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Lead Testing in School Drinking Water Sampling and Results

updated Feb. 28, 2024

Sourced: <https://health.data.ny.gov/>

No local School building has lead free plumbing Public Health Law and New York State (NYS) Department of Health regulation mandate that NYS public school districts and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) test drinking water for lead contamination and report the results to parents, the NYS Department of Health, NY State Education Department, and local health departments. The regulation required school districts and BOCES complete their sampling by the Fall of 2016, and test again in 2020 and at least every five years thereafter or at an earlier time as determined by the Commissioner of Health. This dataset shows the results of lead testing in school drinking water reported by each public school district and BOCES for Compliance Year 2020. •

Lead Testing in School Drinking Water Sampling and Results: Compliance Year 2020 Provides sam-

pling details and results for Compliance Year 2020 including the number of outlets sampled, number of outlets with test results exceeding the lead action level (>15 micrograms per liter), sampling completion dates, and other information. Data from other compliance years are also available on Health Data NY. Data Methodology: All data displayed are self-reported by the schools into a NYS Department of Health electronic survey and transferred to Health Data NY as is without edits or redaction.

Schools update their information on an ongoing basis as their water sampling is performed, laboratory test results are received, and remediation is conducted (as needed). The information last reported for Compliance Year 2020 are displayed. In addition to these datasets, schools are required to post their sample results and any lead remediation plans to address lead in drinking water on the schools' website.

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Obituaries



City	School	Outlets Sampled	Result over 15ppb	Out of Service	All Results Received	Date Results Received	Remediation Status	Street
HARPURSVILLE	HARPURSVILLE JSHS	105	21	Yes	Yes	1/30/2020	On-going	54 MAIN ST
HARPURSVILLE	W A OLMSTED ES	84	16	Yes	Yes	2/13/2020	On-going	54 MAIN ST
CONKLIN	F P DONNELLY SCHOOL	25	0	N/A	Yes	7/27/2021	Not Applicable	1168 CONKLIN RD
CONKLIN	RICHARD T. STANK MS AT SV	13	0	N/A	Yes	7/22/2021	Not Applicable	1040 CONKLIN RD
CONKLIN	SUSQ. VALLEY SHS	26	0	N/A	Yes	7/22/2021	Not Applicable	1040 CONKLIN RD
VESTAL	AFRICAN ROAD ELEMENTARY	71	0	N/A	Yes	3/5/2020	Not Applicable	600 S BENITA BLVD
VESTAL	CLAYTON AVE ES	101	2	Yes	Yes	3/25/2020	On-going	209 CLAYTON AVE
VESTAL	GLENWOOD ES	78	0	N/A	Yes	3/2/2020	Not Applicable	337 JONES RD
APALACHIN	TIOGA HILLS ES	100	0	N/A	Yes	3/5/2020	Not Applicable	40 GLANN RD
VESTAL	VESTAL HILLS ES	78	0	N/A	Yes	2/28/2020	Not Applicable	709 COUNTRY CLUB RD
VESTAL	VESTAL MIDDLE SCHOOL	103	2	Yes	Yes	3/5/2020	On-going	600 S. Benita Blvd.
VESTAL	VESTAL SHS	264	16	Yes	Yes	3/17/2020	On-going	205 WOODLAWN DR
WINDSOR	C R WEEKS ES	45	2	Yes	Yes	6/14/2021	On-going	440 FOLEY RD
KIRKWOOD	FLOYD BELL ES	44	2	Yes	Yes	6/28/2021	On-going	RD 2 GOLDEN
WINDSOR	PALMER ELEM/WINDSOR MS	81		No		Not Started		213 MAIN ST
WINDSOR	WINDSOR SHS	72	19	Yes	Yes	6/28/2021	On-going	1191 NY RT 79



Calendar

Kirkwood

Town Board Meeting

Scheduled Town Board Meetings:
First Tuesday of each Month at 6:00 PM
Scheduled Town Board Work Sessions:
Last Tuesday of each Month at 6:00 PM

Work Session

March 26, 2024 6pm

Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Norbut Solar Farms - Quilty Hill Road/ Foley Road – Request for Area Variance Interpretation

March 28, 2024 – 7 PM

KIRKWOOD TOWN COURT HOURS

Monday – Friday 8:00 AM – 3:30 PM

Town of Binghamton

April 2, 2024 – Work Session 4:00 P.M.
April 16, 2024 – Town Board Meeting 6:00 P.M.

Town of Conklin

Regular Town Board Meeting

March 26, 2024 Conklin

Conklin Town Hall, 1271 Conklin Road,
Conklin, New York.

DMV AT CONKLIN TOWN HALL WEDNESDAY – 9 A.M. until 1 P.M.

Conklin Town Court Hours

Monday, Wed, & Fri 8:00 am – 2:00 pm

1st Friday of the Month 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

BROOME COUNTY LEGISLATORS

<u>Kelly F. Wildoner</u> District 3 (Town of Binghamton, Conklin & Vestal) kelly.wildoner@broome- countyny.gov	<u>Maj. Leader-Matthew J. Pasquale</u> Dist 7 matthew.pasquale@ broomecountyny.gov
<u>Stephen J. Flagg</u> District 1 (City of Binghamton, Towns of Colesville, Fenton & Kirkwood) stephen.flagg@broome- countyny.gov	<u>Min.w Leader Robert Weslar</u> (Dist 13) bob.weslar@broomecountyny.gov Health & Human Services Committee (OVER VETERANS)
<u>Scott D. Baker</u> District 2 (Towns of Kirkwood, Sanford & Windsor) scott.baker@broomecountyny.gov	<u>Jason Shaw</u> jason.shaw@broomecountyny.gov <u>Louis Augustini</u> louie. augostini@broomecountyny.gov <u>Matthew Hilderbrant</u> matt.hilderbrant@broomecountyny.gov <u>Kim Myers</u> kim.myers@ broomecountyny.gov <u>Mark Whalen</u> mark.whalen@broomecountyny.gov
<u>Chairman-Daniel J. Reynolds</u> (Dist 5) daniel.j.reynolds@ broomecountyny.gov	



Free Vaccines for Dogs and Cats

The Broome County Humane Society is hosting free, monthly vaccine clinics for dogs and cats in need of updated Rabies and Distemper vaccines in our community on the following dates (*dates are subject to change):



Tuesday, April 2, 2024

Tuesday, April 30, 2024

Clinics will be held at The Broome County Humane Society located at 167 Conklin Ave in Binghamton from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. A \$5 donation is requested, but not required for each vaccination given. Pets need to be at least three months old and restrained. Bring previous rabies vaccination certificate (if applicable) First come, first served. A \$10 donation per pet is suggested but not required. For additional information, visit the Broome County Humane Society website.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Dear Editor:

We have been receiving letters and reviews of the changes to the Country Courier, we will post them here without names listed. The absence of names has a long history in American Reporting, up until the early to mid 1970's.

WE APPRECIATE ALL STORY TIPS
AS WELL

EMAIL TO: News@TiersNews.com

**FOURTH ESTATE
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Kirkwood Senior Group

Officers:

Blanche Birtch, President

Jeanie Ditch, Vice-Pres.

Linda Yonchuk, Secretary

Linda Buffle, Treasurer

Jeanie Ditch & June

Fedish, Trip Coordinator

Ellie Grubham, Sunshine Committee

Scheduled Meetings:

First Wednesday of each month, at Noon, at the Kirkwood Fire Station, Main Street, Kirkwood, unless otherwise noted.

Activities:

Meetings: Monthly @ Noon the First Wednesday of each month, at the Kirkwood Fire Station, Main Street, Kirkwood, unless otherwise noted. Everyone is asked to bring a covered dish, coffee and tea are provided. The meeting takes place after lunch, with Bingo to follow if anyone cares to stay October and November meetings are catered and will be at Elks Club at 12 noon.

Bus Trips:

Trips are usually 3 per year. Members pay for expenses for show tickets and meals, bus



The Country Courier

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The Country Courier

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YOUR PHOTOS ARE WELCOME

Email to: editor2@TiersNews.com

NEWS/ADVERTISING DEADLINE

The Country Courier goes to press on Wednesdays. Deadline for news and advertising is the Friday before the desired week of publication.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

Subscription rates to *The Country Courier* are \$35 a year in Broome County, \$100 outside Broome County and papers are mailed every Thursday from Conklin.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

The Country Courier welcomes letters to the editor. All letters must be signed and include the phone number of the writer, to be used for verification of authenticity, not for publication. The editor reserves the right to refuse to publish letters which contain potentially libelous or erroneous statements. Also, letters endorsing political candidates are considered advertisements and should be prepaid as is all political advertising. No letters to the editor regarding political candidates will be accepted.



- **TOB YOUTH LACROSSE REGISTRATION IS UNDERWAY.**
- **Registration ends 3/29/24.**
- **It's official ... the Town of Binghamton Youth Lacrosse program is gearing up for the 2024 season! The registration form (blue flyers) has been distributed to the schools.**
- **There is an online pdf version of the Youth Lacrosse Registration Form and online registration form**
- **NO CASH PAYMENTS.**



Lap Swim
 Open Swim at SV
 Just because it's getting colder doesn't mean you have to stop swimming! Come to our beautiful, heated pool at Susquehanna Valley for Lap Swim and Open Swim sessions every Monday! Lap Swim is 6:30-7:00 p.m., followed by Open Swim from 7:00-8:00 p.m. every Monday Night.

KIWANIS FOOD VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
 Once a month, couple hours to help free food distribution at the Community Center. Third Monday of month, volunteers NEEDED to help, or the Town is in danger of losing this program.
 Contact Mr. Krasowsky, millertoncard@aol.

The Susquehanna Valley Spirit Shop is now open!
 Hey Sabers Fans - there's a great place to go to stock up on Sabers gear! It's the Susquehanna Valley Spirit Shop. Access at SVSABERS.org



Is there a **FIRE** in you?
 Become a volunteer firefighter today.

Find volunteer firefighter opportunities with fire departments in Broome County, New York. Just reach out, or stop into a local fire department and a recruitment team member will be in touch.

BECOME AN EVERYDAY HERO

Conklin Cemetery
 Shawsville Cemetery
SPRING CLEANUP
 PLEASE REMOVE ALL WINTER WREATHS AND WINTER DECORATIONS FROM CEMETERY GRAVES
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 Montrose • New Milford • O'Dell • Wysox

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PA- AASHTO #8, #57, #1, #3, #2A Modified. RIP RAP / LANDSCAPE BOULDERS:
 NY- Fine, Light, Med., Heavy Stone Fill, Stackable Laid Rock. PA- R-3, R-4, R-5, R-6, R-7, R-8.
SCREENED: Topsoil, Sand, Mound Sand, Washed Crushed Gravel

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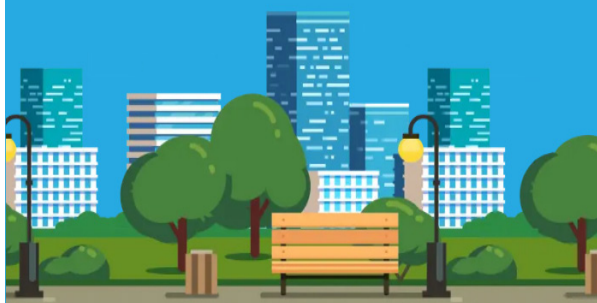
Take Out & Catering Available

KIRKWOOD BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE PRESENTS

YOUR COMMUNITY CLEANUP DAY

SATURDAY, APRIL 20 | ALL DAY

Calling all residents to come out and help clean trash from the streets of our neighborhoods.



TRASH BAGS CAN BE PICKED UP FRIDAY, APRIL 19 FROM 9-3 PM AT THE TOWN GARAGE AND SATURDAY, APRIL 20 FROM 9:30 - 10 AM AT THE TOWN HALL. A DUMPSTER WILL BE PROVIDED AT TOWN GARAGE TO DISPOSE OF GARBAGE

Advocating for Yourself or Loved Ones When Bladder Cancer is Suspected

(StatePoint) If you or someone you know may have bladder cancer, being well informed could get you the best diagnosis and treatment. In fact, according to an article published in “Urologic Oncology,” in 46.5% of the cases where a bladder was removed because of advanced cancer, a very serious type of tumor called carcinoma in situ (CIS) had been missed in past transurethral resection of bladder tumor (TURBT) procedures. This alarming statistic magnifies the need for urologists to have enhanced tumor visibility during TURBTs. There is one procedure that can offer visibility of hard-to-see tumors including CIS; it’s called Blue Light Cystoscopy (BLC). Here’s what to know:

TURBT can be a critical diagnostic step when done properly and precisely. The TURBT provides essential information regarding the number of tumors, tumor sizes, locations and depth of invasion. All these factors signifi-

cantly inform the identification of a patient’s risk category, which can subsequently impact treatment decisions.

cantly inform the identification of a patient’s risk category, which can subsequently impact treatment decisions.

Currently, White Light Cystoscopy is most commonly used for a patient’s first TURBT and is considered the standard level of care. However, research suggests that using White Light Cystoscopy alone may be inadequate, causing:

- Incomplete tumor resection: After one year, there is a rate of up to 61% of non-muscle invasive bladder cancer recurrence, suggesting incomplete tumor resection when using only White Light Cystoscopy.
- New tumor growth: Up to 70% of patients have tumors recur after standard TURBT.
- Tumors found during subsequent TURBT procedures: Up to 86% of residual tumors are found at the original resection site after initial white-light TURBT.

So, how can patients ensure better diagnostics and treatment? Experts say that asking for BLC during the first TURBT is a great way to advocate for yourself or a loved one. BLC

is a technology that allows urologists to see tumors that white light alone may miss. Unfortunately, it is not always utilized at the first encounter with the patient. Suzanne B. Merrill, MD, FACS, Colorado Urology said, “By using Blue Light Cystoscopy for first TURBT, urologists can more completely assess the bladder, achieve greater tumor eradication and provide more data for appropriate diagnosis. Doing the procedure with enhanced visibility right at the start of patient care can better establish the appropriate treatment regimen for each patient and lower the risk of disease recurrence.”

Dr. Merrill recommends that patients and their loved ones be their own advocates when it comes to their diagnosis.

Need some tips for how to talk to your urologist about TURBT and BLC? Follow these steps:

1. Find a trusted urologist in your area.

How to talk to a urologist following a bladder cancer diagnosis

STEP 1
Following diagnosis, find a trusted urologist in your area.

STEP 2
Ask your urologist about Blue Light Cystoscopy (BLC).

STEP 3
Explain to your urologist that you’re interested in BLC at your first transurethral resection of bladder tumor (TURBT) to ensure enhanced tumor visibility.

STEP 4
Always feel comfortable advocating for yourself and your health. If your urologist does not offer BLC, find one that does.

2. Inquire about BLC with your urologist.
3. Explain to your urologist that you’re interested in BLC at your first TURBT to ensure better tumor visibility.
4. If your urologist does not offer BLC, find one that does.

To find locations that offer BLC, visit <https://rebrand.ly/BLC-Locations>.

“When it comes to your medical care, you should always feel comfortable advocating for yourself,” says Dr. Merrill. “You may need to speak to more than one urologist, but doing so can mean better outcomes for your health in the long term.”

How to Build a Healthy Money Mindset for a Stable Financial Future

(StatePoint) Building and managing your wealth is a lifelong process that can have major implications for you, your children and other beneficiaries, this three-pronged approach from Freddie Mac can help you plan for a stable financial future.

1. Understand your money mindset: Understanding your relationship with money can help you identify opportunities to create healthier spending and saving habits. A positive outlook toward money can provide you with a strong base on which to build wealth and achieve goals. Conversely, a negative outlook can make you reluctant to take the steps you need to establish a strong financial history. For example, being overly focused on displaying wealth can lead to overusing credit. Likewise, becoming preoccupied with financial success to the point of anxiety can prevent you from spending the wealth you do have on items you need and want to live comfortably. By recognizing the factors that influence how you spend and save, you can make new choices that better support your financial goals.

2. Set and manage goals: Establishing and maintaining a set of defined financial goals is the next step when building wealth. Think about what you would like to accomplish over the short-, medium- and long-term, and make a savings plan to help you get there. It’s also important to take actions to safeguard your accumulated savings. This includes being mindful of inflation, guarding your information from scammers, and planning for unforeseen circumstances and emergencies.

3. Be prepared: Building an emergency fund can help you maintain financial stability by putting you in a better position to weather unexpected financial circumstances, such as a loss of income, unplanned medical bills or property damage from a storm. Creating an emergency budget can help you gauge how much you need to save, but in general, you should save up enough money to cover three to six months of your typical monthly expenses. Keep this money separate from your other savings, and don’t touch it until it’s needed. Additionally, having adequate homeowners or renters insurance will help ensure that your wealth is protected in certain unexpected circumstances. Familiarize yourself with your coverage so you understand what is and isn’t covered by your policy. Want to know more about managing money and establishing wealth? Whether you’re renting a home, are on the path to homeownership, Freddie Mac’s CreditSmart, which is available in English and Spanish, offers free personalized financial educational resources.

Visit creditsmart.freddiemac.com to learn more.





AOH CELEBRATED IN STYLE THIS ST. PATRICK'S DAY



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AOH MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

From the AOH website:

Membership in the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Inc. is confined to men 16 years and older who are practicing Roman Catholics of Irish birth or descent and who are citizens of United States of America or who have declared their intentions to become citizens of the United States of America.

Associate membership is also available to those who do not meet the aforementioned qualification.

It is a standing rule that Applications for Membership that languish without action for longer than 6 months are discarded.

Notifications for induction dates and times, through the Shamrock Degree, are sent to all applicants.

Those who have applied prior to this 6-month period, and are serious about joining the A.O.H., need to reapply for admission and make arrangements to attend a Shamrock Degree ceremony within the next six month.

Those interested in membership must stop into the Hall to submit an application as they must have an active member sponsor them and sign the form.



Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS
Irish • Catholic • American



LLC Publishing INFORMATION

Required:

1. NAME
2. ADDRESS (this is where the affidavit will be mailed upon completion of publishing),
3. PHONE NUMBER
4. EMAIL ADDRESS

In order to process your request for an LLC to be published, you will need the following information in the following order:

1. Name of LLC (EXACTLY as was submitted to the State);
2. Date that the Articles of Organization were filed with the Secretary of State of New York – DD/MM/YEAR
3. THE SECTION # OF THE LLC LAW THAT YOU FILED UNDER!
4. County of Office Location;
5. LLC Location – Street Address, Town/ City, Zip;
6. Purpose of LLC

Binghamton NY Native Competes On 'The Voice'

Broome County native Alyssa Crosby is putting the City of Binghamton on the map as she makes her debut on "The Voice," representing the city nationwide.

After auditioning for "The Voice" eight times, Crosby finally seized her moment this season, landing a coveted spot on Team Reba. For Crosby, who has harbored a lifelong dream of gracing the stage of "The Voice," this achievement marks a significant milestone.

Having sung for as long as she can remember, Crosby views music as an integral part of her identity. During the "Battle round" episode aired on March 18, Crosby found herself on the brink of elimination until Chance The Rapper intervened, saving her from elimination with his sole steal.

Reflecting on this pivotal moment, Crosby expressed profound gratitude for the overwhelming support she has received from the Broome County community. She feels honored to serve as a unifying force within the community, emphasizing the special bond shared among its residents.

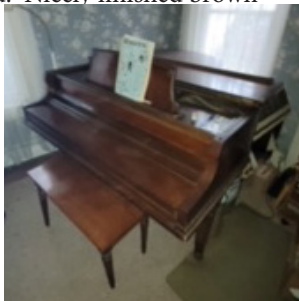
Acknowledging the unique camaraderie fostered among contestants behind the scenes, Crosby treasures these moments as her favorite memories from the show, even though they may not be captured on television.

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Baby Grand, Weser Bros., NYC and Rochester, NY. Approximately 70 years old. Nicely finished brown wood.

OK for anyone for practice; for fun. Not for hard use.

Phone: Betty B. 607-768-0265. Can leave a message with your phone or e-mail. Or my e-: bettylarue24@gmail.com



The Binghamton Hope Foundation Hosts A Ribbon-Cutting

Ceremony for Women's Hope Home

A residence catering to women who have faced challenges with substance abuse.

The Binghamton Hope Foundation conducted a ribbon-cutting event on Wednesday morning to mark the establishment of its Women's Hope Home.

Having been operational for a year, this residence accommodates women from across the county dealing with substance abuse and other challenges. It endeavors to guide individuals through a nine to 12-month program aimed at achieving sobriety.

According to Leigh Stevens, Executive Director of the Hope Foundation of Binghamton, each resident has specific objectives they are striving towards. However, the overarching aspiration is for them to undergo a profound transformation, rendering them almost unrecognizable from their initial state upon entry.

Stevens emphasized that the program is offered free of charge to residents seeking to embark on this journey of change. Individuals like Amanda Geiner, who has been residing at the Hope Home for three months, are provided with the essentials to initiate the rehabilitation process.

Geiner expressed profound gratitude for the support she has received, crediting the home with facilitating significant positive changes in her life. She highlighted the provision of basic necessities such as a comfortable bed, caring companionship, and regular meals, which were lacking during her time spent on

the streets.

Residents dedicate their time to improving their physical and mental well-being while also addressing educational pursuits, resolving legal issues, and more.

Both Geiner and Hailey Jackson, a resident for two months, attested to the life-altering impact of their experiences and expressed a desire to extend that transformation to others.

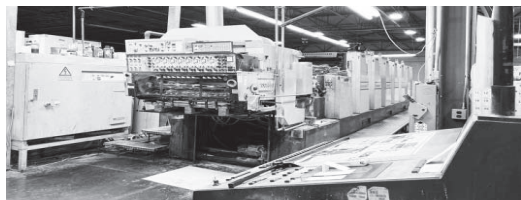
Jackson expressed her aspiration to work with children, advocating for love and support to steer them away from the challenges she herself has faced. She particularly emphasized the importance of reaching out to youth and teenagers, where the allure of drugs and alcohol often presents itself.

Geiner echoed the sentiment, expressing excitement about the prospect of positively influencing others' lives, now that her own life has been profoundly changed.

Stevens revealed plans to expand the capacity of this facility and others across multiple counties, including the imminent reopening of a recovery home for men within the next month.

Call (607)269-7589 or visit their facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/women-shopehome607/> if you're struggling with substance abuse and interested in this addiction treatment center.

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1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12	
13						14				15				
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	57	58	59					60				61	62	63
64						65	66			67				
68						69				70				
71						72				73				

THEME: FINISH THE LYRICS

DOWN

1. *The Go-Go's: "They got the ____"
2. 100,000, in India
3. Cameron Diaz' Fiona, e.g.
4. Hula dancer's hello
5. These are held to be true
6. Miners' passage
7. *Tainted Love: "Once I ran to you, now I ____"
8. "Lord of the Flies" shell
9. Like the other side of the pillow?
10. Certain kind of exam
11. Not his
12. Antiquated
15. Protection from a sword
20. To death, in French (2 words)
22. ____ B vaccine
24. Manna from heaven
25. *Bon Jovi: "Tommy used to work on the ____"
26. Habituate
27. Spaghetti ____
29. *Don McLean: "Drove my chevy to the ____"
31. Pains
32. Frost over (2 words)
33. Capital of Delaware
34. *Tennessee Ernie Ford: "I owe my soul to the company ____"
36. Geishas' sashes
38. "____ good example"
42. Royal topper
45. ____-tattle
49. Pronoun
51. Refused to act, archaic
54. City-related
56. Giraffe's striped-legged cousin
57. *Bruce Springsteen: "Tramps like us, baby we were ____ to run"
58. Change a manuscript
59. Small amounts
60. Make sharper
61. Newspaper piece
62. Applications
63. Midterm, e.g.
64. Wharton degree, acr.
66. Back then



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THEME: FINISH THE LYRICS

ACROSS

1. Swell up
6. Pendulum's path
9. Type of salmon
13. *Steve Miller Band: "I want to fly like an ____"
14. Simon & Garfunkel, e.g.
15. Popular winter boot brand
16. Ohio city

17. Lodge
18. Squirrel away
19. *Glenn Frey: "The pressure's high just to stay alive 'cause ____ is on"
21. *John Travolta in "Grease": "I got ____, they're multiplyin'"
23. Automated teller
24. Clarified butter
25. Bad-mouth, slangily
28. Stag

30. Tartans
35. "I'm ____ you!"
37. Commies
39. Monocot's alternative
40. Road's edge
41. Living room center-piece?
43. Prefix meaning "left"
44. Deadly snake
46. Sasquatch's cousin
47. Court petitioner
48. Blood infection
50. Indian flatbread

52. Opposite of post-
53. Sound of impact
55. *Duran Duran: "Her name is ____, and she dances on the sand"
57. *The Beatles: "Take a sad song and make it ____"
60. *Elvis: "We're caught in a trap, I can't ____"
64. Relating to a mode
65. Scrooge's exclamation

67. Memory failure
68. Bouquet thrower
69. Number of candles on a cake
70. Musketeers' weapons
71. Picnic invaders
72. "Just kidding!"
73. Did, archaic



Senators eye pay boost for junior troops, more funds for housing fixes

By Leo Shane III

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Jack Reed, D-R.I., visits Army paratroopers assigned at Fort Liberty in North Carolina on Aug. 24, 2023. (Sp. Vincent Lev-lev/Army)

A key Senate leader is pushing to pass targeted pay raises for junior enlisted troops this year but warned that budget caps on military appropriations for next fiscal year may complicate the plans.

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Jack Reed, D-R.I., said he also hopes to find ways to fund wide-ranging barracks improvement projects and other quality of life changes in coming months.

“I hope we can do it, because it provides real incentives and it will help respond to the issue of retention and recruitment that we have seen,” Reed said. “It reflects the respect and regard we have for our forces. We can praise them, as we do, but it helps to pay them well too.”

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2025 budget: 4.5% pay raise, shift of troops from active to reserve

The Pentagon is seeking hundreds of millions of dollars for mental health and suicide prevention programs, among others.

By Meghann Myers

The comments from Reed during a meeting with reporters on Monday echo goals already outlined by House leadership to find ways to improve quality of life for younger service members and their families. But whether the two chambers can adopt such a plan will depend on spending debates in coming months.

Last week, the White House unveiled plans for a 4.5% pay raise for all troops next January as part of its fiscal 2025 Defense Department budget request. That target would be slightly below the 5.2% raise service members saw this past January but would still mark the third consecutive year of raises above 4% for military personnel.

But lawmakers for the last year have debated whether those across-the-board pay raises are enough, particularly for junior enlisted troops who earn less than \$30,000 a year in base pay.

House lawmakers last year adopted plans to award junior enlisted troops a significant, targeted pay boost, guaranteeing that even the lowest-ranking service members make at least \$31,000 in take home pay. But the proposal did not survive negotiations with the Senate.

Members of the House Armed Services Committee’s special panel on quality of life issues have promised to revive the idea this year, and are expected to unveil a host of proposals aimed at improving military families’ health and finances in coming weeks.

Rep. Don Bacon, R-Neb., chairs that panel and said the changes need to happen as soon as possible. But he has also warned that they could be expensive and take several years to fully implement.

Reed’s committee did include in the fiscal 2024 defense authorization bill language requiring a review of military pay rates, along with legislative proposals from the Defense Department for comprehensive military pay table changes.

Defense officials have said they expect that report to be due in early 2025. But lawmakers may not wait that long. “We’re already looking at not only at improving incentive pay, but also the idea of whether all of our pay increases have to be across every rank, or is there a better model,” Reed said. “We’re going to be seriously engaged with the department in terms of how we compensate our forces and how we make sure their quality of life is attractive.”

But defense spending will rise next year only by about 1% from fiscal 2024 levels under budget caps approved

by Congress last summer, limiting how much funding may be available for sweeping quality of life reforms.

“We’ll have to make tough decisions,” Reed said.

House appropriators are scheduled to hear from senior enlisted leaders on Wednesday to discuss their quality of life improvement ideas ahead of congressional budget decisions later this spring.

Meanwhile, lawmakers still need to finalize plans for the fiscal 2024 defense budget by the end of the week or risk a partial shutdown of military operations and services. The department has been working on short-term budget extensions since Oct. 1, when the new fiscal year began.



Senior leaders worry DOD pay models don’t reflect demands on troops

By Leo Shane III

Military leaders are conducting a review of troops’ pay and benefits, but some worry the models being used could shortchange service members.

Lawmakers and senior enlisted leaders cast doubt over whether current military models for troops’ pay really reflect the roles and responsibilities of their jobs, and said more overhauls may be needed to make sure service member compensation is fair.

“We should be looking for a comparison model that isn’t about someone’s age and education. It should be more about the level of responsibility, and the expectations of the work in the service,” Master Chief Petty Officer James Honea told members of the House Appropriations Committee on Wednesday.

“If a 19-year-old is working at Starbucks, that’s not the same thing as being in the military. We’re asking our 19-year-olds to serve in harm’s way.”

Honea’s comments during a committee hearing on military quality of life issues come as Defense Department leaders are conducting a comprehensive review of military pay and benefits issues, with an eye towards



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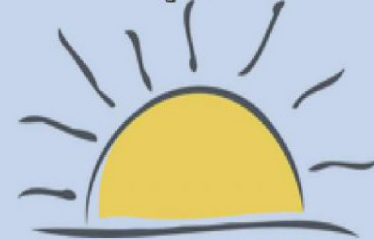
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