Police Turn to Home Surveillance

Putnam sheriff says devices helped solve Garrison robbery

By Leonard Sparks

Home security cameras from Amazon's Ring, Google's Nest and other companies are filming more than the escapades of bears, bobcats, foxes and other wild animals.

The electronic eyes are also capturing people breaking into residences and vehicles, and stealing packages from porches, making them a technology that police agencies are turning to with increasing frequency and privacy advocates are watching with heightened concern.

Putnam County Sheriff Kevin McCo-ville said he was surprised that the department did not have an account set up with Neighbors, the networking app that allows Ring users to share footage with each other.

In June, Ring announced that police agencies would be allowed access to Neigh-

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No Way to Right of Way Changes, Says Judge

Stops cell-tower work based on access question

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

A New York state court judge on Wednesday (Feb. 23) stopped Home-
land Towers from transforming a right of way it needs to reach a Nelsonville cell tower site and predicted opponents of the company's access plans would prevail.

The action by Putnam County Supreme Court Judge Thomas Davis, who issued a preliminary injunction against Homeland, came less than 24 hours after Mayor Mike Bowman told the Village Board that the cell tower firm expected in June to start construction of a 95-foot tower disguised as a fir tree. Located off Rockledge Road, a private, dead-end lane intersecting Moffatt Road, the 9.6-acre site overlooks the Cold Spring Cemetery.

Homeland's parcel can be accessed through a right of way that runs through the property of neighbors. Homeland wants to remove trees and widen and resurface the pathway and dig trenches for hundreds of

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FIVE QUESTIONS: ROBERT CALDERISI

By Chip Rowe

Robert Calderisi, of Cold Spring, is the author, most recently, of Cecil Rhodes and Other Statues: Dealing Plainly with the Past.

For the unfamiliar, can you introduce us to Rhodes?

He was born in 1853 and died in 1902, at age 48. He arrived in southern Africa from England in 1870, at age 17, created the De Beers diamond monopoly and bought up gold mines and in 1890, at age 37, was named prime minister of the Cape Colony (South Africa). He had a tremendous impact in his day.

How did neighboring Rhodesia come about?

In 1890 Rhodes invaded the 750,000 square miles that would become Rhodesia — he didn’t name it — and is now Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi, without firing a shot. He told the local king he was interested in mineral rights, then sent in hundreds of “pioneers” to add the region to the empire. He didn’t do it for the money but because he genuinely believed British rule would benefit everyone. It’s not very different from how many, if not most, people in the West still regard Africa. We have things to teach them, rather than things to learn from them.

You were a Rhodes scholar. Is that what brought you to the topic?

As a benefactor of the man, I was interested in knowing more about him. I’d heard him described as a “white supremacist” or “warmonger” and decided during the pandemic shutdown to see what actually was true. I found those descriptions to be an exaggeration. Also, I’ve been exasperated, like a lot of people, with the way political discourse has deteriorated into a big shouting match, and I resent people who make up convenient facts to suit their case. History, like human beings, is much too complicated to sum up in a few words.

Denouncing Rhodes today as an “imperialist” is like denouncing an American for being a “patriot.” It was part of being British, French or German at the time — large countries felt they had a right to invade countries where the people didn’t look like themselves. Rhodes didn’t believe that Africans were subhuman. He felt the British were superior because of their favorable history. It was paternalistic, but he thought Africans just needed time, education and a good example before taking their rightful place in society.

There were efforts in South Africa and at Oxford to remove statues of Rhodes. How should we handle statues of contested figures?

I don’t believe everybody in the past should be exonerated. Standards change, but some moral values are eternal. I was looking for evidence that Rhodes was a blatant racist but I could not find examples of where he was unkind to anyone because of the color of their skin. At the same time, I’m not sure I would want to spend an evening with him. He was a hard-driving, sometimes ruthless businessman, and a bit of a megalomaniac. When asked how long he expected to be remembered, he said, “4,000 years.” Yet he was generous throughout his life. It was a mix that you’d expect in a complex, busy man of his day.

You lived in Africa for 30 years. What took you there?

I was interested in international development, in particular, fighting world poverty. Most of the poorest countries, despite all the efforts that have been made over the last 60 years, are in Africa. I worked with the Canadian government and then for the World Bank in Washington, D.C., which is the largest foreign-aid agency in the world. I love Africa and its people, but its governments are atrocious. The people have never been exposed to anything else. They don’t know, in a sense, what to expect.
Arrest Made in Garrison Robbery

Suspect is Newburgh man on parole

By Chip Rowe

A City of Newburgh man was arrested last week in the armed robbery of $228 from the Gulf gas station on Route 9D and transferred to U.S. Marshalls for prosecution on federal charges.

The Sheriff’s Department said David M. Peres, 23, was arrested on Feb. 18 after a joint investigation by the Sheriff’s Department, Newburgh Police Department, New Windsor police and Federal Bureau of Investigation.

The Sheriff's Department said in its statement that after consulting with federal prosecutors, “it was determined that federal prosecution would be most appropriate.

Peres was turned over to U.S. Marshalls and arraigned on Feb. 18 in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of White Plains on two charges: Hobbs Act robbery and brandishing a firearm. He was denied bail.

An affidavit filed by an FBI agent as part of Peres' prosecution said the license-plate reader on Route 9D near Boscobel first captured a black Hyundai hatchback passing the Gulf station while driving toward Cold Spring at 7:07 a.m., roughly 30 minutes before the robbery.

Two minutes later, according to the affi- davit, surveillance footage from the Sunoco at Main Street and Route 9D in Cold Spring showed a man later identified as Peres buying Swisher Sweets cigars from the station. Peres showed the clerk a picture of his identification on his phone and lowered his face covering before completing the purchase and leaving at 7:13 a.m., said the FBI.

The license-plate reader captured the Hyundai driving back toward the Gulf station at 7:15 a.m., and footage from a home surveillance camera north of the gas station showed the same car driving south on 9D at 7:21 a.m., and 15 seconds later, driving north again. The home surveillance also caught someone walking south toward the Gulf at 7:37 a.m., about one minute before the robbery, and then running north again at 9:40 a.m., according to the FBI.

After responding to the Gulf, deputies deployed a K-9 dog and followed footprints in the snow from the station to an area off Route 9D and Snake Road, ending at tire tracks that “appeared to back into a parking spot and then pull straight out onto Snake Hill Rd,” said the FBI.

The car's registered owner was traced to a woman living in Fort Montgomery. Shown the surveillance footage, she identified Peres, saying he was her daughter’s boyfriend, according to the affidavit. The woman also said the clothing worn by Peres belonged to her daughter and she gave investigators permission to search her house. The FBI said the search led to a container of zip ties.

A man named David Peres of the same age was released on parole in November for state prison after serving a sentence for burglary. David M. Peres, then 17, of Highland Falls, was arrested in 2015 with two others for breaking into farm stands in Orange County.

Saif Saleem, who was filling in for his cousin, station manager Eelaaf Najam, said that he was threatened with a revolver before handing over cash from the register and being ordered to zip-tie his own hands together.

After using scissors to cut the zip tie and free his hands, Saleem called 911. “I thought he was going to shoot me,” he said.

The Granite Mountain Preserve was created in 2017 when the land trust bought 28 acres to expand the Granite Mountain Preserve, the Hudson Highlands Land Trust said on Feb. 18.

The land trust said it will assess the 28 acres — as well as 91 acres it manages adjacent to the preserve that are owned by Putnam County — for trail opportunities and connections.

The Granite Mountain Preserve was created in 2017 when the land trust purchased three parcels containing 358 acres. It grew to 400 acres in 2018.

Beacon Woman Involved in Fatal Crash

Connecticut teen killed in early-morning accident

A Beacon woman was involved in an early-morning crash on I-684 in Westchester County on Monday (Feb. 21) in which a 15-year-old Connecticut girl was killed, according to the New York State Police.

Troopers said they responded to the northbound lane in the Town of Harrison at 1:24 a.m. For unknown reasons, a Hyundai Sonata driven by Twanna A. Spalding, 19, of Waterbury, Connecticut, struck the median guardrail and was disabled in the left lane.

Spalding and her passenger, Destiny Coleman, 15, also of Waterbury, exited the vehicle, which was struck by a Toyota Prius driven by Elaine M. Montleon, 38, of Beacon, and pushed into Coleman, who died at the scene.

Spalding and Montleon were transported to Westchester Medical Center for non-life-threatening injuries, police said.

Putnam Valley Donates Land

Adds 28 acres to Granite Mountain

Putnam Valley has donated 28 acres to expand the Granite Mountain Preserve, the Hudson Highlands Land Trust said on Feb. 18.

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Veterans redesign

You may have noticed some changes to the Memorial Building on Main Street in Beacon. The veterans’ organizations of the building have more plans in store. The building committee, comprised of leadership of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion and the Marine Corps League, have embraced Mayor Lee Kyriacou’s beautification of Main Street initiative.

Our first foray was artistic. Art, particularly public art, often engenders strong reactions; indeed, that’s one of its purposes. Our first entry into public art, the eagle, has received universal praise, and we are gratified.

You may have noticed that the decaying coats of arms of the military services, formerly on the building’s pediment, have been replaced with simple, elegant letters identifying the building by name. In the coming months, in collaboration with the city, we hope to develop a more elevated landscape leading the way to a more elegant and inviting Main Street corridor. We are also looking to upgrade the universal accessibility of the front portico of the building.

Less visible is the professional kitchen, and the restroom upgrades that we installed during the pandemic. We are now Americans with Disabilities Act compliant. Hopefully, we will introduce these changes to the residents of Beacon at our inaugural comedy night on April 2. Look for the announcement of what will surely be an exciting and fun evening.

John MacEnroe, Beacon

Thank a teacher

As COVID-19 restrictions begin to subside, it is a good time to thank the educators in our community for their perseverance, creativity and commitment. Throughout the Hudson Valley, we saw a number of schools respond in a variety of ways to pandemic impact. In our own community, our children largely were present in the classroom over the last two years even as their teachers’ own children may have had completely different experiences.

Amid the rapid anti-school rhetoric dominating the media, we ought to be reminded that our teachers are there for us. They are there for our children, our grief, our funerals, our dysfunction and our sickness. They celebrate our joys, but they carry the burden of our family’s emotional, economic, health and psychological distress. As quick as we are to criticize and as valuable as good criticism is, we must never lose sight of their service, humanity and the value of their work.

It is no accident that the long anti-public school sentiment that pervades much political discourse has eventually led to the diminishment of funds and support for educators. This discourse has led to a steady increase in the number of early retirements and a steady decrease in the number of individuals entering the profession. Simply put, the profession is not valued. Thus, we are witnessing the erosion of a system that, although it has its issues, has served this country well. A democracy depends upon a level of competence and participation in order to find its vitality.

This latest current of anti-educator rhetoric has manifested itself in verbal and physical attacks on teachers and school boards who merely seek to provide an informed, healthy and safe learning environment. It’s sad to think that, even as teachers carry the weight of our lives during one of the most trying times in our country’s history, we still permit a culture of uniform disregard for the contribution educators make. While the lack of gratitude is shameful, the impact on our democracy is dangerous.

If you can, please take some time to thank a teacher and encourage young people to consider the profession, or at least don’t deride those who pursue it.

James Hoch, Garrison

Hoch is a former member of the Garrison school board.

Nelsonville sewers

As a resident of Nelsonville, I was pleased to read that Philipstown is considering sharing some of the federal funding they are going to receive with Nelsonville (“Garrison Water and Behavioral Hub Seen as Relief Priorities,” Feb. 18).

The article specifically mentions sewers for Nelsonville. Yes, the system in Cold Spring was designed to include Nelsonville and it has been a topic for every incarnation of the Village Board. When I was a member of a previous Village Board, we investigated the issue thoroughly and even solicited estimates for a sewer connection to Cold Spring.

Our investigations came to the same conclusion every time: The project is cost-prohibitive for a village the size of Nelsonville. We received estimates from $7 million to $10 million for the installation of sewers connected to Cold Spring’s system. That would include only the homes closest to the line (maybe three blocks from Main Street) and does not include the costs that would be incurred by homeowners to connect to the system and decommission their current septic systems.

We investigated getting a bond for the project but found that paying the bond every year would be far more than the village’s current yearly budget. Nelsonville

(Continued on Page 5)
residents would very likely see their taxes increase at least three- to fourfold. Nelsonville would not receive any revenue as that would be paid to Cold Spring. Grants were sought but $7 million to $10 million grants are not easy to find.

I am on record as saying that I completely support the construction of a sewer system but not at the cost of bankrupting Nelsonville or putting financial hardship on the residents. Again, I thank Phillipstown for wanting to share the largesse of funds with the villages but I think that the money would be better used for other pending projects.

Alan Potts, Nelsonville
Potts is a candidate for a trustee seat on the Nelsonville board.

Beacon arrest
Police Chief Sands Frost will have his hands full in the months ahead with the current Beacon City Council, no matter how the police handle any situation (“Did Officers Respond Appropriately?” Feb. 18). In this case, they conducted themselves with admirable honor, only to face hostile general disdain for law enforcement, it’s amazing that we even have anyone signing up for the academy. Kudos to the officers. I respect police work enough to know that it’s irresponsible for untrained individuals to determine how well they stuck to their training. The question in the headline of this article is a divisive binary that you either support the police or criticize them. One of the biggest challenges around this issue is that it is difficult for council members or residents to ask how we can handle a mental health crisis most effectively using the newest tools available without someone trying to veer the conversation to whether we are anti-police. It is not anti-police to ask for a well-funded fire department to put out fires, or an ambulance service to take people to hospitals, or social services with the training and expertise to handle mental health.

It’s a responsible and very responsible question for our city to ask.

Diane Butler, via Facebook

After clicking through on Facebook to read your article, the answer is apparently, “Yes, they did act appropriately.”

Unfortunately, not everyone reads the articles. I am sure you are aware that a less-alarming headline would result in fewer clicks. Such is life and media in 2022. I was hoping for better from a local paper, but it is what it is.

Tom Guzzi, Putnam Valley

(Continued from Page 4)

There is always room for improvement in mental health, addiction and law enforcement agencies that are, in fact, staffed by human beings. My opinion on this particular case: The only alternatives to what happened would be an inappropriate and risky “mental health” intervention with an acutely irrational individual, and/or abdication of society’s obligation to protect this individual.

Joseph Steinfeld, Beacon

A clinical social worker police officer should receive the proper mental-health or substance-abuse arrest. They are schooled in how to evaluate and de-escalate a situation. Beacon has yet to hire one.

Terry Hockler, Beacon

The unilateral closing of mental hospitals in favor of so-called community health centers has been a disaster for the mentally ill and society at large. The jails have become the repository of the mentally ill and the police custodians constantly under the microscope of the “you should have done thus and such” town officials.

Ann Panizzi, Carmel

They only used force when the man started hitting an officer. Good thing he didn’t have a knife or a gun. It’s sad that law enforcement has to wait until their lives are in jeopardy to do anything.

Damian Schwartz, via Facebook

It’s ridiculous that we even have to put the police under a microscope, but this is the environment in blue states these days. With constant video surveillance and a general disdain for law enforcement, it’s amazing that we even have anyone signing up for the academy. Kudos to the officers.

Don Torelli, via Facebook

This is a great job by these police officers. They brought the man to the ground in a method very unlikely to result in injury and immediately and consistently checked on his well-being.

Dan Olsen, via Facebook

Hindsight is always 20/20. These men do what is absolutely necessary 99.1 percent of the time, while making split-second decisions. Stop trying to make trouble.

Michael Caruso, via Facebook

Why would you ask the general public a question that an untrained person couldn’t possibly answer? Stop trying to stir up trouble.

Tom DiCastro Jr., via Facebook

Maybe the City Council members who “took issue” with the way the police handled the issue should apologize. Stop making everything a Black-and-white issue; we’d all be in a better place. Our police are here to protect all of us, no matter what race we are, and they do a great job in Beacon. These days, that’s not easy. Shame on those council members.

Susan Pagones, via Facebook

The people who judge these officers should try to gently restrain someone who appears to be having a psychotic episode. I have worked in the prison system for more than 25 years — a place that has become a dumping ground for the mentally ill. I have seen countless inmates have psychotic episodes, pick up and throw officers, kick and bend their cell bars and dive headfirst from their bunks into steel toilets and not even flinch. The next time you see one of these videos that media instigators show the public, maybe you will realize that the officers are trying to save this person from harming themselves or some innocent citizen. They are showing compassion.

Dennis Crawford, via Facebook

Putnam Valley
‘My Heart Was Broken’

Friends remember Phillipstown author David Poses

By Leonard Sparks

A
fter Alex Colyer lost her best friend to addiction in January 2020, she found David Poses. It was Poses’ book, The Weight of Air: A Story of the Lies About Addiction and the Truth About Recovery, she read after launching the Albertus Project, a nonprofit formed to help addicts in honor of her friend. Soon, she was inviting Poses to be a guest on the organization’s podcast and befriending the Phillipstown author. Together, they spent the afternoon of Feb. 15 on the phone with an aide to U.S. Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, lobbying for the congressman’s support of proposed legislation to expand access to methadone amid a continued spike in overdoses, said Colyer.

“To me, that synthesizes exactly who David was,” she said. “He just spent all that time trying to help other people.”

Other witnesses to his generosity have also been pouring out similar tributes on Facebook and on Twitter, where the author and activist had built a following of 15,000, in response to his sudden death on Feb. 16, less than eight months after his book’s release. He was 45 and is survived by his wife and two children; a Go Fund Me campaign for the family has been created at bit.ly/david-poses.

In The Weight of Air, Poses detailed how the federally approved addiction medication, buprenorphine, led to his recovery from the abuse of heroin, which he started using at age 16 as an antidote to depression. He also used its pages to criticize tight federal restrictions on the dispensing of buprenorphine and other addiction medications.

It was a crusade Poses also waged on television, and in newspaper op-eds and radio and podcast interviews, on social media and in The Current. He used those platforms to advocate harm-reduction-based addiction strategies — a menu that includes needle exchanges, safe-injection sites and addiction medications — instead of the traditional focus on complete abstinence.

He was also a founding board member of the Phillipstown Behavioral Health Hub in Cold Spring, which helps people access addiction and mental health resources.

“I don’t think he realized how many people he was helping with his story,” said Sandra Jonas, his Colorado-based publisher, “People are, understandably, very, very upset.”

In 2017, when The Current asked for ideas about what should be done to counter the opioid crisis, Poses submitted a response about his own experience with the disease that we have reposted at highlandscurrent.org. Two years later, he wrote an op-ed for The Los Angeles Times that he later called his national “coming out party.”

“As the opioid crisis started to be a thing that was in newspapers, I saw so much misinformation,” he said, “I realized my silence was sabotaging what I was trying to accomplish.”

Poses wrote a draft of The Weight of Air and said he expected wholesale rejection. But Jonas said she was “intrigued” by his story when he contacted her in late 2020. “Number one, he’s a really good writer and, also, he had a different take on things,” she said. “He wanted to raise awareness about the connection between mental health and addiction, and even before the book came out, he was helping people.”

Jennifer Hornak is one of those people. She met Poses on Twitter and found support after her son, Quincie Berry, died of an overdose on July 23, 2020. Quincie returned to using fentanyl after a halfway house refused to admit him unless he stopped taking buprenorphine, said Hornak, who lives in Jacksonville, Florida.

Poses told her “I’ll do whatever we can to do get this out there,” she said. Although never meeting in person, they talked often, sometimes several times a week, said Hornak. It was a senior editor for Vice News, who interviewed Hornak for a story about federal restrictions on buprenorphine, who broke the news of Poses’ death, she said.

“I cried as hard as I cried when my son died of an overdose,” said Hornak, who is among the people Poses acknowledged in The Weight of Air. “My heart was broken.”

The book was released on July 6, with a launch five days later at Split Rock Books in Cold Spring. Poses, initially wary of how his book would be received, said he found the positive reactions “extraordinary.”

Colyer said that Poses’ book taught her “so much about the truths of addiction” as she sought information following her friend’s death. On Monday (Feb. 28), the Albertus Project (albertusproject.org) is hosting a vigil on Instagram at 5 p.m., she said. People are invited to share something about Poses or read an excerpt from his book.

“It’s just absolutely heartbreaking,” she said.
Packed House for Good-Cause Eviction

Beacon council to discuss law once more Feb. 28

By Jeff Simms

The Beacon City Council held a marathon, two-and-a-half-hour public hearing Tuesday (Feb. 22) on a proposal that would require landlords to demonstrate “good cause” before a judge would consider eviction proceedings.

Forty-eight people spoke, in person or via Zoom, with 3-to-1 favoring the proposal, which Beacon council members modeled on laws adopted recently in Newburgh, Poughkeepsie and a handful of other municipalities.

The standing-room-only crowd was, by far, the most to gather for a meeting in City Hall since the pandemic shutdown began nearly two years ago.

The hearing was adjourned at 10:20 p.m., by a 5-2 vote, until March 7, when the council could vote to adopt the law or elect to take more public comment.

If the council makes substantive changes to the draft law during its Feb. 28 workshop, it would not be able to vote until March 21, City Attorney Drew Gamils said.

Council Members Justice McCray and Paloma Wake, advocates of the law before their election in November, voted against adjourning the hearing, saying they wanted to continue the discussion and potentially vote that night.

“I didn’t hear anything in this hearing that changed my mind enough to say that I would change anything substantial in this law,” Wake said.

“I also recognize that if my other council members need more time to digest what we heard, I want you to give them the space that you requested to do that,” Wake said.

Dozens of people, not all of them from Beacon, urged the council to adopt the law.

Many brought signs advocating tenants’ rights or wore stickers that read “Housing is a Human Right.” Some speakers told stories of landlords evicting tenants with no warning, leaving single parents and children homeless, while others cautioned that tenants everywhere are vulnerable since the state’s moratorium on pandemic-related evictions expired Jan. 15.

On the flip side, the owners of rental units in Beacon made the case that they shouldn’t be lumped in with “greedy, corporate” management companies. Small landlords who rely on rent income will be penalized by the law, which would require them to hire attorneys to justify rent increases brought on by rising costs such as insurance or taxes outside of their control.

The council appears set to move ahead despite attorneys’ warnings that the city lacks the authority to enact a good-cause law.

City Attorney Nick Ward-Willis told the council in September that he believes a 2010 state law supersedes local regulations.

On Jan. 31 he told the council that his firm could not defend the city if it adopts the law.

A statewide good-cause law was introduced in the state Senate in 2020 and similar bills are being considered in the Legislature now.

Defense in Murder Case Wants DA Removed

Accuses Putnam office of misconduct and bias

By Leonard Sparks

A Lake Carmel man who served more than 20 years in prison for the killing of a 12-year-old girl before being granted a new trial is asking a judge to replace the Putnam County District Attorney’s Office with a special prosecutor.

Andrew Krivak was convicted, along with Anthony DiPippo, in 1997 for the rape and murder of Josette Wright three years earlier.

DiPippo, who was convicted in the same case, spent 20 years in prison before being released following his acquittal at a third trial in 2016. He sued Putnam County and settled for $12 million, all but $200,000 of which was paid by insurers.

A key difference between the prosecutions is that Krivak implicated himself in a statement that the defense contends was a false confession coerced by Sheriff’s Department investigators. He is being retried before Westches-

ter County Judge Barry Warhilt because the state judges based in Putnam recused themselves.

Krivak’s attorneys, Oscar Michelin and Karen Newirth, filed a motion in December to replace District Attorney Robert Tendy’s office as the prosecutor in the case. They allege his office withheld evidence and is pursuing Krivak despite the recantations of three eyewitnesses and the admission by a fourth, Denise Rose, that she lied about “significant details” during a deposition.

Tendy is also accused of failing to investi-
Shifting Beliefs

78% Americans in 2007 who identified as Christian
- 62% in 2021

16% Americans in 2007 who identified as “nones”
- 29% in 2021

The heart of the village

One doesn’t have to be religious to appreciate what a church brings to a community. “You have all these wonderful buildings, historical structures, they’re beautiful and add such character to any village,” said Mark Forlow.

But as Forlow knows from his time as a vestry member of St. Mary’s Episcopal Church in Cold Spring, taking care of those structures can be a trial. St. Mary’s was built in 1887, a few years after the Reformed Church in Beacon. Like that structure, St. Mary’s was the second church built by the congregation. The Reformed Church started in 1813 and St. Mary’s was founded in 1840. Both congregations left their first churches to build the larger, grander ones that still stand.

They were built to inspire. They were not built to be energy efficient. “The furnace was 40 years old, so every year, we put money into the furnace,” said Fritzinger about the Reformed Church in Beacon. “It was all on one zone. And when you have an old church like that, there are lots of repairs.”

Historic churches “are a huge suck in terms of your resources, heating them, the electricity, the maintenance,” said Forlow. “They are very, very needy structures.”

One of the first projects that he took part in upon joining the church was getting the steeple repointed. The congregation had to raise $250,000.

“We got it done — great,” he said. “Now you got the rest of the building. Then you’ve got the parish hall.” The church isn’t insulated, and its windows aren’t tight. “It seems like the oil burner is on all day long, and the heat just goes right up through the roof,” he said.

When the orgen needed repairs, parishioners had to learn how to do the costly work themselves. Both churches predate the Americans with Disabilities Act by at least 120 years, and had to be brought up to code.

These are daunting enough projects for a large congregation. For a small one, they become impossible. The financial crash of 2008 hit the St. Mary’s endowment hard, and the church spent the next 10 years flitting with bankruptcy. There was discussion of how much the church could get if it were to sell its rolling 1.5-acre lawn in the heart of the village to a developer. The assessment came back at just under $3 million.

In 2018, in order to survive, they had to let go their full-time rector, Father Shane Scott-Hamblen, who had been with the church since 2002 and had rebuilt the congregation from an average of seven members at Mass to 50. A statement from St. Mary’s at the time called the decision to do so “difficult and without pleasure, but it was a necessary decision in order for the parish to continue.”

This was the environment that Rev. Steve Schunk, the part-time priest-in-charge at St. Mary’s, came into. The pain of a popular rector being let go, and the constant worrying about the church’s dire finances.

“I thought St. Mary’s was on the brink but just not from money,” he said. “There was a lot of hurt in the parish. That’s what I thought not only in the parish, but I think even in the community. So I think my first thing to do was simply to love them. And just lead them out. I hope and I think we’ve stopped the leak in the boat. I think we’re on a positive cash basis.”

Still, he wonders why more people from the village aren’t spending their Sundays here. And because he’s only in the village part-time, he worries that he’s not in the community enough to figure it out.

“I think St. Mary’s is being taken for granted,” he said. “But how do I tell that story? If St. Mary’s is important to you in the community, you have to be like our parishioners and pledge. How do I get that story across?”
Exile and return
In Beacon, Emily Murnane tried to convince her friends to attend services at the Reformed Church, hoping that an infusion of young members could sustain the congregation. “It’s a free breakfast, just come in, meet the people,” she remembers telling them. “You’re going to be inspired.”

No one joined her. Some needed those Sunday mornings to catch up on sleep. Others were put off by the religious aspect, “which kind of sucks when you’re trying to convince people to come to a church,” she said. “But there was that overarching specter of organized religion that was making them believe that ‘this is going to be boring, it’s going to be a responsibility, it’s going to be spooky.’”

Finally, a few months into the pandemic, the congregation realized that they could not afford to keep going. They held a final service in May 2021. Past members and former pastors returned. The theme of the service was the resurrection. They spoke of exile from Egypt, the uncertainty of the wilderness, and then finally finding the promised land. They spoke of Jesus revealing himself to his disciples three days after being crucified, when all hope had been lost. And they performed the Rite of Passage to New Forms of Ministry, in which the congregants were urged to find a new place of worship where they may be encouraged in their faith.

For Murnane, that hasn’t happened. She hasn’t gone to another church. Instead, she’s been busy scanning and digitizing the church’s historical records for the Beacon Historical Society. The church is in contract to be sold and transformed into a venue for live performances with a bar and a hotel.

She has not lost hope. She’s encouraged that the developers have been speaking with her about the site’s history and ways in which they can preserve it. They plan to restore the historic cemetery, which is overgrown and inaccessible. “They care about that property, and they have the motivation and the resources to take care of it,” she said. “If it has to be a music venue, then it couldn’t have ended up in better hands.”

And both Murnane and Pastor Fritzinger are glad to see that, until the sale is finalized, another religious group is using the church. Goodwill Church, an evangelical organization with three churches in Orange County, has been renting the space since June.

Fritzinger, who is serving as a part-time pastor in Hyde Park, was shocked to learn that Goodwill is bringing in 70 people every week. Larger churches can afford the marketing and other resources it takes to grow. In this case, she learned that the members attending weren’t local. They were “church plants” from one of the other three churches on the other side of the river.

“They take people from other congregations of theirs that are willing to go to a new church, and they plant them in there for a few weeks, and then spread the word out,” she said. “That’s the marketing.”

Murnane worries about the stories that will now be lost. Once the records she’s handling have been digitized, the originals will be sent to the governing body of the Reformed Church and they’ll lie dormant forever.

How Diverse is the Hudson Valley?

In a study released last year, the research firm PRRI ranked each county in the U.S. for religious diversity. The index is calculated so that a score of 1 would indicate that every religious group is of equal size, while a score of 0 indicates that one religious group comprises the entire population. The average score in the U.S. is 0.625. Diversity is highest in urban areas and lowest in the South and rural areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Diversity Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rockland</td>
<td>0.869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>0.846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westchester</td>
<td>0.842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulster</td>
<td>0.824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutchess</td>
<td>0.800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putnam</td>
<td>0.776</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Christian Portrait

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Group</th>
<th>Dutchess</th>
<th>Putnam</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White Christians</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>Lynn County, Iowa</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Evangelical</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Marion County, Alabama</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Protestant</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>Pope County, Minnesota</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Catholic</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>Dubuque County, Iowa</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Protestant</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Hidalgo County, Texas</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Catholic</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>Zapata County, Texas</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nones</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>San Juan County, Washington</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The American Religious Landscape in 2020, PRRI (July 8, 2021)
Rival Accuses Maloney of Promoting Illegal Drug Use

At issue: Statement on MSNBC talk show
By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

C ongressional hopeful Colin Schmitt last week used a sentence from a long MSNBC interview of Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney to accuse the latter of celebrating illegal drug use.

A Republican who’s now in the New York State Assembly, Schmitt wants to oust Maloney in the November election.

Maloney, a Phillipstown resident, was a guest on the Morning Joe talk show on Feb. 17 in his capacity as chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

Before he arrived, the Morning Joe panelists bantered about memorable years, music, movies and pastimes, including questionable behavior, of their youth.

When Maloney joined them, he was asked to contribute his recollections. He recalled 1986, when “I was at UVA [University of Virginia]. The MDMA [Ecstasy, an illegal hallucinogen] was really pure, and we enjoyed [the band] R.E.M., and I went to all kind of places.”

Schmitt, in a news release, claimed that “instead of setting an example for our children, Maloney is now appearing on national television and bragging about his use of hard drugs” and “has turned his back on the families he was elected to represent and become a caricature of what a member of Congress is supposed to be.”

Schmitt also faulted Maloney’s comments on inflation, saying “Joe Biden and Sean Maloney’s failed leadership has made everyday items more expensive across the board.”

On the show, Maloney advised political leaders to focus on the basics. “Talk about the price of a gallon of milk. Talk about the price of a gallon of gas. What’s a pound of hamburger cost? And if you don’t get the cost of groceries and gas down — yeah, it’s a problem. And there’s no excuse when you’re in power. So we’ve got to do something about that.”

Mia Ehrenberg, Maloney’s press secretary, said Thursday (Feb. 24) that “the Maloney team opted to not comment” on Schmitt’s news release.

Cell Towers (from Page 1)

feet long for cables and conduits.

Homeland contends that it can proceed because its deed to the parcel, which it purchased two years ago, does not limit it to using the right-of-way path merely for entry and exit, or “ingress and egress,” in legal parlance.

Richard Villella and Courtney Tarpley and their neighbors, Jeff Rossi and Melissa Gillmer and Michael and Rosemarie Oshkoski, sued in 2020, seeking a permanent entry and exit, or “ingress and egress,” in the fruit of the soil … would be taken away, diverted and appropriated for the purposes of a corporation.

Based on such precedents, Davis declared that the Rockledge homeowners “are likely to succeed on the merits of the main legal issue” they raise, “that the right of way benefitting the Homeland parcel is for ingress and egress only, to pass over the land,” and “that the trench-digging and installation of these materials is not permitted.”

Davis acknowledged that an unsettled question remains: Whether Homeland might avoid the more disruptive elements of its plan and widen the right of way.

However, he added, “it is clear” that road-widening is secondary “to its main goal of digging trenches and installing underground conduit and cables in the right of way to service the cell tower it proposes to build on its lot. To be sure, without the underground conduit and cabling, the cell tower will be inoperable, and constructing the cell tower was the very purpose for which Homeland purchased the property.”

He noted that the neighbors likewise “assert they will suffer irreparable injury” if Homeland proceeds, “creating substantial, additional surface disturbance” and otherwise “irreparably changing the right-of-way and the bucolic nature of the area.”

Homeland asserts “the alleged harm can be compensated with money damages,” the judge observed, but “Homeland’s arguments are unavailing.” He explained that the company’s proposed changes to the landscape, and their effect on homeowners’ ability to control what happens to their properties, “in which they have vested rights, and over which Homeland has a limited right to pass for ingress and egress, cannot be compensated with money damages.”

Davis also discounted the tower builder’s claim that gaps in cellphone connectivity threaten to harm the public, including emergency first-responders.

“This court is not persuaded that the public’s general desire for better cellphone coverage outweighs the real property rights of individuals,” he wrote. Moreover, he suggested that any hardship to Homeland from delays to its project “is self-created. It forged ahead” with its plans, assuming it would succeed, “rather than proceeding cautiously and, perhaps, seeking court intervention on the issue of the right of way before spending hundreds of thousands of dollars.”

Davis ordered attorneys for both sides to appear in court in May to discuss the status of the case, after submitting any comments regarding his ruling.

A federal judge in November dismissed a separate suit, involving U.S. environmental law, that other residents had filed. An earlier federal case that Homeland Towers brought against Nelsonville, after the village refused to grant a permit for the proposed cell tower, resulted in a 2020 settlement allowing the tower to be built.

Villella said on Thursday (Feb. 24) that the legal battle with Homeland has cost at least $60,000 — so much that he and his wife launched a fundraiser at gofundme.com/st/stop-the-cold-spring-cell-tower.

Maloney on Ukraine

Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney, whose district includes the Highlands, released a statement on Thursday (Feb. 24) on the Russian invasion of Ukraine:

“This invasion is part of a larger, dangerous pattern of Russian efforts to undermine democracies across Europe. As Russia’s advance into Crimea proved, if this invasion is allowed to proceed unchecked, Russia will continue its attacks and aggression. I support rushing further support to Ukraine and implementing severe sanctions on Russia, including sanctions which directly target [President Vladimir] Putin, his financial institutions, and his oligarch supporters.

“I spent the past week in Europe as a member of the U.S. delegation to the Munich Security Conference. After many discussions with our allies, I am confident in the strength of the transatlantic partnership and certain that the best path forward is working cooperatively with them in this moment of crisis.”

A 2020 report included a rendering of how the proposed 95-foot Nelsonville cell tower, disguised as a tree, would look from the Cold Spring Cemetery.

On March 28, 2021, Homeland Towers and Verizon began cutting down trees on a parcel off Rockledge Road in Nelsonville to make room for a cell tower. “The devastation is pretty significant,” Courtney Tarpley, who with her husband filed a lawsuit, said at the time. “They don’t even have the go-ahead to build the tower.”

File photo by Ross Corsair
Reporter’s Notebook

What is ‘Local’ News?
By Michael Turton

All politics may be local, but I wonder if that’s true of all news as well.

It was all local when I began reporting for the The Putnam County News and Recorder 15 years ago. The publisher and editor, Brian O’Donnell, said my job was to be a “fly on the wall” at school and municipal meetings and tell people what happened. My journalistic horizons never extended beyond Nelsonville — well, maybe Garrison during a heavy news week.

It struck me recently how drastically that has changed since joining The Current 12 years ago. In fact, if the paper had the budget to send me to all the places involved in my stories, I’d be a world traveler.

It was recent emails to and from Enrique “Rob” Lunski in Argentina that brought that realization home. Rob lives in South America during our winter. I was writing about his Poughkeepsie-based, bilingual, online magazine, ABCLatino, that has readers from across the Spanish-speaking world. I wished I was down there now, enjoying Argentina’s 75-degree weather. Rob rubbed it in a little.

My first virtual overseas travel was to Germany in 2013 when I wrote about Brooks Bowman, a rising musical star whose songs have been performed by everyone from Billie Holliday to Diana Krall. Bowman died in a traffic accident in Garrison in 1937. Largely forgotten for decades, his story was revived by a German musician, Hans-Martin Fleischer, who traveled here to retrace Bowman’s life. A few years later, Fleischer and I communicated by email. He was in Germany, and I admit, thoughts of Black Forest beer gardens danced in my head. I settled for a bottle of Paulaner from Foodtown.

In 2019, I wrote about something that came as a surprise: Two TV news programs, La Verdad Internacional and Punto Vida, produced in Bolivia and broadcast to Latino countries around the world, originate from a studio in Philipstown and are hosted by my friend and fellow journalist, Carlos Salcedo. I had never envisioned Philipstown as home to international television programming.

Reporters aren’t supposed to be part of the story, but Carlos returned the favor and interviewed me and Current Editor Chip Rowe via Zoom for one of the shows. We discussed the challenges of publishing a local weekly newspaper. It was fun to have the tables turned and be interviewed rather than doing the interview. However, I know exactly three words in Spanish: por favor, cerveza and gracias. So, it was bizarre to see us speaking Spanish in the translated version of the broadcast and to realize viewers from Chile and Paraguay to Columbia and Spain were tuned in to hear what we had to say.

Last year, I wrote about Tomiko Morimoto-West, who, as a 13-year-old girl, survived the bombing of Hiroshima. She lives in Dutchess County now, but her descriptions of what she experienced 76 years ago were so vivid she took me back to that day in Japan. She made the unimaginable very imaginable.

Despite the death and destruction she described, her wisdom, kindness and lack of bitterness left me with a good feeling.

Not all stories do.

In January, I covered the story of Aung Phone San, a 26-year-old Myanmar national whose backpack was found along the banks of the Hudson River in Cold Spring. He had phoned his mom from near Albany in December, telling her that he would jump ship from the bulk carrier he worked on rather than return to Myanmar, now ruled by a military junta that was punishing political activists. Seeing the clothing, personal documents and photographs from Aung’s backpack was chilling. I tried to imagine the desperation he must have felt as he plunged into the icy water. His body has not been found.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been equal parts local and global. It’s no surprise that I’d write about its impact here in the Highlands, but early in 2020 I was amazed to find myself interviewing Dong Xin Gong, via Zoom, as he sat in Xuzhou, China, a city I had never heard of despite its population of 8.6 million. I’ve always found China fascinating, but thanks to the coronavirus, I was happy that visit was only virtual.

Most of my internationally tinged articles haven’t resulted from in-depth research on my part. Most have somehow found me, although I did produce one international story all on my own. And it wasn’t virtual.

In 2018, I was in Australia visiting my son, Drew, and his wife, Kim. What’s a reporter to do while on vacation Down Under? Look for a story! We drove about an hour inland from Brisbane to the small town of Boonah, Queensland. There I spoke with Wendy Creighton, who had 33 years under her belt as editor of the The Fassifern Guardian, the local weekly newspaper, with circulation similar to The Current. Interestingly, she told me that in Australia, the Liberal party is actually conservative and the Labor party is liberal.

I’ll always remember my last question to Wendy: “I love your accent; but why is it so strong?”

“I don’t have an accent, you do!” she replied.

Tomorrow, I hope to contact a former resident of the Highlands who has been stranded in the Ukraine since the start of COVID. I think his observations will be of interest locally.

So, yes, all news is local. But at The Current, at least, some stories have tentacles that stretch way beyond Main Street, transcending time zones and even oceans.

NOTICE
BEACON: Meadow Ridge II Senior Residence

One (1) bedroom apartment available for immediate occupancy. Rent is $1,150.00 and a month security is required.

Tenants are responsible for electric for lights, cooking and air conditioning (air conditioners provided) as well as cable and telephone. Included in rent is heat, hot water, water, sewer and trash collection. All household members must be 62 years or older. Credit/Criminal Background Check. Property is SMOKE-FREE. Income restrictions do apply. Please call 845.297.2004 for an application. EHO.

NOTICE
BEACON: Meadow Ridge II Senior Residence

Two (2) bedroom apartments available for immediate occupancy. Rent is $1,200.00 and a month security is required.

Tenants are responsible for electric for lights, cooking and air conditioning (air conditioners provided) as well as cable and telephone. Included in rent is heat, hot water, water, sewer and trash collection. All household members must be 62 years or older. Credit/Criminal Background Check. Property is SMOKE-FREE. Income restrictions do apply. Please call 845.297.2004 for an application. EHO.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that a Public Hearing will be held by the Town Board of the Town of Philipstown on March 3, 2022 at 7:30pm at the Philipstown Town Hall, 238 Main Street, Cold Spring, NY. The purpose of the Public Hearing is to hear comments for/against a PROPOSED LOCAL LAW ENTITLED ‘A Local Law To Amend Town of Philipstown Town Code Chapter 82, entitled ‘Energy Conservation’ to update the provisions thereof regarding the State Energy Conservation Construction Code’.

A complete copy of the Local Law is available for inspection upon request sent to townclerk@philipstown.com and is also available on the Town's Website, Philipstown.com.

Dated: February 23, 2022
BY ORDER OF THE TOWN BOARD | Tara K. Percacciolo, Town Clerk

Tara K. Percacciolo, Town Clerk
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**NEWS BREAK** — Savana Kush and Kylee Graff are the anchors of AM Rombout, a morning news show produced at the Beacon middle school. Sargent Elementary School also has a news program called Sargent Stars, and Haldane Middle School students recently published a new issue of The Haldane Scoop. See highlandscurrent.org for links.

**CHAMBER MEETING** — More than 50 people attended a Cold Spring Chamber of Commerce breakfast at Boscobel on Feb. 15, including elected officials from Cold Spring, Nelsonville, Philipstown and Putnam County. Jeff Consaga, the owner of the Foundry Cafe, which closed last month, was recognized.

Photo by Caitlin Chadwick

**ICE ON THE HUDSON** — Tania Steele shared this photo she took at Long Dock Park in Beacon.

**BREAKNECK RESCUE** — A New York State Police helicopter was called in on Wednesday morning (Feb. 23) to rescue an injured hiker. The hiker was hoisted and transported to a landing zone at Mayor’s Park in Cold Spring, where the Phillipstown Volunteer Ambulance Corps. was waiting. Cold Spring and North Highlands firefighters responded to the scene.

CSFC

**100 DAYS** — Students at Haldane celebrated 100 days of school with more than 100 donations for the Philipstown Food Pantry. Some students also dressed up as 100-year-olds and shared what they would do with $100. Students at Glenham Elementary in the Beacon school district also dressed up (right) to celebrate their 100th day.

Photos provided
Matt Costello is one of those tick-off-all-the-boxes type of writers. “You spend enough time on the planet and it accrues,” says Costello, who began writing professionally in 1987. His output includes everything from action and horror fiction to a bestselling puzzle book to video game plots to popular “cozy” mysteries set in England.

A recent transplant to Cold Spring from Katonah, Costello attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute planning to become a science writer. But when he learned the program wasn’t available to freshmen or sophomores, he switched to philosophy while editing the RPI literary magazine. All this was “during the ’80s, so it was focused around protest coverage: Eldridge Cleaver, Timothy Leary, that sort of thing,” he recalls.

After graduating, Costello became a teacher, which he loved, but “always in the back of my head I wanted to write,” he says. At age 30, he wrote a novel that didn’t sell, and from there, began reviewing board and video games.

“A mentor of mine came into my class one day with something like an Atari [video game player], which was the first time I had seen something like that,” he says. “Later [in 1988], I wrote a book called The Greatest Puzzles of All Time that sold 3 million copies and brought me lots of royalties.”

While making forays into game design, Costello continued writing. “I worked my way up the journalistic food chain, writing pieces for Playboy, Sports Illustrated, The Los Angeles Times, plus lots more,” he says. “Through journalism I found my voice, and then I went back to writing a novel. That one sold.”

His resume brims with a long list of video game writing, everything from Doom3, where he is credited for “additional story and dialogue,” to The 7th Guest, as “game screenplay and novelization writer,” to Clifford, the Big Red Dog: Reading, for which he wrote the story and served as game designer. He once discussed the difference between a story and a “set of sequential events,” namely that “there must be a mission involved, with something at stake: Close encounters, dangerous environments and completely isolated characters are ways to raise those stakes.”

Although Costello’s passion has always been writing books, “games paid way more than the fiction,” he says. “Novels rarely earn royalties, unless you’re James Patterson.”

That changed when Costello tried his hand at the gentle, largely pastoral style of British mystery novels known as “cozies” that he writes with Neil Richards. At 140 pages each, they are meant to be quick reads. He and Richards had worked together on some BBC shows over the years. They chose a contemporary setting in the Cotswolds, home to rolling hills and thatched roofs, and plotted out the characters. They visited the region, “checking out the pubs, trains, museums; soaking in the local atmosphere.” They wrote 25 pages each, then edited each other.

“We’re not delicate with each other — you can’t be,” he says. “The rules are simple: There’s a corpse, but you’re not going to see the knife. There’s nothing graphic; it’s ‘No sex please, we’re British.’ While there’s a mystery, the characters are still enjoying life: stopping into the pub for a pint and talking about a suspect.”

The books of their first series, Cherringham, were bestsellers, selling 750,000 copies. They followed with the Mydworth Mysteries, set in 1929.

Their audience has grown through the pandemic. “People were looking for escape,” Costello says. “In these days and times, cozy writing is terribly soothing.”

The men complete a book every two months and so far have published 42 volumes in the Cherringham series and 10 in Mydworth.

Costello says his typical day in Cold Spring starts with a cup of coffee and a long walk or run. Upon his return, he begins writing, without even a glance at his email. “I’m fast, so those first seven to 10 pages come quickly, even in longhand, which is how I write,” he says. “I take a break, check emails, and the rest of the day is editing, revising and planning for the next day while listening to music. Afternoons are for shopping, going for a walk with my wife and cooking — I like to cook. If I’m working on a game, I don’t have to be as religious about the work. It doesn’t require the degree of craft that fiction does.”

“There must be a mission involved, with something at stake: close encounters, dangerous environments and completely isolated characters are ways to raise those stakes.”
THE WEEK AHEAD
Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)
For a complete listing of events, see highlandscurrent.org/calendar.

COMMUNITY
SAT 26
Maple Sugar Tours
CORNWALL
11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Outdoor Discovery Center
120 Muser Drive
845-534-9506 x204 | hhm.org
Discover the process of making syrup during a Sugar Bush Tour (1-mile hike) or a Maple Lane Tour (short walk). Continues on weekends through March 20. Reservations required. Cost: $31 ages 6 and up ($9 members; free ages 5 and younger)

SUN 27
Winter Wellness Expo
PEEKSILL
10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Comfort Suites
835 Route 52
hudsonvalleyholisticmarket.com
At this event, organized by the Hudson Valley Holistic Market, practitioners will showcase their talents and wares.

SUN 27
Nature on Ice
CORNWALL
4 p.m. Outdoor Discovery Center
120 Muser Drive
845-534-9506 x204 | hhm.org
At this benefit in honor of the Hudson Highlands Nature Museum educators, enjoy ice carvings and a demonstration by artist Bill Bywater. Warm up by the fire pit and with refreshments. Adults only; dress warmly. Cost: $75 to $500

KIDS AND FAMILY
SAT 26
Polar Bear, Chicken Soup and Friends
GARRISON
10:30 a.m. Desmond-Fish Library
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020 desmondfishlibrary.org
Doug Brown will read and discuss his book for children ages 2 to 8 about friendship.

SUN 27
The History of Me
CORNWALL
11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Outdoor Discovery Center
120 Muser Drive
845-534-9506 x204 | hhm.org
Author Adrea Theodore and illustrator Erin Robinson will read and discuss their picture book about the first Black female millionaire in the world, making the YouTube show Blippi the Musical come alive. Best for children ages 2 to 7. Cost: $32.50 to $84

STAGE AND SCREEN
SAT 26
Rigoletto
POUGHKEEPSIE
1 p.m. Bardavon | 35 Market St.
845-473-2072 | bardavon.org
Watch the Metropolitan Opera’s live screening of Bartlett Sher’s take on Verdi’s tragedy with the action set in 1920s Europe. Baritone Quinn Kelsey, soprano Rosa Feola and tenor Piotr Beczala are in the leading roles. Cost: $28 ($26 members, $21 ages 12 and younger)

SAT 26
Jim Gaffigan
POUGHKEEPSIE
7 p.m. MJN Convention Center
14 Civic Center Plaza
midhudsonviccenter.org
The comedian, actor, writer and author will perform his stand-up routine as part of his We All Deserve This Fun tour. Cost: $90.75 to $125

SUN 27
Lit Lit
BEACON
8 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | 845-831-4988
howlandculturalcenter.org
In this evening of wine, music and lies, the audience will participate in a game of truth and fiction. Cost: $25 ($30 door)

THURS 3
Lit Lit
BEACON
7 p.m. Happy Valley | 296 Main St.
Sign up to read work from any genre at this monthly series. Email littlitseries@gmail.com.

FRI 4
Storm Lake
GARRISON
7:30 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre GARRISON 10 Linden Landing | 845-424-3900 philipstowndepottheatre.org
The 2021 documentary marks the return of the Depot Doc series with a focus on local journalism through the story of a family-run newspaper in Iowa and the changes it has experienced over four decades. The film was edited by Beacon resident Rachel Shuman. Cost: $20

FRI 4
Grand Concourse
WAPPINGERS FALLS
8 p.m. County Players
2681 W. Main St. | 845-298-1491
The CP2 Readers Theatre series will stage the Heidi Schrek play about the interaction of women in a church’s history. Cost: $36.75

SAT 4
Irish Comedy Tour
PEEKSILL
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
1008 Brown St. | 914-962-6402 or 800-532-4290
paramounthudsonvalley.com
This webinar, hosted by Support Connection, is open to any adult who has lost a loved one to breast, ovarian or gynecological cancer.

THURS 3
The Life of Madame C.J. Walker
BEACON
8 p.m. Via Zoom
845-831-1134 | beaconlibrary.org
Rick Feingold will discuss the first Black female millionaire in the U.S., who founded a line of beauty products for Black women. Sponsored by the Howland Public Library for Women's History Month.

SUN 6
The Audubon Sanctuaries of the Hudson Valley
PEEKSILL
4 p.m. Via Crowcast | 845-424-3020 desmondfishlibrary.org
Scott Silver, the director of the Constitution Marsh Audubon Center and Sanctuary, will discuss bird conservation sites with land steward Dave Decker in this event organized by the Desmond-Fish library.

VISUAL ART
SAT 5
Works on Paper
COLD SPRING
Noon – 5 p.m. Buster Levi Gallery
123 Main St. | busterlevigailery.com
Drawings by John Allen, Pat Hickman, Grace Kennedy, Nancy Steinson, Lucille Tortora, Ada Pillar Cruz, Bill Kooistra, Jenne Currie, Grey Zier, Barbara Smith Gioia, Ursula Schneider and Tim D’Acquisto will be on view through March 22.

SUN 6
The Narrative of Things
NEWBURGH
5 – 7 p.m. Holland Tunnel
46 Chambers St. | hollandtunnelgallery.com
Shari Diamond, Norm Magnusson, Kathleen Vance and Tamara RaKlin will exhibit work on the relationship of narrative and objects. Through April 10.

MUSIC
SAT 26
Concert of Concertos
NEWBURGH
4 p.m. Mount Saint Mary College
330 Powell Ave. | 845-913-7157
midhudsonciviccenter.org
The Greater Newburgh Symphony Orchestra will perform a program at Aquinas Hall of Dvorak and Prokofiev with soloists Alan Murray and Mo Xu. Cost: $25 (students free)

TALKS AND TOURS
TUES 1
The Rules for Grief and Loss: There Aren’t Any
YORKTOWN HEIGHTS
7 p.m. Via Zoom
914-962-6402 or 800-532-4290
The rules to follow when a loved one has died, and how we will navigate grief in light of a pandemic. This webinar, hosted by Support Connection, is open to any adult who has lost a loved one to breast, ovarian or gynecological cancer.

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Works on Paper
COLD SPRING
Noon – 5 p.m. Buster Levi Gallery
123 Main St. | busterlevigailery.com
Drawings by John Allen, Pat Hickman, Grace Kennedy, Nancy Steinson, Lucille Tortora, Ada Pillar Cruz, Bill Kooistra, Jenne Currie, Grey Zier, Barbara Smith Gioia, Ursula Schneider and Tim D’Acquisto will be on view through March 22.

SUN 6
The Narrative of Things
NEWBURGH
5 – 7 p.m. Holland Tunnel
46 Chambers St. | hollandtunnelgallery.com
Shari Diamond, Norm Magnusson, Kathleen Vance and Tamara RaKlin will exhibit work on the relationship of narrative and objects. Through April 10.

MUSIC
SAT 26
Concert of Concertos
NEWBURGH
4 p.m. Mount Saint Mary College
330 Powell Ave. | 845-913-7157
midhudsonciviccenter.org
The Greater Newburgh Symphony Orchestra will perform a program at Aquinas Hall of Dvorak and Prokofiev with soloists Alan Murray and Mo Xu. Cost: $25 (students free)
SUN 27
Blues Chaser
BEACON
7 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. 845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
Big Thurston, Tom “The Suit” Forst, Tony Delisio and Joey Primo will play songs from their three albums. Cost: $20 ($25 door)

MON 28
Jazz Night
BEACON
8:30 p.m. Quinns’ | 330 Main St. facebook.com/QuinnsBeacon
Joe McPhee, Steve Swell and Chris Corsano are scheduled to perform.

FRI 4
Chris O’Leary Band
BEACON
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. 845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The blues band will perform music from its latest release, 7 Minutes Late, which was nominated for Best Contemporary Album at the 2019 Blues Blast Awards. Proof of vaccination required. Cost: $20 ($25 door)

SAT 5
Enter the Haggis
PEEKSKILL
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley 1008 Brown St. 914-739-0039 | paramounthudsonvalley.com
The Canadian band combines rock rhythms with fiddles and bagpipes to create singalong melodies. Cost: $25 to $37.50

SAT 5
Loudon Wainwright III
BEACON
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. 845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The author, actor, composer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist will perform hits from his decades-long career. Proof of vaccination required. Cost: $40 ($45 door)

TUE 1
Putnam Legislature
CARMEL
7 p.m. Historic Courthouse 44 Genevieve Ave. 845-208-7800 | putnamcountyny.com

WED 2
School Board
GARRISON
7 p.m. Garrison School | 1100 Route 9D 845-424-3689 | gufs.org

WED 2
Board of Trustees
COLD SPRING
7:30 p.m. Village Hall | 85 Main St. 845-265-3611 | coldspringny.gov

THURS 3
Voter Registration
NELSONVILLE
8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Village Hall 238 Main St. | nelsonvilleny.gov
Open to those not already registered in Putnam County. Use the Pearl Street entrance.

TUES 1
Amazing Sensationalists
BEACON
9 p.m. Quinns’ | 330 Main St. facebook.com/QuinnsBeacon
The band encourages dancing and will be joined by The Freejays.

SAT 6
Beppe Gambetta
BEACON
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. 845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The Italian-born performer will bring together his American and European influences with a unique approach to times, periods and places. Proof of vaccination required. Cost: $20 ($25 door)
The Garrison theater has scheduled the other events as a Depot Docs screening of Storm Lake on Friday (March 4); violinist Gwen Laster’s New MUSE4tet on March 19; and two Night Train storytelling shows on March 26. They mark the return of indoor performances for the theater after a two-year absence because of the COVID-19 shutdown. (In warmer months, some performances were staged outside.)

The seeds were planted for the Weather Women show when Simpson met Garrison residents Kevin Green and Kevin Hershberger through a mutual friend who had a grant to make a film.

At that time, Green and Hershberger were living in Brooklyn. When the weather became too frightful to shoot the film outdoors, the couple invited the filmmaker to shoot inside their spacious home.

Later, after Green and Hershberger had moved to Garrison, they welcomed Simpson, who had not long before relocated from Texas, to stay with them while she became familiar with New York City. “They’re almost like adoptive dads,” she says.

Simpson, who grew up on a small farm in New Mexico, says she has embraced New York City while also discovering more about herself. “Bare feet, soil, watching the sun rise and set every day. It’s something I’ve come from: grounded, but I’ve also found a part of myself in where I live now,” she says. “I was excited to be immersed in a culture where I don’t have to choose one form or another.”

Simpson majored in dance performance and film/media at Southern Methodist University, and says the disciplines “have run together.”

Simpson describes the film Ray will show at the Philipstown Depot Theatre as “asking questions about what it is to be authentic to the body of a woman of color. How does it feel to experience life? The film expands on a lot of emotions. It’s experiential and asks what it’s like to truly embody oneself. Often, it’s a question of being safe, to exist as you are.”

Sackler, who also lives in Brooklyn, says her songs “rely heavily on natural imagery to evoke the seasonality of emotion and time. My work explores the concept of memory: how we cultivate, preserve, indulge in and become dispossessed of it. I draw inspiration from collective emotion — though we bear heavy burdens, we need not suffer alone or in silence.” Her debut EP, Where Once Grew Green, is available on most platforms.

“I’m excited to have all of us together,” Simpson says. “We’re all channeled in our work, energy and emotion to be shared in that space with the audience.”

The Philipstown Depot Theatre is located at 10 Garrison’s Landing. Weather Women will perform at 7 p.m. on March 12; tickets are $20 at philipstowndepottheatre.org.

Spectators must be vaccinated to attend the show. For more information, call 914-594-2478.

VILLAGE OF COLD SPRING
GARbage UPDATE

Starting March 1, 2022 Royal Carting will be collecting garbage and recycling in the Village of Cold Spring on a full-time basis. Here are the important things to know:

- **Garbage pick-up will change to Thursdays starting March 10th**
- Recycling will continue to be picked up on Fridays
- Continue using your existing garbage and recycling containers for now

The Village will be sending information in the next couple of weeks with more details on the changes, when to expect new garbage and recycle containers, how to select a size and how to dispose of your old containers.

NOTICE

Philipstown Planning Board

**Site Visit - Sunday, March 6th, 2022**

The Philipstown Planning Board will meet on Sunday, March 6th, 2022 at 10:30am to inspect the proposed new Snake Hill Road entrance of following sites:

- Garrison Golf Club PDD/Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, 2015 Route 9 Garrison, NY 10524
- TM# 60-1-59.2 & 59.3

Reading with Writers

**WED 2 & WED 23, 6:30 P.M.**

The Creative Habit: Learn It and Use It for Life, by Twyla Tharp

Split Rock Books, Cold Spring (via Zoom)

Register at splitrockbk.com.

**Elementary Book Club (Grades 2-4)**

**MON 14, 3:15 P.M.**

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, by Roald Dahl

Butterfield Library, Cold Spring

Register at butterfieldlibrary.org/calendar.

**Butterfield Book Club**

**MON 28, 7 P.M.**

Klara and the Sun, by Kazuo Ishiguro

Butterfield Library, Cold Spring

Email janedemic@butterfieldlibrary.org.

**Middle School Book Club**

**THURS 31, 7 P.M.**

Bellevue: Three Centuries of Medicine and Mayhem at America’s Most Storied Hospital, by David Oshinsky

Split Rock Books, Cold Spring (via Zoom)

Register at splitrockbk.com.

**History Book Club**

**THURS 31, 7 P.M.**

Use It for Life, by Twyla Tharp

Butterfield Library, Cold Spring

Register at butterfieldlibrary.org.

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Use It for Life, by Twyla Tharp

Butterfield Library, Cold Spring

Register at butterfieldlibrary.org.
On Monday (Feb. 21) and Tuesday (Feb. 22), with local schools on break for President’s Day, the Garrison Art Center hosted workshops for 37 students.
Lars I Kulleseid
(1935-2022)

The Kulleseid family mourns and celebrates the remarkable life of Lars Ivar Kulleseid, who died on February 17, 2022, at his home in Garrison, New York, aged 86 years. He was a husband, father, patent attorney and fanatical athlete, outdoorsman and fox trotter.

Lars was born June 5, 1935, in Lakewood, Ohio, to Brynhild and Olav Kulleseid, Norwegian nationals living and working in the U.S. at the time. Shortly after his birth the family (including older brother Hans) returned to Norway. Following the German invasion in 1940, Lars’s father returned to the U.S., he thought temporarily, to be able to work and send money to his family.

The war persisted, however, and upon America’s entry into the war Lars and his brother came to the attention of German authorities because they were American citizens by birth. Heroically, Lars’s mother secured forged travel papers, and she and the boys were able to cross the border to Sweden by train on a winter night in December 1942. They spent the balance of the war in Sodertalje, near Stockholm — memories of which were happy and bright.

In 1946 the three came to America and were reunited with Lars’s father. They settled in Sea Cliff, Long Island, where Lars rapidly acclimated to life in the U.S. Soccer and his keen intelligence drew the attention of Yale, where he matriculated in 1953. He studied electrical engineering and graduated in 1957 with highest honors.

After graduation, Lars traveled by steamship to Norway where he would spend a year on a Fulbright scholarship. As the ship sailed past the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor he met Marit Gundersen, a Wellesley College student headed to the Oslo Summer School. They quickly fell in love. The two were married in La Crosse, Wisconsin, on August 27, 1960, after his second year at Harvard Law School. He graduated in 1961.

He accepted a position at the NYC patent law firm of Fish & Neave as a litigator. He took a leave of absence to work for famed U.S. Attorney Robert Morgenthau, returning to the firm in the late ’60s where he became partner in the early 1970s. One of his seminal cases was representing Polaroid successfully against Kodak when the latter tried to get into the instant camera business. At the time it was the largest patent infringement case in history. He remained at Fish & Neave through its merger with Ropes & Gray in the ’80s.

Having grown up with instability and dislocation, Lars prioritized putting down roots. He loved land and open space, so he and Marit moved to Garrison in 1964, despite the daily hour-plus commute to his work in New York City. He and Marit raised three children there, with a strong diet of sports, activities and family. His love for land continued, and he was instrumental in building the Hudson Highlands Land Trust into a dynamic force for conservation in the Hudson Highlands.

The fire of life burned bright in Lars. On any given winter day, conditions permitting, you would find him playing hockey with his hockey crowd on whatever pond in the area had the best ice. Thin ice was always something to be tested, not avoided. During summers spent at the family cabin on Canada Lake in the Adirondacks, he would head off into the woods with his faithful golden retriever companion, Loki, to bushwhack for hours around the North Branch of the West Branch of the Sacandaga River. He was passionately interested in people and the world, and traveled to Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, South America, Europe and the Caribbean. He was an insatiable consumer of news and devoured The Economist weekly.

Lars maintained and instilled in his children a love for Norway and all things Norwegian, returning to visit relatives there many times over decades. He always honored guests at the Kulleseid dinner table by leading a raucous rendition of a traditional Norwegian toast, “Og dette skal være.”

Looking Back in Beacon

By Chip Rove

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

150 Years Ago (February 1872)

The Matteawan Enterprise distributed its first issue, noting it was the fourth newspaper to be published in the village following the demise of the Herald, the Chronicle and the Review.

It was reported that John Booth of Fishkill Landing inherited $8 million ($233 million today), supposedly from a relative in England. [This was almost certainly an “unexpected money” scam, in which a grafter claimed a distant relative overseas had left a fortune accessible with an up-front fee.]

During the previous 12 months, Lewis Tenpenguins had built 13 homes in Matteawan, as well as the stores opposite the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The Rev. Mr. Andrews, a revivalist, preached at the Matteawan Baptist Church and administered the rite of baptism by immersion to five people.

On a Sunday morning, James McGarvey of Matteawan hid behind a screen in his store to thwart past burglars. At 1 p.m., he grabbed a person who crawled through the rear window, thrust the flat of a screwdriver against his cheek, cautioned the culprit it was a revolver and bound his arms. Soon after, a second culprit appeared, and then a third. Their names were McKane, McClary and Turner, and they were 11, 13 and 14 years old.

A proposal to build a horse-drawn railroad from the river to Matteawan was revived and a bill drafted for its incorporation. It was to extend from the westerly end of Long Dock to the Dutchess and Columbia Railroad in front of the Methodist Church, be completed within five years, have capital stock of up to $50,000 and charge a fare of 10 cents or less.

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John Ginley, the ringleader of a group of boys who stoned the house of Patrick McGinnis at Dennings Point and threw rubbish into his well, was sentenced to 30 days in the county jail.

125 Years Ago (February 1897)

Prof. James DeGarmo, of the DeGarmo Institute at Fishkill Landing, was appointed grand representative of the Grand Lodge of Masons of Mexico. (No more explanation was provided.)

The minstrel organization of the St. Luke’s Cadet Corps gave a performance at Town Hall in Philipstown.

The Ladies’ Catholic Benevolent Association in Fishkill-on-the-Hudson faced a dilemma when the president who served during its first year in existence was re-elected, making her past president and president. Since the past president installed the new president, a branch officer had to be deputized to give her the oath.

After Thomas Wood died in Fishkill, Undertaker Battell of Fishkill Landing retrieved the body and secured a burial permit. But the widow Wood was a relative of the wife of Undertaker Donahue of Newburgh, and he understood he would handle the arrangements. At the same time Battell announced the funeral in the Fishkill Catholic Church, Donahue prepared for services at St. Patrick’s in Newburgh. Because Donahue did not have a permit, he could not take the body across the river, so he and his lawyer pressed their case with the Town Board. Wood finally had his funeral, in Newburgh, five days after his death.

Daniel Decker, convicted of watching an illegal boxing match, was fined $25.

An unnamed Italian from Fishkill Landing was fined $200 for violating the Raines law. (The law, which was enacted in 1896 and repealed in 1923, raised the drinking age from 16 to 18 and banned the sale of alcohol on Sundays except in hotels with at least 10 rooms that served free food.)

After a passenger aboard the Newburgh-Fishkill Landing ferry felt something strike him in the chest, he noticed a small hole in his coat. He pulled his leather-covered notebook from his vest pocket and in the leaves found a .32-caliber bullet. It apparently had been fired by a hunter a long way off.

Two convicts at the Auburn state penitentiary who had become “insane through idle-
The Matteawan school, caused a ruckus because the U.S. Army turned him away, in the French army to fight in World War II. Instructions. The deadline was March 15.

The superintendent said the dissection was subject to fits; nearing chloroformed when she dissected a kitten. The cat had drowned in Fishkill Creek while walking his dog, which was found two days later. The kitten in a wash bin in the basement.

The mysterious Thomas E. Shannon, who had enlisted at age 16, was declared insane. His minders said he spoke of "affection for his mother-in-law" may have contributed. The telephone and had been assigned to operate and test the transatlantic instruments. He specialized in the wireless representing the interests of the General Electric Co. He was among 250 students injured when a 4-cylinder Mazda engine. Tires have 2 or 3 forward speeds and one reverse, each at both ranges. Over $3,000 in tires, rims and hoses.

Herbert Webb, who had enlisted at age 16, compared to 25 percent for the district. A late-model sedan stolen in College Place and no one knew anything about it. At the first meeting of the Beacon chapter of J.B. Lodge, manager of Mount Beacon, was defeated Beacon, 102-96.

Edward Coffee, the 65-year-old superintendent of the Budd brickyard at Dutchess Junction, dropped dead at his mother-in-law’s funeral. The Poughkeepsie Eagle-News said “his affection for his mother-in-law” may have contributed.

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The mysterious Thomas E. Shannon, who had testified on warrants that he purchased illegal whiskey, and a Beacon man who had been then raided by the state police, returned to the city looking for $45 from the mayor, who, he said, had hired him for $5 a day to gather evidence. “If Mayor Stafford does not pay me that money, I am going to start something,” said the Orange County resident.

J.B. Lodge, manager of Mount Beacon, planned to build a crushed-stone road from the foot of the incline to the Beaconconr Hotel. The only other way up the mountain was by cable car.

The Trinity Five of Beacon dropped out of the fledging Central Hudson Valley semi-pro basketball league, citing a lack of home games. It also claimed that, during a loss at undefeated Wappinger, the Bleacher's star fouled out but refused the referee's order to leave the game. The league president said the result would stand because the referee's judgment was transferred to the Matteawan asylum. Herbert Webb, who had enlisted at age 16 in the French army to fight in World War II because the U.S. Army turned him away, returned to Beacon with his Australian bride, Sylvia Kershaw. He met her while traveling after he graduated from Oahu College in Honolulu.

JOY MATALON
HEALING BODYWORK WITH VACCINATED

FOURTH WINTER" were transferred to the Matteawan asylum, The New York Times reported in its Telegraphic Brevities column. Fannie Nearing, a science teacher at Fannie Nearing, a science teacher at Fannie Nearing, a science teacher at Pocahontas, held a banquet to celebrate its first anniversary. It was entertained with a Pocahontas, held a banquet to celebrate its first anniversary. It was entertained with a Pocahontas, held a banquet to celebrate its first anniversary. It was entertained with a Pocahontas, held a banquet to celebrate its first anniversary. It was entertained with a Pocahontas, held a banquet to celebrate its first anniversary. It was entertained with a Pocahontas, held a banquet to celebrate its first anniversary.

The Highlands Current
February 25, 2022
19
Out There

Tree’s a Crowd

By Brian PJ Cronin

At first glance, it looks like whoever printed Eli Roberts’ business cards was drunk. There’s a ¾-inch notch missing from the top of every one of them.

But Roberts is a farmer and forest manager, and the notch on his card is an angle gauge to measure the density of a forest to see if it’s overstocked. You close one eye, hold the card in front of you about as far as your arm can stretch, and see how many trees around you are wide enough to fill the entire gap.

You can then calculate if the forest is reaching what’s known as “the zone of imminent competition mortality,” or the point at which less-established trees will die because there aren’t enough resources to support them.

I recently received an email from a reader who wanted to know why there are so many trees on the ground in the Nelsonville Woods. Anytime I need help unraveling tree mysteries I turn to Roberts and Nicole Wooten from the Hudson Highlands Land Trust, who went to forestry school together and forget more about trees in a day than I’ve learned in my life. Which is why, on a snowy day a few weeks ago, we ended up half a mile down the green trail off Secor Street, each with one eye closed and Roberts’ business card in hand, spinning in circles.

It’s easy to imagine the forest as timeless, but the Nelsonville Woods, and many of the Highlands’ forests, are relatively young. The stone walls point to a past as farmland. We know the land was cleared at least twice, first by European settlers and again in the sheep-rearing craze of the early 1800s. Many of the trees wound up in the furnaces at the West Point Foundry.

Roberts estimates that the dominant trees in the Nelsonville Woods are more than 100 years old, but many of the trees around us were less than 50. Still, enough trees were wide enough to fill the gap in Roberts’ card and lead to some troubling math. The zone of imminent competition mortality was, well, imminent.

The evidence was all around us, on the ground. Winter days are the perfect time to look for fallen trees; you can see deeper into the woods and the snow helps the trees stand out. The lack of leaves also makes it easier to follow the paths trees take as they bend their way toward gaps in the canopy, straining to reach the light.

In some cases, you can see where a trunk makes a hard turn. That’s usually the result of a space in the canopy opening because a larger tree nearby fell. The ghosts of the forest shape what we see.

It would seem that the many fallen trees around us was no cause for alarm. The young forest was working itself out, reaching a state of balance in which the number of trees in the forest is equal to the number of trees the forest can sustain.

“That’s a somewhat rosy picture of it,” said Wooten when I explained my hypothesis. “With the emerald ash borer, hemlocks infected ticks and the spotted lanternfly. ‘That’s a somewhat rosy picture of it,’” said Wooten when I explained my hypothesis.

In the woods, there’s always more to see. The open spaces in the canopy aren’t making room for more oaks, whose acorns support squirrels and bears. Instead, oak saplings are getting eaten by the deer, who are flourishing because wolves and mountain lions were getting eaten by the deer, who are flourish- ing because wolves and mountain lions were driven out of the Northeast. That just leaves room for plants that deer don’t eat: invasive species such as Japanese barberry and Tree of Heaven, which provide habitat for lyme-infected ticks and the spotted lanternfly.

At the same time, ash trees are being felled by the emerald ash borer, hemlocks by hemlock woolly adelgid, and all the trees’ roots systems by invasive earthworms plowing their way through the leaf litter, leaving fewer nutrients. The changing climate is producing more intense storms, droughts followed by deluges and increas- ingly warmer temperatures. If one species of plant or insect fades, the species that depend on it for food and shelter also die.

The forest may be working itself out, but it’s doing so in the face of new and mounting pressures. “We’re losing some things that we may never get back,” Wooten said.

The arc of the forest may be long, but land management practices can bend it toward stability. That doesn’t just apply to professionals like Roberts and Wooten, but anyone who cares about the woods, from amateur naturalists to people who hike often enough that they notice when something’s wrong and write to the local newspaper.

“I have hope that we’ll achieve a balance so that future generations can walk around the Nelsonville Woods and not see potential indications of global problems, but rather a forest that’s sustainably thriving at all levels,” Wooten says — even as it constantly changes and adjusts every time a tree falls.
Rombout Middle School Honor Roll

Students recognized for second-quarter grades

Grade 8

Principal's List

Nadeen Ahmed, Alianna Aljaj, Farhana Antora, Patrick Apmann, Mira Bagriyanik, Aleksander Danilov, Celia Drury, Sara Principal's List

Stageman, Harper Strang, Jesiah Swain-

Julian Ambrose, Samuel Bates, Kate

Morgan, Henry Mulligan, Sigil Netboy,

James D'Abruzzo, Liam Flanagan, Emily

Mikayla Acevedo, Cecilia Allee, Maayan

Julian Hannah, Elidonya Hudson, Aali-

Benjamin Seaman, Shane Signorelli, Gonzalo Soria Vecelea, Caelum Tripaldi, Derek Waite, Caleb Wells-McGurr, Owen Youatt, Troy Zapencki, Josefine Zeeza

Mark Aakjar III, Jacqueline Albra, Caden Balfour, Kiersten Barber, Lily Berry, Michail Brown, Wyatt Burgess, Hawah Camara, Sarah Camara, Henry Cerech-

David Busselle, Alissa Buslovich, Frankie

Caleb Wells-McGurk, Owen Youatt, Trey

Grade 6

Principal’s List

Kendall Adnams, Owen Allee, Jesse Apos-

gan, Kiarra Tice, Vincent Tonyes Jr., Fabiola

Charles Rowe, Julian Schwarz, Keira Shan-

femme Akinnwunmi, Ericka Arce, Benja-

Mia Lentini, Melody Longino, Ziryab Malik,

Ruby Martin, Oliver Meyer, Braelyn Milli-

Gabriel Lunin-Pack, Trajan McCarthy,

High Honor Roll

Aaron Antonacci, Emma Bellis, Casey

Mark Aakjar III, Jacqueline Albra, Caden

Grace Bradley, Alissa Buslovich, Frankie

Jude Williams, Hayden Wilson, Luna

Gilleo, Colin Hopkins, John Mangan,

Thalia Rodriguez, Antonio See, David

"The Highlands Current"
Byrne Wins Putnam GOP Endorsement

Republican chair objects, accusing him of ‘dishonor and disloyalty’

By Liz Schevetchuk Armstrong

Kevi Byrne last week won the Putnam County Republican Committee’s endorsement for county executive, following an extended war of words — though not with his opponent for the GOP line, Legislator Carl Albano.

Instead, Byrne, a state Assembly member whose district includes eastern Putnam, clashed with Anthony Scannapieco, the longtime head of the committee, who also works as one of two county Board of Election commissioners.

Despite Scannapieco’s misgivings about Byrne, which he expressed in correspondence to the party faithful, the state lawmaker won the endorsement, 148-76. Albano has the backing of County Executive MaryEllen Odell, who cannot run because of term limits. If neither Byrne nor Albano drops out, they will compete in a June 28 primary. Party organizations must tell the state by Monday (Feb. 28) whether they need to hold primaries.

Campaigning as a candidate for “a new generation,” Byrne announced his plans in November to pursue the county job.

Albano, who cites his 45 years of local business experience and more than a decade on the county Legislature, declared his candidacy in December, saying he wants to continue the policies and practices of the Odell administration.

His district includes Cold Spring and parts of Patterson and Lake Carmel.

Putnam hasn’t had rival Republican contenders for county executive since 2010, when Odell lost a primary to then-state-Sen. Vincent Leibell, who won in the general election but never took office after being accused and subsequently convicted of violating federal anti-corruption laws. In 2011, Odell won a special election for the position and was elected to full terms in 2014 and 2018.

In 2015 and 2016, Scannapieco and Byrne worked together on the Republican Committee; Scannapieco as chair and Byrne as vice-chair.

Whatever comity they then shared apparently no longer exists. Writing to Republican committee members on Feb. 4, Byrne complained that Scannapieco had been undermining his candidacy. “Running for county executive, apparently against the wishes of the man with whom I served as vice chairman, may seem a failure to ‘kiss the ring,’” he protested.

Nonetheless, he continued, “politicians and party chairs don’t get to anoint candidates. We can win the county executive election this November, but we won’t win if we don’t choose our best candidate through honest competition within a vibrant and active Republican Party!”

He said a poll his team conducted before he decided to run “put me 41 points ahead of any other likely Republican hopeful and that he also “has demonstrated the crucial ability to raise funds” and keep Putnam under Republican control.

A day later, at a campaign event, Byrne blasted “an establishment that’s working against us.” He promised that “I will not be dissuaded by those in power or others who are creatures of the establishment. I took on the establishment in Albany and if I have to take it on in my own backyard, I’ll do that too.”

On Feb. 10, in a letter to Republicans, Scannapieco responded that Byrne has “brought the party to the brink of broken with this primary” and that “it is his dishonor and disloyalty that is the destructive force here.”

Describing Byrne as a “career politician” who has “lived his adult life from photo op to photo op,” Scannapieco asserted that in three terms in the Assembly, Byrne has “offered no help in any way, shape or form to our local government.”

In a second letter the same day, Scannapieco disparaged Byrne’s poll, arguing that in 25,000 phone calls, the pollster reached 240 individuals and only 139 of them favored Byrne — “a meaningless result.”

Scannapieco urged Republicans to “not be fooled by a snake-oil salesman of the ‘new generation’ of supposed leadership.”

Albano has tried to steer clear. “I just want to emphasize that letters from our Republican chair regarding the campaign are not from me,” he said in a message to committee members before the vote.

Along with the Republican endorsement, Byrne has obtained the backing of the Putnam Conservative Party; former U.S. Rep. Nan Hayworth, for whom he worked as an aide; former county Clerk Dennis Sant; and former county Legislator Roger Gross.

Disclosures filed with the state Board of Elections show that as of Jan. 17 Byrne had collected $122,672 in contributions and other receipts and spent $4,108. Contributions included $1,000 from the Molinaro for Dutchess campaign; $1,000 from Nan Hayworth; and $500 from Tera Construction, operated by Ken Kearney, who built the affordable-housing West End Lofts in Beacon and owns the vacant former Marathon property in Cold Spring.

Albano’s state filing Jan. 16 reported that he had loaned his campaign $52,900 and spent $231.

The Putnam County Democratic Committee has not yet endorsed a candidate.

Big Events to Return to Mayor’s Park

Also, Cold Spring police review underway

By Michael Turton

The Cold Spring Village Board, at its Wednesday (Feb. 23) meeting, gave conditional approval to two events to be held at Mayor’s Park this summer.

Organizers must still confirm the availability of parking at the Haldane campus and provide site maps.

On July 16, Hops on the Hudson plans to host Brews with Views II, a festival featuring craft beers and ciders from New York State. Organizer John Scherer estimates 1,500 people will attend.

The Putnam County Wine and Food Fest, scheduled for Aug. 6 and 7, is expected to host Brews with Views II, a festival featuring craft beers and ciders from New York State. Organizer John Scherer estimates 1,500 people will attend.

The village had prohibited such large scale gatherings during the height of the pandemic shutdown.

The organizers will pay the village $3,000 per day for use of the park, as well as fees to use the pavilion, use of the Highway Department garage for vendor parking and use of the park during setup and breakdown.

During the public comment period, Mayor Kathleen Foley was asked if the events benefited the village beyond the revenue they generate.

The question reflected comments by Planning Board Chair Jack Goldstein at the previous Village Board meeting, when state park representatives outlined a shoreline protection project at Dockside Park that will also include a walking trail and boat launch. Goldstein questioned if the improvements would draw more visitors to the village, which he said already faces overcrowding and parking shortages during the tourist season.

“I do have concerns about the impacts,” Foley said. “As a board, we have spent a decent amount of time talking about striking a balance.”

The mayor said recent increases in the event fees helps ensure that funds are available to maintain the park.

“We haven’t had really large events in some time,” she said. “It’s important for us to see what impact encouraging public transportation has.”

Earlier in the meeting, Foley urged event organizers to work with Metro-North to increase the number of visitors who come by train.

“There’s no question the village is crowded on weekends, and it can be very frustrating for residents,” Foley said. “It’s also an economic driver, not just for village revenues, but also for Main Street.”

Police review

The committee conducting a state-mandated review of police department policies and procedures met for the first time on Wednesday (Feb. 23). When asked if its meetings will be open to the public, the mayor said she expected the committee would discuss the issue at its first meeting.

“It is an ad hoc committee, not a standing board,” she said. “I want very much for that committee to drive its own bus.”

Foley said analysis of a 2021 survey of village residents regarding the Cold Spring Police Department will be among the committee’s first tasks, followed by recommendations to the Village Board stemming from the data.

In other business...

■ The mayor was authorized to sign a renewal of the franchise agreement with Cablevision of Wappingers Falls. The agreement is not exclusive and does not prevent other cable providers from operating in the village.

■ The board approved the 2021 Firefighters’ Record, a document that lists the hours of service by each Cold Spring Fire Co. volunteer, data required for their pensions.

■ Discussion continued on a request by Jim and Lori Ely, owners of the Riverview Restaurant, to purchase a narrow, 665-square-foot strip of village-owned property adjacent to the northern edge of the restaurant’s lot line. The request was initiated but not finalized during the previous administration. Trustee Eliza Starbuck suggested, and Foley agreed, that the $4 per square foot price charged for such purchases in recent years should be reviewed.
The Highlands Current

Puzzles

Cross Current

ACROSS
1. Atlas page
4. Ivy League University
9. Science room
12. GPS suggestion
13. Haunting
15. 1989 Al Pacino film
17. Decks in the ring
18. Small battery
19. Yard tools
21. “Understood”
24. Membership
25. Tolkien beast
26. Civil War soldier
28. Pulitzer category
31. Abound
33. NARC’s org.
35. Dr. McGraw
36. Anticipate
38. Chips go-with
40. Sugar suffix
41. Mark Harmon TV series
43. School break
45. Shun
47. Owned
48. Sashimi fish
49. New York City’s Park
54. Decay
55. Ryan or Tatum

DOWN
1. — Miniver
2. Packed away
3. Shell-game item
4. “No cheating!”
5. Akin
6. Acalpuclo gold
7. The First — Club
8. Required
56. Gaiety
57. Sauce source
58. Actions
59. Turf

Solutions
1. Atlas page
4. Ivy League University
9. Science room
12. GPS suggestion
13. Haunting
15. 1989 Al Pacino film
17. Decks in the ring
18. Small battery
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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. creamy mother sauce (11)
2. measure for race distances (9)
3. cuddle lovingly (8)
4. cumulus, cirrus and stratus (6)
5. wilderness area (11)
6. uniquely moving chess piece (6)
7. Las Vegas football team (7)

Solutions
1. — Miniver
2. Packed away
3. Shell-game item
4. “No cheating!”
5. Akin
6. Acalpuclo gold
7. The First — Club

Sudo Current

Answers for Feb. 18 Puzzles

For interactive sudoku and crossword answers, see highlandscurrent.org/puzzles.

Puzzle Page Sponsored by

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BOYS’ BASKETBALL

Beacon wanted to end its regular season on a positive note and did just that on Feb. 17, scrapping out a 59-58 win over host O’Neill High School of Highlands Falls on a free throw by Chase Green with two seconds remaining.

In a game that the Bulldogs led most of the way, O’Neill chipped away and tied it, 58-58, with 30 seconds left.

After a Beacon miss, Green forced a turn-over, with the ball going to teammate Joe Battle. Moments later, Battle passed the ball back to Green, who missed a shot but was fouled. He hit one of two free-throws. O’Neill got off a potential game-winner from midcourt but it didn’t drop.

“Chase had an absolutely tremendous game,” said Coach Scott Timpano. “He gives us endless hustle. And Joe had a lot of big rebounds and did a lot under the basket. Jason Komisar was also phenomenal again; he had a big dunk early that energized us.”

Darien Gillins and Green each finished with 14 points, Komisar had 13 points and seven rebounds, and Battle pulled down nine rebounds to go with two points.

“That was a great win for our guys,” Timpano said. “We were coming off two losses to Goshen, which will probably be the top seed, so we wanted to go into the playoffs with some momentum.”

The Section IX, Class A tournament begins Saturday (Feb. 26); the Bulldogs are expecting the No. 3 seed and begins Saturday (Feb. 26); the Bulldogs game, “said Coach Scott Timpano. “He gives us endless hustle. And Joe had a lot of big rebounds and did a lot under the basket. Jason Komisar was also phenomenal again; he had a big dunk early that energized us.”

BOYS’ SWIMMING

BOYS’ SWIMMING

In a win last week over Minisink Valley, 12-8 on Tuesday (March 1). The Blue Devils defeated YMA by seven points early in the season. The winner will advance to the title game on March 5.

BOWLING

The Beacon boys defeated Washingtonville, 7-0, on Feb. 17 to finish their season at 10-5; the girls also defeated Washingtonville to improve to 7-9.

Dan Gilleo had a record-breaking season: He broke the Beacon High School record with a 760 series, tied the school record with a 289 game and finished with a 208 average and All-Section honors. He will bowl in the state tournament in Syracuse on March 12.

GIRLS’ BASKETBALL

Beacon put the wraps on an impressive regular season on Wednesday (Feb. 23) at home, getting strong play from its roster of freshmen and sophomores to defeat Spackenkill, 29-27.

With the win, the Bulldogs finished the regular season at 12-8 and are hoping for a home game when the Section IX, Class A playoffs begin Saturday.

Coach Christina Dahl said she likes the way her young team has progressed in its first season playing in Section IX. “We’d love to make some noise in the postseason,” she said.

The victory over Spackenkill was the team’s fourth straight. Beacon got 10 points from Reilly Landisi, and Deyvn Kelly and Shadayra Fryar each added eight. Lila Burke recorded six points and 11 rebounds and Davyra Rodriguez had five points.

“Lila’s energy and aggressiveness on the boards set the tone,” Dahl said. “Reilly did a good job attacking the hoop and we also had shooting contributions from Davyra and Deyvn from the outside and solid post play from Lila and Shadayra.”

In a win at Minisink Valley on Feb. 16, Fryar scored 12, Rayanna Taylor had 11 and Kelly added six. “We lacked some intensity on offense, but our defense led us,” Dahl said. “Shadayra played great down low and Rayana hit some big shots in the fourth quarter to seal the win.”

Haldane (9-11), seeded No. 3 in the Section I, Class C tournament, is scheduled to play at No. 2 Yonkers Montessori Academy (12-8) on Tuesday (March 1). The Blue Devils defeated YMA by seven points early in the season. The winner will advance to the title game on March 5.

BOYS’ SWIMMING

Beacon finished 18th of 20 schools in the Section IX tournament at Valley Central High School last weekend.

The relay team of Imroz Ali, Bryce Manning, Ronnie Anzovino and Hunter Ingold finished 14th in the 400-yard freestyle relay in 4:01.25; and Ingold was 15th in the 50-yard freestyle in 24.21.

BOYS’ BASKETBALL

By Skip Pearlman

Reilly Landisi drives around a Spackenkill defender on Wednesday (Feb. 23) in Beacon’s regular-season finale. The Bulldogs open the playoffs on Saturday.

Girls’ Basketball

Rayana Taylor had 11 points for Beacon in a win last week over Minisink Valley.