Toy Donation Drive for Children Affected by Ebola

Denniston International, a Cold Spring–based charity, is collecting

By Alison Rooney

At the top of one of the main pages on Denniston International’s website is a quote from South African novelist Marion Molteno: “No one ever knows if the little we do makes a difference. But we need to do it just the same.” Putting that statement to work, Danielle Pack McCarthy, the founder of Denniston International, a small, local 501(c)(3) nonprofit, has organized an ongoing toy drive, collecting donated new and gently used toys, games and more and delivering them to children affected by the Ebola epidemic in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Denniston International (DI) has a mission “to empower underserved children and youth worldwide to live happy lives and contribute to their world.” It approaches that mission in manageable ways, stemming, most often, from getting to know a particular community, believing that the community in the town on the island of St. Vincent in which Pack McCarthy served (Continued on page 4)

Firehouse Plans Unveiled
Three stories; cost estimated at $6 million plus

By Michael Turton

The end of Monday’s (Dec. 15) special meeting of the Cold Spring Village Board, leadership from the Cold Spring Fire Company (CSFC) commented that public input is needed regarding plans for a new firehouse to replace the badly aging existing structure. Given that the cost estimate, at $6 million, is probably conservative for construction of the proposed three-story, state-of-the-art facility, it is difficult to imagine anything but robust commentary from residents.

Mayor Ralph Falloon began the discussion, commenting that the idea of a new firehouse has “been kicked down the road” for at least 12 years and, referring to the current building, asked a key question: “Are we going to keep investing money in this place?” Before CSFC Assistant Fire Chief Steve Smith described the new plans, Falloon said that ultimately the issue will have to be put to the public in the form of a referendum.

Support for Main Street location

Cold Spring’s mayor pointed out that there is public support for keeping the fire company on Main Street. “Maybe the public will be willing to pay a bit more to stay on Main — away from the park,” a reference to a previous, widely criticized proposal to locate the new firehouse in McConville Park, adjacent to Tots Park (Route 9D).

Smith, who also heads CSFC’s building committee, reviewed a series of drawings for the proposed building, prepared at no cost by Keith Scofield, an architect with the Poughkeepsie-based firm of Liscum McCormack VanVoorhis. Scofield used the Fishkill Fire Department’s building as the basis for the design. The concept for the firehouse features brown brick and a bell tower, reminiscent of Cold Spring’s historic character.

The plans call for the complete demolition of the existing building. A major challenge in designing and building a new firehouse is the small size of the property. “It’s tight,” Smith said, describing how Scofield summed up the available space. “It’s a really hard site,” Smith continued. “Almost like a New York City site.”

Modern firehouse design

Scofield’s design “gave us a lot more than we expected,” Smith said, adding that it incorporates facilities in keeping with those found in other firehouses in the region. Plans include a basement; first-floor truck storage, decontamination area and laundry room; second-floor ready room, exercise room, showers and computer facilities; and third-floor meeting room, kitchen and bathrooms. Smith said that the (Continued on page 3)
The Lady’s Choice

By Joe Dizney

“An oyster, that marvel of delicacy, that concentration of sapid excellence, that mouthful before all other mouthfuls, who first had faith to believe it, and courage to execute? The exterior is not persuasive.”
— Henry Ward Beecher, Eyes and Ears

That’s one way to look at it, and then there’s this:

“There’s a gallon of shocked oysters in the refrigerator — whatcha gonna cook?” — Mom (Elmire Marie LeBlanc Dizney, or “The Big E”)

What is the prodigal son to do when confronted with a culinary gauntlet being lobbed by a hungry and obviously excited nonagenarian (and her octogenarian “baby” sister who was the actual supplier of said bivalves)? You might think this is a somewhat unusual challenge, but that’s how my people rock the holidays in South Louisiana.

Mom, who held down a full-time job as a teacher and librarian while raising five children and never had much of an inclination to the culinary arts, (herself the child of a master, my grandmother) is entitled to such demands. She is however, an enthusiastic and unrepentant shellfish connoisseur and rapacious epicure of the stripe found only in Bayou Country.

And as the progeny of such bloodlines I am neither threatened nor intimidated by such provocations — I say, let the games begin! For one in the family who actually does love to cook, this is a typical welcome for my too-infrequent visits home and one I gladly accommodate.

We’ve done fried oysters: oyster po’boys, oyster spaghetti, a Hangtown frying pan, (also called Oysters Italian style) is a signature dish, “composed” (although they would never use that term) of oysters in a mixture of sautéed onions, garlic and spices and baked with a generous dusting of breadcrumbs and a bit of Parmesan cheese.

There is absolutely nothing wrong with this dish. But, never one to leave well enough alone (“It’s not done ’til it’s overdone!”), the second time I proceeded to make this dish in a week (a gallon of shocked oysters is a lot of oysters) I was reminiscing (or maybe just fantasizing) about a combination of oysters and artichokes from somewhere in my forgotten past, and the accompanying recipe is the result of that rumination.

My major deviation from the Mosca’s seasonings is the substitution of a splash of soy sauce as a replacement for a classic brown French stock, but if you happen to have some lying around, by all means. There is a bit of subtlety lost but not as much as the effort required to get there displaces. This makes a great appetizer or side dish and is rich and elegant enough to make a meal in itself accompanied by a salad and some crusty bread. (I should note that Adam’s Fairacre Farms usually has shocked oysters on hand and given a day or two will get quantities, so a call beforehand is recommended.)

Which is just what we did and apparently it was enough of a success for she-who-never-cooks to request the recipe. So here it is, Mom. Merry Christmas.

Oyster-Artichoke Gratin

Serves 4 as a side dish

2 cloves garlic, minced
1 stick celery, diced
1 teaspoon oregano
1 teaspoon basil
9 ounce package of frozen artichoke quarters
2 tablespoons unsalted butter (plus a bit for the gratin dish)
4 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium yellow onion diced small

1. Mix the breadcrumbs and Parmesan and mix in 2 tablespoons of melted butter and a tablespoon or so of the olive oil. Crumble it all together with your fingers. Set aside. Butter a small gratin dish and “dust” with 1 to 2 tablespoons of the breadcrumb-Parmesan mixture and set aside. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

2. Heat 2 tablespoons butter and 3 tablespoons of the olive oil in a large skillet or sauté pan. When hot, add onions and cook for 3 minutes. Add garlic, cook for another minute and add celery, oregano and basil. Cook for another two minutes and add artichokes, stirring to warm through (about a minute).

3. Add ¼ cup of the reserved oyster liquor and the soy sauce (to taste) and cook on medium heat to fully cook the artichokes, about 5 minutes. You want the liquids to reduce but not dry out completely, so add additional oyster liquor as necessary to keep it moist.

4. When artichokes are cooked and liquid has reduced, gently stir in oysters until just incorporated and remove from heat. Stir in 1 to 2 tablespoons of the breadcrumb mixture. Gently spoon the oyster and artichoke mix into the prepared gratin dish.

5. Sprinkle enough of the remaining breadcrumb mixture over the dish to just cover and bake on the center rack of the oven for about 30 minutes, until top is just barely browned. Check after 20 minutes and every 5 minutes thereafter. Remove from oven and serve warm.

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suddenly Nov. 26, fighting the emph-ysena that had not deterred his plans to build the grander house which, with its larger dimensions, would be more suitable for the site of his memorial service. Yet Mes-iah, like Stewart’s legacy, goes on, with two performances scheduled for Dec. 21. The Oval Office speechwriter and future staple of White House gatherings, John Plummer found himself recruited by John Plummer in his role as the Oval Office speechwriter. As a result, “Gordon Stewart defined an era,” concluded Os- born. He mentioned Stewart’s work not only in publishing a newspaper but in supporting other community projects, such as Hudson Valley Seed and the Farm to School program. “The zest for a better world is what Gordon Stew- art exemplified, with ‘an enthusiasm and gusto that was contagious.’” Osborn noted that Stewart believed “being kind, caring, and listening to your fellow hu- man being” was more important “than what you’ve accomplished” in a ca- reer and other pursuits, as important as those are. He taught that “it’s nice to be important but much more important to be nice,” Osborn said.

The Oval Office speechwriter Hendrik Hertzberg, President Jimmy Carter’s chief speechwriter, recalled his meetings with Stewart, the gru- nty chief speechwriter, in sites ranging from the Oval Office to the White House, where he served. “We depleted our vocabulary in those meetings,” Hertzberg said. “Because of that [coach- ing], this was the best-delivered speech Jimmy Carter had ever made.” Stewart’s biggest invention was typical, Hertz- berg pointed out. “Gordon made his own agenda, his own life, his own career.” In a subsequent staff exit interview, Hendrik Hertzberg recounted, Stewart defined speechwriting not as an exercise in ma- nipulation of emotions, presidents or the nation but a form of service, asking pro- vocative questions: “‘How do we make things work? How do we find something that we believe in — that we can do about things work? How do we find something that we believe in — that we can do about things work?’ … Now that time has come when we have to make our lives, for bringing so much beauty to this community. Gordon was my friend and I will miss him more than words can express.”

“Now that time has come when we can no longer wonder ‘What is next?’ … Now is the time for thanks and reflection — for thanks for improving our lives, for bringing so much beauty to this community. Gordon was my friend and I will miss him more than words can express.”

The music
Beginning with a prelude of “Make Our Garden Grow” from Leonard Bern- stein’s Candide, by vocal- ists and instrumentalists, the memorial service in- terwove magnificent out- pourings of music, philosophy and the prayers of an Episcopalian service. Violinist Rachel Evans performed the solo Largo from the C Miserere Sonata by Bach, and Ronald Madden, bass, sang the solo The Trumpet Shall Sound from Handel’s Mes- siah, accompanied by Betsy Barnard on the trumpet. Courtenay Brennan, soprano, and James Ruff, tenor, joined Madden in providing the classical vocal touches of the service. And at the beginning and end, the congregation lent its voices, too, on the hymn “Lord of All Hopefulness,” which uses a traditional Irish melody, and Sing With All the Saints in Glory, derived from Beethoven’s Ode to Joy. Re- sides Barnard and Evans, Rachel Hand- man, violinist, Dr. Cynthia Ligensa, vi- olist, and Christine Gummere, cellist, took part, along with John Drew, St. Mary’s music director. On the lawn before the service, a kithed Seth Gallagher, an in- strument-maker and former mayor of Cold Spring, played poignant Celtic airs on his bagpipes in tribute.

Lined up outside the church, members of the Cold Spring Fire Company saluted as the service ended.

Attendees included New York State Assemblywoman Sandy Galef, Town Councillors Dave Merandy and Nancy Montgomery, Village Trustee Stephanie Hawkins, members of other town and village boards, theater personnel, at least one former White House staff member (besides Hertzberg), Stewart’s relatives and sources of individuals from around the valley, if not the country who slipped into the church unobtrusively and paid their respects to the man who, in Shea’s words, “brought his whole world to this small town.”

The Episcopal Church of Saint Mary-in-the-Highlands

Where everyone is welcome!

CHRISTMAS EVE

FAMILY MASS

3:30 PM

With Children’s Christmas Pageant

FESTIVAL MASS

10:30 PM

With The Saint Mary’s Choir

Reception in The Parish Hall after Mass
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

February 7

Firehouse Plans Unveiled

meeting room would have a capacity of 125 to 130 people, slightly larger than the current space.

Among the current building’s shortcomings mentioned at Monday’s meeting was the lack of laundry and decon- tamination facilities, even though they are considered a require- ment. The current building also has no exercise room. Asked by Trustee Stephanie Hawkins if that facility is required, Smith said that firefighters are supposed to stay in shape but that it’s difficult to force vol- unteers to do so. He pointed out that in New York City, fire- fighters have to “work off the pounds” when their weight gets above acceptable lev- els. Fallon said fitness rooms are common at most firehouses now, explaining that more than 40 percent of fatalities among fire- fighters are health re- lated — not caused by fire. Smith said that “pretty much every- thing” included in the design is required.

The numbers

The architect estimated construction costs at $220,000 per foot. The pro- posed building would total 19,458 square feet compared with the current struc- ture, which is slightly more than 4,800 square feet.

Smith said that the estimate of just over $2 million probably doesn’t represent the full cost. Other expenses would in- clude offsite storage of equipment during construction, a construction trailer and demolition of the existing building.

Fallon said that with only 894 tax properties in Cold Spring, a $6 million bond spread over 20 years would cost taxpayers an additional $650 per year. Over 20 years the annual cost would be reduced to $400.

Trustee Mike Bowman asked about sav- ings should a new firehouse be built on a flat, open site such as adjacent to Tots Pavilion, the three biggest aesthetic encompassing mentioned at Monday’s meet- ing … we need to do as much of the work as possible. They have not formed a new fire- house at the Cold Spring Boat Club will no longer be called in. To the Editor: Hawkins urged the fire company to pro- vide a stronger rationale for the proposed facilities. “We [the Village Board] and the community need to hear the justification for things that are not legally required so we can make it happen,” she said.

CSFC President John Landolfi ex- plained that the architect was told to put everything into the plans that would actually go into today’s firehouses. “We want to move forward. We want to hear from the community,” he said. “If everybody thinks three stories are ridiculous …” He didn’t finish the sentence.

When Smith commented to Village Board members that “we can discuss what can be eliminated — it’s your build- ing,” Fallon responded, “It’s our build- ing … we need to do as much of the work as possible.”

The CSFC plans to hold an open house to showcase the plans and seek public comment. “Cooperation” may have to be the watchword in 2015 and beyond, not to mention “tolerance.” Real progress to- ward a new firehouse will be a major financial challenge. And further down the road, its construc- tion can’t help but disrupt village life to some extent. But a firehouse on the only major project on the horizon. Substantial initiatives including repair of the village dams, Main Street recon- struction, upgrades to wastewater treat- ment facilities and the removal of coal tar at the Cold Spring Boat Club will no doubt put those watchwords to the test.
Santa Arrives in True Beacon Style for Bicycle-Tree Lighting

**New location is park/city square off Route 9D**

By Brian PJ Cronin

F ew people know how to make an entrance like Santa Claus. That was evident in Beacon last Saturday night, when the man in red arrived at the park on the corner of Main Street and Route 9D for the city’s fourth annual tree lighting. Delayed by second-Saturday traffic, Mr. Claus rolled down Main Street in a pedi-cab pedaled by Jon Miles of the Peoples Bicycle shop. With the Grinch by his side, looking suspiciously like Beacon City Council Member Ali T. Muhammad under the mask, sculptor Ed Benavente playing the role of the reindeer on a golden bike of his own, and a full police escort, Santa arrived to cheering kids of all ages.

The mood had been set long before Santa arrived, with music and dancing provided by the Beacon Music Factory, the Center for Creative Education and local elementary school students. The WeePlay Community Project held an ornament-making workshop for children to make their own decorations for the tree. And the tree was, of course, no ordinary tree. As with the previous three years, the tree was actually a sculpture constructed by Benavente out of old bicycle parts.

“It gets a little bit bigger every year,” said Benavente about this handiwork. “My plan is always to build it in the middle of the summer when I can still feel my fingers, but somehow it always comes down to the week before.”

This was the first year that the lighting was held at the pocket park on the corner of Main Street and Route 9D. The lot at Cross Street and Main, the event’s previous location, was recently sold. While the new landlord offered to let the event continue at Cross Street, Dan Rigney, president of BeaconArts, said it was better to come up with a new permanent site for the event. The pocket park, home of the Beacon Welcome Center, has slowly been transforming into the sort of public square the city sorely lacks. Rigney said that having the tree lighting there would help further develop the location. “It’s a site that’s controlled by the city, and the visibility of the park to those driving back and forth on Route 9D is fantastic,” he said. “It’s a public space that needs to be developed a little bit more, as it welcomes a lot of people to Beacon, and this is going to help set this park in people’s minds.”

The spirit of excitement continued to develop as Santa strode to the porch in front of the Beacon Welcome Center and led the crowd in a countdown to lighting the tree. Santa’s flair for the dramatic was evidenced once again by the fact that the tree failed to light on the first two tries. But the third time was the charm, and the tree burst to life with multicolored lights, spinning wheels and a rotating disco ball at the top that cast stars across the faces of awed children at the foot of the tree.

Benavente said it’s no wonder the children find the tree so entrancing. “When you talk about Christmas, for a lot of kids a bike is the best gift you could ever get, because it’s your first taste of freedom,” he explained. “You’re self-propelled. So when Beacon was lacking its own tree ceremony, I thought, Why not make it an art project, something symbolic of the town?” Like Beacon, a bicycle is powered by people. And besides,” he added, gesturing grandly to the illuminated tree towering above the park, “who doesn’t like a bicycle?”

Million-Dollar Stocking Stuffer

State funds part of Fjord Trail project

By Kevin E. Foley

P rocponents of the Fjord Trail, a planned hiking and biking pathway running along the Hudson River between Cold Spring and Beacon, received an early holiday present Thursday, Dec. 11, when Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced a new round of economic development grants, including $935,000 for the project. The funding is part of Cuomo’s Regional Business Council initiative, wherein locally created projects intended to increase economic activity and job opportunities are provided with seed money from the state government. In this round of grants, 852 projects received funding for a total of $709.3 million.

Advocates for the Fjord Trail include all the local governments that encompass the area the path would traverse, including the towns of Philipstown, Fishkill, the city of Beacon and the Village of Cold Spring. Scenic Hudson, the regional nonprofit land preservation and environmental protection group, is also a major driver of the project.

Still in the design stage, the Fjord Trail will ultimately cost several million dollars. This fresh round of funding will allow for progress on what many consider a critical feature of the project, the creation of a safer, more orderly way for visitors arriving by car and train to access hiking trails in Philipstown and Fishkill along the Route 9D corridor, including the popular destination Breakneck Ridge. Currently cars are often parked along the edges of 9D with pedestrians walking along the roadway perilously close to traffic.

According to the grant announcement, the money is intended to help create a new visitor’s center for the Hudson Highlands State Park area at Little Stony Point just north of Cold Spring, improved train access and better parking for both cars and bicycles in and around the Breakneck Ridge train platform as well as an Americans with Disabilities Act–accessible path to the Breakneck Ridge trail head.

**Notice**

All bills outstanding against the Town of Philipstown, Putnam County, New York, must be submitted for payment by 1 p.m. on Monday, December 29, 2014, to the Town Clerk’s Office at 238 Main Street, P.O. Box 155, Cold Spring, New York.

**By Order of the Town Board of the Town of Philipstown**

DATED: December 3, 2014

**Wishing you joy and peace this Christmas and Chanukah and into the New Year.**

Robert Tendy

www.tendy4da.com
This Ornament Has History

Family celebrates the carrot's 113th Christmas

By Michel Turton

When 25-year-old William Bennett and his wife Louise presented their 5-month-old son William Bennett Jr. with a gift to celebrate the infant’s first Christmas, they could not have imagined that their small gesture would prompt a news story more than 100 years later. But it did.

Born in Trenton, New Jersey, in 1876, William Bennett Sr. was a tugboat captain with the Dalzell Towing Line, where he helped the large ocean liners of that era dock in New York Harbor. He married Louise in 1900, and the young couple moved into their home near to the Brooklyn Bridge. William Jr. was born in 1901, and later that year the young parents gave their son a Christmas ornament—a gift destined to become a family treasure and the source of yuletide conversation among their descendants for generations to come. The ornament was an orange, velvet carrot.

William Bennett Jr. moved to Brewster shortly after the Second World War. After his death in 1949, “the carrot”—as it is simply but reverently referred to within the family—was passed on to his niece, Carol Hamel, a resident of Putnam Valley. This Christmas, Carol, 11-month-old granddaughter Shaylee becomes the carrot’s heir-apparent, the first member of the fifth generation to lay hands on the beloved ornament. Shaylee’s parents, Bob and Alanna (McGuire) Hamel, also live in Putnam Valley.

“I always find it interesting when looking at faded black-and-white family Christmas photos from decades ago…that somewhere on those trees…is the carrot ornament we’re fortunate enough to still have,” Carol said. “I have cousins who would love to have it, but I’m the eldest,” she said, a hint of mischief in her eye. She said that when relatives visit over the holidays, the first words uttered are always the same: “Where’s the carrot?” She confessed that when the relatives depart, “I check to make sure it’s still there!”

Her son Bob said that the carrot has never missed a Christmas and that milestone anniversaries always prompt comments that add to the ornament’s mystique: “This is 90 years for the carrot!” “This is 95 years for the carrot!” “This is 100 years for the carrot!”

Carol and her son agree that the carrot’s monetary worth doesn’t warrant an appraiser’s appearance on Antiques Roadshow; but that does nothing to diminish its value to the family. Bob even said, somewhat seriously, that at one point his mom wondered about who the carrot would eventually be passed down to. “I had to have a family so that someone could inherit the carrot!” he said.

The Hamels also have a large, gold ball, a Christmas tree ornament that they think is as old as the carrot. Of considerable weight, it was meant to be placed on the lower part of the tree to help hold the branches down. The family definitely treasures it as well, but as Bob puts it, “It’s just not as good a story.”

The carrot’s Christmas past and present are secure, and its Christmas future also seems to be in good hands. “I’ll have the carrot some day, and then I’ll pass it on to Shaylee,” Bob said. “Then we’ll just have to keep it going for another 113 years.”

Toy Donation Drive for Children Affected by Ebola

(from page 1)

During her two years (1998-2000) in the Peace Corps, or the community of Philipstown, where things—and people—can fall through the cracks as easily as anywhere else. As DI’s site notes, “Our organization tries to ‘do something’ when the feeling of what to do may feel overwhelming.” It’s looking beyond the huge, seemingly impossible-to-solve problems and often getting down to business, relieving some of the pressures that go along with those big picture issues.

This new initiative began after Pack McCarthy watched a 60 Minutes episode “on the incredible work of International Medical Corps (IMC) in a Liberian Ebola clinic,” she explained. “One of the most heartbreaking images of the piece was a small boy infected with Ebola. He sat in an area for infected patients, being taken care of by his father. And this would happen all day long: sitting there, nothing to play with, nothing to do.”

During the stretches when there isn’t certainty over whether someone is infected or not, they must simply wait. And, for children, this means sitting around in rooms with adult workers all suited up in protective coveralls, with no real chance for connection, even for hugs. “I couldn’t watch that and then just get up and go to bed,” Pack McCarthy said. “They have nothing to latch onto, no trains, no dolls, no objects of comfort. It’s an issue of comfort and comforting.”

Pack McCarthy immediately got going. She contacted the Internation- al Rescue Committee, with whom she had worked previously. For logistical reasons, they and a number of other aid organiza- tions were unable to implement her idea, but eventually she contacted the agency she had seen on 60 Minutes (IMC) and, after discussion, Pack McCarthy assured them enough items would be collected, and after IMC vetted Denniston International and its background, they agreed to a combining of efforts—with DI in charge of collecting, packaging and shipping the toys over to IMC.

A very young William Bennett is pictured here holding “the carrot” circa 1903. (Photo courtesy of the Hamel family)

Eleven-month-old Shaylee Hamel, with her father Bob Hamel and her grandmother Carol Hamel, already seems fascinated by the “carrot.” (Photo by M. Turton)

The community has already responded to Denniston International’s drive for toys for children in Africa affected by the Ebola crisis. (Photo courtesy of Danielle Pack McCarthy)

Field offices in Sierra Leone and Liberia and IMC then taking over to distribute them. Pack McCarthy described IMC as an “on-the-ground organization; they’re already there in these communities and are working from the ground up, getting to work. They’re totally dedicated and extremely professional and have been active on a long-standing basis,” working to help avert and/or manage health crises associated with diseases such as malaria and AIDS/HIV in various locations around the world.

Pack McCarthy started organizing for this initiative during the second week of November; the various clearances needed have taken up much of the time since then, but now all is set and collecting has begun, with boxes already appearing on her porch. DI is covering the cost of the shipping and IMC is doing the same in devoting its resources to distribute the shipments. The first shipment was scheduled to go out around Dec. 9, to receiving offices in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Throughout the process, there will be photographic documentation of the journey from here to the actual clinics and other areas of distribution, so donors and their families will be able to see the results of the contributions.

DI is seeking toys new or gently used (the guide to gently used being “I want to be proud of what I’m sending”) per Pack McCarthy, toys including cars, trucks, building blocks, Duplo-type Legos, crayons and markers, complete boxed games (like checkers, Chinese checkers, Connect 4, dominoes and chess sets), children’s books in English, picture books and gently used magazines for both children and adults. Financial donations, earmarked for shipping costs, can be made through the DI website. Donations can be made during regular business hours at boxes at Butterfield Library, Haldane High School, where the Student Council and the Model UN class have done some organizing, and through Living Yoga Studios in Philipstown Square on Route 9; a free yoga class there is offered to anyone making a donation.

Pack McCarthy calls the spirit of the community “exceptional—people just want to help, they’re looking for a personal connection to a cause.” Perhaps it is simply giving back, for DI has directly helped others, over the past few years, in this community. They have focused on small, acute needs, needs they have found out about through “relationship building—getting to know the community.” It is through visits, quiet conversations, that Pack McCarthy has found out where the needs are.

For example, a coach mentioned that an avid player on his Little League team would be sitting out the season the following year. Follow-up determined that the family couldn’t afford the fees, and DI paid those fees. Another time, someone noted that a Spanish-speaking fam- ily had a child who would be attending kindergarten at Haldane in a year, inev-itably hampered right off the bat by not speaking any English. DI paid for a year of preschool for that child, where the fo- cus was on language acquisition. “It’s the little things that are overlooked,” said Pack McCarthy. The DI website echoes this, stating their “true belief that small acts create great change.”

The inspiration for all of this is DI’s namesake, a boy from St. Vincent named Denniston Thomas. Pack McCarthy first met him when he “left mangoes on my porch.” He lived a few (To page 14)
Harlem’s Rattlers and the Great War

Writing history about soldiers in war wasn’t Jeffrey T. Sammons’ first choice. The New York University history professor’s primary interests are race and sports. He has a book on boxing coming his way to chronicle the path of a regiment of African-American soldiers through the travails of the American entry into World War I and the country’s resistance to fully accepting the role of those soldiers, he believed he had to do it.

Harlem’s Rattlers and the Great War was a “labor of love, with a lot of blood, sweat and tears,” that took over a decade of research to complete, Sammons told an audience at the Desmond-Fish Library on Sunday, Dec. 7. Appearing with Sammons for a discussion of the book was the heir to a storied Hudson Valley name, the library’s president of the board of trustees, Hamilton Fish V. The library is named in part after Fish’s grandfather (the third H. Fish), who played a significant role in the formation, deployment and aftermath of the 369th Regiment. Fish V has had a varied and interesting career involving journalism, documentary film, politics and campaigns for social justice.

The regiment, according to Sammons, flew under a Gadsden flag featuring a coiled snake and the motto “Don’t Tread on Me,” which dates back to a Revolutionary War general, hence the name “Rattlers” even though the unit was better known by the early 20th-century media-imposed name of the Harlem Hell Fighters.

Ever since the end of the Civil War, New York state’s African Americans had sought to form an all-black National Guard regiment. Over the years, such efforts were met with hardened opposition, in part, said Sammons, because the National Guard of the day was as much a prominent social institution as a military one, and members, especially the leaders, could not accept the idea that blacks would attain any.

(Continued on page 10)

Books on Big Subjects with Local Roots

By Kevin E. Foley

Terry Platz Is One of Several Local Singers Returning to Perform Messiah

‘It’s transcendent and overwhelming. Some phrases are so overwhelmingly beautiful it’s hard to get through them.’

By Alison Rooney

This Sunday’s two performances of Handel’s Messiah will, as with last year’s, feature a panoply of professional, New York City-based musicians and singers, most with many performances of the oratorio under their belts, along with a contingent of local singers. For a few of those local singers, last year’s performances were their first times at bat in this epic and challenging work.

Philippston’s Terry Platz sang last year, and though she was not among those performing the piece for the first time, it was still like nothing she had ever done before. Platz, who will be returning to sing in both performances of Messiah this year, and though she was not among those performing the piece for the first time, it was still like nothing she had ever done before. Platz, who will be returning to sing in both performances of Messiah this year, and though she was not among those performing the piece for the first time, it was still like nothing she had ever done before. Platz, who will be returning to sing in both performances of Messiah this year, and though she was not among those performing the piece for the first time, it was still like nothing she had ever done before. Platz, who will be returning to sing in both performances of Messiah this year, and though she was not among those performing the piece for the first time, it was still like nothing she had ever done before. Platz, who will be returning to sing in both performances of Messiah this year, and though she was not among those performing the piece for the first time, it was still like nothing she had ever done before.

Power on the Hudson

Imagine for a moment going to the Cold Spring dock and looking across the Hudson toward a giant hydroelectric power plant built into Storm King Mountain. Atop the mountain would sit a large lake of pumped-up water waiting for release to create electricity. Imagine though, the energy from the river and moving across Philipstown aboveground toward eastern Putnam County and Westchester carrying the power from the water.

Hardly seems possible that any entity would propose such an idea now, but in 1962, Consolidated Edison (Con Ed), the New York City-based energy company, did just that, and they spent more than a decade and a fortune in company funds trying to make it happen.

Ironically, the proposal was announced on the same day, Sept. 27, as the publication of Rachel Carson’s seminal environmental book, Silent Spring. Ironically, the proposal was announced on the same day, Sept. 27, as the publication of Rachel Carson’s seminal environmental book, Silent Spring. Ironically, the proposal was announced on the same day, Sept. 27, as the publication of Rachel Carson’s seminal environmental book, Silent Spring. Ironically, the proposal was announced on the same day, Sept. 27, as the publication of Rachel Carson’s seminal environmental book, Silent Spring. Ironically, the proposal was announced on the same day, Sept. 27, as the publication of Rachel Carson’s seminal environmental book, Silent Spring.

The book is an outgrowth of Lifset’s Columbia University doctoral dissertation. As a student, he had a broad interest in the politics of environmental conflict but was uncertain where his scholarly research should be directed. At the suggestion of an uncle he decided to focus on the Storm King battle, which was a precedent-setting legal imbroglio with a healthy dose of politics in the mix. With voluminous records to review and people to interview, the work took up much of the 2000s.

Lifset said in an interview with The Paper.

(Continued on page 11)
The Calendar

Holiday Religious Services

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20
Blue Christmas Service
7 p.m. First Presbyterian Church
50 Liberty St., Beacon
845-831-5322 | beaconpresbychurch.com

Blue Christmas Service
9:30 p.m. South Historic United Methodist Church
19 Snake Hill Road, Garrison | 845-526-3788

St. Philip’s Episcopal Church
5 p.m. Family Service and Pageant
11 a.m. Midnight Service
1101 Route 9D, Garrison
845-424-3571 | stphilipshighlands.org

First Presbyterian Church of Philipstown
5 p.m. Service of Lessons and Carols
10 Academy St., Cold Spring
845-265-3365

First Presbyteriae Church
9 p.m. Christmas Elixir Service
50 Liberty St., Beacon
845-831-5322 | beaconpresbychurch.com

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21
Christmas Pageant
10 a.m. First Presbyterian Church
50 Liberty St., Beacon
845-831-5322 | beaconpresbychurch.com

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24
Christmas Eve Services
St. Mary’s Episcopal Church
3:30 p.m. Family Mass and Pageant
10:30 p.m. Carols and Candlelight Mass
1 Chestnut St., Cold Spring
845-265-2539 | stmaryscoldspring.org

A Christmas Carol
8 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
10 Garrison’s Landing, Garrison
845-424-3571 | philipstowndepottheatre.org

Chop Suey by the Dozen
8 p.m. The Beacon Theatre
445 Main St., Beacon
845-453-2978 | thebeacontheatre.org

It’s a Wonderful Life: The 1946 Radio Play
8 p.m. Culinary Institute of America (Marriott Pavilion)
1046 Campus Drive, Hyde Park
845-225-9885 | halfmoonthat.org

Music
KJ Deshert
6:30 & 9:30 p.m. 12 Grapes
12 N. Division St., Peekskill
914-737-6624 | 12grapes.com

Band Rock Back: Camp Purple Rain
8 p.m. Southern Dutchess Bruno
629 Route 52, Beacon
845-765-0472 | beaconmusical.com

Open Mic Night
8 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St., Beacon
845-831-4988 | howlandculturalcenter.org

Ricardo Gautreau & Friends
8 p.m. Boardrunner Cafe
201 S. Division, Cold Spring
845-855-1300 | boardrunnergayle.com

Free Admission
5 - 8 p.m. McHudson Children’s Museum
75 N. Water St., Poughkeepsie
845-471-0589 | mhcm.org

Sparkle!
5 - 9 p.m. Boscobel
See details under Friday.

Sports
Army vs. St. Thomas Aquinas (Women’s Basketball)
1:30 p.m. Christ Arma
Fordon Plaza, West Point
845-939-0039 | paramounthudsonvalley.com

Cheaper by the Dozen
1:30 & 4:30 p.m. Westchester County Center
198 Central Ave., White Plains
914-995-4050 | countycenter.biz

It’s a Wonderful Life: The 1946 Radio Play
1:30 & 8 p.m. Performances
Culinary Institute of America (Marriott Pavilion)
3:30 & 8 p.m. Performances
1046 Campus Drive, Hyde Park
845-225-9885 | halfmoonthat.org

A Christmas Carol
4 & 8 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
See details under Friday.

Friday, December 19

Kids & Community
Sparkle!
5 - 9 p.m. Boscobel | 5001 Route 9D, Garrison
845-265-3368 | boscobel.org

The Nutcracker
246 Main St., Beacon
845-939-0039 | paramounthudsonvalley.com

A Special Benefit for St. Mary’s-in-the-Highlands, and Philipstown Food Pantry
Featuring top professional period instrument players and singers
Prepared and conducted by Gordon Stewart in 2013, and performed in his memory.
July 22, 2013 | November 24, 2013
December 21, 2014
200 p.m. and 500 p.m. | Reception: 3:30 - 4:30 p.m.
1101 Route 9D, Garrison
1-800-695-1025 | whistlingwillies.com

Tickets: www.brownpapertickets.com

A Philipstown Messiah
by George Frideric Handel
Parts I and II (abridged)

A special benefit for St. Mary’s-in-the-Highlands, and Philipstown Food Pantry.
THE Paper

December 19, 2014

Nut-Cracked
7:30 p.m. Fisher Center
Barth College, Annandale-on-Hudson
845-758-7900 | fishercenter.bard.edu

Cheaper by the Dozen
8 p.m. The Beacon Theatre
See details under Friday.

Hung With Care: A Holiday Baroque Cabaret
8:30 p.m. Cunneen-Hackett Theater
12 Vassar St., Poughkeepsie
845-537-7855 | trinityplayers.org

Music

Hudson Valley Philharmonic: Handel’s Messiah
2 p.m. Ulster Performing Arts Center
601 Broadway, Kingston
914-339-6088 | upac.org

Otterknockers
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier Cafe
477 Main St., Beacon
845-202-7500 | dogwoodbar.com

Jazz & Jingle Balls at Bernie’s
9 p.m. Whistling Willie’s
845-205-2539 | bernies LeapsofSpooky.org

 imaginable xmas
9 p.m. 12 Grapes
845-628-3020 | embarkpeekskill.com

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23

Kids & Community

Christmas Eve Services
8:45 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 5 p.m.
St. Mary’s Episcopal Church
331 Verplanck Ave., Beacon
845-896-5678 | allsportfishkill.com

WedNeSday, december 24

No recycling pickup in Cold Spring
Putnam County offices closed
Cold Spring Village offices closed
Butterfield and Desmond-Fish Libraries closed
See page 8.

MondAy, December 22

Kids & Community

Christmas Eve
Local libraries closed

Music

Beacon Music Factory Solstice Celebration
Noon: 2 p.m. Hudson Cultural Center
477 Main St., Beacon
845-831-4988 | beaconmusicfactory.com

Holiday Art Camp (ages 5–12)
9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Embark
331 Verplanck Ave., Beacon
845-347-4409 | rba.com/dec/embark

Meetings & Lectures

The Polar Express
7:30 p.m. Tarrytown Music Hall
39 Sunset Ave., Tarrytown
914-631-3390, ext. 100 | tarrytownmusichall.org

Vacation Camp (ages 5–12)
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
All Sport Health & Fitness
See details under Monday.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24

Kids & Community

WedNeSday, december 24

Vacation Camp (ages 5–12)
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
All Sport Health & Fitness
See details under Monday.

Health & Fitness

Navigating Healthcare Options
10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Howland Public Library
313 Main St., Beacon
800-453-4666 | nysparks.com

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25

Christmas Day
See page 8.

FRIday, DECEMBER 26

Bullterford and Deaden-Fish libraries closed
Cold Spring Village offices closed
Putnam County offices closed
No recycling pickup in Cold Spring
Kids & Community

Monday, Dec. 20, 5:30 p.m.
8 p.m.
All Sport Health & Fitness
See details under Monday.

Open House
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Kreis’s Headquarters
289 Forge Hill Road, Vails Gate
845-561-5498 | nysparks.com

Health & Fitness

Navigating Healthcare Options
10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Howland Public Library
313 Main St., Beacon
800-453-4666 | nysparks.com

Appointment required.

TO page 10

This Christmas! Featuring the famous jazz/gospel vocalist Rene Bailey
Saturday, Dec. 20, 5:30 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church
1 Academy Street
Cold Spring
(walk up Main Street past Whistling Willie’s, turn right on Academy and walk half block, church on left)

Donations gratefully accepted in support of jazz music programming
Wine and cheese reception to follow
The Calendar (from page 9)

Music
Spero Plays Nyro
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier Cafe
See details under Dec. 19.
Greg Phillips
9 p.m. Whistling Willie's | Details under Dec. 19
Rhonda Denel & The Bad Cats
9:30 p.m. 12 Grapes
12 N. Division St., Peekskill
914-737-6624 | 12grapes.com
Curtis Winchester Band
10 p.m. The Hudson Room | Details under Dec. 19
10 p.m. Whistling Willie's | Details under Dec. 19
9 p.m. Towne Crier Cafe
Spero Plays Nyro
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier Cafe
See details under Dec. 19.
Greg Phillips
9 p.m. Whistling Willie's | Details under Dec. 19
Rhonda Denel & The Bad Cats
9:30 p.m. 12 Grapes
12 N. Division St., Peekskill
914-737-6624 | 12grapes.com
Curtis Winchester Band
10 p.m. The Hudson Room | Details under Dec. 19

Meetings & Lectures
Village Zendo Meditation Retreat (Opens)
3 p.m. Garrison Institute
14 Mary's Way, Garrison
845-424-4800 | garrisoninstitute.org
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Village Zendo Meditation Retreat (Opens)
3 p.m. Garrison Institute
14 Mary's Way, Garrison
845-424-4800 | garrisoninstitute.org

Support Groups
For a full list of area support groups, visit philipstown.info/sa

Support Groups
For a full list of area support groups, visit philipstown.info/sa

Jeffrey T. Sammons
Photo by K.E. Foley

thing resembling a similar social status. Even when a law establishing such a unit passed in New York, National Guard opposition curtailed it for two years, until the need for troops to fight in Mexico and then in Europe created a necessity for it. Still, the regiment was not formally included in the New York guard, achieving only detachment status. The commander of the guard demanded no blacks be made officers, and while a few were ultimately appointed, they held minor positions. Hamilton Fish was made a captain.

Sent into the maelstrom of WWI, the Rattlers at first were limited to a role as laborers by the American commanders until French army demands for assistance resulted in their assignment to the trenches. The French, according to Sammons, awarded 179 Croix de Guerre (cross of war) medals to the regiment during their years under fire. Their combat service, he said, was the longest of any American outfit. One severely wounded member, Henry Johnson, is still considered America's first Medal of Honor recipient.

When the fighting ended, to find themselves less than full citizens despite their larger National Guard unit. And then fearful authorities tried to block a homecoming parade.

"They didn’t want 3,000 black soldiers marching in New York City. They weren’t the same men who had gone over. War is a transformative experience … I’m going to be blunt. They had killed white people and they had seen Parce … so how were you going to keep them down on the farm?" asked Sammons rhetorically, referencing a famous WWI song.

The parade took place. While the public that turned out for the event gave rise to greater African-American pride and is seen as the beginning of the Harlem Renaissance in the arts. Many of the soldiers went on to play roles in the nascent civil rights movement in the years that followed. This was, said Sammons, a transformative experience.

"It’s incredible to think of the place which was made for them in Louisiana and the difficulty situations under domestic attack from their own military and under fire in Europe," said Sammons.

Both men spoke of Fish’s drive and personal ambition, which sometimes overtook his good intentions. He wanted to run the regiment, not thinking much of the region, yet we are told that for all his pushing and breaking of dishes, “there was something about doing the right thing that came from a sense of who he was that restrained him,” said his grandson.

When Fish V, a progressive Democrat, first ran for Congress, his grandfather, a conservative Republican, supported his opponent. A defining moment for the Rattlers’ role in the American war effort came when they began the journey home after the fighting ended, to find themselves less than full citizens despite their larger National Guard unit. And then fearful authorities tried to block a homecoming parade.

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The parade took place. While the public that turned out for the event gave rise to greater African-American pride and is seen as the beginning of the Harlem Renaissance in the arts. Many of the soldiers went on to play roles in the nascent civil rights movement over the next 50 years. "The genie was out of the bottle," said Sammons.
Power on the Hudson (from page 7)

“...took way too much time understanding the positions of all sides. Good history invaded the extension of every issue... Con Ed honestly thought it was doing the right thing. History is often written by the victors,” said Lifset, emphasizing he wanted to help dispel any mythologies around the struggle to protect Storm King, such as the idea that the entire environmental movement was born during this particular episode.

Lifset sets the historical context by fully exploring Con Ed’s thinking and the issues surrounding the economics of energy production during the period. He points out that during the years of the Con Ed proposal, other projects such as a pygmy plant at what is now Little Stony Point Park were also proposed and that the Hudson Valley region had a long history of industrial activity.

He also covers the varied activities of groups and individuals, some famous and some forgotten, involved in political machinations and protest, educational initiatives, aggressive advocacy and effective fundraising within the growing environmental movement. Gov. Nelson Rockefeller (and brother Laurence), Congressman Richard Ottinger as well as heads of federal agencies and New York City officials all play a role. The origins of present-day groups such as Clearwater and Riverkeeper and leaders like Pete Seeger and Robert Boyle and their associates all find a place in Lifset’s narrative.

Central to the book’s perspective, however, is the long battle involving committed legal opponents engaged in hearings before the Federal Power Commission and in the federal courts where environmental and economic would gain new standing for citizen opposition to the siting of power plants and other projects that raise questions of degradation of the national water.

Lifset’s highlights as groundbreaking the introduction of ecological evidence as the basis for an argument before a board or a court to deny permission to proceed with a project. “The evolution, direction and effectiveness of environmentalism changed after its proponents placed ecological arguments front and center; this book argues that a strong focus on ecology is a central component of modern environmentalism,” wrote Lifset in his introduction.

Protecting nature’s aesthetic beauty had long played a part in the national conversation in the expansive western regions of the country as well as the more settled east, including the Hudson Valley. Lifset maintains that demonstrating that a human enterprise will harm the balance of nature, in the case of Storm King, the killing of large quantities of fish for example, opened a new citizen relationship with nature, science and the political and governmental system that accounts for a broader consensus today on preserving open spaces, protecting wetlands and closely examining any large construction, especially an energy-related one.

Birth of Scenic Hudson

The current significant regional influence of the Scenic Hudson organization, with its network of parks and open spaces (Cold Spring’s West Point Foundry Preserve and Beacon’s Long Dock Park among them), its planning prowess (the proposed Fjord Trail) and lobbying heft ($1 million in state funds for the Fjord Trail), derives directly from the Storm King fight.

According to Lifset, when Con Ed first proposed its plant on Storm King it worked to blunt possible opposition by securing negotiated support from the two leading local environmental organizations of the day, the Palisades Park Interstate Commission, which controlled the Storm King site, and the Hudson River Conservation Society.

However, individuals from smaller groups interested in maintaining hiking trails and preserving open space began meeting to discuss possible strategies for opposition and fundraising. Out of those deliberations, which Lifset discusses in detail, arose the idea of forming a new group dedicated at the time to just focusing on opposing the plant.

GCEF Raises $19,500 During Fall Fundraisers

Fund commits $25,800 for enrichment programs

The Garrison Children’s Education Fund (GCEF) raised a total of $19,500 during the fall’s fund-raise fundraising efforts, which included a successful Oktober Goof Marathon Fundraiser and Fall Appeal, completed in November. The Fall Appeal brought in over 100 donors and raised $12,000 with an emphasis this year on GCEF’s commitment to supporting a state-of-the-art library at GUFs. Money raised will support a variety of academic, artistic and athletic curriculum-enhancing activities.

GCEF welcomes grant proposals from any member of the GUFs community, including teachers, administrators and parents. Grants are awarded on an ongoing basis throughout the school year and the fund will continue to evaluate and support new programming for the spring.

GCEF has committed $25,800 for 12 programs during the 2014-15 school year:

• Library Connection Grant: $10,000 to purchase of over 400 content-rich, relevant and intellectually challenging books.

• Hudson Valley Seed (HVS): $4,000 for the development of a sustainable, year-round school garden for curriculum in grades K-4.

• Jazz Ensemble: $3,350 for musical instruction that will teach middle school students to read jazz band arrangements and improvise solos.

• Hudson Valley Shakespeare School Workshop: $1,925 to bring the touring production of Macbeth to GUF’s for students in grades 7 and 8.

• Chef in the Classroom: $1,260 to provide monthly cooking sessions to grades K-4 and 6.

• Sloop Clearwater: $1,250 for the annual fifth-grade sail on the sloop Clearwater as part of their study of history, ecology, art and music.

• Percussion Ensemble: $1,200 to bring a professional percussionist/teacher to teach percussion to students in grades 4-8.

• Artist in Residence: $1,100 to host Hudson Valley artist Andrew Lattimore for a three-session residency at GUFs to work with students grades 3-8.

• PTA After-School Programs: $500 to support full and winter chess with students in grades 1-8.

• Constitution Marsh Eagle Program: $500 for fourth-graders to participate in the “Eagles on the Hudson” program at Constitution Marsh.

• Liberty Science Center: $362 to partially cover the fourth-grade visit to the Liberty Science Center in New Jersey.

• Challenger Space Center: $350 for the sixth-graders to experience a simulated mission to Mars at the Challenger Space Center.

GCEF’s next fundraiser is the 16th Annual Spring Thaw, which will be held on April 18 at Gysin Wood from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m. Spring Thaw is GCEF’s biggest fundraising event of the year to support enrichment programming at GUFs.

World’s End Theater presents:

A Christmas Carol

A new one-man fully-staged version of this classic Dickens holiday ghost story. Featuring Gregory Porter Miller as all the characters you know and love, with movement and direction conceived by Christine Brooks Bohkher.

Friday, Dec. 19, 8 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 20, 4 p.m. & 8 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 21, 7 p.m.
Tickets at brownpapertickets.com
845.424.3900 • www.philipstowndepottheatre.org
Garrison Landing, Garrison, NY (Theatre is adjacent to train station.)
McGill, through a partnership with the German's Castle on Pollepel Island in the Hudson River, will receive a NEA grant for $20,000 to create a large-scale sculptural installation on the ruins of Bannerman's Castle. The Constellation Grant is in support of the arts project, to transform the island for public enjoyment in perpetuity. He will work with over two million people a year. We expect the river. "I’m honored to receive this support from the NEA," said McGill. "This award brings us closer to being able to launch Constellation this summer, creating a free, community-building public artwork on the site of Pollepel Island in the Hudson River." "Much like the Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park and the Copake Gateway Project, two other recent Hudson Valley projects that we were pleased to partner with, Constellation is a very exciting and unique project taking place in one of our most unique State Parks," said Allen Parne, executive director of the Natural Heritage Trust. "Between the Metro-North railway; Riverside roads such as Route 9D; and hiking trails along Breakneck Ridge, Storm King Mountain, Mount Taurus and other peaks in the Hudson Highlands State Park, Bannerman Island is already viewed by more than two million people a year. We expect Constellation to even further increase the park’s visibility and prominence as visitors from all over the world journey to the Hudson Highlands to watch the stars light up at dusk every evening."

Art Works grants support the creation of art, public engagement with art, lifelong learning in the arts, and enhancement of the livability of communities through the arts. The NEA received 1,474 eligible applications under the Art Works category. Of those applications, 919 are recommended for grants for a total of $26.6 million. For a complete listing of projects recommended for Art Works grant support, visit the NEA website at arts.gov. For more information about Constellation, visit melissamcgillconstellation.com.

**Garrison Students Visit O’Neill High School**

Alumna hopes to help students decide on her school

On Dec. 10, 15 eighth-graders, one guidance counselor and two sets of parents spent the day in James I. O’Neill High School in Highland Falls, one of the two local high school choices for students graduating from Garrison Union Free School.

Sarah Kelly, sophomore at O’Neill and a former Garrison School student, said the event helped her “to guide these eighth-graders in the direction of attending” her school. “Once they arrived, the students heard a presentation about the many unique opportunities offered at O’Neill. From the athletics to the many clubs offered, these students were able to get a feeling as to what it might be like to be a part of the O’Neill community. After this presentation students toured the building with individual tour guides, allowing for a more personal experience.”

In addition to Kelly, many other Garrison alumni from past years went to the library, where the students got to talk to a panel of about six students answering their questions. “Hopefully, after this tour, many of the eighth graders will be well informed and excited about the many new things going on at O’Neill,” Kelly said.

**Community Choruses Hold Winter Concert Sing-Along**

People’s Choir and the Dream Choir in Cold Spring Dec. 21

The Beacon Music Factory is proud to present People’s Choir and the Dream Choir, both community choruses dreamed up and directed by Cat Butterfield and open to all, will perform in a winter solstice concert and sing-along at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 21, at the Church of the Open Door, 10 Academy St. in Cold Spring.

The choirs are singing tunes from the Beatles to bluegrass, with lots of stuff in between, from cultures near and far. Attendees are asked to join us in the singing, as well. The concert admission is a free-will donation, with refreshments to follow. For more information, call 914-440-4515 or visit harmonyandco.com.

**Butterfield Library’s Story Times Return Jan. 8**

Registration open for Little Bookworms

After a short break to enjoy the holidays, the Butterfield Library’s weekly story times, Little Bookworms and Bouncing Babies, will resume on Thursday, Jan. 8.

Those interested should register now for the winter session of Little Bookworms, held on Thursdays at 12:30 p.m. This preschool-age program is intended for children age 2.5 through 5 years. Ms. Johanna will expose the children to books and stories to aid in language development and pre-reading skills. Each week is a
Adult Writing Workshops Offered in Philipstown

Two workshops at Butterfield Library and Rec Center

The Butterfield Library and Philipstown Recreation Center will offer two adult writing workshops starting in the new year, designed to help everyone discover and develop their love for the written word. Hilda Holt, the library’s new services librarian, at 845-831-1134, ext.103 or hilda.holt@verizon.net. For more information, email susanwalches@verizon.net.

Hudson Valley Shakespeare Receives Major NYS Grant

Grant to support 2015 education and outreach programs

The Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival has been awarded $71,000 from the New York State Council on the Arts, administered by the New York State Office of Cultural Education (NYSCA). The Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival will use this grant to help fund its 25th Anniversary Season,辖区内所有社区图书馆的计划。

HLLT Donates

Connecting to Libraries and Schools

Commemorative book also available for purchase

The Hudson Highlands Land Trust has announced that it is donating copies of its newly released book, “Connecting: The People and Places of the Hudson Highlands,” to public schools and community centers within its Hudson Highlands Land Trust Library. The book is part of the library’s mission to support education in the region.

Howland Library to Begin Tag Waggins’ Tutors

Kids read aloud to dogs 1st and 3rd Wednesdays from Jan. 21

Howland Public Library on 313 Main St. in Beacon invites children in grades kindergarten through fifth to participate in Tag Waggins’ Tutors, held from 4 to 5 p.m. every first and third Wednesday of the month beginning Jan. 21. Children who need practice, especially those with reading difficulties, will have the opportunity to read out loud to Aries, a specially trained therapy dog from Therapy Dogs International (TDI). “Dogs are wonderful — they listen patiently and they don’t criticize.”

Quinn’s Offers Heavy Metal Shows in January

Vomit Fist plays Jan. 8, Downfall of Gaia on Jan. 22

The eclectic character of the live music presented at the Beacon club Quinn’s has distinguished it among Hudson Valley venues. They’ve had hardcore punk, experimental noise, Eastern European folk songs, Iranian pop, and jazz every Monday night. Now, they will have heavy metal again, with two shows this place in January.

Education and Outreach Programs, call Sean Mc- Nally, associate artistic di- rector and director of ed- ucation at 845-809-7570, ext. 18, or at smcnally@ hvshakespeare.org.

Beacon

Artsisans Guild Show and Sale continues in Beacon

Proceeds benefit Beacon High School artist prize

And local artists are selling blank compact discs, a few feet of old oak fencing, a stash of vintage fabric scraps, some foraged pine cones and birch twigs and get ready for some surprises just in time for holiday gift giving. Hudson Valley Artists Guild members transformed raw materials that others may have relegated to the scrap heap into items like a barn owl to hang in a window, a jewelry box for treasured jewels, a log cabin quilt, a birch-branch Christmas tree complete with ornaments and a large diameter pine cone wreath fit for the White House.

The show was planned to benefit a Beacon High School artist. The Hudson Valley Artists Guild will grant a best artistic expression award to a Beacon High School student whose artwork will be selected from submissions to the January show at The Lofts at Beacon. Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday.

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The other workshop meets on Tuesday nights, starting Jan. 13 and running for six weeks from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Philipstown Recreation Center. Register through the Rec Center by calling 845-424-4618.

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Toy Donation Drive for Children Affected by Ebola (from page 6)

houses down from her, and his family had little money. They had no electricity and no sheets on the mattresses laid out on their floor. Denniston, at 11, was always working and giving money to his parents for basics. “He became a presence on my porch,” Pack McCarthy explained. “I helped him study for the common entrance exam to school. He studied really hard and he passed.” Close to the end of her Peace Corps assignment there, Pack McCarthy worked with a nearby Catholic school, St. Joseph’s Convent Marriaqua, which she called “a school that prides itself on academic excellence, and has a priority to take in poor children who would not be able to afford an education elsewhere. They accepted him.”

“He was my first, one-on-one sponsored child,” Pack McCarthy explained. After her departure, “we would write letters to each other. I started hearing from him that he wasn’t feeling well, and I asked the principal to check up on him. It turned out that he had fluid in his lungs, and eventually he got well enough to travel to the U.S. for treatment. During my time in the Peace Corps, all my family had visited me and met him, and really took to him, so when he came here, he felt like family. During his first week here he felt OK, but soon it was determined he had leukemia.” During a year of treatments at Westchester Medical Center, which Pack McCarthy called “a horrible time,” she was amazed by the generosity of those around her, which extended to his passing at age 14. “The costs of the funeral were donated, and the cemetery donated the plot.”

Now, Pack McCarthy wants to continue “what Denniston would want to do,” Di, which she founded in 2003, supports his former school in St. Vincent, where things are changing: “Now school is a right, not just something for people who can listen to YouTube, doing it over and over again.”

With money. But some parents can afford school fees, but not enough for lunch, or travel. So the principal alerts me and we earmark funds for specific issues.”

The benefits of this charitable work are not just for the recipients. Pack McCarthy has three boys, two elementary-aged and a baby, and the older two understand already that surrendering not just some toys, but finding the good ones and giving those up for someone with greater needs, is what counts. Donations are ongoing and will be accepted well beyond the holiday season. For more information, visit dennistoninternational.org and internationalmediicalcorps.org.

Terry Platz Is Returning to Perform in Messiah (from page 7)

have never sung before — the lesser-known sections. Though I never learned to play piano well enough to play it through, I was able to plunk out a few notes and practice, practice. There are online methods, too, and of course you can listen to YouTube, doing it over and over again.”

Still, even aidious preparation was not complete training for the “scary temps” of the actual performances. "My vocal chords were challenged by the speed," Platz recalled. But the terror was matched by exhilaration. "To watch Rachel [Evans, the concert master] was so exciting to watch the movement of the musicians.”

This year’s performances will be much altered by the absence of Stewart, who passed away just before Thanksgiving. Having planned for these performances to take place regardless of whether he would be around to guide them, Stewart requested that an empty podium represent him.

"The symbolic, empty podium will be a major challenge," Platz said, “but we’ll have to tune in even that much more because of it, and Rachel was the pulse last year, as she will be this year." Stewart will be much missed, though. "It was impossible not to be inspired by his story last year." Platz related. “He told us the story of his father emigrating from Scotland to this country without a penny in his pocket, but with a Messiah score tucked under his arm … Gordon couldn’t have completed his life without doing this. As a singer, watching him conduct was like looking into his soul.”

Messiah will be performed at St. Mary’s Episcopal Church in Cold Spring at 2 and 5 p.m. Dec. 21. At press time, a few seats were still available (both of last year’s concerts sold out), and tickets, which cost $20, are available at brownpapertickets.com or at the door.
Gifts for the Gardener: Books about Gardening and the Environment

By Pamela Doan

There are many issues that have stood out for me this year, and as the year draws to a close, it's a natural time for reflection. Since it's also a gift-giving season, I decided to combine the two here with my favorite subjects: books, gardening, and the environment.

Climate change has been the most pressing issue on my mind for years now; my gardening and landscaping approach is always about trying to minimize harm, and I want to help the acres I tend here in Philipstown to recover and restore to a better natural state. Everywhere I look, I see the impact of global warming. Whether it's stretches of forest where nothing grows but invasive, non-native plants; a bird sighting off-season; or a species that has moved north — the signs of loss are evident, and it is a loss; make no mistake.

If that cheery subject makes you want to read more, then here are some suggestions for books that will also make good gifts for people who want to know what is happening in the world and try out new ways of gardening and landscaping.

The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History by Elizabeth Kolbert

Kolbert's book from 2006, Field Notes From a Catastrophe: Man, Nature and Climate Change, defined the climate change crisis for me and shaped my thinking about what was happening. What I love about both books is her fieldwork with every situation she describes and uses as an example of the crisis. In reading that creates urgency. The New York Times Book Review included The Sixth Extinction in its top 10 books of 2014.

Seeds of Hope: Wisdom and Wonder From the World of Plants by Jane Goodall

I haven't finished reading this book yet, but I recommend it for anyone looking for the bright spots in the global environment. Goodall, known for her work with chimps, writes here about her lifelong engagement with the natural world around her, including an early love for a special tree. I loved her memoir, Reason for Hope, and 15 years later, she remains impassionately faithful to her belief that we can still pull ourselves out. Seeds of Hope has her gentle and reverent voice and is good reading for dark and quiet winter days.

The Living Landscape: Designing for Beauty and Biodiversity in the Home Garden by Doug Tallamy

Tallamy gave a presentation at a conference I attended at the Native Plant Center last spring about fragmenta-
tion, dividing up and rupturing habitats through development, and the loss of biodiversity of plants and animals. Es-
entially, when we landscape our yards with the same six shrubs and flowers as all the rest of our neighbors and cover the majority of the space with grass, we've annihilated the ecosystem and disrupted the natural flow of nature by developing the land into plots for homes and buildings. Tallamy has great ideas about how to restore pathways for nature in your home landscaping in this book.

These books have been on my mind for years. Both of the authors are researchers at Cornell University, and I attended a presentation Galbraith made at a conference and was excited about a lot of his ideas. These are the kinds of forward-thinking approaches that are necessary to both adapt to climate change and mitigate our impact.

Happy gift giving!
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