

FREE! TAKE ONE WITH YOU!

AFFORDABILITY:

Express Sessions conversation with real estate pros turns to affordable housing for locals. R1



WORD:

Southampton Arts Center's upcoming exhibition takes a 'Look at the Book.' B1



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Arriving for Dinner

A bald eagle lands near a deer carcass in East Hampton on Saturday. The carcass attracted several juvenile bald eagles as well. DOUG KUNTZ



Powerhouse Fundraising Fuels Quick Pace of Project

BY MICHAEL WRIGHT

The Montauk Playhouse Community Center Foundation donated more than \$8.2 million in privately raised money to East Hampton Town last week to fund the bulk of the construction of a planned swimming pool and cultural center inside the cavernous empty half of the historic Playhouse building.

With the foundation's donation in hand, the East Hampton Town Board on Thursday, February 15, approved the nearly \$14 million contractor bids for the construction of the pool and other facilities and said the work could begin as soon as this April and be com-

pleted by late summer 2025.

The town will contribute \$5.5 million toward the construction — it increased its contribution by \$500,000 last week — and the State Legislature has earmarked \$1.7 million for a grant to support the second-floor cultural center component of the project.

The Playhouse foundation had not previously revealed exactly how much it had raised for the project, to protect the integrity of the blind bidding process, but had told the town last spring that it had enough — accounting for the \$5 million the town had already

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An artist's rendering of the aquatic center pool. Construction will begin on it, and a second-floor cultural center at the same time, at the Montauk Playhouse.

MONTAUK.PLAYHOUSE.COMMUNITYCENTERFOUNDATION

Analysis Probes Potential Airport Impact

Montauk could be most at risk

BY MICHAEL WRIGHT

Consultants for East Hampton Town have unveiled their sprawling new analysis of the potential impacts that new policies limiting aircraft traffic to East Hampton Town Airport might have on other airports in the region.

The analysis, nearly 2,000 pages long and stuffed with reams of data about air traffic, roadway traffic, noise impacts and pollution levels, will guide the next round of decision-making by the Town Board as it once again embarks on an effort to impose restrictions on helicopters, large jets and commercial charter aircraft using the airport.

It is unlikely that any changes to the airport's operating rules will be in place by this coming summer.

More than a year in the making, the document, known as the draft generic environmental impact statement, or DGEIS, for the proposal to adopt a "prior permission required" policy at the airport, attempts to use data and hypothetical worst-case scenarios to forecast the impacts of new rules that the town had tried to use real-time data to guide their policy-making in 2022 before being stopped by a court injunction.

How wealthy visitors to the South Fork might react if they were unable to fly into the Wainwright airport — known as JPX on Federal Aviation Administration flight maps — and how those decisions would negatively impact those who live near airports in Montauk, Westhampton and Southampton compared to how it might positively impact those living around JPX is the crux of the town's decision on how or whether to limit air traffic at its airport.

No changes are expected before summer.

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FEBRUARY IS NATIONAL TEEN DATING VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH

As part of Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, staff members of The Retreat wore orange on February 6 to help spread the message that everyone deserves a healthy relationship. COURTESY THE RETREAT

1 IN 10
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS has experienced physical violence from a dating partner in the past year. SOURCE: LOVE IS RESPECT ACTION GUIDE

Teen Relationships Can Set the Stage for Adulthood

BY MICHELLE TRAUING

A hot topic of conversation among Salome Galindo and her girlfriends at East Hampton High School is, perhaps unsurprisingly, love found and lost, and the relationships they immerse themselves in. She can say, with certainty — through what she's learned as a member of The Retreat's Teen Leadership Council — that more than half of them have experienced an unhealthy one. And she is only 16. "It's really emotionally draining for them," she said, "which they always tell me."

February marks Teen Dating Violence

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Luke Castillo, Benson Edmond, Adriano Rangel, Courtney Hyland and Salome Galindo at the Teen Leadership Council's Coordinated Community Response Team kickoff meeting at East Hampton High School. COURTESY THE RETREAT

TEENS: Group Educates Youth About What Makes Healthy Relationships

FROM PAGE A1

Awareness Month, which shines a light on the abuse that some adolescents endure in their earliest romantic endeavors. Survivors of dating abuse are more likely to experience depression and anxiety, engage in drug use, exhibit antisocial behaviors like lying, bullying or hitting — and it can set the stage for future relationship problems.

"We like to explain that all couples have conflict, people disagree, but this is when one person feels like their way is the only way, and they're willing to hurt," Prevention Education Program Director Helen Atkinson-Barnes said. "And that could be physically hurt the other person, but it could also be pressure, manipulate and embarrass."

Teen dating violence can include physical and sexual violence, psychological aggression, and stalking, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. One in 10 high school students face physical and sexual dating violence, Atkinson-Barnes said.

For emotional abuse, that number skyrockets to one in three, according to Loretta Davis, executive director of The Retreat. "Sometimes it's hard to gauge whether it's increasing, or people are just more aware of pathways for support," Atkinson-Barnes said of teen dating abuse. "So it may be a situation where, in the past, it was just kept quiet and people weren't talking about it, and now people are coming forward. Do we attribute that to an uptick in abuse? Or is it just a matter of people feeling safer getting support?"

On the East End, the Teen Leadership Council itself plays a role, Davis said. Launched in 2010, the group creates a space for students to discuss what they notice happening in teen dating and other relationships, and teaches them how to prevent abuse and promote respect in all relationships.

"I can say that the prevention program that we have, I think why it's so successful, is we're not telling teens what to do," she said. "They're helping formulate what works. They are part of the solution and they're part of the conversation in a big way, and I think respecting what they have to say is so important."

"Our goal is to partner with youth," Atkinson-Barnes said, "to learn from them and to have them learn from one another." Pop culture has normalized some signs of teen abuse, Atkinson-Barnes noted, including sharing online passwords, checking a partner's phone, tracking someone's location at all times, and isolating them from friends and family. What can feel fun can quickly turn "potentially dangerous and unsettling for a lot of teens when they get to that point," she said. Red flags that East Hamp-

RESOURCES FOR TEENS AND THEIR FAMILIES

THE RETREAT
Provides safety, shelter and support for victims of domestic abuse. Call the 24-hour hotline at 631-329-2200 or chat at allagainstabuse.org/live-chat

LGBT NATIONAL HELP CENTER
Serves the LGBTQ+ community by providing free, confidential peer support and local resources. Call 1-800-246-7743 or chat at lgbthotline.org

THE TREVOR PROJECT
Provides 24/7 confidential crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to LGBTQ+ teens and young adults under 25. Call 1-866-488-7386, text START to 678678, or chat live at thetrevorproject.org

NATIONAL RUNAWAY SAFELINE
24/7 free support for homeless and at-risk youth. Call 1-800-RUNAWAY or visit 1800runaway.org/youth-teens

CYBER CIVIL RIGHTS INITIATIVE
Emotional support, technical advice, and information to victims of online abuse and nonconsensual pornography. Available 24/7 via phone, email, and chat. Call 844-878-CORI or visit cybercivilrights.org

SCARLETEEN
Inclusive, comprehensive, supportive reproductive and relationships info for teens. scarleteen.com

YOUR LIFE YOUR VOICE
Supporting parents, families, and children in need. 24/7 hotline, text, or email. yourlifeyourvoice.org

STRONGHEARTS
24/7 free, confidential, and culturally relevant support for Native American teens and young adults experiencing dating abuse and sexual violence. Call 844-7NATIVE (762-8483) or chat live at strongheartshelpline.org

HEART
Ensures that Muslims have the resources, language, and choice to nurture sexual health and confront sexual violence. heartgrog.org

BROWN BOI PROJECT
A community of people working across race and gender to eradicate sexism, homophobia and transphobia, and create a healthy framework of masculinity and change. brownboiproject.org

ton High School juniors Adriano Rangel and Benson Edmond have either noticed, or learned through their time with the Teen Leadership Council, are lack of communication or over-

communication — demanding contact when one partner is busy or feeling pressure to be someone else in order to be more likable.

"I feel like nowadays, especially with the rise of online teen dating and social media overall, there has been this unhealthy romanticization of relationships,

"I feel like nowadays, especially with the rise of online teen dating and social media overall, there has been this unhealthy romanticization of relationships,

I feel like nowadays, especially with the rise of online teen dating ... there has been this unhealthy romanticization of relationships.'

and being able to raise awareness of the unhealthy signs is very beneficial," said Adriano, who is 16. "Nowadays, people don't really know how to tell what healthy and unhealthy is."

"It's important to know the difference now that we're young, than to experience it later on, like when we're in college, or even in our jobs," Salome said, adding, "I have one friend who, like, her boyfriend is really on her, like, 'overprotective.' That's what she says."

"Now, I can find ways to tell her that's not what it is, and it's him just being really manipulative of her," she continued. "I feel like we put a kind of makeup on it."

Salome and Benson have learned that setting boundaries early in a relationship is key — "It isn't a bad thing, it's a great thing because it helps a relationship thrive and continue to survive," he said — as well as es-

tablishing healthy communication and compromise.

These tools can be used with any type of relationship, explained Courtney Hyland, associate director of education for The Retreat, including friends, teammates and family.

"I feel like with Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month, you think of violence prevention, you think of unhealthy, abusive things," she said, "but we also focus a lot on healthy things — staying true to yourself, setting boundaries and knowing what those are and knowing what we need."

In the coming month, Adriano said he hopes to start a new club at East Hampton High School — perhaps called "RAC," which stands for Relationship Awareness Club — to help share what they have learned through the Teen Leadership Council and educate their peers on dating abuse, as well.

"If you think you're in an abusive or unhealthy relationship, don't be scared to either go for help or to try getting out of that relationship," Benson said. "Because in the long run, it'll be really beneficial, even if you're nervous to be really scared or really nervous of actually doing it, it's crucial that you get out of it. And it's not gonna be an easy task, but all that matters is that you're out of that daunting experience in that relationship."

"Or a toxic cycle, too," Salome said. "You're gonna find something much better with your own self or with someone else." For more information, visit allagainstabuse.org.

RELATIONSHIP SPECTRUM

Healthy

A healthy relationship means both you and your partner are:

- Communicating
- Respectful
- Trusting
- Honest
- Equal
- Enjoying personal time away from each other
- Making mutual choices
- Economic/financial partners

Unhealthy

You may be in an unhealthy relationship if your partner is:

- Not Communicating
- Disrespectful
- Not trusting
- Dishonest
- Trying to take control
- Only spending time together
- Pressured into activities
- Unequal economically

Abusive

Abuse is occurring in a relationship when one partner is:

- Communicating in a hurtful or threatening way
- Mistreating
- Accusing the other of cheating when it's untrue
- Denying their actions are abuse
- Controlling
- Isolating their partner from others

SOURCE: LOVE IS RESPECT ACTION GUIDE



Monday - Friday Happy Hour 4-7pm

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