

The HIGHLANDS Current



The Coolest Tavern in Newburgh
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DECEMBER 8, 2017

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

After Indian Point *An occasional series*

What's Causing Local Thyroid Cancer Rates to Soar?

*New study explores possible
link to nuclear plant*

By Brian PJ Cronin

It was four years ago that Joanne DeVito, who spent 14 years living in and raising her children in Rockland County, received a call from her eldest daughter with surprising news.

"She said to me, 'Mom, they found a lump in my throat,'" recalled DeVito. Her doctor suspected thyroid cancer, but DeVito was skeptical. "I told her 'We don't have any thyroid cancer in our family.'" Three days later, the diagnosis was confirmed. Over the next month, DeVito's two other grown daughters called to say they also had thyroid cancer. So DeVito called her own doctor.

"I said, 'You're not going to believe this,'" said DeVito. "She said, 'You better come in.' I live an extremely (To Page 7)



FALL INTO WINTER — Above, visitors relax and contemplate *She*, a sculpture by Mark di Suvero, at Storm King on Dec. 1. The New Windsor art center will be open from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Dec. 9 and 10 before closing for the winter. See stormking.org.

Photo by Ross Corsair

Digital Frontier *Garrison library to add innovation, technology lab*

By Alison Rooney

The Desmond-Fish Library in Garrison has hired a new digital services coordinator and plans by March to open an innovative technology lab on its lower level.

The library's new hire, Ryan Biracree, 32, succeeds Pam McCluskey, who left in August to join the Technical Education Department at BOCES Putnam/Westchester, which serves school districts.

McCluskey, who held the title of cybrarian, was a force in bringing computer education to the library. She taught classes and labs, offered weekly tech support to patrons, and founded a robotics club and Project Code Spring, an afterschool program that became so popular it had to stop accepting participants for lack of computers and data capacity, said library



Ryan Biracree

Photo provided

Director Jen McCreery.

The momentum from these programs led to the Innovation and Learning Center, under construction in a space formerly used by the Friends of the Desmond-Fish to store used books for its annual sale.

The center was funded through donations, state grants and contributions from NewYork-Presbyterian, which is Hudson Valley Hospital, the Cold Spring Lions Club and the library's trustees, McCreery said. More (Continued on Page 6)

Tax Proposal Would Be Tough on New York

*Local officials decry loss of
deductions*

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

In a bipartisan outcry, local elected officials criticized proposed changes to the federal tax code that would abolish deductions for state and local taxes and could complicate the use of bonds to fund municipal projects, while reducing taxes on corporations and the ultra-wealthy and increasing the federal deficit by more than \$1 trillion.

Encouraged by President Donald Trump and with little deliberation, the Republican-controlled U.S. House and Senate each passed tax-reform bills in recent weeks. All Democrats in both chambers voted "nay," while a single Republican voted against the Senate bill. In the House, 13 Republicans opposed their chamber's legislation. The bills await action by a joint conference committee to resolve differences before a single version returns to each chamber for a vote.

Among the provisions affecting New York residents:

- Elimination of a deduction for state and local taxes, except for up to \$10,000 in property taxes.
- A reduction in the amount of the mortgage-interest deduction for new mortgages. The House bill lets homeowners write off mortgage interest for a first-home mortgage of up to \$500,000. The Senate cap maintains the cap at \$1 million. The House bill abolishes the mortgage-interest deduction for second homes. Both bills would eliminate the deduction for interest on home-equity loans.
- An increase in the standard deduction to about \$12,000 for individuals and \$24,000 for couples, but an elimination of the personal exemption of \$4,050 and an exemption of \$4,050 for each dependent.

(Continued on Page 8)



BREAKAWAY — Sophomore guard Olivia McDermott starts a fast break against Bronxville on Dec. 5 in the season opener for the Haldane girls' varsity squad. The Blue Devils fell, 38-36. For a preview of the Haldane and Beacon teams, see Page 20.

Photo by Scott Warren

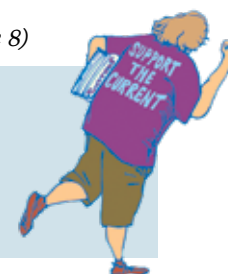
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For a look behind the scenes by cartoonist Deb Lucke, see Page 10.



5 Five Questions: RAE WYNN-GRANT

By Brian PJ Cronin

Rae Wynn-Grant studies black bears at the American Museum of Natural History's Center for Biodiversity and Conservation. She'll speak at the Cary Institute in Millbrook on Dec. 8.

What drew you to black bears?

I had been studying conflicts between humans and lions in Tanzania, but it's hard to study an endangered species for a long time. Although there aren't a ton of black bears in North America, in many places they are rebounding.

What is the biggest misconception about the bears?

That they are ferocious. Black bear attacks are rare and rarely lethal. Black bears are much more likely to retreat.

What should a hiker do if he or she encounters a black bear?

Retreating is the best idea. But if you feel threatened, make yourself big. If you have a jacket on, hold it above your head to look tall. Back away slowly and speak in a low and resonant voice. What we usually

say when we encounter a bear is, "Get out of here, bear!" It sounds ridiculous, but that's what we say. At the same time, don't make eye contact. Predators always make eye contact with prey.

You took 60 high school students from New York City to camp at Black Rock Forest for a week. What was that like?

It was profound. I'm also a city kid and wasn't introduced to the outdoors until I was an adult. I enjoyed watching students transform from fearful to having a great time. By the time we finished, the students had handled turtles, snakes, millipedes and birds. They'd taken night walks without flashlights and seen amazing views of the Hudson Valley. It's powerful for me to see these kids who are a lot like me go through this experience.

What could be done to get more people of color into conservation science?

There's a lack of awareness that it can be a career path. That's what I went



Rae Wynn-Grant

Photo by Peter Houlihan

through. I knew the environment existed, and I thought it was cool, but I didn't know of any examples of people like me who did science in nature. I thought science was done in a lab. Conservation is a mission-driven field. We're trying to save the environment, and it's not going so hot

right now. But there are reasons to believe that a diverse group of people working on environmental problems, with diverse backgrounds, perspectives and ideas, will be more likely to solve problems than a homogeneous one.

Beacon Development Roundup

Edgewater, 226 Main on Planning Board docket

By Jeff Simms

The Beacon Planning Board is expected to decide on Dec. 12 whether a proposal for a housing development near the Hudson River should be delayed because of its impact on the city's school system, or if the board should proceed in its review.

If the Edgewater project, which will include seven buildings and 307 apartments, is found to have an adverse impact on the schools, the builder, Scenic Beacon Developments, will have to show it can mitigate the effects. If the project passes environmental review, the Zoning Board of Appeals must rule on three requested vari-

ances for the number of stories allowed in each building, units per building and the distance between buildings.

The environmental review of the project, which began in May, has been at a standstill as consultants for the development and Beacon City School District officials have clashed over the students Edgewater would add, and the cost of educating them. Both sides rely on their own metrics in what City Attorney Jennifer Gray admitted during last month's meeting will come down to a judgment call.

Edgewater's consultant, Patrick Cleary, says that the Rutgers University Demographic Multiplier is the most accepted, and conservative, model for projecting student population growth. Based on the higher rents anticipated for most of the Edgewater units, Cleary suggested the development will add fewer than 50 children

to the district.

Factoring in per-student cost data from the instructional portion of the school system's budget and the assessed value of the Edgewater property — which is used to project tax revenue — he said the district would realize a modest benefit.

The school district argues there is more to the cost of education than just the instructional portion of its budget. Additional costs, such as staff for special education students, BOCES services and publication of educational materials, can be found throughout the budget, said Judith Mayle, an attorney who represents the district.

"What's being proposed now to calculate the cost to educate a student isn't recognized by the State of New York and is not used by anyone to calculate the cost of municipal services, whether it's fire, po-

lice or education," Mayle said last month.

The grassroots Beacon People's Committee on Development this week launched a petition at Change.org urging the Planning Board to vote down the project. By Dec. 7, 573 people had signed.

226 Main

The Planning Board will also continue a public hearing for the project at 226 Main St. The Zoning Board of Appeals last month granted variances allowing the developer to have a 10-foot (rather than 25) rear-yard setback and waiving its on-street parking requirement.

Parking for the four-story retail/residential building will be located at the rear of a county-owned lot across the street, which is being widened to create 18 additional spaces, and in a nearby municipal lot, which is being re-striped as well.

(Continued on next page)



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Beacon Development Roundup *(from previous page)*

Beacon council

Following another lengthy public hearing before the City Council on Dec. 4 over proposed changes for the Main Street and Fishkill Creek development zones, Councilperson Ali Muhammad conceded that the issue is unlikely to be resolved soon.

"This same conversation has been spoken about since the campaign and before the campaign," said Muhammad, who lost in the primary and will not return to the council. "As much as I'd like to go for it on fourth down I think we might need to punt this one to the next council."

The rest of the council (although two of its six members were out sick) seemed to agree.

"This council has worked very hard and has been digging into this for quite a long time," said George Mansfield, but "we need to give it as much time as is necessary and make sure we get it finally right."

The next City Council will be seated in January, when newcomers Amber Grant, Jodi McCredo, Terry Nelson and John Rembert will join incumbents Mansfield and Lee Kyriacou.

The Dec. 4 hearing featured mostly negative feedback, either from residents who weren't seeing the changes they wanted or appeared fed up with the ongoing discussion.

Kyriacou said after the meeting that the proposals have veered away from what the public wants. Extending the Central Main Street zone to cover all of Main, for

"It's very clear that everyone in here loves Beacon. I just hope that you all really consider what we're all saying. I don't want to move, I want to live here and raise my son here, safely."

instance, would hurt the historic districts that have thrived on the east and west ends of the street, he said. As drafted, the proposals are "encouraging more development than many people want on either end of Main Street," he said.

During the public hearing, several speakers said the city appears to be haphazardly approving projects. Others suggested that Beacon is falling prey to developers only interested in maximizing profits.

"It's very clear that everyone in here loves Beacon," one of the final speakers, Christine Seymour, said to the council. "I just hope that you all really consider what we're all saying. I don't want to move, I want to live here and raise my son here, safely."

The hearing will continue on Dec. 18, although the council could address the zoning proposals at a workshop before then.

Beacon Voters Approve School Plan

Beacon City School District voters on Dec. 5 approved a nearly \$9 million capital improvements plan, 480 to 98. It includes construction of a multi-sport artificial turf field behind Beacon High School, air conditioning in parts of Rombout Middle School and safety and technological upgrades throughout the district.

School officials said the projects, which should begin in 2019 and two-thirds of which will be funded through state aid, would not require a property tax increase beyond what the district would normally propose next spring.



The turf field will be installed behind Beacon High School.

TEN YEARS

For 10 years I've worked to better understand and publicize the finances of the Garrison Volunteer Fire Co.

Two years ago, the Town Board established a Garrison Fire Protection District and appointed five commissioners. Your commissioners have the power to levy taxes and approve Fire Co. budgets. (Please note that the first budget they approved increased 27%.)

On December 12th, from 5 to 9 p.m., an election for the critical fifth spot on the Commission will be held at the Rt. 9 firehouse.

I urge you to make the effort to come out on December 12th and vote for me, **Joe Regele**, for this open spot on the Commission.

Over the past 10 years, I've come to fully appreciate the importance of our volunteers in providing emergency services in Philipstown. Moving forward, it is imperative that the operations of the District Commission be open, transparent, and committed to fiscal responsibility, so that our volunteers have the community support they will need to thrive.

PLEASE SHOW UP AND VOTE!

The HIGHLANDS Current

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Garrison Fire District

The five commissioners of the Garrison Fire District are responsible for the protection of residents' lives and property. We do this through the Garrison Volunteer Fire Co. and mutual aid from other emergency services in Philipstown.

As commissioners, we oversee the day-to-day operations. It is our responsibility to maintain two firehouses, trucks and all other equipment necessary for the performance of the firefighters' duties. Records of training and physicals are kept to ensure the health and safety of the men and women who put themselves in harm's way.

This was the first year the district started to work on important repairs and projects that had been neglected because of several years of underfunding. A backup generator was installed at Station 1 so the doors can be opened when the electricity is out. Station 2 had a leaking diesel fuel tank replaced, new fire hoses were purchased and unexpected truck repairs had to be made.

The 2018 budget is \$6,000 less than in 2017. It was adopted 4 to 1, with Commissioner Stan Freilich voting no. This budget will allow us to continue the work that was started last year. There is still a lot of work to be done.

It has been my honor to serve as a commissioner for the last two years. I have worked hard and will continue to do so if re-elected in the fire district election Dec. 12. The volunteers of the Garrison Fire Department deserve your respect and gratitude, and they have mine.

David Brower, *Garrison*

I wanted to write to endorse David Brower for re-election as a commissioner of the Garrison Fire District and also share my perspective as a commissioner over the past year.

The fire district is only in its second year of existence. It takes a while to sort through the legalities and nuisances that entails. It was known from the start that the district and fire company would have to find ways to get to know and respect and trust each other. The board has made great progress. There are dedicated professionals on both sides, and slowly we are

Fire District Voting

Garrison

Tuesday, Dec. 12, 5 - 9 p.m.
Garrison Firehouse

1616 Route 9, Garrison

Candidates: Dave Brower, Joe Regele
1 open seat, 5-year term

North Highlands

Tuesday, Dec. 12, 6 - 9 p.m.
North Highlands Firehouse

504 Fishkill Road, Philipstown

Candidates: Amy Locitzer
1 open seat, 5-year term

trying to become as close to one entity as possible, working together and assisting each other.

I ran last year for a seat on the board to take a close look at the budget process and to ensure transparency for taxpayers. I was on the budget committee and the 2018 budget was developed by going line-by-line and building from actual expenditures and anticipated necessary expenses, with reserves for the unexpected, all built from the bottom up. I do not spend my own money frivolously, and I would never spend taxpayer money without justification.

You may have heard that we were able to save quite a bit of money this year by reviewing insurance and legal costs. That money was needed for unexpected repairs. We should expect the unexpected and going forward, budget accordingly.

There are reserves in the budget in anticipation of the long-term needs, just as you would have a savings account for home improvements or repairs.

You also may have heard about an insurance payment for a fire company boat that was swamped and sank while attached to a buoy. The fire company owned the boat and our lawyer and insurance company informed us the recovery check belongs to the company. The district was reimbursed the amount it had invested in the boat and we will also receive annual checks from the fire company to cover the costs of the boat and other equipment it owns.

The fire company has fully opened their books to the Garrison Fire District and community. All its paperwork is current

and it has presented the district with a full accounting. This transparency is what we have been hoping for. After spending a year on the "inside," I continue to be amazed at the dedication of our volunteer firefighters. The thought and time they spend making sure Garrison residents are safe is truly astonishing. They are proud of their commitment, and we residents are lucky to have them covering our backs.

Linda Lomonaco, *Garrison*

Joe Regele and I, a few years ago, were at the Garrison train station campaigning against and for (respectively) the New York State Service Award program. All volunteer fire companies have this retirement program, but Joe was against it for Garrison. When I asked, "But why?" he responded, "I want to see if I can defeat it." At that time, he did.

So began Joe's sport: find financial fault with local organizations. After a stint with the Philipstown Recreation Department and a brief foray into the Garrison School reserve funds, Joe concentrated relentlessly on the Garrison Volunteer Fire Co. With nothing constructive to offer, he argued, demanded, disbelieved and accused with a tenacity that accomplished nothing.

Joe's letter in the Dec. 1 issue about his candidacy for fire district commissioner was classic Regele-speak: innuendo, information without context, hyperbolic guarantees of future disclosures. It's a pathetic waste of skill and energy. The Garrison Volunteer Fire Co. has a long history of community service. I commend their determination to continue despite these destructive efforts.

David Brower is also running for commissioner. He has been an active firefighter for many years, in many roles. He also was a member of the Philipstown Town Board. I hope you will vote for a person who is honest, sensible, loyal to our community and conservatively aware of the fire company's needs.

Betsy Calhoun, *Garrison*

Calhoun is past president of the Garrison Volunteer Fire Co.

Editor's note: Because this letter was received close to the election, we asked Regele if he would like to respond. He wrote: "Carl Sandburg said: 'If the facts are against you, argue the law. If the law is against you, argue the facts. If the law and the facts are against you, pound the table and yell like hell.' It is an unfortunate byproduct of local politics that issues become personal. Ms. Calhoun's letter is a perfect example. Our purported conversation on the train platform never happened. I would like to point out that there is a world of difference between asking questions and finding fault (and add that her reprise of my resume omitted six seasons of coaching the Philipstown Dragons). Attacking me does not change the facts — it just degrades the dialog and muddies the water. Blaming the messenger and pounding the table will not change the facts."



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Langley win

What's missing from your coverage of Robert L. Langley Jr.'s victory over Putnam County Sheriff Don Smith is how slim Smith's margins were in the districts he did carry ("An Even Split," Dec. 1). Langley's victory isn't a simple "Philipstown turned out" story. Langley and his team worked very hard in every town, every district, and earned the confidence and support of voters in every party — Republicans, unaffiliated voters, Working Families, Greens.

Voters across party lines spoke. It was time for a deeply flawed sheriff, whose problems were of his own making, to be sent packing. Now the real work begins. And we start from a cooperative base to do it together. I'm grateful to Langley for stepping forward to lead all of Putnam.

Kathleen Foley, *Cold Spring*
Foley was Langley's campaign manager.

As a write-in candidate in the Putnam County sheriff's race, I spent a lot of time campaigning on the western side of the county, including heavy door-to-door, and I had many stimulating conversations with people. My campaign was well worth it, whatever the outcome, as I thoroughly enjoyed connecting with Philipstown residents.

What I took from the article and voting results map was that Philipstown receives little respect and attention in most races, and many countywide Republican candidates ignore the western side altogether

and simply write it off as a loss. The results showed that was a mistake. Philipstown played a big role in the election, something I don't recall seeing reported.

Andrew DeStefano, *Brewster*

Anthony Scannapiecco, the Republican election commissioner for Putnam, is a toxic leader who has supported toxic candidates such as Smith and will continue to do so. He doesn't realize that times are a-changin' and hacks will no longer be tolerated by the people of the county. In this case, party loyalty only went so far.

Next stop: 2018, when County Executive MaryEllen Odell and some legislators are up for re-election. Let's keep the broom handy; lots to do.

Ann Fanizzi, *Southeast*

Putnam sues drugmakers

While it is certainly good that the pharmaceutical industry is being called to task on this regrettable issue of opioid addiction (and more than a day late), I feel doctors should be called out in not sharing responsibility for overprescribing ("Putnam Votes to Sue Drug Companies," Dec. 1). They know their clientele and they know what road they will likely travel.

What about the line in the Hippocratic oath, "I will prevent disease whenever I can, for prevention is preferable to cure"? Doctors should step up to the plate and adopt a broader view of their treatments and consequences.

Kelly House, *Cold Spring*

Senior center delayed

I was stunned to read that John Tully, the deputy commissioner of Putnam County Highways & Facilities, thinks that sending Putnam County workers to Cold Spring to work on the planned senior center may add costs because "it's a little remote over there" ("Senior Center Bids Higher Than Expected," Dec. 1).

We are Putnam County taxpayers whose citizens and businesses generate money for the county government. We are entitled to the same services as any area of the county. This project is for our seniors, who have paid into the system for the longest time and have been waiting many years for this center, first promised with a subsidy from former Fox News chief Roger Ailes, which the Putnam County Legislature was all for until he was accused of sexual misconduct and the details of the "deal" were uncovered. I suggest Mr. Tully send them over and get to work.

Kathleen Kourie, *Cold Spring*

The workers work for the county and we are included. Many construction workers work far from home to put bread on the table and they are no different.

We deserve our center and it's been a long time coming with many seniors out there fighting for this center for years, including me, for the past 16 years. Since the first drawing of the center until now, a lot has been taken away. I understand

the money part, but enough has been taken.

The bids that came in for the project were outrageous. For heaven's sake, the building is there and all that's needed is the interior finished. Let's get this project moving in the right direction.

Donna Anderson, *Cold Spring*

Veggie take-out

Some people have asked why we opened Veggie Go-Go in Wappingers Falls ("Veggie Take-Out," Nov. 24). We tried to find a spot in Philipstown but could not find the right combo of space, rent, location etc., to make any of them work.

Since we're located near popular destinations for P-towners (Adams Fairacre Farms and Viscount Wines & Liquor), we hope folks will swing by for a bite.

Lynn Miller, *Cold Spring*

Miller is co-owner of Go-Go Pops in Cold Spring.

Indian Point

Indian Point is the safest nuclear plant on earth, with the most and best-trained group of men and women anywhere ("Leaving Waste High and Dry," Nov. 24). Most are military veterans and know how to serve and protect in whatever task is assigned. I feel sorry for any outside enemy — or inside, for that matter — who wants to do any type of harm.

Thomas Nastasi Sr., *Cold Spring*



HALDANE SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Community Forum

The Board of Education of the Haldane School District will be holding an open forum and conducting an online survey to get feedback from the community members about the type of leader they would like to see as the school district's next Superintendent. Parents and Community members are invited to attend this important meeting and/or complete the online survey.

Forum Date: Monday, December 11th

Time: 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Location: Band/Music Room ES/MS

If you wish to complete the survey, please go to www.haldaneschool.org and click on the Superintendent Search tab on the main page of the website.






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ALL ARE WELCOME!

No Chestnut Ridge Rent Increase — For Now

Owner seeks change in financing

By Michael Turton

Cold Spring Mayor Dave Merandy is asking the federal government to ensure that the company that owns Chestnut Ridge, which provides subsidized housing for seniors, is not allowed to convert the complex to market-rate apartments.

Residents in the 64-unit complex were alarmed last month when they received a letter from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which provides low-interest loans to developers to create rural housing for the elderly, disabled and poor, that the owner of the property wanted to convert it to market-rate apartments.

The letter, dated Nov. 15, said Harmony Management wanted to pay off its USDA loan and convert the apartments. The agency said that if it granted the request, rents could rise and the agency would no longer be able to provide subsidies to tenants. (The USDA holds the mortgage on the property.)

However, soon after, a "corrected" letter arrived from the USDA, identical to the first except for a new, bolded paragraph that read, "Based on USDA's communications with the owner so far, the owner plans to continue to operate the apartments as affordable rental housing."



CPA John Costilow said his firm had found no issues with the village's finances.

Photo by M. Turton

At its Dec. 5 meeting, the Village Board approved a letter from Merandy to the USDA urging the agency to ensure that Chestnut Ridge remains subsidized housing. The letter notes that Chestnut Ridge is the only affordable housing in western Putnam County.

"Without these subsidized apartments the low-income and mostly elderly tenants will be forced to move into an unfamiliar environment," he wrote.

On Dec. 6, Dan Dunning of Harmony Management, which has owned Chestnut Ridge since it opened in 1981, told *The Current* that the company wants to transfer its loan from the USDA to a private lender but said the proposed agreement with

the agency would keep Chestnut Ridge as subsidized housing for another 10 years. "We'll probably keep it subsidized longer than that, but that is all USDA requested," he said.

Christopher Stewart, a special projects coordinator with the USDA, wrote in an email that the current 50-year loan matures around 2030.

In other business ...

- Trustees approved Joule Assets to administer the village's participation in the Community Choice Aggregation program, which allows municipalities to collectively purchase electricity at reduced rates. The towns of Philipstown and Fishkill and City of Beacon are part of the local CCA, an initiative developed by Renewable Highlands and the Ecological Citizen's Project, two Philipstown-based nonprofits. A public hearing will be held before the village adopts its energy-purchasing plan.
- Village Clerk Jeff Vidakovich will continue to handle building department applications and inquiries from Cold Spring residents. Trustees approved the six-month, \$1,250 stipend he receives for those duties. The village and Philipstown merged building departments earlier this year, with Greg Wunner serving as building inspector for both municipalities.
- Deputy Mayor Marie Early noted that 2018 marks the bicentennial of the opening of the West Point Foundry. "It put Cold Spring on the map," she said, pointing out that President Abraham Lincoln visited the foundry at the height of the Civil War. Trustee Fran Murphy and Early will work on plans to commemorate the anniversary. Mayor Merandy suggested possibly combining events at the foundry with Independence Day celebrations.
- Merandy reported that he toured Metro-North's Cold Spring property with Neal Zuckerman, Putnam County's representative on the MTA board, to identify areas for improved maintenance.
- The mayor will meet with a group of eighth-grade Haldane students who are interested in painting the pedestrian tunnel at the foot of upper Main Street. The students would also like to see a skate park constructed at Mayor's Park.
- Merandy said the village would leave one of the two restrooms next to the Chamber of Commerce information booth open despite vandalism. A week earlier, he had said the restrooms would be locked for the winter.
- At the board's Nov. 28 meeting, John Costilow, a CPA with the Albany office of the EFPR Group, said his firm found "no issues" with the village's finances after an audit for the fiscal year ending May 31, 2017.

Digital Frontier *(from Page 1)*

than \$175,000 has been raised, with another \$10,000 to go and a matching grant in place through Dec. 31.

Biracree envisions the space serving not just Garrison but the region, with the goal of making digital and cultural literacy more than "a privilege for people who can afford to be a part of it," he says. "There'll be all sorts of instruction, from how to use those new devices you got during the holidays to password management, along with weekly meetings for adults to introduce technology — everything from Snapchat to learning what exactly Russian hackers are. We'll also have a weekly work-from-home coffee house.

"It's a space that's for the community, so the community can have a lot of say in what's offered," he says.

Project Code Spring will continue and, if there's a demand, a session specifically for girls will be offered, he says.

Biracree sees the Innovation and Learning Center compelling children and teenagers to interact with not just machines

but each other.

"Space like this won't leave kids enslaved to social media or video games," he says. "Most people will be working on projects and opening ways of thinking that they never had before. We'll take a toy apart, do circuit-bending and work with kits.

"Kids now are using video games to make things and explore new worlds. They're not always fighting zombies — they're building simple machines and they're networking, working together. It can look like fiddling around but it's actually designing, building and problem-solving."

Biracree, who lives in Beacon with his wife and their 2-year-old daughter, is a graduate of Bennington College, where he double majored in poetry and computer music. "There was a lot of production work involved," he says of the latter. "We built a big machine out of old toys soldered together and used mathematics to create music."

Before attending Sarah Lawrence to earn a master's in poetry, Biracree was employed at the American Academy of Po-

Inside the Center

Here is a sampling of what the Innovation and Learning Center at the Desmond-Fish Library in Garrison plans to offer:

- 3-D printers, printing services and a 3-D scanner
- A recycler that turns plastics into 3-D printer raw material
- High-end digital equipment for drawing and moviemaking
- High-end video and photo software
- A recording studio
- Three green screens, including one for stop-motion
- A robotics studio and flooring in a pattern easily recognized by robots
- Two walls to display panel-light programming
- An interactive whiteboard for videoconferencing
- A head-mounted Google Glass
- An Oculus virtual-reality headset



An Oculus virtual-reality headset

ets, where he helped maintain its website and directed an audio archives built from 75 years of reel-to-reel tapes.

Before coming to Desmond-Fish, Biracree taught literature at the College of Mount Saint Vincent in the Bronx, where he says he observed students using technology

in ways that were "inner extensions of their thoughts and selves," he says, although they didn't always seem to realize it.

For more on the plans, see desmondfish.wixsite.com/innovatelearncenter. The Innovation and Learning Center will have the same hours as the library.

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Steel Magnolias

Through Dec. 17

Directed by Sally Mayes; featuring Jenn Lee, Maia Guest, Sally Mayes, Julie Heckert, Liz Keifer and Ursula Anderman

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

What's Causing Local Thyroid Cancer Rates to Soar?

(from Page 1)

healthy lifestyle. I'm a yoga teacher and an organic gardener. But sure enough, I had it."

DeVito's doctors couldn't explain why thyroid cancer suddenly befell her family. But a peer-reviewed study by Joseph Mangano and Janette Sherman of the Radiation and Public Health Project published this week in the *Journal of Environmental Protection*, suggests that researchers look 8 miles upriver from DeVito's home, at the Indian Point nuclear power plant.

*"It's going up everywhere.
But it's going up much, much
faster here."*

Thyroid cancer is the fastest-growing cancer in the U.S., with national rates tripling since the early 1970s. More accurate diagnoses account for some of the rise, but researchers believe there may be other factors. The disease affects women at a higher rate than men, for reasons that are unclear. Certain genetic mutations could be a factor. The only widely accepted root cause is exposure to ionizing radiation, such as from long-since outlawed medical procedures involving head and neck irradiation and fallout from nuclear attacks and meltdowns.

Survivors of the atomic bomb blasts at Hiroshima and Nagasaki suffered from

Has Your KI Expired?

The federal government has recommended since 2001 that residents who live within a 10-mile radius of the Indian Point Energy Center (the "Emergency Planning Zone") keep a supply of potassium iodide tablets, known as KI, on hand.



Should there be a major leak at the nuclear plant, each tablet prevents the thyroid gland from absorbing radiation for 24 hours. It does not protect other organs. The tablets are not recommended for adults over the age of 40 as that group has the lowest risk of thyroid cancer. Fetuses and infants are the most at risk.

The Putnam County Bureau of Emergency Services distributes the pills. (If you have a supply, it should be replaced if expired. The old tablets can be safely discarded in the trash.) Tablets are available from the Philipstown Town Clerk at 238 Main St. in Cold Spring on weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 845-265-3329.

high rates of thyroid cancer, as did survivors of the 1986 accident at Chernobyl. A 1999 study by the National Cancer Institute suggested as many as 212,000 Americans may have developed thyroid cancer as a result of the above-ground nuclear testing in Nevada in the 1950s. Mangano and Sherman's study examines the hypothesis that low-level doses of iodized radiation from both planned and unplanned releases of radioactive steam when the Indian Point reactors shut down for refueling or emergency measures play a role.

Using data from the New York State Cancer Registry, the study examined the rates of thyroid cancer in Putnam, Rockland, Orange and Westchester counties. From 1976 to 1981, the rates were 22 percent below the national average. As of 2014, the rate has increased to 53 percent over the national average.

"It's going up everywhere," said Mangano. "But it's going up much, much faster here."

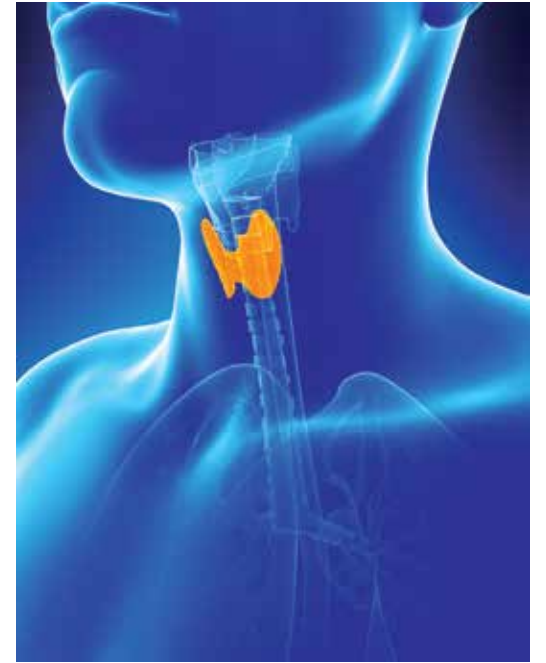
Although this is the 37th study that Mangano has written or co-written, some of his work has been criticized as "junk science," notably by Entergy, which owns Indian Point, and *Popular Mechanics*, which in 2014 documented flaws in two papers, including one that suggested that fallout from the 2011 nuclear accident at Fukushima led to 14,000 deaths in the U.S.

However, the thyroid cancer study is quick to point out possible flaws in its own hypothesis. For one, it's possible there are other, unknown causes besides radiation that could be responsible for the local increases. The study also acknowledges that because Indian Point does not measure the amount of waste products emitted during ventings, it's difficult to know exactly how much ionized radiation is released.

Symptoms of Thyroid Cancer

- A lump in the neck, sometimes growing quickly
- Swelling in the neck
- Pain in the front of the neck, sometimes up to the ears
- Hoarseness or other voice changes that do not go away
- Trouble swallowing
- Trouble breathing
- A constant cough that is not due to a cold

Source: American Cancer Society



The thyroid gland, depicted above right, is located at the front of the neck just below the larynx (voice box). Shaped like a butterfly, it has lobes on either side of the windpipe. The gland produces hormones that regulate the rate at which the body uses energy, as well as functions of the heart, digestive tract, muscles, brain and bones.

Stock image

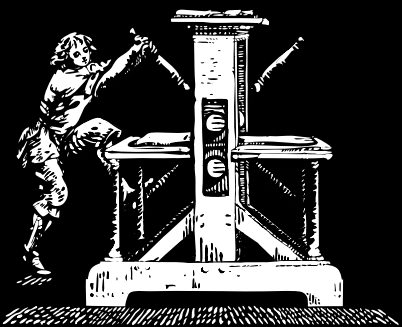
Mangano hopes that the study will lead to better data being collected, and for other researchers to conduct similar studies near other nuclear plants for comparison.

While the cause of the local increase in thyroid cancer is the subject of debate, the increase is not. Susan Shapiro, an environmental attorney who serves on the board of the nonprofit Radiation and Public Health Project, suggested that residents ask to be checked for thyroid cancer

annually by their doctor or dentist. She also suggested keeping a supply of potassium iodide pills on hand, which can be taken during a radiation emergency to protect the gland.

If detected early, the 5-year survival rate for thyroid cancer is over 98 percent. But it leaves the immune system compromised, as DeVito and her daughters have learned. "They say it's a good cancer," she said. "I'm not finding it so good."

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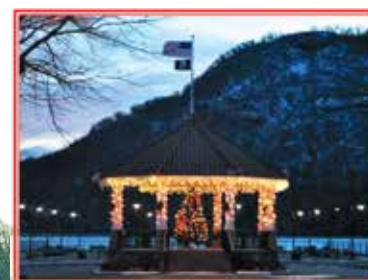
**Join us for the
Cold Spring Area Chamber of Commerce
Annual Holiday Dinner
December 14th, 6 p.m.
Cathryn's Tuscan Grill**

RSVP:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/csacc-annual-holiday-dinner-tickets-39407484848>

OR

info@explorecoldspringny.com



Tax Proposal Would Be Tough on New York *(from Page 1)*

- Changes that would make it more difficult to use municipal bonds to fund major infrastructure projects.
- To compensate for the revenue lost with the revisions, automatic cuts to Medicare and other programs aiding the elderly and/or poor.

Critics of the legislation, including the Putnam County Legislature, Nelsonville Village Board and New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC), said eliminating the deduction for state and local taxes amounts to double taxation because, in the words of a resolution passed on Sept. 18 by the Nelsonville Village Board, residents “would be forced to pay federal income taxes on the taxes they pay to state and local governments.” (The all-Republican Putnam County Legislature adopted a similar resolution on Nov. 8.)

Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell, a Republican who also serves as NYSAC president, said Wednesday (Dec. 6) that while the tax system needs reform, eliminating or limiting the state-local tax and mortgage-interest deductions would be “a hard hit” for New York.

“There’s still not a lot of room for individuals and families” to benefit “and that’s a big concern,” she said. “There’s a whole lot of points that have to be addressed.”

In its resolution, the Putnam County Legislature noted that New York is a federal “donor” state, sending far more

to Washington than it gets back in federal projects and spending. According to NYSAC, the toll for New York is \$48 billion and eliminating the state-local exemption “would only increase that discrepancy.”

An analysis by the Tax Foundation, New York ranks ninth in the nation for combined state and average local tax rate, at 8.49 percent. New York ranks second for the total amount residents deduct for state and local taxes, about \$68 billion annually. In Putnam County, the average

deduction taken for local, sales and real estate taxes in 2015 was \$18,161, according to the National Association of Counties; in Dutchess, it’s \$15,146. In New York City, it’s \$27,192.

In Cold Spring, Village Board Trustee Lynn Miller, who co-owns Go-Go Pops on Main Street, said the legislation will “have a huge impact on small businesses and make operating them extremely difficult. The number of deductions we will no longer be allowed to take is incred-

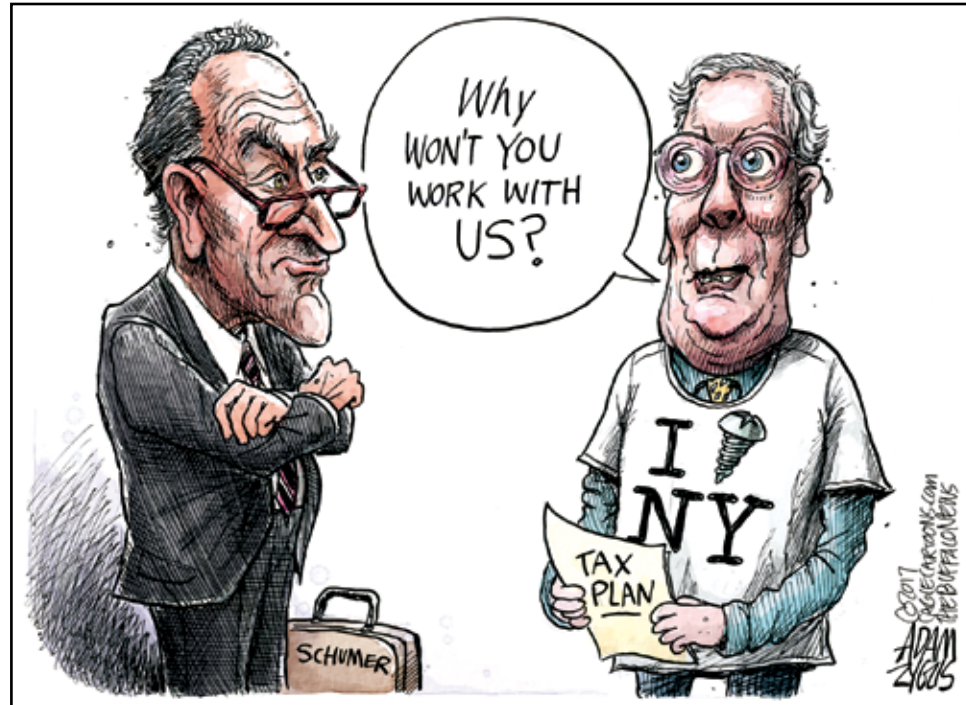
ible.” Deputy Mayor Marie Early said that “many ‘trickle-down’ effects haven’t yet been recognized or thought through,” including the legislation’s implications for nonprofits.

Nelsonville Mayor Bill O’Neill said that “eliminating or capping the federal deductions for local taxes unfairly penalizes people like the citizens of Nelsonville who reside in a state and local community where taxes are very high,” even though their own village “strives to manage its budget and keep its taxes in check.” If the federal legislation is enacted, “the impact on our citizens will be painful,” he said.

Philipstown Supervisor Richard Shea, a Democrat, said that, for local municipalities, “hampering the ability to bond for infrastructure when coupled with the New York State tax cap will essentially cripple our ability to undertake timely repairs to roads, bridges and buildings. It also hampers recovery efforts from storm-related damage.”

Furthermore, he said, “elimination of the property-tax deduction will hurt working-class families and slow the construction sector of the economy. It makes no sense.”

Democratic leaders at the state and federal level were equally critical. For their comments and additional details, see highlandscurrent.com.



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The Calendar



Tom Costa, left, and his son, Zach, with two pistols and a slot machine found at the tavern. Below, Mrs. Sauer, an early 20th-century owner



The unassuming tavern exterior is deceiving.

Photos by M. Turton

The Coolest Tavern in Newburgh

Fine dining in a fascinating historic setting

By Michael Turton

Newburgh's North Plank Road Tavern throws a party every Dec. 5. And, given the theme, the setting could not be more authentic.

This year's gathering on Tuesday evening toasted the 84th anniversary of the end of Prohibition in 1933. The ratification of the 21st Amendment turned

the last page on a chapter in the historic life of a restaurant that drivers pass each time they head to the Newburgh riverfront.

Its unassuming exterior is deceiving. Inside, in addition to cuisine and cocktails served from a hand-carved bar, guests are surrounded by unusual artifacts and tales of mobsters, gamblers and illegal booze.

Built in 1801, the hotel and



tavern thrived at the east end of the Newburgh Shawangunk Plank Road, a private thoroughfare that led travelers from western New York and Pennsylvania to the Hudson River. A music shop just down from the present-day restaurant served as the tollhouse where a 2-cent fee was collected.

By the mid-1800s railroads had put toll roads out of business and the hotel's upper floors were converted into a rooming

house. The ground floor remained a tavern.

Tom Costa, who bought the property more than 40 years ago at age 28 and still operates the bar and restaurant, says he's always been a history buff. When Prohibition began in 1920, he says, a woman named Augusta Sauer was the proprietor. "I've had old-timers come in who used to drink here then," he says. "Mrs. Sauer ran a mom-and-pop speakeasy here. During Prohibition she just kept serving alcohol" until she got in trouble.

Those same old-timers told Costa that Mrs. Sauer's boyfriend once insulted her in front of her adult son, Frederick, who in turn punched the boyfriend, knocking him backward into an open trap door, breaking his neck.

(Continued on Page 13)

The Best Thing That Ever Happened to Beacon Art

Nonprofit celebrates 15 years with exhibit

By Alison Rooney

BeaconArts, the nonprofit created to champion the city as a center for arts and culture, is celebrating its 15th year with an exhibit at the Beacon Institute on Main Street that highlights the many projects and events it has supported.

"We've always been this ad hoc marketing and tourism entity, focused on the arts and on business," says Kelly Ellenwood, who in January will step down as president of the group, which has 116 artist and 90 business members. "Now we've become more like a council, focused on more than just the arts."

Curated by Kalene Rivers with help from Ellenwood, the exhibit continues at 199 Main St. through Second Saturday in March, with the exception of Jan. 8 to 25, when the space will be closed for Beacon Institute activities. A central feature is an extensive timeline that fills one wall of the space. The rest of the room has photos, scrapbook archives and objects.

Ellenwood says, for her, browsing (Continued on Page 14)



In 2010, 24 artists created murals for the windows of an abandoned factory in Beacon for a temporary gallery called Electric Windows.

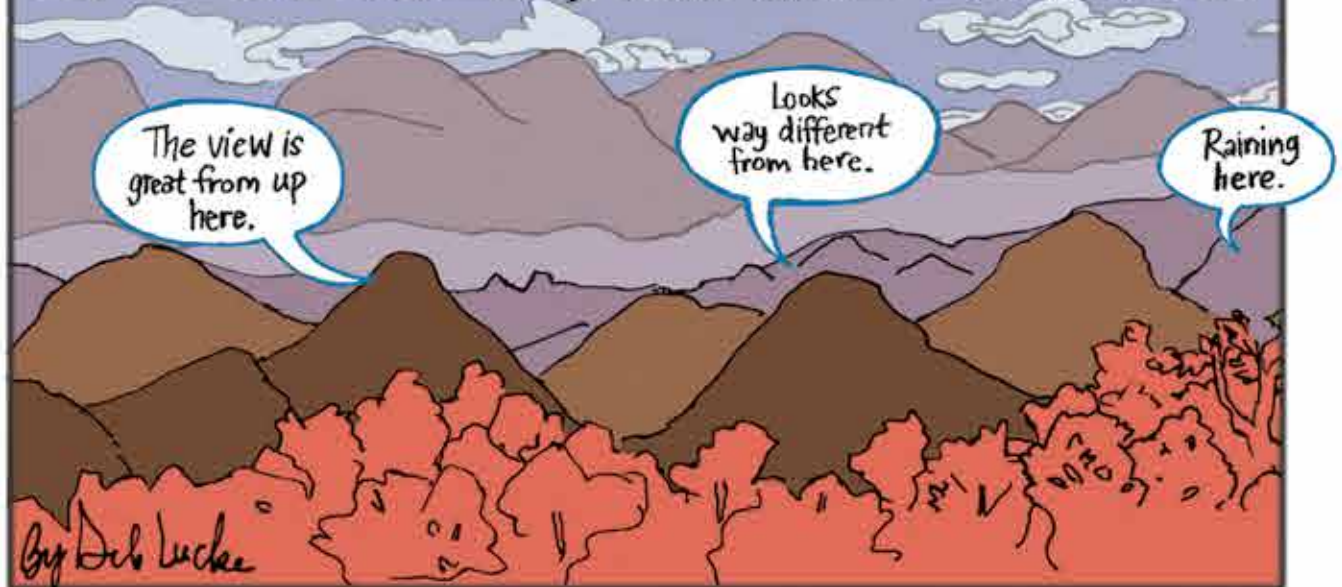
Photo by Daniel Weise

A WISE PERSON ONCE SAID:

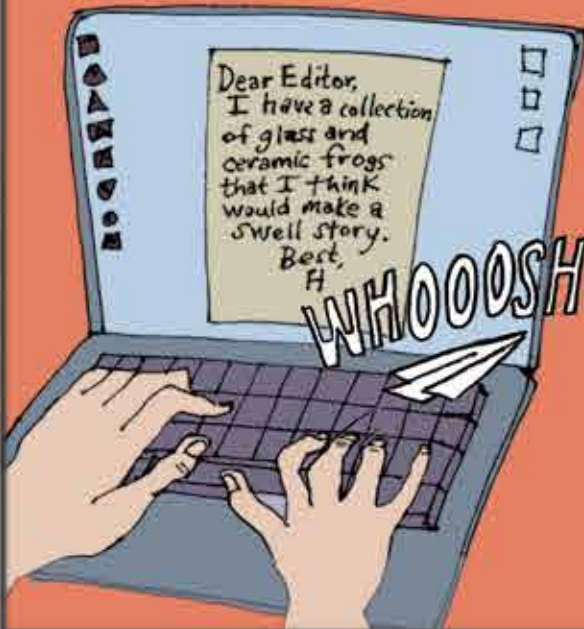


A LOCAL PAPER SHOULD PROVIDE A FORUM FOR LIVELY BUT CIVILIZED DEBATE.

LUCKILY, THE HIGHLANDS CURRENT IS PUBLISHED IN A PLACE WITH MANY POINTS OF VIEW. SO WE ALWAYS HAVE PLENTY OF ISSUES TO COVER.



PEOPLE AREN'T SHY ABOUT SHARING WHAT'S IMPORTANT TO THEM.



SUGGESTIONS ARRIVE HOURLY.



ALL ARE ADDED TO THE LIST OF POSSIBLE EDITORIAL CONTENT.



SOME STORIES ARE RIGHT THERE IN FRONT OF OUR FACES. REPORTERS DIG UP FACTS, SORT THROUGH PUBLIC FILINGS...



...AND COVERTOWN HALL MEETINGS YOU'RE PROBABLY HAPPY NOT TO ATTEND BUT WOULD STILL LIKE TO KNOW ABOUT.



THE PAPER COVERS LOCAL CULTURE AND THE ARTS. REMEMBER THE WORD "CIVILIZED" WAS MENTIONED EARLIER?

What inspires you?

At 3:00 every afternoon, there's a shadow that falls on my worktable. I've sketched it over and over again. The design of this necklace comes from those sketches.

REPORTERS TEAM UP TO TAKE ON STORIES TOO BIG FOR ANY ONE PERSON. MANY INTERVIEWS, MANY ANGLES. MANY ARTICLES.

I think everyone in this community knows someone who has been touched by the opioid epidemic.

RECORD 10:00

THEY'RE COMMITTED TO BALANCED COVERAGE WITH NO EDITORIAL (OR ANY OTHER) BIAS.

You want my opinion?

Not a trust-worthy source.

THE NEWS IS LAID OUT UNDER DEADLINES...

Is it too late to squeeze in another ad?

Interu

...PROOF-READ AND FACT-CHECKED...

Do we clean up the grammar in the quote? Or is that part of the perspective?

Keep the vernacular.

...THEN HAND-DELIVERED TO STORES AND COFFEE SHOPS, PROVIDING YET ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY FOR FEEDBACK.

Hey, Mike, how about a Bridal Issue?

WHILE YOU'RE READING THIS WEEK'S NEWS, NEXT WEEK'S PAPER IS SHAPING UP.

HURRY, THE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR SECTION IS ALMOST FULL.

Hmmmm. I think the world needs to hear my point of view on this.

If you like what we're doing, please help keep our nonprofit paper free to the community.

Donate online at:
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 Or send a check to:
 161 Main Street, Cold Spring, NY 10516
 Thank you!

FRIDAY, DEC. 8

Parents’ Night Out (grades K-5)

5:30 – 8:30 p.m. Haldane High School
RSVP to haldaneaclassof2018@mail.com.

Beacon vs. Lakeland (Girls’ Basketball)

6:15 p.m. Beacon High School
101 Matteawan Road, Beacon
845-838-6900 | beaonk12.org

Holiday Party (grades 6-8)

6:30 – 8 p.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave., Cold Spring
845-265-3040 | butterfieldlibrary.org

Elf the Musical Jr.

7 p.m. Beacon High School
101 Matteawan Road, Beacon
774-249-8943 | beaconperformingartscenter.com

Blood, Sweat and Tears

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

Steel Magnolias

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

SATURDAY, DEC. 9

Bring the Kids (ages 4+)

9:30 – 11:30 a.m. Boscobel
1601 Route 9D, Garrison
845-265-3638 | boscobel.org

Winter Weekend

10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Storm King Art Center
1 Museum Road, New Windsor
845-534-3115 | stormking.org

Boy Scout Xmas Tree / Wreath Sale

10 a.m. – 4 p.m. North Highlands Firehouse
504 Fishkill Road, Cold Spring | 914-523-8331

Early Cinematic Adaptations of the Life of Lincoln (Talk)

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

Hudson Valley Artisan Marketplace

10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Old VFW Hall
34 Kemble Ave., Cold Spring
hvirtmarket.wix.com/hvirtmarket

Family Music Hootenanny

10 a.m. Beacon Music Factory
333 Fishkill Ave., Beacon
845-765-0472 | beaconmusicfactory.com

Work:Shop Winter Market

10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Wickham Studio
578 Main St., Beacon
workshopwintermarket.com

Calendar Highlights

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

Holiday Flash Mob Rehearsal

11 a.m. Center for Creative Education
464 Main St., Beacon | cce4me.org

Holiday Party with Santa

11:30 a.m. Butterfield Library
See details under Friday.

Howland Cultural Center

1 – 5 p.m. Fine Arts and Crafts Fair
7:30 p.m. Kofi and Sankofa (Music)
477 Main St., Beacon
845-831-4988 | howlandculturalcenter.org

Elf the Musical Jr.

2 & 7 p.m. Beacon High School
See details under Friday.

It’s A Wonderful Life (1946)

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

Bicycle Tree Lighting

4 p.m. Holiday Flash Mob
4:30 p.m. Beacon High School Choir
4:50 p.m. Santa arrives. | 5 p.m. Tree lighting
Polhill Park, Beacon | beaconarts.org

A Little Advent Music

5 p.m. St. Andrew’s Church | 15 South Ave., Beacon
845-831-1369 | standrewsbeaconny.org

Steven Edson: Road Paint (Opening)

Group Show: *PHOTOcentric 2017 (Opening)*
5 – 7 p.m. Garrison Art Center
23 Garrison’s Landing, Garrison
845-424-3960 | garrisonartcenter.org

Middle School Movie Night: Star Wars VII

7 p.m. Philipstown Recreation Center
107 Glenclyffe Drive, Garrison
845-424-4618 | philipstownrecreation.com

Jessica Lynn’s Country Christmas Spectacular

8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
See details under Friday.

Steel Magnolias

8 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
See details under Friday.

BEACON SECOND SATURDAY

Gemstone Pendant Jewelry Trunk Show

2 – 8 p.m. RiverWinds Gallery | 172 Main St., Beacon
| 845-838-2880 | riverwindsgallery.com

Holiday Fine Art Exhibition

5 – 7 p.m. Bannerman Island Gallery
250 Main St., Beacon
845-416-8342 | bannermancastle.org

Thomas Huber: After Some Time (Talk)

5 p.m. Matteawan Gallery
436 Main St., Beacon
845-440-7901 | matteawan.com

Small Works Show

6 – 9 p.m. Catalyst Gallery
137 Main St., Beacon
845-204-3844 | catalystgallery.com

Herman Roggemann: Floatilla

Laianna Ferruggia: *Thrive*
6 – 9 p.m. bau Gallery | 506 Main St., Beacon
845-440-7584 | baugallery.com

Gift Wrapped 2017

6 – 9 p.m. Clutter Gallery | 163 Main St., Beacon
212-255-2505 | shop.cluttermagazine.com/gallery

Electric Projected (Documentary)

7 p.m. Beacon Institute
199 Main St., Beacon | beaconarts.org

SUNDAY, DEC. 10

CVFD 2017 Santa Run

9 a.m. – 1 p.m. | See continentalvillagefd.org for stops. | Rain date: Dec. 17

Boy Scout Xmas Tree / Wreath Sale

10 a.m. – 4 p.m. North Highlands Firehouse
See details under Saturday.

Winter Weekend

10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Storm King Art Center
See details under Saturday.

Work:Shop Winter Market

11 a.m. – 5 p.m. Wickham Studio
See details under Saturday.

No-Strings Marionettes

1 p.m. *Nick of Time* | 4 p.m. *Scrooge*
Howland Cultural Center | Details under Saturday.

Steel Magnolias

2 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
See details under Friday.

Pints and Prayers

3 p.m. Dogwood | 47 E. Main St., Beacon

Newburgh Symphonic Chorale:

Ceremony of Carols
4 p.m. St. George’s Church
105 Grand St., Newburgh
845-534-2864 | newburghchambermusic.org

Cirque Dreams Holidaze

5 p.m. Eisenhower Hall Theatre | 655 Ruger Road,
West Point | 845-938-4159 | ikehall.com

Get Lit Beacon: A Literary Salon

5 p.m. Oak Vino Wine Bar
389 Main St., Beacon | Facebook: Get Lit Beacon

St. Philip’s Choir: Bach’s Magnificent

5 p.m. St. Philip’s Church | 1101 Route 9D,
Garrison | 845-424-3571 | stphilipshighlands.org

Living Nativity

6 p.m. Church on the Hill | 245 Main St., Cold Spring

Breakneck Ridge Revue

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

MONDAY, DEC. 11

Haldane vs. Keio (Boys’ Basketball)

6:15 p.m. Haldane School
15 Craigsides Drive, Cold Spring
845-265-9254 | haldaneschool.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 | beaonk12.org

Community Forum on Superintendent Search

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

TUESDAY, DEC. 12

Bicycle Menorah Lighting: Celebrating

Volunteers
5:30 p.m. 427 Main St., Beacon | beaconarts.org

Garrison Fire District Election

5 – 9 p.m. Garrison Fire House | 1616 Route 9,
Garrison | 845-424-4406 | garrisonfd.org

Beacon vs. Brewster (Girls’ Basketball)

6:15 p.m. Beacon High School
See details under Friday.

North Highlands Fire District Election

6 – 9 p.m. North Highlands Firehouse
504 Fishkill Road, Cold Spring
845-265-7285 | nhfd21.org

Board of Trustees

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

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 13

Leaf/yard debris pickup in Cold Spring

Healthcare Job Fair

10 a.m. – 1 p.m. TOPs Building
112 Old Route 6, Carmel | terrence.irding@labor.ny.gov

Holiday Card-making Workshop

1 p.m. Howland Public Library | 313 Main St.,
Beacon | 845-831-1134 | beaconlibrary.org

Bicycle Menorah Lighting: Celebrating Educators

5:30 p.m. 427 Main St., Beacon | beaconarts.org

Beacon Chamber Holiday Gathering

5:30 p.m. Chill Wine Bar | 173 Main St., Beacon
beaconchamberofcommerce.com

Garrison School Board

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

THURSDAY, DEC. 14

Bicycle Menorah Lighting: Celebrating First Responders

5:30 p.m. 427 Main St., Beacon | beaconarts.org

Cold Spring Chamber Holiday Party

6 p.m. Cathryn’s Tuscan Grill
91 Main St., Cold Spring | explorecoldspringny.com

Beacon vs. Sleepy Hollow (Girls’ Basketball)

6:15 p.m. Beacon High School
See details under Friday.

Into the Woods

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

FRIDAY, DEC. 15

Zine Club

3:30 p.m. Howland Public Library
See details under Wednesday.

Beacon Historical Society

4 – 6 p.m. Open House
6 – 8 p.m. Members’ Holiday Party | 17 South Ave.,
Beacon | 845-831-0514 | beaconhistorical.org

Bicycle Menorah Lighting: Celebrating Children

4:45 p.m. 427 Main St., Beacon | beaconarts.org

The Brasiles Ensemble

5 – 7 p.m. Magazzino
2700 Route 9, Cold Spring
magazzino.art/events/magazzino-holiday-festivities
Reservations required. *I*

Into the Woods

7 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
See details under Thursday.

Open-Mic Night

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

Steel Magnolias

8 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
See details under Dec. 8.

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The Coolest Tavern in Newburgh (from Page 9)



The intricately carved mahogany bar came from Manhattan.

Photos by M. Turton

"They buried him back behind the barn," Costa said. Years later, Costa would dismantle the barn, using the materials to build the house he lives in on the site.

Prohibition

According to Costa, the tavern's most fascinating period came after 1928, when Mrs. Sauer sold the property to Mitch Nixon.

"He worked for the Legs Diamond organization," Costa said of Nixon, referring to Jack "Legs" Diamond, aka "Gentleman Jack," a gangster who plied his trade in New York City and Philadelphia. He met his demise when he was murdered in an Albany rooming house in December 1931 after being acquitted of the kidnapping and torture of a truck driver transporting 26 barrels of hard cider without his permission.

In Newburgh, Nixon closed the rooming house to make room for slot machines on half of the second floor and a still on half of the third that produced "genuine" Gordon's Dry London Gin. On the other halves of the two floors, accessible only by separate stairway, was a brothel.

Counterfeit Gordon's labels, found by Costa when he dismantled the intact still in the 1970s, are on display in the restaurant, along with one of Nixon's business cards illustrated with a sketch of a naked woman.

Fascinating finds

Costa has had some fascinating finds over the years. In a gutter above the rear of the building he found a Colt Lightning, the company's first double-action revolver. In the barn he discovered a long-barreled Stevens 410 shot pistol. He

also rescued at least one slot machine from the second floor.

There were liquid treasures, as well. Under the trap door of what was once Mrs. Sauer's kitchen he found jugs of homemade booze that Costa believes she made but which he says were unfit for consumption. In the barn, however, he found several gallons of "applejack," a distilled apple liquor.

"Nixon made really good applejack out in the barn; it's delicious," Costa said. "I still have about 2 gallons" of the now 90-year-old brandy.

The tavern's beautiful mahogany bar was originally housed in Manhattan, according to Costa's old-timers. Around the end of the Civil War it was brought up to Newburgh and installed in the United States Hotel on the riverfront. When the hotel was remodeled around 1895, the bar was brought to North Plank Road. "They had to cut it down to make it fit," Costa said.

Costa operates the tavern with his wife, Denise, and son, Zach. Its two dining rooms are painted in the *Trompe-l'œil* technique — French for "deceive the eye" — the walls are painted to mimic wood, stone and brick. One features a painted doorway, while another has a signed fresco of the Hudson River, painted when the carved bar was brought in.

The cuisine

When Costa took over in the 1970s he served French cuisine, although "it's more of a modern American menu now,"



Bartender Madalyn Kneeter pours an ale at the tavern's 200-year-old bar.

he says. The tavern's "greatest hits" are an amalgam of offerings from chefs who have worked there over the years, including Kevin Reilly (later executive chef at the Water Club in Manhattan) and Costa's first wife, Lucy.

"You're not going to find our pan-seared jalapeno cheddar bread slab anywhere else," Costa boasts. He also recommends the spicy crab bisque, salmon sur planche and Campanelli Farms crispy skin chicken.

North Plank Road Tavern, at 30 Plank Road, opens at 3 p.m. and serves until 9 or 10 p.m. It is closed on Mondays. See northplankroadtavern.com or call 845-562-5031 for reservations.

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The Best Thing That Ever Happened to Beacon Art (from Page 9)

the exhibit induces “huge flashbacks and great memories. It’s all documented now; it’s archived and it’s important that it is.”

While BeaconArts was created before the arrival of Dia:Beacon, it was Dia that “made Beacon a place to come to,” she says. “Also, our Main Street is unique. It’s very long, for a Main Street, because contemporary Beacon was created out of two villages, each with their own center, coming together. So many people know each other, and Main Street is a spine which keeps us connected.”

Rivers says her goal putting the exhibit together “was to represent a little snippet of what it might have felt



Keys to the City, which debuted this year, placed pianos around the community, such as this one at Key Food.

Photo by Rob Penner



From 2010 to 2015, the epicenter of Beacon Open Studios was Truck City, where artists created mini-studios in rented U-Hauls.

Photo by Linda T. Hubbard

like to actually be at one of these past events. Luckily a lot of great photographers were there.

“We also looked for projects that could be represented by artwork,” she says, such as guitars from RiverFest, sculptures from Beacon 3D, a concept design sketchbook and maquette study from the River Beacons mural, a piano from Keys to the City, sculptures created at the HEFeSTUS iron pour, an owl mural from Electric Windows and totems from Two Row Wampum.

There’s also a listening station for *Freedom and Truth*, a musical composition commissioned by BeaconArts for the dedication of a marker in 2016 honoring American journalist and women’s rights advocate Margaret Fuller (1810-1850).

Finally, on Second Saturday in December, February and March, BeaconArts will screen documentaries about its projects and artists. On Dec. 9, at 7 p.m., the selection will be *Electric Projected* by Cary Janks and Dan Weise.

Over the years, BeaconArts provided funding for a variety of projects, including Second Saturday, Beacon Open Studios, the Beacon Independent Film Festival, Beacon 3D, the Bicycle Christmas Tree and Menorah, Windows on Main Street and, most recently, the Bus Shelter artwork project. The

group also has a website at beaconarts.org to promote events and prints a map of Beacon distributed through its members four times a year.



Pop Culture, by Insun Kim, was displayed along Main Street during Beacon 3D in 2014.

Photo by Michael Kriegh




Steel Magnolias

By Robert Harling

Directed by Sally Mayes

December 1, 2, 3 - 8, 9, 10 - 15, 16, 17

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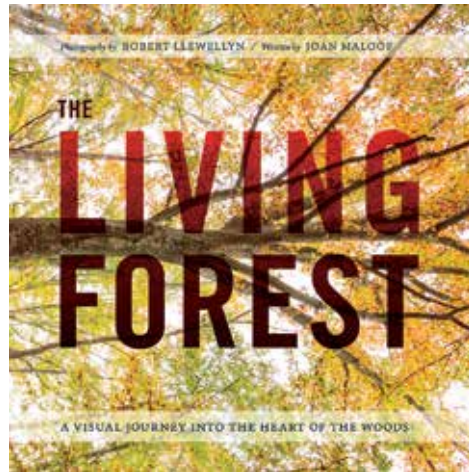
By Pamela Doan

In the Oct. 27 issue I wrote about visiting the High Line in New York City and how my experience was enhanced by having read *Gardens of the High Line: Elevating the Nature of Modern Landscapes*, by Piet Oudolf and Rick Darke. For anyone who wants to emulate and understand what is happening in those naturalistic designs, check out ***Planting: A New Perspective***, which Oudolf co-authored with Noel Kingsbury.

The book is a useful guide for gardeners who want to understand the sustainable

approach taken by an innovative landscape designer. It is both a resource with plant lists and a tool of knowledge about what goes on in the landscape.

The Living Forest: A Visual Journey into the Heart of the Woods, by Robert Llewellyn and Joan Maloof, is another rich experience with nature. The natural world is changing rapidly in response to many pressures: development, climate change, invasive species, major storms. (Both of these titles are available at timberpress.com.) Pair it with ***The Hidden Life of Trees***, by Peter Wohlleben.

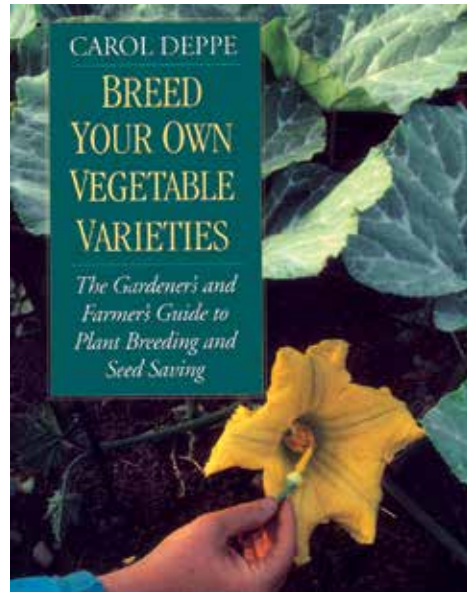


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The Pollinator Garden seed set

Garden, Cut Flower Garden or go for the Collection Bundle. As a bonus, you get to support a small business dedicated to preserving and propagating heirloom and open-pollinated varieties through sustainable, organic growing. I find growing from



seed to be the most satisfying and remarkable process. See hudsonvalleyseed.com.

On the subject of open-pollinated seeds, help the vegetable gardener in your life go to the next level with Carol Deppe's ***Breed Your Own Vegetable Varieties: The Gardener's and Farmer's Guide to Plant Breeding and Seed Saving***. If you've ever grown a tomato, squash or pepper that truly worked in your growing conditions and had a flavor you loved, use this resource to learn how to save seeds from it and adapt it to be even better. It's also a way to recover some of the control that we've lost to agribusiness. See chelseagreen.com.

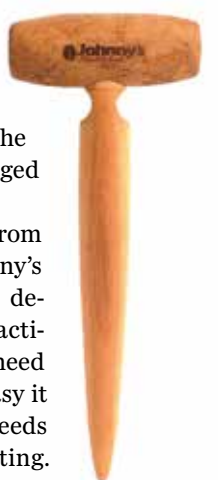
All work and no play makes for a grouchy gardener. Give the gift of beauty and leisure with **a membership to a garden**. Stonecrop Gardens near Cold Spring (stonecrop.org), Innisfree Garden in Millbrook (innisfreegarden.org) and the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx (nybg.org) are prime viewing spots and memberships offer other perks. If you're lucky, your recipient will take you along and you'll get the pleasure of his or her perspective.



A garden knife set from Hudson Valley Seed Co.

Gardening is always easier when you have the right tool, and most gardeners I know tend to skimp in this area. We have workarounds, and it's too much effort to go back to the shed to get something. The **Opinel garden knife set** from Hudson Valley Seed Co. has a blade for any situation and the brightly colored handles are easy to spot when you set one down and want to find it again on the ground. One blade is curved for harvesting or pruning, the other is a straight-blade garden knife, and the serrated blade is capable of sawing through small trunks. The set comes nicely packaged in a wood box.

I covet this **dibble** from employee-owned Johnny's Seeds. It's a gorgeously designed tool and also practical. You won't think you need one until you see how easy it makes planting bulbs, seeds or garlic and transplanting. See johnnyseeds.com.



Dibble



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Dibble

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Santa at Butterfield

St. Nick to visit library

Children of all ages are invited to meet Santa Claus at the Butterfield Library in Cold Spring at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 9. The library will provide crafts and refreshments and each child will receive a gently used book.

Tree and Wreath Sale

Boy Scouts will be at NHFD

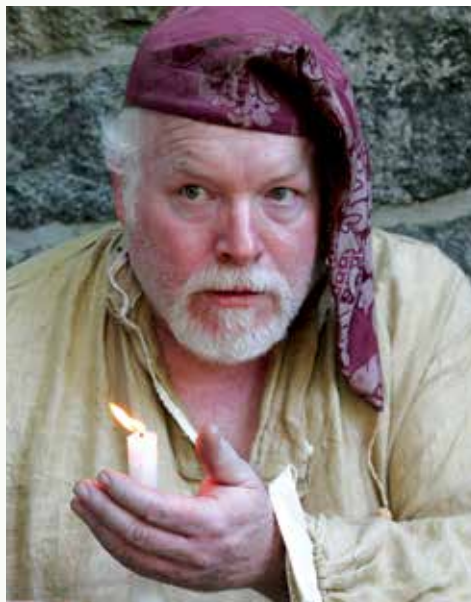
Philipstown Troop 437 will hold its annual fundraiser from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 9, and Sunday, Dec. 10. The Boy Scouts will be selling wreaths, trees and holiday decorations at the North Highlands Fire Department on Fishkill Road near Route 9 in Philipstown. To reserve a tree, email John Maasik at jmaasik@gmail.com.

Merry, Beary Christmas

Bears get their presents Dec. 16

Watch the bears open their holiday gift boxes filled with treats on Saturday, Dec. 16, at the Trailside Zoo at Bear Mountain State Park. Arrive at 10:30 a.m. to make the snacks and watch as the bears enjoy the results at 11 a.m. The ice rink, merry-go-round and hiking trails will be open. See trailsidezoo.org.

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS



Greg Miller in one of the 30 roles he will play in a one-man adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* to be performed at St. Mary's Church in Cold Spring on Dec. 16

File photo by Greg Gunder

Dickens with a Cast of One

One-man show at St. Mary's

A one-man adaptation of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* will be performed at St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Cold Spring at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 16, as a fundraiser for the church. The

classic story was adapted by Christine Bokhour and Greg Miller and first performed in 2014. Tickets are \$25 each, or \$15 for students and seniors. See brownpapertickets.com/event/3192001.

First Noel

Orchestra to perform classics

The Greater Newburgh Symphony Orchestra will perform its first holiday concert at 4 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 16, at Aquinas Hall on the Mount Saint Mary College campus in Newburgh.

Under the direction of Russell Ger, the program includes Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite* and other seasonal classics. The soloists are Erica Spyres (soprano), Patrice Eaton (mezzo soprano), John Kawa (tenor) and Adrian Rosas (bass). Tickets are \$22 to \$45 each at newburghsymphony.org.

Holidays at Mount Gulian

Storytelling and candlelit tours

Mount Gulian will host candlelight tours of the historic Dutch Colonial home of the Verplanck family on Sunday, Dec. 17, from 4 to 7 p.m., as well as Tuesday, Dec. 19, and Wednesday, Dec. 20, from 1 to 4 p.m. Tickets are \$4 to \$10,

or free for members. Storyteller Lorraine Hartin Gelardi will also perform at 5 p.m. on Dec. 17. The home has been decorated for the holidays with greens, ribbons, bows and sparkle.

Menorah Lighting

Set for Dec. 17 in Cold Spring

A menorah lighting ceremony to celebrate the start of Hanukkah will take place at 1 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 17, near the Cold Spring Depot Restaurant on Main Street. See putnamchabad.org.

Magazzino Holiday

Brasiles Ensemble will perform

Magazzino Italian Art will host a reception on Friday, Dec. 15, at its space on Route 9 in Philipstown with a performance by the Brasiles Ensemble accompanied by fine lute and piano. Italian holiday treats will be offered beginning at 5 p.m., with the concert at 6 p.m. The repertoire will include Italian arias, madrigals and Gregorian Latin masterpieces.

Due to Magazzino's limited parking, guests are encouraged to take shuttles from and to the Cold Spring train station beginning at 4 p.m., with service until 7:30 p.m. Reservations for the event are required. See magazzino.art/events/upcoming.

Health Care Job Fair

Scheduled in Carmel on Dec. 13

The Carmel Career Center is hosting a job fair with five health care businesses from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 13, at the Putnam County Training and Operations Building Auditorium, 112 Old Route 6.

Able Healthcare, A & J Homecare Services, Putnam Ridge, Sunshine Homecare Services and Vision Healthcare will meet applicants. No appointment is needed but organizers ask participants to dress for success and bring a resume and two forms of ID. Call 914-737-3490, ext. 327, for information.

What Does Voting Mean?

Students invited to enter MLK Jr. contest

Students in elementary, middle and high school are invited to enter a contest sponsored by the Desmond-Fish Library in Garrison in connection with its annual celebration in January of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Students can submit an essay, short story, poem, poster or short video inspired by interviews with five people about why they vote (or don't). Email dfiprograms@gmail.com. Entries must be submitted by Jan. 1 at either the Desmond-Fish or Butterfield libraries.

Sculpture Honors Clearwater

Installed at riverfront in Peekskill

A ceremony was held at Charles Point in Peekskill on Dec. 2 to dedicate a sculpture honoring Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, the vessel that launched an environmental movement led by folk singer Pete Seeger.

The 24-foot *North Star* was made by Al Landzberg of Yorktown Heights with a sailboat mast salvaged by his son-in-law, Chuck Newman, from a discarded boat at the Peekskill Yacht Club. Initially installed in Yonkers, the piece was moved

to Charles Point in May and donated to the city.



North Star, a sculpture by Al Landzberg, before its move to Charles Point in Peekskill to honor Clearwater

Photo provided

Beacon

Revue Returns to Crier

Beacon show on Dec. 10

The Breakneck Ridge Revue will perform at the Towne Crier on Sunday, Dec. 10, at 7:30 p.m. with songwriter and poet Jake Holmes (who wrote and performed *Dazed and Confused* two years before Led Zeppelin did), keyboardist Chris Brown and folk master David Bernz and the Trouble Sisters.

Visit highlandscurrent.com for news updates and latest information.

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS (from previous page)



POET GOLD RETURNS – Bettina “Gold” Wilkerson has been re-appointed as the Dutchess County poet laureate for 2018. *Newburgh Illuminated*

Bless This Beer

Pints and prayers at Dogwood

Dogwood in Beacon will host Pints and Prayers with the First Presbyterian Church on Sunday, Dec. 10, at 3 p.m. at 47 East Main St. Sing carols, wear an ugly Christmas sweater and enjoy the worship band. Donations will be collected for hurricane damage relief.

Jazz Duo at Record Store

Concert at Hudson Valley Vinyl

Joe McPhee and Billy Stein will perform at Hudson Valley Vinyl in Beacon on Saturday, Dec. 16, from 7 to 9 p.m. Stein is a guitarist and McPhee plays

multiple instruments. The store is located at 267 Main St.

Music for Advent

Free concert at St. Andrew’s

Brother José Martínez-Cubero (tenor) and the Rev. John Williams (baritone) will be accompanied by pianist Maximilian Esmus in a free concert at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 9, at St. Andrew’s Church in Beacon. The performance, called *A Little Advent Music*, will include music by Benjamin Britten, Ravel and Saint Saens. The church is located at 17 South Ave.

Visit highlandscurrent.com for news updates and latest information.

Art and Poetry



Thomas Huber, whose work is on display at the Matteawan Gallery in Beacon through Dec. 17, will talk at the gallery about his work at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 9. There will also be a poetry reading by Edwin Torres. *Image provided*



Joe McPhee and Billy Stein will perform at Hudson Valley Vinyl on 7 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 16. *Photos provided*



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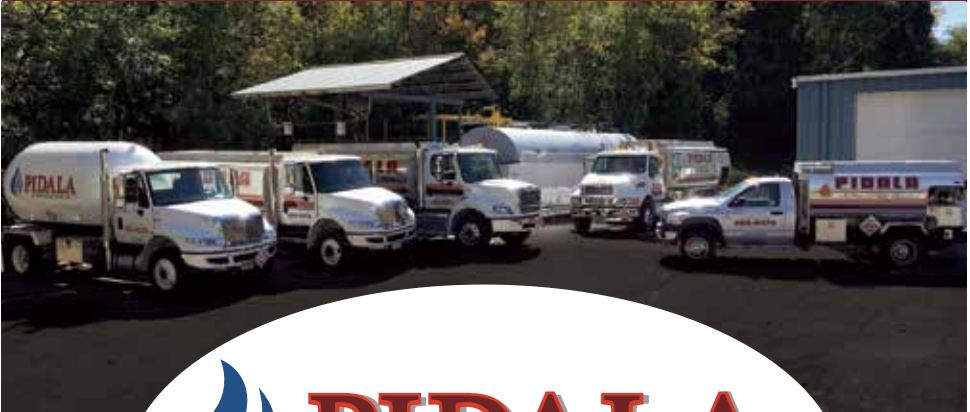
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Ideas to Action

Philipstown residents push projects

By Michael Turton

The Philipstown Community Congress moved from “wish list” to “let’s make it happen” at a Dec. 3 forum at the Haldane school as residents gathered to push for the projects that received the most votes in a survey.

More than 750 people voted for about 40 proposed projects and plans presented at three public meetings. The top three vote-getters were the creation of biking and walking paths, ensuring clean water and establishing a teen center.

Hiking trails

Philipstown has many hiking trails but the discussion

group wanted to take a fresh look at the subject. They floated ideas such as closing one or more roads to cars on some weekend days to allow people to bike safely, said Marianne Sullivan, noting that similar closures have been successful in New York City and Seattle. The group also wants to identify carriage roads and trails that could be linked.

Clean water

The group would like to see a study that identifies “the most important parcels of land for conservation and land-use actions to protect the water supply,” said Michelle Smith, executive director of the Hudson Highlands Land Trust. She said other goals include establishing a clean water coalition and water quality

monitoring. “We are excited that this activity coincides with the update to the Philipstown comprehensive plan,” she said.

Teen center

An effort to open a teen center has quickly gathered momentum. “We have more than 100 people who signed up to help,” said Sandy McKelvey, suggesting the American Legion on Cedar Street as a potential location after the senior center moves to the Butterfield site in the spring.

McKelvey said that when she met with Haldane’s Teen Mentors group, its members were “overwhelmingly in favor of a space for high school kids to go after school.” They were also unanimous on one other point. “If you call it



A group at the Dec. 3 forum, including Putnam County legislator Barbara Scuccimarra, at right, discusses clean water initiatives. Photos by M. Turton

a teen center, no one will go,” she said. A survey of teens will be conducted to find a creative name. The center will be operated by a group of teens and adults.

Several other initiatives from the Community Congress survey were discussed, including school district consolidation, local efforts to fight climate change, sales tax redistribution, improvements to the Philipstown Recreation Center, bringing essential health care services to the Butterfield development, improved road maintenance and banning plastic bags and Styrofoam.

Jason Angell, the executive director of the Ecological Citizen’s Project, the group that organized the congress, wrote in an email that he envisions the congress having a less active role as the working groups take ownership of the projects.

“Our role will be to help distribute update reports and calls for volunteers, and to help organize a collective meeting once there is significant progress to report,” he said. The Ecological Citizen’s Project plans to launch a Community Congress in Peekskill in the spring, he said.



Jason Angell, one of the organizers of the Philipstown Community Congress, provides instructions to the discussion groups.

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Sports

Girls' Basketball Preview

By Leigh Alan Klein

Haldane

Coach Tyrone Searight's program has set the bar high, winning four straight Section 1 Class C titles. The Blue Devils will be tested this year. Haldane's starting backcourt graduated last June after an 18-win campaign that reached the regional final in the state tournament.

Haldane would like to play fast. When the Blue Devils are at their best they are moving the ball quickly up the court before the defense can set up and getting the ball inside to senior Allison Chiera. Defensively, Haldane likes to extend to full-court pressure.

In its first game of the season, on Dec. 5 at Bronxville, Haldane was successful in the first half with its game plan, storming to a 28-14 lead. But in the second half, the Blue Devils couldn't find their rhythm. Early-season fatigue set in and Haldane lost the momentum that its defense and rebounding provided in the first half.

Bronxville handled the basketball much better after the break and Haldane didn't get the same open looks from the perimeter. Bronxville gutted out a 38-36 win by attacking the Haldane zone and holding the Blue Devils to only eight second-half points. Still, Bronxville needed to block a late Haldane shot and force a turnover to seal the victory.

Chiera, who after last season was named a third team



Haldane will depend on Abbey Stowell (25) to make plays.

Photo by Scott Warren

All-State selection, is the focal point of the offense. Gone is Hannah Monteleone, but in are her two sisters, Livy and Bela, as starters. Livy, who is active on the glass, is a good interior passer and had seven points in the first half. Bela logged her first varsity minutes and will look to build upon them.

Olivia McDermott and Abbey Stowell lead the defense. A sophomore, McDermott, is a lights-out three-point shooter, most comfortable on the catch-and-shoot. She led Haldane with nine points at the half. A standout in the pentathlon, Stowell has many duties on the basketball team, as well, as the primary playmaker.

The Blue Devils hosted Irvington on Dec. 7 and play in a tournament in Croton next week.

Beacon

The Bulldogs opened their season on Dec. 5 at Walter Panas High School with a 41-24 loss.

Last season, led by senior Lauren Schetter, Beacon advanced to the sectional quarterfinals, upsetting Hendrick Hudson before being ousted by Tappan Zee.

This season the Bulldogs will be led by senior Brianna Dembo, who scored 15 of the team's 24 points at Panas. "Bri is a strong returner, she's our leader," said Coach Christine Dahl, who is in her 16th season at Beacon.

The sophomores who had varsity minutes last season will need to step up, Dahl said. "They are learning as they go," she said. "They will get better."

Sophomore Skyler Kurtz will play an important role as a



Senior Brianna Dembo (11) looks for an open teammate during the Bulldogs' loss at Walter Panas on Dec. 5. Dembo finished with 15 points. For more photos, see highlandscurrent.com.

Photo by Richard Kuperberg Sr.



Sophomores Livy and Bela Monteleone are two of Haldane's starters.

Photo by Scott Warren



Enita Rodriguez (5) drives to the basket against Panas.

Photo by Richard Kuperberg Sr.

playmaker, ballhandler and defensive stopper. Sarah Evans provided a spark for Beacon with strong interior play at Panas, scoring six points in her first varsity minutes.

Beacon hosts Lakeland tonight (Friday, Dec. 8) at 6:15 p.m. The Bulldogs visit Haldane on Jan. 24.

Fall Sports Honors

Girls' Soccer

Jade Villella, Haldane (Second Team All-State)

Volleyball

Makenzie Patinella, Haldane (Third Team All-State, All-Section)

Mackenzie Tokarz, Haldane (Fourth Team All-State, All-Section)

Conference 3 Coach of Year: Kelsey Flaherty, Haldane

Brianna Dembo, Beacon (All-League)

Jummie Akinwunmi, Beacon (All-League Honorable Mention)

Tessa Nilsen, Beacon (All-League Honorable Mention)

Football

Sam Giachinta, Haldane (All-League, All-County)

Brandon Twoguns, Haldane (All-League, All-County)

William Westerhuis (All-League)

Brad Dowd (All-League)

The All-State football teams are announced in January.