

13 things about Narcan

Consider, please, 13 unexpected things I learned about Narcan on a hot, muggy Saturday, between a visit to the gym and the barber for my husband's bi-weekly haircut:

1) It's easy to learn how to administer naloxone, or Narcan, as it is more commonly known, a drug that reverses opioid overdoses.

2) A Narcan class is surprisingly short.

3) Naloxone is the No. 1 drug most administered by the Huntington Community First Aid Squad in Huntington Station, where Saturday's class was held. The squad last year responded to 61,000 calls — the second largest number in Suffolk.

4) The newest naloxone dose kits are one-piece units which, unlike older ones, require zero assembly. They're roughly the size of Ring Pops.

5) Fentanyl has replaced heroin as the most-used opioid in Suffolk. "You have to grow heroin and get it here," Dr. Gregson Pigott, clinical director of Suffolk's Health Services



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Department, pointed out to the class. "You can make fentanyl anywhere in a lab."

6) Some heavy users, after mixing a baggie of fentanyl with water, inject themselves every three or four hours to keep from going into immediate, painful withdrawal.

7) One baggie of fentanyl, heroin or some combination of the two is called a hit; 10 baggies is a bundle; 10 bundles is a sleeve.

8) A bundle can cost between \$60 and \$100. "Economically, that is unsustainable," Pigott told us, "and if someone is using every three or four hours, it's going to be worse because it will be impossible for them to hold on to a job."

9) Opioid addiction and mental health issues go hand in hand, which makes treating addicts challenging.

10) The number of addicts opting to use Suffolk's four clinics

that offer methadone — an opioid used to help addicts taper off or stay off heroin — has increased. "There should be a clinic in every neighborhood," Pigott told us, adding the reality that such won't happen, given community resistance to drug treatment centers.

11) Suffolk could see a record number of deaths for calendar 2017. But after years of increases, officials are hopeful they could be seeing a slowdown, year over year. A look at the 12-month period between May 2017 and last month shows Suffolk averaging about 3.6 overdoses a day, and one death every 36 hours, a police official told lawmakers recently. By comparison, the county had about six overdoses a day, one fatal, during the previous 12-month period.

12) Since 2013, Suffolk has offered 360 Narcan training classes. But the county has had to cut back because the state, which provides the free naloxone kits we received Saturday, reduced the number going to Suffolk because statewide demand is high. "If

we ask for 1,200," Pigott said in an interview Monday, "we've been getting 600."

13) Suffolk — still — has the largest number of opioid overdoses of any suburban county in New York State.

Last month, Newsday reported that naloxone had been administered 2,200 times since it has been put into widespread use by law enforcement and other agencies. Some of those receiving the drug were revived, only to relapse and require Narcan once, twice or several times more.

Pigott dealt with that issue, too. Each revival, he told the class, amounted to one more chance for the survivor. And one less funeral for family, friends and neighborhoods.

On Monday, Pigott, who has worked with addicts, elaborated.

"Behind every overdose there are family members that are grieving," he said, noting that most overdoses occur in young people in their 20s and 30s.

"There is all of this unrealized potential," he said, "that has been taken away from all of us."

Schumer: IRS closing Hauppauge office

BY DAVID M. SCHWARTZ
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Sen. Chuck Schumer warned Monday that the Internal Revenue Service plans to close its Hauppauge office, leaving only one facility to serve Long Island taxpayers.

Under the plan, 42 jobs in tax collections would be transferred to the IRS office in Bethpage by the middle of 2019, with the remaining 86 following in 2022, Schumer said.

Many of the 15,500 people a year who visit the Hauppauge office will experience longer drives and longer wait times in Bethpage, he said.

"We're here to say no to taxing the patience of Long Islanders," Schumer said at a news conference in front of the IRS office in Bethpage. "To have 3 million people served by just one office makes no sense."

The IRS, in a statement, confirmed the first phase of the plan "as part of our ongoing



Schumer issuing his warning outside the IRS office in Bethpage

commitment to use taxpayer resources efficiently." The agency said it has lost 17,000 employees since 2010.

The service said the Taxpayer Assistance Center in Hauppauge, where individuals can have face-to-face meetings with IRS officials, would remain open.

The consolidation would

eliminate 15,000 square feet of office space and save about \$600,000 a year in rent, according to a strategic facility plan provided by Schumer's office.

Final consolidation will be considered in 2022 when the lease on the Hauppauge site expires, according to the document.

Rep. Peter King (R-Seaford) said he'd received no official notification of the IRS plans, but would work with Schumer to stop a consolidation.

"It's a big island. People's time is valuable . . . It's important to keep both offices open," King said in an interview.

The IRS consolidated its Riverhead office with Hauppauge to save money in 2012.

Those driving from the East End already complain about the drive to Hauppauge, Joan Ballantyne, an IRS tax compliance officer at the Hauppauge office, said at the news conference Monday. To have them drive to Bethpage "is a burden to the taxpayers."

Schumer said the plan would take place "in a matter of months."

He said if the IRS institutes the first phase of the consolidation, it will be harder to stop the complete closing of the Hauppauge office.

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CORRECTION

D&B Engineers and Architects PC is based in Woodbury. A story Monday had an incorrect location.

THIS DATE IN HISTORY

1794 Congress passed the Neutrality Act, which prohibited Americans from joining in any military action against a country that was at peace with the United States.

1884 Civil War hero Gen. William T. Sherman refused the Republican presidential nomination, saying, "I will not accept if nominated and will not serve if elected."

1947 Secretary of State George C. Marshall, in a speech at Harvard, outlined an aid program for Europe that came to be known as The Marshall Plan.

1950 The Supreme Court, in *Henderson v. United States*, struck down racially segregated railroad dining cars.

1967 Israel, anticipating a possible attack by its Arab neighbors, launched a series of pre-emptive airfield strikes that destroyed nearly the entire Egyptian air force; Syria, Jordan and Iraq immediately entered the Mideast War.

1968 Sen. Robert F. Kennedy was shot and mortally wounded after claiming victory in California's Democratic presidential primary at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles; assassin Sirhan Bishara Sirhan was arrested.

2004 Ronald Wilson Reagan, the 40th president, died at 93 after a long struggle with Alzheimer's disease.