

Courier-Standard-Enterprise

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Fort Plain grad prepares for 3-year residency at Yale

BY JOSHUA THOMAS
C-S-E Editor

With an understandable bit of unease, yet strengthened resolve in her chosen career path, Fort Plain Central School District graduate Maisie Orsillo is currently preparing for an upcoming move to New Haven, Conn., where she and her partner will begin a three-year internal medicine residency at Yale.

Of herself and her partner, currently living in Long Island, Orsillo stated, "We're going into medicine right now at a very strange and stressful time."

Following her graduation from FPCSD in 2011, Orsillo's path to being certified as a doctor of osteopathy practicing internal medicine began with two years of undergraduate studies in Middletown, N.Y. in the Hudson Valley. Following undergraduate studies was a four-year program at a relatively-small hospital facility in northwestern Connecticut.

The third and fourth years of Orsillo's studies in Connecticut were more-clinical than the first two, with she and her similarly-educated peers seeing patients, diagnosing, reading labs and determining what medications to prescribe.



PHOTO COURTESY OF STRATEGIC IMAGE, LLC.

Maisie Orsillo, of Fort Plain, is pictured following a white coat ceremony.

During their third year, students begin applying for residency positions — basically an apprenticeship. As part of the three-year residency program, Orsillo will begin salaried work caring for patients, writing orders, and working with an extended team including nurses.

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JOSHUA THOMAS

The Easter Bunny (Janet Stanley of Lee's Shops at Wagner Square) waves to the Clouthier family during a Friday delivery in Palatine Bridge.

Easter Bunny deliveries in high demand throughout local area

BY JOSHUA THOMAS
C-S-E Editor

CANAJOHARIE — After Lee's Shops at Wagner Square announced that they'd provide Easter Bunny deliveries at several price points, orders exploded, with Manager Janet Stanley having to add an extra day to the originally-planned three-day delivery schedule just to facilitate all requests.

"I honestly had no idea what to expect," said Stanley of the Easter

Bunny delivery promotion, explaining that once word got out, phone calls started pouring in from all over. One family even inquired about whether she'd deliver to Amsterdam. Though that was outside of the planned delivery area, Stanley informed the family that if they could get a couple more people in that area involved, she'd be happy to make a delivery there.

"The next thing you know, they had their friends calling me as

well!" she commented, stating that Lee's Shops at Wagner Square made about 125 deliveries altogether.

Fun, lime green Easter bags were delivered throughout a wide expanse encompassing several counties, from Amsterdam to St. Johnsville, and from Johnstown and Gloversville to Sharon Springs.

Stanley noted that while she was excited about the idea of making

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Arrest rates rise in the village of Fort Plain

BY JOSHUA THOMAS
C-S-E Editor

FORT PLAIN — The Fort Plain Police Department has seen crime rise significantly in the village lately, with officers making 13 arrests in the past four weeks compared to the average arrest rate of between four and 10 per month.

"We're pretty steady," in terms of recent arrests, said Fort Plain Police Chief Ryan Austin, explaining that while the department is already "one of the busier police departments among the three villages," in the westernmost end of Mont-

gomery County, "lately, arrests have hit a higher number."

Austin attributed the climbing arrest rate almost exclusively to the current COVID-19 crisis, noting that people have been stuck indoors, with some people around one another for large periods of time, and other separated.

He said, "I believe some type of boredom plays into," recent crimes. "And, unfortunately, I think alcohol along with being confined in close quarters," provokes a sense of restlessness.

The recent arrests have been

primarily comprised of domestic disputes, neighbor disputes, disorderly conducts and assaults. Stated Austin of the Fort Plain Police Department, "As it progresses in the summer, we're going to become busier and busier," as arrest rates always climb during each year's warmer months.

Typically, the Fort Plain Police Department operates two vehicles in the village on a Friday and Saturday from June through August, but with the village arrest rate climbing,

ARRESTS — See page 3

Village provides funding to GMVLB for projects

Palatine Bridge Board OKs \$15K to assist with demolition

BY JOSHUA THOMAS
C-S-E Editor

PALATINE BRIDGE — During its virtual monthly meeting Tuesday evening, the Village of Palatine Bridge Board unanimously agreed to provide \$15,000 to the Greater Mohawk Valley Land Bank to assist with three upcoming demolition projects in the village. GMVLB Executive Director Tolga Morawski provided a 42 page document to the village board outlining critical conditions at the former Stone Lodge at 132 West Grand Street. The report was funded by a \$5,200 grant received last year.

"I think it'll be helpful in understanding the scale of the project," said Morawski of the document, which provided a budget and interior photos to detail an estimated \$300,000 stabilization project.

A second grant awarded to the GMVLB for \$20,000 (from NYS Homes and Community Renewal) will fund the creation of a feasibility study, to "essentially explore options for the property," according to Morawski, noting that the study will identify potential future uses (residential, commercial, etc.) for the 12 acre parcel.

Part of that study explored how to best market the site for future use.

Morawski expressed that he'd like to start a committee populated, in part, by members

of the Palatine Bridge Village Board, giving them the capacity to provide continued input throughout every phase of the project.

Palatine Bridge Mayor James Post said that he agreed with the idea of forming a committee related to future work at those properties, as the village does wish to have continual involvement.

Explained Morawski of the GMVLB's goals, "the most important thing we want is to have this project work for the village," assuring the village board that the village properties' future use will fall in line with the board's overall vision for the area.

The GMVLB will soon demolish 71 W. Grand St. — which is currently being tested

for asbestos — within the next month, "depending on the whole COVID-19 situation," according to Morawski. The kitchen area of the stone building at 132 W. Grand St. will also be removed, asbestos remediation already having taken place there. Also to be demolished is a second building on the old Stone Lodge property, which was damaged in a fire decades ago.

That building, previously utilized as servant quarters, "basically sat back there decaying," according to Morawski.

Including the demolitions, Morawski noted that the GMVLB will have invested about \$80,000 into the three aforementioned properties.

YALE, from Page 1

es, pharmacists and a large number of support staff, servicing both inpatients and outpatients.

With Orsillo and her partner always intending to relocate for a residency program together, they applied utilizing a couples match system, with their applications being tethered to one another with the goal of receiving offers to work in the same location.

After sending out 65 applications, Orsillo was offered 25 interviews. "It's in your best interest," she said, to attend them all, as she explained that you must rate the programs as you're also being rated to determine a perfect match.

"You only match to one place," Orsillo pointed out, adding of the complex process, "At the end of the day, it's all leading you to be where you want to be practice-wise," noting that after completing a three-year residency, the option exists to be a free-standing physician.

"We were really lucky, actually," said Orsillo of she and her partner, joyfully stating, "We ended up at our first choice" — Yale, in New Haven, Conn.

Interviews began in mid-October, with Orsillo traveling to various facilities at her own expense — often requiring an overnight stay to facilitate a full day of interviews — the process then wrapping up in January, with Orsillo stating, "It was very stressful leading up to that day in March," when she was informed of her positive

Several traditions associated with this (residency) process have already been upended by the spread of COVID-19, including the "Big Match Day," when many schools have their students open their residency results together at noon.

status regarding a Yale residency.

Several traditions associated with this process have already been upended by the spread of COVID-19, including the "Big Match Day," when many schools have their students open their residency results together at noon. Some schools were forced to be creative, having students open results in parking lots while social distancing, or holding virtual happenings with students opening their email results together.

The alteration of the process by which those hard-earned results were received, said Orsillo, "was very disappointing for a lot of students."

"But," she added, "We're all go-

ing into medicine, so we all understand why," the unexpected changes were required.

Graduation ceremonies will now take place virtually, with Orsillo commenting of this strange moment in time and the entire altered process, "This is unprecedented, really."

Orsillo's May 19 graduation was scheduled to take place in Middletown, N.Y., at the Paramount Theater, the event aiming to be a full-circle one for many students, as Orsillo and her peers started their journey to this current moment in that very space, where the meaningful white-coat ceremony once took place.

Though graduations will now be held in a virtual space, the students will be provided with full regalia, so they can take photos in their caps and gowns for family members and loved ones.

This part of the process being curbed after working toward it for years — if not for the better part of a lifetime — "is hard, because for me, going to college was a big deal," Orsillo expressed, pointing out that she was the first person in her immediate family to attend college.

She continued, "Getting through medical school and being able to say this was going to be my lifelong career was going to be a very special moment for my family."

While she, her parents and her sister in Fort Plain, are disappoint-

'I had a really wonderful education in Fort Plain, and I really learned what it is to have a sense of community.'

MAISIE ORSILLO

ed at the loss of so many important events and commemorative moments, Orsillo said that they all remain incredibly thankful. "We have to be so grateful for our health every day," she said, noting that seeing colleagues and friends in the medical field currently sick and struggling "is really very hard."

Orsillo, scheduled to begin her residency in June — which will require a move to another state during a time when social distancing measures are necessary — explained that understandably, "I have some fear about starting."

The fear derives partially from the fact that much about COVID-19 remains unknown, including the potential for a second wave.

Luckily, where Orsillo and her partner are heading, protective measures are consistent and constant, with residents and staff members being provided proper personal protective equipment.

In moving forward into a realm made unknown by modern uncertainties and potential risks, Orsillo said she will continue to carry with her various lessons and values she acquired during her schooling in Fort Plain.


"I had a really wonderful education in Fort Plain, and I really learned what it is to have a sense of community," she said, noting that even though her graduating class were all from different backgrounds, they still share the unique, unbreakable connection that being raised in Fort Plain and the Mohawk Valley offered.

Orsillo explained that she had wonderful teachers at Fort Plain that consistently encouraged her to keep reading, asking questions and to stay motivated, even advocating for her during the college application process and constantly reminding her that she had the capacity to accomplish even the most seemingly-lofty goals.

Orsillo outlined one moment in high school where things really clicked for her in terms of the path she'd eventually follow. While visiting the Bodies exhibit in Manhattan on a field trip, her science teacher Lance Elliott — seeing her level of focus on various human organ displays — told her that she was "science minded," excitedly encouraging her to follow a science-related path.

To all of those who have supported Orsillo during her years-long path to this upcoming Yale residency — including teachers, loved ones, her peers at all stages, the community and the Fort Plain Scholarship Association, which personally and financially supported her for years — she extends endless appreciation, stating that their ongoing and often "personal" support continually served as ground beneath her feet during uncertain moments leading to this current, well-deserved accomplishment.


Ask The Doctor • ONCOLOGY/HEMATOLOGY



Q: Are cancer patients at higher risk of contracting COVID-19?

A: Patients with compromised immune systems, including many cancer patients, are more vulnerable to viruses, including COVID-19. Some cancer therapies, such as targeted drugs, steroids, as well as some cancer types, like blood cancers, can result in a weakened immune system. A weakened immune system has been shown to increase the severity of symptoms associated with COVID-19. As a result, NYOH is taking several precautions to protect our patients and staff. We have postponed non-urgent visits, do not allow guests and require our staff to wear N95 masks to reduce the risk of exposure. All patients are being screened for COVID-19 symptoms and asked to wear a mask or facial covering. NYOH is also offering telemedicine appointments, so eligible patients can receive care via phone or video.

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