Pride in the Highlands
Gay residents, having found a home, are finding each other
By Alison Rooney

When Dominic Viola, a retired investment banker, and his husband moved to Garrison from Manhattan, they loved the area but could not find a place where gay people socialized. So they decided to organize their own. All they needed was a place. Viola thought The Silver Spoon on Main Street in Cold Spring might work because the staff there was “always so nice, friendly and cordial.” He spoke to owner Hussein (Jimmy) Abdelhady, who readily agreed to host monthly Saturday night gatherings.

In putting event posters up for that first event, Viola says he found “some Main Street places completely receptive, others not.” Seventy-five people joined a group he created online at Meetup.com, a popular organizing site, and 35 showed up at the restaurant. “Jim was nice enough to provide music and hors d’oeuvres,” Viola recalls. A year later, his Meetup group has more than 230 members and people have turned up at the monthly event from as far away as Danbury and Chappaqua, Viola says, as well as from Newburgh and Poughkeepsie. Many gay residents of Philipstown, including people who have lived here for decades, have expressed surprise at the size of the community.

Putnam Legislature Discusses Public Comment
Says committee meetings are best time for feedback
By Holly Crocco

Members of the Putnam County Legislature discussed Nov. 14 whether to allow public comment throughout its formal monthly meetings or only at the end, which is the current practice. While some argued at the meeting of the Rules Committee that allowing comment only at the end was more efficient, others said the public should be allowed to speak on an item before a vote is taken, not after.

“I appreciate people’s overture,” said Ginny Nacerino (R-Patterson), who chairs the legislature. “However, I don’t think they understand the fundamental difference between a town board and a legislature.”

She said a town board deals with local laws that the town has control over, but the county legislature is bound by state and federal mandates and so seeks input from department heads, outside agencies and other stakeholders.

For this reason, public comment is encouraged at the committee level, where those involved can answer questions and react to feedback.

Neighbors Ask State to Close Indian Brook Falls
Social media brings visitors and traffic to bucolic site
By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

Sightseers have long delighted in Indian Brook Falls, where a Philipstown stream plunges from a cliff to a rocky pool before joining the Hudson River. Part of Hudson Highlands State Park, the site borders private property and the Constitution Marsh Audubon Center and Sanctuary along Indian Brook Road, a curving narrow dirt lane that intersects with Route 9D a mile south of Cold Spring.

In August 1834, Washington Irving led an evening jaunt there after a dinner party at the Cold Spring home of his friend Governor Kemble. As one guest later recalled, Irving provided “elegant and playful” commentary as they “wandered among the rocks of that beautiful and secluded dell.”

Today, promoted not by a 19th-century literary light but 21st-century social media, the waterfall has become so popular that some neighbors want to seal it off.

It’s easy to find visitors near the falls. Mariah Nichols and Nick Mercado drove Nov. 13 from Poughkeepsie to hike Breakneck, but observing “like a mile and a half” of cars along Route 9D, abandoned that plan. “We like to hike quietly,” Nichols said. An internet search brought them to Indian Brook Falls. Megan Oliveri and Grace Razzano came from Long Island that same day but bypassed their usual destination (Bear Mountain) for the waterfall. They, too, learned about it through social media.

Ten days earlier, at a Philipstown Town Board meeting, Indian Brook Road residents complained that the swarm of visitors, especially in summer, had caused numerous problems, including trespassing, and that visitors often arrived with gaggles of children or in large groups, dragging picnic coolers and swimming toys. (Swimming is not allowed at the waterfall.)

Frank Riback, who lives near the falls, proposed that authorities deny entry, “fencing off the trail, fencing off access to the falls.” Riback acknowledged the site’s allure but predicted “it’s just a matter of time before there’s going to be a tragedy caused by the parking, the congestion, the cars.”

Indian Brook Falls
Photo by Marty Kavell

Domonic Viola hiking at Bear Mountain with his dog, Dexter
Photo provided
Seeds, Glorious Seeds

By Pamela Doan

Every fall I resist harvesting the globe thistle seeds. They’re tempting: big spiky balls left over from the summer’s blooms. The goldfinches and dark-eyed juncos love them, though, so I do resist for the pleasure of seeing a bird perched on the tall stalk in winter enjoying a snack. I like to imagine the seeds of this native plant dispersing in the wind, too. It’s a campaign I’ll never know the results of but continue nonetheless.

Here are a few reasons to save seeds. It’s not too late, either. There are probably flowers in the yard now that could be harvested.

Preserve biodiversity. Organizations such as the Hudson Valley Seed Library and other seed banks across the world want to make sure that certain species don’t go extinct. As climate change makes habitats unsustainable for plants, this effort has become especially important. A global seed vault managed by CropTrust (croptrust.org) on an island between Norway and the North Pole has nearly a million varieties and is built to hold 4.5 million. This ensures ongoing cultivation will be possible.

Knowledge. Here in your backyard, the goal could be a fun project without the stakes of human survival. But if everything goes badly, wouldn’t it be a good skill to have?

Thrift. Transplants can cost anywhere from $2 to $20 depending on the plant. Although I shop end-of-season sales, I paid $15 for a wild indigo when I could have gotten an entire packet of seeds for far less. But did I mention the color of those flowers? Impulse control does not come easy to gardeners fantasizing about next summer’s blooms.

Seeds are cool. I love starting plants from seed even though a lot of my vegetables are transplants because that’s the amount of time I have. Seeing shoots coming up from the soil makes it seem like everything is possible. Some seeds are tiny specks. I get a childish feeling of wonder to see it develop into a plant — a dramatic process that takes place unseen while it’s buried in the earth and then it emerges toward the sun’s light and warmth.

Propagate a variety you like. I try to keep a garden log but it’s morphed into a shoebox lid full of the plastic stakes that come with plants and seed packets. When I cannot remember what I planted as new growth is starting in the spring, I dig through the box and try to put a name to a leaf. If you have a particular tomato or pepper you enjoyed this summer, save its seeds.

How to save seeds

The most important fact to understand is that some plants are self-pollinated and others are cross-pollinated. Solanaceae family vegetables, also known as nightshade plants, include tomatoes, eggplants and peppers. Their flowers have male and female parts and don’t need insects for pollination. These types of plants are the easiest from which to save seeds. A caveat is that they can also be cross-pollinated and varieties can become less similar to the parent. Keep the rows separated and far apart.

Cross-pollinated plants like squash, corn, cucumbers and melons aren’t good candidates for seed saving. These plants are pollinated by insects. I know from experience they don’t turn out like the original. This summer a squash vine volunteered itself from compost in a newly planted flowerbed. Out of curiosity, I let it go. The produce was a squash-melon hybrid with no flavor.

Here’s the next twist. If you’re going to save seeds, choose open-pollinated varieties, not hybrids. It’s impossible to predict what characteristics the seeds will have from both plant parents. Purity matters in this case. The Minnesota Cooperative Extension lists Brandywine and San Marzano tomatoes as good possibilities for open pollinated plants.

Depending on what seeds you’re saving, the process may differ slightly but the basics are to dry the seeds thoroughly. Depending on what seeds you’re saving, the process may differ slightly but the basics are to dry the seeds thoroughly. They need to be stored at cool temperatures, around freezing. The CropTrust seed vault is kept around minus 18 degrees Celsius but your seeds will be fine in the refrigerator, a shed or garage. Moisture triggers the seed to grow, so the seeds need to stay dry, too. A few resources I’ve read recommend using powdered milk to act as a desiccant.

Don’t get too caught up in worrying about what to save and how to do it. Like anything that happens in the garden, experience is the best teacher.
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Andy Galler, Garrison

On Nov. 8, the people spoke. With the election of Donald Trump, things have been shaken up at the national level — no thanks to the voters of New York State. Meanwhile, in the Hudson Valley, the status quo received a ringing endorsement.

Voters in the 41st Senate district and the 19th Congressional District gave their approval of our political system in which the federal and state governments’ primary job is to funnel money to billionaires, corporations and special interests.

Incumbent Republican Sue Serino handily defeated challenger Terry Gipson, ensuring Republican/renegade Democrat control of the state Senate, where campaign finance reform dies in every legislative session.

Republican John Faso, a former corporate lobbyist, with the help of $6.7 million in outside money from political action committees and billionaires, defeated reformer Zephyr Teachout for Congress. Think these billionaires have our best interests at heart?

If you would ask a voter, “Who makes up for the loss of revenue every time a tax break or favor is given to billionaires, corporations and special interests?” he or she would know the obvious answer.

But while complaining about high property and other taxes, and crying about a falling standard of living, we elect candidates who say “I’ll keep your taxes low, but please remember that my first duty is to campaign contributors who pay me for favored treatment.” Another of the great mysteries of life? Or a case of fooling some of the people some of the time?

Charles Davenport, Wappingers Falls

I hear the sound of trumpery And all I do detest I mean to counter lies with truth (I meant to take a rest) I weep the rank misogyny And all I do detest I mean to push against it hard (I meant to take a rest) I see the spread of bigotry And all I do detest I mean to labor for amends (I meant to take a rest) I feel the harm of climate change And all I do detest I mean to change the course of it (I meant to take a rest) I smell the stench of gushing hate And all I do detest I mean to stanch the hate with love (I meant to take a rest) I mourn the loss of common ground And all I do detest I mean to speak in spite of fear (I meant to take a rest) No one knows how far you’ll go And all I do detest I mean to fight you tooth and nail And then I’ll take a rest.

Mitchell Jay, Cold Spring

The Beacon Charter

Success has many fathers; failure, it is said, is an orphan. Thank God Beacon’s development is a success story. Therefore I think it noteworthy to mention the bipartisan (Continued on next page)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I feel like it was stolen by a political pirate who force-fed the populace fear. I voted for Trump only because I am a business owner.

~ John Raheb, Montvale, N.J.

Taking it to the Street

What’s your take on the election?

By Anita Peltonon

“Trump’s winning is not surprising. He capitalized on America’s ignorance. It’s disappointing and embarrassing.”

~ Shane Wilbe (and newborn son) Beacon

"It's been a mix of feelings. A lot of sadness. But now I’m feeling hopeful that we’ll keep fighting for what we believe in, galvanize against prejudice, and respect each other.”

~ Ami Mehta, Beacon

"I feel like it was stolen by a political pirate who force-fed the populace fear. I voted for Trump only because I am a business owner.”

~ John Raheb, Montvale, N.J.
**Letters to the Editor (from previous page)**

Charter Review Committee and the adoption of its proposed City Charter as one of those collective fathers (“At the Heart of Beacon,” Nov. 4).

The adoption of the current City Charter that established the four-ward versus a citywide district for electing a majority of city council made it much more possible for new progressive candidates to get elected. The Charter also provided for a professional administrator, who could easily see the economic potential of facilitating the move of a world-class museum like Dia to Beacon.

It is easy to forget that the previous City Council, before the Charter's adoption, took pride in buying lottery tickets from their personal funds promising the proceeds to the city as a way out of the city financial crisis. This council could have easily rejected Dia on the basis of the loss of property taxes due to its nonprofit status and consequently a financial drain to the community.

It was progressive councilmen like Lee Kyriacou, Steve Gold and Chris White who led the charge for zoning changes that prohibited storefront apartments on Main Street and the carving up of single-family homes into multiple apartments. They also led the battle to close the city sludge incinerator.

Hopefully others will come forward with the names of the many other fathers to Beacon's success so the current community activists and political leadership realize that it takes a whole village of single-family homes into multiple apartments. They also led the battle to close the city sludge incinerator.

Hopefuly others will come forward with the names of the many other fathers to Beacon's success so the current community activists and political leadership realize that it takes a whole village to raise a child like Beacon.

Charlie Kelly, Beacon

**Anchorage on the Hudson**

Beware of lobbyists in their attempt to influence the U.S. Coast Guard to approve of the public rule-making proposal (an oily business!) to create anchorage berths for 43 commercial vessels on the Hudson River. Each will swing in an 1,800-foot radius, interfering with boaters, kayakers, fishermen, tour boats, picnickers and hikers and destroy the view and swimming too. We are not a harbor!

I spent four sea-going years in the Navy during the Korean War, sailing the Pacific, which gives me pause to wonder what'll happen to the waterfront that Pete and Toshi Seeger fought for with the Clearwater. Look into any river with motorized boats; you'll see oil. That will be the scenario with diesel from ships polluting our Hudson.

Warning to fishermen: “Do not eat more than one fish a week!” You'll see that sign at points along the Hudson. The river is still polluted, thanks to General Electric, which called a halt to cleaning up its PCBs. Ships in the past have been cited for dumping bilges here. Now, through a leak in the dyke in our bureaucratic system, industry wishes to destroy our stream, with its fantastic views that President Eisenhower said were even more beautiful than those of the Rhine River Valley.

Our dreams in the valley are hopeful, with the tourist trade increasing from Yorktown to West Point to the Walkway in Poughkeepsie through to Kingston. If we aren't careful, big business will turn the Hudson into a swamp.

Nicholas Conti, Beacon

**Obituary**

**Putnam Undersheriff Dies Suddenly**

*Worked in law enforcement more than 40 years*

Peter Convery, 65, an undersheriff with the Putnam County Sheriff’s Department, died Nov. 15 at his home in Mahopac after apparently suffering a heart attack.

Convery joined the Putnam County force in 2002 following a career with the Westchester County Department of Corrections, where he retired as a captain. His law enforcement career spanned 40 years.

“We are all absolutely heartbroken,” said Sheriff Donald Smith. “Peter was a loving and devoted family man, who adored his wife, Luanne, and their children, Caitlin, Courtney, Kerry, Tara and Connor, and their children’s families. And he was a very good friend to me.”

Convery was a longtime member of the Mahopac Volunteer Fire Department and an active Rotarian. He was a parishioner of Saint John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church in Mahopac.

Born in Tarrytown on Jan. 31, 1951, Convery was the son of John J. and Rose Ann (Carolan) Convery. In addition to his wife and children, he is survived by grandchildren Colin, Isabelle, Peterson Jr. and Jackson and a sister, Maureen Beale.

Visitation will be held Saturday, Nov. 19, and Sunday, Nov. 20, from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. both days at the Joseph J. Smith Funeral Home in Mahopac. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated Monday, Nov. 21, at 10 a.m. at St. John the Evangelist Church in Mahopac.

Thank you to the numerous individuals who contributed time and talent to my campaign, in ways large and small. I have been honored by your support and friendship.

Many thanks, as well, to the individuals across party lines who took an interest in the Town Justice race, chatted with the candidates at your doors and on train platforms, and shared your questions and ideas. I have learned from you all.

Last but not least, many thanks to Faye Thorpe and Luke Hilpert for a race well run. I am glad to call you my colleagues.

Camille S. Linson, Esq.
Pride in the Highlands (from Page 1)

Most of the Saturday night gatherings have been about 70 percent male, Viola says, with those in attendance ranging from their 30s to 70s, although some 20-somethings attend. There are more women who have joined the Meetup site than come to the gatherings. Viola noted, which makes him wonder if women are more cautious. “I wish they would come because this is a comfortable, encouraging group,” he says. “It’s a nice mix of people. In the gay venues in the city nobody talks to each other; here there are no barriers.”

The group meets on the final Saturday of each month, although it will get together Dec. 8 because of the holidays. Viola says the group has organized events such as a visit to Boscobel followed by brunch and in the spring hopes to visit a winery and a comedy club. In addition, smaller gatherings such as barbecues have helped build friendships, he says.

One regular, Jimmy Zuehl, who has lived in Philipstown for 10 years, says they have been happy with how the village has embraced them. Zuehl, who works in the travel industry, has formed a spin-off Meetup group called LGBT Travelers of New York, which has about 125 members. Its first big trip is a weeklong cruise to Cuba planned to begin March 5 in Miami. Zuehl says that although he’s encouraged by the size of the Hudson Valley’s LGBTQ population (an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Queer), “we’re still a minority.” While there are many gay couples in Philipstown, he said, “it’s easy not to want to go out and associate with people, but it’s important to meet neighbors because we really should be strong for each other.”

A safe, relaxed place

At the Chill Wine Bar on Main Street in Beacon, owners Patrick McKenna and Jim Svetz often host events for the gay community, including a party Nov. 18 to benefit Hudson Valley Care Services.

“We have been welcomed into the Beacon community for many years,” says Svetz, who opened the wine bar with McKenna a decade ago. “Chill Wine Bar has always been a safe, relaxed, all-inclusive space. Hosting fundraisers, private parties and special events has always been a part of who we are as people and business owners in the community.”

Dogwood Bar, on East Main, hosts a Mid-Hudson Queer Night on the third Tuesday of each month. Typically it is organized around an event such as a Halloween party or talent show, and the turnouts have been large, according to Dogwood owner George Mansfield. “It’s a great meeting place,” Mansfield says. “There isn’t a pickup vibe, everybody mixes and everybody’s welcome.”

Ava Bynum, who, with Rae Leiner, organizes the Queen Nights, praised Mansfield’s “incredible level of support,” which she said has been critical. “The fact that we can use the room is a really big deal, one that not every community gets to have,” she says. “It’s a real mix of all kinds of people and was very intentionally created that way, in order to create a space that was welcoming. We get lots of people coming whom we’ve never met before. It’s been really fun to tap into the growing queer community in Beacon.”

Bynum, who is executive director of Hudson Valley Seed, says she participates in another group, Hudson Valley Queer Outdoors, which organizes monthly hikes and was founded by Air Nonken, her development manager. Bynum says both social clubs offer “opportunities to come together not only to affirm our many identities but also to take a stand for justice and support one another.”

Nonken was inspired to start the hiking group, which meets on the first Saturday of each month, “to give the regional queer community a regular ‘place’ to gather that wasn’t a bar, so that folks who were shy in mingling-type settings, were on a tight budget, weren’t comfortable around drinking, etc., could have an alternative community-building; finding good buddies and enjoying good, unfiltered conversation.”

Nonken continued in an email: “Being outside for so many people is a time to step away from society and commune with greater nature and our inner selves. The hiking club gives queer people the chance to do that in a context where they know they aren’t being judged on their appearance, presentation or partners. The hikes also give us the chance to talk with other queer people about topics related to queer identities and lives — from relationships to clothing choices to discrimination — in a safe and supportive space. Of course we also talk about all kinds of other unrelated things, from sports to work to philosophy!”

Nonken was surprised by the initial response. Within two months, more than 300 people had joined the mailing list, “and I continue to receive messages from queer folks throughout the region sharing how much they’d wanted something like this to exist for years. I also hear each month from queer people in New York City who are considering moving to the area” and are happy to find a community to connect with.
Continental Village Gets a (Small) Tax Break

But aqueduct shutdown may cause water-price spike

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

Continental Village residents received some good news Nov. 9: Their percentage of Continental Village Park District costs should decrease in 2017 because the Town of Cortlandt will pick up a larger portion. In addition, the park district budget is expected to fall by 9 percent.

The Continental Village Park District includes parts of Philipstown and Putnam Valley in Putnam County and Cortlandt in Westchester County. Mike Phelan, who oversees the district, spoke at a short meeting preceding a Philipstown Town Board budget hearing.

Phelan said the district’s 2017 budget would be $190,672. Of that total, Philipstown residents who live in the district will pay 69 percent; Cortlandt residents 24 percent (up from 22 percent) and Putnam Valley residents 7 percent. The Philipstown share went down because the equalization rate is designed to level out taxes when districts cross city and town borders such as this, while Cortlandt went up a couple of points, Phelan said.

Moreover, the 2017 park district budget fell $18,000.

Phelan said the Philipstown decrease reflects complaints at a September Town Board meeting, when residents said they felt their taxes were relatively too high, especially the property taxes they pay to the Lakeland School District. The disparity is due largely to the various ways jurisdictions conduct assessments and attempt to equalize discrepancies. Like the park district, the Lakeland School District includes towns in both Putnam and Westchester.

“IT’s always nice to see a reduction,” Councilor Robert Flaherty said after Phelan’s comments.

Councilor Michael Leonard and Supervisor Richard Shepard praised park district infrastructure efforts. Shepard highlighted a bridge replacement, including plans to transform the previous bridge into a boat launch, as an example of “the height of efficiency and the whole community pulling together.”

Continental Village Water District

Ralph Bassignani, who manages the Continental Village Water District, said its budget will increase $5,775 to $265,790 but additional revenue should offset the increase. However, he said, due to pending improvements to the New York City aqueduct system, from which Continental Village draws its water, “next year is going to be a bear.”

Bassignani told the board that the aqueduct is scheduled to shut down for seven to 17 weeks next year, after being closed for only 10 days this year.

When the aqueduct is not available, Continental Village buys water from Cortlandt. “I’ll be buying water at a huge increase,” Bassignani said.

To help offset it, he said he would seek financial assistance from the aqueduct system, because its repair work will cause Continental Village to pay more for water elsewhere. The Town Board offered to assist with any appeals.

A view of the lake at Continental Village, from a guidebook on the Philipstown government website

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Putnam Legislature Discusses Public Comment (from Page 1)

before the topic goes before the full legislature, Nacerino said.

“If we have input at the full meetings pertaining to questions that perhaps we cannot answer at that particular time, it only retards the whole process because we’d have to table it back to a committee in order to do our fact-finding,” she said.

Carl Albano (R-Carmel) expressed a similar view.

“We have many committee meetings to discuss these issues,” he said. “That’s really the time for the public to speak. That’s the time to decide on the matter. That’s the time to discuss these issues,” he said. “That’s really similar view. We have many committee meetings to discuss these issues, Dini LoBue (R-Mahopac Falls) said that was not always the case. Rather, a committee discussed a topic and passed it along to the full legislature at its monthly meeting. During committee meetings, legislators often ask questions of department heads and consultants, but “when we go to the full, the public wants to address us.”

Albano said he thought it essential that legislators attend the meetings of committee other than those on which they serve. “I feel it was a mistake when legislators didn’t go to committee meetings,” he said. “You can’t go to a full meeting and then at that point make a decision based on what you hear.” He added: “We’re willing to spend all the time it takes to get to the point where we make a final vote, but once we’re there to make a final vote, we’re ready to act.”

Southeast Town Councilwoman Lynne Eckhardt, a Democrat, said it is unfair to place the onus on residents to keep track of committee meetings, because they are not held on the same day each month, and starting times vary. Also, she said, residents may not know which committees handle which topics. "A lot of the time when people have comments at the full meeting, they are misinformed," she said. "They do not have all the facts, and if we were to open up a discussion there it would make the meetings chaotic. And the few times we have opened it up, they have been chaotic."

While most if not all legislators attend the various committee meetings, Dini LoBue (R-Mahopac Falls) said that was not always the case. Rather, a committee discussed a topic and passed it along to the full legislature at its monthly meeting. During committee meetings, legislators often ask questions of department heads and consultants, but “when we go to the full, the public wants to address us.”

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Fellow Southeast Town Councilwoman Elizabeth Hudak, a Republican, added: “You need to have more of the public be aware of these meetings.”

Nacerino asked who should raise awareness. “Do we ask ourselves: Is it our fault?” she said. “Or is it incumbent upon those who are interested enough to do what is necessary to find and attend meetings?”

She also pointed out that residents can call or email legislators or the legislative office, or listen to meetings on the county website.

LoBue suggested making the website more user-friendly so residents can pull up the calendar and find agendas and background information.
Beacon Names New Poet Laureate
Tony Pena inspired by heart beneath grit
By Alison Rooney

As a teenager, Tony Pena fancied himself a rock 'n roll poet in the vein of Patti Smith, Lou Reed and Jim Carroll. He took the train from his home in White Plains to hang out in the city, wearing a "long black coat with my notebook in one pocket and a bottle of Mr. Boston Blackberry Brandy sticking out from the other, hanging out at McSorleys, The White Horse Tavern and A Kettle of Fish," he recalls with a laugh.

But he couldn't sing so well, so he focused on words. Now, many years later, he has been named the third Poet Laureate of Beacon, succeeding Thomas O'Connell. Pena, whose two-year term begins Jan. 1, was introduced Nov. 15 at the Howland Public Library by Beacon Mayor Randy Casale.

In his early years writing poetry, Pena often read at The Poetry Project at St. Mark's Church in the East Village and submitted his work (by mail, in those days, with a self-addressed envelope folded inside for the inevitable returns) to poetry magazines like Slipstream and Poetry Space that paid in contributor copies. But, as usually happens, "responsibilities kicked in and I couldn't play out the dream," he recalls. "The urgency was gone and I had a drawer full of manuscripts and torn strips of paper with phrases on them."

After a second marriage and a move to Beacon in the early 2000s, Pena found his voice again, writing fiction, lyrics and poetry. In 2010 he performed his work for the first time in years at an open mic organized by Calling All Poets.

"It went well and gave me the ability to work on my old rock 'n roll aspirations, fleshing out words with performance," he says. "My strength is still in writing, but it has value added through performances because it's all about the passion and getting people to dig it."

He also read his work at venues in Woodstock and Kingston and five years ago published a chap book with 18 poems, Opening Night in Gehenna. A more recent volume, Blood & Beats & Rock & Roll is available on Amazon.com. He also has made a number of videos in which he perform his poetry; see youtube.com/tonypenapoetry.

Pena says he has an affinity for the gritty. "I'm captivated by the heart that beats underneath the grit," he says. "I feel comfortable writing prose poems from the underdog perspective, trying to inhabit it." He hopes that readers of his work find that "once it gets going, you go into this place; it's very dark in there, you really don't know how it's going to come across."

The poet says living in Beacon provides plenty of inspiration. "Beacon has always been a hardscrabble town," he says. "It's the common man and woman here who inspire me." He hopes to inspire others to appreciate poetry. "Many people don't 'get' poetry," he says. "I want to foster a love of poetry from young people to seniors and don't want them to be intimidated. I want them to see that it's another way of understanding the world we live in. I want to put poetry where you don't normally see it."

By day Pena is a numbers guy, working as a government accountant. He says his dual interests may reflect his parents: his father was a Spanish-language professor, and his mother, who worked in warehouses, wrote out multiplication tables every day.

The Beacon Poet Laureate's responsibilities are to present poetry readings at schools, the Howland library and civic celebrations, as well as serve on the committee to appoint a successor. Pena says he also would like to present workshops and readings in less traditional settings, such as the Beacon Farmers' Market.

Beacon's 2017/18 Poet Laureate, Tony Pena

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Patter
By Tony Pena

A billion bubbles bounce and scatter on the window pane like a quick paradiddle on a snare with pieces of your heart beating along in unbridled time to a jazz wild with longing for a poet drunk on the Eden of your eyes to wrap you in dry garments and cradle the scared puppy in you during the storm.

Crank
By Tony Pena

I'll keep an ironclad poem in my denim jacket pocket
A string of words by my heart to ward off silver bullets while wrestling rusted gears to open the drawbridge to a mind too often closed by fears of delusional design

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FRIDAY, NOV. 18
Gift Shop Holiday Sale
10 a.m. – 7 p.m. Boscobel, | 1501 Route 9D, Cold Spring | 845-265-3638 | boscobel.org

Holiday Pottery Show & Sale (Opening)
5 – 8 p.m. Garrison Art Center
23 Garrison’s Landing, Garrison
845-424-3960 | garrisonartcenter.org

International Games Night
8:30 – 9:30 p.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave., Cold Spring
845-265-3040 | butterfieldlibrary.org

International Film Night: Everybody’s Famous!
(Thursday)
7 p.m. Howland Public Library
313 Main St., Beacon
845-831-1134 | beaconlibrary.org

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Calendar Highlights
For upcoming events visit highlandscurrent.com. Send event listings to calendar@highlandscurrent.com

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Lounge Dance Night
7 – 9 p.m. Beacon Elks Lodge
90 Wolcott Ave., Beacon | beaconelks1493.com

Sebastian Maniscalco (Comedy)
7 p.m. Mid-Hudson Civic Center
14 Civic Center Plaza, Poughkeepsie
845-454-5800 | midhudsonciviccenter.org

The Beacon Players: Grease
7 p.m. Beacon High School | 101 Matteawan Road, Beacon | 845-838-6900 x3420 | beaconplayers.com

Depot Docs: Life, Animated
7:30 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
10 Garrison’s Landing, Garrison
845-424-3900 | philipstowndepottheatre.org

The Last Five Years
8 p.m. County Players | 2681 W. Main St., Wappingers Falls | 845-298-1481 | countyplayers.org

SATURDAY, NOV. 19
Harvest Sale
9 a.m. – Noon. St. Philip’s (Parish House)
1101 Route 9D, Garrison | stphilipshighlands.org

Ski Swap and Fundraiser
9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Fahnestock Winter Park
1570 Route 301, Carmel
716-913-1641 | paul.kuznia@parks.ny.gov

Conscious Entrepreneurship: Profit + Purpose (Opens)
9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. Beekhove
291 Main St., Beacon | artidolcollective.org

Harvest Sale
10 a.m. – Noon. First Presbyterian Church
10 Academy St., Cold Spring | 845-265-3220

Holiday Pottery Show & Sale
10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Garrison Art Center
See details under Friday.

Army vs. Morgan State (Football)
Noon. Michele Stadium, West Point
845-938-2526 | gogameports.com

The Drunken Pumpkin
Noon – 6 p.m. Fishkill Farms
Fishkill Farm Road, Hopewell Junction
eventbrite.com/e/the-drunken-pumpkin

Holiday Soap-Making Workshop
1 – 4 p.m. Outdoor Discovery Center
100 Muser Drive, Cornwall
845-534-6506, ext. 204 | hhnaturemuseum.org

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The Tempest & The Sword in the Stone
2 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
See details under Friday.

Jazz Vespers
5:30 p.m. First Presbyterian Church
10 Academy St., Cold Spring | 845-265-3220

Tribute to Tom Pacheco
6 – 10 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St., Beacon
845-831-4988 | howlandculturalcenter.org

Silent Film Series: Singin’ (1924)
7 p.m. Butterfield Library | See details under Friday.

The Beacon Players: Grease
7 p.m. Beacon High School | Details under Friday.

Darlene Love
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
1008 Brown St., Peekskill
914-739-0039 | paramounthudsonvalley.com

The Last Five Years
8 p.m. County Players | See details under Friday.

SUNDAY, NOV. 20
Holiday Pottery Show & Sale
10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Garrison Art Center
See details under Friday.

Hudson Valley Wine & Chocolate Festival
11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Ramada Conference Center
542 Route 9, Fishkill
845-278-7272 | partnerswithparc.info

Intro to Beekeeping with William O’Farra
1 – 4 p.m. Stone Kill Farm
79 Farmstead Lane, Wappingers Falls
845-831-1617 | stonekill.org

Seasonal Self-Care for Families (Talk)
1 p.m. Butterfield Library | See details under Friday.

The Beacon Players: Grease
2 p.m. Beacon High School | Details under Friday.

Concert for Haiti
3 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
See details under Saturday.

The Colonial Nutcracker
3 p.m. Eisenhower Hall Theatre | 655 Ruger Road, West Point | 845-938-4159 | jkewhall.com

Breakneck Ridge Revue
7:30 p.m. Towne Crier Café
379 Main St., Beacon
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

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Holiday Pottery Show & Sale
Black Friday at the Holiday Pottery Show
Friday, November 25, 10 – 5pm
Skip the malls, shop local and support your local art center and artists!

Garrison Art Center
garrisonartcenter.org

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MONDAY, NOV. 21
Holiday Pottery Show & Sale
10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Garrison Art Center
See details under Friday.

Beacon City Council
7 p.m. City Hall (Courtroom)
1 Municipal Plaza, Beacon
845-839-5011 | cityofbeacon.org

Beacon School Board
7 p.m. Beacon High School
101 Matteawan Road, Beacon
845-838-6900 | beacoschool.org

Garrison Fire District Meeting
7 p.m. Garrison Firehouse | 1616 Route 9, Garrison
845-424-4406 | garrisonfd.org

Neuillyville Board of Trustees
7:30 p.m. Village Hall | 258 Main St., Neuillyville
845-265-2500 | villageofneuillyville.org

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TUESDAY, NOV. 22
Holiday Pottery Show & Sale
10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Garrison Art Center
See details under Friday.

Beacon Historical Society
7 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St., Beacon
845-831-0514 | beaconhistorical.org

Board of Trustees
7:30 p.m. Village Hall | 85 Main St., Cold Spring
845-265-3611 | coldspringny.gov

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WEDNESDAY, NOV. 23
Holiday Pottery Show & Sale
10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Garrison Art Center
See details under Friday.

Haldane Senior Class Bake Sale
10 a.m. Foodtown
49 Chestnut Street, Cold Spring

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THURSDAY, NOV. 24
Thanksgiving Day
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FRIDAY, NOV. 25
Holiday Pottery Show & Sale
10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Garrison Art Center
See details under Nov. 18.

Not My Life (Documentary)
7 p.m. First Presbyterian Church
50 Liberty St., Beacon
moviesthatmatterbeacon.org

Jim Brickman: Comfort and Joy
10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
914-739-0039 | paramounthudsonvalley.com

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November 18, 2016
The Highlands Current
highlandscurrent.com
The Power of Protest
Beacon resident creates nonprofit to promote the right of assembly

By Brian PJ Cronin

During the day, Dan Aymar-Blair of Beacon works as a senior executive at the New York City Department of Education. But for the two hours and 20 minutes a day he’s sitting on a Metro-North train, he’s thinking about crowds.

Over the last two years Aymar-Blair has been using his commute to and from the city to research the First Amendment, specifically the freedom of assembly. He studied what civil rights groups have done over the past decade to protect the right and, during those precious moments where the train was close enough to a wi-fi signal, exchanged emails with experts on free speech.

Last month, Aymar-Blair and co-founder Patrick McEvoy unveiled the nonprofit Article 20 Network, and at 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 4, the group will host its first event, “A Toast to Human Rights” at Dogwood, 47 E. Main St. Aymar-Blair said he will talk about the history and importance of the freedom of assembly and describe the programming he has in mind. The name references Article 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations in 1948, which states that “everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly” and that “no one may be compelled to belong to an association.”

When Aymar-Blair sat down to speak with The Current about the Article 20 Network a week after the U.S. presidential election, he noted it was also the five-year anniversary of two events he said marked “the end of my street activism”:

Members of the Occupy Wall Street movement being evicted from Zuccotti Park in New York City, and the birth of his first child.

A lifelong activist, Aymar-Blair said that at the time he had become disillusioned with public protests, which he called “pa-rades without floats.”

“The police know you’re going to be there, they set up barricades, there’s a predetermined route, you turn right here, left here, and at the end it just petered out and everyone goes home,” he said.

But the sustained encampments that fueled the Arab Spring movement and Occupy Wall Street showed ways that peaceful protests could be effective, he said. Protests by members of Black Lives Matter in response to killings of unarmed black men by law enforcement also encouraged Aymar-Blair. “We hadn’t seen an upswell of protests all across the country like that in quite some time,” he said. “Most important, it was making a difference. And the question of effectiveness was something that had been bothering me for a long time.”

Aymar-Blair initially thought he would create an app that could be used to organize protests. But making it secure would require a lengthy development cycle that made him restless. He decided to learn more about the freedom of assembly during his commute, which led him to conclude that while many groups touch on the right, there wasn’t an organization dedicated to protecting and strengthening it.

He began a correspondence with Alycee Lane, an Oakland-based author of Nonviolence Now!: Living the 1963 Birmingham Campaign’s Promise of Peace, which examines the commitment cards to nonviolence that anti-segregation protesters carried. (Continued on Page 12)
in Birmingham. Aymar-Blair asked Lane if he knew of a contemporary version, and Lane responded by creating one. It became the first project of the Article 20 Network and is provided as a free download at a20n.org.

The pledge has since been retrieved more than 500 times, said Aymar-Blair, who is now working on a 10-day lesson plan for high school history classes that adheres to Common Core standards. He also is assembling resources for ministers and faith groups, a manual for police officers who must manage crowds while protecting expression, and checklists that towns and municipalities can use to safely and effectively protect freedom of assembly.

The first tweet by president-elect Donald Trump after the election suggested Aymar-Blair and his volunteers may have their work cut out for them. “Just had a very open and successful presidential election,” Trump wrote. “Now professional protesters, incited by the media, are protesting. Very unfair!”

The tweet was “chilling,” said Aymar-Blair. “It verified what we suspected his real attitude is toward the First Amendment and freedom of assembly. We’ve seen him, over the last eight months, inciting violence and encouraging violence against protesters. At one point he referred to the act of protest as ‘disgusting.’ ”

Fairness “isn’t really the question,” Aymar-Blair said. “It’s their right to protest. They could be protesting anything.” And the protests are expected to continue. A women’s march is planned for Jan. 21 in Washington, D.C., and a monthslong encampment at Standing Rock, North Dakota, to protest an oil pipeline continues to draw attention. Aymar-Blair said that the level of mobilization taking place is unlike anything he’s ever seen, and it’s bringing new allies into the fold.

“Before the election our group was seven people, and now we’re up to 14,” he said. “People who I had been trying to get involved before the election who said they didn’t have time are writing me and saying ‘OK, I’m in.’”

The Power of Protest (from Page 11)

Dan Aymar-Blair, left, and Alycee Lane
Catching Up With ... John Griffiths
The Garrison principal, in his second year, talks innovation

By Alison Rooney

It's really busy here — there's so much energy — and so much potential energy,” says John Griffiths, a few months into his second year as principal at Garrison Union Free School, which has 208 students from kindergarten through eighth grade. He says he was drawn to the school from his tenured position in the Somers district by the opportunity to innovate.

Asked to describe some of the changes underway, Griffiths began with Project Lead the Way, a science, technology, engineering and mathematics system used in the third to fifth grades that focuses on collaborative problem-solving strategies applied to real-world design challenges. Students use an iPad application to construct a test model before building a model as part of the Engineering and Writing Project in part “because it takes into account that if there are 20 kids, there could be 20 levels.” Most of the instructional time is spent on individual assignments. “Rather than having a reading textbook, it’s a strategy of giving them their own reading material, and having the teacher confer with each of them,” Griffiths explained.

Garrison began a new rotation this year of “specials” — art, physical education and music. It had included library, but that was cut from the schedule for middle school students because of “specials” — art, physical education and music. Griffiths explained.

Griffiths recruited a middle-school teacher, Ian Berger, who is interested in teacher, and he says that “last year I saw a real lack of skills in how our students could confidently present their ideas to their peers. Watching debates, I found an inability to listen for the flaws in their opponents’ arguments.”

In terms of technology on hand, Griffiths said every middle school student this year was assigned a Google Chromebook, and laptops were added to each classroom in the elementary grades. Last year all fifth- through eighth-graders were given a school-use Google email account, with access to all Google apps; that has been extended this year to third- and fourth-graders.

In addition, teachers are able to use Google Classroom and Google Drive, which allows students to complete and submit homework online for grading. “It’s not just tech for tech’s sake, but it’s their homework as well,” Griffiths said.

As a result of the rotation change, the Library Media Specialist position had its hours reduced significantly, something Griffiths called “a tough decision.” The teacher in that position wound up departing for another job.

In literacy and speech, Griffiths is very concerned that so many kids are staring at phones constantly,” he said. “They’ve been asked to notice two new things while walking between buildings and also to think about somebody who really should have a good day, adult or student. Our school counselor reports no giggling, no noise. It’s been amazing seeing that some very simple, deliberate directives are helping them move through the school day.”

The campus, meanwhile, is undergoing capital improvements. Each kindergarten through fifth-grade classroom has new furniture, while a team of students, teachers and community members are re-designing what used to be the speech and special education room into a nontraditional learning space.

A small school garden, managed by Hudson Valley Seed, has been moved to a brighter, 40-by-50-foot plot with three raised beds. Students grow vegetables, most of which are donated to a Beacon food pantry and the rest used for educational activities.

Suzi Tortora’s Dancing Dialogue
Dance · movement · music
story play · socialize

Dads’ Dance December 3
10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

BabyMovesBabyCues
Rolling Babies ages: Newborn - 8 months
Contact Suzi at: suzitortora@mac.com
or call 845.265.1085
26 Main St., Cold Spring, NY 10516
www.dancingdialogue.com

UNLIMITED CLASSES NOW ONLY $49 / MONTH!
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ON THE FLY CYCLING STUDIO
ON THE FLY CYCLING STUDIO
3021 RT 9 | COLD SPRING NY 10516
Neighbors Ask State to Close Indian Brook Falls (from Page 1)

Another resident, Jerry Albanese, told the board that often there are so many people in the road, so many cars, you simply cannot drive down Indian Brook. “No emergency vehicle would ever get through,” Albanese said. Philipstown has installed additional no-parking signs, but neighbors say drivers ignore them despite enforcement efforts by the Putnam County Sheriff’s Department. A resident told the board that, according to the Sheriff’s Department, deputies issued 111 tickets and had 106 cars towed between May and October. She said traffic is so dense on summer weekends that residents often cannot leave, or return home, because vehicles line the road and sometimes stop in the middle, engines running, waiting for a parking spot.

Some drivers get aggressive when challenged, residents reported. Leslie Pileggi told The Current that drivers often park alongside her home, located close to the road, blocking her egress. When she approached one, she recalled, he responded with an obscenity, asking who gave her the right to tell him where to park.

Pileggi likewise mentioned teenage boys and young men leaping from the cliff into the water. Indian Brook Falls is “becoming a big party place,” she said. “They’re drinking openly. They’re smoking pot openly. Someone is going to end up dead.” She recommending limiting, but not banning, access.

Samara Mormor, another neighbor, expressed fears of harm not only to people but to the land. “It’s sort of a delicate ecosystem that gets out of whack on weekends” when crowds descend, Mormor said. “My experience has been that many visitors don’t have respect for that delicacy.”

A parking area on Indian Brook Road provides eight spaces for Audubon Center visitors. But swimmers often grab them, neighbors reported.

In an August email to state park officials, Eric Lind, the director of the Audubon Center, said that “the swimming issue at Indian Brook waterfall continues to be a stressful and difficult problem,” generating complaints “from people who want to visit the marsh but have no place to park, as our lot is full all day with vehicles from illegal swimmers.” Swimming parties also leave trash, which Audubon staff collect, he added.

Lind told neighbors he had contacted Linda Cooper, director of the Taconic Region for the New York parks department, to recommend tougher parking enforcement, more signage and “a trail closure until a permanent solution is found.”

To support their cause, residents presented Town Board members with Lind’s emails and other documents. Town Supervisor Richard Shea urged more state and county action. “What we can do as a town, we’re pretty much done,” he said. “I do think that with more ticketing and towing, eventually word will get around” on social media, blamed for spawning the increase in visitors.

Shea likewise said the town could help subsidize more policing, “but it’s tough to rationalize, because we have so little discretionary funding. And it’s a problem that does need to be addressed by New York State.”

Councillor Nancy Montgomery said the issues extend from Indian Brook Falls to Breakneck on Route 9D and beyond. “We have our parks, our land, overrun with graffiti and garbage,” she said. (Graffiti mars the understructure of the Route 9D bridge near the waterfall.) The town can’t handle such problems at Indian Brook Falls, she said. “But are we going to be able to close it down? I don’t think so.”

Cooper said at the Nov. 3 meeting she didn’t foresee an easy solution. “We don’t want to stop access and prevent people from enjoying the out-of-doors,” she said. “But we do want to teach them an environmental ethic.”

She told residents and Town Board that “what you’ve been able to enjoy to yourselves, just the people that live here, because of social media is now being discovered and enjoyed by a much broader audience.”

“Everybody wants to strike that balance,” Shea said. “You don’t want to drive people away,” but Indian Brook Falls “is a really fragile area” and too many excursions “can overwhelm and ruin it.”

What Brings Visitors to the Falls

Lately, some sites add words of caution

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

Search the internet for “Indian Brook Falls” and you’ll find a number of blogs, magazine articles and recreation sites that recommend a visit to the waterfall. In June 2015, New York magazine quoted a musician calling Indian Brook Falls “one of the best undiscovered waterfalls. You park underneath a big suspension bridge, hike for 10 minutes, and then it’s like an oasis. You can swim around behind the waterfall to sit on the rocks back there.”

Several readers objected, noting that swimming at the falls is illegal. One also wrote: “Your advice was irresponsible. There is no parking here and many of us were ticketed and also towed! Thanks tons!”

The site See/Swim review of Indian Spring Falls [sic] advised visitors to park in the Audubon Center spots. An update said the site was only a “see” location.

The mother who blogs at Cuddles and Chaos shared photos of children exploring the brook and swimming beneath the falls. “The water was crystal clear and running slowly when we went,” she wrote. “Next time, we’ll pack a lunch to eat on the rocks while we’re there.” A postscript noted: “You’re not supposed to swim there. I didn’t realize until we were leaving, but there is a No Swimming sign posted on one of the trees.”

In its review, Hike the Hudson Valley cautions: “Constitution Marsh has made the very reasonable request for folks to please not illegally swim at Indian Brook Falls while taking up a parking spot at Constitution Marsh. The falls are unaffiliated with Constitution Marsh, and the visitors’ center lets visitors park here to visit the falls out of the goodness of their hearts — a goodness that you will be testing if you leave your car parked here all day while enjoying an illegal frolic.”

Finally, the Outbound Collective calls the waterfall “a great spot for the whole family to take in its beauty” and notes the swimming ban, although a reader dismissed it as being posted only for liability reasons. “When we were leaving,” the reader wrote, “an entire coach bus showed up with children on a field trip who were going to the falls. It was one of the nicest, purest waterfalls I’ve ever been to and I plan on going back in a few days.”
Fjord Trail Route May Change
Dockside being reconsidered for Cold Spring section

By Michael Turton

The Cold Spring portion of the proposed Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail linking Cold Spring and Beacon may be altered as a result of concerns raised before and during a public meeting Nov. 14.

The trail’s master plan calls for the Cold Spring end of the nine-mile route to travel from the Metro-North train platform to Main Street, then north along Fair Street to Route 9D and to Little Stony Point.

At the Nov. 14 meeting at Dutchess Manor, which was attended by about 75 people, a number of Fair Street residents repeated their opposition to the route, citing what they say is a significant increase in pedestrian traffic on the street and sidewalk even before construction has begun.

A woman who lives on Fair Street but did not identify herself said that hazardous conditions would only increase once bicyclists begin using the trail. “Bikes can’t ride on the sidewalk and the street is too narrow” to support a bicycle lane, she argued.

She added that Fair Street residents already find it difficult to pull out of their driveways and that children can’t play on the sidewalks due to the large number of hikers heading to and from Breakneck Ridge, especially on weekends.

Kacala has contacted Metro-North, a consultant firm drafting the Environmental Impact Statement for the project, stressed the need to address the issues raised about rerouting through their neighborhood.

The proposed route of the Fjord Trail through the Breakneck Connector, will move forward, but the rest of the proposed route remains open to discussion, she said. However, she asked, “Will doing nothing help?” The problems, she said, already exist, and the trail planning process is designed to address them.

After hearing the litany of complaints, Kacala noted that a “no build” decision is an option. The section of trail from the Breakneck whistle stop to the trailhead, known as the Breakneck Connector, will move forward, but the rest of the proposed route remains open to discussion, she said.

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John Teagle, a member of the Little Stony Point Citizens Association, suggested the trail may make the situation better by spreading usage out over the entire corridor, rather than focused at Breakneck. If more people take the train from Beacon or hike from there, and with planned improvements to parking, Teagle said that some of the burden Cold Spring faces may be reduced. “It may end up that a lot of what people are complaining about will improve, and there will be economic benefit,” he said.

Steve Smith, chief of the Cold Spring Fire Company, complimented planners for listening to his ideas and redesigning the area near the Breakneck tunnel after he pointed out the problems that first responders have experienced when parking large emergency vehicles there. “They helped us out big time,” he said. “They’re working with everybody.”

Chris Robbins of AKRF, Inc., the consulting firm drafting the Environmental Impact Statement for the project, stressed the review will cover a range of impacts from environmental and economic to projected visitor use and its effect on the community.

A seven-day field assessment will include a detailed analysis of the trail route, he said. A seven-day field assessment will include a detailed analysis of the trail route, he said.

Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail
MASTER PLAN

Photo by M. Turton

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Author to Read from Memoir
Growing up in a one-room farmhouse

Catherine Marenghi will read from her new memoir, Glad Farm, at the Desmond-Fish Library in Garrison at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 20. The book, which will be available for sale, chronicles Marenghi’s childhood growing up in a one-room farmhouse in Milford as the fourth of five children.

After achieving success as a journalist, she was able to provide her family with better living conditions. Her other publications include poetry and two books of nonfiction. Marenghi is donating half the proceeds from her book sales to Habitat for Humanity.

Meet the Animals
Nature museum will be open over holiday weekend

The Wildlife Education Center at the Hudson Highlands Nature Museum in Cornwall will be open Friday, Saturday and Sunday following Thanksgiving from noon to 4 p.m. each day. Children are invited to stop by to meet the animals and for craft projects.

Museum educators will share information about the center’s animals, including what they had to eat for Thanksgiving, at 1 and 2:30 p.m. each day. Admission is $3; children ages 3 and younger are free. For more information, visit hhnaturemuseum.org.

Artisan Market in Nelsonville
New shared space will host sale Nov. 26

On Saturday, Nov. 26, a new shared work and play space in Nelsonville, Create Community, will host a market featuring more than 20 artisans selling handcrafted items. It will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and include retailers such as Kristi S. Wright Papercrafts, Love Grandma Jean baked goods, M & N Jewelry Design along with bath and body products, apparel and home and garden items. For more details, see facebook.com/createcommunity.

Haldane High School to Celebrate Honor
Community invited to Blue Ribbon ceremony

Community members are invited to join Haldane High School students and faculty at plaque dedication and flag-raising at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 29, to celebrate the selection by the U.S. Department of Education of Haldane High as a Blue Ribbon School.

Superintendent Diana Bowers, middle school principal Julie Sniffen, former Haldane High School principal Brian Alm and Haldane Faculty Association President Andrea McCue attended a ceremony in Washington, D.C., earlier this month to accept the award. Haldane was one of 54 public high schools in the nation honored this year with Blue Ribbon status.

A Murder Mystery in the Highlands
Cold Spring inspires British writer

A British writer, IJ Benneyworth, has published a novel, Dark River, set in a fictional Hudson River town based in part on his visits to Cold Spring. “I spent many hours walking around, taking photos, soaking up the atmosphere of the town and the walking trail near the Foundry, and of course enjoying a burger and truffle fries at the Depot,” he said. “The town and county of Independence might be fictional and inspired by many different places, but I hope I’ve captured some of the character of the Hudson area.”

The book focuses on a single mother who, as the town’s sheriff, uncovers the truth behind the apparent suicide of a lawyer. Dark River can be downloaded at Amazon.com for the Kindle.

Assistance Available for Energy Bills
Feds and Central Hudson offer help

The federal government will offer grants of $350 to $490 through Putnam and Dutchess county social services offices for fixed- and low-income customers who need assistance with winter heating bills.

Eligibility is based on family income and size and if a vulnerable individual is in the household. For example, a family of four earning up to $4,423 per month (or $53,071 per year) may qualify. The program also offers assistance with heating equipment repair or replacement.

To learn more, visit mybenefits.ny.gov or call 845-986-3249 in Dutchess County or 845-808-1500 in Putnam and ask about the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). There is also information at cenrulehudson.com/heap.

Visit highlandscurrent.com for news updates and latest information.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Haldane Senior Class to Host Bake Sale
Will help fund service trip to New Orleans

Haldane’s Class of 2017 will hold a bake sale on Wednesday, Nov. 23 starting at 10 a.m. outside Foodtown to raise money to fund a service trip to New Orleans to work with Habitat for Humanity. The students will have homemade pies, cakes and breads.

Haldane photo Catherine Marenghi

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Library to Hold 24th Annual Holiday Sale
Desmond-Fish event begins Nov. 26

The Desmond-Fish Library in Garrison will open its 24th annual holiday market at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 26. It continues Thursday to Sunday through Dec. 11 during library hours. The sale includes balsam wreaths, pottery, soaps, hand knits, gourmet treats and jewelry. See desmondfishlibrary.org/boutique.

Beacon
Visual Conversation
Howland show on view until Dec. 3

The Howland Public Library is showcasing the work of two Beacon artists who happen to be friends, Anna Bergin and Dana Devine O’Malley, through Dec. 3. The exhibit, Intro to Mind Pong, includes paintings by Bergin and mixed media by O’Malley.

Breakneck Ridge Revue Returns to Crier
Music rooted in American folk

On Sunday, Nov. 20, the Breakneck Ridge Revue returns to the Towne Crier Café in Beacon for a sequel to its inaugural show over the summer. Led by Andrew Revkin, a songwriter and instrumentalist, and David Ross, a singer and guitarist, the revue includes a mix of traditional, classic and original songs rooted in American folk. Guests include poet T.R. Hummer, musician Chris Brown, balladeer Susan Reid Bozsó and Susan English. Tickets are $15 at townecrier.com. The show begins at 7:30 p.m.

Benefit for Haiti
Funds to assist residents who lost homes to Matthew

The Beacon Sloop Club will host a benefit concert for Haiti at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 20 at the Howland Cultural Center in Beacon. Organizers from the Haitian People’s Support Project will speak about their work bringing food and supplies to the former residents of Jeremie, which was destroyed in October by Hurricane Matthew. Open Book, Gaia Wolf and One Sky with Mighty Xee and EC Lorick will perform, and there will also be a bake sale. The suggested donation is $20. Call 845-399-5359 for information.

A solo show of work by Beth Haber based on Herman Melville’s Moby Dick, Open Attachments, is on view at the Theo Ganz Studio in Beacon through Dec. 4.

Visit highlandscurrent.com for news updates and latest information.
Long Dock Expansion Moves Closer to Vote

River pool appears unlikely to be part of plan

By Jeff Simms

Scenic Hudson hopes to gain approval next month for its plans to expand Long Dock Park in Beacon, but the land trust still faces criticism for its decision not to host the Beacon River Pool.

The organization’s proposal calls for adding lawns, café tables and chairs, a boardwalk and infrastructure for up to two food trucks on four acres that would complement the existing park, which opened in 2011. Eighteen parking spaces also would be added, bringing the total to 79.

Meg Rasmussen, a park planner with Scenic Hudson, said Nov. 16 that construction could begin in the spring if the Beacon Planning Board approves the proposal in December. However, Scenic Hudson’s Nov. 9 appearance before the board — a public hearing continued from the month before — was dominated by discussion of its reluctance to provide a home for the 17-foot fiberglass river pool, which has been located at Seeger Riverside Park, 25 feet north of Long Dock, since 2007. The existing pool is nearing the end of its design life and sits in only three feet of water. More than 1,000 people use the pool each year, according to board members.

The river pool board inquired several years ago about moving the pool to deeper water near Long Dock Park, but Scenic Hudson declined, citing liability concerns.

At the Nov. 9 meeting, Rasmussen was peppered with questions about the pool. Board Chair Jay Sheers seemed puzzled, questioning how the organization could operate a kayak pavilion — one of the most popular features at Long Dock — but decline to work with the pool.

“Too me,” Sheers said, “many, many more people know how to swim than to operate a kayak safely. It’s mind-boggling to me that that’s less of a liability than a staffed swimming pool.”

Rasmussen noted that Scenic Hudson doesn’t fear liability from swimming-related injuries, “but we would be liable under a suit where someone claimed there shouldn’t have been a river pool installed at all.”

Sheers wasn’t appeased. “You’ve had three neighbors on this project,” he said. “The yacht club you got rid of; you have the river pool that you’re driving out, and you’ve marginalized the sloop club, from my point of view.”

Rasmussen said Scenic Hudson has been mischaracterized as not wanting the river pool at Long Dock, but “from an organizational standpoint, we’re not comfortable with the liability that we would indeed have.”

Sheers shot back: “The oversight is making sure their insurance is up-to-date once a year. What else is there?”

Citing the inability to staff or manage a river pool, Rasmussen said the debate has detracted from the decades of work the land trust has put into Long Dock. “Scenic Hudson has provided this park in a place that was an oil storage facility,” she said.

“It can be a little disheartening that there’s a perception that Scenic Hudson isn’t doing its part for river access.”

Rasmussen seemed to indicate on Nov. 16 that further discussions with the river pool are not likely, saying the organization gave its proposal “our greatest consideration.” River pool supporters have said they may have to relocate elsewhere on the river, outside of Beacon, if a suitable location can’t be found.
Color this turkey to display at your Thanksgiving table.

**Happy Turkey Day!**

Thank You Notes
Give these coupons to family and friends before Thanksgiving dinner.

- I'm thankful for: 
- I'm thankful for: 
- I'm thankful for: 

Stones in the stomach?
A part of the turkey's stomach contains tiny stones that the bird has previously swallowed. This organ has strong muscles and uses the stones to grind up food. Color the spaces with one dot to see what it is called.

How many turkey drumsticks can you find on this page?

**Color me after reading!**

The head of a turkey has very few feathers. But, it does have a snood and a wattle!

The snood is a fleshy body part that hangs over the turkey's throat. When a turkey becomes frightened, agitated, or ill, the snood and wattle can change from their usual pale pink or bluish gray color to red, white, or blue.

How many turkey drumsticks can you find on this page?

**Thankful**
Look through the newspaper and circle five or more things you are thankful for. Choose one and write a sentence telling why you are thankful for it.

**Write On!**
Thanksgiving Holiday Spirit
What is the holiday spirit? How do you and members of your family show holiday spirit?

**Double Word Search**
Find the words in the puzzle. Then look for each word in this week's Kid Scoop stories and activities.

- BESIRPRUS
- EHSERGRIND
- FTCEUOTHHR
- LKAANLOKEE
- EANMMDTHLN
- SECAROSTGN
- HBGIHVTIAI
- YEKRUTNSEW
- GDEWOLLAWS

**Kid Scoop Puzzler**
Help the gravy boat reach the mashed potatoes.

**Kid Scoop Together:**
How to draw a turkey
Draw a turkey in seven easy steps. Practice drawing this turkey several times. Then on Thanksgiving, teach your family and friends how to draw it, too!
Haldane Football Advances to Final Four

One win away from playing for Class D state championship

After winning the Section 1, Class D championship game Nov. 5, the Haldane football team advanced Nov. 12 to the final four of the state tournament with a 14-6 victory in Kingston over Section 9 champ Roscoe/Downsville/Livingston Manor. The last time the program won two state tournament games was 2007. The team that won tournament games before that was the 2000 squad, when Coach Ryan McConville was a sophomore linebacker for the Blue Devils.

Haldane next plays at 4 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 18, against the Section 2 champion, Cambridge (11-0), which defeated Ticonderoga, 55-28. The game will be at Dietz Stadium in Kingston. Cambridge is an offensive powerhouse that has won each of its games this season by at least 27 points and scored at least 50 points in 8 of its 11 contests.

In the victory over Roscoe, quarterback Brandon Twoguns started the scoring with a 70-yard touchdown run. Roscoe scored in the second quarter and Sam Giachinta clinched the win in the fourth quarter with a 12-yard run. He finished with 144 yards on 21 attempts.

Quarterback Brandon Twoguns races for a 70-yard touchdown in the first quarter of Haldane’s 14-6 win. Photo by Kim Giachinta

Sam Giachinta (44) carries the ball against Roscoe behind a block by VJ Fina (62). Photo by Michael Haines

Haldane Cross-Country Ends Season at State Finals

Boys and girls both finish eighth in state in Class D

The boys’ and girls’ cross-country teams at Haldane both finished eighth in the 5,000-meter final at the Class D state championships held Nov. 12 at Chenango Valley. Maple Grove in Beamus Point, located in the northwest part of the state near Lake Erie, won the Class D state championship, while Greenwich Central, east of Saratoga Springs, won the girls’ state championship.

Boys
13. Adam Silhavy 16:51.90
45. Nick Farrell 17:46.60
84. Matthew Mikalsen 19:09.10
85. Ellis Osterfeld 19:11.90
108. Andrew Silhavy 20:01.20
111. Kyle Kisslinger 20:52.90

Girls
43. Shannon Ferri 20:46.70
60. Taylor Farrell 21:55.20
70. Heather Winne 22:37.00
98. Meghan Ferri 24:46.90
102. Ruby McEwen 24:57.70

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