

The HIGHLANDS Current



JUNE 12, 2020

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TAKING A KNEE — Protests have continued around the country against police brutality and racism following the death of George Floyd on May 25 while in police custody in Minneapolis, including on Saturday (June 6) on Route 9D in Beacon. For more photos, see highlandscurrent.org.

Photo by Jeff Simms

Cold Spring Officer Resigns

Residents raised concerns about 2012 shooting

By Michael Turton

A Cold Spring police officer who was the supervisor at the scene of a fatal shooting of an unarmed black man in New York City in 2012 said this week he would resign following calls from community members that he be fired.

Mayor Dave Merandy said that Officer Scott Morris, who was hired by the village in December to join its force of about a dozen part-time officers, told him in a phone call on Tuesday (June 9) that he planned to quit. Merandy said he and other Village Board members received a “bombardment” of emails this week questioning the hire.

In February 2012, Morris was the sergeant of a New York Police Department narcotics team when two officers followed Ramarley Graham, 18, to his Bronx apartment on suspicion that he had been involved in a drug deal.

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Now Entering ... Phase 2

Restaurants, churches reopen, with limits

By Leonard Sparks

For the first time in months, the bucolic Fishkill Creek waterfall outside the Roundhouse Beacon restaurant has some company.

Five minutes into the Roundhouse’s reopening at 3 p.m. on Tuesday (June 9), couples and families were arriving at the outdoor patio for meals. By 7 p.m., the tables were full.

“It feels good,” said Katie Guerra, the Roundhouse’s general manager. “It feels really good.”

Uncertainty still overshadows local restaurants shuttered since March 22, when Gov. Andrew Cuomo ordered nonessential businesses, including bars and restaurants, to close to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

But Tuesday marked, in the Mid-Hudson Region, the beginning of Phase 2 of the state’s four-phase reopening plan, which allows restaurants to begin offering outdoor dining as a prelude toward a return to indoor dining. In Beacon, tables



About 30 parishioners gathered on Tuesday (June 9) at Our Lady of Loretto for the first time since March. The Cold Spring church is holding Mass at 8:15 a.m. daily, except on Sunday. Photo by John Scherer

were moved onto the sidewalk in front of the Yankee Clipper Diner; a tent was

(Continued on Page 9)

Shea to Sullivan: Apologize

Philipstown supervisor says Putnam Legislature hit ‘all-time low’

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

Philipstown Supervisor Richard Shea last week called on a Putnam legislator to apologize for his behavior at a recent county meeting.

During the monthly meeting of the Putnam County Legislature, held June 2 by audio conference, Nancy Montgomery, who represents Philipstown on the nine-member panel and is its only Democrat, was repeatedly interrupted while she argued against approving funds to reinstate a deputy county executive position.

At one point, as legislators talked over each other, a male voice told Montgomery to “shut up, shut up, shut up.”

Montgomery objected that “it sounds like Legislator [Neal] Sullivan telling me to shut up.” She appealed to the chair, Toni Addonizio of Kent, to restore order.

(Continued on Page 3)

5Q FIVE QUESTIONS: BURCHIE GREEN

By Arvind Dilawar

Burchie Green is president of the National Maritime Historical Society, based in the former Fleischman's Gin building on the waterfront in Peekskill.

How did the society end up in Peekskill?

It was founded in 1963 in Washington, D.C., by a group of preservationists determined to save an 1899 merchant barque, the Kaiulani, which was the last U.S.-built square rigged to sail around Cape Horn. It became a rallying call for an organization to preserve America's maritime heritage. When Peter Stanford, the founder of the South Street Seaport Museum in New York City, took over leadership of the society, he lived in Yorktown. So he moved the society to Croton and then in 1991 to Peekskill. Walter Cronkite cut the ribbon.

What's your personal interest?

My family owns islands in Pointe-au-Baril, which is on Lake Huron north of Toronto. When I was growing up, we went everywhere on wooden boats. As an adult, my sons and I spent lots of time sailing and boating and waterskiing with friends on the Hudson River. Many of my happiest times were on the water. It's been said

that the connection we have with the water is biological, that because our bodies are so much water we are drawn to it. I also have always loved history and did some archeology in England. I had been managing editor of *Creative Computing*, an early journal in the personal computing field, and when I left that to have a family, I was looking for a national organization to work for and the National Maritime Historical Society was in my backyard.

What does the society do?

We organize seminars, conferences and meetings for our 8,000 members. We advocate federal funding for 1,000 maritime heritage organizations around the country. We publish the journal *Sea History*. It has a section for fifth-grade students. Although 95 percent of goods still go by ship, it is an invisible industry. We need students to know about the exciting careers in the field.



How have your operations changed since the shutdown?

We closed on March 22 and had to postpone many events, including our annual awards dinner in Washington and our annual meeting in Philadelphia. We have created digital educational projects from maritime museums while they are closed. But the June issue of *Sea History* went out on schedule.

What challenges face both local waterways and seafarers?

The Hudson River had undergone a slowdown of recreational traffic in the past decade, from security issues after 9/11, work on the Mario Cuomo Bridge at Tarrytown, and the high cost of fuel and maintaining a boat after the recession of 2008. In the first bloom of spring there was great enthusiasm that this might be the turn-around year for recreational traffic on the Hudson River, but the pandemic put a stop to that.



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ON THE SPOT

By Michael Turton

What was the best thing about the place where you grew up?

I was baseball-obsessed, and just outside Beacon we had a great Little League, plus the Renegades at The Dutch.



~ Patrick Kennedy, Beacon

I liked Bronxville because it was quiet, calm and you could walk to everything.



~ Colette Cavana, Garrison

The best thing about Wappingers Falls was the diversity of kids, rich to poor; you were able to choose your friends.



~ Joey Emmanuel, Beacon

Former Beacon Woman Found Dead

North Carolina police accused of slow response

By Chip Rowe

The families of a former Beacon woman and her fiancée are questioning the response of police in Wilmington, North Carolina, after the couple went missing in April. Nearly three weeks later, the women's remains were found inside their car, which had left the road and crashed into thick vegetation.

The bodies of Stephanie Mayorga, 27, and Paige Escalera, 25, were discovered inside their Dodge Dart on May 4 near a curve in a road. They had been missing since April 15.

Mayorga's Facebook profile said she was originally from Beacon. She attended Ashley High School in Wilmington, and in December received her bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina Wilmington.

Her mother, Monica Villafuerte, said through an intermediary that she was not ready to discuss her daughter's death. Her stepfather, Rigo Villafuerte, said during a news conference on May 4, while the search was still underway: "This is our worst nightmare. We're just so desperate to see them to come home. We have a lot of dreams for both of them."

On June 3, a judge ordered the Wilmington Police Department to release bodycam footage of two police officers' encoun-



Lauren Henderson, a friend of Stephanie Mayorga, lays flowers at a the site of the crash.

Photo by Mark Darrough/Port City Daily

ter with a man who called 911 just before midnight on the day the women disappeared. The caller, who waited for the officers to arrive, insisted he had seen a vehicle in his side mirror speed down Independence Boulevard, miss a curve at River Road and disappear into the tree line.

After returning to their squad car, according to the footage, the officers discussed

how the car may have pulled into a nearby gated community. As other calls came over the radio, including for two armed robberies and a shooting, one officer commented: "And we're looking for a phantom car crash." They left the scene after eight minutes.

According to a timeline compiled by the *Port City Daily* in Wilmington, the women's roommates filed a missing persons' report four days



Stephanie Mayorga and Paige Escalera

later and called the women's parents on April 26 after being told police had not done so.

The Escalera family responded by creating a Facebook group, and family members and friends distributed thousands of fliers seeking information. Friends, family members and volunteers also conducted searches.

In a news conference on May 14, a police department representative said it appeared the vehicle was traveling at 102 or 103 miles per hour when it ran a stop sign, hit a curb near the entrance to a marina and went airborne before striking a tree 150 feet off the road. Officers found empty beer bottles at the scene and concluded alcohol was a factor in the crash.

Police said the car was hard to see because the battery broke in half on impact, shutting off the lights. It also was partly submerged in a marshy area.

Shea/Sullivan (from Page 1)

Addonizio stated that she did "not know who's doing that."

Sullivan maintained that "I didn't say anything."

Two days later, at a meeting of the Philipstown Town Board, Shea accused Sullivan of "disgusting and reprehensible" behavior.

"The tenor in the county Legislature has reached an all-time low when you have a legislative member telling another member to 'shut up' multiple times," Shea said. "That is unacceptable, and Neal Sullivan should be ashamed of himself. He's brought shame to that legislative body. He needs to conduct himself in a more professional manner" and "to apologize to the entire legislative body for his conduct."

Sullivan did not respond to a request for comment.

Typically, county legislators must identify themselves and obtain the chair's permission before speaking, a practice often ignored during the heated exchanges over transferring \$20,558 to hire a deputy county executive through the end of the year. The position had been vacant since 2017 but County Executive MaryEllen Odell said that "the current global pandemic and grave economic crisis" made restoring it "imperative."

Montgomery cast the lone vote against the funds transfer.

In her monthly report on June 4 to the Philipstown board, she explained: "We're a tiny county. We don't need all this government. We don't need this expansive executive [department], the high-paid top officials we have." Instead, she proposed that Putnam focus on rank-and-file workers because those "making low salaries deserve a lot more support than what they're getting."

Legislators can reconsider funding the deputy county executive position when they take up the 2021 budget this fall.

Several hours before the June 2 vote, Odell issued a news release referring to Thomas Feighery, a project manager in the Highway Department, as the deputy county executive.

In her remarks that night, Montgomery noted the timing of the release and claimed her colleagues were providing "a rubber stamp on a patronage hire." She also questioned Feighery's credentials and declared that his responsibilities, as defined by Odell, did not match the job description for a deputy county executive.

"Now is the time for hiring freezes and austerity measures at every level until we can stabilize county finances," she argued, pointing out that Finance Commissioner Bill Carlin had warned of possible county employee furloughs and layoffs in the wake of the economic turmoil caused by the COVID-19 crisis. (In a separate meeting, convened that night after the vote on

the deputy county executive funds transfer, Carlin delivered grim news, noting that the sales tax revenue received by the county in May was 24 percent less than recorded in May 2019.)

Legislator Ginny Nacerino of Patterson responded that Feighery's job was "a benefit to the people of Putnam, to help this county get back on its feet," and berated Montgomery for trying "to grandstand and monopolize the whole meeting."

Legislator Paul Jonke of Southeast said that initially he thought Montgomery asked questions at meetings "because she was

unprepared. But now I know it's just grandstanding and that's what she wants to do. She wants to go on and on about her pet peeves. And I don't think this is the place for it."

Sullivan urged them to avoid discussing "things that don't matter."

Montgomery protested that her colleagues "don't want to hear what anyone has to say." If deliberation and discussion are banned, "what are we here for?" she said. "I work for the people."

"We all work for the people. We all serve our communities," Sullivan asserted. "We all want to do what's right for them."

CURRENT CONVERSATIONS

Clint Watts

Former executive officer at the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point will discuss his new book, "Messing with the Enemy".

WEDNESDAY JUNE 17TH 7:00 - 7:30 P.M.
Register to attend the live Zoom event:
highlandscurrent.org/current-conversations



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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.

LETTERS AND COMMENTS

Deputy executive

More county cronyism, big surprise ("Putnam OKs Funds for Deputy Executive," June 5). Nothing personal against the appointee, but how can one realistically expect to do this job, manage projects for the highway department and act as general manager for his bar and maintain focus doing all three things?

Why are issues like this never discussed in advance? How about some surveys and accountability, and see what we, the citizens in this county, think about the things going on?

Ed Swanson, *Carmel*

A million thank-you's to Legislator Nancy Montgomery for always voting the right way, even in the face of insulting opposition from her colleagues on the board. She is 100 percent correct that in an era of furloughing, layoffs and general financial upheaval, such egregious featherbedding courtesy of County Executive MaryEllen Odell is the epitome of indifference to her constituency. (Of course, it's bad during any season, and I don't know how our friends elsewhere in Putnam County can vote such corrupt representatives into office.)

This is not about Republican versus

Democrat but about common sense and good governance, and the legislator who told Montgomery to "shut up," likely from the comfortable anonymity of his Zoom-enabled dark screen, should be identified and censured.

Jacqueline Foertsch, *Cold Spring*

Police response

Since the unconscionable murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police officers last week, we, the members of the Beacon Police Benevolent Association, have been struggling to find the words to express our emotions. It should not have to be said, but absolutely needs to be said that each and every member of the Beacon PBA condemns the murder of Mr. Floyd and the actions by all four of the involved officers in Minneapolis.

As police officers we take our oath seriously to protect and serve each and every one of you and your constitutional rights regardless of race, gender, religion, political party or age. On the much larger scale, as human beings we respect and cherish all life. That is why watching the video and following this incident, it is sickening to all of us to see evil in those that have taken similar oaths.

Please believe that we are proud to serve the City of Beacon and respect the lives and

rights of every single resident, business owner and visitor. We will still stand proud wearing the uniform and patch of the City of Beacon Police Department. We will stand tall and strong with you and protect your right to express your voices, beliefs and causes in a peaceful and safe setting.

Michael Confield, *Beacon*
Confield is vice president of the PBA.

Protester photos

It's just a shame that the photos [of three leaders of a Beacon protest] look like mug shots ("The Faces of Protest," June 5).

Hailey Reynolds, *via Instagram*

I feel that. Kinda shocked. My dad said it looks like *America's Most Wanted* on the front page.

Ciarda Hall, *via Instagram*
Editor's note: Hall was one of the three protestors depicted in the photos.

Village visitors

You will grow to regret your decision [to add restrictions in Cold Spring] as you see the focus on this "plandemic" disappear ("Village Residents on Lockdown," May 29). Your beautiful town is a haven for those who need some peace, serenity and fresh air. Hopefully, before August, you will ease up on your restrictions.

Barbara Darrigo, *via Instagram*

Vandalism arrest

What a waste of money ("Beacon Police Arrest Alleged Vandal," June 5). Those buildings near Madam Brett Park have been tagged for decades. Why bother to arrest this artist? And a pot bust? Really. This is why we need to rebuild the idea of policing.

David Ross, *Beacon*

Wide views

I am the mother of a New York Police Department deputy inspector and the mother-in-law of a retired NYPD aviation lieutenant and am beyond proud of the fine professionals they are. My father was in law enforcement in the family courts of New York City. A more compassionate and honorable man never lived.

On 9/11, I was in Manhattan, volunteering at the armory, serving affected families, observing many officers. Does anyone remember *those* police? Those police who ran into buildings; the police like my daughter and son-in-law, who on their days off jumped into their cars and headed toward the devastation, into a dangerous unknown; my son-in-law in his helicopter frantically hoping they could rescue

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LETTERS AND COMMENTS

(Continued from Page 4)

people from the rooftops — people who never appeared.

These are the same police. The thin blue line honors them. The flag is the symbol of their gallantry and sacrifice (“Wide Views of the Thin Blue Line,” June 5).

Let’s not continue the abhorrent policy of rewriting history for the whims of the moment: tearing down statues, banning books, silencing opinions. These actions are the antithesis of the American spirit.

Rena Corey, *Cold Spring*

I wrote the mayor regarding this concern, being fully aware of what the thin-blue-line flag has meant. But unfortunately — like many symbols that people should be proud of, and have pride for — the thin blue line has been appropriated by several white supremacist groups. Many protesters also associate the symbol with the thin blue line of silence, which means no matter how bad a cop behaves, his fellow officers will remain silent.

There are alternatives to this divisive logo. As a person of mixed heritage, who doesn’t plan on going anywhere, I hope that the mayor and trustees recognize the opportunity to ease what could be unnecessary tension between our law enforcement and people of color, whether residents or visitors.

Patrick Biesemans, *Cold Spring*

The Current refers in its story to “the death last month in Minneapolis of a black man, George Floyd, while in police custody.” Respectfully, I think you are drastically understating the gravity of the incident. The police officer, Derek Chauvin, clearly intentionally knelt on George Floyd’s neck until Floyd died. There is uninterrupted video of the incident. Chauvin’s colleagues prevented bystanders from intervening. That’s on video, too.

While I understand that *The Current* may want to be cautious in describing the incident and avoid potential liability, I can see no fault in calling this act of murder a murder. The attorney general of Minnesota is calling it a second-degree murder. Can *The Current* not do the same?

David Limburg, *Nelsonville*

I commend Mayor Dave Merandy for taking time to review the thin-blue-line flag matter. The opposition to the flag is a knee-jerk reaction to the horrific actions of several officers in the Floyd killing. The flag is a memorial to those officers who have been hurt or killed in protecting us and our families. The thin blue line has been around for years, but most recently as a memorial to two NYPD officers who were assassinated while sitting in their patrol car. Both officers were minority members. The flag has come to represent the good officers do.

The flag decals have been on Cold Spring Police Department cars for a year, so why now? Did local officers execute a horrific act? Why insult them? Let’s not bring the hate to our area communities. Support those who act responsibly while protecting us. Last week they were heroes, like all first responders during this virus crisis. What changed? Fire departments have the same flag with a red stripe. White is EMS,

gold is dispatchers, green is military, gray is corrections, red and white are nurses, etc. Is this a problem, too?

Thank you, Dave and Trustee Fran Murphy, for being able to sort it out and take time to evaluate the facts. I’m a recently retired Cold Spring officer who for 22 years always treated people the way I wanted to be treated. I considered Cold Spring my home and its residents my friends. And yes, if you’re offended, I’m offended, too, that you would subvert a respectful item into an object of hate.

Bill Bujarski, *Putnam Valley*

No pun intended, but this is not a black-and-white issue. All cops are not bad. There are plenty of good cops doing their best to serve and protect. They deserve our support. But there are also far too many bad cops throughout this nation, who must be identified and removed from the ranks. There should be absolutely no place for violent bigots in this country’s police forces.

Jon Lindquist, *via Facebook*

I found the decals inappropriate when they first appeared, and I know many of my neighbors felt the same way. The only thing that has changed is the wider realization that the police do not control the people, the people control the police. Every police department in America must distinguish itself as an independent, specific resource dedicated to the unique community it serves. This is one way to start.

Sean Conway, *Cold Spring*

This is how I interpret those altered flag decals: I’m wary of police who display the Blue Lives Matter messaging. Perhaps there’s another way to show support and solidarity for police that doesn’t come across as a dog whistle or a call to fascism to a significant portion of our citizenry.

I’m not anti-cop, I’m pro-justice, and I don’t think it’s controversial to say, “Hey, a lot of Americans have a negative interpretation of the thin-blue-line flag due to its numerous associations with white supremacist activity, as well as the fact that the FBI has reported that white supremacists have been infiltrating law enforcement forces across the country. Even though *we* interpret this symbol as support for our fallen brothers and sisters, unfortunately a lot of the people we are sworn to protect and serve have a much different notion of it, and it makes them distrustful. How can we approach this so the public understands we are not against them?”

Heather Candon, *via Facebook*

Blue Lives Matter was created in reaction to Black Lives Matter, so when you’re repping the Blue Lives Matter decal, it gives off the message that the black communities’ struggles are invalid. At a pressing time like this, when human rights and police brutality are a big debate, supporting one specific side says a lot about someone’s character.

Nick Farrell, *via Facebook*

I am grateful to Patrick Biesemans for bringing our attention to the blue-line decal. He created a space for all of us to

sit with the uncomfortable feelings that arise when we are asked to face our painful history around race relations. Let’s not waste this opportunity to face our demons.

Nowhere do race relations arise with more fear and rage in our country than they do around policing. There is deep interrelated trauma in both our police forces and in our communities of color going back 400 years. The painful reality is that to build our railroads and farm our cotton, our ancestors created an interrelated system of black slavery and white slave enforcement. Into the remnants of that baseline system we have all been born. That system is in our bones, with the moral and physical traumas passed down and replayed generation after generation, as the science of epigenetics has shown.

A few years ago, a black man in his 60s told me that every time he had to drive through Cold Spring, his blood pressure rose and he began shaking. To feel that level of terror in a grown man was devastating to me. While we must also acknowledge and address the deep trauma suffered by law enforcement, I don’t think a police car is the place to do it.

Diana Hird, *Philipstown*

There’s no such thing as “blue lives.” Becoming a police officer is a profession. It’s not comparable to being killed because of the color of your skin. We are thankful to officers who have given their lives to serve and protect, but fallen officers can

be remembered in a way that isn’t antagonistic to communities of color.

The association of the flag with Blue Lives Matter is what causes the tension. Blue Lives Matter was created in response to Black Lives Matter and creates an “us vs. them” mentality that is not helpful. There are other ways to remember fallen officers than a modified flag that didn’t exist 10 years ago.

Daniel Bentley, *via Facebook*

I was born and raised in this town and am the daughter of a retired police officer. I am embarrassed and appalled at this. Shame on you, Cold Spring!

Krissy Irwin, *via Facebook*

Why is the decal now a problem? We can support police officers and their feeling while still advocating for change. Officers of all ethnicities, genders and sexual orientations fly this flag or post it on their cars. Every time I see it, I think of friends who died protecting that line and friends who have been injured or made some sacrifice for it. Racists also fly the American flag.

Andy Fast, *via Facebook*

I’m a lifelong resident of Cold Spring, and my grandparents and great-grandparents lived here and owned businesses here. They would be beside themselves to know the lack of respect that is being spewed

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COVID19 PANDEMIC

It has been a busy few months here at Gergely Pediatrics trying to keep our doors open and everyone safe. Our patient and staff safety remains our number one priority. Since Wednesday, March 25th, we have been seeing all sick children via telehealth video appointments only and will be continuing to use telehealth for all sick visits until we feel it is safe to resume in office visits. We are now seeing well children ONLY in our office. Please call today to schedule your annual physical. We are following the guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics to continue seeing all healthy, well children in our office.

We are taking the following precautions:

- Pre visit COVID symptom and history screening for all visits
- Modified Provider Schedules with reduced patient volume
- Remote Check-in: we will have a streamlined check-in process. Forms and co-pays can be processed remotely.
- Where possible, patients will skip the front desk and proceed directly to the exam room.
- Upon arrival, everyone who is 2 years and older (who will tolerate) will have to wear masks.
- In addition to prescreening for COVID-19 symptoms before arrival, screening will be done upon arrival, including but not limited to temperature screening.
- Social Distancing: We have changed appointment time slots in order to space out scheduled appointments
- Disinfection and Cleaning: Our locations are repeatedly and thoroughly sanitized after every patient is seen throughout each day. Exam rooms are cleaned with EPA approved wipes between patient visits.
- Staff and Patient Protection: Our care teams follow CDC guidelines, have the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) and wear it at all times. We have also established screening and testing protocols for our care teams.

We remain dedicated to serving our patients and community. From all of us at Gergely Pediatrics we thank you for your support and patience during this time.

We will be remaining closed on Saturdays but still available by phone. If you should get the answering service and feel that you cannot wait until we open up again, please leave a message with the service. We will continue to keep you informed as events change. Please continue to check our website for update: gergelypediatrics.com

What is a Virtual Visit?

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Will my insurance cover a Virtual Visit?

Most insurance carriers will now cover this service, and are waiving copays associated with COVID19. Feel free to call your insurance company's member service number on the back of your insurance card to get exact benefit information for your own plan, as some company plans may vary.

COVID -19 Hotline at NY Presbyterian Hospital:

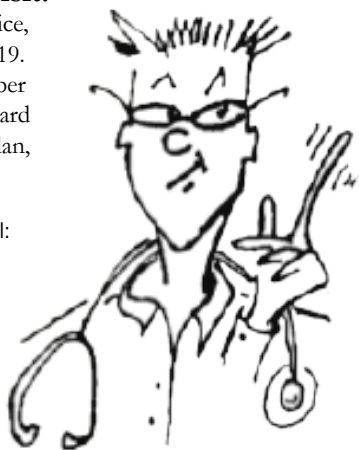
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Center for Disease Control:

CDC.GOV

World Health Organization:

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Route 403, Garrison, NY 10524

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gergelypediatrics.com

LETTERS AND COMMENTS

(Continued from Page 5)

through this village. People need to find stupid things to complain about a bit too often. The request to remove these decals should never have even been entertained. The Village Board should have simply moved on to the next item on the agenda.

Krista Manzoello, *via Facebook*

This is about police cars, not police officers, and how the sticker is perceived in general, and especially when placed on police vehicles. Police should be supported. At the same time, these stickers represent racism to many people. When I see the stickers, I think it would be great if people could come out of their corners and focus less on being "right" and more on being decent human beings.

Christine Ashburn, *via Facebook*

If Black Lives Matters changed the flag for their political message, conservative heads would explode. Blue Lives Matters wasn't a spontaneous campaign; the message was that officers didn't want change or oversight. Like a Confederate flag, at least part of its intent is to make certain people uncomfortable. Continuing to use it despite that sends a clear message.

Police officers should care about the messages they send and how they are going to be perceived. It seems like they don't. Officers are asked to do too much: Drug addiction, mental illness, legal military-grade weapons on the street and crime directly related to severe poverty all fall on cops to deal with, while the root causes for these problems are made worse by conservative policies of shortsighted fund-cutting.

Jay Nicholas, *via Facebook*

Health commissioner

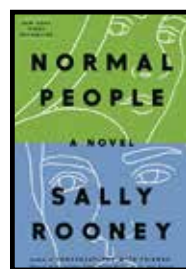
Dr. Michael Nesheiwat holds four paid positions in Putnam County, in addition to continuing in his private practice: coroner, supervisor of coroners, health commissioner and jail physician [for which he is employed by a private firm] ("Judge Questions Putnam Health Commissioner's Jail Job," June 5). He's the highest-paid employee in the county; the last time I requested records from the county through the Freedom of Information Law, it showed he earned nearly \$218,000 annually – and that was in 2017.

The County Charter – specifically, Chapter 10.04 (e) Department of Health: Commissioner/Public Health Director – doesn't seem terribly ambiguous: "All full-time managerial employees in the department who are professionally licensed shall not engage in any private practice, nor be employed in their field of expertise with the County, by any private or governmental entity."

Kathleen Foley, *Cold Spring*

Has Dr. Nesheiwat met the requirement for retention of one of his four positions: a master's degree in public health? He keeps dipping into the county trough with the connivance of the county executive and obedient complicity of the Legislature. And for his efforts, he has been awarded an increase in salary as health commissioner to \$181,430 last year from \$177,873 in 2018. Together with his coroner's salary of \$20,640 and coroner manager salary of \$12,000, he certainly has become the model accumulator and dipper.

Ann Fanizzi, *Carmel*



Local Bestsellers

Based on combined hardcover and paperback sales reported for April and May by Binnacle Books, 321 Main St., in Beacon, and Split Rock Books, 97 Main St., in Cold Spring.



	Position	last month	TITLE	AUTHOR
ADULT	1	-	<i>Normal People</i>	Sally Rooney
	2	-	<i>All Adults Here</i>	Emma Straub
	2	3	<i>Untamed</i>	Glennon Doyle
	2	-	<i>Wow, No Thank You</i>	Samantha Irby
	3	-	<i>Lost Children Archive</i>	Valeria Luiselli
CHILDREN	4	-	<i>The City We Became</i>	N.K. Jemisin
	5	-	<i>The Glass Hotel</i>	Emily St. John Mandel
	1	-	<i>Ghost Squad</i>	Claribel Ortega
	2	-	<i>Poppy Takes Paris</i>	Pataki / Myers
	3	2	<i>Unusual Chickens for the Exceptional Poultry</i>	Kelly Jones
	4	-	<i>The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes</i>	Suzanne Collins
	5	-	<i>Esperanza Rising</i>	Pam Muñoz Ryan
	5	-	<i>When Stars are Scattered</i>	Jamieson / Mohamed
	5	-	<i>The Wild Robot</i>	Peter Brown

Lawmakers Remove Shield on Police Records

Disciplinary histories will be available to public

By Leonard Sparks

Police departments in New York will no longer be able to deny public access to the disciplinary records of officers under a bill passed this week by state lawmakers in response to the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, who died after an officer kneeled on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

Democrats in the Senate and Assembly repealed section 50-a of New York’s civil rights laws, a 44-year-old statute that kept confidential “personnel records used to evaluate performance toward continued employment or promotion” for police and corrections officers and firefighters.

Sandy Galef, whose Assembly district includes Philipstown, and Jonathan Jacobson, whose Assembly district includes Beacon, both Democrats, voted for the bill, while Sue Serino, a Republican whose Senate district includes the Highlands, voted against it.

Passed in 1976, the law has been used by police departments to limit access to the complaint and disciplinary records, over

the protestations of defense attorneys, criminal justice advocates and the state’s Committee on Open Government.

Capt. Lisa Ortolano, a representative for the Putnam County Sheriff’s Department, cited the confidentiality law in an April memo to Legislator Paul Jonke, chairman of the Protective Services Committee, while disputing that lawmakers were “entitled” to see the disciplinary records of deputies.

Once Gov. Andrew Cuomo signs the bill into law — which he said Wednesday (June 10) that he intends to do — the records will be subject to release through the Freedom of Information Law, with personal information such as addresses, phone numbers and Social Security numbers redacted. Departments can also withhold reports of minor violations of administrative rules.

In 2014, the Committee on Open Government said that while 50-a was designed to be a “narrow exemption” to the FOIL law, it “has been expanded in the courts to allow police departments to withhold from the public virtually any record that contains any information that could conceivably be used to evaluate the performance of a police officer.”

In addition to repealing 50-a, the Assem-

(Continued on Page 19)

Police Reform: How They Voted

The state Senate and Assembly passed 10 police-reform bills this week that were sent to Gov. Andrew Cuomo to enact or veto. Below are the votes cast by Republican Sue Serino (whose Senate district includes the Highlands), Democrat Sandy Galef (whose Assembly district includes Philipstown) and Democrat Jonathan Jacobson (whose Assembly district includes Beacon).

1. Access to disciplinary records

Legislators repealed a provision, known as 50-a, that kept confidential the disciplinary records of police officers, firefighters and correction officers.

Passed Senate 40-22

Serino ☒

Passed Assembly 101-43

Galef ☒ Jacobson ☒

2. Investigation of police killings

A new Office of Special Investigation in the Attorney General’s Office will investigate, and, if warranted, prosecute police-involved killings.

Passed Senate 45-17

Serino ☒

Passed Assembly 97-47

Galef ☒ Jacobson ☒

3. Investigation of misconduct

A new Law Enforcement Misconduct Investigative Office will study and make recommendations regarding the operations and policies of local police agencies.

Passed Senate 41-21

Serino ☒

Passed Assembly 100-44

Galef ☒ Jacobson ☒

4. Filming police activity

The law clarifies that someone who is not under arrest or in custody has the right to record police activity and to keep the recording.

Passed Senate 59-3

Serino ☒

Passed Assembly 128-16

Galef ☒ Jacobson ☒

5. Chokehold ban

The Eric Garner Anti-Chokehold Act prohibits the use of chokeholds by law enforcement and establishes the crime of aggravated strangulation as a felony. Garner died in 2014 after being placed in a chokehold by an officer on Staten Island.

Passed Senate 62-0

Serino ☒

Passed Assembly 139-5

Galef ☒ Jacobson ☒

6. Calling 911 for no good reason

This law establishes the right of a person to sue someone who calls the police on him or her because of their

race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, religion, religious practice, age, disability or sexual orientation when there is no reason to believe a crime has occurred and there is no imminent threat to a person or property.

Passed Senate 56-6

Serino ☒

Passed Assembly 105-39

Galef ☒ Jacobson ☒

7. Reporting gun discharges

This law requires local and state police officers to report within six hours when, whether on or off duty, they discharge their weapons where a person could have been struck.

Passed Senate 59-3

Serino ☒

Passed Assembly 105-39

Galef ☒ Jacobson ☒

8. Tracking low-level offenses

The Police Statistics and Transparency (STAT) Act will require courts to compile and publish racial and other demographic data of all low-level offenses and for police departments to submit annual reports on arrest-related deaths.

Passed Senate 60-2

Serino ☒

Passed Assembly 100-44

Galef ☒ Jacobson ☒

9. Affirming right to health care while in custody

This law will add a section to Civil Rights Law to affirm a person’s right to medical and mental health care while under arrest.

Passed Senate 60-2

Serino ☒

Passed Assembly 109-35

Galef ☒ Jacobson ☒

10. Requiring state police to wear body cams

This law will require state troopers to wear body cameras that must be activated whenever an officer has an interaction with anyone stopped on suspicion of a crime or a traffic violation.

Passed Senate 61-1

Serino ☒

Passed Assembly 142-2

Galef ☒ Jacobson ☒

NOTICE

Haldane Central School District
15 Craigsides Drive, Cold Spring, New York 10516

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

SCHOOL PHYSICIAN SERVICES

The Haldane Central School District is seeking proposals from interested persons and/or medical groups for the provision of School Physician Services to the Board of Education. The successful respondent will provide physician services for the Haldane Central School District.

Bids will be received until 11:30 a.m. on the 22nd day of June, 2020 in the Business Office in the Administration Building at Haldane Central School District. Bids should be marked ATTN: Tara Rounds, Director PPS and Special Education. At this time all bids will be publicly opened.

Specifications and bid forms may be obtained by calling Jessie Des Marais at (845) 265-9254 ext. 111 or email jdesmarais@haldaneschool.org. The Haldane Board of Education reserves the right to waive any informality relative to this bid and to reject any and all bids. Any bid submitted will be binding for the entire term of the bid, July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

Board of Education
Haldane Central School District
Cold Spring, New York 10516
By: Anne M. Dinio
School Business Manager



Coronavirus Update

■ State health officials said that, as of Thursday (June 11), 1,282 people have tested positive for COVID-19 in Putnam County; 4,027 in Dutchess; 34,106 in Westchester; 13,385 in Rockland; 1,729 in Ulster; and 10,550 in Orange. Statewide, there were 380,892 positives, including 208,517 in New York City, and 24,404 people had died.

■ Local libraries announced they would begin curbside pickup. The Butterfield Library in Cold Spring will offer pickup as of Monday (June 15). See butterfieldlibrary.org. In Beacon, the Howland Public Library began pickup on Wednesday (June 10). See beaconlibrary.org. And in Garrison, the Desmond-Fish Library will begin pickup as of Wednesday (June 17). Pickups at each library are by appointment only through email or phone. Delivery can be arranged and materials can be returned through the book drops.

■ Gov. Andrew Cuomo on June 7 signed an executive order extending the absentee ballot deadline for the June 23 primary election to the day of the election. Ballots must be postmarked by June 23 to be counted. He also extended the deadline for absentee ballots for school and library budget and trustee elections, saying they must be received by mail by June 16; the previous deadline was June 9. In addition, school districts that have their proposed budgets voted down will be able to schedule a second vote.

■ Cuomo said on June 6 that places of worship will be permitted to reopen during Phase 2 with 25 percent occupancy and all social distancing protocols in place. He also said he would sign an executive order allowing office buildings to conduct temperature checks on people entering.

■ Cuomo announced on June 7 that outdoor, socially distanced graduations of up to 150 people will be allowed beginning June 26, "subject to any outbreaks or significant changes in the metrics." This week, Haldane High School announced it would hold two ceremonies on June 27, each with about half of the 65-member class and two guests per graduate. Beacon High School plans to screen a "virtual graduation" ceremony on June 24 at a drive-in theater in Hyde Park.

■ Cuomo announced on June 8 that elective surgeries could resume at New York City hospitals.

■ In a news conference on June 9, Cuomo said that a region would only be shut down as it advances through the reopening stages if there is a spike in infections that cannot be managed through the contact tracing of those who test positive.

■ The state added racket games (badminton, pickleball, racquetball); toss/bowl games (horseshoes, bocce, bean bag toss, croquet);

COVID-19 by the Numbers

■ PUTNAM COUNTY

Number of confirmed cases:

1,282 (+14)

Philipstown **119**, Putnam Valley **176**

Tests administered:

12,268 (+1,917)

Percent positive:

10.4 (-1.9)

Number of deaths:

62 (+2)

Source: New York State Department of Health, with weekly changes. Data current as of June 11.

■ DUTCHESS COUNTY

Number of confirmed cases:

4,027 (+65)

Beacon **95**, Fishkill **61**

Tests administered:

42,269 (+6,670)

Percent positive:

9.5 (-1.6)

Number of deaths:

145 (+3)

flying disc games (disc golf and Frisbee); shuffleboard; aerial rope courses or zip lining; rope courses; batting cages; shooting ranges; and swim classes and swim instruction to the list of recreational activities that are allowable with restrictions in place. It also said that municipalities could open public pools and playgrounds at their discretion.

■ The state delivered 500,000 cloth masks and 10,000 gallons and 100,000 two-ounce bottles of hand sanitizer to Metro-North. To date, New York has distributed four million free bottles of hand sanitizer statewide.

■ The governor signed an order allowing in-person special education summer schools to operate.

■ 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. To find a test site, visit coronavirus.health.ny.gov.

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June 29 – July 17

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garrisonartcenter.org

Garrison Art Center

TIM BRENNAN
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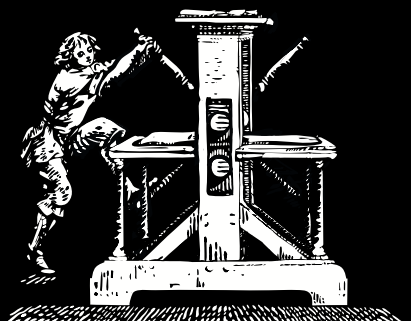
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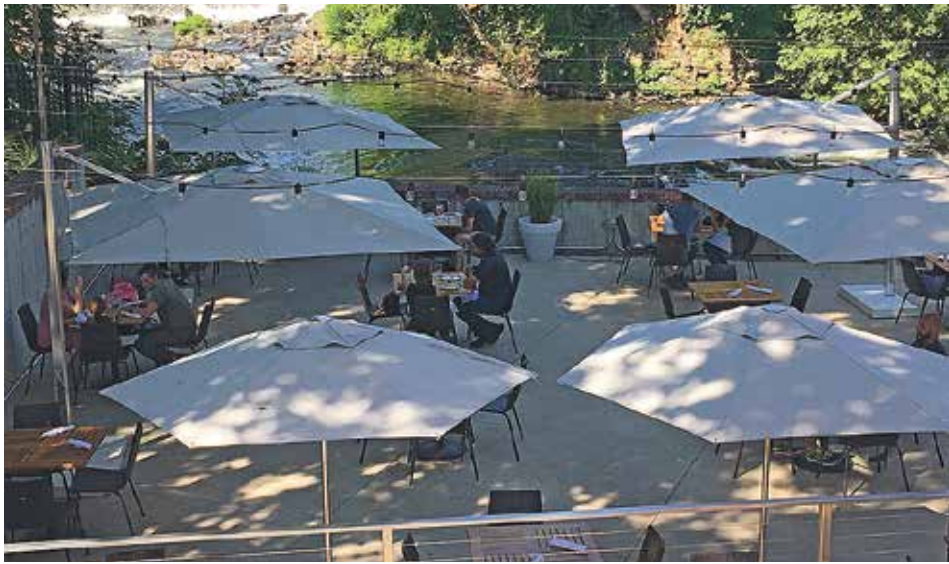
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The patio tables at the Roundhouse in Beacon, which reopened on Tuesday (June 9).

Photo by L. Sparks

Phase 2 *(from Page 1)*

erected in the parking lot of the Melzingah Tap House; and sidewalk seating at Max's on Main stretched around the corner onto North Walnut Street.

The state also allowed churches in Phase 2 to resume indoor services at 25 percent of capacity, and a number of them, such as St. Joachim & St. John the Evangelist in Beacon, took advantage. The church resumed morning Masses on Wednesday (June 10).

"The parish is more like a family," said the Rev. Richard Smith, its pastor. "So it feels like a family reunion."

During the shutdown, many local restaurants have been allowing customers to call in orders and pick up their food outside. A return to serving seated customers was not expected until Phase 3 of the state's plan, but Cuomo unexpectedly announced last week that outdoor dining would be permitted in Phase 2 as long as social-distancing and other health and safety requirements were met.

The announcement was "amazing timing," Guerra said.

Roundhouse had received quick approval for the federal Paycheck Protection Program, a COVID-19 relief program under which businesses could receive loans to keep employees on their payrolls as unemployment skyrocketed during the pandemic. (*The Current* also received a loan under the program.)

With that funding ending this week, Roundhouse's employees would have been looking at unemployment at least until Phase 3, Guerra said.

"We don't have to do that now," she said. "We can keep everybody on payroll and working."

The Roundhouse is also improvising to make use of its outdoor creekside event space, normally used for weddings and other private events. The space is being transformed on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays into "Smoke on the Water," a pop-up outdoor barbecue restaurant featuring cherry wood-smoked ribs and brisket. It will open on June 19.

"Instead of throwing up our hands and saying that business is not there this summer, and laying off those staff members, we figured there's got to be something that we can do," Guerra said.

Like Roundhouse, Hudson Hills Cafe in Cold Spring had to remove tables to

comply with the state's mandate that there be 6 feet of space between them. On Wednesday, the restaurant began serving diners at four tables on its covered porch, after having removed five.

People are happy to again be able to dine out, said co-owner Hilary Hayes. "So far people have been pretty respectful in terms of keeping their masks on and social distancing. So far it's positive."

Phase 3 is expected to begin in the Mid-Hudson Region on June 23. In addition to allowing the reopening of personal-care businesses like massage therapists, hair salons and tattoo parlors, restaurants will be able to offer indoor dining at 50 percent of capacity.

The Yankee Clipper in Beacon had a "bunch" of customers Tuesday after setting several tables outside, but owner Katina Pertesis and her staff are already planning for Phase 3.

"We have it all figured out — what we're going to do and how it's going to look," she said.

Optimism is warranted, but local restaurants likely face a "long road to recovery" after the shutdown, said Guerra. "I don't think there's a person in this industry who thinks that it's all-good now."

Local churchgoers are enjoying the return of another kind of nourishment.

In addition to St. Joachim & St. John the Evangelist, Our Lady of Loretto in Cold Spring opened its doors this week. Dozens of people attended Mass on Tuesday, including longtime member John Scherer.

"I was looking forward to it since the day they said we couldn't go to church," he said.

St. Joachim & St. John the Evangelist held 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. Mass on Wednesday after preparing by marking off pews to maintain social distancing, buying hand sanitizer and recruiting ushers to help with seating.

One parishioner brought Hershey Kisses to give out "because she couldn't kiss [people] for real" during the shutdown, Smith said. The church also received notice from the Archdiocese of New York that weekend Masses can resume, and it held on Wednesday its first funeral since early March, he said.

"People have been dying alone all these months," Smith said. "So it's wonderful that you're able to grieve in a human way."

Parking Space for 4, Please

Main Street in Beacon pivots as Phase 2 begins

By Jeff Simms

An ad hoc committee of Beacon and Dutchess County officials, Main Street merchants and members of BeaconArts has been working behind the scenes for the last month to ensure a smooth reopening for retail and restaurants as the state begins lifting restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This week the group began rolling out its ideas, the most noticeable of which will be "parklets" — an arrangement that converts curbside spaces into public seating.

The concept isn't new. Parklets were first seen in San Francisco around 2005, when activists created them to "take back" public spaces. They have popped up more recently in New York state as municipalities seek ways to balance businesses' needs with social-distancing guidelines.

By midweek, the parklets — which, according to some planners, slow traffic and create a more communal atmosphere — and other creative arrangements had begun to take shape along Main. The city also allowed some restaurants to use sidewalk space for dining, as long as the sidewalks were wide enough to maintain social distancing and still remain accessible

under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

"We haven't come up with anything completely novel," said George Mansfield, a member of the City Council who owns the Dogwood bar and restaurant. "But, as a group, we need to communicate the message that we take the protocols very seriously."

To spread that message, the committee is creating "Beacon Back Together" posters to distribute to businesses. The posters will encourage visitors, residents and merchants to "be kind, be safe, be responsible."

Beacon retailers and restaurants have been hit hard by the shutdown, Mansfield said, because of overhead costs they incur whether open or closed. The switch since March to curbside pickup and delivery has been "nothing more than a Band-Aid to keep the lights on for most people," added Brendan McAlpine, who owns the Hudson Valley Marshmallow Co. and is project developer at the Story Screen Beacon Theater.

The ad hoc committee considered asking the city to temporarily close parts of Main Street to allow for more outdoor business. That idea didn't stick, but an event on Main to celebrate the resilience of Beacon's business community is possible.

"People here have weathered this and are eager to welcome guests again, even in a limited capacity," McAlpine said. "This has reaffirmed my faith in humanity a little bit. This is what makes Beacon, Beacon."




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AROUND TOWN



▲ **THANKS TO TEACHERS** — The Garrison School PTA expressed its gratitude last month for teachers. Melissa DeFonce, the school nurse, and other volunteers placed yard signs throughout the community and at teachers' homes.

Photo provided



▲ **BAKE SALE** — The Cold Spring Coffee Shop held a Social Justice Bake Sale on June 4. Owner Mia Klubnick said the shop raised \$1,000 in four hours from the sale of beverages and baked goods that was donated to Black Lives Matter, the American Civil Liberties Union and Campaign Zero.

Photo by Michael Turton



▲ **GAY PRIDE** — Beacon hoisted a pride flag at City Hall on June 6 for the first time. Donated by Mayor Lee Kyriacou, it will fly through June, which is LGBT Pride Month.

Photo by Jeff Simms



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Garrison Art Center

The Calendar



“Church #040, February 14, 2017, Beacon NY”



From the *Wires* series

By Alison Rooney

The Artist Next Door

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh

Michael Bogdanffy-Kriegh is an architect — or he was, until 2013, when he left that career to focus on photography, for which the Beacon resident has no formal training.

“I’ve always been meditative, thoughtful, an early-morning riser,” he says. “I don’t do well with intent. When I started to make pictures, the daily walking became thoughtful interactions with places and spaces I’m moving through.”

“My photographic practice is a daily meditative dipping into the hum. There isn’t a consistent focus or idea from one day to the next, only a stream of observations,” he says. “Out of this stream, I make assemblages. No assemblage is a definitive question or answer, just a meditation on the hum.”

As for many artists, COVID-19 has wrecked Bogdanffy-Kriegh’s summer plans. A solo show, *Dark Matter*, scheduled to open June

20 at the Woodstock Artists Association & Museum, has been postponed indefinitely.

Bogdanffy-Kriegh has been fiddling around with cameras since he was a teenager. He returned to them with vigor when his architecture career ran out of steam. “I started not servicing my clients very well because I wasn’t excited about the work,” he concedes. He was financially stable, which allowed him to switch gears without having to immediately support himself. He feels his experience with architecture gave him a foundation in composition.

“I came to a place where I thought I would enjoy doing something I didn’t need to depend on someone else for,” he says.

Each morning, he goes out with a camera along five main routes, with three variations. He thought he might grow bored with the routine but hasn’t, although there are “many days when I don’t come out with great shots.”

Bogdanffy-Kriegh considers the daily excursion “a way to hold on to my sanity,” noting that it’s “rather well-suited to the pandemic. My routines haven’t changed that much, although the subject matter did, initially. I was photographing [pandemic-related] signage, shop windows and groupings of gloves and masks, but that got tiresome.”

Along with his photos, Bogdanffy-Kriegh keeps a journal and posts entries online. “I

don’t expect anyone to spend a lot of time with it, but I need to do it,” he says. “It can be a chore when I get fearful that if I miss one or two days the whole thing will fall apart.”

After moving to Beacon in 2006, Bogdanffy-Kriegh began attending a monthly photography salon organized by the Woodstock Artists Association & Museum, where he received feedback that proved invaluable.

“I had been bringing in work for over a year when I brought something which was a change of direction, and it blew everyone away,” he recalls. “I walked away on cloud nine. As every artist will tell you, there are far more non-acceptances than acceptances, so to hear encouragement from people you respect is tremendously helpful.”

Most of his work has been sent to shows that have issued calls for entries. “I don’t do well shooting to a theme,” he says. “I submit, though. You never know when all of a sudden one photo will catch a curator’s eye.”



From the *Dark Matter* series



From the *Flattened Can* series



From the *Dark Matter* series



The Pioneer

EDITED FOR LENGTH AND CLARITY • ILLUSTRATED FOR HUMOR

THE LAST FEW MONTHS, WE'VE FOUND OURSELVES IN THE UNEXPLORED WILDERNESS OF THE CORONAVIRUS. CUT OFF FROM CIVILIZATION, WE SHELTERED AT HOME, GRIEF-STRIKEN. THEN IN EARLY APRIL, SOMETHING HAPPENED: WE GOT SOME GRIT! WE REACHED DOWN, PULLED OURSELVES UP BY OUR BOOTSTRAPS AND CHanneled THE SKILLS OF OUR PIONEER ANCESTORS. WE BECAME SELF-SUFFICIENT!

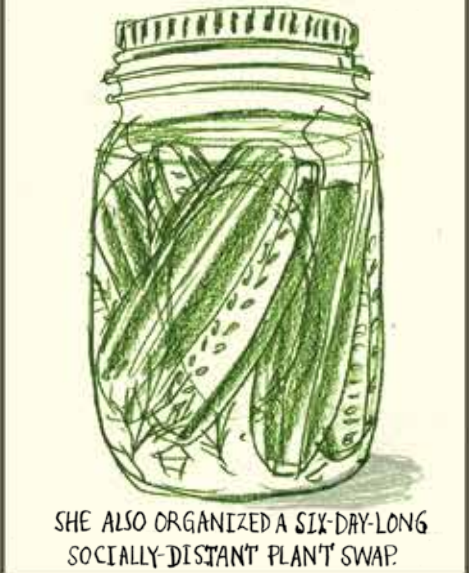
WHEN TOUGH TIMES ARE COMING, PIONEER LADIES GET COOKING. BECAUSE WHO KNOWS HOW LONG IT WILL BE BEFORE YOU CAN BUILD A FIRE AGAIN.



JENN OTTO MADE DINNER FROM WEEDS IN HER BACKYARD.



ANNA WEST PICKLED AN OVER-SIZED CUKE!



MINDY JESEK PREVENTED A DROUGHT IN THE JESEK HOME BY FIXING THE WATER DISPENSER IN THE REFRIGERATOR. SHE DISCONNECTED THE WATER LINE, THEN UNCLOGGED AND REATTACHED IT!



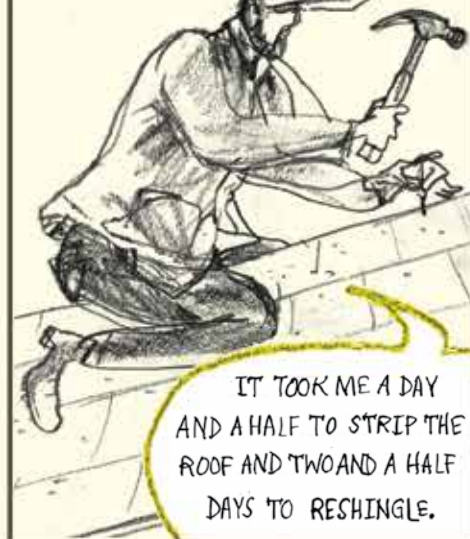
REGINA WILLIAMS QUILTED. EACH SQUARE DOCUMENTS THE MOOD IN THE HOUSE.



THE FABRICS RANGE FROM ORDERLY TO COMFORTING TO CHAOTIC.



CLARK THOMPSON DID A NEW ROOF ON HIS GARDEN SHED.



TED AZARY BUILT A CHICKEN COOP, SO DID KIMBERLY SEVILLA, THE OTTOS, THE WILLIAMSES, AND NEARLY EVERYONE ELSE.



OBERT WOOD AND TATIANA KOTIK BUILT THEIR KIDS (AND CAT) A PLAYGROUND.



ADAM DYLAN BUILT A MOVEMENT: ECO-NECTAR ENCOURAGES DIY URBAN ECOLOGY. MEMBERS TURN THEIR LAWNS INTO FARMS, COMPOST SOIL, PLANT NATIVE TREES, AND ARE NICE TO BEES.

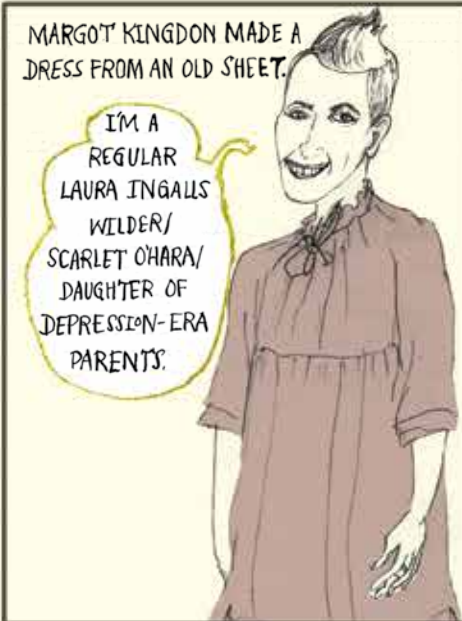
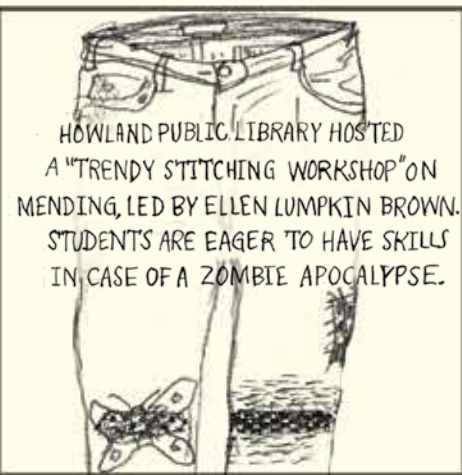


Spirit alive and well in the Highlands.

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HEROIC HOME-SEWERS MADE MASKS! BEETLE AND FRED SOLD 932 YARDS OF FABRIC SPECIFICALLY FOR MASKS.



THE WEEK AHEAD

Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)

For a complete listing of events, see
highlandscurrent.org/calendar.

COMMUNITY

MON 15 Marathon for Mental Health

COLD SPRING

philipstownhub.org/marathon

The Philipstown Behavioral Health Hub is sponsoring this virtual marathon in which participants run 26.2 miles in 30 days. Prizes will be awarded for fastest total time by gender, age group and family, and most improved mile time from Day 1 and Day 26.

Registration ends at 11:59 p.m. on SUN 14. Cost: \$26 (\$50 family)

MON 15 Go Solar!

DUTCHESS

6 - 7:30 p.m. CCE Dutchess County ccedutchess.org

Learn about solar panels, how they work and what incentives and rebate programs are available during a virtual event hosted by Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County and other organizations. Register at bit.ly/30wf7s2.

SAT 20 Bannerman Island Tours

BEACON

11 a.m. - 5 p.m. | bannermancastle.org

Private boats, kayaks and canoes that can navigate in shallow waters (1.5 to 3 feet) can visit and tour the island by booking online. Also SUN 21. Weekday visits for smaller boats can be arranged by calling Neil Caplan at 845-831-6346. Continues weekly.

KIDS & FAMILY

MON 15 YOU Picasso Kids

COLD SPRING

10:30 a.m. Butterfield Library

All you will need is paper and

a Sharpie, crayons or markers for this Zoom workshop led by Kinga Lesniak. Register at bit.ly/3cuhoGn. Also TUES 16.

THURS 18 Summer Reading Party GARRISON

4:30 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library

Stacy Labriola will perform to launch the library's summer reading program. Register at crowdcast.io/e/summer-reading-kickoff.

FRI 19 Garden Lab

COLD SPRING

4 p.m. Butterfield Library
butterfieldlibrary.org

Join at facebook.com/jblkid to talk about plants, read garden-related books and learn how to do fun crafts.

VISUAL ARTS

SAT 13 Member Exhibit and Sale

GARRISON

Garrison Art Center
garrisonartcenter.org

The annual show and sale, conducted online, continues through SUN 21.

TALKS

TUES 16 Dharma and Racial Injustice

GARRISON

4 p.m. Garrison Institute

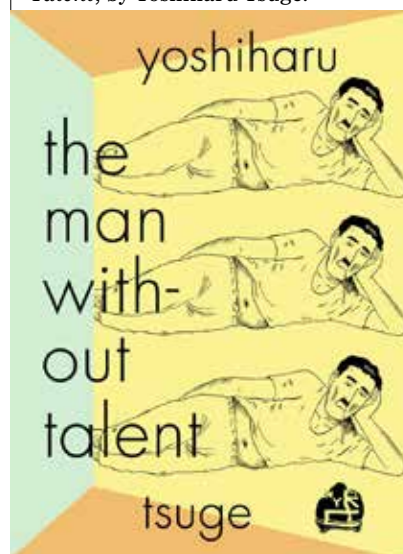
Atman Smith, Andres Gonzalez and Ali Smith, co-founders of the Holistic Life Foundation, will discuss, via Zoom, their work and perspectives. Register online.

TUES 16 Graphic Novel Book Club

COLD SPRING

7 p.m. Split Rock Books
845-265-2080 | splitrockbks.com

Summer Pierre will lead a Zoom discussion about *The Man Without Talent*, by Yoshiharu Tsuge.



THURS 18 Social Justice Discussion

GARRISON

5 p.m. Garrison Institute
garrisoninstitute.org

Rhonda Magee, a law professor and author of *The Inner Work of Racial Justice*, will join Garrison Institute CEO Jonathan Wiesner.

THURS 18 Extreme Heat, COVID & Equity in New York City

MILLBROOK

7 p.m. Cary Institute
caryinstitute.org

The Cary Institute will host this panel discussion on how city residents will fare this summer given the current challenges. Register online.

THURS 18 Fiction Book Club

COLD SPRING

7 p.m. Split Rock Books
845-265-2080 | splitrockbks.com

Co-owners Heidi and Michael Bender will lead a discussion over Zoom of *Lost Children Archive*, by Valeria Luiselli.

MUSIC

SUN 14 The Music of Joni Mitchell and Paul Simon

BEACON

7 p.m. Towne Crier
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

Anne Carpenter and Peter Calo, with John Lissauer on reeds, will perform classics and some lesser-known songs live at facebook.com/TowneCrierCafe.

THURS 18 Open Mic

BEACON

7 p.m. Towne Crier
Walker May hosts via Zoom with 12 performers. To perform or listen, email walker@townecrier.com by 3 p.m. Continues weekly

SAT 20 The Virtual Great Hudson River Revival

CROTON

11 a.m. - 11 p.m.
Hudson River Sloop Clearwater
clearwaterfestival.org

More than 20 performers, including Andes Manta, The Mammals, Leonard Peltier, Tommy Sands, The Scooches, James Maddock, Tom Chapin, Guy Davis, Jay Ungar and Molly Mason, David Amram, Jaeger & Reid, Jacob and David Bernz, The Rix, Mel & Vinnie, Magpie, Betty & The Baby Boomers and Ernie Sites, will perform during a livestream at youtube.com/HRSloopClearwater.



The Scooches

STAGE & SCREEN

SUN 14 Open Mic: Poetry and Spoken Word

PUTNAM VALLEY

3 - 5 p.m. Tompkins Corners Cultural Center
facebook.com/tompkinscorners

Anne Graue, author of *Fig Tree in Winter*, will share her poetry via Zoom, followed by an open mic for up to 18 readers.

FRI 19 The Laramie Project

HYDE PARK

7 p.m.

This livestream reading of the 2000 play that recounts the reaction to the 1998 murder of gay University of Wyoming student Matthew Shepard will benefit the Hudson Valley LGBTQ Community Center and the New Deal Creative Arts Center. See newdeal-laramieproject.eventbrite.com.

SAT 20 An Afternoon of Poetry

GARRISON

1:30 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library
845-424-3020 | desmondfishlibrary.org

William Lessard, Kathryn Weld and Kathleen Williamson will read from their work via Zoom. Register at bit.ly/afternoonofpoetryzoom.

CIVIC

Meetings are closed to the public but streamed or posted as videos. See highlandscurrent.org/meeting-videos

MON 15 City Council

BEACON

7 p.m. City Hall
845-838-5011 | cityofbeacon.org

MON 15 Village Board

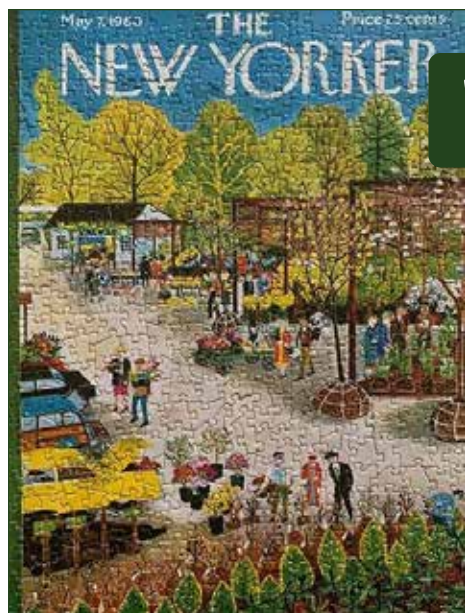
NELSONVILLE

7:30 p.m. Village Hall
845-265-2500 | nelsonvillen.gov

TUES 16 School Board

COLD SPRING

8 p.m. Haldane
845-265-9254 | haldaneschool.org



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Something You Don't Know About Me

Cecile Weiland

By Alison Rooney

Cecile Bouchardeau Weiland, who lives in Garrison, is a television producer.

You work mostly on shows about true crime or the paranormal. How did that come about?

After studying broadcast journalism at Northwestern University, I become an on-air reporter but I realized I was bad at it. I had produced a documentary at school about a gentrifying neighborhood in Chicago, so I found a job in Washington, D.C., as a field producer at a company that made television documentaries. I love telling stories and interviewing people, plus traveling and adventure, and it combined all of that.

What is the process?

Field producers do the research and find the people to interview. Then they film the interviews and gather "atmospherics." In post-production, you put it all together. As an executive producer, I oversee all that for a number of projects. My big show right now is on the Travel Channel, which — despite the name — is all paranormal, which means a lot of ghosts, UFOs and creatures like Bigfoot.

Are you a believer?

I believe more now, because some of the clips viewers send in I can't explain. I'm now a big believer in UFOs. I've worked on ghost shows for so long, but I've never had any experience personally. I do maintain a certain amount of skepticism, but I believe the people telling the story believe it and my job is to tell the person's story.

Have you done any reality shows?

I directed *The Real World: Paris* for MTV. I followed the seven cast members for five months all over the city and on a train trip across France and Italy. They were strangers between the ages of 18 and 26, mixed genders. The story usually happened after-



Weiland (center) with crew members in front of the Sacre-Coeur Basilica in Paris during the filming of *The Real World: Paris*

they started drinking or partying. There was a lot of hooking up, tension, figuring out who is going to argue with whom.

Did you have to nudge them along?

As director, you weren't supposed to interfere, unless there was imminent danger, so there was a bit of, "Hmmm, do I break up this fight?" When the cast members signed contracts with the production company, it pretty much said, "You have to give us a story." When one person turned out to be camera-shy, the production company had to tell her that she was violating the contract. Filming was chaotic. There was a tremendous amount of equipment, and I was in the streets of Rome, tethered to the crew, constantly walking backward.

You also did a series on hoarders?

That was *Hoarding: Buried Alive*. You never knew what you were walking into once the front door opened. It was often floor-to-ceiling, with little pathways.

The difficult part was that you're shooting for only a few days but need resolution. We had a psychiatrist and a professional organizer but it takes a tremendous amount of time for hoarders to sort out their issues. Usually there was an enabler who allowed it to happen. In one case there were two sisters. The enabling sister would pay the rent and

tell her sister about sales. The enabler wants to connect with the hoarder, but they're not helping, of course. Each person had some kind of trauma from childhood. It could have been a fire, or their parents cleaned out their room without permission, or they had too many siblings. If they could tap into the reason why, there was hope. It was heart-breaking, and disturbing.

What's the oddest thing that's happened on a true-crime shoot?

I was working on *Dead North*, a docu-

mentary series about Laura Frizzo, a police chief who captured a female serial killer in Michigan. We were filming in the woods where the killer had buried a bag of remains. The chief was reenacting how she dug up the bag. The camera operator said, "Let's move back a bit," so we did. As we looked down, we saw a lower jaw. The chief had found the skull of the victim not far from where we were, so this was another piece. Although it sounds frightening, it was more of a spiritual experience.

Filming true crime can be intense. You're interviewing killers or the victim's family. Plus, you're capturing images of where the crime took place. You're filming outside, from public property, so you can do it without permission, but you don't know if someone's home. And sometimes the people living in the house don't know that a murder took place there.

Anything else?

I filmed a kung-fu documentary in China and caught typhus; I interviewed the king of Norway at the 1994 Lillehammer Winter Olympics ... I'm sure I can think of more for another time!

Is there something about you most people in the community aren't aware of? It can be job-related, a hidden talent — basically anything, serious or funny. If you'd like to share your story, email arts@highlandscurrent.org and we'll get in touch.



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PAUSE

Looking Through
the Window

Barbara Smith Gioia

Lucille Tortora

Martee Levi

John Allen

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Some of the postcards are on display in the Art Center's windows on Garrison Landing. *Photo provided*

PANDEMIC POSTCARDS

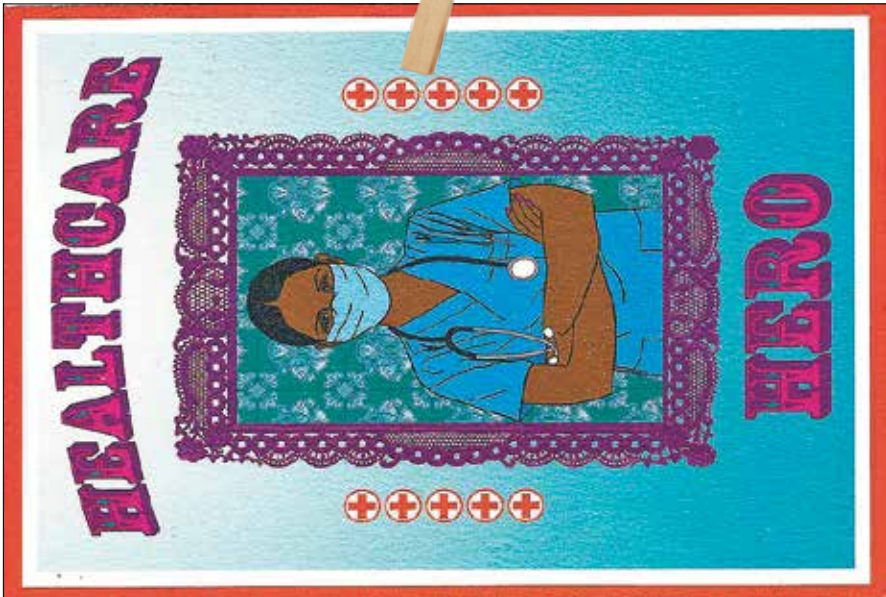
By Alison Rooney

With its galleries closed due to the pandemic, the Garrison Art Center considered how else it might mount a show. Barbara Smith Gioia, the exhibitions coordinator, suggested they solicit postcards related to the quarantine, and the result has been *Postcards from a Pandemic*. The call, which is ongoing, asks for submissions of a 4-by-6-inch postcard on paper or board, in any medium that can travel safely through the U.S. mail to the Garrison Art Center, P.O. Box 4, Garrison, NY 10524. The stamp and postmark are considered part of the art. The artist's name

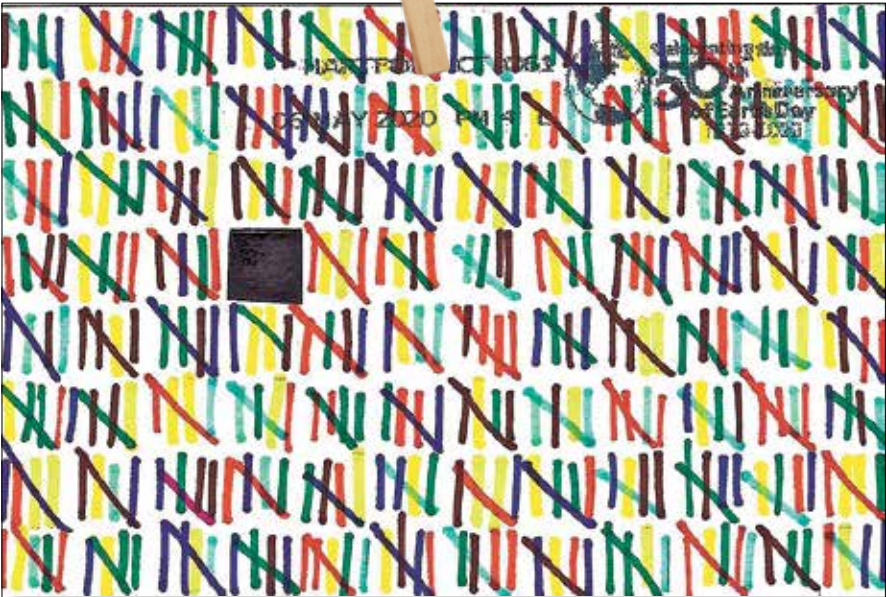
and/or social media tag should be placed on the front or back, but not a return address. When received by the center, each postcard is scanned and posted at [instagram.com/postcards_from_a_pandemic](https://www.instagram.com/postcards_from_a_pandemic), where it can be claimed for a minimum \$25 donation. Twenty percent of the proceeds are being given to Fred's Pantry, in Peekskill. "It has been both exciting and cathartic to watch the submissions pour in," says Katie Schmidt Feder, the art center's executive director. "Each postcard chronicles the different effect this pandemic has had on individuals as they struggle with isolation or frustration or fascination with this very unusual time."



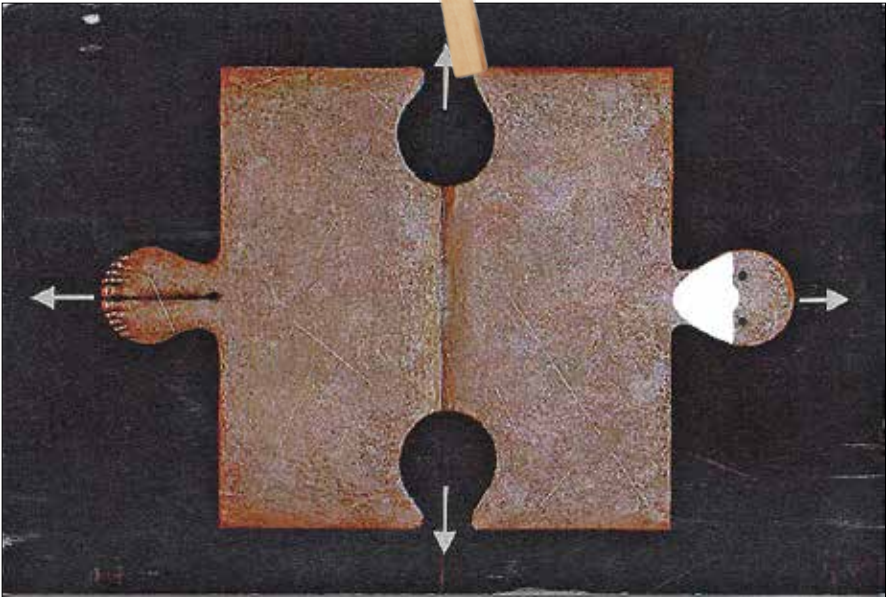
"Not Sure Running Away From This Thing Helps," by Kirsten Kucer



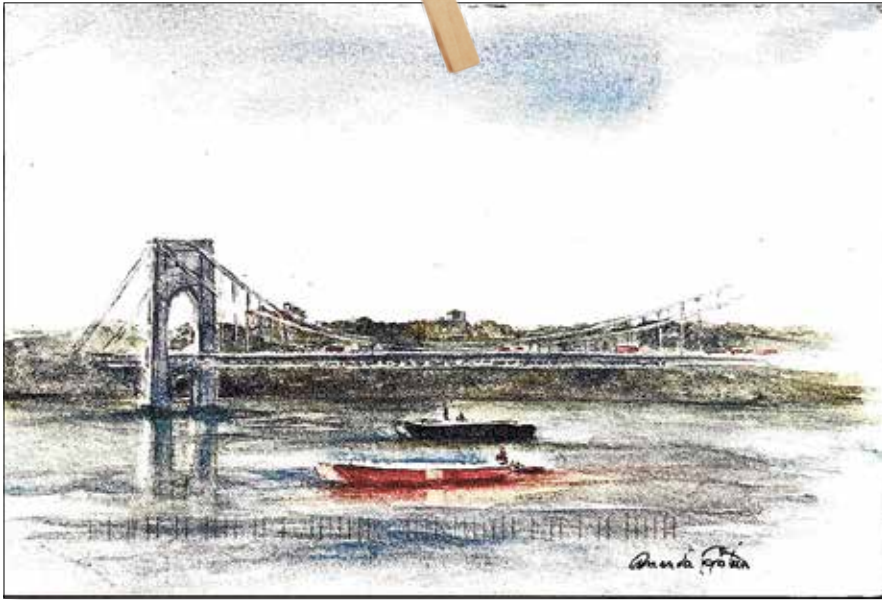
"Healthcare Hero," by Laurel Garcia Colvin



"502," by Christine Knowlton



"My Art in Social Distancing Times," by Cepp Selgas



"View from Room at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center," by Amanda Epstein



"Time Passes," by Morgan Wells



"Battista Sforza and the Duke Social Distancing," by Cynthia Winika



"Matter of Time," by Curt Belshe



"Arc of the Viral Universe," by Carla Rae Johnson

Exit Interview

Eric Richter

By Alison Rooney

Eric Richter will retire this month after teaching 11th-grade English at Haldane High School for 36 years, but because the pandemic closed the schools, he won't have a last bell — at least not one he planned for.

In retirement, the Garrison resident says he plans to become more active in the Haldane Booster Club and Arts Alliance and continue as the assistant coach of the spring track team. He and his wife, Amy, have an Antarctic cruise booked for the winter, which "hopefully can still happen."

Richter grew up in New York City but spent many weekends and summers at his grandmother's place in Garrison. He said that, from an early age, he knew he wanted to live in the area.

When did you decide to teach high school English?

My original plan was to teach at the college level. However, when I was finishing my master's degree and planning to pursue my doctorate at Columbia, my adviser informed me that only three newly graduated Ph.D. students out of 36 had lined up tenure-track jobs. I could see the writing on the wall and went looking for a job at a private school. At that point, I had not taken a single education course and was lucky to land a job at Adelphi Academy [in Brooklyn], which is where I met Amy. There's a saying that when God closes



Eric Richter, early in his career, and more recently



Photos provided

a door, he opens a window. In my case, he opened two windows.

Who hired you at Haldane?

Dudley Hare, the superintendent, was looking for someone to start a literary magazine at the high school, and I had started one at Adelphi. Also, [they liked that] I had studied with Lucy Calkins [the founding director of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project at Columbia], who was a proponent of the writing process that I had started to incorporate. I was lucky that Dudley Hare and Frank Milkovich, the principal, had trust in a relatively inexperienced teacher.

Your two children attended Haldane.

Did you like living in the same district where you teach?

The positives far outweigh the negatives. You get to know your students and their families. You become invested in the school in a way you might not be otherwise. In terms of teaching my own children, it never was a problem, though my son could be a bit of a cutup in class. I was lucky they were both good students.

What's it like having colleagues who were once your students?

It is incredibly gratifying. To see former students develop into outstanding teachers fills me with immense pride.

What would surprise the high school students of 36 years ago about teaching methods today?

The use of computers, cell phones and the internet. When I started teaching, apple was only a fruit.

What books were controversial in the curriculum when you started?

Catcher in the Rye, which remains controversial at some schools, and *Lord of the Flies*.

Is there a book that was mandated that you never liked?

Not really. I guess I've been lucky in that respect.

What changes do you see in students

More 2020 Retirees

Robert Atwell

Math, Beacon, 31 years

Sheila Blair

Bus driver, Beacon

Bethzaida Catalano

Guidance, Beacon, 34 years

Linda Dearborn

Confidential secretary, Haldane, 43 years

Kevin Keegan

Science, Garrison, 34 years

Tom Locascio

Art, Haldane, 24 years

Edward Malle

Science, Beacon

Carolyn McLaughlin

Special education, Haldane, 24 years

Cheryl Wondsel

Head cleaner, Haldane, 25 years

who have grown up with technology?

The students don't change, but the adults do. I'm afraid many people as they age become more intolerant of young people. They seem to forget, or want to forget, how it once felt to be an adolescent.

Many colleges are dropping the SAT from their application requirements. Is it a valid assessment tool?

I'm not a big fan of the SAT. As a rule, I'm not a fan of timed exams. Not everyone processes information at the same rate. Some of the greatest thinkers have been slow thinkers. Some say Einstein was a slow thinker.

What are Haldane's greatest strengths?

Its caring and nurturing culture. Also, Haldane provides students with numerous opportunities to excel academically, athletically and artistically. For such a small school, it is remarkable that Haldane offers such a rich and diverse program.

What could it improve upon?

As a school community, we need to better respect and honor the students who may not be pursuing a college education. They are working just as hard as our college-bound students. BOCES does a wonderful job helping students develop the skills to be successful in their chosen careers.

Do you have a favorite form of literature?

Poetry. Not surprisingly, my favorite writer is Shakespeare. Emily Dickinson is close behind. She is America's greatest poet.

What will you miss most in September?

The students, of course.

COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES



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Police Reform *(from Page 7)*

bly and Senate also passed nine other bills to regulate police behavior, including a ban on chokeholds. (See Page 7.)

"It was time to help restore public trust in our criminal-justice system," said Jacobson, who voted "yes" on all 10 bills.

Galef also voted yes on the bills. She noted on Thursday (June 11) that before Floyd's killing, the COVID-19 pandemic

had already raised questions about racial inequities in health care and wages, "and then you get to the compiling of all of these events that have gone on around with black men being killed on the street. Sometimes it's timing, and this was the time."

In a statement on Thursday, Serino said she could not "in good faith" vote to repeal 50-a. While there must be "zero tolerance for police brutality, racism, hate or violence," she said the bill "goes too far in

allowing for the release of false accusations, unfounded and unsubstantiated claims."

The law was created to "ensure first responders could safely testify in court on behalf of victims," said Serino, who accused lawmakers of "rushing through legislation negotiated behind closed doors that will have serious ramifications when it comes to public safety."

On Monday (June 8), Democrats in the U.S. House and Senate introduced a bill

that would ban chokeholds, prohibit racial profiling by police and establish a national registry of officers fired for misconduct.

Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, a Democrat whose district includes the Highlands, co-sponsored the Justice in Policing Act in the House. "Those who support honest, community-based law enforcement, as I do, can agree that tragedies like the killing of George Floyd require these sensible reforms," he said in a statement.

Police Disciplinary Procedures

The procedures by which a law enforcement officer is disciplined for misconduct vary by department. Below are excerpts from police contracts in the Highlands. In every case, an officer can be represented by the union and/or an attorney at any interrogation or hearing. Agencies typically cite and follow due-process procedures outlined in state law for public employees.

City of Beacon

Disciplinary action shall follow within the provisions of Article V, Title B of the New York State Civil Service Law... The authority to suspend an employee of the department shall be exercised by the mayor, chief of police or acting chief of police. Other and subordinate officers shall have the authority to relieve a member of the department from duty for a period not to exceed 24 hours.

Suspensions shall be with full pay until such time as a final adjudication is made. [Added to current contract:] However, the city may suspend an employee without pay for 30 days, pending resolution of disciplinary charges, where such employee is criminally charged. During such suspension without pay, the employee may use accruals on the books [vacation or sick days], if he/she has any.

Village of Cold Spring

Employees who have completed 40 months of service with the village shall be entitled to the due-process protection set forth in New York State Civil Service Law Section 75.

The specific act(s) that warrants disciplinary action and the proposed

sanction(s) shall be specifically contained in a Notice of Discipline... In the event the employee objects, he/she shall file a written notice with the employer and Police Benevolent Association [union] no later than 10 calendar days. The disciplinary procedure pursuant to [state law] provides for a hearing by an independent hearing officer at its final stage. The parties agree to [select from] the following panel of hearing officers [professional arbitrators]: 1. Joseph Wooley, 2. Jeffrey Selchick, 3. Alan Viani, 4. Roger Maher.

The hearing officer shall make findings of fact and a penalty recommendation, if any, and submit his/her findings and recommendations to the Village Board... In no event shall an employee who has been served with a Notice of Discipline be suspended without pay for a period not to exceed 30 calendar days. All fees and expenses of the hearing officer, if any, shall be paid by the employer. All hearings shall have a transcribed record provided at no cost to the employee or the PBA.

Dutchess County

No employee who is the potential subject of a disciplinary investigation

shall be interrogated unless and until the employee is provided with sufficient information to reasonably apprise the employee of the potential charges and specifications. The employee shall be informed of the name of the officer or officers in charge of the investigation. The interrogation shall normally be held during the employee's tour of duty. [Otherwise], the employee shall be compensated according to the terms of this agreement.

The investigation shall normally take place at the Sheriff's Office at 150 North Hamilton St., Poughkeepsie, or a substation. Home contacts of employees who are the subject of a disciplinary investigation for the purpose of interrogation are prohibited unless there is an ongoing criminal investigation.

Each employee shall be entitled to respond in writing to any complaint made against him and such response and any documentary evidence in support thereof shall be made a part of the investigation file. Employees shall be advised of the outcome of any disciplinary investigation against them whether or not charges are instituted.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no disciplinary proceeding shall be commenced more than six months after the occurrence of the last alleged infraction, incompetence or misconduct complained of unless an employee has been counseled regarding the subject matter of the offense during that period, in which event the limitations period is 18 months. The limitations periods set forth herein commence on the date of discovery by the employer or the date

when the employer should have known of the alleged infraction, incompetence or misconduct, whichever is earlier.

Putnam County

The county may bring disciplinary charges against an employee within an 18-month period from the date the violation is discovered. A hearing will thereafter be conducted and a determination shall be made within 30 days after the hearing is concluded... Hearings upon charges will be conducted by a Hearing Board consisting of either three employees of the Putnam County Sheriff's Department or one hearing officer appointed by the sheriff.

The choice of having a three-member board or hearing officer shall be the choice of the accused employee. On the three-member hearing board, the presiding officer shall be of the rank of lieutenant or above, and one other officer shall be of the rank of sergeant or above, both of whom will be selected by the sheriff. The third officer may be named by the PBA, and if available, will be designated by the sheriff...

The Hearing Board officer(s) shall refrain from acquainting themselves with any facts or circumstances involving the accused or the subject matter of the hearing, except for a review of the pleadings.

Note: The contract between the county and the deputy's union was renewed by the Legislature on April 7 but marked "confidential" by the Legislature, so it was not immediately known if the disciplinary procedures changed.



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NOTICE

Haldane Central School District, Cold Spring, NY 10516

LEGAL NOTICE TO BIDDERS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Board of Education of the Haldane Central School District of Philipstown will receive electronically sealed bids via Bidnet until 11:30 AM on June 26, 2020 when same will be publicly opened at the Business Office of the Haldane Central School, 15 Craigsides Drive, Cold Spring, NY 10516 for the following:

MISCELLANEOUS PAINTING SERVICES

Specifications and bid forms may be obtained at <http://www.bidnetdirect.com/haldanecentralschooldistrict>, available on Monday, June 15th at 8:00 AM. The Board of Education reserves the right to reject any and all bids. By Order of the Board of Education of Haldane Central School District of Philipstown, Dutchess and Putnam Counties, New York By Anne M. Dinio, School Business Manager.

Officer Resigns *(from Page 1)*

According to news reports, Morris was sitting in an unmarked squad car a few blocks away. When told by the officers via police radio that Graham may have a gun, Morris asked them to confirm it. The officers soon responded they were certain Graham was armed.

Soon after, one officer kicked down the door to Graham's apartment, and the other, Richard Haste, confronted Graham in the bathroom and shot him once in the chest. No weapon was found. Officers found marijuana in the toilet.

Haste was indicted on manslaughter charges, but a judge threw out the case, ruling that the prosecutor had given improper instructions to the grand jury. A second grand jury declined to indict Haste, who left the department in 2017. The officer said he thought Graham was attacking him; an NYPD review reprimanded the officers who entered the apartment for showing "bad tactical judgment" but found the killing "legally justified."

Neither Morris nor the officer who kicked down the door were charged, but Morris faced departmental reprimands for "failure to notify police communications" and "failure to supervise members during a police incident." In late 2017 he agreed to a 30-day suspension without pay and resigned from the force.

At the time, the NYPD declined media requests for the officers' disciplinary records, citing Section 50-a of state civil rights law — a provision that the Assembly and Senate this week voted to overturn.

(See Page 7.) Morris did not respond to a request for comment sent through Larry Burke, the officer-in-charge of the Cold Spring Police Department.

The controversy over the officer developed quickly over the past week. After the June 2 Village Board meeting, at which the use of the thin-blue-line flag on Cold Spring police vehicles was discussed (see below), *The Current* received comments questioning the hiring of Morris and drawing attention to the 2012 killing. (*The Current* was not aware of the incident when it reported in December that Morris had been hired.) Last weekend, flyers were handed out in the village encouraging residents to email Merandy to voice their concerns.

At Tuesday's meeting, Merandy defended the hire, which was approved by a unanimous vote of the board.

Morris "provided all the information upfront regarding the incident," the mayor said. "We knew everything. We did our research and background checks. We felt he wasn't on the scene; that was one of the biggest things in our decision."

Merandy complained that the flyers that were distributed "were taken as gospel" and led to a "kind of mob mentality."

"That's something we're actually trying to fight," he said. "The cause of stuff like this is people not really doing things rationally."

Merandy said he addressed the issue with Burke and Tom Ciero, the president of the Cold Spring Police Benevolent Association, the union that represents officers, before speaking with Morris on Tuesday. The Village Board met in executive session

before its meeting and agreed to accept Morris' resignation.

"I do feel it's unfortunate," Merandy said. "We have mixed feelings about accepting his resignation. Unfortunately, in today's environment, where we're going, I don't feel there is any way he can stay on." Merandy said that, during the officer's time with the department, "everyone was pleased with his performance."

On Wednesday (June 10), Trustee Fran Murphy told *The Current* that, like Merandy, she feels there was a "mob psychology" behind the campaign. She noted at least one email referred to Morris as "a murderer."

Murphy also took exception to a comment at Tuesday's meeting by village resident Tara Vamos, who thanked high school and college students for their participation in the email campaign.

"I thought high school and college kids are trained to do research," Murphy said. "It's not just doing a Google search and picking up *The New York Post*."

"We did our due diligence" before the hire, Murphy added. "We spent a lot of time and energy researching him," including reading the NYPD report.

Murphy still questions her decision to accept Morris's resignation. "I wanted to have the guts not to do that, to keep him on," she said. Refusing his resignation was discussed, she said, "but we could not find a way that was not going to be detrimental to the village."

Murphy said the safety of village residents was a concern. There was fear that in the current climate, if Morris did not resign, protests would escalate. "What we did was wrong for him, but right for the village," she said.

Cold Spring resident Cassie Traina was among those who encouraged people to contact Merandy, and an email she wrote was the basis for many of the messages sent to the mayor. She disagreed with assertions that the effort was not based on research.

"This matter was researched thoroughly; I take this matter very seriously," she said. "Letter-writing campaigns have been an important part of getting elected officials' attention for decades at all levels of government."

Traina said organizers were trying to force a response. "We wanted action," she said, while also acknowledging "there has been pushback."

Trustee Steve Voloto said he found comments on social media critical of the board for hiring Morris to be disturbing. "They assume the worst; that we're either

not doing a good job or we're somehow racist in our actions," he said. "They question how we could let someone who had 'murdered someone' become a [Cold Spring] police officer, when that is not the facts of the case."

Morris was not charged with a crime, Voloto noted, nor was he implicated during the prosecution of the officer who fired the shot. "Haste didn't say Morris told him to kick that door down and get that guy," Voloto said. "He did it all on his own."

Voloto said he feels Morris was not treated fairly by the NYPD, and that "he's being treated in a similar way now in this village by the people who think he killed people. But he didn't. Someone who was under his charge didn't follow procedure."

At the same time, Voloto said he understands the anger about Graham's death. "People have the right to be in their homes," Voloto said. "We have rules about that. You can't just kick somebody's door down and shoot them."

"The people who are getting mad at Scott Morris have a right to be mad; the police are like an occupying force," Voloto said. "It's not right. I'm very concerned about what's going on in our country."

Trustee Lynn Miller also was critical of how some residents responded.

"I'm willing to bet that few, if any, of the people now targeting Scott Morris have ever bothered to talk with him about the Graham incident or anything else," she told *The Current*. "Some people, in their zeal to effect legitimately needed reform to our national justice system, have misdirected their efforts and heaped injustice on a good man who has served our village well. However well-intentioned they may be, their blindness to their own prejudice is astounding."

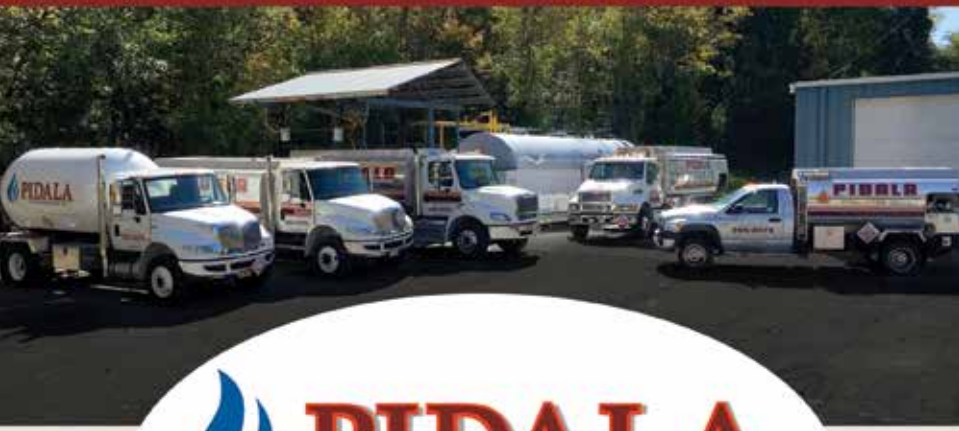
Decals removed


After hearing complaints from residents at the June 2 meeting of the Village Board, Burke this week removed thin-blue-line flag decals from the police department's squad cars.

The decals, which had been applied about a year ago, were popularized by Blue Lives Matter, a national campaign created in reaction to Black Lives Matter. The symbol has more recently been appropriated by white supremacists.

Burke said the decals were intended to honor police officers killed in the line of duty, and that he would remove them only if ordered to so by the Village Board, which planned to continue the discussion at its June 9 meeting. But in the meantime, Merandy said he spoke with Burke and Ciero and they agreed to remove the decals.

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Beacon Officers Discuss Use of Force

Council plans to host public safety forum

By Jeff Simms

In the wake of national protests against police brutality, members of the Beacon Police Department, including Chief Kevin Junjulas, spoke with the City Council on Monday (June 8) for nearly 90 minutes on the department's policies, including the use of force.

During the meeting, which was held by videoconference, the chief, Lt. Tom Figlia and Capt. Gary Fredericks addressed "8 Can't Wait," policies that the activist organization Campaign Zero says would reduce police violence. The council also said it would host a community forum on public safety on a date that will be announced at its next meeting, on Monday (June 15).

Council Member Terry Nelson, who during the June 1 council meeting shared the story of having a gun pointed in his face by a New York City police officer as a teen, said on Monday that there are "a lot of pockets of this community whose voices have not been heard for way too long." The city and police, he said, should "not make it difficult for them."

The police officers and council members spent the most time discussing the use of chokeholds. (State lawmakers this week passed a bill to ban them, which Gov.

Andrew Cuomo said he will sign. See Page 7.)

"It's not something we train officers to do; it's not something we encourage officers to do," said Figlia, the department's training coordinator. "It's the sort of thing where if it's the only method that you have available and it's a lethal force situation — that's the only time it would be allowed."

In addition, an officer must file a report after any use of force beyond "compliant handcuffing," Figlia said. The reports are reviewed by the officers' supervisors, as well as Figlia and Junjulas. "We look at the body camera [footage]; we try to interview any witnesses we can find. We have a fairly extensive review process," Figlia said.

In 2019, the department made 526 arrests, and there were 24 instances in which force was required, Figlia said, noting that "if a person pulls their hands forward and the officer pulls their hands back" to apply handcuffs, that scenario would count as a "reportable use of force." None of the 24 reported uses of force involved chokeholds or any other form of deadly force, he said.

Responding to a question from Council Member Air Rhodes, Figlia said the department does not track demographic information related to its arrests.

The council and police also had a lengthy conversation about complaints against the department.

(Continued on Page 22)

Officer Resigns *(from Page 20)*

Ciero said he was "disappointed that what was meant as a tribute was used as a weapon to hurt people by [racist] groups that no one wants or supports."

Village reopening

The Mid-Hudson Region on Tuesday (June 9) entered Phase 2 of the state's planned reopening, and Merandy reported a number of related developments:



RIGHT THIS WAY — On Tuesday (June 9), Cold Spring began applying sidewalk signs to encourage social distancing by directing pedestrians to walk east on one side of Main Street and west on the other.

Photo by Teresa Lagerman

■ Dockside Park, Riverfront Park and Mayor's Park will now be open on weekends, although the Tots Park remains closed.

■ Restaurant owners wanting to use sidewalks for outdoor dining should contact the village clerk.

■ Retail shops can admit customers while adhering to state guidelines.

■ The placement of sandwich-board signs and merchandise on Main Street sidewalks is prohibited.

■ One-way pedestrian traffic arrows have been painted on Main Street sidewalks.

In addition, the board declined a request by the organizer of the Putnam County Wine & Food Fest to hold the two-day event over Labor Day weekend. It had been scheduled for mid-August but the board last month canceled all events at Mayor's Park until at least Aug. 31. The board said it would reassess its policy on large events in mid-July, including Community Day, which is scheduled for Sept. 6.

In other business ...

■ Cold Spring police officers responded to 61 calls for service in May and issued 18 parking and six traffic tickets. Two arrests were made, both for trespassing. The Cold Spring Fire Co. responded to six alarms.

■ Miller said she is investigating the possibility of establishing a human rights commission.

■ Village boards and committees have begun meeting by video conference.

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Putnam Legislators Blast State Over Repeal

But also want sheriff to let them see records

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

Putnam County legislators on Tuesday (June 9) objected to a bill that will repeal a state law prohibiting public disclosure of police discipline records — while also insisting that the sheriff give them access.

“It’s a sad day for all law enforcement folks in New York state to have that repealed,” said Legislator Paul Jonke of Southeast, who chairs the Legislature’s Protective Services Committee. “Basically, now everything will become public. I’m ashamed New York State went down this road.”

Jonke pointed out that Democrats control both state legislative chambers and that Gov. Andrew Cuomo, a Democrat, promised to sign the repeal. (See Page 7.)

By contrast, the nine-member Putnam Legislature consists of eight Republicans and one Democrat, Nancy Montgomery, who represents Philipstown.

Legislator Joseph Castellano of Brewster proposed that the Legislature send a letter of opposition to state officials (as it has done previously, on 8-1 votes, over bail reform and a change to abortion laws).

Legislator Amy Sayegh of Mahopac expressed sadness “that this civil rights law is going to be repealed. The original

intent was to protect law enforcement against fishing expeditions” for detrimental information about officers, she said.

Montgomery said that, given the state Legislature’s repeal, “this should have been just taken off the agenda” of the committee.

But they still devoted much of Tuesday’s meeting, held via audio connection, to sparring with Sheriff Robert Langley Jr. over their desire to access his agency’s records.

“For quite some time,” Jonke said, “this body has requested the ability to examine disciplinary records. We have an obligation to our constituents to be mindful of complaints or disciplinary charges.” He assured Langley that the Legislature “has never intended for this information to be made public.”

Legislator Neal Sullivan of Carmel-Mahopac added that “we’ve never asked for anyone’s home address or even their names.” He suggested that the sheriff meet with legislators privately. “We’re allowed to ask questions and to get information,” he said.

Legislators also cited the potential financial burdens of misconduct. “The county is exposed to a lot of litigation,” said Legislator Carl Albano of Carmel. “It’s important that law enforcement act in an appropriate manner. I believe they do, for the most part. It’s a moral obligation that things are done right.”

Langley said he was reluctant to share records because keeping legislators out of the loop prevented them from being

suspected if the information is leaked.

“Somewhere, somehow, I don’t know by whom, certain information that’s been confidential in investigations seems to leak out,” he said. “You have to plug up certain areas to find where that leak is.”

“So you don’t want to provide information to the Legislature because you’re afraid we might leak it?” Jonke asked sharply.

“I have to eliminate possibilities of where the leak is,” Langley said.

A statement that Langley posted on Tuesday on his unofficial Facebook page also proved divisive.

In it, Langley denied what he said were rumors that he would provide deputies’ personal information to the committee. He also claimed that some legislators “and other members of county government want to have unfettered access” to police personnel files.

“I have stood before the Legislature more than once, on the record in public meetings, opposing access to personnel records, as some members persist [in trying] to have those records released,” he wrote.

Jonke objected that “this is 1,000 percent untrue” and termed the Facebook comment “outrageously reprehensible.”

Langley said legislative materials corroborated his claim. And while he said he opposed the repeal of the state shield law, he noted that the Legislature would soon have access if the governor enacts the bill passed by the Assembly and Senate.

Use of Force *(from Page 21)*

Citizens can file complaints in person, through a civilian complaint form on the city’s website, through the city’s Human Relations Commission or by sending an email to the mayor or city administrator. Complaints are forwarded to Fredericks, who conducts interviews with the officer(s) and complainants.

In 2019, Junjulas said, the department responded to nearly 13,000 calls for service, and there were five complaints filed. So far in 2020, the police have responded to nearly 4,000 calls and received three complaints. No complaints were related to the use of force, Fredericks said.

While the officers’ responses to 8 Can’t Wait and the council’s questions were “sober and practical,” Council Member Dan Aymar-Blair said they did not fully address the feedback he has heard from residents. He added on Tuesday that most, if not all, “are asking for substantive change” in local policing.

The Beacon Police Department spent more than a decade, from 2004 to 2016, under the oversight of the U.S. Department of Justice after a number of lawsuits were filed against the city. The federal agency issued nearly a dozen pages of recommendations regarding the use of force, weapons, canines and the procedures for processing complaints.

On Monday, Beacon Mayor Lee Kyriacou said the oversight led to the “professionalization of the department” and a shift from a “who-you-know” arrangement to a “treat everyone the same” approach.

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Puzzles

CROSS CURRENT

ACROSS

1. Impale

5. Father

8. Waller or Domino

12. Operatic solo

13. Playwright Levin

14. "Step —!" ("Hurry!")

15. Kindly bloke

16. Make a mock-up of

18. I before E except —

20. Draw forth

21. Doesn't feel good

23. Overly

24. Kiss

28. Winter forecast

31. Debt notice

32. Detroit team

34. Payable

35. Calm before the storm

37. Vary a tone

39. Winning hand's winnings

41. Cupola

42. Notlikethis

45. Random drawing?

49. Count

51. Require

52. Right angles

53. Knight's title

54. On the rocks

55. Encounter

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

12 13 14

15 16 17

18 19 20

21 22 23

24 25 26 27 28 29 30

31 32 33 34

35 36 37 38

39 40 41

42 43 44 45 46 47 48

49 50 51

52 53 54

55 56 57

56. Skirt terminus

57. *Finding Nemo* character

8. Page numbers strikes

9. Big snake

10. South American monkey

11. Undo a dele

17. Last (Abbr.)

19. Small stream

22. Remained upright

24. Lubricant

25. Old French coin

26. Guilt

27. Germ layer

29. Result of three

30. Tiny

33. Wrestling style

36. Noisy swarmer

38. Nikita's successor

40. — Aviv

42. Branch

43. Wan

44. Morse morsel

46. Retro art style

47. Lecherous look

48. Vortex

50. Dead heat

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7 LITTLE WORDS

Find the 7 words to match the 7 clues. The numbers in parentheses represent the number of letters in each solution. Each letter combination can be used only once, but all letter combinations will be necessary to complete the puzzle.

CLUES

1 spent more than reasonable (8)

2 flavorful (9)

3 long, flat pasta noodles (7)

4 having evil intentions (9)

5 Snoopy and Linus creator (6)

6 renowned (11)

7 attempt (10)

SOLUTIONS

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SUDO CURRENT

	8					4	
		1	9	5		8	
		6			3	7	
	6		2	9		1	3
	2			7			
	1						
				1	5		7
		7		3	8		2
						5	

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Answers for June 5 Puzzles

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A	N	N	E	A	L	R	E	H	A	N
D	O	S	E	A	C	E	R	M	E	N
			D	O	R	A	B	O	B	
B	R	A	S	I	R	S	L	U	N	A
Y	A	N	K	E	E	S	T	A	D	I
E	D	G	E	D	E	A	D	E	T	C
		E	A	T	A	N	D	Y		
C	U	L	R	E	T	D	O	R	C	A
A	S	I	M	O	V	A	R	D	O	R
R	E	C	I	P	E	R	H	E	S	U
T	R	A	D	E	R	D	O	L	E	D

1. INFALLIBLE, 2. SKINNER, 3. SHORTEST, 4. MEAGER, 5. YOUTHFUL, 6. KILTS, 7. STOOPED

Answers will be published next week. See highlandscurrent.org/puzzle for interactive sudoku.

Out There

A Beginner's Guide to Hiking the Highlands

By Brian PJ Cronin

With the exception of those at Indian Brook Falls and Little Stony Point, the Highlands' trails are open daily once again.

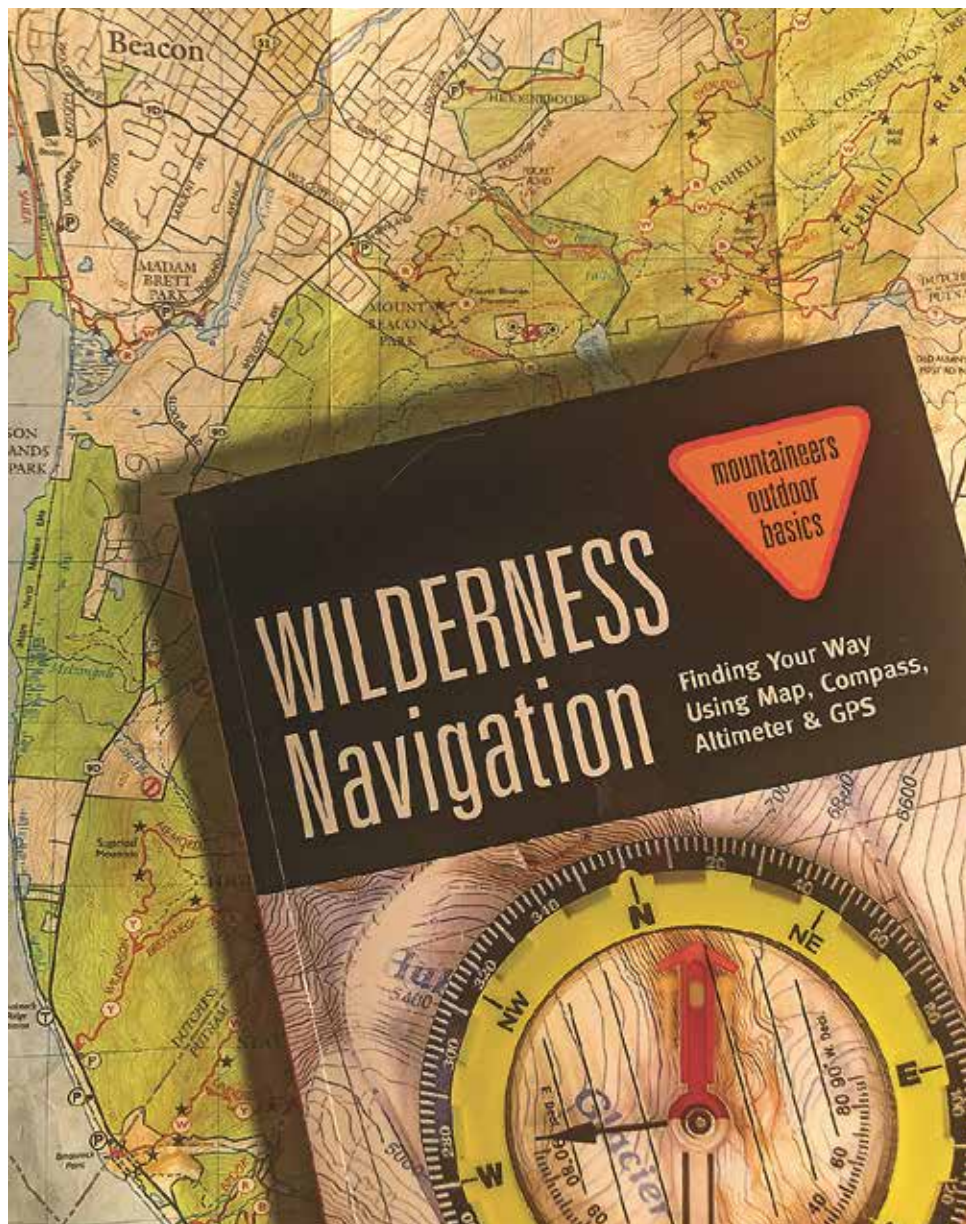


Data from the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference shows that, before local trails were closed as part of the COVID-19 shutdown, more people than ever were downloading maps for Highlands trails — which is good and bad. It's good that people are using the trails, but not so good that they are relying on internet maps.

Downloading an online map suggests an inexperienced hiker, and the Trail Conference won't have its stewards in place at hotspots such as the Breakneck to discourage ill-prepared ascents until June 27.

If you're an inexperienced hiker, what does that mean? It means that, more than ever, the onus is on you.

Daniel Schaublin, who lives in Beacon, is the former president of Hudson Valley Orienteering, which organizes trail races on unmarked courses; participants have to use maps and compasses to complete them. Schaublin also teaches orienteering and wilderness navigation with Thayer Leadership, which is based at the Thayer Hotel at West Point. He can go on for quite a while about hiking prep and common sense but agreed to give me the basics in five minutes for people who don't know their azimuth from a hole in the ground.



Seriously, get a paper map.

Photo by B. Cronin

Paper maps

This is nonnegotiable. You have a map on your cellphone, or you snapped a photo of the map billboard at the trailhead. But cell reception isn't reliable in the woods, batteries run out, phones get dropped or wet. An inexpensive map from the Trail Conference will tell you everything you need to know.

Put it within reach. If you bury it in your backpack, you'll hesitate to check it. You know the cargo shorts with the huge pockets that everyone mocks you for wearing? *This is their time to shine.*

A compass

It doesn't need to be fancy, but it shouldn't be on your phone. It should be a flat, clear compass that you can lay on your paper map. You don't have to be an expert: Line up the north arrow on the compass with the north arrow on the map and you'll have a better sense of your bearings than the vast majority of the hikers you encounter. I've used little more than that technique to bushwhack to some of the Catskills' untrailed peaks and back. And I am not that smart!

Of course, you won't need to pull out that compass because you're going to....

Plan ahead

How long will the hike take? Is everyone in your group comfortable walking that long? How many intersections are there? What's the forecast? When should you start hiking to give yourself plenty of daylight? When is sunset?

Figuring all of this ahead of time will make your life easier. And although you

never want to hike in the dark if you're not familiar with the trail, throw a flashlight or a headlamp in your bag for emergencies. (I realize your phone has a flashlight but we've covered that.)

Bring more than you need

It's summer, and it's hot. You're going to get thirstier and hungrier than you expect. Shelf-stable, sturdy, calorie-dense food that can live in your backpack is an essential. "If you have a PowerBar, you can nibble on it forever," Schaublin says. "It's ugly, but it works."

Get a grip

After years of overuse, the rocks and holds on Breakneck have been smoothed down like the floors of a Venetian church. If you're going up, you're going to need shoes or boots that grip.

For trails in the rest of the Highlands, you can get away with standard footwear if you are not equipped yet with hiking or trail-running boots (especially since I've already sold you on a map, compass, headlamp and box of PowerBars). In a pinch, most sneakers will work. But save the flip-flops for the beach.

It's hard to get too lost

You can get very lost in the Highlands: I've run into people at the casino ruins on Mount Beacon who started on Breakneck without a map or water who were having one of the worst days of their lives. On the bright side, they were 30 minutes from Bob's Corner Store.

One of the great things about hiking in the eastern Highlands is that you have Route 9 on one side and Route 9D on the other, not to mention a river as a landmark. If you're truly lost, stay on the trail and head downhill.

You're on your own

Accidents happen. Hikers twist ankles, break legs and suffer heart attacks. But Schaublin says first responders in the Highlands too often get called for rescues of people who could have hiked out on their own. As someone who has gotten himself into a fair share of trouble in the woods over the years, I can assure you that as long as you don't panic, you're capable of a lot more than you think. Especially around here, where you're likely to run into other hikers and you're surrounded by highways.

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