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Driving range set to open in spring '12

BY PATRICK ROCCHIO

Turtle Cove Golf & Baseball Complex, which was closed last season for the first time in years, is expected to open again in the spring under new management.

National Golf Group, a partnership that includes professional golfer Anthony Esposito, won a Parks Department RFP in May, but has delayed the opening the driving range, miniature golf course, and batting cages.

The facility, located at on City

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PONZI VICTIMS TO SUE

Multi-million \$ complaint targets MetLife

BY BILL WEISBROD

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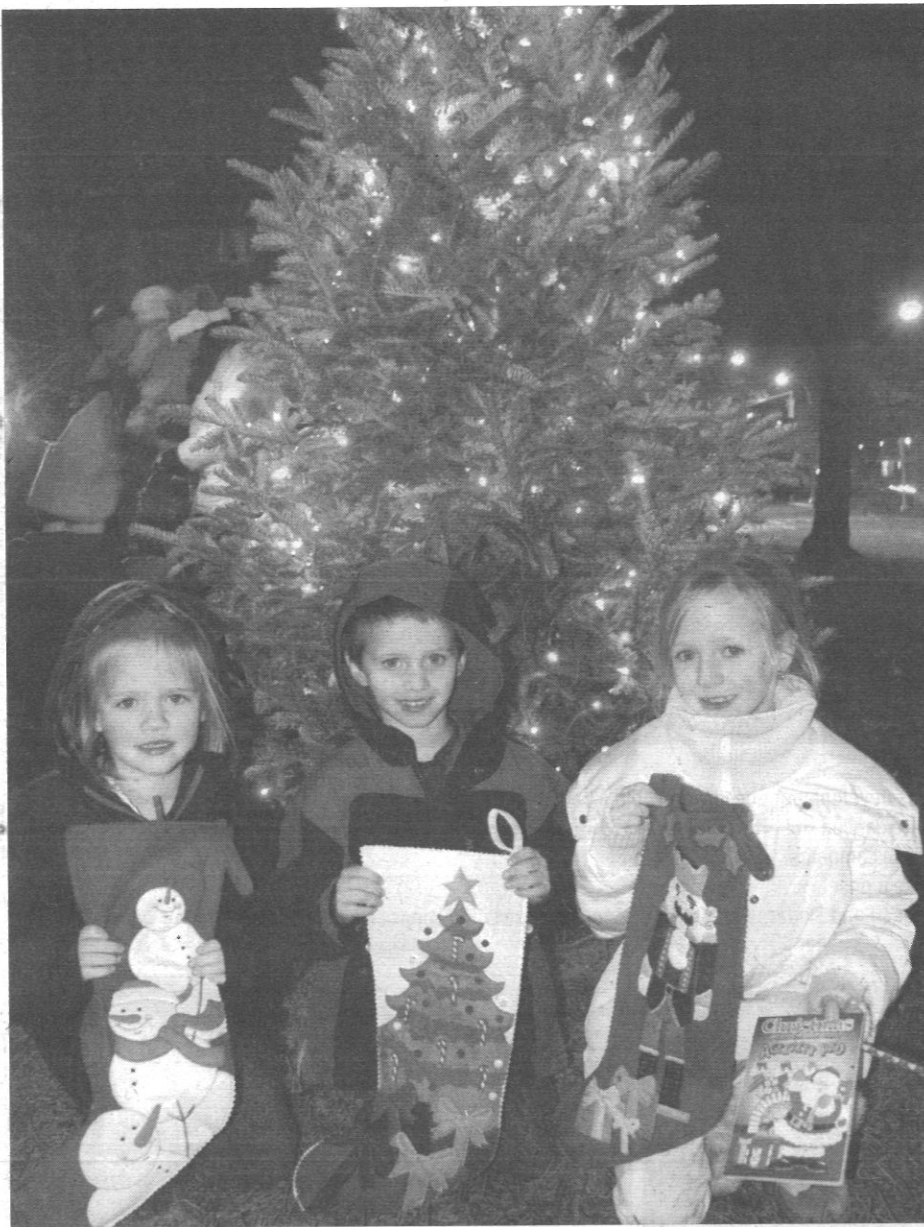


Photo by Laura Stone

Standing in front of Waterbury-LaSalle's tree with the gifts that Santa Claus brought on Sunday, December 11 were (l-r) Reese Murphy, Jack Murphy, and Riley Murphy of Country Club.

Waterbury LaSalle tree lighting

Ponzi victims target MetLife

From page 1

Robert Henry Van Zandt, his late son Robert John Van Zandt, their tax prep business the Van Zandt Agency, as well as other family members and associates, for allegedly running a ponzi scheme. That investigation continues.

Robert John Van Zandt, who had previously served time in federal prison, was found dead of a gun shot wound to the head in a Yonkers swimming pool in September. Yonkers police believe the death was a suicide, but its investigation is ongoing.

All of the complainants

live, or have lived in the Bronx, and most used the Van Zandt Agency for tax prep.

The complaint alleges that Robert Henry Van Zandt built up trust among his customers, and used brochures to solicit them to invest their nest eggs through him with assurances of annual returns starting at 9 percent. It alleges that, in actuality, they were putting their money into a Ponzi scheme and that MetLife Securities failed to exercise the necessary oversight to prevent that from taking place.

"They all feel very betrayed," Malecki said of her

clients. "Even if his business was legitimate, which is a question, what he was recommending to them was not suitable for them. [The investments] were aggressive and high risk."

She said clients had invested proceeds from home sales, pensions and injury settlements with Van Zandt.

FINRA is a private entity that regulates the securities industry.

A spokesperson for MetLife Securities said the company was aware of the case but, as of Monday, December 12, could not comment since it had not yet been served with the complaint.

Driving range to open in spring

From page 1

Island Road, is getting a complete upgrade and Esposito and his team have been renovating the facility since the summer, he said.

"What really drew me to Turtle Cove is that it is bit different than anything else in New York City," Esposito said. "This is more natural. At Turtle Cove I feel like I am hitting a golf ball at a fairway."

The facility stands in sharp contrast to most urban driving ranges, which are often built using an artificial netting system, Esposito said.

tial to be a top notch facility because of its location, in a wooded section of Pelham Bay Park. Esposito operated a similar facility in Brooklyn for eight years, he said.

The overhaul will be completed before it opens in the spring, and there will be 18 new covered and heated stalls for driving golf balls, bringing the number of covered stalls up to 30, Esposito said. There are 50 stalls total, covered and not covered.

"We are going to upgrade the gas heating system inside the stalls so that it will be a lot warmer in the winter if a golfer chooses to come and hit a bucket of balls," Es-

Group planning on including a "party tent" for youth parties. The pitching machines in the batting cages will be receiving new mechanisms, Esposito said.

In addition, the rear fence of the facility is being repaired, and all standing water is being removed from the body of the driving range, Esposito said. The main building is also being completely rehabilitated.

The facility needed work, and its reopening could be helpful for business on City Island, said City Island Chamber of Commerce president Gerard Giacco.

"I think that anything