

The HIGHLANDS Current

The Best Hot
Chocolate Ever
Page 20



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SLEDDING WEATHER — The Highlands got hit with a light dusting of about 2 feet of snow on Monday and Tuesday. Although wind gusts of up to 40 mph were expected, there were no widespread power outages. This shot was taken on Parsonage Street in Cold Spring on Monday afternoon. See more photos on Page 19.

Photo by Maria Hardman

Feds Indict Beacon Man on Conspiracy Charges

Accused of organizing Jan. 6 attack at Capitol

By Chip Rowe

A Beacon man arrested for participating in the storming of the Capitol building on Jan. 6 has been indicted on additional charges, including conspiracy, and is accused of being a member of the Proud Boys, a white nationalist group. William Pepe, 31, was indicted last week in Washington, D.C., on federal charges of conspiracy; civil disorder; unlawfully entering restricted buildings or grounds; and disorderly and disruptive conduct in restricted buildings or grounds. He had been earlier charged with a single count of unlawful entry of a restricted building after being photographed in the Capitol rotunda during the riot. Federal authorities said Pepe conspired to attack the Capitol with Dominic Pezzola, 43, of Rochester, who faces the same charges plus counts of civil disorder; robbery; resisting officers; destruction of government property; and engaging in violence. According to the indictment, Pezzola identified himself online as a member of

(Continued on Page 6)



The Bird & Bottle Inn sits at the intersection of Indian Brook and Old Albany Post roads in Garrison.

Photo by Michael Turton

Another Go for Bird & Bottle

New owners plan to promote its history

By Jeff Simms

The Bird & Bottle Inn, a tavern that dates to before the Revolutionary War, has undergone its fair share of reboots over the years. Now a Beacon couple — one part history buff, another part restoration specialist — plans to have the Garrison landmark up and running again this year after some TLC. Marjorie Tarter, who co-owns the Hudson Valley Marshmallow Co. in Beacon with her fiancé, Brendan McAlpine, organized an investment group that

(Continued on Page 17)

Fashion Moment

Cold Spring resident sketched inauguration jackets

By Alison Rooney

Susan Trotiner-Conway, who lives in Cold Spring, is the director of production for iloveplum, a Brooklyn-based girls' clothing maker. Her illustrations of two jackets created in homage to those worn as children by Vice President Kamala Harris and her sister, Maya Harris, were selected by Maya's daughter, Meena, for her two daughters — the vice president's great-nieces — to wear to the Jan. 20 inauguration in Washington, D.C.



Trotiner-Conway

How did this fashion moment happen? We keep a running list of people and brands we should collaborate with. Working with influencers is key right now. A few weeks before the inauguration, the girls [Amara, 4, and Leela, 2] came up during one of our weekly chats — we sent a lot of samples to generate social media mentions. We sent a package to Meena, and she posted a photo on Instagram of Amara in one of our tutus. While brainstorming about the inauguration, we looked at all sorts of historical pictures and came across this photo of Kamala and her sister as children wearing matching leopard coats. We were planning on making dresses until we saw the photograph. We thought, "How great would that be

(Continued on Page 16)



Vice President Kamala Harris' great-nieces, Amara, 4, and Leela, 2, in their iloveplum jackets at the inauguration

Photo courtesy Meena Harris

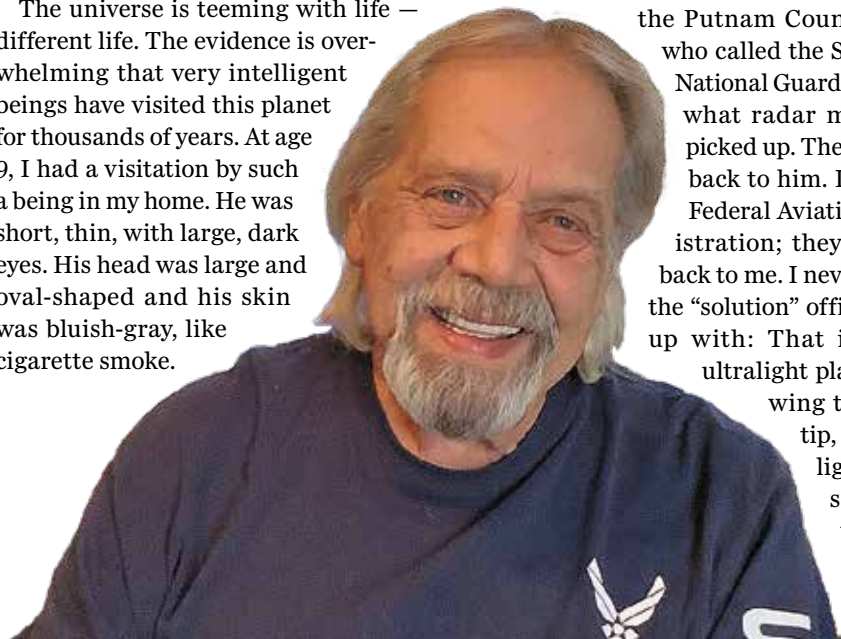
5Q FIVE QUESTIONS: DENNIS SANT

By Michael Turton

Dennis Sant, who was the Putnam County clerk until his retirement in 2014, is the author of *The Other Side of ... Connecting the Cosmic Dots: A Personal Journey of Awareness, Realization and Acceptance*, which draws on his accounts of encountering UFOs and aliens.

What is the most compelling evidence that aliens have visited us?

The universe is teeming with life — different life. The evidence is overwhelming that very intelligent beings have visited this planet for thousands of years. At age 9, I had a visitation by such a being in my home. He was short, thin, with large, dark eyes. His head was large and oval-shaped and his skin was bluish-gray, like cigarette smoke.



I don't remember any hair. He spoke to my mind, saying, "Don't be afraid, please let me speak to you, we are like cousins, we are related." My grandmother and grandfather had similar stories.

What happened on March 17, 1983, over Brewster?

We saw a "city of lights" hovering over our town. I watched 60 or 70 people get out of their cars on I-84, pointing at the sky. The next morning, I called the Putnam County sheriff, who called the Stewart Air National Guard base to see what radar might have picked up. They never got back to him. I called the Federal Aviation Administration; they never got back to me. I never believed the "solution" officials came up with: That it was six ultralight planes flying wing tip to wing tip, with extra lights. Thousands of witnesses said they were not

ultralight planes. The object was caught on video by my neighbor, and the sighting is in the museum at Area 51 [in Nevada], along with my testimony. It was sighted from Lower Westchester County to Albany.

Do you think Putnam's stone chambers are connected to visitors?

Initially I thought they were early root cellars, but then I saw writings in archives indicating that settlers said the chambers were already here. We investigated about 40 chambers from Ridgefield, Connecticut, to near Cold Spring. The thought is they are portals. The doors are aligned to highlight the seasons.

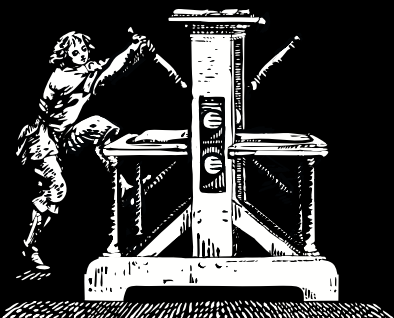
Why do you quote Pope Francis and the Dalai Lama in your book?

The writings of nearly every religion in the world, including Christianity, include a great deal of commentary on spectacular events in the sky. Pope Francis has said extraterrestrials exist and that they can be baptized. In 1989, I spent two hours with the Dalai Lama at the dedication of the Buddhist monastery in Kent. A 20-minute meet-and-greet turned into two hours, and most of our conversation was about extraterrestrials. I could have used comments from just about every religious leader in the world.

As Putnam clerk, you appeared in 2013 on a number of Fox shows, including Sean Hannity and Fox and Friends, because you refused to release information from gun permits issued by the county, despite it being required by state law. Any regrets about that decision?

None. I'd do the same thing now. It wasn't just about gun owners but also people who didn't have weapons. Under state law, if I felt the information could be harmful to residents, I had the prerogative to not release it. I felt the information *The Journal News* wanted was unnecessary; it could put people in jeopardy. If I were a burglar looking for a place to break into, I'd go to a house that has no guns.

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ON THE SPOT

By Michael Turton

How would you describe your talents on the dance floor?

"Killer. I love dancing. I've even done ballroom dancing while at work."



~ Kim Madigan, Beacon

"I haven't tried since my parents sent me to dance school in Germany when I was 17."



~ Winfried Dohle, Garrison

"Nonexistent. I love dancing but probably need a couple drinks first!"



~ Cara Smith, Beacon

NEWS BRIEFS



State DEC Fines Beacon Woman

Offered leopard hide online for \$1,400

The state Department of Environmental Conservation fined a Beacon woman \$500 and confiscated a leopard hide she offered for sale online.

Kimberly Sauer paid the fine in October, although the DEC only reported the seizure on Jan. 19.

The agency said that an investigator responded to an online ad on Aug. 19 that offered a leopard hide for \$1,400. A week later, the investigator posed as a potential buyer and met with Sauer, who said the hide was authentic, according to the DEC.

Sauer entered into an order on consent with the DEC for the illegal commercialization of an endangered species. In addition to the fine, she forfeited the hide, the DEC said.

Under state law, it is illegal to sell any part of leopards, snow leopards, clouded leopards, tigers, Asiatic lions, cheetahs, alligators, caimans or crocodiles (with some exceptions), tortoises, marine turtles, vicunas, wolves, red wolves, Tasmanian Forester kangaroos, polar bears, mountain lions or cougars, jaguars, ocelots, margays or Sumatran or black rhinoceroses.

Valentines for Vets Underway

Deadline is Feb. 10

Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, whose district includes the Highlands, has

launched his seventh annual Valentines for Veterans initiative.

Maloney's office collects homemade cards that are distributed to local veterans. Last year, more than 100 groups participated, creating 7,800 valentines.

Individuals and groups can mail Valentine's Day greetings to Maloney's office at 123 Grand St., Second Floor, Newburgh, NY 12550. The deadline is Feb. 10.

Dutchess Tourism Begins 'Aerial Tours'

Series starts with Bannerman Island

Dutchess Tourism has launched a series of 12 short videos called Air Dutchess that provide aerial tours of local landmarks, with the first installment focusing on Bannerman Island.

One video will be released each month online. Future installments will feature Beacon, the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, Innisfree Gardens in Millbrook and Fishkill Farms in Hopewell Junction, among other sites. See bit.ly/air-dutchess.

School Board Petitions Available

Garrison has four open seats

Prospective candidates for the Garrison school board can download petitions at gufs.org or pick them up in person weekdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. by calling 845-424-3689, ext. 224, upon arrival. The election is scheduled for May 18.

There are four open seats on the nine-member board — three for 3-year terms (for seats held by David Gelber, James Hoch and Courtney McCarthy) and one for 1 year to fill the remaining term of Jill Lake (now held by Madeline Julian, who was appointed). The candidate with the fourth-highest number of votes will fill the one-year term.

Petitions must be signed by at least 25 qualified voters who live in the district and filed by 5 p.m. on April 19.

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Tell us what you think

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

LETTERS AND COMMENTS

The vaccine

Your article on the vaccination of prisoners and staff at our correctional facilities included a new example of bureaucratic red-tape argot ("Should Prisoners Get Early Vaccines?" Jan. 29). Apparently, the state of New York has identified the vaccination of prisoners as, according to the secretary to Gov. Andrew Cuomo, "something that we've been standing up and operationalizing." Has anyone, either in or outside of state government, the faintest idea what this means?

It is clear that the failure to vaccinate inmates means corrections officers and staff are more likely to carry the virus home to their families and communities. The state has taken responsibility for the inmates' medical conditions. It is not corrective to withhold preventative services from imprisoned inmates as punishment, or to "favor" the same inmates by providing it to them.

Camilla von Bergen, Beacon

I got the shot!

I heard Cuomo say that residents age 65 could get the shot and I jumped on the computer. A nightmare. Figuring there

would be more shots in New York City, I tried Manhattan and Queens. "You got a spot!" No, you didn't. Filled out another form. "You got a spot!" No, already taken.

I decided to wait a few days and try the state website. I put in the Cold Spring ZIP code. Drug World was listed, so I went to its site.

They had a sign-up list! Imagine. Impressive. A small operation with smarter managerial chops than much bigger players. Then, a day or so later, I got an email saying that the sign-up site would go live in two hours. "Since you are on the list, here is the link." Bam! Got an appointment.

The setup at St. Mary's church was great, with lots of cheery volunteers who all laughed at my silly jokes and stories. It was organized and efficient. Got the shot and was placed on the list to come back in four weeks.

The moral of this story: Can't the providers start making lists, maybe by county? Notify those on the list when spaces open, give them time to decide. If they don't take the spot, give the slot to the next person on the list.

Maybe President Biden should hire the Drug World folks.

Allan Wernick, Cold Spring

The Masons

I was extremely disappointed to find a Masonic recruitment piece in your most recent issue ("Demystifying the Masons," Jan. 29). A minimal level of journalistic diligence would have revealed what's well-known in Muslim communities: Far from being a benign charitable organization, the Freemasons develop dependencies in vulnerable people in order to mobilize them in an anti-Muslim crusade.

The goal of rebuilding the Temple of Solomon, the *raison d'être* of the Freemasons, is nothing other than a pretext to mobilize members in a common goal to destroy the Muslim holy site that stands at the location in Jerusalem and has been under siege for several decades now. Thank you for your other content, which has been enjoyable and informative.

John O'Leary, Beacon

The editor replies: There has historically been conflict between Freemasons and Muslims, although much of the pushback in the past century seems to be based on the anti-Semitic conspiracy theory that Freemasonry is secretly a Jewish organization whose members are determined to destroy the Al-Aqsa Mosque. A number of Christian denominations also have denounced Freemasonry, including the Roman Catholic Church, which considers it a "grave sin" to be a member. In fact, the Knights of Columbus was founded in 1882 in part as an alternative.

Beacon administrator

Anthony Ruggiero worked in the planning department in Peekskill and became city manager of Peekskill before he went to Beacon as city administrator. I knew him as an honest, hardworking, talented and dedicated public servant. (Our Riverfront Green is a result of a decade-long liaison with Scenic Hudson.) It was terrible to watch him in the terrible political storms, too. I wish him well, and thank you for this story ("Exit Interview: Beacon's City Administrator," Jan. 29).

Tina Volz-Bongar, via Facebook

Early hospitals

I'd like to offer a correction and some additional information about the Highland Hospital and the Sargent Industrial School that were shown among the Beacon postcards in your Jan. 8 issue ("Lost Landmarks").

The first hospital was a house on Russell Avenue in Matteawan, which was purchased by Gen. Joseph Howland and donated to the village. When the hospital was moved, the original became a family home. My parents bought it in 1950 and I now own it.

The second hospital, shown in the post-

(Continued on Page 5)



LETTERS AND COMMENTS



The second Beacon hospital, on Verplanck Avenue

(Continued from Page 4)

card, was located on Verplanck Avenue. It was replaced in 1960 by a building on Delevan Avenue. You stated that the Verplanck building was razed in 1960, but it actually remained standing (and vacant) into the 1970s, when it was replaced with townhouses.

The Delevan hospital operated for years before being purchased by St. Francis Hospital, which made it a satellite campus with limited services. When St. Francis closed, the Beacon building was sold and renovated, and is now senior housing.

The Sargent Industrial School also started out in a Russell Avenue house, located across the street from the hospital. When the school outgrew the first house, it moved to Schenck Avenue, around the corner from the hospital. In her will, Mrs. Sargent required that the school close upon her death. The building was sold to the hospital as housing for its nurses.

Peg Siebert, *Beacon*

Beacon parking

It's impressive that a group of citizens came up with at least 170 new parking spaces in Beacon without the need for more asphalt ("Main Street Beacon: Add Parking, Not Asphalt," Jan. 29). That will help in humanity's heroic battle against climate change. As City Planner John Clarke explained, "With global warming and the heat-island effect in cities, the last thing you want to do is create 'dead spaces' in and around Main Street."

However, I don't recall Mr. Clarke raising objections in his role as Dutchess County planner a few years ago when Beacon bought an acre of land on Fishkill Creek and Churchill Street for more than \$500,000 and spent more money to turn it into a parking lot. Where are all these lovely places we haven't already paved over that we are saving? I've lived in Beacon for nearly 20 years and have heard the phrase *pocket parks* bandied about since Day One. At least the municipal lot, while not a pocket park, is not "dead space" — it's a great place to have a tailgate party while waiting in line to buy a few cases from our excellent brewery.

I can't be the only one to see the irony in taking a chunk out of global warming by increasing Beacon's auto traffic. Other cities around the world are restricting cars in downtown areas and make biking and walking safer. A story in *The New York Times* in January talked about the major shift in transportation happening

in Paris, for example. Much of the initial transformation was done the same way Beacon is proposing to squeeze in some of these extra spaces — with a can of paint.

The suggestions by the committee are divided into three phases. It's not until the end of the second phase that biking gets a mention, with a proposal to create "bicycle boulevards" with shrubberies "or other traffic-calming elements." Bicycle boulevards are streets with low motorized traffic volumes and speeds, designated and designed to give bicycles priority — for instance, the "sharrow" markings along Main Street that the majority of motorists and bicyclists alike don't seem to understand, because nobody bothers to explain or enforce them. The committee has potential routes in mind, but they want the city to get a grant to hire a consultant to tell us what to do. Look for a couple more sharrows and some bushes around 2030.

Mayor Lee Kyriacou is upbeat on the possibility of all these recommendations landing an even more comprehensive Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant. Peppering a grant with *sustainable* and *access* and *bicycle boulevards* should increase the chances of landing money for creating parking spaces. But it doesn't matter how many boxwoods are planted, we can't make bicycling safer at the same time we are increasing auto traffic.

Beacon will not be bicycle-friendly until it reaches a critical mass of citizens who decide to use a bicycle to get around. That will not happen until it becomes economically unfeasible for a portion of its citizens to operate three, two or even one car. That tipping point may be coming sooner than any of us would want. However, it will likely not involve landscaped boulevards.

According to *The Current* article, the committee has come up with longer-term Phase 3 projects, but those are being held close to the vest for the moment. I may just eat my bicycle bell if it doesn't include a recommendation for some kind of multi-story parking structure. No doubt it will have solar panels on the roof.

Mark Roland, *Beacon*

All of Main Street is a mess, with cars never stopping at crosswalks. I was in the middle of one last night, where a car came whipping around the turn and just missed me. He had to be going 50 mph, at least.

Melissa Nastasi, *via Instagram*

Two Announce for Nelsonville Seats

Village election scheduled for March 16

Two Nelsonville residents have announced plans to run for Village Board seats now held by Trustees Dove Pedlosky and Lisa Mechaley, who do not plan to seek re-election. The election is scheduled for March 16.

Maria Zhynovitch, a state appellate court attorney, said in a statement that she routinely deals with the types of issues facing the board, such as contracts, land use, conservation, accidents and disputes that arise between the state and municipalities.

"Since our first day here, my husband and I have felt welcomed by our neighbors, both those who have been here for generations and those who have moved to the village recently," she wrote. "As someone who did not have the benefit of growing up in a small, tight-knit community, I enjoy that every house has a history and that families know each other, many times going back decades. I also appreciate that the village has a certain way of conducting itself, which includes holding monthly meetings.

"I appreciate that the current board values transparency in its decision-making process and invites community input," she wrote. "Despite the tensions running high over certain choices faced by the trustees, the discourse has always remained civil, even under sometimes charged circumstances. Even as

a newcomer, I have felt safe contributing to the conversation and never had reservations about expressing an opinion. If elected, I promise to maintain the same level of integrity and seek common ground and compromise to find the best solutions for our community as a whole."

Kathleen Maloney, who said she has held a variety of clinical, corporate and research roles, said she decided to run because she "cares deeply about preserving the character and the beauty of Nelsonville."

"This past year has underscored the value of being part of this community," she said in a statement. "My husband and I experienced this firsthand when we became new parents during the initial lockdowns and were without the usual support networks. Our neighbors stepped right up and we couldn't be more grateful. Preserving these strong community ties is one of my main motivations for seeking the trustee position.

"As we continue to welcome new families into Nelsonville, and weigh the pros and cons of issues such as short-term rentals, 5G and sewers, it's important we continue to foster a culture of camaraderie and collaboration, and make choices that will benefit the entire village long into the future."

Any resident who wishes to run for a seat has until Tuesday (Feb. 9) to file an independent nominating petition with at least 15 signatures of registered Nelsonville voters, said Village Clerk Mindy Jesek.

Putnam Releases Police Report

Legislature will consider on March 4

The Putnam County Police Review Panel, created after Gov. Andrew Cuomo last year ordered municipalities and counties to review law-enforcement procedures, released its findings and recommendations today (Feb. 5).

"I want to thank everyone on the panel for their hard work in putting together

such a thorough report in such a short time," said Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell in a statement. "I am especially grateful for the meaningful feedback we got from the public."

The report can be found at putnamcountyny.com/policereviewpanel. The public can submit comments on the report at the site or by email to policereviewpanel@putnamcountyny.gov through Feb. 17, when a virtual public hearing will be held.

The 21-member panel, chaired by Odell, began meeting in September.

NOTICE

Philipstown Planning Board

will hold their regular Monthly Meeting on Thursday February 18, 2021 at 7:30 pm virtually via Zoom.

If you would like to attend, please visit the following link:

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OR, find the meeting through Zoom by searching the Meeting ID above and inserting the password below when prompted.

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If you are unable to join, please send any written comments on the above two public hearings to the above email addresses.

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A man identified as Pepe is shown moving a barrier in a photo released by U.S. Justice Department.

Conspiracy *(from Page 1)*

the Proud Boys and owns a tactical jacket with the group's logo. It said Pepe had the same tactical jacket as well as other Proud Boys-related paraphernalia inside his Beacon home.

The indictment alleges that Pepe, Pezzola and others "known and unknown to the grand jury, took actions to evade and render ineffective the protective equipment deployed by Capitol Police in active riot-control measures, including actions to remove temporary metal barricades erected by the Capitol Police for the purpose of controlling access to the Capitol Grounds, and the stealing and purloining of property belonging to Capitol Police."

A man identified as Pezzola was filmed using a police riot shield to smash a window, while a man identified as Pepe is shown moving a barrier. The FBI earlier alleged that members of the Proud Boys used walkie-talkies and earpieces to communicate; a photo of a man identified as Pepe appears to show him holding a walkie-talkie.

Pepe was a laborer in the mechanical department at the Metro-North train yard in Brewster and was initially identified to the FBI by colleagues. He was suspended from his job without pay following his arrest.

According to a motion filed by prosecutors arguing that Pezzola should not be released from custody, Pezzola and Pepe were among the first marchers to reach and move through barriers in the plaza on the west side of the Capitol. Pezzola was one of the first people to reach the next police line, which was overwhelmed, the motion said.

Prosecutors said FBI agents seized from Pezzola's residence in Rochester a computer thumb drive with instructions to make homemade firearms, poisons and explosives.

Pepe was released from custody on Jan. 22 after being instructed by a federal judge by teleconference to "stay out of Washington" except for legal proceedings. He also was ordered not to travel outside the continental U.S. or to possess firearms. He and Pezzola are scheduled to be arraigned on Tuesday (Feb. 9).

According to the George Washington University Program on Extremism, which is tracking charges against people who entered the Capitol, as of Thursday (Feb. 4), 181 people



William Vogel in a social media image released by the Justice Department

had been charged from 40 states and D.C.

They include Jake Lang, 25, a Newburgh resident who was detained at his home on Jan. 16. He was indicted by a grand jury on Jan. 29 on 11 counts, including assaulting officers with a weapon, civil disorder, violent entry and obstruction of an official proceeding. His next court hearing is scheduled for Feb. 9.

The FBI also arrested a Pawling resident, William Vogel, 26, on Jan. 26, after he posted a video of himself inside the Capitol on Snapchat, according to the charging document. He has been charged with disorderly conduct and violent entry. According to the FBI, on Jan. 7, Vogel wrote a friend via Facebook: "They're trying to report me to the FBI/DOJ and put me away for 10 years for domestic terrorism because of my Snapchat story, where I simply walked into the lobby of the Capitol" and "didn't even film anything crime-wise."

The FBI recovered an assault rifle from Vogel's home during his arrest, law enforcement sources told NBC News. After an initial court appearance by teleconference from White Plains, he was released with travel and firearm restrictions.

In addition, on Jan. 28, FBI agents arrested a Westchester County man, Brian Gundersen, after tipsters recognized someone wearing a letter jacket from Byram Hills High School in Armonk, according to a criminal complaint. According to the agency, Gundersen sent a text message on Jan. 8 that read: "We all stormed the us capital [sic] and tried to take over the government."

Ambulance Corps, Philipstown Argue Over Control



The Garrison and Philipstown ambulance corps are each negotiating their annual contracts with the Town of Philipstown. PVAC photo

Conflict over independence

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

As February began, Philipstown's annual contracts with its two ambulance services, which usually take effect Jan. 1, remained unsigned.

Supervisor Richard Shea said on Wednesday (Feb. 3) that the contract with the Garrison Volunteer Ambulance Corps and First Aid Squad is ready to sign except for a "small technical" request from the corps.

However, disputes dogged the Philipstown Volunteer Ambulance Corps (PVAC) contract, over what town officials view as oversight but PVAC members see as control of their independent organization.

Without a contract soon, Steve Sherman, a PVAC representative, said on Monday (Feb. 1) the corps can only continue "for another couple of weeks before our operating money runs out," which means "Philipstown is at serious risk of losing its emergency ambulance service." Yet, he asserted, Town Board members "seem determined to run us into the ground."

Shea responded on Wednesday that resolving the dispute "is up to the PVAC. I am confident they will realize that the Town Board is only meeting our mandate for oversight." Sherman said on Monday that the PVAC had submitted a counterproposal and was waiting to hear from the Town Board.

Both ambulance corps are nonprofits staffed by professional emergency medical technicians as well as volunteers. The PVAC covers the north end of town and the GVAC covers the south.

According to Putnam County data, the PVAC responds to 97.5 percent of calls and the GVAC to 96.5 percent — rates that county emergency services leaders say are exemplary.

For 2021, Philipstown allocated \$356,060 for the PVAC (including \$10,560 for contributions to state pensions for the volunteers) and \$250,000 to the GVAC.

Typically, GVAC and PVAC contract rati-

fication occurs routinely, with each new agreement replicating the previous one, except for updates to the sums.

This time, however, things went off track in November after the Town Board sent copies of the 2020 contracts to Stephen Gaba, the town attorney, to review. He noted that both failed to comply with various provisions of state law and drafted revised versions for 2021.

The PVAC and GVAC balked at the changes.

After the Town Board heard their objections at a Dec. 22 workshop, it revised the drafts and returned them to both corps in mid-January.

Sherman said the PVAC finds the latest version, like its predecessor, "unacceptable." He accused the Town Board of seeking "complete oversight" of the organization, even though "we have a long and proven record of excellence and professionalism." He also said the Town Board is "misinformed about many aspects of how we operate," and prone to "making unfortunate assumptions and jumping to wrong conclusions."

Shea said on Jan. 27 that the proposed contracts allow "sensible oversight of public funds. The Town Board is accountable to New York State. More important, is our accountability to the taxpayers of Philipstown."

At the December meeting, Gaba said that under the prior contracts, there was no oversight of the ambulance corps by town authorities. He recommended that the PVAC and GVAC provide rosters of their officers annually for Town Board approval so that "you know the town is being represented in a way you want."

But Michael Liguori, a PVAC attorney, called sign-off on officers a "non-starter."

The 2020 contracts defined both corps as independent contractors "not subject to any direction or control in any manner by the town, except as expressly conferred by law."

The PVAC impasse also involves finances.

Both ambulance corps bill patients or their insurers but under state law, billing is supposed to come through the town, according to Gaba. Ambulance corps

"can't bill on their own," he said. "When the money comes in, it belongs to the town."

Philipstown can turn over billing and collection to the corps but the contracts must spell that out, Gaba said.

Liguori said the PVAC might accept that change, but not for 2021 unless Philipstown wants to close the gap between the corps' \$520,000 budget and the \$356,060 provided by the town.

The previous contracts also did not address what happens to an ambulance purchased with town funds if the corps disbands.

Gaba proposed that in such cases Philipstown be given the right to buy the ambulance for \$1. Otherwise, he said, the town could spend a large sum on an ambulance only to see it go elsewhere. "You don't want to interfere with the day-to-day operations of the ambulance corps," but contracts need to anticipate such situations, he said.

During the December workshop, Shea said the PVAC had not informed the Town Board that it was "selling an ambulance that, five years ago, we funded through taxpayer money," or that it had recently acquired a new one.

He elaborated on Jan. 19 in an email.

Ambulance purchases are "directly funded by the taxpayers of Philipstown," he said, and if one is going to be sold, the town only wants "the right of first refusal to buy back" what "we have already paid for."

In December, Liguori said that the idea ambulances "are owned by the town is not correct." Moreover, he said, the corps needs to "sell them, trade them in, do what we do, because we know what we're doing."

Sherman said the new ambulance has four-wheel drive, "which any resident on a hilly dirt road in winter will be grateful for." In fact, he predicted, all residents will probably "be delighted to know that we have upgraded."

The contract debate extends to mutual aid, or a system that obligates neighboring agencies to respond with assistance if dispatched.

The old contract states the PVAC "shall not be precluded from providing ambulance services" in southern Philipstown or "areas outside the town."

Sherman, who is also president of the North Highlands volunteer fire department, said that Putnam Valley's volunteer ambulance corps was recently down to a single ambulance, while Kent wrestled with staffing problems. The PVAC teamed up with them in a five-month agreement that ended Dec. 31. With a spare ambulance "always ready to roll, we were never lacking in local emergency coverage," Sherman explained. "We helped our neighbors in their time of need as they would and will do for us if we ever need it."

At the December workshop, Shea and other Town Board members questioned the PVAC's involvement in Kent and Putnam Valley.

PVAC President Chris Tobin told them that the arrangement "worked and it cost us no extra money." Tobin also noted that under a Putnam County mutual-aid pact, the PVAC must answer calls outside its territory if it is in the best position to do so.

But Shea and other Town Board members cautioned that municipalities could take advantage of Philipstown's willingness to fund its ambulance services.

"If we're so active that we're enabling Kent to not meet their responsibilities and it's coming back on the Philipstown taxpayer, it's something we need to address," Shea said. "If it's mutual aid, it's one thing. But it feels like it's not mutual."

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No Respite for Nursing Homes

State reveals hospital deaths in response to report

By Leonard Sparks

New York State last week revealed for the first time its count of the COVID-19 deaths of nursing home residents that occurred in hospitals. The new numbers came in response to a report by the state attorney general that concluded the deaths of nursing home residents had been undercounted by as much as 50 percent and that some facilities had endangered the lives of patients and staff.

A month after the COVID-19 shutdown began, the state Department of Health began releasing a daily report of nursing home deaths by county. The following month, the state added “confirmed” and “presumed” virus deaths by facility, with a footnote explaining that the figure only included residents who died at nursing homes, not hospitals.

In a lengthy response, Health Commissioner Howard Zucker said on Jan. 28, the day Attorney General Letitia James released her report, that 3,829 nursing home residents died after being taken to hospitals as of Jan. 19. That raised the reported confirmed and presumed deaths of nursing home residents by 43 percent, to 12,743.

The change had no effect on the total number of deaths reported by the state,

which as of Wednesday (Feb. 3) was 35,767. But it did change the percentage of victims who were nursing home residents from about 25 percent to about 36 percent.

As of Wednesday, the state reported that seven residents had died at the Fishkill Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing in Beacon. But Fishkill — one of the few nursing homes that posts COVID-19 data on its website — said 14 residents had died as of Tuesday. Another 19 residents died inside Wingate at Beacon and 14 at the Putnam Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Holmes, according to the state.

The attorney general’s report did not give out-of-facility deaths for specific nursing homes, but it was wide-ranging and went beyond deaths, concluding that nursing homes faced shortages of testing, protective equipment and staffing as the pandemic raged.

Others reported faulty data on deaths to the state, failed to communicate with residents’ families and allowed lax infection-control procedures to jeopardize the health of residents, it said.

One facility told the Department of Health that it had 11 presumed or confirmed COVID-19 deaths as of Aug. 3 but told the attorney general that 40 residents had died — 27 at the facility and 13 at hospitals.

Zucker said his department found “numerous inaccuracies” in data sent by nursing



Nineteen residents of Wingate at Beacon died of complications of COVID-19 at the facility.

Photo by L. Sparks

homes, including “entries where a deceased individual was listed as dying both in a hospital and in a nursing home, duplicate entries and entries where the individual had no name or listed a date of death in a facility before they had been admitted.”

Another unnamed nursing home allowed residents who tested positive for COVID-19 to intermingle with non-positive patients for several months because the facility had yet to create a coronavirus-only unit, the report said. A facility on Long Island failed to separate COVID-19 patients who returned after hospital stays, despite having available beds in its quarantine unit, according to the report.

Some nursing homes “pressured, knowingly permitted, or incentivized existing employees who were ill or met quarantine criteria to report to work and even work multiple consecutive shifts, in violation of infection-control protocols,” it said.

Richard Molloy, the executive director of the Long Term Care Community Coalition, said the report “demonstrates that the longstanding system of accepting and paying for substandard nursing home care has been harmful for residents, their families and the public at large.”

State Sen. Sue Serino, whose district includes the Highlands, and other Republicans bashed Gov. Andrew Cuomo and his administration over the report. She said in a statement it confirmed her longstanding accusations that the state sought to cover up the toll of COVID-19 on nursing homes by refusing to release a tally of residents who died in hospitals.

While Zucker said the attorney general did not find an undercount of the total death toll and affirmed that the total number of deaths in hospitals and nursing homes “is full and accurate,” Serino described the report as a “bombshell.”

On Wednesday, Serino joined other Republicans in demanding that Democrats who lead the Legislature investigate and subpoena the Cuomo administration for data and documents. She alleged that a Senate hearing scheduled for Wednesday on the Department of Health budget was delayed because some legislators planned to ask Zucker about nursing home deaths.

“The attorney general’s report makes it painfully clear that we absolutely cannot afford to wait another day — let alone weeks — for the health commissioner to be ready to appear,” Serino said.

Cuomo’s administration has also faced criticism over an order in March that nurs-

COVID-19 by the Numbers

■ PUTNAM COUNTY

Number of confirmed cases:

7,456 (+285)

New Cases in Philipstown: 50

Tests administered:

143,820 (+5,553)

Percent positive:

5.2 (0)

Number of deaths:

82 (+3)

■ DUTCHESS COUNTY

Number of confirmed cases:

19,512 (+959)

Active Cases in Beacon: 43

Tests administered:

465,779 (+17,323)

Percent positive:

4.2 (+0.1)

Number of deaths:

372 (+25)

Source: New York State Department of Health, as of Feb. 3, with weekly change in parentheses. New cases in Philipstown is for week ending Jan. 28.

Join Legislator Nancy Montgomery
& HVSF for a Zoom Presentation on...

The Plans For HVSF's First-Ever Permanent Home

Tuesday, February 9
at 6:00PM



Legislator Nancy Montgomery

HUDSON
VALLEY
SHAKESPEARE
FESTIVAL

RSVP by February 8 to nancy.montgomery@putnamcountyny.gov

Those who RSVP will be sent a Zoom link in advance of the event.



Vaccine Update

■ On Tuesday (Feb. 2), the federal government again added to the amount of vaccine that will be sent to New York over the next three weeks, this time by about 4 percent. Last week, it said that New York's allotment would rise by about 16 percent, but this week bumped the increase up to about 20 percent. The allotment for pharmacies will also increase, by about 10 percent, or another 30,000 doses.

■ As of Thursday (Feb. 4), New York State said it had administered 81 percent of the 2.23 million COVID-19 vaccine doses received. Both vaccines available require two doses given weeks apart. New York has administered 95 percent of the first doses it has received and 51 percent of the second. The Mid-Hudson Region, which includes Dutchess, Putnam and five other counties, had administered 73 percent of the 219,420 doses it had received.

■ The state's Vaccine Dashboard at covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov now includes, for each county, the percentages of hospital workers vaccinated and the percentages of nursing home residents and staff receiv-

ing shots. In Dutchess County, 83 percent of hospital workers had been vaccinated as of Wednesday, compared to 54 percent in Putnam County, which has the lowest rate in the seven-county Mid-Hudson Region. Dutchess nursing homes had vaccinated 81 percent of residents and 46 percent of staff, while the rates in Putnam were 88 percent for residents and 54 percent for staff.

■ The state said it planned to establish 35 pop-up vaccination clinics inside churches, community and cultural centers and public housing complexes to boost the number of Blacks and Latinos getting shots. An estimated 25,000 people will receive first doses at the clinics, including those in Newburgh, Peekskill and Poughkeepsie.

■ The state offered local governments the option of adding restaurant workers, cab drivers and facilities serving the developmentally disabled to the list of people eligible to receive vaccinations.

■ The site where Putnam County stores vaccines was named a "critical facility" during the snowstorm that hit the state on Monday. "Even if there are widespread power outages, we will be able to keep the vaccines refrigerated," said County Executive MaryEllen Odell. "We're not going to



On Jan. 28, more than a dozen staff and managers at Foodtown in Cold Spring, including Maureen McCabe, shown here, received the COVID-19 vaccine during a clinic at the Philipstown Recreation Center.

Putnam County photo

let a single dose go to waste."

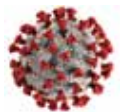
■ While Blacks account for 17 percent of

Where to Check for Appointments

- drugworld.com
- dutchessny.gov/covidvaccine
- putnamcountyny.com/covid-19-vaccine-information
- covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov

the state's hospital workers, only 10 percent have received vaccines so far, according to the state. Of hospital workers vaccinated, 63 percent have been white (70 percent of hospital workers total), 16 percent were Asian (11 percent of workers) and 10 percent Hispanic or Latino (8 percent of workers). The state plans to launch an advertising campaign targeting Blacks hesitant to receive the vaccine, said Gov. Andrew Cuomo. "There is a definite trust issue that we have to get through," he said.

■ The state launched a hotline where residents can report vaccine-related fraud. Call 833-829-7226 or email stopvaxfraud@health.ny.gov.



Coronavirus Update

■ State health officials said that, as of Wednesday (Feb. 3), 7,456 people had tested positive for COVID-19 in Putnam County; 19,512 in Dutchess; 95,989 in Westchester; 35,094 in Rockland; 8,955 in Ulster; and 32,830 in Orange. Statewide, there have been 1,440,718 positives, including 613,285 in New York City.

■ Beacon had 43 active cases as of Feb. 2 and Putnam had 394 for the week ending Jan. 28, with 50 new cases reported in Philipstown, which has had 655 since March. There were 200 new cases in Carmel, 52 in Kent, 61 in Patterson, 59 in Putnam Valley and 82 in Southeast. Eighteen people were hospitalized at Putnam Hospital in Carmel.

■ The number of people with COVID-19 who are hospitalized in New York state as of Feb. 3 stood at 7,967; the number in intensive care was 1,506; and the number of intubations was 986. In the Mid-Hudson Valley, 43 percent of hospital beds were available and 40 percent of ICU beds.

■ New York renewed its suspension, until Feb. 28, of the collection of medical and student debt owed to the state. Residents seeking relief can fill out an application at ag.ny.gov/covid-19-debt-suspension-application or call 800-771-7755.

■ New York's positivity rate of 4.38 percent on Wednesday was the lowest since Nov. 28, Gov. Andrew Cuomo said on Thurs-

day. "The good news is New York's numbers continue to show progress as the holiday surge recedes," he said.

■ New York's 7-day average positivity rate had fallen for 23 straight days through Jan. 31. The seven-day average of 5.2 percent as of Jan. 30 was the lowest rate since Dec. 14. "The news is very good, but keep an eye on the U.K. variants and the other variants because all of them suggest more diligence will be needed," said Cuomo.

■ Both Dutchess and Putnam counties are seeing their daily positivity rates fall. After averaging 8.2 percent from Jan. 1 to 22, the positivity rate in Dutchess averaged 6.3 percent from Jan. 23 to 29. Putnam averaged 6.1 percent during the seven-day period, compared to 8.5 percent for the rest of January.

■ With New York City's infection rate falling, Cuomo said on Jan. 29 that the city's restaurants can resume indoor dining at 25 percent capacity as of Valentine's Day.

■ Newlyweds can resume holding wedding receptions as of March 15, Cuomo said. Events must be approved by local health departments and be limited to 50 percent capacity and no more than 150 people. Each guest must be tested for COVID-19 before the event.

■ Questions? Dutchess County posts updates at dutchessny.gov and has a hotline at 845-486-3555. Putnam County posts info at putnamcountyny.com. New York State has a hotline at 888-364-3065 and

a webpage at coronavirus.health.ny.gov, which is also where you can find a testing site. The state also created an email

list to provide updates. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention posts updates at cdc.gov.

CURRENT CONVERSATIONS

COVID-19 School Update

Q&A with Haldane and Garrison



HALDANE: FEB. 10, 7:00-7:30PM

Live Zoom event with Superintendent Philip Benante



GARRISON: FEB. 17, 7:00-7:30PM

Live Zoom event with Superintendent Carl Albano

REGISTER TO ATTEND:
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Montgomery Reveals Ouster from Committee

Putnam legislator also outlines her goals for 2021

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

Nancy Montgomery, who represents Philipstown and part of Putnam Valley on the Putnam County Legislature, expressed surprise during its monthly meeting on Tuesday (Feb. 2) that she had been removed from one of her two committee assignments.

Montgomery, the sole Democrat on the nine-member panel, described the change as unexpected. She commented at the Legislature's formal monthly meeting, held by audio connection because of the pandemic shutdown.

She did not identify the committee but the legislative roster lists her only as a member of the Economic Development and Energy Committee. Previously, she had also been a member of the Personnel Committee. Other legislators sit on two or three committees each, and Montgomery is the only legislator not to chair a committee.

On Thursday, Montgomery told *The Current* that she had received no explanation of her ouster, which she attributed to a decision either by Legislator Toni Addonizio of Kent, who chairs the Legislature, or to a party caucus of the eight Republican legislators. In fact, she said, she strongly suspects the latter, because such moves are "always so well-orchestrated" and "there is never any discussion" openly. She was replaced on the Personnel Committee by Legislator Neal Sullivan.

In her remarks on Tuesday and in her follow-up Thursday, she explained that her requests to the legislative chair to be assigned to the Health Committee, Protective Services Committee and Rules Committee had been ignored for three years.

In letters she sent to Addonizio on Jan. 6 and Jan. 13, shared with *The Current*, Montgomery cited her background in health care, including her roles as an emergency medical technician, dispatcher and an officer in the Philipstown Volunteer Ambulance Corps; experience in managing group homes for the developmentally disabled; work on health care issues for three years

as an aide to Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, whose House district includes the Highlands; involvement with the Hub, the Philipstown behavioral health assistance agency; and activities as a Philipstown Town Board member, such as establishing Philipstown's emergency operations center during Hurricanes Sandy and Irene, "when it was geographically impossible for the Putnam County Bureau of Emergency Services to respond."

On Tuesday, in a five-minute statement at the end of the Legislature's meeting, Montgomery also outlined a half-dozen goals for 2021, including getting the county government "to help Cold Spring and Philipstown, the very heart of our tourism industry, to deal with the health and safety issues" that arise from visits by large crowds to a village of about 2,000 residents, adjacent hamlet of Nelsonville and town of fewer than 10,000.

"We share the benefits of tourism," she told fellow legislators. "We need to share the responsibility as well." Putnam recently withdrew \$7,500 in annual funding provided to help Cold Spring handle tourism-related trash.

Because at the legislators' yearly reorganization meeting in January they "set out to work closely and work harder," Montgomery admitted that she "was surprised that I had been removed from a committee. That kind of went against what I thought we had set out to do: work together."

Nonetheless, she added, "I am undeterred."

On Tuesday, Montgomery both chided her Republican counterparts and urged them to join in improving county government.

During her tenure, "we've not worked well together," she said. "And we lost so many opportunities to provide better services to all our constituents. I don't want to waste any more precious time like that. We're not enemies here. We're here in service" to residents, "who deserve our best every day, our honest best, our best driven



Montgomery

not by any ambition other than to run the county government efficiently, effectively and transparently."

Along with tourism-related support, her goals include:

■ Meetings held by video connection, instead of the radio-like audio link the county utilizes, to help the public "see and participate."

■ Limits on restaurant delivery fees charged by online companies, similar to what was done by executive order recently in Dutchess County. "Our local businesses are really fragile" and would benefit from a fee-cap, she said. She said she has encouraged County Executive MaryEllen Odell to take up the issue, but if Odell demurs, "we need to do it ourselves, passing a law."

■ Health Department mobile units to bring COVID-19 vaccinations "to communities where direct care is needed most"; similar innovations so all residents, especially senior citizens, can get vaccinated; and diversion of funds "from non-essential programs" to provide relief to exhausted Health Department employees.

■ Renewed efforts to establish a county human rights commission, because, since a failed attempt in 2020, "we've seen no slowing of the incidents and tensions that such a commission could help address."

■ Reviving "our dormant Climate Smart Initiative," and learning from other municipalities that have implemented the program to mitigate effects of global warming and reduce pollution.

She urged her colleagues to share ideas for meeting the goals. "I'm not asking you to get behind me," she said. "Do it for your constituents."

In other business Tuesday, the Legislature unanimously approved a transfer of \$15,000 for the purchase of a license-plate reader. Questions about the use of license plate readers by sheriff's deputies and the Cold Spring Police Department, which Putnam recently equipped, consumed long legislative hours in 2020 after the Odell administration rewrote the Sheriff's Department LPR policy.

Where They Sit

Toni Addonizio (R)¹

- Budget & Finance (chair)²
- Health, Social, Educational & Environmental

Carl Albano (R)

- Audit & Administration
- Physical Services (chair)
- Rules, Enactments & Intergovernmental Relations

Joseph Castellano (R)

- Audit & Administration (chair)
- Physical Services
- Rules, Enactments & Intergovernmental Relations

William Gouldman (R)

- Audit & Administration
- Economic Development & Energy (chair)
- Physical Services

Paul Jonke (R)

- Economic Development & Energy
- Personnel (chair)

Nancy Montgomery (D)

- Economic Development & Energy

Ginny Nacerino (R)

- Health, Social, Educational & Environmental
- Personnel
- Protective Services (chair)

Amy Sayegh (R)

- Health, Social, Educational & Environmental (chair)
- Protective Services

Neal Sullivan (R)

- Personnel
- Protective Services
- Rules, Enactments & Intergovernmental Relations (chair)

¹ Addonizio also chairs the Legislature.

² All legislators serve on the Budget & Finance Committee.



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Cold Spring Weighs Water Options

Wells could offer big cost savings for village

By Michael Turton

The Village of Cold Spring is taking a closer look at options for enhancing its water supply, including measures that could offer major cost savings.

At the Tuesday (Feb. 2) meeting of the Village Board, Chazen Engineering Consultants presented cost estimates for various options detailed in a report produced for the Hudson Highlands Land Trust and presented to the board in October.

The examination of how Cold Spring gets its water is being driven in part by repairs that need to be made to the village reservoir dams. An analysis in 2010 judged the upper reservoir dam off Lake Surprise Road to be “unsound,” and the lower reservoir dam and the Foundry Brook dam at the treatment plant on Fishkill Road to be “inadequately maintained.”

The Chazen report estimated repairs to the dams would cost between \$6 million and \$8 million but suggested it could be far less expensive if wells were drilled to enhance or replace the reservoir system. The report noted that “water well fields are frequently placed in service for \$1.5 million or less.”

George Cronk, an engineer with Chazen, and Russell Urban-Mead, a hydrogeologist, told the board that wells can tap into either bedrock or sand-and-gravel. The latter generally yield larger volumes and higher-quality water.

Urban-Mead said bedrock wells could be drilled on the bottom of the upper reservoir if it is “decommissioned,” or drained. Other possible bedrock locations include Foundry Brook, the water treatment plant and lands close to the upper and lower reservoirs.

The Clove Creek aquifer, which lies beneath the creek and parallels Route 9, already provides well water to three municipalities.

If wells are used, the cost of a system to transport the water to the village distribution network also would have to be considered, the report stated.

Establishing a well field in the Clove Creek aquifer would likely require an

expanded water district to include the Town of Philipstown, something Cold Spring Mayor Dave Merandy questioned. “I don’t see why Philipstown would get involved,” he said. “I don’t know who they would want to service” by tapping into the aqueduct.

Cronk said the Putnam County Economic Development Commission has advocated further development along the Route 9 corridor in Philipstown to bolster the tax base but the “No. 1 hang up” has been the lack of water and sewer service.

Michelle Smith, the executive director of the Hudson Highlands Land Trust, noted that Philipstown should consider that Beacon, Fishkill and East Fishkill already draw water from that aquifer and that if the town “doesn’t make a move within a certain amount of time, they may never be able to access the aquifer because it’s in such demand from the highly developing cities and towns around it.”

Urban-Mead said that intermunicipal projects such as an expanded water district including Cold Spring and Philipstown could be eligible for grants and that the larger user base would improve cost sharing.

Merandy remained dubious but said he would speak with Philipstown Supervisor Richard Shea to explore the town’s interest in an expanded water district, including use of the Clove Creek aquifer.

The Chazen report also recommended adding “flashboards,” or wooden structures, to increase the height of reservoir dams. Flashboards would cost about \$150,000 and could increase capacity by more than 13 million gallons.

In addition, the report suggested diverting the Jaycox Pond stream into the Cold Spring water system, a move that would increase water supply in the fall, winter and spring. The diversion would require state approval. No cost estimate was provided.

“The upper dam is definitely in need of serious repair,” said Matt Kroog, the village’s superintendent of water and wastewater. “If it’s significantly cheaper to decommission it and put flashboards on the lower reservoir and Foundry Brook dams, and if it’s feasible to supple-

ment the system with Jaycox Pond and a couple of wells, that would probably be the cheapest and fastest way to go.”

Expensive leaks

While the board is considering the best way to get water to the village, the antiquated distribution system, with pipes dating back 100 years or more, can create costly problems for residents.

At Tuesday’s meeting, three residents expressed concern about the cost of repairing leaks.

“People often have complaints but don’t say anything. I appreciate you bringing it up; I will definitely follow up.”

~ Mayor Dave Merandy

Village Code specifies that Cold Spring is responsible for leaks in the main water line and from that line to the “curb cock,” a shut-off valve located near the curb. Homeowners must pick up the cost of fixing leaks in the service line from the curb cock to the house.

Repairs involving a private contractor can cost from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Excavation is a major part of the expense, includ-

ing labor and the use of heavy equipment.

Tom Stephens, who lives on Morris Avenue, has an even costlier dilemma. On Tuesday, he told the board he is facing a bill of \$20,000 — “money I don’t have” — for a yet-to-be-completed repair.

Stephens said his situation is made worse because Morris Avenue is part of Route 9D, a state highway, and the Department of Transportation will not allow him to excavate part of the pavement until spring. Because of traffic volumes, there will be an added cost of flagmen, a factor that Stephens said makes contractors reluctant to take on the work.

Failed attempts to locate the curb cock have also hampered Stephens’ ability to fix the leak.

Village residents John and Mindy Jesek and Matt Francisco said they also face expensive and difficult repairs.

They cited issues such as difficulty finding a contractor, especially in an emergency situation in the winter, wildly varying cost estimates and a lack of adequate insurance coverage.

“I don’t have an answer for you tonight; I wish you guys didn’t have to pay that much,” Merandy said, adding that he will speak with local contractors. He also said he would consult with the trustees about possible cost-sharing ideas.

“People often have complaints but don’t say anything,” Merandy said. “I appreciate you bringing it up; I will definitely follow up.”

Valentines in the Paper

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At far right, Olivia Zappala places a rose on Saturday (Jan. 27) on the columbarium at St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Garrison during the funeral of her grandmother, Anna Kantor (right), who died a week earlier of cancer at age 78. Olivia is shown with her parents, Jon and Elizabeth Kantor Zappala. Besides roses, the socially distanced outdoor service included a bagpiper. Anna and her husband, Paul, moved to Philipstown six years ago.



Photos by Ross Corsair



20 MARKET TREND 21

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Eugenia Copeland is a Garrison native with her masters in music performance from Mannes Conservatory. She has been teaching private voice lessons since 2016. She specializes in teaching the holistic voice encompassing both classical and modern voice techniques.

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OR VISIT
EugeniaCopelandVoice.com

The Calendar

Keeping Bedlam on Track

Artistic director, now in Cold Spring, plans next move

By Alison Rooney

Eric Tucker, the artistic director at Bedlam, the off-Broadway theater company known for its physicalized, every-corner-of-the space interplay, moved to Cold Spring last year.

He and his wife, Susannah Millonzi — the company's director of development and an actor who has had several leading roles with Bedlam and the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival — and their two young daughters last week welcomed a son and baby brother to the family.

Like nearly all theater companies, Bedlam has not held a live performance since the pandemic shutdown began in March. The casualties included an off-Broadway transfer of their acclaimed Boston production of *The Crucible*, which was canceled as they prepared for rehearsals, and *Angels in America*, which was postponed.

Many of Bedlam's other activities, such as summer youth workshops and veteran outreach, have transitioned to virtual. The 8-year-old company also introduced *Do More*, a twice-monthly play-reading series via Zoom, and *Bedlam: The Series*, a foray into episodic, filmed storytelling.

What do you see when first reading a play?

I think visually. How can it be exciting onstage? What can I do next? I keep those images in the back of my mind but often it changes completely in rehearsals. I may try to push a square peg into a round hole for too long, but I usually shift and use the strengths of the people in the room.

If I know how to start it and what the

rules are, we can break the rules. The story always ends up with what's happening in the room, and the journey to it. Some actors find it scary, others love it. What are we saying? Even if we know how it ends? What's your version? It's mostly what's in the room for me.

Did you always want to run a theater company?

I did. When you're directing for other theaters, you are responsible to the artistic director and their audience. It's nice to have their eye and it can be less stressful, overall. But for me, with my own company, it's just me at the end of the day, which is a nice thing to have as a director.

Will the pandemic influence Bedlam's choice of material?

When we talk about what's next, it's normally a conversation that involves recent politics and social issues. These conversations now are: "How do we go forward?" Also, the George Floyd murder changed the landscape: "Have we been tone deaf until now?"

It's funny, I wanted to do *The Crucible* for years and years, pre-Trump. When we finally did it [in 2019], of course I thought Trump — the mob mentality, how he incites his people. My God, *The Crucible* has everything, aside from the great storytelling. Audiences drew those parallels. Unfortunately, *The Crucible's* probably never not been timely.

You're also an actor. Which did you think of pursuing first?

I went to college with acting in mind, though I directed a little. I got an acting MFA at Trinity Rep [Trinity Repertory Co. in Providence, Rhode Island] and directed there, too, but was still focused on being an actor. When I finished, I found that I was always best producing my own work. So, I kept directing. It multiplies if people like your work. Recently I've acted mostly with my own company. But I love acting, and am hoping to do more of it, outside of Bedlam.

How has the shutdown affected Bedlam financially?

It's hard. We started 2020 in a good financial place. We had cushions. We kept our staff small so we could fill out the productions ourselves. When we canceled *The Crucible*, it didn't hurt us that much, as an entity, but it hurt the artists.

When the George Floyd murder happened, theaters started writing letters of support. We agreed with that but we wanted to do more. We thought: "Maybe we can raise money through donations for Zoom readings, giving that money away to groups addressing equity and justice." We spent



Susannah Millonzi, Eric Tucker, Kelley Curran, Zuzanna Szadkowski and Edmund Lewis in Bedlam's *Peter Pan*. The costumes are by Charlotte Palmer-Lane, who lives in Cold Spring

Photo by Jeremy Daniel



Susannah Millonzi and Eric Tucker in Bedlam's *Uncle Romeo Vanya Juliet*

Photo by Ashley Garrett

most of the year producing a new reading every two weeks, which was a lot of work, but it felt good and we were proud of it.

Susannah had a keen eye on when we needed to do something to keep ourselves safe as a company. Our board and our small army of donors have loved and supported our company. We're fortunate to have loyal people who love the company.

How did Bedlam: The Series come about?

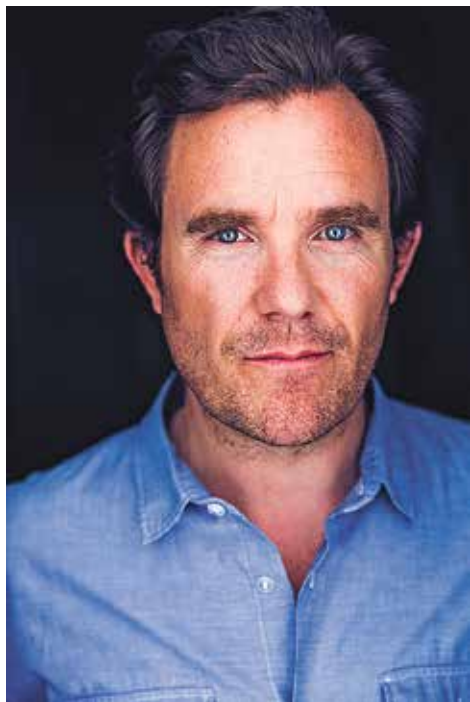
I always had this idea of taking plays from Shakespeare's canon to make an ongoing, episodic television series. When the shutdown happened, I came back to it. Having a project would enable us to fundraise, and we'd be putting 30 people to work. The board felt it was a good shift to keep the company alive while squarely staying in our mission. The series is very much Shakespeare's plays, with about 90 percent of his language and 10 percent modern colloquialisms. I think that will help people who don't know Shakespeare or do but

need those few initial minutes to adjust and become pulled in. We combined *King Lear* and *Merry Wives of Windsor*, which I had done a very Coen brothers version of, with *Merchant of Venice* threaded through.

The season is eight episodes. We've filmed two in Queens and Newburgh. We're deep into editing, while looking for investment for the rest. We really want to put the whole thing out into the world.

How did you make your way to Cold Spring?

Susannah and I came to know Cold Spring through working at HVSF [the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival]. We bought the house two summers ago but didn't spend a lot of time there until January 2020. We were living in the city in an Airbnb rental while we were rehearsing. Then the pandemic hit, and we closed the show and were finally able to spend time in the house. It felt lucky. We miss New York City, but we love Cold Spring. It's been wonderful.



Eric Tucker

Photo by David Noles

THE WEEK AHEAD

Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)

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

COMMUNITY

TUES 9

Shakespeare Festival Update

PHILIPSTOWN

6 p.m. Via Zoom

hvsakespeare.org

Putnam County Legislator Nancy Montgomery will join Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival officials for a presentation on the organization's proposed new site. Email nancy.montgomery@putnamcountyny.gov by MON 8 to RSVP.

THURS 11

Adult Trivia Night

COLD SPRING

7 p.m. Butterfield Library

845-265-3040 | butterfieldlibrary.org

Go solo or bring a team to win prizes in this Zoom event.

THURS 11

Finding a Job Online

GARRISON

8 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library

845-424-3020

desmondfishlibrary.org

Learn how to research jobs, apply and handle a virtual interview in this webinar.

SAT 13

Washington's Birthday

NEWBURGH

Washington's Headquarters

facebook.com/

washingtonsheadquarters

View presentations about Revolutionary War history, and George and Martha, and enjoy live music. The schedule is online. Also SUN 14, MON 15.



STAGE & SCREEN

FRI 12

Adult Story Slam

COLD SPRING

7 p.m. Butterfield Library

845-265-3040 | butterfieldlibrary.org

Love is the theme for this Zoom event led by Karen Kapoor. Register online.

FRI 12

Twisted Valentines Festival

YORKTOWN HEIGHTS

8 p.m. Axial Theatre

914-286-7680 | axialtheatre.org

Register to watch one-act plays and monologues via Zoom written in tribute to love and lovers. Also, SAT 13. Cost: \$20

LITERARY

MON 8

Book Club

COLD SPRING

7 p.m. Butterfield Library

845-265-3040 | butterfieldlibrary.org

Register online for this Zoom discussion of *Just Us*, by Claudia Rankine.

THURS 11

How to Love Yourself

YORKTOWN HEIGHTS

7 p.m. Support Connection

914-962-6402 or 800-532-4290

supportconnection.org

Mary Prenon will discuss her book, *I'm Lazy and I Love to Eat*, via Zoom. Register online. Cost: \$15

TALKS

TUES 9

Social Justice and Health Equity

GARRISON

Noon. Hastings Center

thehastingscenter.org

Patrick Smith, a Duke University professor of theological ethics and bioethics, and Hastings Center President Mildred Solomon will discuss during a webinar how to move forward on social justice and health issues. Register online.

TUES 9

Cholesterol and Heart Health

COLD SPRING

12:15 p.m. NewYork-Presbyterian

Hudson Valley

914-734-3159 | nyp.org/hudsonvalley

This discussion via Zoom, part of the hospital's Physician in the Kitchen series, will cover cholesterol and the best fats and oils to use for cooking.

FRI 12

Women and Heart Health

COLD SPRING

1 p.m.

NewYork-Presbyterian Hudson Valley

914-734-3159 | nyp.org/hudsonvalley

Learn about nourishing and healthy recipes for your heart in this Zoom presentation.

FRI 12

Break Up With Your Gas Car

PHILIPSTOWN

7:30 p.m. Climate Smart Philipstown

csphilipstown.eventbrite.com

Women who own electric cars will discuss their experiences via Zoom. Register online.

SAT 13

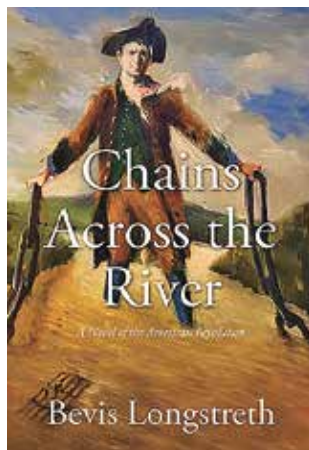
Thomas Machin and His Chains

COLD SPRING

5 p.m. Putnam History Museum

putnamhistorymuseum.org

Bevis Longstreth will discuss the real-life story behind his latest historical novel, *Chains Across the River*. Cost: \$10 (free for members)



VISUAL ART

SAT 6

In Our Lifetime

BEACON

1 - 5 p.m. Howland Cultural Center

477 Main St.

howlandculturalcenter.org

Paintings, photographs and illustrated children's books by 17 Black artists from the Hudson Valley will be on view to celebrate African American History Month. Through Feb. 28.

THURS 11

On Kawara

BEACON

Noon. Dia:Beacon

845-231-0811 | diaart.org

Museum educators will discuss Kawara's work and pieces on display via Zoom. Register at bit.ly/kawara-talk.

SAT 13

Emergence

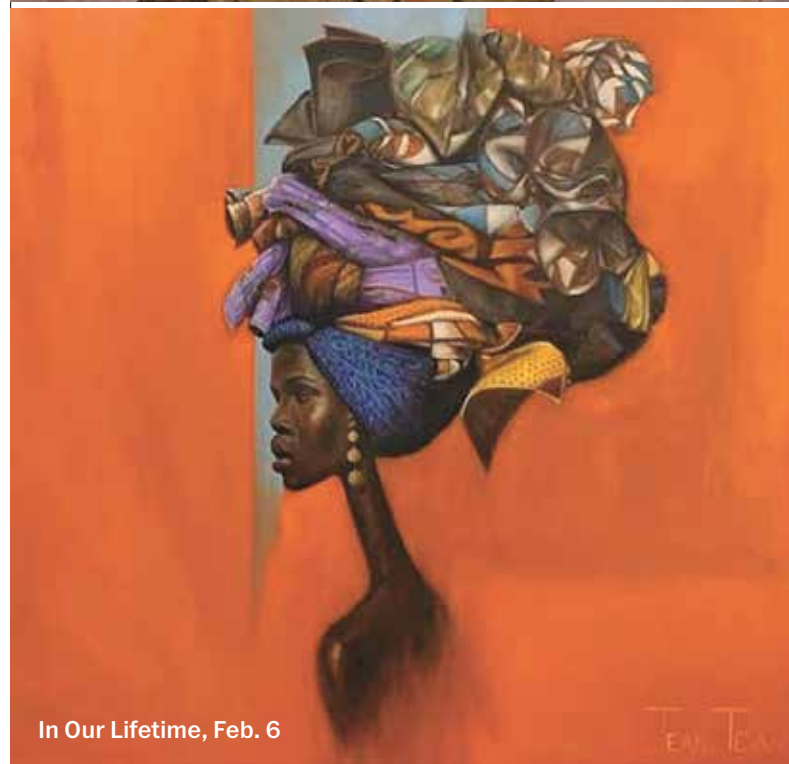
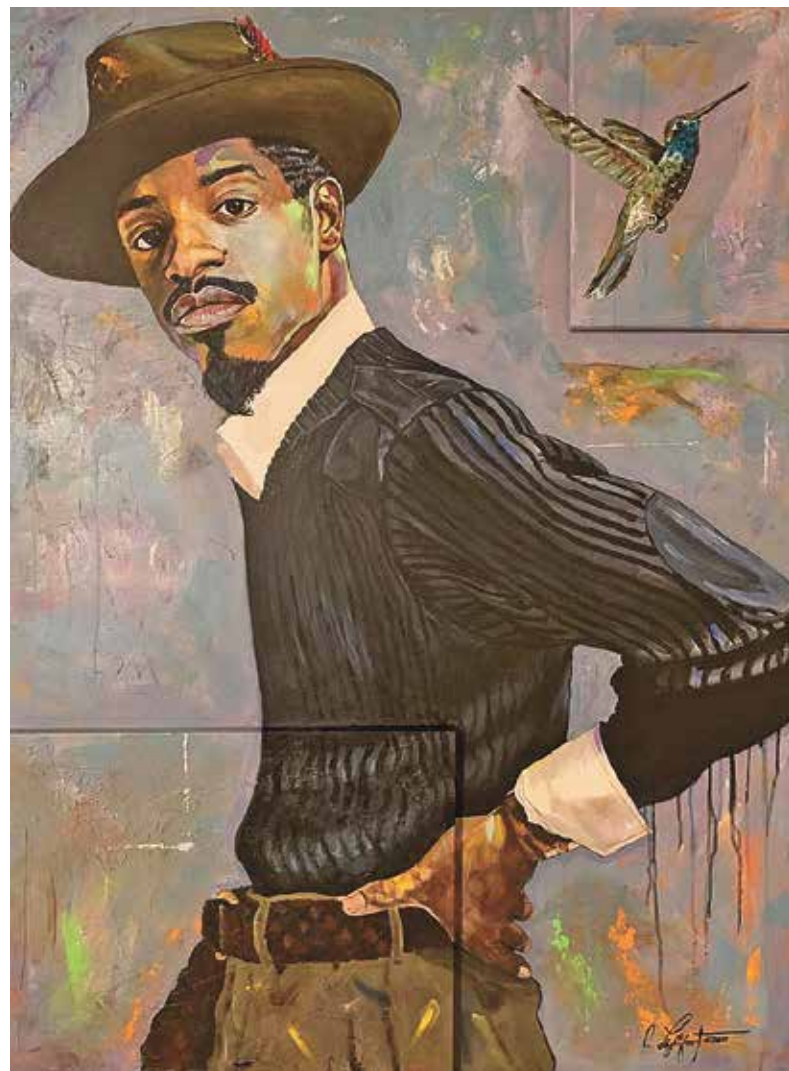
BEACON

Noon - 6 p.m. BAU Gallery

506 Main St. | 845-440-7584

baugallery.org

This annual juried show with works by artists from the region was curated by Samantha De Tillio.



In Our Lifetime, Feb. 6

ANIMALS & NATURE

SAT 6

Hudson River EagleFest

GARRISON

9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Boscobel

1601 Route 9D, Garrison

845-265-3638 | boscobel.org

Register for two-hour slots to view eagles from the grounds overlooking the Hudson River and Constitution Marsh as part of the annual event organized by the Teatown Lake Reservation. Staff from the Constitution Marsh Audubon Center and volunteers from the Putnam Highlands Audubon Society will be on hand to assist. Cost: \$12 (\$10 seniors, \$6 ages 5 to 18, free for children under 5)

KIDS & FAMILY

SAT 6

Seeing Sounds

BEACON

4 p.m. Compass Arts | compassarts.org

Students in grades 1 to 5 will make art while listening to music and learning about the visual representation of sound. Cost: Sliding scale

THURS 11

Katie the Catsitter

COLD SPRING

4 p.m. Split Rock Books | splitrockbks.com

Colleen AF Venable and Stephanie Yue will read from and discuss their book during this Zoom event for children ages 7 or older.

SAT 13

Story Walk and Crafts

COLD SPRING

Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040
butterfieldlibrary.org

Enjoy a Valentine's Day-themed story in the garden around the library and take home a craft to make later. Also SUN 14.

SAT 13

Outdoor Survival Skills

PATTERSON

10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
putnam.cce.cornell.edu

Children and teens ages 11 to 19 will learn mapping, orienteering, basic first aid and fire-building during this three-part, in-person class presented by the Cornell Cooperative Extension. Register by WED 10. *Cost: \$80 (\$45 members)*

SAT 13

Global Rhythms, Sounds and Songs

BEACON

4 p.m. Compass Arts
compassarts.org

Gwen Laster and Damon Banks, co-founders of Creative Strings Improvisers Ensemble, will lead this webinar for students in grades 6 to 12 with beats from around the world. *Cost: Sliding scale*



Attacca Quartet, Feb. 6

MUSIC

SAT 6

Attacca Quartet

POUGHKEEPSIE

7 p.m. Vassar
music.vassar.edu/concerts/webcast

In this livestream from the Bardavon, the Grammy Award-winning group will perform *Three Song Suite* by Flying Lotus, *String Quartet No. 3* by Chris Rogerson,

and *Three Essays* by Caroline Shaw. After the concert, the group will talk about their work amid the pandemic.

SAT 6

Jeremy Schonfeld

BEACON

8 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
845-831-4988
howlandculturalcenter.org

Schonfeld will perform *Anthem:*

Songs of Life (and Death) in America in a livestream from the Howland. See Page 18. *Cost: \$15*

WED 10

Carole King's Tapestry

POUGHKEEPSIE

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

This anniversary tribute will feature performances created for the Bardavon by Dar Williams, Jill

Sobule, Kate Pierson, Carly Simon and others. Watch at youtube.com/c/BardavonPresents/videos. Donations welcome.

CIVIC

MON 8

City Council

BEACON

7 p.m. Via Zoom
845-838-5011 | cityofbeacon.org

MON 8

School Board

BEACON

7 p.m. Beacon High School
845-838-6900 | beaconk12.org

TUES 9

Board of Trustees

COLD SPRING

7:30 p.m. Via Zoom
845-265-3611 | coldspringny.gov

WED 10

Village Board

NELSONVILLE

7 p.m. Via Zoom
845-265-2500 | nelsonvilleny.gov

THURS 11

Town Board

PHILIPSTOWN

7:30 p.m. Via Zoom
845-265-5200 | philipstown.com

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Via Zoom at Home
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12:30pm-1:30pm (5th-8th graders)
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The original jackets, worn by the Kamala Harris (front, center) and her sister Maya, in an undated family photo

Fashion *(from Page 1)*

for Meena to dress them in a way that calls back to their [Kamala and Maya's] childhood?" The head of iloveplum, Alexia Canza-Williams, messaged Meena, and we made a presentation with the photo and my illustrations of the girls wearing the coats. Meena replied, "Yes, as long as they're warm!"

We knew they had to be soft and cozy, so we lined the hood with [faux] fur. We weren't sure how many other people had reached out — there are so many more famous brands, and Meena is part of the scene. We couldn't imagine she would pick us. We thought, "We're a women-only startup but there must be others offering more."

Making the jackets on such short notice must have been a whirlwind.

It was. Normally we would have reached out months in advance, but for this, we did the sketches and got them to her right away. We worked so hard getting the fabric in the San Francisco and Oakland area [where Canza-Williams lives]. It ended up coming from Hobby Lobby, after Alexia searched everywhere. Our design director, Sydney Hawes, was sewing the last button on in a FedEx parking lot minutes before it was closing. It was such a happy moment, so tangible, to see all the work completed.

“ We put 10 of the coats for sale on the website, after people kept asking about it. When they sold out in a day, we decided to make 100, which sold out by the end of the second day.

Did you know for sure they would be worn?

We had no idea. We weren't sure if they were going to bring the children to the Capitol, considering what had happened two weeks before. We all got up at 5 a.m. to watch the news. There was a lot of: "Did you see them? Are they there?" We spotted Meena getting out of the car, wearing green, and we saw one little leopard-coated arm! Actually, I didn't even see that because I was trying to watch everything at once.

And now, everyone wants one ...

It's crazy. We had a huge amount of press. I was getting messages like, "Is it OK if *Harper's Bazaar* uses your sketches?" Um... yes... We put 10 of the coats for sale on the website after people kept asking about it. When they sold out in a day, we decided to make 100, which sold out by the end of the second day. We're going to lots of Hobby Lobbys now. We're delivering the fabric to a coat factory next week. They do beautiful work. It feels a little like *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* — that old-fashioned garment industry flavor before everything moved overseas.

That whole week brought such positive energy, especially after a long year full of shipping delays — COVID made my job difficult. But this has given us a new fire. It was powerful moment of history.

How did you get started in the industry?

I went to FIT [Fashion Institute of Technology]. I had a hard time the first year. It was draining. In your second year, you choose a specialization and children's wear was one of the choices. They do a big presentation to lure you in. The children's wear person had an interesting balance, whereas the other people talked about how cutthroat their specialty was.

After graduation I worked for Kahn



Vice-President Kamala Harris at the inauguration with her great-niece Amara, who is wearing a coat made by iloveplum.

Photo courtesy Meena Harris



Fabric for "Kamala" coats loaded in Trotiner-Conway's car in Cold Spring



Susan Trotiner-Conway's illustration of the jackets

Image provided

Lucas, a third-generation children's wear company, and Pip & Joy, where I found my passion for sourcing and fabric marketing, and developed negotiation skills. Along the way I met Alexia, who was full of wild ideas.

Last September, she convinced me and Sydney, an old friend of mine from FIT, to join her company. It was her spirit of being

willing to try anything that we both admired. I work mostly on the production side; working with factories, building relationships with vendors. Going to the great Asian fabric markets is my favorite part of the job.



The building in 1940, after years of neglect Putnam History Museum



An undated postcard photo of the inn

Bird & Bottle (from Page 1)

purchased the building a year ago for \$1.25 million. McAlpine, whose family owns the Roundhouse hotel and event space in Beacon, and who in 2019 was part of a group that reopened the restored Beacon Theater, is lending his expertise.

After buying the 8-acre property in February 2020, Tarter, who also owns the Wonderbar cocktail lounge adjacent to the Beacon Theater, and McAlpine were set to begin renovations when you-know-what hit a month later.

Tarter said this week that she wrestled with the idea of opening last year for outdoor dining along Indian Brook, “but people have an expectation for the Bird & Bottle. I want them to see that when we do come back, we’ve invested the time and effort to give her the care she needs. We want to restore her to her glory.”

Tarter, who served on the board of the Beacon Historical Society, said she’s always been fascinated by local history, and “the Bird” is steeped in it.

The structure was built near what is now the Old Albany Post Road by John Warren as a home in the mid-18th century and then, in 1761, converted by his son, Samuel, into a stagecoach stop known as Warren’s Tavern.

According to *Historic Houses of the Hudson Valley*, the tavern “was a welcome sight to weary travelers” and became a popular stopping place on the road between New York City and Albany. The tavern was commandeered by the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War as a regional headquarters for Gen. George Washington and, then, according to *Historic Houses*, attained its greatest renown after the war with the building of the Highland Turnpike, which ran parallel to the Post Road and ended at the tavern — by then known as Nelson’s — and greatly increased highway traffic.

The building was sold twice in the mid-1800s, as the introduction of the steamboat and railroad left less traffic and fewer customers for a hotel and inn. In the 1830s it was purchased by Justus Nelson, who converted it into a residence and built a grist and lumber mill on the banks of Indian Brook. His son, James Nelson, in 1882 overhauled the homestead. “One improvement has suggested another until enough work has been done to almost build a new house,” according to a contemporary account.

James’ son, also named James, decided

The Earliest Tavern

The earliest tavern in the Highlands was probably the log cabin built about 1730 along what is now the Old Albany Post Road by John Rogers, who leased a tract from the Philipse family that ran south from the present site of the Bird & Bottle to the Westchester County line.

“Rogers was always sure to have a traveler for the night if he reached the house in the middle of the afternoon, as no one ever left on his journey after that time owing to the danger of traveling through the Highlands after night and the difficulty of threading such a wild, mountainous and solitary path,” wrote William Blake in his 1849 *History of Putnam County*.

to become a minister and sold the building and mill in 1916 to Rhinelander Waldo, a former New York City police commissioner who during his lifetime purchased some 2,000 acres in the Highlands. But he abandoned the building and, in 1938, a group of 31 residents formed the Garrison Highlands Corp. to buy it. Two years later, they sold it to George Perkins, who operated Glynwood Farm and was the president of the Haldane school board.

He restored the building and named it The Bird & Bottle Inn. The inn became a hot spot, visited by Hollywood elite such as

Joan Crawford and Veronica Lake and, in 1954, earned a “superb dining distinction” award from *Holiday* magazine.

Most recently, Elaine Margolies bought the building at auction in 2004. It was closed from 2010 to 2015, when it was purchased by caterer Pamela Resch.

After the pandemic shutdown last year, Tarter and McAlpine decided to use the downtime to expand the scope of their renovations. Their plans now include a restaurant and lounge (with historic taproom) and indoor and outdoor seating. On the exterior, the signature yellow paint will remain.

“We’re not reinventing the property,” said McAlpine, whose Roundhouse project became an anchor for East Main Street in Beacon after it opened in 2012. “It just needed some love — to be taken apart and put back together.”

A tented patio will be used as an event space for up to 150 people and, during a later phase, a cottage and part of the main building will be renovated with guest accommodations.

The couple hopes to open the event and dining space — likely outdoors, at least to start — later this spring. The menu will be “farm-to-table,” with Adam Sternberg, the chef at Wonderbar in Beacon, on board as executive chef.

Tarter’s enthusiasm for the project and its history is readily apparent.

“If those walls could talk, just imagine the people who stopped and had a meal there,” she said. “It’s got so many ties to major historical figures. I can’t wait to tell the stories and serve people a really good meal.”



Joseph Frisenda (1943-2021)

Joseph Frisenda a lifelong resident of Cold Spring passed away suddenly on February 1, 2021. He was 77.

Born on May 9, 1943 in Cold Spring to the late Rosario and Josephine DiPane Frisenda.

Joe was a retired mechanic from the MTA Railroad and owned Joseph’s Beauty Salon with his wife Jean.

Joe was a member of Our Lady of Loretto Church where he served as an usher for many years and a member of the Knights of Columbus Loretto Council #536. He enjoyed his daily walks throughout the village and his beloved rose garden. Most recently Joe traveled with his son Joe and grandson Octavian to Rome where 3 generations of Frisenda’s got to explore Italy together.

Joe is survived by his loving son Joseph Frisenda and his girlfriend Beatrice Goldsmith, his cherished grandson Octavian Frisenda along with numerous nieces, nephews and extended family.

He was predeceased by his beloved wife Jean Frisenda in 2017 and his siblings, Santa Huston, Florence Weise and Salvatore Frisenda.

Friends may call on Sunday February 7, 2021 from 2:30-4pm at Clinton Funeral Home, 21 Parrott Street, Cold Spring. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Monday February 8, 2021 at 11:00am at Our Lady of Loretto Church. Interment to follow in Cold Spring Cemetery. In lieu of flowers please make donations to Our Lady of Loretto Church.

NOTICE

"COMMUNITY CHOICE AGGREGATION (CCA)" VILLAGE OF NELSONVILLE PUBLIC MEETING

Will be held online on:

THURSDAY, February 11th, 2021 from 6 - 7 pm

Meeting Link

<https://tinyurl.com/nelsonville11feb>

Please join us to learn how the Village of Nelsonville is joining neighboring communities in a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program to provide clean, affordable electricity to local households and businesses.

Event brought to you by Village of Nelsonville, Joule Community Power (a division of Joule Assets) and Hudson Valley Energy:

Questions?

Please email info@hudsonvalleycommunitypower.com or call 845.859.9099 ext. 2



PAID NOTICE



Jeremy Schonfeld

Photo by Christian Campbell

Writing for Himself

After a move to Beacon, songwriter returns to roots

By Alison Rooney

In whatever role, as composer, lyricist or songwriter, Jeremy Schonfeld usually thinks big, building his projects around complicated ideas.

His latest album, *Brooklyn to Beacon*, tackles, he says, “the never-ending search for meaning and purpose in our lives, espe-

cially as we get older. Are we still relevant? Do we still have something to say? What are the legacies we will leave behind?”

Selections from the album will be featured in a performance with Will Bryant called *Anthem: Songs of Life (and Death) in America* livestreamed from the Howland Cultural Center in Beacon at 8 p.m. on Saturday (Feb. 6). Tickets are \$15 at howlandculturalcenter.tix.com.

Schonfeld, 51, says he had been feeling dissatisfied with his professional life. “I’d



Jeremy Schonfeld's two younger children at the piano in a photo that was used for the cover of his latest album

Photo provided

been writing shows during my 40s and I felt like somewhere along the way I had lost my ability to sit down at the piano and write songs I wanted to write,” he says. “I’d become this commissioned deadline writer and, as an aging musician, was struggling with the idea of identity. I’d consider: ‘Am I the composer Jeremy or the singing-at-the-piano Jeremy?’”

Once he and his wife and two young children moved from Brooklyn to Beacon in 2018, he began writing songs just for himself again. He also headed across the river to collaborate with other musicians at Building Records, a Marlboro studio housed in what was the original site of the music venue The Falcon.

“I worked with some young guys with old souls,” he recalls. “It was good to collaborate, and to make an album where I was singing what I wrote. The guys told me I should make this album. I didn’t have any grand expectations.

“When you go through the songs, there’s a lot of talk about aging, love, gratitude,” he says. “The album has no angst, no anger. Some of the songs, like ‘Brooklyn to Beacon,’ came from walking around town, opening up to a different kind of life.”

Music has always been part of his life. When he grew up in St. Louis, there was a piano in the house and “lots of lessons and music camp,” he says. After attending the Indiana University and Berklee schools of music, Schonfeld returned home and then moved to New York City at 21, courtesy of a BMI Lehmen-Engel musical theater workshop sponsorship.

There, he fell in love, married and had a daughter, now 24, while doing studio and commercial work and recording his material. By the 1990s, he says, “a lot of musicians were hitting the road, doing it by bus and truck, but I had a family so that wasn’t going to happen to me.”

At 30, he created a concept album-turned-theater piece called *Drift*. It tack-

led “the emotionally turbulent journey of a man experiencing that first year after his marriage has ended,” he says. That led to a contract with Sh-K-Boom records and more musical theater work; he has since written many other shows.

“A lot of my drive was centered on being a Holocaust survivor’s son,” he says, “Never feeling 100 percent settled is a common thread. You don’t just survive, you survive for a reason, succeed in a way that carries the religion. That was hard for me, living up to that self-imposed idea.

“By the end of my 30s, my father was becoming sick, and I started working on *Iron and Coal*, a father-son piece, about the father coping with the idea that he survived. I spent years on this hard, huge-scale project, done in Vienna. My father died the day it was mastered.”

Schonfeld and his second wife, Sarah-Jane, a New Zealand-born actor and equine therapist, were married onstage at the Neighborhood Playhouse, and have two children, ages 3 and 8. Their move to Beacon was prompted by a desire for change, he says.

“We had friends, artists who had moved here a couple of years before us, who beckoned,” he recalls. “We had also been looking at Nashville, but it dawned on me that I didn’t actually need the big-city part. I’m not giving up the status of calling myself a musician or artist by living outside the city. And actually, life is pretty awesome when you have some space to breathe.”

Early in the pandemic, Schonfeld and his family headed to New Zealand. But they’re happily back in Beacon, and Schonfeld is eager to share his music with the community. He describes *Anthem* as “a look at the country and the 20 years we’ve endured since 9/11 and how the thread that ties us together is the stories we tell and those who hear them. It’s something I hope will become a larger piece, or could be a concept album. The evening is all under that umbrella.”

NOTICE

PHILIPSTOWN PLANNING BOARD

Public Hearing – February 18th, 2021

The Philipstown Planning Board for the Town of Philipstown, New York will hold a public hearing on Thursday, February 18th 2021 starting at 7:30 p.m. via zoom to hear the following appeal. If you would like to attend, please email kmacintyre@philipstown.com to request login information before 7:00 pm on February 18th, 2021.

**Alice Curtis Desmond & Hamilton Fish Library,
472 Route 403, Garrison, NY**

TM# 71.6-1-12&71.6-1-13

(Applicant seeks to install a ground mounted solar ribbon array integrated with the landscape’s natural topography. We would also like to create a Discovery Path to provide community members welcoming and ADA-accessible outdoor walkways and opportunities to learn about habitats that occur naturally on the library’s property as well as solar energy and design.)

At said hearing all persons will have the right to be heard. Copies of the application, plat map, and other related materials may be seen in the Office of the Planning Board at the Philipstown Building Department.

Dated at Philipstown, New York, January 21st, 2021



Beacon photos by Jeff Simms (2)



Cold Spring photo by Michael Turton

SNOW SHOTS

In the event you missed it, the Highlands received as much as 2 feet of snow on Monday and Tuesday.



Cold Spring photos by Teresa Lagerman (3)

Mouths to Feed

Burning Love

By Celia Barbour

Returning from a walk in the woods the other evening, my children and I spied a small campfire in a neighbor's yard. No one was sitting by it. So potent is the lure of firelight in an indigo dusk that, but for our good manners, we might have walked up their driveway and made ourselves comfortable by its side.

Fire pits were the must-have backyard accessory of fall 2020, and my husband, Peter, built us a brilliant one. Yet, after a small flurry of socially distanced outdoor gatherings, I've been avoiding ours since November, when we held an election-night anxiety-dispelling party (its effects were not, sadly, immediate).

It's not that I've come to doubt a flame's ability to banish the cold or to warm weary hearts, but I resist the steps needed to get there: The chilling of the fingers and toes as you gather the kindling and build the structure; the chilling of everything else as you wait for the fire to grow from flicker to blaze.

But now here we are in February, the month when winter settles in and makes itself at home. And when "home," meanwhile, shifts from cozy to claustrophobic even in the best of years. It is high time, in other words, to revisit the outdoor fire pit.

Luckily, lying smack at the proverbial heart of this month is a perfect occasion to do so. St. Valentine's Day will soon arrive with its reminders that love thrives on creativity, generosity and a spark of daring.

As well as on chocolate. Preferably heated and served in a mug that will warm your hands and belly as you sit by a fire that will warm your feet.

In recent decades, packaged hot chocolate mixes have turned what used to be a wonderful indulgence into a bland sugar fix. (A single instant hot-chocolate packet contains 28 grams of sugar—nearly half an adult male's daily recommended intake.) In my opinion, if you're going to bother drink-



Melted Hot Chocolate

Makes 2 to 3 servings

Use chocolate bars you'd want to eat on their own, not baking chocolate, for this recipe. You can adjust the ratio of milk to dark chocolates, but don't eliminate the milk chocolate completely even if you prefer dark — it adds an essential silkiness to the final concoction.



ing hot chocolate, it should be a great treat, worthy of whatever pangs of nutritional guilt it might induce.

To that end, I developed a recipe inspired by the best hot chocolate I've ever had. Made by the late City Bakery, a Flatiron District cafe with a cult following, it was essentially a melted, high-quality chocolate bar thinned with cream and milk. (I realize "thinned" is a misnomer here.) City Bakery wisely offered it in shotglass-size cups in addition to 6-ounce versions. And every February, during their annual hot chocolate festival, they served a different flavored option each day (including caramel, bourbon, cinnamon,

INGREDIENTS

1½ ounces Lindt milk chocolate, or other good-quality bar (see headnote)

1½ ounces Lindt 70% dark chocolate, or other good quality bar (see note)

¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon heavy cream

1½ cups milk

Pinch salt

2 teaspoons pure cocoa powder

1 teaspoon vanilla

Marshmallows for serving, optional

Dash vanilla vodka, bourbon or flavored liqueur for serving, optional

RECIPE

Warm a thermos with hot tap water, then drain and place near stove. Break the chocolate into small pieces. In the top of a double boiler or heatproof bowl set over a pot of simmering water, combine the chocolate and cream. Heat, stirring regularly, until the chocolate is completely melted. Reduce heat and keep warm.

Meanwhile, warm the milk in a small saucepan over medium heat until nearly simmering, stirring frequently.

When the chocolate is melted, whisk in the salt, cocoa powder and vanilla. Whisk in the steaming milk until combined. Transfer immediately to the warmed thermos. Serve hot, with marshmallows and/or liquor.

stout and banana peel) alongside the pure-chocolate paradigm.

As it happens, my homage to their hot chocolate was on the menu at the aforementioned election-night party. Rather than playing around with flavors, I placed a bottle each of vanilla-flavored vodka, coffee liqueur and bourbon next to some thermoses of it on the bar table. People quickly figured out how to mix their own. It was a fitting way to toast a night when we were filled with the collective hope that love, good work and shared warmth might vanquish our troubles. A quarter of a year later, it's a formula that still works.



My Two Best Winter Fire Pit Tips

One of my favorite things about outdoor fires is that they're a chance to burn the (dead) wood from pine trees, which has a wonderful fragrance and ignites easily, even when wet. This wood, which includes hemlock, spruce and white pine, can't be used in indoor fireplaces because the creosote it releases as it burns can cause chimney fires. Even after a snowfall, when most kindling is damp, you can usually start an outdoor fire using the feathery dead twigs you'll find growing low on the trunks and bottom boughs of most pine trees, graduating to medium-size dead pine branches to help the fire grow. Once it's blazing, even slightly damp logs from your woodpile should be able to catch.

If you have to dig out your fire pit after a snowfall, don't forget to also dig a long trough leading away from the fire, on the side opposite the prevailing wind. A fire needs to be able to draw air in at its base, but a wind tunnel that catches every passing gust will blow out your sparks before they can catch.

Photos by Henry Weed

NOTICE

Haldane Transportation Requests

Due by April 1st

Haldane Central School District is accepting applications for Private/Parochial School Transportation for the 2021/2022 school year.

Completed applications should be mailed to

Haldane Central School District
15 Craigsides Drive, Cold Spring, NY 10516
ATTN: Transportation Dept.

and received not later than April 1st, 2021

If you have any questions,

Contact Kristine Kallesten
at the Haldane Transportation
Department at

845 265-9254 ext. 171.

Applications can be found online at haldaneschool.org

NOTICE

KINDERGARTEN PARENT ORIENTATION MEETING AND KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

The Haldane Central School District is beginning the Kindergarten registration process for the 2021-2022 school year. If you have a child who will be turning five on or before December 31, 2021 and you live in the Haldane Central School District, please complete and print the registration forms from our website www.haldaneschool.org. Click on Quick Parent Links, Registration then Kindergarten Registration.

Parents are invited to attend the Kindergarten Orientation Meeting on Monday, February 1, 2021 at 7:00 PM via Zoom. Registering for attendance is a 2 step process. Please visit our website and click on the Orientation Link to get started.

Registration will take place on Monday, February 8th - Friday, February 12th. Please contact Sue Hylka in the Elementary Office to schedule your appointment, 845-265-9254 ext 122. Parents who are registering incoming children must bring all completed Registration and Health Forms along with copies of their child's Birth Certificate, Immunization Record, and required Proof of Residency Documents indicating that the family resides in the Haldane School District.

OBITUARIES

Jack Eaton (1926-2021)

John P. "Jack" Eaton, 94, of Cold Spring, died Jan. 29.

Born in Easton, Pennsylvania, on May 27, 1926, he was the son of Paul and Hannah (Wilkins) Eaton. He graduated from high school at age 16 and enlisted in the U.S. Army to serve in World War II.

After earning a biology degree from Lafayette College in 1947, Jack moved to Greenwich Village, where he embraced the life of a bohemian, finding work as a page in the burgeoning world of television at NBC Studios.

Jack became entranced by the story of the Titanic at age 20 when he saw artist Harper Goff's painting of the sinking liner in *Esquire*: It was the start of a lifelong, passionate interest. In 1963, Jack became the founding historian in 1963 of the Titanic Enthusiasts of America (now the Titanic Historical Society) and in 1989 he co-founded the Titanic International Society with Charles Haas.

In 1986, Jack's first book on the disaster, co-written with Haas, *Titanic: Triumph and Tragedy*, was published. It featured many research discoveries, including the first publication of the ship's cargo stowage plan, cargo manifest, details of post-sinking lawsuits and a full account of the role of the Halifax. By its third edition in 2011, the book included more than 1,000 photographs and was known in maritime circles as "the Titanic Bible."

Jack was co-historian on the first Titanic research and recovery expedition in 1993, when, at age 67, he became the oldest person to make the perilous 12,500-foot dive to the ship's wreck and debris field.

He wrote two other books on the Titanic, as well as a non-maritime book in 1982 that combined his love of felines and cuisine: *The Disgusting Despicable Cat Cookbook*.

Jack spent 40 years as an admitting officer at Roosevelt Hospital, often working in the emergency room. After his retirement in 1995, he moved to Cold Spring, where he made friends while walking his dog, Dexter, and served four years on the village Planning Board.

Jack has no family surviving. Memo-



rial donations may be made to the Titanic International Society, P.O. Box 416, Midland Park, NJ 07432 (titanicinternationalsociety.org), or to a favorite charity, especially those preserving ocean-liner history or supporting classical music.

Mike Kelliher (1950-2021)

Michael Aloysius Kelliher, 70, died in Salt Lake City on Jan. 11 of leukemia.

He was born in Beacon on May 5, 1950, the son of James and Agnes (Root) Kelliher. "Big Mike" served in the U.S. Marines during the Vietnam War and was later commander of VFW Post 666 in Beacon.

Mike was an owner-operator with North American Van Lines and held other jobs. After visiting Ennis, Montana, for a Marine Corps reunion, he decided 20 years ago to retire there.

Before moving to Montana, he was a member of the Knights of Columbus, Trinity Council No. 445 and a 50-year member of the Mase Hook and Ladder Fire Co. in Beacon, where he played Santa Claus at Christmas and delivered candy on the fire truck to the neighborhood children.

He is survived by his siblings: Patrick Kelliher of Saratoga Springs, James Kelliher of New Hamburg, Mary Baxter (Daniel) of Galway, Kathy Smith (Edward) of Petersburg and Timothy Kelliher (Tina) of Beacon.

Family and friends will gather on Monday (Feb. 8) from 5 to 8 p.m. at River-view Funeral Home by Halvey in Beacon. Members of the VFW and Marine Corps League, Mase Hook and Ladder and the Knights of Columbus will each hold services starting at 6 p.m.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Tuesday (Feb. 9) at 10 a.m. at St. Joachim Church in Beacon, followed by burial with military honors at St. Joachim Cemetery in Beacon. Memorial donations may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project (wounded-warriorproject.org) or the American Cancer Society (cancer.org).

**Brian McNeary (1942-2021)**

Brian J. McNeary, 78, of Garrison, died Jan. 23 of lung cancer.

He was born in Brooklyn on Aug. 24, 1942, the son of John and Catherine (Lemon) McNeary. He attended La Salle Academy and St. John's University. In 1966 he married Alison Struck at St. Joseph's Church in Newton, New Jersey.

Brian began his career on Wall Street in the "back room" and worked his way up to becoming a specialist and partner with Murphy, Marseilles and Smith, and then senior vice president at Fleet Specialists before retiring from Bank of America in 2004.

He served as a founding committee member of the Garrison School Forest and as president of Highlands Country Club. After retiring, Brian and Alison split their time between Garrison and Sarasota, Florida.

Besides his wife of 54 years, he is survived by his children, Heather Duell (Stephen), Jennifer MacDonald (Peter) and Sean McNeary (Anastasiya); as well as six grandchildren: Alison, Jacqueline, Luke, Gwendolyn, Aurora and Shea.

He is also survived by his brother-in-law, William Keenan; his sister, Marcia Seredynski (Peter); and his brother, Allen McNeary (Priscilla).

Memorial donations may be made to the Philipstown Food Pantry (presbychurch-coldspring.org).

**Elliott Zaslansky (1951-2021)**

Elliott Zaslansky, 69, a longtime Fishkill resident who owned the Cape Cod Leather Co. in Cold Spring, died Jan. 5 at his home.

He was born Oct. 20, 1951, in Fair Lawn, New Jersey, the son of Harry and Violet (Dash) Zaslansky.

Elliott owned and operated the Cape Cod Leather Co. with his wife, Mary, for the past 32 years. Seven years ago, the couple opened the Cold Spring store. Elliott also had a passion for producing and playing music.

He is survived by his wife, the former Mary Mulligan, and a son, Matthew Zaslansky, as well as his stepbrothers and sisters-



in-law, Marty Zaslansky (Roberta) and Sheldon Zaslansky (Marla).

A funeral service took place on Jan. 6 at Libby Funeral Home in Beacon, followed by interment at the Fishkill Rural Cemetery Mausoleum. Memorial donations may be made to Musicares (grammy.com/musicares).

Other Recent Deaths**Philipstown**

Frank Bumpus, 98
Robert Canfield, 89
Helen Carufe, 95
Bob Cresci, 77
Fr. Jerry DiGiralamo, 75
Ted Forlow, 89
Joe Frisenda, 77
Joe Gilmore, 76
Nancy Junjulas, 79
Anna Kantor, 78
Hans Moeller, 89
Jake Nolfo, 93
Artie Siccardi, 89
Buddy VanTassel, 56
Audrey May Williams, 93

Beacon

Teesha Amoroso, 79
Claudette Black, 95
Jack Bolander, 87
Ofelia Caro, 83
Donna Cook, 85
Sister Lydia Lojo Cruz, 90
Anna Diedrich, 69
Ruth Duda, 87
Eugene Feldman, 62
Patricia Fox, 92
Joe Galletta, 86
Geraldine Garrett, 88
Ann Marie Garrison, 88
Kurt Hager, 84
Kathy Hopper, 77
Mike Kelliher, 70
Joe Lamoree, 94
Joe Larkin, 89
David Lucas, 86
Ralph Marinaccio, 87
Scarlett Mendoza, newborn
Joseph Mordas, 94
Ginny Moseman, 89
Victor Olijnyk, 82
George Pacenza, 71
Caroline Papula, 65
Rose Polhemus, 92
John Powlis Jr., 70
Rose Pendleton, 90
Lonnie Reed, 88
Mark Riccardi, 58
George Rihm, 65
Chic Roccio, 80
Leona Schultheis, 96
Bob Sheehan, 87
Bob Sugg, 71
Lucy Supple, 87
Stan Tatur, 71
Steve Tomlins, 41
Kathleen Vermilyea, 98
Ronnie Weyant, 59
Jeroy Williams, 58
Mauricia Wilson, 79

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A HAHNEMÜHLE CERTIFIED STUDIO

For obituaries, see
highlandscurrent.org/obits.



This feature is designed as a counterweight to all the bad news in the world that weighs people down. We could share a photo of a baby, or a photo of a dog, but we are giving you both. How many newspapers can say that? Faith and Ed Kuck of Mahopac shared this photo of their granddaughter, Sophie, who decided that Benji needed a bow. Oliver is in the background. If you have a photo of a baby and a dog, submit it for consideration to editor@highlandscurrent.org.

Current Classifieds

SERVICES

PSYCHOTHERAPY — Columbia University PhD, fully licensed LCSW with 35 years psychotherapy experience in Putnam and Westchester. Doctoral training in both research and clinical cognitive behavioral therapy with adults. Teaching, training and supervision of other clinicians, Fordham Univ, Columbia Univ, Lehman College. Accepting clients for online psychotherapy via secure HIPPA-compliant platform. Call to discuss how my qualifications may meet your needs, 860-466-9528.

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR WRITING AND STUDY SKILLS — Local expert coach in writing and study skills offers guidance to students from middle school through graduate school. NYU MA, editor, writer, educator, experienced with kids and adult learners. Remote for now. Email mrsgtutor888@gmail.com.

HOUSEKEEPING AND OTHER SERVICES — Available for cleaning, laundry, ironing, accompanying patients to medical appointments, business support, admin, data entry or any local errands required in Cold Spring, Garrison, Beacon and Fishkill. I am happy to help whether for an hour

or more; whatever your needs are. Email sandiafonso70@gmail.com or call 845-245-5976.

DONATE YOUR CAR OR TRUCK — Benefits Heritage for the Blind. Tax deductible, free towing, all paperwork taken care of. Call 1-833-304-0651.

POSITIONS WANTED

CARETAKER AVAILABLE — Caretaker with 20+ years experience available to maintain home & property including: repairs; gardening; landscaping; pool care; convenience services (errands); pet care, misc. Flexible to a variety of needs. Resume & references available. Contact Greg at 914-618-2779 or gproth24@gmail.com.

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Puzzles

CROSS CURRENT

ACROSS

1. Saudi native

5. Job-safety org.

9. Old CIA foe

12. Mentor

13. Err

14. Shoe width

15. Secondhand

16. Watch chains

17. Away from SSW

18. Slightly

19. And so on (Abbr.)

20. Tackles weeds

21. Longing

23. Hearty quaff

25. Ex-hausted

28. Castor's twin

32. Silents star Mary

33. Country singer
Shelton

34. Arrest

36. Dwellings

37. Meadow

38. Dancer Charisse

39. Rage

42. Trio after Q

44. Raw minerals

48. Exist

49. — Domini

50. *Damn Yankees*
vamp

51. Irate

52. Tale teller

53. Maui meal

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

12 13 14

15 16 17

18 19 20

21 22 23 24

25 26 27 28 29 30 31

32 33

34 35 36

37 38

39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47

48 49 50

51 52 53

54 55 56

54. Golfer Ernie

55. Track circuits

56. Holler

DOWN

1. Oaxaca water

2. Reddish brown

3. Region

4. "That'll Be the
Day" singer

5. Insult

6. Coin aperture

7. Wheel cover

8. Six-pack muscles

9. Vegas game

10. Hereditary unit

11. Honey bunch?

20. Louis Armstrong
song

22. Haunting

24. Hotel area

25. "Humbug!"

26. Suits network

27. Disco guy on
The Simpsons

29. Young fellow

30. Guitar's kin

31. Ballot marks

35. Aslan's land

36. Oscar
contenders

39. Notoriety

40. Russian river

41. Some wines

43. Crisp cookie

45. Libertine

46. Mideast airline

47. Author Bellow

49. 100%

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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 rope-soled cloth shoes (11)

2 not open to compromise (9)

3 easily shattered (9)

4 "The Scream" painter Munch (6)

5 surpass on an ascent (8)

6 forehead fringe (5)

7 winter pajama fabric (7)

SOLUTIONS


ESP	ARD	HEA	IL	BRE
PIG	IMB	EL	OU	FL
TCL	GS	BLE	DED	LES
AKA	ANN	ADR	BAN	EDV

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SUDO CURRENT

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

Puzzle Page Sponsored by



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845-265-2122

Answers for Jan. 29 Puzzles

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

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

1. ORGANICS, 2. MICHIGANDER, 3. WISE, 4. MAIN, 5. VEXING, 6. INVICTUS, 7. SHOWROOM

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

SPORTS



Follow us at twitter.com/hcurrentsports

Preview: Boys' Basketball

By Skip Pearlman

BEACON HIGH SCHOOL

With winter "high-risk" sports approved to begin practices this week, the Beacon boys' basketball team hit the court running. But even a shortened season of 12 games may be challenging because the Bulldogs lost all of their starters to graduation.

In Region 1, which includes Dutchess and Putnam counties, the 12-game season will be followed in early March by a tournament. (State tournaments for winter sports have already been canceled.)

Teams opened practice on Wednesday (Feb. 3) — unless delayed by the snowstorm — and need to complete six practices before their first game.

Amid the COVID-19 shutdown, sports deemed by the state to be high-risk because of their close physical contact had been delayed from their November start.

"I didn't think it was going to happen," said Coach Scott Timpano. "Once we got the green light, it's been insane trying to get everything ready. There are still more questions than answers, but for the seniors it's great that they have a way to end their high school careers. And for the younger guys it's a good chance to improve."

Last year's squad fell to Poughkeepsie in the playoffs and finished at 9-13.



Beacon coach Scott Timpano is looking to rebuild a team that lost all its starters to graduation.

Beacon lost its top five scorers, including All-Section pick Quasir Hayes and All-League guard Shane Green.

Only four players — seniors Regan Ladue (center) and Caden Cutinella (guard), and juniors Chase Green (guard) and Dillon Kelly (guard) — are back. Joining the Bulldogs are sophomore guards Adrian Beato, Leo Gecaj, Darien Gillins and Jack Philipbar; sophomore forward Gavin Ledoux; and junior forward Simmy Mann. More players could be added after the team's first few days of practice, Timpano said.

"Chase and Dillon are our most experienced players," he said. "Darien, Adrian — we're hoping they'll be able to improve under greater pressure. It's a big jump from freshman to varsity ball." With only two seniors and a short season, he said he hopes to give the younger players opportunities to play "and get through the season without problems. We haven't been this young in some time."

Beacon hopes to open its season with a game late next week. Spectators will not be permitted.

HALDANE HIGH SCHOOL

The Blue Devils were thrilled to get the news that their season was a go, and that it could begin as early as next week.

Coach Joe Virgadamo held his first practice on Wednesday (Feb. 3) and used the words "awesome" and "amazing" to describe it — probably not typical of any first practice.

"You could see the kids smiling through their masks," he said. "I still don't think they've realized we may be playing games next week. They have a lot of mixed emotions. A lot of them haven't played a game since March 2, when we lost to Tuckahoe" in the sectional tournament.

"They're excited to be back with friends, and they're excited to have something," he said. "You can feel the positive energy."

Last year's team finished 15-6, earning the No. 2 seed in Class C before falling to Tuckahoe, 42-38, in the semifinals at the Westchester County Center.

This year's squad lost All-Conference frontcourt powers Mame Diba and Matt Champlin (now playing for Utica College) to graduation. But the Blue Devils return three starters with strong experience in senior guards Dan and Darrin Santos and sophomore forward Matteo Cervone.



Haldane's Matteo Cervone during a tournament game in March

File photos by S. Pearlman

Also returning from last year's team are seniors Christian Pezzullo (guard), Jonathan Bradley (guard) and Vincenzo Scanga (forward), and junior Soren Holmbo (guard). Joining the team are juniors Solie Gaines, Stefano Hammond, Julian Forcello, Ryan Irwin, Rob Viggiano and Giancarlo Carone.

"Irwin and Viggiano are versatile players with great shots and a great attitude," Virgadamo said. "They're well-balanced and can be a problem on the offensive end. I'm expecting good things from the others, as well."

Virgadamo will look to the Santos twins and Cervone to lead the way. "They'll give us hustle and communication," the coach said. "Those three and Soren will be our floor generals."

"I'm looking to play as many as we can," he added. "We want to make it the best possible season. We'll run in transition and create havoc."

Virgadamo said wearing masks during play could take some getting used to. "They know it's the norm now, and all teams are in the same boat. I just hope our opponents, and our players, have fun."

Haldane is expected to play its traditional league opponents Putnam Valley, Pawling, North Salem and Croton-Harmon, followed by a regional playoff. Spectators will not be permitted at games.

“We want to make it the best possible season. We'll run in transition, and create havoc.”

~ Haldane Coach Joe Virgadamo