

# The HIGHLANDS Current



DECEMBER 10, 2021

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Sean Barton and Josh Maddocks operate Cockburn Farm in Garrison, where customers cut their own trees.

Photo by J. Asher

## What? No Christmas Trees?

*Fires, drought and snafus tighten supply*

By Joey Asher

The pandemic, drought, forest fires and a supply chain mix-up have thrown the Christmas tree business into turmoil this year in the Highlands. Prices are up. In some cases, supply is down. For the first time in 50 years, the Beacon

Engine Co. No. 1 at 57 E. Main St. had no trees to sell for its annual fundraiser, said Frank Merritt, the president of the company. The cause was a supply-chain mishap with the supplier in Vermont. “He didn’t have enough trucks to make deliveries,” Merritt said.

At Vera’s Marketplace and Garden Center on Route 9 in Philipstown, co-owner Dominic Giordano said on Thursday (Dec. 9) that he received only 270 trees this year,

(Continued on Page 25)



**GIVING SEASON** — Man’s best friend gets in position for a nibble at the Cold Spring waterfront on Dec. 4 while waiting with a crowd of revelers for Santa to arrive on a Cold Spring Fire Co. truck. Hudson House provided the treats. For more photos, see Page 21.

Photo by Michael Turton



## HUNGER in the Highlands

By Brian PJ Cronin

One of the most significant recent achievements to address food insecurity in the Hudson Valley is something that, on its surface, has nothing to do with food.

Last month, Poughkeepsie became the fourth New York municipality to pass a “good-cause eviction” law, which limits the amount that landlords can increase rent and stipulates that they must have a good cause for evicting tenants. Beacon is weighing whether to pass similar legislation.

What does that have to do with hunger? Everything, says Sarah Salem, who was elected on Nov. 2 to a third term on the Poughkeepsie Common Council and works for Dutchess Outreach, an organization that has been fighting food insecurity for nearly 50 years.

“This was something that our constituents told us they needed,” Salem said the day after the legislation was passed. “And we were

able to give it to them. Those constituents are our clients at Dutchess Outreach. They said last night how great our food pantry was, and how it helps them achieve a sense of financial stability, but they need to be protected in their homes.”

It is hard to discuss food insecurity without examining what’s driving people to food banks and soup kitchens in the first place.

The reasons are vast: Growing economic inequality, stagnant wages, gentrification, rising health care and housing costs are the most obvious. Maggie Dickinson, who lives in Beacon and is the author of *Feeding the Crisis: Care and Abandonment in America’s Food Safety Net*, argues that welfare, the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps) and other government programs have been modified to be less about ending hunger and more about subsidizing low-wage workers.

“During welfare reform in the 1990s, there was this line that everybody used which was ‘A job was your path out of

(Continued on Page 10)

Third in a series



# 5Q FIVE QUESTIONS: RICHARD KREITNER

By Chip Rowe

Richard Kreitner, of Beacon, is the author of *Break It Up: Secession, Division and the Secret History of America's Imperfect Union*.

## How did you come to the topic of secession?

I was the archivist for *The Nation*, which was founded in 1865 by abolitionists, so that got me interested in Reconstruction, which led to the Civil War, which led to the period right before the constitutional convention [in 1787], when it looked like the country was going to fall apart. There's a reason it took 150 years for the colonists to form a union in the first place — they wanted nothing to do with one another. That a year ago you had so-called “nationalists” storming the halls of the national legislature shows you how easily patriotism can turn into secessionism. Each side says: “You want to secede — that's treason.” But when they lose the election, they want to pick up their ball and go home.

## It hasn't fallen apart, though. We have survived some perilous times.

That's one takeaway. It's not mine. It was often just chance that allowed us to survive,



such as the War of 1812, where New England probably would have seceded if the war hadn't ended when it did. The country stayed together after the Civil War, but 800,000 people died and we only reunited on the basis of white supremacy. We have this tradition where we postpone the divisive questions; we had Jim Crow for 50 years because we didn't want another war. But we're out of options for compromising away all of these disagreements. Perhaps there's a world in which the end of the United States leads to something better, although I have serious doubts. But a cold, sober look at history suggests that the union was never inevitable and still isn't.

## What caused the South to secede?

Certainly slavery was at the center of it. It was also an argument over states' rights, but that doesn't mean that Confederates were sincere believers, because just a few years earlier, with the Fugitive Slave Act, they were perfectly happy to trample on states' rights in the north. I would argue that the *anti*-slavery movement was a major cause, because it riled up the South.

After the war, abolitionists were blamed for having started the war unnecessarily, but they should be credited for saying that either slavery survives or the union, one or the other. We should be proud that we fought a war to end slavery, but that begs the question: What are we tolerating today for the sake of union? Sticking together for fear of what might happen if we break apart is not my definition of a healthy marriage.

## If it goes that way, which is the first state to secede?

You'd have to go with Texas, which was an independent country for a decade and has what it perceives to be just causes, and it has the guns. But it's more likely the whole thing crumbles at once. You may have a federal power vacuum because of some crisis, or you might have two pretenders to the presidency and the states split behind them. The other possibility is that governors form regional coalitions in the age of catastrophic climate change because of all these emergencies and say, over a century, the federal structure withers away.

## A reader suggested in a letter to the editor that Philipstown secede from Putnam County. Could it be done?

At the state level — such as recent proposals by several counties in Oregon to join Idaho — it would require the assent of both state legislatures and also, I believe, Congress. At the local level, the Town Board and the Putnam and Dutchess legislatures would have to agree. If Putnam refused, Philipstown could sue for its freedom. Whichever the route, Philipstown voters would have to approve. None of the legal experts I consulted had ever heard of this being done, although in 1989 the Patterson supervisor did meet with the Dutchess executive to discuss leaving Putnam.

# ON THE SPOT

By Michael Turton

## How do you feel about the early sunsets these days?

“The shorter days don't diminish the beauty of the sunset down at the river.”



Mary Poppiins, Beacon

“The more sunshine the better; I just like the daylight.”



Robert Timan, Cold Spring

“Early sunsets make it easier to quit working on Zoom at 5 p.m., guilt free!”



Britta Larsen, Garrison

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Newburgh

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Danielle Greenberg,  
Cross River

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**Challengers Arise in Cold Spring**

While most people who contract COVID- (Continued on Page 6)

**Beacon Schools Plan to Sell**

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# The HIGHLANDS Current

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## Tell us what you think

**T**he *Current* welcomes letters to the editor on its coverage and local issues. Submissions are selected by the editor (including from comments posted to our social media pages) to provide a variety of opinions and voices, and all are subject to editing for accuracy, clarity and length, and to remove personal attacks. Letters may be emailed to editor@highlandscurrent.org or mailed to *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. For our complete editorial policies, see highlandscurrent.org/editorial-standards.

## LETTERS AND COMMENTS

### Fatal crash

In light of the recent fatal crash, Beacon should move to install a leading pedestrian interval (LPI) at that intersection, as well as at other dangerous intersections ("Pedestrian Killed in Beacon," Dec. 3). By giving pedestrians a head start to cross before turning traffic, LPIs have been shown to reduce conflicts by 60 percent, and can be implemented quickly and at minimal cost.

We should conceive of tragic incidents like this not as unavoidable accidents, but as something we can prevent through a mix of better design, technology and enforcement.

Installing LPIs will mean that cars have to wait a bit longer at intersections. But Main Street is the beating, people-oriented heart of our city, and if pedestrians can't feel safe simply crossing the street there, where will they ever feel safe?

Hayley Richardson, *Beacon*

It's very sad to read that someone was killed walking across the street. One possible solution to make the intersection safer has been implemented in other places such as Rhinebeck (at the intersection of Market Street and Route 9), where they changed the traffic light to what is called an "exclu-

sive pedestrian interval."

This is a traffic signal that temporary stops all vehicle traffic, thereby allowing pedestrians to cross safely without cars being allowed to turn into the intersection with a green light. It has been implemented in cities where pedestrian traffic has increased. It is a nice feeling when crossing at that intersection; when the signal says it's safe to walk, all cars are stopped.

This type of intersection might not be the answer, but a traffic investigation should be done to see if implementing this change would help prevent more accidents.

Christopher Cring, *Poughkeepsie*

### Proper terms

Cold Spring and Beacon hung Christmas wreaths, not holiday wreaths ("Around Town," Dec. 3). Stop making everything politically correct.

Andrew Dade, *Cold Spring*

### Reporter's notebook

Mike Turton hits the nail on the head regarding the immense contributions Dave Merandy, Fran Murphy and Marie Early have made to the village ("Reporter's Notebook: A Change of the Guard in Cold

Spring," Dec. 3). Thanks, Mike, for putting to words what I was thinking.

Donald MacDonald, *Cold Spring*

Mike's column was very well-written. Best wishes to all three of them. I couldn't help but remember a former trustee who said, "Today I get sworn in and tomorrow I will be sworn at."

Cheryl Allen, *via Facebook*

### Culturally responsive

The "culturally responsive education" being implemented in the Beacon school district is disguised critical race theory (CRT) designed to indoctrinate and not educate ("A Shift in Thinking," Dec. 3). Diversity can be a hindrance to social cohesion and unity in a nation.

I am a retired history teacher and the textbook we taught from had illustrations of the brutality of slavery and the economics that perpetuated it. I also had personal material since I had several courses in African history. It's just CRT propaganda to say that slavery is not taught, that Jim Crow is not mentioned, that somehow Reconstruction and the Ku Klux Klan are whitewashed. The issues were more than contextualized.

Ann Fanizzi, *via Facebook*

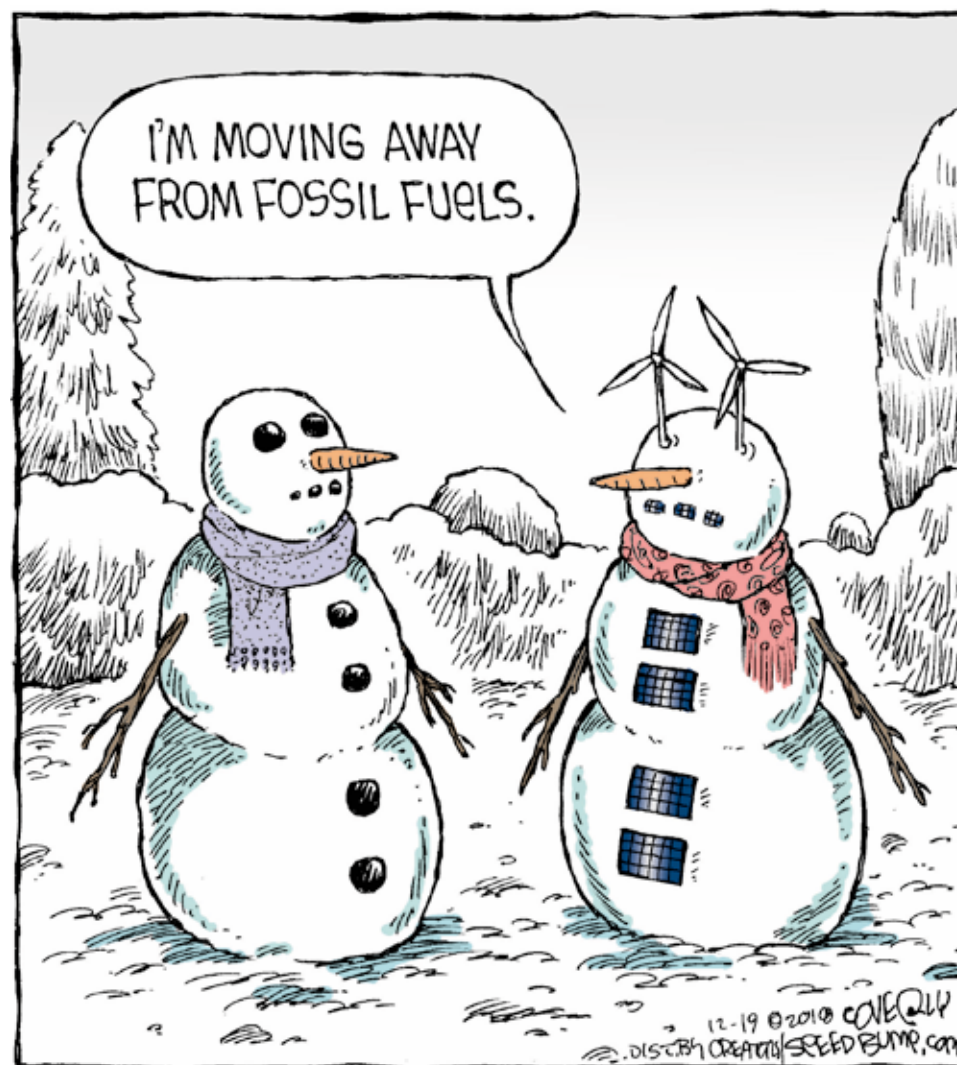
Schools may be teaching about slavery but they aren't teaching about the institution itself. What is being asked for is the *whole* history of enslavement, including struggles for freedom and fights for legislative change that shaped this country. The version of Reconstruction taught in public schools doesn't talk about the history of what happened when Black people were emancipated and the actions taken afterward. CRT is a more complex analysis of the criminal justice system and how it disproportionately impacts communities of color. We can't contextualize an issue if we refuse to look at the context.

Rae Leiner, *via Facebook*

I'm a retired history teacher, and I taught everything I could about slavery, Reconstruction, Jim Crow, segregation, racism and discrimination throughout our history, and I wasn't an exception. People who claim our history is "whitewashed" have no clue what's taught. We also teach about American colonization and the horrors of that.

I have researched the nonsense that the left is pushing and I find it abhorrent. It is racism in disguise, and it will divide our nation even more. Activist teachers are more concerned with politics than educating children, which is one reason our children do so poorly in school. Teach-

(Continued on Page 5)





## LETTERS AND COMMENTS

*(Continued from Page 4)*

ers have an enormous amount of influence and power in the classroom; some use that influence and power in a corrupt way.

“Culturally responsive curriculum” has been labeled, incorrectly, as CRT. But what is masquerading as CRT — diversity, inclusion, etc. — is an attempt to make white children feel guilty about being white, and children of color believe they are victims and can’t succeed in a “white man’s world.” The idea that white children should be made to feel responsible for the enslavement of Africans, under the guise of “real history,” is disgraceful.

Patricia Burruano, *via Facebook*

A culturally responsive framework isn’t a claim that no one is teaching slavery or Jim Crow. It’s an approach that aims to ensure all of our children see themselves, their history and their communities reflected in the educational materials.

Black American history is not just slavery and Jim Crow, civil rights and Martin Luther King Jr. — it is much more than simply the horrible things white people have done to build this nation and the struggle of oppression, and even if we were only focused on atrocities and hardships, we are barely covering those.

When a dominant cultural group gets to place a fixed lens in front of history to focus on themselves, all else will be distorted and improperly understood.

We are not a nation of only Black and white folks, either. It always seems to go that way in conversations but there are far more cultures represented in our classrooms. Culturally responsive means every student’s culture should be understood, respected and appreciated. That’s good for all our kids.

Bryanne Figlia, *via Facebook*

I am the parent of a child adopted from Guatemala who went through the Beacon school system. My child experienced racism, not only from classmates but also from teachers, especially in middle and high school. Beacon is going to have a difficult time including cultural sensitivity in their curriculum when they have teachers who are openly racist.

Kristen Rigney, *via Facebook*

Who is trying to make white children feel guilty for being white and why would they want to do that? The article explicitly stated that Beacon is not implementing CRT, which is a discipline appropriate at the college level. The goal for a culturally responsive curriculum framework is to give the teachers the tools they need to teach about a broad spectrum of perspectives. We live in America, the melting pot, the “give me your tired, your poor” country.

It’s not easy to be a country that houses so many perspectives. We are learning to do a better job of understanding those diverse perspectives. We are training teachers to teach these perspectives. That is the goal.

Anna Cory-Watson, *via Facebook*

This curriculum sounds excellent. I wish I had it, rather than the high school history textbook I had in New York City in the 1970s that said enslaved Africans were “happy” to be slaves. I didn’t learn there were enslaved people in New York until the New-York Historical Society had an exhibit on it long into my adulthood.

Donna Minkowitz, *via Facebook*

Beacon is a diverse community, and administrators use data to determine the approaches that need to be taken to most effectively serve the students in our schools. This is one of several approaches. Among the 2,723 students in Beacon’s six public schools, the majority (55 percent) are nonwhite — seeing yourself and celebrating your culture and contribution is a big part of keeping students engaged.

I am of Irish heritage — years ago there was a great PBS series called *The Irish in America*. The more tragic parts of that story, such as indentured servitude, disposable labor and a forced famine creating a crisis that led to mass and dangerous immigration conditions/backlash, didn’t make me hate British people or Americans who were not welcoming. It helped me to know my history, celebrate that culture of origin and experience compassion for those whose plight is similar today.

Learning to take in other perspectives expands a student’s humanity; it doesn’t diminish another. There is so much fear in the reaction to the article — fear that

is based upon nothing that is actually happening within the three-year framework to improve learning and build level experience. It’s hard to know what to do about that — it mostly seems triggered by race because it seems to automatically get linked to CRT.

The article makes clear that the framework is about expanding the story and experience in the classroom for purposes of engagement and education, to include the broader narrative of the pluralistic society that is America — race, but also social class, gender, language, sexual orientation, nationality, religion or ability. Many of these overlap, and in those layers, struggles and accomplishments we learn more about our common humanity.

Kristan Flynn, *via Facebook*

*Flynn is a member of the Beacon school board.*

## Dockside

This is a great thing for Cold Spring (“Dockside Shoreline to Get Major Rehab,” Dec. 3). I’ve always admired Beacon’s waterfront and wished ours could be similar.

John Merante, *via Facebook*

What a waste of money.

Ralph Falloon, *via Facebook*

I think this is great. We made such a mess of the beautiful Hudson Valley with

brickmaking, quarries for city buildings, iron for cannons and such, refineries, and power stations. We continue our abuse of our planet through what we dump into the air and water. It’s time we started to show some respect for the beauty we were born into.

Peter Callaway, *via Facebook*

Dockside is beautiful as is. Use the money where it is of more immediate need. Or maybe don’t spend it.

Maria Leiter, *via Facebook*

No one complains when Putnam County wastes our money on bogus horse farms and golf courses, but everyone complains when the state wants to give us our money back and use it to restore our eroded shoreline.

Andrea Hudson, *via Facebook*

## Girl Scouts

I remember having my Brownies boil eggs and make egg salad for lunch and then crushing all the shells, gluing glitter on them and making stars for Christmas (“Longtime Beacon Scout House May Be Sold,” Dec. 3). We had a sleepover and in the morning discovered the mice ate up about half of them.

I also had my Junior Scouts bring in leftover paint, wet brushes and splatter it all over the floor. That speckled floor was there for years. Such fun times.

Jean Haight, *via Facebook*

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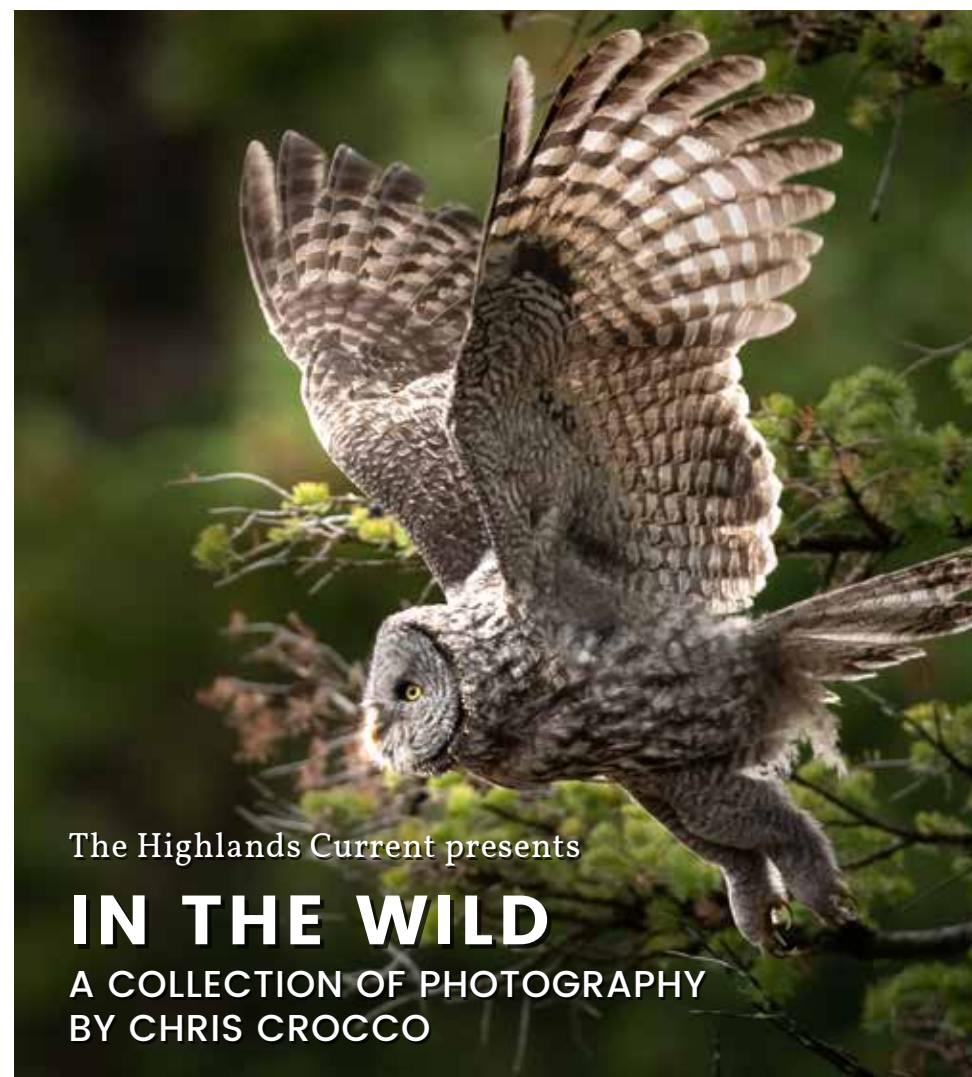
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Storm Lake streaming exclusively for our members and readers PLUS an online Q&A with the film's editor, Rachel Shuman (of Beacon) and consulting producer Toby Shimin (of Cold Spring) on Dec. 12.

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## Dutchess Legislature Approves \$533 Million Budget

*Property tax rate will fall by 10 percent*

By Leonard Sparks

The Dutchess County Legislature on Dec. 2 approved a \$533 million budget for 2022 that contains a 10 percent reduction in the property tax rate and the elimination of taxes on up to \$110 in spending on clothing and shoes.

The county's property tax rate will fall to \$2.85 for each \$1,000 of assessed value, from \$3.13. An owner of a property valued at \$300,000 will save \$84 annually.

With an assist from the federal American Rescue Plan, enacted in March, the budget refills some of the positions temporarily eliminated or left vacant when 152 employees took early retirement or severance last year, saving the county about \$11 million amid the pandemic shutdown.

Of the 96 positions, 18 were restored using some of the \$57 million in funding Dutchess is receiving from the American Rescue Plan. Dutchess will use \$1.8 million of the ARP funding to fill 21 positions over the next three years. An additional 38 of the eliminated positions would also be refilled in 2022, according to budget documents.

New positions include three crisis counselors for the county's help line, an assistant district attorney, a senior assistant public defender, two alternatives-to-incarceration workers in the Public Defenders' Office, two sheriff's deputies and three park maintenance workers.

The budget also appropriates funding for three grant programs: \$4.5 million for nonprofit infrastructure projects; \$4 million for projects by municipalities and school, fire, sewer and water districts; and \$1 million for nonprofit youth programs.

## Valdes Smith Elected to Dutchess Legislature

*Will represent Beacon Ward 4, part of Ward 3*

By Chip Rowe

The Dutchess County Board of Elections said on Monday (Dec. 6) that it had completed counting absentee ballots and that Democrat Yvette Valdes Smith had maintained her Election Day lead to succeed Frits Zernike in the Dutchess County Legislature.

District 16 includes Ward 4 and part of Ward 3 in Beacon. The rest of Beacon is represented by Nick Page, a Democrat who ran unopposed to keep his seat.

The unofficial results, including 147 mail-in ballots, showed Valdes Smith defeating Ron Davis. Valdes Smith, who serves as secretary on the board of the Stony Kill Foundation, led by 117 votes on Election Day over Davis, who chairs the Fishkill Republican Committee, with 238 mail-in ballots outstanding.



Smith

☆	Smith	1,498	53%
☆	Davis	1,302	47%

Unofficial tally including absentees

Zernike, a Democrat, did not seek a third, 2-year term. The vote still must be certified by the Board of Elections.

Democrats lost two seats in the 25-member Legislature when incumbents Rebecca Edwards of Poughkeepsie, the minority party leader, and Brendan Lawler of Hyde Park were defeated. The Legislature will now consist of 17 Republicans and eight Democrats.

### Dutchess County

The Board of Elections said on Tuesday that, with all but 26 of 3,642 mail-in ballots counted, Robin Lois had won re-election as Dutchess County comptroller. The Democrat led Republican challenger Ola Nesheiwat Hawatmeh by 1,546 votes when the polls closed on Nov. 2.

☆	Lois	33,130	52.5%
☆	Hawatmeh	29,930	47.5%

Unofficial tally including absentees



Philipstown Depot Theatre at the

**Cold Spring Aglow Event!**

AT 5:30PM

Join us for a condensed reading of *A Christmas Carol* with Carolers and Carols.

We'll be at the plaza at the termination of Main St. near the train underpass.

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The newly seated Cold Spring Village Board held its first meeting on Tuesday (Dec. 7). From left is Joe Curto, Tweeps Phillips Woods, Kathleen Foley, Eliza Starbuck and Cathryn Fadde.

Photo by M. Turton

## New Cold Spring Village Board Takes Office

*Shifts meeting dates and times*

By Michael Turton

The Cold Spring Village Board had a different look at its Tuesday (Dec. 7) meeting compared to a week earlier.

Before the meeting began, Mayor Kathleen Foley and Trustees Cathryn Fadde, Eliza Starbuck and Tweeps Phillips Woods were sworn in by Village Judge Camille Linson. Each was elected on Nov. 2.

As her first act in office, Foley appointed Joe Curto to fill the trustee seat she vacated to become mayor. Curto will serve the remaining year of the term. Woods will also serve a year to complete the term of Heidi Bender, who resigned in April. Foley, Fadde and Starbuck will serve 2-year terms.

The board includes both political veterans versed in village affairs and political newcomers. Foley was elected trustee in 2020 after serving on the Historic District Review Board. Fadde was a trustee in 2014-15. Curto is a former Haldane school board trustee. Woods was elected in November after being appointed by then-Mayor Dave Merandy in May to fill Bender's seat until the election. Starbuck is a first-time trustee and past president of the Cold Spring Chamber of Commerce.

The board's first agenda included approval of more than 30 appointments, designations and policies, standard procedure when a new administration takes office. Woods was appointed as deputy mayor and Jack Goldstein as chair of the Planning Board, succeeding Matt Francisco, who continues as a member.

Francisco had been a candidate for trustee in the November election but ended his bid in June, along with Merandy and Trustee Marie Early, after Foley entered the race for mayor.

In a later interview, Foley emphasized Goldstein's experience from over 20 years on the midtown Manhattan Community Board and his review of more than 1,000 varied land use applications. "He also led the landmark designation of the historic Broadway theaters; he's well-versed in working in the context of historic community fabric," she said.

She praised Francisco, saying he "brought professional rigor and deep content expertise" as its chair and that his continued membership on the board will be an "invaluable service."

Committee chairs are appointed annu-

ally to one-year terms. Reappointed as chairs were Jeff Amato (Recreation); Al Zgolinski (Historic District Review Board); Eric Wirth (Zoning Board of Appeals); and Jennifer Zwarich (Tree Advisory Board).

"Tonight, we are truly reorganizing the village," Foley said, noting that trustees had been assigned as liaisons to departments and boards but that department heads would now meet with her and the deputy mayor weekly. She said she hoped the move would "ensure clear lines of communication for goal-setting, project coordination and progress reports."

Foley said she asked the deputy mayor to make recommendations to "improve efficiencies, reduce bottlenecks and increase productivity," at Village Hall based on Woods' experience working for the New York City Mayor's Office of Operations.

She implemented Woods' recommendation to organize village management by work areas, such as finance, water, highways, tourism and recreation, with trustees acting as lead contacts on projects in each area and reporting to the mayor.

This approach, Foley said, "will help ensure knowledge is spread across the full board," something she said is "important for organizational and institutional health and longevity."

Foley said in a later interview that listening to department heads about priority issues "will be integral to formulating goals and objectives for the first six months of 2022." She listed the garbage and recycling contract, plans for "long-delayed infrastructure projects" and completing the zoning code update as issues that need to be addressed soon.

Beginning in January, the board's monthly business meeting and all workshops will shift from Tuesday to Wednesday. All meetings will begin at 7 p.m.

## Garrison Fire Seeks OK to Borrow

*Wants funds to purchase "mini-pumper"*

By Michael Turton

Voters will go to the polls on Tuesday (Dec. 14) to consider a proposal by the Garrison Fire District to borrow funds to purchase a "mini-pumper" fire engine.

They will also be asked to elect a fire district commissioner on the five-person board, either incumbent Nat Prentice or challenger Kyle Irish. The term is five years.

The polls will be open from 5 to 9 p.m. at the firehouse at 1616 Route 9. There are no absentee ballots available.

The estimated cost of the pumper is \$449,000. Voter approval is required for the district to borrow money, such as by issuing a bond. Prentice estimates the district will need to borrow 60 percent of the price, or about \$270,000, with the remainder coming from savings. Most of the purchase price, he said, will not be due until 2023.



This mini-pumper is similar to what the Garrison Fire Co. would like to purchase.

Photo provided

If the fire district had the full purchase price in savings, it could buy the pumper without voter approval. That was the case in 2019 when the district bought a second-hand ladder truck.

In a newsletter to residents in October, fire district officials said larger fire trucks have difficulty on Garrison's narrow, hilly and winding roads.

The mini-pumper is built on a Ford F-550 chassis and is 5 to 6 feet shorter than the full-size engine it will replace. That vehicle, a 2007 Marion, would be sold.

The new engine would also have four-wheel drive, making it more effective in winter than two-wheel drive, full-size engines," said Commissioner Fred Reich. "It would serve multiple purposes, including fighting fires with water or foam,

rescue and supporting off-road brush fire operations; and its Jaws of Life would be used at motor vehicle accidents."

The Garrison Fire District serves 2,400 residents. The owner of a home valued at \$500,000 paid about \$1,000 in taxes through the Town of Philipstown for fire protection in 2021. It is estimated that amount will increase by about \$12 in 2022.

The district's proposed budget for 2022 is \$787,350, a 1.5 percent increase over 2021.

The fire district, established in 2016, is administered by five elected commissioners. Besides Prentice and Reich, the others are Linda Lomonaco, Sandy Bohl and David Brower. The Garrison Volunteer Fire Co., founded in 1929, lists 17 active firefighters on its website, including Chief Jim Erickson.

## Toys for Tots

*Donate new, unwrapped toys*

Former Cold Spring Mayor Anthony Phillips first brought the U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots program to the village in 1993 and it's back again this year.

Toys for Tots helps out families in need, collecting and distributing donations of new, unwrapped toys.

Toys can be dropped off at Butterfield Library, Foodtown, Downey Oil, C&E Paint Supply, Drug World and Deb's Hair Salon through Dec. 21. Toys will be distributed to local families at the Cold Spring Firehouse on Dec. 22 between 10 a.m. and noon.





# Craig House Project Heads to Planning Board

*Also, Beacon council approves 2022 budget*

By Jeff Simms

The Beacon Planning Board next week will begin its review of a proposal to develop the historic Tioronda Estate, the home of the former Craig House psychiatric facility, with an inn and spa, restaurant and cottage rentals.

An investment group led by Michael Silberberg and Bernard Kohn, who also owns the 344 Main St. and 248 Tioronda projects in Beacon, purchased the 162-year-old estate in 2017 for \$5.5 million.

The developers only submitted a handful of maps, with no narrative write-up of the proposal, to the Planning Board for its Dec. 14 meeting, but the project appears not to have changed significantly from a presentation made to the City Council in March 2020, during the early weeks of the pandemic shutdown.

Based on the maps, the project calls for the Craig House mansion, built in 1859, to be renovated, with hotel and spa additions built on either side and behind the building. “Entry” gardens would also be installed surrounding the structure, with a larger “Monet water garden” in the rear of the building.

Cottages and three other unidentified buildings are shown on the map just west of the water garden, with more than a dozen cottages farther south. The application for a special-use permit submitted to the board indicates that the project includes 100 “rental rooms.”

A tent venue area and venue parking would be in the North Meadow, which lies to the north of the mansion. A second entrance to the site would be added on Route 9D, with a driveway curving through



A developer plans to renovate the former Craig House estate in Beacon.

File photo

the parcel. It appears that several lots would together include more than 100 parking spaces.

If the plan is approved, a little less than half of the 64-acre estate looks like it will be developed. The publicly accessible Fishkill Creek Greenway and Heritage Trail is expected to cut through the property, although its route is unclear from the maps. The cover sheet shows the project renamed as the Mirbeau Inn & Spa at the Howland Estate.

“I look at this as almost being part of Main Street,” Kohn said to the City Council last year. “It’s going to be something very special.”

## Accessory dwellings

All but one person who commented during a public hearing on Monday (Dec. 6) urged the City Council to balk on a proposal that would simplify the process for creating accessory dwelling unit (ADU) apartments

in Beacon.

At least a dozen people spoke, either in person or by calling in to the council meeting.

The council has discussed the ADU measure, which would allow the apartments to be built in all residential districts and the transitional district, as a way of encouraging homeowners to create smaller housing units that could be rented at affordable prices. But on Monday, the overwhelming majority urged the council instead to adopt a good-cause eviction law to protect renters who could be at risk when a statewide moratorium on pandemic-related evictions expires Jan. 15.

Others brought up additional issues. “This proposal is in opposition to the comprehensive plan goal to preserve the density and character of established neighborhoods,” said Elaine Ciaccio. “I have heard little evidence that this will lower rents but the

one thing it will do is raise prices on homes.”

Ciaccio added that she believes the cost of building an ADU, even with the ease of simplified municipal regulations, would make it hard for a homeowner to offer below-market-rate rent.

Kristan Flynn questioned the “expeditious manner” of getting the proposal through discussion and to the public hearing stage. “It’s kind of astounding, given how long it takes anything to make it to the agenda,” she said. Flynn also said that city officials have argued that increasing Beacon’s housing stock would lead to lower prices, but “we’ve seen that play out in the opposite direction. There’s no reason to believe that this would yield a different result.”

The one caller in favor of the proposal, said that “we need it all. We need many different solutions” when it comes to affordability.

The council adjourned the public hearing until Jan. 18, by which time four new members will have taken seats. The council asked to discuss the enforcement of short-term rental regulations during an upcoming workshop, as several speakers on Monday suggested ADUs are more likely to be used as short-term rentals than affordable housing.

## Budget approved

The council on Monday unanimously approved Beacon’s 2022 budget, which includes \$23.4 million in general fund spending, along with a separate \$4 million water fund and \$5.2 million sewer fund.

Residential properties will see a slight decrease in their city tax bills while commercial and apartment properties will pay about a 3 percent increase.

The budget also includes \$25,000 to create a program to assist residents facing eviction with legal aid and other resources; \$10,000 to fund neighborhood-level community improvements; and a \$20,000 fund that nonprofit agencies can apply to for “community investment” projects.

# ‘Weird, Wacky, Inappropriate and Touching’

*At last meeting, Philipstown supervisor hears tributes — and questions*

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

Presiding over his last formal monthly meeting on Dec. 2 as Philipstown supervisor, Richard Shea received tributes, standing ovations and a round of song.

He also repudiated a resident’s criticism of both the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival plans for a new home and town government oversight of that project.

In an email the next day, Shea summed up the evening as “one for the record books, by turns weird, wacky, inappropriate and touching.”

First elected supervisor in 2009 after eight years as a member of the five-person Town Board, Shea did not seek re-election this fall and will leave office Dec. 31. Board Member John Van Tassel, who ran unop-

posed in November, will succeed him.

During the meeting at Town Hall, Shea’s colleagues passed a resolution honoring him, prompting a standing ovation. Sandy Galef, whose state Assembly district includes Philipstown, presented a proclamation declaring him “an exceptional individual”; an aide to Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, a Philipstown resident, brought similar recognition from Capitol Hill; and Putnam County Legislator Nancy Montgomery, whose district includes Philipstown and part of Putnam Valley, provided a statement attesting to her personal appreciation.

Van Tassel called Shea “a role model for me; a role model for this board. You’ve taught me to listen” to the public and sometimes change an intended course of action as a result, he told Shea.

Councilors Judy Farrell, Robert Flaherty and Jason Angell separately praised Shea and the board gave him an antique map of Putnam County. Fred Martin, a resident, led the audience in a round of “For He’s a

Jolly Good Fellow.”

Shea responded by expressing appreciation to fellow board members, who “make my life easier and make your life better”; to Galef and other elected officials; and to residents for taking an interest in town affairs.

“The great thing about local government is that we get to paint our future,” he said, before a second standing ovation. “You can have direct impact in your community.”

The board also saluted Judge Stephen Tomann for a quarter-century of service to the Philipstown Justice Court and awarded him a ceremonial gavel. Tomann, who could not attend the meeting, “is just a super-steady person,” said Shea. “As a justice, that’s what you want, this impartial, objective individual. Good justices are very hard to come by.”

During the public comments that ended the meeting, Garrison resident Joe Regele challenged HVSF’s plans to develop the former golf course at The Garrison into

a theater and arts campus. He noted that the festival has applied for a special-events permit from the Town Board to stage performances in a temporary tent in 2022 and 2023 while Planning Board scrutiny of HVSF’s proposed permanent facilities continues.

“What opportunity does the public have to address a special permit?” Regele asked, claiming that the application is “full of inaccuracies and misstatements.” He urged that, “before a decision is made,” the Town Board explain how special-event permit approval relates to the review by the Planning Board, which, he said, has been “overwhelmed” by information from the applicant.

Shea acknowledged that he supports the HVSF project, but noted he will not be on the Town Board when the special-event permit application comes up. He said there would be a public forum on the review process and pointed out that Planning Board meetings are open to all. “That’s democracy: You show up and get informed,” he said.

As Regele returned to his seat, he flipped off Davis McCallum, the HVSF artistic director, who was sitting in the audience.



# Hospitals Brace for Two Unwelcome Visitors

*COVID-19 cases climb as the flu re-emerges*

By Leonard Sparks

Two years ago it was a record-high flu season. Last year it was COVID-19.

This winter, hospitals are facing a resurgence of both.

Fueled by the Delta variant of the coronavirus, cases, hospitalizations and deaths have been surging over the last four months in Dutchess and Putnam counties, and statewide.

Despite concerns about the newly identified Omicron variant, Delta is still the dominant strain, accounting for 99 percent of infections for the two-week period ending Dec. 4.

The coronavirus has company this winter.

Nearly absent last winter because of mask-wearing, flu cases are rising again amid loosened pandemic restrictions and the jettisoning of face coverings by vaccinated residents.

The state Department of Health reported 3,698 flu cases through Nov. 27, a tally that will soon eclipse the 4,900 cases from last year with five months left in the season. During the 2019-20 flu season, New York recorded 158,000 cases, a record for the state.

"This could be a challenging winter," said Dr. William Begg, vice president of medical affairs for Vassar Brothers Medical Center

## Daily Positives

	DUTCHESS	PUTNAM
JULY	13	4.4
NOV.	67	18
DEC. 1-7	141	45

## Occupied Acute-Care Beds

<b>NewYork-Presbyterian</b> Cortlandt Manor	<b>93%</b>
<b>Vassar Brothers</b> Poughkeepsie	<b>86%</b>
<b>Montefiore-St. Luke's</b> Newburgh	<b>85%</b>
<b>Putnam Hospital Center</b> Carmel	<b>63%</b>

Source: New York Department of Health, as of Dec. 7

in Poughkeepsie, which, along with Putnam Hospital Center in Carmel and Northern Dutchess Hospital in Rhinebeck, belongs to the Nuvance Health system.

"The last two years, it was one or the other," he said of COVID-19 and the flu. "This year it's potentially going to be both."

Hospitals have already seen their beds

filling again with COVID-19 patients, starting in August, when Delta-fueled infections began increasing.

Vassar Brothers was treating 29 patients, including four on ventilators, on Tuesday (Dec. 7), nearly four times the number from a month earlier and nearly six times the five people hospitalized on the last day of July. Eleven patients had died at the hospital over the previous month.

Another eight COVID-19 patients were hospitalized at NewYork-Presbyterian Hudson Valley Hospital in Cortlandt Manor on Tuesday, 25 at Montefiore St. Luke's Hospital in Newburgh and seven at Putnam Hospital Center in Carmel.

While a small percentage of "breakthrough" infections have hit vaccinated residents, most of the cases in New York state reflect infections in people who are unvaccinated, as do most of the hospitalizations.

"As far as the sickest people, without a doubt it's those patients who have never received vaccination," said Begg.

Thirty-two upstate hospitals across the state were required, starting Thursday (Dec. 9), to limit non-essential procedures under a "surge-and-flex" plan to preserve capacity for COVID-19 patients. Under state Department of Health criteria, the hospitals must limit procedures if 90 percent or more of their acute-care beds are full and they are in a region with a similar shortage.

## COVID-19 by the Numbers

### ■ PUTNAM COUNTY

Number of confirmed cases:

**13,508** (+511)

Active Cases in Philipstown: 21-30

Tests administered:

**335,973** (+10,232)

Percent positive:

**4.0** (0)

Percent vaccinated:

**76.7**

Percent in 10516: 88.9

Percent in 10524: 83.0

Number of deaths:

**101** (0)

### ■ DUTCHESS COUNTY

Number of confirmed cases:

**39,702** (+1,525)

Active Cases in Beacon: 32

Tests administered:

**1,073,119** (+29,442)

Percent positive:

**3.6** (-0.1)

Percent vaccinated:

**71.5**

Percent in 12508: 66.7

Number of deaths:

**515** (+9)

Source: State and county health departments, as of Dec. 7, with change over previous two weeks in parentheses. Percent vaccinated reflects those ages 5 and older who have received at least one dose.

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## Hunger *(from Page 1)*

poverty,’ ” she says. “The policy goal was to get women off welfare and into a job so that they would no longer be poor. What happened was that millions of women got pushed off the welfare rolls and they were still poor.

“Food stamps were seen as one of these ways to subsidize low wages without actually doing anything to challenge employers’ bottom lines,” she says. “Walmart could still pay you next to nothing, but you could get food stamps and the Earned Income Tax Credit to make ends meet. Wages have stagnated so much over the past 40 years. If the minimum wage was the same as it was in 1968, and inflation-adjusted, it would be around \$24 an hour. We’re still trying to get \$15 an hour passed.”

There’s space for food-insecurity programs to get involved in addressing long-term economic problems, such as Dutchess Outreach advocating good-cause eviction laws or, in Texas, the San Antonio Food Bank building an affordable, transitional housing unit with child care next to one of its distribution centers.

But for the immediate problem — making sure no one goes to bed hungry — the COVID-19 pandemic is providing the funding and momentum to change how the issue is addressed.

One of the allowable uses for funds from the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act passed by Congress earlier this year is addressing food insecurity. And nonprofits are questioning the necessity of barriers that in the past have prevented people from getting help, such as paperwork and income verification.

Over the past 18 months, volunteers and private funding have stepped up in the Highlands in such ventures as the formation of Beacon Mutual Aid and the \$600,000 that the Town of Philipstown raised to buy grocery gift cards and fund emergency feeding programs.

With that in mind, in October the Philipstown Town Board considered what level of food insecurity would be acceptable.

“In a town like Philipstown, with our resources, we should have a goal of zero percent food insecurity,” says Jason Angell, a Garrison farmer who joined the board this year. “That’s doable.”

### Mapping inequality

It takes more than a bag of groceries or a box of produce to address food insecurity. It also takes data. If you’re setting a goal of zero hunger, you have to first figure out how many people are hungry.

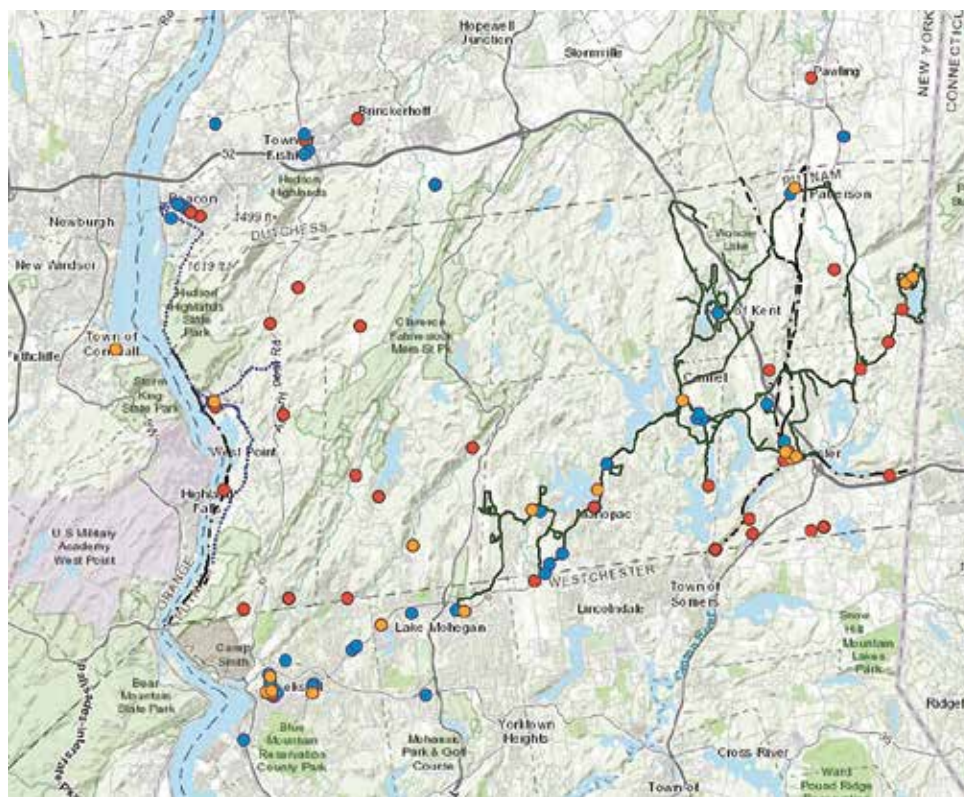
Much of Angell’s work with Long Haul Farm, which he owns with his wife, Jocelyn Apicello, has involved addressing food insecurity in what are traditionally thought of as the areas that suffer from it: Poor, urban neighborhoods in Newburgh, Peekskill and Poughkeepsie.

But when the number of families that the Philipstown Food Pantry was serving tripled in the pandemic’s early months, he says his field of vision expanded. “Did that reveal a spike in food insecurity due to COVID-19, or did it show chronic food insecurity in some way that had not been revealed?” he asked.



Jason Angell, a farmer who serves on the Philipstown Town Board, says zero hunger locally is “doable.”

*Photo provided*



This food access map, created by the Putnam County Food Systems Coalition, shows the challenge that lack of transportation can create when obtaining food. The blue dots represent stores that accept food stamps; the orange dots are pantries and other emergency providers. The green and dotted blue lines are county bus or trolley routes.

Those questions led him to the newly formed Putnam County Food Systems Coalition, who was crunching numbers and interviewing residents in a search for answers. The coalition — whose members include the county Department of Health, Second Chance Foods, the Glynwood Center for Regional Food and Farming and Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Putnam County — recently published a food systems map based on its research (see [bit.ly/putnam-map](http://bit.ly/putnam-map)).

As Jen Lerner of CCE Putnam explained,

5 percent of residents in Putnam County live at or below the poverty line, compared to 13 percent nationwide. “That would say to you, ‘Oh, it’s not a problem here,’ ” she says. “But then you start looking at the comparison of the cost of living.”

According to the data, Putnam has the highest cost of living of any county in the state and the second-highest average cost per meal, behind Manhattan.

That leads to another stat known as ALICE. Developed by the United Way, it’s an acronym for Asset Limited, Income

Constrained, Employed. These are the working poor, who make too much to qualify for food stamps or other government assistance but have trouble making basic ends meet. Nearly 30 percent of Putnam households meet that criteria, or about 1,000 households in Philipstown.

“They’re making decisions between paying bills and buying food,” Lerner says.

But are they food insecure? Angell says it’s best to think of ALICE households as intermittently food insecure as opposed to chronically hungry, because they may be able to afford enough groceries one month but not the next.

Working off the calculation that a third of ALICE households are food insecure at any given time — “That’s just an assumption because our data has limits,” allows Angell — and that 120 households in Philipstown are at or below the poverty line, leads to the rough estimate of 450 food-insecure households.

Based on the number of households being served by the Philipstown Food Pantry and the county senior center, about 25 percent of the food-insecure households in Philipstown are being fed. So what would it take to feed the other 75 percent?

Lerner says that while insufficient income is the leading cause of food insecurity in Putnam, lack of transportation is the second.

“Having reliable transportation is a great cost, between insurance, upkeep, car payments,” she says. “So people are dependent on public transportation, but there’s a lot of anxiety.”

If it takes an hour to get back home from the grocery store by bus, people will think twice about buying fresh produce, dairy or anything else that needs to be refrigerated for fear that it will spoil on the journey.

Another piece of the puzzle is that farmers in Putnam have the capacity to donate more

*(Continued on Page 11)*



(Continued from Page 10)

food to Philipstown than they already do, but there's nowhere to store it. Vendors at the Cold Spring Farmers Market have expressed an eagerness to give food leftover at the end of the Saturday market to the Philipstown Food Pantry, but the pantry is closed for the week by the time the market closes, and doesn't have enough refrigeration to accept it anyway.

The answer appears to be a refrigerated truck or van that can pick up produce, dairy and meat donations, store them safely and deliver them to families with transportation problems. The necessity of Second Chance Foods, which transforms excess produce into freezable meals, becomes clearer when considering the food map.

"Much as I like to think, as a farmer, that just giving people bunches of kale and collard greens is going to solve their issues, a lot of people need food that they can consume right away," says Angell. "They may be homebound elders who can't turn a bunch of kohlrabi into an immediately nutritious meal. So we source the surplus food, have a place to store it until it can either be distributed or turned into easily consumable foods like Second Chance Foods does, and then bring it to places that we've identified as having food insecurity needs."

As a model, Angell points to the Westchester Food Bank's mobile food pantry, which lays its wares out like a farmers market but gives away the food to anyone who comes by. "They don't ask for income data," says Angell. "They're trying to not stigmatize the fact that people need food, especially when there's a growing number of people in economic crisis."

"What it keeps coming down to is: storage and distribution," says Lerner. "You talk to everybody who works in food insecurity and the question is: How can we store it in a way that we can distribute when it's needed, when it all comes in at once?"

Angell and Lerner are working on a proposal to present to the Philipstown Town Board on how to use some of \$700,000 it expects to receive through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to address local hunger.

Part of the proposal will probably involve a mobile refrigerated unit, as well as more refrigerated sites to handle excess produce donations and allow food pantries to have more stock on hand. But part will include human infrastructure: someone to oversee it all.

Most food insecurity groups start out as volunteer networks and quickly run out of capacity because no one has time to expand the organization. Second Chance Foods hired an executive director a few years ago, and Fareground in Beacon recently did the same after operating on volunteer power for six years.

Angell hopes that a part-time coordinator, paid in part or entirely with ARPA money, could oversee senior care and food insecurity while also identifying other sources of funding for the position, as happened with the nonprofit Philipstown Behavioral Health Hub, which provides mental health services. As he sees it, nonprofits, religious groups and local



Dutchess Outreach board members serve lunch.

Photos by Sean Hemmerle

governments have to team up to tackle hunger, or no one else will.

"Who has the incentive to take the food from that waste stream and refrigerate it and turn it into usable food items that can be consumed easily by the general American public and distribute it?" he asks. "I don't see how the capitalist market moves into that space and finds a way to profit by giving food away."

### Dutchess Outreach

A lot has changed in the 47 years that Dutchess Outreach, based in Poughkeepsie, has been fighting hunger. Initially, as with most food pantries, it handed out food based on a model provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture: bags with protein such as beans, a dairy item, a fat, canned vegetables and canned fruits.

"That's not according to dietary guidelines, and it wasn't according to cultural preferences," says Sarah Salem. The stereotypical view of "beggars can't be choosers" sometimes persists when it comes to routing donations to food banks, resulting in donations that don't take into account the health of the person receiving the food, or even what they will eat.

Dickinson, the author of *Feeding the Crisis*, spent the early months of the pandemic assisting a group that was handing out donated food in Manhattan's Chinatown. One of the donated foods the volunteers kept receiving was cheese.

The members of the largely immigrant population who needed food told the volunteers that "this is not something we ever consume." Says Dickinson: "Honestly, they're kind of grossed out by it. It's really culturally inappropriate."

For Salem, the proof that the old model wasn't working was in the streets. After handing out food, volunteers would find



Sarah Salem of Dutchess Outreach

discarded cans on the ground outside. "We were contributing to waste," Salem says. "We've switched to the 'choice' model."

Today, clients at Dutchess Outreach grab a shopping cart and take what they want from food that has been laid out. Salem says that since the model was adopted, the organization is giving away less food because people are only taking what they know they're going to eat. The model is also in use at the Philipstown Food Pantry — volunteer Amy Richter refers to it as "shopping."

As in Cold Spring and elsewhere, Dutchess Outreach asks for little information from clients, who expressed fear of visiting after the Trump Administration in 2019 revealed a proposal to deny green cards and citizenship to immigrants who legally availed themselves of public services such as food stamps.

"We do need to collect some data for grants and reporting purposes, but we don't need that much, and we definitely don't need to stop someone and get an entire analysis of their financial history or their background," Salem says. "We want to make it as easy and shameless as possible."

Salem also helped found the Hudson Valley Food Systems Coalition, a working group of farmers, food producers, legislators, health officials and culinary professionals hoping to figure out how to address local hunger.

Dickinson says that's a good instinct, citing Nourish New York, a recently passed law in which the state pays farmers and food producers to supply food to food pantries and other emergency food providers.

That type of program "strengthens the connection between people who need food, and people who are growing food but are doing it with a lot of risk and a lot of economic challenge," she explains. "Rebuilding food systems may not seem like an obvious solution, but it's an important piece."

Not every service that Dutchess Outreach offers is free. It also runs a farmers market where the produce and other items are about half the typical cost.

"It gives people the opportunity to test at the level they're able to purchase food and build a more sustainable food system for themselves but also — and this is key — feel like they're participating in the local food movement," says Salem. "They feel like they have a seat at the table."

### NEXT WEEK: *Feeding the hungry is an agricultural act*

For Parts 1 and 2, see [highlandscurrent.org/hunger](http://highlandscurrent.org/hunger).



AROUND TOWN



▲ **MEET THE MATRIARCH** — Lucy Steele (played by Elaine Llewellyn) reacts to a puppet representing her future mother-in-law during a performance of *Sense and Sensibility* by Haldane Drama on Dec. 4. The puppet is wielded by Fanny Dashwood (Helen Hutchinson) while Elinor Dashwood (Maya Gelber) looks on. *Photo by Ross Corsair*



▲ **PURPLE HEART COINS** — In a news conference on Dec. 4 in Wappingers Falls, Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney unveiled designs for three commemorative coins that will be released in 2022. Maloney, whose district includes the Highlands, introduced a bill that allowed the U.S. Mint at West Point to create them. The series will include \$5 gold, \$1 silver and half-dollar clad coins; proceeds will benefit the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor in New Windsor. The Purple Heart is awarded to service members who are wounded or killed by enemy action.



◀ **BEATLES VERSUS STONES** — Kelly Maloney and Richard Schunk of Cold Spring show their loyalties before a performance on Dec. 4 by Beatles and Rolling Stones tribute bands at the Paramount Hudson Valley Theater in Peekskill. They and four other couples scored free tickets in a drawing held for members of *The Current*.

*Photos provided*

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# The Calendar

## Artist Next Door James Murray

By Alison Rooney

“We bought it for the river.” That’s what James Murray says about the “wreck” he and his wife purchased 33 years ago in Fort Montgomery that today, after a renovation that transformed it, houses materials for his sculptures.

“I have a tendency to scavenge, then disassemble, cut them up, then weld them back together,” he explains. His raw material comes mostly from demolition projects far and wide, or objects washed up on the banks of the Hudson.

“I am always on the hunt for materials, harvesting them as an urban archaeologist,” he says. “I find the pieces the contractors don’t want, some hit by lightning, or bees got to it, or a squirrel made a nest in it. I don’t like things that are neatly cut and cleaned. Instead I love things, for example, with curves from the original sawmills. I become a partner with the material and add to it.”

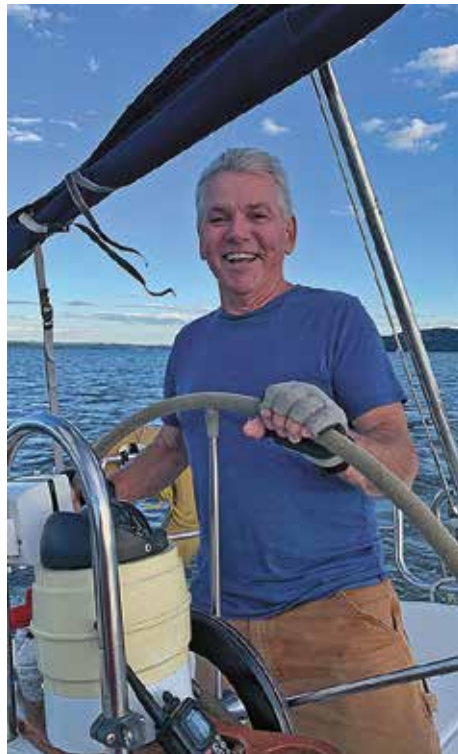
Murray, who has taught sculpture at the Garrison Art Center for 12 years, is himself a contractor — he owns Murray Craft Builders. “There’s always a due date,” he says. “I put art aside and focus on that due date. Through that side of things, I work with a lot of great designers. I’ve done a lot of unique interiors, published in lots of design magazines. I move art around a lot at my house and studio, because you forget to see it clearly. It’s how to see, or when to see.”

He’s also a 100-ton master for power and sail vessels courtesy of a Merchant Marine operator’s license. In that capacity, he brings boats back and forth from New York to Florida and the Antilles. He’s even operated a small ferry at Martha’s Vineyard.

“I’m a sailor, really,” Murray says with a smile. “Sailing and living on the river gives easy access to collecting an abundance of materials. I’ve been lucky to have art and work mix.”

That luck began with a “wonderful art teacher” in Brooklyn, where Murray grew up. “On his own time, he would take us to dig up clay and stones, and taught us stone carving; I painted back then, too. In addition, my father started me out wood carving as a young teenager, so I had good guidance and I was comfortable with hand tools. By the time I graduated, I knew I wanted to become a sculptor.”

As part of the first graduating class of the School of Visual Arts in Manhattan, Murray had the benefit of a welding shop. It was



James Murray

Photos provided

there that he discovered the work of sculptor David Smith. And one of his instructors was Don Nice, the late artist who was based in Garrison for many years. “He was a wonderful artist, and a kind man with loads of patience,” Murray recalls.

By the time he graduated, Murray had moved into an apartment on Great Jones Street in the East Village. “I became the young, go-to carpenter for artists,” he says. “I did things like building stretchers and flat files. Over the years I had three shops in the area.”

Murray bartered his skills to build his art collection. “Maybe a painter would pay me half and throw in a piece of art,” he says. “Art was everywhere; people like Rauschenberg were across the street. I also became a sculptor’s assistant to Paul von Ringelheim; he was my mentor.”

For his own work, Murray says, he would start with a sheet of steel and “shape it up. I was never good with sketchbooks. I sketch on my material with crayon or chalk. I don’t have a clear plan until I’m on the material; the material is my partner. The finish is important. If it’s a painted finish, I’ll build up layers of colors. Then I work backward, stripping, distressing, until I find the surface I want. Rust may be a part of it.”

It was former Garrison Art Center director Carinda Swann who approached Murray about teaching. He teaches in every season but summer, when he is busy on boats. The next session, for students at all levels, begins Jan. 8.

The classes, which take place at his studio and lawn, begin with him putting out a pile of different materials. “We look at it, and sure enough someone’s making something within a half-hour — it’s a hands-on, get-dirty class. If it’s a nice day, no wind, 32 degrees, I’m happy to work outside and so are the students.”



Nelly Llano and Francisco Mena

@nikolas.ray

## DanceDanceDance

Nellybombs to perform benefit for A-Y company

By Alison Rooney

Offstage, she is Nelly. Onstage, she is one-half of Nellybombs — “confident, comfortable, brighter.”

Singer and songwriter Nelly Llano and guitarist Francisco Mena perform together nearly every weekend at wineries, wine bars and private parties in the Hudson Valley. On Wednesday (Dec. 15), they will take the stage at the Howland Cultural Center for *Holiday Dance Dance Dance*, a benefit to support the third season of A-Y/Dancers, the Beacon-based modern dance company.

“I’ve known [A-Y co-founder] Claire Dean to be a phenomenal dancer,” says Llano. “I always knew the time would be right to collaborate together. I’m so excited because Christmas songs are so well-written and often have a jazz flavor.”

Llano, the daughter of an Italian mother and Cuban father, has lived all over: Wappingers, Albany, Newburgh, Montgomery, Walden. Her father worked in the music industry and discouraged her from heading in that direction.

“I went to college to please my parents, but I knew music was what I wanted to pursue,” she recalls. “At age 25 I started jamming out with friends and someone suggested we go to a Newburgh open mic. It was there, five years ago, that I met Francisco. We understood each other musically in a way that I had never experienced.

“We began thinking, ‘Maybe we should book some bar gigs.’ Fran had been playing in a band at bars in Beacon; he had equipment,” Llano says. “That started this crazy journey where we’d play any restaurant or bar for whatever money they wanted to pay us. We’d play dive bars we hated, but eventually we started making enough money for me to drop my day job. I never thought that could happen.”

(Continued on Page 18)



# The Elders of Philipstown

Annette Solakoglu, a Garrison-based photographer and filmmaker, conceived of *Faces/Graces*, which continues through Jan. 9 at the Garrison Art Center, and photographed its subjects. Solakoglu spoke to Alison Rooney recently about the project. Her remarks have been edited for brevity:

I got the idea and started about two-and-a-half years ago. Over the years of raising my children in Philipstown, I've seen the older generation pass away. I felt this urge to pick up my camera and pay homage to what they created, such as seemingly small institu-

tions like the Philipstown Depot Theatre and the Garrison Art Center, which mean a lot to people living here. They've also worked to protect our local environment.

Some I knew, and others were referred to me. No one turned me down. Of course, they are only a small sample of

the people who have contributed to and grace our community.

When I spoke to my subjects while making their portraits, some said, "I have nothing to offer." I'd say, "But you do, and it's not just about being on this board or another, but simply being community-oriented." It was an honor to bring to light their quiet devotion to community-building. I was impressed with how relaxed and open they were — completely unconcerned with their looks. They couldn't care less



## MARGARET (MARIT) KULLESEID

**BORN:** 1937, La Crosse, Wisconsin

**ARRIVED:** 1964

**CO-FOUNDER:** Garrison Art Center

**CO-FOUNDER & FOUNDING PRESIDENT:**  
Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival

**EARLY MEMBER:**  
Highlands Choral Society

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**Entrepreneur, weaver, knitter, mentor**

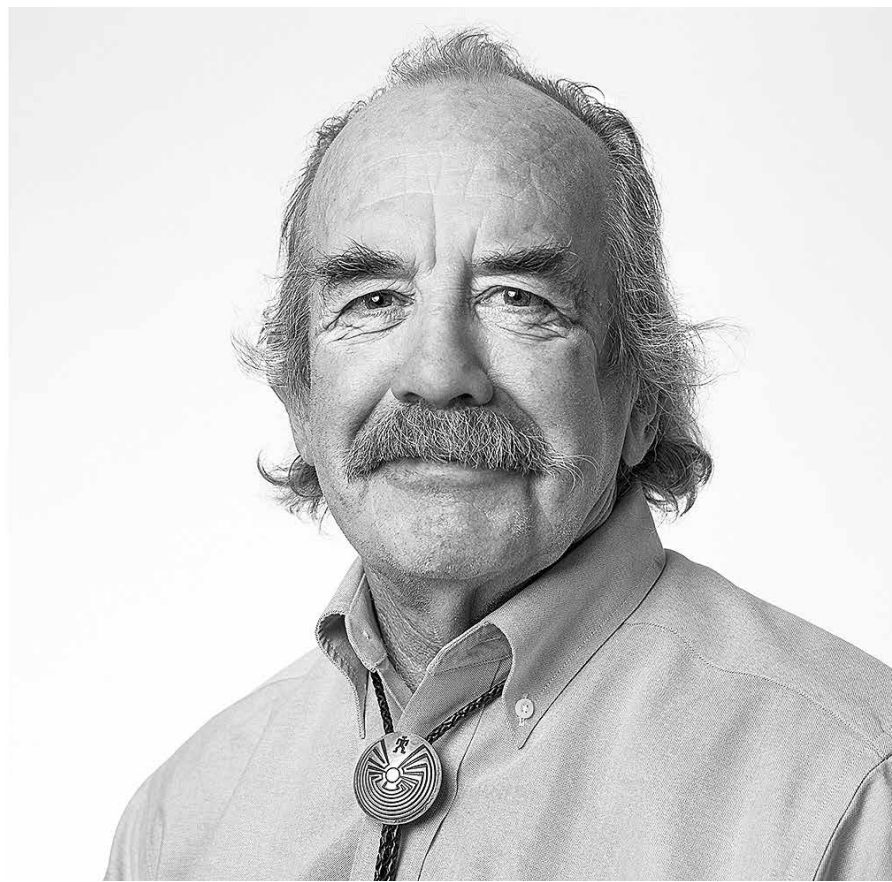
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After we first moved up here from Brooklyn, I sometimes thought, "Why did we move so far from people?" But a wonderful neighbor, Nancy Sayles Evarts, took me under her wing and introduced me to all kinds of people. Then, once our children started school, we had that community. And I felt that if I were going to complain about the school, I sure as heck had better get myself involved, so I got on the school board.

That's also when the Art Center got its start. A group of us were interested in art,

so we hung good reproductions around the school. In order to raise money to enlarge that collection, we hosted an art show; there were lots of really gifted artists in the community. Afterward, we realized we'd raised enough money to rent the old post office at Garrison's Landing. We would hold art classes, and some of us could teach. We weren't fancy, that's for sure; the building was pretty rickety and parts of it didn't have heat. But it just caught on. Later it absorbed the building next door, which had been Forson's Store.

Another of my great loves was Hudson Valley Shakespeare. By God, that first summer it was just a group of young actors in Manitoga's field, with flashlights and ladders and sneakers. And it took off like a bird in flight! Local people were interested, and if you asked them to do something, like host visiting actors, they said yes. I became the first HVSF president. It grew so fast it's hard to fathom. When people get together and channel their energy into something they believe in, and it works, it's simply fabulous.



## JOHN BENJAMIN

**BORN:**

1946, Butterfield Hospital, Cold Spring

**RETURNED:** 1995

**FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER:**  
Hudson Highlands Land Trust

**PRESENT OR FORMER BOARD MEMBER:**  
Putnam Highlands Audubon Society;  
Constitution Island Association;  
Garrison Station Plaza

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**Activist, farmer, stonemason, gardener,  
pond hockey player**

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When I was growing up, virtually all of the area from Upper Station to Lower Station roads was Benjamin land or Fish land. I have 24 first cousins, and there was a wonderful knot of us running around just wild there. My grandmother's house was the first in Garrison to have a swimming pool. Around Memorial Day, we'd clean it out, send the water flushing down into the Hudson. Having sat all winter, it would be full of dead frogs and leaves and ooey-goey litter. And if you helped, you could swim

there, so everybody came. It was great fun.

I learned nothing until I got out of college. I went to Colorado for two years to be a ski bum, came back 30 years later having learned stonework and farming and mushrooming.

I've done quite a bit of stonework around Philipstown — formal entries, pillars and gardens. One day in Cold Spring, a delivery truck's brakes gave way; it went screaming down Main Street, right through the wall and onto the train tracks. So I fixed that wall; it's still there.

I built an oval garden at St. Philip's parish after Ruth Anderson died. Everybody went to Saunders' farm, picked out stones, and I built it from them.

Stone is surprisingly subtle and sculptural, and I like that it doesn't rot.

Over the years, I've contributed a little bit to the education of a few, mainly children. I coached lacrosse and ice hockey. While youth-coaching at West Point, I arranged to bring the team up to Earl's Pond. It was one of those classic February black-ice days. The kids had never skated on anything but a rink. At first they were tentative, but then they got into the wonder of it. I still play every winter. It's a highlight.



about looking in the mirror. That's the beauty of age. It charmed me, because usually when you photograph people it's preceded by, "How do I look?"

Originally, the idea was simply to photograph them. With documentary filmmaking, there's this idea that when you aim a camera at someone, you open them up. It's a psychological tool. During the photo shoots they were telling me all these stories. I wound up typing away after they left, thinking this needs to be part of it. Celia [Barbour] interviewed

everyone and then with enormous skill and warmth she edited each down to around 250 words. She drew some quotes from these which captured their spirit, their humor, and these will go under the portraits.

The photos are faces on a white background to communicate a sense of abstraction, timelessness. I'm hanging them so you can stand and observe their faces. The Art Center invited the elders to come on opening



night an hour early for a private moment with their portraits. I'm interested in that intimate moment when you stand in front of the portrait and look at these beautiful wrinkles. I'm honored to have been allowed to take their portraits.

Photographer Annette Solakoglu, in a self-portrait

## The Subjects

John Benjamin	Margaret Kulleseid
Robert Bickford	Claudio Marzollo
Gilman Burke	Anne Todd Osborn
Leonora Burton	Frederick H. Osborn III
Brigitte Freed	Sandy Saunders
Henry Lewis Kingsley	Polly Townsend



## POLLY TOWNSEND

**BORN:** 1949, Butterfield Hospital, Cold Spring  
**LEFT:** 1970 / **RETURNED:** 1990  
**AWARDS:** Alice Curtis Desmond Award  
**PRESENT OR FORMER BOARD MEMBER:** Philipstown Garden Club; Manitoga; Putnam Highlands Audubon Society; Garrison Children's Education Fund; Garrison School Forest Committee

**Journalist, teacher, riding instructor, gardener, quilter, Desmond-Fish Public Library's "Miss Polly"**

My happiest form of transportation is horseback, and my second is driving a tractor. My father died when I was 14, and we didn't sell Wintergreen Farm until I was 21. In between, I took care of 60 acres all by myself. I still cut the field now; my husband, Perry, always walks in front of the tractor because the box turtles who live there can't run away fast enough. According to my mother, my favorite phrase as a child was "I can do it myself." In those days, Philipstown was a do-it-your-

self community. We were resourceful. You went to the dump yourself, mowed your own lawn, baked your own bread and knew everything about gardening. I began working at Desmond-Fish in 1995. I'm amazed that not everybody uses libraries. Some people actually buy their books! I'm not cheap; I believe in supporting the book industry, but that's a *lot* of books to have in your house when you read as much as I do. Reading for children was wonderful. I always made it interactive, because 4-year-olds don't necessarily want to sit still. I'd say, "What do you think is going to happen?" You let them absorb the pictures and make up their own story. I started a story garden outside the children's room, and a butterfly garden with Sandra Nice. We'd read to the kids about gardens and animals, and plant something every year. Gardens are important. They take you from one generation to the next. My father planted daffodils in the woods around where my house is. He died in 1963, and they still bloom every year. And butterfly weed — the seeds fly around, and every year there's a new patch: *Look where it is now!* That just makes me really happy.



## HENRY LEWIS (LEW) KINGSLEY

**BORN:** 1940, Roe Park, New York  
**ARRIVED:** 1967  
**FOUNDER:** Kingsley Tree Care  
**CO-FOUNDER:** New Leaf Restoration  
**FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER:** Riverkeeper; Hudson Highlands Land Trust; Constitution Marsh Audubon Center and Sanctuary; Putnam Highlands Audubon Society  
**BOARD MEMBER:** Philipstown Conservation Committee (Wetlands)  
**Arborist, environmentalist, birder, caretaker of Philipstown's grandest old trees**

I was climbing trees as soon as I could grab a branch. Oh, man, we used to play tree tag in those wooded areas before they were developed — we'd shimmy up one of those little skinny birches, bend it over, go to the next one, bend it over, go to the next. And when a huge tree would fall in a storm, we'd play tag on the crown of that, running from branch to branch. When I was 17, I went to work for a tree company. We cleared farmland so I learned

how to run power saws. Then I worked for this tree guy who didn't know one tree from another. So I made it my job — I got the good manuals and books, and I studied trees, learned the species. I was one of the first people to become a certified arborist. My business grew by word of mouth. Now people wait a year and a half to have me come and do their trees. Some of these people, they want everything polished: not one leaf on the yard, perfect trees, all that stuff. It's not even healthy. Yeah, there's some rat trees, but most trees, there's a reason why they're there. Many trees I refused to cut down. Because if it was a beautiful tree, what's wrong with it? "Well, it's shading this or that." That's what it's there for! Next thing I know, somebody else would have taken it down. That's OK. It's their loss. And the tree's loss. Absolutely, I sometimes like trees better than people. They don't give you any back talk. Look where I live: I am between two mountain ranges. And a mountain stream comes right through me. It never stops. My wife's here — her ashes are on the property. I'll never leave.



# THE WEEK AHEAD

Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)

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

## COMMUNITY

FRI 17

### Holiday Caroling

GARRISON

5 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre  
10 Garrison's Landing

Pick up lyric sheets and hot chocolate at the theater.

SAT 18

### Rummage Sale

COLD SPRING

1 – 5 p.m. St. Mary's Church  
1 Chestnut St.

This sale of gently used men's and women's clothing will benefit the church and Philipstown Fights Dirty. To donate items, email darsnowden88@gmail.com for drop-off spots.

SAT 18

### Winter Wonderland

GARRISON

4 – 6 p.m. Philipstown Recreation Center  
107 Glenclyffe

facebook.com/philipstownrecreation  
This outdoor family event will include carnival games, crafts and karaoke caroling. Register online.

## STAGE & SCREEN

SAT 11

### Storm Lake

COLD SPRING

Via Film Platform  
highlandscurrent.org/storm-lake

In this 2021 documentary, the residents of Storm Lake, Iowa, confront a changing community as global forces threaten their precarious existence. Enter the family-run *Storm Lake Times*, which delivers local news and biting editorials on a shoestring budget for its 3,000 readers. Sponsored by *The Highlands Current*. Register online to watch anytime. Also SUN 12. *Free*

SAT 11

### Northern Lights

PEEKSKILL

8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley  
1008 Brown St.  
paramounthudsonvalley.com

The staged reading of the play by Mona Z. Smith and Traci Mariano will feature local actors and Foley sound effects. Also SUN 12. Email northernlightstheplay@gmail.com to reserve seats. *Free*

SUN 12

### Fire Music: The Story of Free Jazz

BEACON

2 p.m. Story Screen | 445 Main St.  
845-440-7706 | storyscreenbeacon.com

This documentary uses archival footage and rare interviews with musicians such as John Coltrane, Ornette Coleman, Sun Ra and Cecil



Holiday Dance Dance Dance, Dec. 15

Taylor. A panel discussion will follow with musicians Thurman Barker, Ras Moshe Burnett and Warren Smith. Presented in partnership with Elysium Furnace Works. *Cost: \$20*

SUN 12

### Mississippi Fiddle Tunes

BEACON

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

Harry Bolick tracked down every bit of Mississippi fiddle music and its stories that he could find and will discuss his book on the subject and perform with guitarist Jacques DiCroce. *Cost: \$10 (\$15 door)*

WED 15

### Holiday Dance Dance Dance

BEACON

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

Nellybombs will play holiday music for a dance party at this benefit for A-Y/Dancers. See Page 13. *Cost: \$25, \$50 or \$100*

SAT 18

### A Christmas Memory

BEACON

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

Scott Ramsey will read Truman Capote's memoir about holiday traditions in rural Alabama. *Cost: \$15 (\$20 door)*



SUN 19

### Czech & Slovak Fairy Tales Puppet Show

COLD SPRING

1 p.m. St. Mary's Church  
1 Chestnut St.  
bit.ly/stmarys-marionette-show

Puppeteer, storyteller and author Vit Horejs will perform three folk stories during this one-man show with hand-carved marionettes. Registration required. *Free*

## TALKS & TOURS

SAT 11

### Holiday Tours

BEACON

1 & 2 & 3 p.m. Mount Gulian  
145 Sterling St. | mountgulian.org

Tour the historic home and grounds lit by the glow of candles. Also SUN 12, WED 15 to SUN 19. *Cost: \$10 (\$8 seniors, \$5 ages 6 to 18; members and under age 6 free)*

SAT 11

### Holiday House Tours

GARRISON

10 & 11 a.m. & Noon. Boscobel  
1601 Route 9D  
845-265-3638 | boscobel.org

Take a tour of the historic mansion decorated as it would have been in the 19th century and stroll the decorated grounds. The house will be open from 2 – 4 p.m. for self-guided tours. Also SAT 18. *Cost: \$18 (\$14 seniors, \$9 ages 5 to 18, members and ages 5 and younger free)*

SAT 11

### Twilight Tours

GARRISON

4 – 7:30 p.m. Boscobel  
1601 Route 9D  
845-265-3638 | boscobel.org

Take a candlelit tour of the

mansion decorated as it would have been in the 19th century and stroll the decorated grounds. Also FRI 17, SAT 18. *Cost: \$25 (\$15 ages 5 to 18, members \$20/\$12, ages 5 and younger free)*

SUN 12

### Beacon's Memory Keeper

BEACON

1 – 3 p.m. Beacon Historical Society  
61 Leonard St. | beaconhistorical.org

The editor of a book of collected works of the late Beacon historian Robert Murphy will sign copies.

SUN 12

### How Animals Survive Winter

COLD SPRING

2 p.m. Little Stony Point  
3011 Route 9D  
putnamhighlandsaudubon.org

Learn about the many ways that animals adapt to cold weather and go on a short hike to discover habitats in this program organized by the Putnam Highlands Audubon Society. For ages 8 and older.

SUN 12

### Dragon Rock

GARRISON

4 p.m. Via Crowdcast  
desmondfishlibrary.org

In this program hosted by the Desmond-Fish Public Library, Jennifer Golub will discuss her newly published book, *Russel and Mary Wright: Dragon Rock at Manitoa*, with Allison Cross, the executive director of the Russel Wright Design Center.

SUN 12

### Current Conversation

COLD SPRING

6 p.m. Via Crowdcast  
highlandscurrent.org/storm-lake

Following a free screening of the documentary *Storm Lake*, about challenges facing a family-owned newspaper in Iowa, the film's editor, Rachel Shuman of Beacon, and its consulting producer, Toby Shimin of Cold Spring, will discuss their work on the film. Register online.

THURS 16

### Strategies for a Sustainable Income

COLD SPRING

6 p.m. Via Zoom | butterfieldlibrary.org

Mark Lange of Prudent Financial will discuss financial wellness strategies in this program organized by the Butterfield Library.

## KIDS & FAMILY

SAT 11

### Santa Claus Visit

GARRISON

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

Santa will visit with children outdoors in the Orangery. Storyteller Jonathan Kruk will perform at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Also SAT 18. *Cost: \$12 (\$10 seniors, \$6 ages 5 to 18; members, health care workers, ages 5 and younger free)*



SAT 11

### Holiday Artisan Market

BEACON

10 a.m. – 5 p.m. The Yard  
4 Hanna Lane | bit.ly/the-yard-market

More than 30 Hudson Valley-based artisans will showcase their art and crafts with food available from Eat Church, live music and drinks.

SAT 11

### Holiday Market

PATTERSON

10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Camp Herrlich  
101 Deacon Smith Hill Road  
campherrlich.org

Children can enjoy the Kid's Club while the grown-ups shop for local and handmade gifts.

SAT 11

### Holiday Market

PEEKSKILL

11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Peekskill Clay Studios  
1000 N. Division St.  
peekskillclaystudios.com

Shop indoors and outdoors for pottery. Masks required.

SAT 11

### Palmera Holiday Pop-Up

COLD SPRING

11 a.m. – 6 p.m. Bijou Showcase  
50 Main St.

Find handcrafted ornaments, Mexican textiles, clothing, artisanal gifts, accessories and housewares. Daily except Tuesdays through December.

SAT 11

### Holiday Small Gift Show

BEACON

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

In this annual show, artisan and handmade crafts, prints, jewelry, ceramics, candles and toys will be available for purchase. Also SUN 12, FRI 17, SUN 19.

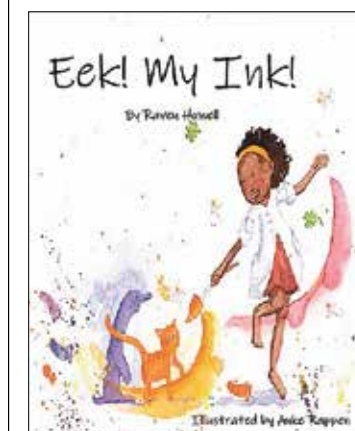
SAT 11

### Poetry and Art

COLD SPRING

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

Raven Howell and Susan English will discuss their new children's book, *Eek! My Ink!*





**SAT 11**  
**Tinkergarten Lantern Walk**  
**GARRISON**  
4 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020  
desmondfishlibrary.org

Jackie Grant will lead this traditional walk for families and children ages 2 to 8 to welcome the darkness and embrace natural change.

**SUN 12**  
**Family Story Time**  
**COLD SPRING**  
11 a.m. Butterfield Library  
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040  
butterfieldlibrary.org

Get into the holiday spirit with stories.

**FRI 17**  
**Holiday Party**  
**COLD SPRING**  
3:30 – 4:30 p.m. Butterfield Library  
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040  
butterfieldlibrary.org

Children ages 1 to 10 are invited to enjoy a piñata, games and a candy hunt. Registration required.

**MUSIC**

**SAT 11**  
**All is Bright**  
**NEWBURGH**  
4 p.m. Newburgh Free Academy  
201 Fullerton Ave. | 845-913-7157  
newburghsymphony.org

The Greater Newburgh Symphony Orchestra will perform a holiday concert in two parts. The first will feature the string section playing Christmas music across the centuries. The second will feature singers and classics. *Cost: \$35 to \$50 (\$25 seniors, students free)*

**SAT 11**  
**Sloan Wainwright**  
**BEACON**  
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.  
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

Wainwright will perform her 21st holiday show with friends and the Sloan Flakes. *Cost: \$35 (\$40 door)*



**SUN 12**  
**The McKrell's Holiday Show**  
**BEACON**  
7 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.  
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

Kevin McKrell and Brian Melick will channel the Marx brothers in an interpretation of *'Twas the Night Before Christmas*. *Cost: \$20 (\$25 door)*

**SUN 12**  
**Christmas Concert**  
**POUGHKEEPSIE**  
8 p.m. Christ Episcopal Church  
20 Carroll St.  
thebrasilesensemble.wordpress.com

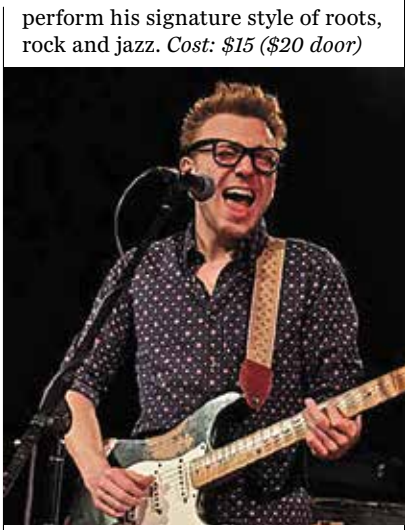
The Brasiles Ensemble, a Garrison-based vocal group, will sing rare carols in seven languages, along with performances by the church choir, Carl Gutowski and James Fitzwilliam. The concert benefits the church's homeless shelter. *Cost: \$15*

**THURS 16**  
**Of a Winter's Night**  
**BEACON**  
7 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.  
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

Tony Trischka will perform music from his 2015 acoustic release with a warm take on seasonal music. *Cost: \$20 (\$25 door)*

**FRI 17**  
**Dylan Doyle**  
**BEACON**  
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.  
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

The guitarist and his band will



**SAT 18**  
**Handel's Messiah**  
**POUGHKEEPSIE**  
2 p.m. Bardavon | 35 Market St.  
845-473-2072 | bardavon.org

Guest conductor Christine Howlett will lead the Hudson Valley Philharmonic with soloists Amy Justman, Emily Lipschutz, Morgan Mastrangelo and Kenneth Overton. *Cost: \$25 (\$20 members and seniors, \$12 ages 12 and younger)*

**SAT 18**  
**A Very Slambovian Christmas**  
**BEACON**  
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.  
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

The Slambovian Circus of Dreams will perform its energetic holiday show. *Cost: \$35 (\$40 door)*

**SAT 18**  
**A Very Merry Country Christmas**  
**PEEKSKILL**  
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley  
1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039  
paramounthudsonvalley.com

Jessica Lynn's annual holiday show will feature dancers, marching bands, Santa and choirs performing holiday songs. *Cost: \$25 and \$35*

**SUN 19**  
**The Costello's Christmas Show**  
**BEACON**  
5:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.  
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

Lynn and Bob Costello will be joined by Scott Ramsey, Dimitri Archip and Chihoe Hahn for their annual holiday show. *Cost: \$15 (\$20 door)*

**SUN 19**  
**Holiday Hoot at Cafe Sizzle**  
**BEACON**  
6 p.m. Howland Cultural Center  
477 Main St. | 845-831-4988  
howlandculturalcenter.org

Goldee Greene and The Shades will lead this cabaret style show celebrating yuletide along with the Luvbugs, Sizzling X-tremes and Kiki and Willa's Kwanzaa Korner. Pianist Lucy Galliher will play for the singalong finale. *Cost: \$17.50 (\$20 door)*

**VISUAL ART**

**SAT 11**  
**Winter Holiday Exhibition**  
**BEACON**  
Noon – 5 p.m. Bannerman Island Gallery  
150 Main St. | 845-831-6346  
bannermancastle.org

The exhibit includes fine art paintings, photographs, ceramics, artistic crafts and sculpture. Through Jan. 30.

**SAT 11**  
**Jennifer Keltos | Small Works Show**  
**BEACON**  
6 – 8 p.m. BAU Gallery | 506 Main St.  
845-440-7584 | baugallery.org

Paintings by Keltos of herself in recalled scenes from TV and movies from her youth will be on

view through Jan. 2, along with an annual exhibit of affordable small works for holiday gifts.

**SAT 11**  
**Gift Wrapped**  
**BEACON**  
6 – 9 p.m. Clutter Gallery  
163 Main St. | 212-255-2505  
clutter.co

In this ninth annual show, work by more than 100 artists costing less than \$200 will be available for unique gifts.

**CIVIC**

**MON 13**  
**City Council**  
**BEACON**  
7 p.m. City Hall | 1 Municipal Plaza  
845-838-5011 | beaconny.gov

**MON 13**  
**School Board**  
**BEACON**  
7 p.m. Beacon High School  
101 Matteawan Road | 845-838-6900  
beaconk12.org

**MON 13**  
**Dutchess Legislature**  
**POUGHKEEPSIE**  
7 p.m. County Office Building  
22 Market St. | 845-486-2100  
dutchessny.gov

**TUES 14**  
**Board of Trustees**  
**COLD SPRING**  
7:30 p.m. Village Hall | 85 Main St.  
845-265-3611 | coldspringny.gov

**TUES 14**  
**Fire District Vote**  
**GARRISON**  
5 – 9 p.m. Firehouse  
1616 Route 9 | garrisonfd.org

On the ballot: two candidates for a 5-year commissioner seat and a proposal to borrow money to purchase a mini pumper. See Page 7.

**WED 15**  
**School Board**  
**GARRISON**  
7 p.m. Garrison School | 1100 Route 9D  
845-424-3689 | gufs.org



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The Nellybombs band after a 2021 show at Daryl's House in Pawling Photo by Philip Fusco

## Nellybombs (from Page 13)

The duo play their original songs plus a mix of “older Motown, blues, jazz and soul, covering artists like Etta James, Michael Jackson and Stevie Wonder, plus some ’90s R&B at bars with younger people,” she says. Llano grew up listening to gospel, soul and Donna Summer.

Three years ago, they released their first single, “755,” which was “the name of the voice memo I used to write the song,” Llano

explains. But soon after, Llano went through a breakup and stopped writing and singing.

“Fran was like, ‘You need to just write about this,’ ” she recalls. That turned into *Dana Avenue*, their second EP. “The songs are the emotions you go through during a breakup, in chronological order: sadness to ‘I hate you,’ to ‘I still love you,’ ‘I’m over you,’ ‘I love myself,’ ‘I’m moving on.’ ”

She worked on her most recent single, “On My Own,” in Los Angeles with the producer

Smile High, part of The Main Squeeze, traveling there every other month. The song addresses the mental health issues she has suffered during the pandemic. “I felt stuck in a room, unable to perform,” she says. “It’s me being the realest I could be about what’s going on in my head.”

“Still, I struggle. I have panic attacks, not knowing if the momentum will fizzle. I’ve had to buckle down, relearn how to be OK with myself, by myself. I want to help other

people who are maybe too scared to talk to someone about their issues.”

Llano says that writing the song, getting it produced and doing a music video was therapeutic. “It’s like, OK, I think I can do this, I can be an artist. Now I can take my emotions and make them into art. I still think I have a long way to go, but I can see the progression of getting better and that makes me want to learn more, sing more, keep pushing.”

*The Howland Cultural Center is located at 477 Main St. in Beacon. Nellybombs will perform on Dec. 15 from 6 to 9 p.m.; tickets are \$25, \$50 or \$100 through [aydancers.com](http://aydancers.com). Proof of vaccination required. Nellybombs will also play at 8:30 p.m. today (Dec. 10) at the Reserva Wine Bar, 173 Main St., in Beacon.*

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Please mail/email the completed application to, Ms. Christine Jamin, ES Principal ([cjamin@haldaneschool.org](mailto:cjamin@haldaneschool.org)) no later than December 23, 2021. A fingerprinting/criminal background check clearance is required.



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Mouths to Feed

Bar None

By Celia Barbour

“Don’t you think the early 2000s seem so far away?”



This line, from Lorde’s new song, “Mood Ring,” has been stuck in my head for days, ever since my friend Stephen told me at a dinner party that “streamers” won’t consume history content that predates the turn of the millennium.

It’s like being sucked out to sea on a riptide, such news. The shore blurs, and suddenly history is indistinguishable from “history content.” Streamers aren’t party decorations — they’re people, and for them the year 2000 disappears over the crest of the horizon.

Experts agree that when you’re caught in a riptide, the best thing to do is stay calm, float and wait for the current to shift. But for many of us, including Stephen, an exceptional documentary filmmaker, such waiting feels treacherous.

Meanwhile, I’ve also been thinking lately about Euell Theophilus Gibbons, a curious little twig who drifted by on the tides of U.S. history during the (now irrelevant) previ-



ous century. Born in Texas in 1911, Gibbons was a forager and wild-foods advocate who once subsisted for three years on foods he found beachcombing in Hawaii. He later moved to Pennsylvania, wrote six successful books on foraged foods, and became, briefly, the spokesperson for Grape-Nuts cereal. His opening line in a 1974 Grape-Nuts TV ad, “Ever eat a pine tree?” catapulted him to that decade’s equivalent of viral-meme fame.

Though he’d been a conscientious objector, boat-builder, surveyor, teacher, author and wild-foods bon vivant, Gibbons suddenly became known primarily as the

butt of late-night monologues and comedy routines. He didn’t care; he must have known how to float.

I was reminded of him during a recent walk in the woods with my son, Dosi. The forest floor all around us was layered with a remarkable variety of oak leaves and we soon found ourselves discussing acorns and acorn flour, and wondering whether other parts of the oak tree might also be edible.

Had I spent less of my life drifting about on glowing e-currents, I might know the answer to this question. As it is, I was stuck Googling oak trees and reminiscing about an era when “crunchy granola” was used as a personal insult for people who shunned neckties, authority and processed foods.

“Do you know the phrase ‘crunchy granola?’” I asked Dosi.

He said he’s heard of people being referred to as either “crunchy” or “granola,” but not both at once.

Yet despite what the epithet suggests, granola was not actually invented by the back-to-the-land hippies of the 1960s. It started as “granula,” a breakfast dish invented at a health spa here in New York state in 1863. The name was a reference to the granules of over-baked, crushed graham flour that comprised it. C.W. Post, a patient at the spa, evolved it into Grape-Nuts, whose success prompted Dr. John Kellogg to create a competing product, the oat-based “granola.”

Granola fell out of favor when cornflakes came on the scene, then re-emerged in the 1960s when the hippies began making it from scratch. Soon, corporations like General Mills and Quaker saw gold, and granola has grown steadily in popularity and market share ever since.

Dosi ranks among the 40 percent of Americans who feel that the main problem with granola and other cereals is that they’re not portable enough. Before noon, he’s an eat-on-the-go type of guy. It is for his sake that I’ve spent some portion of the 21st century foraging through cookbooks for a first-rate homemade granola bar. I think I’ve finally found it: a bar rich with oats, seeds and lore, if not with Gen-Z-consumable history content.

Dosi’s Granola Bars

You should start these bars at least 4 hours before baking, and up to a day ahead. You can substitute any moist dried fruit, such as apricots or cherries, for the dates.

- 1¾ cup rolled oats
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup mixed seeds (I used equal parts sesame, flax, sunflower and pepitas)
- 2 medjool dates, finely chopped
- ¼ cup dark chocolate chips (optional)
- ¾ cup almond butter
- 3 tablespoons butter
- ¾ cup brown sugar
- 1 extra-large or jumbo egg
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

1. Butter a brownie pan and line the bottom with parchment, allowing the paper to drape up over two sides. In a medium bowl, combine the oats, baking soda, salt and seeds. Add the chopped dates and, using your fingers, separate and break up any clumps, so the date pieces are evenly dispersed and coated with dry ingredients. Mix in the chocolate chips, if using.
2. In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream the almond butter, butter and brown sugar on medium speed until smooth and light, about 4 minutes. Add the egg and vanilla and mix until well-combined. Reduce the mixer to low speed and gradually sprinkle in the oat mixture, mixing until evenly incorporated.
3. Pat the mixture into the prepared pan, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 4 hours or overnight; this allows the oats and seeds to hydrate.
4. Heat the oven to 350 degrees. Bake the bars 25 to 30 minutes, or until the top is golden-brown. Cool completely on a baking rack before slicing into bars.

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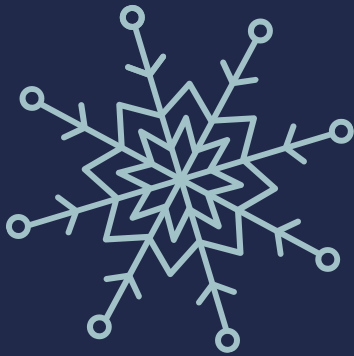
## SANTA VISIT

The Cold Spring Fire Department brought Kris Kringle to the waterfront on Saturday (Dec. 4), where Hudson House provided cookies and warm drinks. Santa collected letters from the children in attendance.

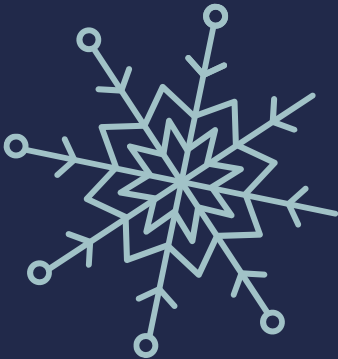
Photos by Michael Turton







# COLD SPRING AGLOW



In Tribute to...

As part of Cold Spring Aglow, which takes place today (Dec. 10) from 5 to 9 p.m., residents lit up Main Street with candles and tributes, some of which are shared here.



For Hudson House  
River Inn



In loving memory of  
Stephen Rutkowski



For Mark Trotiner,  
from Susan



Honoring Geraldine &  
Harry Fadde



To Monkey,  
from Liesel Vink



For Warner Rush,  
from  
Joseph Laurino



For Rozzy &  
Felix Panasci,  
from Eri Panasci



Grandma Kay Andersen,  
we love you  
- Hannah Salit



To Clara and Jack,  
from Wendy  
Sanderson



For Gloria  
Richardson, from  
Eliza Starbuck



For Sweet Harvest  
and Hudson  
River Healing and  
Wellness



Welcome to the  
world Anthony  
Stefan - we love you!  
- Sara O'Leary



In memory of Richie  
Stanulwich. Always  
the light of my life.  
Love, Kimmie



In loving memory  
of John Bishop;  
beloved husband,  
father and friend



For our much loved  
and dearly missed  
Grandad, from  
Heather Purvis



In honor of Dave  
Merandy, Marie  
Early, and Fran  
Murphy, for their  
service to the  
village  
- Jennifer Zwarich



To my grandmother,  
Paddy Stericker.  
We love and miss you  
dearly  
- Julian Cornwell



For Sara Katz, keep  
shining, my friend  
- Pamela Doan



Para mi abuelo,  
Victoriano, que nos  
ilumina  
desde arriba  
- Teresa Lagerman



Jim Farnorotto,  
Joseph & Josephine  
Merando, Bobby  
Merando, Rich  
Lucchesi, George  
Tompkins  
- Fran Farnorotto



Thank you Fareground,  
Beacon4BlackLives, and Binnacle Books  
for feeding our community through  
your Tiny Food Pantry!  
- Sara O'Leary



Merry Christmas in heaven, Mom &  
Dad. I so wish you could have been at  
Matthew's wedding, but I know you  
were sending your love to us from  
above. Love, Angela Ghiozzi



We honor our grandmother, Maxine  
Freiheit. We are grateful for her life  
of faith, love and service. Her loving  
grandchildren: Jeff, Heather, Scott  
and Kari Jo



## Roots and Shoots

# Encouraging Competition

By Pamela Doan

I've been taking a class where the presenter, a landscape designer, talks about "exploiting the differences" as a strategy for helping desirable plants thrive and get a competitive edge over undesirable plants.



The idea is to know a lot of details about the plants in question and figure out how to give one a way to thrive over the other. It could be that your garden has more black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*) and you'd like the butterflyweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) to spread out instead, because you love seeing monarch butterflies.

First you'll want to learn as much as possible about the plants through observation and research. One difference to note is that black-eyed Susan has a biennial life cycle and butterflyweed has a perennial life cycle. (Important: *Rudbeckia spp.* includes annuals and perennial varieties and the common name "black-eyed Susan" doesn't distinguish between them.)

Biennial plants complete their lives in the garden in two years. In the first year, the plant will only grow leaves. In Year 2, the plant will shoot up leaves, a stalk and a yellow, daisy-like flower with a dark center. After flowering, it will turn brown and the flower will look dry and drop seeds.

If undisturbed, many of those seeds will germinate and the cycle will begin again in Year 3. If the gardener wanted more plants, seeding them in Year 1 would be the way to get continual black-eyed Susan flowers in Year 3, and so on.

Is there a difference that can be exploited between perennials, which will return year after year unless something prevents them, and biennials? In this case, to get more butterflyweed, deadhead the black-eyed Susan to prevent it from going to seed. Or if you want some, but not as many plants as will grow from seed, leave a few seed heads to disperse. By simply cutting off the seed heads, black-eyed Susan could be controlled to a two-year cycle.

Butterflyweed, however, will need a second intervention in this strategy to help it spread and get a competitive edge over the black-eyed Susan.

Because it's part of the native milkweed family, most people will be familiar with the feathery, white seed heads that come when the pods crack open. Light and airy, these seeds are designed to float on the wind. The seeds also need to be cold-stratified, meaning they have to be exposed to freezing temperatures during the winter to



To encourage spreading by a wind-dispersed seed like this butterflyweed, you'll need to collect seeds and place them on soil.

*Photo by P. Doan*

germinate in spring. These are not meant to sit in a packet all winter. Considering their dispersal method, it's an efficient way for it to spread.

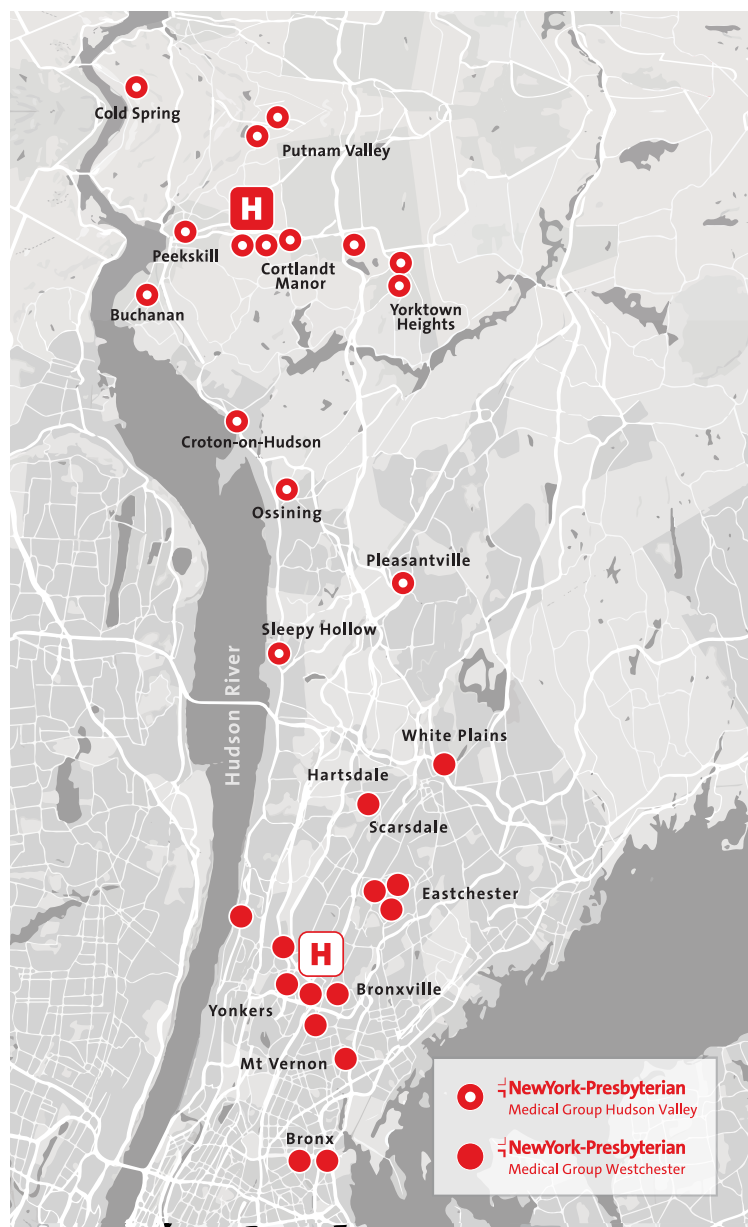
To encourage the butterflyweed, you'll need to tuck those seeds onto the soil where you want them instead of letting them fly away. Try not to bury them, though. Small

and delicate seeds will have difficulty germinating if covered with too much soil. Assuming the garden beds haven't been cleared to bare soil, just let the butterflyweed seeds rest among the foliage while touching bare ground. Weather and nature will do the rest.

When it comes to low-effort ways to encourage certain plants, other factors to consider are bloom season, height, sunlight requirements and preferences for the warm (summer) or cool season (fall) when it comes to grasses. For example, spring-blooming plants that will die back in summer can be planted next to fall-blooming plants that will have their biggest growth spurt during the summer.

Some of our worst plant enemies like Japanese barberry, an invasive species, thrive and become so prolific because they have many competitive advantages in their home away from home. Barberry leaves emerge before the leaves of native foliage and they can shade the ground to prevent anything else from growing up around them. Their seeds are well protected and can last for up to seven years on the ground and germinate when an opportunity opens up. Their thorny branches protect them from being trampled, eaten, or used in any way by wildlife.

Since they didn't co-evolve with our white-tailed deer, the main herbivores of the forest understory, they aren't eaten. This would be a case where it is difficult to find a way to exploit a difference with a native species to find success.



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## OBITUARIES

## William Blacknall (1945-2021)

William Henry Blacknall, 76, a longtime Beacon resident, died Nov. 24 at Sapphire Nursing Center in Newburgh.



He was born in Raleigh, North Carolina, on July 11, 1945, the son of Ruth Blacknall, and raised by his grandparents, Hillard and Marjorie Blacknall.

William attended schools in Henderson, North Carolina. After high school he relocated to the Hudson Valley, where he became well known for his many talents as a biker, car racer and softball hitter. He retired from the state Department of Transportation.

He was "Mr. Duster" during his car days, "Shotgun" during his motorcycle days, "Hicks" to many of his friends and "Bill" to many others.

William was inducted in 1999 into the Beacon Softball Hall of Fame. He loved cooking for his family (especially fried turkeys), friends and strangers in need.

William is survived by his wife, Johnnie Mae Blacknall, and his children: Damon Blacknall, Annette Hendrickson (Chris) of Killeen, Texas; Sherita Williams (Jeff) of Philadelphia; Chantely Skipwith (John) of Henderson; Crystal Morrison of Henderson; Fry (William) Blacknall II; and stepson, Jessie Williams (Kathleen) of Beacon.

## Frank Bugg (1942-2021)

James Francis Bugg, 78, of Beacon, died Nov. 15 at the Renaissance Rehabilitation and Nursing Care Center in Straatsburg.



Frank was born on Dec. 12, 1942, in Montclair, New Jersey, the son of David and Agnes (Walker) Bugg. Following his graduation from Beacon High School in 1961, he enlisted in the U.S. Army. He went on to study at Temple University in Philadelphia.

Frank left Philadelphia to work as assistant director of the educational oppor-

tunity program at SUNY Morrisville. He later moved to Detroit to work at Focus Hope; where there, he earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Wayne State University. Returning to Philadelphia, he took a position with the state Department of Conservation & Natural Resources.

Finding a better opportunity in New Jersey, he became the director of education for Atlantic City YouthBuild. Finally, after being recruited to become director of the Newark Boys' Choir, he moved to Newark. Upon retiring, he came back to Beacon to be closer to family and friends.

Frank was a passionate advocate in Beacon for increasing the diversity of the teachers in the school system. "I just happened to see some data on there that in 2010 the City of Beacon had 266 instructional staff, and that only five of them were minorities," he told *The Current* in 2016. "That riled me then and it still does."

Frank loved good food, people (especially children), golf and life. He was a master storyteller, who could make any story or experience more interesting and entertaining just by his telling, his family said.

He is survived by his sister, Rhonda (Rhoni) Bugg and a sister-in-law, Theresa Green Bugg.

A funeral service with military honors was held Dec. 2 at St. Andrew Episcopal Church in Beacon. Memorial donations may be made to the Mary McKenzie Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o Rhonda Bugg, 51 Clifton Ave., No. C1811, Newark, NJ 07104.

## Carla Giuffrida (1946-2021)

Carla Lindsay Giuffrida, 75, of Beacon, died Dec. 1 at the Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla from injuries suffered when she was struck by a vehicle.



Carla was born in Hollywood, California, on Sept. 27, 1946, the only child of Ernest and Barbara (Bush) Faust. She was a Montessori and fiber arts teacher in Sullivan County for nearly 30 years until her

retirement in 2016.

Growing up, Carla and her family split time between a home in Malibu Canyon that was built by her father, and summers living on their boat, usually docked at Catalina Island. In keeping with their belief that life is better on or near the sea, they spent most of their free time sailing or cruising in Southern California.

She attended high school and college in the San Fernando Valley and met her future husband, Mauro Giuffrida, at Cal State Northridge. They were married on Sept. 9, 1967, and soon after moved to Brooklyn, where Mauro pursued his master of fine arts degree at Pratt Institute and Carla opened Coulter Studios, a yarn-and-knitting boutique in midtown Manhattan.

Carla was selfless, compassionate and a dear friend and inspiration to all she knew, her family said. A self-taught master fiber artist, she was happiest while knitting or weaving, producing the most breathtaking pieces of art.

After retirement, Carla continued to share her passion with friends and strangers, hosting weekly knitting circles and coming up with projects and learning tools for her grandchildren at each visit.

She is survived by her son, Mauro Giuffrida, her daughter, Lindsay Giuffrida, and her grandchildren: Natasha, Isabella, Liviana, Owen, Eliza and Massimo.

A celebration of life will be held at Harrison Rasmussen Funeral Home in Barryville from 1 to 3 p.m. on Dec. 29, followed by interment next to her husband in the couple's adopted hometown of Eldred. Memorial donations may be made to the Delaware Riverkeeper Network ([delaware-riverkeeper.org](http://delaware-riverkeeper.org)) or Planned Parenthood ([plannedparenthood.org](http://plannedparenthood.org)).

## Louis Pataki Jr. (1941-2021)

Louis Peter Pataki Jr., 80, the older brother of former Gov. George Pataki, died Nov. 29 at Norwalk Hospital in Connecticut.

Born Nov. 2, 1941, in Peekskill, he was the

son of Louis and Margaret (Lagana) Pataki. As a teenager, he received the rank of Eagle Scout and went on to be a scoutmaster for Troop 2 in Rowayton, Connecticut, where he and his wife, the former Jane Smith, resided and raised their family.



Louis received his undergraduate and doctorate degrees from Yale University and a law degree from Indiana University. He taught astronomy at Indiana University, practiced law in New York and for the past 21 years was an astronomy professor at New York University.

He volunteered for the Rowayton Fire Department in Norwalk and enjoyed stamp collecting, orienteering and celebrating his Hungarian, Italian and Irish heritage.

In addition to his wife of 55 years, Louis is survived by his children, Jonathan Pataki and Daisy Pataki; his grandchildren, Kaitlyn, Maggie, Milo and Juliana; his brother, George Pataki (Libby) of Garrison; and seven nieces and nephews.

A funeral service was held Dec. 6 in Rowayton, with interment following at Rowayton Union Cemetery. Memorial donations may be made to the Rowayton Fire Department ([rowaytonfire.com](http://rowaytonfire.com)).

## Other Recent Deaths

## Philipstown

George Baltich, 84  
Steve Boston, 58  
Gina Guida, 66

## Beacon

Harold Conley, 65	Jay Mosher, 76
Lucrecia Cooper, 93	Vincent Nenni, 87
Illyana Fleming, 49	Ted Petrocine Jr., 64
Diane MacAvery, 82	Paulie Putorti, 84
Agnes Maleakas, 72	Jerry Rodriguez, 69
Lorraine Malone, 88	David Ruf, 63
	Joe Wassi, 71

For more obituaries, see [highlandscurrent.org/obits](http://highlandscurrent.org/obits).

## Current Classifieds

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# Putnam Approves Pay Raises for 2022

## *Also backs settlement of alleged wrongful arrest case*

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

Putnam County legislators on Tuesday (Dec. 7) approved 2.4 percent raises for the county executive, county clerk, the sheriff and themselves.

Legislator Nancy Montgomery, a Democrat whose district covers Philipstown and part of Putnam Valley, cast the lone “no” votes.

County Executive MaryEllen Odell will receive \$170,070 annually beginning Jan. 1 while County Clerk Michael Bartolotti gets \$139,462. Eight legislators will earn \$42,802 each for their part-time jobs and whoever chairs the Legislature will draw \$53,503. The incoming sheriff, Kevin McConville, will take home \$160,209.

Montgomery joined her eight Republican colleagues in unanimously adopting another measure that set salaries for various employees and increases the salary of

the Legislature’s clerk to \$104,794 annually and the two Board of Election commissioners to \$98,235 each.

The salary increases passed without debate. However, in October, before the Legislature adopted the county’s \$167.1 million budget for 2022, Montgomery opposed raising the pay for Odell and other top officials while increasing property taxes even as Putnam anticipates \$62 million in 2022 in sales tax revenue.

The lawmakers last gave themselves a raise in November 2020, when they voted 5-4 to raise their salaries and those of top officials and department heads by 2.4 percent.

Also on Tuesday, legislators unanimously agreed to settle, for \$125,000, a lawsuit filed by a Poughkeepsie man who claimed sheriff’s deputies had been motivated by racial prejudice when they arrested and allegedly assaulted him during a 2019 traffic stop on the Taconic State Parkway. In November, the legislative Rules Committee consented to the settlement, sending it on to a vote by the full Legislature.

“We wrestled with this case” but concluded that “it’s in the best interests of taxpayers that we move this forward and settle,” said Legislator Neal Sullivan of Carmel-Mahopac, who chairs the Rules Committee. If the county lost in court, “the potential negative effect on taxpayers and the amount of dollars could be significant,” he said. “In no way do we think the behavior in this case is acceptable. We look forward to next year and the future with our new sheriff and having a real strong approach toward making sure that these things do not happen.”

Montgomery objected that Sullivan seemed to suggest that the present sheriff, Robert Langley Jr., a Democrat who lost to McConville, a Republican, in the November election, “was responsible for the behavior of these two officers” and that they did not receive adequate training. “That’s inappropriate. It’s wrong,” she said.

Legislator Amy Sayegh of Mahopac emphasized that “these were alleged actions” by the deputies but said that

while she didn’t “want to throw any officers under the bus,” she also didn’t condone misbehavior.

“There needs to be some kind of culpability to prevent these kinds of cases,” added Legislator Ginny Nacerino of Patterson. “That’s not a reflection on any one person or the sheriff, but there has to be some culpability and some understanding of accountability. I’d like to see that culture change.”

Legislature meetings end with members’ ad hoc comments and Montgomery and Legislator Bill Gouldman of Putnam Valley used theirs to recognize Supervisors Richard Shea of Philipstown and Sam Oliverio of Putnam Valley, who both leave office this month. Oliverio served on the county Legislature and Putnam Valley Town Board before becoming supervisor.

In other business, the Legislature unanimously approved compensation of up to \$84,000 in 2022 for Robert Firriolo, its lawyer; signed off on a fund transfer of \$102,500 (endorsed last month by the Rules Committee) so the county Law Department can pay bills before Dec. 31; and reappointed Andrew Pidala of Philipstown to the county Board of Electrical Examiners.

## Christmas Trees *(from Page 1)*

compared to 370 in the past, although he didn’t blame COVID-19 or the supply chain. He said his Canadian supplier underplanted several years ago.

However, as in 2020, demand is higher because of the pandemic — “Everyone was home and they had to have something to do,” so they bought Christmas trees, said Giordano. In addition, he said, prices are up 30 to 40 percent for cut trees, mostly due to increased shipping costs.

Sean Giles, owner of Sunny Garden Greenhouses in Wappingers Falls, said on Wednesday that he had only 15 trees left. He said his wholesaler was the victim of a drought several years ago, which has lowered stock since.

Giles said that higher labor and freight costs on cut trees have driven up his prices this season by 10 percent to 20 percent. He’s charging up to \$79 for a 7- to 8-foot Balsam

fir and up to \$120 for a Fraser fir.

He said he believes the pandemic had an indirect effect on demand because of the influx of first-time tree buyers who moved to the area from New York City. “They now have room for a tree,” he said.

Joe Cardella, owner of BJ’s Christmas Tree Farm in LaGrange, has also seen high demand and expects to sell out early. “I certainly will not be open for the entire season,” he said.

Josh Maddocks and Sean Barton, who operate Cockburn Farm in Garrison, where customers cut down their purchases, also said sales have been strong, which Barton attributed in part to the pandemic, which “brought back family values.”

“We had a strong opening week, even with the rain,” Maddocks said of the Route 9 farm, which has 1,500 trees ranging from \$150 to \$750.

Gene Knudsen, president of the Christmas Tree Farmers Association of New York



**Brittny Tomaselli and her friend Ariz Carpinteyro cut their own tree at Cockburn Farm in Garrison. “I look forward to this every year,” she said.**

*Photo by J. Asher*

and the owner of Balsam Ridge Christmas Trees in Ulster County, said there doesn’t seem to be any acute shortage statewide, especially for cut trees that can be trucked in from elsewhere.

His own sales have been on track with last year, he said, which he remembered as “exceptional.” But he said forest fires in the Pacific Northwest have had a ripple effect nationally on supplies.

Back at Cockburn Farm in Garrison, Brittny Tomaselli, 30, of White Plains was making sure to buy early. She visited last week with her friend Ariz Carpinteyro, 31, of the Bronx, and her dog, Baxter. “I look forward to this every year,” she said. “I wanted to uphold the tradition.”

She and Carpinteyro settled on a 5½-foot Fraser and cut it down with a saw provided by the farm. “I like a smaller tree,” said Tomaselli. The cost? \$225.

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Deputies Seize Arsenal in Carmel

*Sheriff: Only one firearm had serial number*

Putnam County sheriff’s deputies seized an arsenal of weapons from a home in the Town of Carmel during a raid on Dec. 2, according to a news release.

The agency’s Narcotic Enforcement Unit executed a search warrant at a residence following what it said was a month-long investigation into the manufacture and sale of illegal firearms in the Mahopac area.

Inside the home, officers said they found 10 pistols, an assault rifle, 67 large-capacity ammunition-feeding devices and the tools and parts to make more than 20 fire-

arms. Only one of the firearms had a serial number, they said.

David Goldberg Jr., 23, was arrested and charged with 15 counts of possession or sale of illegal weapons and one count of criminal possession of a controlled substance. He was arraigned and sent to the Putnam County jail on \$15,000 cash bail or \$30,000 bond.

### Legislature Asked to Restrict Judicial Candidates

*Bill would prevent primary ‘raids’*

A state senator from the Rochester area introduced a bill on Dec. 1 that would restrict judicial candidates from running in primaries for parties that haven’t endorsed them. It is identical to a bill introduced in

the Assembly over the summer by Jonathan Jacobson, a Democrat whose district includes Beacon.

Both bills have been referred to committees. Jacobson’s bill is co-sponsored by Sandy Galef, a Democrat whose district includes Philipstown.

The Assembly bill was inspired in part by this year’s campaign for Beacon city judge. The incumbent, Tim Pagones, who appeared on the Republican and Conservative lines, gathered enough signatures to force Democratic and Working Families primaries against Greg Johnston, the candidate endorsed by those two parties. Had Pagones won, he would have run unopposed in the general election.

“It’s becoming a widespread practice, particularly for incumbent judges, to ‘raid’

the primary of a party with which they are not aligned,” Jacobson said in a statement. Judicial candidates “should be required to do what every other candidate for public office does — get the authorization of that party to run.”

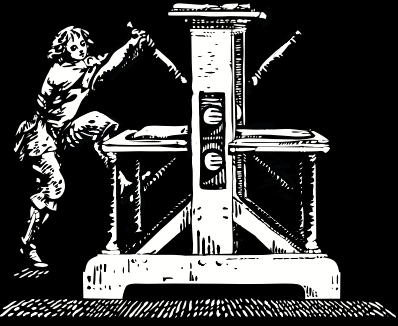
### Metro-North Train Kills Man

*Struck on tracks near Beacon station*

A southbound Metro-North train struck and killed a man at about 1 p.m. on Tuesday (Dec. 7) near the Beacon station, according to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

A representative for the commuter rail said it was investigating why the man was on the tracks.



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**Roundup** (from Page 28)

nent, and we didn't do that," said Coach Scott Timpano. "We kept our foot on the pedal. We had all 12 players score. They need to see what winning feels like."

Darien Gillins led the Bulldogs with 13 points, while Adrian Beato had 10 and Jason Komisar and Jack Antalek each added nine.

"Adrian Beato gave us some great minutes," Timpano said. "We also got great defense from Gavin LaDue, and Jamel Sellers-Blackwell came up strong with five rebounds and two steals."

The Bulldogs fell last week at Pine Bush, 61-53. Chase Green and Jack Philipbar each scored 13 points, Gillins had 12, Sellers-Blackwell had seven and Komisar had 11 rebounds.

"We came back from 16 points down and got their lead down to two points in the fourth quarter, but then they hit two 3-pointers," Timpano said. Nevertheless, "we saw some good things against a good team."

Beacon (1-2) is scheduled to host Port Jervis on Wednesday (Dec. 15) at 6:30 p.m.

**WINTER TRACK**

In the 15-team, Section I Kickoff meet on Dec. 5 at The Armory Track & Field Center in New York City, Haldane's Luke Parrella was fifth in the 1,000 meters in 2:58.37, a personal record. He also had a personal record in the 300 meters at 44.30.

Other top finishers for Haldane included Andriea Vasconcelos (fourth in the triple jump at 25-10), Eloise Pearsall (11th in the 1,500 meters in 5:46.74), Aleksander Noormae (26th in the 55 meters in 7.84) and Brendan Shannahan (31st in the 600 meters in 2:02.60).

"That was a good start to the season for our freshmen and sophomores," said Coach AJ McConville.

**BOWLING**

The Beacon boys' and girls' bowling teams each lost to Kingston, 7-0, on Tuesday (Dec. 7) following wins last week over Roosevelt. Against FDR, the Bulldogs were led by Daniel Gilleo and William Hockler, and the girls by Cadence Heeter and Vanessa Campanelli. The Bulldogs were scheduled to compete against FDR again on Thursday (Dec. 9), Saugerties on Dec. 14 and Goshen on Dec. 16.

**BOYS' SWIMMING**

The Beacon boys' swim team (0-3-1) fell to Minisink Valley, 119-48, on Dec. 2; tied Lourdes, 79-79, on Monday (Dec. 6); and fell to Valley Central, 108-51, on Dec. 8.

Ronnie Anzovino won the 100 freestyle race against Minisink in 1:02.62 and Fionn Fehilly won the 500 freestyle in 7:08.85; the 400-meter freestyle relay team won in 4:32.77 against Lourdes.

**Basketball** (from Page 28)

with a new mindset. We have a lot of depth on the bench and guards who can handle the ball."

The Blue Devils opened their season with a 58-24 home loss to Westlake (McDaniel had eight points and Chiera seven) but rebounded this week with a 53-46 victory at Yonkers Montessori Academy and a 62-26 home win over Hamilton.

"It was our third game, and I felt like we needed to get out quick," said Perrone. "We were faster in transition. We also needed points in the paint and we got 26."

Chiera led Haldane with 13 points, six rebounds, five assists and four steals. Cates added eight points, 12 rebounds and two blocked shots. Poses had seven points, eight steals, five assists and four rebounds, and Johanson and Siegel scored eight.

Against YMA, Chiera had 18 points, McDaniel had 10 and Siegel had eight. At one point, Haldane trailed by seven points but fought back with a strong third quarter.

Perrone said attention to detail will be key in getting the team where it wants to go. "We have the talent to contend," she said. "But it's also a matter of the small things that can become big in games, such as boxing out" for rebounds.

Haldane (2-1) is scheduled to play in a tournament at Croton-Harmon this weekend, followed by a visit to Carmel on Thursday (Dec. 16).

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Puzzles

CROSS CURRENT

**ACROSS**

1. Alum

5. Spell-off

8. Pit

12. Taylor of *Mystic Pizza*

13. Approves

14. Satan's forte

15. Leading man?

16. Landlocked Mideast territory

18. Disney's Ariel, for one

20. Van Gogh venue

21. CBS logo

22. Mimic

23. Wedding VIP

26. *I'm No Angel* actress

30. '60s chic

31. Green shade

32. Cattle call

33. *The Great Gatsby* setting

36. Self-reproach

38. Stop — dime

39. "— voyage!"

40. Skater Ohno

43. Within earshot

47. Oater setting

49. Author Bellow

50. Within (Pref.)

51. "Shool!"

52. Exile isle

53. Beheld

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

12 13 14

15 16 17

18 19 20

21 22

23 24 25 26 27 28 29

30 31 32

33 34 35 36 37

38 39

40 41 42 43 44 45 46

47 48 49

50 51 52

53 54 55

54. Sugary suffix

55. Marvel superheroes

9. Cameo shape

10. Queue

11. BPOE members

17. Carton sealer

19. Nay undoer

22. Motorist's org.

23. Upscale auto

24. Shad product

25. Egos' counterparts

26. Jo's sister

27. Brit. record label

28. Fa follower

29. Youngster

31. Links org.

34. Ratted out

35. Sufficient, old-style

36. Deity

37. Gender-neutral

39. Montana city

40. Dazzles

41. Freshener scent

42. Shoppe

43. Unrepaired

44. Lip soother

45. Garage job

46. Panache

48. Conceit

**DOWN**

1. Glitz partner

2. Carousel, for one

3. Winged

4. Darkened

5. "Let's Dance" singer

6. Scratched (out)

7. Curved letter

8. Semitic language

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Answers for Dec. 3 Puzzles

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

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

1. HERCULEAN, 2. MAUVE, 3. BLABBING, 4. ASIA, 5. BONDS, 6. BARNUM, 7. TANNING

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

7 LITTLE WORDS

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

**CLUES**

1 Mexican leather sandal (8)

2 not tainted (9)

3 accordionlike instrument (10)

4 in an unconquerable way (11)

5 half of a seesaw (6)

6 out of bread (5)

7 informal alliance (7)

**SOLUTIONS**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_


HUA	MITA	ED	CHE	NCE
OIL	ET	ENTE	BLY	KE
TE	BRO	INA	CO	UNSP
RT	ENT	RA	ER	INDO

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SUDO CURRENT

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

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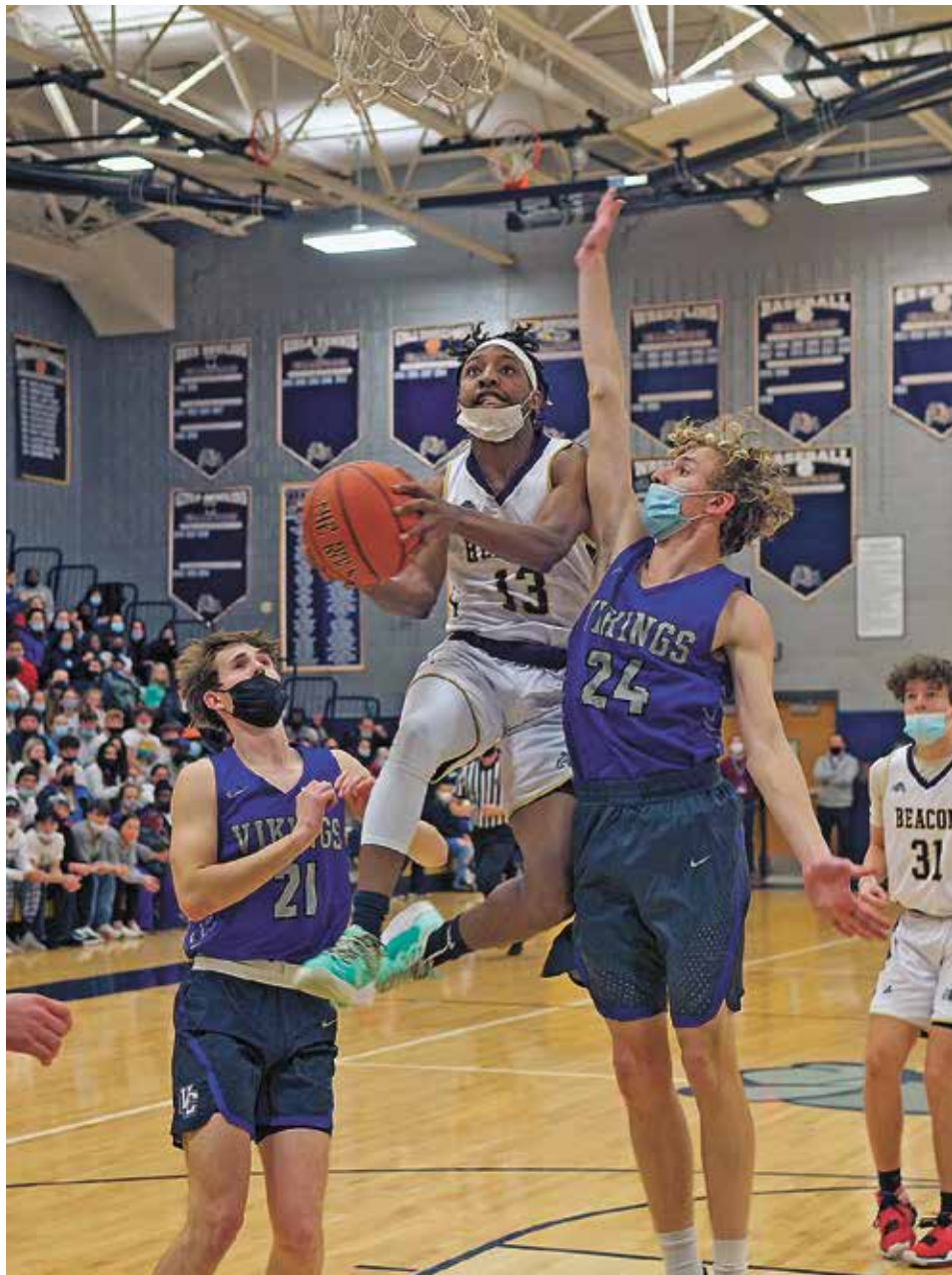
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## SPORTS



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Beacon's Darien Gillins (13) elevates to the rim in Tuesday's win, the team's first of the season.

Photo by S. Pearlman

## VARSITY ROUNDUP

By Skip Pearlman

### BOYS' BASKETBALL

Haldane won its first game of the season on Dec. 2 behind 18 points from Matteo Cervone and 16 from Tristen Reid, edging Alexander Hamilton on the road, 67-64.

"It was an up-tempo, intense game," said Coach Joe Virgadamo. "It was a loud crowd, a fun atmosphere, and the win gave the team some confidence."

Soren Holmbo added 11 points, Ryan Irwin had 10 and Rob Viggiano finished with seven.

"Holmbo and Irwin were both impressive," Virgadamo said. "The football guys came in late from their season, but they're playing well."

Two days later at Washingtonville, the Blue Devils came up short, 87-65. Cervone

and Will Bradley each scored 25 points and Holmbo added nine.

Haldane was up by three points after the first quarter but Washingtonville pulled away. The closest the Blue Devils got in the second half was nine points. Washingtonville shot 58 percent from three-point range.

Haldane (1-1) is scheduled to host Marlboro for Senior Night today (Dec. 10) at 5:30 p.m. It has home games next week against Hastings on Tuesday (Dec. 14) and Briarcliff (Dec. 16) that start at 6:15 p.m.

At Beacon High School, the Bulldogs had a lopsided, 75-34, home win on Tuesday (Dec. 7) over Valley Central. After going 1-11 last season, it was just the second win for the team in two seasons.

"Sometimes you play down to an oppo-

(Continued on Page 26)



Beacon's Reilly Landisi brings the ball up the court during a game last season against Haldane.

File photos by S. Pearlman

## Preview: Girls' Basketball

By Skip Pearlman

### BEACON BULLDOGS

You can't get much younger than the roster of the Beacon High School girls' basketball team, which finished 4-9 last season. The team has no juniors or seniors.

Its three returning starters are sophomore Devyn Kelly and freshmen Reilly Landisi and Daveya Rodriguez, and other returning players include freshmen Lila Burke and Rory LaDue. New to the team are sophomores Kiarra Rodriguez, Shadaya Fryar, Alex McCollum and Shyanne Kush and freshman Rayana Taylor.

Coach Christina Dahl said that the lineup, of course, presents "the potential to grow, with focus and hard work."

She said she didn't expect any one player to take over a game "but we expect our leaders to spread the ball around, to get others involved."

The Bulldogs are competing for the first time this year in Section IX, after the district moved its athletic programs from Section I. "We hope to get contributions from all 10 players, to make the sectional tournament, and make some noise," Dahl said.

Beacon fell in its first two games of the season last week to Roosevelt High School (Landisi scored 13 and Rodriguez added six) and Pine Bush (Landisi had 10). The Bulldogs (0-2) are scheduled to visit Port Jervis on Tuesday (Dec. 14) and host Washingtonville on Dec. 20.



Maddie Chiera is one of five returning starters for the Blue Devils.

### HALDANE BLUE DEVILS

Haldane returns all five starters, four of whom are seniors: Ella Ashburn, Maddie Chiera, Marissa Scanga and Molly Siegel. They are joined by sophomore Ruby Poses. Also returning are juniors Betsy Cates, Amanda Johanson, Mairead O'Hara, Moretta Pezzullo, Chloe Rowe and Camilla McDaniel. Newcomers are senior Jenna Irwin and junior Madeleine Gardephe.

Last year's team lost 11 of 12 games, but Coach Jessica Perrone said during summer play that "we looked like a different team,

(Continued on Page 26)