

The HIGHLANDS Current



Art of Darkness
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AUGUST 25, 2017

161 MAIN ST., COLD SPRING, N.Y. | highlandscurrent.com



PARTLY MOONY — Stargazers around the Highlands shared dark glasses and cardboard boxes to view the partial eclipse on Aug. 21. For more photos, see page 20.

Photo by Ross Corsair

Seastreak Plans Return

Cruise line requests at least 11 fall dockings

By Michael Turton

The boats will be back: The Seastreak cruise line has requested permission to dock on the Cold Spring waterfront again this fall.

At its Aug. 22 meeting, the Village Board of Trustees reviewed a proposed schedule

provided by the company, which operates Hudson River excursions that depart from Highland, New Jersey, and New York City. It began its fall cruises to Cold Spring in 2013.

A boat would arrive at the waterfront at 11:45 a.m. each Saturday and Sunday from Oct. 7 through Nov. 11, departing at 3:30 p.m. If ticket sales warrant, a second boat would arrive at 12:45 p.m. and depart at 4:30 p.m., wrote Brett Chamberlain, the line's director of marketing, in a letter to the board. (Continued on Page 3)



CONQUISTADORS — The 164-foot El Galeon, a replica of a 17th-century Spanish galleon, passed by Garrison on Aug. 9 as it sailed the Hudson River to New York City before heading home to Spain. For more photos, see highlandscurrent.com.

Photo by Ross Corsair

Parking in Beacon: Stop and Go

Drawing the lines in battle over space

By Jeff Simms

Scenic Hudson is hoping to nearly double the parking at the base of Mount Beacon to ease congestion at one of the Highlands' most popular hiking spots. Meanwhile, the Beacon City Council and a developer clashed over who should provide spaces for a new 24-unit apartment building on Main Street.

Mount Beacon

Representatives from Scenic Hudson appeared before the Planning Board earlier this month to discuss plans to expand the lot at the park from 40 spaces to 77.

The project, if approved, would be completed this winter, said Meg Rasmussen, a park planner for the nonprofit conservation group. It would involve moving the Howland Avenue lot entrance farther away from Route 9D and turning it into an exit. Cars routinely line Howland on holidays and weekends when the park's lot is full.

An overflow area north of the lot will be off-limits (it was recently determined to be wetlands), while the existing lot will be widened and oriented for one-way traffic. Individual parking spaces will be marked in the lot, increasing its overall capacity by 37 cars, Rasmussen said.

In 2015, Scenic Hudson transferred



The entrance to Mount Beacon Park

Photo by J. Simms

more than 2,100 acres on Mount Beacon and along the Fishkill Ridge to the state parks department as an addition to Hudson Highlands State Park. It retained the 15-acre trailhead parcel.

"It's connected to 6,000 acres [of open space] and 50 miles of trails and is expanding in popularity all the time," Rasmussen said.

The Route 9D entrance to the park would remain unchanged, as would the informational kiosks in the lot. It would remain gravel, except for ADA-accessible spaces, which will be paved. Bike racks are also likely to be added. (Continued on Page 7)

Restoration at Former Guinan's Well Underway

Restaurant owners float new name

By Gwendolyn Bounds

Renovations for a new restaurant and café are well underway at No. 7 Garrison's Landing, home to the former Guinan's Pub & Country Store, which closed its doors in 2008. A few weeks ago, I received a private tour, stepping back across a threshold into a place so many lucky people once called a second home.

The nonprofit Garrison's Landing Association, which is leading the reconstruction, has rebuilt the pub (the floor doesn't slant anymore) and kept the overall architecture intact. The green phone booth still stands outside (it might become a library book trading outpost) and the stone

fireplace is there. I couldn't see the gold shamrock once embedded on the hearth — but was later told by Margaret Guinan that it's in her possession. "We chiseled it up because we couldn't leave it behind!" she says.

The divide between the store and the living area is gone; this new open space will be the dining area. The upper floor will have two loft apartments.

The doors are scheduled to open in mid-March, and the restaurant will be run by Fresh Company, owned by Kimball Gell and Shelley Boris. In the meantime, after raising \$400,000, the nonprofit Garrison's Landing Association still needs about \$40,000 to complete the work (see garrisonlanding.org/donate).

After my tour, I quizzed Boris about her plans: (Continued on Page 18)

5 Five Questions: MARCY B. FREEDMAN

By Alison Rooney

Freedman is the performance art curator for Collaborative Concepts, the annual outdoor art installation at Saunders Farm on Old Albany Post Road in Garrison that opens on Saturday, Sept. 2.

How would you define performance art?

It can include acting, singing or dancing, but it stems from visual art. It can be presentational or interactive. It grew out of the visual arts in the 1970s, with artists who wanted to *do* things rather than *make* things. The dominant visual art in the 1960s was minimalism and abstract expressionism, but that didn't tell stories.

How did your visual art evolve into performance?

In the mid-1990s I was invited to participate in an event in Peekskill. I came up with a piece, *The Mother is the One Who Stretches*. I spoke it, and a dancer danced it. It was filmed and became an 8-minute short. In 2006, I don't know why, I decided that not enough people in Peekskill were aware that you could

visit studios for free, so I developed a work called *This Artist Will Pay You to Look at Her Art*. I stood in front of my studio, people went upstairs to see the art, then came down and picked an envelope with a \$1, \$5, \$10 or \$20 bill inside while I talked with them about why I did it.

How did performance art become part of the Farm Show?

In 2009 I was asked to submit a sculpture and I wondered if they'd accept a performance instead. I did one every Saturday for nine weeks. It lasted an hour and I hugged a tree and recited love poetry to it. I did it whether anyone was there or not. Kids would point and wonder whether I was a sculpture.

How do you find the artists?

When I meet young performers, I tell them about this event. The Westchester Arts Council puts out a proposal, but mostly it's word of mouth. My most important criteria is, does the piece open the mind to what art can be? I never just go by how much blood, sweat and tears are involved.



Marcy B. Freedman

Photo by Gene Panczenko

Are the Farm Show performances family friendly?

Yes! I told all the participants they

had lots of freedom except their piece must be kid-friendly, dog-friendly, earth-friendly and cow-friendly.

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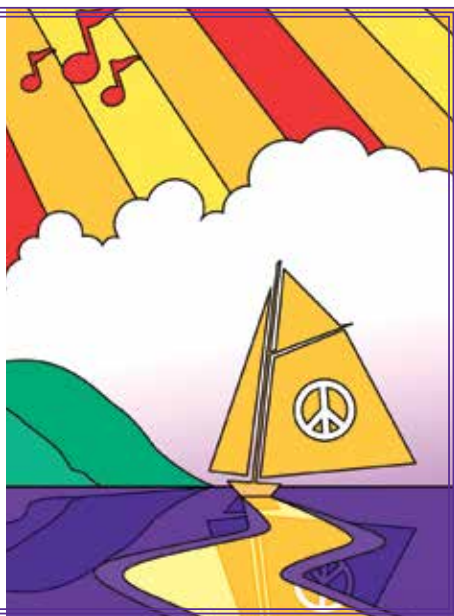
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Performance Art at the Farm, Sept. 2

Wish Sisters at the Wishing Well

by Day de Dada (2:30 – 5 p.m.)

Six performers will examine the nature of hopes and dreams as they sit around a virtual well. Visitors are invited to toss in a coin.

Job, by Carla Rae Johnson (2 – 3:15 p.m.)

Johnson will collect cow manure and deposit it on a vinyl U.S. map. Visitors will be invited to slide the manure off the map, after which the artist will share a hopeful speech about restoring our nation to its core values.

Wolves in the Trees

by Mary McFerran (2:20 – 3:30 p.m.)

Dressed as an old woman, the artist will read passages from *Grimm's Fairytales* and *Women Who Run with the Wolves* to soothe listeners in dangerous times.

Annata ("No Self")

by Alexandra Neuman (2:30 – 5:30 p.m.)

Dressed in green Chroma Key bodysuits and seated in a circle, the artist and nine others will engage in the practice of dialogue conceived by physicist David Bohm in which "no one permanently holds to or otherwise defends his or her own ideas."

Self Migrant Soul Mileage

by Nathalie Reynoso (2:30 – 6 p.m.)

In performances of four to seven minutes, two or more performers will present music, spoken word and the "spinning" of props to address recent immigration policies.

This is Paradise

by ShishiSo (2:30 – 5 p.m.)

The artist will recite his poetry in English and in his own language.

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Seastreak Plans Return *(from Page 1)*

Should a third boat be required, which has occurred in the past, it would dock at 1:45 p.m. and leave at 5:30 p.m.

Each boat has a capacity of 500 passengers.

Mayor Dave Merandy said he opposes allowing a third boat. Unlike the number of hikers who pass through Cold Spring on weekends, he said the dockings are "something we can actually control."

Trustee Lynn Miller, co-owner of Go Go Pops on Main Street, said that even with the staggered arrival times, a third boat would mean up to 1,500 passengers in the village for part of the day. "There aren't enough seats in the restaurants," she said. "Everyone ends up disappointed."

Seastreak passengers provide robust business for Main Street shops, although for restaurants and cafés it can be a headache because within minutes of the first boat's arrival seemingly every seat in the village is taken. Those who aren't seated during the first wave wait impatiently outside, or go hungry. For that reason, restaurant owners suggested a staggered schedule.

"There aren't enough seats in the restaurants. Everyone ends up disappointed."

Merandy said he would like each boat to leave the dock after dropping off passengers, pointing out that the large vessels block scenic views. He also would like the company to give notice of the number of passengers expected on each boat.

The mayor suggested approving one boat per day initially while negotiations continue. However, the board took no action.

The fall cruises provide revenue not only



Each Seastreak boat can carry up to 500 passengers.

File photo by M. Turton

for local businesses but for the village, which charges \$6 per foot each time one of the 140-foot vessels docks. Eleven dockings would generate a total of \$9,240. The rate increases by \$2 per foot if the boat remains at the dock.

But, Merandy argued, "we shouldn't just be thinking about money." After it was noted that the first two Saturday cruises would conflict with weddings planned for the bandstand area, he added, "weddings are part of the charm of the village." The village charges \$250 for riverfront weddings.

Deputy Mayor Marie Early will continue discussions with Seastreak officials, including a request to revise the schedule to avoid conflict with the weddings.

In other business ...

- The Knights of Columbus have requested a police officer for its annual Oktoberfest at Mayor's Park on Sept. 23 and 24. The fundraiser, which benefits the Knights, Our Lady of Loretto and Special Olympics, has drawn 1,500 to 2,000 people.

Merandy said the Knights would be responsible for the cost of extra policing but promised to discuss it with Officer-in-Charge Larry Burke. He noted it was unlikely an officer would be stationed at the park for the entire event, which runs from noon to 9 p.m. on Saturday and noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday.

- The owners of 11 Market St. have asked to purchase an adjacent lot owned by the village. The 900-square-foot corner property at Market and New streets has a fire hydrant but is otherwise vacant. Merandy said he does not favor "selling off every bit of green space." Trustee Fran Murphy said she supports selling small village-owned parcels to get them on the tax rolls. The owners have indicated they would store a boat on the property, prompting Trustee Steve Voloto to comment, "I don't know how attractive it would be to have a boat parked there." No action was taken pending completion of a survey.

Obituary

Forrest Ryzy-Ryski (1993-2017)



Forrest Wolfe Ryzy-Ryski, 23, of Marietta, Georgia, who grew up in Philipstown, died Aug. 18, 2017. In a Facebook post, his grandmother, Fernanda Ryzy-Ryski, said the cause of death was a drug overdose.

Born Dec. 12, 1993, Forrest was the son of Albert Ryzy-Ryski of Cold Spring and Aleta Wolfe of Garrison. He graduated in 2011 from Haldane High School in Cold Spring. At the time of his death, Forrest was studying English literature at Kennesaw State University, about 20 miles northwest of Atlanta. A mixed martial-arts fighter, he trained at Stryker Fight Center in Kennesaw.

He also was a gifted musician and artist. While a senior at Haldane, he won first place as an Emerging Artist from the Putnam Arts Council. He also won the Rising Star Award for visual arts at the Haldane Fine Arts Awards and was recognized for his creative writing and songwriting.

Forrest studied classical guitar from the age of 10 and composed and performed music, and gave lessons to younger students. He also performed his composition, *Clearly*, at the Haldane High School talent show and joined two classmates in a harmonized version of *Helplessly Hoping*, by Crosby, Stills and Nash.

In addition to his parents and grandmother, he is survived by his sister, Sophia Ryzy-Ryski, of New York City, and grandmother Joy Atteberry of La Quinta, California.

A visitation was held at the Medford-Peden Funeral Home in Marietta on Aug. 23. A memorial service will be held in New York at a later date.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Renting close to home

When we all were supporting more accommodations in the village as part of the comprehensive plan, Airbnb was not considered an option ("Airbnb Bookings Jump 75 Percent in Philipstown," Aug. 18). We had hoped to expand the code to allow for more legitimate bed and breakfasts that would enhance the village's desirability for its residents and guests.

Uncontrolled Airbnbs can do the opposite, especially the ones in which an entire house is rented to a group. Guests park everywhere, not even legally sometimes, and

can be noisy into the night.

There is also a rising concern that smaller homes and apartments will be used full-time as short-term rentals, removing needed lower-cost housing that deprives newcomers or the next generation from getting a foothold here.

A good piece of journalism. Thanks for highlighting this issue.

Judith Rose, *Garrison*

Cold Spring is a tourist town. That is a fact. Tourism drives our local economy. The overwhelming majority of people who come to visit our beautiful village are here

to take a walk, visit the shops and have a meal. This is commerce and that means money for local businesses.

I realize that some people wish that the visitors would just go away. That is not going to happen. If there are not places to stay, the likelihood of someone having dinner in a restaurant decreases greatly.

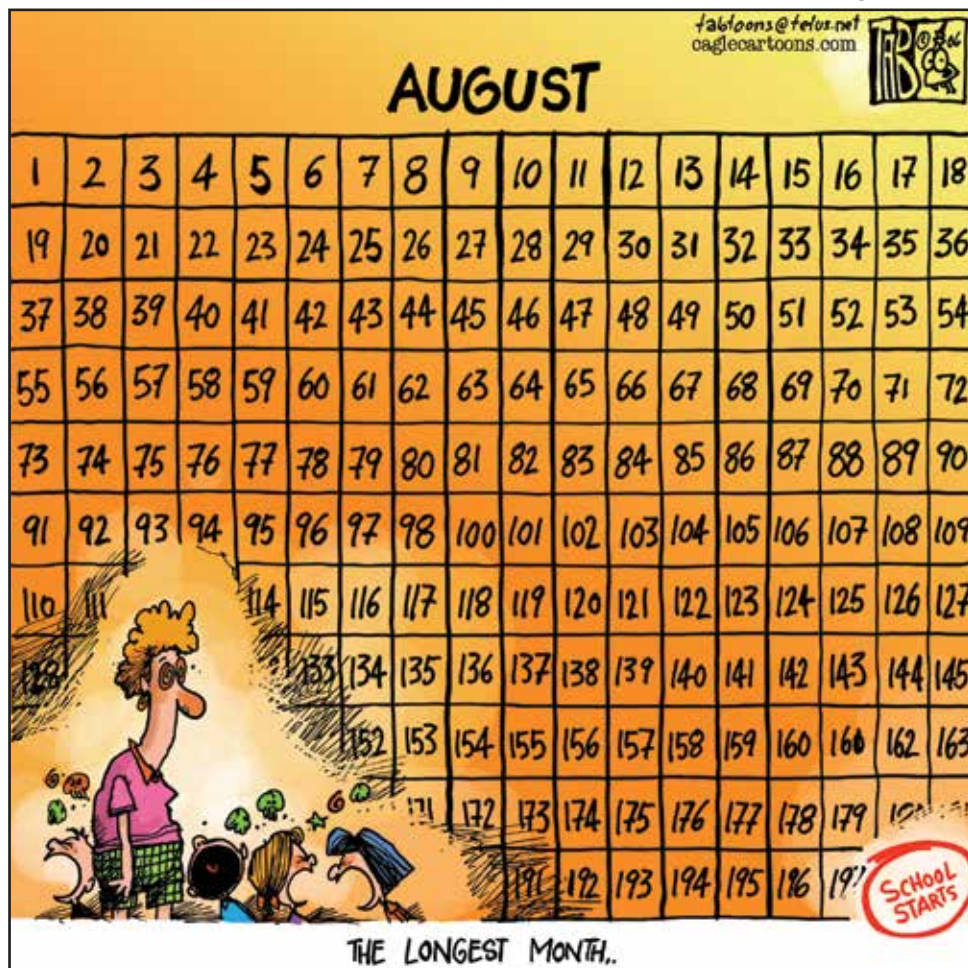
Every family that has stayed at our [Airbnb] house has been wonderful; most of them were parents of West Point cadets. We have had the opportunity to meet them and hear about their experiences. We also direct them to the many fine local businesses that line our Main Street. Money for local business, great families visiting from around the world and local property owners putting a few dollars in their pockets to make ends meet; sounds pretty good to me.

I didn't think last week was a slow news week but apparently this hard-charging, in-depth coverage of my home was more important than the murderous Nazis occupying Charlottesville, Virginia.

Richard Shea, *Philipstown*

The editor responds: Shea, who is the Philipstown supervisor, and Steve Voloto, a member of the Cold Spring Village Board, questioned why they were named in the story. In their elected positions, they oversee codes that may or may not apply to Airbnb rentals, so we found their role as "hosts" to be relevant. We hoped to include Shea's views on whether the Philipstown code applies to Airbnb rentals; he declined comment. Voloto addressed the issue in a later interview with Armstrong, and his comments have been added to the online version of the story.

Does Airbnb conduct background checks on its members? What is stopping a convicted felon or child predator from renting one of (Continued on next page)



Taking it to the Street By Sheila Williams

What was the last movie you saw?



"Beauty and the Beast, yesterday on a plane. I loved it!"
~ Shahla Jannetta, *Garrison*



"Despicable Me III, with my kids. It's better than the second but not as good as the first."
~ Lori Powers, *Cold Spring*



"Sausage Fest. It made me think twice about what we eat."
~ Alyssa Grippo, *Beacon*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (from previous page)

these properties near Haldane or any of our homes? The local municipalities are once again playing catch-up to changes in technology.

Michael Bowman, *Cold Spring*

The editor responds: Airbnb says it does basic background checks of county and state criminal records on guests and hosts who live in the U.S., as well as state and national sex offender registries.

It all sounds sketchy to me. There are enough creepy people in this town during the summer without encouraging people to stay in houses not deemed as real bed-and-breakfast businesses.

According to this article, the names I see kind of surprise me. Do they need the money that bad? I need money but I'll be damned if I will allow a stranger to stay in my house whether I'm home or not.

Thomas Nastasi Sr., *Cold Spring*

I have no argument with Airbnb, but the rentals should never be allowed in R1 single-family zoning. It's a commercial enterprise and belongs in a commercial zone.

Stephen Bogardus, *Cold Spring*

The Cold Spring tourist-home rule, calling for a \$500 fee and a public hearing before such a home can go into business, may make sense for a business that plans to operate every night. But those who wrote the rule certainly were not thinking of someone who occasionally rents out a room or a home.

There is no doubt I can legally invite a friend to stay at my home, whether or not I am there, for a few nights. Should that become illegal if the friend offers to help out with my expenses? How often is too often? If I own a home and do not live in it, no one doubts I may rent it out on a monthly basis. Should I be able to rent it on a weekly basis? Daily?

New technologies have raised issues in many areas other than this. Is it an illegal search if the police use infrared to identify homes where marijuana is being grown? Smartphone apps make Uber possible, with drivers deciding when, or if, they will accept fares, rather than working for an established car service or taxi company. To what extent do existing rules apply?

Governments need to think about how, if at all, they want to regulate an enterprise such as Airbnb. Interpreting old rules to make them cover Airbnb may be possible, but it may not be wise.

Floyd Norris, *Garrison*

Cell tower near cemetery

I am organizing a group to oppose construction of a 10- to 15-story cellphone tower on land adjacent to the historic Cold Spring Cemetery on Peekskill Road.

The project's builder, Homeland Towers, was denied a permit by the Nelsonville Building Department, but the decision is being appealed to the Zoning Board. A meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 29, at 8 p.m. at the Philipstown Town Hall, 238 Main St., in Cold Spring.

We all understand the need for adequate cell-phone coverage, but the siting of this tower overlooking this landmark is a desecration and an insult to the community. Among others, the cemetery is the final resting place of Washington and Emily Roebling, builders of the Brooklyn Bridge; Julia Butterfield, the widow of Civil War hero Daniel Butterfield (a Medal of Honor recipient and author of *Taps*) who endowed the Butterfield Library and Butterfield Hospital; Robert Parrott, inventor of the Parrott Gun, a decisive weapon in the Civil War; and Medal of Honor recipient James Bennett.

I urge you to attend the meeting to have our voices heard. Email savcoldspring-cemetery@gmail.com for more information. We hope that Homeland Towers realizes that this proposed siting is extraordinarily insensitive. Our community would like to work with the company to find a more appropriate site.

Frances O'Neill, *Nelsonville*

Beacon development

Developers roll into town and convince everyone that their projects will be good for the city, but the data shows otherwise ("Progress Report: Beacon Developments," Aug. 18). This influx of residents will hurt the public schools and the added infrastructure costs will quickly dissolve any short-term tax gains. I can't for the life of me understand why we don't learn the lessons of Westchester, Rockland or

Photo of the Week



Playing around with Menashe Kadishman's *Suspended* (1977) at the Storm King Art Center in New Windsor (Photo by Lucy Freilich)
High-resolution submissions welcome. Email photos@highlandscurrent.com.

North Jersey — congestion and skyrocketing taxes do not make a successful city.

Lori Merhige, *Beacon*

I was under the impression that buildings in Beacon could not be more than three stories tall because the fire department's ladders can only reach the third floor. The building at 344 Main is clearly four stories high. How is this possible?

Peter McGivney, *Beacon*

Reporter Jeff Simms responds: The building is in the central Main Street zoning district, which allows four stories and, in some cases with special permits, five stories.

Beacon is only attractive because of its Metro-North stop. There isn't any land or space, and no decent architecture. If you are so annoyed with your town's renaissance, have the MTA move the tracks on the other side of the river. Newburgh, which has a lot more land and architecture, could use the love and Beacon can go back to be-

ing the dump it was 20 years ago.

Pascal Boyer, *Newburgh*

It's time to stop the building. When you overbuild you take the charm and quaintness out of a town. Just look at the huge eyesore being erected on Main Street, not to mention the lack of parking and traffic.

Everyone talks about business on Main Street, but many locals I know won't go near Main because of the lack of parking. And forget about going down Route 9D toward the bridge at rush hour. You can hardly turn in or out of Van Ness Road or Rock Hill onto 9D at certain times of the day.

Pam Jones, *Beacon*

After all this construction, it will be impossible to drive or park anywhere on Main Street, so the idea that any of this will help businesses is a red herring. The congestion on the side streets and Routes 9D and 52 will also increase and the noise will become intolerable. Or, I should say, *more* intolerable.

Lisa Ornest, *Beacon*
(Continued on Page 6)



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (from previous page)

Letters to the Editor

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Cash for Cold Spring?

Thanks for a very informative article about the efforts of Kathleen Foley and Juhee Lee-Hartford to secure a \$10 million grant for the city of Hudson ("The \$10 Million Women," Aug. 18). As I read through it, the first thing that came to mind was trying to launch a similar initiative for Cold Spring.

Perhaps Foley and Lee-Hartford could hold a workshop to show how it's done. I know that I am not the only one who has tried (unsuccessfully) to get funding. Unfortunately, Putnam County has the benefit of receiving a great deal of income from sales tax we collect that it does not share.

From my own experience, I know that money is available, but it is not easy for an outsider to navigate the bureaucracies mentioned in the article. Lee-Hartford said: "Hudson is an attractive, creative, buzzing town. Folks now see that Hudson is ready." Cold Spring is also a creative, buzzing village, and we are ready!

Patty Villanova, *Putnam Valley*
Villanova is a Main Street shop owner.

Power of petitions

The challenge to the nominating petition of Anthony DeStefano, a Republican candidate for Putnam County sheriff, by the head of the Putnam County Democratic Committee, is all about power ("Sheriff Candidate Back on Ballot," Aug. 18). How does a minority party without significant political presence in Putnam County gain a foothold, no matter how tenuous? Even

if there appears to be the odious smell of collusion, it joins forces with the party in power to register a challenge to the only sheriff's candidate on the Republican line with any legitimate claim to the office: Anthony DeStefano.

Never mind that in the process Republican voters are left with the distasteful choice of filling in the circle for Sheriff Don Smith, an admitted liar, defamer and abuser of police power, just as long as their candidate, a former police officer and now beekeeper, has a ghost of a chance of wresting the office from the machine. A prized foothold for the Democrats, no matter how gained. That is how politics is played.

Ann Fanizzi, *Southeast*

I would like to thank the almost 1,200 registered Republicans who took the time to sign my petition to become the next sheriff of Putnam County. Many of you share our common frustration at the complete lack of urgency by the current sheriff regarding this drug crisis, which started on his watch.

Our high schools in any of the Putnam towns are infested with narcotics and embedded with local drug dealers. What's worse, there is no plan to clean up any of this. The only plan of action instituted by the incumbent was to put forth a monumental effort to prevent me from being on the Republican primary ballot on Sept. 12. That effort has failed, much like everything else.

As a New York City police captain, my narcotics, community police, and command experience is by far the most proven of either of the other candidates, both of whom come from the same failed program. My name on the ballot has given the parents of Putnam County renewed hope for the future. There is a reason why both the Democrats and Republicans teamed up in a failed attempt to keep my name off the ballot.

If you are tired of the status quo, and the same people in the same jobs decade after decade, with conditions just getting worse, I ask for your support on Sept. 12. I have a daughter in the 10th grade at Carmel High School, and for me the stakes cannot be higher, personally and professionally.

Andrew DeStefano, *Carmel*

I represented Mr. DeStefano in the appeal of the challenge to his nominating

petition. I am proud to say I have never worked a case of this nature but we prevailed in the initial action. I still consider Don Smith a friend but his actions cannot be condoned. The sheriff cannot lead by example, even quietly, with "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth."

True to form, the county GOP did not want to give Mr. DeStefano his rightful place on the primary ballot and went to extremes, even collusion. How sad for taxpayers and voters, whether you are Republican, Democrat and any other party affiliation, to see who is controlling our county government.

What started out as a "slam dunk" for the Board of Elections backfired because of a brilliant and exquisite decision by Putnam County Supreme Court Judge Paul Marx, who thought outside the box. The county handed the case off to outside counsel. So even with a slam-dunk case, not one attorney in the Putnam County Department of Law can handle it? Even when the county claims to have no money?

John Zarcone Jr., *Putnam Valley*



Vandals positioned fallen branches along trails used by mountain bikers. Photo provided

Mount Beacon vandalism

I am writing on behalf of the Hudson Highlands Mountain Bike Club concerning the vandalism of trails on and around Mount Beacon in the hope that someone knows the person who is doing this.

Since last fall a person or group has been vandalizing the trails, specifically, the You Know the One (YKTO) or Melzingah Trail that runs near the Blue Trail around Melzingah. The damage includes removing rocks from tree-overs, removing rocks from a stone wall, placing rocks in the trail, placing logs and branches across the trail, and raking leaves onto the trail.

This vandalism has already caused at least one injury when a rider ended up rolling down a small cliff where the rocks that supported the trail were removed. I have had close calls on the trail coming around corners to find logs in the middle of the trail or trees at chest height. We are asking for the public's help to spread the word that this is a state-approved trail and to please stop vandalizing it.

Tom Cerchiara, *Beacon*

Protecting the river

People care about the health of the Hudson River because they realize it impacts their well-being and local economies. That's why in the height of summer 500 people turned out to meetings hosted by the Environmental Protection Agency in Poughkeepsie and Saratoga.

But many people don't realize that the Hudson continues to be harmed by millions of pounds of sediment contaminated with cancer-causing PCBs. Until Sept. 1, the EPA is accepting public comments on whether more dredging should be done. The agency's own five-year review of the dredging by General Electric to remove PCBs it dumped in the river concluded that the company's cleanup doesn't currently protect the health of the public or the river.

Citizens should call for the EPA to remove any statements about the cleanup being "protective" five decades from now, because state and federal scientists say time and nature won't fix the project's shortcomings.

We have created a page at scenichudson.org/pcbcs with a link to the EPA's public comment site and background information, as well as a letter for business owners to sign to remind the EPA that a polluted Hudson River diminishes local businesses and jobs.

Jay Burgess
Scenic Hudson, *Poughkeepsie*

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Individual & Family Office Services

Parking in Beacon: Stop and Go *(from Page 1)*

The project will require the lot to be closed during construction, Rasmussen said, with plantings and other finishing touches scheduled for the spring.

Planning Board members liked the idea, which will now go to the Zoning Board of Appeals, from which Scenic Hudson must request a variance on setback regulations for the residential-zoned neighborhood.

344 Main St.

The atmosphere was more tense at the Aug. 21 meeting of the City Council, which terminated its agreement to lease parking to a developer for 24 apartments under construction at 344 Main St.

City officials signed an agreement a year ago to lease developer Sean O'Donnell the spaces at \$40 each per month in the city-owned Eliza Street lot. But Beacon Mayor Randy Casale noted that O'Donnell later purchased the Citizens Bank parcel at 364 Main, which the mayor argued was "spe-

cifically to provide permanent parking" for the neighboring 344 Main project, and allowed the city to nullify the agreement and reclaim its spots.

(In 2008 Beacon repealed a zoning provision that allowed retailers and developers to pay a one-time fee for each off-street spot it could not provide. Instead, the code requires developers to give the city "appropriately located and developed land for commercial parking" elsewhere. Without a special permit, the code generally requires one space for each apartment, plus a quarter-space for each bedroom; two spaces for homes; one for every 500 square feet of retail space; and one for every three restaurant seats.)

Patrick Moore, O'Donnell's attorney, said at the council's Aug. 14 workshop that O'Donnell can't turn the 364 Main St. property — purchased in March — into a parking lot because he needs to develop it to pay



A rendering of the Mount Beacon parking lot proposal *Scenic Hudson*

the \$1 million mortgage he holds on the parcel. (Moore did not respond to phone calls or emails seeking further comment.)

Adding to the confusion is that 344 Main and 364 Main are owned by separate entities. O'Donnell Construction Corp. purchased 344 Main Street in 2013 after the city foreclosed on the parcel. The company received Planning Board approval last year to construct a four-story building with retail space and 24 apartments.

In January, O'Donnell conveyed 344 Main St. to O'Donnell Construction NY, which had been created a month earlier. Both companies have the same Fishkill address. However, O'Donnell did not ask that the parking agreement with the city be amended.

The ownership change prompted Nick Ward-Willis, the city's attorney, to argue

that the agreement was null and void because it states it cannot be transferred without the city's permission. Another clause allows the agreement to be canceled if O'Donnell is able to secure the 24 spaces elsewhere.

Additionally, the council said this week that it cannot legally issue certificates of occupancy for 344 Main if O'Donnell doesn't provide parking for the project.

Speaking for O'Donnell, Moore argued on Aug. 14 that his client and the city must be in agreement before the "alternate location" clause kicks in. Since they can't agree, he said, "I'm ready for a judge."

"I know you are, and I'm not scared of lawyers," Casale shot back. "This needs to go to the courts. I'm done being lied to by developers."

Cold Spring's Virtual Parking

Law allows businesses to pay instead of provide

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

Taking a different approach from Beacon, in 2010 Cold Spring launched a waiver program that allows businesses to buy permanent exemptions from a village law demanding they provide off-street customer parking.

The program was established in stages. In July 2010, after several months of discussion, the Cold Spring Village Board enacted a law to permit businesses on Main Street and Chestnut Street to pay to avoid compliance with the parking-space requirement, which is part of the zoning code. Two months later, the board set the waiver fee at \$250 for every customer parking space not provided.

Without the waiver, retail shops and offices are required to provide one parking space for each 150 square feet of their building's ground-floor area and each 300 square feet of upper-floor area; restaurants, cafes, and taverns must supply one parking space for every three seats. For example, a restaurant containing six tables, each with two chairs (or 12 seats total), would pay \$1,000 for a waiver (or \$250 for every three chairs).

Old Main Street buildings often lack parking lots and before the law passed, many businesses had to rent parking, often at a monthly cost of \$60 to \$100 per space, from owners of buildings with extra.

According to the village clerk, the village government has no consolidated list of parking waivers granted since the program began.

POSITION AVAILABLE

The Town of Philipstown has a vacancy on the Recreation Commission. Any persons interested should submit their resume to:

Richard Shea, Supervisor
Town of Philipstown
238 Main Street, P.O. BOX 155, Cold Spring, New York 10516

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

The Town of Philipstown is seeking volunteers to serve on the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee. Visit www.philipstown.com to review plan. Any persons interested should submit their resume to:

Richard Shea, Supervisor
Town of Philipstown
238 Main Street
P.O. BOX 155
Cold Spring, New York 10516

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Political ad paid for by the Friends of Tim Greco for Philipstown Town Board

Gallery 66 NY to Close Sept. 24

Group show by three Highlands artists ends five-year run

By Alison Rooney

On Sunday, Sept. 24, Barbara Galazzo, owner of Gallery 66 NY in Cold Spring, will remove the paintings from its walls and shut its red doors after five years on Main Street.

When it closes, only one gallery, Buster Levi at 121 Main St., will remain in operation in Cold Spring.



Untitled, by Galelyn Williams

Image provided

Galazzo, who lives over the gallery, said she knew several years ago that the building's owner wanted to sign a long-term lease when hers expired, or sell. A cooperative whose members come and go, the gallery couldn't commit, particularly as the past two years have seen a downturn in business. Another tenant, yet to be publicly identified, will take over the three rooms and back garden on Oct. 1.

The large layout of the gallery allowed Galazzo to present works by three artists at a time in each exhibit, with the works often linked by a theme. The final show, *Past, Present, Future*, which opens with a reception from 6 to 9 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 1, has paintings and collages by Anna Bergin of Beacon, Galelyn Williams of Cold Spring and Lisa Zukowski of Beacon.

Over the years, Galazzo kept a careful tally of the foot traffic at the gallery, which sometimes topped 180 people in a day. However, many were hikers who browsed but typically were not looking to buy art. About 50 percent of the people who purchase artwork have a connection to the artist, she said. The other half fall in love on the spot. Very few works of art are purchased as investments.

"Most people buy from emotions," says Galazzo, who before opening in Cold Spring owned a New York City gallery for 16 years.

Galazzo and other merchants and gallery owners attempted to build a First Friday tradition that mirrors Second Saturday in Beacon. "Everyone was really excited about this, but it's never had the participation that Beacon has," Galazzo says. "Still, there are First Friday regulars, including Beacon residents."

Galazzo, a prominent glass artist, says she plans to put everything in the gallery in storage and take a breather. She's done work for the Rockland Center for



Gallery 66 NY's Barbara Galazzo Photo by Michael Turton

the Arts in West Nyack and also as an art handler for a TV series, which involves hanging, taking down and caring for art on the set.

"Running a gallery is a lot like opening a new store every month," Galazzo says. "There's the putting up and taking down, the marketing, organizing the opening reception. And then you do it all again just a few weeks later." Galazzo says she looks forward to spending more time in her own studio, and, though living above the gallery has been convenient, she admits there are moments when "it's Saturday morning and you just want to come downstairs in your grungy sweats — and you can't."

Gallery 66 NYC is located at 66 Main St. Its hours are noon to 6 p.m. Friday through Sunday, or by appointment. Call 845-809-5838.

By appointment at
magazzino.art
2700 Route 9
Cold Spring, NY 10516
@magazzino

Giovanni Anselmo
Marco Bagnoli
Domenico Bianchi
Alighiero Boetti
Pier Paolo Calzolari

Luciano Fabro
Jannis Kounellis
Mario Merz
Marisa Merz
Giulio Paolini

Pino Pascali
Giuseppe Penone
Michelangelo Pistoletto
Remo Salvadori
Gilberto Zorio

MAGAZZINO

ITALIAN ART

The Calendar

Humor from Another Planet

Longtime Philipstown resident was pioneer in off-the-wall comedy

By Peter Stevenson

It was summer in New York City in 1988 and Brian McConnachie was living an enviable life for a 45-year-old writer. He and his wife Ann were renting a duplex on the top two floors of a handsome brownstone on West 78th Street.

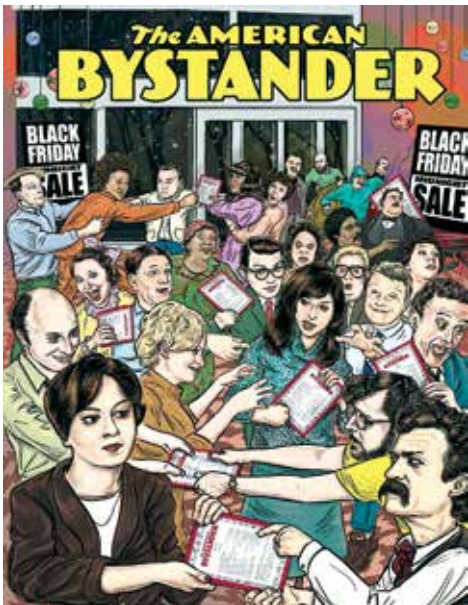
An advertising man in his younger days, McConnachie had made the giddy leap to *National Lampoon*, which led to writing for NBC's *Saturday Night Live*, where he became one of the pioneers

blasting open the politically charged, gonzo comedy landscape in the late 1970s and 1980s. With the birth of his daughter, he started writing episodes of children's shows such as *Noddy* and *Shining Time Station*. And his landlord was offering to sell him that sweet apartment.

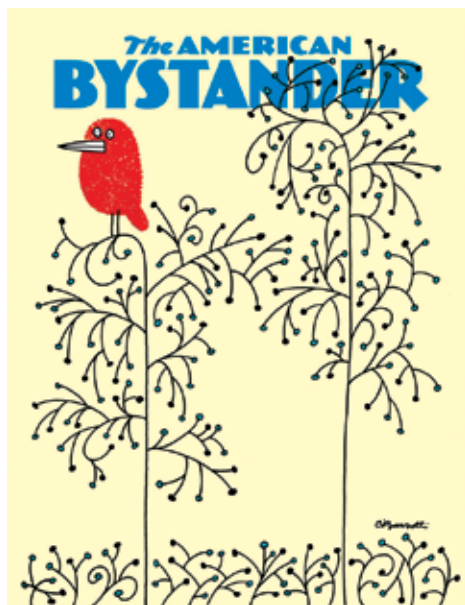
Another New York City winter was approaching, however, with fuel prices high enough to keep a guy awake at night.

"We'd heard there were good schools in Garrison," McConnachie recalls. They bought an 1890s farmhouse with a one-horse stable.

He'd never lived anyplace like Garrison. "The first day of school, we walked our daughter down this old ox-cart road, and



The first and second issues of *The American Bystander*, a humor magazine founded by McConnachie in 1983 and recently revived



Brian McConnachie

Photo by Sheila Williams

horses were grazing," he says. "It reached the point where I thought, 'Oh, come on. Let's tone down the Norman Rockwell.'"

Before he knew it, McConnachie was part of the picture. He put up a fence and started planting, driven by his "inner farmer." Other countrified chestnuts followed: Coaching Little League; staging a variety show at the St. Philip's parish hall; writing and producing a musical at the Depot Theater. (Meanwhile, Ann ran Gov. George Pataki's office in New York

City from 1995 to 2006.)

McConnachie also continued to write comedy and act. He's had minor roles in seven Woody Allen films as well as classic comedies such as *Caddyshack* and *Sleepless in Seattle*.

McConnachie, 74, who now lives in a cozy house with lots of wood and stone in Cold Spring, has a new escapade. *The American Bystander* is a quarterly revival of a humor magazine he founded and edited in (Continued on Page 12)

Into the Art of Darkness

Shadowy, timely art exhibit pops up in Beacon



David Dixon

Photo provided

By Brian PJ Cronin

When David Dixon placed the artwork for a group show on exhibit at 18 West Main St. in Beacon, he knew there was only one place for his own pieces — in the darkest corner.

"If I put anyone else's piece there, it wouldn't be acceptable," says Dixon with a laugh. The exhibit, *Leaving Home*, a project of the Brooklyn-based collective CATHOUSE FUNERAL, will be on display through Sept. 10. (After the show departs, the space will be remodeled for retail.) It is anchored by a model of Christopher Columbus's ship *Santa Maria* that Dixon's grandfather built in 1926.

The darkness in the cavernous room is a feature, not a bug, that drew Dixon to the space when he visited for the first

time and saw it illuminated only by a single overhead light.

"I wanted it to feel like we snuck into the storage space of a forgotten museum," he says.

One work by Dixon that leers out from the shadows is called *The Clansman*, a painting of swirling Klan hoods that friends as recently as a month ago told him was no longer relevant in American politics.

The other, called *Twins*, is a split Confederate flag, light and dark, rearranged so that the cross makes a diamond. The flipped X references a Congolese cosmogram, "a conduit to the spirit world," said Dixon. "You're born from that, and when you die you go back into that. The X is a negation, but if you draw a field of them, you also get a field of diamonds."

The X also conjures crossroads, a space that in many cultures is vulnerable to liminal energy from the spirit world. (Think of Robert Johnson selling his soul to the devil there.) The relationship between X's and diamonds changed as Congolese imagery became woven into the fabric of African-American culture, and that is explored in a piece called *Hole Nation*, by Nari Ward.

Years ago, Ward discovered an X inside of a diamond drilled into the floor of the First African Baptist Church in Savannah, Georgia, and later learned they were breathing holes above a crawlspace used by slaves fleeing in the Underground Railroad. The cosmogram has since become an integral part of his work; In *Hole Nation*, the symbol is nailed into a U.S. history textbook.

Other pairings (Continued on Page 14)

FRIDAY, AUG. 25

Dutchess County Fair

10 a.m. – 10 p.m. Dutchess Fairgrounds
6550 Spring Brook Ave., Rhinebeck
dutchessfair.com

Beacon Chamber Bash

6 – 9 p.m. Chill Wine Bar
173 Main St., Beacon
845-592-4145 | beaconchamber.org

HVSF: *Pride and Prejudice*

7:30 p.m. Boscobel
1601 Route 9D, Garrison
845-265-9575 | hvshakespeare.org

Hamlet CU3ED

7:30 p.m. Catalyst Gallery
137 Main St., Beacon
845-204-3844 | catalystgallery.com

SATURDAY, AUG. 26

Newburgh Last Saturday

newburghlastsaturdays.com

Dutchess County Fair

10 a.m. – 10 p.m. Fairgrounds
See details under Friday.

Benjamin Franklin's Experiments

10 a.m. Fort Montgomery Historic Site
690 Route 9W, Fort Montgomery
845-446-2134 | nyspark.com

Military Reenactment Day

10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Constitution Island
Buses from Cold Spring station
constitutionisland.org

Passport Fair

10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Putnam Valley Free Library
30 Oscawana Lake Road, Putnam Valley
845-528-3242 | putnamvalleylibrary.org

Bees, Honey and Cider

1:30 – 3 p.m. Glynwood Farm
362 Glynwood Road, Cold Spring
845-265-3338 | glynwood.org

Hudson River School: Artistic Pioneers (Film)

3 p.m. Putnam History Museum
63 Chestnut St., Cold Spring
845-265-4010 | putnamhistorymuseum.org

A Summer Celebration (Strings Concert)

4 p.m. Scenic Hudson River Center
23 Long Dock Road, Beacon
845-765-3012 | howlandmusic.org

Artists' Talk: *The Other Side of Things*

4 p.m. Garrison Art Center
23 Garrison's Landing, Garrison
845-424-3960 | garrisonartcenter.org

Calendar Highlights

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

Week of Revolution: *The Traitor's Wife*

6:15 p.m. Boscobel
See details under Friday.

Constellation Sunset Cruise

6:45 p.m. From Beacon Institute dock
melissamcgillconstellation.com

Get On Up, Get On Down Dance

7 p.m. Elks Lodge
900 Wolcott Ave., Beacon | 845-765-0667

HVSF: *Twelfth Night*

7:30 p.m. Boscobel | See details under Friday.

Hamlet CU3ED

7:30 p.m. Catalyst Gallery
See details under Friday.

Rich Rosenthal Trio (Jazz)

8:30 p.m. Chill Wine Bar
173 Main St., Beacon
845-765-0885 | chillwinebarbeacon.com

SUNDAY, AUG. 27

Dutchess County Fair

10 a.m. – 10 p.m. Fairgrounds
See details under Friday.

Military Reenactment Day

11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Boscobel | See details under Friday.

The Ebony Hillbillies

6 p.m. Cold Spring waterfront
explorecoldspringny.com

Wrestling Under the Stars VI

7 p.m. Dutchess Stadium
1500 Route 9D, Wappingers Falls
845-838-0094 | hvrenegades.com

HVSF: *The General from America*

7:30 p.m. Boscobel
See details under Friday.

Hamlet CU3ED

7:30 p.m. Catalyst Gallery
See details under Friday.

MONDAY, AUG. 28

Community Day Open House**Hamiltunes: A Singalong**

5 p.m. Boscobel
1601 Route 9D, Garrison
845-265-9575 | hvshakespeare.org

Garrison School Board

6 p.m. Garrison School
1100 Route 9D, Garrison
845-424-3689 | gufs.org

Beacon City Council Workshop

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

Beacon School Board

7 p.m. Beacon High School
101 Matteawan Road, Beacon
845-838-6900 | beaconcitk12.org

H.V. Renegades vs. Tri-City

7:05 p.m. Dutchess Stadium
1500 Route 9D, Wappingers Falls
845-838-0094 | hvrenegades.com

TUESDAY, AUG. 29

Mindfulness Meditation Workshop

7 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library
472 Route 403, Garrison
845-424-3020 | desmondfishlibrary.org

H.V. Renegades vs. Tri-City

7:05 p.m. Dutchess Stadium
See details under Monday.

WEDNESDAY, AUG. 30

Day of Golf to Support Veterans

11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Centennial Golf Course
185 John Simpson Road, Carmel
app.eventcaddy.com/events/a-day-of-golf-veterans-fundraiser

Beacon vs. Byram Hills (Girls' Soccer)

4:15 p.m. Beacon High School
101 Matteawan Road, Beacon
845-838-6900 | beaconcitk12.org

Guided Tour: Systematic Order Beds

5:30 p.m. Stonecrop Gardens
81 Stonecrop Lane, Cold Spring
845-265-2000 | stonecrop.org

Teen Trivia Night

5:30 p.m. Boscobel | See details under Friday.

Cold Spring Merchants – Putnam County Meeting

6 p.m. Cold Spring Firehouse
152 Main St., Cold Spring

***The Secret Life of Bees* (2008)**

6 p.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave., Cold Spring
845-265-3040 | butterfieldlibrary.org

Highlands Photographers' Salon

7 p.m. Garrison Art Center
See details under Saturday.

H.V. Renegades vs. Tri-City

7:05 p.m. Dutchess Stadium
See details under Monday.

Summer Movie: *Phantom of the Opera* (Musical)

8 p.m. Beacon Visitors' Center
South and Main, Beacon
beaconchamberofcommerce.com

THURSDAY, AUG. 31

Seniors Luncheon

1 p.m. Church on the Hill
245 Main St., Cold Spring | 845-265-2022

Week of Revolution Children's Activities

1 – 4 p.m. Boscobel | See details under Friday.

Beacon vs. Lakeland (Boys' Soccer)

4 p.m. Beacon High School
See details under Wednesday.

H.V. Renegades vs. Vermont

5:05 p.m. Dutchess Stadium
See details under Monday.

International Overdose Awareness Day Vigil

7 p.m. Cold Spring gazebo | philipstownctc.org

Dance Jam

7 p.m. Towne Crier Cafe | 379 Main St., Beacon
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

FRIDAY, SEPT. 1

HVSF: *Love's Labour Lost*

6 p.m. Storm King Art Center
1 Museum Road, New Windsor
845-265-9575 | hvshakespeare.org

Group Show: *Past, Present, Future* (Opening)

6 – 9 p.m. Gallery 66 NY | 66 Main St., Cold Spring
845-809-5838 | gallery66ny.com

Eric Erickson (Opening)

6 – 8 p.m. Buster Levi Gallery
121 Main St., Cold Spring
845-809-5145 | busterlevigallery.com

H.V. Renegades vs. Vermont

6:35 p.m. Dutchess Stadium
See details under Monday.

HVSF: *The General from America*

6:15 p.m. Q&A with Richard Nelson
7:30 p.m. Performance
After show: Adult trivia (ages 21+)
Boscobel | See details under Aug. 25.

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THE RIVERSIDE GALLERIES

Battling Bullies

With musicals and mail, Philipstown educators teach empathy

By Alison Rooney

Once upon a time, a weekend resident of Philipstown named January Akselrad walked into the boutique on Main Street in Cold Spring now known as Kismet, where she came upon a children's book, *The Wishful Penny — Adventures of a One-Cent Coin*. As she read, she began composing songs for a children's musical.

She bought the book and brought it home, where it sat on her piano. Two years later, she popped into the store to say hello to owner Caryn Cannova and overheard a conversation with Jennifer Young, a Cold Spring resident who had popped in to check on the sales of her book.

"You're the author of *The Wishful Penny*?" Akselrad asked. She told Young she had an idea for a musical based on her book — would she like to hear some songs?

On that fateful day a partnership was forged, as has a business called See the Wish, which this year marks its 10th anniversary. It is named for the lyrics

from a *Wishful Penny* song: "See the wish, and the wish will come true."

Both women work in education — Akselrad is a drama instructor and Young spent a decade as a life-skills educator for children in foster care. The topics of their musicals range from Abe Lincoln to *Matzah and Miracles*. They also create educational books, as well as a line of plays and musicals designed for classrooms called Dramaterials.

Starting Sept. 16, See the Wish will present its first professional musical, *It's Easy! The Friend Strong Musical*, at the Irvington Town Hall Theater for a three-week run. Its 29-kid cast includes Alex Danilov and Sophie Sabin of Cold Spring, and Adam Cabo, who recently moved from Beacon to the Bronx, as well as adults including Laura Danilov (Alex's mom) and Mark Firestone of Cold Spring. It is set in a sixth-grade class in which bullies and the bullied travel into the future and see the consequences of their choices. (See irvingtontheater.com.)

Young also is the force behind a program called Be-A-Friend that offers support to bullied children. It had its roots in an earlier version of *It's Easy!* when the children in the production, at Riverdale Rising Stars, wanted to take its



All 29 of the youth *It's Easy* cast members, posing in character at a recent rehearsal

Photos provided

anti-bullying theme off-stage.

The project delivers "friend mail" to students between first and eighth grade who are recovering from severe bullying — the kind that often ends only when the child is pulled out of school. So far 10 children, found through teacher referrals and word of mouth, and with approval from their parents, have been shown the love. Some letters are written collectively by classes or at writing parties.

To participate, visit seethewish.com. (The next deadline, for an 11-year-old named Robert who was forced to switch schools, is Oct. 2.) There you will find guidelines, the most critical of which,

Young says, is to be positive. For example, instead of writing, "I feel sorry for you," acknowledge the not-good stuff with, "Your life will get better. I'm sorry you feel sad now."

All letters are mailed to Young at her Cold Spring office, where she reads each one, making sure everything is appropriate. The recipient and the writers remain semi-anonymous (first names only). One child received 720 of the letters, which are sent in one package and usually come as a surprise.

"The real magic is that for every one kid we feature, there are 700 others who practice empathy," Young says.



Jennifer Young and January Akselrad, of See The Wish

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(rain date: Sunday, Sep. 24) with Dance & Classical Music & Jazz

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Humor from Another Planet (from Page 9)

1983 of the same name. He filled it by asking writers he knew to send him their “bottom-drawer” material, such as “scripts, short stories, parts of novels and whatnot.”

The revived title, called “essential reading for comedy nerds” by *The New York Times*, is now on its fourth issue (see americanbystander.org). Each is funded by online fundraising and assembled with his co-editor, Michael Gerber, a writer who recruited McConnachie for the relaunch. The magazine is a gorgeous throwback to a pre-internet age — its content is not available online — and stuffed with pieces, cartoons and artwork by humorists committed to reclaiming territory lost to the tin whistle of Twitter.

McConnachie’s dry, offbeat wit is evident in his piece in Issue 2, “The Ding-Dong Hoodlum Priest,” about a kid named Danny whose dream is to be “a bra salesman, or a bra designer. Basically bra-related work.” A cop tells him, “The bra biz is a sucker’s game, Danny.” So Danny becomes first a middleweight boxing champ and then a priest. Which causes problems when the church bell tower gongs during communion and “Father Dan punched Mrs. Rodriguez in the mouth.”

McConnachie grew up in Forest Hills, Queens. His dad was a newspaperman who was pals with Jackie Gleason; his mom read him James Thurber. “When dad needed extra money, he’d go to the Athletic



The *Saturday Night Live* cast of the late 1970s: Garrett Morris, Jane Curtin, John Belushi, Laraine Newman, Dan Ackroyd, Gilda Radner and Bill Murray

NBC

Club and play gin,” said McConnachie.

The day McConnachie knew he was — and that comedy made him happy — occurred while he was with his best friend, Jack Ziegler. They were 10 or 11, hunting down comic books in a store near the Port Authority. “I’m on my hands and knees, looking at these issues in the bottom of this rack,” he said. “And for some reason, I looked up at the ceiling. And there was a sign on the ceiling that read, ‘What the hell are you looking up here for?’ I burst out laughing.” (Ziegler,

who died this year, would go on to become a cartoonist for *The New Yorker*.)

McConnachie’s father sent him to LaSalle Military Academy on Long Island, and from there he attended the University of Dublin before moving to New York. He loved a new magazine called *National Lampoon* and began submitting cartoons while working at a restaurant on 72nd Street. Soon after, one of the co-founders, Henry Beard, came by to offer him a job.

In his seersucker suit, bow tie and 6’4”

frame, McConnachie stood out among the longhairs at the *Lampoon*. But only on the outside. In *Drunk Stoned Brilliant Dead*, a history of the magazine, Rick Meyerowitz wrote of McConnachie: “He emphasized the illogical and the absurd, and he demolished the reader’s cozy expectations. He quickly became every other writer’s favorite writer.” He added that McConnachie’s work for the *Lampoon* “is well loved, here on Earth, and on his home planet.”

Another history of the *Lampoon* noted that “behind a horn-rimmed exterior lay profound eccentricity.” He preferred the “zany over the scathing,” it noted, creating comics such as *Amish in Space* and *The Attack of the Sizeable Beasts*, in which large squirrels overran a town. He also wrote *Tell Debbie*, an advice column with responses such as “How very unfortunate.”

Within a year, the magazine was so popular that it launched a radio show and a stage show. To populate both, the company brought in John Belushi, Gilda Radner and Bill Murray from SCTV. McConnachie and Belushi became close, reminiscent of his father’s friendship with Gleason.

In 1975 Lorne Michaels launched *Saturday Night Live*. Soon after, the show’s head writer, Michael O’Donoghue, called his friend McConnachie to report that the show was stealing from him.

(continued on next page)

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Humor from Another Planet (from previous page)

"There was a *Lampoon* piece I did — it was a cartoon of a police lineup of a duck, a refrigerator, a nun and a black man. And a woman is pointing to the black man: 'He's the one who did it,' " McConnellachie recalls. "And they did it as a sketch on the show, with Richard Pryor playing the black man. How that played out was Lorne saying to me, 'Well, we've been using your stuff. We might as well hire you.' " (In 2013, after a similar incident with a joke purloined by *The Simpsons*, McConnellachie was invited to write an episode.)

At *SNL*, McConnellachie says, "your job became to get your piece on the air," no matter how abstract the idea.

"Sometimes a title would come to me before I knew what the sketch was going to be," he recalls. "That happened with *Name the Bats*. The piece was a game show and Belushi and Gilda are the contestants. They're locked inside a barn and the host hits the wall with a baseball bat, which gets all the bats swarming around inside, and Belushi says, 'I found a fruit bat. I found a fruit bat!' and the hosts say, 'No, no, no. Don't tell us what kind of bats they are. We know what kind of bats they are. Who do you think put them in there? No. Give them names!' So then they just went comatose by the end.

"Another one that just came to me was from the title *Cochise at Oxford*. They were in this classroom, Eric Idle [of Monty Python] is the teacher, and it's jokes on top of jokes and the banter is

fast. One of the students is Bill Murray dressed as Cochise, the Apache chief. And Eric Idle is doing an imitation of hopping away from a puddle of urine: 'You mean like this?' And he tucks one leg up and hops away from the imaginary pool of urine. And a hatchet comes right in front of him. They placed it perfectly. And then he slowly turns around and he says, " 'All right. Who threw that?' "

"Lorne didn't like the piece because he didn't understand it — it's understandable that he didn't understand it."

"Lorne didn't like the piece because he didn't understand it — it's understandable that he didn't understand it," McConnellachie recalls. "But Belushi said to Lorne, 'Unless we do this piece, I'm leaving the show.' "

The sketch ran. "Al Franken, to his credit — because he was on Lorne's side about the sketch — came up to me afterward and said, 'You know, now I see what you were driving at. I didn't see it before.' Which I thought was awfully generous of him."

The bond between McConnellachie and Belushi lasted until the comedian's death in 1982 of a cocaine and heroin overdose at age 33. "Belushi would tell me and everyone on the show, 'If something happens to me, I want you to look after [my wife] Judy.' And

Fighting Atop the Train

"You'd think they go into the parlor car to slug it out, unless it was the people in the parlor car who told the brawlers to take it outside and up a flight."

~ from a 2015 piece by McConnellachie for NPR called *Before Fighting Atop a Train, Some Things to Consider*

if you hear that enough times, it's a matter of when," said McConnellachie. "Toward the end I was getting more and more phone calls from him."

These days when the winter comes, Brian and Ann head to Osprey, Florida, "formally the winter home of the Ringling Brothers circus," notes Brian. "The ringmaster once fixed our plumbing." Notable residents include John Gotti Jr. and Steven King. "It's the *dangerous* end of the Key."

Spring finds the couple back in Cold Spring. "I love the Memorial Day Parade," Brian says. "I get teary. Maybe it has to do with the firefighters and high school bands. It has a wonderful charm. I saw one, they were playing, 'I talk to the trees, but they don't listen to me,' from — what was that? Well, whatever. It was just so sweet and just off-key enough that it's endearing; they're not pros, they're heartfelt amateurs. It was perfect."



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our storybook river towns, relaxing lake communities, rural roads to peaceful neighborhoods.

Craig has had the great fortune of living in Cold Spring for 21 years, along with his lovely wife Joanne, a teacher at O'Neill High School. Together they have raised two amazing boys here in Cold Spring, both have attended Haldane from K-12.

Craig has extensive real estate sales experience, and understands market values and negotiation. He has purchased and sold homes, planned subdivisions, contracted new construction, owned, rented, and sold commercial properties, and represents buyers and sellers, from apartments to luxury homes, throughout the lower Hudson Valley.



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Into the Art of Darkness *(from Page 9)*

in the space illuminate and contrast with each other. The tarps of Tariku Shiferaw's *XXX* and *King Kunta* hang near the ornate shrouds of Baseera Kahn's *Acoustic Sound Blankets*. Resembling burqas, the shrouds are often worn by the artist in performances in which Kahn invites viewers to join her underneath them.

The series *Refugees Leaving Venezuela RGB* by Davide Cantoni are done in pearlescent paint that absorbs light, with the image revealing itself as the viewer moves through the space and the light that hits the canvas changes.

"Oddly enough, you can see the image better if you look at it through the camera on your phone, since it

compresses it," notes Dixon. One of Cantoni's paintings is overlain by Farideh Sekhar's *ISIS/NASA*, which also uses pearlescent paint to show images of rockets blasting into space alternating with mosques and monuments being destroyed; columns of flame that push humanity forward or backward.

The show ends on a hopeful note with Luisa Rabbia's *Toward*. The blue lumps spread to the furthest reaches of the tallest wall suggest barnacles. But, upon closer inspection,

they are blue porcelain heads, staring downward, modeled after photographs from Yann Arthus-Bertrand's book, *Six Billion Others*.

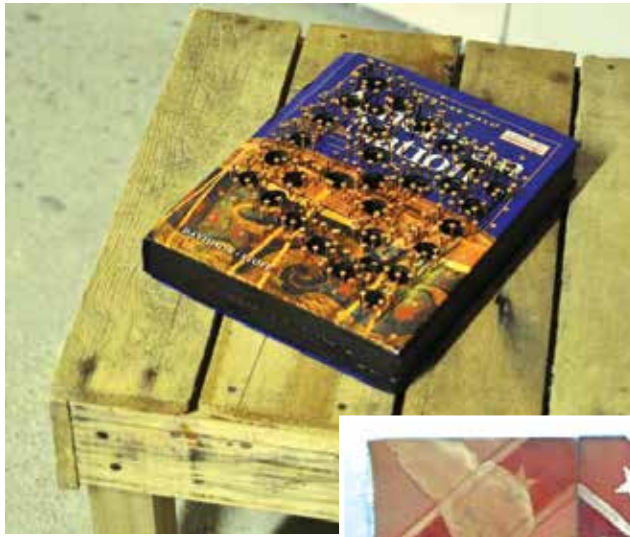
"It's hard not to love this piece," says Dixon. "And it's hard not to love humanity when you stand under it."

*"It's hard not to love this piece.
And it's hard not to love humanity
when you stand under it."*



Toward by Luisa Rabbia

Photos provided



Hole Nation by Nari Ward



Baseera Kahn inside one of her *Acoustic Sound Blankets*, which is featured in the Beacon show *Photo by Thomas Barratt*



Twins, by David Dixon, created with blood, thread and wood on canvas

Photo provided

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Looking Back: The Local Klan

In 1920s, KKK extended its reach into Highlands

By Chip Rowe

The Ku Klux Klan, which has been in the news lately, had its heyday in the 1920s, following the social upheaval of World War I. Although there was pushback from millions of Americans, white supremacists were embraced, or at least tolerated, in many places in New York state, including the Highlands, and across the country.

The Klan presented itself as a patriotic, fraternal organization while targeting Catholics, Jews, immigrants and blacks, in that order. According to social historians, its rhetoric was appealing to dispossessed white Americans who longed for a simpler time when everyone “knew their place.”

At its peak in 1924, the Klan had 6 million members. By 1930, that had dwindled to 30,000 (today it is 3,000 to 6,000, in about 190 chapters). Historians generally blame corruption within the organization and exposure of its hypocrisy by newspapers and civil-rights activists for the sharp decline. Here are news items gleaned from local newspapers from the time:

Sept. 23, 1921

The Republican County Committee, led by U.S. Rep. Hamilton Fish, met in Carmel to adopt its platform, which include a resolution denouncing the Klan as “un-American” because of its campaign to “to arouse religious and racial hatred.” The resolution also urged “drastic state and national legislation to suppress its pernicious activities which threaten to undermine the Constitution and respect for law and order.” (*Putnam County Courier*)

June 30, 1923

After a 12-foot cross was lit on Burned Hill at 11 p.m. at the conclusion of the annual firemen’s parade, the *Daily Herald* asked, “Has Beacon a branch of the Ku Klux Klan?” Newburgh is said to have about 600 members, but the paper concluded Beacon residents were joining the Peekskill branch.

Dec. 5, 1923

A burning cross visible atop Bull Hill is thought to have been placed either by “the ridiculous Ku Klux Klan” or pranksters. (*Cold Spring Recorder*)

April 1, 1924

During a Sunday evening service at First Methodist Church in Cold Spring, a dozen hooded Klan members marched into the sanctuary double-file and silently presented a purse with \$50 in gold to the Rev. Jonas Inman. He declined to accept it unless the men removed their robes and presented the offering as “plain citizens.” Instead, the Klansmen reformed their double column and marched out. (*The Evening Star*, Peekskill)

July 17, 1926

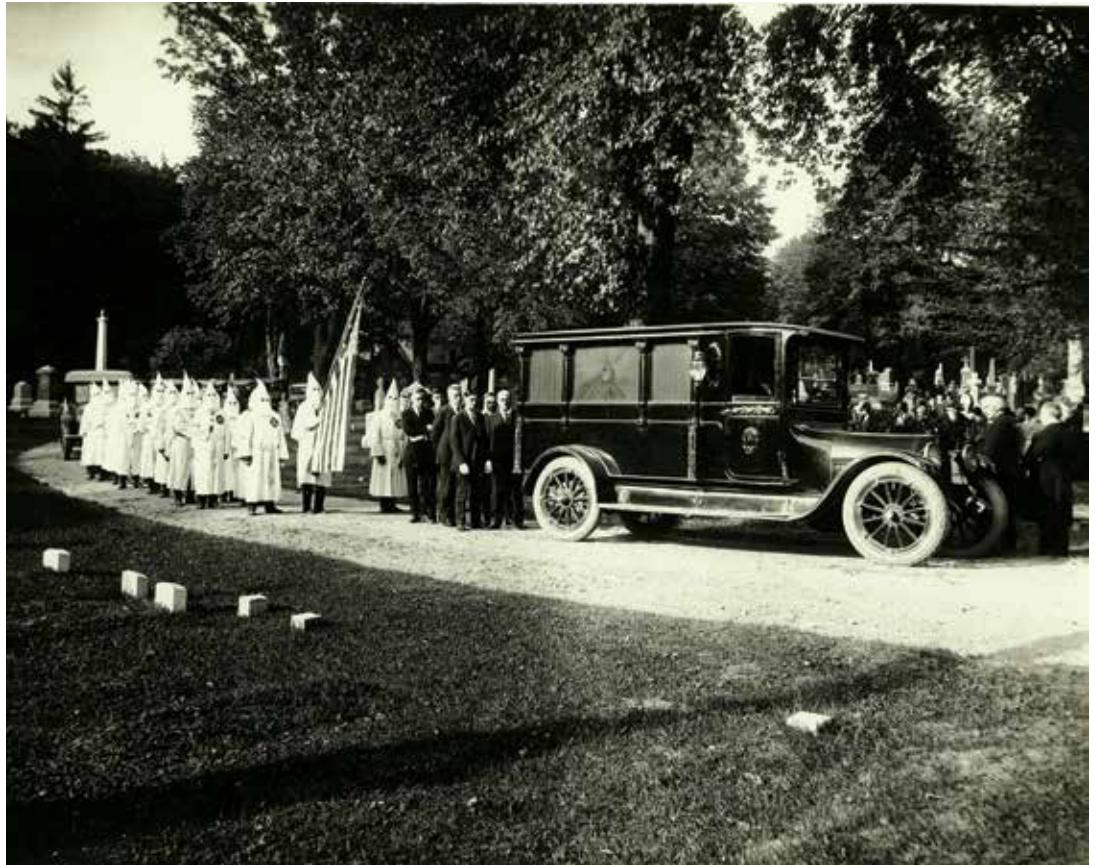
As many as 7,000 people assembled for the second annual outing organized by Peekskill Klan No. 203. Armed with baseball bats, Klansmen patrolled the boundaries of the event. (*The Highland Democrat*, Peekskill)

July 26, 1926

Four hundred robed Klansmen gathered near the former motorcycle race course at the upper end of East Main Street in Beacon, where at 9:30 p.m. they burned a 25-foot cross and heard addresses by men “thought to be high officers in the order” while hundreds of spectators looked on. The state police directed traffic. (*Beacon Daily Herald*)

July 15, 1927

The Klan organizations of Westchester, Putnam and Dutchess counties scored a coup by convincing Imperial Wizard Hiram Wesley Evans to speak at the annual outing near Peekskill. The Klan claimed 24,000 men, women and children were in attendance, although a reporter estimated the crowd at closer to 10,000. Highlights included a drill by the Klan Auxiliary of Beacon and another by 1,000 white-robed figures. The day ended with fireworks. (*Putnam County Courier*)



A funeral procession for a Klan member at Cold Spring Cemetery in the 1920s New York Public Library

Sept. 14, 1927

B. Cohen, the manager of Camp Nitgedaiget in Beacon, received a letter signed “Ku Klux Klan” demanding the Jewish resort leave town. (*Cold Spring Recorder*)

Aug. 31, 1928

In a straw poll held in Nelsonville, “where Klan sentiment is high,” there were seven votes for Al Smith, the Democratic candidate for U.S. president (and a

Catholic), and 53 for incumbent Herbert Hoover. (*Putnam County Courier*)

July 17, 1931

Handbills promised to have 10,000 parking spaces available for the annual field day near Peekskill and asked, “Who said the Klan was dead?” (*Putnam County Courier*) Apparently many people had reached that conclusion.

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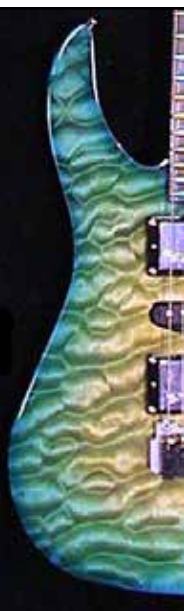
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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Howl at the Moon

Cabaret fundraiser at Garrison

Excellent Creature Productions, the organization that brought the Dialogues with Drama reading series to the Philipstown Depot Theatre, will host a fundraiser at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 6, at the gazebo on Garrison's Landing.

The Howl at the Moon Cabaret will include live jazz as well as music and scenes from Broadway shows. It features Dar Williams, Ray Bokhour, Claire Wellin, Phil Geoffrey Bond, Maia Guest and Lisa Sabin. Tickets are \$75 and include wine and food. Howling at the full moon as it rises at 7:38 p.m. is optional. The event will help pay for a new reading series and production at the Depot. See brownpapertickets.com/event/3049714.

The Revolution for Kids

Boscobel to host games and role playing

The Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival is hosting a free day of Revolutionary War activities for children from 1 to 4 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 31, at Boscobel. Children can participate in games, interactive demonstrations and role-playing as part of the Week of Revolution. For a schedule of other Week of Revolution events, see hvshakespeare.org.



Actor Ryan Quinn of HVSF demonstrates proper dramatic swordfighting technique at a workshop under the Boscobel tent. The workshop returns on Aug. 31. Photo provided

Reenactment Day

Muskets, rifles, cannons and drills

Constitution Island played a role in the American Revolution and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 26, military reenactors representing soldiers from the Revolution and Civil War will fire muskets, rifles and cannons and portray camp life and troop drills for visitors.

In addition, the West Point Band's Hellcats will perform and the Black Knights Drill Team will demonstrate its skills. Jonathan Kruk will share stories and food and drinks will be available, or pack a picnic lunch.

Catch a van at the Cold Spring Metro-North station every half-hour or so from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Photo identification is required for adults. See constitution-island.org.

Film Festival

More than 60 films in Brewster

More than 60 independent films will be shown at four venues from Friday, Aug. 31 to Sunday, Sept. 3, during the annual Village of Brewster Film Festival.

Features, short films and animation will be screened at Arts on the Lake, Ryder Farm, the Bull and Barrel Brew Pub and the new Independent Film Center. For a schedule, see vobfilmfestival.com.

Overdose Awareness Day

Vigil scheduled for Aug. 31

A candlelight vigil will be held as part of National Overdose Awareness Day at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 31, at the gazebo at the foot of Main Street in Cold Spring. The event is designed to fight the stigma associated with addiction, support those who are struggling with the illness and acknowledge the grief of families who have lost loved ones. It is organized by Philipstown Communities That Care Coalition. See philipstownctc.org.

Putnam Rocks

Seniors spreading kindness

Seniors in Putnam County are spreading kindness with a local version of the national Kindness Rocks Project in which participants paint words of inspiration and kindness on rocks, which are then "released" back into the community. Those who find a painted rock can look it

up on Facebook using the number painted on the back. See thekindnessrocksproject.com.

StoryWalk to Open

Meadow trail begins Sept. 2

The Wildlife Education Center in Cornwall will open its StoryWalk meadow trail on Sept. 2 with a story for children ages 2 to 6, *Trout are Made of Trees*, by April Pulley Sayre, with illustrations by Kate Endle. The opening day celebration includes guided walks on the trail with a museum educator at 1:30 and 3 p.m. and presentations at 1 and 2:30 p.m. about the center's resident animals. See hnm.org.



A visitor stops along the StoryWalk, which opens Sept. 2 at the Wildlife Education Center in Cornwall. Photo provided

Chamber Concert

Doansburg Ensemble returns to St. Mary's

The Doansburg Chamber Ensemble will perform in Cold Spring at St. Mary's Episcopal Church at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 2. The concert, with Christine Smith on flute, will include Mozart's *Symphony No. 14 K114 in A Major* and *Concerto for Flute in G Major*, as well as Haydn's *Symphony No. 70 in D Major*. The performance is free but donations are welcome.



A sampling of kindness rocks Photo provided



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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

History Museum Gala

Tickets on sale for annual dinner

The Putnam History Museum's 2017 annual gala, scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 1, at the Highlands Country Club in Garrison, will honor the Prentice family and trailblazer Jody Saylor.

Tickets for the fundraiser start at \$275 each and should be purchased by Sept. 15. Search for "Putnam History Museum" at eventbrite.com.

Art in the Field

Farm Project opens Sept. 2

The Farm Project, the annual sculpture exhibit in the cattle pastures of Saunders Farm in Garrison, opens Saturday, Sept. 2, with music and performance art from 2 to 6 p.m. (See Page 2.) Organized by Collaborative Concepts, the exhibit will be on display from 10 a.m. to dusk through Oct. 28. Admission is free. See collaborativeconcepts.org.



Airplane in a Cage, by Simone Kestelman, is one of the sculptures on display during the Farm Project show that opens Sept. 2 in Garrison. Photo provided

Input from Main Street

Meeting at Cold Spring firehouse

Putnam County has hired a consulting firm to assess nine commercial corridors. It hopes to collect input from the owners of businesses on Main Street in Cold Spring and Nelsonville at a meeting at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 30, at the Cold Spring firehouse.

Dharma Sunday School

Begins Sept. 3 at SkyBaby

Dharma Sunday School begins Sunday, Sept. 3, at 12:30 p.m. at SkyBaby Yoga in Cold Spring for children age 5 and older and their families. The class uses readings, movement and meditation to explore concepts like kindness, gratitude and generosity. See skybabyyoga.com.



The hull of the Woody Guthrie is shown in 2015 during its restoration. The sloop returns to Beacon on Aug. 26.

File photo by Brian PJ Cronin

Beacon

The Woody Guthrie Returns

Ceremony in Beacon on Aug. 26

The sloop Woody Guthrie, which for decades has provided free public sailing trips on the Hudson River, will return to service in Beacon after a two-year restoration with a welcoming celebration on Saturday, Aug. 26, from noon to 3 p.m. The event will include a potluck, deck tours and a re-christening.

The sloop was built in 1978 and owned by Pete and Toshi Seeger, who donated the boat to the Beacon Sloop Club. The restoration work at the Riverport Wooden Boat School at the Hudson River Maritime Museum in Kingston began in 2015 and involved the replacement of nearly all the ship's frames, planks, structural timbers, a portion of the decking, and a section of the keel at a cost of about \$400,000.

The sloop is expected to resume free public trips by mid-September.

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Celebration Concert

String players at Howland

In a pop-up concert celebrating summer, the Howland Chamber Music Circle will present a free concert by string players at 4 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 26, at the Scenic Hudson River Center at Long Dock Park in Beacon. See howlandmusic.org.

Howland Wolves to Play

Will perform as part of cabaret series

The Howland Wolves will perform jazz, blues, and rhythm and blues music as part of a monthly cabaret series at the Howland Cultural Center at 8 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 2. The Beacon-based combo is Goldee Greene, Chris Shann, Bill Imperial and Olu Akiwumi-Assani.



ART AND BAGELS — Artwork by students who attend Beacon Recreation Department camps and programs is available at Beacon Bagel for \$5, with proceeds benefitting the tuition assistance fund. Photo provided

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Restoration at Former Guinan's Well Underway *(from Page 1)*

What will you do with the space that was once the bar?

We thought it was too small to be the bar, so it will be for quiet dining with a fireplace. But on a slow night, folks can just drink there, of course.

Do you have a name yet?

We're thinking about Dolly's — a nod to *Hello, Dolly!* [which was filmed in part at Garrison's Landing]. We like the open-to-all vibe of the name — a general locals

place with very good food, but not fancy.

What type of food and drink?

That's still a work in progress, but a casual, seasonal, varied and changing menu with a few standards, including burgers and fries. We are hoping for quality soft-serve for an in-house tasty dessert to walk with around the landing and along the riverfront, in keeping with our interest in reaching all ages.



A view outside the new window framing in the former Guinan's building



Looking up at the building from the riverfront

Photos by G. Bounds

What will you do in the basement?

Kitchen, second bathroom, storage and inside seating where folks can go if they are on the patio or the lawn and it rains. It also could be used for meetings, private parties or special dinners.

Do you have an idea of the hours?

We're thinking 6:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. weekdays, and later on weekends, depending.

Coffee for commuters?

Initially, yes. We want to be open early for commuters and offer takeout at night.

Bounds is the author of Little Chapel on the River: A Pub, a Town and the Search for What Matters Most, a memoir about Guinan's. This story was adapted from her blog (littlechapelontheriver.blogspot.com).

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Cook On: 1 part chaos, 2 parts calm

Peppered Corn Meal

By Mary Ann Ebner

Preparing the perfect polenta sounds easy enough, but around my kitchen it takes added patience to work with the grainy flour ground from white or yellow corn.

When simmering the flour in water to transform the fine grain into the consistency of porridge, I've stirred up thin batches and a few lumpy variations. Later, a pre-cooked version makes a conve-



Mix pre-cooked polenta with your favorite ingredients for a hearty stovetop meal.

nient heat-and-eat substitute. The packaged polenta is firm and ready to slice, as if a pan of my wishfully smooth porridge had cooled and set.

Adding fresh ingredients to the packaged product diminishes a bit of the guilt of not preparing the basic polenta from scratch. For this stovetop take on skillet polenta, shishito peppers make up for any shortfall with the grainy foundation. They boost the flavor and complement the dense cornmeal texture. Any mild peppers will do, but if you see these beauties at the farmers' market, scoop up a few dozen. (I purchased mine from a farmer who guaranteed their great taste.)

A 24-ounce tube of the starchy ground corn costs under \$3 at some local markets



Blistered shishito peppers

Peppered Polenta

12 shishito peppers
1 small shallot, diced
1 cup fresh mushrooms, sliced
extra virgin olive oil

24 ounces pre-cooked polenta, crumbled
5 eggs
½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
sea salt and fresh ground pepper

1. In dry cast-iron skillet, cook peppers over high heat until skins blister and brown. Drizzle with olive oil and season with course salt. Remove from pan. Cool and cut into small pieces. Set aside.
2. Add shallots and mushrooms to pan and sauté in olive oil. Mix in crumbled polenta and 1 tablespoon olive oil. Salt and pepper to taste. Cook 10 minutes on high heat, stirring. Mix in peppers. Lower heat and make five wells in the polenta mixture. Crack eggs into wells. Cover and cook 3 to 5 minutes. Check eggs for doneness.
3. Finish with shredded or grated Parmesan. Serve immediately.

Pepper note: For a mild peppery snack platter aside from the polenta, prepare shishito peppers following the blistering directions but leave the peppers whole with stems intact. Pass the platter and hope that it comes back with a taste for the host.



Peppered polenta

Photos by M.A. Ebner

and can be sliced, grilled, baked, fried or crumbled and mixed into a skillet. This easy working starch offers a change from the trite potatoes-rice-pasta routine. Polenta lovers in Italy have known for generations that the finely ground corn serves as a hearty filler, eaten alone as a creamy dish or enhanced with everything from tomatoes to cheese.

Shishito peppers blistered on high heat add a taste of sweet char without overpowering the cornmeal base. A cousin to Spanish Padrón peppers, Japanese shishitos taste sweet with a mild heat unit on the pepper measurement scale, nowhere near the fire of peppers like the habanero or serrano.

Resisting the temptation to devour the slender green shishito pods may pose the

primary challenge in reserving the blistered peppers for the medley. Combine sundried tomatoes or fresh mushrooms with shishitos and polenta to further satiate hungry dining partners. If eggs agree with you and your guests, make room for their protein-rich addition.

Once ingredients warm through, crack eggs into the skillet and let them cook for a few minutes. Our family prefers cooking the egg to a soft-boiled consistency. With eggs, peppers and mushrooms mixed in, the polenta almost carries enough weight to stand alone as the meal. Finish the dish with a layer of grated Parmesan or your favorite cheese. To get the most from these grains, eat peppered polenta while it's still hot.



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Impressive Photo by Karen Thompson

The Brightness of a Midday Moon

The eclipse on Aug. 21 was a hit. Highlands residents gathered at the Desmond-Fish Library, the Butterfield Library and Long Dock Park in Beacon, among other locations, to bask in the partial rays. See you in 2024.



Sungazers at the Butterfield Library in Cold Spring Photo by L.S. Armstrong



An assist from mom at the Desmond-Fish
Photo by Karen Thompson



Making use of a homemade pinhole projector to view the eclipse from a lawn on Morris Avenue in Cold Spring
Photo by L.S. Armstrong



Getting eclipsed in Garrison (right and below) Photo by Ross Corsair

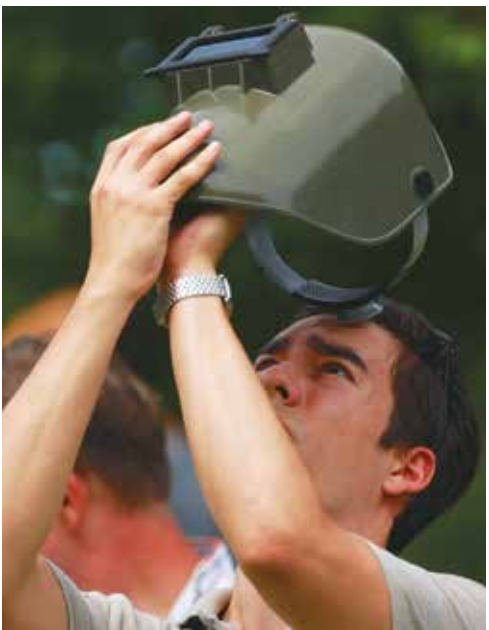


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