



Letters to the Editor: Beach Condemning 12.03.15

Our readers comments

| December 3, 2015 - 2:20pm

Obnoxious Beach Driving

East Hampton

November 26, 2015

Dear Editor,

When three pickup trucks are parked on the 100-yard-long beach near my house, they take up half the beach, including the space required for them to turn around and to accelerate off the beach. Visually, they consume the entire beach. Beachgoers who do not drive on the beach are left with the debris: exhaust fumes, noise pollution, asphalt-dust, and deep ruts in the sand.

Who can deny that the town's permitting and encouraging beach driving is absurd? The town's plan to ask its taxpayers to pay millions of dollars to purchase waterfront property to ensure the continuation of the obnoxious beach-driving habit is irresponsible.

It is unrealistic to expect local politicians to oppose beach driving. The town, however, will have a difficult time trying to convince a court that there is a substantial state interest in condemning waterfront property to accommodate beach driving, in face of the fact that the recreation erodes and desecrates the town's most precious resource.

Very truly yours,

LAWRENCE J. KONCELIK JR.

Share the Beach

Amagansett

November 28, 2015

Dear David:

East Hampton is a celebrated place, renowned for its natural beauty and stunning beaches. There are few who believe a beach swarmed with vehicles is a safe one, or a beautiful one. Yet some do. This has certainly been an issue on Maidstone Beach and Albert's Landing. In Napeague, at "Truck Beach," there is also significant conflict between folks with these differing points of view, and we formed Safe Access for Everyone (SAFE) to educate the public about the challenges there, and to offer solutions.

Truck Beach now has 140 families living there, and the arrangement of 24/7/365 beach driving is no longer

sustainable. Yet East Hampton has 22 miles of oceanfront beach, a few miles of it uninhabited and available for beach driving. Napeague State Park is adjacent to Truck Beach, and though it requires a paid permit for beach driving, the permit costs less than an S.U.V. tank of gas. And the uninhabited beach at South Flora, purchased by the town for \$8.4 million, has free vehicle access and sits almost unused. All while Truck Beach has sometimes hundreds of S.U.V.s jammed onto 4,000 feet of beachfront. The local families must traverse a highway of S.U.V.s and squeeze through trucks parked like sardines to get to the shoreline.

Why does one beach-going group get to subjugate another? Why can't they both share different stretches of the same beach, separated from each other to avoid clashes?

Despite the fact that the town restricts S.U.V. locations and hours elsewhere in East Hampton, and S.U.V. drivers happily comply, at Truck Beach the town has refused to discuss real solutions to the matter. Instead, it has already spent \$250,000 putting S.U.V.s before sincere parental safety and sanitation concerns. (Dogs have been hit and killed; trash and human and dog feces litter the dunes.) It shouldn't take a child being hospitalized to get some real dialogue going.

The town is now threatening to condemn the beach, potentially spending tens of millions more, plunging the town into massive debt and costing taxpayers unnecessarily. And in eminent domain proceedings, taxpayers will not be given an opportunity to have public hearings about the true cost first, then decide what they want to do. The town ultimately makes an executive decision and won't know the cost until it's too late to back out.

There are free solutions, outlined on safebeach.org. We are asking that the S.U.V.s move just a half-mile east — not to Westhampton. We think that is a reasonable, free compromise that preserves beach access for all user groups, including S.U.V.s, in the safest manner possible.

CINDI CRAIN

Another Hot Potato

East Hampton

November 28, 2015

Hi David,

I would like to weigh in on the issue of "Truck Beach" — another hot potato.

While I see both sides of this issue, I clearly see a resolution that will not cost the town a dime and allow for only fishermen pulling in nets to continue, as the town claims has happened for many years.

Nearly 30 years ago I sold both properties at the end of Mitchell Dunes Lane, the oceanfront properties. At that time there truly was only the occasional dawn or dusk fisherman casting his or her line in. Frankly, I never saw a fisherman hauling in his nets as the town describes.

One of those purchasers has become a lifelong dear friend of mine and my family, so I have spent many days at that beach. The current use of the shoreline is not even remotely close to what East Hampton Town describes as its allowable use. Did you know it is the only "drive-on" beach that is not public lands? Did you also know that just to the east is New York State parkland — which is the answer!

If Truck Beach were relocated to this state land, there is no issue! Private property owner rights are then not in question! The lawsuit that has cost taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars will cease instantly. Local residents who

enjoy driving on the beach and parking there for the day will continue to enjoy the activity.

A win win win situation for everyone! Property owners, taxpayers, and beach-driving enthusiasts!

Town residents who wish to drive on the beach will need to get a New York State pass to drive and park there, and may even need a state fishing license. But remember, that was the original allowable use as described by East Hampton Town.

I am befuddled at why this simple and comprehensive resolution has not simply been done. The existing course is a waste of time, energy, and money. Let's get smart. Please.

JUDI A. DESIDERIO

First Two Freedoms

Sag Harbor

November 30, 2015

Dear David,

F.D.R. spoke of the Four Freedoms, which define who we are as a nation. The first two are freedom of speech and freedom of religion.

Fourteen citizens were arrested for exercising their First Amendment rights on the beach in Montauk for failure to leave what has been described as a "construction zone." The beaches are public, and this so-called "zone" was not created by any local authority or legislation. While the police were polite, they really had no authority to arrest anybody who participated in a peaceful protest. There was no lawful order that needed to be obeyed.

While Mr. Trump has the right to speak his mind, suggesting that all Muslims register and that mosques be watched and even some closed shows he has no respect for freedom of religion. His ideas are not new; they sound like they came from Nazi Germany in the '30s. I like his idea about building a wall, as long as the wall is around his mouth.

In some respects, Jeb Bush was no better when he suggested entry to the U.S. be granted to Christians only. That's just plain dumb. They just don't get it.

STEPHEN A. GROSSMAN

Save the Beach

Noyac

November 29, 2015

To the Editor:

Sitting here at the beach at Gosman's, we mourn the recent and imminent destruction of Montauk's town beach. Yet I have yet to let go of the idea we can still save it. Please, any celebrity reading this, stand with us and save the beach you've so enjoyed for your children and grandchildren.

Read the "Stop the Corps, Save the Beach" Facebook page and learn what is really happening to what used to be a beautiful sandy beach. And then step up. We need you.



Letters to the Editor: Truck Beach 12.17.15

Our readers comments

| December 16, 2015 - 3:20pm

Hampton E-ZPass

Wake, Va.

December 9, 2015

To the Editor,

I read last week's article on Truck Beach in Amagansett as a summer resident since circa 1961. The answer to all this hubbub is quite simple.

1. The beach is not a parking lot, so let's get that straight. No one can say how beautiful or peaceful the beach is with a row of trucks parked on it in the summer. But if you're a haulseiner or commercial fisherman, you get a pass, of course.

2. All citizens have a right to enjoy the beach. I'm all for it, and believe there should be no private ownership of the beach. The premise that "I own oceanfront, therefore I own the beach and my pristine view" is absurd.

The answer is for the town to build a public-access parking lot for all of us who don't own oceanfront. How about a parking lot like the one at Atlantic Avenue, just past the Gun House? But please no parking attendants or lifeguards, etc.

While you're at it, how about looking into issuing all residents an East Hampton E-ZPass that opens a toll gate (at no cost) to all town beach access parking lots to make life easier for us and the police, who have to ticket nonresidents illegally parked all summer.

Sincerely,

DOUG BANFIELD

There Are Three Sides

East Hampton

December 14, 2015

Dear David,

I would like to thank Sylvia Long for helping me to realize that my position on the Truck Beach item was obviously misconstrued by her and possibly others, so allow me to clarify.

First, I do not "take sides." As I see it, all three sides have rights that should and can be maintained. Yes, there are

three sides.

1. The private property owners at and around the area.
2. Individuals who enjoy driving, parking, picnicking, and fishing on the beach.
3. Mother Nature, who has suffered the most by the wear and tear caused by beach driving. In the over three decades that I have brokered transactions on the East End, in particular that sensitive strip of oceanfront, there have been significant changes. Thirty years ago I would see an occasional fisherman pull up, cast, then leave. In recent years it no longer remotely resembles that way of life. The photos speak for themselves.

It is my opinion that the needs and rights of all three sides can be met easily. It's so close you can literally touch it. And this would preserve everyone's rights, without lawsuits, without condemnation, and without further expense to the taxpayers. The answer lies just to the east. It is public land owned by New York State. There already exists a truck entrance to the beach and the identical beautiful oceanfront that could accommodate everyone. The only one who may not get everything she deserves is Mother Nature, as driving on any beach compromises the beachfront.

But again, the balance between preservation and conservation is a fragile one.

Ms. Long, this issue has nothing to do with commissions, as properties will continue to trade no matter what the outcome is. This is strictly an issue of maintaining rights with the utmost respect and consideration for the other side. And please know, I have never heard any agent tell "new buyers of land in Napeague that they buy the house, beach, and ocean all the way to Portugal." Licensees on the East End are keenly aware of laws, rights, and restrictions. They are most sensitive to our lands. After all, we are all neighbors enjoying the same beautiful East End, as we all chose to live here.

I trust this clarifies my position and I remain available to discuss further should you wish to visit me.

Respectfully,

JUDI A. DESIDERIO

Excessive Privilege

Amagansett

December 9, 2015

Dear David:

The massive numbers of S.U.V.s on the beach in Napeague are having an adverse effect on the people who live there. Beyond the blight, there are safety concerns expressed by scores of parents with small children, who must traverse the highway of vehicles to get to the shoreline. In addition, the S.U.V.s have "decimated" a dune and "opened a flood corridor" that has flooded repeatedly, as outlined in East Hampton's Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. The area homeowners tried for years to get the S.U.V.s curbed and moved to areas where human life and property are not so endangered.

The town board is ignoring these concerns, and instead is threatening to condemn the beach for the S.U.V.s. Why, when traditional use of our beaches is pedestrian, and it's estimated that less than 5 percent of East Hampton's townspeople drive on that beach? Those drivers and the town board expect the other 95 percent of East Hampton's taxpayers to foot the bill for legal expenses and condemnation damages — a case of excessive privilege that will not

go unchallenged by taxpayers. SAFE (safebeach.org) has more information on these expenses and what can be done about them.

Area homeowners welcome reasonable public pedestrian use of the beach there. So public access is not at risk. Moving the S.U.V.s to nearby uninhabited beaches would resolve the conflict and is a win-win for all, especially taxpayers who are sick and tired of paying for this legal battle.

CINDI CRAIN

Safe Access for Everyone

Truck Beach Sunday

Springs

December 13, 2015

Dear Editor,

I was born and raised in Montauk and am now a homeowner in Springs with small children about to enter the school system. My husband also grew up here and owns a local trade company. After college we both came home and worked hard to remain here in order to raise our own family in this beautiful community.

This past weekend, I was approached by a teenage boy asking me to sign a petition for SAFE, to ban trucks from driving on Napeague beach. I was taught to be polite, so it took everything in me to simply smile and respond with "Absolutely not!" I came to find out later, through social media, I was not alone in my anger and these solicitors were not very knowledgeable about what they were asking people to do.

The thing is, I am one of the trucks on Truck Beach every Sunday during the busy summer. It's one of the few chances this local family has to spend quality time together. We also go there because many of our friends bring their children there.

And anyone with small children knows that the amount of stuff needed to have a successful beach day requires a truck. Without the ability to drive on there is no question, I would question going to the beach. I'm sure as my children get older a day at the beach will just involve some sunscreen and a towel, but for now, we load up the cooler, the chairs, the tent, the grill, the blankets, the sand toys, the water table, the umbrella, the backup umbrella (you get the picture), and head down to find a spot near our friends. We laugh, make sand castles, eat good food, swim, and decompress. That one day on the beach gives us just enough relaxation to start the long workweek again Monday. And not to forget, when we leave the beach there is not one speck of garbage left behind.

My husband worked for East Hampton Town as a lifeguard for 10 years, 5 as a lieutenant. He saved several lives and made safety on the beach his number-one priority, so hearing that SAFE's main focus is "keeping the beach safe" is insulting. I think it's safe (pun intended) to say that I would never put my children in danger.

I can also recall one beautiful Truck Beach Sunday, a local volunteer fireman got a call that there was a fire in progress. I watched as he sprinted down the beach alerting another volunteer there. They got into the same truck and exited the beach so cautiously I recall thinking it was a bit ironic how urgently they rallied together and still kept it to five miles per hour leaving.

Napeague beach is safe.

Thank you.

ASHLEY LIBATH

Trucks Off the Beach

Fairfield, Conn.

December 11, 2015

Dear David,

Each and every year, I, my husband, and our four children yearn for summer excitement, which mostly includes the ocean, sun, and sand. For over 10 years now, we have spent our summer vacations on the East End.

We stay in the dunes of Napeague, as our family enjoys spending time with my brother, an East Hampton resident. The children walk to the beach and play in the sand and ocean most days. My husband and I have such fond memories of spending hours at the beach. We spend our time swimming, tossing a frisbee or football, and walking along the shore with our children, picking up shells and sea glass to create numerous art projects. I remember when my sons, now 14 and 12, first started body surfing and building sand castles. This year they learned how to surfcast from their uncle. Good old wholesome family time.

Unfortunately things are changing, and, sadly, I can't say they are for the better. The once serene and beautiful beaches of Napeague are being overrun by beach revelers and tailgaters. This detracts from the experience that my family has grown up loving. The threatened piping plovers used to flourish. Now they seem to be scared away by the rumblings of S.U.V.s speeding along the beach. We used to lay our blanket out on the soft yellow sand, and now we have to smooth out the tire tracks so we don't uncomfortably lie in the "ruts," as my children like to call them.

Not to mention finding a section of sand free of the ever-increasing litter. I have picked up garbage bags full of trash during my vacations at the beach. This stretch of coastline has gotten so overrun with vehicles that I no longer feel safe letting my children play freely. What type of mother would allow her children to play in a congested parking lot or busy roadway? Sadly, this is how I have grown to feel over the years. I wonder about the influence the tailgating will have upon my nearly teenage boys as beachgoers each year seem to partake in more aggressive behavior, which includes drinking and driving, urinating in the dunes, and loud music.

I asked myself why does a town as wonderful as East Hampton allow this beach to exist without rules? Why is the Napeague beach not better policed? Why is this beach different from others where driving is limited to certain hours of the day? The Town of East Hampton needs to provide parking for its residents and their vehicles.

As I continued my research, I learned about the homeowners' lawsuit, CfAR, the Benson deed, etc. The more I read and learned, the more irrational and borderline comical it has all become to an outsider looking in. There are too many people fighting for self-interests rather than considering the effects their behaviors have on others.

I teach my children to be kind to their neighbors, give back to their community, to share, respect others and the environment, and, most important, never do anything that would put another person in harm's way. I wish the town and the beach trustees would do the same. Treat Napeague like every other beach in East Hampton. Take the trucks off the beach. I guess it is just the mother in me.

Sincerely,

PAM RYAN

To the Editor,

I am so grateful to live in a community that has an airport that is open and accessible to everyone. On Christmas Day I was able to enjoy the morning mountain of toys with my friend's kids in East Hampton, have lunch with my brothers and sister and their families in Rhode Island, surf Point Judith, and be back home in time to have dinner with loved ones.

On Saturday good weather prevailed and I was able to make one of two EVAC flights in search of a dog that went missing Christmas Eve. The dog was returned home Saturday afternoon, hungry but unhurt.

We can see New England from our backyard and with a little smarts, imagination, and less money than a bus ticket to New York City it is easily accessible and more akin to the culture we know and love here on the East End.

MATT NORKLUN

Vehicular Pollution

Amagansett

December 21, 2015

To the Editor,

As residents of Amagansett for the past four years, we are horrified with Truck Beach. My wife and I purchased our house in the dunes section of Amagansett in April 2012 because of the natural beauty of the area. Only in July of our first summer there did we realize the existence of Truck Beach when we went for a walk onto what we thought was a pristine beach — only to discover that it had turned into a parking lot. We were dismayed by the scene and incredulous that the Town of East Hampton would allow this travesty.

We have difficulty wrapping our heads around the commitment of the town to the environment (e.g., protecting nesting birds and natural vegetation), while tolerating vehicular pollution of such a beautiful natural resource. It cannot be good for the beach environment to have hundreds of trucks travel over the dunes every weekend spewing fumes and litter along the way. We have also witnessed beer drinking, urinating in the dunes, and loud music playing on the part of those who drive onto the beach.

Also, this is an important safety issue. Having heavy vehicular traffic “share” the beach with local residents and their families cannot be viewed as sensible. Would the Town of East Hampton allow pedestrians, including children, to lie on a road shared by trucks without any traffic control? There have been reports from other areas in the country where vehicular traffic is permitted on beaches, of people being run over and children injured; note that small children are below the line of sight of large sport utility vehicles, which traverse the beach sometimes at inappropriate speeds.

For example, in 2010, a 2-year-old boy was hit by a van on the beach in Smyrna Beach, Fla. In 2006, a college student who was sunbathing on a beach in Georgia was run over by a beach patrol officer; in 2003, two sunbathers were run over in Miami Beach. These are just a few of the cases that clearly demonstrate the potential dangers of vehicular traffic on the beach.

As expectant grandparents, we would be very hesitant letting our future grandchild play on the beach with the voluminous truck traffic. We know of other homeowners in our area who will not use the beach when in “truck mode” for fear of injury. This is regrettable. What is especially frustrating is that a simple solution exists that we feel is being ignored by the town. There now is a truck entrance east of the populated Amagansett beaches in Napeague

State Park, along with miles of uninhabited beach that could easily be used by local residents who wish to drive their vehicles onto the beach, thus eliminating the danger and negative effects of the vehicles on the Amagansett beaches. Instead, the Town of East Hampton has embarked on an expensive course of action by attempting to take by condemnation the Amagansett strip of beach, while the Napeague and South Flora beaches remain empty.

We are not in any way advocating privatizing the beaches. We are only concerned with the safety of our family and friends, and the preservation of the natural resources in the beach environment. It would certainly be tragic if it took a catastrophic event to wake the town to this danger.

WENDY and DAN MOSKOWITZ

Still Relevant?

Montauk

December 28, 2015

To the Editor,

Are the Constitution and Declaration still relevant? My question to Supervisor Larry Cantwell is this: Do you stand with the founding fathers or with the modern progressive movement?

VINCENT BIONDO

Springs School Parking

Springs

December 22, 2015

Dear David:

Re: School Street parking, pending public hearing on Jan. 7.

Parking has been ongoing for two years there since a former East Hampton Town official allowed it, without the proper resolutions or public input. Only after that did parking in front of Springs School become the thing. Lazy parents and teachers, blighting our historic district that never knew this problem in the 45 years I can remember as a former K through 8 student.

It will be temporary, they said. Well, on Sept. 20, the timed temporary parking ended and as per original intent reverted to no parking at any time.

Now, asking for enforcement of the no-parking rule to which it reverted, I am confronted with our Police Department's lack of willingness to enforce the law. (Or is it a law?)

The reason? A supposed defect in tax map description. The powers that be seem to have personal, intimate knowledge of some codification defect and refuse to enforce the law as it states now, in a railroad agenda supposedly of police concern and input from Springs School officials.

Here's the funny part. The school officials — Superintendent John Finello, Principal Eric Casale, and Elizabeth Mendelman, president of the school board, all have denied to me personally knowing of the resolution, announcing the need to continue parking in front of the school for "safety reasons," etc.

Amagansett

February 5, 2016

Dear David,

I wanted to correct some errors in the statements attributed to a member of Jordan Haerter's company in last week's Chris Walsh article.

Two years ago there was an inadvertent capitalization error in how Jordan's rank was listed. When I learned of this I told the Wounded Warrior Project we might have to reprint them. They had no problem with that. When our committee met we debated the importance of reprinting them, as we were late in getting them up. But when we were told it was important by Jordan's mom, we told W.W.P., who had no problem reprinting them.

W.W.P. had nothing to do with Rock the Farm. That was a separate event designed to give both the wounded warriors and this community a fun evening. Nick Kraus and I organized the event through our own corporation. W.W.P. did not pay for anything, including alcohol. We did. Everyone who worked on the event, including Nick and me, was a volunteer. We comped the wounded soldiers, the members of Jordan's company, the Soldier Ride volunteers, and W.W.P. staff. We gave the soldiers a fun night and the community got to meet them and thank them. All W.W.P. seeks to do, year in and year out, is to honor the memory of Jordan Haerter, since we named the ride after him. No good deed goes unpunished.

To suggest W.W.P. would not pay for a poster is not only untrue, it is ludicrous, especially in light of the fact that it has contributed \$15,000 to In Jordan's Honor, a nonprofit run by his mom. (Five thousand dollars just two months ago.) W.W.P. also hosts her every year at our Courage Awards event in New York City.

I used to be a newspaper reporter. An axiom of the trade was, "We don't print the truth, we print what people tell us is the truth." I asked your reporter why he didn't bother to ask one of the several volunteers in this community if this soldier spoke the truth. He said he didn't have the time, explaining, "I was on deadline." Really? But he had time to write the falsehood. His story made the first page of The Star. But the truth is here.

Best,

PETER HONERKAMP

At Truck Beach

Amagansett

February 8, 2016

Dear David:

Safe Access for Everyone is dedicated to solving vehicle-pedestrian safety concerns on East Hampton's beaches. A letter to the editor in your Feb. 4 issue by an S. Mitchell describing the situation at Truck Beach is full of inaccuracies.

Ms. Mitchell states that Truck Beach has "remained the same," and that SAFE's accusations are "ridiculous," while at the same time she corroborates SAFE's exact complaints by writing that Truck Beach is "overcrowded," that "some people disrespect the beach," that traffic is "heavy and scary," and that she too, like us, must use "hand gestures" to get drivers to slow down.

Ms. Mitchell suggests that she is willing to overlook it all, but in other parts of our town, where use has similarly turned into abuse for those mere 10 weekends a year — such as at Indian Wells Beach, downtown Montauk, Cyril's on the Napeague stretch, and the airport — the town has felt it important to crack down loudly and dramatically.

Ms. Mitchell said she could “better understand the homeowners’ displeasure if Truck Beach had become a thing a few years ago.” But it did: The abuses at Truck Beach are not a new phenomenon. The homeowners filed suit in 2009, and things had gotten out of control several years before that. It's only gotten worse since then. (To see what conditions are like today, please see our new video on the bottom of the safebeach.org home page.)

Ms. Mitchell's view is that area homeowners want to keep the beach “all to themselves”; however, they have stated often in court documents and elsewhere that they welcome reasonable public pedestrian access. Where else in East Hampton does public beach access equal unrestricted S.U.V. access? At what other pedestrian beaches in East Hampton does Ms. Mitchell feel area residents are keeping the beach all to themselves?

SAFE has never suggested that cars park on Montauk Highway. We agree that is a poor solution. There is parking both in the Napeague Lane lot and in Napeague State Park. We encourage surfers and fishers to park in the state park for access to our beach (one foot away). That will free up parking in the Napeague Lane lot (50 feet from our beach) for those who do not surf or fish.

But to actually drive her family onto the beach, Ms. Mitchell said that Truck Beach is her “only option.” I recommend that Ms Mitchell have a look at SAFE's suggested alternative, to drive on the uninhabited beach a short distance away at South Flora, which the town spent \$8.4 million to purchase and sits unused. Moving the S.U.V.s doesn't solve our environmental concerns, but it removes the risk of a resident child stepping off a dune boardwalk to traverse a busy and scary highway of moving S.U.V.s to get to the shoreline. It also removes the risk of the resident children being hit by an S.U.V. as the child freely plays on the beach. And it allows families to drive onto the beach — a free solution to the conflict that costs taxpayers nothing.

It's worth noting that many sick and elderly people who enjoy walking on the beach find traversing S.U.V. ruts equally as difficult for them.

SAFE would like to point out that the Truck Beach debate isn't limited to those who use the beach. The biggest matter facing every East Hampton resident is potential tax hikes over the matter. In January the town board trumpeted its record of debt reduction but then two weeks later took out a \$320,000 bond to defend Truck Beach. It can't have it both ways.

This is our money, taxpayers. Almost \$1 million spent to date, with tens of millions more potentially in the pipeline. Is this really where we want it being spent, to encourage and defend boozy tailgating and hundreds of people urinating on the beach in Napeague? These should not be our town's financial priorities. There are free solutions that satisfy all beach user groups on the SAFE website.

Sincerely,

CINDI CRAIN

Spending for a Few

Amagansett

February 7, 2016

Dear David:

During the runup to the town board elections I asked Larry Cantwell and Sylvia Overby why they were considering using public money to condemn the portion of the Napeague beach known as Truck Beach. Their response was that a politician in East Hampton cannot be against dogs or S.U.V.s on the beach.

Well, maybe not so fast, at least as to S.U.V.s. Certainly recent letters to the editor of The Star and the creation of the Safe Access for Everyone group demonstrate that many people recognize the folly of spending hundreds of thousands and possibly millions of dollars of public funds to make this fragile resource safe for the S.U.V. Nation. The videos on SAFE's website show vividly the desecration that is being done to this area by these vehicles. It is truly appalling. How can this spending for a few possibly be justified when tens of thousands of us are fully capable of enjoying the beach without driving on it?

I suggest that part of the political problem is that Truck Beach is, ironically, largely invisible except to the local residents most affected by it. I've lived in Amagansett for 37 years and was totally unaware that it existed until I saw photographs in The Star. I'm reminded of the "oldest, established, permanent, floating, crap game in New York," from "Guys and Dolls." I'm imagining what the public reaction would be if, on a weekly basis, 100 or more S.U.V.s rotated around the various East Hampton beaches and periodically took over Atlantic Beach, Indian Wells, Main Beach, Montauk, or Sammy's Beach?

I'm betting Larry and Sylvia would be getting a whole different earful about where to spend our tax dollars.

JACK HASSID

Pathbreaking Initiatives

Amagansett

February 8, 2016

Dear David,

The annual honors to our town police and report of Sgt. Wayne Mata's promotion at last Thursday's town board meeting were followed by two unusual, momentous announcements.

Maritza Guichay and Angela Quintero, two Latino citizens, came forward in the meeting's public comment section to applaud the town's creation of a 10-member Latino advisory committee. They spoke in English and Spanish to a filled meeting room, including an unprecedented gathering of men, women, and children from East Hampton's various Latino communities. Town Supervisor Larry Cantwell proudly affirmed that this initiative, sparked by the members of the new committee, would open a new era of response to Latino concerns, and, in the words of Ms. Guichay and Ms. Quintero, the "integration" of one-third of our residents into the whole community.

Then, five Montaukers reported a major step forward in Ditch Plain. The four-acre ED40 beachfront property has been rezoned from resort to residential, preventing replacement of the former East Deck motel by another beachfront commercial venture. The work of a coalition of community environmental groups, the breakthrough is a first gingerly step toward retreating rather than armoring against the ocean.

These initiatives are pathbreaking. They happened through local leadership and painstaking collaboration among people with various points of view. They show that our town, faced with major changes in population and environment, can be resilient and become healthy. It is exciting that we are adding a wealth of new partners to forward-looking community efforts.

the development of a “microgrid,” a small-scale renewable-energy resource, to power designated municipal services responsible for the safety, security, and well-being of the community during an extreme weather event if the town’s electrical grid is compromised.

Yes, “the time is now,” and town leadership is responding with strategies to address the challenges of a changing climate charged by the growing levels of carbon dioxide in the earth’s atmosphere.

LINDA B. JAMES

Georgica Pond Pollution

East Hampton

February 24, 2016

Dear David,

Christopher Walsh’s recent article “Georgica Pond Is in Trouble, Supervisor Says,” indicates that the level of pollution in Georgica Pond is a result of human activity; namely, septic and cesspool intrusion and water runoff from roads and lawns. These have resulted in high levels of nitrogen that appear to have caused large, dangerous algae blooms for the last two summers. This man-made situation needs a man-made solution, sooner rather than later. All the stakeholders agree to move swiftly. This is a good thing.

The newest generation of sewage removal systems for private homes is regulated and must be approved by the Suffolk County Department of Health. To date, this has not happened. Whenever I ask when a new system will be approved, I’m told “next year.”

What are we waiting for? Let’s do something now. The Health Department should be leading the way, not procrastinating.

Once the Health Department approves a system, the town must be ready to quickly update the town code to encourage the use of these updated installations. With new construction continuing unabated, there is not time to lose.

BARBARA McCLANCY

Recording Secretary

League of Women Voters

Of the Hamptons

Video Not Doctored

Amagansett

February 29, 2016

Dear David:

I am the spokesperson for Safe Access for Everyone, an organization advocating for safer conditions on East Hampton’s beaches, most notably with regard to the S.U.V.-pedestrian conflict at the Napeague beach commonly referred to as Truck Beach.

Faced with indisputable facts and actual video evidence about the atrocities being committed on a Napeague beach, it is unfortunate that CfAR has resorted to lies and libel to attempt to distract from the truth at Truck Beach. In fact, had SAFE known the mere 45 seconds of video we released (out of our more than 16 hours of video in our possession) would have garnered the reaction that it has — both among our critics and our supporters — we would have done it much sooner.

CfAR, unable to refute the conditions depicted in the video on the merits, has stated that the video was “doctored,” and “the group SAFE and some of its supporters once again knowingly circulating false and misleading information in their efforts to privatize Napeague Beach,” according to the CfAR board member Tim Taylor’s letter to The Star last week.

The fact is that the video was not doctored in any way; the Jeep was not sped up to make it appear as if it were going faster — it really went that fast, right past playing children. This week we will be uploading to Facebook the time code that accompanies the video to prove that the car is indeed traveling at an alarming speed. Once we do that, I suspect critics will say a speeding car is a rare occurrence, but in fact by my count there are an unbelievable 52 other examples of speeding vehicles in one day that we haven’t yet shown to the public. Fifty-two!

Some may say that simply more enforcement is needed, but on two occasions a car speeds right past a Marine Patrol officer without incident. We also have in our possession a photo of a woman peeing next to her vehicle and a disgusting three-minute video of a man and woman taking turns urinating next to their vehicle on the beach (some of which is shown in the commercial). It’s simple: Truck Beach is out of control.

Tim Taylor also wrote that the extreme congestion of vehicles is a misrepresentation of reality because of the extensive piping plover closures that closed off half of the beach. So by default, Mr. Taylor agrees the videos show an extreme congestion of vehicles. Which supports our point exactly because there was not a single piping plover closure at Truck Beach in 2014, the year the video in the commercial was shot. (Again, the time code can prove this.) Anyone can read the East Hampton Town plover report by Googling “plovers,” “East Hampton,” and “2014.” (There were only two plover nests in Napeague, at Ocean Colony, which is more than 2.6 miles away from Truck Beach.) Thus CfAR is willing to publicly and outrageously lie to try to justify the egregious acts that are being committed at the beach, and we find this despicable.

And again CfAR is insisting we are trying to privatize the beach, when in fact we clearly state we wish to make it a pedestrian-only beach like many other East Hampton beaches.

Perhaps CfAR’s position is best summed up by a repugnant Facebook comment by Billy Toad Helmsorig in response to our video last week: “If you get hit by a slow moving truck on a beach your [sic] an idiot anyways and most likely had it coming to you.”

The town board alarmingly is expecting taxpayers to continue to lay out hundreds of thousands of dollars, and potentially tens of millions, defending CfAR’s lies and outrageous beliefs such as Mr. Helmsorig’s. Taxpayers will expect the town board to answer for this.

We at SAFE are grateful to the hundreds of residents of East Hampton who are taking the time to watch the video at safebeach.org/#!video/cow3r and adding their names to the growing list of those who would see beach driving ended at the densely populated Napeague beach in question, along with an end to the waste of financial resources by the Town of East Hampton on defending the S.U.V. special interests in light of such incontrovertible evidence that beach driving at Napeague is unsafe, unsanitary, and out of control.

CINDI CRAIN

On Jan. 12, I celebrated my 94th birthday. Not easy to acknowledge, even harder to say.

“Write about it,” urged my children. “Tell the world,” shouted my friends. But why? I asked. Some answers might suggest good genes, an active life, an adoring family, and a happy marriage.

Yes, maybe all of the above.

But for me, it signaled an end of an active life committed to working for just causes.

I reviewed a piece I had submitted to The East Hampton Star when I turned 80, but rereading it brought me up sharp. Then, there was still a road to travel. But at 94, I have to ask myself, how much time do I still have?

I am still a nongovernmental organization representative at the United Nations for Peace Action, the largest U.S. peace group. I still attend weekly meetings or briefings (U.N.-speak) at the U.N., and lobby other groups on issues of mutual concern. I corner diplomats with my message of peace and disarmament — no more nukes — and urge support for women’s rights and equality. A formidable agenda for a 94-year-old!

So, where am I today? Still at the U.N. and preparing to attend a U.N. conference in May in South Korea. I still chair the intergenerational committee for that conference, dedicated to advancing global education.

I will urge all who attend to bring the older and younger generations to dialogue and work together for a safer world. It is my hope that by bringing the old and young together, I will pass my torch. Yes, indeed!

But it is still closer to what I see as an end. It does not depress me, nor even limit my activity, given my good health. But it does set some time limits. Will I reach a point when I will say, enough? When will I read a good book and drink a glass of wine? Then I will remember the wonderful life I have had.

I will take comfort knowing that I am leaving a legacy to you, to my three children, six grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Forever,

JUDY LERNER

Uncertain Times

Lakewood, Ohio

March 11, 2016

To the Editor:

I want to thank you for printing my letter, wishing for more donations, but understand everyone’s situation. Since my previous letter, Northwestern University in Illinois is starting a clinical trial for my disease, Moersch-Woltmann, a.k.a. stiff person syndrome, and I have been invited. I have met the eligibility requirements and am now waiting to see if I am elected to participate. It is stem cell research. This is the first clinical trial since 2010, so I am excited for anyone who gets elected to participate.

Thank you again for your time and consideration during these uncertain times.

TOBY LARSON

Time to Move the Trucks

Amagansett

March 13, 2016

Dear David:

The East Hampton Star grasps exactly some of the main problems with pursuing condemnation on a Napeague beach in its March 10 editorial “To Condemn? That’s the Question.” It writes that “Two major municipal condemnation initiatives, [including one on a] strip of beach on Napeague, warrant more public consideration.”

Indeed. The Napeague condemnation is being considered to retain S.U.V. access on three-quarters of a mile of beach. However, the S.U.V.s have nearby uninhabited beaches available to them that they don’t even use. Surfers and fisherfolk can use Napeague State Park, which is nearly triple the size of Truck Beach yet sits almost empty even on summer weekends. And recreational beachgoers can use South Flora, which the town already spent \$8 million to purchase and also sits nearly unused. Why waste taxpayer dollars to buy S.U.V.s another place to drive when the S.U.V.s don’t even use what the town has already bought for them at significant cost?

Should the town choose to condemn, it will do so without taxpayers knowing the cost first, and C.P.F. funds will not be able to be used. Taxpayers will be stuck with whatever bill a judge assigns. Some in East Hampton think the beach can be purchased for next to nothing; we believe its value is in the many tens of millions. However, as Michael Rikon, the town’s condemnation attorney, writes in “The Practical Real Estate Lawyer,” saying that a property is worthless because it has “no development potential” is “dangerous” — “highest and best use” might be something else entirely.

“Instructing the condemner’s appraiser to disregard an obvious highest and best use will result in the complete dismissal of condemner’s appraisal” in favor of the property owners’ appraisal, he adds; and attempting to “low-ball” property owners on condemnation valuations is folly, as it can trigger significant penalties, interest, and having to pay the homeowners’ legal bills. Paying homeowners just compensation, per the Fifth Amendment, is “not a game,” he writes.

Back in 2006, representing the Town of East Hampton in a condemnation case, Rikon attempted to flout his own advice and got the town slammed with having to pay compensation and penalties amounting to 14 times the initial offer made to the homeowner. In a December 2015 case where Rikon represented a business with property being condemned, he turned a \$244,000 offer from a municipality into a \$12 million catastrophe for it in penalties, interest, and compensation — 53 times the initial offer! Indeed, Rikon proves that low-balling is dangerous folly.

Draining East Hampton’s coffers for S.U.V.s on the beach — something the town has already done to the tune of nearly \$1 million despite the S.U.V.s having other beaches to drive on — instead of for affordable housing, medical facilities, E.M.S. services, and police and fire departments is just plain wrong.

In addition, the homeowners’ nuisance claims can trump condemnation. As The Star surmises: “The other concern is that condemnation would not necessarily end the court battle. The litigating property owners’ claim could well prevail: that what is known as Truck Beach is an unregulated nuisance. Were the courts to agree, the traditional right to drive on the town’s beaches could be jeopardized. From where we sit, that is a very big and very serious risk.”

Free solutions exist to resolve this conflict, which are outlined on safebeach.org. It’s time to move the trucks to uninhabited beaches.

CINDI CRAIN

Driving on the Beach

Amagansett

March 26, 2016

To the Editor:

To save our beaches, we are on the brink of disaster. Just think: The beaches here in East Hampton and Amagansett are our only true treasures, irreplaceable. To lose these pristine areas to crowds of parked or speeding trucks and cars would be fateful, automatically destroying our biggest drawing card for tourists, visitors, and locals alike — what we all come here for!

Last summer, a Jeep racing by me clipped my dog on her leash and never stopped. This is not Coney Island, and it should not stand the threat of being ruined.

My mother was born in Amagansett 90 years ago and never even conceived driving on the beach, which was restricted only to the haulseiners pulling in nets, trying to make a fisherman's living. Even some of them walked down to the beaches. What, have we really become this lazy, not to walk on the sand to water? And don't tell me "my family has a historic right to drive on Napeague or any other beach!" This excuse is simply not true, as four-wheel drive, the real reason that the beach is now marked with tracks and gouges, basically did not exist 20 or so years ago.

Either ban the vehicles or move Truck Beach nearby to the east of Napeague, to the beach almost unused, away from swimmers, picnickers, surfers, dogs, families of children who are much too close by. Plenty of room east, and a pretty beach too. This information is well known to the trucks and hot riders, but they do not move to the beaches open to them.

Now this: The beaches here are regulated by the town trustees, to keep them safe. It is certainly time for them to strongly do their job or stand by to see ruin. There should be more marine patrols placed on the beaches; I have never seen more than two.

No other beaches worth their sand along our coastline allow driving on the beaches. Things have changed now, folks, and we must act to protect our beaches, our great gift.

A. WILLIS



Letters to the Editor: Truck Beach 06.23.16

Our readers comments

| June 23, 2016 - 12:50pm

Traditions Are Outdated?

East Hampton

June 13, 2016

Dear David,

In the April 20 copy of that other East Hampton newspaper, on page B4, near the top of the third paragraph, Ms. Cindi Crain is quoted in the story: "Times have changed," said Crain. "The way Grandpa Joe enjoyed the beach has no bearing now."

Wrong, Ms. Crain, your statement is exactly why the locals here, many of whom depend on tourism and second-home owners for their livelihood, are up in arms about the continued influx of new people who do nothing but try to change the way things are.

I know of what I speak, I am a 32-year transplant myself. I moved to Montauk with my wife and 5-month-old daughter from Queens. We were looking to start a new life here; we did. It was hard at first and after having our second child became harder still, but through hard work we were able to stay. We were able to buy a home in East Hampton and settle down and raise our kids. I have never regretted that decision from that day to this. This town and its people are so generous and open to people who offer something and contribute to the town they love, but are critical of those who do not.

The main difference between us is I moved here to live, to offer something of myself, and take a little of what this town has to offer in return — a different way of life, an unhurried pace, and a way of looking at something. You, by your words and actions, want to change that way of life. The traditions and the old ways that make this town one of the undeniable gems of the Eastern Seaboard are outdated? You couldn't be more wrong.

I feel sorry for you; you will never know what it's like to live here. You are only a person passing through. Say what you have to say and be gone from here. The town and its many thousands of locals will be better off without you.

Best to you, David,

TONY GANGA

Environmental Facts

Amagansett

June 14, 2016

Dear David:

The Town of East Hampton has made it clear that the condemnation of Truck Beach and another 1,500 feet of beach to the east of Napeague State Park will perpetuate S.U.V. use on our beaches. But let's look at the environmental facts of that activity:

Prior to the 1991 beach-driving regulations being enacted, the town obtained a negative declaration under the state's Environmental Quality Review Act, because it claimed no environmental impact would occur from S.U.V. use on the beach.

A mere eight years later, in 1999 — following a multi-agency collaboration and 30 public hearings — the town released its Local Waterfront Revitalization Program, its bible of management of East Hampton's shorelines that is still the standardbearer today. The L.W.R.P. stated that:

"Off road vehicles have damaged features or prevented regrowth of the fragile vegetation which stabilizes the dynamic dune system." (Flooding & Erosion Policies, V-75)

O.R.V. use has "decimated" and "destabilized a dune, causing a blowout that allows floodwaters to enter behind the dune into the Marine Boulevard area." (Flooding & Erosion Policies, V-76; Public Access, VII-53)

"In Napeague intensive O.R.V. beach traffic from Marine Boulevard east into Napeague State Park has impaired the beach ecology by damaging vegetation, decreasing nesting habitat and compacting wrack forage for shorebirds. Beach grass growth is retarded by O.R.V. traffic, reducing the stability of the beach in storm conditions and its ability to recover from storm erosion. Excessive traffic has expanded the dune opening at the Marine Boulevard O.R.V. access, forming a flood corridor into the back dune residential area." (Public Access, VII-54)

"Along Napeague Beach on the Atlantic shoreline, a complete 24-hour closure [to O.R.V.s] is recommended." (Public Access, VII-66)

The primary dune [at the access point at Marine Boulevard] should be restored. (Flooding & Erosion Policies, V-108)

The final 2007 L.W.R.P. stated that "the conditions, issues, and opportunities identified in the 1999 draft L.W.R.P. remain relevant and appropriate today."

Since 2007, not only was the Napeague beach not closed to vehicles, but instead nearly 20,000 additional beach driving permits have been issued — the burden of which falls on the compromised Napeague Beach, where no amount of dune or beach restoration has been allowed.

On June 7, the town received a positive SEQRA declaration and, remarkably, appeared to be stunned by it. The gentleman of AKRF Inc., the town's environmental consultant, who presented his environmental findings, stated that "it will be important to discuss the conformance of the [condemnation] action with the L.W.R.P. . . . The [condemnation] project [has] the potential to result in one or more significant adverse environmental impacts. . . . There is the potential for cumulative impacts [from] long-term continuation of the same [activities, such as beach driving] with regard to threatened species, dunes, grasses as well as other environmental effects."

To restate, the L.W.R.P. called for a complete cessation of driving on the beach in Napeague, and the town turned a blind eye and continued to pummel the beach and dunes with S.U.V.s. For the town to be selectively aggressively enforcing the L.W.R.P. in some areas such as Montauk and defying the L.W.R.P. in others defies the entire point behind the treatise, which is backed by the state and federal governments. And forget about the cost of compensating the owners of the beach in a condemnation action; to pursue condemnation for a beach that has

already been tragically destroyed by S.U.V. use only for the purpose of continuing S.U.V. use there for eternity would leave East Hampton environmentally bankrupt.

CINDI CRAIN

Safe Access for Everyone

Privatizing the Beach

East Hampton

June 20, 2016

Dear David,

On behalf of the board of Citizens for Access Rights, its members and supporters, and anyone who enjoys East Hampton's beaches and the rights and traditions that come with public access and ownership, I would like to say a special thank-you to all of those who took time out of their busy schedules to testify at the State Supreme Court in Riverhead. As we on the East End are well aware, it is a busy time of year for everyone, and your time and effort have not gone unnoticed. Everyone who enjoys the beaches in East Hampton and all they have to offer owe you a debt of gratitude.

It is vital that anyone who enjoys East Hampton's beaches gets involved with the fight to protect public access and ownership and the rights and traditions associated with public access before it is too late. The beach you enjoy may not be threatened at the moment, but if the plaintiffs in the Seaview and White Sands lawsuits are successful, you can bet that others will be lining up to file lawsuits privatizing the beach or dictating its use. CfAR urges everyone to get involved before it is too late.

See you on the beach (at least for now),

TIM TAYLOR

President, CfAR

Shepherds of the Beach

East Hampton

June 20, 2016

To the Editor:

When I moved here in 1982, the first thing that I did was to buy a four-by-four to fish and enjoy family time on what has now become known as Truck Beach.

During the intervening years I have never witnessed any child or adult in danger. What I have observed are many locals who take special care of the beach and the environment. Compare the trash left behind on the "public beaches" even with trash cans, and you will see how spotless Truck Beach is. What is brought in is carried out, sans trash cans. Truck Beach attendees are basically the shepherds of the beach there, and take great pride in doing so.

It would be travesty if the homeowners trying to secure the beach for themselves were to prevail. Unfortunately, it would be just another local tradition and right lost to the 1-percenters, who are here for three months.

current town board has repeatedly avoided requests to investigate actual completion performance, it is hoped Surf Lodge management will step forward to publicly verify completion of this self-required project so this troubling matter can finally be put to rest.

In fairness to the musicians who gain employment in Montauk, current noise violation standards require additional investigation. However, there is an equal obligation to the rights of Montauk citizens who are negatively affected by current noise violations. The 250 noise complaints recorded in 2015 were from Montauk citizens, who have a legitimate right to their privacy and a peaceful environment.

The root to the primary problem is not music; it is music played outdoors in which the sound is dramatically carried over far greater distances than when performed within doors. The ultimate question then arises that, why should a music product being offered to a customer base within a radius of no more than 10-15 yards from its source be allowed to irritate, annoy, and aggravate hundreds of other citizens, up to and beyond a quarter mile from the music's creation? It is selfish, unfair, and a waste of good music.

If indeed, the Montauk bars and clubs are serious and sincere in working within town laws and codes, there is a solution and proven example of effectiveness. The Amagansett nightclub Stephen Talkhouse years ago forwent any outdoor music performances in favor of an indoor music venue. Additional sound-retaining techniques were installed in the building and as a result, 100 percent of joyful, exhilarating, and powerful music is delivered to exactly the customers who it was originally intended for without a single bit escaping to a less-enthusiastic reception — a perfect example of a local business understanding and appreciating its responsibility to the community of which it has the good fortune to be a part, while still delivering what its customers desire. It's a situation that, as of yet, is unheard of in Montauk.

TOM BOGDAN

Montauk United

Dysfunctional Traditions

Amagansett

June 27, 2016

Dear Mr. Rattray,

As a homeowner and seasonal resident on Whalers Lane, which abuts Truck Beach, I sympathize with those who relax and "recreate" in the weekend tailgating community there, and have observed the care with which they watch their children, remove their trash, and maintain harmony. The sense of community, which the O'Donnells described very eloquently in their letter last week, is certainly palpable, and indeed looks like a lot of fun.

I disagree, however, with the argument that this, and "tradition," justify the environmental and aesthetic degradation of this beach in particular, and by extension, East End beaches in general. Last week's letter from Cindi Crain summarized the environmental findings that should be at the heart of the discussion. (Ms. Pilgrim's article on the topic also recapitulated the environmental and political considerations involved.)

I especially would like to rebut certain aspects of Mr. Blatt's letter of June 23. There is no question that turning a natural area into a parking lot abuses it, as does driving on the sand and the aftermath of ruts, oil drips, forgotten bottles, etc. And to justify an unwillingness to consider alternatives to the current situation because homeowners "should have done their due diligence before purchasing their homes overlooking sands that have been used by East Hampton residents for centuries or recreational purposes" is quite offensive: Some of us have had our houses for

decades; the numbers of permits issued has ballooned since that time. Nor does it occur to the average buyer in March or September that this density of driving and parking on the beach on a July weekend could be possible.

Local residents may have used the beach for recreational purposes for centuries, but I will warrant that they did not do so from 4,000-ton S.U.V.s and trucks until the 1980s or later. Before that, if you drove on the beach, it was because you fished from there, more or less commercially. This was the traditional and historical circumstance of beach driving, not tailgating with hundreds of other vehicles on a sunny afternoon. Also, there are countless examples of dysfunctional traditions that have been abandoned or modified over time: whale-slaughtering (to use a nautical one), foot-binding, witch-burning, the horse and buggy — you get the idea. The point is that traditions evolve.

Finally, Mr. Blatt conflates the issue of driving and parking on Truck Beach with Beach Access for All. As was written elsewhere in The Star, the town has failed in its responsibility to address the democratization of access to beaches, but there are other ways to do this than turning a blind eye to the destructiveness of beach driving.

These involve people walking from a real parking lot rather than driving onto the sand; that might require a rethinking of the parking regulations in the town and providing more user-friendly public transportation. Certain residents will object to such measures, but they ultimately would contribute to more equitable access to the resources here, and a stronger, more cohesive community.

ALEX von HOFFMANN

I Declare

East Hampton

June 27, 2016

To the Editor:

In the spirit of Independence Day, I declare my right and those of my friends, family, neighbors, and pets on the East End to be free from the noise and aviation gas emissions generated by helicopters, jets, and seaplanes.

I declare the right of all wildlife to be free to live peacefully and propagate in the fields, woodlands, and beaches that East End residents have taxed themselves to preserve for both wildlife habitat and our enjoyment.

I declare our children must be free of the negative impacts aircraft noise has on their ability to learn. I declare that our physical and mental health needs to be freed from the deleterious health impacts we know aircraft noise are causing, particularly in increased incidences of cardiac disease.

Last week, the Second Circuit Court of Appeals heard the town's appeal of a federal court ruling imposing a temporary injunction on the town's adopted once-per-week rule limiting aircraft that meet the town's definition of noisy to one landing and takeoff per week to protect the public from noise. While the panel deliberates, the summer progresses, and noise impacts continue to rain down on all East End residents as we try to garden, hike, go to the beach, and generally enjoy the outdoors. Currently, we are not free to exercise our right to the peaceful enjoyment of home and property.

In the meantime, the aircraft-noise-affected public is urged to continue to log complaints that will help the town board shape further policy while we wait to see if the once-per-week rule will be restored.

One hopes that the town's right to govern its airport in the best interests of airport users and the noise-affected alike

accelerated rate. We have seen repeat episodes of algal blooms, fish kills, and shellfish die-offs. Our septic systems are outdated and overused. Getting from point A to B in July and August is impossible. Automobile fatalities and airlifted injuries are extremely common and a testament that too many trucks, cars, bicyclists, and pedestrians share our roadways.

Springs, the most populated community with the lowest median household income and highest property taxes of all the hamlets, is particularly at risk because of overuse. The pristine waters of Accabonac have recently experienced areas closed to shellfishing because of poor water quality. As the Springs School population continues to grow, the school board is seriously considering a capital expansion estimated to cost \$25 million that will undoubtedly be higher. A large part of the population in Springs is made up of working-class people and retirees, who will be asked to pay increased taxes they cannot afford for the expansion.

Springs is not the only hamlet stressed by overusage, misuse, and increases in population. There are the crippling crowds that have turned the once sleepy hamlet of Montauk into party central. Georgica Pond, Sag Harbor Cove, Lake Montauk have all been cited in recent years for algal and water quality problems that ultimately resulted in access limitations and/or closures. Communities have protested Truck Beach and the parking of commercial vehicles on residential property. These are two problems the town trustees and the town board are trying to resolve that might not exist if there were fewer people doing it.

Fortunately for us, we already have some meaningful programs and legislation: the Peconic Bay Community Preservation Fund and the rental registry. The Peconic Bay C.P.F. is available to purchase and preserve land, and on the ballot this fall is a proposal to use preservation funds to assist in paying part of the cost of replacing outdated septic systems with the latest technology that will reduce groundwater pollutants before they end up in our bays. That is a great idea that should receive our full support!

The rental registry is a valuable enforcement tool available to stop illegal, frequently overcrowded, and sometimes dangerous housing. One hundred percent compliance would enhance the quality of the environment and the quality of our life. It will also work toward the preservation of the residential character of our community.

Nonetheless, much more is needed to respond better to the challenges we face! Shared hamlet management, school consolidation, determining impacts before granting special-use permits, and enhanced 24/7 code enforcement should all be pursued more aggressively. These concepts will result in better management, lower taxes, and the preservation of the character of the East End.

Yes, the government can do more, but we should be accountable for our own actions rather than waiting for and then objecting to new legislation. The more we individually do, the less government will have us do. East Hampton has countless good citizens and organizations working hard, fighting the good fight, to preserve this beautiful place we call home. Each of us has a role to play in the preservation of our environment and our quality of life.

Retrofitting our infrastructure to accommodate a larger population is prohibitive in every sense. Prevention is a much better road than remediation. We have now reached the point when less would be more.

FRANK RIINA

Alternative Locations

East Hampton

August 1, 2016

Dear David,

For many years our community has prided itself on gorgeous beaches, pristine vistas, and faultless landscapes. I am writing today to weigh in on the debate surrounding trucks and sport utility vehicles on the Napeague beach. Apart from the obvious environmental issues at hand, the trucks on the beach are a significant contributing factor to noise and visual pollution.

Here in the Town of East Hampton we're fortunate to have iconic beaches that people flock to during the summer. However, in my opinion, by allowing vehicles onto Napeague, we've diminished the enjoyment the vast majority of beachgoers derive from the time they spend there. I've heard many residents complaining about how unseemly Napeague has become.

What was once a picturesque little strip of beach has turned into a car park littered with beer cans, plastic bags, and wrappers. When I go to the beach, I want to enjoy the sand, the sun, and the ocean. I want to look up and see the horizon, not a pickup. I want to hear the waves crashing and the seagulls calling, not a car radio. I don't want to worry about broken glass from a party while I'm walking along.

I believe we need to find an equitable solution to this issue in a timely manner. Not only are the trucks themselves an eyesore, but they also bring with them increased noise, litter, and less-enjoyable beach views for everybody else present. If the beaches are a part of the reason people choose to live in East Hampton, then our beaches should be maintained and preserved accordingly. Alternative locations for "Truck Beach" have been proposed, and, I believe, referring to this issue as one of "public access" is a red herring in its most egregious form. Public access to Napeague won't be barred; only the trucks will be.

While I don't condone people driving their vehicles onto the beach, I do respect that it's something of a local tradition. I think the fairest, most expedient solution would be to relocate truck and S.U.V. access to an area less in the public view as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

NICOLA CLAYTON

Tennis Club Project

East Hampton

August 1, 2016

To the Editor,

As a lifelong resident and longtime teacher and coach in East Hampton, I believe I have a pretty good feel for the pulse of the locals when it comes to matters that affect our community. Many of us were thrilled when we learned that the town board had granted approval for the project at the East Hampton Indoor Tennis Club. Once again we would have bowling lanes to provide year-round recreation for adults and youths, as well as allowing East Hampton High School to revive its bowling program. Miniature golf, bocce, and a sports bar and restaurant would provide additional venues to be enjoyed by year-round as well as summer residents and visitors.

Naturally many of us were dismayed to learn of the lawsuit filed by a small group of homeowners against the town board, as well as Scott Rubenstein and E.H.I.T. I speak for many local residents when I say that I sincerely hope the town board stands by its decision to approve this project. Many months and several open meetings went into reviewing this proposal and all its plans, and the board voted unanimously to approve this project.

It would be totally wrong for the board to cave to this small group of Nimbys and start this process all over again.

had more to do with customer behavior, and I think the chain has done a magnificent job of bringing us what we need and, often, even what we want, whenever possible. Let's face it: This is a difficult location to ship to, especially since the days of freight cars on L.I.R.R. tracks are long gone.

We need our King Kullen, which serves not just Bridgehampton but everyone who lives east of the Canal (that is, Southampton to Montauk Point). Even if you close every other location on Long Island, please consider keeping the Bridgehampton location open. I would hate to see it turn into another Stop & Shop, a chain I really don't like.

MATT HARNICK

Irreparable Damage

East Hampton

August 15, 2016

Dear Editor,

As a longtime East Hampton resident and observer of the beaches here, I am certain that trucks and sport-utility vehicles are causing significant damage to sand dunes in the East Hampton region and are creating serious safety concerns for other beach users.

With sales of pickup trucks and motorbikes increasing dramatically in recent years, the number of vehicles being driven on East Hampton beaches is also dramatically increasing. As an avid follower of local news, I often read about a large number of complaints being received by local authorities and police with vehicle-related accidents and near-misses becoming a common occurrence on our beaches. I believe that it's about time that everyone learn to respect the beach, the fragile dune environment, and other beachgoers.

The reckless driving of vehicles on the beach and in the dunes is not only a significant safety hazard but also leaves irreparable damage to vegetation caused by two or four-wheel vehicles.

Sand dunes need to be protected so they can continue to protect coastal communities from coastal erosion and flooding and so the natural character of the coast is preserved for future generations. Driving over sand dune plants can destroy them and lower their growth rates by breaking off stems, crushing seedlings, and damaging underground roots. Any activity that damages these important sand-binding plants can stop the dunes from rebuilding and can lead to increased erosion. Vehicles also compact the sand and soils, which changes the conditions needed for sand-binding grasses to grow. Driving through dunes can destroy vegetation, which makes them more prone to erosion.

While some vehicle users who drive on the beach do act responsibly, the threat to the environment and other beach users by those who are driving recklessly has become too great at Napeague. Therefore, I believe that trucks should not be allowed to drive on Napeague beach.

Best,

BRUCE ANDERSON

Like It Was a Frat Party

East Hampton

August 14, 2016

Dear Editor,

Last week I took my younger cousins to Napeague beach. They've only visited East Hampton a couple of times and I thought it would be a nice outing for the day. However, the sheer number of trucks that park on the beach made it difficult to enjoy and I think something's got to be done to address the issue.

Not only did the trucks force us to sit farther back from the water, but they totally obstructed our views, too. Most people were playing music from their radio way too loudly, and everybody was drinking and carrying on like it was a frat party. Definitely not the relaxing atmosphere I'm used to when I go to the beach.

When the sun was going down and people were packing up to head out, the beach was total chaos as cars drove every which way and crowded toward the exit. It was difficult to stay out of their way and safely leave the beach on foot.

I don't mind the idea of people driving their cars onto the beach, but Napeague is one of the most popular. I think the trucks should be relocated to somewhere with less foot traffic, so that everybody can enjoy equally one of the most centrally located beaches we have.

NIDIA RIOS

Zeldin Was First

Springs

August 15, 2016

Dear David,

In the age of unfriending, Twitter, and presidential campaigns' rhetoric, the candidates are responsible for the words they use, and what people hear. So, when Donald Trump said, "Hillary wants to abolish the Second Amendment. By the way, if she gets to pick her judges, nothing you can do, folks. Although the Second Amendment people, maybe there is. I don't know." People heard: "If that bitch is elected, she'll take away your guns and nothing you can do, except use your guns."

Earlier, Donald Trump attacked a Gold Star military family. When asked of his personal sacrifice to the United States, Mr. Trump said, "I've made a lot of sacrifices. I've worked very, very hard." People heard him say, "Your family's military sacrifice, the death of your patriotic, heroic son are just like the days I declared bankruptcy or when I started Trump University. I think they were sacrifices, for sure."

"I was being sarcastic," Mr. Trump tweeted, defending his delusional statements, adding, "Obama founded Isis."

We don't need a president with a Ph.D. in sarcasm.

You know, a normal American's reaction, the reaction I hear from real Republicans, Democrats, and independents alike, to Donald Trump, the man who would be our commander in chief, includes the words "disgusting" and "treason," not sarcasm.

But New York's First District congressman, Lee Zeldin, is not your normal American. Lee Zeldin was the first to endorse Donald Trump for president. Lee Zeldin was the first to explain away Mr. Trump's tweets. Lee Zeldin was the first on CNN to defend Mr. Trump even after Republican Speaker of the House Paul Ryan called Mr. Trump's words "textbook racism."