

State of the Towns and Villages



Joye Brown – Newsday, Moderator

Joye Brown is a columnist at Newsday. During her 29 years with the newspaper she's also worked as a reporter, editor, administrator and editorial writer. She worked at the Chicago Tribune, Raleigh News and Observer and Mutual Broadcasting radio before joining the paper. She lives in Huntington.



Edward Ambrosino – Town of Hempstead

Hempstead Town Councilman Edward A. Ambrosino was first appointed to the Town Board in March 2003, before being elected again in 2003, 2007 and 2011.

Ambrosino has enjoyed a distinguished career in both the public and private sectors. Having served the majority caucus of the Nassau County Legislature as the first majority counsel, he created its internal systems and committee structure; counseled legislative leaders and the Legislative Caucus; drafted all caucus legislation and reviewed documents for several major transactions.

Ambrosino also served as a commissioner for Sanitary District 6 in the Town of Hempstead.

In addition to his municipal experience, the councilman has experience in the private practice of law. He is currently of counsel to Ruskin Moscou Faltischek as a member of the firm's Real Estate Department and Municipal and Regulatory Affairs Group. He's also a founding member of Municipal Solutions Group LLC, a municipal consulting and re-engineering entity.

Ambrosino is active in a number of civic and charitable organizations. He is president and founder of Amber Rose Productions, a not-for-profit community theatre production company. The councilman also serves as counsel or board member to several organizations including the Friends of North Valley Stream, the Central Nassau Civic Association, the Nassau County Sports Commission, the Pat Cairo Family Foundation, Perks Dance Theatre, Musicals Unlimited, the Faithful and Fearless World Trade Center Family Fund and the Nassau County Literacy Volunteers of America.



Judi Bosworth – Town of North Hempstead

A three-term Nassau County legislator, Judi Bosworth (D-Great Neck) is the supervisor-elect of the Town of North Hempstead after winning this past election.

Throughout her career, Bosworth proposed a law banning smoking in cars if a minor is present; co-sponsored water-protection hearings with Suffolk County Legislator William Spencer; secured funding for the Udalls Mill Pond Remediation Project; sponsored a Health and Information Fair; and provided free glaucoma screenings and mammograms.

Bosworth is a member of the North Shore-LIJ Spinney Hill Community Partnership, the Board of Directors of the Great Neck-Manhasset Community Child Care Partnership, and the Great Neck Senior Center. She is also a trustee of the Corporate Advisory Board of the Long Island Chapter of the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation of America, a member of the Advisory Board of the Foundation of Community Unified Services, a member of the Hofstra Bioethics Advisory Council, a member of Eleanor's Legacy and a member of the Rotary Club of Great Neck and the Kiwanis Club of Great Neck.

In recognition of her advocacy on behalf of the community, she was named a 2013 Quiet Hero by COPAY; received the Lions Club of Great Neck's George Carr Humanitarian Award in 2011; and was presented with the Great Neck Arts Center's Inspiration Award in 2010. Bosworth has also been a 2004 New York State Senate Woman of Distinction; Trailblazer of the New Millennium in 2003; and named to the Town of North Hempstead's May W. Newburger Women's Roll of Honor in 2001.

Bosworth was a member of the Great Neck Board of Education for 16 years, serving as president, vice president and board liaison to the Great Neck Senior Center. She was also former Assemblyman Thomas DiNapoli's special projects coordinator.

A former New York City elementary teacher, Bosworth received her bachelor's and master's degrees in Early Childhood Education from City University of New York at Queens College.



Peter Cavallaro – Village of Westbury

Peter I. Cavallaro is in his second term as mayor of the Village of Westbury. Before that, he had served 22 years in village government, including 10 years on the Village Board of Trustees. The mayor is a member of the executive board of the Nassau County Village Officials Association, currently serving as second vice president.

Since being elected, the village has received three credit upgrades by S&P and Moody's to produce the municipality's highest-ever bond ratings. Twice during Mayor Cavallaro's term, CNNMoney.com has recognized the Village as one of the top 20 places in the nation for young professionals to live. Mayor Cavallaro and Westbury have been recognized by both the Long Island Business News and Vision Long Island for their Smart Growth initiatives, which include the development of over 800 multi-family residential units in the village's downtown and the approval of the multi-million dollar development of The Space at Westbury, a newly opened performing arts theater. In 2011, the mayor was recognized by Hofstra University's School of Suburban Diversity for his and the village's commitment to a diverse community.

Mayor Cavallaro's past government service has included serving as a commissioner of the Town of North Hempstead Housing Authority; a member of the Town of North Hempstead Historical Preservation Board; and a staff member for the NYS Senate Majority Leader. His current and past professional, community and charitable endeavors include the Boy Scouts of America; St. Brigid's Church; the Thomas Hartman Foundation for Parkinson's Research; Education and Assistance Corp.; the Henry Viscardi School division of Abilities! Inc.; the New York State Conference of Mayors; and the Nassau County Bar Association.

Professionally, Mayor Cavallaro is a practicing corporate attorney.



Ralph Ekstrand – Village of Farmingdale

In addition to serving as the mayor of Farmingdale, Ralph Ekstrand is the supervising pharmacist and owner of downtown Moby Drugs.

Ekstrand is an active member of Farmingdale and the surrounding community. He served as assistant cub master and cub master of St. Killian's Women's Guild-sponsored Cub Pack 57 for 10 years. He is an Eagle Scout and currently sits on the Eagle Scout Review Board for the Rough Rider District. The mayor has been a member of the Bethpage Masonic Lodge for more than 25 years. Ekstrand is also a past president and board member of the Farmingdale Breakfast Rotary Club and the Farmingdale Chamber of Commerce, current chairman of the Finance Committee of the Farmingdale United Methodist Church and was a member of the Committee for the USGA/Chamber of Commerce for the U.S. Open 2002 at Bethpage State Park.

He was recognized by the Center for Developmental Disabilities, Inc. in 1995 (American Dreamer Award) and he received the Farmingdale Businessman of the Year Award in 1998. In 2002, Ekstrand received the Rotary International Paul Harris Fellow Award. In 2006, he was given the Corporate Leadership Award by the Epilepsy Foundation of Long Island and the Farmingdale Republican Club Man of the Year award in 2007.

Ekstrand is a member of the American Pharmaceutical Association, the Long Island Pharmaceutical Society, the National Association of Community Pharmacies and the Pharmaceutical Society of the State of New York. He graduated from St. John's University.



Steven Flotteron – Town of Islip

A Town of Islip resident since 1995, Steven J. Flotteron graduated from SUNY Fredonia in 1984 with a degree in Business. He became fully licensed in insurance and equities, and opened a successful insurance practice.

Flotteron found himself becoming a civic leader shortly after buying his home in Islip, first joining the Bay Shore Summit Council in a leadership capacity. He then joined community leaders from Brentwood and Central Islip to form the Tri-Hamlet Alliance – an organization that successfully lobbied for the New York State Legislature to update the Uniform District Court Act. This entitled local government to serve summonses to absentee landlords outside of neighboring counties, which enabled the Town of Islip to more vigorously clean up illegal housing throughout the community.

He was encouraged to run, successfully elected in 2006. Flotteron is now a senior councilmember and continues to be a civically-active official. Over the years he's helped create an informational town website, create term limits for board members, sponsored legislation to get Cold War veterans a property tax break and helped make Building Department processes to become more efficient and streamlined.

Flotteron currently serves as a member of the Town of Islip Empire Zone Administrative Board, Economic Development Commission and Resource Recovery Agency. He also works closely with the Islip Town Environmental Council and the Community Development Agency.



Wayne Hall – Village of Hempstead

Wayne Hall, mayor of the Village of Hempstead, is the son of Jamaican immigrants and an Army veteran. Graduating from the City University of New York, he moved to Hempstead with his new wife in 1978.

Hall was elected in March 2005, quickly learning about the crises facing the village. Hempstead had a \$6.5 million general fund deficit with excessive borrowing used to pay for items not properly budgeted, a bond rating a step above junk status, out of control spending and a crumbling infrastructure while taxes increased by 278 percent from 1989-2004.

Since then, Hall eliminated the general fund deficit and recorded a \$2.6 million surplus in 2007, received a \$1.6 million grant to improve Main Street, received a \$2.4 million grant to improve the water system, repaired more than 60 roads, renovated Lincoln Park Pool and purchased new sanitation vehicles.

The mayor has also introduced legislation to protect residents against predatory lenders, adopt a living wage and strengthen building and sanitation codes. He's also endorsed various law enforcement programs to reduce violence and increase neighborhood participation.



Ed Romaine – Town of Brookhaven

Ed Romaine was elected Brookhaven Town's 70th supervisor in a special election November 6, 2012. He graduated from Adelphi University and earned a master's in History from Long Island University.

He worked as a history teacher in the Hauppauge School District for 10 years, only entering public service as the Town of Brookhaven's first Commissioner of Housing and Community Development in 1980. He was later appointed Director of Economic Development.

Romaine was a member of the Suffolk County Legislature serving from 1986-1989, known for sponsoring cost-saving measures like the Suffolk County Tax Cap. He also authored Suffolk's first Clean Water Act. In 1989, he was elected Suffolk County Clerk and served for 16 years, taking an active role in increasing productivity and improving access to official records. He was recognized as a pioneer for use of technology and was named "2001 New York State County Clerk of the Year."

Romaine was elected back to the legislature in 2005, also winning elections in 2007, 2009 and 2011. During these terms he preserved countless acres of open space across eastern Brookhaven, the North Fork and Shelter Island; sponsored numerous pieces of landmark legislation like "Michael's Law," that bans explosive fuel gels; the state's first local law to regulate helicopter traffic; and established the LIPA Oversight Commission.



Rich Schaffer – Town of Babylon

Rich Schaffer was elected as Babylon Town Supervisor in November 2012 to complete the remaining year in Supervisor Steve Bellone's previous term. No stranger to leading the town, he previously served five terms as supervisor, from 1992-2001.

Sworn in as Babylon Town Supervisor on his 29th birthday in 1992, the youngest person to serve as chief executive in town history, Schaffer cut the number of administrative jobs and perks like town cars and part-time benefits common to "political appointees." To serve as an example, he declined the use of a town vehicle and reduced his salary by five percent. During his service in Babylon, he returned more than \$21,000 of his wages to the town treasury.

Now returning to the office of supervisor 10 years later, Schaffer's top priorities remain the same: protecting taxpayers and overseeing an efficient and productive government. During his first year back in office, he's been committed to continuing the long-term initiatives of the Bellone administration: the landmark community and economic revitalization initiatives, parks and recreation facility improvements and Long Island Green Homes.

The supervisor also made assisting residents recover from Superstorm Sandy a priority since last fall. Through an extensive outreach effort, in coordination with the Town's three village governments, the Town of Babylon will continue to work with each resident on their individual needs.

Schaffer has also served as chairman of the Suffolk County Democratic Committee since September 2000.



Anna Throne-Holst – Town of Southampton

Anna Throne-Holst first joined the Southampton Town Board in January 2008. Less than a month into office, she called for a forensic audit of town funds when questions about various account balances could not be adequately answered. Months later, audits revealed years of financial mismanagement and overspending across major funds led to multi-million dollar deficits. Determined to restore the town's fiscal health, change the culture of Town Hall and improve constituent services, she opted to run for supervisor, winning the post in November 2009. Less than two years later, controllable spending was well below by 2009 levels, departments once in deficit were running a surplus and Wall Street rating agencies praised new management for its swift and effective response. Today, the town's financial position is considered "substantially stabilized and rebalanced" by Standard & Poor's and poised for long-term stability.

A natural consensus-builder committed to working transparently, Throne-Holst personally led negotiations with the town's three labor unions and achieved the leanest contracts in town history. She also led a major planning reform initiative to improve the controversial Planned Development District legislation and introduced legislation to double fines against egregious landlords.

Aware of the region's economic dependence on the local environment, the supervisor pressed to accelerate land preservation. She coordinated with oceanfront homeowners in Sagaponack, Bridgehampton and Watermill to establish Beach Erosion Control Districts and launch a \$25 million beach

renourishment project. The project will protect six miles of public beaches and a \$1.8 billion tax base at no cost to taxpayers outside of the erosion control district.

Determined to shake up government, Throne-Holst overhauled the town's organizational structure, deployed enhanced software and provided employee training to increase efficiency. Under her leadership, staff size has dropped 11 percent primarily through attrition and operational costs have held constant while increasing constituent services.

A co-founder of the Hayground School and former executive director of the Bridgehampton Child Care Center, Throne-Holst graduated from American University. She received her master's degree in public administration and international affairs from Columbia University.



Sean Walter – Town of Riverhead

Riverhead Supervisor Sean Walter attended Sullivan County Community College and SUNY Binghamton, graduating in 1988.

After graduation, he took a job with the Town of Brookhaven Department of Waste Management, helping the town implement their solid waste recycling program, as well as sample and monitor the groundwater in and around the town's landfill.

In 1992, Walter was hired as the environmental manager for the 106th Rescue Wing of the New York Air National Guard located in Westhampton Beach. His primary duties were to establish a comprehensive environmental program for all aspects of the Air Guard Base. This included a multi-million dollar environmental cleanup program and the construction of a sewage treatment plant at Gabreski Airport.

In 1996, Walter took a leave of absence from the Air National Guard Base to attend St. John's Law School. He graduated St. John's Law School cum laude in 1999 and was hired as a deputy town attorney in 2000 to assist the town attorney in all phases of litigation.

During his tenure, Walter was appointed to be the town's Farmland and Open Space manager. This was a very successful farmland preservation period during the Riverhead's history, with the town purchasing nearly 1,000 acres of farmland and preserving several critical wetland areas.

Sean left the Town Attorney's office in January 2006 and started his own law practice in Wading River. The primary concentration of his practice involves land use as, well as real estate, estates and litigation.

Within the community, Walter is an active member of Riverhead Rotary, the Knights of Columbus and part of the children's liturgy team at St. John the Baptist in Wading River.