



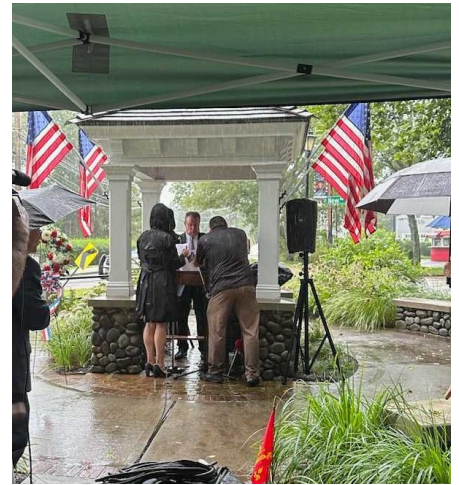
Assemblywoman

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Assembly District 95



## September 2023 E-News



*9/11 memorial ceremonies around the district*

### September 11 and New 9/11 Notice Act

My staff and I spent the beginning of last week attending 9/11 memorial ceremonies around the district: in Yorktown, Peekskill, Ossining and the tri-Village ceremony in Croton, which brings Cortlandt's communities together. It is important that we continue to pause and reflect on that day, to remember the lives of those who were lost, the bravery of those who rescued and recovered beloved community members, and the resilience of our communities in the months and years that followed that fateful day in 2001.

Governor Kathy Hochul signed [several new 9/11-related laws into effect](#) on September 11, including the new 9/11 Notification bill that requires employers to inform employees who were in the [exposure zone](#) of their eligibility to register for the 9/11 Victims Compensation Fund. Many people do not realize that they are entitled to compensation if they worked or attended school in the area; it is not just for first responders. If you were in [the exposure zone](#) on September 11, 2001 or in the days and months afterward and have not already done so, visit [www.vcf.gov](http://www.vcf.gov) to learn more about the Victims Compensation Fund and your possible eligibility for compensation.



*Honoring firefighters in Peekskill and veterans in Cortlandt.*

## Recent Hate and Terror Threats

Two recent incidents have sparked fear in Briarcliff Manor and Ossining, and I would like to applaud the actions taken by the Briarcliff Manor Police, the Ossining Police department, and the Ossining Schools to keep us safe and well-informed.

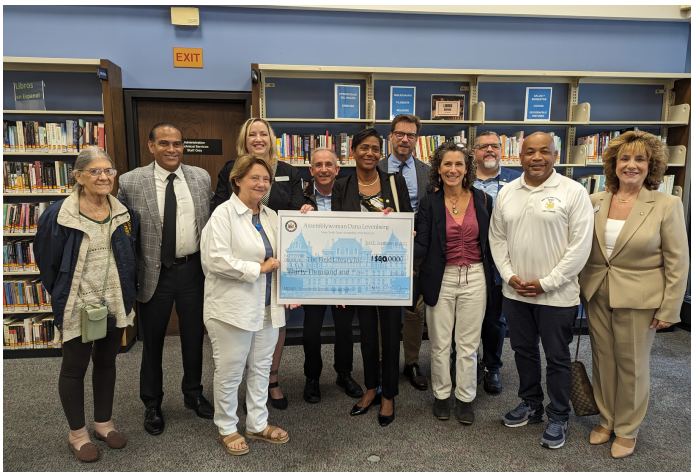
During Rosh Hashanah services last Saturday, an individual drove onto the property of Congregation Sons of Israel (CSI) in Briarcliff to shout anti-Semitic slurs at congregants. He was quickly apprehended thanks to the quick thinking of CSI's security team and the Briarcliff police.

We learned on Wednesday that the Ossining School District had received a bomb threat, similar to ones that have been emailed to other districts around the state. The school district is working with the Ossining police and the district's security consultants to maintain extra presence and vigilance regarding threats, as well as communicating with other districts who have received similar messages to continue to assess the threat.

I could not be more grateful to the professionals who work together daily to keep us safe. I will continue to vote to secure the funding that our police and our schools need to ensure that our communities are places where everyone is free to thrive. I will also continue voting to strengthen our gun laws to reduce the ability of hateful individuals to do us harm. Let's also all remember to do our part to make the world a kinder place with the choices we make daily in our interactions with others, especially today, the International Day of Peace.

## Remembering Jeannette Phillips

The Reverend Jeannette Phillips of Peekskill passed away earlier this month, leaving behind a major legacy. As one of the founding mothers of the health center now known



*Photos from Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie's visit to Peekskill*

as Sun River Health, she was a local pioneer in the ongoing effort to achieve health care equity. She was a visionary leader whose kindness and commitment to others were an inspiration to many. Peekskill and so many other Hudson Valley communities have been enriched by her efforts to bring high-quality health care to all. I was proud to attend her memorial service and honor her life with an Assembly citation, and I look forward to passing a resolution in memoriam when we return to Albany for the next legislative session.

## **New Grant Awards & Opportunities**

This month, my office has been very focused on the distribution of grants. Each member of the Assembly received \$250,000 in the 2023-24 state budget to help them support not-for-profits, municipalities and school districts with services and activities that benefit the public. These grants are intended to help defray the cost of one-time operational expenses associated with projects that will help grantees better serve their surrounding communities. I have distributed my allotment to ten grantees throughout the district; see the next page for the full list of recipients and projects. Congratulations to all of the recipients! I cannot wait to return and see these projects come to fruition.

Assembly Speaker Heastie came to visit Peekskill last Friday, bringing additional grant funding. We kicked off Hispanic Heritage Month by presenting the Field Library with the funding mentioned above, to support its Spanish-language collection and resources for English-language learners. The Speaker added an additional \$80,000 for structural improvements to the building. September is also Hunger Action Month, which the Speaker honored by pledging an additional \$30,000 to Caring for the Hungry and Homeless of Peekskill (CHHOP) for building improvements. We also delivered more than \$1.8 million in funding to support Peekskill's youth, with \$125,000 in grant funding for the Youth Bureau and \$1.7 million for accessibility and safety upgrades at four of Peekskill's playgrounds. You can read more about the Speaker's visit in [this week's Examiner](#).

## Budget Initiatives Grant Recipients

- The **Town of Cortlandt**'s Information Technology department for server upgrades (\$50,000)
- The **Garrison School District** for their cultural arts program (\$35,000)
- The **Ossining Public Library** for expenses related to technology education and after-hours book pickup (\$30,000)
- The **Field Library** of Peekskill for technology and materials to support new readers, job seekers and English-language learners (\$30,000)
- The **Croton Free Library** for technology upgrades and revitalization of existing program rooms (\$20,000)
- **Caring for the Hungry and Homeless of Peekskill (CHHOP)** for their "Welcome Home for Veterans" program, assisting homeless veterans with the transition from shelter to permanent housing (\$20,000)
- The **Village of Briarcliff** for automated external defibrillator (AED) upgrades (\$20,000)
- **Support Connection** of Yorktown for expenses related to their peer counseling program (\$15,000)
- The **John C. Hart Memorial Library** in Yorktown for their digital book club (\$15,000)
- The **Julia L. Butterfield Memorial Library** in Cold Spring for their Book Bike program (\$15,000)

My office is currently reviewing applications for another round of funding to be used for capital expenses, through the state's Community Resiliency, Economic Sustainability and Technology (CREST) program. Municipalities, school districts and not-for-profits that have been pre-qualified through the State's [Grants Gateway](#) can click [here](#) to review the guidelines and apply by **4 PM on Friday, September 29**. (My grants blast subscribers have already received this information; if you would also like to receive the grants blast, you can sign up by replying to this email with the word "grants.")

## Legislative Updates

Since the signing of the "[Save the Hudson](#)" bill, four more of my bills have been signed into law. These new laws were requested by municipalities to help them better serve their residents. A.5274 and A.6570 enable the expansion of the residential parking systems of Cold Spring and Croton, respectively, to help these villages balance the needs of residents and visitors. A6101 and A7478A create exemptions from residency requirements for Buchanan Engine Company No. 1 and certain positions within the Village of Cold Spring government. This enables talent recruitment from a wider area, and permits people currently serving in key roles to continue their service if they have to move. Addressing the needs of the municipalities in my district is a top priority of mine, and I will continue working to ensure our local governments have what they need.



*Left to right: Peekskill Mayor Vivian McKenzie, myself, Cynthia Knox of CHHOP and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie; Speaker Heastie with myself, Peekskill Councilmember Brian Fassett, Mayor McKenzie, Deputy Mayor Patricia Riley, and City Manager Matthew Alexander.*

I am currently preparing for the upcoming legislative session, and constituent input is very important to me. The best way to share your opinions with me is via [my contact form](#) and/or my [survey](#). These methods make for easy capture and analysis of information by my staff. You can also feel free to email me at [levenbergd@nyassembly.gov](mailto:levenbergd@nyassembly.gov) to share your position on an issue. Please make sure your street address is included in your message so that my office can confirm that you are a constituent.

## **New Salary Transparency Law**

New York's new salary transparency law went into effect this week, and I am proud to have voted for it. This new law is intended to combat pay inequality by giving current and prospective employees the salary information they need to pursue well-informed negotiations. It also enables more people to make career decisions that align with their financial goals. Here's what to know about the new law:

- It requires employers to disclose compensation upon issuing an employment opportunity for internal or public viewing or upon employee request.
- It applies to New York companies employing four or more employees (excluding independent contractors), employment agencies, recruiters, and agents. Temporary help firms are excluded.
- Covered positions include jobs, promotions and transfer opportunities that will be physically performed, at least in part, in New York State, as well as remote opportunities that report to a supervisor or office located in New York State.
- If a job is 100% commission based, only a general statement indicating that compensation is based on commission is required.
- Companies are required to disclose the following:
- the compensation or range of compensation for a job, promotion or transfer opportunity. The employer must disclose salary information that they, in good



*Left to right: celebrating the awarding of grant funding to the Julia L. Butterfield Memorial Library in Cold Spring, the Ossining Public Library, and the John C. Hart Memorial Library in Yorktown.*

- faith, believe to be accurate at the time the disclosure is made.
- A job description for the position, if one exists.
- Workers cannot be retaliated against for exercising their rights under this law.
- Companies found to be in violation of this law face fines ranging from \$1,000 to \$3,000 per offense.

If you witness a violation of the new law, you can report it to the Department of Labor at [labor.ny.gov](http://labor.ny.gov) or by calling **1-888-NYSDOL (1-888-469-7365)**.

## Domestic Violence Awareness Month Drive

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, and my office will be conducting a drive ending **Friday, October 27** to collect items that will benefit women and children leaving abusive situations. Suggested items for donation include full-size toiletries and gift cards for establishments such as Amazon, grocery stores, gas stations, drug stores - essentially, items that survivors can use to meet immediate needs as they are trying to re-establish their lives. All donations will be delivered to Hope's Door at the end of the drive. If you are able to contribute, please bring or mail your contributions to my district office at 8 Revolutionary Road, Ossining, NY 10562, or bring them to mobile office hours. Your generosity is appreciated!

## Attorney General Spotlight

My office partners with the office of Attorney General Letitia James to share an item of hers in each edition of our e-news. Below, read more about the Attorney General's efforts to ensure that all children in New York can receive an education, regardless of their background or housing situation. [Click here to read more.](#)

## September Highlights

Attorney General Letitia James, along with NY State Education Department Commissioner Betty Rosa, reminds New Yorkers that every young person in New York between the ages of 5 and 21 has the right to a free public-school education, regardless of nationality or immigration status.



In a newly released “Know Your Rights” publication, Attorney General James reminds New Yorkers of their rights and offers specific information regarding what documentation can and cannot be requested to prove residency.

You must live in a school district to attend its schools for free. And while a school may ask you to submit documents proving where you live, they must accept many different kinds of proof, such as a letter or affidavit from a social worker, teacher, lawyer, religious leader or other person with personal knowledge of your address. Schools should not require that all residency proofs be less than 30 days old and should not report or threaten to report information about your living situation to local code-enforcement authorities.

In addition, when a student requests enrollment, the school must allow that student to begin attending classes as soon as possible – ideally the next school day. The student then has three business days to prove residency and if the school decides that the student is not a resident, it must provide a written explanation of its decision and tell you how to appeal it.

All of this information and lots more can be found online at: [ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/letters/kyr-ed.pdf](https://ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/letters/kyr-ed.pdf). In addition, the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) encourages New Yorkers who have been denied enrollment at their local public school to file a complaint by calling 1-800-771-7755 or on the OAG website ([ag.ny.gov/file-complaint](https://ag.ny.gov/file-complaint)).

That’s all for now. For more frequent updates, be sure to follow me on social media - I am [@AMDanaLevenberg](#) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#). Until next time, be safe and healthy. To those celebrating Yom Kippur, I wish you a meaningful fast. May you be sealed in the Book of Life!