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 the Proud Boys.

(Continued on Page 6)

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)
50 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.

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 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.
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, Asiat ic 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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Thank You for Your Support!
The vaccine
Your article on the vaccination of prisoners and staff at our correctional facilities included a new example of bureaucratic red-tape arrogance (“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 the 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 chatty 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
card, was located on Verplanck Avenue. It was replaced in 1960 by a building on Dele-
van 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 Delean 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 Schenack 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 human-
ity’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 park-
ing 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 cans 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 boule-
vards are streets with low motorized traf-

"I want to thank everyone on the panel that I have met so far and that I have not had 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 some-
times charged circumstances. Even as

Mayor Lee Kyriacou is upbeat on the possibility of all these recommendations landing an even more comprehen-
sive 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 economi-
cally 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 whirring 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 Mecheley, 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.

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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 some-
times charged circumstances. Even as

Putnam Releases Police Report

Legislature will consider

March 4

The Putnam County Police Review Panel, created after Gov. Andrew Cuomo last year ordered municip-

ities 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 putnamcoun-
ty.com/policeviewpanel. 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:

Register in advance for this webinar: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_HpAhhb3ctRZzSOGxYhHLi0WA

Webinar ID: 827 0051 3464

Password: PLAN

Iphone One Tap: 1-646-558-8656, 82700513464 
Telephone: 1-646-558-8656 | Passcode: 106763

OR, find the meeting through Zoom by searching the web page:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_HpAhhb3ctRZzSOGxYhHLi0WA

Webinar ID: 827 0051 3464

Passcode: PLAN

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

The second Beacon hospital, on Verplanck Avenue

(Continued from Page 4)
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 purlin-ing 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 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

Conflict over independence

By Liz Schevetchuk-Appleman

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.”

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.”

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 Garrison Volunteer Ambulance Corps 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 ratification 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.”

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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.

Shea 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, Sherman 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 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

ew 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 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 Mollot, 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 nursing homes had to admit or re-admit residents released from hospitals who were “medically stable.” The attorney general’s report found the order consistent with guidance from the federal government but said it “may have contributed to increased risk” of infection and fatalities.

The Fishkill Center admitted 10 COVID-19 patients from hospitals, the Putnam Nursing and Rehabilitation Center admitted six and Wingate at Beacon received none, according to federal data. Of the 310 nursing homes that took in patients from hospitals, 304 already had a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case before the admission, Zucker said.
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 receiving 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 61 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 let a single dose go to waste.”

- While Blacks account for 17 percent of 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 7,987; 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 Thursday. “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 845-486-2555. 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.

Where to Check for Appointments
- dutchessny.gov/covidvaccine
- putnamcountyny.com/covid-19-vaccine-information
- covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov

CURRENT CONVERSATIONS

COVID-19 School Update

Q&A with Haldane and Garrison

Live Zoom event with Superintendent Philip Benante

HALDNAE: FEB. 10, 7:00–7:30PM
GARRISON: FEB. 17, 7:00–7:30PM

REGISTER TO ATTEND:
highlandscurrent.org/current-conversations
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, she said, 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 said, 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 $8,500 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 undecided.”

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 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)
- Budget & Finance (chair)
- 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 MichaelTurton

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 & Associates 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-

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, including 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 $30,000 — “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

Surprise them with a free Valentine’s Day message in The Current!

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highlandscurrent.org/valentine
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
Keeping Bedlam on Track

Artistic director, now in Cold Spring, plans next move
By Allison 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 on stage? What can I do next? I keep those images in the back of my mind but often

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 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.
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
hs-shakespeare.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
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

TUES 9
Social Justice and Health Equity
GARRISON
Noon, Hastings Center
thefastingscenter.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
cshphilipstown.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.

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
GARRISON
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 and older.

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: $22 ($18 seniors, $8 ages 5 to 18, free for children under 5)
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

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
845-838-6500 | beaconk12.org

TUES 9
Board of Trustees
COLD SPRING
7:30 p.m. Via Zoom
845-265-3611 | coldspringny.gov

THURS 11
Town Board
PHILIPSTOWN
7:30 p.m. Via Zoom
845-265-5200 | philipstown.com

WINTER BREAK WORKSHOP for Kids
School’s out, let’s make ART!
February 15-17
TWO OPTIONS:

In-Person

Via Zoom

In-person at Garrison Art Center
10am-3pm – Covid precautions followed
2nd-8th graders (two small groups)
$60 per day, includes materials

Via Zoom at Home
10am-11am (2nd-4th graders)
12:30pm-1:30pm (5th-8th graders)
$30 per session, includes materials

Register online or call 845.424.3960
Garrison Art Center

Hudson Beach Glass
Gifts For The Valentine Of Your Heart

To spread the love, we are offering free shipping and product discount for curbside pickup.
Our hearts are grateful.

Stay well, stay safe and vaccinated!

www.hudsonbeachglass.com
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.

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 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.
Bird & Bottle (from Page 2)
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 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 Glynnwood 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 Reesch.

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.”

**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](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.

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

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

**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.**

**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 Philips 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.

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**Joe Frisenda (1943-2021)**

Joseph Frisenda a lifelong resident of Cold Spring passed away suddenly on January 2, 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 Wise and Salvatore Frisenda.
Writing for Himself

After a move to Beacon, songwriter returns to roots

By Alison Rooney

I

n 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, especially 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.org.

Schonfeld, 51, says he had been feeling dissatisfied with his professional life. “I’d 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 equine therapist, were married onstage 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.”

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
In the event you missed it, the Highlands received as much as 2 feet of snow on Monday and Tuesday.
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 a fire 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,” means, well, shifts from cozy to claustrophobic. While, 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.

And when “love,” mean—other words, to revisit the outdoor fire pit.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Applications can be found online at haldaneschool.org

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 Craigsifdef Drive, Cold Spring, NY 10516
ATTN: Transportation Dept.

and received not later than April 1st, 2021

If you have any questions, Contact Kristine Kaliestein at the Haldane Transportation Department at 845 265-9254 ext. 171.

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.
Jack Eaton (1926-2021)


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-sinkings 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 treacherous 12,500-foot dive to the ship’s wreck and debris field.

He wrote two other books on the Titanic, as well 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, he worked as a page at St. Joseph’s Church in New Jersey. In 1996, he married Alison Struck at St. Joseph’s Church in New Jersey, New York, and made a career on Wall Street in the “back room” and worked his way up to becoming a specialist and partner with Murphy, Marselles 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.

Mike Kellihier (1950-2021)

Michael Aloysius Kellihier, 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) Kellihier. “Big Mike” served in the U.S. Marines during the Vietnam War and was later commander of VFV 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 Kellihier of Saratoga Springs, James Kellihier of New Hamburg, Mary Baxter (Daniel) of Galway, Kathy Smith (Edward) of Petersburg and Timothy Kellihier (Tina) of Beacon.

Family and friends will gather on Monday (Feb. 8) from 5 to 8 p.m. at Riverview Funeral Home by Halvey in Beacon. Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Tuesday (Feb. 9) at 10 a.m. at St. Joseph’s Church in Beacon, followed by burial with military honors at St. Joachim Cemetery in Beacon. Memorial donations may be made to the Titanic Historical Society.

Mike McNeary (1942-2021)


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 New Jersey, New York, and made a career on Wall Street in the “back room” and worked his way up to becoming a specialist and partner with Murphy, Marselles 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.

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).

Brian 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 New Jersey, New York, and made a career on Wall Street in the “back room” and worked his way up to becoming a specialist and partner with Murphy, Marselles 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 (Priscella).

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

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).
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 Kueck 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.


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 gorothe24@gmail.com.

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Answers for Jan. 29 Puzzles

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Answers will be published next week. See highlandscurrent.org/puzzle for interactive sudoku.
**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 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 Gillias and Jack Philipp; 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.

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.”

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

— Haldane Coach Joe Virgadamo

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.