Pomp and Circumstances

With schools shuttered, districts forced to pivot

By Jeff Simms

After Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s announcement on May 1 that schools will remain closed for the remainder of the academic year, teachers and administrators in the Highlands face a new set of challenges.

Amid the COVID-19 shutdown, they’ve already been asked to keep students engaged over the internet. Now they must navigate year-end traditions — prom, awards ceremonies and, most notably, graduation — under social-distancing regulations.

“There isn’t a playbook for this,” said Elisa Soto, the principal of Beacon High School.

State: Hudson Valley Not Ready

Businesses worry about protecting customers

By Leonard Sparks

The seven-county Hudson Valley region that includes Dutchess and Putnam has not met the criteria to begin a phased-in loosening of restrictions put in place in March to slow the spread of COVID-19.

The Mid-Hudson, which has 2.3 million people, falls short on three of seven benchmarks: (1) sustained decreases in hospital deaths; (2) fewer than two new hospitalizations a day per 100,000 residents; and (3) a minimum of 30 people per 100,000 to trace those who come into contact with people confirmed positive.

Besides Dutchess and Putnam, the region consists of Westchester County, which has the most COVID-19 cases outside of New York City and Long Island; Orange and Rockland counties, which also have high numbers of cases; and Sullivan and Ulster.

State: Hudson Valley Not Ready

Highlands, have argued that the two counties should be considered “upstate” and not grouped with their neighbors.

New York, where infections and deaths are still high but declining, is one of about 30 states that have announced plans to begin removing restrictions on businesses. The shutdown, now in its eighth week, has led to widespread layoffs and severe revenue shortfalls for states, counties and local municipalities.

Despite the economic pressures, national polls have found a significant majority of Americans prioritize public health, and projections predict that infections and deaths will rise when people begin returning to workplaces, stores and restaurants in large numbers.

“There’s a cost of staying closed; there’s also a cost of reopening quickly,” Cuomo said during his weekday briefing on Tuesday (May 5). “That is the hard truth that we are all dealing with.”

He added: “Our reopening plan doesn’t have a tradeoff; our reopening plan says you monitor the data. If it goes up, you have a circuit breaker. You stop; you close.

(Continued on Page 9)

Enough Police in Cold Spring?

Putnam legislator questions response to visitors

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

Nancy Montgomery, who represents Philipstown on the Putnam County Legislature, this week questioned whether Cold Spring has sufficient law enforcement to handle the crowds descending on the village despite social-distancing regulations amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Montgomery, the panel’s sole Democrat, raised the issue on Tuesday (May 5) at the Legislature’s monthly meeting, conducted via audio connection.

Even with the closing of nearby state park trails, the visitors “just keep coming,” she said. “Our Main Street was overrun” over the May 2-3 weekend, with many tourists failing to maintain a 6-foot distance, she said. She predicted the crowds would only grow.

(Continued on Page 18)
FIVE QUESTIONS: RONZELL SMITH

By Brian PJ Cronin

Ronzell Smith, a chef at Dogwood in Beacon, has been spotted recently roller skating on Main Street in a giant-panda suit.

How long have you been dressing as a giant panda?

The panda is a variation of one of my many costumes. I dress up three or four times a week in a different “cosplay” (costume play) that I design myself. I also sell my designs at The Underground Beacon.

Why dress up?

I was part of the theater kids at Beacon High School and built a lot of props. I always liked to sew and make stuff with my hands; Halloween was always my favorite holiday. After I joined the military, I was stationed in North Carolina, and a friend said, “Hey, I’m going to a sci-fi convention,” and I thought “Cool, I love sci-fi.” I put on an X-Men T-shirt. We get there and there’s all these people dressed as their favorite characters, and I was like, “What the hell is this?” I had heard of cosplay, but I didn’t realize it was a real thing. Once I saw it, I thought, “Well, that’s my life now.”

What gave you the idea to roller skate on Main Street?

I wanted to get a little exercise, and I figured a good way to sweat would be to get in that super-hot panda suit. I also have a teddy bear suit. On Monday [May 4], dressed as Kylo Ren from Star Wars. Yesterday I was Raiden from Mortal Kombat. I was Elmo a few days ago. I put a little hat on him and some hip-hop clothes. I like to do my own version of characters, like when I dress as Wolverine, because I’m black, he’s Wolverine Black. It gives me a chance to express myself while we’re locked away.

How do people react?

People love the fluffy, happy costumes, but I have one costume that’s a bodysuit that shows the muscular system, and people aren’t so sure about that one. It’s nice to see the joy in everyone’s face when I dress as the bear. You can’t get that kind of love anywhere. People are so happy to see you. But that thing will suffocate you if you’re not careful. It’s really hot.

Where else do you go in costume?

I attend Hudson Valley Comic Con and New York Comic Con. I’m usually at The Underground Beacon once or twice a week. I’ll do karaoke at Quinn’s in a bear costume as Beary White and sing Barry White songs. Sometimes I go to work in a costume, although obviously I can’t wear the bear suit in the kitchen. Anything that’s flammable and bulky is out.
Hustis Case Delayed a Fifth Time
Rescheduled for June 3

The prosecution of Charles E. “Chuck” Hustis III, who was arrested by the FBI in Cold Spring on Dec. 16 and accused of soliciting a minor for sex, has been delayed a fifth time, until June 3.

According to documents filed in federal court on May 6, Benjamin Gold, who represents the former Cold Spring village trustee and mayoral candidate, is talking with federal prosecutors about “possible disposition of this case without trial.”

The judge released Hustis, 36, in December on $150,000 bond but placed him under home detention with a monitoring device.

Molinaro: Dutchess Finances Strong
Says surplus will be essential to ‘restart’

Dutchess County Executive Marc Molinaro on May 4 said that the county ended 2019 with a surplus behind a 4.6 percent increase in sales tax revenue.

The Annual Financial Report that the county submitted to the state showed 2019 revenues of $472.6 million, while expenses were $471.2 million, for a surplus of $1.4 million. Revenues included a $9.1 million increase in sales tax revenue. State aid also rose by $8.7 million, which included a one-time increase in the county’s foster care block grant.

Rising expenses included $1.7 million in sales tax revenue shared with municipalities; $1.8 million in funding for Dutchess Community College; $2.7 million increase for state-mandated preschool special education; $7.6 million for union contract settlements, positions, benefits and debt service; and $3 million for mandated family assistance and safety net costs.

The report can be downloaded at bit.ly/dutchess-report.

Molinaro said that in response to COVID-19, Dutchess has suspended hiring for open positions, postponed non-essential travel and training and delayed all spending deemed “non-essential.” He said the county is keeping an eye on what the state may be doing to provide in aid because it accounts for 16 percent of the 2020-21 Dutchess budget.

He said the county is lobbying the federal government to provide support for counties with fewer than 500,000 residents and has formed a fiscal/financial team to focus on local economic impacts.

Beacon Receives Federal Grant
Will defray cost of new water tank

Beacon on May 1 announced it had received a federal grant that covers more than half of the cost of a new water tank.

The $856,467 grant, from an Environmental Protection Agency program designed to assist communities with their public water utilities, will pay for 58 percent of the $1.48 million cost of replacing the Fairview Water Tank. The tank, which holds 1 million gallons and was built in the early 1980s, will be replaced by a new tank that can hold up to 1.5 million gallons.

The city said it has eight other grant applications underway for $692,000 in funds for projects such as youth development, senior support, pollution prevention and firehouse enhancements.

State Ends STAR for Some
Those behind on tax payments won’t get benefit

The State of New York on April 1 changed the Basic STAR program, which provides homeowners with a break on their school taxes, so that anyone who is a year or more behind on payments will not receive the credit until they are paid up.

Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell voiced her opposition to the change in a statement on April 30, saying “this is not a time to penalize homeowners who have fallen behind in their property tax payments.” She added: “These kind of budget shenanigans may make state finances look better, but they amount to nothing more than hitting people when they are down.”

The state Department of Taxation and Finance plans this month to notify those who will lose their Basic STAR credit. The Enhanced STAR program, which is for seniors, was not affected. Property owners who have an adjusted gross annual income of more than $500,000 are not eligible for the credit.

Putnam Names Youth Leaders
Four Philipstown residents were among 15 students honored last month by the Putnam County Youth Board and Youth Bureau for their volunteer work.

Gaetano Cervone and Adam Sharifi, Garrison residents who attend O’Neill High School in Highland Falls, Charlotte Dinitz of Garrison, who attends the Bard Academy, and Alanna Moskowitz of Cold Spring, a student at Haldane High School, were each recognized with a Youth Award.

Nicole Kordoniaz and Spencer Smith from Putnam Valley High School, along with six students from Mahopac and three from Carmel, were also recognized by the program, which is in its 35th year. A dinner planned to honor the recipients was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The HIGHLANDS
JOIN NOW!
AND RECEIVE A SPECIAL GIFT!

Nine celebrated chefs and cookbook authors who are your friends and neighbors here in Philipstown and Beacon have shared with The Current some of their most comforting recipes so that we can share them with you as a digital cookbook.

Support The Current’s in-depth coverage of your community today by becoming a member for as little as $2 a month at:

highlandscurrent.org/join

See all benefits and receive a link to the cookbook!

ALREADY A MEMBER?
Check your email for a link to this special gift!

Thank you to you and our cookbook authors for all support.
The Current will be here for you through this crisis and back into calmer times.
Tell us what you think

The Current welcomes letters to the editor on its coverage and local issues. Submissions are selected by the editor to provide a variety of opinions and voices, and all are subject to editing for accuracy, clarity and length. We ask that writers remain civil and avoid personal attacks. Letters may be emailed to editor@highlandscurrent.org or mailed to Editor, The Highlands Current, 142 Main St., Cold Spring, NY 10516. The writer’s full name, village or city, and email or phone number must be included, but only the name and village or city will be published.

Opening up

Slow it down, folks (“Dutchess, Putnam: Keep Us Out of It,” May 1). Southern Dutchess has the next-highest number of positive cases after the city and town of Poughkeepsie. Why is the county number of reported deaths lower than the state’s for Dutchess? Is the county not counting the deaths in prisons and nursing homes? Sen. Sue Serino, Dutchess County Executive Marc Molinaro and Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell need to back off (with the push to reopen).

Ginny Buechele, via Facebook

I’m very happy Putnam has low numbers but we didn’t do the whole lot of testing. And if I can’t get that stuff anywhere. And if I can’t, I won’t patronize any businesses until there’s a vaccine. We cannot provide stupid Purell? That’s ridiculous, no? Beam me up, Scotty.

Lynn French, via Facebook

If it is OK for grocery and liquor stores to be open with safety guidelines, it should be the same for other businesses. Unfortunately, many businesses will not be able to hire everyone back due to the restrictions or be profitable enough to stay in business. A lot of information has become available since the beginning of this virus and I feel it is more about control than safety now.

Sara Gilbert, via Facebook

Are flu deaths, dead-on-arrivals and other deaths being counted in COVID-19 numbers? I think yes. Open it up and let us back to work.

Lynn French, via Facebook

We’ve barely tested in Putnam. Our residents have resorted to seeking tests in neighboring counties. It takes weeks to get tests back when people go to sites out of county. We have no idea how widespread the virus is in Putnam. Odell, as ever she does, will lead us down a ruinous path.

Kathleen Foley, via Facebook

I’m pretty sure bringing crowds from New York City will bring COVID-19 to Cold Spring.

In fact, it is Spring Forward.

Corrections

In our April 24 and May 1 issues, we reported that a member of the Beacon High School tennis team is the 2020 valedictorian at Beacon High School but identified the wrong player. In fact, the valedictorian is Patrick Lewis. Our apologies to Patrick. As we reported, Eric Ostrow, who is also on the tennis team, is the salutatorian.

In the May 1 issue, in a profile of talent manager Bernard Bunye, we identified a film by director Tom Gilroy as Come Forward. In fact, it is Spring Forward.

Our experience in Greene County is that folks who travel to our amenities from harder-hit areas are more than willing to drive two hours to clean the shelves of toilet paper; bad at practicing the basic social-distancing and other health-related mandates; make most purchases from box stores, which does little to improve our local economy; and are unsettling to locals. All-in-all, a pretty negative experience. I would recommend not creating an attractive nuisance by offering services worth driving for.

Lea Boyer, via Facebook

We are a short train ride away from harder-hit areas and we have had virtually no testing. The ignorance of these legislators is stunning. If MaryEllen Odell loves her seniors so much, she should probably try not to kill them.

Andrea Hudson, via Facebook

Everyone wants to get our businesses reopened as soon as possible. But the members of the Putnam County Business Council, with their businesses and livelihoods at stake, must surely want to see their businesses open to stay open, not to be closed down again in a couple of weeks when the infection rate spikes.

The way we do that is by being prepared,
Counting the Highlands

Response rates to the 2020 U.S. census, as of May 5, along with historical data, are at right. If a household doesn’t respond online, the agency sends a paper questionnaire. If there is still no response, a census taker will be dispatched over the summer to knock on the door, although those operations are now uncertain due to the coronavirus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>1990</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cold Spring</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putnam County</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>66.8</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philipstown</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>66.2</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>57.3</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nelsonville</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beacon</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18th District</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutchess County</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>65.7</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York State</td>
<td>51.6</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newburgh</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2020census.gov

I hope everyone will be extra generous with their school taxes this year — the teachers are doing an amazing job in a tough situation, and this has made urgently clear we need an educated populace for the future.

Ryan Biracree, via Facebook

Health act

COVID-19 and the economic crisis have thrown the dysfunctionality and injustice of our fragmented health care system into stark relief.

Hospitals are struggling to supply front-line workers with protective equipment; patients lay awake in intensive-care units wondering whether the treatment they are receiving will bankrupt them; structural inequalities amplify, ravaging low-income communities and communities of color; and hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers are losing their jobs and insurance just when universal coverage is most needed as a moral right and as a matter of public health.

Even before the crisis, millions of New Yorkers were uninsured or underinsured, rural and public health systems were struggling to survive, and local governments were being crushed under the weight of rising health care costs.

We can and must do better.

The New York Health Act is a state-level, single-payer health care bill that would guarantee comprehensive health care to every New Yorker, regardless of age, income or employment, with no premiums, copays or deductibles — and with no networks, so everyone has their choice of doctor and hospital.

The program would be paid for progressively, with the vast majority of New Yorkers paying less than they do now. In fact, multiple studies have shown that the bill would save the state billions of dollars each year. It would also save on property taxes — currently, 22 percent in Putnam and 38 percent in Dutchess County go toward Medicaid.

The act has already passed the Assembly four times and is one vote shy of majority support in the Senate. New York could pass the bill this year if we put enough pressure.

LETTERS AND COMMENTS

Dwight Arthur, Mahopac

(Continued from Page 4)

with 30 percent vacancy of hospital and ICU beds, infection rate below 1.0 (or perhaps 1.3), hospitalization rates declining for 14 days, and testing, tracing, isolation and personal protective equipment stockpiles in place.

Are our elected leaders making a serious proposal to change this, or are they just pandering to business leaders? They claim to be pushing to keep Putnam and Dutchess out of the group of “downstate” counties. Will there be a new Putnam-Dutchess region, with our taxpayers burdened with funding a monitoring center and a corps of qualified testers and trackers?

Instead of grandstanding, our elected officials should try to accomplish something. For example, they could try monitoring and publicizing our infection rate, hospital vacancies and trends in hospitalization, the numbers that will actually be used to decide when we can return to “normal.”

Ann Fanizzi, Carmel

If half of the COVID-19 deaths were in Montana, would they have locked down New York State? Obviously, there is no one-size-fits-all solution for a state as large and diverse as ours.

The truth is that Putnam and Dutchess are not even in the same universe as downstate, which is New York City, Westchester, Rockland and Nassau, which collectively have a population of more than 12 million people. If you separate the number of downstate COVID-19 fatalities from the rest of the U.S., we would not even be in the top 10. Be that as it may, many small business

(Continued on Page 6)
LETTERS AND COMMENTS

(Continued from Page 5)

COPING WITH STRESS

BY MICHAEL MCKEE, PHD

We’re in a situation that demands that we accept a number of unpleasant realities. We can’t go where we like, shop, drink or especially sing with whom we like. There is potential danger for our own health and the danger that we will harm others through contagion if we’re sick.

We have to accept the restrictions on our behavior and actively adapt to them.

Psychologist Marsha Linehan advises taking deliberate steps to acceptance:

◆ Observe that you are resisting reality (“This whole pandemic thing just can’t be happening”).

◆ Remind yourself how things came to be this way (“This coronavirus is very contagious in a globally connected population, etc.”)

◆ Practice accepting with the whole self: mind, body, spirit. Act as if you accept even if you don’t yet.

◆ Cope in advance with what may seem at present to be unacceptable.

◆ Allow yourself to feel the emotions result from acceptance mentally and physically. Use the mindfulness and relaxation skills that work for you, and acknowledge that living life involves pain.

◆ Stay active and maintain a focus on the local, present moment. Set tasks for yourself that are specific, achievable and realistic and in your control. And do one thing at a time.

Michael McKee is a licensed psychologist with offices in Garrison who specializes in Cognitive Behavioral Psychotherapy (CBT). He can be reached at 914-894-9352 or info@mckeetherapy.com. For more information, visit mckeetherapy.com.

Motorcycle noise

As the warm weather finally arrives, it brings with it noise pollution from the deluge of wannahe Wild Bunch members descending on the town and village.

I have to ask why two-wheeler motor vehicles are not held to the same standards as four-wheeled and trucks? If my car or pickup made the kind of noise most of these motorcycles make, I would have a stack of summonses and never pass annual inspection.

It is not only noise. I have observed bikers casually exceed the speed limit countless times on Peekskill Road and even on Main Street in front of the police station.

I was a U.S. Air Force pilot, and most of us retired with a 30 percent hearing loss from engine noise during ground ops.Motorcycles make much more noise than an aircraft’s engines. I am not in favor of infringing on the rights of motorcycle owners and operators.

I just don’t want them infringing on my right, or that of others, to a little peace and quiet. A few well-placed signs and a few well-placed summonses might work wonders to limit this annoyance.

Steven Sohn, Cold Spring

Thank you to workers

I would like to take this small space to give huge thanks to all the Foodtown employees. In such a stressful environment during the COVID-19 shutdown, they have maintained a sense of calm and courtesy. It can’t be easy wearing a mask and gloves at work every day and dealing with the public with long shifts.

Thank you for being there for our community. My family and many families we know are grateful.

Bill Coelius, Cold Spring

STAYING AT HOME

The chart in the May 1 issue showing movement tracked by cell phones wasn’t clear (“Moving Around”). Did phones not move more than 330 feet from some point, or 330 feet during the day? Despite being home all day, I am doing so much work around the house and garden, and going up and down stairs, that Google Fit is showing that I do at least 5,000 steps. Today, for example, it says I have walked 1.36 miles.

Kim Connor, via Facebook

The editor responds: The data measured whether a person moved more than 330 feet in any direction. Cuebiq also calculated the percentage of people who moved less than a mile, less than 10 miles and more than 10 miles, but that seemed like apples and oranges to compare New York City with the Highlands, since here we must usually drive 10 miles, but that seemed like apples and oranges to compare New York City with the Highlands, since here we must usually drive more than a mile to get groceries and other essentials. A note: We neglected to include the legend on the map. The darker the purple, the more people were staying put.

SPOTS AND ALL MY DOGS

This book/memoir depicts about 74 of my 81 years with my dog, my children’s dog, my granddogs, many family dogs and so many neighbor’s dogs... loved them all.

This is a loving message to all that love dogs. Rescue dogs are looking for the love of families who love dogs and are willing to love them dearly... They, in return, will give back that love

TEN FOLD! Your life will take on a whole new meaning.

Available on Amazon and Barnes & Noble

Library Trustee and Budget

APRIL 28 → JUNE 1 → JUNE 9

The Howland Public Library district vote will be included on absentee ballots distributed by the Beacon school district. There are five seats open. A self-nomination form and budget information are located at beaconlibrary.org under the About tab. The deadline for nominations is 5 p.m. on May 11.

Village of Nelsonville

MARCH 18 → APRIL 28 → JUNE 1 → JUNE 23 → SEPT. 15

Mayor Michael Bowman, trustees Dave Moroney and Chris Winward, and Justice Court Judge Dennis Zenz are each running unopposed.

Primary elections

APRIL 28 → JUNE 23

The polls will be open, although the state Board of Elections will mail an absentee ballot application to every registered voter. (Check the box for “temporary illness” if you are voting absentee because of concerns about COVID-19.) Early, in-person voting is scheduled for June 13 to 21.

Democrats on the state election commission canceled the presidential primary, but on May 5 a judge ordered the vote reinstated following a challenge by candidate Andrew Yang.

There will be no local primaries in Philipstown. In Beacon, Green and Independence Party voters will decide between Peter Forman and Jessica Segall for those lines for Dutchess County judge, and Serve America Movement party members will select Eric Carter or Peter Bradley for SAM’s state committee line.
Coronavirus Update

State health officials said that, as of Thursday (May 7), 1,066 people have tested positive for the coronavirus in Putnam County; 3,233 in Dutchess; 30,708 in Westchester; 12,280 in Rockland; 1,468 in Ulster; and 9,328 in Orange. Statewide, there were 327,469 positives, including 180,216 in New York City.

Statewide, 20,828 people had died as of May 7, including 55 residents of Putnam County and 96 from Dutchess.

Dashboards released by Dutchess and Putnam showed that, as of May 7, Beacon had 137 confirmed cases and Philipstown had 107.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo on Thursday (May 7) announced that a moratorium on COVID-related residential or commercial evictions would be extended 60 days, until Aug. 20. The governor also announced the state is banning late payments or fees for missed rent payments and allowing renters facing financial hardship to use their security deposit as payment and repay it over time.

Five of the state’s 15 prison inmate deaths from COVID-19 have occurred at Fishkill Correctional Facility, which has the most cases and deaths of any prison as of May 6, according to the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision. In all, 85 inmates at Fishkill have tested positive for the coronavirus, up from 61 cases and one death as of April 22. Sing Sing has had the next-highest total of cases with 51 and deaths with 4. The Bedford Hills Correctional Facility for Women in Westchester County has had 29 cases and one death. Advocates and relatives of inmates announced a two-day vigil at the prison cemetery for May 7 and 8 to demand that prisoners vulnerable to COVID-19 be released.

Dutchess County Executive Marc Molinaro, in a town hall on Facebook on May 6, discussed a goal of opening summer camps by July 1, based on state guidance and approval. He said the county Department of Behavioral & Community Health is developing guidance to assist camps in developing health and safety plans, including the measures they will take to reduce the potential for the spread of COVID-19 and how they will respond to any confirmed cases. Camps will be required to submit these plans to the county with their permit applications, he said.

The state Department of Health this week began reporting “presumed” COVID-19 deaths, in addition to confirmed ones, at nursing homes. Through May 3, Dutchess had 19 confirmed nursing home deaths and nine presumed ones. The state reported nine confirmed fatalities and one presumed death at Ferncliff Nursing Home in Rhinebeck and five confirmed fatalities at Wingate at Beacon. Eight presumed deaths were reported at Grand Rehabilitation and Nursing at Pawling. Data for Putnam County showed 13 confirmed deaths at the Putnam Rehabilitation and Nursing Center in Holmes and three at Putnam Ridge in Brewster.

Rite Aid said it would offer free COVID-19 testing through its drive-thru windows for adults with or without symptoms beginning Monday (May 11), including its location at 709 Main St. in Poughkeepsie. An online appointment is required. Rite Aid said it has the capacity to conduct up to 10,000 tests daily across its New York locations. See riteaid.com.

Dutchess County said that, as of today (May 8), its dashboard at dutchessny.gov/coronavirus will include data, such as deaths, obtained from the state health department. Hospitals and nursing homes are not required to report to local health departments, and state data also includes presumed positive cases in its fatality numbers. “There is an enormous volume of data being generated daily, much of which local health departments do not have direct access to,” explained Dr. Anil Vaidian, commissioner of the county Department of Behavioral & Community Health. “The state has been impressive, providing this aggregate data, by county, on a daily basis for the public, as this kind of data is generally only reported on an annual basis. However, it will take some time, likely several months, before all of the needed specific data is reported down to the local health departments.”

On April 29, Cuomo said elective outpatient treatments could resume in counties “without significant risk of COVID-19 surge in the near term,” including Putnam, Dutchess and Ulster but not Orange, Rockland or Westchester. He said a county must have hospital capacity of more than 25 percent and fewer than 10 new hospitalizations of COVID-19 patients over the past 10 days to qualify.

Although closed to the public, the Boscobel historic site in Garrison is offering health care workers and members limited access to its grounds and gardens, if scheduled in advance for one household at a time. If you are a health care worker or member who would like to soak in the view, hike the Woodland Trail and see the gardens’ blooms, email Ed Glisson at eglisson@boscobel.org.

On May 1, Cuomo ordered schools to close for the rest of the academic year and their officials to submit plans for protecting students, faculty and staff when reopening in the fall. (See Page 1) The New York State Public High School Athletic Association also canceled the spring sports season.

About 90 Democratic members of the New York State Assembly, including Sandy Galef, whose district includes Philipstown, and Jonathan Jacobson, whose district includes Beacon, signed an open letter to members of the state’s congressional delegation requesting federal aid for local governments and for the state to offset budget cuts. It noted that Cuomo recently announced a revised budget plan with cuts to Medicaid, education and property-tax relief programs. “I am calling on our federal representatives to stand up for our first responders, medical staff and schools as we get through the worst of this public health crisis,” Galef said in a statement.

The Cooperative Extension of Putnam County canceled its 4-H fair scheduled for July 24 to 26. The event had been held annually for 48 years. The Dutchess County Fair is scheduled for Aug. 25 to 30.

The Philipstown Food Pantry, where organizers say they have seen a 160 percent increase in clients since social distancing began, is in need of donations. Food can be

FROM THE LAB — The science department at Haldane High School donated 26 pairs of protective eyewear to Miller Francis (far left), a 2012 Haldane grad, and her team of intensive-care nurses at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital in New York City. The donation also included cloth masks made by Maria Finucane of Cold Spring.
What do you get when you combine Biology and Landscape Architecture?

**BIO*LOGIC EARTHSCAPE**

Curbside Plant Material Supply and Landscape Design

Natives - Orchards - Screening
Meadows - Rain Gardens - Steep Slopes

COLD SPRING, NY

Registered Landscape Architect NY# 2241 - CT#1454
845-216-8587 | biologicearthscape@gmail.com

*contact us today to set-up a FREE virtual site consultation

---

**ON THE FRONT LINES** — Rebeca Garcia and Denise Sheeran, nurses with the Putnam County Health Department, take a sample from a resident who came to a drive-thru testing clinic held on April 28 in Brewster.

---

**Coronavirus Update**

(From Page 7)

Coronavirus Update dropped off between 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. on Friday mornings, or Saturdays between 8:30 and 10 a.m. Do not bring homemade food, food in bulk packaging or expired foods. See presbychurchcoldspring.org/food-pantry.html. Soho Salon in Cold Spring also collects goods for the pantry each Monday.

- The 2020 Memorial Day parade in Cold Spring has been canceled.

- Cuomo said the state is directing insurers to waive cost-sharing, co-pays and deductibles for mental-health services for front-line workers. The state also partnered with the Kate Spade New York Foundation and Crisis Text Line to provide 24/7 emotional support for front-line health care workers. Text NYFRONTLINE to 744-744.

- The Community Resilience Coalition hosted a webinar on April 28 entitled “Children of Putnam and COVID-19,” with panelists who addressed talking to children about COVID-19; child care, school and summer camp concerns; meeting the need for social services; and handling domestic violence. It was moderated by Jonathan Sury, project director of the National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University’s Earth Institute, and included speakers from the Community Resilience Coalition, Putnam/Northern Westchester Women’s Resource Center, the county departments of social services and health, Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES and Camp Herrich. It can be viewed at bit.ly/rcrc-c19webinars.

- The Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley announced the second round of emergency grants from its Putnam COVID-19 Response Fund. The $17,400 in grants benefited CAREERS Support Solutions, the Ecological Citizen’s Project, the Glynwood Center for Regional Food and Farming, the Philipstown Behavioral Health Hub, Putnam Community Action Partnership and Second Chance Foods. Donate or request funds at putnamcovidresponse.org.

- With assistance from Scenic Hudson, FeedHV is purchasing milk from Hudson Valley Fresh and milk, yogurt and butter from Ronnybrook Farm Dairy to donate to three food programs for children: The Kingston YMCA Farm Project, Dutchess Outreach in Poughkeepsie and Friends of Hudson Youth in Hudson. FeedHV, which is a program of the Hudson Valley AgriBusiness Development Corp., links donors of prepared but unserved food and fresh produce with nonprofits and food assistance programs. The donation will include more than 12,000 gallon and 1,800 half-gallon containers of milk, 1,250 containers of yogurt and 210 pounds of butter in eight 8-ounce packages. Both dairies are selling their products at cost.

- Jonathan Jacobson said his state Assembly staff can assist residents of Beacon and Newburgh, by phone or email, who are experiencing delays when applying for state unemployment benefits. Call 845-562-0888 or 845-763-7011, or email jacobsonj@nyassembly.gov.

- Questions? Dutchess County posts updates at dutchessny.gov/coronavirus and has a hotline at 845-486-3555. Putnam County posts info at putnamcountyny.com/health. New York State has a hotline at 888-364-3065 and a webpage at ny.gov/coronavirus. The state also created an email list to provide updates. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention posts updates at cdc.gov.

Leonard Sparks contributed reporting.

---

**DRIVE-THRU TESTING** — Nurses and staff from the Putnam County Health Department held a mobile COVID-19 testing clinic in Brewster on April 28. One hundred and thirty people were tested.

---

** Leonardo Sparks contributed reporting. **
Not Ready (from Page 1)

the valve on reopening.”

A revised forecast released May 4 by the Seattle-based Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation predicts that nearly 135,000 deaths will occur in the U.S. by Aug. 4, including 32,132 in New York state. The forecast, more than double an estimate of just over 60,000 on April 17, reflects "rising mobility in most U.S. states as well as the easing of social distancing measures expected in 31 states by May 11," it said.

A poll of 1,008 Americans conducted from April 21 to 26 by Marist College for NPR/PBS found that 85 percent of respondents believed opening schools without further testing was unsafe, as did 80 percent when asked about opening restaurants for dining and 65 percent when asked about returning to work.

The only significant difference between those who identified with one of the two major political parties was on the latter question: 84 percent of Democrats wanted to continue work-from-home policies versus 51 percent of Republicans.

Main Street waiting

Split Rock Books in Cold Spring is typical of a business operating in the time of crisis.

Orders can be placed online or by phone. Books are packaged and left outside the front door with customers' names. Pickup times are staggered so that customers are not arriving at the same time.

Sales have fallen dramatically but owners Heidi and Michael Bender say they are not planning to allow customers inside their Main Street shop anytime soon.

On Sunday (May 2), the couple used a Facebook post to express sadness over the death of Cold Spring resident Bill Whipp from COVID-19 (see Page 22), as well as anger at the number of people not wearing masks while visiting the village over the weekend.

"We want to be able to pay our bills, but we’re not thinking about profit in that sense right now," Heidi Bender said. "We're thinking about our friends and our family and our community."

In Beacon, Lauren and Todd Decker are also wary of reopening too soon. Their jewelry business, King + Curated, has been closed since March 14.

Todd Decker said he wanted reopening to be "a marathon, not a sprint." Both he and Lauren are waiting for more guidance on best practices for preventing infections, including social distancing, masks and the use of hand sanitizer.

"As much as it hurts the business to be closed, and the financial hit that we’re taking, "If I have to live with my mask and keep my distance, I can live with it," he said.

Retail businesses like Split Rock and King + Curated would be able to reopen in the second phase of Cuomo’s plan, which gives first priority to construction and manufacturing. Professional services and real estate would also be among the businesses allowed to open during Phase 2.

The state’s move toward reopening is being driven by data showing an outbreak in retreat.

Confirmed new cases, hospitalizations and deaths have been falling statewide — overall and as a percentage of people tested — since the first test on March 2. Nearly 47,000 people were tested on April 24, the single-day high. In Dutchess County, about 6 percent of residents had been tested and in Putnam about 5 percent.

However, the number of tests and positive cases does not represent the scale of infections because an estimated 80 percent of people infected with the coronavirus will not experience symptoms or only feel mild symptoms, health officials say.

To get a truer estimate of the scale of infections, New York tested 15,000 people visiting grocery stores and community centers around the state for COVID-19 antibodies, the virus-destroying proteins whose presence indicates a past infection.

Antibodies were detected in 12.3 percent of those tested, the state said. In New York City, 19.9 percent had the antibodies, while in Rockland and Westchester counties it was 13.8 percent and in the Hudson Valley, including Dutchess and Putnam, 3 percent.

Twenty percent of those tested in New York City and about 11 percent on Long Island had antibodies.

Dutchess County officials last week announced a plan to test nursing home residents, starting with Wingate at Beacon, which has had five confirmed fatalities. The county also announced the launch of a van service to ferry Poughkeepsie residents to MidHudson Regional Hospital for testing.

More than 12,500 Dutchess residents were tested in April, as well 3,400 Putnam residents. Both met the state’s monthly goal of 30 tests per 1,000 for the month, but Molinaro is concerned that people's "desire to get tested may begin to wane significantly."

"Therefore, we might not meet that particular standard," he said. "And while we have yet, we might not know the breadth of the transmission of the disease as we enter a time when people are naturally going to want to move around."
We are using this unimaginable moment to reinvent the way we create, curate, educate, and facilitate art!

ONLINE LEARNING
Single Session Workshops in May, expanding online classes.

VIRTUAL EXHIBITIONS
From the Archives of Garrison Art Center every Friday night.

SPECIAL EVENTS
Creative and unexpected alternatives to our annual live events.

CALL TO ARTISTS
Postcards from a Pandemic Bear witness to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please visit us online to learn more at garrisonartcenter.org

MELISSA MCGILL: RED REGATTA
Film available on May 6, 2020
Live Q+A with artist Melissa McGill and journalist Julia Felsenthal on Instagram Live on May 9, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. EST
www.magazzino.art/magazzinodacasa @magazzino

HIGHLAND STUDIO
PRINTMAKERS
FINE ART PRINTING SCANNING LARGE FORMAT
HUDSON VALLEY’S ARCHIVAL PRINTING SINCE 1997
PICTURE FRAMING print & map gallery
845-809-5174
31 STEPHANIE LANE COLD SPRING, NY www.thehighlandstudio.com

OUR DOORS ARE TEMPORARILY CLOSED FOR OPERATION
BUT WE ARE OPEN FOR INSPIRATION IMAGINATION CREATION MOTIVATION COLLABORATION CONTEMPLATION

Garrison Art Center
Visit us online to learn more at garrisonartcenter.org

Around Town

▲ MUSKRAT LOVE — On April 24, Michael Hameline, an officer with the state Department of Environmental Conservation, responded to a call in Beacon that a muskrat was stuck in a chain-link fence. The critter was taken to Friends of the Feathered and Furry Wildlife Center in Hunter to recover. DEC photo

▲ NEW PANTRY — Binnacle Books on Main Street in Beacon teamed up with Fareground Community Kitchen to convert its dollar shelves into a Tiny Food Pantry. Take what you need, leave what you can. Photo provided

▲ CAUGHT IN THE ACT — Cora McMahon and her brother, Andre (in background), fifth-graders at the Garrison School, donned their safety vests on April 26 to pick up trash along Avery Road near their home. Photo by David Lilburne
W
hen I was a senior in high school, my grandfather, Abel Meeropol, was living in Florida and had Alzheimer's. My family lived in Massachusetts, in the Berkshires. My father had to make the hard decision to bring him to a nursing home near us.

I was worried and upset about my grandfather. I decided I'd get a job at the nursing home to keep my eye on things. I knew I couldn't work directly with him, but I could get the overall picture. I got this idea in my head. I hadn't had an interest in the medical field or caretaking. But the way I thought about it, it would almost be like a volunteer position. I had this idealized vision that I would read letters to the residents, comb their hair, that sort of thing.

I somehow got hired. I was called a CNA — certified nursing assistant — but I was not certified. The job was helping people stay clean and comfortable, making sure they were eating enough, nothing medical.

On my first day on the job, there were other CNAs on the wing where I was assigned, and they were pretty cruel to me. They told me, "Sam needs help. Go to the bathroom." The poor man was crying, covered with feces. They had played a prank on me. It became one of those moments in life where you're confronted with an instant decision: Do I run out screaming? Or, do I tell myself, "I was hired and this guy needs me and he's crying?" I talked to him, cleaned him up, got a diaper for him and settled him down. He was happy. I just knew, OK, I can do this.

That was the beginning. My grandfather died not long afterward. By then I had worked there for a few months. I went off to Sarah Lawrence College and, every summer, worked at a nursing home. I worked at different facilities, but everywhere there was something about that kind of work that just drew me.

I learned there are so many people in nursing homes who have nobody. People are just left. They are alone, sad, scared, confused. I knew that I could bring something more because I wasn't beaten down by life yet.

I learned there are so many people in nursing homes who have nobody. People are just left. They are alone, sad, scared, confused. I knew that I could bring something more because I wasn't beaten down by life yet.
THE WEEK AHEAD
Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)
For a complete listing of events, see highlandscurrent.org/calendar.

COMMUNITY

SUN 10
Plant a Pollinator Paradise
CARMEL
9:30 a.m.
 Cornell Cooperative Extension
putnam.cce.cornell.edu
 Learn how your landscape can be part of helping endangered pollinators such as butterflies, and how to create a pollinator garden and other useful habitats.

SAT 9
Spring Bird-a-thon
PHILIPSTOWN
Your backyard | bit.ly/phas-birdathon
 Sign up to count species in a safe and convenient location for this annual fundraiser for the Putnam Highlands Audubon Society. Also SUN 10.

MON 11
Hudson Valley Women in Business
ONLINE
1 p.m. hudsonvalleywomeninbusiness.com/events
 Christine Gritmon will lead a discussion via Zoom about building an audience through social media. Cost: $10

TUES 12
Kitchen Sink Science
GARRISON
11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Deskson-Fish Library
 fmathrm@desmondfishlibrary.org
 Via Zoom. Email beautifulmamas123@gmail.com for registration information. Continues weekly.

TUES 12
Paper Crafts Workshop
GARRISON
6 p.m. Deskson-Fish Library
facebook.com/pg/desmondfishlibrary
 The workshop takes place each week via YouTube, Facebook and Instagram.

THURS 14
Fiction Book Club
COLD SPRING
7 p.m. Split Rock Books
845-265-2080 | splitrockbooks.com
 Join co-owner Michael Bender on Zoom to discuss one of his favorite books, The Book of Ebenzer Le Page, by G.B. Edwards.

KIDS & FAMILY

MON 11
Emily Music for Kids
BEACON
11 a.m. facebook.com/EmilyMusic4kids
 Tune in on week days for a fun and funny program.

MON 11
Story Time
GARRISON
1:30 p.m. Deskson-Fish Library
instagram.com/desksonfishpubliclibrary
 Lucille Merry and other members of the staff will read children’s books aloud. Also WED 13, FRI 15.

TUES 12
New Parents’ Support Group
GARRISON
11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Deskson-Fish Library
 Desksonfishlibrary.org
 Via Zoom. Email beautifullamans123@gmail.com for registration information. Continues weekly.

THURS 14
Quarantine Stream
BEACON
6 p.m. facebook.com/Songsmithlive2
 Three nights per week, Mark Westin hosts live performances streamed online by local musicians such as Jay Nicholas, Decora, Judith Tulloch and Steve Franchino, Mimi Sun Lomgo, Annalyse & Ryan and Jen Clapp. Also WED 13, FRI 15.

THURS 14
Resiliency Meditation
BEACON
8:30 p.m. bit.ly/resiliency-meditation
 Register to join Amy Soucy via Zoom for a weekly 30-minute meditation about turning fear into resilience.

VISUAL ARTS

SAT 9
Artist of the Week
BEACON
baugallery.org
 Each week the gallery interviews a local artist and spotlights his or her work.

SAT 9
Red Regatta
PHILIPSTOWN
3 p.m. Magazzino Italian Art
 845-666-7202 | magazzinoart
 As part of the Magazzino Da Casa series, Melissa McGill of Beacon will discuss on Instagram Live her public-art project in Venice. A documentary by Giovanni Pellegrini about the project is available at the museum website.

SAT 16
Installing Magazzino
PHILIPSTOWN
3 p.m. Magazzino Italian Art
 845-666-7202 | magazzinoart
 The museum’s collection manager and chief registrar, Gabriella Perez, and its head preparator and facilities manager, Thomas Huber, will discuss a short film by Domenico Palma, Installing Magazzino, that takes viewers behind the scenes of the installation of its first exhibit, Margherita Stein: Rebel With A Cause. The film will be available on the museum website and Instagram beginning WED 13.

MUSIC

MON 11
Quarantine Stream
BEACON
6 p.m. facebook.com/Songsmithlive2
 Three nights per week, Mark Westin hosts live performances streamed online by local musicians such as Jay Nicholas, Decora, Judith Tulloch and Steve Franchino, Mimi Sun Lomgo, Annalyse & Ryan and Jen Clapp. Also WED 13, FRI 15.

THURS 14
Resiliency Meditation
BEACON
8:30 p.m. bit.ly/resiliency-meditation
 Register to join Amy Soucy via Zoom for a weekly 30-minute meditation about turning fear into resilience.

CIVIC

MON 11
Gov. Cuomo Daily Briefing
10:45 a.m. Weekdays
 twitter.com/nygovcuomo

MON 11
City Council
BEACON
7 p.m. City Hall
 845-838-5011 | cityofbeacon.org

MON 11
Garrison Fire District
GARRISON
7 p.m. Firehouse | garrisonfd.org
 The meeting will conducted by video conference via YouTube.

MON 11
School Board
BEACON
7 p.m. Beacon High School
 845-838-6900 | beacon12.org

MON 11
Zoning Board of Appeals
PHILIPSTOWN
7:30 p.m. Zoom | philipstown.com
 The board is expected to discuss a disputed home plan for 529 Route 9D in Garrison. Email Kelly Macintyre at kmacintyre@philipstown.com for meeting information.

THURS 14
Board of Trustees
COLD SPRING
7:30 p.m. Village Hall
 845-265-3611 | coldspringny.gov

TUES 12
Conservation Board
PHILIPSTOWN
7:30 p.m. Zoom
 Email kmacintyre@philipstown.com for meeting information.
Roots and Shoots

Compost for All

By Pamela Doan

As many new gardeners plan vegetable plots this season, I’ve been answering a lot of questions about composting. Not only is it a resource for soil nutrients, it’s an important part of managing your imprint on the planet. Are your fruit and vegetable scraps headed to a landfill in a trash bag mixed with plastic and other waste to decompose and release methane gas and carbon dioxide into the atmosphere? Instead, mix those materials with other carbon and nitrogen sources to become an organic amendment for your plants.

There are basic rules of composting. The main idea is that you mix browns (leaves, dead plants, newspaper, small sticks or wood chips) and greens (fruit and vegetable scraps, eggshells or coffee grounds). By doing this, you’re creating a space to speed up the decay with a mix of carbon-and nitrogen-rich materials that result in a healthy hummus to top-dress a garden.

Recognizing that everyone has varying degrees of complication in their stay-at-home lives, here are approaches that can be more-or less time-intensive to begin composting or to try a new approach.

If you have an hour

Make a pile in your yard that is conveniently located from your home. After many years of composting in many settings, this is a big consideration. If it’s too much of a hassle to get to in every season, it becomes another chore.

Collect small sticks, wood chips, dead plants and leaves for a base layer of a few inches. The sticks will help air circulation as the pile grows. Begin adding green materials on top of this. An ideal size for compost is 3 feet by 3 feet by 3 feet. When you’ve hit this shape, stop adding to it and let the microbes work. Make a new pile. Or set up a worm bin for vermicomposting. See highlandscurrent.org/worming.

If you’re ready for a half-day project

Build a compost bin, or three. If you eat a lot of fruits and vegetables, have trees that drop leaves in the fall, and a lot of plant clippings, a three-bin system could fill up within a year. The goal is to always have one pile that you can draw from, one that is resting, and one that you’re adding to.

My home composting includes chicken bedding and grass clippings, as well as vegetarian cooking and a yard full of mature trees. I can fill three bins in a season. Take those things into consideration when you choose a containment system.

Build the bins out of wood and wire, or buy a plastic compost bin. An affordable option is to use three wood pallets, which you can probably find for free. Make a three-sided bin with the front as the opening for adding material or scooping it out. It’s easy to find DIY inspiration online.

Master composter (you have time and love science)

I call myself a lazy composter. Before I had chickens and a bag for the lawn mower to collect clippings, my compost would take a year to break down. I didn’t turn it or check the moisture or heat levels. I didn’t balance ratios of greens and browns. I made a pile and was happy to keep my organic materials out of the landfill.

If that works for you, that’s fine. This does not have to be an involved or intimidating project. However, if the science of carbon-and nitrogen-making microbes and creating new cells is interesting to you, it’s possible to take a deep dive into perfect hot and fast composting.

By calculating the C/N ratio of each material you add to the bin, you can strive to hit a balance of 30:1 by weight. At this level, the pile will have optimal heat for quick decomposition. The moisture levels, temperature and oxygen can be measured and balanced, as well. The Cornell Waste Management Institute at compost.css.cornell.edu has calculations and formulas.

Last note: Don’t add meat, sauces, fats or pet waste.

Gardening questions? Email Pamela at rootsandshoots@highlandscurrent.org.

The hardware cloth sides stapled to a wood frame made this compost container easy to build and give it good air flow and drainage. The front gates come off to easily empty or turn it.

Photo by P. Doan

Solstad House

A unique lifestyle and General Store committed to providing a warm, hospitable shopping experience for Beacon’s diverse residents and visitors.

Visit us at SolstadHouse.com

While our doors are temporarily closed to help flatten the curve of COVID-19 infections, our website is buzzing with new visitors!

Free shipping & delivery in Beacon for orders over $20.

Follow us!

@solstadhouse

SolstadHouse1

CURRENT CONVERSATIONS

Catching up with The Timmers

Garrison family discusses their pandemic-extended stay in Patagonia

WEDNESDAY MAY 13TH 7:00 – 7:30 P.M.

Register for the Zoom event at highlandscurrent.org/current-conversations

FRESH CUT FLOWERS FOR

Mom (or you)

Grown, harvested, arranged and delivered (safely) by

The Parcel Flower Co.

Order now: shop.theparcelflower.co or (845) 402-0408
Artists in a Box

*Magazzino commissions works made at home*

By Alison Rooney

Magazzino Italian Art, the museum on Route 9 in Philipstown, this spring commissioned eight artists living in New York City to create works for a virtual exhibit called *Homemade*.

There were a few rules. The artists, who are all Italian, had to create the work while sheltering in place, meaning they could only use materials available in their homes. They were asked to document their experience on Magazzino’s Instagram account (@magazzino) and website (magazzino.art). They can speak to each other for inspiration and support over a two-month period through May 30 via Zoom.

Information about four of the artists is below. To learn more about each of the eight artists and follow their progress, see magazzino.art.

**Davide Balliano**

Known for his black-and-white paintings and minimalist, abstract sculptures, Balliano in isolation embraced color.

At the beginning: “I intend to use the restriction imposed by this calamity as an opportunity to move into territories usually outside my daily gymnastics,” he said. “Statistically, failure will be the most predictable outcome, but I hope to meet it with joy, having peeked in a garden usually foreign to me.”

At midpoint: “The tonal brainstorming makes me feel; I feel the ferocious greens of the forest of central Bali, the peach shades of a sunset over the bay of Naples, the red of my wife’s dress in Avignon.”

**Andrea Mastrovito**

Mastrovito will leave New York soon for his home in Bergamo.

At the beginning: Mastrovito said he would cover household objects with paper and rub a pencil over them to create “a lasting document” of the pandemic. The objects included “some coins, my son’s toys, the floor, the curtains hanging on the windows,” he said. “All this reality, in its roughness, is recorded by the stroke of my pencil and frottage, through which it comes to life and forms new shapes, the shape of my small family: myself, my wife and my son.”

At midpoint: Mastrovito has begun to combine the drawings of his wife and child with surface details of the floors, carpets, found coins and toys, constructing life-size collages of his loved ones.
Luisa Rabbia

Rabbia typically examines bodily landscapes, such as veins and belly buttons, which she says chart essential forms of human connection.

At the beginning: Rabbia will involve her hand and leave traces through her fingerprints, adapting her work to a more intimate size to reflect the new domestic environment. “The precariousness of life, the connection between one and the other as small particles in a vast universe made of time, experiences from the past to the present, from the personal to the collective; these have always been subjects at the core of my work,” she said.

At midpoint: “The images I am presenting are a selection of small works, as well as shots of a larger canvas I am preparing with impressions of fingerprints in wet gesso. Certain images, in my experience, require a large format while others work just as well in a small one, but what matters is the right format for the right image.”

Beatrice Scaccia

Scaccia combines painting, drawing, animation and writing to construct narratives that follow “identity-fluid protagonists through ambiguously defined worlds.”

At the beginning: Scaccia said she would create a stop-motion animation that explores the compulsion to hoard. She wanted to create a character “defined by the belongings they cling to for safety and comfort.” She explained: “I understand way too well the mechanism behind the act of hoarding: the illusion of comfort, the need of being in control,” she said. “Hoarding hides a void and/or a fear. I will experiment in making a 3D bust with the materials I hoarded in the last year.”

At midpoint: “I keep thinking my bust will need some eyes. I moved it from my studio room to my bedroom three days ago; then back to my studio room last night. I’ve tried several settings, I even placed it in front of a vanity mirror with orange lights. Yesterday, while listening to Gov. Cuomo, I considered adding more hair on its head — black or white, or maybe something colorful. Some foggy dreams have stayed with me for days. I’ll write them down in fragments while wondering how to turn this bust into a soothing friend.”
Dining Out at Home

**Marbled Meat Shop**

**CURBSIDE PICKUP**
PLEASE CALL/EMAIL AHEAD
INFO@MARBLEDMEAT.COM | (845) 265-2830
ONLY WED-SAT 10:00A.M. – 5:00P.M.
3091 US 9, COLD SPRING, NY 10516
marbledmeatshop.com

**Flowercup Wine**
82 Main Street, Cold Spring
Free local delivery of 12+ bottles
Curbside pickups
845-859-9123 • flowercupwine@gmail.com

**Doug’s Pub**
Pretty Good Pub
Pick-up grub at the pub
Due to the widespread panic the pub has been forced to temporarily close.

**Toine Crier Cafe**
379 Main Street, Beacon
Pick-up & Take-out
THURS & FRI 4 - 8 P.M. | SAT & SUN 2 - 8 P.M.
Special family meals & beer and wine
Gift Certificates
www.townecrier.com
Order @ (845) 855-1300

**Belgian Choc. Walnut Brownie w/ $25 order**

**Your Business Here!**
For just $25 per week.
Email ads@highlandscurrent.org
Mouths to Feed

A Spring Canvas

By Celia Barbour

“N o more excited b read posts” read the email’s subject line. It piqued my interest the moment it landed in my inbox, mostly because I misunderstood it. I thought its writer was expressing annoyance at the rash of sourdough upstarts who’ve been new-momming all over Instagram about their adorable leavens.

Yeah, enough already, I thought in (imagined) agreement.

In fact, the email’s author intended no snark. In an essay in a linked-to literary journal, she lamented her friends’ diminishing enthusiasm for baking; the upbeat sourdough posts that had proliferated on the internet in early April were being replaced by grimmer musings as the shutdown wore on. “No more” was merely a bleak observation: no more carrier pigeons, no more polar ice, no more excited bread posts.

Still, my reaction, though ungenerous, wasn’t entirely unwarranted. Home-grown sourdough has been the biggest trend of the stay-at-home period. King Arthur Flour reported that online sales of certain flours were up by 2,000 percent in March. And according to Nielsen data, mid-March yeast sales were up 647 percent over the same time last year. Quarantine sourdough even made it onto Fox News.

Truth be told, I am something of a sour-dough upstart myself, having birthed my starter less than a year ago. Yet I find myself facing what must be a national dilemma at this moment. Because—did you notice—it’s spring, glorious, bird-crazed spring. And while part of me absolutely does not want to abandon my baby-genius starter, the other part wants to be outside romping among the crabapple blossoms. I no longer find it cozy to have crusty loaves piling up in my kitchen.

Soup season is over, and the kids are tired of me begging them to eat buttered toast for snack instead of Sun Chips.

Asparagus and Mushroom Topping

½ pound asparagus, trimmed and cut on the diagonal
½ pound wild mushrooms, sliced
4 ramps (or substitute spring onions and green garlic, 2 of each), sliced thin
1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves
1 tablespoon olive oil
Salt and pepper
4 ounces fontina, grated

In a bowl, combine everything except the grated cheese. Before baking, sprinkle the vegetable mixture over the surface of the focaccia.

When the focaccia is done, remove from oven and immediately sprinkle on the shredded cheese; the heat from the focaccia will melt it. Serve warm or at room temperature.

The name focaccia comes from the Latin for “fire”: fuoco. But from now on, in my personal lexicon, I’m going to translate it as “excited bread.” Which means that this column right here? It’s my own excited bread post.

Rules of Thumb

Erin Detrick takes a different approach to focaccia than she does to loaves. Check highlandscurrent.org/focaccia for a basic recipe. However, if you’re interested in experimenting with your homegrown sourdough, here are some guidelines for evolving it into focaccia. (You can also skip baking altogether and order Signal Fire bread at signalfirebread.com)

1. Increase the water by 5 percent to 10 percent.
2. Add 2 tablespoons olive oil and ½ teaspoon sugar to the dough.
3. Increase the leaven. I added 100 grams of poolish in addition to my regular 200 grams of starter. Alternatively, says Detrick, you can simply throw a little yeast (2 or 3 grams) in with the starter at the beginning of the process.
4. Halfway through the bulk rise, transfer the dough to rimmed baking sheets coated with olive oil (one loaf = one focaccia), and stretch gently. It will contract at first; don’t worry. Just give it a gentle stretch every half-hour for the remainder of the bulk-rise period.
5. Cover dough for the 2- to 3-hour final rise.
6. Before baking, gently pock the surface with your fingertips, drizzle on olive oil and sprinkle with flakey sea salt.
Beacon Makes it Tougher to Build Four Floors

Developers must now include ‘public benefits’

By Jeff Simms

With a proposal to build a 4-story building on next week’s Beacon Planning Board agenda, City Council members on May 4 enacted regulations that tighten the requirements developers must meet to receive permits to construct such structures on Main Street.

Two years ago, the council adopted a law requiring a special-use permit to build four floors on Main. As of Monday, developers must add to their plans one or more public benefits — increased parking or affordable housing units, green building features or public spaces — that the council stipulates before receiving the permit.

"The amount of the public benefit — that decision is strictly within our discretion," Mayor Lee Kyriacou said before the council’s decision is strictly within our discretion, "unanimous vote. "You could offer a huge lot of the lots would be a single-family home of the lots would be a single-family home and an artist’s live/work space. The development would also include “a large greenspace area,” according to the plans.

A permit for a fourth floor must come from either the Planning Board or, when in or adjacent to the city’s historic district, from the City Council. A setback could also be required.

If the council approves a list of 35 buildings that are being considered for the historic district, nearly all of Main Street would fall under its jurisdiction for the special permit. All permits for fourth floors will also require that the development have no “substantial” negative effects on sunlight, parking, traffic or scenic views considered "important" by the city.

The new regulations will apply on May 12, when the Planning Board will begin its review, by video conference, of a proposal to combine lots at 416 and 420 Main Street. According to materials submitted to the board, a building constructed on the site would include nearly 5,000 square feet of retail space (a portion of which is occupied by the Kitchen & Coffee cafe — formerly Ella’s Bellas — which will remain), along with nearly 8,000 square feet of office space on the second and third floors. The fourth floor would contain two apartments.

A second, two-story building in the rear of the lots would be a single-family home and an artist’s live/work space. The development would also include “a large greenspace area,” according to the plans.

Reopening

Legislator Neal Sullivan (R-Mahopac) added his voice to those of the Dutchess County Executive Marc Molinaro, Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell and state Sen. Sue Serino in urging his colleagues to stay the course in enforcing social-distancing rules.

"I don’t want to see a resurgence of infection even before we fully understand what our Putnam outbreak is with limited testing and contact tracing. I’m reaching out to my colleagues for help," Sullivan said. "We certainly do not have the number of cases and the illnesses or deaths" of counties closer to New York City, he said. “It’s time to lessen the restrictions on our local businesses so they can go back to making a living and support their families.”

Legislator Paul Jonke (R-Southeast) said everybody in Putnam “is wearing their mask. Everybody is social distancing. Everybody gets it here. That’s one of the reasons we’re on track to get our small businesses back.”

Odell on Wednesday in a letter to state Sen. Peter Harckham, who represents eastern Putnam, urged the state to divide the Mid-Hudson group, with Westchester and Rockland forming a southern section and Putnam, Dutchess, Orange, Sullivan, and Ulster counties remaining in a northern section. Odell said in an email on May 7, “with the very limited number of residents that have been tested in Putnam, how can anyone say with certainty that we don’t have a higher rate of infection than neighboring communities? Without large-scale testing, tracking, and a clearly articulated plan, this is bound to cause much more suffering.”

COVID-19 Spending

In early April, the Putnam Legislature allocated $221,144 to purchase protective gear and cleaning supplies to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

On Tuesday, Bill Carlin, Putnam’s finance commissioner, said the county has so far spent about $69,000 of that money, with commitments to spend another $77,000 as soon as more protective gear is available for purchase.

He said the county money has purchased 24,400 disposable face masks, 8,000 high-grade face masks, 2,000 disposable gowns, 16,000 gloves and 1,300 face shields for distribution by the Bureau of Emergency Services.
A Senior Year Like No Other

We asked four local high school seniors how they are holding up.

By Jeff Simms

Anneke Chan

Chan, who is the Haldane High School salutatorian, says she had “a weird senior year.” She spent the first half working in an after-school art program and applying to colleges. After being accepted at Tufts University, where she plans to pursue a dual degree in studio art and anthropology, Chan said she was looking forward to spending the final weeks of the year working at Dia:Beacon to fulfill an internship required of all Haldane seniors.

“It’s kind of like a reward for putting yourself through the stress of applying to schools and working hard,” she said.

But her internship, set to begin later this month, will now be done remotely. In the meantime, Chan reads, writes and paints at home to pass the time.

The closure of schools in New York State, she said, has made her feel guilty about graduation and getting into college — milestones that are normally cause for celebration.

The process “was more stressful because everything is already so uncertain,” Chan said. “You don’t know how you should feel about things. You shouldn’t be celebrating while people are dying.”

Olivia Lynch

Olivia Lynch, a senior at Beacon High School, plans in the fall to enroll in the pre-physician assistant program at the University of Central Florida. She’s hoping that means moving to campus in Orlando rather than studying from home.

“I’ve tried to keep a positive mindset,” she said. “I’m trying to stay focused on the things I can control.”

As a member of the lacrosse team, Lynch said she is upset that she won’t have a senior season and can imagine that other students are feeling the same way, as four years of work on and off the field ends with a whimper.

Students “get to the point where you’re so excited” about what you’ve accomplished in high school, “and then not being able to be celebrated for all the work you’ve put in — it’s disappointing.”

She knows that district officials are scrambling to come up with a plan for graduation. “Anything that they can do to recognize the work we’ve all done — that’s all that we can ask for.”

Richard Rinaldi

As senior class president at Beacon High School, Rinaldi had a hand in planning nearly every event scheduled for the end of the school year, from prom to the senior breakfast, field day and the senior trip.

“I just wanted to be a part of it, and end it all in a way that we’ll remember forever,” he conceded. “We will remember this forever,” but not for the same reasons. With Cuomo’s announcement last week that schools would not reopen, “I watched all of the ideas that we had fall apart,” Rinaldi said.

Rinaldi, who plans to attend Dutchess Community College, said that some students have rolled with the punches while others have been “gutted” by the shutdown. Some of his classmates “thought we were going to go back, but sometimes in life things like this happen, and you just have to adapt and overcome.”

Adam Sharifi

When the schools closed in March, Adam Sharifi said he thought immediately about whether O’Neill High School in Highland Falls would hold graduation.

The Garrison resident said that while distance learning has its challenges, it can be a reasonable facsimile in some regards. But for events such as graduation, “you just can’t capture that moment of walking across the stage virtually.”

Sharifi ran tracks for three years but had to forgo his senior season. “We were trying to stay optimistic by going on our [practice] runs, hoping that maybe we could get in one race,” he said. “But once you know you won’t be able to run that last time, it’s heartbreaking.”

He had planned to spend his summer in an on-campus, pre-freshman course at Cornell University, where he will enroll in the fall, but it was moved online.

“It pulls the benefits out,” Sharifi said. “Now it’s just taking courses at home. I’m sad, but you have to put on a smile. All I can do is look toward college, and the fun I’m going to have there over the next four years, and hope for the best.”

Graduation (from Page 1)

A week after Cuomo’s announcement, a few details have begun to take shape.

Soto said that she has been in “constant communication” with students and parents to hear what they need. “How else can I provide wonderful memories for our seniors?” she asked. (Online, a group is selling $20 lawn signs at bit.ly/bhs-signs to benefit and congratulate the Class of 2020.)

At Haldane High School, in Cold Spring, Principal Julia Sniffen said the district plans to hold a small ceremony near the end of June for its 65 graduating seniors. She said the district will reduce the number of people who can attend and enforce social distancing while broadcasting a livestream of students receiving their diplomas and recorded segments for award and scholarship presentations.

As for senior traditions, including the parade-by-car that “scoops the loop” at the foot of Main Street, “we’re still looking to do some of those things that are by nature socially distanced” with new twists, she said. That could also include asking families to post stakes in their yards with photos of seniors and their yearbook quotes.

Academically, the work is far from over.

The state requires that officials at each school district and college get approval for their plans in the fall to ensure the safety of students, faculty and staff. The plans must show how administrators will monitor the spread of COVID-19, house and feed students who live and eat in groups, educate special-education students and organize extracurricular activities.

Schools must continue to provide meals and child care, the governor said. A decision on summer school will not be made until the end of this month.

In Beacon, school officials have reached out to the DJ who typically provides music for the prom to move the event online. “Kids could dress up in their homes and we could all celebrate our prom virtually,” Soto said.

Similar plans are being made for the traditional senior breakfast, she said. Students would arrive at staggered times to receive their yearbooks and return home for a “virtual celebratory breakfast” with classmates.

The district has partnered with the Mediation Center of Dutchess County to create virtual circle meetings in which students can blow off steam. “Most of them just want to see each other” at this point, Soto said.

In a statement, Beacon Superintendent Matt Landahl said he and district officials plan to organize a graduation ceremony that follows health guidelines but creates a memorable experience for students.

“We do want our seniors, even if it is just in front of their families and everyone is safely social distancing, to walk across a stage,” he said. “If it takes 10 hours to do it safely and families come in shifts, so be it.”

For the six weeks that remain in the school year, teachers and students will continue to try to make the best of a bad situation.

“You get out what you put in,” said Sniffen. “If a student maintains the desire and they’re in the headspace where they’re continuing to push themselves, there will be some gaps, but there is some benefit to [the virtual] model as they progress.”

“Our kids have become the essential workers” in grocery stores and other businesses that remain open, added Soto.

“They’re so used to walking into a school building and having someone check up on them; they miss that.”

“So we’re going out into the community and checking up on them.”
After about two months of the stay-at-home orders and lockdowns, I decided to review what’s changed as we put together The Current each week.

Meeting coverage

It’s gotten easier and harder. The Philipstown Town Board and the Nelsonville Village Board have adopted Zoom teleconferencing for their meetings and workshops. The Putnam County Legislature uses audio connections for its monthly meeting and committee sessions. Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney holds telephone and Facebook town halls, as does Dutchess County Executive Marc Molinaro, and local officials and others use teleconferencing and video for periodic updates.

Advantages: I don’t have to leave my desk at home to attend a meeting. No more driving in the dark 20 miles to Carmel or down the road 5 miles to the Philipstown Recreation Center; no more walking up the hill to Nelsonville Village Hall or Philipstown Town Hall (if it reopens before the lockdown ends).

Disadvantages: It’s more difficult, or time-consuming, or both, to ask questions of elected officials. Informal personal interaction is more limited and, after a meeting ends, I can’t catch up to someone in the hallway or parking lot to ask a question or get clarification on some point that struck me only after the meeting had ended and it seeped into my mind more thoroughly. I have to follow up by an email or phone call, probably the next day, so I’m not disturbing someone at a late hour. Moreover, I don’t get that exercise racing up the hill.

Then, too, because public officials and audience members at Zoomed meetings can see me just as I can see them, I’ve got to make sure that I look presentable, that my parrots have been evicted from the room, lest they decide to join in with raucous exuberance.

Other coverage

Because everyone is hunkered down, like journalists elsewhere I have to chase around more — from a distance — to come up with articles.

Just as town boards and county government, plus the U.S. House of Representatives, have suspended many sessions, the courts, at all levels, have mostly shut down. From local to federal jurisdictions, legal cases I was tracking and writing about hang in abeyance.

Furthermore, when you work remotely, you can’t laugh and talk and swill coffee or eat home-baked cookies or candy from The Country Goose. So that interaction is lost, too … one more example of the collateral damage from COVID-19.
Dorothy Ferrone (1916-2020)

Dorothy Eileen Ferrone, 103, a lifelong resident of Beacon who was employed making equipment for the military during World War II, died at her home on April 30, surrounded by family members.

Dorothy was born Sept. 3, 1916, in Beacon, the daughter of William and Anna (Gray) Galbraith. After graduating from Beacon High School in 1935, she attended the Krisler Business Institute in Poughkeepsie but left to work at the New York Rubber Corp. in Beacon during World War II, making rubber rafts, life jackets, and other equipment.

On Feb. 11, 1945, she wed Joseph Ferrone at St. John the Evangelist Church in Beacon. She died in 1967. In 1977, Betty married George Sexton and, together, they ran the George A. McAndrew Auto Parts store on Main Street until George’s death in 1994.

Betty loved all things British, as well as animals, music, reading, and sweet treats. She is survived by her daughters, Margaret Sexton and Kathleen Harrison (Scott); four grandchildren, Richard Sexton, Stacy Kuenzle (Tim), Christine Foley (Kip) and Rebecca Roberts (John); and four great-grandchildren.

A Mass of Remembrance will be held at Our Lady of Loretto in Cold Spring on May 1, 2021, the first anniversary of her death. Memorial donations may be made to the Paralyzed Veterans of America (pva.org) or the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (aspca.org).

Betty McAndrew (1924-2020)

Betty Ann McAndrew, 95, a longtime resident of Cold Spring, died at her home in Orange County on May 1, with her family by her side.

Betty was born on July 1, 1924, in Liverpool, England, the daughter of John and Mary Agnes Brown. She served four years in the British Women’s Royal Air Force during World War II. In 1953 Betty immigrated to the U.S. with a friend and made a temporary home at the Martha Washington Hotel in New York City. She quickly found employment with Ziff Davis Publishing Co., where she worked for 25 years.

In 1955 Betty married Edward Sexton and the couple settled in Cold Spring. She died in 1967. In 1977, Betty married George McAndrew, and together they ran the George A. McAndrew Auto Parts store on Main Street until George’s death in 1994.

Betty loved all things British, as well as animals, music, reading, and sweet treats. She is survived by her daughters, Margaret Sexton and Kathleen Harrison (Scott); four grandchildren, Richard Sexton, Stacy Kuenzle (Tim), Christine Foley (Kip) and Rebecca Roberts (John); and four great-grandchildren.

A Mass of Remembrance will be held at Our Lady of Loretto in Cold Spring on May 1, 2021, the first anniversary of her death. Memorial donations may be made to the Paralyzed Veterans of America (pva.org) or the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (aspca.org).

Robert Nowak (1945-2020)

Robert Laramee Nowak, 74, of Cold Spring, died on April 23 at NewYork-Presbyterian Hudson Valley Hospital in Cortlandt Manor with his wife, Susan Early, at his side.

Bob was born July 22, 1945, in Elizabeth, New Jersey, the son of Edmund and Elizabeth “Betty” (Laramee) Nowak. A 1964 graduate of Linden High School, he served in the U.S. Navy in Vietnam as a coxswain on a riverboat. After his service, he worked at jobs requiring mechanical expertise, including at Anchor Motor Freight and Sears. He was a founding member of LZ Hope, a self-help group at the VA hospital in East Orange, New Jersey, for veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

Bob lived in New Jersey for 57 years before moving to Cold Spring. In his earlier years he enjoyed taking family and friends out on his boat, riding his motorcycle and attending car shows with his 63½ Ford Galaxy. He loved his dogs, Fords, frogs, Coca-Cola, mustards, chili, hot peppers, cheese and (sadly) the Jets. His family said he was a thoughtful and generous person.

Besides his wife, he is survived by a brother, Lee Nowak (Sue); a sister, Joy Kennedy (Tim); and a sister-in-law, Mary Jayne Nowak.

Memorial donations may be made to Vietnam Veterans of America (vva.org) or any veteran’s organization or charity.

John Salvas (1960-2020)

The Rev. John Salvas, 59, who joined the priesthood after graduating from Beacon High School and served in parishes around the country, died April 21 at St. Francis of Assisi Friary in Hackensack, New Jersey.

John was born in Beacon on Aug. 26, 1960, the son of Walter and Barbara (Lyman) Salvas. He grew up in the family’s “big brick house” on Wolcott Avenue in the shadow of Mount Beacon. He graduated from St. Joachim’s Catholic School and, in 1979, from Beacon High School.

From a very early age, John developed a true love for nature and all of God’s beautiful creation, his family said. He strived to live in the spirit of St. Francis in every way. He made his first Profession of Vows on Aug. 19, 1984, at St. Lawrence Friary in Beacon.

He made his final Profession of Vows on Sept. 19, 1987, at Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Orange, New Jersey. He was ordained on March 12, 1988, at Our Lady of Lourdes in Paterson, New Jersey, and recently had completed his 32nd year as a priest.

Following ordination, John served in parishes in the Bronx; Paterson, New Jersey; Atlanta; Tampa; Hendersonville, North Carolina; and elsewhere before coming to St. Joachim in 2011.

(Continued on Page 22)

---

Thinking about divorce?

Let’s talk. Spare your children the trauma of seeing their parents “battle it out” in court. Work with us to reduce the confusion, conflict, and cost of your separation or divorce.

MAGNUSS Divorce Mediation
Diane Magnusson 914 382-3268
2537 Rt 52, Suite 1 Hopewell Junction NY 12533
www.magnussvorcmediation.com

Let us transform your yard into a beautiful setting for you to enjoy and relax in.

Marc’s Landscaping & Outdoor Living, LLC.

Learn more about our available eye care services and what we are doing to safely care for you and your family at ... SDEC2020.com

All work professionally done with extra attention to detail.

RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL
LANDSCAPE & HARDSCAPE DESIGN & INSTALLATION

For Appointments call Kathy at 845-590-5283
Licensed & Insured | P.O. BOX 346 Cold Spring, NY 10516

---

Marc’s Landscaping & Outdoor Living, LLC.
lina; and Hackensack, New Jersey. Among his favorite ministries was working with the Hispanic community, his family said, and he immersed himself in the Dominican Republic to become fluent in Spanish and loved ministering in that language.

John founded the Helping Hands food pantry and soup kitchen at Immaculate Conception Friary in the Bronx. He was also known for his stirring homilies, artistic abilities and parish dramas depicting scenes from the life of Christ, his family said.

John especially enjoyed nurturing the many gardens he planted, hiking, camping at Montauk, going to the ocean, traveling to various pilgrimage sites and music of all kinds. John always made it a priority to minister to the sacramental needs of his large extended family by performing numerous weddings, massbets and funerals over the years. He was a true child at heart and loved seeing his many nieces and nephews at family gatherings, his family said.

He is survived by his father, Walter Salvas of Beacon; and his siblings, Paul Salvas (Carol) of Beacon; Martin Salvas (Kathy) of Rochester; William Salvas (Anne) of Ayer, Massachusetts; Mary Gagliardi (Joseph) of Poughkeepsie; and Jeanne Brunet (Paul) of Brookfield, Connecticut.

Interment took place on April 25 at St. Lawrence Friary Cemetery in Beacon.

John Sheeran (1948-2020)

John Denis Sheeran, 71, of Cold Spring, died on May 2 of complications of COVID-19 and a stroke he suffered in October.

John was born in New York City on July 5, 1948, the son of John and Jean (Pring) Sheeran. Over the course of his life he lived in various places throughout New York, including Riverdale, New City, Centerport, Manhattan, Jeffersonville and Garrison. John also spent time at family summer homes in Montauk and Loch Sheldrake in the Catskills.

John received a bachelor of arts degree from Fairfield University in Connecticut and went on to work over 36 years in the financial services end of the insurance industry as a senior vice president in charge of directors’ and officers’ liability programs.

He enjoyed bringing his family on vacation to places like Newport, Rhode Island; Tybee Island, Georgia; and what he considered the perfect location, Martha’s Vineyard.

John’s family said he possessed a larger-than-life personality and will be most remembered for his sense of humor and playfulness. He was articulate and had a great love and appreciation for his friends and family. He organized many events to bring them together, such as annual trips to Austin, Texas, concerts, cocktail parties and corporate outings.

He was a lifelong fan of the Boston Celtics and also a self-acclaimed Celtic who lived a life focused on pride, loyalty and camaraderie. He enjoyed watching and playing sports, including basketball and tennis, and he was interested in movies, books, art and his biggest passion, music. He enjoyed fine wine and good food as well as a great pizza and a cold ice cream. In his later years, John found joy in decorating themed cigar boxes that he sold at galleries and markets.

John is survived by his wife of 47 years, Maureen; his daughter Maureen; his daughter Brittany (Joseph) of Ashland, Massachusetts; and grandchildren Sienna, Tristan and Hayes; his daughter Mariel Cornell and grandchildren Dexter, Chase and Tatau, who live in California. His son, Cailean Walker Sheeran, died before him. He also is survived by his siblings, Peter Sheeran of Texas, Patricia Sheeran of Las Vegas and Claire Levin of Virginia.

A celebration of John’s life will be held on April 24 at the Joseph F. Nardone Funeral Home in Peekskill, followed by interment at St. Augustine Cemetery in Ossining.

Wayne Stephens (1961-2020)


With his wife, Wayne enjoyed the arts, travel and driving up the New England coast. He especially loved birds. He would often be up early to catch the sunrise, his family said.

Besides his wife, he is survived by his siblings, Maryanne Heady (Kevin), Theresa Johnson (Roy), Gary Stephens (Sue Cristo) and Edmund Stephens (Sharon). He also is survived by his sister-in-law, Lorraine Iacino.

A service for family was held on April 24 at the Joseph F. Nardone Funeral Home in Peekskill, followed by interment at St. Augustine Cemetery in Ossining.

Bill Whipp (1940-2020)


Bill was born on July 8, 1940, into a family of nine children. Being the youngest, he and three deaf sisters, he began to develop a sense of empathy at an early age, according to David Dickinson, his partner of more than 50 years, Bill was an uncomplicated man who was passionate about the injustices he saw. His smile made everything good, Dickinson said.

Besides David, Bill is survived by his sisters, Thelma Kamuchey and Evangeline Norton, both of California; a sister-in-law, Susan Kamuchey of Florida; and a brother-in-law, Stan Smith. Shortly before his death, Bill wrote a letter to The Current to thank Dr. Cynthia Ligenza and Terry Alexander for his care.

Other Recent Deaths

Beacon
Robert Kerby, 71
Jon Osborne, 77
Mary Rafter, 87
Rosina Tyburczy, 79

For more obituaries, see highlandscurrent.org/obits.

HAVE YOUR OWN BUSINESS CARD? You can advertise your business here starting at $20.
Puzzles

CrossCurrent

ACROSS
1. Kills, slangily
5. Make up your mind
8. Padlock fastener
12. Polio vaccine pioneer
13. Born
14. Sheltered, at sea
15. Reacted to sun glare
17. Hot dog holder
18. Sugar suffix
19. Charged bit
20. Chin indentation
21. Kreskin’s claim
22. Montana or Namath
23. Baghdad resident
26. Feast
30. Frill for Fonteyn
31. Bear hair
32. Radius neighbor
33. In need of laundering
35. Bishop’s headdress
36. Present
37. Corral
38. Engine
41. Fish’s flipper
42. Fire residue
43. Ego
44. Crones
45. Pinnacle
46. Hotel chain
47. AOL, for instance
48. Enticement
49. Ostrich’s kin
50. A bit too tight
51. Doctrines
52. “Gosh!”
53. Skillets

DOWN
1. — buco
2. Webpage list, often
3. Chimney channel
4. Tackle the slopes
5. Winning
6. Hammerhead part
7. Slugger Williams
8. Buffoon
9. Lotion additive
10. Ego
11. Hide
16. Unless, in law
19. Opposed
21. They occur in March and September
22. Pickle container
23. Monty Python opener
24. Trench
25. — standstill
26. Unopened flower
27. Last: Abbr.
28. Away from WSW
29. Pitch
30. A bit too tight
31. Only a small number
32. Neither mate
33. In need of laundering
34. Neat\n35. Carte
36. Fit of resentment
37. Neighbor of Niger
38. Piece of work
39. Expression
40. Expression
41. Notoriety
42. Actress Paquin
43. Dazzle
44. Crones
45. Pinnacle
46. Journey segment
47. AOL, for instance

SudokuCurrent

Answers will be published next week. See highlandscurrent.org/puzzle for interactive sudoku.
Attic Yields World War I Treasures

Encouraged Americans to preserve food

By Michael Turton

Jeff Wigdor credits his penchant for collecting family discards and the ongoing COVID-19 shutdown for his recent discovery of three World War I propaganda posters in the attic of his Lake Valhalla home in Philipstown.

“I was the one who’d keep things from ending up in the dumpster,” Wigdor said of his habit of collecting unwanted possessions after the death of a relative.

Over the years, his attic collection grew to include boxes he had not even opened. “The pandemic gave me time to do that,” he said.

One box contained a storage tube he didn’t recognize. Inside were the three posters, a little worse for wear.

Produced by the U.S. Food Administration, the agency responsible for feeding the American and allied military force overseas, the posters stress the need for stateside food conservation. As the U.S. entered “the war to end all wars,” posters featuring slogans such as “Victory is a question of stamina” encouraged Americans to eat less so more food could be shipped to troops. They also advocated planting “victory gardens” and canning fruits and vegetables.

In 2020 it’s hard to imagine posters as a primary means of influencing a nation. Not so in the early 20th century. According to the Library of Congress, which has more than 1,900 posters created by the U.S. and its allies in its collection, “during World War I, the impact of the poster as a means of communication was greater than at any other time during history.”

American artists contributed hundreds of designs. The best-known of them — an aggressive Uncle Sam pointing at the view and saying, “I Want YOU for the U.S. Army” — was created by James Montgomery Flagg. He adapted his design from a 1914 British poster in which Lord Kitchener admonished British citizens with “Your country needs YOU!”

Posters, including a version of Flagg’s Uncle Sam design, were produced in large numbers in the 1940s during World War II, as well, but by then much larger audiences could be reached though radio and film.

Topographic maps of Massachusetts, stored in the attic next to where Wigdor found the posters, provide a clue to the likely original owner of the World War I memorabilia. “The maps belonged to my grandfather, Palmer Day,” Wigdor said. “He last lived in Plymouth, Massachusetts.”

Day’s family was in the printing business, but markings on the posters indicate they were produced in New York City and Chicago.

His grandfather did, however, play a role in restoring the century-old printed materials. Wigdor used Day’s handmade T-squares to flatten the tightly rolled paper. (Wigdor said he would like to have the posters mounted and protected. One of his dreams, he said, is to own a pub. “I’d love to hang them there.”)

Day, who died in 1996, wasn’t a veteran, but Wigdor’s family has a history of military service dating to the Revolutionary War. During World War I, relatives served in the U.S. Signal Corps Balloon Group No. 3 and the 101st Engineer Battalion.

Finding the posters when he did was poignant, Wigdor said. His discovery came as his son, Jared, a lance corporal in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves, returned home after a year of training in Florida and California.

Of the three posters, Wigdor is especially drawn to one bearing the slogan “Food is ammunition — don’t waste it.” He said, “I love the message, the vibrant colors and the silhouette of soldiers on horseback.

“The messages have such significance,” he said. “It’s humbling to be their steward, hopefully to preserve them for another 100 years.”