

It's time to renew

Once each year we ask all readers of Suffolk Life Newspapers to renew their subscriptions to the paper. We ask each of you who reads the paper to pay the \$10 annual subscription fee. This fee covers a small part of bringing your copy of the paper to your door via the postman.

The cost of postage alone for an individual copy is close to \$7 per year. The cost of printing is just about the same. These costs do not include the salaries of the reporters, the editors, the production personnel. When all is said and done, it costs us close to \$20 per year to mail you a copy of the paper. The difference between what you pay and our cost is made up through the sale of advertising.

Traditionally, you have received Suffolk Life whether you paid for the paper or not, a tradition we have maintained for the past 34 years. Times are different, the economy has been in a tailspin for the past three years and our resources are dwindling.

Your subscription pays for basically the news product in the paper. In most cases, one-third of the pages in Suffolk Life are devoted to news, editorials, pictures and letters. We endeavor to have reporters at as many governmental meetings as we are physically able to accomplish. These reporters are covering the stories that are important to you. We publish the happenings that the dailies, the radio and television sta-

tions do not consider important and are unable to present properly, the local news that has an impact on your community, your life.

Your paid subscription allows us to have an independent, editorial voice that can fight for the entire community instead of parochial, political or vested interests. Without the voluntary support from our paid readers our news hole is cut, and stories and your views, although important, do not find their way into the paper. The quality of the editorial product of Suffolk Life is very much determined by our readers' involvement and their support.

We have set the voluntary contribution at \$10. If you can't afford the full payment, we ask you to do what you can. If you can afford more and do appreciate the work we have done on your behalf in the past, we thank you in advance for your generosity.

What we do want, what we do need, is an indication from all our readers that they want and appreciate Suffolk Life. Those subscribers who do pay for the paper have their papers individually addressed to them rather than "To the Folks At." This coming year, why not have your copy addressed personally to you? We appreciate it.

Thank you from the staff at Suffolk Life.

And why not?

Hopes for the New Year

As we enter 1994, we can look at the coming year either optimistically or negatively. Although the glass is half full, we can say it is half empty.

The economy has been battered. Jobs have been lost; businesses have failed. Yet, new jobs have been created and new businesses have started.

We will continue to be haunted by many of the problems that have plagued us through the days of the year just ended. If our elected officials will do more in '94, we may come closer to the solutions that have thus far evaded us. We will be able to accomplish meaningful savings through cost cutting measures that were not to be in '93. We will audit the way our governments are run, the way taxpayers' dollars are spent. We will not be afraid to discard the practices of the past to achieve the savings needed at all levels to ease the burden on the public.

In Suffolk County, many of the old legislators have retired and a new crop of freshmen are coming aboard. There were a lot of ills which plagued the old legislature and, hopefully, the new legislators will have learned from the past mistakes and not repeat them. Hopefully, they will put aside partisan attitudes and work together to do what they were elected to do, provide an efficient government at the lowest possible cost to the people.

A recent grand jury report criticized the manner in which the county's preschool program has been operated. In one instance, according to the grand jury report, a provider of services could not account for some \$3 million in funds received from the county's taxpayers. This program, its skyrocketing costs and the methods of

operation under which it is run have been crying out for close scrutiny for many years. But county officials dropped the ball, they ignored the criticism, they were blind to the need. Perhaps they'll do more in '94.

The tax burden that has crippled Long Island can be reversed if those within the system have a mission and work, cooperatively, with those from outside who can provide the expertise to weed out such waste.

State legislators have provided little more than lip service to the problems faced in our schools, in our local municipalities. Needed changes in the state aid formula for funding education are often discussed, but never implemented. The quality of education is constantly criticized in report after report, but no changes are made. State legislators continue to pass laws which impose mandates on local governments without the dollars necessary to accomplish them. State-imposed regulations on landfills and garbage have driven the cost of dealing with our waste stream to astounding heights, without dollars or leadership to ease the problem. We pray they will do more in '94.

LILCO (Long Island Lighting Company) has raised its electrical rates to the highest in the nation. They have now agreed to not increase rates for the next two years. This solves nothing. It simply keeps the level of pain at the same peak. LILCO's rates, and high taxes, have been responsible for driving more industry off Long Island than any other factors. This will continue. During the next two years, many other areas of the nation will enjoy lower rates and will continue to encourage

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Millions are saved

Santa Claus left Suffolk County residents a mighty big Christmas present.

Robins Island has been bought by a single individual, Louis Moore Bacon, a New York City financier. Bacon intends to use the island as a private residence and preserve. Bacon paid \$10.5 million for the island, one-and-a-half million dollars more than the county was originally under contract to purchase the island for. In addition, Bacon has agreed to put \$1.1 million into a preservation fund for the restoration of some of the buildings and the land itself.

The bankruptcy judge who was presiding over a recent bankruptcy hearing concerning the island accepted the deal and it has been consummated. Bacon submitted certified checks and has received title to the island. This will keep the Robins Island in private ownership. It will remain a taxpayer. There are no stated intentions to develop the island. The Nature Conservancy will, the new owner said, work with him on the restoration and the management of the preserve.

The big benefit to Suffolk County taxpayers is that the island will remain a taxable entity, but more important is that the county residents will be relieved of maintaining and patrolling the island, which could have added tens of millions of dollars of cost. It is estimated it would have cost the county, conservatively, a half million dollars per year to provide 24-hour, year-round surveillance and patrols.

Radical environmentalists, although faced with a win-win situation, utilizing private instead of public funds for preservation, are still critical of the deal. Any development on the island that might be desired by the new owner would face stringent hurdles and strong environmental scrutiny because under the current administration, the Southold zoning and planning boards are comprised of strong environmentalists.

Thanks, Santa
And why not?

our businesses to relocate to enjoy those lower costs. We must work vigorously to find ways to force the reduction in LILCO rates downward. We must do more to shut that door in '94.

It is our hope for the new year that these and so many more pressing problems facing us can be dealt with intelligently and fairly so that at the end of this year there will be no question that the glass is least half full.

And why not?

Airing dirty linen

Last week we read that the Clintons donated their used clothing, including their underwear and socks, to the Salvation Army and other thrift institutions. They itemized the deductions and then claim the value of these items as a tax deduction.

When we first read the article, we were amused and then disgusted. The Clintons are not donating their used clothing, they are selling it for a tax deduction. How low can you get when you can't afford to give away your used clothing, particularly your used underwear, without expecting to get something back? How degrading.

Most people we know take their used clothing to thrift shops, churches and organizations such as the Salvation Army. They willingly give these items away and do not ask for a tax receipt. They believe that by sharing their no longer wanted items, they are doing something for their fellowman rather than for themselves.

What a horrible example the Clintons are setting: the President and the First Lady of the United States being cheap, miserly and using a tax shelter of such pittance for their own personal gain. They make a mockery out of charity and humanity.

If the President was donating items of value and was taking a write-off, we could understand it. If the President was just squeaking by and had no deductions, it might be understandable. But being the governor or the President and taking part in such a practice is offensive.

John F. Kennedy once said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." With this revelation, Bill Clinton should be known for asking what your country can do for him, not what he can do for you, your country or your fellowman.

And why not?

Mario Van Winkle

There is a folklore here in New York State about Rip Van Winkle. The gentleman, a New York State resident, while traveling in upstate New York found a huge tree, where he decided to rest. He sat down under it and didn't wake up for another 20 years. This folk story has its origins in the late 1700s or 1800s.

As we listened to Mario Cuomo give his State of the State address last week, we could not help but wonder if he isn't a modern day Mario Van Winkle.

During the last 11 years, he must have been asleep because only now is he realistically willing to address the problems that have been pounding New York State residents.

During Mario Van Winkle's tenure, 500,000 jobs have disappeared from the New York State landscape. These

formerly productive people no longer buy New York State products and pay sales taxes. They no longer earn wages and pay income taxes. Some of these people have died, some have moved and some are now on the welfare rolls, absorbing taxes.

Mario Van Winkle just woke up to the fact that our cities and streets are not safe. Would you believe he wants to put away three-time losers who have perpetuated violent crimes? He actually is suggesting life without parole. While he slept he must have dreamt about some of the past Republican bills that he and his cohorts in the assembly refused to allow to become law. The reawakened Mario Van Winkle now wants to put welfare people to work, and tie school attendance to welfare checks. Who knows, he might take another snooze and have a nightmare that would call for a New York State resi-

dency requirement and state-wide fingerprinting. Lord knows he might have a convulsion and provide for the investigation and the auditors and hard jail time for the white collar criminals that have been ripping off the Medicaid system of billions of dollars in illegal charges, padded bills and overcharges.

The new Mario Van Winkle is talking about instituting an elimination of mandates on the school districts that require them to be social agencies instead of educational establishments.

Mario, the slumbering giant, has even broached the subject of relieving businesses of many of the costly regulations, reducing taxes to spur investments, and eliminate the surcharge on corporations that have driven employers over the border to the surrounding states where they can do business profitably.

The folklore concerning Rip Van

Winkle does not give us much further history about what happened to him after he awoke. Nor do we have much to go on concerning Mario's sudden realization about the real world. We do know that this is a gubernatorial election year and the slumbering giant has given a lot of indication that he intends to be a born again candidate for the post of governor.

Fairy tales are fun to muse about, but living in the real world in the crisis of the mess that has been brought about by Cuomo and his cronies is no laughing matter.

Our advice to Cuomo is simple. Buy that half-million dollar castle in the sky for Matilda and live happily ever after. Let people who live in the real world and suffer the consequences of inept management return New York to its position of glory.

And why not?

No place for politics

Social Services is the biggest department and cost factor in Suffolk County government. The head of Social Services is appointed by the sitting county executive and confirmed by the Suffolk County Legislature.

Suffolk County's Department of Social Services has been without a commissioner for the last six months since Ruth Brandwein resigned. The appointment for the commissioner of Social Services is for six years. The appointment does not serve concurrently with the term of the county executive.

The current county executive, Robert Gaffney, a Republican, has not shown any great ability to attract or to appoint the very best for top posts or as department heads. His administration has shown this weakness.

When the former Social Services commissioner resigned, we encouraged Gaffney to put aside politics and even the tradition of appointing someone from within the system to become commissioner. We suggested that he look outside for an astute business person or someone with strong management capabilities who could separate

emotionalism from the need for financial control. Someone who had the right philosophy and was not afraid to be an innovator. One who would be willing to take on the providers and clean house of those who are abusing and corrupting the system.

Recent reports have indicated that Gaffney has narrowed his choice down to three. One is a politician without management experience and two are from Social Services who have been a part of the system, but with more experience in management. It had been rumored that the one with the political savvy had the shot at being selected. That would be a mistake.

Can Gaffney afford another failure? Can Suffolk County residents afford to have someone who is not looking out for their best interests at the head of this crucial department? We surely hope Gaffney puts aside political considerations in making what could be one of the most important decisions he may be asked to make.

And why not?

Babylon Town leads the way

While Suffolk's other nine towns are refusing to discuss or are in the process of debating tax abatements for home improvements, Babylon has enacted this practice into law. Good for them!

The New York State Legislature recently empowered the towns in Suffolk County to enact laws that allow for 100% tax abatements on the value of home improvement construction for the first year, and phase in the taxes at 12.5% over the next nine years.

Thousands of homeowners paying crushing real estate taxes have postponed or decided against wanted and needed home improvements for fear that the application would set off new tax assessments. They feared they could not afford the new taxes that would be assigned to their homes. As much as they wanted to do improvements that are needed, they have put off this decision because of the tax ramifications.

This has impaired the construction industry's ability to create or keep jobs.

It has stopped the sale of appliances, furniture, rugs and blinds and all the other things that are needed beyond the capital construction. All these items are subject to sales taxes which would benefit county and state finances. More importantly, the fear of the tax consequences has stopped good old-fashioned, average Suffolk County citizens from fully enjoying their properties.

A phase-in of the tax will make their wants more obtainable. No, the tax will not be an immediate benefit to the towns, but the towns will enjoy an annuity of sorts as the value of these improvements enlarge the tax base over the next nine years. Without the abatements, the towns do not have these tax revenues now. In many cases they would not have them in the future either, as many residents cannot do the home improvements that they desire.

East End officials are arguing against tax abatements, saying that most of the home improvements performed in their towns are done by second homeowners who have enough

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Gratifying response

Our initial notice of the start of the annual Suffolk Life subscription drive, published last week, has been met with a very gratifying response from our readers. Many have included kind words about the high

value they place on this newspaper for news of the important happenings which touch their lives. That too is very gratifying for it offers evidence to our hard working staff that their efforts are noticed and appreciated.

Our subscription drive is very important for us to be able to provide the news that others very often ignore. Our plans for the new year include more in-depth coverage and expanded scrutiny of the spending habits of those empowered to spend your hard-earned tax dollars. Subscription dollars are important to these efforts for they provide the funds which enable us to devote the time and space necessary to concentrate on these important matters. Your response to this subscription drive will enhance our efforts.

To those who have already responded, we offer our grateful thanks for becoming a partner in our efforts to focus on the problems we face, and the solutions that are needed. For those who have not yet done so, please help us to help you. A subscription form appears above for your use. Together we can make a difference.

And why not?

money to own more than one house and are not concerned about the tax burden.

We personally think these officials are plain stupid provincialists who do not realize the dynamics of their towns. We personally know of a number of these second homeowners and have heard them say emphatically that they will not improve their properties because their fears are the same as those of the locals.

These second homeowners are the golden goose of the East End. Why not make it more enjoyable and more economical for them to enjoy their properties rather than creating a hostile environment?

Tax abatements for home improvements are a win-win-win situation. If nothing is done everybody loses. If something is done it creates immediate jobs, local spending and nine years of tax revenue growth. That is undoubtedly in the best interests of everyone.

And why not?

\$3 million heist, but no charges

A recent grand jury report cited a multitude of abuses in the Suffolk County Preschool Handicapped Children's Program which weaved a tale of overcharges, cozy arrangements, lack of proper record keeping, the hiring of noncertified staff, overcrowding, lack of staff supervision and inappropriate educational settings. In one instance it reported an unexplained use of \$3 million for which no documentation or adequate explanation was given. The one-year investigation uncovered a horror story of the misuse of taxpayer dollars.

Perfect crime

In the case of the \$3 million fiasco, the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office said the grand jury "found that the transportation management consul-

tant could not account for at least \$3 million between 1987 and 1992. The money, which was paid in the form of a management fee by the county for administering the transportation of handicapped children, was not spent on the handicapped children's program. In fact, the grand jury found that the management consultant could not account for where the money was spent." However, the grand jury concluded there were no chargeable criminal offenses, and made legislative, executive and administrative recommendations.

How someone can make off with \$3 million in taxpayers' dollars without accounting for its use and escape prosecution boggles the mind and fits into the category of a perfect crime. But

while criminal indictments were not handed down, just about everyone involved in this program, with the exception of the kids, bears the stigma of guilt for misusing tax dollars.

The guilty

The guilty start at the state level where the program was hatched, at the State Education Department where rules and regulations were implemented covering the program, rules and regulations which, in reality, virtually legalized the misuse of program funds. Suffolk County officials shoulder much of the blame as well. They frequently complained about the growing cost of the program, estimated to be at \$126 million, but did little else. Had these same officials concentrated

on auditing the contract providers they utilized to perform the services, making sure the tax dollars being spent were for legitimate expenses, the program might have been under control instead of becoming a windfall for the greedy.

We applaud the grand jury members for the year of effort and diligence in uncovering the scores of abuses. Unfortunately, because criminal charges were not made, the identity of the providers, who utilized this program to satisfy their own greed without concern for the impact on the children they were supposed to be helping, was not revealed. They not only escaped prosecution, walking away with unearned taxpayer dollars, but they also escaped the shame of their deeds.

Dear deer everywhere

As a boy learning about the outdoors, my friends and I used to thrill when we found a hoofprint of a deer. Although Eastern Long Island was rural in those days and there were vast forests and fields, the sighting of a deer was a rarity.

During the 50s and 60s, the herds started to grow. Places like Shelter Island, areas of the South Fork, Calverton and Manorville began to report concentrations of deer and problems brought about by the herds.

A limited hunting season went into effect that helped control the deer population. During the 70s and 80s, deer became prolific even though the original 10-day hunting season was extended and an archery season was established.

Today, deer have overtaken many suburban neighborhoods. They have adapted to a more limited range and have learned to co-exist with the human inhabitants who they formerly shied away from. North Sea has particularly had a bad problem and the village is considering a special hunt to thin out the herd. Fire Island tried a limited hunt a few years back and it was met with a vocal outrage from animal lovers.

Starvation horror

We doubt that many of these animal lovers have ever seen the starvation that the deer are subjected to when you have adverse weather such as we are experiencing now. As a sportsman and as a conservationist who did his share of hunting in his youth, I have personally come upon groups of deer struggling with starvation because they have been hemmed into a very small area due to snow and ice. It is not a very pleasant sight to see a deer not much older than a fawn laying on its side, too weak to get up and run. I have come across slaughtered deer that had been attacked by roaming dogs because they did not have the ability to break free of their confines due to the ice and snow. Hunting, although considered cruel by many, is a preferred method of conservation and control of the size of the herds.

Most sportsmen who are hunters practice conservation. To become successful as a hunter you must not only

learn the safety and capability of your weapon, but you must learn to think as the animal you are seeking does. Rarely does a hunter go into the woods and have a deer pop up in front of him.

We know of many hunters who during the year, particularly in times of freezing weather such as this, haul bags of grain, picked-out potatoes, hay and other nourishment into the woods to help deer survive the onslaught of winter. These are true conservationists, environmentalists, who practice what they preach.

Contraceptive idea

Recently a method of implanting a contraceptive device in the females has been devised. The deer is tranquilized and the contraceptive device is inserted in the deer and she becomes infertile for a period of time. We think this is a great idea, one that should be supported by sportsmen, conservationists, environmentalists and people who resent the deer munching on their ornamental shrubs and damaging their landscapes.

The herds cannot be allowed to go unchecked. They are reproducing at too rapid a rate. Hunting is a partial answer, but obviously it has not cut down sufficiently on the herds. Hunting is not an option in more populated areas which deer have become adapted to. We would hate to see the deer population totally eliminated and be back to only seeing a hoof print, limited only to imagining the sighting of a deer.

Provide food

We encourage those who consider themselves environmentalists to make a personal commitment to feed the deer that are in their area during the trying winter months. We have a herd of nine deer who regularly are seen in the meadow in the rear of my home. Year-round I feed them with corn, vegetables and in the summertime, I even grow wild flowers and other edibles they like. The deer seem to be content with this arrangement and leave my other trees pretty much untouched. The deer have learned to co-exist with us and we with them.

During the cold months particularly, when ice and snow cover their

normal browse, I increase their food. This, of course, has a counter-effect. They are able to get through the winter, but because of this nourishment most of the deer foal twins. Some of the herd are killed by cars as the bucks, in particular, head for the breeding grounds in November. Some of the does do not make the passage either. Some remain at the breeding grounds into hunting season, but each year we seem to add one or two new ones. Birth control, as far-fetched as it may seem, may be the answer.

Birds right now are also in serious peril. The ice and the snow are depriving them of their natural table. They must depend upon humans to get them over this harsh winter. We recommend that all who can afford it to buy cracked corn, bird seed and either broadcast it on the ground or place it in bird feeders.

If you have any left-over bread that you might normally throw out, put it out plain or fry it up with bacon grease and hang it in trees where the birds will find it.

Ducks, swans and geese also are being denied their natural feeding spots because the ponds and lakes are frozen over and the fields are covered with snow. A sack of corn distributed by any open water will ensure numerous birds will make it and not starve to death.

Instead of talking about conservation and the environment, join us in doing your part.

And why not?

Suffolk County serves the largest number of preschool handicapped children in the state outside of the five boroughs of New York City, the grand jury report states. That fact alone raises serious questions about the manner in which the program is administered in this county. A frequently-stated concern, one which was echoed in the grand jury report, notes that those who evaluate the students are, in most cases, the providers who are responsible for the delivery of the program. If that doesn't represent a rank conflict of interest, nothing else does. That has to end.

Sanctions needed

The grand jury's recommendations for legislative changes to stop the misuse of program funds must be implemented now. State and county legislators, and educational officials, must begin, immediately, to prepare the legislation and program guidelines that will correct the shortcomings which have made a mockery of the preschool program. And program oversight must be put into place to ensure that only legitimate charges are honored at the outset. Charging back for overpayers, usually over an extended period of time, is a waste of taxpayer dollars.

Those who are staunch supporters of special education programs must also take an active stand in ensuring these problems are resolved, and never happen again. They must demand criminal penalties be established to punish those who line their own pockets at the expense of the public and the children the program was created to serve.

And why not?

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Is Mario Cuomo choking?

Governor Mario Cuomo's announcement that he was going to run for re-election had hardly become old news when Bill Catacosinos, the chairman of LILCO (Long Island Lighting Company), announced that he had awarded himself a raise of 8.4%, or \$50,000, per year. The poor man will be paid \$533,957 a year. All of this coming from the ratepayers of the Long Island Lighting Company.

Cuomo should have choked, for here he is not only running for re-election, but is personally responsible for this ludicrous increase funded by the most expensive electrical rates in the nation that are paid by his constituents.

You might rightly say that Bill Catacosinos is responsible for these rates, but you would be mostly wrong. These rates are almost the sole responsibility of Governor Mario M. Cuomo, who has been in office for the last 12 years. Cuomo controls the Public Service Commission (PSC). He appoints the members and determines the chairman. His choices are subject to confirmation by the Senate, which normally is pro forma. The governor gets what he wants.

During the governor's 12-year tenure, he has allowed the PSC to heap increase on top of increase on LILCO's rates. Prior to his personal involvement in the Shoreham fiasco, he allowed Paul Gioia to continue on as chairman for years after his appointment had expired. Gioia had a reputation of being the utilities' best friend. Rarely did a rate increase come before him or his commission that they found fault with. He allowed LILCO to charge ratepayers extra construction and progress payments, known as CWIP (construction work in progress) funds, before the Shoreham plant was "used and useful." This was a total turnaround from established precedents which required a facility to be up and operational before the charges for the plant could be

passed on to the consumers. This charge alone accounted for the ratepayers being overcharged billions of dollars.

Shoreham commission

As it became obvious that Shoreham should not ever operate because of faulty construction and the potential health threat it posed, Cuomo became involved. He appointed a commission to explore the ramifications of the plant, its safety, its economic feasibility, the ramifications to the citizens and to the ratepayers. During these hearings, things went from bad to worse for LILCO. Its stock fell to under \$3 per share. The company was forced to pay up to 23% in interest on bonds, unheard of for a utility. Its lines of credit were cut. The company's ratings dropped. LILCO was teetering on the brink of bankruptcy. After the revelation about the faulty diesel generators and LILCO losing the prudency hearings, which made them liable for \$1.2 billion in falsely incurred costs, LILCO was ready to throw in the towel.

It was at a commission meeting in Albany when the former chairman of LILCO, Charles Pierce, stated to the commission that LILCO was ready to give up, but for fiduciary reasons would have to continue to fight for another 15 to 18 months. It was felt at this time that the state could have taken over Shoreham for about \$1.2 billion, no more than \$1.8 billion. LILCO would have been kept whole and the rates kept intact.

Cuomo capitulated

Cuomo did not act. Catacosinos became chairman. Instead of operating from a position of strength, Cuomo ca-

pitulated. The end result was the Shoreham deal that the Wall Street Journal, the conservative financial publication, called the "sweetheart deal of the century." The plant was closed but Cuomo and the PSC paid a dear price.

LILCO and the stockholders recovered every penny they had invested, both prudently and imprudently, in the construction of the plant. In addition to the recovery of its investment, the company got to keep the CWIP funds and were guaranteed profits they would have made on the investment. The state, through the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA), acquired a few acres of ground that the plant and the fuel storage area sit upon. LILCO got to keep the rest of the 500-acre parcel. It is even going to be the beneficiary of the sale of any of the fixtures or equipment within the plant.

LILCO ratepayers have the pleasure of paying for the decontamination of the plant, which was contaminated deliberately by the management of LILCO in an attempt to force the opening of the plant. The ratepayers, through LIPA, will pay for the removal and disposal of the fuel.

PSC signs off

All of this came about because of Cuomo's deal with Catacosinos. The PSC, which is supposed to be charged with watching over the monopolies that utilities are, signed off on the deal. Cuomo wanted it, Cuomo got it.

During the Cuomo administration, the PSC has been no friend to the consumer and ratepayer. The commissioners, serving at the governor's pleasure, have not been responsive to the public

outcry or even logic concerning rates. Cuomo should have called the commissioners onto the carpet and demanded to know what is wrong with the rate-making policies of this state that allow LILCO to charge three times as much for electricity as other utilities.

LILCO's current charges are around 19 cents per kilowatt hour. Florida Power, which does not have low cost hydropower but does have some nuclear power, charges its customers seven cents per kilowatt hour. LILCO claims it can generate its most expensive electricity for less than six cents per kilowatt hour. Some of the electricity that it generates from its older plants costs less than two cents per kilowatt hour. LILCO is receiving the equivalent of Shoreham in low cost power from upstate New York, since the Marcy transmission line went operational right after the Shoreham deal.

If Florida Power can be highly profitable by not only generating power, but wheeling it as LILCO does and have similar overhead costs, why can't LILCO do the same? This is what Cuomo should have been asking the PSC to explain. Instead, Cuomo has allowed rate increase after rate increase to go unchecked. It probably didn't come as any surprise to him that the chairman awarded himself a \$50,000 increase. That's peanuts when you consider the billions of dollars the company has extracted from its customers, who are held hostage by this monopoly that Cuomo, through the PSC, has failed to regulate.

Make no mistake about it, your high utility bills are the result of the lack of oversight provided by the governor of New York.

And why not?

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home.

These subscriptions are also a tremendous encouragement to our reporters, our writers and the support personnel of the publication. Your subscription tells these individuals that you do appreciate the hard work that they do for you each week. It tells us also that it is okay to stand up and fight when we see the citizens being hurt.

Subscribers will receive their newspaper individually addressed to them rather than addressed to "The Folks at." If you have not already sent in your subscription, we would appreciate it if you did.

And why not?

Grumman, now what?

It wasn't just the cold that sent chills down the spines of elected officials and residents of the communities that are affected by Grumman. Grumman officials announced they will close the Calverton facility as well as some other sites here on Long Island. Grumman's only presence on Long Island after 1995 will be their headquarters and their computer site.

Grumman is moving its assembly and manufacturing operations, as well as some of their support facilities, to the south. Grumman claims they can save several million dollars per plane because the cost of doing business is substantially lower there than on Long Island.

Grumman during the last few years, has substantially down-sized its operations on the Island, moving jobs and facilities to the south. Wage levels in the south are substantially lower than they are here on Long Island. Workers can afford to accept lower wages because the utility costs and real estate taxes are a fraction of what they are here.

We have editorialized incessantly about the need for the state to intervene and order reductions in utility costs. Not only Suffolk Life and other newspapers, such as the Long Island Business News, have zeroed in on the primary cause of high taxes, the abnormally high cost of education here on the Island. Although the cause has been spelled out in detail, the abuses revealed, no one in authority has had the courage to reform the system and eradicate the waste. The cancer is killing

the economy and as it consumes more businesses and jobs, there are fewer left to shoulder the burden.

Grumman intends to pull all operations out of Calverton within two years. Even if we came up with a master plan that would be an economic benefit to the region, nothing can be done to reuse the property for at least five years. The property, owned by the Navy, will have to be declared surplus. A long bureaucratic process will then be started whereby the property will be offered for other use. During this period, the facility will not generate any jobs and the economy will be in deeper trouble.

Last year, a study was conducted by Dr. Lee Koppelman that looked at the facility as a possible cargoport. The report basically found that a cargo airport operating out of Calverton was not particularly feasible and would have only limited utilization. As airports in the metropolitan area have grown, they have reached a point of over utilization. A new airport center will have to be developed. Calverton might be the obvious choice but with local opposition so strong, it may never become a reality.

For the region, and particularly for the Town of Riverhead, to survive, a plan must be developed that converts this facility as an economic center. We must all put aside our prejudices, think beyond the obvious and develop a place for our people to work, taxes to be generated and profits to be made.

And why not?