Putnam Votes to Sue Drug Companies

Claims negligent marketing of opioid pain pills

By Chip Rowe

Putnam County is joining more than 100 other counties and states in suing drug companies that it claims contributed to the opioid addiction crisis through “fraudulent and negligent” marketing and careless distribution of pain pills.

During the county’s Nov. 15 Rules Committee meeting, Legislator Neal Sullivan (R-Mahopac) cited a 60 Minutes–Washington Post investigation in October that detailed how the drug industry lobbed a handful of members of Congress to weaken regulations designed to prevent large shipments of opioids to corrupt doctors and pharmacists.

The report also noted the pharmaceutical industry has spent $102 million lobbying Congress between 2014 and 2016. “It is a clear indication [the pharmaceutical companies] are in it for the money,” Sullivan said. “They’re killing 91 people a day who overdose. We’re going to join this lawsuit to put some pressure on these companies.”

Legislator Barbara Scuccimarra (R-Philipstown) said she was pleased the county had moved ahead. “It’s not just to get money,” she said. “It’s also a board member of Highlands Current.”

The decision “wasn’t easy,” he said. “But we all agreed.” He added that “our board members have been amazing; many have stayed with us for years and years.”

There is precedent for putting some pressure on these companies. (To Page 7)

Cataloging Nature

Beacon committee creating natural resource inventory

By Jeff Simms

It’s impossible to place a value on the Hudson River or Mount Beacon, or the cultural significance of the city that lies between the two — or is it?

Municipalities in New York state are increasingly cataloging their environmental and historical assets through Natural Resource Inventories, and they’re being rewarded by the state for doing so. In Beacon, the city’s Conservation Advisory Committee, a panel of 10 volunteers (with two open seats) expects to complete its NRI next summer.

NRIs are generally comprised of maps and information about significant natural resources such as forests, streams, wetlands and rocky ridges. Cultural resources like historic, scenic and recreational assets are often included, as well.

The state Department of Environmental Conservation promotes NRIs as essential for guiding municipalities as they update zoning codes or consider planning initiatives. The “big picture view” it provides is critical, the DEC says, but for city leaders the possibility of moving closer to the front of the line for state funding may be equally important.

“NRIs can be a springboard for pursuing other conservation goals, such as updating a...” (Continued on Page 6)
Darren Thomas Scala is the owner of D. Thomas Fine Miniatures, which opened in October at 103 Main St. in Cold Spring.

What intrigues people about miniatures?
Most people love them but aren’t always sure what to do with them. But you don’t need a doll house to love minis. You can own a specific piece, without context, simply because you like it.

Is there a standard scale?
The 1/12 scale is the most traditional and popular. Anything can be recreated: pottery, flowers, fashion, furniture. Minis are a great way to capture a memory. For instance, a client’s husband was retiring and leaving his home office of many years to move to Florida. It was hard emotionally for him, so she arranged to have it recreated in 1:12.

How did you become interested in miniatures?
My dad was a cabinet maker who made credenzas and curio cabinets, working freehand. The smell of the wood intoxicated me. When I was 8 years old I announced I wanted a dollhouse. Although 8-year-old Brooklyn boys in the 1970s were not generally interested in dollhouses, my mom told my dad, “It doesn’t matter, you’re going to make him a dollhouse!” I developed a huge interest in miniatures from that.

Has the digital era changed the market?
There was a generation not exposed to miniatures, but I saw signs of life online. I tapped into the “makers” movement, because with miniatures, you can construct them, paint, blow glass, so many things. Now there are hot spots for miniatures, including in Japan, Spain, Russia and Poland, along with the U.S.

Why did you open your store in Cold Spring?
My retail operation was in Hastings and I was selling a lot of dollhouse items there but I wanted to reframe the story away from play and toward fine art. I looked for space in Beacon and elsewhere but my friends and I were visiting Cold Spring and happened upon The Shoppes [in the former Palen Drug Store] and all had the immediate reaction, “Here it is, the perfect place.” There happened to be an empty space, and my display cabinet fit perfectly. I knew Cold Spring because, as a child, I came from the city with my family for brunch, the antiques and experiencing all the history.

Darren Scala holding a miniature copper pot stand

Photo by A. Rooney
Residents, village layer up lawyers

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

The latest round of a continuing public hearing by the Nelsonville Zoning Board of Appeals on a cell tower proposed for Rockledge Drive consisted of another three hours of intense, three-way interaction that ultimately produced an extension, into January, of both the hearing and the deadline for the village to rule on the project.

Attesting to the depth of controversy, residents opposed to the tower brought legal and technical experts to the Tuesday (Nov. 28) session, held in Philipstown Town Hall to accommodate an audience that still spilled onto floor space and thronged in the doorway after the chairs were filled, as happened at the first hearing session on Nov. 15.

Homeland Towers, the firm proposing the tower with Verizon Wireless, again brought a several-man legal team; and before the hearing ended, the Zoning Board of Appeals and its partner in the review, the Planning Board, voted to augment their own advisors with a consulting firm, AKRF.

At issue is Homeland Towers’ application to construct a 110-foot tower on 9.6 acres off Rockledge, a dead end that connects with Moffatt Road, which twists uphill from Route 9D to a village district zoned mountain-residential. The site overlooks the Cold Spring Cemetery.

Homeland Towers filed the application with the Village of Nelsonville on July 17, triggering a 150-day FCC “shot clock” for the ZBA to decide whether to grant a special-use permit. Along with the ZBA permit, under village law the clock “for the ZBA to decide whether to grant a special-use permit. Along with the ZBA permit, under village law the

tower needs site-plan approval from the Planning Board.

Because the village did not formally find fault in the application within 30 days of July 17 and thereby delay the shot clock, the deadline for village action was Dec. 17. However, before the Tuesday session adjourned, Homeland Towers and the ZBA agreed to extend the deadline to Jan. 8. The boards also kept the hearing open, scheduling the next session for Jan. 4.

The ZBA received new materials Tuesday from tower opponents, but old questions arose concerning the need for the tower, the extent of the applicant’s rights, and the village’s obligations under federal telecommunications law.

Cell tower attorney Robert Gaudioso again maintained that “it’s not the applicant’s burden of proof to show that there is a significant gap” in wireless service or that the proposed cell tower “is the least intrusive means” of filling it.

Challenging what he termed Gaudioso’s “misconceptions” and “misrepresentations,” Jason Biefore, an attorney for the newly formed citizens’ group Philipstown Cell Solutions, which opposes the Rockledge tower, said that

Nelsonville’s zoning code requires applicants to prove the need for a cell tower and that federal courts “have held over and over that actual need refers to a significant gap.”

He questioned “where counsel [Gaudioso] is coming from when saying they don’t have to show a significant gap.” Biefore alleged that much of Gaudioso’s presentation “has been a misrepresentation. It’s meant to intimidate” and “browbeat” the ZBA into a hasty decision favoring Homeland Towers, he charged.

Gaudioso again referred to Section 253 of the federal Telecommunications Act, claiming that it “specifically and expressly says a municipality may not prohibit any telecommunications service” and that “it doesn’t distinguish between voice service, data service, and so forth and so on.” Currently, he said, often phone call “voice service is provided as a data service,” so the issue of “voice versus data is a red herring.”

Section 253, on “removal of barriers to entry,” stipulates that “no state or local statute or regulation, or other state or local legal requirement, may prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting the ability of any entity to provide any interstate or intrastate telecommunications service.” It does not specifically mention cell towers, or state that local governments must guarantee companies freedom to use them to deliver all types of service everywhere.

In a written report to the board, Philipstown Cell Solutions argued that activities such as “sharing iPhone photos, streaming Netflix, etc., is not granted the same ‘essential’ status that mobile voice common-carrier services are afforded under the Telecommunications Act.”

Critics of another application by Homeland Towers to construct a tower on Vineyard Road in Philipstown have made similar arguments.

Richard Comi, of the Center for Municipal Solutions, which provides telecommunications expertise to local governments, an advisor to Philipstown Cell Solutions, concurred with Biefore that the Nelsonville zoning code demands that cell tower applicants demonstrate a need. Moreover, he said, “I’ve not seen anything that says they [wireless companies] have to have ubiquitous service” at all levels.

A West Point graduate and former Cellular One executive, Comi noted that the tower has been seen as a replacement for the wireless antennas removed from the old Butterfield Hospital roof before the building was demolished a few years ago. But the hospital was in Cold Spring, not Nelsonville, he observed. “There’s nothing I’m aware of that says because [a wireless company] took down a site in another community, this community has to give you one,” he said.

Responding, Gaudioso attacked Comi’s credentials and said that earlier this fall Nelsonville had hired a consulting engineer who, like Homeland Towers, concluded “that carriers had significant gaps in service” locally.

Similarly, Gaudioso declared that Nelsonville’s village attorney had agreed with Homeland Towers “that we’re allowed to bring utilities” to the Rockledge tract via an old right-of-way across the property of a neighbor who objects to the tower.

But Mark Blanchard, an attorney for the neighbor, asserted that the right of way simply grants authorization to cross the property, not to use it as a gateway to a large commercial venture operating “at the expense of your neighbors.” As a user of the right-of-way, Homeland Towers “is not allowed to make permanent changes to it,” he said, advising the ZBA to not condone anything that harms his client.

The boards also heard from residents. Eleanor Chew, a 9-year-old Haldane student, informed the Homeland Towers delegation that “my mom has always told me to stand up to bullies and have my friends’ backs. You, sirs, are bullies. Please don’t put an eyesore of a cell tower in our lovely town.”

Heidi Wendel and Joe Hirsch moved to Nelsonville in September after visiting regularly for some 20 years to hike and enjoy nature. Opposing the tower, Hirsch predicted “it would hurt the aesthetics of the village and bring down property values” and “be a major intrusion aesthetically, historically and psychologically.”

POSITION AVAILABLE

The Village of Nelsonville is seeking to fill an opening for a part-time Assistant to the Village Clerk-Treasurer. Duties will also include assisting the Court Clerk, Registrar of Vital Statistics and secretary to the Building Inspector, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals.

The position requires proficiency in MS Word and Excel, excellent communication, organizational and writing skills, strong interpersonal skills, and a strong financial background. The ability to work independently and manage multiple tasks concurrently is essential.

The position currently pays $15/hour.

Please send a cover letter and resume to:
Pauline Minners, Village Clerk, Village of Nelsonville
258 Main Street, Nelsonville, New York, 10516
or Nelsonville@optonline.net
Garrison Fire District vote

Each year, on the second Tuesday in December, one of five positions on the Garrison Fire District Board of Commissioners is to be filled by the voters in a public election. This year it will be Dec. 12. The polls at the Garrison Firehouse at 1565 Route 9 are open from 6 to 9 p.m.

I urge district residents to show up, and I ask you to vote for me — for the simple reason that the commission needs to be more open to the public.

In 2016, the district’s first board, whose members were appointed approved a 27 percent increase in the budget for the Garrison Volunteer Fire Company. This past fall, the first elected board approved a $70,000 budget for 2018, despite an $80,000 surplus in 2017.

Of even greater importance is the fact that between 2018 and 2020, final payments on two leases and a mortgage totaling $210,852 will be made (expenses that will not recur). An open and informed discussion needs to be undertaken about what will happen with this budget opportunity.

However, one expense that will recur between 2018 and 2020 is the $25,000 in annual rent that Garrison taxpayers pay to the Garrison Fire Co. Say what? That is correct. Garrison taxpayers, who pay the mortgage, maintenance and utilities on the firehouse, also pay $25,000 per year to the fire company for the Fire District’s use of the building.

The board has been unwilling to obtain from the fire company any information as to what it intends to do with the $50,000 in rent payments received to date and the $75,000 still due to the non-profit company under the agreement.

I urge you to vote for me on Dec. 12 so that the Garrison taxpayers and community have a voice in how your money is going to be spent and see that it is accounted for.

Joe Regele, Garrison

Philipstown Passes $10.9 Million Budget

Town Board discusses costs of emergency services

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

With little ado in a nearly empty meeting hall, the Philipstown Town Board on Nov. 16 unanimously adopted a 2018 budget of nearly $10.9 million.

The budget, which takes effect Jan. 1, anticipates collecting $7.8 million in taxes (about $200,000 more than 2017) and $1.98 million in miscellaneous revenues, with the remaining portion covered by existing balances of $1.1 million.

“We’re still under the cap” set by New York State for property tax increases, Supervisor Richard Shea said before the board’s vote. The state limits property tax increases to 2 percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is lower, but allows for some variances; it also grants credits to municipalities that consistently meet the cap.

Shea’s salary for 2018 will remain at $27,000 annually and Councilors Nancy Montgomery, John Van Tassel, Michael Leonard and Robert Flaherty each earn $18,000. The pay for Clerk Tina Merando will rise from $63,000 to $64,250 and Highway Superintendent Carl Frisenda from $89,000 to $90,000. The Highway Department budget will rise by 3 percent, to $3.7 million.

The amount earmarked for workers’ compensation will increase by 22 percent, to $54,939. For 2017, the town budgeted $44,860 but by Nov. 16 had already spent $54,919. In 2016, it budgeted $43,861.

Emergency services

Spending for fire protection will remain steady at about $1.875 million. Philipstown is served by four fire departments: North Highlands, Garrison, Cold Spring and Continental Village. For 2018, the Philipstown payment to Continental Village will be...
An Even Split
By Chip Rowe

With the Nov. 7 election results in Putnam County now certified, Robert Langley Jr. defeated Sheriff Don Smith by 324 votes, of nearly 25,000 cast, a margin of 1.3 percent.

How did he do it? Langley, who lives in Garrison, carried Philipstown, where the voter turnout was the highest in the county, at 50 percent, by a more than 2-to-1 margin, 68-32. That landslide created a cushion that Smith, even though he won four of the five other districts, could not overcome.

Carmel and Southeast each had the lowest turnout, at 39 percent. Langley won Southeast, 52-48, while Smith prevailed in Putnam Valley by six points, Kent by four, Patterson by six and Carmel by eight.

The map at right shows, in blue, the districts won by Langley, a Democrat, and, in red, by Smith, a Republican. In the white district they tied.

Smith also had to contend with a write-in challenge that Andrew DeStefano mounted after his nominating petition for the Republican primary was thrown out. Of the 486 write-in votes for sheriff, DeStefano received 428, according to the Putnam County Board of Elections.

In the other local race that was too close to call on Election Night, Robin Lois, a Democrat, leads Republican incumbent Jim Coughlan as Dutchess County comptroller by 412 votes of nearly 63,000 cast, but the results have not yet been certified by the Dutchess County Board of Elections.

Legend: PH = Philipstown; PV = Putnam Valley; KE = Kent; CA = Carmel; PA = Patterson; SE = Southeast. The large numbers are legislative districts, each of which contains about 10,000 residents.

Langley Selects Undersheriff

On Nov. 18, Putnam County Sheriff-elect Robert Langley said Michael Corrigan, 54, of Carmel, would be his undersheriff. Corrigan spent 21 years with the Putnam County Sheriff’s Department, including 18 years as a criminal investigator. A 1995 graduate of the FBI National Academy at Quantico, Virginia, he also has worked as an officer for the Village of Cold Spring.

Divorce Litigation and Mediation
NORAH HART, ATTORNEY
Hart-Smart Divorce
Streamlined Litigation & Expedited Settlements
Call for a Free Consultation • 212-897-5865
www.hart-smart.com • nhart@hart-smart.net

GreenerCPA.com
845.424.4470 x2
John@GreenerCPA.com
Individual & Family Office Services

Gergely Pediatrics
Dedicated to keeping your child healthy & thriving

Dr. Peter Gergely, MD
Janet Eisig, CFNP
Danielle Chiaravalloti, CFNP

• Collaborative practice for children & adolescents
• Board Certified Pediatricians & Licensed Pediatric Nurse Practitioners
• Welcomes patients with developmental or behavioral issues

Meet with us for a FREE first time consultation
34 Route 403, Garrison, N.Y. 10524
tel: (845) 424-4444 fax: (845) 424-4664
egergelypediatrics.com
comprehensive plan or developing an open space plan, and funding is available to support these kinds of projects, including Hudson River Estuary Grants and Hudson River Valley Greenway Grants,” says Laura Heady, a conservation and land use coordinator for the DEC’s Hudson River Estuary Program. “The process of developing an inventory can also identify data needs for a city of Kingston realized it needed a street tree inventory and subsequently applied for and was awarded a $50,000 Urban and Community Forestry Grant.”

Cities that develop an NRI are also eligible for grants of up to $100,000 from the state’s Climate Smart Communities program.

**Scenic resources**

Another component of the Beacon report, a scenic resources inventory, is being completed by six students from Cornell University’s College of Architecture, Art and Planning, who visited the city in October.

The group was charged with cataloging not only landscape features such as the Hudson and Mount Beacon but also cultural assets, which could include historic structures and other aspects of the city that are appreciated and enjoyed by the public.

In a preliminary presentation to the Conservation Advisory Committee (CAC) next week, the students will state that the protection of these resources should extend beyond Beacon’s boundaries, said George Frantz, a Cornell professor in the college’s Department of City and Regional Planning. “It’s very interesting working in the Hudson River Valley because a scenic resource for a city or municipality often is not actually in that municipality,” Frantz said. “One of the defining bits of information is that it’s going to take inter-municipal cooperation to protect these places.”

As the Cornell students complete their work, the CAC is concurrently working to create maps that depict Beacon’s geology, water resources, wildlife habitat land-use planning.

“We’re taking this information and interpreting it through the lens of the environment and hoping that the city will utilize it” when it makes zoning and other land-related decisions, explained Brian DiFeo, chair of the CAC. “The CAC plans to present its NRI to the public and City Council next summer. If the council adopts the plan, DiFeo said he hopes the CAC can begin work on a detailed open space plan.

**Other initiatives**

Formed in early 2017, the Green Beacon Coalition sponsored Earth Day cleanups around Beacon. The plan for 2018 is to put on a “proper mini-festival” as residents clean up Mount Beacon, the Fishkill Creek and Hudson River banks and other spots, DiFeo said. The group also hosts Environmental Citizen Soapbox events where residents share ideas related to the environment, conservation and sustainability.

In 2017, the CAC sponsored the launch of Energize Beacon, part of the nonprofit Energize NY network created to increase energy efficiency. Homeowners can sign up at beacon.energizeny.org for a free energy assessment and to learn if they qualify for subsidized home improvements.

Because Beacon is under a Stage 1 drought alert, the CAC posted a list of water conservation tips at cityofbeacon.org/Government/cac.htm. Recommendations include turning off the water after you wet your toothbrush and, to check for leaks, reading your meter before and after a two-hour period when no water is being used.
Putnam Votes to Sue Drug Companies (from Page 1)

holding large corporations responsible for downplaying the health effects of their products. In 1998, 46 states settled with the tobacco industry for $200 billion after arguing manufacturers had covered up the risks of smoking.

“As president of the New York Association of Counties, I think it is imperative that we learn from the tobacco lawsuits of the 1990s and collectively go after the source of the prescription opioid epidemic,” said County Executive Mary Ellen Odell in a statement.

Putnam County Attorney Jennifer Bumgarner noted the lawsuit was not part of a class action but rather one of many individual suits filed by counties and states. In June, Dutchess County sued 11 pharmaceutical companies, and Orange, Rockland, Westchester and at least eight other New York counties also have sued as part of a coordinated effort called the New York Opioid Cost Recovery litigation.

In addition manufacturers and distributors, looking for evidence they knew of the risks of addiction to pain pills. Most recently, officials in four towns in West Virginia sued a nonprofit that sets standards for hospitals, arguing it had spread “misinformation” beginning in 2001 in its directives on using opioids for pain management.

The challenge for plaintiffs is that opioids are not tobacco. People who abuse prescription opioids, which are approved by the FDA for pain relief, are not using them as directed and taking more than prescribed (unlike cigarettes, which people do use as designed). In addition, most marketing is aimed at doctors, not the user. Like gunmakers, the drug companies and distributors likely will argue that people, not its products, are responsible.

Bumgarner said the lawsuit will not cost the county anything, because the firm that many neighboring counties have hired, and which advised Putnam officials — Napoli Shkolnik, based in New York City — is working on a contingency basis, meaning it will be paid from any settlement.

“They have absolutely agreed to provide us the resources, and that they will do the legwork and look through the documents themselves,” said Bumgarner.

The Legislature met Nov. 21 to approve the lawsuit, which seeks damages for “deceptive acts and practices, false advertising, public nuisance, fraud and unjust enrichment” from the “largest manufacturers and marketers of opioid pain medications,” such as Purdue Pharmaceuticals, Teva Pharmaceutical Industries, Johnson & Johnson and Endo Pharmaceuticals; as well as the largest distributors, which are McKesson Corp., Cardinal Health and AmerisourceBergen.

According to the resolution, the goal of the litigation is to compensate the county for costs incurred from prescription opioid abuse, including loss of productivity in the workplace, health care costs such as treatment, and criminal justice costs.

But Legislature Chairwoman Ginny Nacerino (R-Patterson) said the chief objective of the litigation isn’t financial. “We don’t anticipate receiving a lot of money,” she said. “But it is important to send a message. It is important to stop what has been going on for so many years.”

Paul Jonke (R-Brewster) called the litigation a good first step, saying the lawsuit and others like it send a message to drug companies “that we’re going to hold them responsible for the crisis they’ve created in our little community. Hopefully they’ll see some financial obligation down the road, or we’ll be able to recoup some funds for education, and get some folks help.”

Holly Crocco contributed reporting.

Philipstown Passes $10.9 Million Budget (from Page 4)

$269,150; to Cold Spring, $69,643 (for town areas just outside the villages); to Garrison, $771,302; and to North Highlands, $764,984. Only property owners in the territory covered by a given fire department pay for its services. The Garrison and North Highlands fire districts set their own budgets, but the tax revenue is channeled through the town.

Philipstown likewise has two ambulance providers: the Philipstown Volunteer Ambulance Corps and the Garrison Volunteer Ambulance Corps. For 2018, Philipstown will receive $317,110, an increase of 17 percent, and Garrison will receive $200,429, an increase of 16 percent.

Together, fire and ambulance coverage will cost nearly $2.4 million, accounting for about 22 percent of the budget. Shea called that outlay “striking,” noting that five other Putnam County towns spend less.

Even when population and geographic differences among the six towns are factored in, “we’re way above” the others in emergency services spending, Councilor Nancy Montgomery added. She recalled that when the town undertook an evaluation, with state approval, of emergency services needs and spending, they learned that “we were in the top 5th percentile for per capita costs.” State officials “looked and said, ‘What are you doing?’ ” she said.

Board members did not take any immediate action. In 2010, when the board brought in a retired fire chief-turned-consultant to conduct a study of emergency services, the effort provoked outrage even before he recommended merging the four fire departments and two ambulance corps under one administrative umbrella.

THE HOWLAND CULTURAL CENTER PROUDLY PRESENTS

The Annual Holiday Fine Arts and Craft Small Gifts Holiday Show

December 5-23, 2017
Opening Reception: Saturday, December 16, 3-5pm

Gallery hours: 10:00-5:00pm
Open every day except Saturday December 9

The Howland Cultural Center - 477 Main St., Beacon, NY - 845.831.4988
Train Control Behind Schedule
Skepticism about 2018 launch

By Holly Crocco

U.S. Sen. Charles Schumer made a stop in Putnam County on Nov. 20 to criticize the Metropolitan Transportation Authority for delays in installing a system known as Positive Train Control on its lines, including Metro-North.

“We all know that safety has to come first when it comes to travel, and rail travel in particular,” said Schumer, the Democratic minority leader, during a news conference at the Brewster station. He was joined by Nancy Montgomery of Garrison, whose husband, Jim Lovell, was killed, along with three other passengers, on Dec. 1, 2013, in a Hudson Line derailment at Spuyten Duyvil.

Montgomery, a member of the Philipstown Town Board who has championed rail safety, thanked Schumer and legislators in Washington for passing the Rail Safety Improvement Act in 2008, which mandated that Positive Train Control (PTC) be installed on most trains in the U.S. by 2015 (a deadline since extended by Congress to 2018). The 2008 law was in response to the collision of two trains in Los Angeles in which 25 people died.

The federal government has done its job, she said, and “now it’s time for the MTA to step up and do their job and implement this really important technology that will save lives.”

As it has found with other train accidents, the National Transportation Safety Board said PTC would have prevented the 2013 Hudson Line derailment. Its investigation found the train was traveling 80 mph in a 30 mph zone when it crashed. The engineer, who suffered from sleep apnea, had fallen asleep.

In addition to testing engineers for sleep apnea, Schumer said the MTA needs to implement PTC to counter human error. “When, God forbid, something happens because an engineer falls asleep or is distracted, PTC will stop the train from crashing and falling off the track, and slow it down,” he said.

“This is not a money issue,” he said. “You don’t have to take money away from anything else to install Positive Train Control.” Although Metro-North has expressed confidence in the past that it will meet the December 2018 deadline to have PTC in all its locomotives, according to a quarterly report the agency must file with the Federal Railroad Administration, there is much work to be done on the $968 million project. As of July 31, the railroad had trained nearly all of the required 2,915 employees but only equipped 104 of 531 locomotives with the system and installed nine of 104 radio towers. None of its 384 miles of track are currently equipped for PTC.

On Nov. 13, at a meeting of the MTA’s Capital Program Oversight Committee, whose 15 members include Neal Zuckerman, of Garrison, the agency reported that the project was on schedule. But, according to the minutes, Zuckerman, who represents Putnam County, expressed his “disappointment and deep concern” at the lack of progress, nothing that December 2018 was not the operational goal but only when Metro-North hoped to achieve benchmarks established by the Federal Railroad Administration.

Zuckerman was assured that Metro-North was focused on full implementation but that software and design setbacks were making that a challenge. A representative of the railroad noted that Metro-North had finished installing Advanced Civil Speed Enforcement on its locomotives, a safety system that uses transponders in the track, coded circuits and digital radio. But PTC is far more advanced, with GPS tracking, radio towers, trackside signals and remote control.

Chip Rowe contributed reporting.
The Calendar

The Paws that Refresh

Artist finds inspiration in four-legged friends

By Alison Rooney

Which came first — the chicken or the ... dog?

In Chantelle Norton's case, it was the feathers. She lived with a flock of chickens, and later with a Boston terrier adopted from the friend of a friend. In both cases, her surprise at the bonds she formed with the animals, and their distinctive personalities, led to a visual exploration of the interactions.

The oil paintings, drawings and giclées that resulted are on exhibit at the Theo Ganz Studio in Beacon through Jan. 28 as an exhibit called Dog Days. A collection of Norton's chicken portraits, Brood, was shown there in 2013. The terrier was named Lulu. It was the first dog Norton ever owned and she found she “wanted to document the tenderness” that develops between animal and owner. She also was captivated by paws. Her paintings at Theo Ganz show them stretched out against a backdrop of patterns from bed linens, blankets and rugs — intimate “glimpses into the fabric of a home.”

“A dog “links one to home by insisting on rituals of daily walks, sniffing out the smells of local terrain and beasts, their sleeping arrangements and their feeding,” she says. “Yet I’ve never lost sight that they are animals; they don’t speak our same language.”

Norton says it was hard for her to put these feelings into words, which is why she painted them instead. “In my experience with Lulu, I not only got interested in the bonds, but in how dogs get trained to be companions, or to round up other animals, or hunt,” she says. “I got interested in how they developed as breeds and how humans have altered them for their purpose.”

A Classic Holiday Dance

Garrison student lands role in Nutcracker

By Alison Rooney

When Henry Timmer says he “moved around a lot” as a child, he is not referring to geography but kinetics. Henry, 12, of Garrison, is an accomplished dancer who will play the role of Clara’s brother, Fritz, in the Westchester Ballet Company’s The Nutcracker, which runs from Dec. 15 to 17 at the Westchester County Center in White Plains.

His early affection for movement was one reason his parents, Ted and Nell Timmer, suggested dance lessons, he says. He also loved watching clips on YouTube of Fred Astaire (for one birthday, Henry asked for a tuxedo) and physical comedians such as Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton.

Now a seventh-grader at the Garrison School, Henry enrolled at age 7 at the Logrea Dance Academy in Ossining and it’s since been “five years of single-minded focus,” his mother says. He initially studied tap, ballet and jazz but soon focused on ballet and modern dance, he says, noting that he has been inspired by the skill of an older male ballet student at Logrea.

“A lot of people think ballet is just (Continued on Page 12)
Calendar Highlights
For upcoming events visit highlandscurrent.com. Send event listings to calendar@highlandscurrent.com

FRIDAY, DEC. 1

December Show (Opening) 8 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
10 Garrison’s Landing, Garrison
845-424-4800 | garrisonartsinstitute.org

Steel Magnolias 7 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
See details under Friday.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time 7 p.m. Haldane Auditorium
845-265-2500 | haldane.org

What Would Jesus Buy? (Documentary) 7 p.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave., Cold Spring
845-831-1134 | beaconlibrary.org

To Be Heard 7 p.m. Beacon Community Kitchen Benefit
1100 Route 9D, Garrison
845-938-4159 | excellentcreature.com

Mars Williams: An Ayler Xmas (Jazz) 8 p.m. Atlas Studios
11 Spring St., Newburgh
845-391-8855 | atlasnewburgh.com

SATURDAY, DEC. 2

Breakfast with Santa 9 & 10:30 a.m. Garrison Fire Company
1616 Route 9, Garrison
Call 845-424-4406 for seats.

Craft Fair and History Exhibit 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. St. Mary’s Parish House
1 Chester St., Cold Spring
845-425-2539 | stmaryscoldspring.org

Self Made Holiday Bash 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. American Legion/VFW
413 Main St., Beacon | selfmademakers.com

Craft Showcase and Sale (Opening) Noon – 5 p.m. Putnam Arts Council
521 Kennicut Hill Road, Mahopac
845-803-8622 | putnamarts council.org

Shibori Indigo Workshop Noon – 2 p.m. Colorant | 146 Main St., Beacon
nytextilelab.eventbrite.com

West Point Band: A West Point Holiday 1:30 p.m. Eisenhower Hall
845-938-4159 | westpointband.com

A Charlie Brown Christmas 2 p.m. County Players Theatre
See details under Friday.

West Point Baroque Ensemble 4 p.m. Chapel Restoration
45 Market St., Cold Spring
845-265-5537 | chapelrestoration.org

Auditions for Cat on a Hot Tin Roof 2 – 5 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
Email info@excellentcreature.com.

Auditions for Cat on a Hot Tin Roof 1 – 3 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
Email info@excellentcreature.com.

Beacon Community Kitchen Benefit 4 – 7 p.m. St. Rocco Society
26 S. Chestnut St., Beacon | fareground.org

Jazz, Shakespeare & Improv 4 p.m. Butterfield Library | See details under Friday.

Holiday Tree Lighting 6 p.m. Riverfront Bandstand
Main Street, Cold Spring

Mark Nepo: The Way Under the Way (Reading) 7 p.m. Garrison Institute | 14 Mary’s Way, Garrison
845-424-4800 | garrisonartsinstitute.org

Steel Magnolias 7 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
See details under Friday.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time 7 p.m. Haldane Auditorium
See details under Friday.

Annual Holiday Show 7:30 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St., Beacon
845-765-3012 | howlandculturalcenter.org

Mars Williams: An Ayler Xmas (Jazz) 8 p.m. Atlas Studios
11 Spring St., Newburgh
845-391-8855 | atlasnewburgh.com

Bert Rechtschaffer Jazz Trio 9 p.m. Chill Wine Bar | 173 Main St., Beacon
845-765-0885 | facebook.com/chillwinebar

SUNDAY, DEC. 3

Red Hot Winter Fishing 10 a.m. Outdoor Discovery Center | Muser Drive, Cornwall | 845-534-5506 x204 | highmom.org

West Point Band: A West Point Holiday 1:30 p.m. Eisenhower Hall
See details under Saturday.

Blood Drive 2 – 6:30 p.m. Beacon Hebrew Alliance
331 Verplank Ave., Beacon
845-831-2012 | beaconhebrew alliance.org

Philpstown Community Congress Forum 2 – 4 p.m. Haldane Cafeteria
15 Chestnut Drive, Cold Spring
ecolocalizecitizens.org

A Charlie Brown Christmas 2 p.m. County Players Theatre
See details under Friday.

Steel Magnolias 3 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
See details under Friday.

Labyrinth Baroque Ensemble 4 p.m. Chapel Restoration
45 Market St., Cold Spring
845-265-5537 | chapelrestoration.org

Auditions for Cat on a Hot Tin Roof 7 – 10 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
Email info@excellentcreature.com.

Hard Hitting Songs Concert and Benefit 7 p.m. Towner Crier Café
379 Main St., Beacon
845-855-1300 | townicer.com

The Blind Boys of Alabama Christmas Show 7 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
See details under Friday.

MONDAY, DEC. 4

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

TUESDAY, DEC. 5

New Moms & Infants Group 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library
742 Route 403, Garrison
Email whiteside ks@gmail.com.

Putnam County Flu Clinic 2 – 6:30 p.m. Health Department
1 Geneva Rd, Brewster
845-808-1332 | putnamcounty ny.com

She’s Beautiful When She’s Angry (Documentary) 6:30 p.m. Osining Public Library
53 Croton Ave., Osining | 914-941-1111

Haldane School Board 7 p.m. Haldane Music Room
15 Chestnut Drive, Cold Spring
845-265-9254 | haldaneschool.org

Putnam County Legislature 7 p.m. Historic Courthouse | 44 Geneva Ave., Carmel
845-208-7900 | putnamcoun ty.org

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 6

Deep Heap Circle with Garrison Congicle 1:30 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library
472 Route 403, Garrison | 845-424-3020

Garrison School Capital Improvement Plan 6 p.m. Walkthrough | 7 p.m. Forum
1100 Route 9D, Garrison
845-424-4733 x2 | gscu.org

Ethics / Dressed for Protest / The True Cost of Fashion (Documentaries) 7 p.m. First Presbyterian Church
50 Liberty St., Beacon | moviesthatmatter beacon.org

THURSDAY, DEC. 7

Philipstown Seniors Club 10:30 a.m. Chestnut Ridge
62 Chestnut St., Cold Spring | 845-809-5924

Sixth Annual Tree Lighting 5:30 p.m. Winter Hill
20 Nazareth Way, Garrison
Haldane vs. Irvington (Girls’ Basketball) 6:15 p.m. Haldane Gym
15 Chestnut Drive, Cold Spring
845-265-2500 | haldane.org

Choosing Your Retirement Path 6:30 p.m. Howland Public Library
See details under Friday.

Citizens’ Climate Lobby 6:45 p.m. Beavie Beacon
291 Main St., Beacon | citizensclimatelobby.org

More Good Gala for Generosity 7 – 10 p.m. Hudson Valley Brewery
2 Churchill St., Beacon
Email info@drinkmoregood.com.

Wynotte Sisters Holiday Bash for Planned Parenthood 8 – 11 p.m. Dogwood | 47 E. Main St., Beacon
facebook.com/wynottesisters

Peter Gansvoort’s (Not-so) Unusual Regimental Talk (Coast) 7 p.m. Fort Montgomery Historic Site
690 Route 9W, Fort Montgomery
Reservations required | 845-446-2134

Town Board Meeting 7:30 p.m. Town Hall
238 Main St., Cold Spring
845-265-5200 | philipstown.com

The Music of STYX 8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
See details under Friday.

FRIDAY, DEC. 8

Bakeology 101: Holiday Cookies 3:30 p.m. Howland Public Library
See details under Dec. 1.

Beacon vs. Lakeland (Girls’ Basketball) 6:15 p.m. Beacon High School
101 Matteawan Road, Beacon
845-838-6900 | beackon12.org

Holiday Party (grades 6-8) 6:30 p.m. Butterfield Library
See details under Dec. 1.

Elf the Musical Jr. 7 p.m. Beacon High School
101 Matteawan Road, Beacon
774-249-8943 | beackonperformingartscenter.com

Bread, Sweat and Tears 8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
See details under Dec. 1.

Steel Magnolias 8 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
See details under Dec. 1.

SATURDAY, DEC. 9

Dragonfly Story Hour 7 p.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave., Cold Spring
845-265-3040 | butterfieldlibrary.org

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time 7 p.m. Haldane Auditorium
15 Croisade Drive
845-265-2500 | haldane.org

What Would Jesus Buy? (Documentary) 7 p.m. Universalist Fellowship
67 S. Randolph Ave., Poughkeepsie | uupek.org

Westchester All-Stars Concert for Veterans 7:30 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
1008 Brown St., Peekskill
914-739-0039 | paramounthudsonvalley.com

A Charlie Brown Christmas 8 p.m. County Players Theatre
2681 W. Main St., Wappingers Falls
845-298-1491 | county players.org

FRIDAY, DEC. 9

Bakeology 101: Holiday Cookies 3:30 p.m. Howland Public Library
See details under Dec. 1.

Beacon vs. Lakeland (Girls’ Basketball) 6:15 p.m. Beacon High School
101 Matteawan Road, Beacon
845-838-6900 | beackon12.org

Holiday Party (grades 6-8) 6:30 p.m. Butterfield Library
See details under Dec. 1.

Elf the Musical Jr. 7 p.m. Beacon High School
101 Matteawan Road, Beacon
774-249-8943 | beackonperformingartscenter.com

Bread, Sweat and Tears 8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
See details under Dec. 1.

Steel Magnolias 8 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
See details under Dec. 1.
The Paws that Refresh  (from Page 9)

as breeds and how humans have altered them for their purpose.”

As an artist, she also found herself intrigued by the “variations of looks, from the little hairless dogs to St. Bernards, Chihuahuas to wolfhounds,” as well as their role in early history and mythology.

Born in Ireland to an Irish father and an American mother, Norton was raised in both countries. “I always knew that I wanted to create,” she says, “It was more like, in what way? And, what do I want to say?”

She attended the Rhode Island School of Design for a year, couldn’t continue for lack of funds, took a year off, then enrolled at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. After a year there, she moved to Dublin, studied for a year at the National College of Art and Design, then returned to the Art Institute, where she completed her bachelor’s degree in fine arts. She also has an associate degree in fashion design from Parsons and worked for years as a freelance designer for Henri Bendel.

Norton and her partner, Dan Dobson, a musician, came from Brooklyn to Philipstown 10 years ago, when they began renting a property over the winter. It was during one of these stays that they were introduced to chickens as providers of eggs and destroyer of ticks. “They are remarkable little creatures,” Norton has written, praising their “perfect combination of beauty and utility.”

To prepare her poultry series, Norton photographed the birds, then transferred sketches to plates for etchings. (Chickens are “perfect subjects because using fine lines really captures them,” she says.) She also reproduced the images on ceramics, and it was at a Garrison Art Center pottery show that Eleni Smolen of Theo Ganz saw them and suggested a show. Norton, who now lives on 11 acres in Kent, mixes freelance design work with commissions. “Pigs, goats, I’m open to anything,” she says with a smile.

Theo Ganz Studio is located at 149 Main St., in Beacon. It is open from noon to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, or by appointment. Call 917-318-2239.

Handmade Holiday Workshops

Make a creative gift to give

TWO WORKSHOPS Saturday, Dec. 9

HANDMADE BOOK with Tracy Strong
10:30–12:30 $40

HAND PRINTED WRAPPING PAPER
with Melissa Schlobohm
1:30–4:30 $40

Stocking Stuffer

Give the gift of creativity

BUY AN ART ED CARD of any value—can be used for any Art Center class or educational program

Visit Our Website to Register and Buy garrisonartcenter.org

845-424-3960

Garrison Art Center
for girls and that it’s not physical,” says Henry, who is the eldest of five Timmer children. “It’s very athletic, actually, and if you look at a lot of the male dancers at ABT [the American Ballet Theatre company in New York City], you can tell. When we do our shows, we try to make it look easy, when it takes a lot of practice.” Auditions for The Nutcracker are held each September. Henry says he was thrilled to be cast as Fritz. “He’s the boy in the party scene who is a troublemaker,” he says, and (spoiler alert) “he breaks the nutcracker, Clara’s toy.”

Timmer says he was hopeful he would be cast because the dancer who had played the role for the past four years “got too tall.” At the audition, when asked to display the irritation Fritz feels toward Clara, Henry says that “since I have three brothers and a sister, I get angry, so I kind of popped back to those moments.” Henry also plays a soldier and a jester. The cast is mostly students; professionals dance the solos.

Henry says he likes ballet but that modern and jazz allow him to “move more. Ballet is important for flexibility and strength; it’s more precise. Modern and jazz get on the floor a lot, and you don’t have to be perfect — and there’s no foot-pointing.”

He encourages boys to try dance, saying, “Usually when you start, the teachers are super nice. You develop technique. When you get older it’s kind of hard because there is lifting and partnering involved.”

Nell Timmer says she can see many ways in which ballet has “enhanced Henry’s overall body awareness. He is able to pick up things like swimming and martial arts because he has a sense of his body in space that many boys his age have not been trained to have.”

Henry isn’t sure he wants to dance professionally. In assessing his strengths, he says he’s best at jumps and splits but needs to work on his pirouettes and spotting, which is keeping one’s head forward.

Sometimes Henry’s classmates at Garrison come to watch him perform. “My brother’s [fifth-grade] class might come, too,” he says. “I’m excited.” In the spirit of brotherly “bro-ness,” Jasper Timmer, 10, says: “It’s cool because I get to see all his performances, but sometimes that can be boring, too.”

The Nutcracker will be performed at 12:30 and 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 16, and at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 17. (There is also a 10 a.m. performance on Dec. 15 for school groups.) Tickets are $27 for adults or $23 for seniors and children ages 10 and younger. Call 800-745-3000 or visit ticketmaster.com. Tickets at the door are $32. The County Center is at 198 Central Ave., in White Plains.

---

**Holiday Dance** (from Page 9)

Henry had an early interest in dance — and tuxedos. Photo provided

Henry Timmer at the barre Photo provided

**A Short History of The Nutcracker**

1816 German writer E.T.A. Hoffmann writes a story, The Nutcracker and the Mouse King.

1844 French writer Alexandre Dumas adapts Hoffmann’s work into his own story, The Nutcracker.

1892 Russian composer Tchaikovsky (who also composed Swan Lake) and choreographers Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov adapt Dumas’ story into a ballet that premieres on a double bill at the Mariinsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg.

2017 By one estimate, 40 percent of most companies’ ticket revenue comes from the ballet.

---

**Ballet Terms**

- A dagio – Slow, continuous motion
- A allegro – Fast motion, such as jumping steps
- Balletomane – Ballet fan
- Cavalier – Anonymous male partner of female star
- Corps de ballet – Dancers who do not have solos
- Danseur – Male dancer

---

**Town Crier Cafe**

Sat. & Sun. 10 a.m. brunch/dinner Mon. - Fri. 4 p.m., Closed Tuesday

Fri., 12/1 7:00 p.m.  Chris Raabe - Free
Fri., 12/1 8:30 p.m. Bruce Katz
Sat., 12/2 11:00 a.m. Tad Robinson
Sat., 12/2 6:00 p.m. Breakfast with Santa
Sat., 12/2 8:30 p.m. Cleverly Brothers - Free
The Electric Gypsies Sun., 12/3 11:30 a.m. East Coast Jazz - Free
Sun., 12/3 7:30 p.m. ‘Hard Hitting Songs’ 50th anniversary
Thurs., 12/7 7:30 p.m. Tony Trischka Band
Bob Dylan Tribute

"A gem ... They take their food seriously"– NY Times

Fri., 12/8 7:00 p.m. Lucky Luna - Free
Fri., 12/8 8:30 p.m. The McKrells Christmas Show
Sat., 12/9 8:00 p.m. Jerry Kitzrow - Free
Sat., 12/9 8:30 p.m. Joe Louis Walker Band
Sun., 12/10 noon Music Cottage Holiday Showcase
Sun., 12/10 7:30 p.m. Breakneck Ridge Revue
Wed., 12/13 7:30 p.m. Victor Wooten Trio
Sat., 12/16 8:30 p.m. Lunasa: Christmas from Ireland

**Beacon Fine Art Printing**

Specializing in Fine Art - Large Format - Display Printing - Retouching - Image Capture - Mounting

914.522.4736
beaconfineartprinting.com

**The Desmond-Fish Library**

Holiday Boutique
Continues for two more long weekends
Thursdays - Sundays - during library hours
Nov. 30th – Dec. 10th

Our boutique features the finest hand crafted items from the Hudson Valley Fresh baked goods each Saturday morning including Gluten Free

472 Route 403 • Garrison, NY 10524
845-424-3020 desmondfishlibrary.org
Putnam History Museum Goes Digital

New software spurs effort to scan and catalog

By Christine Simek

The Putnam History Museum is in the midst of the challenging task of digitalizing its expansive collection of documents, ephemera and photographs with the goal of making its collection more easily accessible.

The board of directors of the nonprofit museum, which is located in Cold Spring, made the decision to go digital two years ago and has since worked to secure funding. It purchased collections management software called PastPerfect that has made the project easier.

Many museums, historical societies and libraries have pushed to scan their collections, which has the added value of reaching new audiences and potential donors if put online. The Desmond-Fish Library has an archive at desmondfishlibrary.org/lisa.html created with funding from Jeanne Livingston and John Svirsky, and a site established by the Hudson River Valley Institute at hrvh.org includes archives for the Putnam County Historian, the Dutchess County Historical Society and the Newburgh Free Library.

John Duncan, the collections associate for the Putnam History Museum, said digitalization also will help create exhibits and speed up responses to research requests. Until last year, all research requests were handled by volunteers using a card catalogue and handwritten records. Once digitalization is complete, the process will be more self-service.

Duncan said the project began earlier this year with the creation of a digital catalog of the museum’s books and the scanning of 600 glass-plate negatives. Duncan, along with photo archivist Jan Thacher and volunteers Corinne Giunta and Bob Polastre, are now organizing and scanning the museum’s 7,000 photographs, a few of which are shared here. Next up will be the creation and upload of reference photos of its artifacts, paintings and larger items.

Duncan says he is working out the technical kinks to place the scans and digital catalog online at putnamhistorymuseum.org and hopes to have it live within the next month or so.

Senior Center Bids Higher Than Expected

Work will be delayed at Butterfield site

By Holly Crocco

Putnam County is faced with a setback in the construction of a senior center at the Butterfield site in Cold Spring because the bids for the work came in much higher than expected.

Last year the Legislature approved an $800,000 bond referendum for the initial costs of retrofitting space inside the Lahey Pavilion at the former hospital site. It plans to lease 6,000 square feet from the developer for 15 years at a cost of about $4.5 million, including rent, taxes, common charges and costs.

Barbara Sceccimarra (R-Philipstown) said at the Nov. 22 Physical Services Committee meeting that the county received three bids to complete construction for the senior center, and that the lowest was $1.8 million.

She said the county would re-bid the project. That will delay progress at least 30 days, she said, although the center is still expected to open in the spring.

“When the price comes in high, what else can you do but look at the scope again and re-bid, or change the direction of the project?” she asked.

The county’s Highways & Facilities Department completed the demolition work in the Lahey space, which Sceccimarra said may help reduce bids. She noted that construction at other projects in the eastern part of the county, such as at Tilly Foster Farm in Brewster and the Putnam County Golf Course in Mahopac, was done by county employees to reduce costs, and asked why this can’t be done at Butterfield.

“I would like to see the county do more,” she said.

John Tully, deputy commissioner of Highways & Facilities, said the county was reviewing the project plans to see if any areas were overdesigned; the second look may also reduce incoming bids. He added that location may add costs if the county sends workers to Cold Spring.

“Tilly Foster was easy because all of our guys report to this side of the county; it’s in our backyard,” he said. “It’s a little remote over there.”

Visit highlandscurrent.com for news updates and latest information.

Steel Magnolias
Directed by Sally Mayes
Dec. 1-17
Featuring Jenn Lee, Maia Guest, Sally Mayes, Julie Heckert, Liz Keifer and Ursula Anderman

Auditions for
Cat on a Hot Tin Roof
Directed by John Christian Plummer
co-produced by Excellent Creature and The Depot Theatre
Dec. 2 and 3

Garrison Landing, Garrison, NY (Theatre is adjacent to train station.)
SEE HOW MUCH YOU COULD SAVE

Our agency will show you plenty of ways to save money—
with the AARP® Auto & Home Insurance Program from
The Hartford.

Call us, your local Hartford independent agency, today
for a FREE, no-obligation quote.

Gerelli Insurance Agency, Inc.
Post Office Box 362
23 Lady Blue Devil Lane
Cold Spring, NY 10516

(845)265-2220
Gregg@Gerelli-Insurance.com
www.Gerelli-Insurance.com

Baby and Dog

This feature is
designed as a counter-
weight to all the bad
news in the world that
weighs people down.
We could share a photo
of a baby, or a photo of
a dog, but we are giving
you both. How many
newspapers can say
that? Christine Wright
of Beacon shared this
photo of her son, Max,
with the family Basset
Hound, Ginny. If you-
have a photo of a baby
and a dog, submit it for
consideration to
editor@highlandscurr-
rent.com.

20-Year Voyage Comes To End (from Page 1)

rather than take the chance we wouldn't
be able to maintain the programs at that
high level.”

Lynn Rubicam, a former Cold Spring
resident who served on the BBBB board
for 13 years, wrote in an email that part
of its legacy was in helping “people in
the community strengthen their relation-
ship with the Hudson River” and raising
awareness about access to the riverfront.
She noted it had been established as an al-
ternative high school program but grew to
involve families in a variety of river-based
activities.

In addition to its camps for teens, the
organization offered public rowing, canoe
-building and other community initia-
tives.

“There was always something new, from
our Tales from the Yardarm nautical read-
ings to our high hopes for a permanent
boat house at Dockside,” she recalled.

Hardy said one his “tiredest” memories
is from 2008, when BBBB campers com-
pleted the Great Hudson River Paddle
from Albany to New York City.

Stefan Carlson, who attended BBBB
camps from seventh grade through high
school, was part of that 11-day excursion.

“As high school kids it was daunting to
even think about, but we accomplished
our goal,” he said. “It stands as one of my
proudest accomplishments.”

For Carlson, the camps offered more
than simply learning about boats and the
river. “It absolutely had a major impact on
my development as a person,” he said. “It
was the first time I was truly thrust out
of my comfort zone. Kids learned to get
along, be respectful and work together.
It’s not often that kids are forced to rely
on each other like that, sometimes in very
serious situations.”

In its early years, the organization built
three 15-foot shad boats and a 26-foot gig;
it also refurbished used vessels and bor-
rowed crafts when needed. Campers par-
ticipated in rowing competitions up and
down the Hudson and in November 2014
won the Northeast Regional Youth Open-
Water Rowing Championships (a.k.a. the
Icebreaker) in Hull, Massachusetts.

The organization has also been known
for its community service, especially its
participation in the annual Great Hud-
son River Sweep. Other projects included
gathering relief supplies for hurricane vic-
tims and assisting in making a local home
handicap-accessible.

Hardy said the organization’s assets,
including its boats, will be distributed
among other nonprofits with similar mis-
sions. He said BBBB will likely close its
books by next summer.

Campers pause near the Esopus lighthouse during a 2012 paddle from Albany to Cold
Spring.

Nolan Shea rowing in the Icebreaker in 2014 as part of the BBBB team

Photo by Damian McDonald

AARP
Auto & Home Insurance
Program from The Hartford

The AARP Automobile & Homeowners Insurance Program from The Hartford is underwritten by Hartford Fire Insurance Company and its affiliates, One Hartford Plaza, Hartford CT 06155. CA license number 5152. In Washington, the Auto Program is underwritten by Trumbull Insurance Company. The Home Program is underwritten by Hartford Underwriters Insurance Company.

AARP does not employ or endorse agents or brokers. AARP and its affiliates are not insurers. Paid endorsement. The Hartford pays royalty fees to AARP for the use of its intellectual property.

These fees are used for the general purposes of AARP. AARP membership is required for Program eligibility in most states. Applicants are individually underwritten and some may not qualify.

Specific features, credits, and discounts may vary and may not be available in all states in accordance with state filings and applicable law. You have the option of purchasing a policy directly from The Hartford. Your price, however, could vary, and you will not have the advice, counsel or services of your independent agent.
Simple Is As Simple Does

By Joe Dizney

Food writer Molly O’Neill once called chowder “edible democracy.” It is certainly one of the most American of dishes — if you can simply call it “a” recipe. Chowder is more a state of mind, and in its myriad forms captures the essence of the American spirit: ruggedly individualistic, assertive and proud of its heritage; at its best, humble, substantial, inclusive and comforting.

As such, recipes abound in every region and micro-region of the country, each proclaiming itself original and authentic, which, like all self-identified Americans, all certainly are.

There is fittingly a sketch of a recipe included in the great American novel Moby Dick, Herman Melville’s homage to the sea and this country; the American statesman Daniel Webster is famous for his much-circulated version and President John F. Kennedy, a Bostonian, was particularly fond of his “chowdah” and his preferred recipe is preserved in the National Archives.

Ostensibly the culinary and etymological descendent of Breton’s Acadian fisherman, chowder (née chaudree, named from the pot, chaudron, in which it was prepared) is a simple seafood stew featuring the catch of the day, originally thickened with hardtack (ships’ biscuits) but now more commonly potatoes, almost universally seasoned with onions, pork, salt and pepper and enriched with butter and eventually milk.

Like all culinary classics, it has been subject to generational and commercial “improvements”: spices or spirits, additional vegetables (corn, celery) and even a roux or heavy cream to thicken this delicate celebration of the sea to a porridge-like (at best) or wallpaper-paste consistency. Possibly the most abhorred defilement is the addition of tomatoes as in Manhattan clam chowder, an abomination at its worst, but perhaps an acceptable stew or soup variant when viewed kindly.

None of these additions offers any substantial increase in enjoyment to this concoction of onions, pork, spuds, fish and dairy in which each element holds its own but all come together in a bowl of warm comfort and national celebration on a cold winter day.

Regarding its individual ingredients: Select firm, white-fleshed fish — cod, hake, haddock and halibut — whatever is available, freshest and affordable. (Clams or other shellfish can be used but that’s another story.) If you’re energetic and/or authentic enough, a fine seafood broth can be made from fish heads or other less appealing bits from whole fish or even the eventual chowder fish chunks, parboiled briefly in water with onions and a couple of bay leaves. Marbled Meat Shop on Route 9 in Philipsburg was offering its own seafood stock in quart containers a few weeks ago and bottled commercial clam broth will do in a pinch.

Salt pork is traditional but can be hard to find, but thick-cut bacon adds an additional smoky edge to the proceedings.

The food writer and Maine native John Thorne, whose definitive study, “Down East Chowder,” appears in his thoroughly enjoyable and enlightening book, Serious Pig, offers the one “innovation” worth taking seriously. He specifies that potatoes should be cut in the manner referred to as “thick-thin.” This simple technique involves cutting your potatoes (any all-purpose potato will do, although Yukon Golds are consistently available and dependable) into bite-sized wedges “the shape of an ax head” by casually circling the peeled spuds with a paring knife. This allows the thin parts to “melt” into and thicken the chowder while leaving larger chunks to provide a creamy counter-texture to the flaky chunks of fish.

Warming the milk before adding it speeds up the proceedings. A dollop of butter added to the bowl when serving provides an inviting puddle of liquid gold. The only thing you could possibly need is a slice or two of toasted country bread for a comforting and satisfying meal.

Simple Seafood Chowder

2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1/4 cup salt pork or thick smoky bacon, 1/4-inch diced
2 onions, roughly chopped
3 cups seafood stock (or bottled clam broth)
2 bay leaves
5 to 6 medium-large, all-purpose potatoes (Yukon Gold), peeled and cut into 1-inch thick-thin wedges (See story note on technique.)
3 pounds firm-fleshed white fish (cod, haddock, hake, halibut) cut into 2- to 3-inch chunks
3 cups warmed whole milk
Salt
Freshly ground black pepper
1/4 cup minced parsley
Additional unsalted butter for serving

1. Melt butter in a 3- to 4-quart stockpot over medium heat. Sauté pork or bacon five to six minutes to render some fat. Add onions and continue to cook until slightly caramelized. Add stock and bay leaves, bring all to a low boil and simmer for two to three minutes.

2. Add potatoes and simmer for 10 minutes. Add fish and simmer for another 10 minutes. Add warmed milk and return to a low simmer for five minutes. Salt to taste and add a generous amount of freshly ground black pepper. Stir in the parsley and cut the heat, allowing the chowder to steep. This will give you just enough time to make some toast to serve with the chowder.

3. Serve hot in large bowls, garnished with a healthy knob of butter.
The Highlands Current

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIRS

The Desmond-Fish Library Holiday Boutique continues in Garrison from Thursday to Sunday until Dec. 10 during library hours, and offers handmade gifts that include art, crafts, soaps, jewelry and candles.

St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Cold Spring will hold its Craft Fair and History Exhibit on Saturday, Dec. 2, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The fair features Christmas décor, homemade baked goods and stews, and gift baskets and crafts. There will also be documents and photos on display marking the 140th anniversary of the death of Robert Parrott, the inventor of the Parrott cannon, West Point Foundry superintendent and warden of St. Mary's.

Self Made: A Makers Collective will host a holiday bash on Saturday, Dec. 2, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the American Legion/VFW Hall at 413 Main St., in Beacon. The event features 28 craftspeople and designers from the region, along with food and music. Admission is $2, although children younger than 12 are free. See selfmademakers.com.

The Howland Cultural Center kicks off its Holiday Fine Arts and Crafts Small Gifts Show that opens on Saturday, Dec. 2, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Howland Cultural Center in Beacon. The event features Christmas décor, homemade baked goods and stews, and gift baskets and crafts. There will also be documents and photos on display marking the 140th anniversary of the death of Robert Parrott, the inventor of the Parrott cannon, West Point Foundry superintendent and warden of St. Mary's.

The Putnam Arts Council will open its Craft and Art Showcase and Sale from noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 2, and continue it daily through Dec. 10 at the Belle Levine Art Center in Mahopac. (It is open until 7 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 7) The sale includes pottery, jewelry, artwork, glass and body-care products. See putnamarts council.com.

The Work:Shop Winter Market will host its fifth annual sale with work from 20 artisans on Saturday, Dec. 9, and Sunday, Dec. 10. Gift items include body-care products and candles from Beacon Bee, wool hats from Beaconknits and spirits from Dennings Point Distillery, along with ceramics, jewelry, glassware and baked goods. The market will be open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Dec. 9 and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Dec. 10 at the Wickham Solid Wood Studio in Beacon. See workshopwintermarket.com.

TREE LIGHTING CEREMONIES

The Hudson Valley Artisan Marketplace will take place on Saturday, Dec. 9, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Old VFW Hall in Cold Spring. The show will feature jewelry, knit items, baked goods and artwork. See hvartmarket.wix.com/hvartmarket.

The Putnam Arts Council will open its Craft and Art Showcase and Sale from noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 2, and continue it daily through Dec. 10 at the Belle Levine Art Center in Mahopac. (It is open until 7 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 7) The sale includes pottery, jewelry, artwork, glass and body-care products. See putnamarts council.com.

Tribute: Arts at the Bicycle will host its annual tribute to Robert Parrott, the inventor of the Parrott cannon and West Point foundry superintendent and warden of St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Cold Spring. The show will feature jewelry, knit items, baked goods and artwork. See hvartmarket.wix.com/hvartmarket.

The Beacon Bicycle Tree Lighting at Beacon’s Polhill Park at Main Street and Route 9D will take place on Saturday, Dec. 2, at the riverfront bandstand. There will be music and a visit from Santa Claus.

The sixth annual Winter Hill tree lighting will take place on Thursday, Dec. 7, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at 20 Nazareth Way in Garrison, just east of Route 9D off Snake Hill Road. There will be food and drinks as well as Christmas carols sung by the Walter Hoving Choir.

The Beacon Christmas Tree Lighting at Beacon’s Polhill Park at Main Street and Route 9D will take place on Saturday, Dec. 9. The activities begin at 3:30 p.m. with a children’s craft; at 4:30 p.m., the Beacon High School Choir will lead caroling; and at 4:50 p.m. Santa will arrive. The tree will be lit at 5 p.m. and Santa will greet families until 6 p.m. Parking is available at City Hall across the street. Bring a mug for hot cider or chocolate. As part of Second Saturday, galleries and shops will be open until 9 p.m.

Sculptor Ed Benavente, who created the bicycle tree (which has doubled in size since it first appeared in 2011), also creates a menorah from bicycle parts that will be lit from Tuesday, Dec. 12, to Dec. 19 at the Beacon Building at 427 Main St. at 5:30 each evening, with the exception of Dec. 15, when it will be lit at 4:45 p.m. Each evening will honor a different part of the community, including (in order) volunteers, educators, first responders, children, business owners, clergy, activists, and artists and musicians.

Group Show at Buster Levi Continues through Dec. 30

The Buster Levi Gallery in Cold Spring will open a group show on Friday, Dec. 1, with a reception from 6 to 8 p.m. It features the work of member artists Ada Pilar Cruz, Tim D’Acquisto, Barbara Smity Gioia, Jenne M. Currie, Bill Kooistra, Vincent Baldassano and Eric Erickson, and continues through Dec. 30. See busterlevigallery.com.

Superintendent Search

Haldane to hold public forum

The Haldane Board of Education will hold a public forum and conduct an online survey to solicit feedback from community members about the type of leader they would like to see as the district’s next superintendent. (Continued on next page)
Road Works
Steven Edson photos at art center

The Garrison Art Center will open Road Works, an exhibit of photographs by Steven Edson that explore the textures, lines and shapes of road systems, with a reception from 5 to 7 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 9. It continues through Jan. 7 and runs concurrently with PHOTOcentric, the art center’s annual juried photography exhibit. See garrisonartcenter.org.

Putnam Flu Shot Clinic
Scheduled for Dec. 5 in Brewster

The Putnam County Department of Health will hold its annual walk-in flu vaccine clinic of the year on Tuesday, Dec. 5, from 2 to 6:30 p.m. at its Brewster office. Any county resident aged 18 or older or who has a Medicare card is eligible. The shot is $25, or free for anyone 65 years or older, or who has a Medicare card. Call 845-808-1390.

International Crèches
Graymoor exhibit through Jan. 14

Graymoor’s annual Christmas Around the World crèche exhibit will be on view through Jan. 14 with crèches from nearly every country and continent in the world. The materials used to create the nativity scenes include straw, wood, paper, stone, ceramics and animal horns.

Regimental Coat
Historian to explain uniform

Historian Phil Weaver will discuss the Revolutionary-era regimental coat worn by the commandant of Fort Schuyler, Col. Peter Gansevoort Jr., in a talk at the Fort Montgomery Historic Site on Thursday, Dec. 7.

Many uniform experts initially believed the coat was unique, or possibly German in origin, but Weaver has documented that it was typical of several styles worn during the period. His talk, Peter Gansevoort’s (Not-so) Unusual Regimental Coat, begins at 7 p.m. The suggested donation is $5, and reservations are required. Call 845-446-2134.

Beacon
Elf, Live!

The newly formed Beacon Performing Arts Center will present a production of Elf the Musical Jr. at Beacon High School on Friday, Dec. 8, and Saturday, Dec. 9. The cast includes student actors who range in age from 5 to 17. Tickets are $10 at beaconperformingartscenter.com.

Puppets From the Past and Future
No Strings returns to Howland Cultural Center

The Howland Public Library will host a performance by No Strings Marionettes at the Howland Cultural Center in Beacon at 1 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 10. Nick of Time tells the story of astronaut Nick Eastman, who is sucked into a time warp, meets dinosaurs, then jumps forward into a bizarre future. Admission is $10 at the door for adults; children are admitted free. The holiday film Scrooge will be shown at 4 p.m.

Concert Celebrates Seeger
50th anniversary of Seeger-Guthrie book

To mark the 50th anniversary of the publication of Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie’s book on American folk songs of the Depression and labor movement of the 1930s, Hard Hitting Songs for Hard-Hit People, the Towne Crier Café in Beacon will host a benefit concert at 7 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 3, for the Beacon Food Pantry and the American Center for Folk Music. The performers will include John Cohen of the New Lost City Ramblers, Happy Traum, Guthrie’s Ghost (Hope Machine, Amy Fradon, Jacob Bernz and David Bernz), and The Rix (Rick Nestler and Rick Palieri).

Puppets From the Past and Future
No Strings returns to Howland Cultural Center

The Howland Public Library will host a performance by No Strings Marionettes at the Howland Cultural Center in Beacon at 1 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 10. Nick of Time tells the story of astronaut Nick Eastman, who is sucked into a time warp, meets dinosaurs, then jumps forward into a bizarre future. Admission is $10 at the door for adults; children are admitted free. The holiday film Scrooge will be shown at 4 p.m.

WINNING PHOTO
Nicole Zeko of Clinton Corners, near Millbrook, won Central Hudson’s fifth annual Fall Foliage Photo contest with this shot taken in Stanfordville.

C.E. Paint Supply, Inc.

Tools • Hardware • Plumbing & Electrical Supplies

Monday - Thursday 8 - 5:30
Friday & Saturday 8 - 5
Tel. 845.265.3126
158 Main Street • Cold Spring, NY 10516

Tim Brennan General Contractor

From Remodeling to New Construction
We have been Building Right for Over 40 Years
845.265.4004 Lic# PC.58 brennanbuilt.com
Lynne Ward, LCSW
Licensed Psychotherapist
Individuals • Couples • Adolescents • Children
Psychotherapy and Divorce Mediation
Addiction Counseling
75 Main Street lynneward99@gmail.com
Cold Spring, NY 10516 (917) 597-6905

Dr. K Imported Cars Service & Repair
“Quality Care”
15 Tioranda Ave., Beacon, NY • 845.838.0717

Rene Schrock
Hound Haven
Dog Walking & Pet Sitting
www.houndhavenbeacon.com

Pamela Petkanas, LCSW
Licensed Psychotherapist
Cold Spring Healing Arts
6 Marion Ave, Cold Spring, NY 10516
Phone: 908-230-8131
ppetkanas@gmail.com
Trained in DBT, specializing in
Children, Adolescents, Young Adults,
Adults and Families

Cold Spring Physical Therapy PC
John R. Astrab PT, DPT, OCS, MS, CSCS
Medicare, United Health Care, Railroad, Tri-Care, No-Fault, Workers Compensation Insurance Plans Accepted
1760 South Route 9 • Garrison NY 10524
845.424.6422
johnastrab@coldspringnypt.com
coldspringnypt.com

architecture & consulting
residential & commercial
new construction & renovation
ethard@thefiguregroundstudio.com
845.287.4889
cold spring, ny
Highland Baskets
One-stop shopping for the entire family
115 Main St., Cold Spring, NY
845.265.2122
highlandbaskets.com

Unique gifts, games, puzzles, and wooden toys for the whole family
Featuring many Eco-Friendly Made in USA products
Open Friday - Sunday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
86 Main Street, Cold Spring, NY 10516
Gifthut06@aim.com
Phone 845.297.3786

Kringle’s Christmas House
134 Main Street
Beacon NY 12508
845-765-0444
Follow us on Facebook
Hidden in Plain Sight

Steeple Chase
Photos by Michael Turton

How often do you look up? Likely not enough. Can you identify these steeples and cupolas in Philipstown and Beacon?

The answers are on Page 18.