Census Shows Racial Shift

Fewer Highlands residents identify as ‘white alone’

By Leonard Sparks

The rainbow is getting more colorful. Both Dutchess and Putnam counties and their municipalities are undergoing a marked demographic shift as more residents report being multiracial and Latino populations grow, according to preliminary data from the 2020 census released last week.

Overall, Dutchess’s population has fallen since the 2010 census by 1,577 people, or about half a percent, and Putnam’s by 2,042, or about 2 percent, according to data released Aug. 12.

The data, which will be used to redraw local, state and federal legislative districts, showed only slight increases or declines in Philipstown (+169), Cold Spring (+27) and Nelsonville (-4); Beacon’s reported loss of 1,772 residents may be related to how its prison population was counted in 2010. (See Page 9.)

During a briefing that accompanied the release of the data, a bureau official said the agency was confident in the accuracy of its numbers, despite the count being upended by the pandemic.

The most noticeable change was a seismic shift among racial groups. Although (Continued on Page 9)

Police Exam Draws Diverse Pool

Dutchess reports increase in minority, female applicants

By Leonard Sparks

Beacon’s police department and the Dutchess County Sheriff’s Office both named the hiring of more Black, Latino and female officers as a goal in reform plans they crafted in response to an order last year from Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

The Beacon department, which patrols a city whose population is 19.5 percent Latino and 14 percent Black, has four Latino, two Black and two female employees among its 31 officers and detectives.

A list of 148 positions provided by the Sheriff’s Office in May showed 20 females, five Latinos, two Blacks and two Asians. White males held the rest of the positions.

One step toward increasing diversity on both forces will come on Sept. 18 when Dutchess County offers its first civil service exam since 2017 for deputy and police officer candidates. Based on figures released on Aug. 6, many more racial minorities and women will take this year’s test than the last time it was offered.

(Continued on Page 10)

A Day with the Beacon Police

By Jeff Simms

Chief Sands Frost called me a few days ago to ask if I wanted to spend an afternoon at the Beacon Police Department, going on a “ride along” on a patrol and talking to officers about their day-to-day duties.

Last week I took him up on his offer.

A few days before, The Current asked on social media if readers had any questions for the chief or other officers. We received several variations of:

(1) Why aren’t there any foot patrols on Main Street, especially on the weekends?
(2) Speeding is a huge problem on [fill-in-the-blank] Street. Can you help?

According to Frost, the answer to both is lack of staff. The Police Department is budgeted for 37 officers, including the chief and detectives, but there are only 31 officers on the force now, one of whom is currently restricted to light duty. On Monday (Aug. 16), the City Council shifted $195,000 that had been budgeted for salaries to overtime pay for the officers working extra hours.

Shifts typically have three patrol officers and a supervisor, Frost explained, which isn’t ideal but has become the norm.

“That’s all we’ve got right now,” he said.

Call volume then determines how many officers are available to walk Main Street or sit at an intersection watching for speeders. If you see an officer on Main Street, he said, that same officer will be the one who responds to a domestic disturbance or car crash or anything else that comes up.

We all heard calls to “defund the police” last year after George Floyd was murdered by an officer in Minnesota, so it’s interesting to also hear complaints that there aren’t enough officers to do what’s needed on the ground.

We had several readers ask why officers aren’t friendlier, as well. One person wrote, “I’d be less nervous around the police if they would talk to me.”

This one isn’t so simple to answer, Frost said, because it’s hard to account for every situation. If an officer walks down Main, for instance, he or she can’t make eye contact and nod at everyone.

“It’s enlightening to hear that question,” said Lt. Tom Figlia. “It goes two ways, because you don’t always know who wants to talk to you.”

I had my own question for the officers: Why’d you decide to become a cop? (Continued on Page 8)
FIVE QUESTIONS: DOLORES STREBEL

By Alison Rooney

Dolores Strebel, who started 16 years ago at the Garrison Art Center as an administrative assistant, is retiring this month as its associate director.

How did you hear about the job?
From a family member. Although my background was in psychology, I knew [then-director] Libby Turnock, and the job seemed like the perfect opportunity to meet artists, teachers, students and community members. I had taken some time off from working because of family obligations, so it was a great “beginning-again” job. My first day is still crystal clear to me: I started on a Monday, so the life-drawing class was going on.

How has the technology changed since 2005?
We had a basic database that we’re still using, but, of course, we weren’t using Instagram or Facebook. The impact of social media has been tremendous. We’ve been able to do artist talks through Instagram live, which reach a much larger audience, and get the word out so easily. It’s allowed artists to partner with us in sending out information, inviting their constituents. During the pandemic, we were able to do so many things virtually, such as Art in a Box, which gave kids a way to create at home. We’ve been inventive in keeping the momentum going.

What’s it like spending your working days on Garrison’s Landing?
It’s wonderful. Because our office is on the train side and we get so busy, sometimes we have to remind ourselves to get outside and look at the scenery. Every season brings something to marvel at.

What are you going to miss?
I love the teamwork, pulling everything together, making events. The people I’ve worked with closely, we all wear many adaptable hats. Things change but we just make it happen. Even when it looks like it can’t happen, we know that it can happen. My responsibility was to put all the puzzle pieces together. I’ll miss interacting with the families, the kids who have grown up here, and all the community members I’ve come to know. I’ll miss the day-to-day energy, how we go from a gallery show to an event to a program in the space of a week. The Riverside Crafts Fair [on Aug. 21 and 22] is the perfect example. On Friday, the landing in the morning is clear, pristine, but by Friday evening, all the vendors have arrived, with all the action and energy. Come Sunday evening, the landing is back to its quiet self.

What are your plans?
Along with spending more time with my five grandchildren — all under the age of 3 — and adopting and training a dog, I’d like to take a class or two at the art center!
Mayor hopes to contract out garbage collection

By Michael Turton

Mayor Dave Merandy wants to solve Cold Spring’s garbage problem, and soon.

At the Tuesday (Aug. 17) meeting of the Village Board, Merandy said he hoped to soon ask Royal Carting and AAA Cartage to bid on collecting Cold Spring trash and recyclables. If either bid is low enough, the winning firm would take over collections for the Highway Department, which is short-staffed.

Merandy said that picking up trash and recyclables consumes nearly half of department employees’ time.

In the past, Merandy said the cost of paying a firm such as Royal Carting would require a tax increase. Last month, Merandy said collection by village employees costs about $158,000 a year, and he estimated that hiring an outside firm would cost approximately $212,000.

In recent discussions with Royal Carting, however, the firm suggested it might be able to deliver the service for less, Merandy said. If collection is privatized, the village also would no longer need to purchase a new garbage truck at a cost of $115,000 to $120,000.

Parking plan

Merandy said a plan recently presented to the Village Board by its Parking Committee can’t immediately be implemented.

“There’s a lot going on,” he said, citing the worker shortage at the Highway Department, which would be responsible for installing signs. A full-time employee recently resigned and a summer employee returned to college. Merandy said “help wanted” ads have produced no results.

“We can’t [further] burden the crew,” he said, noting that if trash collection is contracted out, “we can get away with a three-man crew.”

The mayor also said an assistant is needed to help the village clerk handle the regulation of short-term rentals under a recently passed law. Applications for permits can be submitted starting next month. The clerk also would distribute residential parking permits.

Trustedie Marie Early, who served on the Parking Committee with the mayor, said plans for paid parking at the municipal lot on Fair Street and at Mayor’s Park using a smartphone app can go ahead.

Merandy asked the Parking Committee to look into the cost of contracting out installation of signage in the 11-street residential permit area.

Wine bar hits a snag

A request by Juhee Lee-Hartford of River Architects for a temporary certificate of occupancy for a cafe and wine bar called Cro’ Nest at 15 Main St. was put on hold.

Trustees outlined a number of aspects of the project that don’t conform to the plans approved by the Planning Board, including a front deck and an access ramp that encroaches 6 feet onto village property.

Merandy also said space at the rear of the building, approved as a tourist home, is now advertised as a one-bedroom apartment, a change that also requires Planning Board approval.

The mayor said he will discuss the project with Planning Board Chair Matt Francisca and the building inspector. Lee-Hartford will appear before the Village Board again next week.

In other business...

A Church Street block party that has become an annual event was approved for Sept. 6.

Talbots plans to conduct a fashion shoot on Main Street and at Dockside Park on Wednesday (Aug. 25). Because the shoot will include a crew and vehicles, Merandy requested an extra police officer be on duty that day.

The board adopted a master schedule of fees. In the past, when fees were included in the village code, a public hearing was required for any change. The schedule enables the board to update fees without a hearing.

The board approved the purchase of a new dump truck for the Highway Department for $199,282. Merandy said the vehicle will replace is in such bad condition that “it’s dangerous.”

Cold Spring officer: ‘We’re like the lost stepchildren’ of county

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

Larry Burke, the commanding officer of the Cold Spring Police Department, this week defended the three license-plate readers recently installed in Philipstown as vital in a resource-starved chunk of Putnam County.

“I’m not big on Big Brother,” he said, invoking the repressive, intrusive government envisioned by novelist George Orwell. But for a small force, having a license-plate reader “is like having an extra 10 or 15 cops out there,” he told the Nelsonville Village Board on Monday (Aug. 16).

He accused county officials of neglecting western Putnam and recalled pleading in Carmel for license-plate readers but encountering debate and delays. “I was over there for two years, begging them for any type of LPR or help over here,” he said.

“The other side of the county has had them for years. We’re like the lost stepchildren. This side of the county is far behind in technology to help law enforcement.”

The wrangling ended in late 2020, allowing Cold Spring to buy three readers, funded by a grant from the Putnam County district attorney. The devices were installed last month on Main Street east of Peekskill Road in Nelsonville; on Route 9D near Little Stony Point, just beyond the Cold Spring border; and on Route 9D near Boscobel, about a half mile south of Cold Spring.

The cameras, larger versions of models installed in patrol cars, capture and store images of license plates.

“It’s a tool that’s great for law enforcement when something bad happens,” Burke said. “I don’t want to wait for something bad to happen and then turn around and say: ‘We should’ve gotten them.’”

He pointed out that “the crime rate is going up” in some areas, citing thieves who apparently steal cars in Connecticut, and drive them to the Philipstown, where they steal different cars and commit other crimes.

“I could not stand idly by and let this go without trying, somehow, some way, to get these individuals,” Burke said. “If I could do this any other way, believe me, I would.”

He said equipment obtained with money from the district attorney can only be used for serious investigations, so the readers will not be employed to catch drivers who have unpaid tickets, for instance. He also said access to the data, which is transmitted to the Westchester/Putnam Real Time Crime Center, is limited and any request by an officer to see it must be approved by a superior.

Burke noted that three readers can help solve cases far beyond their location. For example, he said, in early August the readers near Little Stony Point and Boscobel captured the plate of a car that had been stolen in Poughkeepsie; the suspect was apprehended in Ossining.

The installation of the license-plate readers in Nelsonville and Philipstown caught local officials and residents by surprise. To get more information, the Nelsonville Village Board invited Burke to Monday’s meeting, held not far from the Nelsonville LPR.

“I want to extend my apologies for the quickness it went up,” Burke said. “It wasn’t meant to be done sneakily.” He said that in the three days after its installation, the Nelsonville reader captured 1,200 images, but none revealed a wanted vehicle.

Although Burke had proposed putting a reader near the Main Street traffic light in Cold Spring, the Sheriff’s Department advised placing them in spots to cover all exits and entrances to the villages. Burke asserted that career criminals avoid communities with readers.

At the Nelsonville meeting, Jim Knox, an attorney who formerly worked with Burke in New York City, said “we’re blessed to have Larry Burke as a police officer in our presence.” Nonetheless, he objected to “a camera staring at you as you walk out of your house. That’s an Orwellian nightmare. That’s communism. Communism is about control.”

Knox said he would have sued both villages if any officer besides Burke had led the effort to install the readers. “We need proof. We need evidence” that data collected works, he said.

Heidi Wendel, a former federal prosecutor, said she supported the use of license-plate readers. “I don’t see the Orwellian aspect at all,” she said. “It’s just smart law enforcement. It makes us safer.”

Sales tax split

The Village Board added its voice to a call for Putnam County to share some of its sales tax boon with towns and villages. Voting 5 to 0, it adopted a resolution nearly identical to the one Phillipston approved on Aug. 5.

Both measures propose that Putnam give municipalities, collectively, 50 percent of the increase in sales tax revenue over the previous year, which would then be divided among towns and villages on a per capita basis.

According to materials from newly organized “Share the Growth” advocates, the proposal had been in place in 2019, Phillipston would have received $150,718; Cold Spring, $27,537; and Nelsonville, $30,208.

“It seems like a no-brainer,” said Trustee Chris Winward.
Tell us what you think

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

Beacon development
When I read the word developers, I get goose bumps. There are so many buildings coming up (“Beacon Development,” Aug. 13). They completely change the beauty and uniqueness of the city. Greed and power is everywhere.

Lillian Rosengarten, Philipstown

The “beauty and uniqueness” people like about Beacon was created by developers. The “greed” is not by people who want to build housing, it’s from NIMBYs who want to keep housing supply artificially low to keep housing costs sky-high.

A 1,100-square-foot house in Beacon should not cost $500,000. This didn’t happen because of development. It happened because of a lack of development. The best way to get affordable housing is to allow the building of as many housing units as possible. Supply and demand applies to housing units, too.

Brandon Smith, Beacon

Developments with 10 units or more are required to offer one unit for every 10 workforce below-market-rate housing. Unfortunately, that is far from adequate to meet the need and not advertised well.

Arthur Camins, Beacon

Climate Smart
A major United Nations report that came out last week found that some of the devastating impacts of global warming are now unavoidable. To borrow the headline from Ed Miliband, “Our biggest enemy is no longer climate denial but climate delay.”

I am fed up with the level of delay and illusion of action when it comes to the climate crisis. We have seen no meaningful attempt to address the emergency at hand. If you are a car speeding toward a cliff and you slow the car down by 10 mph, you’re still going off the cliff.

I feel the same about empty gestures such as Putnam County’s Climate Smart program (“Putnam Adopts Climate Smart Proposal,” Aug. 6). During my first seven months as Philipstown Climate Smart coordinator, I have never been contacted by the county’s Climate Smart coordinator. We haven’t seen any educational or outreach programs or movement toward legislative actions. Does the Climate Smart task force hold public meetings? When and where are those meetings? I’d attend if given an opportunity, and if they exist.

Also, the county hired a new Climate Smart coordinator, Vinny Tamagna, its transportation manager, without posting the job. Why weren’t any of the other Climate Smart coordinators in the county, who are already leading programs at very part-time hours, offered a chance to expand the scope of their work? If Putnam cares about the climate, and not just formalities and appearances, it should hire someone qualified who is not overtaxed with other jobs.

I want Putnam County to succeed and do an amazing job at reducing our emissions. Its success is our success because we all need to be working together (and fast) to transition from fossil fuels. But if you are going to sit there and pretend you’re doing something while the world is burning, I’m done being polite. Everything I do is about reversing the climate crisis, not because it’s a job or title, but because my children’s future is at stake.

Krystal Ford, Garrison

Putnam sales tax
Here we go again with the yearly “red herring” about sales tax sharing (“Philipstown Again Asks County to Share Sales Tax,” Aug. 13).

The politicians love this because it gives them an issue, however phony, to run on. In fact, sales tax sharing has been a talking point for so many years that probably both sides have the same speeches memorized.

There are good reasons why Putnam County does not share sales tax with its towns. Putnam uses the revenue to finance a large chunk of the county budget, thus taking the burden of homeowners in their property taxes. In other words, people from all over the world are helping to ease our tax burden via their sales tax contributions.

These are some of the things paid for by the county: Sheriff’s Department, social services, Medicaid payments to the state, community college tuition, emergency services, Health Department, senior centers and elections support.

The services that the county pays for would bankrupt the individual towns if they had to pay for them, even with the puny sales tax contribution.

People like Philipstown Town Board Member Jason Angell and others who know better should put their efforts into getting services in lieu of tax contributions. Example: The county should be paying Cold Spring a lot more money to maintain the restrooms and the tourism booth as well as garbage cleanup. The county tourism agency should be financing events and advertising for the village, which is the main tourist attraction in Putnam. Or how about getting money for the riverfront and a police boat on the river?

It’s so much easier to pretend to care

(Continued on Page 5)
LETTERS AND COMMENTS
(Continued from Page 4)

about the taxpayers than to do the actual work that will get results and save money.

Patty Vilianova, Putnam Valley

All towns and villages deserve a portion of the sales tax revenue their businesses generate. What I don’t understand is why business owners and chambers of commerce put so little effort into persuading the Putnam County Legislature to share. They certainly put plenty of effort into griping about what villages don’t do for them with this nonexistent revenue.

Lynn Miller, Cold Spring

I would be the first to admit that asking Putnam County to share sales tax with towns and villages — like all the counties around us do — is not a new issue. You don’t give up on doing the right thing because it’s hard or takes a long time. But here are the facts that make this proposal different: 1. Putnam’s sales taxes are skyrocketing, largely due to the fact that starting in 2019 the state allowed online sales tax collection from tax-dodging monopolies like Amazon. County sales tax revenues even grew during the COVID-19 economic shutdown that hurt so many local businesses. 2. At the same time, the county is sitting on a historic surplus of cash. 3. The Share the Growth Putnam proposal asks the county to share any growth in sales tax from year to yearto meansthat in the good times — which local businesses help create everyone shares the economic benefits.

It’s great that the county helps provide essential services that benefit local communities. That’s its job; that’s what counties all over our state do. By adopting a shared-growth approach, the county can keep its budget whole, keep providing those services and returning to towns and villages so they can address the top priorities of their local communities.

Jason Angell, Philipstown

Angell is a member of the Philipstown Town Board.

While complaining that it doesn’t get any sales tax revenue from the county, the Philipstown Town Board is still considering opting out of allowing the sale of cannabis, which could bring in excess of $400,000 in annual tax revenue for our town. Shortsighted, as usual. Anthony Lise, via Instagram

Short-term rentals

In late 2019, I applied for a short-term-rental permit (tourist home) at the village office for 2020, paying a $150 fee (“Cold Spring adopts short-term rental law,” Aug. 6). For three months, I was the only one who applied. Then I was joined by a Main Street business.

No one asked me why I run an Airbnb; the Village Board members don’t know me. I grew up in Cold Spring, I am maintaining my parents’ 1886 house. But despite years of hard work, dedication and social responsibility, I find I need additional income to pay taxes and renovate.

To run the Airbnb, I reduced my living space to a one-bedroom apartment. I make sacrifices to be able to earn some extra dollars. I agree that some regulations need to be in place, but it would be fairer having a sliding scale of fees, and I could pay relative to my earnings.

The sneakiness of the board — saying in May it would wait, then speeding it through the public meetings, some with two of five members absent — resulted in ill-planned actions. Cold Spring is my village, too. I would like the board to represent all of us.

Nancy Sobier-Maier, Cold Spring

While I can understand the need to regulate certain aspects of the short-term-rental market, I would like to share my perspective as a recent guest in Cold Spring.

My wife and I spent a couple of nights this past week in Nancy Sobier-Maier’s spare room on Parrott Street. As longtime New York City residents, we have been taking various car-free Hudson Valley daytrips for years but have searched in vain for accommodations that fit our budget. It was Nancy’s listing that both attracted us to Cold Spring and enticed us to stay over for a couple of nights.

Arriving by train and getting around on foot, I doubt that we caused any sort of burden on the village’s resources or inconvenience to its residents. In fact, I would like to think that we brought a modest amount of economic activity to a rather sleepy midweek Main Street, eating our meals in restaurants and doing a fair amount of shopping.

We would love to repeat the experience a few times a year but will likely do so in other towns if Cold Spring’s new law puts operators like Nancy out of business.

Michael Dougherty, New York City

When villages dissolve

I would love to see the villages of Cold Spring and Nelsonville dissolve into Philipstown (“POOP! A Village Could Disappear,” Aug. 13). Can you imagine the cost savings and more efficient and strategic deployment and coordination of resources (fire, police, sanitation)?

Being governed by layers of bureaucracy is asinine. Of course, I say this with deep respect, admiration and gratitude to our local leaders, who make large personal sacrifices to make things work in our community for negligible compensation.

But I don’t see how some duplication or duplication of services can be more cost-effective. Also, I feel I have strong kinship with folks on East Mountain and in Garrison and Cold Spring, and believe we are all on a similar page when it comes to community and quality-of-life decisions.

Ben Cheah, via Facebook

Correction

A story in the Aug. 13 issue about a coming vote over whether the Village of Highland Falls should be dissolved reported that Joe DeWitt plans to run for the Village Board. In fact, DeWitt plans to run for the Town Board.

I think all parties are open to the discussion (of consolidation), but there are bigger discussions that would have to happen as well, such as consolidation of school districts, fire departments/districts (including what to do with their service award programs that were approved by specific sets of voters), water districts, sewer districts, garbage collection, highway departments. I’m sure there are more.

Michael Bowman, via Facebook

Bownan is the mayor of Nelsonville.

Farming

Hats off to the brothers who are getting into farming (“Regenerating Land — and People,” Aug. 6). It’s the glue that keeps our nation together — something that no one should forget.

Leonard Lindros Jr., Garrison

Cuomo resigns

Why has the attorney general not conducted a serious investigation into Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s order that COVID-19 patients be placed into nursing homes, spreading the disease and causing many infections and deaths (“Local Officials React to Resignation,” Aug. 13)? Why is there no investigation into the protocol that apparently rushed many of the sick, and possibly the not-so-sick, to intubation and ventilation?

Why do we know so much about these sexual harassment allegations but so little about the intent and consequences of at least two other issues which killed many at the same time the governor was distracting us with his news conferences, for which he was given an International Emmy (quite unusual for an elected official), an award that has not yet been retracted?

Are the calls to resign solely due to the sexual harassment an attempt to sweep these far more serious scandals under the rug?

Frank Haggerty, Cold Spring

Thank you, state Sen. Sue Serino, for your perspicacious, high-minded commentary on the resignation of the governor. It’s so persuasive when someone from your party opines about the dangers inherent in letting “extreme power” go unchecked.” (Also, not for nothing: Don’t let the door hit you in the keister on your way out, Andrew.)

Steve Petkus, via Instagram

Real Estate

Market Report (July)

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Pie Baking Contest

**IT'S HERE AGAIN! VILLAGE OF COLD SPRING'S 3RD ANNUAL AMATEUR PIE BAKING CONTEST**

**PART OF THE 2021 COMMUNITY DAY CELEBRATION**

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The Highlands Current
Haldane Will Require Masks

Releases COVID-19 policies for school start on Sept. 2

By Chip Rowe

In a note to parents on Wednesday (Aug. 18), Haldane Superintendent Philip Benante said the district will require students, teachers and staff members to wear masks indoors when the school year begins on Sept. 2, regardless of vaccination status, to protect against the spread of COVID-19.

Benante also said a minimum of 3 feet of social distance would be required in classrooms and could be expanded farther “based on the number of students and available space.”

The superintendent said the procedures were informed by guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Academy of Pediatrics, which both recommend masks be worn indoors at schools because of a surge in COVID-19 infections that have been largely attributed to school reopenings and the return of unvaccinated students.

Under federal guidelines, only students ages 12 and older can receive the COVID-19 vaccine made by Pfizer, leaving elementary school students vulnerable. Those made by Moderna and Johnson & Johnson have emergency authorization only for adults.

On Aug. 12, Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul, who will succeed Gov. Andrew Cuomo, who is resigning, said she expects New York will issue a mask mandate for schools.

Benante said the Haldane district planned to continue testing both vaccinated and unvaccinated students, and asked parents to provide their consent. He said that, as of March 1, 86 percent of Haldane employees had been vaccinated and that the figure would be updated after school begins.

In addition, he said the district had conducted a thorough review of the buildings’ ventilation systems and instituted practices to ensure adequate airflow throughout each of the spaces; upgrades include the installation of MERV-13 rated filters.

The district will revert to the daily schedule it used before the pandemic began, with classes beginning at the middle and high schools at 7:33 a.m. and at the elementary school at 8:35 a.m. Teachers will be encouraged to use outdoor spaces and students will be sent outside, weather permitting, to eat lunch.

Remote learning will only be available to students who are required to quarantine, Benante said, or if the district closes because of an outbreak. Students will be required to wear masks on school buses.

Benante said each building principal would hold a forum with parents before school begins to discuss the procedures. “I anticipate that we will update these guidelines on a continual basis as local conditions change,” he wrote.

The superintendents of the Beacon and Garrison districts each last week said they would require masks indoors. They both also cited the CDC.

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>57.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of deaths:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Number of deaths:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94 (+1)</td>
<td>461 (+9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State and county health departments, as of Aug. 18, with change from previous week in parentheses. Active cases in Philipstown as of Aug. 12. Percent vaccinated reflects those ages 12 and older who have received at least one dose.
The Highlands Current is initiating its Student Journalists Program to provide an opportunity for students who attend high school in Philipstown and Beacon to be mentored by professional journalists while they serve as correspondents for our nonprofit newspaper and website.

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

Students will be expected to submit photos and video (when applicable) as part of their assignments. Due to the generous support of our Highlands Current members, correspondents will be compensated for the stories and photos that we publish online and/or in print. If you are interested in becoming a student correspondent, you can review the requirements and apply at:

highlandscurrent.org/student-journalists-program

Chip Rowe, Editor
The Highlands Current
Police Ride (from Page 1)

Like everyone else, I’ve seen the tension surrounding the role and power of the police escalate over the last 18 months. It was uncomfortable hearing some of the stories people told last year during community forums on law enforcement.

It’s clear there’s a lot of work to be done to repair or even establish relationships with segments of the community. Maybe it would help, I thought, if we could humanize officers, and learn what makes them tick.

“Not everybody’s going to like you. But whether they like me or not, I still have a job to do.”

~Officer Silverio Santiago

Jason Johnson, a detective sergeant who joined the force in 2004, often speaks to reporters as a representative for the department. He says he grew up idolizing his father, John Johnson, who was the Beacon chief from 1989 until he retired in 1994. “I admired the satisfaction I saw him get out of helping people,” Johnson said.

I also spoke with the department’s domestic violence advocate, who is stationed three days a week in Beacon through an arrangement with Family Services, a Poughkeepsie-based agency. The woman, who asked not to be named because of the nature of her job, and Lashaveous Dicker, a behavioral health specialist placed with the department through a partnership with Mental Health America of Dutchess County, work with people the police encounter who are suffering from abuse or addiction.

I wrote last year about the push to include funding in the budget to add the behavioral health position as a way of “reimagining” how law enforcement responds to certain calls — the sort of change that for some people falls under what they mean by “defund the police.” But I had not known that the department already had a domestic violence/sexual assault advocate — and has since 2009.

At the end of the afternoon, after signing a waiver and donning a bulletproof vest (both department policy), I climbed into the passenger seat of a marked SUV with Officer Silverio Santiago. As he drove, I asked him how he thought residents perceived the police.

“Not everybody’s going to like you,” he said. “But whether they like me or not, I still have a job to do. I’m going to treat you with respect and try to resolve the situation. I respect that you may have a difference of opinion with me.”

As we drove past the basketball courts at South Avenue Park, Santiago told me that he sometimes stops to watch the summer youth league games.

“I go to Loopers Plaza [across the street] because my favorite pizza place is there and I’ve run into a couple of coaches who were very open in asking us to come by and hang out with the kids,” he explained. “They want us to let them know that just because we’re there, we’re not looking for something. I see parents who I know. They appreciate us showing support for the community.”

After we’d driven for a while, Santiago was uncomfortable hearing some of the stories people told last year during community forums on law enforcement. It was clear there’s a lot of work to be done to repair or even establish relationships with segments of the community. Maybe it would help, I thought, if we could humanize officers, and learn what makes them tick.
The 2020 Census

On Aug. 7, the U.S. Census Bureau released preliminary numbers for its decennial count, which reflect the population as of April 1, 2020. Here are figures specific to our area.

Census Results (from Page 1)

the Census Bureau urged caution because of changes made to its questions about race and how responses are tabulated, the results show a country and region clearly growing more diverse.

While the number of people who identified themselves as white fell by 8.6 percent through 2035, the report found. (That the number of Blacks who identified themselves as white fell by 17 percent and Putnam’s by nearly 17 percent, a change also seen in Beacon and Cold Spring. (The breakdown for towns has not been released.) The declines were mirrored by a major rise from 2010 in the number of residents reporting they are of two or more races – by 231 percent in Dutchess and 381 percent in Putnam, and more than double in Cold Spring (42 to 150) and nearly quadruple in Nelsonville (12 to 57).

Both counties also saw significant increases in their Latino populations – Putnam by 52 percent and Dutchess by 35 percent. The Asian and American Indian/Alaska native populations in both counties also grew, as did the number of Pacific Islanders in Putnam County.

Census Data for Beacon Unclear

Did population decrease or stay the same?

By Jeff Simms

The only conclusion to draw from preliminary census numbers from Beacon is that it’s difficult to draw conclusions from Beacon’s preliminary census numbers.

At first glance, the figures released by the U.S. Census Bureau last week show a startling loss of 1,772 people in the past decade, from 15,541 to 13,769, or more than 11 percent in a city that has seen the addition of hundreds of apartments and condos in recent years.

But Mayor Lee Kyriacou said on Monday (Aug. 16) that he believes the agency’s numbers from 2010 and 2020 aren’t comparable.

In 2010, he said, the count included 1,790 prisoners at the Fishkill Correctional Facility, which is split, geographically, between Beacon and the Town of Fishkill.

The mayor said he believes the Census Bureau did not include the prison population in the 2020 numbers. He suggested it instead counted inmates as permanent residents of their hometowns, regardless of where they’re incarcerated.

Kyriacou said he learned that prisoners had been included in Beacon’s 2010 count in 2012, when he analyzed the data while co-chairing a committee tasked with redrawing the lines for Beacon’s four council wards.

Without prisoners, the population in 2010 was 13,751, Kyriacou said, compared to 13,769 counted for 2020, an increase of 18 people.

But that, too, is hard to believe for a city that three years ago hired environmental engineers to study whether its water supply could support the long-term impacts of rapid residential development. (It could, through 2035, the report found.)

Locally, the Dutchess “white alone” population fell by 13 percent and Putnam’s by nearly 17 percent, a change also seen in Beacon and Cold Spring. (The breakdown for towns has not been released.) The declines were mirrored by a major rise from 2010 in the number of residents reporting they are of two or more races – by 231 percent in Dutchess and 381 percent in Putnam, and more than double in Cold Spring (42 to 150) and nearly quadruple in Nelsonville (12 to 57).

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| TOTAL | CHANGE | %
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>13,769</td>
<td>1,772</td>
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<tr>
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<td>8,751</td>
<td>1,136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1,933</td>
<td>1,679</td>
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<td>1,131</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUTNAM COUNTY</th>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
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<td>Latino</td>
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<td>American Indian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Other Race Alone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Redistricting Data Hub, Empire Center for Public Policy
Police Diversity (from Page 1)
did, 119 identified as Black, more than double
the number in 2017; 249 as Latino, more than
triple; 218 as women, nearly double; and 17 as
Asian, compared to 9 in 2017.
There were 1,380 applications, an increase
of 57 percent. The test also drew more white
applicants, 608 compared to 447, the county
said.
Having a diverse applicant pool is impor-
tant because “who enforces the law matters,”
said Taneisha Means, an assistant professor of
political science at Vassar College whose areas
of interest include diversity in legal systems.
She cited the results of a study published
earlier this year in Science in which researchers examined records from patrols
by officers with the Chicago Police Depart-
ment. It found that Black and Latino offi-
cers were far less likely than white officers
to stop and arrest residents, or to use force.
The study also found that female officers
were far less likely to use force than males.
Means said she doesn’t believe diversity
training for white officers already on the
force is enough to improve policing. “When
you look at the data, they [minority and
female officers] are policing communities
differently,” she said.
“We are now living in the most diverse
country that we’ve had, and our nation’s
powerful political and legal institutions
must reflect that diversity, including police
departments,” she said.
Dutchess County used a number of strat-
egies to boost applications and improve the
diversity of the pool. It waived the $25 exam
fee and will give applicants up to five years
after they are hired to complete the 60
college credits required for the exam. The
county also recruited applicants on social
media and at Hudson Valley Renegades
games, and conducted outreach at hous-
ing complexes.
The Dutchess County Sheriff’s Office
also has offered preparation classes for the
exam and physical fitness tests in collabor-
ation with local police departments,
including in Beacon.
In the wake of the murder of George Floyd
last year by a Minneapolis police officer,
Cuomo ordered municipalities to study their
law enforcement policies and issue reports
by April 1 on reforms to, among other goals,
“eliminate racial inequities in policing.”
In addition to diversifying the race and
gender of its officers, Dutchess County’s
plan recommended establishing a civilian
review board and expanding the involvement
of social workers and other non-police staff
on drug overdose and mental health-related
calls. The county’s 2021 budget includes fund-
ning for body cameras for the Sheriff’s Office.
In April, Beacon’s Police Department
hired a specialist to assist officers on calls
that involve mental health issues and
addiction, one of the recommendations in
its reform plan. Officers have been issued
body cameras since 2018.
Despite the best efforts of the pandemic to thwart it, there's no doubt that there's a resilient, flourishing Hudson Valley art community.

Consider this: last year's inaugural Upstate Art Weekend included 23 participants. This year, more than 100 art spaces, museums, pop-up shops, sites, studios, sculpture parks, galleries, barns and other facilities asked to participate. Of those, 61 were selected and will open their doors to the public beginning Friday (Aug. 27) with a reception at Stoneleaf Retreat in the Catskills.

The three-day weekend was conceived as a way to celebrate the region's cultural vibrancy in an accessible way. The self-directed program extends from Garrison to Chatham, on both sides of the Hudson River. It includes 11 sites in the Highlands, such as Dia:Beacon, Magazzino, Storm King and Manitoga, as well as the newly opened Barns Art Center in Hopewell Junction, which will present its first exhibit, a group show called *Tasting Menu*.

"This has grown into a beautiful beast," says Helen Toomer, who founded the event. "It's incredible—the magic up here; I'm just here to connect the dots."

Toomer describes herself as "an organizer and connector by nature" and says that, after her family moved to the Hudson Valley in 2016, she found herself creating itineraries for visiting friends who expressed confusion about the geography and would ask: "What do you mean things are on opposite sides of the river?"

"I knew for several years that I wanted to do an Upstate Art Weekend, but every year something happened: a baby, a job—big things," says Toomer, who with her family runs Stoneleaf, an artist residency and creative space for women and families. "I thought of doing it in the fall, with all the leaves and beauty, then put it to one side because of the pandemic."

"Shake Up the Room" will be exhibited in a solo show by Reginald Madison that opens Aug. 27 at the September gallery in Hudson. (Continued on Page 14)
**THE WEEK AHEAD**

Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)
For a complete listing of events, see highlandscurrent.org/calendar.

**COMMUNITY**

**SAT 21**

**Butterflies & Blooms**

**WAPPINGERS FALLS**
10 a.m. – 7 p.m. Story Kill Farm
70 Farmstead Lane
butterfly.storykill.org

The end of a weekend celebration of pollinators kicks off with a butterfly workshop about their names and characteristics, then a chance to decorate wagons for hay rides and a concert with the 20-piece Big Band Sound. Bring chairs and a picnic.

**SAT 21**

**Modern Makers Market**

**COLD SPRING**
10 a.m. – 6 p.m. St. Mary’s Church
1 Chestnut St. | hopsonsthudson.com

In this benefit for the church, browse work by 40 artisans and artists in media including wood, glass, leather, ceramics and jewelry, and enjoy live music, food trucks, New York beer and cider and a raffle. Rain or shine. Free

**SAT 21**

**Riverside Crafts Fair**

**GARRISON**
10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Garrison’s Landing
845-424-3960 | garrisonartcenter.org

Artistic creations by more than 50 exhibitors will be available for purchase. Visitors will find ceramics, furniture, home goods, fine art and crafts at the fair, which was launched in 1964. Also SUN 22. Rain or shine. Cost: $10 (timed entry)

**TUES 24**

**RiverHARE**

**PEEKSKILL**
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039

Open mic night for local poets. Free

**SAT 21**

**Teen Water Balloon Fight**

**GARRISON**
1 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020

desmondfishlibrary.org

Participants in the Summer Reading program will get bonus balloons for every book read.

**WED 25**

**Mississippi Travelers**

**PEEKSKILL**
6 – 8 p.m. 142 Main St.
Old time string band music featuring Harry Bolick (fiddle); Jacques DiCroce (guitar); Charlie Shaw (bass); and Brian Slattery (fiddle, banjo). Free

**MUSIC**

**SAT 21**

**The Bell Bottom Blues**

**RHINEBECK**
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039

Al Caprara and his band recreate guitarist Eric Clapton’s performances with The Yardbirds, Cream, Blind Faith, Derek and the Dominos and from his solo career. Cost: $20 to $35

**THURS 26**

**Ian Flanigan**

**RHINEBECK**
8 p.m. Dutchess County Fairgrounds
6550 Spring Brook Ave.
dutchessfair.com

Flanigan, who was in Saugerties, appeared in 2020 as a contestant on The Voice. Free with admission to fair; tickets are only sold online. Cost: $12 (children under 12 free)

**FRI 27**

**Freestyle Legends**

**MAHOPAC**
6:30 p.m. Putnam Golf Course
187 Hill St. | 845-808-1880

putnamcountygolfcourse.com

Judy Torres, Cynthia and C-Bank will perform dance music with a DJ. Cost: $30 to $200

**SAT 28**

**Slovakian Circus of Dreams**

**GARRISON**
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier
379 Main St. | townecrier.com

The all-roots rock band’s energetic live show returns. Cost: $30 ($35 door)

**SAT 21**

**Celebration of Poetry**

**GARRISON**
3:30 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020

desmondfishlibrary.org

Mary Newell will read from her new chapbook, Re-SURGE, and Billie Chernicoff will read from Amoretti. Watch live on the lawn or via Crowdcast.

**SAT 28**

**Jud Caswell**

**PUTNAM VALLEY**
4 p.m. Tompkins Corners Cultural Center
729 Peekskill Hollow Road

456-7270 | tompkinscorners.org

The folk singer and songwriter will perform on multiple instruments. Cost: $20

**SAT 28**

**Springsteen Tribute**

**RHINEBECK**
8 p.m. Dutchess County Fairgrounds
6550 Spring Brook Ave.
dutchessfair.com

Matt Ryan, who began impersonating Bruce Springsteen in Las Vegas shows 20 years ago, leads his band singing the New Jersey native’s hits. Free with admission to fair; tickets are only sold online. Cost: $12 (children under 12 free)

**Clue**

**GARRISON**
8:30 p.m. Story Screen Drive-In
724 Woocott Ave. | 845-440-7706
storyscreendrivein.square.site

Find Colonel Mustard in the library with the knife in this 1985 film based on the board game and starring Madeline Kahn, Christopher Lloyd and Lesley Ann Warren. Also SUN 22. Cost: $10 ($8 children, seniors, military)

**THE WEEK AHEAD**

Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)
For a complete listing of events, see highlandscurrent.org/calendar.
The Highlands Current

SAT 21
Saturn’s Return
PUTNAM VALLEY
7:30 p.m.
Tompkins Corners Cultural Center
729 Peekskill Hollow Road
845-528-7280 | tompkinscorners.com

Nerve Tank presents a project designed for the cultural center’s carriage house with Karen Grenke, Jason Howard, Robin Kurtz and Mark Lindberg. Cost: $20

SUN 22
Untitled Agatha Project
GARRISON
7:30 p.m. Via Zoom
845-265-9575 | hvsshakespeare.org

As part of the HVSP2 Reading Series, Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival actors will perform a revised version of Heidi Armbruster’s play. Cost: $10

TUES 24
Dignity, Always Dignity
GARRISON
7:30 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
10 Garrison’s Landing
845-265-9575 | hvsshakespeare.org

James Stewart and Kim Novak starred in Alfred Hitchcock’s 1958 masterpiece, which will be screened in North America, located in Marlboro, during this presentation sponsored by the Howland Public Library.

WED 25
Black Panther
BEACON
8 p.m. Story Screen Drive-in
724 Wolcott Ave. | 845-440-7706
storyscreendrivein.square.site

Chadwick Boseman, Michael B. Jordan and Lupita Nyong'o star in this 2018 adaptation of the Marvel Comics kingdom of Wakanda. Also THURS 26, FRI 27, SAT 28, SUN 29. Cost: $20 (8y children, seniors, military)

WED 25
Gomez Mill House
COLD SPRING
7:30 p.m.
729 Peekskill Hollow Road
55 Teller Ave. Beacon, NY, 12508
845-265-9575 | hvsshakespeare.org

The City Council will hear comments on its $10 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant application.

MON 30
Public Hearing
BEACON
6 p.m. City Hall | 1 Municipal Plaza
845-838-5011  | beaconny.gov

The City Council will hear comments on its $10 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant application.

SAT 28
Ecoprint Workshop
WAPPINGERS FALLS
10 a.m. Common Ground Farm
79 Farmstead Lane | 845-231-4424
commongroundfarm.org

This session of the Sustainable Textiles workshops will focus on using natural materials to make prints. Cost: $20 to $45

CIVICS
TUES 24
Board of Trustees
COLD SPRING
7:30 p.m. Village Hall | 95 Main St.
845-265-3611 | coldspringny.gov

WED 25
School Board
GARRISON
6 p.m. Garrison School | 1100 Route 9D
845-424-3689 | gufs.org

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TALKS & TOURS
SAT 21
Pollinators: What’s the Big Deal?
BREWSER
10:30 a.m. Tilly Foster Garden
Route 312 & Prospect Hill Road
putnam.cce.cornell.edu

Master Gardeners will discuss the critical role of bees, butterflies and other pollinators, and what people can do to help them.

WED 25
Vertigo
BEACON
6:30 p.m. Boat leaves Beacon dock
845-831-6346 | bannermancastle.org

Two casts will perform the Disney hit set at East High that explores what happens when cliques step out of their roles. Also SAT 28. Cost: $20

FRI 27
High School Musical Jr.
BEACON
6 p.m. Beacon Performing Arts Center
724 Wolcott Ave.
beaconperformingartscenter.com

As part of the HVSF2 Reading Series, Zachary Fine and Bryce Pinkham’s newly commissioned play will be staged live. Cost: $25

SAT 21
North by Northwest
PUTNAM VALLEY
7:30 p.m.
Dockside Park
North by Northwest
SAT 21
Cost: $20

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Adapting to Summer
By Pamela Doan

Every garden season is different; that’s what makes it interesting. But the impacts of climate change are making things different in new ways, a trend that will be more challenging in the years to come.

This summer we’ve had dry spells, record rainfall in the first part of July, several heat waves, lower-than-average temperatures, smoky skies, storms with strong wind gusts and heavy rainfall, many high humidity days, and it’s not over yet. Hurricane season runs through November, so we have months ahead with the possibility of more extreme storms.

Don’t give up! Whether it’s protecting the vegetable garden harvest, fruit trees or trying to preserve the beauty of landscaping, there are techniques and methods that can help stabilize conditions for plants.

Row covers
Fabric covers draped over plants or on hoops and secured with ground staples can achieve greenhouse conditions without a greenhouse. Different weights of fabric allow access by 30 to 85 percent of sunlight and water and help control soil temperature and pest damage, though I haven’t seen research about protection from pathogens.

In spring, heavier fabric helps warm the soil faster for earlier planting when winter just won’t end. Soil temperatures can be raised 2 to 8 degrees, depending on the fabric weight, and that can mean a harvest 1 to 3 weeks earlier.

If secured well to the ground, a row cover is a barrier to prevent insects from reaching the plants and weed seeds from blowing in. For plants that need pollination, pull back the cover once the female flowers bloom to allow bees in.

In summer, lighter-weight row covers can stabilize the temperature for plants and screen out harsh sunlight on the hottest days. If the row cover has been in place since the crops were planted, stay on top of weeds to prevent seeding. Insect pressure will be less intense. Since the greenhouse effect holds in moisture and heat, in summer make sure to open the row cover for more air circulation and to keep plants from getting too hot.

In fall, a row cover will keep the soil warm longer and extend the growing season. While protecting plants from frost (the frost date here is Oct. 15) and freezing temperatures, try growing vegetables that you would plant in early spring, like greens and root vegetables. I’m not promising that tomatoes will make it until January but spinach, carrots and beets might be viable in our warmer winters.

Insects controlling insects
Another way that weather patterns affect the growing season is through insect pressure. Aphids have had a fantastic season this year, judging by my garden and the comments of gardeners in online groups that I follow. Large amounts of rain have produced fast growth and abundant foliage this summer and the aphids have followed.

Lots of food leads to larger populations.

Spider mites thrive in hot, dry weather. Wet springs can decrease cutworm populations. No matter what ecosystem lever is pulled, our gardens respond.

Ladybugs, including New York’s endangered, native 9-spotted variety, are wonderful consumers of aphids. They are attracted to flowers that have pollen and nectar. Try planting cosmos, dill or goldenrod to attract them. Lacewings eat many plant pests and their eggs, including thrips, mites and aphids. They appreciate similar pollen and nectar flowers.

One of my favorite beneficial insects are parasitic wasps that lay eggs inside caterpillars. The wasp larva hatches and basically eats the caterpillar until it dies and they are grown. This process is most commonly seen in the garden on tomato hornworms. The key is to let the host caterpillar munch the tomato leaves long enough to allow the baby parasitic wasps to grow to kill more hornworm caterpillars. The sacrifice is worth the benefit.

Rain, rain go away or not?
Heavy rainfall can cause root rot in poorly drained soils and evaporate quickly on hot days. This year in a rush to get a bed of tomatoes planted, we mulched with handfuls of a pile of last year’s grass clippings mixed with shredded leaves and it’s been the best mulch I’ve had for water retention and weed suppression.

When it comes to water, follow some simple techniques. Set up a storage system like a rain barrel or barrels for dry periods. Improve soil to retain and drain. Use mulch to keep soil from drying out. Be wise with watering by measuring the amount of irrigation and avoiding overwatering. Watering systems that focus on plant roots rather than foliage are most effective.

Arts Weekend (from Page 11)
then things started opening up, and I started feeling how lucky we are to be surrounded by nature and so much art, and I knew I had to do it.

“Very late harvest,” she says. “I woke up one morning in June (2020) and said ‘We’re doing it!’ I emailed the premise to people I knew. Because we had all been through this incredibly traumatic time, all riding the same storm in different boats, the response was quick and positive,” with the first replies coming from Mother Gallery in Beacon and Magazine Italian Art in Phlipstorp.

“There is so much going on up here,” Toomer says. “There are all these wonderful communities that have been here for a long, long time, but the pandemic and the wave of opportunities to work remotely have made a lot of new things crop up. We’re so fortunate to be able to have studios, time and space.”

For 2022, Toomer says she is “thinking of lots of things. I want to see what the community needs, whether that’s an expansion of what we’ve been doing or getting back to the drawing board.”

For a map and list of participants, addresses, hours, admission fees, COVID-19 safety protocols and other details, see upstateartweekend.org. Download the app Upstate Curious to Join an Upstate Art Weekend meet-up group.
Mouths to Feed

A Cream of the Crop

By Celia Barbour

My husband and I ran into our friend Steve on Saturday at the farmers’ market. He was standing in line at one of the vendors, and after my husband had greeted him in a suitably friendly fashion, I grilled him as to what he was buying, and why. I can get a little one-track around food.

Steve’s reply (corn, shrimp) and reason (“This amazing dish we’ve been making...”) set my heart all aflutter. It is a time of year when I’m eager for variations on amazing, especially when they involve corn, or any other constituent of August’s influx of fresh produce.

When I was growing up in Indiana, corn was something you drove through. As summer wore on, the country roads cut deeper and deeper channels through the rising sea of flared green stalks, with their tassels grasping at the flat, hot sky. Like 99 percent of the corn grown in the U.S., this was field corn, the kind used to feed livestock as well as to do things like power automobiles, sweeten processed feed, make gloves less sticky (this last thanks to corn-starch). Only 1 percent of the corn that our country’s farmers grow is sweet corn — the starch. This was field corn, the kind used to feed livestock as well as to do things like power automobiles, sweeten processed feed, make gloves less sticky (this last thanks to corn-starch). Only 1 percent of the corn that our country’s farmers grow is sweet corn — the starch.

The situation in Indiana in the 1970s wasn’t quite as bleak as the one Steve found when he traveled through Florida’s orange groves in 1965. There, in a region that single-handedly produced more citrus than Spain and Italy combined, he could buy only orange juice that was made from frozen concentrate, even when he stopped at roadside stands advertising “fresh juice.”

A few Indiana farmers must have still been growing the sweet variety when I was a kid, because we managed to eat fresh corn every once in a while. I know this because I remember with a kind of wonderment that my sisters and I would run our hot corn cobs straight across the middle of an entire stick of butter, creating a messy swale in the perfect stick — a practice so boorish I can’t imagine my polite, frugal mother ever condoning it.

It’s been a long time since I’ve buttered an ear of corn using any technique whatsoever, having learned that fresh, young corn needs zero embellishment. But butter and corn remain a magical pairing. (Well, that’s not news, is it? Everything pairs well with butter.) I was reminded of these ingredients’ particular affinity when I tried the recipe that Steve sent me following our encounter on Saturday. That recipe was indeed amazing, just as billed. You can find it on The New York Times website (search for “shrimp with creamed corn and feta”), where you can also learn that 493 other readers also love it, and that several of them additionally wish that it was adapted for weeknight cooking. Indeed, later the night that I made it, I lay in bed dreaming up variations, perhaps with coconut milk and lime, or broth and lemon — and this is what I made for supper a few nights later, merging the creamed corn with one of my favorite, go-to, easy summer pasta recipes. Amazing plus simple feels just right at the moment.

1. Cut the kernels from each corn cob by standing it on end on a cutting board and slicing downwards. You should have about 3 cups total. Transfer 2 cups of kernels to a small saucepan; add the milk or broth, 2 tablespoons butter, plus a few dashes of salt and pepper. Bring to a simmer, cover and simmer gently until quite soft, about 12 minutes. When cooked, puree to a rough sauce with an immersion blender or food processor. Stir in the goat cheese and transfer to a large serving bowl.

2. Thinly slice the herbs. Combine with the scallion greens, the lemon zest and juice, the eggs, and a few dashes of salt and pepper. Bring to a simmer, cover and simmer gently until quite soft, about 12 minutes. When cooked, puree to a rough sauce with an immersion blender or food processor. Stir in the goat cheese and transfer to a large serving bowl.

3. Meanwhile, bring a large pot of water to a boil, salt generously and cook pasta for 3 minutes less than the package directs. Add the remaining cup of corn kernels and the scallion whites, and continue cooking until al dente. Drain, saving ½ cup of the pasta water.

4. Toss the hot pasta with the corn mixture in the bowl, adding cooking water to keep the mixture loose. Add the herb and lemon mixture and stir to combine. Serve with fresh chopped tomatoes and extra parmesan on the side.

Ingredients

- 3 large or 4 small ears corn, husked
- ½ cup milk or broth
- 3 tablespoons butter
- Salt and pepper
- 4 ounces fresh goat cheese
- 1 pound pasta
- 2 scallions, thinly sliced, white and green parts separated
- 2 to 3 cups loosely packed soft herbs, such as basil, mint, dill, cilantro and/or parsley
- Zest of 1 lemon, plus 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 cup grated parmesan, plus more for serving
- 2 large tomatoes, chopped, for serving

Serving

Arrange on a large serving platter. Pass more parmesan and lemon juice at the table.
Looking Back in Beacon

By Chip Rowe

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

150 Years Ago (August 1871)

The Matteawan correspondent of The Fishkill Journal reported that, while business had been slow in July, the hat factories were ramping up for heavy orders expected in the fall. The Matteawan Manufacturing Co., was turning out hats by the truckload and preparing to make cloth hats, while the Seamless Clothing Co. planned to go in heavily on skirts and was turning out 1,500 daily, along with hats, druggets and the edge linings.

Two stowaways from New York City jumped off a train at Dutchess Junction on a Friday night, filled sacks with whatever valuables they could find, and were waiting to sneak aboard the next train that stopped when they were caught.

The decapitated body of James Slinery of Matteawan was found on the Harlem Railroad track near Millerton. Witnesses said Slinery had nearly $100 in cash the night before, which was missing, and foul play was suspected.

125 Years Ago (August 1896)

Charles Kiltredge of Fishkill Landing died suddenly at Mont Vernon, New Hampshire, while attending a reunion of the alumni of McCollom Institute, a private high school. Kiltredge had concluded a brief address in a chapel when he fell into the arms of the gentlemen present and expired. [The institute closed in 1906 and today the building houses the town offices and police station.]

A group of intoxicated workers from Aldridge's brickyard were walking along the tracks just before 10 p.m. after a payday visit to Fishkill Landing when a northbound mail train caught them by surprise. James Cody attempted to pull John Riley to safety but Riley, apparently thinking Cody wanted to wrestle, held him fast. Both were killed.

100 Years Ago (August 1921)

John Cronin, the commissioner of public safety, hired a bacteriologist to examine the condition of the water at Denning's Point after concerns that it was unsafe for swimming due to sewage. Health officials feared an outbreak of typhoid.

Cronin hired a scientist to test the ice cream being sold in Beacon on the suspicion that it did not include the percentage of butterfat required by law.

The body of James Tomlins, a member of the 554 men known as the Lost Battalion, arrived in New Jersey. The Beacon resident had died of combat injuries in an Army hospital in France in October 1918. His division had been trapped in the Argonne Forest by German forces, and only 194 soldiers were rescued.

End of Summer Sale

50% off all annuals, perennials and shrubs

25% off Coast of Maine products

OPEN 7 DAYS
SUN - THURS 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM | FRI - SAT 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
1611 U.S. 9, GARRISON, NY 10524

(Continued on Page 17)
(Continued from Page 16)
A taxi owner sued the city over a new ordinance requiring cabbies to obtain a $15 annual permit that required them to have lived in the city for at least a year.

75 Years Ago (August 1946)
A couple from New Hamburg was injured in a 5:30 a.m. crash at 21 North Ave. when their car skidded on wet pavement and hit a tree. An hour later, a 51-year-old Beekman Street resident was killed when his car hit a tree at 28 North Ave.

Beacon fell to Poughkeepsie, 18-13, in the Eastern New York State Girls’ Softball championship at Middletown in front of 1,000 fans.

Humphrey Hedgecock, an authority on the hibernization of gladiolus, spoke at the monthly meeting of the Men’s Garden Club.

The grandfather and grand uncle of a 3-year-old Beacon boy were arrested in New Jersey on charges they had kidnapped him from his mother’s home on South Walnut Street. The boy’s father had been killed during the war and he had lived with his grandparents in Jersey City until his mother remarried.

A New York City man was fined $25 for reckless driving after a patrolman saw him traveling at 35 mph down Main Street while passing other vehicles.

50 Years Ago (August 1971)
A former Newburgh Free Academy football star was charged with the armed robbery of Jo’s Little Store at 33 Teller Ave. After grabbing $500 from the cash register, “he didn’t even say thank you,” said the owner’s daughter. A police officer noted the plate number of the getaway car.

A wildcat strike by meat cutters and butchers closed the AKP for a few hours until union officials ordered the members back to work. They also removed the offices of the local chapter, which had been the only one of four in the New York City area to vote against a new contract.

The Knights of Columbus Hall, constructed in 1885, was demolished as part of a $640,000 midtown urban renewal project.

A Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, constructed in 1910 at Groveville Park in Beacon and moved to northern Dutchess in 1966.

The USS Beacon visited its namesake city in 1971.

The USS Beacon visited its namesake city in 1971. Texaco in Glenham, won a bronze medal in the 50-kilometer walk at the Pan-American Games in Cali, Colombia. He finished in four hours and 42 minutes.

The female inmates at Camp Beacon raised 2,500 pheasant chicks for hunts organized by the Federation of Dutchess County Fish & Game Clubs.

Texaco laid off 130 employees at its Glenham plant amid rumors it planned to close the facility. The downsizing was part of the company’s decision to sell its lubricants and additives unit, which had been dinged by a Consumer Reports test that found the products made no difference in performance.

The Beacon Recreation Commission apologized to residents for the lack of a finale to the July 6 fireworks display. It said Bay Fireworks had neglected to ship the finale shells but promised it would extend the 1997 show at no charge.

The Church of the Nazarene dedicated a new multipurpose building at Camp Taconic in Milan. The summer camp was founded in 1930 at Groveville Park in Beacon and moved to northern Dutchess in 1966.

For more information, email ads@highlandscurrent.org.

The Highlands Current
Dr. Ming Gensoli (1928-2021)

Dr. Mamerto F. “Ming” Gensoli, 92, a retired physician and longtime resident of Beacon, died May 8 in Baco Baco City, Philippines, where he had lived for the past three years.

He was born May 11, 1928, in Murcia, Philippines, the son of Teofilo and Victoria Gensoli. He studied medicine at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila.

In 1961, he was awarded an opportunity for a residency in the U.S. and practiced medicine at St. Vincent’s Hospital on Staten Island, where he met his wife, Fran. They married on July 29, 1964, in San Francisco. She died in Baco Baco City on Feb. 6, 2020, at age 78.

After their marriage, Ming and Fran lived in Baco Baco City for two years, where he established a community clinic, before returning to the U.S. to raise their family. Ming continued his career as an anesthesiologist with Veterans Affairs hospitals in Reading, Pennsylvania; Syracuse; St. Louis; and Cold Spring on Wappingers Falls, where he worked for 38 years. Fran worked in pediatrics at St. Vincent’s Hospital in New York City and later at Vassar College.

In 1973, Ming became a U.S. citizen. He was a longtime member of St. John the Evangelist Church. He was also a master rose and woodworker, leather worker, jeweler, and artist.

He was survived by his children, Lynn Keller (John), James Gensoli and Elizabeth Manetta (Bob); his grandchildren, Estelita DeUngria; and his sister-in-law, Tristan; his sisters, Gloria Gensoli and Gelist Church. He was also a master rose and woodworker.

A memorial Mass for Ming and Fran was held Aug. 7 at St. John the Evangelist. Memorial donations may be made to the church (stjoachim-stjohn.org) or to the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement (atonemfrairs.org).

Steven Stanulewich (1950-2021)

Steven Stanulewich, 71, a lifelong Beacon resident known affectionately as “Stick,” died Aug. 15 at his home following a nine-year battle with cancer.

He was born in Beacon on May 18, 1950, the son of Stanley and Marcella Stanulewich, and graduated from Beacon High School. In 1989, he married Shirley Pavlock.

Stick served for six years in the Army National Guard. He was employed by Texaco Research Center in Glenham for 34 years until his retirement when it closed. He went on to drive for N&S Supply.

He was a member and past president of the Slater Chemical Fire Co. in Glenham and a member of the Rombout Fire Co. in Fishkill. Stick played softball with numerous teams, starting with the Texaco Ball Busters and ending with the Poughkeepsie Senior League. He also threw shoes with the league at Slater Chemical. Stick also loved motorcycles.

In addition to his wife, Steve is survived by his son, Charles Stanulewich of Florida; his daughter-in-law, Jennifer Marko of North Carolina; his grandchildren, Dylan Stanulewich and Valerie Stanulewich, of North Carolina; his siblings, Roberta Schwartz of New Jersey and Mark Stanulewich and Mike Stanulewich, both of Florida; and his sister-in-law, Eileen Hoey of Marlboro.

A memorial service is being planned to be held at the Slater Chemical firehouse. Memorial donations may be made to a charity of choice.

Jeannette Yannitelli (1937-2021)

Jeannette Yannitelli, 83, of Garrison, died Aug. 13 after a long illness.

She was born in Florida on Nov. 11, 1937, the daughter of Andrew and Blanche (Barnes) Milan. To help provide for her family, Jeannette became an excellent fisherman, wildlife explorer and forager. After attending school, she became a real estate agent in Fort Myers.

In October 1959, she met and married a pilot and developer, Donato Yannitelli, in Santa Rosa, Florida, and settled in his hometown of Garrison in Philipstown. In Philipstown, she formed fast friendships thanks to her charm, wit, generosity of spirit, authenticity and ability to connect to others in human terms, her family said.

Jeannette and Don worked together in the real estate development businesses (Jeanne operating heavy equipment, when necessary), forming Yanco Properties in 1964 and Andon Associates in 1969.

Jeannette quickly adapted to life in Garrison, raising her family, enjoying the social life and playing golf and tennis at the Highlands Country Club, where she won many championships, her family said.

In 1978, Don died in a plane crash in Mystic, Connecticut. Through Jeannette’s tenacity and, with the help of Don’s family and her four boys, the family businesses carried on. The supportive community in Philipstown became increasingly significant to Jeannette, and rare was an event, church fair, potluck, senior social or fund-raiser where she was not spotted.

Jeannette was passionate and dedicated to whatever project she embraced in life, whether politics, civic affairs, sports, fishing, gardening, cooking and her love for animals. Through these interests, in 1993, she cultivated a friendship with Roger Chirico. Jeannette and Roger reveled in boating and striped fishing on the Hudson, dancing, socializing at the Cold Spring Boat Club and other events.

She is survived by her sons, Don Yannitelli II (Lori), Anthony Yannitelli (Mary Ellen), Tino Yannitelli (Susan) and Vincent Yannitelli, as well as her grandchildren: Salvatore (Katie), Theodore and Aubrey.

A graveside service will be held at a later date. Memorial contributions be made to the American Cancer Society (cancer.org).

Other Recent Deaths

Philipstown

Ellie Cococcia, 91
Leona Dushin, 95
Frank Golan, 88
Martin Papula, 66

Beacon

Jean Anzovino, 71
Julian Carmichael, 85
Steve Cohen, 61
Ronald Frost Sr., 63
Pat Fredericks, 85
Barney Hedberg, 83
Irine Llaja de Villal, 81
Beverly Ann MacEntee, 73

For more obituaries, see highlandscurrent.org/obits.
Puzzles

ACROSS
1. Soviet space station
4. Dance move
8. Actress Fisher
12. — out a living
13. Abode
14. Punch
15. Shares with followers on social media
17. Fury
18. MSN rival
19. Fuming
21. Cop’s badge
24. Flamenco cheer
25. Triumphed
26. Half a dozen
28. Travels by jet
32. Throat clearer
34. Jewel
36. Early Peruvian
37. Cleaning agent
39. Fawn’s mom
41. Junior
42. Carried out
44. French cathedral city
46. Tea urn
50. Business mag
51. Pressing thing?
52. The Handmaid’s Tale author
56. King of the jungle
57. Always
58. Notable time
59. “I did it!”
60. Faction
61. Cowboy moniker

DOWNS
1. Sea, to Henri
2. Mamie’s man
3. Lawyer’s fee
4. Beach souvenirs
5. Water tester
6. 911 responders
7. Green sauce
8. Haifa native
9. Bridge coup
10. Olympic sled
11. On in years
16. Misery
20. Sprite
21. Clear the decks?
22. Jolly laugh
23. Use a shovel
27. Deleted
28. Travels by jet
29. Behind closed doors
30. Nobel Prize subj.
31. Without
32. Throat clearer
33. “Material Girl” singer
34. Jewel
35. Extinct bird
36. Early Peruvian
37. Cleaning agent
38. VII doubled
39. Fawn’s mom
40. Asylum seeker, perhaps
41. Junior
42. Carried out
43. Titled women
44. French cathedral city
45. — jiffy
46. Tea urn
47. Carmen solo
48. Disposition
49. Sitarist Shankar
50. Business mag
51. Pressing thing?
52. The Handmaid’s Tale author
53. Roulette bet
54. Before
55. Levy

Sudoku Current

Answers will be published next week. See highlandscurrent.org/puzzle for interactive sudoku.
Not Again!
With COVID-19 resurgence, state suggests limits on contact sports
By Skip Pearlman

Just when it looked like it might be safe to go back in the water, another COVID-19 monster is rearing its ugly head.

One week ahead of the official opening of practice for most fall sports, the New York State Education Department recommended that high-contact sports such as football be canceled in areas with high transmission of the virus unless all players and coaches are vaccinated.

While not a mandate, the announcement was not well-received by coaches and athletes in the Highlands.

“The timing couldn’t be worse,” said Beacon football coach Jim Phelan. “To make a statement like that a week before the start of the season — I’d hate to have to tell the players the rug got pulled out from under them again.”

In the spring of 2020, the baseball, lacrosse and softball seasons were canceled because of the pandemic shutdown. In the fall, sports such as football and volleyball were delayed until March 2021. Modified sectional playoffs were held, but not statewide competitions, although state tournaments are scheduled to return in 2021-22.

Because the state is only “suggesting” canceling games in high-transmission areas, some coaches called the announcement a distraction. Unless there is a mandate by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association or officials in Section 1 (which includes Haldane) or Section 9 (Beacon), the feeling is that schools will go ahead, with precautions.

With COVID-19 numbers on the rise around the region, especially among those who are not vaccinated, superintendents and school boards were having discussions this week, but fall sports remain on track for a Monday (Aug. 23) start.

“We’re still talking about protocols for the season, and not about delaying it,” said John Gianetta, the Beacon athletic director. The state recommendation “is not something we want to go with. But we also know the NYSPHSAA or the section could postpone or cancel games at any time.”

At Haldane, athletic director Dan Cowan said that, “as of now, we’re going forward with all fall sports as though it’s a typical year. All of our athletes and coaches will be in masks for outdoor practices and events, and indoors the same thing.

“There are some concerns,” said Cowan, who joined Haldane this year from Roosevelt High School in Hyde Park. “But once we’ve all read the guidelines, we can work together and I believe we can still offer sports.

“What we went through last fall was a tremendous challenge,” he added. “Now I think people will be more confident and understand that the restrictions are out of an abundance of caution. Students and families want to feel safe. And, hopefully, the restrictions will ease up as the year goes on.”

Haldane Superintendent Philip Bena- nie said this week in a note to parents that athletes in high-contact sports may be required to submit to weekly COVID-19 testing. He said on Thursday (Aug. 19) that he and the district’s physician were still working out the details.

In Beacon, Gianetta noted that “no one wants to go backward. We’re going full steam forward and trying to get back to normal. That’s important. Sports can change lives, and people value those experiences. It doesn’t matter what we have to do, we have to get it done for the kids.”

Ryan McConville, who coaches varsity football at Haldane, said last week’s announcement had people wondering what might come next.

“People got nervous hearing that” from the Education Department, he said. “I’ve been getting a lot of calls, people wanting to know what’s going on.”

McConville and other coaches were dreading the possibility of having to tell their players the season is not happening or will be postponed. “I had a lump in my throat,” he said. “I don’t know how we’d tell them again. There would be a lot of pushback from the community. We feel we can play; play safely and follow the rules and mandates.

“We have good procedures in place; we’re much better prepared,” he added. “We’ve been keeping the kids apart and revising plans and protocols.”

In Beacon, Phelan said last spring’s “Fall 2” football season was a success but not something he’d like to see repeated. “We wanted to take a step forward, but we took a step back.”

As a team, he said, “Maybe I put too much on the guys in too short a time, with us not being together, not planning. That impacted how much we practiced. It was a difficult adjustment.

“It was a big developmental year, and we didn’t get to see them,” he added. “Now we’re more prepared, guys have been doing their thing over the summer, and everything has been going well. We don’t want to have to jam it into spring again.”

Beacon, which will move this year from Section 1 to Section 9, is scheduled to open its season on Sept. 10, hosting Kingston. Other fall teams include boys’ and girls’ soccer, cross-country, volleyball, girls’ swimming and cheerleading.

Haldane is scheduled to open Sept. 11, hosting Rye Neck. The high school also has boys’ and girls’ soccer, volleyball, girls’ tennis and cross-country teams.

McLain Ward, aboard Contagious, competes in the finals in Tokyo on Aug. 7. The U.S. jumping team — Laura Kraut, Jessica Springsteen and Ward — show off the silver.

Photos by Annan Hepner

McLain Ward, who lives in Brewster, won his fourth Olympic medal on Aug. 7 in Tokyo as one of three riders on the U.S. Equestrian show-jumping team. Sweden took gold in the event after defeating the U.S. by 1.3 seconds in a “jump off.” Ward’s teammates were Kent Farrington, Laura Kraut and Jessica Springsteen, the daughter of Bruce. It was Ward’s fourth Olympic medal; he was a member of teams that won gold in Athens in 2004 and Beijing in 2008 and silver in Rio in 2016.