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EDITORIAL

Train In Vain

The next time you find yourself sitting on a Long Island Rail Road platform during a train delay with some time to kill, be sure to genuflect to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's leaders — for without those six-figure salaried credits to humankind, you might be faced with the boredom of an uneventful and on-time commute.

As negotiations between the authority and unions prove more laborious by the day, the approximately 300,000 weekday riders of the nation's busiest railroad prepare to find an alternative passage to

Manhattan. We think this might be the perfect time to take a vacation; as long as that vacation destination isn't the Hamptons, as throngs of beachgoers may also find themselves without a ride.

Union leaders are asking for a 17 percent raise over six years, as well as health care cost coverage and other concessions. The transportation authority insists it has already laid a generous offer on the table, just as it insists it is doing all it can and more to keep delays to a minimum and avoid fare hikes.

The MTA needs to watch the gap between what they say and what we commuters see.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

CASA's Mission

We read with interest Editor in Chief John Owens' column in the July 9, *Manhasset Press*. Mr. Owens described a letter he received from "A Heart-Broken Mother," a former Manhasset resident, whose son began drinking at the age of 13 and escalated to hard drugs shortly thereafter. Although that was 30 years ago, her son has still not recovered but she is grateful he is alive.

As the Board of the Manhasset Coalition Against Substance Abuse (CASA), we too are happy to know he is alive, but know the road that her family must have traveled has been devastating and can never be imagined by anyone not having experienced this tragedy.

We appreciate Mr. Owens acknowledging CASA as making serious efforts to prevent substance abuse in our community. Underage drinking is not a new problem in any community, or any state in this nation. Preventing substance abuse is no easy task, but we remain positive and hopeful. We are encouraged

that the Bach Harrison study, which was administered to students at Manhasset High School, showed an overall decline of 13% in underage drinking in grades 8-12 from 2008-2013. However, we also know there is quite a lot of work to still be done.

Our mission is to reach our youth before they are in trouble — and we do that by connecting parents, students, schools, religious organizations, healthcare and substance abuse professionals and other organizations and groups involved with reducing substance abuse.

CASA's initiatives have made an impact in the community. This past spring we launched our "Talk. They Hear You." campaign and received a supportive proclamation from the Town of North Hempstead. This ongoing underage drinking prevention initiative seeks to empower families to talk with their children — as young as age 9 — about the risks of underage drinking.

In March, Chris Herren, a former professional basketball player who struggled with substance abuse for most of his career, spoke to parents and students separately at Manhasset High School. Chris shared his focus on sobriety and his experience as a

young substance abuser, noting, "No one wakes up at age 30 and becomes a heroin addict. It all starts in the homes as teenagers drinking out of red plastic cups." Sadly, the woman Mr. Owens describes in his article knows this is true all too well.

CASA's upcoming programs include the annual Red Ribbon Week October 27-31, with activities and programs for students relating to drug abuse and dangerous behavior awareness, and parent outreach and mailings. On Thursday, October 30, at 7:30 p.m. at Manhasset High School, CASA will host a presentation by Dr. Robert Turrissi, a professor of biobehavioral health at Penn State and the developer of the underage drinking prevention effort known as the Power of Parents. Dr. Turrissi will present "It's a Fact...Parents Do Matter," a discussion of the power of parent-based intervention on substance abuse prevention.

In addition, CASA recognizes the importance of family communication as it can be instrumental in building a healthier and safer future for children. This fall we will also offer Active Parenting Now, a 3-part program designed to help parents learn new skills in communication, problem-solving

and conflict resolution.

In the winter and spring, CASA will continue its series of Parent Education workshops, designed to provide parents with the skills and insight necessary to raise healthy and responsible youth in today's world.

Mr. Owens is right: no organization or individual can fight this battle alone. We invite the community to learn more about CASA and its efforts to prevent substance abuse. Visit manhassetcasa.org to join CASA and learn about all of our initiatives. Help us help improve the health and wellness of our youth.

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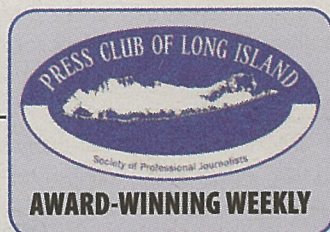
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CORRECTION

The correct spelling of the winner referenced in "Kids Helping Kids At The MPWC Fun Run" in the July 9 edition is Juliana (with one "n") Sims (with one "m").



Letters to the editor are welcomed by the Manhasset Press. We reserve the right to edit in the interest of space and clarity. All letters must include an address and daytime telephone number for verification. All material contributed to Anton Community Newspapers in any form becomes the property of the newspapers to use, modify and distribute as the newspaper staff or assigns see fit.

