

The HIGHLANDS Current



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DECEMBER 17, 2021

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Diane Lapis, the president of the Beacon Historical Society, shows off a recently donated 19th-century painting of Fishkill Creek by Ella Ferris Pell. *Photo by Ross Corsair*

Beacon History Makes Move

Society relocates from one former rectory to another

By Alison Rooney

Just like the city it documents, the Beacon Historical Society is on the move. The latter began its life during America's bicentennial in 1976 at the Howland Public Library, before spending 20 years packed into a 225-square-foot room at the Howland Cultural Center. It has always needed more space to house an extensive collection, ranging from maps, documents and postcards to school desks, artworks and products produced during the city's industrial heyday.

In 2017, after a search which took years, the BHS found some breathing room on South Avenue, moving into the 2,000-square-foot former rectory of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. Moving again was not in the society's immediate plans but, out of the blue, the nonprofit's board was approached by the Franciscan brothers, who were leaving their rectory next to St. Joachim's Church at 61 Leonard St., off the east end of Main Street near The Roundhouse. "The church invited us to consider moving here with a great offer" for a 10-year lease, says Diane Lapis, the society's president. "Now we have 12 rooms: seven

(Continued on Page 8)

Dutchess, Putnam Will Not Enforce Mask Mandate

Serino also criticizes state order as COVID-19 cases rise

By Leonard Sparks

The executives for Dutchess and Putnam say they will not enforce the state's new indoor mask mandate for businesses as both counties face a surge in COVID-19 infections and deaths that has been worsening since August. Putnam County Executive MaryEllen Odell, a Republican, issued a statement on Monday (Dec. 13), the first day businesses

and venues had to require masks indoors for staff and patrons unless they verify that everyone entering is fully vaccinated. The state is directing local health departments to enforce the order, which includes fines of up to \$1,000 for each violation a business incurs. Odell said businesses cannot be expected "to implement this unrealistic order" and that Putnam's Health Department is "working overtime" to vaccinate residents while preparing to open a six-day-a-week testing center at the county's office complex in

(Continued on Page 24)



HUNGER in the Highlands

By Brian PJ Cronin

It started as a lark. Peter Davoren liked antique tractors, but once he got his hands on one, he realized that he might as well use it. Soon he was cutting hay around Philipstown, restoring friends' fields, feeding their livestock. "It was just for fun," says Stacey Farley, his wife. They transitioned from feeding animals to feeding people, and Davoren Farm was born. Davoren and Farley farmed around Philipstown, growing vegetables, putting their children — and then their children's friends — to work. Members of the Philipstown Garden Club volunteered. The couple leased 10 acres in Garrison across Route 9D from Boscobel and built a barn. They began selling to restaurants and set up a pop-up stand that attracted loyal customers. Davoren continued to work full-time in construction, and Farley in the art world. They still do. "We all have other jobs,"

Last in
a series

says Farley, who also serves on an advisory board for this newspaper. Then came March 2020, and it wasn't a lark anymore. "The whole world changed," says Farley. "So we shifted." Although Davoren Farm does not operate as a nonprofit (Farley jokes that it's a "not-for-profit"), when the pandemic shutdown began, its co-owners decided they would give away their harvest. Nearly two years later, that continues. Most of the food is donated to Fareground in Beacon and Fred's Pantry in Peekskill, two organizations fighting food insecurity. The remainder is sold at the farm stand, with the proceeds given to the Philipstown Food Pantry and the town's food assistance program. The food they sold to restaurants is now donated to restaurants. "They're hurting just as much, just in a different way," says Farley. "We see it as a form of mutual aid," explains Lukas Lahey, the farm's one full-time employee, who was hired shortly before the pandemic shut-

(Continued on Page 10)

5Q FIVE QUESTIONS: JIM ROONEY

By Leonard Sparks

The Rev. Jim Rooney, a former Catholic priest, owns the Beacon Hermitage bed-and-breakfast on Route 9D.

Why did you leave the church?

I didn't feel comfortable with some of the stances the Catholic Church was taking on people's lifestyles. I came to the U.S. [from Scotland] in 2000. I worked at St. Vincent's Hospital in Manhattan as a chaplain, and part of the chaplaincy process is you have to go into therapy. If you're meant to be a counselor, you need to understand where you're coming from. I was always aware that I was gay, but I didn't want to address it. Part of the counseling is that you have to address it.

How tough was the conflict?

With one patient at St. Vincent's, when I first went into his room, his partner — an ex-seminarian — was there. He said: "We don't want you to be here." I felt like saying: "Guys, I'm gay myself!" But because I was wearing the collar, and with the position I was in, I couldn't reveal that.

What happened after you left the church?

I found a full-time job. That was in 2008.



Then somebody introduced me to CITI Ministries, which is for ex-Catholic priests who have primarily left because of the celibacy requirement. So, I joined the organization. I loved being a priest; I loved being involved in people's lives. After I joined CM, the doors began to open again. Primarily, it was weddings. The couples I'd be working with were maybe Catholic but felt disenfranchised.

Why did you open the bed-and-breakfast?

I bought a house in Beacon in 2007. I wanted a place of seclusion, with a few rooms, so that I could invite friends up and enjoy the hike. My 50th birthday was approaching and I had been commuting [to Manhattan] almost every day. I was also doing more weddings, funerals and baptisms — not only people from the Catholic side, but people from other faiths. Being from Beacon, I liked the idea of being a lighthouse — the light for a place of safety. *Hermitage* stems from my love of St. Francis of Assisi. He went to the hermitage in Assisi, and I've been there a number of times. The word denotes a place of refuge, a place of retreat.

Where do you perform the ceremonies?

All over. The other weekend, I officiated a wedding in Beacon and one in Manhattan. I focus on the love of the couple and their story, because certainly it was love that brought them together and will sustain them. And their family and friends will sustain and support them. That resonates in people — that they belong to something, and maybe it's not a church or a building any longer, but it's more diverse.

ON THE SPOT

By Michael Turton

Are you excited about the NFL playoffs?

"I'm not a sports guy; I had no idea the playoffs are soon."



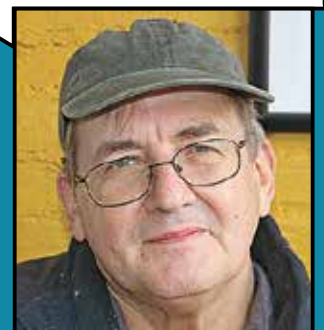
Kirill Kogan, Beacon

"I used to watch enthusiastically, not so much anymore."



Nicole Scott, Cold Spring

"I know who's winning, who's losing; the New York teams are losing."



Charley Cook, Beacon

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Christine Foertsch,
Garrison

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LETTERS AND COMMENTS

Shakespeare plans

We wish to correct an erroneous statement made in your paper by the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival that its plans for The Garrison will protect the land from "suburban-style development" similar to the proposed Hudson Highlands Reserve ("Horton Road Project Faces Continued Scrutiny," Dec. 3).

Chris Davis, who is donating land at The Garrison to HVSF, did indeed protect the golf course from suburban-style development when he purchased it many years ago, for which we are thankful. Subsequently the community itself, at a charette on the future of Philipstown, put in place zoning and regulations which we understood would protect the land. The threat of The Garrison property becoming a housing estate if the HVSF plan does not go forward is therefore an empty one.

The Garrison golf course is designated a Scenic Protection Overlay District in order to "protect the town's scenic beauty and rural character" and provides "ridgeline and hillside" protection, among much else. The zoning is Rural Conservation and these uses are not permitted: suburban-type housing on 200 acres; outdoor permanent theater; indoor theater; outdoor pavilion; rehearsal building; offices; actor (etc.) lodging; box office; back-

of-house facilities; or hospitality facilities, including toilets for hundreds of people.

In order for the proposed plan to go forward, the following have to be thrown out the window: the community-agreed-upon Comprehensive Plan; the Rural Conservation zoning; the Scenic Protection Overlay District; the environmental impact on the land and hamlet of Garrison of more than 1,000 people and their cars at any one time until after 11 p.m., compared to 70-plus golfers at any one time who disappear at dusk.

The HVSF proposal would enable three large wedding venues (Boscobel, Highlands, The Garrison) and two theaters to function simultaneously. On Saturdays with matinees plus evening performances in both theaters, plus two weddings at peak season there would be a huge influx of traffic and a further bifurcation of Garrison by the four-lane highway that Route 9 will become.

It is excellent that the chemically fertilized monoculture of the golf course will disappear. However, any environmentalist knows that such a huge increase in cars and people has a huge impact. A simple "move up the hill from Boscobel" this is not.

As longtime supporters of HVSF, we want it to have a home with a view, a longer

season as in the plan, and actor housing. But as longtime residents within sight and sound of The Garrison, who have fought hard to keep the rural nature of this area intact, we know that if this entire plan is built out, this area will be changed utterly.

The task is to weigh the clear good that the festival brings to the Hudson Valley and beyond while also considering the huge impact on this specific part of the world.

Stan Freilich and Carol Marquand, *Garrison*

I recently received a mailing from HVSF informing me how much I will benefit when — not if — it changes my quiet, rural area to a bustling theatrical "destination." I wondered: Will they be the same kind of benefits I've received from the triple lines of cars parked below Breakneck Ridge? Will they be the same kind of benefits I've received from the snarled mess at Anthony's Nose and the Bear Mountain Bridge? Will they be the same kind of benefits that make parking impossible at Constitution Marsh? Because if that's what HVSF has in mind for me on that treacherous stretch of Route 9 and Travis Corners Road, well then, I can't wait.

Twenty years ago I received an uncannily similar mailing from a developer who wanted to turn what is now the Garrison Institute into Point Lookout, a massive retirement complex which would have completely changed Garrison. Here we go again, only this time it's an inside job.

We should all be grateful to Chris Davis for everything he has done for our area, but that doesn't mean he should be given free rein to do whatever he wants with the heart of Garrison. No one wants The Garrison turned into condos, but I suspect few want to see it turned into Tanglewood, the massive music festival in Massachusetts, either.

Hey there, Philipstown Town Board! You have our backs, right? You wouldn't issue HVSF a special-events permit and allow it to circumvent the Planning, Zoning and Conservation boards, as well as the citizens of Philipstown, would you? Yes, there's big-time money and local pressure involved, but our Town Board wouldn't sell us out to an inside developer after we've managed to hold off the outside ones, would it?

No one is saying HVSF shouldn't grow. But growth should mean getting bigger, not becoming monstrous. Looks like our way of life is once again in jeopardy.

Suzie Gilbert, *Garrison*

In your account of the Nov. 30 Philipstown Planning Board meeting, its chair, Neal Zuckerman, is quoted as saying: "I think I speak for the board when I say — and I hope my colleagues are in alignment

(Continued on Page 5)



LETTERS AND COMMENTS

(Continued from Page 4)

— that everyone feels that this project has great value for this community. I don't think this conversation we've been on is a debate about its merits as a social benefit."

He is correct: There has been no substantive discussion of what in the development proposal provides social benefits to Garrison, and in what ways it will degrade our rural character. Maybe as the "conversation" proceeds, there will be.

In the meantime, Zuckerman might consider asking his colleagues to speak for themselves before "aligning" them with his own views, and he might consider whether his supplying a public-relations voice for the applicant is part of the Planning Board's mission.

Tim Nolan, *Garrison*

Comp plan

Regarding the Philipstown Comprehensive Plan, I'm concerned about what is missing from the section on restrictions to youth access to tobacco, e-cigarettes and vape products and alcohol ("Comp Plan Urges Town-Village Merger," Nov. 26). There's no mention of marijuana in light of Cold Spring residents narrowly voting to allow retail sales. I hope the town can make this update.

Tom Campanile, *via Facebook*

Dockside

If people want to continue using Dockside Park in Cold Spring, it needs to be protected by stabilizing the shoreline ("Dockside Shoreline to Get Major Rehab," Dec. 3). If stabilization is not done, a lot of it will be eroded away. Note the huge roots from trees that have fallen into the river at Little Stony Point. Without shoreline stabilization, this could be the fate of the lovely grove of trees at Dockside's center.

The \$1.86 million the state plans to spend is good news and a prudent use of tax dollars with benefits for our entire community.

Lynn Miller, *Cold Spring*

Debates

Phyllis Hoenig's letter in the Dec. 3 issue, while a well-intended attempt at gracious fairness, was a "pox on both your houses," "both sides-ism" type criticism of both the Democratic and Republican parties for not holding candidate debates.

My beef is not with the League of Women Voters; it is a non-partisan arbiter. The fact is the Democrats have been trying to debate the Republicans, but Republicans keep running from them. A scheduled LWV debate at the Putnam Valley Middle School didn't happen due to the Republicans pulling out at the 11th hour.

Perhaps Republicans fear having to defend their exorbitant, self-awarded salaries? Our county legislators have awarded themselves one of the highest payrolls of any county legislature in the state, while our taxes continue to go up. What do we get in return? Very little, as far as I can tell. Democrats are eager to debate Republicans in this county — we keep trying.

Nicholas Kuvach, *Putnam Valley*
Kuvach is a member of the Putnam Valley Democratic Committee.

Protest

On my way to the Cold Spring train station on Dec. 12, I came across a group of shadowy protestors on the corner of Kemble and Main. As I drew closer, I saw that they were holding signs defaming Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney.

What was their problem with Maloney? I was disappointed to find that none of the protestors would engage in any kind of dialogue. Instead, they repeatedly instructed me to "check the website," maloneyhatescops.com.

Here you will find, unsurprisingly, a series of paranoid Fox News headlines accompanied by images of Maloney glow-

Clarification

The interviews that appeared in the article "The Elders of Philipstown" (Dec. 10) were conducted and edited by Celia Barbour and excerpted from the gallery catalog for the *Faces/Graces* exhibit at the Garrison Arts Center, which runs through Jan. 9.

ing red (you turn red if you don't back the blue, I gather). The website is funded by Schmitt for Congress — Maloney's congressional rival. I'd venture to guess what I thought were protestors were actually paid Schmitt staff. That would explain why their curt responses seemed coached.

I respect your right to plead the Fifth, and of course I respect your right to demonstrate, but I do not respect your unwillingness to dialogue with community members — too risky, I suppose.

Malachy Labrie-Cleary, *Cold Spring*

Holiday goats

Give your favorite gardener a herd of baby goats? ("Roots and Shoots: Gardener Gift Guide," Nov. 26). That's like giving someone a surprise puppy that will end up in a shelter in January. How about renting the goats instead? Then neither of you has to commit to take care of them — for their entire lives!

Kendra Parker, *via Facebook*

Christmas trees

I like Cockburn Farm in Garrison for Christmas trees because it's cute and close, but it was \$250 for the trees on-lot and \$120 to \$150 for pre-cut ("What? No Christmas Trees?" Dec. 10). Because it's a 7-year-old tree (a life), it's worth it, but I have been getting a live tree since I was a kid and an expensive tree is usually about \$50 to \$60. It might be that Garrison taxes are so high, they can only grow a few on-site. The rest are purchased and shipped in and tied up by zip-tie to a pole to give the feeling of getting a live tree.

Matthew Robinson, *via Instagram*

I bought my tree at Mike's Evergreen Forest Christmas Tree Farm in Lagrangeville, which is a cut-your-own operation open until Christmas. It was \$70. Great place.

Dennis Moroney, *Beacon*

Be seen

Days are short and nights are long, yet most of us continue our daily routines such as walking the dog or going for a walk or run.

If you're like me, a lot of your winter clothes are dark-colored, which means that during those long nights you are nearly invisible to cars. And since not every street has a sidewalk for you to walk safely on, please wear a reflective safety vest or carry a bright flashing light. The life you save might be your own!

Yvonne Caruthers, *Beacon*

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Beacon Council to Finalize Ambulance Coverage

Deal would hire private firm while keeping volunteers

By Jeff Simms

In its final meeting before four new members are sworn in next month, the Beacon City Council on Monday (Dec. 20) will vote to fund round-the-clock ambulance coverage for the first time.

City officials included \$200,000 for ambulance service in Beacon's 2022 budget, which the council adopted earlier this month, although it was undecided how the money would be distributed. City Administrator Chris White said this week that \$150,000 would be used to hire Ambulnz, a private company that Putnam County also intends to use in 2022.

The proposed agreement, which provides advanced life support (ALS) service with a paramedic on board, would last five years.

The remaining \$50,000 would be sent to the nonprofit Beacon Volunteer Ambulance Corps (BVAC), which has served the city for 63 years and provides basic life support service. That agreement allows for four, one-year renewals.

An ambulance with a paramedic can provide immediate treatment for cardiac emergencies such as heart attacks and strokes, while an ambulance with basic life support is staffed by emergency medical technicians (EMTs) trained only to stabilize victims until they can reach a hospital.

BVAC came under criticism in July when Wappinger Supervisor Richard Thurston contacted White, saying his town's paramedics, under mutual-aid agreements, had already been dispatched to the area covered by BVAC (which includes Beacon and the Glenham, Dutchess Junction and Chelsea fire districts) twice as many times as in all of 2020.

The town could no longer afford to expend "taxpayer-funded resources" outside of its coverage zone, Thurston said, a stand quickly echoed by four other municipalities, including Philipstown. That led Beacon to consider privatizing its municipal service.

The issue is multi-pronged. The health care industry is facing a dearth of workers and volunteer companies like BVAC have struggled to offer competitive wages. BVAC submitted a proposal to the city to add ALS coverage, which it had provided from 2009 to 2016, but it would have cost many times more than hiring Ambulnz, White told the council during a Dec. 13 workshop.

"We're looking not to get rid of BVAC; we're looking to try to keep them relevant and as part of the equation, but to make sure we're covered" with on-time responses for all calls, including those requiring ALS. Ambulnz and BVAC are discussing how the companies will respond to basic life support calls, White said.



Work resumed this week on a Rock Street driveway that prompted complaints from neighbors.

Photo by M. Turton

Rock Street Excavation Resumes — Legally

Driveway was subject of stop-work orders and lawsuit

By Michael Turton

The excavation of a driveway at 29-31 Rock St. that had been the subject of two stop-work orders from Cold Spring and a federal lawsuit filed by the homeowner resumed earlier this week.

In a settlement reached between the village and William McComish, Cold Spring agreed to grant a permit to complete work on a driveway and a parking area, including excavation of a rock outcrop located on a steep slope.

Mayor Kathleen Foley said the settlement required McComish to provide a safety plan and a certificate of liability insurance for the contractor.

The village also agreed to sell McComish a small piece of property it owns adjacent to his parcel for \$4 per square foot, the same rate it has charged for the sale of stoops and other small tracts to home and business owners.

McComish had planned to build a third residence on the parcel but in 2019 withdrew a request to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance.

In November 2020, the village building inspector issued a permit to extend a driveway and parking area. When that work began, neighbors objected, citing flying rock debris and questioning the project's environmental impact.

The village issued a stop-work order and referred the matter to the Historic District Review Board, which denied the permit application because of the "disruption of the rock face," which it called "a character-defining feature" of the site.

McComish renewed excavation work in March without a permit, prompting the second stop-work order. He then sued, claiming his civil rights had been violated. The settlement was reached on July 16.

NEWS BRIEFS

Cold Spring Man Charged

Pizza shop owner accused of 'forcible touching'

A Cold Spring business owner has been charged with forcible touching and endangering the welfare of a child under 17 years old, both misdemeanors.

Michael Procopio, 60, who owns Cold Spring Pizza on Main Street, was arrested Nov. 19 by New York State Police troopers after a complaint. He was arraigned the same day in the Cold Spring Justice Court and made a second court appearance on Dec. 8, when the case was postponed to Jan. 12.

Each charge carries a maximum sentence of a year in jail and/or a \$1,000 fine. The first is defined as touching, squeezing, grabbing or pinching the "intimate parts of another person." The second occurs when a person "knowingly acts in a manner that is likely to harm the physical, mental or moral welfare of a child."

Procopio's attorney, Chris Maher, said on Tuesday (Dec. 14) that his client is "completely innocent" but declined further comment. The court clerk said the files related to the case have been sealed. The Putnam County district attorney's office is prosecuting the case.

Garrison Voters Approve Truck

Fire district will borrow for mini-pumper

Voters in the Garrison Fire District on Tuesday (Dec. 14), by 59-45 margin, said "yes" to a proposition to borrow up to \$500,000 toward the purchase of a mini-pumper fire truck.

In addition, Nat Prentice was re-elected to a five-year term as one of the district's five commissioners, defeating challenger Kyle Irish, 87-17.

With 1,760 eligible voters in the district, turnout was 5.9 percent. The polls were open for four hours, and there was no absentee balloting.

Commissioner David Brower said the district will use reserve funds for some of the cost and that it would not increase taxes. The new truck will not be delivered for more than a year, he said.

HVSF Receives Second State Grant

Will cover costs if move approved to new site

The Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival will receive \$500,000 from the state parks department, its second grant award announced in less than a month for its project to transform The Garrison golf course into a permanent home.

The grant is among \$196 million awarded through the state's Regional Economic Development Council initiative. The festival was also awarded \$2 million on Nov. 22 from Empire State Development through the initiative. Under both awards, HVSF will be reimbursed for project costs.

The New York Council on the Arts also announced that it has awarded HVSF \$10,000 for a performance planned for 2022 by Alex Kuhn with the working title *An Ecological Candelmas: Illuminating HVSF's New Home*.

As part of the same round of grants, the NYSCA awarded \$49,500 to the Philipstown Depot Theatre in Garrison for general operating expenses.

Jacobson to Host Gun Buyback

Scheduled for Dec. 19 in Newburgh

Jonathan Jacobson, whose state Assembly district includes Beacon, will host a gun buyback event on Sunday (Dec. 19) in Newburgh.

It will take place from noon to 4 p.m. at 104 S. Lander St. under the supervision of the Newburgh Police Department. No questions will be asked and no ID is required.

Those bringing handguns will receive \$500 in BJ's and Walmart gift cards; assault weapons are worth \$300; modified rifles or shotguns, \$150; rifles, \$100; and antique or nonfunctional guns, \$50.

Guns must be unloaded. Active or retired law enforcement officers or licensed gun dealers are not eligible.

Valdes Smith Will Lead Dutchess Democrats

New legislator elected as minority leader

The eight-member Democratic caucus of the Dutchess County Legislature on Monday (Dec. 13) elected Yvette Valdes Smith, whose district includes part of Beacon, as minority leader for 2022-23.

Barrington Atkins, a legislator from Poughkeepsie, was elected assistant leader, succeeding Nick Page, whose district includes the remainder of Beacon.

Valdés Smith is a former schoolteacher who lives in Fishkill. She was elected on Nov. 2 to succeed Frits Zernike, who did not run for a third term; Page ran unopposed to keep his seat. Despite those wins, the Democrats lost two seats on the 25-member panel, which now has 17 Republican members.

Newburgh Suspect Declines Deal

Charged in Jan. 6 Capitol riot

A Newburgh man imprisoned in Washington, D.C., on charges he assaulted police officers during the Jan. 6 riot at the U.S. Capitol has turned down an offer from federal prosecutors to plead guilty for a reduced sentence.

During a court appearance on Dec. 9, a prosecutor said Edward "Jake" Lang, 26, had been offered a sentence of up to about 6.5 years. If convicted at trial on all charges, he would face a sentence of up to nine years.

Lang's next court appearance is scheduled for Jan. 18.

Cold Spring Aglow Temporarily Snuffed

Rescheduling frustrates chamber, merchants

By Michael Turton

The only thing missing from Cold Spring Aglow, the annual Chamber of Commerce holiday event, was the glow.

Scheduled to take place on Friday evening (Dec. 10), the event was to include 600 lit candles in white paper bags lining Main Street sidewalks from the traffic light to the river. Shops stayed open late for shoppers, and carolers added to the festive spirit. The weather was perfect.

But on Friday afternoon, confusion reigned. At 2:24 p.m., the Village of Cold Spring announced by email that the event had been postponed to Sunday. At 3:37 p.m., it sent a second email saying that only the luminaria had been postponed.

By the 5 p.m. start, Main Street was filled with shoppers and carolers had assembled at the waterfront. But the question on the street was, "What happened to the candles?"

At the Tuesday (Dec. 14) meeting of the Village Board, Mayor Kathleen Foley explained that Officer-in-Charge Larry Burke had "raised concerns about the fire risk and what had been inadequate communications with the fire company," which happened to be holding its annual holiday party that night at Riverview.

A representative from the fire company said that the North Highlands fire department was aware of the party and would have been dispatched if needed.

"Officer Burke and I did make the call to ask the chamber to reschedule the luminaria until Sunday," Foley said at the Tuesday meeting. "This was not a failing on the part of the chamber or the fire company."

Foley said the communications breakdown was at Village Hall, "with poor follow-up from the time [the event] was approved" on Oct. 19.

Unlike larger events held at Mayor's Park, which require an extensive application form, details about Aglow were neither requested by the board nor provided by the Chamber.



The candlelighting for Cold Spring Aglow was postponed from Friday to Sunday.



Stonemasons are rebuilding a wall on Main Street.

Photos by M. Turton

"Public safety has to be the primary job for all of us," Foley said. "As uncomfortable and difficult as the decision was, the officer-in-charge and I felt it was the right one to make."

On Tuesday Foley also reinstated Chamber of Commerce reports at the Village Board's monthly meetings, a practice that

had been discontinued. "That eliminated an essential communications pathway for chamber events," she said.

Nat Prentice, who became acting chamber president when Eliza Starbuck resigned to successfully run for a seat on the Village Board, supported Foley's measures to

improve communications and said a report on Aglow had already been submitted to Village Hall.

The report, which was provided to *The Current*, underlined the resentment felt by chamber members at the sudden cancellation, saying "haphazard and untimely communication, especially the mass email sent by the village hours before the event, caused frustration among merchants, disappointment among community members, and damage to the chamber's credibility."

It pointed out that Aglow is the only holiday event the chamber organizes for merchants and that "the last-minute chaos and confusion frankly made us look disorganized, through no fault of our own."

In other business...

■ Donald MacDonald, an architect and the project manager for the ongoing restoration of the stone wall on Main Street between B and Orchard streets, reported that more stone was needed, and that 30 more feet needed repair, adding about \$25,000 to the \$87,000 cost. MacDonald said the contractor would pay to fix a sewer line damaged during excavation. MacDonald said former Mayor Dave Merandy "was invaluable in moving the project forward" and Foley said it would be "a great monument to his time leading the village."

■ The board approved seven parking waivers, at \$250 each, for the storefront at 40 Main St., the former site of the Ellen Hayden Gallery. The rear of the building will include 37 office work stations; parking for those employees will be provided at the two municipal lots on Fair Street, adjacent to Riverview Restaurant and at Mayor's Park, contingent upon the village and the building owner agreeing on an annual fee per space.

■ Code Enforcement Officer Charlotte Mountain reported that she completed satisfactory inspections for three of four applications for short-term rental operations. One applicant did not meet the three-year ownership requirement. Foley noted that the STR law goes into effect on Jan. 1 and that in the new year the board will examine ways to improve and clarify the regulation while simplifying compliance.

■ For more items from the Dec. 10 meeting, see highlandscurrent.org.



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Gary Flynn, a volunteer, organizes newspapers for the BHS archives.

Photo by A. Rooney

Beacon Society *(from Page 1)*

workrooms and five public rooms, plus the kitchen and bathroom and an accessible ramp and accessible bathroom.”

“When people come in this building, they’re astonished,” she says. “It’s so perfect for us on every level. It’s an amazing opportunity for us and the city.”

The society relocated in March and volunteers have been unpacking and organizing since. At the same time, “research has continued; we steadily get requests from around the world. Volunteers are helping run the building, and their numbers are growing: Recently, in just in two weeks we had 100 hours of service. We also have Brandon DiDiego, an intern from SUNY Cortland, working on our veterans’ collection.”

She said the society hopes to upgrade and increase the size of its archives, with more space for exhibits and programming, including for school groups. There is also far more storage than at the South Avenue site.

“We now have a map and deed room, an administrative office, a home for our extensive newspaper collection, a scanning room, a place for our Highland Hospital and Craig House collections, along with all our books, postcard albums, yearbooks and city directories,” Lapis says. “We’re bringing together a lot of things which used to be in separate places, sorting them and putting them into an online database.”

As in other locales, many people discover the BHS while researching the history of their home. “They usually ask if we have an old photo of their house, which we rarely have but sometimes can find by looking at photos of parades and other civic events. They want to know who lived there, when it was built and information on the structures on the property. In one instance, someone had to prove to the City Council that she did not build the shed on her property and



The new Beacon Historical Society headquarters

Photo by A. Rooney

we found evidence that the shed had been there for at least 150 years.”

The building will officially open on May 14 and be dedicated to Robert Murphy, the city historian and society president for two decades, who died in 2020. The event will also herald the naming of rooms for two pairs of benefactors: the Denny G. and Karen L. Meyer Galleries and the Arthur M. and Rita Johnson Library.

The first exhibition in the new space, *Treasures of the Beacon Historical Society*, includes highlights from its collection. There is also a display on local veterans, a holiday tree decorated with vintage ornaments, a 1920s dollhouse made in Beacon and decked out for the holiday, and a gift shop.

The Beacon Historical Society, at 61 Leonard St., will be open to visitors from noon to 4 p.m. on Saturday (Dec. 18) and, as of Jan. 6, from 10 a.m. to noon on Thursdays and noon to 4 p.m. on Saturdays, or by appointment. Masks and social distancing are required. See beaconhistorical.org or call 845-831-0514.



About That Painting

By Diane Lapis

In 1957, a 12-year-old aspiring artist in Beacon named Dan Dakotas was delivering the *Beacon Evening News* to earn money to buy supplies and tickets to the Metropolitan and the Frick museums in Manhattan. One day, at a tag sale on South Avenue, he spotted a painting titled *Looking West from the Matteawan Bridge*. Recognizing his great-grandmother Ellen Klanka’s house in the background, he paid \$4 for it.

The painting has resided in his Kansas home for more than 50 years; last year, his wife, Ruth, decided to research its origins. She discovered the artist was painter, sculptor and illustrator Ella Ferris Pell, an 1870 graduate of the Design School for Women at Cooper Union who later studied at the Académie des Beaux-Arts des Champs-Élysées in Paris.

Her most important painting, *Salome* (1890), which depicts the dancer who demanded the execution of John the Baptist, was daring for its time.

Pell and her sister Evie lived in Beacon during the final years of their lives; first on South Avenue and then Ferry Street. Pell sold landscapes from her home or at local shops but died a pauper in 1922. In the early 1970s a collection of her paintings, sketches, letters and journals was found in a home in Fishkill and donated to the Fort Ticonderoga Museum. She is buried in an unmarked grave next to her sister at Fishkill Rural Cemetery.

Earlier this year, Dan and Ruth donated *Looking West from the Matteawan Bridge* to the Beacon Historical Society, which one day hopes to provide an appropriate gravestone for this amazing local artist.

Reporter's Notebook: Appreciating Frank Bugg

By Jeff Simms

I was saddened to hear the news that Frank Bugg, a 1961 Beacon High School graduate and former city resident, died on Nov. 15. He'd been sick in recent years and deteriorated further after contracting COVID-19. He would have turned 79 on Dec. 12.

We published Frank's obituary last week in *The Current*, but I felt that more of his story deserved to be told.

I became familiar with Frank toward the end of 2015, when I started covering Beacon's city government and public schools for *The Current*. He was a fixture at school board meetings, which, with the district in upheaval over its revolving door of nine superintendents in as many years, were hourslong, wild affairs back then.

Frank addressed the board frequently, sometimes contentiously, urging its members to do something about the disparity between the district's mostly white teachers and the far more diverse student body. He was often the oldest person in the room, and one of the loudest.

This week I called his sister, Rhonda, who lives in Newark, New Jersey, to learn more about his passion for learning.

Frank "spent a lifetime in education," she told me, recalling her older brother's work as the assistant director of the Educational Opportunity Program at SUNY-Morrisville. Later in life, he managed educational programs for nonprofit agencies before ending his career as the director of the Newark Boys Chorus School, a tuition-free private school for elementary and middle school students. After retiring, he returned to Beacon to be closer to family.

Frank and Rhonda were the youngest of six children and the only ones to attend college. While their parents never finished high school, their mother, who was descended from slaves, instilled in the children the value of education, and Frank took it to heart.

"When I was a little girl, I used to hate him," Rhonda said of Frank, who was 12 years older. "But he stayed involved in my life and my education. He would find out what my grades were before my mother did, and he would be on the phone telling her if I'd dropped from an A to a B."

She said Frank was able to attend Temple University with government assistance after serving in the U.S. Army. Later on, he helped pay for his nieces and nephews to attend college, as well.

I interviewed Frank in mid-2016, when I was reporting on the lack of instructional and administrative diversity in Beacon's schools. Even at 73, his lifelong fervor for learning had not waned.

In 2010, he told me, he'd learned that only five of the district's 266 instructional staff (or 2 percent) were Black, Latino or Asian. There were about 3,000 students attending Beacon's schools at the time, and more than 53 percent of them were non-white.



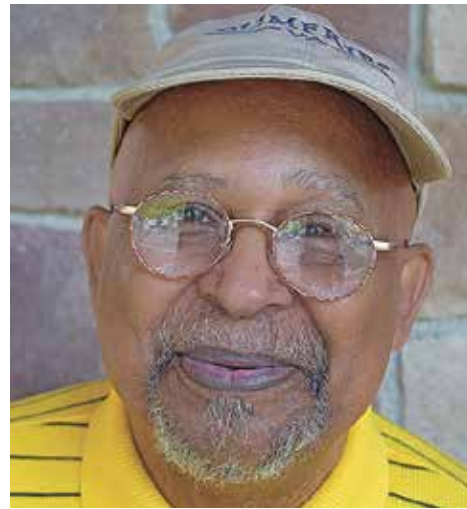
"This was a matter of educational equality," he said sharply.

Later that year, Frank was one of five candidates who submitted applications to fill two vacant seats on the Beacon school board, although he wasn't chosen. While the district has made some attempts to increase diversity in the years since, and the percentage of Black, Latino and Asian teachers did increase from 7.6 percent in 2010 to 11.7 percent in 2018 (the most recent figures available), I would bet Frank was disappointed in the pace of progress.

I also suspect everyone on the school board now would agree there's still plenty of work to be done.

The district took a small step in 2010 when it began advertising job openings on the Online Application System for Educators (OLAS), which reaches a larger audience of candidates than newspaper ads or the Dutchess County Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) that had previously been used as resources.

In 2017, after Matt Landahl was hired as superintendent, the district stopped allowing OLAS to filter the candidates it provided for job openings in Beacon by grade-point average and other factors, further widening the applicant pool. In addition, school officials began sending representatives to recruitment fairs geared toward Black and Latino teachers.



Frank Bugg

File photo by Michael Turton

It also began publishing data about diversity on its website, although the most recent posted is from the 2017-18 school year — even older than what the state provides. Beacon's statistics show that 87 percent of its 297 teachers and administrators were white that year, and of 320 teacher aides and support staff, 75 percent were white.

Meanwhile, the district's 2,723 students in 2019-20 were 55 percent non-white.

Why is this important? Melissa Thompson, who was on the school board from 2007 to 2016, the last three years as its president, was a frequent target of criticism from Frank. But she appreciated his message. "He believed

that kids need to see adults who look like them," she said. "He had very strict ideas of things we needed to change. We all agreed that he was right, but when you're working with a school board, change comes slowly."

Meredith Heuer, the current president of the board, met Frank when she was still a parent attending meetings of the grassroots Advocates for Beacon Schools. Between the lack of diversity and unstable leadership, "we connected the dots that maybe there was something in common between those two problems," Heuer said. "He really wanted to impact kids of color in a positive way. He saw a gap in the Beacon schools and kept fighting for it."

After Heuer, Antony Tseng and other newcomers were elected to the board, "he continued to hold us accountable and was not satisfied that the work was not done. He never stopped caring about public education. We were lucky to have him in our community," she said.

I didn't know Frank personally, only as a source. But after speaking with Rhonda, it was clear that his campaign for fair representation in Beacon's schools mirrored how he'd lived his entire life. "He tried to get excellence out of all of us," she told me. "Anything he was interested in, there was passion involved, believe me. He was very good and kind-hearted."

I'm thankful that I was around to see Frank in action — taking our elected officials to task for what he saw as a major shortcoming. I hope students and teachers today appreciate his contributions, too.

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Hunger *(from Page 1)*

down.

It is difficult to think of something that has killed 800,000 Americans and counting as having a silver lining. But in the early months of the pandemic, Americans were united in their desire to help those who were suffering.

“We’ve seen with COVID a lot of the underlying [societal] problems bubbling to the surface,” says Lahey. “Now we’re facing them and needing to do something about them.”

As the lines at food banks swelled, the way that the U.S. addresses hunger, or “food insecurity,” was reconsidered. What if it wasn’t so hard to get help? What if people were given fresh and healthy food instead of junk that contributes to chronic health issues?

For those already working in food insecurity, it was a validation of what they’ve been saying for years. But for those who were new to it, it was an eye-opener. What could survive the pandemic is a new approach to feeding the hungry.

“The need isn’t going away,” Farley says as we walk through the farm fields on a warm December day. “It’s been hiding in plain sight. But we are committed to this for the foreseeable future.”

Feeding the hungry is an agricultural act

From Route 9D, the fields appear to be bare. But up close, you can see the stubby cover crops that were planted in the fall, after the harvest.

These crops will help aerate the soil and restore nutrients until the winter fells them, Lahey explains. In the spring, they’ll be tilled into the ground to regenerate the soil. Instead of planting one cover crop, the farm is experimenting with mingling several of them. “There’s things that the plants are doing together that you might not take into account,” he explains. “But the sum is greater than the parts.”

In the panic of the pandemic’s early days, Maggie Cheney of Rock Steady Farm in Millerton saw other farmers attempting to fundraise, get food to those in their communities who were being impacted, and continue to farm, all at the same time. Behind the goodwill, “there was a lot of chaos and confusion,” she recalls.

Founded in 2015, Rock Steady is a for-profit farm with a 500-member Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. But by partnering with the nonprofit Watershed Center, it also can fundraise to address food insecurity and social justice issues. With the Glynwood Center for Regional Food and Farming in Philipstown and other local farmers, Cheney helped create what became the Food Sovereignty Fund.

The idea was to allow farmers to support their communities without having to become a nonprofit or spend more time fundraising than farming. The fund pays farmers to grow produce that is donated to food pantries and organizations that distribute it to those in need. In a similar initiative, Common Ground Farm in Wappingers receives a grant each year from Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley that allows it to donate half of its harvest. And last month, Gov. Kathy



Lukas Lahey and Stacey Farley of Davoren Farm

Photo by B. Cronin

Hochul enacted a law to cement into place Nourish New York, which had been created during the pandemic to pay farmers to grow food that is donated.

However, Common Ground Farm is a nonprofit, and Nourish New York is mostly designed for larger farms. The hope is the Food Sovereignty Fund will fill in the gaps to include smaller, for-profit farms.

The fund recruits farmers who identify with communities that have historically been discouraged from farming or disproportionately affected by hunger, such as those who are minorities, gay or female.

Select farmers are matched with a project in their community that addresses food insecurity and paid to grow food across the seasons. The farms also receive support and technical assistance from Glynwood.

“The long-term goal is that we’ll have regional hubs that can overlap and work together to move food effectively around when there are changes in the year or changes in production, instead of the centralized system that failed us during the pandemic,” explains Megan Larmer, who coordinates the program for Glynwood. “We want to get people to see this as a thing that farmers ought to be paid for, and eaters have a right to the food that they’re able to produce.

“If the people of Putnam and Dutchess counties got to choose who got to eat the beautiful food that our farmers grow, it wouldn’t only be the wealthiest among us.”

The fund also hopes to improve the nutritional value of the food that is distributed so it will “keep them well enough to participate in life fully,” Larmer says. “You look at the chronic-disease charts for the people who have to rely on emergency feeding systems over years, and for children, and they’re devastating.”

Much of the food supplied to emergency feeding programs across the country is donated by grocery manufacturers as tax write-offs, Larmer says. Creating that excess processed food is a waste, including of the petroleum it takes to deliver it. “If we can end the reliance on that donation chain, then it’s no longer good business [for corporations], and we give the advantage to the types of food that we actually want to see in the world,” she says.

Cheney says the pandemic brought the problem of food insecurity to light to the public. “People seeing lines at food pantries had a huge impact in terms of their generosity,” Cheney says. “People start to connect the dots, especially in polarized communities such as the Hudson Valley and New York City where there’s incredible wealth gaps and people don’t actually realize how food insecure many people are, including people living right next door.”

‘There’s a lot we can do now’

The cover crop has already started to die back at Common Ground Farm, but the red Russian kale is hanging on thanks to an unusually warm December.

Katie Speicher, who just finished her first season as farm manager, points out which fields in the crop rotation are slated to lay fallow next year in order to give the soil a chance to recover.

“We’ve got great soil for farming,” she says, “It’s all a sandy loam so it’s got excellent drainage, which is what you want, especially in a year like this.” Even with the torrential rains that slammed the Hudson Valley this past year, and being farmed productively for 20 years, the soil continues to provide.

When Common Ground started in 2001, it was a trailblazer. Along with the

Poughkeepsie Farm Project and the Phil-Lies Bridge Farm Project in Gardiner, it introduced the Hudson Valley to the idea of the CSA, which had originated in the early 1980s when Booker Whatley, a professor of agriculture at Tuskegee University, thought it could keep Black farmers from losing their livelihoods.

Whatley argued that small farms could be made more profitable if they offered memberships: People (“city folks, mostly,” he said at the time) would pay a fee at the beginning of a growing season in exchange for a share of the bounty.

Twenty years after Common Ground began, there are more than 110 CSAs in the Hudson Valley. But for Common Ground, it was a lot of work — work that took away from other areas of focus. The farm’s mission had been “to preserve the heritage of farming in the Hudson Valley,” explains Sember Weinman, its executive director. But over its first 10 years, Common Ground came to realize that what was becoming known as the “food movement” — a push for more local, sustainable agriculture — was not worth much if only the wealthy could afford it.

“There are two food systems,” says Larmer at Glynwood. “The one you can afford to pay for, and the one you just have to take if you’re facing any kind of challenges in your life. There needs to be just one food system.”

When Hurricane Irene hit in 2011, Common Ground was able to raise funds to recover. For-profit farms had it harder. That prompted Common Ground to reconsider its CSA, concluding it was “competing with the people we want to help: other farms.”

It began blazing a new trail. The CSA was sent to Obercreek Farm, a new, for-profit operation 4 miles down the road. “The CSA was taking up all of our resources,” said Weinman. “Pulling that out, we were like, ‘Wow, there’s a lot we can do now.’”

Thanks to the grant that allows them to donate half of their produce, the farm contributes to eight feeding programs. Working with Karen Pagano of the Beacon City School District, they’ve gotten their food into the cafeterias and run a “backpack program” in which students take bags full of food home on the weekends (see Page 11). “We have a lot of farm-to-school educational programming, but it’s meaningless unless kids actually have access to that food,” says Weinman.

The farm also helps run the Beacon Farmers Market and helped start the Newburgh Farmers Market, both of which accept food stamps. In fact, customers are allowed to double the value of their federal benefits when purchasing produce to make it affordable and change the perception, says Weinman, that “farmers markets are for wealthy white people.”

Nothing goes to waste. Common Ground secured another grant that allows it to purchase unsold produce from vendors at both markets each week to donate to emergency feeding programs.

Who benefits?

Whatever happens in the fight against food insecurity in the years ahead, it will
(Continued on Page 11)

(Continued from Page 10)

be tied to the fate of smaller local farms. At Common Ground Farm, Speicher believes that, one way or another, because of climate change and an increasingly unstable world, change is going to come.

“Whether we choose to do it now or it’s forced upon us, we are going to face drastic food systems change within the next 10 to 20 years,” she says during a 55-degree day in mid-December. “From a federal standpoint, a smart way to go about it would be to redirect all the farm subsidies for corn and soy and invest in nutritious food that stays domestic, and invest in people who want to farm.”

At Davoren Farm, Lahey points out that the average age of the American farmer is 57.5 years and getting older. Many farmers do not have heirs willing to take over, or a succession plan.

“It’s going to be the largest non-wartime transfer of land in human history,” he predicts. Work will need to be done to make sure farms remain farms, preferably small and under local control. He’d also like to see municipalities give more material and educational support so that people can take food production into their own hands.

“If people are able to have two chickens and a small backyard garden plot, you can feed any scrap food to the chickens, you get fresh eggs regularly. And if you have a community doing that you can create some serious resilience against any screw-ups in supply lines,” he says. “I know people who keep two chickens in their apartment. It’s a little kooky, but it can be done.”

At Rock Steady Farm, Cheney points out that both food insecurity and small-farm insecurity are problems with the same roots. Affordable housing is an often-overlooked factor when it comes to discussing farms, but both Rock Steady and Common Ground have had problems attracting staff who can afford to live in the Hudson Valley.

Lack of medical care is another problem across the board. “It’s such a hard thing for small farms who run on tiny margins to afford good health care for their employees,” Cheney says. “It’s something we’re striving for but we’re 6 years old and we still haven’t gotten there.” It can be especially challenging in rural areas that lack clinics.

Anyone seeking to address hunger will inevitably run into the fact that food insecurity exists, and continues to exist, because of policy failures, not personal failures. Cheney urges people not to fault others for their food choices or circumstances, but instead look at the bigger picture. Who benefits from healthy food being scarce and inaccessible? If healthy food remains out of the reach of many, then who gets to live long and healthy lives and who doesn’t?

“There needs to be less focus on individual responsibility and more on the system,” Cheney says. “That’s the most important piece to understanding this.”

See highlandscurrent.org for Parts 1, 2 and 3 of this series.

Eating at School

For many lower-income students in the Highlands who face food insecurity, school breakfast and lunch are vital.

About 37 percent public school students in grades K-12 in Dutchess and 25 percent of those in Putnam receive free or reduced-price school meals. To qualify, a family of four must earn less than \$34,450 annually for free meals and \$49,025 annually for reduced prices. To prevent shaming, state law does not allow districts to identify which students receive subsidized meals.

Do you see food insecurity issues with students?

There are subtle signs: children who are always first in line at breakfast; children taking as much as they are permitted each meal; children stuffing their backpacks with non-perishables; students showing up at the nurse’s office hungry at the start of the day. Common Ground Farm has worked on weekend distribution to some fragile families to help with non-school days. That is where the insecurities become more observable. We were thrilled that the USDA [U.S. Department of Agriculture] funded all school meals this year because it removed the stigma of receiving free meals. Participation has increased dramatically this year as a result.

How is this year different from last year?

Last year because of the shutdown we were distributing meals to homes, people were picking up meals and we were serving in the cafeterias [when students returned late in the year]. Our concern this year is the supply chain. When you’re serving 2,000 meals a day, you have to have the product in house significantly earlier than when you’re preparing it, and for our vendors to cancel orders at the last minute throws a curve.

How have you compensated for shortages?

In September we made a connection with a New York producer of beef and, because I had my beef order slashed from the government, I committed to buy thousands of pounds. We did a farm-to-school program in the second week in October featuring all New York products. Thinking outside the box has put us in a better position to support the local economy.

There are growers in the region that are learning to provide opportunities

The federal program that pays for these meals is the second-largest nutrition assistance program, behind food stamps. During the pandemic, the federal government has been paying for every school meal in an effort to reach more of the estimated 12 million students who are chronically hungry.

Karen Pagano is the food services director for the Beacon City School District. She spoke recently about her experiences with Zach Rodgers for his podcast *Beaconites*; her responses have been edited here for brevity.



with local products and therefore accepting of the menu changes [to freshly made meals].

Making food from scratch must take more labor.

It had to be done in baby steps. I couldn’t just change every menu every day and expect my staff to be able to manufacture that in the 45 minutes we serve students. So we put a cook at every school; a lot of schools will just have food service workers opening an oven. It’s been hard this year with the numbers of students who are participating, but we’re finding that the items we’re making from scratch are what they are enjoying.

How long do you think the supply crunch will last?

Food has a cycle. Poultry takes 12 weeks from the hatching to harvesting, followed by the process that takes the chicken to the table. When that supply chain is severed, it has a long-lasting impact, because agriculture grows in long stretches of time. Now we’ve missed a growing season, so we have to find something that can be either grown more rapidly or another location. You also rely on drivers; truckers are few and far between. Even if my vendors have a product, they might not get it to me for two weeks. If I see something that has availability in high quantities, we stuff our freezers.

Do you coordinate with other schools?

I work with a coalition of about 20 schools in the Hudson Valley. I’m the president. We try to get ahead of problems. We’re working on a platform to consolidate purchasing to make it more sustainable for vendors, suppliers and us. It’s a struggle, but it’s important because I don’t see this ending in the short term.

for us, as well, so I’m starting to plug into that. That’s the direction I have to go because our typical sources are just not there.

How have you deployed farm-to-school?

Common Ground provides produce and we partner with Land to Learn, which was previously Hudson Valley Seed. Those organizations approached me, knowing that a school district that serves 2,000 meals a day has a lot more purchasing power than a restaurant that serves 96. The idea was to engage the students and the kitchens and food service operations in sustaining Hudson Valley producers.

We had some students who had never seen anything grow in the ground. They had to first engage the students to be accepting of local products, and then we had to engage the staff to prepare local products and families to buy lunches. This has all been developing over the last five to six years. We’re hoping to continue with the thought in mind that our students have already been exposed to all this. They have seen the gardens. They are familiar

HOW CAN I GIVE (OR GET) HELP?

BEACON COMMUNITY SOUP KITCHEN

Operated by In Care Of Multi-Services at the Tabernacle of Christ Church, 483 Main St., the kitchen is open weekdays from 10:30 a.m. to noon for takeout. Call 845-728-8196. To donate, email incareof.beacon@gmail.com.

■ facebook.com/BeaconSoupKitchen

BEACON SENIOR CENTER

This Dutchess County program at 1 Forrestal Heights provides weekday lunch at noon; the suggested contribution is \$3. For delivery, call 845-486-2555.

COMMON GROUND FARM

Located in Wappingers Falls, the farm delivers more than 14,000 pounds of produce annually to 11 pantries, meal programs and free markets. It also doubles the value of SNAP benefits at the farmers markets in Beacon and Newburgh through its Greens-4Greens program.

■ bit.ly/greensforgreens

■ P.O. Box 148, Beacon, NY 12508

COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP FOR DUTCHESS COUNTY

Its Beacon pantry, at 10 Eliza St., is open by appointment on Fridays to pick up a three-day supply of groceries. Call 845-452-5104.

■ dutchesscap.org

■ 77 Cannon St., Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OF PUTNAM COUNTY

The CCE is launching a Seed to Supper program to teach residents on limited budgets how to grow their own produce.

■ putnam.cce.cornell.edu/donate

■ 1 Geneva Road, Brewster, NY 10509

DUTCHESS OUTREACH

This group has operated emergency food services in the county for nearly 50 years.

■ dutchessoutreach.org

■ 29 N. Hamilton St., Suite 220, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

FAREGROUND

Fareground provides weekly distributions and free markets in Beacon, as well as deliveries or pick-ups. It also stocks Tiny Food Pantries at the Beacon Recreation Center (23 W. Center St.); Binnacle Books (321 Main St.; the refrigerator is around back); Christ Church (60 Union St.); and the Howland Public Library (313 Main St.). Donations can be added to the pantries, but no expired food or opened packages.

■ fareground.org

■ P.O. Box 615, Beacon, NY 12508

FOOD BANK OF THE HUDSON VALLEY

This regional agency, founded in 1982, distributes food donations to 400 agencies in Dutchess, Putnam and four other counties.

■ foodbankofhudsonvalley.org

■ 195 Hudson St., Cornwall-on-Hudson, NY 12520

FRED'S PANTRY

Operated by Caring for the Hungry and Homeless of Peekskill, the pantry has seen an annual increase of about 5 percent in the number of people it serves since its founding in 2010. Hosted by St. Peter's Church at 137 N. Division St., it is open from 4 - 6 p.m. on Wednesday and from 9 - 11 a.m. Saturday.

■ chhop.org

■ CHHOP, 200 N. Water St., Peekskill, NY 10566

GLYNWOOD CENTER FOR REGIONAL FOOD AND FARMING

Glynwood runs a program called the Food Sovereignty Fund; this year, 17 farms led by minority, gay and/or women farmers grew food for 15 food-access programs in the Hudson Valley and New York City.

■ glynwood.org

■ P.O. Box 157, Cold Spring, NY 10516

MUTUAL AID BEACON

The community group provides free groceries each week at 9 a.m. Wednesday for vehicles at Memorial Park (enter by Ron's Ice Cream) or for pedestrians at the Beacon Recreation Center.

■ beaconmutualaid.com

OPEN ARMS FOOD PANTRY

This Fishkill ministry provides groceries at the Beacon Recreation Center from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturdays.

■ openarmschristianministries.org

■ 831 Main St., Fishkill, NY 12524

PHILIPSTOWN FOOD PANTRY

Operated by the First Presbyterian Church of Philipstown, the pantry is open Saturday from 9 to 10 a.m. It always needs fresh produce, canned soup, 1-2 pound bags of white rice, frozen vegetables, canned fruit, cereal, tuna, spaghetti sauce, peanut butter, jelly, coffee, tea and hot cocoa mix, toilet paper, tissues, paper towels, laundry detergent and household cleaning supplies. Donation drop-off is Friday from noon to 1 p.m. or Saturday from 8:30 to 10 a.m., or email ptfp2481f@gmail.com. Foodtown shoppers also can donate their points toward gift cards.

■ presbychurchcoldspring.org/food-pantry

■ 10 Academy St., Cold Spring, NY 10516

PHILIPSTOWN SENIOR CENTER

This Putnam County program at 6 Butterfield Road in Cold Spring provides weekday lunches for \$2.50, or \$3 delivered. See putnam-countyny.com/osr or call 845-808-1705.

A Fareground collection basket at the offices of Gatehouse Compass real estate in Beacon.

ROCK STEADY FARM

Last year the farm sent 4,340 boxes of vegetables to low-income families through its CSA Food Access Fund.

■ rocksteadyfarm.com/food-access

■ 41 Kaye Road, Millerton, NY 12546

SALVATION ARMY

The Salvation Army, at 372 Main St. in Beacon, provides grocery pickup between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., Tuesday through Friday. Call 845-831-1253.

■ salvationarmyusa.org/usn/cure-hunger

■ P.O. Box 494, Beacon, NY 12508

SECOND CHANCE FOODS

The nonprofit this year has redistributed more than 217,000 pounds of recovered groceries.

■ secondchancefoods.org

■ P.O. Box 93, Carmel, NY 10512

SPRINGFIELD BAPTIST CHURCH

The Beacon church provides groceries to seniors (ages 50 and older) at noon on the last Saturday of each month. Call 845-831-4093.

■ 8 Mattie Cooper Square, Beacon, NY 12508

ST. ANDREW & ST. LUKE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The church operates a food pantry in Beacon from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Saturdays. It is open for food donations from 10 to 11 a.m. on Fridays. Call 845-831-1369 or email saslebeacon@gmail.com.

■ beacon-episcopal.org/food-pantry

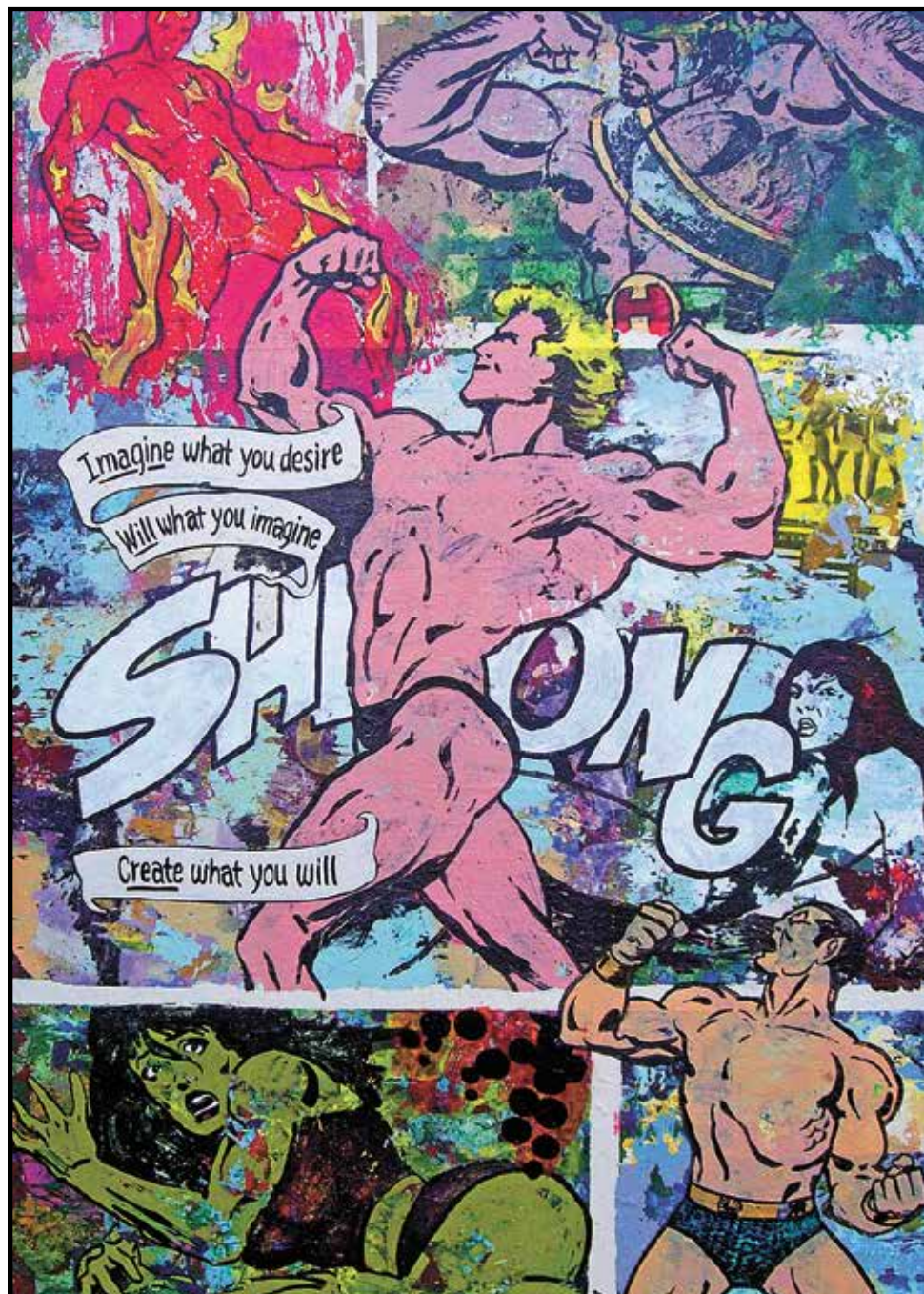
■ 15 South Ave., Beacon, NY 12508



The Calendar



"Big Bang"



"Create What You Will"

TRAINED IN THE COMICS

By Alison Rooney

Retired printer inspired by childhood reading

When Grey Zeien, the former proprietor of Grey Printing in Cold Spring, sold the business in 2020 and retired, it gave him the opportunity to spend a lot more time doing what engrosses him: making art.

It's not that Zeien had abandoned his art — he had a place at Bulldog Studios in Beacon for eight years and was a member of the Beacon Artists Union collective.

More recently, he says he has found a way to make art nearly every day, whether for 10 minutes or five hours, in a home studio. *The Comix*, an exhibit of his mixed-media paintings on panels, all related to comic books, will be on display at the Buster Levi Gallery in Cold Spring through Jan. 2.

Initially, Zeien says he thought he would miss running the printing business — which he sold to Kelly Guinan Preusser two days before New York went into pandemic lockdown — but he's found that's not the case.

"I'm glad to see it's being run so well as it is," he says. "Kelly went through a difficult

time, a period matched only by the Great Recession. In fact, this may be harder."

Each of the works in *The Comix* was made through the same process, in which Zeien co-opts images and paints on their surfaces before transferring the pictures onto a panel. It is "inspired by walls and kiosks seen in New York and overseas: Handbills are put up; the next person tears them down, but only partly; and the remainder gets plastered over into a fantastic surface of possibly hundreds of things. I've made many pictures that are pictures of the kiosks, and collaged them together, to make prints.

"I do this process again and again, layer and layer, and end up with a worked surface," he says. "They're layered-looking transfers, using adhesives and other things. Most are 10 to 20 layers deep. They take months, and I work on a few at a time because of paint-drying time."

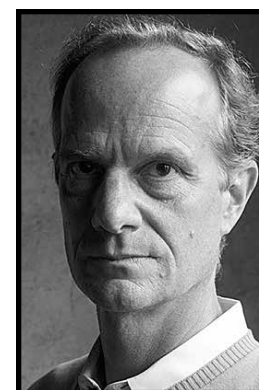
The pieces in the show all derive from comic books and strips, which Zeien says are the genesis of his interest in art.

"I learned to draw from comic books," he says. "I have early memories of copying and re-copying a particular Superman drawing. Marvel Comics opened up a new avenue for me, with their hyperrealistic bodies and contorted viewpoints."

His comic book collection is where he "learned about anatomy, spatial relationships, the whole idea of flattening. That was my art education until I went to college. I decided to show these pieces because I have not shown any of them in about 10 years."

Zeien attended Cornell, where he earned a bachelor of fine arts in printmaking. "That's what segued into the printing business," he explains. "And I was interested in printmaking because I was interested in the pulpy look of comics. I became a silk-screener and lithographer after 25 years in advertising as a graphic designer, running a company in New York City, where I lived until I moved to Cold Spring [in 1986]. I sold that business in 2008."

Zeien says he decided to move to the



Grey Zeien

Highlands after noticing, while pushing his son in a stroller on East 86th Street in Manhattan, that "he was totally glazed over by sensory input."

Cold Spring at the time "had a town center, which most towns didn't. The railroad station was at ground level, with no platform, and it still had wooden ties. I'd get on the 6:50 a.m. train with five or six other people; now there are 10 times as many. By the time I stopped commuting in 2007, it was a whole other world. It went from bucolic to exurbia. Some people think it's suburbia, but I'm not sure about that."

The Buster Levi Gallery, at 121 Main St., in Cold Spring, is open from noon to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, except Dec. 25 and 26. The Comix runs through Jan. 2. See busterlevigallery.com.

THE WEEK AHEAD

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

COMMUNITY

SAT 18

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 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.

SAT 18

Winter Wonderland

GARRISON

4 – 6 p.m. | 107 Glenclyffe
Philipstown Recreation Center
facebook.com/philipstownrecreation

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

SUN 19

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.

STAGE & SCREEN

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 his 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 18

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. *Cost: \$18 (\$14 seniors, \$9 ages 5 to 18, members and ages 5 and younger free)*

SAT 18

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 19. *Cost: \$10 (\$8 seniors, \$5 ages 6 to 18; members and under age 6 free)*

SAT 18

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. *Cost: \$25 (\$15 ages 5 to 18, members \$20/\$12, ages 5 and younger free)*

SUN 19

Beacon's Memory Keeper

BEACON

9 a.m. – Noon. Bob's Corner Store
790 Wolcott Ave.
beaconhistorical.org

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

KIDS & FAMILY

SAT 18

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. *Cost: \$12 (\$10 seniors, \$6 ages 5 to 18; members, health care workers, ages 5 and younger free)*

TUES 21

Holiday Slime

COLD SPRING

3:30 p.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040
butterfieldlibrary.org

For students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Registration required.

MUSIC

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



CHRISTMAS SERVICES

FRI 24

GARRISON

3 & 10 p.m.
St. Philip's Episcopal Church
1101 Route 9D
stphiliphighlands.org
A pageant will take place at 5 p.m.

COLD SPRING

4 & 8 p.m. Our Lady of Loretto
24 Fair St. | ladyofloretto.org

BEACON

4:30 & 6 p.m.
St. John the Evangelist
35 Willow St. | stjochim-stjohn.org
The 6 p.m. service will be in Spanish.

COLD SPRING

5 & 7 p.m. First Presbyterian
10 Academy St.
presbychurchcoldspring.org

COLD SPRING

5 p.m. United Methodist
216 Main St. | facebook.com/csshumc

GARRISON

6 p.m. St. Joseph's Chapel
74 Upper Station Road

COLD SPRING

6 p.m. FaithChurch.CC
245 Main St. | faithchurch.cc
ladyofloretto.org

COLD SPRING

6 p.m. St. Mary's Episcopal Church
1 Chestnut St.
stmaryscoldspring.org

BEACON

7 p.m. First Presbyterian
50 Liberty St.
beaconpresbychurch.org

BEACON

10 p.m. Salem Tabernacle
7 Delavan Ave.
saletabernacle.com

BEACON

Midnight. Church of St. Joachim
51 Leonard St. | stjochim-stjohn.org

SAT 25

BEACON

8 a.m. St. John the Evangelist
35 Willow St. | stjochim-stjohn.org

COLD SPRING

8:30 & 10 a.m. Our Lady of Loretto
24 Fair St. | ladyofloretto.org

GARRISON

10 a.m. St. Philip's Episcopal Church
1101 Route 9D
stphiliphighlands.org

BEACON

Noon. Church of St. Joachim
51 Leonard St. | stjochim-stjohn.org

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

SAT 18

Max Mayer

BEACON

8 – 11 p.m. Reserva Wine Bar
173 Main St. | reservabeacon.com

Mayer will perform blues and melodies from the classic American songbook.

SAT 18

Mimi Sun Longo and MSL

BEACON

8:30 p.m. Quinn's | 330 Main St.
facebook.com/QuinnsBeacon

The singer-songwriter and her

band will celebrate the release of *Fated/Faded* with two sets accompanied by visuals created by the Beacon AV Lab. *Cost: \$10*

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)*



Mount Gulian Holiday Tours, Dec. 18

(Continued on Page 15)



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)*

MON 20
Jazz Night
BEACON
8:30 p.m. Quinn's | 330 Main St.
facebook.com/QuinnsBeacon
Guitarist Nate Radley will celebrate the release of his latest album, *Puzzle People*, with Jay Anderson (bass) and Adam Nussbaum (drums). *Cost: \$15*
THURS 23
Holiday Dance Jam
BEACON
7 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
Beacon Dance Beat plays a wide

array of dance music, mostly from the 1960s to present with emphasis on soul, R&B, funk and all Latin rhythmic styles. DJ Rhoda Averbach and DJ Al Brandonisi will welcome requests. *Cost: \$10*
SUN 26
Open Mic Finals
BEACON
5 p.m. Towne Crier
379 Main St. | 845-855-1300
townecrier.com
In this invitational round, the best performers of the series will compete. *Cost: \$8 (members free)*

CIVIC
MON 20
City Council
BEACON
7 p.m. City Hall | 1 Municipal Plaza
845-838-5011 | beaconny.gov
MON 20
Short-Term Rentals Public Hearing
NELSONVILLE
7 p.m. Village Hall
258 Main St. | 845-265-2500
nelsonvilleny.gov

MON 20
Village Board
NELSONVILLE
7:30 p.m. Village Hall
258 Main St. | 845-265-2500
nelsonvilleny.gov
TUES 21
School Board
COLD SPRING
7 p.m. Haldane
15 Craigsides Drive | 845-265-9254
haldaneschool.org

Annette Solakoglu

FACES | GRACES

photographs

Open through January 9, 2022



Annette Solakoglu pays homage to twelve longtime Philipstown, NY residents by sharing their inspirational visions through intimate portrait photography and storytelling. The personal accounts accompanying each portrait were distilled from extensive interviews conducted by writer and collaborator Celia Barbour.

Henry Lewis Kingsley, 2021,
Cold Spring, NY
Archival Pigment Print
17" x 17"



FACES | GRACES
photographs by Annette Solakoglu
interviews by Celia Barbour
Learn more about the lives and accomplishments of the Philipstown elders with this exhibition catalog. Features all twelve portraits in the exhibition, along with fascinating stories and anecdotes.
Available for purchase now at Garrison Art Center!

Hudson Beach Glass

Fine art gallery located on second floor

ORNAMENTS

Over two dozen designs available



162 Main Street, Beacon, NY 12508 845-440-0068
www.hudsonbeachglass.com Open til 8pm on Friday

The Galleries at Garrison Art Center
23 Garrison's Landing, Garrison, NY
Open Tuesday thru Sunday, 10am–5pm

Garrison Art Center
garrisonartcenter.org 845-424-3960

AROUND TOWN



◀ **ELKS DONATIONS** — The Mid-Hudson District Elks No. 6180 donated 30 turkeys and 12 hams last month to the Castle Point VA food pantry for Thanksgiving. The pantry serves about 120 families in the Hudson Valley. Shown are Army vet Rich Brilla, Army vet Jim Mullen and Carl Oken of the Elks.

Photo provided



▲ **LANTERN WALK** — Jackie Grant led a Tinkergarten Lantern Walk at the Desmond-Fish Public Library in Garrison on Dec. 10 to celebrate early twilight and the beginning of winter. Carrying lanterns made by Chris Nowak, children and their parents walked at dusk on a new library path.

Photo by Ross Corsair



◀ **STOCKING WINNERS** — For the 41st consecutive year, firefighters in Beacon and Glenham presented four elementary school students with 5-foot holiday stockings made by Peg Badami and filled with gifts, including a smoke detector. Evan Pantojas, Natalia Garcia, Luis Jimenez Bueso and Sophia Eldermire are shown with Bob Simmonds of the Lewis Tompkins Hose Co.

Photo provided

REAL ESTATE MARKET

HOME SALES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD IN THE LAST 30 DAYS

BEACON

PROPERTIES	BEDS	BATHS	SQ FT	SOLD!
1258 North Ave.	4	3/0	2,024	\$300,000
94 Catherine St.	3	1/0	1,254	\$315,000
28 S. Brett St.	3	1/0	1,280	\$325,000
40 Lafayette Ave.	2	1/0	1,008	\$370,000
8 Beskin Pl.	3	1/0	1,344	\$385,000
19 Dinan St.	3	1/1	1,326	\$420,000
50 Wesley Ave.	3	2/1	1,800	\$530,000
21 Exeter Cir.	4	3/1	3,385	\$715,000
3 Archer Ave.	3	2/1	2,218	\$749,320

PHILIPSTOWN

PROPERTIES	BEDS	BATHS	SQ FT	SOLD!
81 Barrett Pond Rd.	3	1/1	1,615	\$410,000
12 Old Oaks Rd.	3	2/1	2,160	\$569,000
947 East Mountain Rd. S.	3	3/0	2,750	\$725,000



We are so thankful to be a part of this community.



To help fight food insecurity in the Hudson Valley we are collecting donations for local charity Fareground. Please drop off non-perishable food items at our office during business hours (Mon-Fri 9-5, Sat-Sun 9-4) or donate online via the QR code.

//////////



THE
GATE HOUSE
TEAM

COMPASS

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845.831.9550 | 490 Main Street, Beacon | [@gatehousecompass](https://www.gatehousecompass.com) | [gatehousecompass.com](https://www.gatehousecompass.com)

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Small, Good Things

A Kernel of Comfort

By Joe Dizney

For such a simple dish, pozole (or posole) is surprisingly exotic to many.



Admittedly, the lexicon of the dish is confusing:

Pozole can refer both to the recipe — a hearty soup/stew of deep Mexican heritage — but also to a processed grain itself called pozole and Anglicized to hominy, confusing things further with its echoes of the rural American South.

You may have noticed a qualifier there — processed — for as venerable as pozole's primary native ingredient is, the specific method of its manufacture — nixtamalization — dates to 1200 to 1500 B.C., making pozole an example of one of the earliest processed human comestibles.

Nixtamalization involves soaking and boiling dried flint corn — not sweet corn — in an alkaline solution (limewater or the like) and drying it again, creating nixtamal, the original Aztec-Mexican name for pozole.

The process accomplishes a couple of propitious functions. First, it loosens the hull and softens the kernels, making the final product easier to grind into masa for use in breads and other preparations (tamales, tortillas). More important, the process removes fungal toxins that could cause spoilage, and improves the quality of nutrients (primarily niacin), making it easier for the human body to process. In the early 20th century, non-nixtamalized corn caused many deaths in the U.S. before the niacin connection was discovered by studying the pre-Columbian source.

What's so special about pozole, the dish? For one, it is comfort food of the first order and a cause for celebration. (It appears on Christmas and New Year's tables throughout Mesoamerica.) The basis and namesake of the stew are whole cooked kernels of hominy that, through slow simmering, "bloom" or blossom into tender but substantial morsels redolent of the corn they began as.

Most pozole recipes are labor-intensive, meat-based red chile sauces, but this holiday version is kinder and gentler: green sauce (made from tomatillos, green chilies, ground roasted pepitas, aka pumpkin seeds) is just as traditional, and this one features mushrooms in place of meat.

Please note: Yes, canned pozole is "a thing," but it's not a thing you want to subscribe to. If you're going to do this, it's worth working from scratch. Look for quality raw materials; I can't make a better recommendation than Rancho Gordo's product, found online.

Cook the grain a day or two before to save time. Refrigerate the corn in its cooking liquid. The sauce and final dish come together in a snap and make for almost better leftovers. You can take comfort in that.



Pozole Verde con Hongos (Green Pozole with Mushrooms)

Adapted from Rancho Gordo

Serves 6

2 large white or red onions, peeled, ½ onion chopped; the remainder cut into thick slices

1 cup dried prepared hominy cooked to make 3 to 4 cups (pozole)

4 garlic cloves, peeled

1½ pound tomatillos, husks removed

½ cup toasted hulled pumpkin seeds (pepitas), ground fine

4 to 6 cloves, crushed

2 to 4 jalapenos en escabeche, drained, capped, split and seeded

1 cup coarsely chopped cilantro (stems OK)

2 teaspoons dried Mexican oregano (substitute marjoram or verbena)

5 to 6 cups vegetable broth (or broth prepared from dried mushrooms — porcini suggested)

2 sticks Mexican (or Ceylon) cinnamon

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 to 5 cups (about 1½ pounds) white button mushrooms

2 tablespoons olive oil

GARNISHES:

Toasted pepitas

Red onion, finely chopped

Persian or Key lime quarters

Cleaned cilantro leaves

Optional: shredded napa cabbage, sliced radishes, avocado, chicharrones, crumbled queso blanco or other cheese, sour cream, tortillas

1. Cook the hominy: In a large pot, add hominy and enough cold water to cover by 2 inches. Cover and set aside to soak for at least 6 to 8 hours and up to 10. Transfer the pot to the stove; add the chopped onion and more water as needed to cover by 2 inches. Bring the mixture to a boil over high heat; cook for 10 minutes and then lower heat to medium-low. Simmer until the kernels are tender and split open (blossom) with no chalkiness, 2 to 3 hours. (Check occasionally, adding more water as needed to keep covered by about 1 inch.) When done, drain the hominy on a strainer over a bowl. Set aside the hominy and reserve 2 cups of the cooking liquid. (While the corn cooks, roast the whole mushrooms in a 350-degree oven for 20 to 25 minutes to concentrate the flavor. Let cool, slice into large chunks and reserve.)

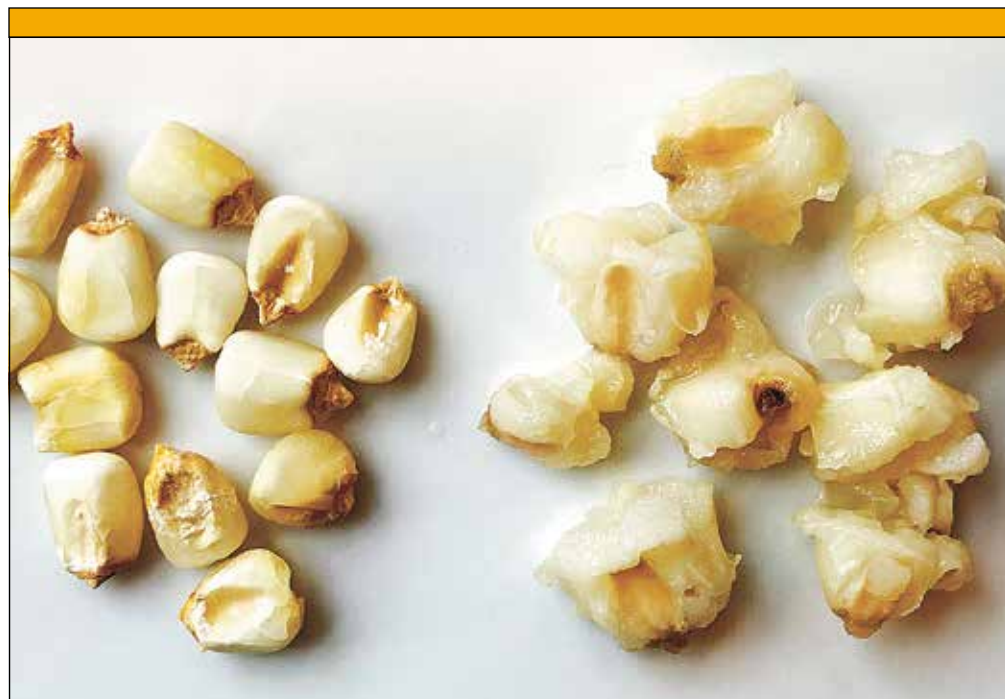
2. For the green sauce: In a dry skillet over medium heat, pan-roast onions, garlic, and tomatillos in a single layer, turning regularly until charred and soft (about 15 to 20 minutes). Transfer vegetables to a bowl to cool.

3. In a food processor/blender (working in batches) process the vegetables and accumulated juices, cilantro, oregano and 2 cups reserved hominy-cooking liquid for the blades to move. Scrape down the sides as needed until everything is pureed.

4. Warm the oil in a stockpot over medium heat. Add pureed vegetables and adjust heat to maintain a simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally, for about 10 minutes. Stir in ground pumpkin seeds and cook, stirring, for another 10 minutes. Add 2 cups of broth to achieve a thick soup-like consistency. Add the cinnamon sticks; keep sauce at a low simmer while you prepare the mushrooms.

6. In a medium bowl, toss the roasted mushrooms, olive oil and a bit of salt. In a medium skillet over high heat, cook the mushrooms until just browned, about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat to medium; cook for 5 minutes more. Remove from heat.

7. Add cooked hominy to the simmering puree. Cook 10 to 15 minutes; add mushrooms, adjust seasoning and return to a simmer; thin with additional broth if necessary. To serve, ladle into bowls and serve with preferred garnishes.



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Living Green

Batten Down the Hatches

By Krystal Ford

Editor's Note: In this issue, we launch a monthly column about what people can do practically to reduce their carbon footprints in the effort to slow climate change, as well as to reduce pollution. Krystal Ford is a resident of Garrison and the coordinator for the Philipstown Climate Smart Community program.

My house isn't old — it was built in 1984 — but its drafts were strong. Over the first five winters, I never felt warm, even with the thermostat turned up. When we got the oil bill, it added insult to injury.



Unfortunately, many of us suffer from the same problem: under-insulated homes that are too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter.

I often hear from people who are looking to do the right thing for the environment, and to save money, want to put solar panels on their roof. And while I support solar as an alternative energy, I wouldn't start there. I would end there.

The first step to a more energy-efficient home is not sexy or sleek: it is identifying where you are losing energy and weatherizing. And it can make a difference in your pocketbook and the community: How we heat our homes and businesses accounts for the second-highest source of carbon emissions in Philipstown. The first is on-road transportation.

Four years ago, we decided to order a home energy audit through a federal program called Healthy Homes Energy and Consulting. I found them through the state website listing home energy auditors (nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Energy-Audit-Programs). A contractor came out and did what is known as a blower-door test (he sealed everything off, then ran a fan out one door to locate air leaks); used an infrared camera to locate heat loss; checked the air quality; and presented us with a report with recommendations.

(Not every contractor can do the blower-door test, and it wasn't part of the free audit. We spent \$250 to have it done, but we thought it was worth it for the extra information.)

With our report in hand we decided the best money-for-value was insulating the attic, spray foaming the crawl space and sealing up cracks.

It worked. We felt much more comfortable. We didn't feel the drafts like we used to and the temperature held more evenly. It also reduced our oil bill by about a third.

I will be the first to admit, it can seem overwhelming. It helps to have someone to walk you through it. A great resource called Mid-Hudson Energy Choices provides free help to residents and businesses. I asked a few questions recently of Collin Adkins, one of their community energy advisers.

Is there a hierarchy of doing stuff in the house? Big ticket item-wise?

Basic energy improvements to the building envelope, like insulation and air-sealing, are often overlooked but are still to this day some of the best bang for your buck. Once your home is consuming less energy, big-ticket items like a heat pump or solar panels become a much savvier investment. The 1-2-3 punch to a cleaner, greener, cozier home is: 1) energy efficiency upgrades; 2) electrify your heating and cooling with air- or ground-source heat pumps; 3) generate your own clean energy with solar photovoltaic panels.

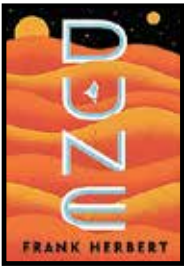
Some of the recommended upgrades sound expensive. Is there financing?

Lower-income homeowners and renters can receive \$5,000 to \$10,000 in home energy upgrades through the state. Or there is low-cost financing available for a range of upgrades, including envelope improvements, heat pumps and solar panels. (See nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Residential-Financing-Options.)

What sort of feedback do you get from people who do this?

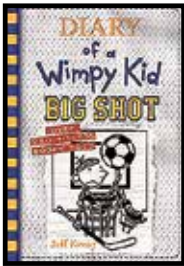
The people who invest in upgrades are often surprised at all the other benefits besides the dollar and energy savings. It's not uncommon to hear that they feel more comfortable, healthier, more optimistic. In that way, upgrades can be a gateway to some truly remarkable transformations.

Residents of Putnam and Dutchess counties can reach a community energy adviser at MidHudsonEnergyChoices.org or by calling 845-677-8223.



Local Bestsellers

Based on combined hardcover and paperback sales reported for October and November by Binnacle Books, 321 Main St., in Beacon, and Split Rock Books, 97 Main St., in Cold Spring.



	Position	last month	TITLE	AUTHOR
ADULT	1	-	Dune	Frank Herbert
	2	1	Beautiful World, Where Are You	Sally Rooney
	3	-	Harlem Shuffle	Colson Whitehead
	4	3	Crying in H Mart	Michelle Zauner
	4	-	The 1619 Project	Nikole Hannah-Jones
CHILDREN	5	-	The Lincoln Highway	Amor Towles
	1	-	Big Shot (Diary of a Wimpy Kid 16)	Jeff Kinney
	2	-	Friends Forever	Shannon Hale
	3	-	Aaron Slater, Illustrator (The Questioners)	Andrea Beaty
	4	-	Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story	Kevin Noble Maillard
	5	-	Stumpkin	Lucy Ruth Cummins
	5	-	The Color Monster: A Pop-Up Book of Feelings	Anna Llenas

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Winter Strings (and Drums)

*Gwen Laster launches
music programs*

By Alison Rooney

Gwen Laster, the Beacon-based violinist, composer and educator, is expanding her Creative Strings program this winter to include a range of after-school classes led by teaching artists.

Half of the 12-week sessions will take place at the Howland Cultural Center in Beacon and half at The Chapel Restoration in Cold Spring. They begin Jan. 3.

As always, there will be strings. “There are no strings programs at Haldane or the Beacon public schools,” Laster notes. “If we can muster up a bigger string voice in this area of the Hudson Valley, we can put together an ensemble, an opportunity for more string players to come together.”

Laster says she benefited from those opportunities while growing up in Detroit.

“I had lessons twice a week and learned to play piano by ear,” she recalls. “My middle school and high school were on the same campus, so there was continuity. My high school teacher was a forward-thinking violist, so along with traditional training, he made up string arrangements and had the strings section stand up and take



Gwen Laster conducts the Creative Strings Improvisers Orchestra.

Photos provided

solos. He also introduced us to electric violins, some in different colors, to appeal to us.

“My teacher was responsible for sending me to my first music camp, which was at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. I had grown up in a totally Black environment, with Afro-centric teachers encouraging us. At the camp, I was surprised to see all these white people in the orchestra. I found they played a lot more fluently because they had had private lessons.



Laster

“From there, I studied on and off, taking lessons after school when my parents could afford it. My teacher was Joe Striplin, who was the first Black musician in the Detroit Symphony. I knew I needed the technical training in order to connect with the music I wanted to play, and that I needed to really learn how to improvise. It was exciting for me to learn the inside of music.

“Eventually, after learning core concepts, you were given the responsibility of being imaginative. This was intriguing to me. I got out all sorts of recordings, learned them note-for-note, transcribed solo work and, through that, learned what I wanted to do.”

Eventually, Laster earned two music degrees from the University of Michigan. She moved to New York City, where she performed with artists in many genres, including Anthony Braxton, Andrea Bocelli, Nona Hendryx and Mark Anthony. She also accompanied Shakira at President Barack Obama’s Neighborhood Ball.

As well as performing at venues from jazz clubs to Broadway orchestra pits, Laster began leading ensembles and orchestrating and composing string arrangements. She has received awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, among other entities.

Laster’s most ambitious project has been founding and running the Creative Strings Improvisers Orchestra (CSIO).

To train the latest group of young musicians, CSIO will offer Ready, Set Up, Sound, a beginner violin group class focusing on traditional skills led by Eva Gerrard, who teaches at the School for Strings. Gerrard completed her bachelor and master of music degrees at The Juilliard School and her doctoral studies at the CUNY Graduate Center; she also has Suzuki training. The hourlong class will take place on Mondays at 4:30 p.m.

For intermediate players, there’s the Laster-taught Stand Up, Take a Solo on Mondays at 6:30 p.m.

Those interested in the cello — combined with singing — are invited to Cello + Song, a beginning group class taught by Patricia Santos, who is a “vocellist” and songwriter. This class will take place on Mondays, from 5 to 6 p.m.

“The younger you are, like in any skill set, the more open and organic you are,” Laster says of her students. “Young players can learn a few notes and they can learn how to jumble notes around and make little



J. Why, teaching drums

melodies. If you’re an improviser, you’re a composer, and vice versa.”

Laster says she also loves “the ‘rhythm-first’ aspect of music — people making their own instruments.” In Universal Rhythms, taught by J. Why, students will get an introduction to frame drumming. Why studied jazz, classical, electronic and experimental music at the California Institute of the Arts, Berklee College of Music and San Francisco State University. He’s also a bass clarinetist. This group class will take place on Mondays at 5:30 p.m.

In addition, Laster’s husband, and Creative Strings co-founder, Damon Banks, will offer private instruction on electric and upright bass. “He’s a history buff of global music, with expertise in North African music, the *gnawa* music of Morocco, a vast amount of knowledge and experience,” says Laster of her spouse, who is a member of the board of Highlands Current Inc., which publishes this newspaper.

Laster believes that music is an essential part of every child’s educational development. “We all know how music offers cross-curriculum advantages, but beyond that, it teaches children how to listen, how to communicate and how to recognize that there are different cultures, histories, genres and people you don’t learn about,” she says. “I see this uplifting their social skills, their self-esteem, their life skills. I don’t go in with the premise of ‘I’m going to make someone a virtuoso.’ All of this will make you a more-informed young global citizen. Music chooses you. Damon and I created the platform for it to thrive, but it chooses you.”

For more information or to reserve a spot in a class, email takeasolo2020@gmail.com.

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150 Years Ago (December 1871)

After colliding with a coal barge during a gale on the Hudson, the Ebenezer Pennock listed forward and sent several hundred barrels from its deck into the river. The crew abandoned ship and the vessel drifted to the shore at Garrison's Landing, where it was secured with a line by Charles Bross. The next morning Bross went to Cold Spring to consult a lawyer about whether the cargo — including 2,000 bushels of potatoes — qualified as jetsam or flotsam and could be claimed. According to *The Cold Spring Recorder*, he was advised that wrecks belonged to the sheriff or coroner. The latter, S.B. Truesdell, proceeded to Garrison's. A Wall Street firm that had insured the cargo sent an agent who paid Bross \$25 for securing the ship and also heard an offer of 5 cents per bushel from Hiram Vantassell and John Vanvoorhis for the potatoes, which were in the forward part of the boat and mostly under water. No deal was reached, but over the next two nights, about 185 bushels disappeared. With ebb tide, the boat was floated to Cold Spring where the insurers began sorting the spuds for auction.

During the same gale, 5,000 joists blew off the deck of the B.W. Bender and floated to shore. All but 2,000 quickly disappeared, presumably for firewood.

After three weeks of cold weather, George Ferris was able to harvest 8-inch-thick blocks of ice from his pond to store for the summer.

While the family of Seymour Worden, who lived 6 miles east of the village, was at church, a burglar stole about 40 pounds of butter and 20 cans of fruit from the cellar. The home of Moses Williams was searched and, while no contraband was found, the constable noted that each of the children wore India-rubber rings on their fingers of the type placed around the neck of cans of fruit.

On Dec. 21, it was minus 4 degrees at 8 a.m. and zero degrees at 8 p.m. The Hudson was frozen from Constitution Island north

Looking Back in Philipstown

By Chip Rowe



Harry Silleck (right) with a team of oxen during the 1920s

Photo provided

New Book Chronicles Putnam Valley History

A new book by historians Sallie and Wylie Sypher examines the history of Putnam Valley from its beginnings through this year.

Putnam Valley: A Look Back chronicles “the defrauding of the Wappingers, the treason of Beverley Robinson, the hard winter in the Revolutionary War encampments, Putnam Valley’s separation from Philipstown and its DIY early town government.

“Neither the town’s farmland nor its brief iron mining boom could prevent the exodus of more than 60 percent of the town’s population,” the Syphers write. The book also covers the “remarkable reign of Harry Silleck

for nearly half a century and how the surprisingly efficient Democratic organization corralled the votes of the newest residents, the summer people.”

The authors, who both have doctorates in history from Cornell University, also revisit more recent anti-tax movements, school district wars and a proposed rerouting of the Taconic State Parkway. Wylie is a retired history professor and Sallie is the former town supervisor and county historian.

The book is \$25, and all proceeds benefit the Putnam County Historian’s Office and the Putnam Valley Historical Society. To order, call 845-808-1420 or email historian@putnamcountyny.gov.

as far as could be seen.

A black Newfoundland owned by John Myers was sent “higher than a kite” by the Chicago Express train — a crowd rushed to the scene, thinking a man had been struck, only to find the dog, sitting with a bloody mouth and snout. Myers put the animal in a wheelbarrow to find the veterinarian.

Emerson Foster caught a wild goose that had eluded him for two weeks on Constitution Island. He thought he would have it tamed by summer.

It was reported that after a “zealous” Methodist prayer meeting at his home, tavern owner Henry Whaley posted a sign on Monday morning: “No more intoxicating liquors will be sold over this counter.”

Hundreds of boys were seen coasting on sleighs down the hill between Church and High streets that ended in the vacant lot behind the old Methodist Church.

A beveled wheel that conveyed power to the engine of the lathes and planes at the West Point Foundry broke, giving the workers an unexpected day off.

The editor of *The Recorder*, in the last issue of the year, gave thanks that “no fatal epidemic has marked the year, although the remitting fevers which have prevailed have been painful and expensive to many laboring men.” [There was no such thing as sick leave.]

Mrs. J. Harvey Briggs had a narrow escape while walking beside the railroad tracks when the 9:58 clipped her and threw her into the street. She suffered only minor injuries.

In a pigeon shoot on Christmas Day, William H. Ladue killed 15 birds, followed by Charles Ferris (13), Levi Ladue (12) and William A. Ladue (11).

A Christmas tree provided for the Episcopal Sunday school was set up at Town Hall, where a crowd gathered to hear carols.

A fence was erected on the hill from the District 3 schoolhouse to the railroad tracks after goats nearly destroyed the trees.

The wife of one of two men who had

(Continued on Page 22)



GARRISON STATION, IN LIVING COLOR — Anamar & Corp, a photo restoration firm in Spain, last month colorized an 1899 photo of the former depot. The telegraph operator is sitting second from left in the chair with glass insulators on the front legs. The building now houses Antipodean Books, Maps & Prints. For more colorized shots from history, see facebook.com/anamarcorporate.



Keep Cats Indoors

Domestic cats make wonderful companions and pets, but when allowed to roam outside, they are the greatest human-caused source of mortality to birds.

Cats now function as introduced predators in many different habitats across the world. When outside, cats are invasive species that kill birds, reptiles, and other wildlife. Because most cats—whether feral or owned by humans—receive food from people, they also exist in much higher concentrations than wild felines do. But despite being fed, they kill wild birds and other animals by instinct.

There are now over 100 million free-roaming cats in the United States; they kill approximately 2.4 billion birds every year in the U.S. alone, making them the single greatest source of human-caused mortality for birds.

Free-roaming cats also spread diseases such as Rabies, Toxoplasmosis, and Feline Leukemia Virus, and face many more threats like vehicles and predators. Living outdoors shortens a cat's lifespan to just 2-5 years, whereas indoor cats can live to be 17 and beyond.

The easiest way you can help prevent needless bird deaths and keep you and your pet safe is by keeping your cat indoors.

* Paid for by a concerned citizen

Looking Back (from Page PB)

been drinking at the Cold Spring House and other West End saloons appeared with a weapon to compel him to return home.

The Philipstown Lodge of Masons presented its retiring master, Andrew Mell-ravy, with an engraved gold watch.

125 Years Ago (December 1896)

The Rev. Alexander Barron of Highland Falls gave a reading at the Men's Club of the Presbyterian Church from the works of recent Scottish writers, including Ian Maclaren and J.M. Barrie.

Mr. Osborn paid to have a sidewalk laid in front the Reading Room at Depot Square in Garrison.

The Recorder offered this advice on licking postage stamps: "Aside from the disease germ theory of abstaining from this practice, it certainly is not a cleanly habit, nor is it a necessary solution. It is a good deal easier and much safer to lick the envelope or, what is better, moisten the corner of it with the finger tips and water, and then apply the stamp."

The Board of Visitors at West Point recommended that 88 more cadets be admitted, although *The Recorder* noted that "the country is not suffering for West Point graduates. It has rather more now than it knows what to do with."

The Recorder noted that "scientific people" were proposing that the calendar be changed in January 1900 to a 13-month year with 28-day months.

The Cold Spring Hose Co. No. 1, nearing the end of its first year in operation, voted to purchase 200 more feet of hose.

The Putnam County Board of Supervisors paid its annual visit to the poorhouse for a dinner served by the keeper and his wife.

The Cold Spring Village Board granted William H. Ladue a franchise to build, within one year, an electric light plant.

The Recorder reported that "nose parties" was a fad with young people. The girls put their noses through slits in a curtain and the boys selected.

Henry Haldane Hustis, a native of the North Highlands who was the oldest lawyer in Fishkill, died at age 68.

Amos Mosher, 45, who was employed by Perry & Reilley, the grocers, was walking home for lunch when he came to the railroad crossing on Main Street. The gates were down but he began to cross despite a warning from Frank Early, the gate tender. Mosher paused and looked down the track, then kept going, but on his last step the engine caught and dragged him 60 feet. He was taken to the station but died 20 minutes later.

The West Point Foundry received a large contract to manufacture Howell disappearing gun carriages.

The Cold Spring Hose Co. No. 1 adopted an alarm system, dividing the village into four districts: (1) north of Main and west of Morris; (2) north of Main and east of Morris; (3) south of Main and west of Chestnut; and (4) south of Main and east of Chestnut. In case of fire, the signal for each district would be a series of taps on the church bell indicating the district.

The Haldane debating club addressed

the question: "Resolved: That every foreign immigrant should pay to the United States \$100 and each should be able to read and write" and announced the topic for January: "That solitary confinement is an effective punishment."

100 Years Ago (December 1921)

Brigadier Gen. Douglas MacArthur, superintendent of West Point, asked for an increase of the cadet corps from 1,334 to 2,500 men.

The Cold Spring Village Board voted to authorize the chairman of the sewer committee to cover the manholes with wire mesh to keep sticks out.

Mr. and Mrs. Howard Robinson purchased the Helen Wilson property that adjoined the Highlands Country Club and was once the home of the writer Alice Duer Miller. [She was best known for her feminist poetry.]

A Philipstown chapter of the Eastern Star was organized. About 200 people attended the initiation ceremony, including delegations from Poughkeepsie, Beacon, Peekskill, Croton and Ossining.

Oscar Blom of Nelsonville offered Christmas trees for 25 or 35 cents each.

The Loretto Council of the Knights of Columbus announced a January euchre tournament pitting its married members against the single ones.

Fifteen patients were convalescing at Loretto Rest on Chestnut Street. The front porch had been enclosed in glass and a steam heater installed.

The Bear Mountain Commission agreed to run a ferry between its dock and Manitou.

Students at Haldane High School launched a newspaper called *The Haldane Spirit*.

75 Years Ago (December 1946)

A 38-year-old Beacon man was killed on Route 9D just north of Cold Spring when his 1941 sedan, speeding south at 70 mph to 80 mph, rolled several times, catapulting him 125 feet. He was survived by his wife and 13-year-old son.

Two cars going in opposite directions sideswiped on a curve on Route 9D south of Garrison, injuring three young people.

50 Years Ago (December 1971)

The Garrison Depot Theater presented three one-act plays: Lady Gregory's *The Rising of the Moon*; Noel Coward's *Come into the Garden, Maud*; and Chekhov's *The Boor*.

Howard Zeliph of Main Street in Nelsonville celebrated his 95th birthday on Christmas Day. Born in Philipstown in 1876, he was a retired mail carrier, having served 41 years using a horse and wagon and then a Model T Ford. He had 22 great-grandchildren and four great-great-grandchildren.

Because of flood damage caused by Storm Doria, the Nelsonville Village Board applied for assistance under the Federal Disaster Act.

Lone Star Properties of Greenwich, Connecticut, presented the Nelsonville Village Board with a deed to 4 acres of land on Secor Street for a proposed park.

It was announced that because of redistricting, the 94th Assembly district would change on Jan. 1, 1973. It would include Putnam

(Continued on Page 23)



Massage and Locker Room adjoining Steam Bath and Showers, at Brown's Physical Training Farm, Garrison-on-the-Hudson, N. Y.

The massage and locker room at Brown's Physical Training Farm

Last Putt

After 61 years, The Garrison Golf Club closed Nov. 28 following a final, snow-swept member tournament organized by pro Joe Spivak. Before it opened for golf around 1960, the site was home to Bill Brown's Physical Training Farm, a resort for men that opened in 1915. Raymond O'Rourke III collected these and other photos of the Training Farm from The Garrison, the Putnam History Museum and the Brown family for a 2012 school project. For more, see highlandscurrent.org. Chris Davis, who owns the golf course, has donated the land to the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival and the Hudson Highlands Land Trust.



Bill Brown

(Continued from Page 22)

County; Pawling and Dover in Dutchess; and Peekskill and Cortlandt in Westchester. It no longer would include Beacon. Putnam also moved from a state Senate district represented by a Peekskill Republican to one represented by a Poughkeepsie Republican.

A 59-year-old Cold Spring man was killed and three members of his family injured in a five-car collision on the Route 100 overpass in Briarcliff Manor.

John Nash Jr., of Walden, the son of Mr. and Mrs. John Nash of East Mountain Road South, won a color TV in a raffle organized

by the Philipstown Civic Association.

25 Years Ago (December 1996)

The wooden bridge on Snake Hill Road reopened after being closed for 10 months following heavy rains in January. At \$800,000, it was the most expensive bridge ever built by the Putnam County Highway Department.

The Philipstown Town Board considered tightening regulations on dog ownership. After Councilman Anthony Merante complained that he had been knocked off his bike twice by dogs chasing him, Supervisor Bill Mazzuca quipped that in "Continental Village, dogs only chase Democrats."

The Environmental Protection Agency said that the owners of the Marathon Battery site had completed their \$90 million cleanup of Foundry Cove, into which the company had dumped nickel, cadmium and cobalt over 30 years until 1982. Scenic Hudson agreed to purchase and preserve the 85-acre property, which would continue to be monitored by the EPA until 2026.

During a Philipstown Town Board meeting, Town Attorney Ed Doyle said that if a road has been used for more than 10 years by the general public, it becomes a town road. He also noted that while some deeds show private property extending to the center of

the road, "it doesn't matter because the town has user-rights to the road."

A federal jury ruled for the defendants — Cold Spring, Putnam County and the Sheriff's Department — in a \$1.5 million lawsuit filed by a driver who had been arrested for allegedly driving while intoxicated.

The North Highlands fire department agreed to allow the Philipstown Little League to build baseball fields and a 60-car parking lot on land adjacent to its firehouse.

Kindergarten students from Haldane Elementary made their annual trek to Linda LeMon's home to see her collection of more than 100 nutcrackers.



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Bills Would Require Vaccine for Students

Legislation would add COVID-19 to list

By Jeff Simms

Two bills have been introduced in the state Legislature — one in the Assembly, the other in the Senate — that would require schoolchildren to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Both bills would add vaccination against COVID-19 to the list of state-mandated inoculations that students must have to attend public or private schools in the state.

Students through grade 12 currently must be vaccinated against diphtheria, hepatitis B, measles, mumps, pertussis, polio, tetanus and varicella (chickenpox).

In Dutchess and Putnam, about 20 percent of children ages 5 to 11 have been vaccinated against COVID-19, along with about 65 percent of those 12 to 17. Both figures are lower than the state rate, which is 23 percent for the younger children and 71 percent for the older ones.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorized emergency use of Pfizer’s COVID vaccine for children ages 12 to 15 in May and for those 5 to 11 years old last month. Vaccines were fully approved for

people 16 and older in August.

The Assembly bill, which was introduced in October by Jeffrey Dinowitz, a Democrat from the Bronx, would add COVID to students’ vaccine requirements 30 days after full FDA approval. The Senate bill, introduced in August by Brad Hoylman, a Democrat from Manhattan, would apply to children and teens from 2 to 18 years old.

In 2019, Dinowitz and Hoylman sponsored legislation that, after being enacted by then-Gov. Andrew Cuomo, invalidated 26,000 religious exemptions from vaccination requirements across New York state, including about 75 in the Highlands, following measles outbreaks.

At the time, most local families who had claimed religious exemptions chose to have their children immunized, rather than leaving the public schools, superintendents in the Beacon, Haldane and Garrison districts said.

The New York state branch of the American Academy of Pediatrics said in October that it “unequivocally supports the requirement that all children attending school, day care and after-school activities be immunized” for COVID-19, and that religious exemptions should not be allowed.

However, Assembly Member Jonathan Jacobson, a Democrat whose district

includes Beacon, doesn’t see it happening before the 2022-23 school year begins next September. “It’s a little early to make a decision,” he said this week.

With variants still emerging, Jacobson said he’d “like to see where we’re at a little further into winter. While it’s possible there will be a vote at the end of the session, I don’t see the support for it now.”

Legislators return to Albany on Jan. 5 and the session is scheduled to run through June 2.

Without mandatory vaccinations in the fall, it’s also too early to say if masks will be required inside school buildings in the fall for the third straight year, Beacon Superintendent Matt Landahl said on Wednesday (Dec. 15). “There need to be some data-driven standards around when masks are worn or not,” he said.

The Lower Hudson Council of School Superintendents last month wrote Gov. Kathy Hochul asking for “clear and very specific metrics, a plan for removing masks” at some point. “Everyone’s safety is most important, but schools have shown our systems are good at keeping people safe by following the science,” the council said.

Without a plan, “it starts to feel endless,” Landahl said.

The New Mandate

On Monday (Dec. 13), the state issued more-detailed guidance for its new mask mandate. The order will be re-evaluated on Jan. 15.

- The mandate covers:**
- Businesses and venues, including indoor entertainment venues, concert halls, indoor sports stadiums, recreational spaces, restaurants, office buildings, shopping centers, grocery stores, pharmacies, houses of worship and common areas in residential buildings.
- The state is requiring that:**
- Any person over 2 years old, and medically able to tolerate a face covering, must wear a mask indoors at public places, regardless of vaccination status. Businesses and venues can choose to implement a vaccination requirement, requiring proof of vaccination as a condition of entry. Whichever requirement is selected, it must apply to all, including staff, patrons, visitors and guests. A business and venue cannot do a “combination” requirement.

- If a business opts to verify vaccination:**
- They must ensure that anyone 12 years of age or older is fully vaccinated before entering. (Fully vaccinated is defined as 14 days past the second shot of a two-dose Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine; and 14 days past the one-shot Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine.) Children between ages 5 and 11 years old, who just became eligible last month for the Pfizer vaccine, only need proof of their initial shot.
- If food or beverages are served:**
- Patrons can remove their masks only while they are actively eating or drinking, at which time appropriate social-distancing measures, proper air ventilation and filtration methods are highly recommended. Masks should be worn at all other times.

COVID-19 BY THE NUMBERS	PUTNAM COUNTY				
	Number of cases:	Tests administered:	Percent positive:	Percent vaccinated:	Number of deaths:
	14,00 (+492)	343,346	4.0 (0)	78.0	102 (+1)
	Active Cases in Philipstown: 11-20	(+7,373)		Percent in 10516: 90.2 Percent in 10524: 84.1	
	DUTCHESS COUNTY				
	Number of cases:	Tests administered:	Percent positive:	Percent vaccinated:	Number of deaths:
	40,340 (+1,268)	1,094,981	3.7 (+0.1)	73.0	523 (+8)
	Active Cases in Beacon: 45	(+21,862)		Percent in 12508: 67.5	
	Source: State and county health departments, as of Dec. 15, with change over the previous week in parentheses. Percent vaccinated reflects those ages 5 and older who have received at least one dose.				

Mask Mandate (from Page 1)

Carmel before Christmas. The department is not a “policing agency,” she said.

“Are we really supposed to stop them from running essential vaccine clinics and redirect them to checking whether the unvaccinated are entering buildings unmasked?” said Odell.

Marc Molinaro, the Dutchess County executive, said in a Facebook post on Sunday (Dec. 12) that the requirement is “unenforceable” and “will become confrontational.” The county will not “escalate tension or conflict or further burden our local small businesses,” said Molinaro, who is running for the U.S. House seat held by Democrat Antonio Delgado.

His position was reiterated in an email sent Monday by Colleen Pillus, a representative for the county. It said that Gov. Kathy Hochul’s administration, which announced the mandate on Dec. 10, “acknowledged” that local health departments are not expected to redeploy staff “from critical responsibilities” like vaccinating residents.

The state also “indicated” that counties should focus on “education only for a minimum of two weeks” to foster compliance with the mask requirement, said Andrew Sherman Evans Jr., Dutchess County’s director of public health and disease prevention.

“Beyond this period, Dutchess County has been advised against and will not divert critical health department resources away from other activities for the purpose of enforcement,” Evans said in the email.

The mandate reverses the state’s adoption, in May, of relaxed mask guidelines after the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced that fully vaccinated people no longer needed to wear masks in public.

Those guidelines, instituted as COVID-19 cases were waning, still required unvaccinated people to wear masks in public; allowed businesses to mandate that customers wear face coverings; and kept masks in place at K-12 schools, homeless shelters, prisons, nursing homes and health care settings, and on public transit such as Metro-North.

Seven months later, the state is experiencing another wave of infections, which began in August, driven by the Delta variant of the virus that causes COVID-19.

New York reported 18,000 new cases on Wednesday (Dec. 15), nearly nine times the 2,143 from Aug. 1. Although upstate counties are seeing the most infections, cases have also increased significantly in Dutchess, Putnam and other Mid-Hudson counties as the cold weather drives people indoors.

Dutchess County’s 231 cases on Wednesday was its highest one-day total since Jan. 11, and Putnam County’s 84 cases on Dec. 10 its highest tally since Jan. 23.

As of Wednesday, Dutchess was averaging 150 cases a day in December, compared to 13 in July, and Putnam 54 versus 4.4 in July.

As of Monday, 72 percent of residents in Dutchess and 77 percent in Putnam had received at least one vaccine dose.

Despite the rising caseloads, state Sen. Sue Serino joined Molinaro and Odell in criticizing the mask mandate. A Republican whose district includes the Highlands,

Serino said on Dec. 10 that Hochul’s decision “blindsided” businesses and requires them “to police the behavior of their customers or face arbitrary fines.”

“Our small businesses are just starting to get back on their feet, and this mandate will be detrimental to all those who were looking toward the holiday season to help keep their doors open,” she said.

Putnam Legislators: Mandates ‘Totalitarian’ and ‘Travesty’

Montgomery calls their position ‘anti-science’

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

The three-member Putnam County Legislature Health Committee on Monday (Dec. 13) unanimously adopted a resolution denouncing COVID-19 vaccine mandates, clearing it for ratification by the full nine-member panel next week.

Committee members used terms such as “totalitarian” and “travesty” to refer to mandates and asserted their stance reflected a “pro-choice” position.

Three other legislators at the meeting voiced their support, as did most audience members who offered an opinion. The entire Legislature next meets on Wednesday (Dec. 22) for its year-end meeting, when it can approve the resolution.

The measure declares “that medical treatment and preventative measures are an individual choice” and that “no COVID-19 vaccine should be mandated by law.” It also opposes vaccine mandates “that affect parents’ rights to make health care decisions in the best interests of their children.”

The resolution encourages people to get vaccinated but that, if they do not, to follow guidance from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to avoid infection.

Legislator Nancy Montgomery, a Democrat who represents Philipstown and part of Putnam Valley, objected to the resolution, describing her Republican colleagues as “anti-science” and “anti-safety for the citizens of Putnam County.”

The resolution came amid a rise in infections, statewide and locally, that prompted New York State to mandate masks in indoor public spaces and directed county health departments to oversee enforcement. The county executives of Putnam and Dutchess counties, both Republicans, promptly announced they would not comply (see Page 1).

Montgomery noted that infections in Putnam have recently increased dramatically and that, as of Monday, six inmates and four officers at the county jail had tested positive.

Under policies instituted by outgoing Sheriff Robert Langley Jr., which placed staff on leave for testing after a suspected exposure, no one got sick but in September county officials abandoned that approach and the virus took hold “because someone was afraid to take leave,” Montgomery said. This “is not a good time to relax restrictions.”

Legislator Amy Sayegh of Mahopac, who chairs the Health Committee, claimed Montgomery “is pro-mask mandates. She’s pro-forced-adult-vaccine mandates” and Montgomery concurred that “I am for masks, for vaccinations. I’m looking to avoid another shutdown, another disaster.”

Dr. Michael Nesheiwat, the county health commissioner, did not attend the meeting. When Montgomery asked if the committee members consulted him about the resolution, Sayegh replied that Nesheiwat “is paid to make sure the state mandates are enforced, so he doesn’t have a say in this argument. This is a legislative argument.”

“We’re not here to rely on that professional opinion,” echoed Legislator Ginny Nacerino of Patterson, another committee member. “We’re here to put forth a resolution.”

Nesheiwat did not respond to a request for comment.

“Totalitarianism” subjects citizens “to absolute state authority” and with mandatory vaccines “we’re talking about state authority over our children’s health. That’s unacceptable,” Sayegh said. “No child or adult should be held down by a government bureaucrat and injected with a vaccine they do not wish to receive, or suffer the consequences,” such as being kept out of school, church, restaurants or stores.

Legislator Toni Addonizio of Kent, the third member of the Health Committee,

Dear Dr. Nesheiwat...

On Thursday (Dec. 16), Legislator Nancy Montgomery emailed Dr. Michael Nesheiwat, the Putnam County health commissioner, saying she had left a message on his emergency line about a “re-occurring public health emergency in Room 318 of the County Office Building,” where the legislative committees meet.

She noted that “members of the Legislature, the sheriff-elect, members of his staff, with a known exposure to COVID [at the jail], as well as members of the public, are not complying with the mask mandate.”

She added: “No vaccination records are being checked and no masks are required to attend these very crowded meetings. In addition to the violation of state law, the county has not taken any measure to ensure that Room 318 is a safe place to hold public meetings. No efforts have been taken to improve ventilation, install COVID preventative filtration or air-quality mechanisms.

“I have requested that the Legislature continue to offer an option to attend meetings virtually, but my colleagues dismissed this request. I would very much appreciate your help in ensuring that I am provided with a safe place to work and that my constituents are provided with a safe place to participate in government.”

criticized two bills pending in the state Legislature. The first, introduced in the Assembly, would require students to be vaccinated to attend school and links district participation to state aid. The

second bill, in the Senate, would permit schools to vaccinate students age 14 and older if the student gave consent.

That a school could vaccinate a teenager without parental permission “is frightening,” said Legislator Paul Jonke of Southeast. “I’m certainly going to support this resolution.”

Legislators Carl Albano of Carmel and Neal Sullivan of Carmel-Mahopac, other non-committee members, also backed the measure.

“We’re just talking about the choice for parents and individuals to decide for themselves,” said Nacerino. “We don’t need government telling us what to do. That’s a travesty.”

“No one is saying we are anti-vaccine,” Addonizio contended. “We are pro-choice.”

Montgomery pointed out that the legislators rejected pro-choice views when they passed an anti-abortion resolution in spring 2019.

Committee members said opposing COVID-19 vaccine mandates does not mean they want to abolish requirements that children receive vaccinations against other diseases such as measles.

“It’s something the state has already decided, so I don’t think that’s something we can go back on,” Sayegh said.

Robert Tendy, who said he spoke as a resident, not as the Putnam County district attorney, remarked that “the vaccines children took to get into school were tested and tested for years,” whereas the COVID-19 vaccine “is a brand-new product.” He said that “the government I know — or knew” doesn’t compel vaccinations.

During the public comment period, Steve Salomone, who lives in Brewster, supported the resolution. “It’s outrageous how far the government overreach has taken us. They’ve done it through fear.”

Phyllis Hoenig of Mahopac, who opposed the resolution, recalled the recent past, when “the hospitals were filled” and “we went through a terrible time. People were dying; they were stacking them up in trailers outside. Did you forget that?”

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SPORTS

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Roundup (from Page 28)

came out strong and played aggressive and clean defense and out rebounded us. They took us out of our transition game.”

In Saturday’s game, the Blue Devils played well in the second half, Perrone said, but could not overcome an early deficit. “If we had played that way all game, we would’ve been good,” she said.

Chiera, who was named to the All-Tournament team, scored 12 points, while Camilla McDaniel added nine and Siegel recorded seven points and five rebounds. Perrone noted that Mairead O’Hara rebounded well for the Blue Devils and that McDaniel shut down Croton’s best player defensively in the second half.

Haldane (2-3) was scheduled to visit Carmel on Thursday (Dec. 16) and will travel to Peekskill on Wednesday (Dec. 22).

INDOOR TRACK & FIELD

Beacon competed at the 31-team Jim Mitchell Invitational on Dec. 11 at The Armory in Manhattan, where Sal Migliore finished second in the 600-meter run in 1:26.60 and Rubio Castagna was fifth in 1:31.31.

The 200-meter relay team of Edward



Evan LaBelle, Henry Reinke, Jack Cleary and Joey Baffuto set a Beacon school record in the indoor mile relay. Photo provided

Manente, Lucas Vermeulen, Chase Green and Migliore took fifth in 1:38.83, while the mile relay team of Henry Reinke, Jack Cleary, Joey Baffuto and Evan LaBelle placed fourth at 19:46.78 and set a new school indoor record.

In the boys’ high jump, Beacon took three

of the top six spots: LaBelle and Vermeulen tied for second at 5-3 and Andre Stackhouse was sixth. Damani DeLoatch took fourth in the boys’ triple jump with a leap of 40-5, the best jump by a sophomore in the state so far this year.

“It was great to be back at The Armory after a nearly two-year pandemic absence,” said Coach Jim Henry. He noted that sophomore Chelsea Derboghossian had impressed him with an eighth-place finish in the 300 meters and he thought Migliore will be contending for a sectional title in the 600 meters.

BOWLING

The Beacon girls’ and boys’ bowling teams both lost this week to Saugerties; the boys fell 5-2 and the girls 7-0.

Dan Gilleo led the boys with a 722 series, and Will Hockler had a high game of 245. The girls were led by Cadence Heeter with a 324 series and Vanessa Campanelli with a 290. Beacon was scheduled to face Goshen today (Dec. 17).

BOYS’ SWIMMING

The Beacon boys’ swim team (0-5-1) fell this week to Cornwall, 101-56, and New Paltz, 94-60.

Against Cornwall, Jesse Vermeulen won the 500 freestyle in 8:12.8, Bryce Manning was second in the 100 freestyle in 1:01.66 and the 50 freestyle in 27.95, and Fionn Fehilly finished second in the 200 individual medley in 2:42.57.

Against New Paltz, Hunter Ingold won the 50 freestyle in 24.99 and Manning was second in the 500 freestyle in 6:24.89 and the 200 freestyle in 2:19.97.

The Bulldogs will return to the pool on Jan. 10, hosting Red Hook.

YOUTH BASKETBALL

The Knights of Columbus Loretto Council No. 536 will host its annual free-throw contest for boys and girls ages 9 to 14 on Jan. 15 at St. Basil’s Academy gym, 79 St. Basil’s Road.

Registration begins at 10:45 a.m. for the 11 a.m. competition. Masks will be required of anyone entering the gym. The winners will advance to the district finals. For more information, call Dan Dillon at 845-265-3802.

The Philipstown Recreation Department has started registration its winter basketball league for girls and boys in the first through eighth grades. The deadline is Dec. 22 and games will begin on Jan. 8. Visit philipstownrecreation.com or call 845-424-4618.

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Puzzles

CROSS CURRENT

ACROSS

1. PC port

4. Roast VIPs

7. — cheese dressing

8. Some tides

10. Coffee break hr.

11. Mistakes in print

13. Mitch Hedberg and Margaret Cho, for two

16. Standard

17. Cybercommerce

18. To and —

19. Greet

20. *Roots* author Haley

21. Racing shell

23. Red-tag events

25. Poker variety

26. \$ dispensers

27. 1040 org.

28. Mideast peninsula

30. Mimic

33. “Don’t slouch!”

36. Spud

37. Thin nails

38. Brick worker

39. Used car sites

40. Med. plan option

41. Away from WSW

DOWN

1. Of an arm bone

2. Writer O’Casey

3. Unfair treatment

4. “Thank you, Henri”

5. Yule tune

6. Pesky email

7. Alpha follower

8. Himalayan land

9. Repress

10. Recipe abbr.

12. Farm units

14. Gas co., for one

15. Boston team, for short

19. Paul Newman film

20. Gore and Franken

21. Vegas area

22. Convention

23. Luminary

24. Good-natured

25. Venus, to Serena

26. Playwright Chekhov

28. Tic

29. “Life — short ...”

30. Marble type

31. Profs’ degrees

32. UFO crew

34. Hexagonal state

35. Press agent?

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7 LITTLE WORDS

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

CLUES

1 like a shabby sweater (6)

2 meticulousness (9)

3 wings’ outer parts (7)

4 moved like arthritic joints (7)

5 tennis Hall of Famer Jimmy (7)

6 transverse beam (10)

7 more mountainous (7)

SOLUTIONS


PIL	CO	PIN	PRE	NS
ION	CRO	ER	NNO	HI
RS	ECE	EA	IO	CIS
CR	LLI	LED	SSPI	KED

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SUDO CURRENT

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

Puzzle Page Sponsored by



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Answers for Dec. 10 Puzzles

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

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

1. HUARACHE, 2. UNSPOILED, 3. CONCERTINA, 4. INDOMITABLY, 5. TEETER, 6. BROKE, 7. ENTENTE

SPORTS



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VARSITY ROUNDUP

By Skip Pearlman

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Sometimes a win is just a win. Other times, a win can feel more like a transformative moment.

The Beacon High School boys' basketball team is hoping its win over Port Jervis on Wednesday (Dec. 15) becomes the latter.

After the team trailed for the entire game, Darien Gillins hit a layup with 48 seconds remaining to give the Bulldogs a 53-51 advantage, which turned out to be the final score in what coach Scott Timpano called a "gritty" victory.

"We didn't play our best basketball, but we dug in at the end," he said.

Port Jervis scored the first 10 points of the game but Beacon closed its deficit to 34-31 at halftime. Port Jervis still led by five points at the end of the third quarter before the Bulldogs rallied.

Gillins finished with 13 points, Adrian Beato added 10 and Chase Green and Jamel Sellers-Blackwell each finished with seven. Defensively, Timpano noted, Jason Komisar had a block with 23 seconds left that may have saved the game.

After winning one game all of last season, Beacon (2-2) has won two straight.

"I am absolutely encouraged by the way we're playing," Timpano said. "We're building something special. Part of learning how to win includes finishing games."

Beacon was scheduled to visit Washingtonville on Tuesday (Dec. 21) and will compete in a 10-team holiday tournament beginning on



Haldane's Tristen Reid finds himself in traffic against Marlboro.

Photos by S. Pearlman

Dec. 27 when they face Ketcham.

At Haldane High School on Tuesday (Dec. 14), a strong defensive effort, coupled with 13 points from Will Bradley, led the Blue Devils to a 69-48 victory over visiting Hastings. Ben Bozsik and Matteo Cervone each contributed 10 points.

"Our defense was phenomenal," said Coach Joe Virgadamo, noting the team held Hastings to seven points in the first quarter.

Rob Viggiano and Tristen Reid each added nine points for Haldane, while Ryan Irwin had seven and Julian Forcello scored five.

On Dec. 9 against Marlboro at home, Haldane trailed 25-14 after a quarter but cut the deficit to two at halftime and then played a strong second half to win, 73-65.

Cervone led the way with 18 points and nine rebounds, Soren Holmbo added 14, followed by Irwin (12), Viggiano (11) and Bozsik (9).

With three wins in four games, Virgadamo said the team is headed in a good



Ryan Irwin drives for a layup against Marlboro.

direction. "We're still working on [defensive] rotations, rebounding, offensive movement. We need to do more little things right."

Haldane was scheduled to host Briarcliff on Thursday (Dec. 16), travel to Millbrook on Saturday (Dec. 18) and host Peekskill at 6:15 p.m. on Tuesday (Dec. 21). The game will be streamed at events.locallive.tv/school/haldane-hs.

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Beacon won its first two games of the season last week, edging Valley Central, 39-37, on Dec. 9 after dominating host Port Jervis, 42-11, two days earlier.

Against Valley Central, Reilly Landisi scored 12 points, Shadaya Fryer added 10 points and 15 rebounds, and Daveya Rodriguez had eight.

"We got a great defensive effort, overcame foul trouble and took care of the ball," said Coach Christina Dahl. "Everyone contributed."

Against Port Jervis, Landisi led the Bulldogs (2-2) with 10 points, Rodriguez added nine points and 10 rebounds, Devyn Kelly had eight and Lila Burke scored seven. Dahl also cited the defensive play of Kelly and Rodriguez.

The Bulldogs are scheduled to host Washingtonville on Monday (Dec. 20) at 5 p.m. and Cornwall Central on Tuesday at 4:30 p.m.

A lack of rebounding and poor defense hurt the Haldane girls at last weekend's Mayclim tournament at Croton. The Blue Devils dropped their opener to Pearl River, 50-22, then fell to Croton-Harmon, 50-39, in the consolation game.

Against Pearl River, Amanda Johanson and Maddie Chiera each scored five points and Molly Siegel had four.

"We felt like we were ready to play," said Coach Jessica Perrone. "But Pearl River

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LACROSSE ALUM — Haldane players past and present gathered at the school on Nov. 27 for a friendly match. The event was organized on a sunny but cold day by coaches Ed Crowe and Peter Ruggiero.

Photo provided