

Letters to the Editor

Dem Candidate for Leg. Blasts Albano's Record

In the May 7-13 Putnam Examiner article profiling myself and Mr. Albano, he implied that I am advocating that the residents of Putnam County District 5 should vote for me on the basis of change for change sake. Nothing could be further from the truth. The following are the necessary changes that we need:

First, we need to end the corrupt and nepotistic hiring practices throughout the

County. Currently Mr. Albano's brother receives a salary from the County and lives rent free on Tilly's Farm in order to care for the animals. Mr. Albano's brother was hired without the County's best interest in mind. The County also loses tens of thousands of dollars a year in lost revenue from that residence.

Second, we must control the County budget in a more fiscally responsible way.

Mr. Albano has voted year after year after year to increase Putnam County taxes. His votes have increased the County's taxes more than 10% of the last five years alone. He also voted to give himself an unconscionable 14% raise.

Third, we need to support our seniors and provide better healthcare to those who serve the County. As Chairman of the Legislature in 2015, Mr. Albano proposed

a resolution which revoked the promised and guaranteed health insurance plan for County retirees.

I am not running to change things just for the sake of change. I am running because things need to change. Come help change things at RebeccaForPutnam.com.

Rebecca Swan
Carmel

A 'Country Club' at Taxpayers' Expense

The "Founding Fathers" of our Constitution could never have envisioned how distorted and meaningless the federal Congress has become. According to most reliable polls, the public view of the performance of our congressmen and women, has been below 20% for many months. Issues, such as immigration reform, health care, infrastructure improvements and entitlement reform have been substituted for daily appearances of the many committees to falsely portray their hard work to

their constituents in their home state and districts. Rarely has new legislation emerged to address and solve the many pressing issues of the day.

A great number of congressmen and women would rather show their face on CSPAN and other media outlets, than work together "across the aisle" on so many of these "quality of life" issues. The only description that I can give to this behavior is to equate them to a "Country Club" gathering. A group of mostly frustrated lawyers, who could never make

good in any other field of endeavor. The American electorate sees through this neglect of responsibilities and that is why they are rated historically low in job performance.

It has become crystal clear that the institution of Congress has become contaminated by partisan personal attacks. The usual coming together of opposing parties in compromise and accommodation of each others views has become so distant and in a paralyzed state of affairs.

It is time to remove these legislators from Congress and seek others who will show courage and independence and work together "across the aisle" for the good of our country. Let's make this happen by nurturing good and informed candidates for public office. There is no time to waste!

Frank J. Del Campo
Mahopac

Mental Health Awareness Month Marks 70 Years

Most people still think mental health issues are uncommon. The truth is quite the opposite: One in five people are estimated to have a mental health condition and that is why promoting mental health and well-being is a key priority of Putnam's Community Health Improvement Plan, often referred to as "the CHIP." This May, the Putnam County Department of Health is promoting the national theme of "4Mind4Body," and marking 70 years of Mental Health Awareness Months, started by the national organization Mental Health America (MHA). Their initial goal in 1909, and still going strong today, is to raise awareness about mental health conditions and the importance of good mental health for everyone.

"Mental health touches all of us," said County Executive MaryEllen Odell. "If we have not directly experienced a mental health problem ourselves, we likely know someone close to us who has, either a family member or close friend. Our community is fortunate to have many resources here in Putnam. These organizations work together tirelessly providing an array of services. Help is available."

"Mental health cannot be separated from physical health—the two are intimately intertwined," explained Health Commissioner Michael J. Nesheiwat, MD. "And it works both ways: A healthy lifestyle can prevent, delay or alleviate mental health conditions, while chronic diseases such as heart disease or diabetes impact and have a mental health component."

The theme "4Mind4Body" focuses on this, bringing awareness to many aspects of a lifestyle that can positively impact

mental and physical health such as recreation and fitness, work-life balance, animal companionship, social connection, religion and spirituality.

Adapting to an increasingly digital world, Mental Health America offers a set of quick and easy online mental health screenings that provide in-home convenience and anonymity. For some this is a good first step. Others may prefer to speak with their personal health care providers, or to call the Mental Health Association in Putnam for a referral at 845-278-7600.

The online screenings for depression, anxiety, eating disorders, PTSD, bipolar, psychosis, and addiction are available at www.screening.mentalhealthamerica.net/screening-tools. These are complemented by a screening that parents can take if they have concerns about their child, a

screening for youth who want to assess themselves, and a work health survey that helps measure the stresses one may be experiencing at work.

CoveCare Center, one of the largest providers of mental health services in Putnam County, recently formed an affiliation with the Mental Health Association in Putnam. CoveCare Center supports the work of MHA in Putnam while also providing compassionate and confidential prevention and treatment services for mental health, substance use, and emotional and social challenges. CoveCare Center can be reached at 845-225-2700. The Mental Health Association continues its vital work in the areas of peer support, community education and outreach, with an emphasis on suicide prevention and veterans. In the case of a crisis, individuals should call the local

Putnam County Crisis Line at 845-225-1222, or 911.

Other Putnam organizations and agency-based groups leading the work together on the CHIP with the health department include the Putnam affiliate of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness), which recently hosted its sixth annual fundraising walk against the stigma of mental illness; the Putnam County Suicide Prevention Task Force; the Child Advocacy Center; the Mental Health/Substance Use Providers Coalition; the Putnam County Department of Social Services, Mental Health and the Youth Bureau; Putnam Hospital Center; and the Veterans Service Agency. A full list of community partners working on the mental health priority is published in the CHIP report, accessible online from the health department's home page.

Correction

In The Putnam Examiner May 7-13 issue, the article titled "Curzio up for Re-election in Crowded Carmel BOE Race" the article incorrectly stated school board member James Reese was not running for reelection this year after his term was going to expire at the end of this school year. Reese's term is actually not up until next school year. The article also stated the rest of the board voted to hold a removal hearing against school trustee John Curzio, but the vote was 5-2 with Reese voting with Curzio to not hold the removal hearing. The Putnam Examiner regrets the errors.

The PUTNAM Examiner

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