

# The HIGHLANDS Current



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DECEMBER 11, 2020

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## Putnam Officials Tussle Over COVID

*Montgomery presses for details about response*

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

When COVID-19 cases began to rise, clashes among elected officials about Putnam's response soon followed.

From Philipstown came questions and a call for the removal of the county health commissioner. From the eastern side of Putnam, praise more often rang out, albeit concerns surfaced, too.

Meanwhile, cases continue to climb.

In a briefing for the Putnam Legislature's Health Committee on Wednesday, Dr. Michael Nesheiwat, the county health commissioner, reported that Putnam had more positive cases in November than at any month during the pandemic. The daily positivity rate has risen from 1.8 percent on Oct. 31 to 9.1 percent on Dec. 9.

The state updates Putnam's testing numbers daily on its online dashboard but the county only shares more specific detail, such as the number of new cases in each town, once per week. The county reported 153 active cases on Dec. 3 and 19 new cases in Philipstown, 164 in Carmel, 73 in Kent, 57 in Patterson, 36 in Putnam Valley and 93 in Southeast. Thirteen people were hospitalized at the Putnam Hospital Center in Carmel as of Dec. 3.

Since mid-November, Legislator Nancy Montgomery, who represents Philipstown

on the nine-member county Legislature and is its only Democrat, has pressed the county administration for details on its anti-COVID efforts.

"What plans are being put in place to deal with the coming surge of cases?" she wrote to County Executive MaryEllen Odell and Nesheiwat on Nov. 18, when the positivity rate had topped 5 percent. She likewise wondered about implementing "a full shutdown similar to earlier in the year."

Six days later, while acknowledging that county officials "want to provide answers and guidance to an anxious public," she urged Putnam to "expand testing so we have data faster. A single testing site is not enough," she said, and "the only way that we keep schools open is to provide testing." She suggested Putnam emulate Ulster County, which transformed a bus into a mobile testing unit, staffed by public health nurses, to conduct rapid testing.

On Nov. 23 Legislator Joseph Castellano of Brewster sent his own memo to Nesheiwat and Odell, citing public worries. "Would it be possible to have more testing available for these residents?" he asked.

Nesheiwat informed Castellano on Nov. 24 that the county Health Department is in frequent contact with the state and with public school officials on such matters as testing. However, in fighting COVID-19, "the main method of mitigation we employ is through case investigation, which enables us to identify contacts that will

*(Continued on Page 19)*



"The Pines" atop the Pocket Road trail on Mount Beacon

Photo by B. Cronin

## THE FADING FOREST

*Ash, beech and hemlock trees are being threatened by causes known and unknown, changing the forests of the Highlands in drastic, and dangerous, ways*

PART 1 OF A SERIES

By Brian PJ Cronin

Thirteen years ago, when I moved to Beacon, I asked a lifelong resident, a neighbor who knew more about the city than pretty much anyone, what his favorite local hike was.

"That'd be the one up Hemlock Gorge," he said, pointing to the cleave in the distance separating Mount Beacon from Fishkill Ridge.

Maps refer to it as the Dry Brook Trail, even though the brook running down the gorge is rarely dry. Colloquially it's referred to as the Pocket Road Trail, after the road that ends at the trailhead. I have never again heard that geologic feature referred to as Hemlock Gorge, and I probably never will, and not only because my neighbor died this year.

Hike to the top of the trail and you'll find an area known as The Pines because of the once towering hemlock trees that provided a tranquil oasis.

What happened to them was devastating — and practically invisible.

*(Continued on Page 6)*

## Hustis Changes Plea to Guilty

*Sentencing scheduled for Feb. 18 on lesser charge*

By Chip Rowe

Charles E. "Chuck" Hustis III, a former Cold Spring trustee and mayoral candidate who was charged last year with the attempted enticement of a minor for sex, on Nov. 19 pleaded guilty to a lesser charge — attempted receipt of child pornography — as part of a deal reached with federal prosecutors.

Hustis, 37, was arrested on Dec. 16 by FBI agents in the Foodtown parking lot in Cold Spring, where they alleged he was waiting to meet a 16-year-old boy for sex. According to the investigator's report, Hustis also solicited explicit photos from the teen via Facebook Messenger.

The child pornography charge carries a

minimum sentence of five years in prison for a defendant with no prior convictions, although in some circumstances prosecutors can ask for leniency. If Hustis had been convicted of the enticement charge, he faced a minimum sentence of 10 years.

Following his arrest, Hustis was released on \$150,000 bond and placed under house arrest with a monitoring device. The judge allowed Hustis to remain at home until his sentencing, which is scheduled for Feb. 18. The government filed a forfeiture motion to keep his cellphone, which agents had seized.

Hustis, a 2002 Haldane graduate, served on the Village Board from 2010 to 2014 and also ran unsuccessfully for the Haldane school board in 2015. He challenged incumbent Mayor Dave Merandy last year.

According to the complaint filed with the court, the 16-year-old notified the Putnam

*(Continued on Page 3)*



5Q

FIVE QUESTIONS: MICHAEL SHAW

By Michael Turton

Michael Shaw, who spent 36 years as a Metro-North conductor, is the author of *My Rail Life*.

What prompted you to write a book?

I enjoy telling stories. Mine has 70 chapters but it could have had 700 if I had started writing when I began the job. Over the years, I organized parties and golf tournaments to benefit the Conductors' Union Scholarship Fund and others in need. We raised more than \$250,000. I'd always provide entertainment but wanted something special for my last party when I retired. So I handed out my book, something to remember me by. I hope what it lacks in grammar or correctness I make up for with honesty, feelings, love of life and a little humor.

What was the most difficult aspect of your job?

I had only been working about a month when I first witnessed a suicide. I could see the girl walking on the tracks toward the train, felt the emergency brakes go on, heard the train horn, muffled by my engineer's screams. Four people were killed by trains I was working on, three by suicide. I



Shaw shows off his tattoo of the landmark statue of Mercury located above the entrance to Grand Central Station.

Photo provided

found my job and this world such a happy place to be, I found it hard to see how much depression is out there. We also lost people we worked with in accidents. The hardest days involved death.

There must have been funny incidents, too?

I was helping a passenger in a wheelchair during a track change at Grand Central. She was a regular, in her 30s, attractive and spunky, and wearing a white tank top and black miniskirt. She was missing both legs from the knees down. I made small talk, asked what she did in the city. She said, "I'm an escort." I was at a loss. I replied, "Huh, like a ..." and she finished my sentence: "Yes, like an escort!" She said if you carry more than 100 condoms in your bag you can be charged with prostitution. "So, I carry 99," she said. We both laughed. No, I didn't become a client — just a friend.

Any celebrity sightings?

I had my fair share: Phil Donahue, David Letterman, Sigourney Weaver, Joe Torre, Al Pacino, Ron Howard, Glenn Close, Robert De Niro. Victoria Jackson from *SNL* [Saturday Night Live] was so funny. The nicest star was the New York Rangers' Mark Messier. He always thanked us for the great ride. My daughter loves the Rangers and I got her a photo of Messier wearing my conductor's hat, sitting in the cab, pretending to drive the train. A week later his teammate Mike Richter was aboard. I did the same photo with him. That was fun.

What did you do with lost items?

I was a little crazy about that. I'd do everything possible to get an item back to a commuter. If I found something with ID in it, I'd look the person up and call them. People appreciated that. I got a tuxedo back to the owner just in time for him to attend an event at Gracie Manor with Mayor Rudy Giuliani. He was ecstatic — and we became friends. When I drove a wallet right to the owner's house, he said, "I could kiss you!" The wallet was old, expensive and had belonged to his deceased father-in-law. He offered me the couple of hundred bucks in the wallet, but I refused. I left feeling great, loving life — and glad I wasn't kissed.

ON THE SPOT

By Michael Turton

Did your favorite high school subject lead you to where you are today?

I liked science; now I'm pursuing my master's in deaf studies at Columbia.



~ Izdihar Dabashi, Beacon

Math was my favorite; today, being chief operating officer of Drug World is all numbers.



~ Mark Snyder, Cold Spring

I studied cosmetology; now one of my jobs is as a hair stylist.



~ Kristy Chesser, Beacon

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# Dutchess Approves \$502 Million Budget

*Most Democrats reject spending plan*

By Leonard Sparks

The Dutchess County Legislature on Dec. 3 approved, largely along party lines, a \$502 million budget for 2021 that avoids layoffs and reduces property taxes for a seventh straight year. However, it also represents a skinnier workforce after the county introduced a retirement incentive program in the face of COVID-19-related revenue losses.

The Legislature's 15 Republicans were joined by Democrat Randy Johnson of Poughkeepsie in voting for the spending plan, while eight of the body's 10 Democrats, including Beacon Legislators Nick Page and Frits Zernike, voted against approval and one abstained.

Under the plan, spending will shrink by about \$18.6 million and Dutchess' property tax rate will fall to \$3.18 per \$1,000 of assessed value from \$3.26. To offset anticipated losses of \$6.1 million in sales tax revenue and \$4 million in state aid, the county is relying on \$10 million in reserve funds and about \$11 million saved when 152 employees accepted offers to retire or leave their jobs for payouts in 2021.

Of the positions approved for early retirement and buyouts, some will be elimi-

nated and others left vacant, according to the county. The deleted positions include 12 corrections officers (for a savings of \$920,000), two probation officers (\$125,000) and drug counselors and social workers in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health.

County Executive Marc Molinaro, who signed the budget on Wednesday (Dec. 9), said last month that no services are being eliminated under the budget, but that some services "may take longer to provide as we serve more people with fewer employees."

"As we work together to face the challenges left in the wake of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this budget allows us to provide the support and services to our residents without adding any taxpayer burden," Molinaro said in a statement after the budget passed.

Among the concerns for Democrats was the toll the loss of employees taking the county's buyout offer may have on services.

The health department, which has had a leading role in the county's COVID-19 response, will have 13 fewer budgeted positions and the Probation Department six fewer positions, according to figures released with the draft budget.

Legislator Rebecca Edwards, who represents Poughkeepsie and is minority leader for the Democrats, said that it would be "an avoidance of weighing the impact" to believe

that the losses will not affect services.

"For 152 employees to leave is an immense loss of talent, of experience, of wisdom, of community in the county," Edwards said.

Molinaro's administration is highlighting several initiatives.

Next year, every Dutchess County sheriff's deputy will begin wearing a body camera and the county will provide procedural justice and implicit bias training to every law enforcement agency in the county. The county said that 200 officers have signed up to attend the eight-hour classes before the end of the year.

The county's mobile crisis intervention team will expand and "work more closely than ever" with police officers and Mental Health America, an anti-racism organization, said Molinaro.

Mental Health America, Astor Services and PeopleUSA will also take over the operation of the Dutchess Stabilization Center in Poughkeepsie, which provides services to people in crisis 24 hours a day.

In an effort to diversify county police forces, the county will amend its college credit requirement for the officer civil service exam, which mandates that applicants have at least 60 college credits. With the change, new officers will have five years to earn the 60 credits.

In a series of amendments, the Legislature added \$300,000 for youth and community

services and \$50,000 for library technology to the Department of Planning and Development's Agency Partnership Grant Program and \$210,000 to the Department of Community & Family Services for additional security services and Domestic Abuse Response Team training.

The Legislature also amended the budget to restore \$10,112 in funding to the Dutchess County SPCA and add \$7,500 to the Board of Elections budget to provide additional support for early voting.

## Hustis (from Page 1)

County Sheriff's Department that Hustis had, over two days in December 2019, sent him sexually explicit photos and solicited him for sex. (The legal age of consent in New York state is 17.)

The teen told police that Hustis had been one of his substitute teachers. Hustis was certified by the state as a teaching assistant from February 2012 to January 2015, and the Haldane school district said he had worked as a substitute teacher as recently as 2016.

On Dec. 12, 2019, an FBI agent took over the teen's Facebook account to communicate with Hustis while posing as the minor, according to the complaint. Hustis allegedly sent explicit photos to the account, as well as photos of his face, including one that also had been posted on his Facebook campaign page during his run for mayor.



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MORE DETAILS: [PAGE 7](#)





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**T**he *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](mailto: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

### Castle for sale

I drive by that castle every day and think, "No, that castle can't be mine" ("This Home Could Be Your Castle," Nov. 27). But it was so thoughtful (and cavalier), especially in a pandemic, of *The Current* to point out the gap in wealth equality in our community. This headline was misleading and frankly an embarrassment to those who are in need of shelter, a paycheck or food for their family. Now is not the time to glorify castles that are on sale.

Victoria Jones, *Garrison*

### Thank you, from a veteran

Each year, several families from Philipstown distribute baskets of good cheer to veterans filled with candies, cookies and other baked goods and assorted treats.

These families do this on their own time and at their own expense to thank the veterans for their service and to wish all a joyous Christmas season. It is a display of patriotism and magnificent community spirit.

As a recipient of one of these baskets, I am extremely appreciative and thankful to have such neighbors. Please allow me to express my sincere thanks to the Rotondo,

McCollum, Harrold, Kinnauld, Champlin, Stowell, Olsen, McCann, Flaherty, Hoffmann and Hughes families.

Dan Dillon, *Cold Spring*

### Open waters

I was gratified to see your article about the removal of several dams on Hudson River tributaries, and your conversations with ecologist George Jackman from Riverkeeper ("A Leg Up for River Fish," Nov. 27). This is a hugely important issue in terms of biological restoration, and there are probably no other actions we could be taking that are as key to ecological health as letting sea-run fish reach historic breeding grounds.

In November 2019, the Putnam Highlands Audubon Society brought attention to this issue with a program we organized, called "Hope on the Hudson," that was attended by nearly 90 people at the Desmond-Fish Public Library. Filmmaker Jon Bowermaster screened his short film about the topic, and Jackman and Scott Silver, director of the Constitution Marsh Audubon Center and Sanctuary, were part of a lively panel discussion on restoration ecology.

Let's keep working on this so that sea-run fish such as alewives and river herring and American eels can bring their great biological benefits back to the de-pauperized river ecosystem.

Pete Salmansohn, *Garrison*

### Food drive

On Saturday (Dec. 5), Putnam for Black Lives hosted a food drive on the steps of the Putnam County Historic Courthouse in Carmel. Several members and allies stood on the steps for two hours to accept donations for food pantries, where demand is higher than ever because of the pandemic.

Soon after the drive began, a group of 20 to 30 men, many unmasked and wearing fatigues and yellow attire associated with the far-right organization known as the Proud Boys, assembled across the street, waving flags that conjured their apparent ideal era of the Confederacy. They screamed epithets and anti-gay slurs, called the volunteers "communists" and chanted "Four more years!" through a megaphone. An (unmasked) police officer confirmed that the protesters knew it was a food collection.

We understand these men are deeply depressed that their chosen leader did not win the election and that their intensely toxic masculinity makes it impossible for them to express that sadness in any way other than through exhibitions of displaced anger. But, hopefully, no person of any political persuasion would think it acceptable to disrupt such an event, and especially to shout slurs at a group of largely young adult (some LGBTQ+) volunteers.

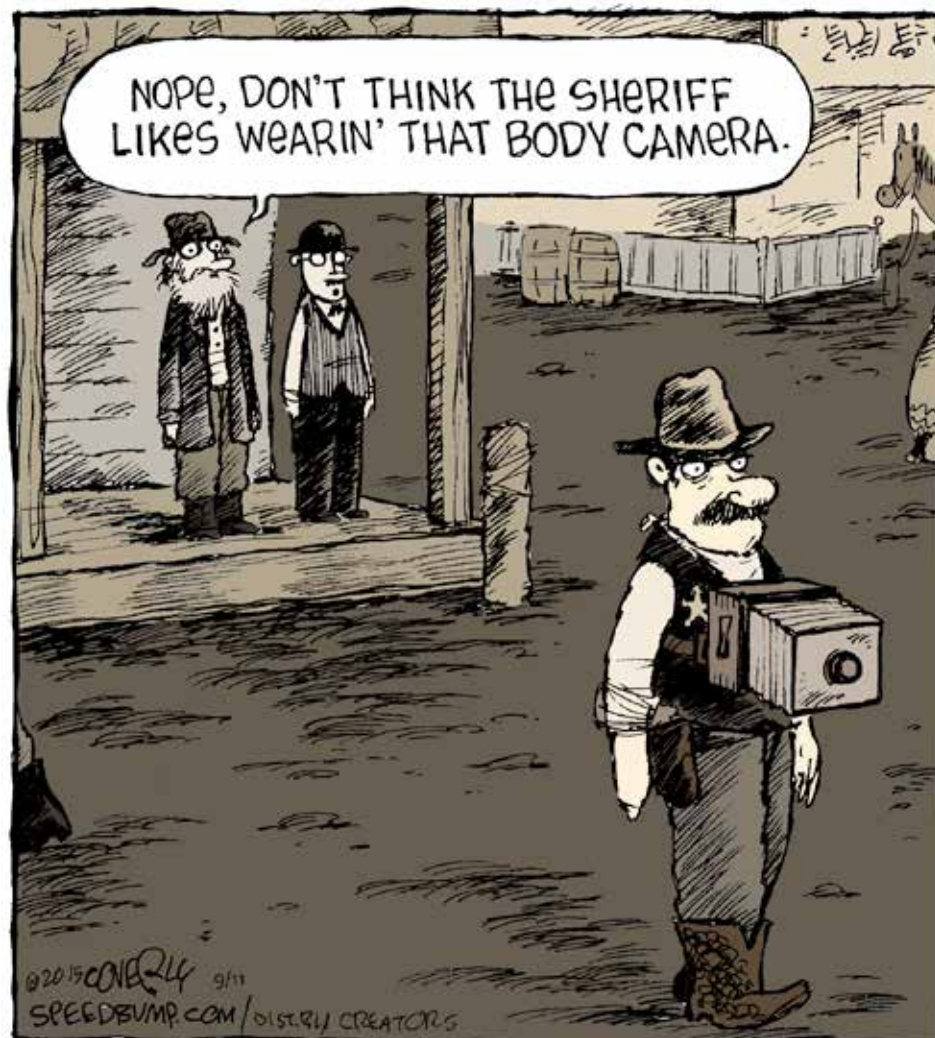
Those who agree are welcome to show up on Saturday (Dec. 12) at Drew United Methodist Church on Gleneida Avenue in Carmel to donate food, household items or gift cards to help families who are struggling this holiday season.

As the number of COVID-19 cases in our county soars, Putnam for Black Lives thought it prudent to hold off on large weekly demonstrations to instead focus on direct action in the community. To all who feel called at this moment to shout down food drives, the least you could do for our county, and the country that you claim to love, is to wear masks while we dangerous, commie antifa radicals help to ensure local families are fed.

Eileen McDermott, *Brewster*

*This letter was also signed by 12 other members of Putnam for Black Lives from Brewster, Carmel and Kent.*

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# Maloney Elected to Top Democratic Position

Becomes chair of the Congressional Campaign Committee

By Chip Rowe

Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, whose district includes the Highlands, was elected on Dec. 3 as chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, which is tasked with getting Democrats elected to the U.S. House in 2022.

“A strong Democratic majority in 2022 will be essential to our fight,” Maloney said in a statement. “I will work every day to improve our campaign operations, connect with voters across lines of difference, protect our incumbents and expand our majority. I thank my peers for their confidence.”

Maloney, 54, was nominated for the position by Rep. Linda Sánchez of California. He defeated Rep. Tony Cárdenas of California, 119-107.

One of the arguments for Maloney’s ability to get Democrats elected is his own success in the Hudson Valley, where he has won five times in a district that voted for President Donald Trump in 2016.

Maloney succeeds Rep. Cheri Bustos of Illinois, who did not run for a second term. In the November election, the Democrats failed to take any Republican seats and nearly a dozen incumbents lost.

Asked by *The New York Times* what went wrong for House Democrats, Maloney said: “The intelligent answer to that question is I don’t really know yet what happened and neither does anyone else, but I know how to find out. If you’re not God, you should bring data.”

House Republicans re-elected Rep. Tom Emmer of Minnesota to lead the Republican Congressional Campaign Committee.

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ELECTION RESULTS

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	DUTCHESS	BEACON	PUTNAM	PHILIPSTOWN	TOTAL
<b>Voter Turnout</b>	78%	78%	80%	84%	70%
<b>President/Vice President</b>					
Joseph Biden/Kamala Harris (DEM/WF)	81,443	5,480	24,953	4,041	5,230,985
Donald Trump/Michael Pence (REP/CON)	66,872	1,731	29,283	2,163	3,244,798
Howie Hawkins /Angela Walker (GRE)	578	44	162	29	32,753
Jo Jorgensen/Jeremy Cohen (LIB)	1,247	64	411	49	60,234
Brock Pierce/Karla Ballard (IND)	513	36	155	20	22,587
<b>U.S. House (District 18)</b>					
Chele Farley (REP/CON)	33,083	1,517	26,583	2,003	145,098
Sean Patrick Maloney (DEM/WF/IND)	48,342	5,419	25,229	4,055	187,169
Scott Smith (LIB/SAM)	651	71	427	65	3,162
<b>State Senate (District 41)</b>					
Sue Serino (REP/CON/IND/ROS)	70,916	2,128	10,164	2,432	81,080
Karen Smythe (DEM/WF/SAM)	63,951	5,010	9,337	3,684	73,288
<b>State Assembly (District 95)</b>					
Lawrence Chiulli (REP/CON)			5,654	2,026	20,237
Sandy Galef (DEM)			7,259	3,939	39,235
<b>State Assembly (District 104)</b>					
Andrew Gauzza IV (REP/CON)	4,154	1,694			17,099
Jonathan Jacobson (DEM/WF)	12,716	5,148			30,908
<b>State Supreme Court, 9th District</b>					
Richard Guertin (REP/CON)	62,999	1,582	27,402	2,115	366,494
David Hasin (REP)	51,726	1,299	23,110	1,704	309,616
Alexandra Murphy (DEM/CON)	77,945	5,039	26,110	4,021	557,827
Robert Ondrovic (DEM/CON)	69,899	4,616	23,900	3,815	500,595
Mark Starkman (REP)	51,722	1,264	22,824	1,680	303,304
Sam Walker (DEM/REP/CON)	121,580	5,901	46,678	5,485	810,179
E. Loren Williams (DEM)	68,079	4,814	21,428	3,629	490,101
<b>Dutchess County Judge</b>					
Peter Forman (REP/CON/LIB/IND)	68,756	2,148			68,657
Jessica Segal (DEM/GRE/WOR/SAM)	73,257	4,881			73,111
<b>Dutchess Redistricting Commission</b>					
Yes	80,066	4,571			80,066
No	43,091	1,482			43,091

DEM = Democratic | REP = Republican | CON = Conservative | GRE = Green | IND = Independence | LIB = Libertarian | REF= Reform | ROS = Rebuild Our State | SAM = Serve America Movement | WF = Working Families



# THE FADING FOREST

(Continued from Page 1)

“This insect the size of the head of a pin comes in and starts feeding,” explains William Schuster, the executive director of the Black Rock Forest Consortium in Cornwall. “They’re tiny, but when you have 10,000 of them on one tree...”

The damage is apparent at the top of the gorge, where the hemlocks look as if they were struck by lightning or ravaged by fire, with barely a pine needle in sight. The hemlock woolly adelgid, which originated in southern Japan, showed up in the Hudson Valley in the 1980s and has been surging of late in part because of increasing temperatures caused by climate change.

The aphid-like insects feed on hemlock twigs from autumn through spring, growing fuzzy white coats to protect themselves from the cold and to hold their eggs. As the swarms feed, the flow of nutrients within the twigs is compromised, leading to needle die-off, and then, the deaths of the trees.

Hemlocks are not the only trees in the Highlands undergoing rapid change. Earlier this year, a friend who had an ash tree cut down in his yard was told by the arborist that, in the next few years, every ash tree in the Hudson Valley would be dead because of the emerald ash borer, another invasive insect from Asia. As with the hemlock woolly adelgid, no native predators feed on them, and the trees have not had nearly enough time and generations to develop resistance.

Alarmed, I asked two friends who both have backgrounds in forestry if this could be true. Are all the ash trees about to die?

They said it wasn’t true: Not all the ash trees will die — only 99.5 percent of them. About 0.5 percent will survive because they have a natural resistance to the ash borer — as long as someone doesn’t cut them down because they heard all the ash trees were dying.

Sometime later I asked one of those friends if she was familiar with the disease ravaging beech trees.

Which one, she asked?

There’s the old one (Birch Bark Disease, which has been around for decades), the new one (Beech Leaf Disease, which appeared in Ohio eight years ago and is encroaching on the Highlands,) and the *new* new one (an unnamed leaf necrosis that showed up in the Highlands within the last few months).

A forest is always in flux, even if the changes often creep forward too slowly to be noticed by even frequent visitors. Sometimes, however, those glacial changes can speed up to seem like landslides. Time in the forest is speeding up.

## Ashes, ashes, all fall down

I have been walking with Jonathan Rosenthal and Radka Wildova for maybe 15 seconds when they spot an ash tree. I ask them how they do that so quickly.

“We dream about them,” Rosenthal says.



Radka Wildova examines a recently felled ash tree in High Falls.

Photo by B. Cronin

Rosenthal and Wildova are scientists at the Ecological Research Institute in New Paltz who run a program called Monitoring and Managing Ash that enlists the public to combat emerald ash borer and protect the few trees that can resist them.

It’s mid-June and we’ve come to High Falls to hike the D&H Canal and check in on what might be one of those trees. We’ve barely left the parking lot of the museum when Rosenthal and Wildova spot a mature, healthy ash that both say they were not aware of. They are delighted, entranced and a bit confused as to how it’s in such good shape.

Since the tree is in someone’s yard, Rosenthal suggests it might have been injected with a systemic insecticide that has been shown to protect individual trees from emerald ash borer. Because the treatment is expensive and must be done every few years, it’s not suitable for widespread application. But for ash trees with particular historical or sentimental value, or that might (like this one) crush a house if toppled, it remains an option.

“I’d love to go take a closer look,” says Rosenthal. “But, you know...”

Meaning we would need to trespass, and whoever owns the tree may not take kindly to three strangers poking at it. We take to the woods instead, bypassing several ash trees that have recently been cut down.

In order to locate trees with ash borer resistance, Monitoring and Managing Ash asks people to keep an eye out for “lingering ash.” The theory is that if you notice a clump of dead or dying ash trees in which one tree appears *not* to be dying, it’s reasonable to assume the tree might have at least some natural resistance.

To determine if an ash is fully resistant,

the tree needs to be monitored for a few years. Last year, someone told Rosenthal and Wildova about such an ash tree at the D&H Canal; when they visited last summer it appeared to be healthy despite several dead ash trees within sight.

But it was not resistant. As we approach, Rosenthal and Wildova point out the several signs of its impending death by borer. There’s the die-back in the leaf canopy: many of the branches are barren. There’s the epicormic shoots emerging from the lower parts of the tree, often a desperate attempt to increase leaf production to compensate for the lost canopy and chemical energy. (No leaves, no photosynthesis, no life.)

However, both conditions could be caused by other stresses besides the borer, so once we reach the tree, they look for signs of infestation.

It doesn’t take long. Underneath a piece of bark, the insect’s looping, serpentine “galleries” can be seen: Trails caused by larvae as they tunnel. Several D-shaped holes are found around the trunk, which is the particular shape that the borer makes when it emerges from its larval stage and exits the tree as a beetle.

Emerald ash borers start at the top of the tree, and subsequent generations work their way down. If you’re seeing the D holes at eye level, Rosenthal says, “you can kiss your ash goodbye.”

The forests of New York are under attack from more than 150 invasive pests, more than any other state, according to Rosenthal. The primary reason for this is New York City’s role as a global shipping hub, with invasive bugs traveling inside shipping crates, pallets and packing material.

Once they escape, there’s just enough

forests within New York City itself — Central Park, the Bronx — for them to establish themselves before spreading into the thickly wooded suburbs.

The gilded wealth of those suburbs also plays a role, in the form of exotic and expensive imported trees. “You want to be the first on the block with that new tree,” says Rosenthal.

That was the case with the first American tree epidemic that can be traced back to human interference: The chestnut blight that destroyed almost every mature chestnut tree in the early 20th century. Arriving on imported Japanese trees, the fungus was discovered on chestnut trees at the Bronx Zoo in 1904. By the 1940s, it was everywhere.

The massive, stately chestnut trees of young America are now few and far between. Today the species lives on mostly as scrubby underbrush, still shooting up from chestnut roots, but felled by the blight before they ever mature.

This may be the future of the ash. Since the emerald ash borer needs a thick trunk to tunnel through, younger and reedy ash trees are safe until they mature. That may be largely how ash trees in the Hudson Valley survive: As thickets and understory, ecological ghosts haunting the forests where they once were found in soaring abundance.

That is, unless enough naturally resistant trees are found and protected. “Every living, standing, healthy tree provides some hope,” says Rosenthal.

Researchers at the U.S. Forest Service have been collecting scions from resistant ash trees to grow grafted clones. Field tests are underway in Ohio and Delaware to see how these younger ash trees react to emerald ash borer outside of a lab or greenhouse.

(Continued on Page 7)





Radka Wildova and Jonathan Rosenthal of the Ecological Research Institute spot a surprisingly healthy ash tree in a yard in High Falls.

Photos by B. Cronin



Trails, aka “galleries,” made by Emerald Ash Borer larvae on an ash tree

(Continued from Page 6)

For the program to thrive, more resistant ash trees must be identified. In the early days of the emerald ash borer invasion, a common practice was to cut down all the ash trees where the pest had been detected, to stop the spread. While research found this increases the spread (the beetles just fly farther afield to find new ash trees), Rosenthal and Wildova say they still encounter people who preach cut first.

“People want to do something,” Rosenthal says. “And what’s more American than cutting trees down? That’s a headwind that we face.”

If all the lingering ash trees are cut down, those that will remain will be the ones that had been deemed “significant” enough to warrant the labor and expense of constant insecticide injections. The state parks department has designated one stand near the entrance to Minnewaska State Park to receive treatment; the trees may become a living museum where New Yorkers can show their children what ash trees are.

For the Mohawk people, a living museum is not enough. Rosenthal and Wildova have spent time on the reservations along the New York-Canadian border, speaking with

elders and craftspeople about the cultural importance of black ash trees.

“For them it’s an existential problem,” said Rosenthal. “Some say it would be the end of their language, because so much of their language is tied to ash. And they’ve made huge efforts to maintain their language.”

The Mohawk and Iroquois people also weave baskets from black ash for ceremonies. It’s tradition that, during weddings, the families of the newly wedded couple exchange black ash baskets. One basket weaver told Rosenthal that if the black ash tree dies out, for Mohawk people it would mean the end of marriage.

### A forest full of secrets

“You name the species,” says Taro Ietaka, “and there’s something that’s coming for it.”

Ietaka, a Cold Spring resident who serves on the village’s Tree Advisory Board, is a parks supervisor for the Westchester County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation. During his 20 years working with forests, he’s watched the threats in the Highlands steadily increase.

“There’s a lot of stressors, especially in our



Taro Ietaka, a Cold Spring resident who works for Westchester County Parks, examines a stricken beech tree at Cranberry Lake Preserve.

area,” he says. “There’s the changing climate, the big summer droughts, the air pollution. But then you throw on top of that some of these exotic things coming over, like emerald ash borer and the like...” He looks at the beech tree behind us. “They’re still not 100 percent sure what’s going on with this.”

It’s late October at Cranberry Lake Preserve, a park north of White Plains that Ietaka used to manage. The leaves are a riot of autumn color, although the beech tree is still green — deeply green. Ietaka plucks a leaf and points to the bands across it. “The stripes, that’s pretty unmistakable,” he says. For years, beech trees have contended with a bark disease that has been lethal for stands in the Adirondacks and Maine but less so in the Highlands and south. “It’s ugly, but down here it usually doesn’t kill the tree,” says Ietaka. “They scar over and go on living happily.”

In 2012, researchers in Ohio noticed something new happening with beech leaves: First came the deep green banding, then the leaves turned leathery, then crinkly, and then they dropped. Beech usually keep their leaves throughout the winter; the faded yellow of winter beech is one of the few predictable pops of color in the Highlands’ forests during the colder months.

But once the leaves fall, the disease prevents new buds from forming. Brent Boscarino, who coordinates the Invasive Species Citizen Science Program for the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, notes that once beech leaf disease afflicts a tree, it will typically be dead within three years. Parts of Ohio have reported a 100 percent mortality rate. “That’s what we’re scared of,” says Boscarino.

It’s not clear what is causing the disease,



Dark green stripes, or “banding,” are a sign of beech leaf disease.

much less what can be done to combat it, but there are clues. Its rapid spread eastward indicates a high probability of an invasive component, since the disease clearly isn’t encountering any natural resistance. So far it’s been found in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Ontario, New York and Japan, which might indicate that it originated in Asia. The most important clue may be the presence of nematodes, a microscopic worm, found in afflicted leaves. It’s not known if the nematodes are responsible for the disease or are a symptom, but Ietaka isn’t waiting to find out. He’s received clearance to inject a few beech trees with an insecticide similar to the one used against emerald ash borer.

So far, beech leaf disease has not been discovered in the Highlands, although with the disease encroaching from the west and the south, it appears to be only a matter of time. Or perhaps it is here already, in a different form.

This past fall, beech tree leaves here have been turning deep green, then shriveling and falling off, but without the characteristic banding of beech leaf disease. “I was just in parts of Fahnstock” State Park in Philipstown, Boscarino said at the end of October, “and it looks like every beech tree has had this. The leaves are staying this dark green” and look diseased. “But we were not able to see banding. So is it beech leaf disease?”

The disease — so new it is unnamed — has so far only shown itself in the Highlands where the familiar beech leaf disease hasn’t made an appearance. Across the river in the western Highlands, Schuster, the Black Rock Forest executive director, and Matthew Brady, its manager, have been on the lookout for beech leaf disease.

They haven’t seen it yet, but they have found examples of the newer leaf disease, which both believe is likely a deformity caused by a late frost (May 15) this year. “We had 2 inches of snow,” notes Brady. If that’s true, the trees should recover come spring. If not, the mystery, and the devastation, will deepen.

**Next week:** *Darwin’s last laugh, and a predator on the loose*



# Beacon Adopts Budget, With Add-Ons

*Also holds hearing on 4-story Main Street proposal*

By Jeff Simms

The Beacon City Council on Monday (Dec. 7) adopted the city's 2021 budget, a spending plan that includes a 1.7 percent residential tax increase, or around \$35 annually on a \$300,000 home.

The budget, as first drafted by Mayor Lee Kyriacou, raised the tax levy — the total that the city can collect through property taxes — by about \$200,000 because of new construction. That would have kept taxes on existing homes and commercial properties flat.

The proposal did not raise taxes to the maximum allowed under a state tax cap, which Kyriacou said was meant to help residents hurting financially because of the ongoing pandemic shutdown.

The plan instead relied on withdrawing as much as \$2.2 million from savings to balance the budget because of an expected drop in state aid and sales tax revenue due to the shutdown.

However, during a public hearing last month, a number of residents called on the council to “go to cap,” or figure in the maximum tax increase, to create about \$186,000 in additional revenue. Doing so, the resi-

dents said, would free up money for community programs not included in the proposal.

On Monday, the council settled in between, adding eight items to the \$22.2 million in general fund spending, and using an additional \$105,000 in savings and the tax increase of nearly \$100,000 to pay for them.

The 2021 tax rates are \$7.76 per \$1,000 of assessed value for homes (a 1.7 percent increase) and \$11.49 per \$1,000 of assessed value for commercial properties (a 6.3 percent decrease). The budget add-ons include:

- Grants to supplement food distribution programs already supported by Dutchess County (\$25,000);
- A survey to determine the community's recreation needs and views on a community center (\$50,000);
- A study of a possible municipal broadband program (\$30,000);
- Weekend trash and recycling pickup at municipal parks (\$14,000);
- Bathroom maintenance at the parks (\$25,000);
- Creation of a voucher program that seniors and other residents without transportation can use for free taxi rides (\$10,000);
- A test of a program to increase resident participation in the budget process (\$5,000).

State law allows the city to roll over its unused tax levy (about \$87,000) to next year's levy.

Because the amount of state aid and some sales tax revenues won't be known until 2021, city officials can only estimate how much they'll be spending from reserves. But in a worst-case scenario, \$2.2 million would be an all-time high and an amount Kyriacou has said repeatedly that Beacon cannot sustain.

The approved budget also includes about \$5.9 million for the Police Department, the city's largest single expenditure. That's a nominal (\$6,500) increase over last year, but one that still drew criticism during budget hearings from residents who supported “defunding the police” in favor of spending on social services.

The council on Monday restored the K-9 program, at a cost of \$24,400, that had been removed from the police budget, although Kyriacou said he does not want to keep it long-term.

## 416-420 Main St.

The council on Monday held a public hearing on a special-use permit being requested for a proposed four-story, mixed-use building at 416-420 Main St., the site of the Kitchen & Coffee eatery, which would remain.

The proposal includes retail on the ground floor, office space on the second and third floors, and a single apartment

on a recessed fourth floor, as well as a two-story live/work building at the back of the parcel. The council must grant the special-use permit for the fourth floor to be built.

If approved, it would be the first four-floor development allowed on Main since the city adopted provisions in May requiring at least one “public benefit” to be included in projects seeking a fourth floor. In this case, the developer said that green space behind the building would be open to the public.

On Monday, architect Aryeh Siegel described landscaping that would be added to the roof, along with a “minimal, lightweight, glass greenhouse-type” design on the fourth floor that he said would reduce its visibility from Main Street.

Two residents spoke during the hearing and another emailed a comment. None favored the project.

“There will be no real community benefit” to taxpayers, said Theresa Kraft, who argued that the green space will only be used by people working or dining at the building. “In reality, it's the size of a postage stamp, with minimal outdoor space abutting parked cars and business delivery trucks.”

The hearing was adjourned for two weeks and can be picked up at the council's next meeting.

The City Council also set a public hearing for Jan. 19 on a proposed law that would shift the approval of wireless telecommunications facilities, including small cell wireless, to the Planning Board. Some approvals currently require a special-use permit from the City Council.

## Q&A: Beacon Mayor Lee Kyriacou

Mayor Lee Kyriacou spoke with reporter Jeff Simms on Wednesday (Dec. 9) about the challenges that faced Beacon in 2020 and those that will follow in 2021. His responses have been condensed.

**A year ago, when you had just been elected, the dominant issue was development in Beacon. Since then, the city has worked on building-height regulations and now requires public benefits for four-story proposals. Is there more work to do?**

We have done some significant things on that track. The most important one was we eliminated the right for fourth floors. It doesn't mean we've eliminated fourth floors. That's important to understand, because we believe in density. The long-term direction of the country, especially if you're environmentally minded, has to be increasing density in cities. It's also the way that our Main Street, which is long, will survive in the long run. We've said that a developer doesn't get a fourth floor as a matter of right, because we discovered people would automatically go for them. Now it's at the discretion of the council, with a special-use permit offered in return for some public benefit. We also tightened up our historic preservation ordinance and, down near the waterfront, we've tightened that up and are setting up to create parklets and other

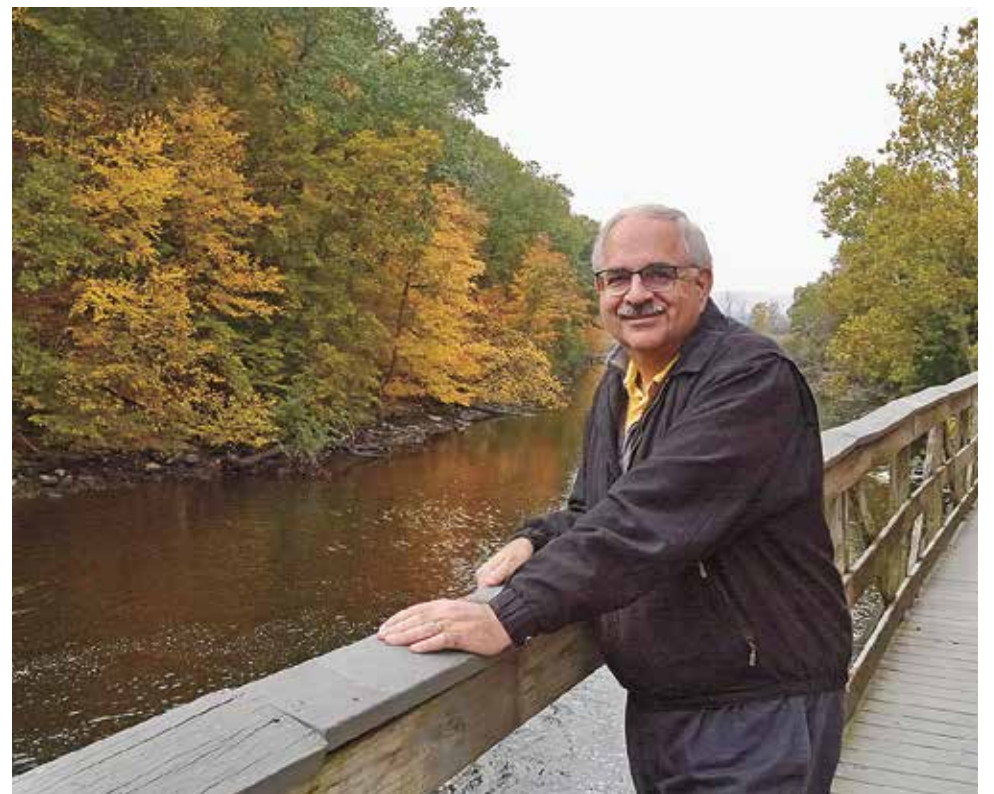
opportunities to draw people from the train station up to Main Street. We have quality-of-life issues to work on, as well, and you'll see that reflected in our budgets.

**Is there anything on your to-do list for development in 2021?**

We started a Main Street Access Committee because one of the things people indicated was a repercussion of density on Main Street was parking. I think it's going to conclude that we need zoning adjacent to Main Street that encourages parking while still encouraging other development. We're probably going to invest capital in parking infrastructure. It's not so much the zoning as much as “How are you going to do this?” One approach would be that if a building doesn't have its own parking, it needs to contribute to a fund. If residents living on Main Street want a monthly sticker for a spot, you'll have to pay something. Maybe we collect something from tourism and use that to fund collective parking.

**How long can a building boom last in Beacon?**

The growth we've had was on urban-renewal parcels that had laid fallow for 40 years. The city in the 1960s and 1970s razed a lot of buildings and created open spaces that it hoped would get rebuilt right away. We were fortunate because it didn't happen until we were a popular destination



Mayor Lee Kyriacou

File photo by J. Simms

and appealing to young people. The parcels along Main Street and Beekman are being built out now. There could be development by the train station, and we've zoned what we're looking for there. We think transit-oriented development is an important environmental approach to housing and where you want to put density. You could put people down there who don't have cars; they walk to the train and go to the city. The

other area we have to look at carefully is the old Camp Beacon prison, which I don't think would be for housing but could be important if we're looking for jobs.

**Your first year as mayor has to be one you'll never forget.**

Who would have thought we'd have a health crisis that created a recession and

(Continued on Page 10)



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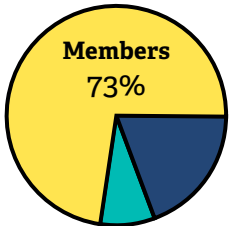
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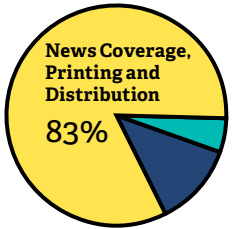
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## Kyriacou (from Page 8)

then, in addition, a civil rights movement. I kept thinking, “I’ve done 18 years on the council, how hard can it be?” We spent the first few months of the pandemic trying to figure out how to keep things open. We never closed anything down in the city other than our recreation classes. We kept City Hall open. We kept the Building Department open. Obviously, we kept water, sewer, police, fire, everything going, and we figured out how to do it while other town halls were shut down. And we did it in a way that our workers felt safe. I think we’ve done an exceptional job in Beacon. I know our infection numbers are up in Dutchess County. In Beacon, we have 30 active cases, so it’s not zero, but our peak was around 150 and we’re nowhere near that. And the county’s over 1,000 now. Things are tough but the community has done its part.

### Will Main Streets and small businesses recover?

That’s the absolute hardest part. We are lucky that we still get some tourists, but the winter’s going to be tough. I am optimistic it will get better next year as we get

vaccinations, but it’s going to last into the summer.

### Is there an update on the search for a new police chief?

The search committee that’s chaired by Council Member Terry Nelson sent me two names and I’m reviewing them. We’re probably a week or so away from being able to extend an offer.

### Is the city involved in planning for the Fjord Trail that would connect Beacon and Cold Spring?

We are. They are focused now on Breakneck Ridge. They have to build around the tunnel and improve the train stop. The important thing about the trail here is how will it cross Fishkill Creek and how does it connect to our trails? I also want to figure out how the trail connects to the Tioronda Bridge. We want to build a historic replica that will be a one-lane bike and pedestrian and hiking bridge with access for fire and other emergency vehicles. I’d love to see the Fjord Trail connect there. I’m also proposing a new greenway trail on the other side of Fishkill Creek. We have one planned on the northwest side; I’d like to see us have

one on the southeast side from that bridge up to Route 9D, so you could do a loop.

### Beacon’s zoning codes have been updated after a long process. If you could change one more thing in the code, what would it be?

We have a little more work to do on the linkage district that connects the train station and Main Street. How do we create that entrance from the train up to Main Street? Is it stairs? Is it small parks, where we’re talking to the Dutch Reformed Church about its cemetery? Do we acquire the cemetery, restore it and put a historic interpretive trail there? How do we plan this effectively to make people love walking from the station up to Main Street and to keep going?

### What are you looking forward to in 2021?

I’d like us to get back to some of the capital projects. I think we’re going to move forward on restoring the Tioronda Bridge. I’d like us to do Main Street improvements that work on parking. I’d like us to get started on consolidation at the Tompkins Hose firehouse. If we can put those projects in place,

which are big capital spends, we can turn to things like a potential community center.

I’m also looking forward to getting our police chief and starting up with some of the harder issues with respect to policing and community safety. We did the transparency stuff right away. We have one of the few state-accredited police departments in the region, so we had a lot of that already in place in terms of our policies and procedures. But there are questions like, can we reduce the size of one of our shifts? Can we share dispatch with the Town of Fishkill? How do we work in a mental health officer? How do we work with Dutchess County to get resources that we can’t afford?

As we continue development, we need to look at affordability. We sold off a parcel of land that we held next door to the municipal building several years ago and we got 75 percent affordable units out of that. There might be a couple more of those that we can do. That’s a much better bang for your buck than trying to get 10 percent or 15 percent affordable units out of new builders. Instead, we can find areas where you get large percentages of affordable housing. We’re working on that, too.

# Mount Beacon Dam to Undergo Repairs

## Structure designated ‘deficient’ by state

By Leonard Sparks

The dam at Beacon’s second-largest reservoir will undergo long-planned repairs as early as next summer to bring the 121-year-old structure’s spillway into compliance with state standards.

The capacity of the dam’s spillway, a channel used to carry controlled releases of water out of the 124-million-gallon reservoir, will be expanded as part of a \$2.5 million project, Ed Balicki, the city’s water and wastewater superintendent, said on Tuesday (Dec. 8).

The Mount Beacon Reservoir is part of a municipal water system that includes two other reservoirs, Cargill and Melzingah, and three wells.

The Mount Beacon dam, which is 350 feet long and 35 feet high, is designated as a “high-hazard” structure by the state Department of Environmental Conservation. That is not an indication of its soundness but of its location and the destruction that could be caused if it fails, including loss of life. In this case, a catastrophic failure could send millions of gallons of rushing water toward the city.

Along with enlarging the spillway capacity and repairing “crumbling” and “spalling” in the dam’s body, Balicki said, the repairs will include new piping and some fixes to a pocket reservoir.

The improved spillway will be designed to handle rainfall from a “once-in-a-lifetime” storm, Balicki said. “The storm that we’re building toward is a hugely significant storm — a massive storm.”

State law requires that owners of high-

hazard dams submit an annual certification, maintain an Emergency Action Plan and conduct inspections on a “regular schedule,” although they only need to send a report to the state every 10 years, or upon request.

Built in 1889 out of “rubble and masonry,” according to Balicki, the dam has undergone repeated repairs to make it stronger. In 1994, the city had vertical metal rods drilled into the structure.

An inspection by the Dutchess County health department of Beacon’s water system in October did not include the Mount Beacon dam, but the agency noted that an inspection from 2018 found the structure to be “poorly maintained with visible leaks and the concrete surfaces showing widespread decay.”

The work will take place during the summer, when Beacon relies more on its wells, Balicki said. During the winter, the



The Mount Beacon dam Photo by Mary Fris

city uses much more water from the reservoirs as they become swollen with snow-melt and precipitation.

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The Town of Philipstown is seeking candidates interested in a position as Clerk to the Special Boards (Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning Board, and Conservation Board) beginning January 1, 2021. If interested please send resume to:

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Data Analytics, LLC. Articles of Organization were filed with the Secretary of State of New York (SSNY) on 07/14/2020. Office Location: Putnam County. SSNY has been designated as agent of the LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail a copy of process to: Data Analytics, LLC, 1120 East Mountain Road South, Cold Spring, NY 10516. Purpose: Any lawful purpose.

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# Cold Spring Police Get License-Plate Readers

*County debates replacing policy that guides use*

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

Last March, at the urging of county legislators, the Putnam County Sheriff's Department revised its policy on the use and storage of data collected by license-plate readers.

Among the changes: Data can only be saved for three years, rather than six. Details were also added about when data can be shared and what happens if the policy is violated.

Soon after, the Legislature approved the transfer of \$13,999 to the Cold Spring Police Department so it could buy license-plate readers (LPRs), contingent on the CSPD adopting the sheriff's policy. The stipulation brought no objections from Larry Burke, Cold Spring's officer-in-charge, who described the policy as a good one.

The CSPD received its readers last week.

Case closed, it seems. Or maybe not — for the county.

A new debate ensued on Tuesday (Dec. 8) during the county Legislature's Protective Services Committee meeting over a move by County Executive MaryEllen Odell to replace the LPR policy with one of her

own. It would require the sheriff to conduct quarterly audits covering the number of plates scanned, LPRs operated, images stored, and similar details.

Odell also wants annual, public reports to the county Legislature, as well as to give the county information technology director access to the records and the power to conduct "auditing when required."

At the meeting, Legislator Nancy Montgomery, who represents Philipstown, warned that Odell's changes could allow LPR data to be scooped up by commercial companies.

In a Nov. 5 memo to Odell, Legislator Paul Jonke of Southeast, who chairs the Protective Services Committee, had questioned the need for a new policy "given that the Sheriff's Department already has its own LPR policy, revised at the request of the Legislature" seven months earlier.

Odell responded that the April resolution did not specifically state "that the Legislature adopted [it] on behalf of the county" and she wanted a policy "across county government" as opposed to one adopted by a single department.

Her version would "help to protect the integrity of the Sheriff's Department as well as the privacy of our residents by helping to prevent a data breach and potential

exposure to liability," she wrote.

Like the Sheriff's Department policy, Odell's proposal recommends that LPRs be used mostly in major crime incidents, such as homicides and shootings. Both also note that law enforcement agencies may deploy them for tracking stolen vehicles, finding missing persons, conducting surveillance and locating suspects.

During the Tuesday meeting, Sheriff Robert Langley Jr. said that none of the New York counties that responded to a survey about LPR policies said they had one that extended across county government. Referring to Odell's description of LPRs as sources of intrusion and high risk, he asked: "Where is that coming from? Do you not trust me as sheriff to ensure the data is protected?"

He called granting access to LPR records to employees outside the Sheriff's Department "a security risk" and Odell's drafting of a new policy "an overreach of authority" that raises legal questions.

Legislator Neal Sullivan of Carmel-Mahopac, a member of the Protective Services Committee, responded that he found it "scary" that no other county had a comprehensive LPR policy.

"There's a lot of concerns around LPRs and we're addressing that," he said. In Putnam,

"we've always been leaders, whether it comes to Second Amendment rights" or "protecting the privacy of our residents."

Odell's draft says Putnam should follow the state education commissioner's rules for records retention and process requests for LPR data by non-law enforcement agencies using the education protocols.

Montgomery said those guidelines are intended for offices such as the county clerk, not the police, and that education-related rules could provide loopholes for commercial use of the data. She said it would be "reckless" to proceed without further consideration.

Legislator Carl Albano of Carmel said the Legislature should avoid a protracted argument and accept Odell's policy and revise it later if necessary.

"Critical funding for critical equipment is being held up" and they can proceed with Odell's version while still pursuing the issues Montgomery raised, Jonke stated.

Ultimately, Sullivan and Jonke, joined by the third committee member, Legislator Ginny Nacerino of Patterson, voted unanimously to approve Odell's draft, sending it to the entire nine-person Legislature.

Before adjourning, the committee also approved transfer of \$90,000 in unused county jail money to cover anticipated Sheriff's Department overtime through Dec. 31. The proposal had been pending since October.



Retablo of José Cruz Soría, 1960, Oil on metal, Princeton University Art Museum 2020-270

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La exposición es completamente bilingüe,  
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## CURRENT CONVERSATIONS

# Cold Spring in 2021

with Mayor Dave Merandy



WEDNESDAY DEC. 16 | 7:00–7:45PM

Join us to review the challenges that faced the village in 2020 and discuss what lies ahead.

REGISTER TO ATTEND:

[highlandscurrent.org/current-conversations](http://highlandscurrent.org/current-conversations)



## AROUND TOWN



▲ **SMASHING START** — At the grand opening of School of Rock at 344 Main St. in Beacon on Saturday (Dec. 5), the firm's CEO, Rob Price, a native of Poughkeepsie, smashed a ceremonial guitar in lieu of a traditional ribbon-cutting. School of Rock Beacon, which is owned and operated by Rob Rutigliano and Tom Cassel, offers lessons in guitar, singing, drums and piano.

Photo by Ross Corsair



▲ **PUZZLE PILE** — On Sunday (Dec. 6) Maxine Junge of Beacon announced on Facebook that she had created a puzzle pantry on Catherine Street. "Help yourself to one of my used puzzles," she wrote. "Many excellent Ravensburgers. If you have a puzzle to unload, why not unload it here?" By Monday afternoon, they were gone.

Photo provided

◀ **TRUNK SHOW** — Greg Buhler of Garrison shared this photo of a tree on the beach at Little Stony Point that appears to be hopeful for 2021.



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# The Calendar



The Artist Next Door

## Pamela Garfield

By Alison Rooney

Pamela Garfield is inspired by non-humans, and that's what she paints. She finds her subjects right outside her Beacon doors and windows.

"When I moved here [from Yorktown], I discovered a tribe of house sparrows hanging out in this tangled-up, weedy bush thing in my tiny backyard," she recalls. "I've made relationships with these sparrows, and with the other backyard birds: the juncos, blue jays, cardinals. They hang out [at the feeder] and look at me, and we go, 'Hi, hello.' I want to understand and appreciate their not-humanness."

Garfield's love of nature began in the backyard of a tract house on Long Island that her parents bought in 1950 in what used to be a potato field.

"My father had a vegetable patch and built a chicken coop," she recalls. "It was a suburban farm, with cherry trees and crabapples. I'd spend hours there, retreating behind the lilac bush in the corner of the yard."

As a child and teenager, she was "always making art. My mother poured creativity into everything she did. She'd say, 'Look out

the window: what colors do you tell?' My father owned a printing plant, so the house was always filled with paper."

After graduating from the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, Garfield became a graphic artist. "One of the advantages I had, as a printer's daughter, was that I knew what something was likely to look like on press," she notes.

She went through periods focusing on printmaking and the construction of plaster and paper pulp vessels but settled on "painting what I'm looking at. As the seasons change in the world, they change in my paintings."

After 10 years as a graphic artist, Garfield left the industry to raise her son. She and her husband bought a house on a cul-de-sac in Yorktown that had an acre of rugged, wooded land that led to a pond. "I felt like I'd been set free," she says. "When we first moved there, I'd lie in bed and hear all the animal sounds."

The family got a Labrador retriever. "This incredible dog trainer came to my house," Garfield says. "She walked in and said, 'Ishkabibble.' I said, 'What?' She said, 'They don't understand a word you're saying. You have to train them so



Pamela Garfield

Photo provided

they regard their human as a teacher and a friend and a parent.' This was in 1993, and it was the beginning of a sea change in how our culture interacts with animals. Through my dog, Cory, I entered the world of animal consciousness."

One day a pair of sparrows set up house in the garage. "We were fascinated watching them," she says. "Another pair came the next year and, over 15 years, about 3,000 birds, including barn swallows, came into our garage."

"Although it wasn't the cleanest, it was so immensely amazing because these

birds established a relationship with us. It was clear, in a short while, that they had a language. I came to realize they were saying complex things to each other and making complex plans."

During a lengthy stretch consumed by family health issues and caregiving, Garfield stopped submitting her work to juried shows. "It began to feel demoralizing and meaningless," she says. "There was so much effort spent on places to show, and it would be on the wall for a number of weeks and it was over." However, she never stopped making art. "I can't not do it," she says.

In 2011, with their son grown, Garfield and her husband decided to downsize. "I was in desperate need of an arts community," she says. When they visited Beacon, "it was like, 'Oh my goodness, my dilemma is solved.' My heart started beating out of my chest. This is what I needed: people interested in building something fresh and interested in community."

Garfield immediately became involved with Beacon Open Studios. She displayed her work in a two-artist show at Hudson Beach Glass and contributed to the annual Small Works shows at Catalyst Gallery before it closed. She even entered juried shows.

"This community celebrates the creative life," she says. "A lot of the arts activity in this part of the Hudson Valley feels more authentic than anything I participated in in New York City and Westchester."





# THE WEEK AHEAD

Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)

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

## GIFT DRIVES

### Helping Hands Kindness Drive

BEACON

Howland Public Library  
313 Main St. | beaconlibrary.org

The library is collecting personal products for local food pantries. Drop off new and unopened soap, sanitizer, toothpaste, lotion, deodorant, baby wipes and feminine hygiene products. Through Dec. 30.

### Philipstown Food Pantry

COLD SPRING

224 Main St.

Donations of new shampoo, toothpaste, deodorant, soap and dish and laundry detergent can be dropped off on the porch. Through Dec. 24.

### Toys for Tots

BEACON

Edward Jones  
284 Main St. | toysfortots.org

Drop off new, unwrapped toys by Dec. 21 for the annual Marine Corps program.

### Toys for Tots

PHILIPSTOWN

toysfortots.org

Drop off new, unwrapped toys by Dec. 21 at C&E Paint Supply, Foodtown, Drug World or Downey Oil in Cold Spring, or Deb's Hair Salon in Nelsonville.

## SECOND SATURDAY

SAT 12

### Darkest Before Dawn

BEACON

Noon – 4 p.m. Ethan Cohen KuBe  
211 Fishkill Ave. | 845-765-8270  
ecfa.com

This exhibit of international artists features works that address uncertainty in our collective history. Schedule an appointment to visit.

SAT 12

### Bridging Solitude / Reflections

BEACON

Noon – 6 p.m. BAU Gallery  
506 Main St. | 845-440-7584  
baugallery.org

Ilse Schreiber-Noll's multimedia work connects with loneliness and isolation, using art as a bridge. Eileen Sackman's ceramics explore how reflections echo in our lives. Through Jan. 3.

SAT 12

### Gift Wrapped / Kimokawaii / Mike Strick

BEACON

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

The gallery's annual holiday show includes art for gifting.

## MUSIC

SAT 12

### A Celtic Family Christmas at Home

POUGHKEEPSIE

8 p.m. Bardavon  
845-473-2072 | bardavon.org

Natalie MacMaster and Donnell Leahy will perform and share moments around the Christmas tree and other bits of holiday chaos via livestream to benefit Bardavon. Registration required. *Cost: \$20*

THURS 17

### Have Yourself a Rockin' Little Christmas

POUGHKEEPSIE

8 p.m. Bardavon  
845-473-2072 | bardavon.org

The livestream performance includes Lucinda Williams' favorite holiday songs. The venue receives a portion of ticket sales. *Cost: \$20*

SAT 19

### Handel's Messiah Sing-A-Long

POUGHKEEPSIE

8 p.m. Bardavon  
845-473-2072 | bardavon.org

The recording of a 2019 performance by the Hudson Valley Philharmonic, broadcast on YouTube, will include on-screen lyrics and guest conductor Christine Howlett providing commentary. A portion of the donations will benefit People's Place and Dutchess Outreach.

SUN 20

### Austin Charnis

GARRISON

2 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
crowdcast.io/e/austin-charnis-/register

In this guitar performance, Charnis will mine a classical and contemporary repertoire that ranges from Bach to Eric Clapton.

SUN 20

### Home for the Holidays

WEST POINT

2 p.m. West Point Band  
westpointband.com/holiday-show  
Watch on Facebook or YouTube.

## HOLIDAY MARKETS

SAT 12

### Small Gift Show

BEACON

1 – 5 p.m. Howland Cultural Center  
477 Main St. | 845-831-4988  
howlandculturalcenter.org

Find handmade and artistic jewelry, ceramics and other gifts priced at \$100 or less. Also SUN 13, FRI 18, SAT 19, SUN 20. Continues through Dec. 23.

SUN 13

### Holiday Mart & Tree Lighting

WAPPINGERS FALLS

3 – 7 p.m. Dutchess Stadium  
1500 Route 9D | hvrenegades.com

Shop for clothing, treats, jewelry, holiday decor, ceramics and more. Parking is \$5.

## KIDS & FAMILY

SAT 12

### Santa Visit

GARRISON

11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Boscobel  
1601 Route 9D  
845-265-3638 | boscobel.org

Santa Claus will welcome children from the front porch of the historic mansion. Also SUN 19. *Cost: \$12 (\$10 senior, \$6 ages 5-18, free for healthcare workers, members and children under age 5)*



Home for the Holidays, Dec. 20

SAT 12

### Mooseltoe

GARRISON

4 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
845-424-3020 | desmondfishlibrary.org

Jim Semmelman will read from his book and actors from the musical will perform highlights. *Free*

SUN 13

### The Snowmaiden

BEACON

Howland Public Library  
845-831-1134 | beaconlibrary.org

Watch a performance online by the No Strings Marionettes as the troupe performs a classic Russian folktale about a snow girl who comes to life.



SUN 13

### Brunch with Santa

WEST POINT

10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Thayer Hotel  
674 Thayer Road | 845-446-4731  
thethayerhotel.com

Reservations required. Also SUN 20. *Cost: \$46 (\$23 ages 5-12)*

FRI 18

### Great Kids' Dessert Bake Off

GARRISON

7 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
bit.ly/dfplkidscook

Watch the video submissions and awards ceremony hosted by Justice McCray and Karen Thompson. Register online.

SAT 19

### Winter Solstice Celebration

CORNWALL

3:30 – 5:30 p.m.  
Outdoor Discovery Center  
120 Muser Drive  
845-534-5506 x204 | hnm.org

On the longest night of the year, go on a scavenger hunt for a Yule Log and cheer on the lengthening

days around a bonfire. Call to register. *Cost: \$8 (\$6 children; \$6/\$4 for members)*

SAT 19

### Drag Queen Story Hour

GARRISON

4 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
845-424-3020 | desmondfishlibrary.org  
bit.ly/dfpldragqueen

Children ages 12 and younger and their families can enjoy Angel Elektra reading holiday stories, singing and crafting. Register to watch online.

SUN 20

### Classics for Kids: The Nutcracker

BEACON

4 p.m. Howland Cultural Center  
howlandmusic.org/ClassicsForKids.html

Pianists Stephen Joven-Lee and Michelle Wong will perform Tchaikovsky's music and Gina Samardge will narrate. Register online and watch on YouTube through Jan. 4. *Cost: Pay as you wish*

## COMMUNITY

SAT 12

### Silent Night Twilight Stroll

GARRISON

3 – 7 p.m. Boscobel  
1601 Route 9D | 845-265-3638  
boscobel.org

Enjoy dusk and sunset on the grounds. Reservations required. Also FRI 11, SAT 12. *Cost: \$12 (\$10 senior, \$6 ages 5-18, free for healthcare workers, members and children under age 5)*

SAT 12

### Beacon's Memory Keeper

BEACON

10 a.m. Bob's Corner Store  
790 Wolcott Ave. | beaconhistorical.org

Pick up a copy of an anthology of articles on the history of Beacon by the late Robert Murphy, former president of the Beacon Historical Society. Also, SUN 13 from 1 to 3 p.m. at the St. Joachim gym and SAT 19 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Beacon Bath and Bubble.

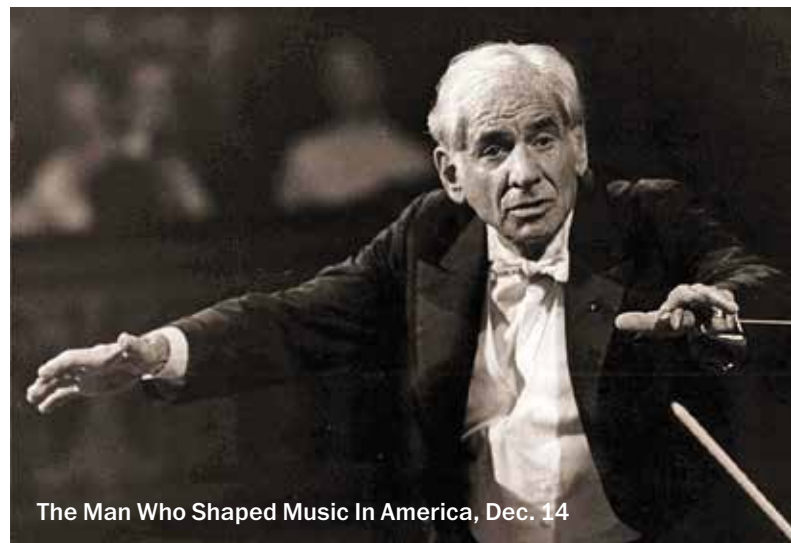
SUN 13

### Make a Winter Wreath

GARRISON

8 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
845-424-3020 | desmondfishlibrary.org  
Marcella Broe of the Parcel

(Continued on Page 15)



The Man Who Shaped Music In America, Dec. 14



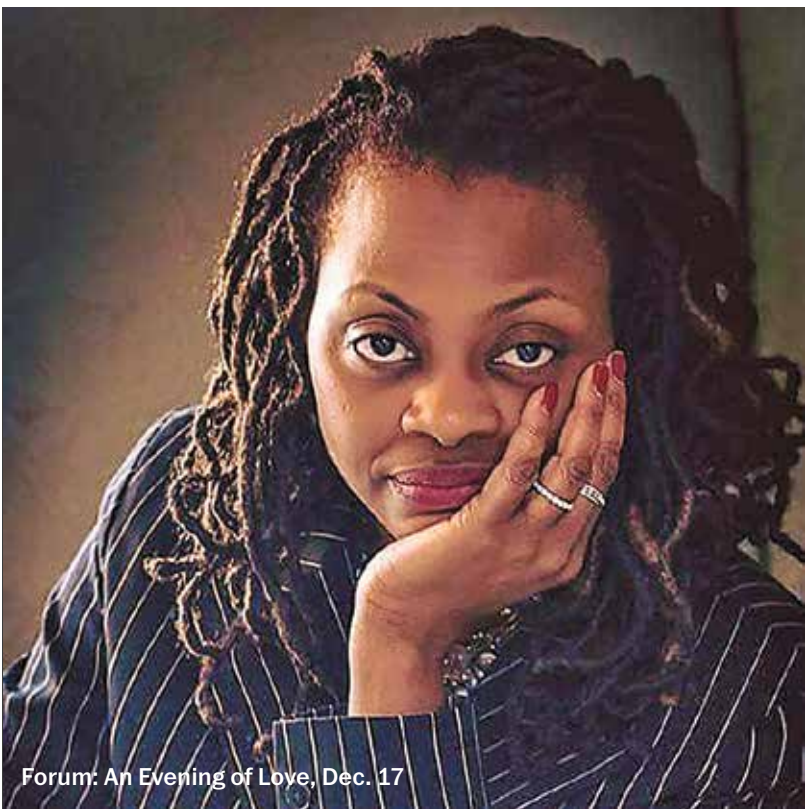
Flower Co. will demonstrate over Zoom how to make a festive holiday decoration. Purchase a kit in advance or gather your own materials.

TALKS & TOURS

**SUN 13**  
**Sharon Salzberg and Krishna Das**  
**GARRISON**  
2 – 5 p.m. Garrison Institute  
garrisoninstitute.org  
In this virtual workshop, which is also a benefit for the institute, Salzberg and Das will lead meditation and chanting. *Cost: \$60*

**MON 14**  
**The Man Who Shaped Music In America**  
**NEWBURGH**  
7 p.m. Newburgh Symphony Orchestra  
newburghsymphony.org  
Russel Ger, the orchestra's musical director, will discuss Leonard Bernstein's impact in the second of a four-part Zoom series. *Cost: \$20*

**WED 16**  
**Backyard Wildlife: Tracks and Traces**  
7 p.m. Teatown Lake  
bit.ly/tracks-traces  
Learn about ways to identify the animals that share your landscape in this webinar. *Cost: Pay as you wish*



Forum: An Evening of Love, Dec. 17

**THURS 17**  
**John Fullerton**  
**GARRISON**  
2 p.m. Garrison Institute  
garrisoninstitute.org  
As part of the Pathways to Planetary Health Forum, the president and founder of the Capital Institute will discuss regenerative economics with Jonathan F.P. Rose over Zoom. *Cost: Pay as you wish*

**THURS 17**  
**Early American Industrialists**  
**COLD SPRING**  
7 p.m. Putnam History Museum  
putnamhistorymuseum.org  
Anton Chaikin, author of *Who We Are: America's Fight for Universal Progress, from Franklin to Kennedy*, will discuss over Zoom the placement of the West Point

Foundry within the strategy of the early industrial movement. *Cost: \$10 (members free)*

**THURS 17**  
**Forum: An Evening of Love**  
**GARRISON**  
2 p.m. Garrison Institute  
garrisoninstitute.org  
Yolanda Sealey-Ruiz will read from her book, *Love from the Vortex and Other Poems*, which explores the intersections of history, social justice, education and humanity. Register online. *Cost: Pay what you wish*

**THURS 17**  
**Overdose Prevention Training**  
**COLD SPRING**  
7 p.m.  
Philipstown Behavioral Health Hub  
philipstownhub.org  
Register to join the workshop via Zoom. Free Narcan kits will be delivered to participants.

**CIVIC**  
**MON 14**  
**City Council**  
**BEACON**  
7 p.m. City Hall  
845-838-5011 | cityofbeacon.org

**MON 14**  
**School Board**  
**BEACON**  
7 p.m. Beacon High School  
845-838-6900 | beaconk12.org

**TUES 15**  
**School Board**  
**COLD SPRING**  
7 p.m. Haldane  
845-265-9254 | haldaneschool.org

**WED 16**  
**Public Hearings on Putnam Raises**  
**CARMEL**  
By audiocast  
4:30 & 6:30 p.m.  
putnamcountynyny.gov  
See website for link.

**WED 16**  
**School Board**  
**GARRISON**  
7 p.m. Garrison School  
845-424-3689 | gufs.org

**SAT 19**  
**Community Forum on Policing**  
**BEACON**  
10 a.m. | cityofbeacon.org  
See website for link.

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Sandy McKelvey tapping a Seringueira (rubber tree) in the Chico Mendes Extractive Reserve outside of Xapuri, Acre, Brazil.



Ceramic figurine artisans in Alto do Moura, Pernambuco, Brazil

Photo by Sandy McKelvey



McKelvey, recently, holding José Alves de Olinda's "Fugitive Slave Vessel"

Photos provided

## Something You Don't Know About Me

### Sandy McKelvey

From 1987 to 1998, Sandy McKelvey of Cold Spring ran a fair-trade importing business from Brazil. She spoke with Alison Rooney.

#### How did a political science major wind up in the far reaches of Brazil?

It was sparked by spending a semester abroad in Salvador Bahia, a region where there is a strong African-origin culture. My major focused on Latin American studies, so it was interesting that we were scheduled to arrive the week of the inauguration of Brazil's first elected president. But he died just weeks before the inauguration, and the vice president, who was not nearly as charismatic, took office instead. It was a small pilot program, with seven of us. We were young, so we had all the energy in the world. We never slept.

#### How did crafts enter into this idyll?

I started buying crafts in the marketplace. I had no business experience but I knew what I liked, so I went around and filled up my suitcases. When I returned home to Connecticut, I drove into Manhattan with a carload, parked in front of stores I had looked up in the Yellow Pages, asked for the manager, and showed them what was in my car.

There was a strong interest at the time in ethnic crafts. People from the stores bought them right out of my car. I didn't even know how to price them, so I made up prices on the spot, like a tag sale. The response was usually, "Do you have more?" so I realized I could go back to Brazil and start a business, which was great, because I hadn't wanted to leave. That first year, I wound up going back several times. My then-boyfriend and I rented a car and drove up the coast to see what we could

find. I was hooked. I think those trips abroad form us as the people we're going to be.

#### How did you expand beyond local markets?

In the next town north we found beautiful, fine lace work. I picked up a bunch. When I went back to the U.S. I found a store on Fifth Avenue called Léron. It was not a place you could walk into. It was huge — it took up the whole building — and designed for the mega-wealthy. The owner, this elderly man, told me: "Actually, I'm not interested in what you have here, but I have some antique Belgian lace and I can take photographs. Do you think the people there could make it?"

#### Could they?

On my next trip, after being given a tip as to where lacemakers lived, we drove to villages in the backland that had no electricity, and chickens running around. As we drove along, everyone shut their shutters. They were thinking: "Who are these foreigners? They could be dangerous." Someone gave us directions to a house where there was a matriarch of a large family. There was an almost formal meeting, attended by all the women of her extended family. After I showed her the designs, she said simply, "We can do this."

I took the results to the man at Léron, who said, "These are good," and he bought large quantities, though he didn't like the material and instead gave me bolts of Irish linens to take to Brazil. He bought everything I brought back on future trips. I started getting more savvy, pricing-wise, as I went along.

I just loved all the people I was working with. The women were so kind. We never talked business. We'd sit down at the table, they'd kill and cook a chicken in my honor; they would never eat with me. Sometimes they'd make me a warm cake to take home in the car.

There were times when I traveled solo. I

was 23 when I got started. I had waitressed to pay for college. After a year and a half doing this, I was able to stop waitressing because I was earning a living from sales. I was soon bringing back more varieties of handicrafts, including small, painted, clay figurines. There was a huge retail store called Folkloric on 16th Street and the owner there would take everything I had, right out of my trunk.

#### How do you make a living selling only what fits in your car?

Things got much bigger. Little by little it became a legitimate business. I named it Odara, which is from the West African Yoruba language, meaning "good for the body." I hired an import/export broker to get products out of customs. After storing everything at my mother's house, I finally rented warehouse space. This, my first real job, wound up being my career for 11 years.

There were two products that made my business possible. One was rain sticks, which were popular in the 1990s. I met someone who made beautiful, unique ones and I wound up selling 1,000 a month. The other was rainforest products. By the early 1990s, rainforest protection was at the forefront of people's minds. I found these animal figures, molded by artists from balata, a sustainable material similar to rubber. The apex of my business came when the company Seventh Generation put them the cover of their gift catalog. That was what made my company successful.

For a number of years, I supported quite a few artisans who made these figures, and I could see the tangible results: their modest home improvements, other small, positive changes. I was part of the whole fair-trade business model: paying a fair wage, working with the artists, seeing that this was improving their lives.

#### Did you ever tire of this adventurous life?

The business was a lot of hard work, but

the payoff was getting to see places that no tourist ever set foot in. I traveled alone to a remote village on the western side of the Amazon, figuring maybe I could meet the rubber-tappers in a collective there, and work with them on producing real rubber bouncy balls. They drove me in a 4x4 on what couldn't be called a road to this remote place, and took me through the trails to where they tapped the trees. They gave me a machete to make an incision and a bucket to collect the liquid. They showed me how they gathered the Brazil nuts used in Ben & Jerry's Rainforest Crunch ice cream. It was amazing that I got to see all these things. That night I was served armadillo for dinner, along with toucan. I couldn't eat it.

#### What made you give it all up?

Economics. China started to produce lace similar to Brazilian lace, but way cheaper. The whole Save the Rainforest craze died out; it's sad, but nobody was excited about it anymore. Also, places like Pottery Barn started making functional crafts, which I wasn't successful at importing. I started to get burned out because I'd been traveling for 11 years, the last few by myself.

I was in my mid-30s by then, and thinking maybe I wanted to try something else. What I wanted to do was to finally live in New York City, have a little apartment and have fun. And I did. In fact, the day I moved in, I went to a Central Park SummerStage Concert of Brazilian music and met my future husband, Aaron [Freimark], who was there with a friend.

*McKelvey will be holding pay-what-you-wish yard sales at her Whitehill Place home on Sunday, Dec. 13, and Sunday, Dec. 20, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., to sell her surplus crafts (particularly Christmas ornaments). All proceeds will be donated to Raices, a nonprofit that provides free and low-cost legal services to immigrant children. Look for a sign on Route 9D north of Haldane.*



## Small, Good Things

## A Tale of Two Apple Pies

By Joe Dizney

“As American as apple pie.”

You’ve heard that a million times but probably never considered that the only apple native to the New World is the crabapple. Although it puts on a great show in the spring, by the fall it is small, hard and bitter — “crabby” — and would make a lousy pie.

Instead, for a classic American apple pie, we have to rely on the *malus domestica*, which has been carefully refined, grafted and tended throughout Asia, the Middle East and Europe for more than 10,000 years.

The roots of pie itself can be traced to the ancient Greeks: crusts of flour and water filled with primarily meat or seafood were among the first “cooked” foods. Enclosed in these crusty lids, fillings stayed fresh longer in the winter. Spices such as cinnamon and nutmeg covered any “off” flavors. But these crusts were barely palatable, functioning mainly as storage and transport contain-



ers. British meat pies made their way with the settlers across the Atlantic but it wasn’t until 1800 or so that sweet pies began to appear in the U.S.

Though the culinary DNA is clouded, Gallic pastry refinements like puff pastry changed the picture. Chilled dough, repeatedly “laminated” with butter, create multiple thin layers that, when baked, form air pockets and a light, flaky and supremely edible pastry.

Pâte brisée is its most basic form — from flour, water, salt and butter — and the basis for a classic French tarte fine aux pommes. A thin disk of pastry becomes a bed for apples, sliced thin, buttered, baked and finished with a fruit glaze. (David Lebovitz recently published a version on his blog.)

Apple pie it’s not. Apple pie is best exemplified by Melissa Roberts-Matar’s *Gourmet* recipe that calls for a filling of tart and sweet apple varieties sugared and spiced with cinnamon, allspice and a hint of lemon.

The recipe here is an attempt to marry the two: the simplicity of the preparation and presentation of the tarte aux pommes augmented by the sugar and fragrant holiday spice of good old American pie.

Needless to say, enjoyed with a cup of coffee or tea, this hybrid is more than sufficient to brighten a cold winter day. Likewise, a slice topped by a scoop of vanilla ice cream is just desserts for a festive dinner.

## A Fine American Apple Tart

Makes 8 servings



## FOR THE PASTRY

¾ cup flour

¼ teaspoon salt

4 ounces unsalted butter, cubed and well chilled

3 tablespoons iced water

## FOR THE TART

2 medium apples (Fuji, Mutsu, Jonagold, Honeycrisp, Empire, Cortlandt, Winesap, Granny Smith) cored, cut into wedges and sliced very thin by hand or with a mandoline

3 tablespoons sugar

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

⅛ teaspoon ground allspice

Pinch salt

½ teaspoon finely grated lemon zest

1 tablespoon fresh squeezed lemon juice

2 tablespoons melted butter

Glaze

2 tablespoons apple or currant jelly, or apricot jam, thinned with enough hot water to be just brushable

1. **For the pastry:** Mix flour and salt in a bowl; add cubed butter and mix quickly with a pastry blender/cutter (or your hands) until butter in just slightly smaller pieces. Add water and knead until dough forms a mass. Pat out into a rough rectangle on a lightly floured surface. With a rolling pin, roll dough into a rough rectangle, about 5-by-10 inches. Fold dough over itself in thirds (one-third folded over the center, then the other). This is referred to as a “turn.” Repeat the process (rolling out and folding the dough as you just did) for four turns and wrap in plastic. Chill in refrigerator for at least two hours. Remove dough and perform two more turns. Wrap and chill again for another hour. (Make the dough up to this point no more than two days ahead, or freeze for up three months.)

2. **For the tart:** Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. On a floured surface, roll pastry into an about 14-inch circle. Using a plate, tart ring or cake pan as a guide, trim dough with a knife to a 12-inch circle. Fold the circle in half (to make it easier to handle) and transfer it to the baking sheet. Unfold it and refrigerate while you prepare the apples.

3. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a small bowl, mix sugar, lemon zest, cinnamon, allspice and salt. In a large bowl, gently toss the apple slices (be careful not to break them), with the lemon juice and about 1½ tablespoons of sugar and spice mixture. Remove dough from refrigerator. Lightly brush surface with the melted butter and dust lightly with more of the sugar and spice mixture. Starting about ¼-inch from the outer edge of the circle, tightly overlap apple slices in a circle around the pastry. Repeat making two more overlapping concentric circles to cover the pastry dough surface. Lightly dust again with sugar and spice mix. (You should have some leftover — save it for cinnamon toast.) Bake until crust is golden-brown, about 35 to 40 minutes. Cool slightly and brush with glaze.

## Seasons Greetings



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## COVID Response *(from Page 1)*

subsequently be notified by state contact tracers and informed about quarantine measures," he said.

The health commissioner emphasized that the public must do its part. "Putnam County has seen a sharp rise in positive cases related to social gatherings and parties," he wrote. "The spike that is occurring locally is a result of our actions. Whether you are in closer proximity to Brewster, or you are farther west, nearer to Peekskill, it is clear that our numbers are rising, and we all must make responsible choices to keep our families and our neighbors safe."

In a Nov. 30 memo, Montgomery referred to a "void of information sharing" and told Odell and Nesheiwat that her constituents, like Castellano's in Brewster, are uneasy. "They want to know what we, as a county government, are doing and what measurable actions and innovations we are taking to keep our schools and economy open," she said.

When the county Legislature met by audio connection last week, Legislator

Neal Sullivan of Carmel-Mahopac said COVID has lasted longer "than I think any of us initially thought" likely. He thanked Nesheiwat and the Health Department "for everything they've been doing, working extremely diligently to take care of the residents of Putnam County."

But Montgomery said public concern continues over "what we as a county government are doing." Yet, she said, her questions, including whether the Health Department has adequate funding and staffing, have been disparaged as "attacks" and as "a waste of time." However, she said, "it's not attacks" but part of a legislator's job to seek and provide information.

Other legislators promptly shot back. Amy Sayegh of Mahopac, who chairs the legislative Health Committee, said that "the county is doing a damned good job during the pandemic" and that for Montgomery "to belittle or belabor or beat down our Health Department, who are working overtime in this pandemic, is very insulting."

Legislator Ginny Nacerino of Patterson similarly rebuked Montgomery. "It's fortunate, I guess, that out of nine legislators the other eight don't have the same issues,"

she said.

That evening, the legislators unanimously authorized a \$30,000 fund transfer for the Health Department. According to the resolution approving the move, the money is for overtime costs for, "specifically, the nurses involved in case investigation, due to the overwhelming increase in COVID-19 cases in Putnam County."

During his Health Committee briefing on Wednesday, Nesheiwat outlined services at Putnam Hospital Center, in Carmel, part of the Nuvance system, which also runs Vassar Brothers Hospital in Poughkeepsie. He serves on the Nuvance board of directors.

Nesheiwat said that Putnam Hospital has opened a COVID-19 section "in the event we have a surge" and a testing facility where anyone, with symptoms or not, can get a COVID test, although a doctor's prescription and appointment are necessary.

Kathleen Percacciolo, a county public health nurse, added that the Health Department doesn't "have the capacity to do testing because we do not have the staff" or lab facilities for COVID analysis.

"It's alarming we can't provide testing," Montgomery commented.

Nesheiwat promised to check to see if there are possible test providers in western Putnam.

But Sullivan cautioned Nesheiwat that "it's not up to you and your staff to be able to perform testing. That's not your role." He observed that the state operates a test site near Bear Mountain, "close to" Philipstown (but across the Hudson River). Thus, Philipstown residents "are being serviced and supported as much as anybody in the county," he said.

Sullivan again lauded Nesheiwat and the Health Department "for herculean efforts in trying to get this pandemic under control and take care of our residents."

In Philipstown, Supervisor Richard Shea shared a different perspective at a Town Board meeting on Dec. 3. Expressing frustration with Putnam's priorities, he mentioned its decision to spend \$45,000 on consultants to study the Sheriff's Department, instead of using the money for anti-COVID-19 initiatives, such as better public information.

Shea, who, like Montgomery and Putnam County Sheriff Robert Langley Jr., is a

## COVID-19 by the Numbers

### ■ PUTNAM COUNTY

Number of confirmed cases:

**3,560** (+522)

New Cases in Philipstown: 19

Tests administered:

**91,369** (+6,089)

Percent positive:

**3.9** (+0.3)

Number of deaths:

**66** (+2)

### ■ DUTCHESS COUNTY

Number of confirmed cases:

**8,629** (+1,264)

Active Cases in Beacon: 23

Tests administered:

**311,614** (+16,789)

Percent positive:

**2.8** (+0.2)

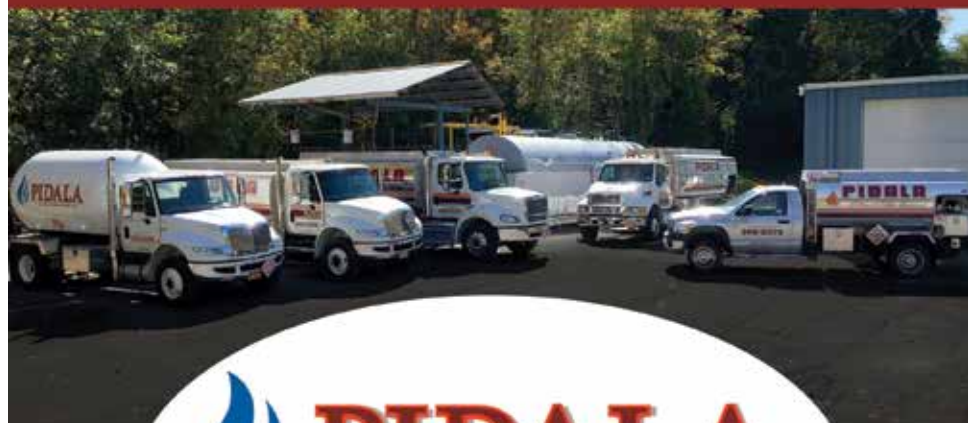
Number of deaths:

**202** (+10)

*Source: New York State Department of Health, as of Dec. 9, with weekly change in parentheses. New cases in Philipstown is for week ending Dec. 3.*

“They want to know what we, as a county government, are doing and what measurable actions and innovations we are taking to keep our schools and economy open. ~ Legislator Nancy Montgomery

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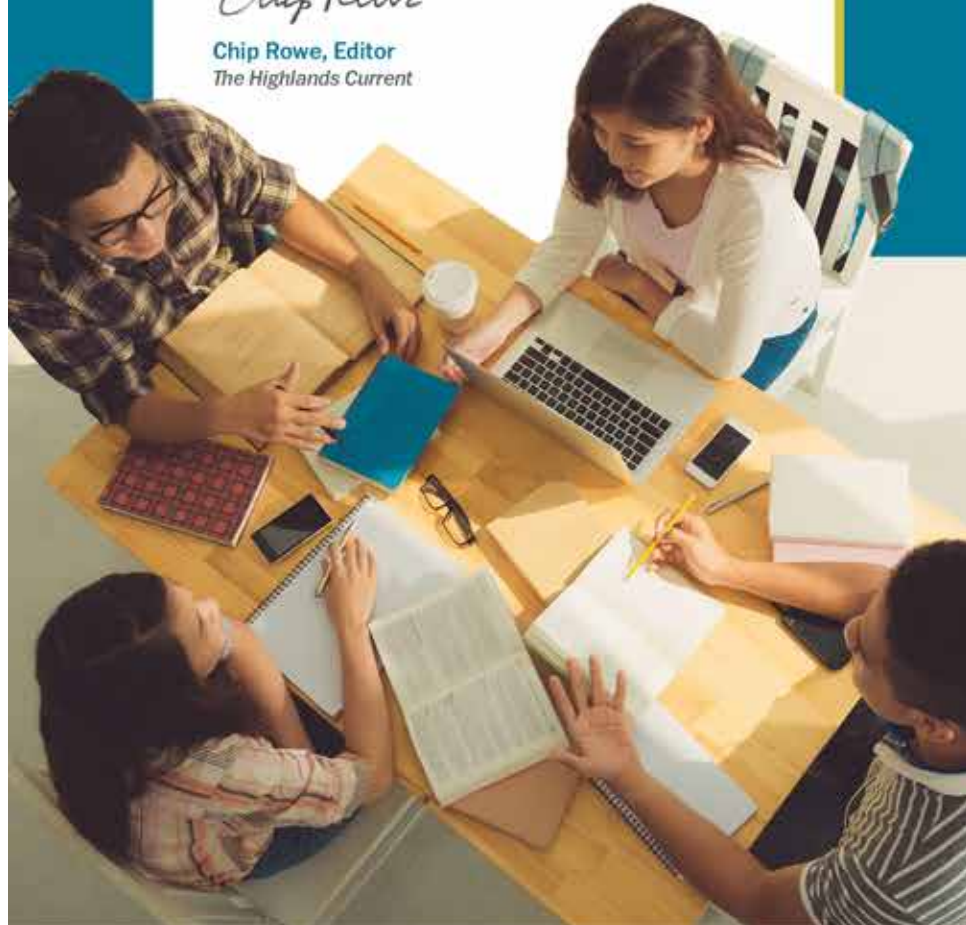
The reporting of correspondents selected for the program will appear at highlandscurrent.org and select stories will be printed. The staff, when editing stories by our student correspondents, will provide detailed feedback and suggestions to improve and refine their reporting.

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*Chip Rowe*

Chip Rowe, Editor  
The Highlands Current



The village issued a stop-work order on a driveway being constructed on Rock Street.

Photo by M. Turton

## Neighbors Oppose Rock Street Excavation

*Work described as 'end run around village law'*

By Michael Turton

An excavation at 29-31 Rock St. in Cold Spring that was halted last week by a stop-work order will be addressed on Dec. 23 at a public hearing.

The project, which was discussed at length at the Tuesday (Dec. 8) meeting of the Village Board, was referred on Dec. 2 to the Historic District Review Board by Charlotte Mountain, the village code enforcement officer. Neighbors claimed the application for excavating should have been approved by the HDRB and the Planning Board before the permit was issued.

Mountain approved a permit last month for the property owner, William McComish, to extend the driveway and parking at the site, which has a steep rock outcrop.

In a document submitted to the village on Tuesday, eight residents who live near the site described McComish's application as "an end run around Cold Spring law to begin a construction project that involves massive environmental impact and potentially multiple structures."

Last year, the Zoning Board of Appeals denied McComish's request for a variance to construct a third residence on the property.

McComish said on Wednesday that he does not intend to build another house. "I'm getting older; I'm 75," he said. "I simply want access to the top of my property, without having to go over slippery rock."

At the Village Board meeting on Tuesday, Planning Board Chair Matt Francisco said that because McComish's application to extend the driveway was not a change of use, it did not require review by that board.

However, the property is within Cold Spring's historic district, and among the criteria the HDRB considers is the effect a project may have on natural resources, including geological features such as rock outcroppings.

Sean Conway, the vice chair of the Historic District Review Board, wrote in an email on Thursday that his panel will decide after the public hearing whether

to approve a "certificate of appropriateness" for the Rock Street project. The code enforcement officer would then determine whether the stop-work order can be removed, he said.

At the Village Board meeting, residents objecting to the project also complained that the work site lacked barriers to prevent debris from hitting homes and cars. One neighbor, Trevor McCarthy, who lives around the corner from the site, said he found granite on his porch and near his car.

"We take your safety concerns seriously," Mayor Dave Merandy said. "The flying debris should have been screened better, and if we were tardy in addressing that, I apologize."

Merandy also noted that had a "steep slopes" provision being considered as part of the update of the village code been in effect, it might have prevented the Rock Street excavation. "But we have to follow the existing code," he said.

When asked what recourse residents objecting to the project might have if the code enforcement officer erred in issuing the permit, Merandy responded, "That is a question for our attorney."

"We'll see where the HDRB goes," he said. "There will be some legal squabbling."

### In other business ...

■ The board approved annual appointments for 2021. While most remained the same, new appointments include incoming Trustee Kathleen Foley as representative to the Cold Spring Fire Co.; incoming Trustee Heidi Bender to the Audit and Insurance/Risk Management committees; and Eric Wirth to chair the Zoning Board of Appeals.

■ Citing traffic and safety concerns, the board declined a request from village resident Natella Alhoca to set up a food truck at Main and Chestnut streets.

■ The Cold Spring Police Department responded to 52 calls for service in November, and officers issued 23 traffic and 119 parking tickets. The Cold Spring Fire Co. responded to 18 alarms.

■ The village reservoirs are at 97 percent capacity, a 10 percent increase over this time last year.



## SPORTS

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# Soccer Honors

By Skip Pearlman

## Beacon Girls

Senior defender Gabby Del Castillo, freshman defender Emma Campagiorni, freshman forward Chelsea DerBoghosian, freshman midfielder Devyn Kelly and junior midfielder Maddie Bobnick each received All-League recognition this week.

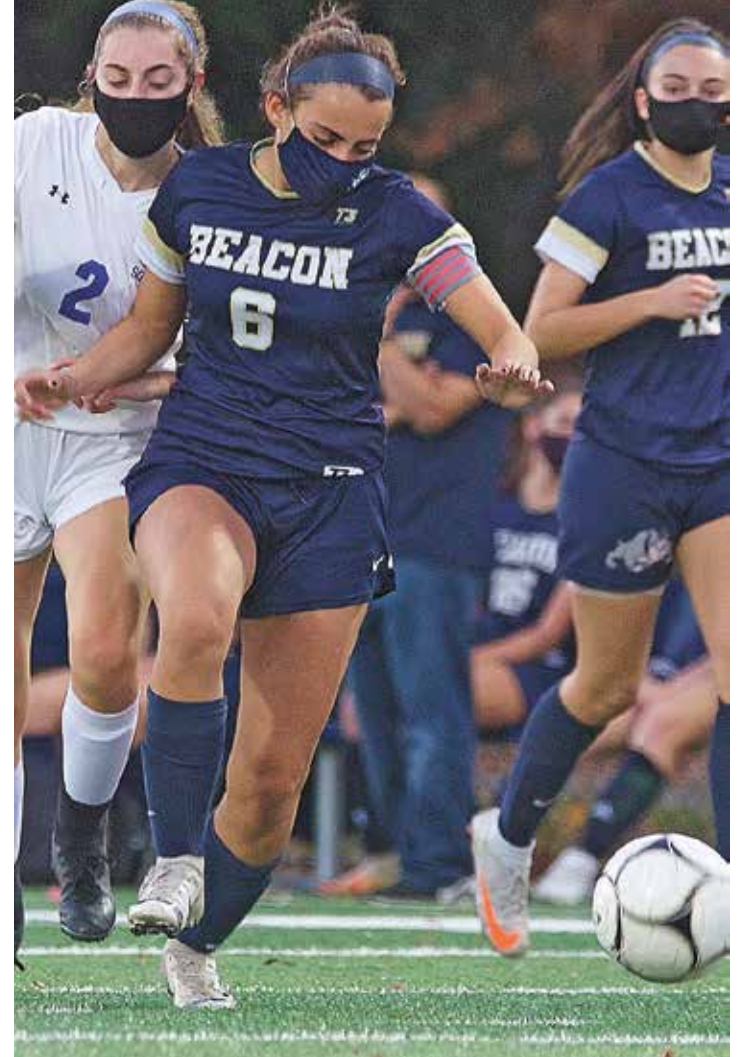
"Gabby was the heart of our defense and held us together in the back," Coach Hugo Alzate said. "Half of our games were one-goal differences, so we were happy to have her back there. Emma was incredible playing her first year of varsity. She showed her speed and fundamental skills as the season progressed.

"Chelsea is relentless at seeking the ball," Alzate continued. "Devyn is an absolute beast on the ball. She can already do things that most soccer players will not be able to do by the time that they graduate. And Maddie was our playmaker this season. If soccer scored like hockey, she would have had 15 assists."

The Bulldogs (7-6) closed their season with a playoff win — the team's first in 32 years — before losing to Class AA powerhouse Arlington in the semifinals of the Section 1 Dutchess County playoffs.



Haldane freshman Matt Nachamkin was named All-League.



Beacon senior Gabby Del Castillo earned All-League honors.

## Haldane Girls

Junior defender Mazzie Maxwell and freshman defender Finola Kiter were each named All-League.

"Mazzie was undoubtedly our leader on the field this season," Coach Stephen Schweikhart said. "She came into her own last year, and then improved on that dramatically. She is a warrior, the type of player every team needs.

"Finola started the season in the midfield, but when Coach [Mary] Callaghan and I switched her to the back, she took off," Schweikhart said. "She settled into the center-back position and did an incredible job. If you watched Finola play, you couldn't believe she was a freshman."

Senior defender Essie Florke, junior defender Ella Ashburn, junior midfielder Bianca Harmancin, freshman keeper Ruby Poses, sophomore Chloe Rowe, senior Sydney Warren and juniors Madison Chiera, Katie Shields and Sophia Scanga all

received All-League honorable mentions.

Haldane, seeded 10th in the small-school sectional playoffs, lost to No. 7 Croton-Harmon to finish with a 1-10-1 record.

"We played most games with 12 or 13 players because of low turnout this year and injuries, which put a lot of physical stress on everyone," Schweikhart said. "Playing a compact schedule, with no preseason, to see the girls compete each and every game for 80 minutes was amazing."

## Haldane Boys

Senior captain Frank Bentkowski Jr. was named All-Section and All-League, and senior captain Andrew Silhavy was All-League plus honorable mention All-Section.

Senior defender John Dwyer, freshman goalie Ronan Kiter and freshman midfielder Matt Nachamkin were each named All-League.

"Frank scored 14 goals and had eight assists and led us in scoring," said Coach Ahmed Dwidar. "He'll be a big loss for us. Andrew could play anywhere on the field. John was very vocal and brought the guys together.

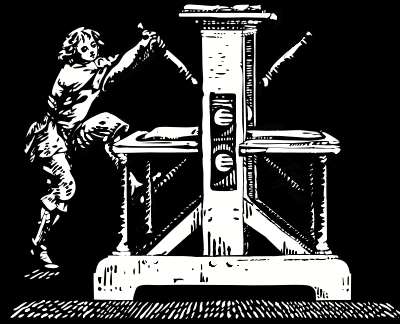
"Ronan saved us many times, and as a freshman he will be a force in the net the next three years," Dwidar added. "And Matt was clutch for us against Putnam Valley. He had the game-winner in our first playoff win in five years."

The Blue Devils finished at 4-9, losing to North Salem in the semifinals of the playoffs. "We played bigger schools and hung in with them," Dwidar said. "That will help us. We have nine freshmen returning and a bright future."

**“** We played bigger schools and hung in with them. That will help us. We have nine freshmen returning and a bright future.

~ **Haldane Boys' Coach**  
**Ahmed Dwidar**

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## Looking Back *(from Page 24)*

written notice of dangerous conditions before it could be held liable for injuries.

A 10-mile ski trail from the summit of Mount Beacon to Neville's Mountainside farm, built over 18 months, was expected to open by year's end. The incline cars would bring skiers to the top, and there would be a jump constructed on the old motorcycle climb course.

The 1946 city budget included increases of \$1,000 in the mayor's salary, \$2,300 for the employees' retirement fund and \$3,250 for the police department.

A 30-year-old man who lived on Ferry Street was charged with hitting his stepmother over the head with a stool and in the face with a beer bottle. However, after an investigation, the district attorney dismissed the charges.

The Kiwanis club raised \$2,000 at its

annual minstrel show.

The temperature at 5 a.m. on Dec. 24 was 6 degrees below zero.

George Tocci, 71, a barber on Main Street, died after being found in the snow with a head wound. He told a police officer he had fallen in the road and been hit and dragged about 12 feet by a car that left the scene. An Italian immigrant, Tucci had lived in Beacon for 40 years.

### 50 Years Ago (December 1970)

Two Beacon men, ages 18 and 20, pleaded guilty to holding up a man on Main Street for \$3.

Rombout Middle School presented its first drama production: *Harvey*.

Mayor Robert Cahill said he was "not seeking" the Democratic nomination for Dutchess County executive. Asked if he wasn't interested in the job, he replied:

"That's not what I said."

More than 100 people attended a meeting of the Beacon school board to protest its sudden dismissal, without explanation, of a physical education teacher.

The Beacon City Council waited for the results of civil service exams taken by three candidates for the police chief position, including the acting chief and two officers. Chief Samuel Wood planned to retire after 33 years on the force.

### 25 Years Ago (December 1995)

Pete Seeger gave a lecture and performance at Vassar College titled "Music Can Save the World — Maybe."

Jamie Russell of Beacon won the 8-year-old division of the regional Punt, Pass and Kick competition held in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

Nina and George Budd's 1983 Chevy

Suburban, which they purchased new in Beacon, hit 369,000 miles.

An 18-year-old Poughkeepsie man was sentenced to up to nine years in prison for robbing a 12-year-old Beacon boy at gunpoint of his radio.

The state Bridge Authority raised the speed limit on the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge from 40 mph to 55 mph. It also installed three automatic toll machines.

A car fleeing a Town of Newburgh police officer hit a concrete toll booth on the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge, killing the driver and a passenger. The officer tried to pull the car over on Route 9W because its headlights were off. The driver, 13, was a student and star athlete at Rombout Middle School and the passenger was a freshman at Beacon High School. A second passenger, 15, survived. The driver had taken his mother's car.

## OBITUARIES

### Bill Flaherty (1929-2020)

William J. Flaherty, 90, died Nov. 28 at his home with family members at his side.

Bill was born in Verplank on Dec. 12, 1929, the son of James and Catherine (Donohue) Flaherty. In 1954, at the Assumption Church in Peekskill, he married Mary Guzi, and the couple settled in Cold Spring.

Bill graduated from Hendrick Hudson High School in 1948 and Packard Business School in 1950. During the Korean War, from 1951 to 1953, he served as a corporal in the Military Intelligence Corps, stationed in Berlin.

He worked for 39 years for IBM as its manager of corporate contracts and procurement. After retiring, he became corporate manager for CDI Corp.

He was a founding member and the first president of the North Highlands Fire Department, served as assessor of Philipstown for eight years and was a Putnam



County legislator for two years.

Bill is survived by his children: Timothy Flaherty of Norwalk, Connecticut; Joann Sherman (Jamie) of Cold Spring; Robert Flaherty (Annette) of Cold Spring; and Bridget O'Brien (Kevin) of Cohasset, Massachusetts. In addition, he is survived by his daughter-in-law, Deborah Flaherty of Beacon, 10 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Dec. 5 at Our Lady of Loretto, with interment with military honors at Cold Spring Cemetery.

### Amy Lipton (1956-2020)

Amy Lipton, 64, of Peekskill, and formerly of Philipstown, died of cancer on Dec. 6. A former gallery owner, she cofounded a nonprofit that promotes artists whose work focuses on the environment.



Born in Philadelphia in 1956, Amy received her bachelor's in fine arts from the California Institute of the Arts in 1980. After briefly working as art director of *Hustler*, she moved to New York City where, six years later, she opened a gallery, Lough-ton, in SoHo with Barbara Broughel.

In 1990, Amy became the sole owner and changed its name to the Amy Lipton Gallery. When it closed in 1996, she joined Patricia Watts to create ecoartspace (ecoartspace.org).

From 2004 to 2008, Amy was a curator at the Abington Art Center and Sculpture Park in Jenkintown, Pennsylvania, and from 2008 to 2010 director of the Fields Sculpture Park at the Omni International Arts Center in Ghent, New York. In 2014, she became an independent curator.

Amy was an early contributor to *The Current*, writing about the arts and in 2011 curating an exhibit at the newspaper's offices on Main Street in Cold Spring called, "Who is Philipstown?"

She is survived by her daughter, Kadence Luella Neill; her siblings, Jane Lipton and Andrew Lipton; and her life partner, Jim Polk.

## Other Recent Deaths

### Philipstown

Elsie Basso, 92  
Eric Geider, 66  
Helen Kent, 76  
Kathleen O'Connor, 78

### Beacon

Alberta Antonio, 88  
AnnaAmanda Bernacchia, 64  
Glenn Bracklow, 60  
Carl Bueti, 78  
Marcia Kane-Morse, 82  
Joseph Keenan, 88  
Bert Swain, 85

Information provided by local funeral homes. For more obituaries, see [highlandscurrent.org/obits](http://highlandscurrent.org/obits).

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Puzzles

CROSS CURRENT

ACROSS

1. Vagrant

4. Poke

7. Femur or fibula

8. Elaine's last name on *Seinfeld*

10. Cook by direct heat

11. Silvery

13. Smooth-coated pooch

16. 1/20 ton (Abbr.)

17. Humdinger

18. Moving truck

19. Narnia's Aslan, e.g.

20. Antitoxins

21. Munchie

23. Enthusiasts' emotions

25. Roe provider

26. Group of quail

27. Debtor's letters

28. Muslim maiden

30. Thee

33. High-backed chairs

36. Earthling, in sci-fi

37. Flavor

38. Go over the books

39. Spud's buds

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40. Always, in verse

41. Two, in Tijuana

8. Conductor's wand

9. Whine

10. English channel?

12. Signs of sorrow

14. Kindle competitor

15. Genetic stuff

19. Young fellow

20. Put into words

21. Try for a two-pointer

22. Queasiness

23. Nil

24. Ousted

25. Bro or sis

26. Beyond well-done

28. Throng

29. Where the elated walk

30. Affirmatives

31. Uneaten morsels

32. Work with

34. Verifiable

35. Boxer's successful blow

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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 unexplored places (9)

2 endangered apes of Borneo (10)

3 of a basic structure (8)

4 EGOT winner Barbra (9)

5 like Savannah's live oaks (5)

6 debits' accounting partners (7)

7 umpire's plate (4)

SOLUTIONS

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SUDO CURRENT

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		3						
6			5	9				
8							9	
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	4				7			5

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Answers for Dec. 4 Puzzles

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

1. CARDIGAN, 2. BARBERSHOP, 3. SANSKRIT, 4. DISCOVERED, 5. RESTART, 6. FLEES, 7. JEWEL

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



## Looking Back in Beacon

By Chip Rowe

*Editor's note: Beacon was created in 1913 from Matteawan and Fishkill Landing.*

### 150 Years Ago (December 1870)

Burglars struck a dry-goods store on Main Street in Fishkill Landing at 1 a.m. on a Thursday morning by forcing open a pair of iron shutters in the rear of the building. They took silk, white goods, empress clothes, bundles and piles of shawls and merinos, but ignored the paisley shawls, gloves and laces. They stole a horse and wagon from a barn owned by Henry Hustis to escape with the haul.

Hours before, Sydney Albert Jaycox, an African American hostler [someone who cared for the horses of visitors to an inn] employed by Hustis, had been found in the road with his throat cut. It was supposed he was killed by the thieves, but a doctor called to the scene said the wound was self-inflicted. Jaycox's sister said she and her husband discovered her brother in the road at 10:30 p.m. on Wednesday after they heard a heavy thud. The doctor concluded Jaycox had stabbed himself with a pen knife — which was found about 20 feet away — because of despondency and poor health.

### 125 Years Ago (December 1895)

William Palmer, the general freight agent of the New England Railroad, entered a room at the Fishkill Landing station to discover three masked men attempting to blow open the safe, which contained \$5,000. The men fled after Palmer struck one of them over the head with a lantern.

A jury in Pennsylvania awarded the First National Bank of Fishkill Landing \$743.31 after it sued the Auburn Wagon Co. for an unpaid loan.

Abram Acroyt, 70, who worked for years at the Groveville carpet mill at Matteawan [now The Lofts at Beacon] until poor health made him a pauper, learned that an aunt who died in England left him \$15,000 [about \$465,000 today]. A lawyer for the estate visited the county poorhouse at Oak Summit, near Millbrook, to tell him.

Officials at the Matteawan Asylum for Insane Criminals thwarted an escape by three inmates when one lost his nerve and alerted the warden. The men had bribed a guard, John Brown, who passed instructions to accomplices who attached a wrench, a bar spreader and a .22-caliber revolver to a rope lowered from a cell window. The plan was to kill the first guard they saw and take his keys, but Frank McGuire claimed he balked at killing anyone and assisted with a sting to implicate Brown. A grand jury recommended that McGuire be pardoned.

Frank L. Greene, identified as a "princi-

pal from Matteawan," was quoted in a newspaper ad endorsing Booth's Hyomei Pocket Inhaler, an "Australian 'dry-air' treatment" for catarrh, bronchitis, asthma, hay fever and whooping cough. [A federal investigation in 1934, following the passage of the Food and Drugs Act, found that the liquid placed in the inhaler was 70 percent eucalyptus oil and 30 percent alcohol and mineral oil.]



Booth's Hyomei Pocket Inhaler and liquid  
*mohma.org*

### 100 Years Ago (December 1920)

The Beacon High School basketball team won a thriller at Raymond Riordan School in Poughkeepsie, 12-11, with a basket in the last minute.

A jury convicted a piano tuner who was accused of attempting to molest an 11-year-old boy inside the State moving picture theater. The boy could not identify the man by name so a "John Doe" warrant was issued. In his instructions to the jury, the judge said that "it is apparent that he is a bright boy, and from the evidence he attends school and Sunday school."

Thieves stole \$1,800 in cash and jewelry from the South Avenue home of Mayor Samuel Beskin.

Employees in the blocking, pressing and finishing departments of the Endel & Peles straw hat factory were informed their wages would be cut by 2 to 7 percent because the firm had lowered its prices.

Two pedestrians struck by a car being towed by John Gantvoort, the president of the National Oven Co., and steered by his 14-year-old son, sued the Glenham resident for \$75,000 and \$10,000, respectively.

### 75 Years Ago (December 1945)

Mayor-elect J. Lewis Bolton said he and the new City Council would visit the Cargill and Melzingah reservoirs to get firsthand information about the water supply.

Officials with the New York Rubber Corp. denied rumors that it planned to transfer its Beacon workers to Middletown.

Fifty members of the Poughkeepsie chapter of the Hudson Valley Thendera Association of the Degree of Pocahontas met in Beacon. [The group is the auxiliary of the Improved Order of Red Men, a patriotic fraternal order.]

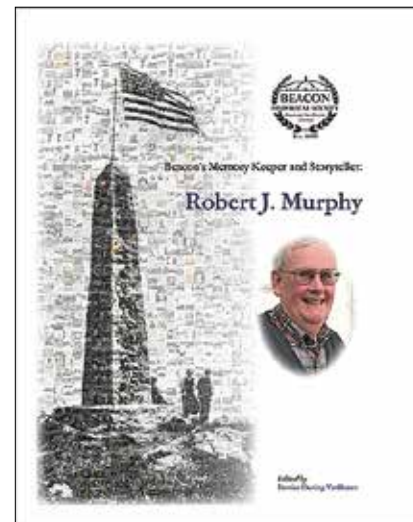
The Dutchess County prosecutor said the slot machines, crap tables, horserace track forms, card tables, electric fans, desks and lighting fixtures stored at the jail since being seized in raids in Poughkeepsie and Beacon in 1944 would be disposed of.

A 65-year-old boarder at the Dillon house was found dead in the bottom of a grease pit at Sorenson's service station on Main Street. For reasons unknown, he entered the garage when it was closed and apparently fell when he attempted to descend the slippery steps into the pit.

The state Court of Appeals ruled, 4-2, that Beacon did not have to pay a \$27,900 claim by residents who said the chicken house and machinery at their Washington Street property had been destroyed by fire because of poor water pressure. The court said that while the city had a public duty to maintain a fire department, it had no legal obligation to quench every fire.

A state appeals court also upheld the dismissal of a \$20,000 lawsuit filed on behalf of an infant boy injured when he fell through a grate on Main Street, saying that the city was protected by a local law that required

*(Continued on Page 22)*



## 38 Years of Columns

**Beacon Historical Society publishes anthology**

The Beacon Historical Society this month published a collection of columns by its former president Robert Murphy, who for 38 years edited and wrote its monthly newsletter.

Murphy died in July of cancer at age 72. His later writings, posted to the BHS website, were reprinted in *The Current* from 2017 to 2019 as "Bits of Beacon History."

The 544-page book, *Beacon's Memory Keeper and Storyteller: Robert J. Murphy*, is illustrated with more than 1,000 photos, said Denise Doring VanBuren, another former BHS president who edited the manuscript and published it with Murphy's sister, Diane, to benefit the historical society.

"Bob was the quintessential local historian — a walking encyclopedia of Beacon history and trivia," VanBuren said. "He brought so much history to life for the rest of us."

The book is \$40 at [beaconhistorical.org](http://beaconhistorical.org). Email [beaconhistorical@gmail.com](mailto:beaconhistorical@gmail.com) for information about shipping. Purchased copies also are available for pickup at Bob's Corner Store on Route 9D and Beacon Bath and Bubble on Main Street.

The book can also be purchased at three events: on Saturday (Dec. 12) from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Bob's Corner Store; on Sunday (Dec. 13) at the St. Joachim Church's gymnasium from 1 to 3 p.m.; and on Dec. 19 at Beacon Bath and Bubble from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Payment must be by cash or check.



The Groveville Mills in Matteawan — a former employee struck it rich in 1895