

# The HIGHLANDS Current



Gamers Go Pro  
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MARCH 3, 2017

161 MAIN ST., COLD SPRING, N.Y. | [highlandscurrent.com](http://highlandscurrent.com)

## County Evaluates Impact of Nuclear Plant Closure

*Concerns about electricity rates and local economy*

By Holly Crocco

Putnam County officials are bracing for the impact of the scheduled closure of the Indian Point nuclear power plant in 2021, in the form of lost revenue for the county, lost jobs and the prospect of an energy rate hike, although a newly released study downplays the latter scenario. (See Page 8.)

The closure of Indian Point was announced in January by Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Entergy, which owns and operates the plant near Peekskill in Westchester County. The plant can produce up to 2,000 megawatts of power.

Tony Sutton, the county's emergency services commissioner, described the closure process to lawmakers during a meeting on Feb. 21 of the Protective Services Committee.

He noted that "spent" radioactive fuel rods were not supposed to remain at the facility, which opened in the 1970s. "It was always intended for the fuel to be shipped off-site and be recycled, but over the course of years and the evolution of the world, every single rod that was ever brought to Indian Point is still at Indian Point," he said. The rods are stored for at least five years in 40-foot-deep pools of water and, since 2008, removed to sealed containers on cement platforms.

There the radioactive rods will remain

"until somebody can figure out what to do" with them, he said.

According to Sutton, each reactor operates for two years and then is shut down for refueling, during which about a third of the fuel is replaced.

The proposed closure of each reactor is scheduled to coincide with the refueling schedule, said Sutton. One unit will be refueled this month and in 2019, then taken offline in April 2021. The other will be refueled next year, then go offline in April 2020.

When a reactor is refueled, the plant takes advantage of the system being down to complete hundreds of maintenance tasks, employing many steamfitters, carpenters, electricians, masons and other workers, Sutton said.

"It basically doubles the workforce at the site," he said. Contractors "descend on the plant and they work like bees to get it done" during the three-week refueling process.

Sutton said some officials have expressed concern that if any serious defects are found during the remaining refuelings, the reactor could be shut down earlier than scheduled without a replacement supply in place for the energy it produces.

However, he said, Entergy must order fuel a year ahead of time and plan for the large workforce that occupies the site during the refueling, so that scenario is unlikely. "The truth of the matter is, I think you're going to see them honor those [closing] dates," he said.

The governor can ask Entergy to keep

(Continued on Page 8)

*"It was always intended for the fuel to be shipped off-site and be recycled, but over the course of years and the evolution of the world, every single rod that was ever brought to Indian Point is still at Indian Point."*



Marie Early, Fran Murphy and Peggy Schatzle are candidates for two seats on the Cold Spring Village Board. See interviews on Page 3.

Photos by Michael Turton

## Sales-Tax Revenues Jump, Town Board Members Seek Share

*Putnam says it distributes money by paying bills*

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

At least on paper, Putnam County's annual sales-tax revenue rose in 2016 by 9.5 percent, the second-highest increase of any county in New York.

In reality, the rise is less rosy than it seems.

According to Putnam County statistics and a Jan. 30 report from the New York State Comptroller's Office, the county's sales-tax income grew to just over \$59 million in 2016 from just under \$53 million in 2015.

However, most of that upswing reflects what the Comptroller's Office termed "distribution adjustments" across years, due to the arrival of late or revised returns or to unspecified "technological" tweaking. Such adjustments to the data for Putnam and two other counties with notable increases boosted their numbers.

Putnam County Finance Commissioner William Carlin said the adjustments, totaling \$2.7 million, accounted for more than half of the 9.5 percent rise. He also explained that the state does not reveal exactly why adjustments occurred and noted that this was not the only time Putnam has seen the adjustments affect its numbers.

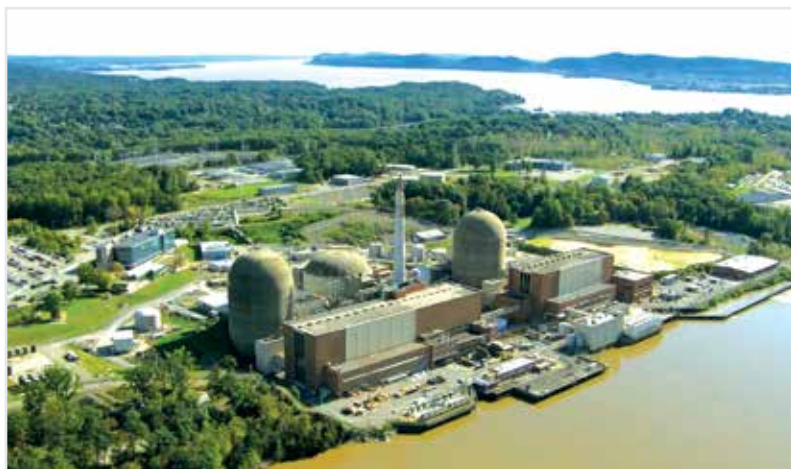
Nonetheless, in recent years, Putnam's sales-tax income has gone up.

Carlin said that from 2014 to 2016, sales-tax revenue rose by 5.7 percent. "Certainly that tells a different story than a 9.5 percent increase in one year," he said, noting that sales-tax income can fluctuate dramatically. "In 2008, Putnam had the highest sales-tax growth," he noted, but a year later, it "had the highest decline in the state."

Sales-tax revenue throughout the state rose by 2.3 percent last year, which the Comptroller's Office considers "sluggish." However, the Mid-Hudson Valley had the best regional increase at 2.9 percent. Dutchess County revenue rose 1.4 percent and Westchester's 1.3 percent. Chautauqua County had the largest jump, 12.7 percent, after raising its sales-tax rate.

Unlike 46 of the 57 counties outside New York City, Putnam County does not share the sales taxes collected, a longstanding point of contention in Philipstown, where many tourists spend their cash.

At the Philipstown Town Board meeting on Feb. 16, Councilor Nancy Montgomery said the \$5 million rise in sales-tax revenue between 2015 and 2016, although exaggerated by the state adjustment, still "makes us wonder once again what we are going to do about getting" a portion. The adjustment, she said, "does not mean there wasn't some growth; even if there wasn't, we are" (Continued on Page 2)



Indian Point

File photo

### New York Energy

- About 80 percent of renewable generation in the state comes from hydroelectricity. (New York is home to the largest hydroelectric power plant in the eastern U.S.)
- Most new renewable power in New York is from wind. The state has the potential for 140,000 megawatts of onshore wind energy, particularly around Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, on peaks of the Adirondack and Catskill mountains and along the Long Island shoreline.
- According to the most recent data (from 2014), New York residents spend \$3,446 annually on energy, including transportation, ranking 49 of the 50 states and D.C. By comparison, North Dakota residents spend \$11,094 per year (1) and Maine residents \$5,681 (7).

Source: U.S. Energy Information Administration ([eia.gov](http://eia.gov))

## Sales-Tax Revenues Jump, Town Board Members Seek Share *(from Page 1)*

still looking to get our fair share.”

Councilor Mike Leonard proposed that the county use some of the higher revenue to replace funds it cut from its allocation for the upkeep of historic cemeteries. That appropriation dropped from \$12,000 in 2016 to \$8,000, divided among six towns. The county can afford to put at least \$4,000 back, he said.

Leonard said Feb. 27 that cemetery committees from the six towns hope to convince County Executive MaryEllen Odell and legislators to restore the funding. The consistent rise in sales-tax revenue “should have delayed their need to cut what is clearly a shameful, low amount to begin with,” he said. “I would have found a way if I was handling the county budget. But then you have to care, first.”

Odell relies each year on sales-tax revenue to fill county coffers. In the projected 2017 budget, it accounts for 37 percent of projected revenue. (Other sources include property taxes, state and federal funds, and fees collected by county agencies.) When Odell went through the numbers at a public presentation in October, she called sales-tax revenue “critical to financial stability of the county” because it “offsets the need for higher property taxes, and/or reducing services.”

Carlin maintained that the county already shares sales-tax revenue, “not the actual cash” but “by paying for such services such as community-college tuition and election expenses not presently

### Sales Tax Facts

- The sales-tax rate in Putnam County is 8.375 percent and in Dutchess, 8.125. This includes the state tax rate of 4 percent, plus the county rate, plus a commuter tax of 0.375 percent. The state’s highest rate is in New York City, at 8.875.
- Outside of New York City, 11 of 57 counties, including Putnam, do not share sales-tax revenue with local governments. (None of the 11 have cities.) Under a formula it adopted in 2013, Dutchess County distributes a flat \$25 million from the 3.75 percent it collects. Poughkeepsie receives 38 percent (\$9.57 million) and Beacon 17 percent (\$4.16 million).
- Ninety-three percent of New York residents pay at least 8 percent. The highest rate in the nation is in New Jersey, where some residents pay 12.875 percent.

Source: Office of the New York State Comptroller

charged back to municipalities, as is done in other counties.” Most important, he said, Putnam “guarantees 100 percent of the property-tax collections of each municipality in the county” — covering losses when someone fails to pay.

“That creates a demand on our cash flow that requires the county to keep

these funds,” he said. Otherwise, it would need to borrow the money, which is “not a scenario that we would recommend.”

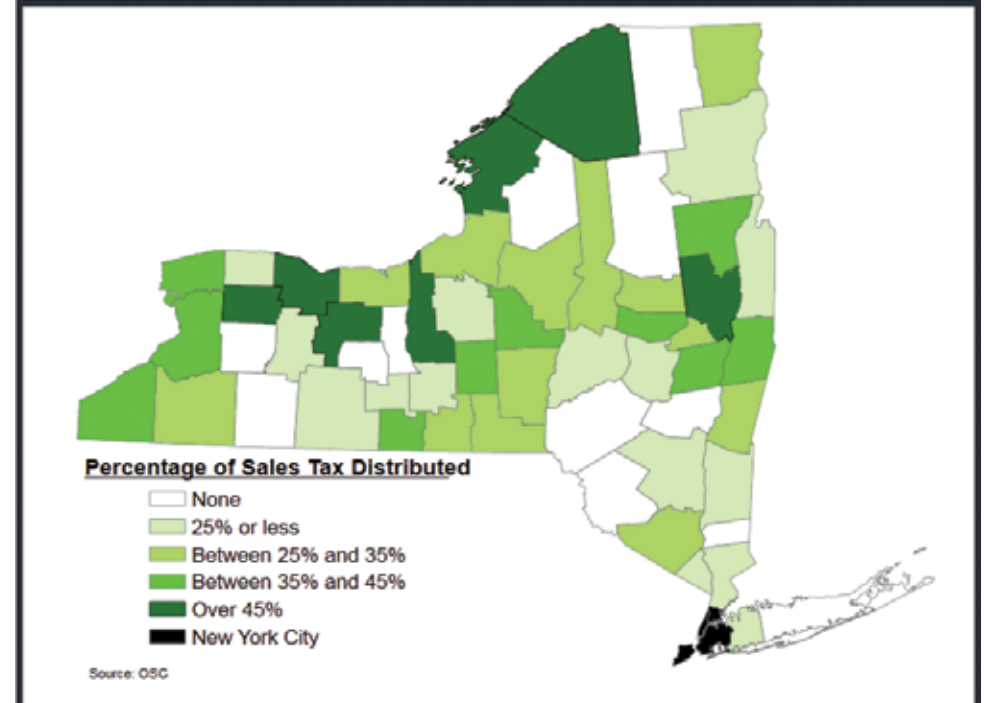
Carlin also observed that the county uses sales tax to fund actions mandated by state or federal governments. “As long as there is no meaningful mandate relief,” especially given the state tax-cap that limits how much municipalities can raise property taxes each year, he said, “the

**For Roots and Shoots, see highlandscurrent.com.**

pressures on the county budget will be too great to share sales-tax revenue. The numbers simply won’t add up.”

So far this year, the sales-tax fortunes look promising. A chart provided legislators for a Feb. 27 meeting showed that in January the county collected \$4.47 million, or \$237,300 more than the same month last year.

### Percentage of County Sales Tax Revenue Distributed to Local Governments, FY 2013



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## MARIE EARLY

**Q: Why are you running for a second term?**

**A:** There are still a lot more items to be addressed. I have the time and feel I should give back to the community. My family has a history of service to the village and being a trustee continues the work I have done on other village boards.

**Q: What projects would you list as successes?**

**A:** The Main Street Project and metering the municipal parking lot. Also updating a number of agreements that had expired, including fire protection for Philipstown and Nelsonville.

**Q: Nelsonville declined to pay the full amount it was invoiced by the village for fire protection. The Cold Spring Fire Company has also expressed concerns over funding issues. Can you comment on both situations?**

**A:** The mayor of Nelsonville said they couldn't afford full payment. I understand that. He left open the possibility of addressing it in the next budget cycle. He's not running again but I hope the new mayor will address the issue. We will continue to fund the CSFC based on their budget. They have provided a new budget and like every department it has to be examined. We've also asked for their actuals. The Village Board has agreed to spend money on the firehouse roof and to evaluate the cost of new air conditioning.

**Q: There seems to be less discord on the board than in some past administrations, but isn't disagreement among trustees a healthy thing?**

**A:** It's healthy to have levels of disagreement. It becomes unhealthy when trustees dig in their heels and refuse to discuss issues with an open mind. The current board is pretty much on the same page. We have not yet had a significant disagreement about a topic.

(Continued on Page 6)

## Meet the Trustee Candidates

Michael Turton interviewed each of the three candidates who will appear on the ballot for two seats on the Cold Spring Village Board: incumbents Marie Early and Fran Murphy and challenger Peggy Schatzle. Their responses have been paraphrased and edited for space. For their candidate statements, see highlandscurrent.com.

## FRAN MURPHY

**Q: Why are you running for a second term?**

**A:** We're not finished. We're in the middle of important projects that I'd like to move further along. I'd like to accomplish a few more things.

**Q: What do you see as the top issues facing the village?**

**A:** Repairing the dam and reaching agreement on the future of the firehouse. We also need to rewrite the employee handbook and make it less complicated. And we have to negotiate with the Boat Club. There's eight years left on their lease and they want at least another 20. They need to finance a new building and we need revenue from that property.

**Q: Which is most vital initiative and the toughest to address?**

**A:** Absolutely the dam. We are moving it along but there's still the issue of connecting to the New York City aqueduct. Every time we think we're getting ahead they come back with "Yes, but..."

**Q: What projects would you list as successes?**

**A:** Definitely the Main Street Project. Previous administrations did a lot of legwork but if we hadn't got it done we would have lost part of the grant. Our new Facebook page keeps residents

(Continued on Page 6)

## PEGGY SCHATZLE

**Q: What motivated you to run for a trustee position?**

**A:** I've always felt I would run because I feel I can make a difference. I'm a good listener and I'm a person who does not take "no" for an answer. My family is from Cold Spring and we've seen more negative change than positive change. There's been a loss of community. And there are issues that have been pending for years.

**Q: How have you been involved in village life?**

**A:** I've been president of the American Legion Women's Auxiliary for seven years, organizing the Memorial Day parade, sending packages to the troops and helping my father with the Voice of Democracy essay program at Haldane. I also helped with his work at the senior center. Recently I also contributed to resolving the parking issue at Locust Ridge near Haldane.

**Q: How does your professional background qualify you for public office?**

**A:** As an educator in the Chappaqua School District I've written grants, including budgets. I work with parents constantly. You have to be level-headed and willing to listen to everyone's opinions — to work as a team and resolve issues together.

**Q: What do you feel are the major issues facing the village?**

**A:** The dam: I don't know why they let it go so long. We have engineers who live here who could have provided advice. The firehouse: they've been asking for help for at least seven years. The Village Board acknowledges it needs repair now, before the election, but that to me is all talk. They have not done anything to help. And definitely the budget. We are in serious trouble with pending lawsuits.

**Q: Which personal traits will help you be an effective trustee?**

**A:** I am trustworthy, have integrity and I persevere. I network and help people. I have positive connections in the community because people know that I care.

(Continued on Page 6)

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St. Philip's Church Parish House  
1101 Route 9D, Garrison

# The HIGHLANDS Current

## NYFA\* Winner: 16 Better Newspaper Contest Awards

\*New York Press Association, 2013 - 2015

### PUBLISHER

Highlands Current Inc.

161 Main St.,

Cold Spring NY 10516-2818

291 Main St., Beacon NY 12508

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(1939 - 2014)

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The Highlands Current is a 501c3 nonprofit funded by grants, advertising and the generous support of our readers. Thank you.



Institute for  
Nonprofit News

THE HIGHLANDS CURRENT,  
Vol. 6, Issue 8 (ISSN 2475-3785)  
is published weekly by  
Highlands Current Inc.,  
161 Main St., Cold Spring, NY 10516-  
2818. Nonprofit postage paid at  
Newburgh, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address  
changes to The Highlands Current,  
161 Main St., Cold Spring, NY 10516-  
2818. Mail delivery \$20 per year.

highlandscurrent.com/delivery  
delivery@highlandscurrent.com

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Thunderstorm magic

I had the good fortune to see the Stephen Sondheim play *Company* at the Depot Theatre on Feb. 25 ("It's Hard to Stay Married!," Feb. 17).

Directed by Maia Guest, it was my first Sondheim musical, and it was a wonderful presentation. We quickly forgot about the thunderstorm raging outside until the second act was about to begin. The lights in the theater and the surrounding neighborhood went out. The audience waited patiently for a half hour or more while the Depot's generator kicked on for a minute or two and then off.

The house manager offered a complimentary ticket to another performance to anyone who wasn't happy with the situation. No one took her up on it. The decision was made to continue the performance in the dark, without music.

"Sondheim without music is never



After the lights went out during a performance of *Company* at the Philipstown Depot Theatre on Feb. 25, audience members used the flashlights on their phones to light the stage.

Photo provided

going to work," I heard one seasoned theater-goer exclaim. But the cast came out for the opening number and, lit by a few flashlights and cell phones, did an incredible job.

I am thankful and amazed at the shared

experience. The second act turned out to be as magical as the first. I was appreciative being part of such an accepting audience, as well as being able to enjoy the talents of each of the actors who created a memorable production.

Kevin Spath, Ossining

### Sanctuary city

A letter in your Feb. 24 issue proposed that Beacon should name itself a "sanctuary city" that would not participate in federal immigration dragnets. No one who is here illegally should be allowed to stay. If one law can be broken all could be broken, which means police should also not give speeding tickets, DWIs or arrest anyone for

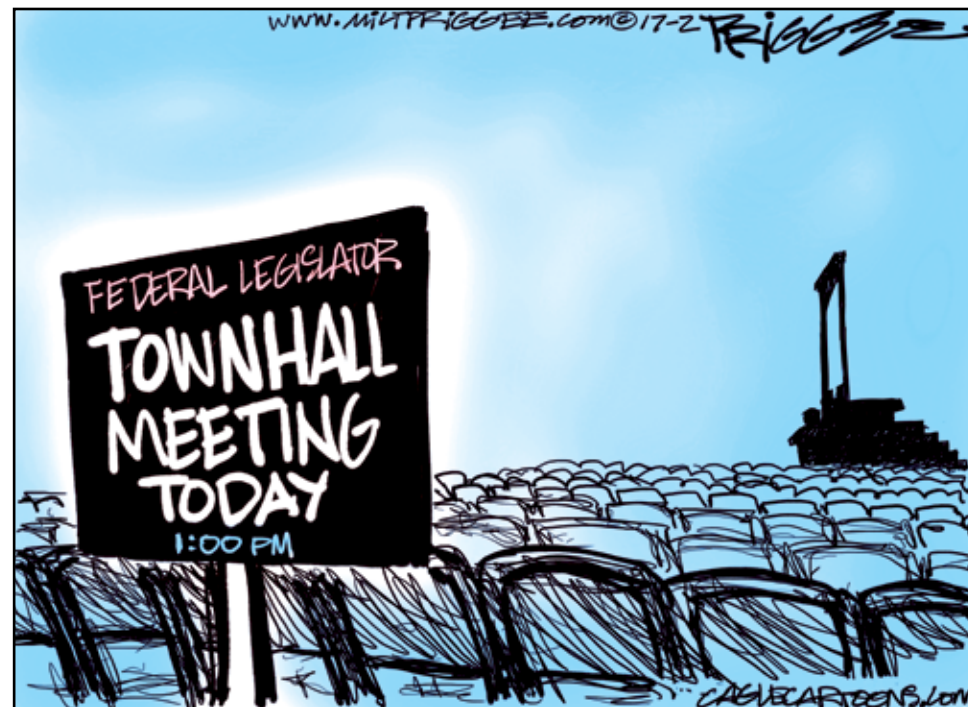
robbery, trespassing, illegal guns and on and on. If I ever commit a crime in a sanctuary city and get a ticket or arrested, it's game on!

Denise Gouldner Bartolotti,  
Hopewell Junction

### Local mergers

You reported online that Philipstown Supervisor Richard Shea "outlined the latest steps toward consolidating the Cold Spring and Philipstown building departments but noted that Nelsonville appears no longer interested in a three-way merger" ("Notes from the Philipstown Town Board," posted Feb. 25).

This is what happens when people have a short history in a community. Philipstown provided building department and code enforcement for years, until the mid-1980s. While I was on the Village Board, and after, I pushed for consolidation for both building departments and the court, as a starter. This nonsense of "independence and identity" by Nelsonville is a sham and a disservice to the residents of the village and the town as well. There should be a general merger of (Continued on next page)



## Taking it to the Street

By Anita Peltonen

### What was your most embarrassing moment?



"I was in front of a classroom teaching Italian. A student said, 'Do you know you're wearing two different shoes?'"

~ Anna Amico Lyons, Cold Spring



"I called my twins, Laura and Tess, by each other's names. I should know better. I'm an identical twin, but they are not. And my brother and I could never fool our parents."

~ Jeff Toland, Beacon



"I was a first-grade teacher having my first parent-teacher conference. I met with a mother and went on about her son, Andrew. It turns out her son was Howard. She didn't say anything until the end."

~ Ruthanne Cullnan Barr, Philipstown

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (from previous page)

all three entities.

For years I was opposed but see it now, looking from the outside, as a win-win situation for all town residents.

Anthony Merante, *Cold Spring*

Theater history

In your story, “Beacon Theater to Re-open” (Feb. 24), you wrote that the theater at 445 Main St. “closed in 1968 and was shuttered to the public for more than 40 years until 4th Wall bought the building in 2010 with plans to create an 800-seat performance space.”

This statement is not true. Why doesn’t *The Highland Current* do proper research instead of misleading the public with articles like this? That theater was bought by Everlasting Covenant Church in the mid-1990s and cleaned up, made beautiful and habitable by the small group of courageous, faithful believers in Christ in spite of constant opposition by the city government who joined with wealthy land developers making it difficult to maintain ministry of the gospel in Beacon.

The church is who opened that theater back up for use, not 4th Wall. But that’s what the media does to the public. They tell only the portion of truth they want you to know.

Fran Beauchamps, *Beacon*

*Editor’s note: Our story was not intended to present a history of every use of the*

*building over the decades between its uses as a theater. That hardly seems reason to issue an indictment of the entire “media” or accuse us of “misleading” anyone.*

**Beacon firehouses**

Rather than building a central station, Beacon should fix the existing firehouses (“Beacon Still Looking for Land for Central Station,” Feb. 17). They say it will cost too much, but I know plenty of people who would volunteer. The city just wants to convert the old stations to more housing. It does not seem to even think about school and roads being overcrowded, plus our taxes will go up instead of going down.

Joe Green, *Beacon*

Re-elect Murphy

Over the past two years Fran Murphy, who is running for re-election to the Cold Spring Village Board, has dedicated herself to the betterment of our village. Several times a day I walk our Labrador down Main Street and will see Fran going into or coming out of Village Hall.

She’s not there to socialize but rather looking for ways to get things done and find ways to access grant money, or applying for low-interest loans. Fran is good for our village; now be good to her and re-elect her!

David Marion, *Cold Spring*

**Write-in candidate for trustee**

I am announcing my campaign to become a trustee on the Cold Spring Village Board as a write-in candidate.

I was introduced to local politics in March 2009 when Seth Gallagher, who was running for mayor of Cold Spring, unexpectedly stopped by. I had never lived in a small town, so this visit for me was a new experience. Since that day I have come to appreciate the value of a small community, namely, the opportunity for close interaction and participation in local elections, democracy and governance. In a small community, one person can make a difference.

The issue on my mind around the time of Seth’s visit was the condition of the local sidewalks, particularly in the winter, especially near the intersection of Lunn Terrace and Main Street. I was told they would soon be repaired, but it was not until seven years later, and two mayors, that it finally happened.

Why did it take so long? A concern of presumably wide and common interest was not a priority until, in several elections, it was repeatedly drummed into the heads of those running for office. It was quite troubling, and remains so to the extent that non-representative behavior periodically reoccurs.

Following Hurricane Sandy, I observed inadequacies in emergency planning and services. Afterward I volunteered for the



Frank Haggerty  
Photo by Michael Turton

village emergency preparedness task force. The village was not prepared for Sandy. It was hardly anyone’s fault; Sandy was unprecedented, and other communities in three states were no better prepared. It turns out the positions of mayor and trustee are part-time assignments, and if one makes a calculation for hours logged (assuming one or two full days per week) and compares it to their stipends, our village is effectively governed and managed by minimum-wage workers! This is a recipe for enormous disappointment, widespread failure and even disaster.

As a member of the Parking Committee, I supported metering at the municipal lot as a safety valve for the increasingly dangerous level of vehicle congestion, but only on weekends and holidays, otherwise at no charge or, at most, for a small fee.

I’d like to hear your concerns and questions and to participate in the wider conversation. Of course, I appreciate any and all support and look forward to receiving your vote on March 21. Please talk and discuss with your friends and neighbors.

Frank Haggerty, *Cold Spring*

The HIGHLANDS

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Candidates Forum for Cold Spring Village Board

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Marie Early

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PHILIPSTOWN PLANNING BOARD

Site Visit – March 5, 2017

The Philipstown Planning Board will meet on Sunday, March 5, 2017, 10:30 a.m. to inspect the following site:

Manitou Property Co.,LLC

1656 Route 9D, Cold Spring

PHILIPSTOWN PLANNING BOARD

Site Visit – March 5, 2017

The Philipstown Planning Board will meet on Sunday, March 5, 2017, 9:30 a.m. to inspect the following site:

Stonecrop Gardens Inc.

(61-115 Stonecrop), Route 301, Cold Spring.

PHILIPSTOWN PLANNING BOARD

Public Hearing – March 16, 2017

The Philipstown Planning Board for the Town of Philipstown, New York, will hold a public hearing on Thursday, March 16, 2017 starting at 7:30 p.m. at the Butterfield Library on Morris Avenue in Cold Spring, New York to consider the following application:

Kristin Sorenson, 1000 Old Albany Post Road, Garrison TM#16.20-1-18. The applicant is proposing a lot line adjustment between two adjacent parcels along the east side of Old Albany Post Road. The proposal is to transfer approximately 0.324 acres of land currently owned by Thompson/Watt, representing an un-used, narrow access way to their lot, to Sorenson. No new development is proposed. This land transfer is deemed a subdivision pursuant to Chapter112 of the Town of Philipstown Code.

At said hearing all persons will have the right to be heard. Copies of the application, plat map, and other related materials may be seen in the Office of the Planning Board at the Philipstown Town Hall.

Dated at Philipstown, New York, this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of February, 2017.

**MARIE EARLY (FROM PAGE 3)****Q: What are the top issues facing the village?**

**A:** No.1 is repairing the dams, which has a myriad of implications. Another is the roof at the firehouse — that has to be done. We also need to begin addressing infrastructure beyond Main Street, including sidewalks, and take a hard look at the budget and address areas that are growing beyond our control. We addressed revenue increases for fiscal year 2016-17. Now we have to take a look at where we spend our money — all of our expenditures.

**Q: Which of those initiatives is most vital and the toughest to address?**

**A:** They can all be addressed. The issue is finding the money. The biggest bill will be for the dams.

**Q: Is there an initiative where you failed to make as much progress as you hoped?**

**A:** I'd like to have completed the Main Street Project. It is "substantially complete," but the contractor was unable to plant the trees last fall. And we are still waiting to hear from Central Hudson regarding a study it has completed on new LED lighting.

**Q: What will be your top priority if re-elected?**

**A:** Trying to find ways to decrease village costs. There has to be a budget for snow removal; you have to have a clerk and an accountant. But if there are oppor-

tunities for merging municipal services I'm in favor.

**Q: Is there an aspect of being a trustee in which you feel you need more knowledge or skill?**

**A:** I'm not as knowledgeable about water and sewer issues as I'd like to be. I have every confidence in Greg Phillips and his team but I don't feel qualified to ask the right, challenging questions.

**Q: What is most difficult about being a trustee?**

**A:** The volume of material that I'm required to understand; today it was a Bond Anticipation Note. Keeping up with the information flow is difficult. Doing a responsible job as trustee involves a lot more than two-hour meetings three times a month.

**FRAN MURPHY (FROM PAGE 3)**

informed. I helped with grant requests that resulted in low-interest financing of capital projects. And I've been working in the village office regularly to support the village clerk.

**Q: There seems to be less discord on the board than in some past administrations. Why is that?**

**A:** We know what each trustee is working on. We email each other and provide input. By the time we get to a meeting we know what's coming up. We're not wasting the village's time and our time. We're pretty much on the same page.

**Q: What is most difficult about being a trustee?**

**A:** The volume of work. And the amount of time. It takes a lot of time to get things done right. It's not an easy "one, two three" especially with something like the Main Street Project. I retired to not have to work — and now I find I have to be in the office Tuesdays and Thursdays to help with what needs to get done.

**Q: If re-elected, what will be on your personal priority list?**

**A:** Our buildings are in desperate need of repair, Village Hall in addition to the firehouse. And I'd like to see some green energy at both. We also need to determine where we're going with trees on Main Street. The contractor was supposed to have trees ready to plant last fall but couldn't.

**Q: Is there an aspect of being a trustee in which you feel you need more knowledge or skill?**

**A:** I'd like to get a better handle on grants. It's not just the applications; if you get a grant there is a lot of reporting to do. I'd also like to do a better job on getting our refunds. There is Consolidated Local Street and Highway Improvement Program money available to us, for example, but I need to get all the paperwork done.

**Q: On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the administration's efforts at communicating with residents?**

**A:** We're at about a 7. We can do better on Facebook. I posted something recently that got about 200 hits — not bad in a small village. We've done more video of meetings. The clerk does email blasts to announce public hearings and the like. And the press covers our meetings. The onus runs both ways though. We're not going to knock on peoples' doors. If you want to know, there are ways to find out.

**PEGGY SCHATZLE (FROM PAGE 3)****Q: Where has the current board come up short in your view?**

**A:** The Boat Club: The village needs to honor the lease, with stipulations covering residents' concerns, such as noise levels. The building needs to be put back up. Historically it has been there for a long time. The club is something positive for hard-working people, a way to enjoy the village where they pay taxes. The Fjord Trail: there is no plan for managing all the people who are going to come here. We can't even manage the weekends now. I'm also concerned about residents who have lived here for generations but can no longer afford to. Things have to get resolved. Issues cannot be outstanding anymore. We need to have public meetings to hear people's concerns.

**Q: What might be done to unify the community more?**

**A:** I've heard of a divide and it breaks my heart. We are all hard-working people. We're all in this together. If we're going to think about division then it's going to get worse. Having more meetings, and having more balance, more residents on committees would help. Also being out there more, going to the seniors to see how they are doing, looking at projects frequently, going up to the dams.

**Q: What would be your priorities if elected?**

**A:** First, settle the lawsuits. Get our budget under our belt. Start helping our firemen. Get our parking resolved. Fix the dam. And be out there with the people — accountable and available.

**Q: What knowledge or skill would you need to be an effective trustee?**

**A:** I wish I knew how to build a dam! I'm quick to learn. I research. I read. I'd give up my time to learn and get the job done. I'm here to get things done.

HUDSON HIGHLANDS  
PUTNAM  
HISTORY  
MUSEUM  
WEST POINT FOUNDRY

## History of Valhalla Highlands

### Lecture with Joseph Pell Lombardi

#### Saturday, March 11 at 3pm

Join PHM for a presentation by world-renowned architect, Joseph Pell Lombardi. Lombardi will

share a brief history of the North Highlands from the late 18th century to the early 20th century, followed by the history of Valhalla Highlands. He will also share his personal experiences in the Lake Valhalla community during the 1940s and 1950s, including the impact of World War II. Joe has been a part-time resident of Philipstown for most of his life including, for many years, having owned the James H. Haldane House on Paulding Avenue in Cold Spring. For more information about Lombardi, please visit [www.josephpellombardi.com/](http://www.josephpellombardi.com/).



Please note that seating is limited. To guarantee your seat, please register through our lecture Eventbrite at [www.putnamhistorymuseum.org](http://www.putnamhistorymuseum.org). Admission is \$5 for the general public and is free for members. Note the special early lecture start time, and join us after the lecture for some light refreshments. Contact Rachel with any questions at 845-265-4010.

**Stop by the PHM on Saturday, March 11 from 11am to 3pm for special winter hours!** This is a rare opportunity for you to view the museum during our seasonal closure.

The Putnam History Museum is located at 63 Chestnut Street in Cold Spring. [www.putnamhistorymuseum.org](http://www.putnamhistorymuseum.org)

## The Nelsonville Race

For information about Nelsonville village board candidates Bill O'Neill and Alan Potts, see [highlandscurrent.com](http://highlandscurrent.com).



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## NY Alert

For public safety and transportation alerts by text or email, visit [nyalert.gov](http://nyalert.gov).



Dear greater Cold Spring area residents:

Thank you to those who attended last November's public meeting on the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail. What began as a kickoff of the environmental review process for the trail quickly became an outpouring of views by some Cold Spring residents over the impacts of high visitation on village life and sensitive natural areas.

While the Fjord Trail planning project hasn't caused these conditions, we were happy to provide a platform for open dialogue about them. We got a clear sense that visitation levels reached a tipping point in summer 2015, with the village attracting even more visitors last summer. Evidence suggests this trend will continue.

Clearly, Cold Spring needs a visitor congestion management strategy to ensure quality of life can be protected in the face of growing visitation to Hudson Highlands State Park Preserve as well as the village as a destination site. Fortunately, a proven formula exists—a strategy developed by the National Park Service for gateways into some of its parks. Among its recommendations:

- Formalize parking areas and place more controls on parking, such as no parking zones or metered parking.
- Use electronic systems to help reduce unnecessary movement, such as early notification that a parking lot is full.
- Improve public transportation—e.g., provide a shuttle.
- Make traffic improvements—better wayfinding to direct visitors, enhanced crosswalks, reduced speed limits.
- Inform people about trip planning, such as providing early notification if an area is congested and suggestions for less crowded alternatives.

What this makes clear is that if designed with these considerations in mind, the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail will function as a visitor congestion management strategy. It will add controls around parking, lower the speed limit and improve pedestrian crossings on Route 9D, as well as support infrastructure to move pedestrians quickly and safely through the village.

In fact, this project started with a group of residents who wanted to improve pedestrian safety along Route 9D. Soon, they realized the trail also could support Main Street businesses and enhance quality of life. From there, the idea took off—attracting an impressive coalition of local, municipal, regional and state groups. Construction of improved and expanded formalized parking already is underway. More parking and the first trail sections (north of Breakneck) will commence soon. However, based on your input, we will review the recommended improvements again to determine if more congestion management techniques should be included.

We're committed to working with Cold Spring area residents to ensure the project does all it can to serve as a congestion management tool. Already, we're working closely with NYS Parks to coordinate how the trail's management strategies dovetail with those under discussion for Hudson Highlands State Park Preserve and with NYS DOT to look at safety measures along Route 9D.

While no single entity can address the challenges high visitation pose to quality of life and natural habitat, the strong coalition behind the Fjord Trail has a significant opportunity to make meaningful, sustained improvements. We look forward to continued discussion with area residents and businesses to help find the right combination of tools and techniques to make life in Cold Spring and recreation in the Hudson Highlands safer and more peaceful for all.

Linda Cooper  
Regional Director, Taconic Region, NYS Office of  
Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Amy Kacala  
Scenic Hudson, Hudson Highlands  
Fjord Trail Project Manager

## County Evaluates Impact of Nuclear Plant Closure *(from Page 1)*

the plant open longer if the state needs more time to get alternative energy supplies in place, Sutton said.

Sutton said there are not only concerns about the impact of the closing on the plant's 1,000 employees ("Everybody who works there makes a good salary," he said) but on the economy in Putnam County.

He said his department, for example, expects to suffer a \$420,000 loss in revenue provided by Entergy for emergency services, and that the company also underwrites firefighter training and safety drills and funds community events such as fireworks. "It's going to be a big hit," said Sutton.

Sutton said funding to the county from

Entergy won't dry up immediately, because the plant will still require maintenance and safety work while it is decommissioned. For example, he said, for about 16 months after spent fuel is loaded into a pool, it needs to be monitored because if the pool loses water, the rods can spontaneously combust in what is called a zirconium fire. After that period passes, the monitor centers and response organizations located off-site can close.

Sutton also explained that Entergy has been banking money over the years to help with the cost of the eventual closure of the plant. "There's a large pot

of money available for cleaning up the site and making it safe," he said.

It is likely the buildings onsite will eventually be demolished, he added.

Bill Nulk, president of the Mahopac-based Putnam County Chamber of Commerce who also serves on the board of the Putnam County Industrial Development Agency, warned legislators that if a reliable replacement of the energy to be lost by the closure is not found and energy prices become destabilized, businesses will not want to come into or remain in Putnam County. "If you lose that and you can't replace it, that's a big detriment to attracting the businesses that we need in this area," he said.

In addition, the many Putnam residents who are employed by the plant will be left without income, which will also impact ancillary businesses such as restaurants and groceries, he said.

He asked legislators to stay on the heels of "the powers that be" to make sure the region finds a replacement energy source to keep people working, keep energy available and rates manageable.

In a blog post in January, Jennifer Maher, the chamber's board chair, expressed similar concerns. "Entergy has been a good community citizen and an active participant in bolstering the economy of the lower Hudson Valley," Maher wrote. "This is going to create quite a mess, and the question to be asked is, 'Why?'"

*"There's a large pot of money available for cleaning up the site and making it safe."*

## Replacing Indian Point

A report commissioned by Riverkeeper and the National Resources Defense Council, who have fought for years for the closure of Indian Point, concluded that New York can replace the electricity generated by the nuclear power plant but will need to change its long-term energy policies.

A \$2.2 billion, 333-mile hydropower transmission line that has been proposed to run from Canada to New York City could make up about half of the power that Indian Point now provides, with the rest coming from gas-fired plants, and alternative energy such as solar and wind.

The report, prepared by Synapse Energy Economics in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and released Feb. 23, argues that New York could rely much less on new sources of power if it were more aggressive about reducing demand. It pointed to Massachusetts and Rhode Island, which have reduced electricity use 2.7 and 2.9 percent, respectively, through programs that offer consumer incentives to use more efficient lighting, appliances and HVAC systems. The energy savings from similar efficiency efforts in New York state is about 1 percent.

Synapse calculated that, under various scenarios, the wholesale cost of electricity in New York could rise anywhere from 0.2 to 2.1 percent without the Indian Point supply.



### COMPANY

**The Stephen Sondheim/George Furth Musical**

**Directed by Maia Guest**

**March 3, 4 (sold out) 10 & 11, 8 p.m.**

**March 5 & 12, 2 p.m.**

**Added show March 11, 3 p.m.**

**Dialogues with Drama Play Reading**

***The Good Person of Szechwan***

**by Bertolt Brecht**

**March 15, 7:30 p.m.**

**Depot Folk**

**March 25 ~ Beppe Gambetta**

**April 8 ~ The Mammals**

**4 p.m. Workshop / 7 p.m. Concert**

**Depot Docs**

***Best of Enemies***

**March 31, 7:30 p.m.**

**Followed by Q & A and reception**

[philipstowndepottheatre.org](http://philipstowndepottheatre.org)

**Tickets:** [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com)

Garrison Landing, Garrison, NY (Theatre is adjacent to train station.)

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**March 21, Re-Elect  
Mayor Dave Merandy  
& Trustee Marie Early  
Responsible Financial  
Management**



# The Calendar

## Time Will Tell

*For Susan Walsh, inspiration comes in waves*

By Alison Rooney

In talking about what inspires her art, Susan Walsh often uses words like *compelled, contemplated, observed* and *noticed*. “I noticed how old Polaroids were curled up,” she says. “It reminded me of leaves.” Or, she says, “one day I noticed how when peeling wallpaper fell to the ground it formed a sculpture, and that made me think about what we put in our homes and how it comes and goes.”

Walsh, a Beacon resident whose work will be exhibited in a solo show at the Matteawan Gallery there beginning March 11, could be described as a “noticer.” Consider her *Wave Drawings* series. “I mostly work with light and I wanted to try other elements,” she explains. “I tried wind,



June 25, 2015. (Robert Irwin/On Kawara), by Susan Walsh



Susan Walsh at the opening of her exhibit at Matteawan Gallery on Feb. 18

Photo provided

and it didn't work. Then an idea came to me: couldn't I collaborate with the waves? Couldn't I mark a moment in time with a wave?"

After drawing a line of gouache across the center of a piece of paper, Walsh holds it down in shallow ocean water as waves wash over. The motion of the waves records her location and a specific moment in time. “When they're shown in a line, you can see the time the tide crashed through it; you can almost see the tide in it,” she says. “You get the energy of the water. Seen as a group you get the idea of horizon and the water pushing and pulling.”

In Walsh's *Only The Sun Can Prove That I Am Use-*

*ful* series, noticing and marking are again factors. After spotting a sundial on the ground near her home, Walsh became fascinated by them. Spotting nails on a wall, and the shadows they created, Walsh made a connection to the sundial and made sculptures of wood panels using paint, nails and the graphite. This reminded her of connections made between one gallery and another at Dia:Beacon, which she visits often, and she noted the GPS coordinates between them and recreated it sculpturally.

Walsh then photographed the panels and printed one version of each on drawing paper. Her photos capture a specific moment when

(Continued on Page 12)

## 'Greece is Our Happy Place'

*Greek goods store to open in Cold Spring*

By Alison Rooney

Christine Zouzias and her family have been enamored of the ancient isles of Greece since her first trip to the country in 1988. “Greece is our happy place,” she explains. Now she hopes to import a bit of its charm to the Highlands with her store, Meraki, which is scheduled to open in Cold Spring on Saturday, March 11. Along with Pink Olive and Flowercup Wine, it is part of a trio of new businesses on Main Street at the intersection with Fair Street.

Although commonly mistaken for Greek, Zouzias, who has lived in Cold Spring with her husband, Christos, and their three children (now all adults) since 2001, is Italian. Christos (who works in the maintenance department at Haldane) is half-Greek; his father was born there. Christine grew up on Staten Island and Christos in Yonkers — they met in his family restaurant in Scarsdale when she was in college and moved to Peekskill, visiting Cold Spring frequently.

They first visited Greece to connect with Christos' family, returning numerous times with children in tow to the mountain village where Christos' father

grew up. They eventually bought an apartment in a suburb of Athens near the Mediterranean.

“It's a culture we wanted to share with our kids,” Christine explains. “Family is so strong there. When we go to



Leather purses, knapsacks, wallets and belts

his father's village, no one speaks English, and we get taken around to people's houses — they bake the bread and invite us in to taste their olive oil, their cheeses.”

“When you're in Greece, you feel so welcomed,” she adds. “People want you to meet their families, show you their neighborhood, their way of life. That's a little bit of what we'd like to do here at Meraki.”

Meraki (roughly translated, it means to do something with all your heart and soul) has been freshly painted in the blues and whites associated with all things Hellenic, and a small kitchen area at the back has been renovated with Greek tiles, some containing talismans to ward off the evil eye. The stock includes olivewood platters, bowls, wine holders, salad servers and olive forks, all made from the trimmings of trees (no trees felled in the process). There are bracelets and necklaces made from leather shoemak-

er scraps (the sandals will be arriving soon). There are leather purses, belts, backpacks, along with linens, including table runners and pillows, ceramics, soaps, and artwork done by Athenian students.

An array of cookbooks focuses on what you'd expect — titles include *Around The Greek Table* and *The Olive and the Caper*. The Greek groceries include imported herbs and pastas,

(Continued on Page 11)



Christine Zouzias

Photos by A. Rooney

FRIDAY, MAR. 3

**Erica Hauser (Opening)**  
5 – 7 p.m. McCaffrey Realty  
140 Main St., Cold Spring  
845-265-4113 | mccauffreyrealty.com

**Bernard Mindich: *On Reflection* (Opening)**  
6 – 8 p.m. Buster Levi Gallery  
121 Main St., Cold Spring  
845-809-5145 | busterlevigallery.com

**Group Show: *Duality of Feminine and Feminist* (Opening)**  
6 – 9 p.m. Gallery 66 NY  
66 Main St., Cold Spring  
845-809-5838 | gallery66ny.com

***Lend Me a Tenor***  
6 p.m. Clove Creek Dinner Theater  
18 Westage Business Center Dr., Fishkill  
845-202-7778 | clovecreekdinnertheater.com

**Shabbat Across America**  
6 p.m. St. Mary's (Parish House)  
Routes 9D and 301, Cold Spring  
philipstownreformsynagogue.org

**Shabbat Across America**  
6:30 p.m. Reform Temple of Putnam Valley  
362 Church Road, Putnam Valley  
845-528-4774 | rtpv.org

**Company**  
8 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre  
10 Garrison's Landing, Garrison  
845-424-3900 | philipstowndepottheatre.org

SATURDAY, MAR. 4

**A Garden of Colors (Talk)**  
10 a.m. Putnam Valley Free Library  
30 Oscawana Lake Road, Putnam Valley  
845-528-3242 | putnamvalleylibrary.org

**Eagle Walk**  
10 a.m. Audubon Sanctuary  
127 Warren Landing Road, Garrison  
845-265-2601 | constitutionmarsh.org  
Reservations required.

**Sandy Galef Town Hall Meeting**  
10 a.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
472 Route 403, Garrison  
assembly.state.ny.us/mem/Sandy-Galef

**Sesame Street Live!: *Make a New Friend***  
10:30 a.m. & 2 p.m. Mid-Hudson Civic Center  
14 Civic Center Plaza, Poughkeepsie  
845-454-5800 | midhudsonciviccenter.org

**Southern Dutchess NAACP**  
10:30 a.m. Howland Library  
313 Main St., Beacon  
845-242-7822 | facebook.com/naacpsd

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Calendar Highlights

For upcoming events visit [highlandscurrent.com](http://highlandscurrent.com).  
Send event listings to [calendar@highlandscurrent.com](mailto:calendar@highlandscurrent.com)

**Maple Sugar Tours**  
11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Outdoor Discovery Center  
100 Muser Drive, Cornwall  
845-534-5506 | hhnaturemuseum.org

**St. David's Day (Patron Saint of Wales) Party**  
Noon – 3 p.m. The Country Goose  
115 Main St., Cold Spring | 845-265-2122

**22nd Annual Dutchess County St. Patrick's Parade**  
1 p.m. Route 9D, Wappingers Falls  
845-297-0800 | dcspopc.org

**Open House**  
1 – 3 p.m. Manitou School  
1656 Route 9D, Cold Spring  
845-809-5695 | manitouschool.org

**Dr. Seuss Birthday Party**  
1 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
472 Route 403, Garrison  
845-424-3020 | desmondfishlibrary.org

**Company**  
2 & 8 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre  
See details under Friday.

**100! Women's History Month Art Exhibit (Opening)**  
3 – 6 p.m. Howland Cultural Center  
477 Main St., Beacon  
845-765-3012 | howlandculturalcenter.org

**School Invitational Theme Exhibition (Opening)**  
3 – 5 p.m. Garrison Art Center  
23 Garrison's Landing, Garrison  
845-424-3960 | garrisonartcenter.org

***Lend Me a Tenor***  
6 p.m. Clove Creek Dinner Theater  
See details under Friday.

***Reunion, with Mike Heintzman and John Pielmeier (Comedy)***  
7 p.m. Butterfield Library  
10 Morris Ave., Cold Spring  
845-265-3040 | butterfieldlibrary.org

SUNDAY, MAR. 5

**Maple Sugar Tours**  
11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Outdoor Discovery Center  
See details under Saturday.

**Art Studio for Ages 3-5 (First Session)**  
11:15 a.m. Create Community  
11 Peekskill Road, Cold Spring  
917-397-0757 | engagingart.com

**Sesame Street Live: *Make a New Friend!***  
1 p.m. Mid-Hudson Civic Center  
See details under Saturday.

**Irish Dance**  
2 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
See details under Saturday.

**Make the Forest Great Again (Puppet Musical)**  
3 p.m. Beacon Recreation Center  
23 West Center St., Beacon | cityofbeacon.org

**Rhythm of the Dance**  
3 p.m. Eisenhower Hall  
655 Ruger Road, West Point  
845-938-4159 | ikehall.com

**Adult Volleyball**  
6 p.m. Philipstown Recreation Center  
107 Glenclyffe Dr., Garrison  
845-424-4618 | philipstownrecreation.com

**Dionne Warwick**  
7 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley  
1008 Brown St., Peekskill  
914-739-0039 | paramounthudsonvalley.com

MONDAY, MAR. 6

**Hudson Valley Restaurant Week Begins**  
[valleytable.com/hvrv](http://valleytable.com/hvrv)

**Art & Sensory Exploration (ages 18 mo. to 3) (First Session)**  
10:15 a.m. Create Community  
See details under Sunday.

**Defensive Driving (First Session)**  
6 – 9 p.m. Beacon Recreation Center  
Call 914-329-8226 to register.

**Beacon City Council**  
7 p.m. City Hall (Courtroom)  
1 Municipal Plaza, Beacon  
845-838-5011 | cityofbeacon.org

TUESDAY, MAR. 7

**Garrison School Budget Workshop**  
9 a.m. Garrison School  
1100 Route 9D, Garrison  
845-424-3689 | gufs.org

**Zumba Gold for Seniors (First Session)**  
10 a.m. Chestnut Ridge (Community Room)  
62 Chestnut St., Cold Spring  
845-424-4618 | philipstownrecreation.com

**Art Therapy Studio for Teens (First Session)**  
4 p.m. Create Community  
See details under Sunday.

**Beacon Chamber of Commerce**  
5:30 p.m. More Good | 383 Main St., Beacon  
[beaconchamberofcommerce.ocom](http://beaconchamberofcommerce.ocom)

**Small Business Administration Workshop**  
6:30 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
See details under Saturday.

**Haldane School Board**  
7 p.m. Haldane School (Music Room)  
15 Craigside Dr., Cold Spring  
845-265-9254 | haldaneschool.org

**Putnam County Legislature**  
7 p.m. Historic Courthouse  
44 Gleneida Ave., Carmel  
845-208-7800 | putnamcountyny.com

WEDNESDAY, MAR. 8

**International Women's Day**

**Fit for Life for Seniors (First Session)**  
9 a.m. Philipstown Recreation Center  
See details under Sunday.

**Chair Yoga for Seniors (First Session)**  
9:30 a.m. Philipstown Recreation Center  
See details under Sunday.

**Howland Public Library**  
9:45 a.m. Come and Play (ages 0-3)  
11 a.m. Toddler Tales (ages 2-3)  
4 p.m. Sign and Sing (ASL for parent/caregiver and ages 3-6)  
845-831-1134 | beaconlibrary.org

**Garrison School Board**  
7 p.m. Garrison School  
See details under Tuesday.

THURSDAY, MAR. 9

**Great Books: Excellence and Its Discontents (Reading Series)**  
6:30 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
See details under Saturday.

**History of Hops in the Hudson Valley (Talk)**  
7 p.m. Beacon Sloop Club  
2 Red Flynn Dr., Beacon  
845-463-4660 | beaconsloopclub.org

**Neko Case**  
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley  
See details under Sunday.

**Chess and Backgammon Club**  
8 p.m. Chill Wine Bar  
173 Main St., Beacon | 845-235-6833

FRIDAY, MAR. 10

**Family Bingo & Pasta Night**  
6:30 p.m. Philipstown Recreation Center  
See details under Sunday.

**Calling All Poets**  
8 p.m. Center for Creative Education  
464 Main St., Beacon  
914-474-7758 | callingallpoets.net

**Company**  
8 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre  
See details under March 3.

**Hudson Valley Poets Poetry Night**  
8 p.m. Howland Cultural Center  
See details under Saturday.

Visit [highlandscurrent.com](http://highlandscurrent.com) for news updates and latest information.

Join us for  
First Friday!  
March 3rd, 5 to 7pm



Robert A. McCaffrey Realty is excited to host Erica Hauser, local artist and co-owner of Catalyst Gallery in Beacon. The opening reception will be Friday evening, March 3rd, beginning at 5pm. Stop in for a visit and support the local arts scene!

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## 'Greece is Our Happy Place' (from Page 9)

dolmades (grape leaves), cans of gigante beans and regional olive oils, including from the Zouzias family groves.

Zouzias says she was inspired to open Meraki while figuring out what she was going to do with herself after her youngest child left for college. (She left a long-time job at the Hastings Center in Garrison to start the business.) A week after the couple put down a deposit on the storefront, they made an impromptu trip to Greece for a buying and planning tour. Christine was not unprepared; she had already logged hours online researching handmade Greek products not available in the U.S.

As so often seems to happen in Greece, the trip included many unplanned encounters. For example, while taking a

ferry to the island of Aegina to visit a soap factory, the couple met an elderly shipping broker who insisted on visiting their third-floor walk-up, where he talked for hours about neighborhoods where they could find unusual crafts. While walking one of his routes, they came upon a shop where a young couple was making bowties and watches from wood.

After their return to Cold Spring, Zouzias spent the next few months waiting for her ship(s) to come in with her stock. She says she had to learn quickly about consolidated container shipping, customs brokers and import regulations.

Meraki, located at 82 Main St., will be open Wednesdays through Sundays. See mymerakishop.com or call 845-666-7600.



Olive tree trimmings carved into serving pieces and chopping boards Photo by A. Rooney



Sap buckets near Hubbard Lodge File photo by Michael Turton

## It's Maple Syrup Time

With maples dominating local forests, there are a number of chances in March to see how trees are tapped and the sap is made into syrup while enjoying the tasty results on pancakes.

The annual maple festival at the Hudson Valley Maple Farm at the Taconic Outdoor Education Center in Fahnestock State Park east of Cold Spring, will be held Sunday, March 12, from 8:30 a.m. to noon; it includes a pancake breakfast and tour of the boiling operation. Breakfast is \$10 for adults and \$6 for children ages 5 to 12. (Children ages 4 and younger are free.) Call 845-265-3773. The center is located at 75 Mountain Laurel Lane, off Route 301.

The Randolph School in Wappingers Falls will host its annual Maple Fest on Saturday, March 11, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Jacob and David Bernz will lead a Pete Seeger sing-a-long as part of a dedication of a new music space. Other activities include storytelling, face painting, crafts and hikes, as well as demonstrations of collecting and boiling sap to make syrup. A pancake lunch served from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. costs \$10 for adults, \$5 for children or \$25 per family. Call 845-297-5600.

The Hudson Highlands Nature Museum in Cornwall will offer tours of its syrup operation every weekend in March. See hhn.org for tour times and tickets. Admission is \$8 to \$10 per person.

## Hudson Beach Glass

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### ON THE STREET WITH BILL CUNNINGHAM



Scene from the memorial service for Bill Cunningham at Carnegie Hall on October 17, 2016, in New York City. Photo by Landon Nordeman for The New York Times.

A staff photographer for The New York Times, Bill Cunningham was a constant presence on the streets of New York, which he travelled by bicycle, for nearly 50 years. He cultivated his own fashion signature, dressing in a uniform of black sneakers and a blue work man's jacket, his only accessory a camera.

Curated by Meghan Loomer. Production by Cornelius Schmid, Joanna Nikas and John Kurdewan.

Opening on Sat. March 11<sup>th</sup>, reception 5 to 9PM, Gallery talk at 7PM  
Show will run thru Sun. April 2, 2017.

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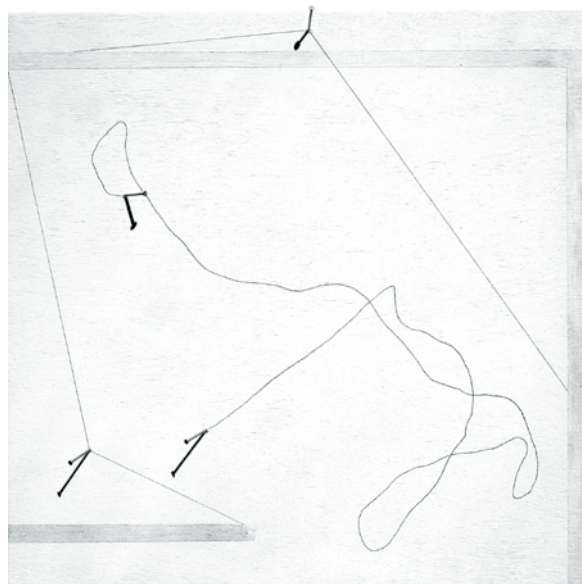
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## Time Will Tell (from Page 9)

sunlight hits the nails and creates shadows that merge with her drawings, playing with perceptions as well as creating what Walsh calls “lyrical time — not literal, but more feelings I had, created graphically.”



April 28, 5:06 pm, by Susan Walsh

Another series, *Only Mark The Bright Hours*, evokes the sundial more directly, on wood panels painted bright yellow, upon which straight graphite lines contrast with loose linear threads. The threads' shadows serve as a reminder of the incremental changes in landscape caused by sunlight.

After growing up in Chicago and spending her 20s there (she earned a master's in fine art from the University of Illinois at Chicago), Walsh moved to New Mexico, living for five years in a place where, as she puts it, “the open sky helped me to see things in a different way, and gave me a contemplative practice.” At age 40 she moved to New York City and later Beacon, where her studio in the old Beacon High School contains “glorious light which streams through huge windows,” she says.

Walsh moved to New York for a number of reasons. “As an artist I knew I would have a



Wave Drawing, Point Lookout, NY #5, by Susan Walsh

much broader audience, and also there's something about leaving the place that you grew up in that creates new worlds for you,” she explains. “My work changed so much because everything was so creative, vibrant and new. I do well with extreme contrasts and my work is really

‘quiet,’ whereas New York is like my fire tunnel.”

Her exhibit, *Only Mark the Bright Hours*, continues at Matteawan through April 2. The gallery, at 436 Main St., is open from noon to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Call 845-440-7901.

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**Chris Raabe - Free**

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## Obituary

### Dr. Mary Ellen Finger (1951-2017)

Dr. Mary Ellen Finger, 65, co-owner with her husband, Dave Vickery, of Horsemen Trail Farm in Philipstown, died Feb. 8, 2017.

Born in Larned, Kansas on Dec. 30, 1951, she was the daughter of Leonard and Agnes (Bondracek) Finger. She graduated from Kansas State University, where she was one of only four women in her class, with a doctorate in veterinary medicine. She also later held a license in massage therapy.

Dr. Finger moved to New York City, where she founded the East Village Veterinary Clinic. She retired in the early 1990s after a cancer diagnosis and moved to the 20-acre Horsemen Trail Farm, off Route 9 in the North Highlands, with the goal of providing healthy food for herself and her family. Her mantra of "let good food be your medicine" was a driving force in her life.

Mary Ellen's father instilled in her the idea that land is always a good investment, and she had a passion for real-estate development. She bought and sold properties in Philipstown and New York City, including a derelict East Village building she converted into a 12-unit condominium with space for her family and veterinary clinic. She met her husband while working on a house renovation at 4 Garden St., in Cold Spring.

Her insatiable thirst for health knowledge was evidenced by her passion for books, workshops and conferences as a



Dr. Mary Ellen Finger

participant or speaker. Locally she served on the boards of the Putnam County Agricultural and Farm Land Protection Board and the Philipstown Planning Board. She also had a keen sense of adventure and travelled extensively, carefully planning each trip with an emphasis on being as thrifty as possible.

Besides her husband, she is survived by her mother, Agnes Finger of Larned; her children, Johanna Altmann and Leonard Altmann, both of Cold Spring; her brothers, Mark Finger of Lawrence, Kansas, Tom Finger of El Dorado, Kansas, and Greg Finger of Belpre, Kansas; and her sisters,

Margaret Scheufler of Sterling, Kansas, Susan Latimore of Larned and Phoenix, and Julie Borchardt of Wallpole, Massachusetts.

Mary Ellen's drive to educate people about their health choices led her and her husband to co-found the Red Chapel Center, a facility which includes the historic red chapel building that the couple purchased in 2014 and relocated from Route 9D to the farm. The center will include a Sustainable Living Library and the Kaqun oxygen bath therapy spa.



The Red Chapel Center

Memorial contributions or investments may be made at [redchapelcenter.com](http://redchapelcenter.com). For more information, call 845-590-8846.

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**Moonlight** (R)

FRI 2:15 5:15 8:45, SAT 12:00 3:15  
6:30 10:00, SUN 1:00 4:15 7:00  
MON 7:00, TUE 1:00 4:15 7:00  
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**Logan** (R)

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## COMMUNITY BRIEFS



Artwork created by a group of students at the Storm King School *Image provided*

## Student Work on Display

Center hosts artists from 12 schools

The Garrison Art Center will open its Annual School Invitational Theme Exhibition and Mentor Program on Saturday, March 4, with a reception from 3 to 5 p.m. With the assistance of mentors, students from 12 schools, including Haldane, Garrison and the Beacon district, addressed the theme “iconoPOP!” using the media, politics, social issues and the economy. The show will be on display until March 12. See [garrisonartcenter.org](http://garrisonartcenter.org).

## Sign and Sing

Free Beacon class for children

A free three-session weekly class called Sign & Sing begins on Wednesday, March 8, at the Howland Public Library in Beacon. Taught by Lydia Adams Davis, a singer and songwriter with a master's degree in deaf education, the classes will teach sign language to parents and caregivers and children ages 3 to 6 using music and furry friends. Registration is required by calling 845-831-1134, ext. 103, or emailing [youth@beaconlibrary.org](mailto:youth@beaconlibrary.org).

## Feminine and Feminist

Gallery 66 NY has mounted a juried exhibit that continues through April 2 called *Duality of Feminine and Feminist*. Curated by Karen Gutfreund, who is known for promoting “art as activism,” it includes works from 29 artists. The gallery is open from noon to 5 p.m. Friday to Sunday. See [gallery66ny.com](http://gallery66ny.com).

Visit [highlandscurrent.com](http://highlandscurrent.com) for news updates and latest information.



Untitled 14 (The Beauty Mask), by Morgan Ford Willingham, on display at Gallery 66 NY in Cold Spring *Image provided*

## One-Day Market

Handcrafted goods in Nelsonville

Create Community at 11 Peekskill Road in Nelsonville will host a one-day mar-

ket on Saturday, March 11, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. with handcrafted and homemade goods, including home and garden items, sweets, jewelry, bath and body products, apparel, art and ceramics. See [facebook.com/createcommunity](https://facebook.com/createcommunity).

## The Story of Valhalla Highlands

An architect who specializes in conserving and restoring landmark buildings will speak about the cultural and historic significance of the Valhalla Highlands at the Putnam *(Continued on next page)*



Joseph Pell Lombardi *Photo provided*

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## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

(From previous page) History Museum at 3 p.m. on Saturday, March 11. Joseph Pell Lombardi, who has been a part-time resident of Philipstown for much of his life, will share his personal experience in the community before and after World War II. He also will discuss the broader history of the North Highlands.

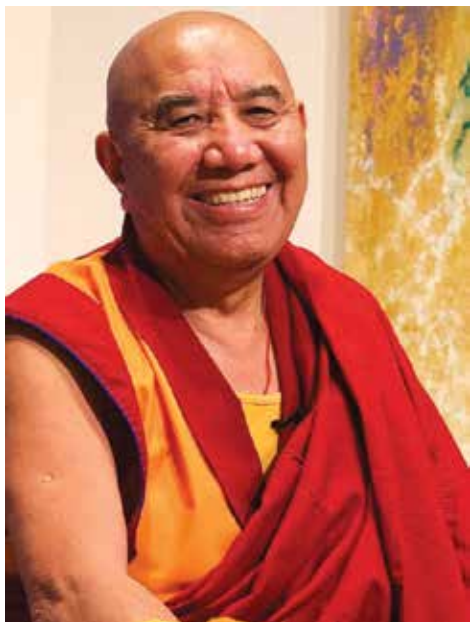
Admission is free for museum members, or \$5 otherwise. Call 845-265-4010. The museum will be open 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. that day.

## Monk to Speak on Sacred Texts

*Will visit Desmond-Fish Library on March 12*

When Rinpoche, abbot of the Tashi Lhunpo Buddhist monastery in Bylakuppe, India, will speak at the Desmond-Fish Library in Garrison at 2 p.m. on Sunday, March 12, on the way books are created, stored and used in Tibetan culture with a focus on the monastic tradition.

Rinpoche, who at age 15 walked with his father more than 800 miles from their home in India to enter the Tashi Lhunpo Monastery in Tibet, fled to his homeland in 1960. He has been traveling and teaching in the U.S. for more than 30 years; his monastery in exile is currently raising funds to double the size of its library. See [tashilhunpo.org/projects](http://tashilhunpo.org/projects).



Khen Rinpoche

*Photo provided*

### Saturday, March 4

The 22nd Dutchess County St. Patrick's Day Parade, with more than 3,000 participants, kicks off rain or shine at 1 p.m. along Route 9D in Wappingers Falls. For a map and lineup, see [dcspcc.org](http://dcspcc.org).

### Sunday, March 5

The Desmond-Fish Library in Garrison will host a free Irish dance performance at 2 p.m. by students from the Kelly Oster School of Irish Dance. At West Point's Eisenhower Hall Theatre, Rhythm of the Dance will take the stage at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$40 at [ikehall.com](http://ikehall.com).

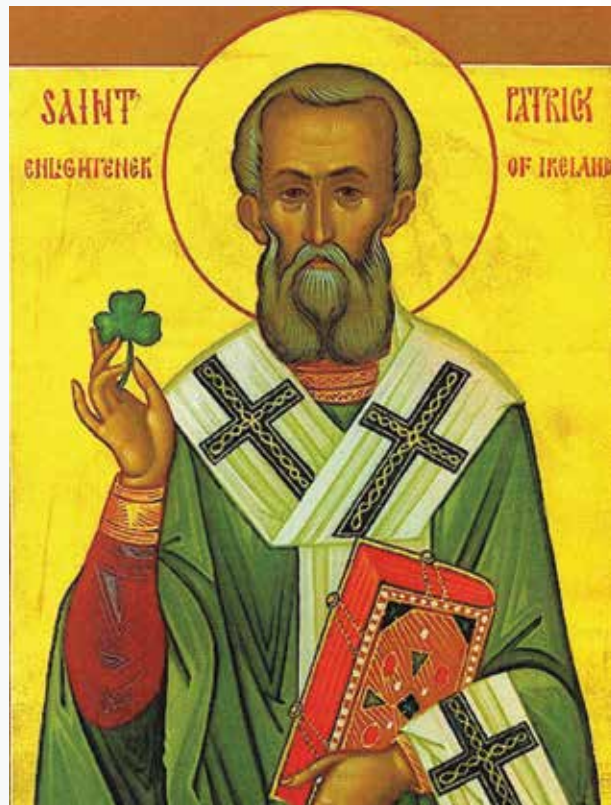
### Saturday, March 11

The annual Parade of Green will be held on Main Street in Beacon starting at 11 a.m. See [facebook.com/paradeofgreen](http://facebook.com/paradeofgreen). In Peekskill, the Paramount Theater presents Rhythm in the Night: The Irish Dance Spectacular at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$25 and \$35. See [paramounthudsonvalley.com](http://paramounthudsonvalley.com).

### Sunday, March 12

The Graymoor Spiritual Life Center in Garrison will host its annual corned beef and cabbage buffet at about 12:30 p.m. (after the 11 a.m. liturgy at the Chapel of our Lady of the Atonement). The buffet is \$20 for adults and \$10 for children

## St. Patrick's Events



ages 6 and older. (Children ages 5 and younger are free.) Call 845-424-2111 for reservations.

At the Paramount Hudson Valley, Celtic Crossings with Phil Coulter and Andy Cooney will share "an evening of Celtic tranquility" at 3 p.m. to benefit

the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement at Graymoor. Guests include Geraldine Branagan and the Irish Pops Ensemble. Tickets are \$30 to \$55.

### Friday, March 17 (St. Patrick's Day)

The Hudson Highlands Nature Museum invites children to its program on St. Patrick's Day Snakes at the Outdoor Discovery Center in Cornwall. It begins at 6 p.m. See [hnhm.org](http://hnhm.org). The Butterfield Library in Cold Spring will host a St. Patrick's Day edition of its monthly Minecraft Mania at 6:30 p.m.

Joe's Irish Pub at 455 Main St. in Beacon will have live Irish music all day and corned beef and cabbage from noon to 6 p.m.

A free St. Patrick's Day dance party will take place at 8 p.m. at the Fred Astaire Dance Studio on Route 9 in Cold Spring, with a group lesson at 7 p.m. Call 845-424-6353.

The New McKrells will perform their Celtic-influenced "folkgrass" at the Towne Crier at 8:30 p.m. Tickets are \$20. The following week, on March 18, the Irish family band Clancy Tradition will take the stage at 8:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25.

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# SUMMER CAMPS



## Summer at the Farm (Camp)

By Michael Turton

A number of close-to-home summer camps help children and teenagers appreciate the importance of the slogan, “No Farms, No Food.” Each camp offers scholarships.

### Common Ground

At Common Ground, located just north of Beacon at the Stony Kill Environmental Center, campers are organized into groups of 12 to explore their relationship with food and nature. Its “classrooms” are the garden, pond, field, barn and trails. Weekly themes include animals, living wild, farmers and living off the land, science at the farm, nature and art, think like a chef and local food with global flavor.

Day camps for children ages 3 to 12 run weekdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., from July 17 through Sept. 1. Before- and after-care is available. For registrations completed before April 1, the cost is \$210 per week for half day and \$260 per week for full-day programs. There is also an eight-week counselor-in-training program for students ages 13 to 16 for \$600. Visit [commongroundfarm.org](http://commongroundfarm.org) or email Education Director Sember Weinman at [seember@commongroundfarm.org](mailto:seember@commongroundfarm.org).

### Sprout Creek

Located in Dutchess County, Sprout Creek Farm offers day and overnight camps on a 200-acre dairy farm that includes a creamery. Children interact with the animals while learning what it takes to run a farm. Summer is the busiest time for milk production from cows and goats, the vegetable garden is full and the creek is finally warm enough to take a dip.

Week-long day camps for children ages

5 to 11 are held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. for eight sessions beginning June 26. Early arrival and late stay are available. The fee is \$395 per week.

Weeklong overnight boys', girls' and co-ed camps include morning chores and meals cooked with chefs trained at the Culinary Institute of America. The cost ranges from \$1,100 to \$1,300 per week. A session also takes place from July 5 to 7 for \$550. See [sproutcreekfarm.org](http://sproutcreekfarm.org) or email [info@sproutcreekfarm.org](mailto:info@sproutcreekfarm.org).

### Phillies Bridge

Located south of New Paltz, the Phillies Bridge Farm Project offers one-week and two-week day camps for children ages 4 to 12.

The 65-acre farm includes vegetable fields, an herb garden, a discovery garden, woodlands, wetlands, rolling pastures, trails and views of the Shawangunk Ridge. The one-week camp is Farm Camp (starting June 26) and the two-week camps are



A camper at Sprout Creek Farm camp in Poughkeepsie

Photo provided

Farm Fresh Cooking (July 10 and Aug. 7) and Forests and Fields (July 24).

The camps take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The fees are \$325 for the Farm Camp and \$525 and \$650 for the two-week camps. See [philliesbridge.org](http://philliesbridge.org) or email Camp Director Jasmine Wood at [jasmine@philliesbridge.org](mailto:jasmine@philliesbridge.org).

### Muscot Farm

Located on Route 100 in Katonah, Muscot is owned by the Westchester County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation. It offers a Young Farmers camp for children entering grades 1 to 8 in which campers help take care of the animals and complete daily chores as well as hiking, cooking and doing crafts. The child-to-counselor ratio is 6 to 1.

The weeklong camp is offered from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. during six weekly sessions starting July 10. The cost is \$350 per week. See [muscotfarm.org](http://muscotfarm.org).

### And for high school students...

The nonprofit Stone Barns Center for Food & Agriculture near Sleepy Hollow offers 11th and 12th graders, as well as motivated 10th graders, an “intensive, delicious and mind-opening exploration of food and farming” in two-week sessions that begin June 26, July 10 and Aug. 7.

The Summer Institute, which runs weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., costs \$1,510 to \$1,675 per session. See [stonebarnscenter.org](http://stonebarnscenter.org) or email [summerinstitute@stonebarnscenter.org](mailto:summerinstitute@stonebarnscenter.org).



Campers at Sprout Creek Farm camp in Poughkeepsie

Photo provided



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**THEATER**

**REGISTER NOW!**

July 17-21 & 24-28  
at Haldane Jr. High

HVSF's creative,  
process-based theater  
camp for 8-16 year olds

**SHAKESPEARE  
SUMMER CAMP**

[hvshakespeare.org/education](http://hvshakespeare.org/education)

## Summer Science & Nature Camp

- Week-long day camp for ages 4 to 15
- Changing science & nature themes
- Fascinating field trips each week
- Early drop off & late pick-up options

**July 3 to August 21**

- Experienced staff
- Beautiful location in Cornwall, NY



For information visit [www.hhnm.org](http://www.hhnm.org) or call 845-534-5506 ext. 211

## Summer Camp at Sprout Creek Farm



Summer marks the height of activity at Sprout Creek Farm. Day and overnight campers will:

- Care for and learn about animals
- Explore our creek & pastures
- Work in our garden
- Get excited about animals, fresh foods and their environment
- Cook with CIA-trained chefs
- A true Farm-to-Table experience
- Do crafts and farm projects

For more information, visit our website at [www.sproutcreekfarm.org](http://www.sproutcreekfarm.org) or email Katie Williams, Director of Education and Camps at [camps@sproutcreekfarm.org](mailto:camps@sproutcreekfarm.org).



DAY CAMP  
**hillcroft**

**WELCOME...  
TO A SUMMER  
OF SMILES!**

A camp is where your children can learn new skills, make new friends, experiment with ideas and grow in self-esteem.

- For boys and girls ages 4 to 14
- Daily Red Cross Swim lessons
- Lunch and snack provided daily
- Extended hours and transportation available from Fishkill, NY

Family owned and operated in Lagrangeville, NY for 67 years  
Telephone. 845-223-5826 [www.camphillcroft.com](http://www.camphillcroft.com)

## 2017 SUMMER DANCE PROGRAM

### NEW! DANCE EXPLORATION WITH KATIE BISSINGER

July 10-14, Ages 6-11, 9am-noon, \$180 for the week  
Performance on Friday, July 14 at noon

Each day of the week during this special camp, dancers will explore a different kind of dance- ballet, modern, tap, jazz and musical theater.

### PRE-BALLET & LOWER SCHOOL I BALLET

Wednesdays, June 28, July 5, 12 & 19, Ages 3-6  
9:30-10:30am, \$60 for the 4 class session

For our youngest dancers, this class, taught by Katie Bissinger, encourages a love of movement and sets the foundation for classical dance.

### BEGINNING TAP

Wednesdays, June 28, July 5, 12 & 19, Ages 5+  
10:30-11:30am, \$60 for the 4 class session

Students will learn the fundamentals of Broadway tap with former Rockette Katie Bissinger.



### MUSICAL THEATER AND BALLET INTENSIVES!

**Ballet:** August 7-11

**Musical Theatre:** August 14-18

10am-4pm, Ages 12+

\$375 for the week

Performance on Friday at 6pm



During these two separate five-day programs, mornings will be devoted to warm-up and dance training. In the afternoons, Musical Theater will workshop a Broadway performance piece and Ballet will work on Variations, with each having a studio performance on Friday. Musical Theater taught by Katie Bissinger.

### BALLET, MODERN AND JAZZ TECHNIQUE CLASSES

June 13-15, 20-22, 27-29 and August 22-24, 5:30-7pm

Ages 12+, \$18 single class or \$50 for 3 classes

Tues - Jazz / Wed - Ballet / Thurs - Modern

Technique classes in a different discipline each day- Jazz, Ballet and Modern- taught by Ballet Arts Studio faculty.



**BALLET ARTS STUDIO**

[www.BalletArtsStudio.com](http://www.BalletArtsStudio.com) Beacon, NY T: 845-831-1870

Training dancers since 1961



**Camp FIT**  
All Sport Health and Fitness

Camp FIT is super awesome!

Way more fun than video games!

Having fun every day!




f t p i YouTube

## Keep your kids active this summer!

### Camp FIT Open House

Sat. April 22nd  
11am – 2pm  
All Sport Outdoor Club

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**  
Rain or Shine!

Camp FIT at All Sport is an active summer day camp for ages 4 – 14. Take a tour, meet the counselors! Your kids can try QuickStart Tennis, bounce in our castle, try our GaGa Pit, new 9 Square game, make arts & crafts and more!  
Special Tennis, Swim & Teen Travel Camps!

#### WIN GREAT PRIZES!

Enter to win a week of Camp FIT & door prizes at the Open House!

WANT MORE INFO? GET IT AT 845.896.5678  
ALLSPORTHEALTHANDFITNESS.COM



Love to swim!

Love to play tennis!



**ALLSPORT**  
health & fitness

17 Old Main Street, Fishkill

## BEACON MUSIC FACTORY

### SUMMER 2017 MUSIC CAMPS AT BMF

#### MUSIC FACTORY CAMP

(Full Day Camp for Kids Ages 5-12)

Inspire your child with a musical experience like no other!

- Hands-on experience with a variety of Instruments
- Kids will create their own bands and drum corps
- They will romp and play musical theater games in Memorial Park (next door to BMF!)
- Jam sessions with our pro-musician teachers
- Musical instrument inventing and building
- They'll even accompany a silent film

OTHER CAMPS AT BMF:

**TEEN ROCK BAND CAMP** (Half day)

**TWEEN ROCK BAND CAMPS** (Half day)

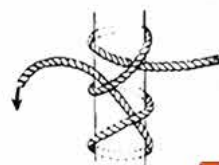
**ADULT ROCK BAND CAMP INTENSIVE** (Full Day)

Each camp is for one week, Monday thru Friday, with a performance on Friday.

Schedule & Registration at [www.beaconmusicfactory.com](http://www.beaconmusicfactory.com)

333 Fishkill Ave, Beacon NY // [play@beaconmusicfactory.com](mailto:play@beaconmusicfactory.com) // 845-765-0472

## Building Bridges Building Boats



2017 Summer River Workshop  
**Rowing on the River**

3 Weekly Sessions

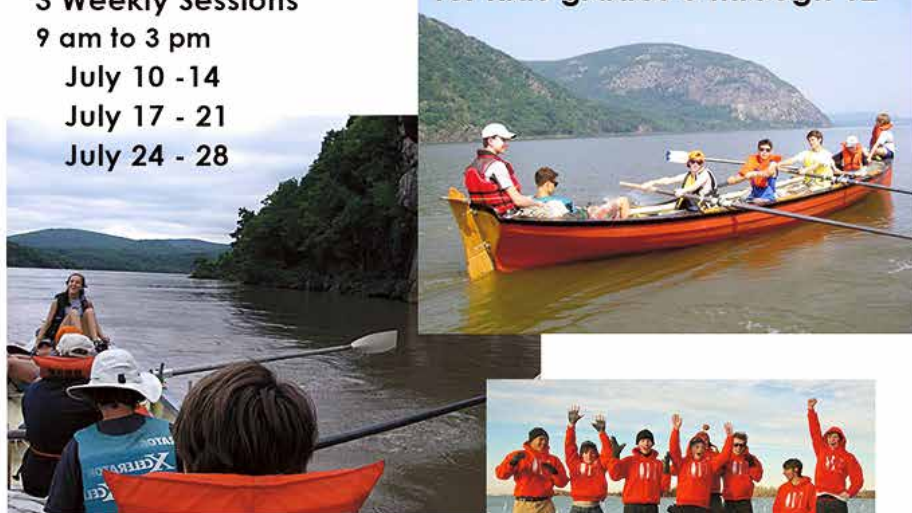
9 am to 3 pm

July 10 - 14

July 17 - 21

July 24 - 28

for kids grades 6 through 12



Register or more info:  
call 845.265.4290  
or e-mail  
[director@buildingboats.org](mailto:director@buildingboats.org)

[www.buildingboats.org](http://www.buildingboats.org)

visit us on facebook





# Camp Guide

**All Sport Camp Fit (Fishkill)**  
845-896-5678 | allsportfishkill.com

**Ballet Arts Studio (Beacon)**  
845-831-1870 | balletartsstudio.com

**Beacon Music Factory (Beacon)**  
845-765-0472 | beaconmusicfactory.com

**Building Bridges Building Boats (Cold Spring)**  
845-265-4290 | buildingboats.org

**Camp Hillcroft (Lagrangeville)**  
845-223-5826 | camphillcroft.com

**Common Ground Farm (Wappingers Falls)**  
845-231-4424 | commongroundfarm.org

**Garrison Art Center (Garrison)**  
845-424-3960 | garrisonartcenter.org

**Hudson Highlands Nature Museum (Cornwall)**  
845-534-5506 x211 | hhnrm.org

**Shakespeare Camp (Cold Spring)**  
845-809-5750 x13 | hvshakespeare.org

**Shattemuc Sailing Camp (Ossining)**  
914-941-8777 | shattemucyc.org

**Sprout Creek Farm (Poughkeepsie)**  
845-485-8438 | sproutcreekfarm.org



For more camps, see  
[highlandscurrent.com/camps](http://highlandscurrent.com/camps)



## SHATTEMUC SAILING ACADEMY 2017

One of the Top Sailing Programs on the Hudson River  
Offering sailing instruction and safety skills for young people ages 9-16



Join us: Session 1 - June 26 - July 21

Session 2 - July 24 - August 18

Email us at [sailingacademy@shattemucyc.org](mailto:sailingacademy@shattemucyc.org) and visit at [www.shattemucyc.org](http://www.shattemucyc.org)

**Shattemuc Yacht Club**, 46 Westerly Road, Ossining, New York (Next to Boathouse Restaurant)



# FARM CAMP

@ COMMON GROUND FARM

**July 17<sup>th</sup> - September 1<sup>st</sup> 2017**

Programs for Ages 3 to 12 // Counselor in Training Program ages 13-16

CAMP WEEK THEMES INCLUDE

- Animals
- Living Wild
- Farmers
- STEM on the Farm
- Nature & Art
- Think Like a Chef
- Local Food with Global Flavor

FOR FULL DETAILS AND TO REGISTER  
visit: [www.commongroundfarm.org](http://www.commongroundfarm.org)  
or email: [education@commongroundfarm.org](mailto:education@commongroundfarm.org)





**JUNE 26 – JULY 14**

**Summer ARTtots (Pre-K)**  
Full or Half-Day

**Summer Arts on the Hudson**  
(K – 8th grade)

**JULY 17 – AUGUST 4**

**Summer Art Institute**  
(grades 9 – 12)

**Summer Art Immersion**  
(adults)

*Programs fill quickly—  
sign up early!*

**Registration now open!**  
**Summer Arts Programs**  
**Pre-K thru High School**

Garrison Art Center

**845.424.3960**  
[garrisonartcenter.org](http://garrisonartcenter.org)

## Is Playing Video Games a 'Sport?'

*Of course, says  
Garrison resident  
who co-founded first  
professional league*

By Brian PJ Cronin

In 2009, Sundance DiGiovanni and his business partners met with the video-game company Activision Blizzard, which owns the bestselling Call of Duty and World of Warcraft series. Their pitch wasn't an idea for a game but for a new way of playing them: Professionally.

DiGiovanni, who lives in Garrison with his family, cofounded Major League Gaming in 2002 with a fellow gamer and co-worker, Mike Sepso, based on the premise that if ESPN could turn street luge and bungee jumping into professional sports via the X Games, there was no reason video gaming couldn't follow the same path. Activision Blizzard said the concept was interesting but unlikely to evolve into anything substantial.

That was the wrong call. Today Major League Gaming streams multi-day tournaments and programming on MLG.tv that reach more than 500 million people monthly in 175 nations. Its gaming platform, Battlegrounds, has more than 9 million members. It hosts regular tournaments in Las Vegas, Atlanta and other cities in which teams compete at Call of Duty or other games for prize money in the tens of thousands of dollars.

By January 2016, Activision Blizzard was back at the table. It agreed to purchase Major League Gaming from DiGiovanni and Sepso for \$46 million.

"It's bananas," admits DiGiovanni, 44, who remains at MLG as its vice president for brands and content. "But we always knew that somebody was going to create something like this someday. We figured, why not us?"

DiGiovanni's passion for gaming began in childhood, with the Atari 2600. He moved around a lot as a kid, he says, and video games and sports provided a sense of consistency and a way to make friends.

But while video games can be a form of escapism, DiGiovanni says for him it was the same as playing basketball in the neighborhood: It allowed him to be social and competitive at the same time.

"Remember that game Combat, on the Atari 2600?" he said. "I would practice my shots for hours, then call my friends over so I could beat them."

The mix of competition and camara-



Although far outnumbered by men, many women also compete.



Rise Nation won the Call of Duty MLG Vegas Open in December and took home \$40,000.

MLG photos

derie continued at New York University, where DiGiovanni and friends would play months-long seasons of NHL Hockey on a single Sega Genesis console by tracking the results on graph paper.

After he graduated, DiGiovanni and his roommates and friends held late-night Tekken and Halo tournaments in their Tribeca loft, with consoles hooked to projectors and prize money. That's when, he says, he had an epiphany that would change his life: While dozens of people showed up to play, dozens more came just to watch.

"That was 2002," he says. "I thought about how the internet was getting faster, computers were getting better and consoles were starting to get connected online. It seemed obvious this was the beginning of

something, and that we could be the ones to get in early and build the infrastructure and the model for what professional video gaming would look like."

DiGiovanni says he studied NASCAR and professional wrestling to learn how to build grass-roots support for a sport but also saw the United States Tennis Association as a model for a system in which novice players could work their way into the big leagues.

"We always wanted to hold onto that aspirational model of it," he says. "Once you have your computer, your mouse and your headset, you can compete in the same arena with the best in the world."

While millions of people watch games through MLG.tv, which is headquartered in New York City and also produces programs such as "eSports Report," those interested in seeing if they have the skill to go pro can join GameBattles to chase cash, points and a seat at an MLG tournament. (The next event is a Call of Duty competition in Fort Worth, Texas, from March 17 to 19.)

GameBattles organizes tournaments for more than 80 games, including Call of Duty, Destiny, Doom, Mortal Kombat,



Game controllers at a Las Vegas event



A screen shot from Call of Duty Ghosts



Sundance DiGiovanni

Photo provided

Halo, Overwatch, a number of sports titles and even Uno and Mario Kart. You can compete as a single player or as part of a team. The prizes are typically a few hundred dollars.

"At first, you're going to get stomped," DiGiovanni says. "You have to put in the time. Just like if I want to make the baseball team, I'm going to hit the batting cage. Play with improvement in mind. Watch a tournament, or one of our events, watch what the pros do, how they play, how they identify patterns. It's all about pattern recognition. And have fun. Because if nothing else, you're going to make friends and meet like-minded people from all over the world."

Now that DiGiovanni has children of his own, he plays against them more than with friends. But he still enjoys basketball and other outdoor sports. "I made the move to cut down on screen time in our house, so we're playing a lot of board games," he says. "But it's still competitive. Even when we play chess, my youngest son keeps track of how many times he wins against his mom."

DiGiovanni hasn't gone cold turkey, of course.

"I play a lot of Clash Royale on my iPhone," he admits. "I'm ranked in the top 1,000 players globally, which is pretty crazy but also shows you how addicted to it I am."



A team competes in Vegas.