

# 10 Halloween movies that will make you howl!

LIFE &amp; STYLE 1B



# The Journal News

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MONDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2012

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## Economy drives N.Y. races

Candidates spar over tax cap, minimum wage

By Jessica Bakeman  
Albany Bureau

ALBANY — Economic issues — the property-tax cap, mandate relief, job creation and whether to increase the minimum wage — are driving the top races for control of the state Senate in the November elections.

Incumbents and challengers are battling over their fiscal positions and vot-

ing records. The outcome of the Nov. 6 election will determine control of the Senate. Republicans hold a 33-29 seat majority.

Republican Bob Cohen of New Rochelle released a mailer criticizing his opponent, Assemblyman George Latimer, D-Rye, for misleading voters on the property-tax cap. Democrat Ted O'Brien is knocking Republican opponent Sean Hanna's vote to raise county property

taxes in a Monroe County race. Democrat Justin Wagner said incumbent Sen. Greg Ball, R-Patterson, changed his position on whether to increase the state's minimum wage.

Steven Greenberg, a pollster for Siena College, which is surveying the most competitive races, said the top issues are fiscal, rather than social, because of the economic difficulties facing New Yorkers.

"We are four years since the Great

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## Power line gets Tuesday hearing

Plan's impact worries Stony Point residents; developer may attend

By Akiko Matsuda  
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STONY POINT — Elected officials, residents and a developer will meet Tuesday for a hearing on the proposed Champlain Hudson Power Express project.

The New York State Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee will conduct a hearing, sponsored by state Sens. David Carlucci, D-Nanuet, and William Larkin, R-New Windsor, from 1 to 4 p.m. at Rho building in Stony Point to gather more information on the 1,000-megawatt transmission line project as well as to determine the project's impact on northern Rockland County.

The proposed 333-mile transmission line, called the Champlain Hudson Power Express, would be installed by Transmission Developers Inc. to bring Canadian clean energy — hydro and wind — to power homes and businesses in the New York metropolitan area.

According to the plan, pending approval of the state Public Service Commission, cables would be buried underwater in the Hudson River starting in the Village of Catskill heading south. They would emerge in Stony Point to

See HUDSON, Page 7A

## PAST MAY AID CO2 FIX



From left, researchers Mio Alt, Jonathan Nichols, John Karavias and Dorothy Peteet, a Lamont-Doherty paleoclimatologist, examine a lake core sample taken Oct. 5 at the Black Rock Forest preserve in Cornwall, N.Y. JOE LARESE/THE JOURNAL NEWS

## Researchers test ancient soil, sediment

By Michael Risinit  
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CORNWALL, N.Y. — The quest for prehistoric soil can seem easy at times, even if you and your fellow researchers are balanced on a wood platform atop two inflatable boats.

"It should be like butter," said Dorothy Peteet, a paleoclimatologist at Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory in Rockland County and a NASA senior researcher, as they screwed together metal tubes and pushed them into the muck below.

The waters of Tamarack Pond gurgled beneath the platform as the researchers worked the hollow,

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**MORE ONLINE**  
Photo gallery with this report at [LoHud.com](http://LoHud.com).

## Irving talks over TZB show gains

By Theresa Juva-Brown  
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TARRYTOWN — The chilly relationship between the state and Irving residents appears to be thawing, with the two groups continuing to meet privately to address how homes will be protected while the new Tappan Zee Bridge is being built.

"They didn't make hard-and-fast commitments to everything and there are still open questions, but progress was made," said Tarrytown Mayor

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## Giants shine, but Jets fall to Patriots

Eli Manning one-upped the Washington Redskins' rookie sensation, and the Giants overcome a late touchdown toss to defeat the Redskins 27-23, while the New England Patriots hold on to beat the Jets 29-26.



WEATHER » 2A

**Today:** Mostly sunny  
HIGH: 69 LOW: 43

**Tomorrow:** Cloudy  
HIGH: 69 LOW: 51

R

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## From candy to costumes

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## Future in film

Jessica Costa knows movies are in her future, with a demo reel of music videos, animation and short features already among her work.

NATION » 8A

On the eve of the final presidential debate, allies of Mitt Romney and Barack Obama square off on policy.

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From left, researchers Jonathan Nichols, John Karavias and Dorothy Peteet wrap a core sample taken from a lake Oct. 5 in Cornwall, N.Y. JOE LARESE/THE JOURNAL NEWS

# CO2: Core samples examined

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magnesium zirconium poles into the bottom of the pond, meter by meter and millennium by millenium. A mechanism inside the tube grabbed a slug of sediment at each interval, similar to pressing a finger over a straw's end to keep a bit of soda inside.

"Aaah, that felt good," said Jonathan Nichols, an assistant research professor at Lamont, who was working alongside Peteet and John Karavias, a Long Island high school science teacher.

Peteet hopes the samples from beneath the pond will contain evidence of past climates and plant life.

The pond inside the 4,000-acre Black Rock research forest is thought to have once been a bog — a spongy wetland filled with peat and moss. The sediment cores can reveal how much carbon, a primary element associated with climate change, was pulled out of the air by the plants that once grew there.

The forest sits next to the U.S. Military Academy. The cores Peteet collected became the latest in her foray into the past, a journey that included stops in marshes along the Hudson River as well as other ponds within Black Rock.

"When we get the sediment cores, we're looking for a lot of different things that are clues to the past," she said on a recent sunny afternoon, moments before the an aluminum rowboat towed their floating platform away from the shore.

Six researchers, about a dozen meter-long metal tubes and various other scientific detritus filled the trio of boats headed for open water.

The hope is the the soil laid down thousands of years ago will contain seeds, pollen and, possibly, charcoal. The last would point to droughts and wildfires. Ancient plant material also provides a window into which climates put more carbon in the atmosphere.

Plants are a sink for carbon, meaning they consume it and store what they don't use as part of their life cycle. A dry and hot climate is thought to have more carbon in the atmosphere because plants don't thrive under such conditions and decompose faster.

Peteet said a wet climate can have two effects depending on temperature. When it's cool, plants could flourish and store more carbon. Hot and wet, however, promotes decay and the production of methane, another greenhouse gas.

Peteet's cores are stored in Lamont's Core Repository, a warren of large refrigerated rooms and shelf space on the observatory's Palisades campus. The collection was started just after World War II and contains about 72,000 meters of cores from oceans and other water bodies all over the world. The cores provide critical material for research — such as on the El Nino weather pattern and ocean currents — and are available to scientists around the globe. The repository sends out 10,000

slices a year. Plankton species and other information held by the sea bottom provide insight into water temperature and other factors.

"If there were no deep-sea cores, there would be no long-term continuous understanding of climate change," said Maureen Raymo, the repository's director and a Lamont professor.

Back at Tamarack Pond, the boats circled a small island of low shrubs and trees. The island was more water than land as it floated on a mass of plant roots, peat and moss. Bags of rocks anchored the research rig.

Pressing the borer into the springy pond bottom the first few times brought back nothing but black water, looking sort of like oil, and plugs of roots. Finally, at about four meters below the water surface, they struck soil. They would collect sediment samples all the way down to 11 meters and bedrock and, Peteet figures, about 15,000 years ago.

Once the metal tube was pulled from the water, Peteet and Nichols pried it open and carefully slid out the cylinder of sediment. The cores are handled like leftovers: wrapped first in plastic wrap followed by aluminum foil. Then they wait at the repository to give up their secrets.

"Everybody's worried about how much carbon dioxide is in the air and our future. We're trying to figure out what climate stores it best," Peteet said.

# TZB: State holds Irving talks

Continued from Page 1A

Drew Fixell, who attended a closed-door session Thursday with homeowners and state officials.

Brian Conybeare, the state's community liaison on the project, had already met with some Irving residents leading up to last week's gathering, which drew more than 30 neighbors, said Tori Weisel, president of the Irving Neighborhood Preservation Association.

The recent meetings have been cordial and productive, she said, unlike past sessions when residents left frustrated and angry. She credited Conybeare and Gov. Andrew Cuomo's top aide, Larry Schwartz, for the turnaround.

Schwartz "assured us that everything we are asking for is something they can look into," Weisel said. "I believe the integrity of what he is saying, which is totally different than in the past. Larry Schwartz brought a whole new tone, which is terrific."

Conybeare told The

Journal News it was a "very positive, open discussion," and said the state is committed to keeping residents updated on the project.

Residents in Irving, a tiny community of 40 homes south of the current bridge's toll plaza, have worried about the Tappan Zee replacement for more than a decade. At one point, residents feared a bridge option that included tunneling a train beneath their homes. The \$5 billion bridge replacement plan recently approved by the federal government doesn't include such a proposal, but residents still have concerns about traffic and noise. Some were eased at Thursday's meeting, Weisel said.

For example, the state assured attendees that a program will be in place to monitor rodents, which residents worry will be disturbed by the construction and wind up in people's yards.

Officials confirmed that the plan also calls for homes near the site to be inspected and photo-

graphed before construction to keep track of their conditions during the work.

There are still unresolved matters, however, such as how frequently construction trucks will use the Thruway maintenance road off Van Wart Avenue. It remains unclear whether some Irving residents will get permanent sound barriers they requested. The village has asked the state to help pay for an additional left turn lane on South Broadway near Interstate 287 eastbound.

State officials have said many decisions can't be made until after the design-build team is selected and a contract is negotiated.

Tarrytown Administrator Michael Blau praised state officials for touring communities to see people's specific concerns.

Despite the progress, Weisel said it's too soon to declare a victory.

"I don't expect any of these things will happen quickly," she said.

# Firefighters welcome guests



"It feels like I'm driving to a real fire," said Dominic Vargas, 8, of Hillcrest as he played in a Hillcrest Fire Company firetruck during the department's annual fire prevention open house on Sunday. PHOTOS BY MELISSA ELIAN/THE JOURNAL NEWS



Hillcrest firefighters gave a demonstration as part of the open house. More photos on LoHud.com.

# STATE: Economy rules races

Continued from Page 1A

Recession started, and people are still recovering from that," Greenberg said. "The economy is not completely recovered by any stretch. People have real economic concerns, and pocket-book issues tend to trump all others — not in the good economic times, but certainly in rougher economic times."

As in the Cohen-Latimer duel, the candidates for the Monroe County seat being vacated by retiring Sen. James Alesi, R-Perinton, are battling over property taxes. Westchester residents pay the highest property taxes in the nation, while Monroe County pays among the most in property taxes compared to home values, according to the Tax Foundation.

O'Brien has contended that Hanna raised taxes when Hanna, now a state assemblyman, was a county legislator. In 2003, Hanna did vote in favor of a county tax increase, but Hanna said the tax increase has prevented other increases — which O'Brien now touts since joining the board. Also, Hanna said that the county during his tenure implemented a plan to limit the growth in Medicaid costs by designating a portion of county sales tax to pay for the growing expense.

As a result, the county avoided higher taxes, Hanna explained.

"Those are now under control, so it has not been necessary for him to raise taxes," the assemblyman said. Hanna called himself a "fiscal conservative up and down the line."

O'Brien said he supports the tax cap championed by Gov. Andrew Cuomo and put into law last year. The tax cap limits the growth in the property-tax levy to 2 percent a year for local governments and schools.

"I have been a proponent of the tax cap, and I have said so publicly in many forums," O'Brien said. "My signature issue is property taxes, and the tax cap is certainly a good start. I have supported the governor with respect to that."

Hanna said he doesn't buy O'Brien's support of a tax cap. He said O'Brien is being financially backed by the state's largest teachers' union, which opposes the cap.

New York State United Teachers is backing Democrats in the party's bid to regain control of the state Senate. The union, which had \$4.2 million in its campaign coffers last month, said

it will sue the state to try to overturn the tax cap. It recently ran an ad attacking Hanna.

"It's worth nothing that Mr. O'Brien's single largest supporter has shown that they will do anything to overturn the tax cap, including going to court," Hanna said. "He has not disavowed that approach, and he has not disavowed their support, so I am very suspicious that he will attempt to do away with the tax cap if he is elected."

O'Brien said the union was aware of his support of the cap before endorsing him.

"They chose to support me because of my support for a range of education issues," he said.

NYSUT leaders would not comment, saying it is legally required to keep separate from their political action committee — which is running the ads.

Candidates are accusing each other of changing their positions on key issues.

Latimer voted against the property-tax cap last year and was absent during a vote to create a new, less-generous pension tier for public workers — another issue vehemently opposed by labor unions.

In a recent mailer, however, Latimer cited a quote in The Journal News that suggested he favored the tax cap.

Latimer said he does support a tax cap — just not the one that passed the Legislature last year. He wants a tax cap paired with more relief from unfunded state mandates for schools and local government.

"All the tax cap does at this point is squeeze the local governments, and they are not the spend-thrift reason for the higher property taxes, in my judgment," he said. "So that's why I voted no on the tax cap and a number of other people did, as well."

But Cohen said the issue is simple: "Quite frankly, George Latimer voted against it, and that is clear and unequivocal."

Cohen said he publicly supported a tax cap when he ran unsuccessfully for the Senate seat in 2010.

A top Cuomo aide said candidates who don't support the tax cap shouldn't bother running.

"If there's anybody running for office this year that doesn't support the governor's property-tax cap and they think their property taxes should be higher than the tax cap, then they shouldn't come to Albany, they should stay home," Schwartz said Oct. 11 on 1300-AM (WGDJ), an Albany station.

A wedge issue between Ball and Wagner has been whether to raise the mini-

mum wage.

Democratic lawmakers this year sought to raise the wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$8.50 an hour. The measure stalled in the Republican-led Senate, and Cuomo didn't push for it.

Ball and Wagner said they support the increase. Wagner said Ball is "flip flopping."

Ball said Sept. 27 at an editorial board meeting with The Poughkeepsie Journal that he wouldn't vote for a minimum-wage hike. A week later, Ball announced legislation to do so, along with help for small businesses. The bill would combine a wage increase with tax cuts for small businesses and a full repeal of the MTA payroll tax, which charges large employers 34 cents for every \$100 paid toward an employee's salary.

"What I said earlier — and I stand by that — is that increasing the minimum wage without providing the support in tax benefits to small business — it could have the unintended consequences of actually forcing small business owners to lay off those people on the lower end of the pay scale," he said in an interview with Gannett's Albany Bureau.

His introduction of the bill demonstrates "leadership," he said.

"Honestly, I may be the first in the state to push for this type of comprehensive package," he said. "It's the type of bipartisan approach that I believe we can actually get done."

Wagner said the senator's intentions are questionable.

"I don't want to subscribe motives, but we're a month away from the election, and last week, the senator announced he's now for some type of increase?" Wagner said.

Even in districts where social issues affected primary races, economic considerations are front and center.

In a Saratoga-area race, Kathy Marchione beat incumbent Sen. Roy McDonald in a Republican primary, largely because McDonald was one of four Republicans who voted last year to legalize same-sex marriage. Marchione opposes same-sex marriage.

Marchione now faces Democrat Robin Andrews, who is gay and married her longtime partner after the law passed.

Both women said same-sex marriage is not a hot topic during the campaign. It remains the economy, they said.

"I think that what people want is a representative that will address what they need and care about," Andrews said.