



New Sheriff

Kevin McConville (center), a Haldane High School graduate and Philipstown resident, was sworn in as the Putnam County sheriff on Dec. 30 by the county clerk on the steps of the historic courthouse in Carmel. He is shown with the six captains whom he appointed as his command staff. See Page 6. Photos by William Gouldman



‘Scout’ Killed in Christmas Day Stabbing

Man of few words was well-known around Beacon

By Jeff Simms

Beacon police are investigating the stabbing death on Christmas Day of Rene Vivo, a 65-year-old veteran known to locals as “Scout.”

While the assault was widely discussed on social media in the days after it occurred, the Beacon Police Department has released few details. No arrests had been announced as of Thursday evening (Jan. 6).

Citing “multiple sources,” *Mid-Hudson News* reported on Dec. 29 that a person known as “Scout” had been fatally stabbed at about 3:40 p.m. on Christmas Day. A day later, the Beacon police issued a statement confirming a Dec. 25 stabbing but without providing a name or mentioning a fatality.

The *Mid-Hudson* report said Mayor Lee Kyriacou had confirmed the death; Kyriacou did not respond to a Dec. 29 inquiry from *The Current*.

Libby Funeral Home posted an obituary for Vivo, and on Monday (Jan. 3), Beacon police confirmed he had been the victim. He was found on South Brett Street, near Main Street, the police said; the obituary said Vivo died at Montefiore St. Luke’s Cornwall Hospital in Newburgh.

Chief Sands Frost said the department was not releasing information because it might compromise its investigation. “We have to think of the victim,” he said. “If that means withholding information and looking like the bad guys, we’ll do that for now.”

(Continued on Page 18)

Problems Plague New Central Hudson System

Customers surprised by large, delayed bills

By Leonard Sparks

Kimberly Sauer says she was home for less than half of last month and her smart thermometer showed that the heat operated for about 13 minutes each day during what was an unusually warm December.

So, the Beacon resident was shocked when Central Hudson billed her for 10 times the amount of gas she uses on average throughout the year.

“December is, allegedly, an actual reading, but I don’t see how that is possible,” said Sauer on Monday (Jan. 3).

She is not the only Central Hudson

(Continued on Page 10)

Hospitals See Influx of COVID-19 Patients

Two administrators expect peak lies ahead

By Leonard Sparks

The resurgence of admissions to local hospitals began in late summer with the Delta variant of the virus that causes COVID-19 but has accelerated in the last month as the highly infectious Omicron has become the dominant variant.

NewYork-Presbyterian Hudson Valley Hospital in Cortlandt Manor had 42 COVID-19 patients on Wednesday (Jan. 5), nearly five times the number on Dec. 18. Three of the 42 were on ventilators, according to state data, and 28 were age 55 or older.

Putnam Hospital Center in Carmel is facing a similar influx. The hospital’s case-load of 29 COVID-19 patients on Monday was more than four times what it had on

Dec. 12. Twenty-three of those patients were 55 or older, and four were on ventilators.

Across the Hudson River from Beacon, Montefiore St. Luke’s Cornwall Hospital in the City of Newburgh reported 86 patients with COVID-19 on Wednesday, including 10 on ventilators. Since Dec. 26, the hospital has admitted at least 10 new COVID-19 patients each day.

Dr. Mark Hirko is president of Putnam Hospital Center and Sharon Hospital in Connecticut (both part of the NuVance Health System). Dr. Bobby Janda is the chief medical officer at NewYork-Presbyterian Hudson Valley Hospital. In separate interviews, each noted that people who are not vaccinated are most at risk as cases continue to rise.

How do those hospitalized by Omicron differ from previous variants?

HIRKO: The unvaccinated are more (Continued on Page 9)



Rene Vivo

Photo provided

5Q FIVE QUESTIONS: COLLIN MILONE

By Jeff Simms

Collin Milone has been the assistant to Beacon's mayor since 2018. His last day is Jan. 14.

Where are you headed?

I'm going to the Galapagos Islands in Ecuador to teach English to adults who want to learn to speak it to get into the tourist trade. Before I came here, I was traveling for 2½ years in the Mediterranean, the Balkans, India and Southeast Asia, volunteering with NGOs [non-governmental organizations] serving refugees in Greece and Serbia and teaching English in Thailand. When you spend time in a different culture, you not only learn what people wear and what they eat, but you learn how they think and why they think that way. That's infinitely interesting to me. I picked South America for this trip because I haven't been there yet and it's a little closer to home. I've saved enough to travel for at least six months, but that was my plan last time, too. I will be back over the summer, when two friends are getting married.

How did you end up in City Hall?

My background is in public administration and social work, so local government is the perfect space. I had to do an internship for my graduate degree in public administration, and I wanted to do it in Beacon because it had this revitalization. I wanted to see up close how it was done. I interned under then-City Administrator Anthony Ruggiero for a few months in 2015. When I came back to the States at the end of 2018, they were looking to fill this position. I told the then-mayor, Randy Casale, that I could stay for six months and here we are, three years later.

What is your job like?

The mayor and City Council set the direction for the city, and the administrator carries it out. I help with that. Every day you're getting calls and emails from community members for everything from a dispute with their neighbors, to potholes, to their opinions on a policy that's in front of the council. You



Collin Milone at his post in Beacon's City Hall

Photo by J. Simms

listen and give them the information they need. You pass along what they want to the elected officials. One of the biggest things I do is help put together the council meetings every week, including an agenda that's anywhere from one to 350 pages long. I also manage grants and the city's website, write press releases, oversee committees and our climate coordinator, and I worked with HBO and Apple TV when they were filming here [for projects], too.

Tell me about some of your local adventures.

The Hudson Valley is the best place to be outdoors. You have absolutely everything right here at your fingertips. I grew up as a rower, and rowed crew from middle school and high school to a college club team. Being out on the Hudson, it's magnificent and powerful. It makes you understand how

small we are and how humbling nature is. Cycling is an outlet I picked up during the pandemic. You helped me out when I was trying to ride down to the city, and this fall I rode the Empire State Trail from Poughkeepsie to Manhattan.

How are you feeling about traveling during the pandemic?

It's imperative that we're responsible for ourselves and others — getting vaccinated, boosted, wearing a mask when it's appropriate. If I learn enough Spanish while I'm in South America, I would love to help with pandemic response, coordinating vaccine distributions or dealing with any of the consequences of the pandemic. As long as you're following the latest guidelines, we're not new to this anymore. It's the new normal and I'm excited to go see the world in a responsible way.

ON THE SPOT

By Michael Turton

What's in your favorite breakfast?

“

Just scrambled eggs and rye toast

”



Noga Cabo, Beacon

“

French toast, scrambled eggs and a good cup of coffee

”



Andrew Multer, Cold Spring

“

Eggs anything, with a croissant and a mimosa

”



Fran Hodes, Cold Spring

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A HAHNEMÜHLE CERTIFIED STUDIO

Putnam Legislature Picks Sullivan as Leader

Philipstown rep offers sole 'no' vote

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

Putnam County legislators on Tuesday (Jan. 4) chose Neal Sullivan as their chair and gave final approval to a \$40,467 fund transfer for a contract with new ambulance service provider Ambulnz.

The actions occurred during the Legislature's annual reorganization meeting, held by audio link, although Legislator Nancy Montgomery, a Democrat, adjusted her settings to appear on screen. Her eight Republican colleagues remained invisible. The Legislature cited pandemic restrictions as the reason for not meeting in person.

Montgomery voted "no" on the Sullivan nomination and money transfer, which rounds off the sum necessary for the deal with Ambulnz. The new provider bid \$1.49 million for the first year of a five-year term, while EM Star/Empress, which the county had been using, bid \$1.9 million.

Legislator Bill Gouldman of Putnam Valley joined Montgomery in rejecting the funds transfer. Both cited concerns by local ambulance corps about Ambulnz's costs and capabilities. The contract is for



Although the Putnam County Legislature held its Jan. 4 meeting by audio connection, Legislator Nancy Montgomery turned on her camera.

advanced life support, which backs up the basic emergency care supplied by local ambulance corps.

"I haven't heard from any ambulance corps and first responders that this is a good thing," Montgomery said. She acknowledged that going with Ambulnz "could save the county money, it could be better service. We just don't know."

But the primary reason for her opposition, she stated, "is that I still don't have

the contract" between the county and Ambulnz, although she repeatedly asked for it. "There's no checks and balances here," Montgomery said, expressing incredulity that legislators are "asked to provide funding for a contract we've never seen."

Legislator Carl Albano of Carmel replied that "we're not approving any contract. The county executive's office does that." He added that since the county agreed to the contract, at this point "the money is

owed." Albano also said that he believes questions about Ambulnz had been sufficiently answered.

Before the vote to appoint Sullivan, who represents parts of Carmel and Mahopac, Montgomery noted the lack of other nominees. As an alternative, she proposed herself, but received no support.

Sullivan has often clashed with Montgomery, at times interrupting or belittling her, conduct that Montgomery said demonstrates he "would not be a good fit" as legislative leader "and not a good fit to represent the people of Putnam County." She suggested that his actions and those of the Legislature overall in 2021 often appeared "politically motivated. The people of Putnam County deserve stronger leadership."

However, after the other legislators chose Sullivan, Montgomery congratulated him, telling him that "I hope we can work through many of the difficulties we've had and work together, despite our differences, for the people of Putnam County."


The Legislature also voted 7-2 to appoint Legislator Paul Jonke of Southeast as deputy chairperson. Montgomery backed Jonke's nomination, but Legislators Ginny Nacerino of Patterson and Amy Sayegh of Mahopac voted "no," without elaborating.

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LETTERS AND COMMENTS

Vaccines

So 400 residents spoke out against vaccine mandates and the Putnam County Legislature believes this to be a majority ("Putnam Passes Resolution Against Mandatory Vaccines," Dec. 31)? Most of us never saw or knew about a petition. The consequences are terrible and I hope the same legislators can live with the consequences of their votes.

Nicole Berglas, *Putnam Valley*

Enough with all these mandates ("No Vax, No Mask, No Service," Dec. 24). It goes on and on and on — the new abnormal.

Mary Ray Lane, *via Facebook*

Congratulations to Zade ("Haldane Student Wins Vaccination Scholarship," Dec. 24)! Wonderful news!

Maureen McGrath, *via Facebook*

So happy for Zade, although I still feel all kids who were vaccinated should have had a chance for this opportunity, not just the 5- to 11-year-olds.

Ro Hartney Bridges, *via Facebook*

Does this kid know the spelling and definition of *coercion*?

Maureen Meehan, *via Facebook*

I'm certain he knows the spelling of *science, facts* and *greater good*.

Nannette Lipinski, *via Facebook*

Test-to-stay

Not enough testing is available to make this an effective strategy for schools ("Test-to-Stay is Here to Stay, For Now," Dec. 31). At-home tests are scarce and many families don't have access to immediate testing. There will be a surge as students get back to school after the break. There is a large subset of the student population that is not approved by the Food and Drug Administration to be boosted yet [as of last week].

What's the harm in going remote for the first two weeks, allowing the surge to crest, allowing time for the FDA to approve the booster for 12- to 15-year-olds, and then returning to school without further disruption?

Francisco Javier, *via Facebook*

What's the harm? There is huge mental-health harm caused by children going remote. Plus, many parents can't take off work.

Victoria Halfpenny, *via Facebook*

How can we rely on at-home tests when so many parents consistently send their sick children to school? Students would arrive to school with fever, coughs, etc., before the pandemic. What makes districts think this would be any different? Some people don't care about anyone or anything else besides themselves.

Lily Essely, *via Facebook*

Scientists at the Princess Elizabeth Antarctic science lab had an outbreak of the Omicron variant. Before arriving, they had to be vaccinated and follow a stringent and lengthy isolation and testing protocol, yet it hit two-thirds of them, according to news reports. What does this tell us about all our expensive, impractical and soul-crushing efforts? At best, they postpone the inevitable. If highly motivated scientists following all guidelines to a T are not able to avoid it, how can the rest of us? Open the schools and allow nature to dictate to us. We cannot dictate to nature.

By the way, those scientists had the option of being flown home, but given the mildness and self-limiting nature of their symptoms, have chosen to stay and continue their work.

Maria Leiter, *via Facebook*

500 issues

Expanding the coverage of *The Current* to include Beacon as well as Cold Spring, Garrison and Nelsonville must have at first seemed visionary, if not chancy ("Editor's Notebook: Looks Like We Made It," Dec. 31"). We in Philipstown tend to be rather insular in our outlook, and understandably so. But the sun also rises and sets in Beacon, a community much like our own slightly to the north.

Many readers remember that Putnam County in 1812 was created out of Dutchess County, the motives for which will be examined at some point in *The Current*. My hunch is this move served to isolate Philipstown.

That said, how fortunate we find ourselves with an attractive, balanced, physically delightful weekly produced by inspired resident writers under superlative management. *The Current* is my weekly tonic in the gloom of small-press mortality across the nation. A well done to the staff and advertisers.

William Harris, *Cold Spring*

(Continued on Page 5)



Update

Jan. 6 Arrests

By Chip Rowe

A year after the attack on the Capitol to disrupt the vote count that certified Joe Biden as president, 707 people face charges that range from trespassing to violent attacks on police officers.

By one estimate, about 140 police officers were injured during the riot. One protester was shot and killed by a Capitol police officer and the assault is believed to have contributed to the deaths of at least three officers.

Five men from Putnam County, two from southern Dutchess and two with ties to Newburgh have been charged. Here is the status of their cases.

Robert Ballesteros, Mahopac

Arrested March 15, pleaded guilty Oct. 28

Ballesteros, 28, posted a video on Instagram of himself inside the Capitol wearing a black mask. When asked online by another Instagram user if he had been inside, Ballesteros said he had “made my stand” and that “some kid told me he tipped off the [FBI] hotline.” He pleaded guilty to “parading, demonstrating or picketing” inside the Capitol, a misdemeanor that has a maximum sentence of six months in prison and a \$5,000 fine. He also agreed to pay \$500 toward the damages to the building and is scheduled to be sentenced on Jan. 27.

Robert Chapman, Carmel

Arrested April 21, pleaded guilty Dec. 16

Chapman, 51, drew the FBI’s attention



The FBI says this photo, taken from an officer’s body camera, shows Matthew and Gregory Purdy Jr., at left, and their father, at right, pushing against a police line at the Capitol.

after a person with whom he interacted through an online dating service alerted agents to a remark and photo posted by someone with that name. In the message, “Robert” wrote that “I did storm the Capitol. I made it all the way into Statuary Hall.” His potential date replied: “We are not a match.” He conceded: “I suppose not.” Like Ballesteros, he pleaded guilty to parading, demonstrating or picketing and will be sentenced on April 4.

Edward “Jake” Lang, Newburgh

Arrested Jan. 16, remains incarcerated

The FBI said Lang, 26, can be seen in the crowd wearing a green-and-black gas mask and striking officers’ shields with a bat. On Jan. 7, the day after the riot, Lang posted to Twitter, according to the charging documents: “I watched a woman die yesterday in front of my eyes. I saved two others from being trampled and suffocated by Capitol Police. They murdered her and tried to murder many, many more. This is an act of war by TYRANTS

against the American people.” During a court appearance on Dec. 9, a prosecutor said Lang had turned down a plea deal with a sentence of up to about 6 1/2 years. In a jailhouse interview with Newsmax last month, Lang was unrepentant, claiming “the police attacked us, and we had to defend each other and defend our country.” His next hearing is Jan. 18.

Roberto Minuta, Newburgh

Arrested March 8, released on personal recognizance

An FBI agent testified that Minuta, 37, was at the Capitol “equipped with military-style attire and gear,” including ballistic goggles, a radio earpiece and radio, hard-knuckle tactical gloves, bear spray and apparel emblazoned with a crest related to the Oath Keepers militia. He “aggressively berated and taunted” police officers before entering the building, the agent said. Minuta, who owns a tattoo parlor in Newburgh but lives in Texas, was indicted with 17 other alleged members of the Oath Keepers. He pleaded not guilty on Dec. 6 to three counts: conspiracy to stop the certification of the vote; obstruction of an official proceeding; and entering a restricted building.

Will Pepe, Beacon

Arrested Jan. 12, released on personal recognizance

Prosecutors allege Pepe, Dominic Pezzola of Rochester and Matthew Greene of Syracuse acted together as members of the far-right Proud Boys by coordinating travel and lodging, using earpieces and radios to communicate, dismantling barriers and breaking windows. All three pleaded not guilty; Pezzola and Greene remain incarcerated. A hearing for Pepe, 32, was held on Nov. 18 but a redacted transcript will not be released until next month. Following his arrest, Pepe was fired from his job at Metro-North in Brewster.

Gregory Purdy Jr., Kent

Arrested Nov. 10, released on personal recognizance

A 2016 Carmel High School graduate, the 24-year-old was one of six candidates in May 2020 for two seats on the Carmel school board (he finished fifth) and in 2016 managed a campaign by his

father, Gregory Purdy-Schwartz, a Republican who hoped to unseat longtime state Assembly Member Sandy Galef, a Democrat whose district includes Philipstown and Kent. Purdy Jr. was arraigned on seven charges that included “assaulting, resisting or impeding” police officers and illegal entry. His next hearing is scheduled for Jan. 27. Purdy’s uncle, Robert Turner, 39, of Poughkeepsie, who traveled with him and faces the same charges, was arrested Nov. 22 and released; his next hearing is Feb. 10.

Matthew Purdy, Kent

Arrested Nov. 10, released on personal recognizance

Gregory Purdy’s younger brother, 22 and also a Carmel High School grad, was charged with four counts, including disorderly conduct and illegal entry. His next hearing is Jan. 27.

THE ACCUSED

707

Number of arrests

39

Average age

87

Percent who are men

77

Percent charged based in part on social media posts

12

Percent with military experience

22

Percent who have pleaded guilty

Source: George Washington University Program on Extremism, as of Jan. 6

William Vogel, Pawling

Arrested Jan. 26, released on personal recognizance

The FBI says Vogel, 27, recorded himself inside the Capitol and posted the video to Snapchat. At least four people who saw the video reported it to the FBI and identified him, the agency said. He pleaded not guilty to unlawful entry, disorderly conduct and violent entry. The government has made a plea offer; his next hearing is March 4.

Anthony Vuksanaj, Mahopac

Arrested Sept. 30, released on personal recognizance

Vuksanaj, 52, pleaded not guilty to charges of trespassing, disorderly conduct and parading, demonstrating or picketing. An FBI agent said that police had detained Vuksanaj on June 6, 2020, in connection to a robbery at knifepoint. He denied being involved but a search warrant revealed that his phone had been at the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, the FBI said, and the agency received video clips that appear to show him inside the building. His next hearing is Jan. 14.

LETTERS AND COMMENTS

(Continued from Page 4)

Behind the scenes

Thank you so much for this article which brings to light the extensive work that goes on behind the scenes of our productions (“From the Shadows to the Spotlight,” Dec. 31). We at Haldane Drama are always looking for additional support! Too often, many of the behind-the-scenes efforts are taken for granted.

I’d like to also add two more vital people to the list. Kathy Feighery, an artist and Haldane parent, is our amazing scenic painter. She spent dozens of hours on *Sense & Sensibility* and she has worked on a number of shows. Also, Jennifer Sandlund, graphic designer and the parent of two actors who have come through our ranks, has been designing our posters and programs and managing ad sales for over a decade, working untold hours.

We would not exist without our ad sales at Haldane Drama, as we provide nearly 100 percent of our operating expenses through ads and ticket sales (and donations!). Jennifer’s youngest is graduating

Correction

In the Dec. 24 issue, we reported that a group of Philipstown educators had each contributed \$100 to tip their server after a meal at Hudson Hill’s in Cold Spring. In fact, according to the organizer, each of the nine members of the party — about half of whom were educators and not all from Philipstown — contributed \$100 toward the bill; whatever was left was the tip, which amounted to \$700.

this year and I have no idea how we will replace her. I might also add that Shanna’s and Kathy’s children are not in the productions. It isn’t a requirement for volunteering.

Martha Mechalakos, *Cold Spring*
Mechalakos is the director of Haldane Drama.



Top row from left: Lindert, Schepperly, Junjulas; bottom row from left: Knox, Grossi, Greenough

New Putnam Sheriff Names Command Team

Kevin McConville sworn in on Dec. 30

Kevin McConville, a Philipstown resident who was sworn in as Putnam County sheriff on Dec. 30 on the steps of the historic courthouse in Carmel, has named his undersheriff and the five captains who will make up his command team. The biographical information is taken from the Sheriff's Department website.

Undersheriff

Thomas Lindert began his law-enforcement career in 1984 when he was hired as an officer for the Cold Spring Police Department. He joined the Sheriff's Department in 1985 and was assigned to the narcotics task force. In 2003 he became a senior investigator and in 2004 was promoted to captain to oversee the road patrol. He retired from the Sheriff's Department in 2007 and joined the Town of Fishkill Police Department, where he served until January 2019.

Bureau of Criminal Investigation

James Schepperly began his 34-year career as a New York State Police trooper, rising over the years to an assistant deputy superintendent. After leaving the NYSP, he worked for the Town of Fishkill Police Department, most recently as chief, until his retirement in 2020.

Road Patrol

Kevin Junjulas, a Cold Spring resident, began his 30-year career with Metro-North, serving as a patrol officer and K-9 handler. He joined the Beacon Police Department as a K-9 handler and on its emergency response team. He was promoted to captain in 2015 and was chief for two years until his retirement in 2020.

Operations/Communications

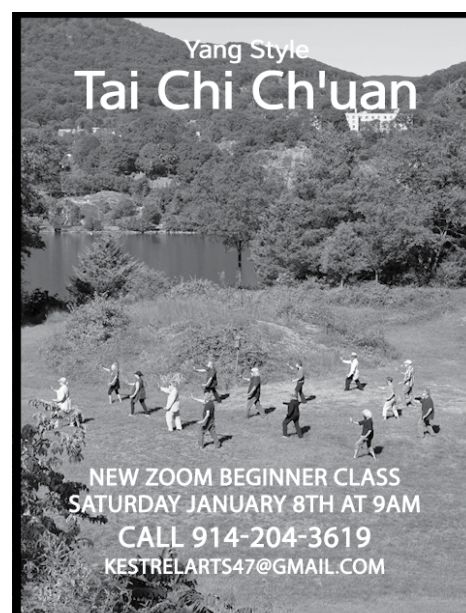
Michael Knox began his career in 1993 as a police officer in White Plains, where he rose to command the patrol division until his retirement in 2012. Knox, who has experience with narcotics and target investigations, has worked on police reform committees and reviewed procedures and policies for compliance, the Sheriff's Department said.

Civil Bureau

Michael Grossi began his 29-year law enforcement career as a road patrol deputy with the Columbia County Sheriff's Office. In 1997 he joined the Westchester County Police Department, where he worked in the civil bureau, overseeing 16 employees and managing a budget of \$14 million and 6,000 case files. Grossi is a "subject matter expert" in state civil laws, the department said.

Corrections

James Greenough has been a corrections officer at the Putnam County jail for 31 years and has experience in budget preparation, records retention and training records management.



NEWS BRIEFS

Probe Finds Prisons Used Faulty Drug Tests

Inmates punished with solitary confinement

The New York State Offices of the Inspector General reported this week that more than 1,600 inmates were punished with solitary confinement, delayed parole, longer sentences and lost visitation as the result of faulty drug tests in 2019.

The investigation followed a series of lawsuits filed by advocates on behalf of inmates at Fishkill Correctional Facility in Beacon and other prisons.

When inmates screened with a test made by Microgenics Corp. were found positive for the opioid buprenorphine, the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision should have confirmed the results with an alternative test, Inspector General Lucy Lang said on Tuesday (Jan. 4). The department also failed to investigate a spike in positive results from the test, she said.

To resolve the findings, the agency expunged 2,500 disciplinary records, reinstated lost privileges and eliminated the use of solitary confinement as a punishment for a failed drug test. The department also stopped using the Microgenics test.

Democrats Name Chair for Dutchess County

Beacon resident will lead party

The Dutchess County Democratic Committee on Dec. 30 elected Julie Shiroishi as its chair. Running unopposed, she succeeds Elisa Sumner, who stepped down after more than 12 years.



Shiroishi

"I will be guided by our party's core values of tolerance, respect and pluralism," said Shiroishi, who has lived in Beacon for 15 years and is the chief of staff for state Assembly Member Jonathan Jacobson, whose district includes Beacon. She also was the campaign manager in 2020 for state Senate candidate Karen Smythe.

State Parks Launches Geocache Challenge

Treasure hunt continues into April

The state parks department has launched its annual winter geocaching challenge at Fahnestock in Philipstown, Lake Taghkanic in Ancram and Mills Norrie in Staatsburg. The hunt will continue through mid-April.

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NIVOLA: SANDSCAPES

Curated by Teresa Kittler
May 8, 2021 - January 10, 2022
Magazzino Italian Art, Gallery 8



MAGAZZINO ITALIAN ART



The Haldane school board: Jen Daly, Sean McNall, Maggie Valentine, Peggy Clements and John Hedlund

Haldane photo

Catching Up with Philipstown School Boards

Highlights from 2021-2022 education meetings

By Chip Rowe

HALDANE SCHOOL BOARD

■ As its reorganization meeting, the five Haldane Board of Education members re-elected Jen Daly as president and selected Sean McNall as vice president. (July 6)

■ The board agreed to pay \$45,934 to A+ Technology & Security Solutions of Bay Shore for security upgrades. (July 6)

■ The board accepted a \$675 donation from the Haldane Arts Alliance for tie-dye supplies for use in grades 6 and 7 and \$754 for state competition medals for band and chorus students. (July 6)

■ On a recommendation from the superintendent, the board approved creating a position of director of curriculum and human resources. (July 6)

■ The board approved the creation of an elementary school teacher position, which was filled by Amy Pastula at an annual salary of \$78,091, and the hiring of Liana Festo as a guidance counselor for \$63,703 annually. (July 6)

■ Anthony Stronconi, a longtime maintenance worker for the district, offered the only bid for surplus musical instruments, purchasing 11 drums, a xylophone, keyboard, 2 timpani, a trumpet, a box of music stand lights, four clarinets, a flute, five trumpets, a cornet, five trombones and a tuba for \$181. (Aug. 24)

■ Luke Parrella, a senior, was appointed as the board's student representative for the 2021-22 year. (Oct. 5)

■ The board held a moment of silence for Ginny Pidala, who died on Sept. 24, and created the Ginny Pidala Annual Scholarship. Donations can be sent to the school. Pidala taught at Haldane High School for 36 years until her retirement. (Oct. 5)

■ The board agreed to change its public comment policy as of Oct. 15. The first public comment time will be for questions and comments on the agenda and/

or presentations. A second time will be for questions and comments about any district business. (Oct. 5)

■ Daly gave an update on the procedures for parent representation on district committees, which if approved would begin in the 2022-23 school year. (Oct. 5)

■ The board recognized three students — Owen Carmicino, Matthew McCoy and Marcel Schwarz — for being named National Merit Scholars. Only about 34,000 of the 1.5 million high school juniors who take the practice SAT achieve the distinction. (Oct. 19)

■ The board accepted a \$500 grant from Haldane Arts Alliance toward the purchase of a portable public address system for outdoor events. (Oct. 19)

■ The board accepted a donation of Tegu magnetic wooden blocks valued at \$310 from The Gift Hut in Cold Spring and a \$2,480 grant from the New York State parks department for sixth-grade field visits to the Taconic Outdoor Education Center in Philipstown. (Nov. 2)

■ The board accepted a bid of \$631,600 from Joe Lombardo Plumbing & Heating of Suffern for electrical and mechanical upgrades as part of Phase II of the 2019 capital project. (Nov. 2)

■ The board accepted a \$250 grant from the Haldane Arts Alliance for a credit at Grey's Printing for the large-format printing of student digital artwork and \$1,000 toward the professional filming of the winter concerts. (Nov. 16)

■ At a special meeting, the board approved, 3-0, a settlement with an employee who was accused of "time theft." According to the settlement agreement, the employee arrived for a 2 p.m. shift, remained in the parking lot for an hour, then went into the middle school, entered a room, locked the door, turned off the lights and went to sleep. The employee also had been reprimanded in May for theft of time. Superintendent Philip Benante recommended termination but agreed to a 60-day suspension without pay, plus probation through 2024. (Dec. 2)

■ Benante shared a schedule to create a

"campus master plan" that recommended forming an ad hoc committee. (Dec. 7)

■ Anne Dinio, the school business manager, announced her retirement as of April 30, 2022. (Dec. 7)

■ The Haldane School Foundation announced on Dec. 13 that it had awarded \$25,349 in grants, including \$1,000 to *The Highlands Current* for *The Blue Print* in print program; \$1,000 for the high school debate club; \$2,500 for the high school World Language Immersion program; \$2,000 to film the winter concerts; \$2,000 for an animal adventure program for grades K-2; \$1,250 for a poetry program at the high school; \$5,000 for an equity, diversity and inclusion speaker series; \$2,300 for a fifth-grade field trip to a Connecticut amusement park for a science program; and \$2,400 for a sixth-grade field trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. (Dec. 21)

■ In a preliminary look at the 2022-23 budget, the board was told that state aid was expected to increase by about \$114,000, to \$1.92 million. On the expense side, health insurance premiums were expected to jump by 6 percent and teacher pension payments by 10.5 percent. (Dec. 21)

■ The board accepted a \$72,000 bid from Con-Tech Construction Technology of Carmel for flagpole site improvements.

(Dec. 21)

■ The board approved payments to its kindergarten, first- and second-grade teachers for up to 2½ hours per week of remote instruction outside of their workday during quarantines. (Dec. 21)

■ At its Tuesday (Jan. 4) meeting, the board was presented with several proposed changes to district policies: (1) If a meeting is held in person and one or more board members attend by videoconference, a notice would identify their locations and members of the public could attend at those locations; (2) Disruptive behavior or obscene language, harassing language, defamatory statements and threats of violence would be not be allowed during meetings, under threat of removal by law enforcement. Public comment must also be related to the district and not about specific individuals; (3) The date by which a student must be 5 years old to register for kindergarten would change from Dec. 31 to Dec. 1; and (4) Using or ingesting recreational marijuana would be prohibited on school grounds.

■ Kindergarten registration is scheduled for Feb. 8 to 12. Contact Sue Hylka at 845-265-9254, ext. 122, or shylka@haldane-school.org by Feb. 5 to schedule an appointment. Children who turn 5 on or before Dec. 31 are eligible.

GARRISON SCHOOL BOARD

■ The Garrison school board voted 7-0 to create an equity, diversity and inclusion committee and appointed board members Jocelyn Apicello, Matthew Speiser and Courtney McCarthy. (July 13)

■ Following discussion, the board set aside a proposal to install four electric-vehicle charging stations. (July 13)

■ The district agreed to pay Cecilia Rohrs of Visual Touch Media to film its meetings for \$400 apiece. (July 13)

■ The board amended its May 2020 employment agreement with Superintendent Carl Albano to increase his base salary for 2021-22 to \$215,000, which it said was "more in line with our neighboring districts" and in recognition to his service as interim principal and business administrator between hires and leading the school through the pandemic. When he was hired in 2020, Albano earned \$198,000. The board also extended his

(Continued on Page 8)



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(Continued from Page 7)

contract by a year, to June 30, 2024. (July 13)

■ The board introduced a resolution for emergency repairs to the roof of the school, which “has deteriorated beyond repair, is leaking, has the potential for mold growth, and must be replaced.” A state law allows contracts for emergency work to be awarded without competitive bidding. (July 13)

■ The board accepted a \$241,339 bid from Edutek to install new phone, security camera and public address systems and door access controls. (July 13)

■ The board signed a contract with Orange County Transit to provide bus transportation during 2021-22 for \$619,510. In the event of a pandemic shutdown, the district can suspend or cancel service with 10 days’ notice. (Aug. 25)

■ The board approved a resolution allowing board members to attend in-person meetings by videoconference if they provide “reasonable justification.” (Aug. 25) At the next meeting, on Sept. 2, two board members attended by videoconference.

■ Albano noted that planning for COVID-19 testing was underway to meet a state mandate that school employees be tested weekly if they cannot show proof of vaccination. (Sept. 2)

■ The board accepted a donation to the district from Richard and Peggy Neill of Garrison of a professional-grade science microscope. (Oct. 6)



Dusti Callo unveils a podium she made for the Garrison School from wood reclaimed during hallway renovations.

■ Evan Maasik, a former Garrison School student who is now a senior at O’Neill High School, spoke about the storage locker he constructed for the school garden for his Eagle Scout project. (Oct. 20)

■ Dusti Callo, the secretary to the superintendent and a woodworker, pulled the coat hooks, nails, staples and screws from scrap lumber that had been removed from the school hallways during renovations and built a podium she presented to the district. (Oct. 20)

■ The board accepted a donation from James Sears of two temperature, humidity and barometric pressure smart sensors

and a WiFi gateway. (Oct. 20)

■ The board created a communications task force and appointed Member David Gelber as chair. (Nov. 17)

■ Linda Speziale was appointed as the middle-school chorus teacher through an artist-in-residence program administered by BOCES. (Dec. 1)

■ Following a school shooting in Oxford, Michigan, on Nov. 30 that killed four high school students, board members discussed gun safety, mental health, security issues and lobbying state legislators for laws to prevent children from accessing weapons. For a transcript, see highlandscurrent.org. (Dec. 15)

■ Albano reported that 99 percent of the staff was vaccinated and 100 percent of those who work with students. In addition, 50 percent of students at the elementary level and 66 percent of those in grades 7 and 8 were vaccinated. (Dec. 15)

■ The new diversity and inclusion committee said it was planning training sessions in the spring for teachers. (Dec. 15)

■ The board heard an update on the progress of a \$9.9 million capital project approved by voters in September 2019; over the past few months, it had approved \$289,000 in additions to contracts based on recommendations from the architect, contractor or administrators. Renovations are scheduled to be completed before the start of the 2022-23 school year. (Dec. 15)

■ Michael Twardy, director of facilities

and transportation, announced that he plans to retire on Feb. 28. (Dec. 15)

■ The Garrison School only goes through the eighth grade, and many of its graduates attend O’Neill High School, which is part of the Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery district. Since 40 percent of HFFM students live on base at West Point, the federal government contributes about 10 percent of the district budget as part of a longstanding arrangement that renews every five years. However, last year the Defense Department announced plans to put the contract out for bid, which could lead to drastic cuts if HFFM does not win. A representative for state Sen. James Skoufis said this week that the department has extended the current contract to include 2022-23 but still plans to solicit bids.

SCHOOL COVID-19 POSITIVES 2021-22

BEACON HIGH SCHOOL	
Students	55 (+3)
Teachers	3
Staff	10
ROMBOUT MIDDLE SCHOOL	
Students	24 (+2)
Teachers	3 (+1)
Staff	3
GLENHAM ELEMENTARY	
Students	17 (+4)
Teachers	2
Staff	1
JV FORRESTAL ELEMENTARY	
Students	11
Teachers	0
Staff	4 (+1)
SARGENT ELEMENTARY	
Students	7
Teachers	2 (+1)
Staff	1
SOUTH AVENUE ELEMENTARY	
Students	5
Teachers	1 (+1)
Staff	2
HALDANE HIGH SCHOOL	
Students	25 (+16)
Teachers	0
Staff	3
HALDANE MIDDLE SCHOOL	
Students	15 (+9)
Teachers	0
Staff	5 (+3)
HALDANE ELEMENTARY	
Students	38 (+22)
Teachers	1 (+1)
Staff	5
GARRISON SCHOOL	
Students	22 (+16)
Teachers	4 (+4)
Staff	2 (+2)

Source: New York State COVID-19 Report Card, as of Jan. 4, with changes over Dec. 23 report in parentheses

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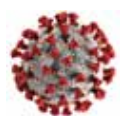
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Coronavirus Update

■ Putnam County said this week it will be distributing thousands of rapid COVID-19 test kits to food pantries, shelters, libraries, senior centers and places of worship. County officials said on Jan. 6 that they have received 4,437 antigen tests from the state, with more expected. They also noted that newly created centers in Carmel and at the Philipstown Recreation Center in Garrison had so far tested more than 4,500 people and found 17 percent to be positive.

■ Democrats on the Dutchess County Legislature excoriated Chair Gregg Pulver for allowing fellow Republicans Mike Polasek and Will Truitt to sit unmasked at their desks in the body's chamber on Tuesday (Jan. 4), despite a state-ordered mandate. Pulver repeatedly cited state guidance for restaurants, where diners must wear masks unless they are eating or drinking. "His negligence and their poor decisions are putting all of us — our families and children and elderly parents, and

our constituents and all the residents of Dutchess County — in danger," said Legislator Brennan Kearney, who represents Clinton and Rhinebeck.

■ Dutchess County issued a public health alert on Dec. 29 urging residents, businesses and visitors to wear masks indoors in public places, socially distance, arrange to get vaccinations or boosters, and get tested.

■ The Dutchess County Jail closed to the public on Jan. 1 in response to an outbreak. Superintendent Therese Lee told the *Poughkeepsie Journal* that 65 inmates of 200 had tested positive, far exceeding the facility's previous high of 19 infections at any one time. Lee also said that 71 of the jail's 200 employees were absent because they had COVID-19 or had been exposed.

■ The federal Food and Drug Administration on Monday (Jan. 3) authorized booster shots of the Pfizer vaccine for adolescents between 12 and 15 years old. The FDA also said boosters for people 12 and over should be given five months after the initial two doses of the Pfizer vaccine instead of six months and authorized a third dose for some immunocompromised

children between 5 and 11 years old.

■ Haldane Superintendent Phil Benante warned that although the district reopened on Monday (Jan. 3) for in-person classes, schools could revert to remote instruction "on any given day" because the high number of infections may cause staff shortages.

■ Dutchess' 838 cases on Dec. 31 set a pandemic high for the county. Putnam reported 520 cases that day, its second-highest daily total since March 2020.

■ Governor Kathy Hochul announced a multi-faceted "winter surge" plan that will include distributing millions of test kits to school districts; a two-week extension, beyond Jan. 15, of an order requiring either masks or proof of vaccination at public places; and the opening of more testing sites.

■ With cases at record levels, the Putnam County Health Department said on Dec. 30 that its staff is unable to conduct contact tracing for exposures. Health Commissioner Michael Nesheiwat also issued an order that requires residents who test positive to isolate.

Where to Get Tested

PUTNAM COUNTY

Philipstown Recreation Center

Route 9D, Garrison
10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily
6 a.m. to 9 a.m. weekdays, children only
No appointment required.

Drug World

55 Chestnut St., Cold Spring
Schedule at myrx.io.

Paladin Center

39 Seminary Hill Road, Carmel
10 a.m. – 6 p.m. daily
6 a.m. – 9 a.m. weekdays, children only
No appointment required.

DUTCHESS COUNTY

Sun River Health

6 Henry St., Beacon
845-831-0400
8 a.m. – 8 p.m. Monday and Tuesday
8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday
8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Saturday

Excel Urgent Care

992 Main St. Fishkill
845-765-2240
8 a.m. – 8 p.m. weekdays
9 a.m. – 4 p.m. weekends

CareMount

60 Merritt Blvd., Fishkill
845-765-4990
8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. weekdays

Pulse-MD

900 Route 376, Suite H, Wappingers Falls
845-204-9260

Dutchess County Health Department

Poughkeepsie Galleria
2001 South Road, Poughkeepsie
Former JCPenney store on 2nd floor
Schedule at bit.ly/dutchess-testing.

CareMount

30 Columbia St., Poughkeepsie
845-231-5600
9 a.m. – 6:45 p.m. weekdays
8 a.m. – 4:45 p.m. weekends

CareMount

2507 South Road, Poughkeepsie
845-471-3111
8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. weekdays

Pulse-MD

696 Dutchess Turnpike, Poughkeepsie
845-243-7100

For information about tests, visit bit.ly/fda-test-basics.

COVID-19 BY THE NUMBERS

PUTNAM COUNTY

Number of cases:

18,156 (+3,032)

Active Cases in Philipstown: 125

Tests administered:

368,390

(+15,601)

Percent positive:

4.9 (+0.6)

Percent vaccinated:

79.6

Percent in 10516: 92.7
Percent in 10524: 86.4

Number of deaths:

106 (+0)

DUTCHESS COUNTY

Number of cases:

48,429 (+4,993)

Active Cases in Beacon: 254

Tests administered:

1,149,740

(+23,721)

Percent positive:

4.2 (+0.3)

Percent vaccinated:

74.1

Percent in 12508: 69.3

Number of deaths:

541 (+10)

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

Hospitals (from Page 1)

severely ill compared to the vaccinated, excepting those vaccinated patients who are immunocompromised.

JANDA: The infections are milder than the previous variants, with a majority of patients being treated and released from the emergency room to be followed up by their primary care doctors. Among patients who are hospitalized, the percentage of those requiring intensive care or ventilators is less. Having said that, we have started to see an increase in acuity [severity] in the past two weeks. We should not take this lightly, especially when we still have the Delta variant in our community.

Are you seeing evidence that Omicron does less damage to the lungs?

HIRKO: Yes, but usually that's in vaccinated patients. Unvaccinated patients still have a higher percentage of being more severely ill.

JANDA: We have seen less hypoxia [low oxygen] among the Omicron variant and less cases of loss of taste or smell, but we still have some patients in the ICU. Sepa-



Dr. Mark Hirko

ately, the sheer volume of positive cases in the community is putting a tremendous amount of stress on hospitals and inundating the health care system.

What percentage of your COVID-19 patients are unvaccinated?

HIRKO: About 50 to 60 percent. Two weeks ago it was 75 percent unvaccinated.

JANDA: We don't have the exact percentages, but it highlights the importance of getting vaccinations and boosters. We know that disease among those who are vaccinated is much milder; we have seen much more severe disease in unvaccinated patients. Among the unvaccinated popula-



Dr. Bobby Janda

Photos provided

tion we have observed more admissions to the ICU and longer stays in the hospital, other than respiratory system complications, and requiring ventilator support.

Have hospitalizations peaked?

HIRKO: Projections are for a spike in infected patients over the next four to six weeks. What's different with this surge is a large number of employees are infected, thereby affecting our ability to treat these patients.

JANDA: I think hospitalization and positivity rates will likely go up this week into next as we come off the holiday season and family gatherings.

In Latest Lawsuit, Developer Claims Rights Violations

Again targets Fishkill board over Continental Commons

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

The developer of the proposed Continental Commons complex on Route 9 in Fishkill on Christmas Eve fired a fresh legal salvo against town authorities and other critics, accusing them of violating his civil rights.

He seeks more than \$5 million, a refund of his property taxes and other payments.

The developer, Domenico Broccoli, asserted that Fishkill Supervisor Ozzy Albra and four board members (three of

whom lost in the Nov. 2 election) engaged in “improper, illegal and unauthorized actions” that violated his constitutional rights. The lawsuit also names 20 unnamed individuals.

Broccoli wants to build Continental Commons — an inn, restaurant, and shopping center along Route 9 on a 10-acre section of the former Fishkill Supply Depot. The Revolutionary War military base sprawled from Fishkill to Beacon and Philipstown and east along a country road, now Route 52.

The Continental Commons parcel contains a gas station, stream, woods and a small cemetery that history buffs suspect contains Revolutionary War dead. Although

Broccoli fiercely disagrees, he has promised to preserve it. (In the lawsuit, he complains about the Town Board’s description of the site as the “Veterans Fishkill Supply Depot,” because, he asserts, “the word veteran still implies that the property contains the burials of soldiers.”)

His lawsuit also accuses board members of opposing the development “to pay back their political supporters” and claims their conduct involved a seizure and “invasion” of his property, thwarting his “investment expectations.”

The Friends of the Fishkill Supply (FOFSD), a historical preservation group, environmental advocates and some residents opposed Broccoli’s plans, which for several years progressed slowly but steadily through local review but encountered more resistance after the Town Board in 2020 acquired a Democratic majority (since overturned).

The developer also sued the Town Board in January 2021 in Dutchess County court, after it rejected his application for extension of water and sewer service to his site. That litigation continues. In August, in federal court, he sued FOFSD members; that case also remains unresolved.

In the latest Fishkill lawsuit, his grievances include the Town Board’s unanimous vote in October to tighten the zoning criteria for developments near historic sites and its creation of an aquifer protection zoning overlay, which, he contends, “imposes additional obligations” on him.

The lawsuit acknowledges that three times over the last two years, most recently on Dec. 23, the day before Broccoli went to federal court, he rejected a settlement offer that called for him to donate the graveyard to the town in return for obtaining the water and sewer extensions.

Central Hudson (from Page 1)

customer in disbelief.

The company has been facing a barrage of emails and phone calls over the last two months from its customers, who number 5,197 in Philipstown and 6,499 in Beacon. Their focus is a range of billing issues — from off-the-chart and smaller-than-usual charges for electric and gas usage to having months go by without receiving a bill.

Joe Jenkins, a representative for the utility, said glitches arose when the

utility recently replaced a 1980s-era computer system with new software to adapt to a “cleaner energy grid” in which more customers are using energy generated from solar panels and third-party suppliers. The update took place around September.

About 4,000 of Central Hudson’s approximately 308,000 customers have been affected, he said. To handle their complaints, the company has “more than doubled” its customer service staff and expanded hours of operation to reduce the amount of time people spend on hold,

said Jenkins. It also is using mail, email, social media and automated phone calls to communicate with customers, he said.

“Our team of IT [information technology] professionals and our software consultants are working every day to identify and implement system fixes,” said Jenkins on Tuesday (Jan. 4). “We expect to have the majority of these fixes in place early this year.”

When that happens, Craig Wolf, who owns both a rental property and a residence in Beacon, is expecting a big bill.

In November, he realized that Central

Hudson had not sent a bill for the rental property since July, and began worrying that he simply had not seen the utility’s statements. Bills were sent to his primary residence, but for much less than the normal \$200 to \$300 in charges. November’s bill totaled \$18.77, said Wolf, who is bracing for a large bill at some point.

“We’re certainly going to get a [corrected] bill someday, and it’s going to be a whopper,” he said.

Visit highlandscurrent.org for news updates and latest information.



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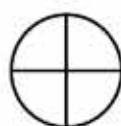


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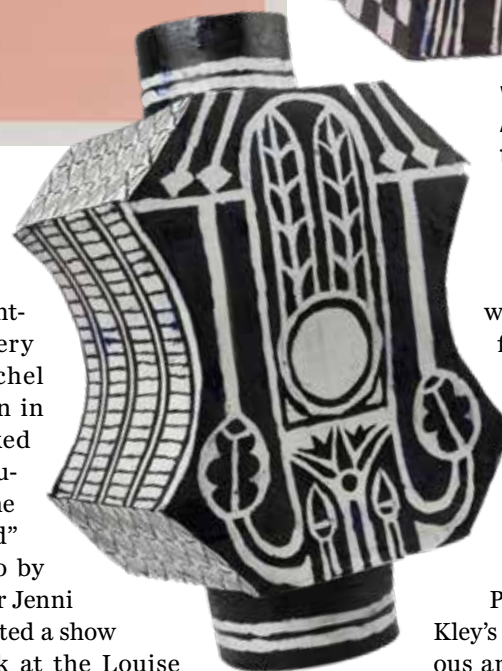
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The Calendar



Works by Elisabeth Kley
Above: A checked fountain with broccoli columns. At left: An Egyptian shield bottle.



white glazes, and transformed by Kley's decorative surface designs and patterns from many eras. Last year, her work was displayed at The Fabric Institute and Museum in Philadelphia.

Parts & Labor describes Kley's style as "pulling from various art historical movements."

Says Kley: "I feel that that's the history of art: People keep transforming things from the past. I like to think I'm continuing that evolution."

In putting the two women together, a dialogue was born, Beauchaine says. "Moving from Kley's monochromatic work, with its form as domestic vessels, to March's interior paintings, done in color, they seem in conversation with each other. When we curate these shows, they always seem to result in magical moments, when the pieces from both artists riff off each other. These two work well together. They have amazing forms — a kind of power."

Parts & Labor Beacon, located at 1154 North Ave., is open from noon to 6 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, or by appointment (text or call 206-387-2556). For more information, see partsandlaborbeacon.com.

ACROSS GENERATIONS

Beacon gallery again pairs 'old' and 'new' artists

By Alison Rooney

Two women — one in her 60s and the other in her 80s, one a sculptor and the other a painter — are paired in Parts & Labor Beacon's latest exhibit, which runs through Jan. 30.

Parts & Labor Beacon's exhibitions consist primarily of two artist presentations, engaging an emerging or mid-career contemporary artist with a more historically recognized artist. The combination casts a light on not just their similarities and differences, but sparks a novel, unexpected way of considering both together.

In this case, there's a domesticity present in each artist's work. Avery, the daughter of

two artists, painters Milton Avery and Sally Michel Avery, was born in 1932 and worked in relative obscurity for years. She was "discovered" a few years ago by artist and dealer Jenni Crain, who curated a show of Avery's work at the Louise McCagg Gallery at Barnard College. (Sadly, Crain died on Dec. 16 at age 30 of COVID-related complications.)

That 2019 show, says Nichelle Beauchaine of Parts & Labor, "catapulted Avery into everybody's consciousness." She describes Avery's paintings as "very personal, about her own life experiences, with scenes of different domestic situations. She uses figurative block colors, and reduced, simplified forms with tactile surfaces; there's a stillness in her compositions."

Elisabeth Kley, born in 1956, makes up the contemporary half of the pairing.

"Generationally, they respond in different ways, though they're both very much ingrained in modernism," Beauchaine explains.

The exhibit features Kley's monochromatic ceramic sculptures and vessels, modeled on those of ancient civilizations, which are modernized, given black-and-



"Two Artists & a Critic" and "Patient and Plant" (top), by March Avery

THE WEEK AHEAD

Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)

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

COMMUNITY

TUES 11

Red Cross Blood Drive

PEEKSKILL

10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley

1008 Brown St. | redcrossblood.org

Download the Red Cross app to schedule an appointment and maintain your digital donor card.

KIDS AND FAMILY

SUN 9

Family Nature Program

PHILIPSTOWN

2 p.m. Hubbard Lodge
2800 Route 9

putnamhighlandsaudubon.org

An educator from the Putnam Highlands Audubon Society will discuss animal signs and tracks (if there is snow cover) or winter tree identification. Free

TUES 11

Magic Tree House Book Club

COLD SPRING

3:30 p.m. Via Zoom
butterfieldlibrary.org

Students in grades 1 to 3 will discuss *Earthquake in the Early Morning* and do a craft in this program hosted by the Butterfield Library. Register online.



THURS 13

Elementary School Book Club

COLD SPRING

3:30 p.m. Via Zoom
butterfieldlibrary.org

Students in grades 2 to 4 will discuss *Ghost Squad* by Claribel Ortega in this program hosted by the Butterfield Library. Register online.



Bummer Camp, Jan. 14th

FRI 14

Reverse Scavenger Hunt

COLD SPRING

6 p.m. Via Zoom
butterfieldlibrary.org

Students in grades 6 and higher are invited to look for clues on the library's social media pages and find objects they think will be on the list to score points in this program hosted by the Butterfield Library. Register online.

SAT 15

Free Throw Contest

GARRISON

11 a.m. St. Basil's Gym
79 St. Basil's Road

Girls and boys ages 9 to 14 are invited to compete in this annual contest organized by the Loretto Council No. 536 of the Knights of Columbus. Winners in each age group advance to county competition. A registration form can be downloaded at bit.ly/KOC-free-throw. For more information, call Dan Dillon at 845-265-3802.

STAGE AND SCREEN

FRI 14

Comedy Night

BREWSTER

6:30 p.m. Tilly's Table
100 Route 312 | 845-808-1840
tillystablerestaurant.com

Buddy Fitzpatrick, Marion Grodin and Frank Becerra will perform. Also SAT 15. Masks required unless vaccinated. The ticket includes a buffet dinner. *Cost: \$45*

SAT 15

MET Live: Cinderella

POUGHKEEPSIE

1 p.m. Bardavon
35 Market St. | 845-473-2072
bardavon.org

Watch Laurent Pelly's staging of Massenet's *Cendrillon* in a new English translation with mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard in the title role. *Cost: \$28 (\$26 members, ages 12 and younger free)*

VISUAL ART

SAT 8

Group Show

COLD SPRING

Noon – 4 p.m. Buster Levi Gallery
123 Main St. | busterlevigallery.com

The exhibit will display the diversity of expression, process and medium of the artist members of the gallery collective. Through Feb. 27.

SAT 8

Celebrating Animals

BEACON

1 – 5 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | 845-831-4988
howlandculturalcenter.org

Tom Conroy, Jan Dolan, Cindy Gould and Jean Noack curated this multimedia show of works by 30 artists. Through Feb. 26.

SAT 8

200 Exhibitions

BEACON

6 – 8 p.m. BAU Gallery | 506 Main St.
845-440-7584 | baugallery.org

The galleries will be filled with work by current and former Beacon Artist Union members to celebrate its 200th exhibition. Through Feb. 5.

TALKS AND TOURS

WED 12

Sermons in Stone

COLD SPRING

7 p.m. Via Zoom
putnamhistorymuseum.org

Susan Allport will discuss her book about the social history of stone walls in New York and New England in this program hosted by the Putnam History Museum. *Cost: \$10 (members free)*

SUN 16

Mediation in our Divided Society

GARRISON

4 p.m. Via Crowdcaster
desmondfishlibrary.org

In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Tajaé Gaynor (below), author of *On Mediation: Creating Bonds of Tranquility in a World That Often Thrives on Calamity*, will discuss mediation as a path to peaceful resolutions and civil rights. The event is being hosted by the Desmond-Fish Public Library, and trustee Erik Brown will lead the discussion.



MUSIC

SAT 8

Professor Louie & The Crowmatix

BEACON

8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

The Woodstock Horns will join the band to perform music by Rick Danko from The Band. Proof of vaccination required. *Cost: \$30 (\$35 door)*

SAT 8

Corcel Mágico

BEACON

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

The trio of Brazilian musicians will perform.

SUN 9

Dominic Cheli

BEACON

4 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | howlandmusic.org

The Howland Chamber Music Circle will launch its annual piano festival with a program by Cheli that includes Schulhoff, Liszt, Schumann, Brahms, Adams and Mussorgsky. *Cost: \$40 (\$10 student)*

SUN 9

Sharkey and the Sparks

BEACON

7 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

Sharkey McEwen of the Slambovian Circus of Dreams

will perform covers of songs from the 1960s and '70s and some originals with his son, Ben. Proof of vaccination required. *Cost: \$15 (\$20 door)*

THURS 13

Way Behind The Sun

BEACON

7 p.m. Carter's | 424 Main St.
cartersrestaurantandlounge.com

A traditional country band with roots in Cold Spring will perform originals and covers. *Free*

FRI 14

Chris Smither

BEACON

8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

The folk and blues songwriter and guitarist will perform, along with the group Milton. Proof of vaccination required. *Cost: \$35 (\$40 door)*

FRI 14

Bad Tide / Bummer Camp

BEACON

9 p.m. Quinn's
330 Main St. | 845-202-7447
facebook.com/QuinnsBeacon

A rare Friday double bill brings together Beacon's "super gnarly surf/garage rock trio" and the "doomy '80s electro goth-pop" of Bummer Camp, according to Quinn's. Masks and proof of vaccination required. *Cost: \$10*

SAT 15

The Bookends Band

BEACON

8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

The band, known for its storytelling style, will perform originals and some classics. Proof of vaccination required. *Cost: \$25 (\$30 door)*

CIVIC

MON 10

City Council

BEACON

7 p.m. City Hall
1 Municipal Plaza | 845-838-5011
beaconny.gov

MON 10

School Board

BEACON

7 p.m. Beacon High School
101 Matteawan Road
845-838-6900
beaconk12.org

WED 12

Village Board

NELSONVILLE

7 p.m. Village Hall
258 Main St. | 845-265-2500
nelsonvilleny.gov

COVID-19 Notice

Check the event websites or **highlandscurrent.org/calendar** for any last-minute changes because of pandemic restrictions.

Saved by Banjos

Beacon shop hung on by strings during shutdown

By Alison Rooney

How did Jake's Main Street Music survive the pandemic shutdown? Banjos, of course.

"Surprisingly, in the beginning, everyone wanted to learn the banjo," says Jake Bernz, who runs the 8-year-old Beacon shop with his father, David. "We had 10 or 12 orders the first week. It didn't stay just banjo, but that's where it started, with lots of internet sales. Our walk-ins decreased because we saw customers only by appointment."

David noted that sales have grown every year except 2020, but "banjos helped us out a lot" when the economy shut down.

Although the store opened again a few months into the pandemic, it's now back to appointment-only because of Omicron, "although we take care of people," David says. "If our doors are closed, and someone knocks and just needs a guitar string, we'll get it for them."

The tentacles of the pandemic have extended to several facets of the business. The shop offers lessons, but only guitar is still in-person. The monthly song circles, which brought many locals into the store, have also been postponed.

The circles, which they hope to restore in the summer or sooner in a suitable outdoor space, grew out of get-togethers hosted for years by the Beacon Sloop Club. Musicians sit in a circle, one starts playing, others join in, then another begins a new tune.

"There were and are so many like-minded musicians, so many



Above: Jake and David Bernz perform at their Beacon shop. At left: Looking for a pandemic banjo? The instruments at Jake's range from \$230 to \$4,700. Photos provided

open mics turned into jam sessions at our store," Jake says. "We'd get people from different states, even other countries. They'd come up when they had gigs in New York City, come with all sorts of needs — often something they spotted on the website."

Some came to talk with David, who was a longtime friend and colleague of Pete Seeger and is a two-time Grammy winner — the first as the producer for Seeger's 2008 album, *At 89*, and the second as producer of Seeger's *Tomorrow's Children*, with the River-town Kids and Friends, which was

released in 2010.

"People ask me about Pete," David says. Others are unfamiliar but become curious after looking around the store. "A lot of young people don't know him, and see Pete's pictures on the wall here," he says. "I let them know who he was."

For Jake, Seeger was a family friend whom he knew while growing up. Jake is a songwriter who has released several albums. There's a folk lineage at work: David's father, Harold Bernz, helped start the *People's Songs* journal, the precursor to *Sing Out*, a quarterly centered on folk music.

When father and son envisioned a music store in Beacon, they began with the notion of a "wall of guitars" running front to back. But their plans went well beyond that.

"When you walk into our store, you'll see we specialize in stringed instruments," David says. "We have five humidifiers going and a wall of banjos, mandolins, as well as the guitars. Where the big box stores carry the main brands, we carry a range."

"We also keep songbooks and kits on hand for beginners," Jake adds. "A lot of parents with kids in elementary and middle school come in, needing a Book One for an instrument in school band."

"From the very start," David says, "we wanted to be a different kind of music store, catering to wants and needs, carrying high-quality instruments. We flipped the model of most modern music stores, places like Guitar Center and Alto Music — who we like a lot — you go into those stores and you see a little bit of everything, and probably somewhere in the back, there's a small humidified room; that's the acoustic model."

He adds: "Originally, what we didn't quite understand is that a music store is a community hub, at least with the type of instruments we carry, acoustic."

Along with the sales, which include used, vintage and consigned instruments, are lessons, most of which have moved to Zoom for now. Although not ideal, Jake says, "it's still a nice way for beginners to learn best practices."

If an instrument or lessons turn out not to be the right fit, that's OK. "After a while people can determine for themselves whether they have a natural affinity, and we can help them with making a switch," David says. Along with guitars and banjos, the store sells violins, mandolins, ukuleles, dulcimers, autoharps and resonator guitars.

Both father and son say they work well together. "There are little tussles, of course, but overall it's a privilege and a pleasure to run a music store together," says David. "I have two wonderful sons living here in Beacon; the other, Jesse, is a software engineer." Says Jake: "We play music together, have done lots of gigs together, so this was an easy place to fall into."

Jake's Main Street Music, at 393 Main St. in Beacon, is open by appointment. Call 845-765-8548 or visit jakesmainstreet-music.com.

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Roast Broccoli and Za'atar Chickpeas and Tahini-Yogurt sauce



Photo by Henry Weed

Za'atar, a Middle Eastern herb-and-seed blend, is available in the spice section of many supermarkets.

1 large head broccoli, cut into florets
2½ tablespoons olive oil, divided
2 to 3 teaspoons salt, divided, plus pepper to taste
2 cups cooked or canned chickpeas
2 tablespoons za'atar seasoning

Heat the oven to 400 degrees. In a large bowl, toss together the broccoli, 2 tablespoons olive oil, 1 to 2 teaspoons salt and pepper. Spread on a baking sheet and roast 12 to 15 minutes, or until slightly charred, rotating the pan halfway through.

Meanwhile, if using canned chickpeas, rinse and drain them, then pat them dry. In a medium bowl, toss chickpeas with the za'atar plus the remaining half-tablespoon olive oil, 1 teaspoon salt and a few grindings of black pepper. Spread on a baking sheet and add to the oven with the broccoli. Roast until they are turning dark brown and crispy, about 12 minutes, rotating pan halfway through.

Toss the roasted broccoli and chickpeas with enough tahini-yogurt sauce to coat. Serve warm, with additional tahini sauce on the side.

Tahini-Yogurt sauce

This versatile sauce tastes great on all kinds of roasted vegetables, from butternut squash to zucchini, and can also be drizzled on stewed or roasted beans, as in the recipe above.

1 cup loosely packed parsley and mint leaves, roughly chopped
⅔ cup tahini
½ cup Greek yogurt, preferably full fat
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 cloves garlic, minced, about 1 teaspoon
Salt and pepper to taste
Sesame seeds for serving, optional

If you have an immersion blender, combine all the ingredients except the sesame seeds in a flat-bottomed cup and blend until smooth. If not, mince the herbs very fine, then whisk everything together in a small bowl. Set aside until ready to use, or store, covered, in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

Mouths To Feed

Far Flung

By Celia Barbour

If I were a scholar, I'd happily get lost investigating how and why particular ingredients turn up in widely divergent cuisines. How did cardamom, for example, wind up flavoring both Indian curries and Scandinavian baked goods? Why does cilantro grace Mexican tacos as well as Vietnamese banh mi's?

Of course, it's not news that ingredients are globe travelers — we all know the story of the New World tomato's impact on Old World Italian cuisine, for example. But I am often

surprised to realize just how idiosyncratic certain foods are about choosing where to settle down and make themselves at home.

My latest explorations have concerned sesame seeds, a staple of Middle Eastern cuisine that also shows up plastered onto the outside of sushi rolls and flattened into Charleston benne wafers, among other dishes. Sesame seeds arrived in my mental inbox thanks to a Christmas gift I sent my older sister: exquisite halvah from a place I stumbled upon five years ago at Manhattan's Chelsea Market. Started by three women, Seed & Mill has since grown from a little kiosk into a bustling company whose products are sold nationwide. Yet they still consistently turn out some of the best halvah and tahini I know.

After I placed the order for my sister, I duplicated it for myself. After all, I feel a scholarly need to explore what happens when ingredients sent to her California kitchen

likewise arrive in my New York one.

I thus spent December experimentally nibbling away at tasty slabs of pistachio and dark chocolate halvah. But now that it's January, my thoughts have turned to foods that are leaner and cleaner. Fortunately, sesame fits the bill here, too, in the form of tahini sauce, whose fresh, brisk flavor contains soft bitter notes (from the sesame) and a lovely tartness (from the lemon juice). It goes just as well with roasted vegetables as raw salads, and makes a terrific accompaniment to braised meats or beans.

I was 16 when I first encountered tahini sauce at a hole-in-the-wall cafe on South Street in Philadelphia. It accompanied a

tableful of food: falafel, souvlaki, hummus, tzatziki, gyros — words that felt almost as marvelous on my Midwestern tongue as the dishes they referred to, and left me with an achy, wondrous sense of the mysteries and stumbling blocks the world still held in store for me. I loved each dish individually, and loved them even more mixed and matched into a flavorful chaos.

I had come to Philadelphia with a group of friends from Westtown School, the Quaker boarding school I'd been sent to in 10th grade. It's likely that, on the day in question, my friends and I had hitchhiked at least part of the 25-mile trip from our campus into the city (because why pay for a bus when you can travel for free?), and that we were buzzed on something or other we'd ingested in one of Philadelphia's storied parks.

Nowadays, my parent-friends like to look back in fear and amazement on the trouble we got into as teenagers, proclaiming that if our own kids find themselves in half as much, God help us all. We seem convinced that there's a diminishing global supply of the fairy godmothers that look out for teenagers.

Of course, kids have always gone places and done things their parents couldn't imagine. The exact nature of the adventures might change. But what persists is the urge to test boundaries — geographical, social, cultural, and, yes, even legal — in order to know, when the time comes, just where we belong.

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Rescued, and Discarded

Beacon writer digs out manuscript — and starts over

By Alison Rooney

Writers of a certain age: Do you have an unfinished manuscript stashed in a drawer? An incomplete masterpiece, waiting to be unearthed?

Jonathan Vickers of Beacon says he had a stack of dusty papers destined for oblivion, until fate — in the form of a writing workshop — intervened.

“Right before the pandemic,” Vickers explains, “I joined this workshop [for veterans; Vickers served in the Army during Vietnam] and wound up writing a short story, and some memoir pieces, which the group liked. The pandemic broke the group up, but I kept writing.”

“After a summer daytrip into New York City, I found it so dead I wrote an essay titled ‘Who Will Build Our Ark?’ comparing it to Noah and the flood. I began thinking about a book I had started to write in high school or college. I couldn’t get any further with it but kept the manuscript for all these years.”

He dug it out, hopeful, but once he began reading, ditched the idea of a revival. “It was terribly written, sophomoric — but I liked the idea of it.”

Vickers decided to start over. “What I realized in writing it the second time is that I hadn’t experienced enough of life back then,” he says. “Many years later, I was able to write the real thing.”

His novel, *The Smile of December*, was published by Dorrance, a self-publishing company, in October. The book’s dedication gives a hint at some of what it’s about, as Vickers explains.

“It’s dedicated to four men who were fathers or father figures to me: my real father, my stepfather, my godfather and my uncle through marriage,” he says. “The book is not autobiographical, but I can pick out things from my own life here and there.”

“The main character is the embodiment of the father I wish I had,” he says. “I did not get along with my father, who died when I was a senior in high school. The night he died, my first thought was, ‘Oh my God, I’m free.’ Then I grieved.”

While growing up in Dearborn, Michigan, Vickers aspired to be an actor and director, but his father disapproved. “I wound up majoring in theater at the University of Michigan,” he says. “When I graduated, I worked for a year in advertising, then, knowing the draft was after me, I signed up for three years in the Army and wound up posted to Heidelberg, Germany, as a personal secretary to a four-star general who commanded overseas forces.”

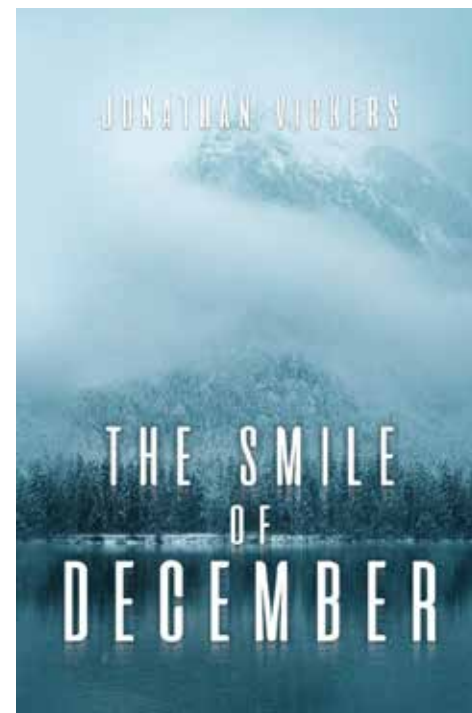


Jonathan Vickers

Upon his return, Vickers went back to advertising, while pursuing theater on the side. He transitioned to hospital administration but, once again, theater tugged at his sleeve. He couldn’t make it work financially so he returned to hospitals.

Eventually, he retired and pursued another art form: the novel, which he wrote in long-hand, because he doesn’t own a computer. It took six months for a first draft, with many hours spent at the Howland Public Library in Beacon and Blodgett Memorial Library in Fishkill. It took another nine months to revise, organize, locate a publisher and work with Dorrance on editing, design and promotion.

Vickers says he submitted the manuscript to traditional publishers but was told repeatedly they were not accepting submissions. “I didn’t want to wait,” he says. He’s been



happy with the experience, saying: “With self-publishing, you have a lot more control. When or if it sells, you get larger royalties, too.”

Vickers, with his wife, bought a home in Beacon in 2017 and moved in two years later, says he has no ideas yet for his next project. “I’m still on this one,” he says.

The next time round, though, Vickers says he might try a new approach, based on his experience with *The Smile of December* (the title is ironic, he notes). “When I first started, I did an outline,” he says. “But once I got into the characters’ heads, they told me where they wanted to go. It was a strange feeling.”

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Dandelions blooming in December and signs of global weirding

Photo by P. Doan

Roots and Shoots

New Year's Resolutions

Dandelions in December

By Pamela Doan

For much of the recent season, it's felt I've returned to living in the Pacific Northwest and its entirely different climate. Grey and drizzly, damp and chilly – I could be in Seattle.



The dislocation of unfamiliar weather brought up similar responses in my landscape. Blooming dandelions in the lawn, yellow pops of color on the forsythia, and parsley in a pot on the patio was happily green and growing until this week.

"Global weirding" is a phrase used frequently by climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe. She uses it to describe all the changes we notice and the extreme weather upending lives around the world. In her recent book, *Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World*, she lays out her case for not giving up on lowering global emissions because we still have time before we tip into the worst-case scenarios. I'm with her in my heart but not always in my mind when facing down news headlines, as are many people.

During a walk in the woods, frozen soil crunched under my boots. Soil saturated with rain and then frozen overnight from a 30-degree drop in temperature covered the bare areas of the path with icy crystals of dirt. The day after, it was soggy and muddy. Noticing just the simple interactions that surround us, there's a lot of global weirding on display.

Do we need resolutions this year? Personally I'm feeling like the ongoing grind of the pandemic and urgency over the climate crisis overwhelm any single efforts at self-improvement or goals to grow more flavorful tomatoes. It's time to think bigger and more selflessly. What can I do? What can you do? Now, tomorrow, the day after that? Gardeners gotta garden, so let's start there.

This year garden with a simple mantra and be kind to your landscape. Kindness in the garden means thinking about what the garden needs and how it will thrive as an ecosystem. It doesn't mean sacrificing your favorite ornamental plants or getting rid of your lawn (but it could if you're ready).

For example, if your landscape includes a lot of ornamental plantings and lawn, it doesn't have much to offer a butterfly or a bird. Ornamental plants are there for show, not function. Even if they are well-adapted to our growing conditions, they are out of their native habitat and don't benefit flora and fauna here in the Hudson Valley.

Some examples of common ornamental plantings include forsythia, boxwood, most lilies, most hydrangea, hybrid species in general and most of the annuals that proliferate at garden centers in spring. We fall back on quick pops of color and hope for reliability when the deer don't eat something. All of that is interesting and completely fine when




Baby and Dog

This feature is designed as a counterweight to all the bad news in the world that weighs people down. We could share a photo of a baby, or a photo of a dog, but we are giving you both. How many newspapers can say that? Steven Higashide and Hayley Richardson of Cold Spring shared this shot of their son, Ryan, with Jia. If you have a photo of a baby and a dog, submit it for consideration to editor@highlandscurrent.org.

in combination with other plants and shrubs that contribute more than beauty.

Consider dedicating an area of the landscape to native plants that are both food sources and habitat for insects that pollinate plants. This includes bees, butterflies, moths and beetles, among others. They show up pretty quickly when there's something for them and I love nothing better than a flower that attracts an interesting variety of visitors. What to plant depends on sun, soil and water.

Organic approaches are a major part of being kind. Synthetic chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides have far-reaching effects when misapplied and used instead of building soil health and alternative methods of insect and weed control. Chemical fertilizer use is higher in residential lawns than in agriculture, contributing to water pollution and harmful algae blooms.

Younger people won't even remember what

a car windshield looked like after a road trip, covered in smashed bugs. Insect populations have declined sharply worldwide by all counts due to pesticide use and development. Instead of poisonous weed killers, try techniques like smothering, cutting and planting densely.

If you're not sure if your impulse to buy a certain plant or pursue a direction in the landscape improves upon the landscape in an ecological way, check out local resources like the Pollinator Pathway group and the Cornell Cooperative Extension. Classes offered by local libraries, nonprofit groups and other gardeners can reveal other possibilities. I prioritize information from sources that are based on scientific research. For an online search, this means sites that end with .org or .edu.

Let kindness grow in 2022.

NOTICE

The Philipstown Planning Board will hold their regular monthly meeting on **Thursday, January 20th, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. virtually via Zoom.**

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Ae3h9lo4QQOvg7q7tJYmA

Webinar ID: 827 1151 4534 Passcode: 113360

One tap mobile: 1-646-558-8656,,82711514534#,,,113360# US

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

OR email crockett@philipstown.com or nzuckerman@philipstown.com to request login information before 7 pm on January 20th, 2022.

If you are unable to join in person, the meeting will be viewable on [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com), search for Philipstown Planning Board January 2022.

NOTICE

The Philipstown Planning Board will meet on **Sunday, January 9th, 2022 at 9:30am** to inspect the following site: Sadlon & Wenske Residential Site Plan, 825 Route 9D, Garrison, NY 10524 TM#71-1-13.111

NOTICE

The Philipstown Planning Board will meet on **Sunday, January 9th, 2022 at 10:30am** to inspect the proposed new Snake Hill Road entrance of following site: Garrison Golf Club PDD/Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, 2015 Route 9 Garrison, NY 10524 TM# 60-1-59.2 & 59.3

Climate Plans Coming into Focus

State asks public for input

By Brian PJ Cronin

In 2019, New York State passed what it hailed as America's most ambitious state climate law: the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. Among other goals, it requires the state to get 70 percent of its power from renewable sources by 2030, reach zero-emissions electricity by 2040, and net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

What the law didn't make quite clear was how the state planned to accomplish those lofty goals. Over the past week, it has filled in some details.

At the end of December, the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) released a draft of a scoping plan by the NY Climate Action Council, as well as an updated greenhouse gas emissions inventory and a report that examines how climate change disproportionately impacts disadvantaged communities.

More recently, on Wednesday (Jan. 5), Gov. Kathy Hochul laid out in her State of the State address plans to make New York "the renewable energy capital of the nation."

Hochul's proposal includes investing at least \$1 billion to support electric vehicle infrastructure, envisioning fast-charging

stations deployed along highway corridors. The chargers will be needed, since she plans on having the state's vehicle fleet and all school buses electrified by 2035. The governor also recently enacted legislation that requires all new passenger vehicles sold after 2034 in New York to be zero-emissions.

The greenhouse gas emissions report calculated that 28 percent of the state's emissions are coming from transportation, and that total emissions have fallen 17 percent since 2005. The state's abundant forests and wetlands are naturally removing about 8 percent of greenhouse gas emissions through carbon sequestration.

Although the state has completed a greenhouse gas inventory every year for decades, this marks the first time that it was done within the framework of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, said Maureen Leddy, director of the DEC's Office of Climate Change. Unlike in the past, it took into account "upstream" emissions, or those emissions made out of state in order to bring energy into New York.

"This is about more than just what we burn in the state," Leddy explained. "It's the entire process of extracting, transporting and delivering that fuel to New York. That's a cumulative impact that we need to be accounting for."

Once the upstream emissions were included, the scoping plan demands for increased in-state renewable energy and fewer plants powered by imported natural gas became clear. By losing the combustion emissions from fossil fuels and the associated upstream emissions from those fuels, "you get a big decline," Leddy said.

Another target is methane, the second most abundant greenhouse gas after

for as long as 30 years. Agriculture, specifically cows, are another significant source, and the scoping report notes that diverting waste from landfills and "alternative manure management and animal feeding" practices will be critical in hitting the state targets.

There's another leakage addressed by the scoping plan: that of industry leaving the state as a result of its aggressive climate plans.

The plan shares strategies to address this, including financial and technical assistance. "It doesn't help anybody" if businesses move to a state with fewer environmental regulations, said Leddy. "We don't want to drive businesses out of the state as a result of this law; we want it to be an economic opportunity."

The state is accepting public comment on the 861-page scoping plan through April. Leddy encourages people to focus on sections in which they have personal interest or expertise "because it covers everything! It's power sectors, it's agriculture, it's forestry, it's waste, it's everything."

She added: "A lot of climate discussions tend to be pretty negative or focused on sacrifice. There's a lot of positive opportunities here. When you think about electric school buses, it's not only about greenhouse gas emissions, but also that you don't have schoolchildren inhaling particulate matter from diesel. I think those health benefits matter to people a lot."

How To Comment

To read the scoping plan, see climate.ny.gov. To comment, visit bit.ly/scoping-comment or write: Draft Scoping Plan Comments, NYSEERDA, 17 Columbia Circle, Albany, NY 12203-6399. All comments will be posted to the New York State Climate Act website.

carbon dioxide. Methane traps 25 times the amount of heat that carbon dioxide does, but fades in the atmosphere after nine years, while carbon dioxide can stick around for centuries. "We'll see a lot quicker reaction by reducing methane," said Leddy.

The natural gas industry is a significant source of methane, but so are landfills, where decaying trash can emit methane

Two Beacon Projects on Agenda

Planning Board to review development plans

By Jeff Simms

The Beacon Planning Board will hold a public hearing on Tuesday (Jan. 11) to hear feedback on a development proposed for 364 Main St. and continue its review of plans to convert the former Reformed Church on Route 9D into a performance space.

The board held hearings in November and December to review any environmen-

tal impact of the 364 Main St. proposal. It could sign off on those this month while holding public hearings on the project's subdivision and site plans.

According to materials submitted to the board, the developer proposes to "further activate the Main Street frontage" of the former Citizens Bank site with benches and green space. In all, the development, if approved, would be 35,000 square feet, with 8,800 square feet of commercial space on the first floor and 20 apartments on the second and third floors. A 1,600-square-foot common residential

area is also planned for the first floor.

The original proposal had included four floors but was scaled back in August to three, eliminating the need, under local law, for the City Council to issue a special-use permit.

The board on Tuesday will also continue its review of plans to renovate the former Reformed Church of Beacon into a 500-person event space with restaurant and bar and replace the adjacent parsonage with a 30-room hotel. The overgrown cemetery behind the church would be restored and opened as a public park with a path connecting Beekman Street and 9D.

Because the church is included in the city's historic district, the developer will

need a special-use permit from the Planning Board.

The Prophecy Theater group, which purchased the 162-year-old building last year, has proposed 31 parking spaces for the site, saying it would rely on public parking nearby, including at the Metro-North station, for overflow.

The city's zoning code does not allow for event venues in the area but does allow for hotels and "hotel-related" accessory uses. However, the board and its planning consultant, John Clarke, have said the submitted plans suggest the hotel would be an accessory to the event space, not the other way around.



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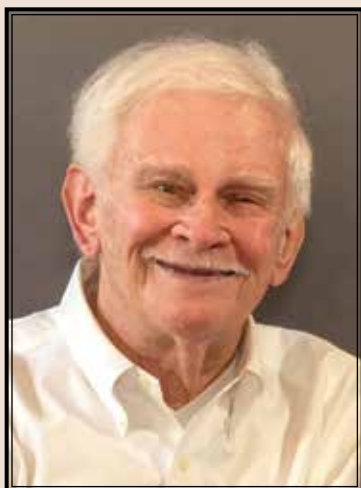
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William "Bill" Hicks

Bill Hicks, Pioneering Fundraiser and Longtime Garrison Resident, Dies at 85

William "Bill" Hicks, the first development director of Joseph Papp's New York Public Theater and an innovative fundraiser who tapped the gay community for friendly political candidates, died December 16 at his home in Pittsboro, NC. His husband, William "Bill" Sadler, was at his side. Bill, 85, a longtime resident of Garrison and New York City, had suffered from COPD and related heart disease.

After receiving a full scholarship in 1954, Bill Hicks enrolled in Princeton University (class of 1958), where he was active in the Triangle Club. From Princeton he embarked on an acting career. He was accepted at Stella Adler Studio in Manhattan and later joined Las Vegas and road productions of *Gypsy* ("I played the rear end of the cow," he loved to recount), *The Boy Friend*, *Take Her, She's Mine* and *The World of Suzie Wong*.

Realizing that he "would always play Laertes, never Hamlet," Bill moved to a front-of-house job at Joseph Papp's New York Shakespeare Festival, where he headed the box office in Central Park. From there he became the first development director of the Festival and of Papp's Public Theatre. During the theater company's heady days in the 1960s and 1970s, he helped develop the legendary fundraising parties that would help to underwrite such hits as *Hair*, *A Chorus Line* and *That Championship Season* and draw young stars in the making, such as Glenn Close, Colleen Dewhurst, Morgan Freeman, James Earl Jones, Raul Julia, Kevin Kline, Al Pacino, George C. Scott, Meryl Streep, and Sam Waterston.

From the theater, Bill took his fundraising skills to local and statewide politics. He conceived and spearheaded the first large gay fundraiser in New York for his friend Gerry Studds, the Massachusetts congressman, which opened eyes for many that the gay community could be a major source of funds for compatible candidates. He also raised money pro-bono for Lambda Legal Defense in its early days.

In 1968 Bill met his lifelong partner and later husband, Bill Sadler, a Wall Streeter, while on a trip to Puerto Rico. They were together 53 years and known by many simply as "The Bills."

The Bills bought a weekend home in Garrison in 1995, which eventually became their primary residence. Bill found new causes to aid. He and Bill Sadler helped start an endowment for supporting gymnastics at The U.S. Military Academy at West Point that today totals millions. He was also an active board member and president of the Putnam History Museum in Cold Spring.

Bill will be remembered by his many friends for his droll wit and devilish humor, his mischievous smile and laughter at his own foibles, his ribald stories about himself, his love of books and travel and anything that stimulated his curiosity, and his near encyclopedic memory of film and theater. He was known to regale listeners with his takes of encounters with notable women, including Queen Elizabeth, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Marlene Dietrich and Elizabeth Taylor.

Of Finnish descent on his mother's side and proud of his heritage, blond-haired Bill delighted friends with the singing of Finnish drinking songs. He relished being the Methodist boy who grew up in Hewlett, a heavily Jewish community on the South Shore of Long Island, and his election as president of a local synagogue's "Sons of Israel."

In addition to his husband, Bill is survived by his brother, Richard (Miriam Solomon), of Tucson, nieces Karen Dennis and Janice Marsh, both of Phoenixville, PA, and Kristen Park of Simsbury, CT, and a dear friend, David Rhodes of New York City and London, whom Bill regarded as almost a godson. He was predeceased by his parents, Spencer and Elsie Leidi Hicks.

A memorial service will be held when Covid allows.

PAID NOTICE

Killing *(from Page 1)*

In a statement on Dec. 30, five days after the killing, it asked that anyone with information contact the department and said that "at this time, it appears to be an isolated incident, and there is no danger to the residents of Beacon."

On Wednesday (Jan. 5), the department denied a Freedom of Information Law request for the police report on the incident from *The Current* 29 minutes after it was submitted.

If the death is found to be a homicide, it would be Beacon's first in five years. A 25-year-old man visiting the city was shot to death in 2016 at the Davies South Terrace apartment complex; no arrests were made.

In 2019, a man was stabbed to death in Beacon but a grand jury found that a suspect had acted in self-defense.

Selaine Garcia, who identified Vivo as an uncle, established a GoFundMe campaign online that raised \$10,708 for funeral expenses.

Garcia wrote that Vivo "was beloved in the Beacon community. He was a quiet, gentle man. My family and I loved him dearly. We are devastated at the thought of how he may have spent his final moments."

Property records showed that Vivo lived at the Forrestal Heights apartment complex. He is survived by his sisters, Iris Colón, Ginette Velez and Yolanda Colón. A wake is scheduled for Sunday (Jan. 9) at Libby Funeral Home.

Vivo grew up in the violent, high-crime Bronx neighborhood known as "Fort Apache," and moved to the Highlands after serving in the U.S. Marines, said David Eberle, a friend who connected with Vivo because both men had served in the military.

To most, Vivo was known for walking around Beacon alone, often wearing near head-to-toe camouflage, but "I knew him quite a bit better than that," Eberle said. "He was a very quiet man who had not had an easy life."

Eberle said that Vivo suffered post-traumatic stress disorder after his time in the Marines, and for that reason was mostly a loner. "I think a lot of that had to do with keeping problems inside. When I got to know him, he was a kind and caring person," he said.

Eberle said that Vivo helped him from

time to time with handyman projects around the house. Vivo had spent the night at his home about a month before he was killed.

Vivo also helped out at BJ's Restaurant on Main Street by sweeping the sidewalks, cleaning, sorting recyclables and stocking soda shelves. Showing up before daylight, he would occasionally make runs to Key Food if a delivery was delayed.

"All that's missing right now is Scout," said Brenda Sims, who co-owns the restaurant with her mother, early Wednesday morning while prepping the kitchen. "He would be up front right now doing his routine."

Sims served as a master sergeant in the U.S. Army before retiring in 2004, and shared the military bond with Vivo, as well. "He was still a soldier out here on the street," she explained, noting that Vivo continued to train by himself "in the mountains."

She agreed that Vivo walked as much as he did because he found it therapeutic. "That was his release. Some people go for a long run to clear their head; his was going out to walk," Sims said. "Sometimes I would pay for him to take an Uber, but more often than not, he wanted to walk."

Sims shared notes Vivo had left for her after stocking or rearranging shelves at the restaurant. Signed "end transmission" or "signed off," the notes were timed and dated, detailed reminders of products that needed to be ordered.

Sims said that she fed Vivo a Christmas meal on the day of his death. That morning, she recalled, he'd hugged everyone working at the restaurant.

"He was an asset," she said. "He did everything to help this place operate on a daily basis."

Eberle said on Tuesday, 10 days after Vivo's death, that he was reminded of the chorus of James Taylor's "Fire and Rain":

*I've seen fire and I've seen rain
I've seen sunny days that I thought
would never end
I've seen lonely times when I could not
find a friend
But I always thought that I'd see you
again*

"You don't always [see them again] and you wish you'd had the chance to say some other things," he said.

Recent Deaths

Beacon

Lisa Altomare, 63
Angel Antongiorgi, 72
Anne Bellissimo, 95
Amy Blacharski, 52
Pat Mollach Cassidy, 59
Catalino Claudio, 79
Joseph Condon Jr., 67
Ismael Diaz, 72
Bill Decker, 89
Nancy Eraca, 84
Martha Jolly, 66

Greta Kapusinsky, 72
Reginald Norton, 67
Rose Robinson, 100
Ruth Schiller, 98
Kenneth Tomlins, 66
Michael Torhan, 70
Rene Vivo, 65

Philpstown

Anne Endler, 67
Bill Hicks, 85
Kathy Reydel, 78

For obituaries, see highlandscurrent.org/obits.

Puzzles

CROSS CURRENT

ACROSS

1. Biting remark

5. Spheres

9. Victory

12. Skin care brand

13. Joel or Ethan of Hollywood

14. Parisian pal

15. Hourly pay

16. Batman's hood

17. Beer container

18. Rebuff

19. Acting coach Hagen

20. Crazy

21. Actor Brynner

23. Old Olds

25. Mourn

28. Hit song by the Oak Ridge Boys

32. Grown-up

33. Snake poison

34. Autobiography

36. Herbal tea

37. Geese formation

38. Computer key

39. Lose color

42. TiVo precursor

44. Idle or Clapton

48. Khan title

49. Close

50. Handle

51. Dict. info

52. Adriatic port

53. Author Hunter

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

12 13 14

15 16 17

18 19 20

21 22 23 24

25 26 27 28 29 30 31

32 33

34 35 36

37 38

39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47

48 49 50

51 52 53

54 55 56

54. Bygone jet

55. Staff leader?

56. Faxed

8. NBC sketch show

9. Texas city

10. Apple computer

11. Boy, in Barcelona

20. Features of romantic comedies

22. Loosen

24. Graceland idol

25. Felon's flight

26. Citric beverage

27. Silent

29. Pig-poke link

30. Director Howard

31. Soul, to Sartre

35. Disclose

36. "Fab!"

39. Crazes

40. Mellows

41. Loony

43. Give a darn

45. Carry on

46. One-named supermodel

47. Penny

49. The Voice network

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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 more effervescent (8)

2 small fan-leaved trees (9)

3 put in order of importance (11)

4 enters a telephone number (5)

5 in an overeager way (11)

6 having a stale smell (5)

7 medicos (4)

SOLUTIONS

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SUDO CURRENT

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

Puzzle Page Sponsored by



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Answers for Dec. 31 Puzzles

1. PILLED, 2. PRECISION, 3. PINIONS, 4. CREAKED, 5. CONNORS, 6. CROSSPIECE, 7. HILLIER

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

SPORTS



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VARSITY ROUNDUP

By Skip Pearlman

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Beacon came within one bucket of picking up its sixth win on Wednesday (Jan. 5) but couldn't get a shot to fall in the final seconds as Cornwall Central earned a 54-53 victory on its home court.

Beacon got off to a strong start, leading 15-5 after one quarter, 24-16 at halftime and 42-35 at the end of three.

But a 19-11 Cornwall run in crunch time clinched the game. The Dragons tied it up at 51-51 on a three-pointer with a minute to play, then went up by three with 30 seconds left on a layup and free throw.

Beacon scored with 20 seconds remaining to pull within one, 54-53, and got a steal from Darien Gillins with 15 seconds left but couldn't get a pair of layups or a three-pointer at the buzzer to fall.

"The kids fought hard until the last second," said Assistant Coach Patrick Schetter. "But Cornwall made one more shot than we did. The energy and the fight was there, but we just didn't hit the shots at the end."

Gillins led the Bulldogs with 16 points, while Jason Komisar and Gavin LaDue each had seven.

"Darien played well," Schetter said. "Our offense went through him tonight. And we played great team defense. That's been lacking sometimes. Chase Green and Adrian Beato played great defense, and LaDue was also outstanding. Jack Antalek and Leo Gecaj gave us great minutes off the bench."

Beacon defeated John Jay East Fishkill on Dec. 30, 82-53, in the final game of a tournament at Ketcham High School; Gillins scored 22, Wilson Ciccone had 13 and Komisar, 12. The Bulldogs (5-4) were scheduled to host Goshen today (Jan. 7) at 6:30 p.m. as part of the Terrence Wright Memorial games.

Haldane improved to 6-1 on Thursday (Jan. 6) by defeating Croton, 73-39; every Blue Devils player scored. The team is scheduled to host North Salem at 6:15 p.m. today (Jan. 7), although the high school is limiting spectators at home games under a COVID-19 policy announced on Wednesday. Each player will receive four laminated passes for family and friends. Home games are streamed at events.local-live.tv/school/haldane-hs.



Beacon native Leandra Echi scored 15 points for Sam Houston State in a 132-55 win.

Photo by DJ Shafer/SHS



Darien Gillins, shown here in a game last year, had 16 points in a close loss on Wednesday (Jan. 5) at Cornwall.

File photo by S. Pearlman

live.tv/school/haldane-hs.

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Beacon dropped a 47-36 decision to Cornwall on Tuesday (Jan. 3) and fell, 36-31, to Goshen on Thursday to fall to 3-4 on the season.

Against Cornwall, the Bulldogs were led by Reilly Landisi, who scored 22 points. Devyn Kelly had six and Daveya Rodriguez had four.

"We were missing a few players, but we played hard and with energy against a more senior-laden team," said Coach Christina Dahl. "Our defense kept us in the game until the end, but we struggled offensively. We'll watch film and look forward to correcting our mistakes and getting the chance to play Cornwall again in a few weeks at their place."

The Bulldogs are scheduled to host Spackenkill at 4:15 p.m. today (Jan. 7) as part of the Terrence Wright Memorial games.

Haldane (2-5) was set to host Croton on Wednesday but the game was postponed. It plans to host Palisade Prep at 6:15 p.m. on Monday (Jan. 10); in-person attendance is limited but the game will be streamed online.

ALUMNI UPDATES

Leandra Echi, who scored more than 1,000 points during her career at Beacon High School, is playing this year for Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas, as a redshirt senior after transfer-

ring from Indiana State. She is averaging 5 points and three rebounds per game for the Kats (5-6). Western Athletic Conference games stream on ESPN+.

Elijah Hughes of Beacon has been playing for both the Utah Jazz and its G League franchise, the Salt Lake City Stars, this season. He scored 22 points for the Stars in a win over Cleveland on Dec. 22 and, after being recalled to the Jazz, had a late basket against Minnesota on Dec. 31.

HALL OF FAME

Beacon High School inducted the 2021 class into its Sports Hall of Fame with a ceremony on Dec. 3 at St. Rocco's Society. The honorees were Coach Jose Rodriguez for the 1997 and 2004 boys' track and field teams; Emily Eraca (2013) for golf; John Humeston (1970) for wrestling; Sara Sheehan (2010) for soccer; and Northern Morgan (1961) for cross-country. "After canceling our 2020 ceremony, it was extremely rewarding getting back together in person," said athletic director John Giametta. The Hall of Fame was established in 1996 and is named for Eric Romanino, who worked for the district for 34 years.