


Viewpoints



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters may be edited for legal considerations, reader interest and length. Please include a telephone number and address for verification purposes. Deadline for letters is Friday at noon. Letters must be submitted by e-mail to be considered for publication. Letters can be e-mailed to newsplace@aol.com, and the phrase "Letter to the Editor" should be included in the subject line of the e-mail.

Policy on letters:

- Letters that contain statements that are libelous or slanderous will not be published.
- Letters that include personal attacks will not be published.
- Letters written in response to other letter writers must address the issue at hand, rather than mentioning the writer by name and must refer to the headline and date the letter was published.
- Letters referring to news stories must mention the headline and date of publication.
- The Southern Dutchess News will not be used as a vehicle to place misinformation.
- Information must be attributed to a specific individual or published item (ie - tell us where or from whom you obtained the information)
- All letters must contain a name, hometown and phone number for verification and 300 words or less.
- Letters appearing on the Viewpoints page are the views of the writers alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Southern Dutchess News.

Students deserve to 'live authentically'

To the Editor:

As a parent within the Wappingers Central School District, I've been monitoring the intimidation and dehumanization of our gender nonconforming children for the past two years. This has escalated to an unacceptable level as could be seen by the statements made during the May 13, 2024, WCSD school board meeting. In addition to various harassments fomented by high school students, this past March 18th a student at John Jay High School created a petition and convened a student walk-out in which participants allegedly spewed transphobic comments.

Our students deserve to live their lives authentically. Groups like Moms for Liberty have distorted facts, misinforming the district's parents, and creating chaos. Continued inaction by the district has permitted this mindless and needless situation to spiral out of control.

Karen Svoboda
Fishkill

Executive Director, Defense of Democracy

EARLY DEADLINE NOTICE

Due to a holiday press schedule for Memorial Day, we will have an early deadline for our May 29 paper. All editorial submissions are due by noon on Thursday, May 23; and all advertising is due by 5 p.m. on Thursday, May 23. Contact eschmidt@southdutchessnews.com for more information.

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Rombout Fire Commissioners 'greatly alarmed' about proposed rules

To the Editor:

The Rombout Fire Commissioners are greatly alarmed after a recent email from Dave Denniston, Vice President of the Association of Fire Districts of the State of New York concerning the Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) proposed rule changes concerning the operation of fire departments.

"In February, OSHA published a proposed rule that will revise the current 29 CFR 1910.156 "Fire Brigade" standard to make it a multi-discipline "Emergency Response" standard that would require fire departments, EMS agencies, and other rescue services to comply with a wide range of responder safety and health initiatives. This will have far-reaching and possibly devastating effects on Fire Districts and Fire Departments across New York State."

The Rombout Fire Commissioners are concerned about these proposed rules will have on the recruitment, retention and the budgetary effects with the increased training and equipment requirements. Following the tragic attacks of September 11, OSHA, with all Federal agencies, were directed to strengthen their preparedness to respond to terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies. OSHA released the new proposal this February with a 90-day public comment session. The Dutchess County Board of Fire Commissioners, with the Association of Fire Districts of the State of New York (AFDSNY) and the National Volunteer Firefighter Council (NVFC) agreed that this was not enough time to fully understand the 608-page new standard rule changes and how it would impact each and every one of the fire districts in the New York State. They successfully lobbied to push back the date for public comments to June 21. The Rombout Fire Commissioners do agree that many of these updates are long overdue to the 44-year-old "Fire Brigade Standard" to meet the new technology and technical advances that have evolved in that time. But the fire commissioners also have a responsibility to the Rombout taxpayers to be fiscally responsible without putting undue financial pressures on them. The increased training requirements, required new equipment, administrative and health costs, will do just that.

The major OSHA directive from Congress was to formulate a standard that is economically and technically feasible. The Fire Commissioners have significant questions as to whether the entire proposed standard falls within these guidelines. OSHA approach is one size fits all fire departments but providing fire protection is surprisingly complex in New York State and each fire department needs are different. But our mission is the same, to serve our community.

If this proposed standard goes through ALL fire departments across New York and Dutchess County will need to comply. The members of Rombout Fire Company help contribute to reducing costs to the New York State taxpayer. FASNY reports that New York State's nearly 100,000 volunteer firefighters save New York taxpayers \$3.87 billion annually in salary, benefits, and potential debt service. FASNY also added that property taxes across the state would rise on average 26.5 percent without them. There is an initial estimate cost of \$8 billion in New York State to update stations and apparatus to the new standard IN ADDITION TO the taxpayers' current annual costs. Preliminary estimates for the Rombout Fire District are that residents would see a severe increase for fire protection on their tax bill.

We are asking for your support and if you are a New York State resident, by signing a petition against this new proposed regulations. To sign this petition, go to this link: https://www.change.org/p/call-to-action-osha-1910-156?recruiter=1334481811&recruited_by_id=246a7570-e538-11ee-929f-65b5e0d33f50&utm_source=share_petition&utm_campaign=p petition_dashboard&utm_medium=copylink

For 53 years, the men and women of Rombout Fire Company have followed the proud American tradition of being volunteer firefighters that dates back to 1736. Every day and night they respond to your call during your greatest time of need. You can be assured that we will continue to do so until these new regulations have been resolved so that it benefits both the firefighters and our community that we serve and live in.

Rombout Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners

Must 'honor and protect' all

To the Editor:

Why have we let our young people become indoctrinated and radicalized? We must remember that we are the land of the brave and home of the free.

Does "One nation under God with liberty and justice for all" ring a bell?

Today regardless of my ancestry or my faith ... Today I am a Jew. Today we should all be Jews.

We must protect and honor all our brothers and sisters of the Jewish faith especially if we are Christians.

Let us all be careful where and how we allow our precious offspring to be educated. May God bless his people.

Brenda VonBurg
Historian Emeritus
Wappingers Falls

Two incarcerated individuals arrested, charged with violating orders of protection

The Dutchess County Sheriff's Office announced the arrests of the below individuals in connection with separate incidents at the Dutchess County Justice and Transition Center. Both were incarcerated at the time of the incidents and arrests, and remain there at the time of this writing.

- William Green Jr., 30, of Poughkeepsie.

- Craig Albrecht, age 41 of East Fishkill
According to the Sheriff's Office, Green and Albrecht have both been

charged with aggravated family offense (felony) and criminal contempt 2nd (misdemeanor), and are accused of violating orders of protection by calling protected parties. Both were arrested on May 1, and are due to appear before the City of Poughkeepsie Court for arraignment.

As with any criminal case the charges described above are merely accusations, and both Green and Albrecht are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.