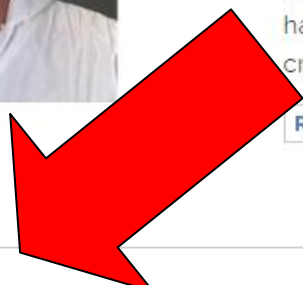




Driver indicted in fatal dirt bike crash

Story By: **TARA SMITH**
11/17/2017 12:00:00 AM

After a series of postponed court dates, a 27-year-old Mastic man has been indicted on upgraded charges for his involvement in a crash that killed two on Montauk Highway in Bellport last June.

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PROJECTING AN IMPRESSIONIST ARTIST AND HIS FARM THROUGH A LENS

Story By: **LINDA LEUZZI**
11/17/2017 12:00:00 AM

A free photo e-book about Weir Farm is available at www.xiomaro.com while supplies last.

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SHOPPING SMALL IS BIG BUSINESS IN BELLPORT

Story By: **TARA SMITH**
11/16/2017 12:00:00 AM

With the busiest weekend for retailers just days away, locals are reminded to choose to shop local this holiday season.

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SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY AND HOLIDAY SHOPPING- #BOUGHTITINPATCHOGUE

Story By: **STAFF WRITER**
11/16/2017 12:00:00 AM

Patchogue chamber readies for Small Business Saturday, Nov. 25. Pictured here is the "I love Patchogue" bear giveaway. Click for details.

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Fine art photographer Xiomaro has a new book coming out on J. Alden Weir, the father of American Impressionism, who visited the East End. Weir reference books are displayed.

Projecting an Impressionist artist and his farm through a lens

Story By: **LINDA LEUZZI**
11/17/2017

Around the summer of 1878, a group of notable American artists, members of the Tile Club, took the Long Island Rail Road to Southampton, venturing to East End sites. Among them was J. Alden Weir, considered the father of American Impressionism. It would be his first of three forays to the North and South forks.

The Tile Club was rooted in Manhattan, but Weir's soul base was his home, Weir Farm, in Wilton, Conn. Eventually, the artist's delicate blending of light and shadowy tonalism, his painterly integrity, scenes of affectionate home life, dogs and spiritually lush landscapes became so sought after, his paintings now hang in over 60 U.S. museums as well as the Orsay in Paris and the British Museum.

Fine art photographer Xiomaro has been contracted by Arcadia Publishing to illuminate the work of this artist and his life at the Wilton Farm National Historic Site, a national park dedicated to American painting and Weir.

Locally, Xiomaro photographed Declaration of Independence signer William Floyd's personal items in the Old Mastic House for the National Parks Service exhibit at the Patchogue Ferry Terminal in 2014; last year his work was included in their Centennial Juried Art Exhibition, also held there.

"One of the reasons Weir's not a household name is that he was a pretty humble guy," Xiomaro explained, adding that Weir's daughter Dorothy was the one who maintained her father's legacy and letters and pushed for recognition. "Probably the most self-promoting thing he did was joining the Tile Club and taking that trip out east. The members tried to get their travels funded and got Scribners Magazine to pay for it in exchange for articles. Their going out there further popularized plein air painting." It was an exclusive club of men including Winslow Homer and Stanford White, who jumped on the decorative arts era by hand-painting tiles and exhibiting them, but its main purpose was more about art talk and discussions when they gathered.

"Impressionists paint on the spot," Xiomaro explained. "You want to capture your subject. You see the brush strokes and brighter colors because they go directly on the canvas." As opposed to bringing back the painting to the studio to perfect it.

But back to the book. How did he get the commission?

Xiomaro, a Roslyn Heights resident who had been a musician and worked as a music lawyer, found himself drawn to photography after a bout with prostate cancer at age 44. He continued with his music, but his photos, especially of his time in national parks in Colorado, sold more than his CDs. So after honing his new art expression for five years, an email plugging a weekend at Weir Farm prompted a visit. A park ranger mentioned an artist-in-residence program. Xiomaro applied, never thinking he'd be accepted. But he was and lived on the grounds in a special cabin for a month.

"It was March 2011, a transitional time to photograph the landscape and the buildings," he said, referring to winter's exit and spring's entry. "They had been closed to the public for renovation. While I had the grounds all to myself, one of the people who came by was

Charles Burlingham, Weir's grandson. He grew up in the house." After speaking about his project, Burlingham got him into the family home. It was pretty empty. "There was some furniture with draped-over covers, ladders, tools, artistic shutters, huge fireplaces and stained-glass windows," he said. When the residency ended, the Parks Service contracted him for before-and-after pictures of the renovation. His use of shadow and rich color pallet and sense of composition were admired. The renovation was completed in 2014 with period furniture and about a half-dozen of Weir's paintings as well as other artists who lived there. The park provides self-guided meanderings over 60 leafy acres with self-guided tours and Junior Ranger activities.

Weir had art in his blood; his father was a professor of drawing who taught Whistler as a student. He studied at the National Academy of Design in the 1870s and, encouraged by his father to visit Paris, enrolled in Ecole des Beaux Arts in 1873. But when he saw the emerging Impressionists, his initial reaction was, to paraphrase, "yech!"

"He eventually wound up adopting it, in a different form," Xiomaro said.

Xiomaro's book, 92 pages with over 100 photos mostly in color, although he has inserted black and white photos of the Weir family including the artist mugging with John Singer Sargeant and the women of Weir Farm. The book is scheduled for debut in 2019 to coincide with the U.S. Mint's issuance of a special Weir Farm quarter in 2020.

Other National Parks commissions include Sagamore Hill and an upcoming Fire Island National Seashore project.

"To the average American, they'll think of the Grand Canyon, but these are places of how the country began in history and art," he said.