ON THE MOVE — Students from The Foundry School in Cold Spring walked from their building on Kemble Street to the gazebo on April 29 as part of International Day, which is celebrated by all Montessori schools. After learning about the geography, traditions and food of various countries, each student chose one to represent, typically from his or her own heritage. Here, the class is led down Main Street by teacher Bethany Ciulla.

Photo by Emily DeGroof

New Dutchess Districts Would Flip Beacon Wards

Commission members clash over Vassar voters

By Leonard Sparks

Two of Beacon’s four wards would switch districts under a draft map approved by a seven-member commission redrawing boundaries for the Dutchess County Legislature based on 2020 census figures.

The county’s Independent Reapportionment Commission approved its first reconfiguration of Legislature boundaries on April 26, and will introduce the plan on Monday (May 9) at the first in a series of public hearings. The commission must adopt final boundaries for the county’s 25 districts — currently represented by 17 Republicans and eight Democrats — by June 25.

In the draft map, Beacon remains split into two districts, 16 and 18, that are shared with different parts of the Town of Fishkill. But the map reshapes the districts’ boundaries and changes the wards that each encompasses.

(Continued on Page 21)

Garrison One of 15 Districts Seeking Override

Driving costs: Inflation and high-school tuition

By Joey Asher

When Garrison residents vote May 17 on a proposed $12.36 million school budget, they will decide whether to approve a tax increase that is four times higher than the district’s state-mandated cap and among the largest increases in New York by percentage, according to a review of state records.

With a proposed tax levy increase of 9.18 percent, Garrison will be one of 15 districts seeking to override its cap, about the same number among the state’s 731 districts that make the attempt each year. For Garrison, the cap for 2022-23 is 2.2 percent; to set it aside, the budget must pass with at least 60 percent of the vote.

The referendum raises important issues for a district that already spends about $42,000 per student, nearly double the state average. And the vote has implications for neighboring districts Haldane.

(Continued on Page 8)

Avian Flu Creeps into Dutchess

No threat to humans, but chickens at risk

By Brian PJ Cronin

The state Department of Environmental Conservation confirmed last week that a highly contagious bird virus has been found in Dutchess County, in addition to other counties across New York, although no cases have been reported in Putnam.

Avian influenza poses no threat to humans, but it can be fatal to backyard chickens.

The virus is spread by migrating birds such as ducks, geese, gulls and shorebirds. Strains that have high mortality rates in wild birds and domestic poultry are designated as highly pathogenic, or HPAI. It does not appear to affect songbirds, so bird feeders can remain unless they attract ducks and geese.

Richard Ball, the state commissioner of agriculture, said that people who own chickens should make sure their flocks are not coming in contact with wild geese or ducks. Ball said the first detected case of the virus in New York this season was on Long Island, where a woman who kept chickens also fed migrating ducks and geese, attracting them to her yard. “Not doing that is the first order of business,” he said.

(Continued on Page 20)
FIVE QUESTIONS: ASHER PACHT

By Zach Rodgers

Asher Pacht is the director of environmental programs at the Beacon Institute for Rivers and Estuaries. His responses are excerpted from an interview for the podcast Beaconites.

What is the Beacon Institute?

It was founded in 2006. Initially we focused on real-time monitoring of the Hudson. But as that project sunsets, Clarkson University — which is located in Potsdam, near the Canadian border — said it was interested in the institute for the research that we were doing. It hired our research team and in 2011 the ecology center became its Beacon campus. We run graduate programs and do programs for K-12 students to inspire them to explore the fields of science, technology, engineering and math.

Didn’t you have a storefront on Main Street?

We had two locations — the Water Ecology Center at Dennings Point and a location on Main, which was an environmental gallery. As we rehabbed the factory buildings at Dennings Point, it made more sense to focus our efforts there, so we left Main Street. The city and mayor were happy, because obviously retail spaces are at a premium.

How did you come to the institute?

I grew up in New Hampshire. I met my wife, Fay, who is from New Windsor, in college. While I was finishing at New York University, we moved to Beacon because she was teaching in Newburgh. I started working at the Hudson Highlands Nature Museum in Cornwall. In graduate school I had studied water resources and environmental policy, so when the job came up at the Beacon Institute, I jumped on it. That was 10 years ago.

Did you close during the pandemic?

Yes, but we are now open on weekends with new exhibits on the river’s ecology and history that we’ve been working on for two years. When you’re putting something on the wall that is going to be there for, ideally, 10 years or more, you have to get it exactly right, with a nod to universal design so that the maximum number of people can digest the information most easily. It’s been quite a process. We tried to make it as much as possible about the place where we are on the Hudson River, which is River Mile 60, Beacon Harbor and Dennings Point. We’re near the salt front of the river — people might not be aware that the fresh water that comes from the north meets the salt water from the Atlantic, and the average salt front is near Beacon or Poughkeepsie, depending on the time of year. You can learn all the physical aspects of the river, the food webs, the migrations, the species, the habitats at Dennings Point and how they all interconnect.

In terms of habitats at Dennings Point, I have seen bald eagles and snakes, including one that I think was constricting a cottontail rabbit. Do you see that sort of thing at work?

Oh yes. Everything eats the rabbits. They’re popular with most of the predators — bobcats, eagles, hawks, coyotes, foxes. It’s a good thing they breed a lot.
Beacon Library Budget Passes

Three new trustees added to board

Voters approved the 2022-23 budget of the Howland Public Library District on April 28 by a wide margin and elected three members to its board.

The proposed budget passed 227-31. It includes $1.34 million in spending, which represents an increase of 5 percent, or $61,069, which was more than the state-mandated tax cap for the library in 2022-23 of 1 percent, or $22,107.

There were nine candidates for three open seats on the nine-member board: Karen Twohig did not run for re-election and two were vacant.

Brooke Simmons received the most votes and will succeed Twohig and serve a 5-year term; Marguerite (Greta) Byrum will serve the four years remaining on one of the vacant seats; and Jeffrey Young (Yang) will serve the final three years of the other.

Two Jan. 6 Defendants From Putnam Sentenced

Mahopac residents pleaded guilty

Two Mahopac men were sentenced last week for their roles in the attack on Jan. 6, 2021, on the U.S. Capitol, an attempt to disrupt the certification of the presidential election results.

As part of an agreement with prosecutors, Anthony Vuksanaj, 52, pleaded guilty to parading, demonstrating or picketing inside the Capitol. Police had detained Vuksanaj in June 2020 in connection to a robbery at knifepoint; he denied being involved but a search warrant showed his phone had been at the Capitol on Jan. 6.

On April 29, he was sentenced to three years of probation that includes three imprisonments of 14 days each and three months of home confinement, as well as $2,510 in fines.

Robert Ballesteros, 28, posted a video on Instagram of himself inside the Capitol wearing a black mask. He said he had “made my stand.” Ballesteros pleaded guilty to parading, demonstrating or picketing and was sentenced on April 28 to 36 months of probation and fined $510.

In addition, an Orange County man, Thomas Webster, a 20-year veteran of the New York Police Department, was convicted by a jury on Monday (May 1) of six counts related to his assault of a Capitol police officer on Jan. 6. The Goshen resident faces 20 years in prison on the most serious charge, striking the officer with a metal flagpole.

Short-Term Rental Suit in Cold Spring Dismissed

Plaintiff says he may refile

A lawsuit filed against the operator of a short-term rental in Cold Spring has been dismissed.

Carl Mauro, owner of the apartment building at 153 Main St., had sought an injunction prohibiting Frederique Henriot from operating a short-term rental at 3 Furnace St. Mauro also sought $150,000 in damages.

The suit alleged that Henriot and her guests block access to Mauro’s building when they parked on an easement along the rear of his property. Mauro also alleged that Henriot’s STR violates regulations adopted by the village last year.

Mauro’s attorney, Norah Hart, said a state judge in Carmel dismissed the case after she was unable to attend a court session because she had traveled to California for a family emergency. She said her client may try again in Cold Spring Justice Court.
Incline railway

I was surprised to read of the demise of the Mount Beacon Incline Railway Restoration Society (“End of the Line,” April 29). My grandfather and uncle purchased the railway from J.M. Lodge in 1960, and I spent my teen years working and living at the lower station house and later the White Stone Hotel after the house burned in 1967. Eventually, my grandfather and I moved to an upstairs apartment at 45 Robinson St. The memories of growing up there from 1963 to 1971 flooded my mind while reading your article.

Earlier this year, my daughter was returning from a trip to Connecticut and stopped by the Mount Beacon park. She took pictures of the historical plaques and one photo caught my attention. The person standing on the tram was me! I believe it was taken in 1967, when I was 16. Imagine, me, on a historical marker!

I managed the railway in 1971, after my grandfather was disabled by a stroke, but left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water. I managed the railway in 1971, after my grandfather was disabled by a stroke, but left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water. I managed the railway in 1971, after my grandfather was disabled by a stroke, but left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water. I managed the railway in 1971, after my grandfather was disabled by a stroke, but left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water. I managed the railway in 1971, after my grandfather was disabled by a stroke, but left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water. I managed the railway in 1971, after my grandfather was disabled by a stroke, but left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water. I managed the railway in 1971, after my grandfather was disabled by a stroke, but left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water. I managed the railway in 1971, after my grandfather was disabled by a stroke, but left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water left when he recovered. I tried rejuvenating the place, but it was like oil and water.

From atop the mountain, I watched the building and connection of the Beacon-Newburgh Bridge and could see the Empire State Building from atop the fire tower on clear nights. I have scars from the close calls I received working there, when I lost a few of my “nine lives.”

Of the videos you posted online, the first shows a dapper gentleman in a fedora sitting on the rear bench of the roofed tram. That is my grandfather. He died in 1978. The second video shows the fellow on the “go-digger” following the tram car down the mountain. We found the gadget and I tried a ride, almost killing myself when the brake handle broke. That is one of the scars I mentioned.

The white guides on either side of the tracks were the emergency braking system for the tram in event of the cable break. Centrifugal force would engage a double-wedge into the 8x8 to stop the tram. I painted guides from top to bottom, by hand, with can and brush, both sides.

I was sad to learn that I must remove ascending Mount Beacon on the incline railway from my bucket list. My last ride was in 1971; I had hoped for one more.

Jeanne Wiley, via Facebook

Could something like a ski lift be installed, something less massive than the incline railway? That would allow the elderly and physically challenged people to benefit from our beautiful mountain vista.

Laurie Gallo, via Facebook

Bummer. Hoped they would find a way.

Michael Koch, via Instagram
What is ‘The Highlands’?

The name of this newspaper, The Highlands Current, reflects the communities we cover: Beacon and Philipstown, which includes Cold Spring, Nelsonville, Garrison, North Highlands and Continental Village.

The Hudson Highlands are mountains on both sides of the river; on the east side, they stretch from Fishkill Ridge to Anthony’s Nose, or roughly the northern edge of Beacon to the southern edge of Philipstown, a distance of about 13 miles. The bedrock here is more than 1 billion years old, and the river is distinguished because it becomes narrower and reaches its deepest point (216 feet) between Garrison and West Point in a gorge dubbed “World’s End.”

LETTERS AND COMMENTS

(Continued from Page 4)
schools. Please join me in enthusiastically voting for them on May 17.
  Jennifer Daly, Cold Spring

Redistricting maps

I can’t wait for New York’s “huge victory for free and fair elections” — as the head of the state Republican committee described the Court of Appeals throwing out the Legislature’s redistricting maps — to trickle up to higher courts and/or to the rest of the country (“Court Strikes Down Democrats’ Maps,” April 29).

Republicans in red states are the main exploiters of gerrymandered district maps and the main beneficiaries of lopsided elections. The Brennan Center for Justice reports that gerrymandering has given Republicans 16 or 17 extra seats for free and fair elections in the 10 most gerrymandered states, which include Texas, North Carolina, Arkansas, West Virginia and the swing states of Ohio and Pennsylvania.

Jacqueline Foertsch, Philipstown

Fjord Trail

There is no good reason to terminate the Fjord Trail at Dockside Park in Cold Spring, and numerous reasons for Cold Spring and Nelsonville to demand safe pedestrian and bike access to Little Stony Point and the Fjord Trail for village residents, as was proposed in 2014 by consultants from the RBA Group (“State Provides $20M for Fjord Trail,” April 22).

Dockside Park has a special place in the hearts of many residents of and visitors to Philipstown, whether painting a sunset, watching a Cold Spring Film Society movie, skipping rocks at the old dock or gazing at clouds rising over Storm King. Too little consideration is being given to what will be lost if the intangible “end of the earth” quality of Dockside is lost when

(Continued on Page 6)
(Continued from Page 5)

it becomes the terminus to the Fjord Trail.

There is no good reason for the Fjord Trail, a rustic, riverside trail, to end at a rustic, riverside point in the village that has no public amenities, no food or water available, and no commercial destinations for people who have supposedly just walked or biked along the river for 8 miles. Why irrevocably alter the character of this village treasure when there are viable sidewalk connections on Route 9D and/or Fair Street?

The proposed route passes over underwater village and town land. Those entities should have a seat at the table. The emphasis has shifted from the 2014 focus on safe bike and pedestrian routes to having people park cars along Route 9D.

The Fjord Trail proposal keeps the parallel parking on 9D to force the state to lower the speed limit along the Fjord Trail corridor. This does not seem like a rational design decision. The Fjord Trail committee seems to be ignoring the demand that will be created by all the additional parking.

Ethan Timm, Nelsonville

It is important to recall the origin of the Fjord Trail project: managing critical safety issues along Route 9D related to the popularity of Breakneck Ridge and other nearby public trails. The Fjord Trail is a local solution, thought up by some of the same residents who are working on it now, in response to a problem that needs attention now more than ever.

The special magic of Dockside Park is not at all lost on me. Nearly 28 years ago, my husband and I were married at Dockside looking out at Storm King, with a reception at Jim and Lori Ely’s former restaurant on the site.

There are several good reasons to have the trail begin/end at Dockside Park. All of these have been borne out by a comprehensive alternatives analysis and public input:

1. The trail has always been planned as a safe and scenic 7.5-mile walk/bike route between Cold Spring and Beacon through the Hudson Highlands State Park Preserve. As the Fjord Trail has evolved, the desire to build in Americans with Disability Act accessibility has become a guiding principle. The trail is now envisioned as a favorite spot for families with small children to go for a bike ride; for walkers and runners to get outside for some exercise; and for seniors to enjoy a midday stroll to Little Stony Point or beyond.

2. With Dockside Park as the southern gateway, Cold Spring residents can easily walk or bike to this trailhead. Likewise, visitors from farther away can easily access the trail from the Cold Spring train station. Fewer cars circulating in search of parking spots is good for the environment, as well as the village’s congestion problem, and safer for cyclists and pedestrians. The first iteration of the Fjord Trail design by RBA included a plan for all hikers to travel through the village after disembarking the train or parking, making their way up Main Street and along Fair Street to Little Stony Point, the Cornish trail and beyond. Feedback from the village opposed this route, considering it invasive to Cold Spring neighborhoods and unnecessarily congesting Main Street, where shopkeepers and restaurateurs wanted earnest customers. The Fjord Trail committee took this feedback seriously. The new route will bring hikers from the train station along the waterfront to Dockside Park, which is part of the public Hudson Highlands State Park. Those that choose instead to meander along Main Street to shop and dine will still be able to do so. In this way, visitor flow will be split, further reducing congestion.

3. The plan to increase parking options north of the village is a direct response to the critical problem of dangerous pedestrian and vehicular congestion at hyper-popular hiking destinations like Breakneck and Bull Hill. By developing organized and rational parking options for visitors and locals alike at Breakneck Ridge and points north, and connecting the entire route through a shuttle system, visitors will be dispersed along the 7.5-mile route and fewer cars will need to cruise Route 9D and Main Street for parking spots.

4. The proposed route of the Fjord Trail does not pass over underwater Cold Spring or Philipstown land. The land where the Shoreline Trail is planned belongs to Metro-North Railroad. Both Dockside Park and Little Stony Point are part of the Hudson Highlands State Park Preserve.

5. Cold Spring and Philipstown have a seat at the table. Elected leadership from these two communities, along with Fishkill and Beacon, is part of the 19-entity steering committee that has helped to move the Fjord Trail project forward from the beginning. Cold Spring Mayor Kathleen Foley and Philipstown Supervisor John Van Tassel, and their predecessors, have brought great value to this coalition of partners. We look forward to continued thoughtful engagement.

Our plan for Dockside Park is by no means complete and public input is welcomed. There will be restrooms and trash receptacles maintained by Fjord Trail staff, and management responsibility and expense will be removed from the village once Dockside is incorporated into the Fjord Trail. Additionally, we are keen on finding the best ways to ensure that beloved community uses such as fireworks and outdoor movies can continue at Dockside. We are open to other ideas and there will be opportunities for residents to weigh in before a plan is finalized.

It’s time to solve the problem that has been plaguing this community for decades. The

(Continued on Page 7)
MJ Martin, Philipstown
Martin is the director of development and community engagement for the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail.

There is a hidden, unfortunate and troubling contradiction between Scenic Hudson, State Sen. James Skoufis and the public in your front-page article on the Fjord Trail regarding the key issue of continued parking along Route 9D. At the March 23 meeting of the Philipstown Town Board, two representatives from Scenic Hudson told the crowd that even though tens of millions of dollars were going to be spent on fixing the situation at Breakneck Ridge, there would still be parking allowed along the east side of 9D.

A number of us immediately objected and questioned the bizarre logic of this. However, your article quotes Skoufis saying: “You’re going to see all of these cars that clog up Route 9D and make for a really awful quality-of-life issue for local residents and businesses be ameliorated as part of this Phase 1. Those cars will no longer be crowding the shoulder all up and down 9D.”

Thus, is the senator not chauvinic in to Scenic Hudson’s very quiet plan for parking along 9D? Did Scenic Hudson not share this with him?

This is a disturbing discussion because I would bet that a huge majority of Philipstown residents are against any continued parking along Route 9D north of the Breakneck Tunnel. We know it is a dangerous, unsafe portion of the road, with drivers doing U-turns, back-parking and causing a situation known far and wide as an accident waiting to happen. Why is Scenic Hudson committed to this self-sabotaging plan? And why should we trust them with their other plans, which could cause irreparable damage to the rural character of Cold Spring?

Pete Salamsohn, Garrison

In the past few years the parking behavior on Route 9D has gone to new levels of chaos and congestion. What used to be excessive parallel parking on either side of the road became nose-in parking, particularly on the east side of the road, with people backing into the high-speed highway.

This needs to be fixed.

The Breakneck Connector will implement a five-point strategy of traffic calming improvements in the mile north of the tunnel. This includes:

1. A new “Welcome to Hudson Highlands State Park Preserve” gateway sign on the hill as drivers descend toward Breakneck southbound, signaling the entry to a recreation use area.
2. Vegetated bump-outs to provide a safe space for pedestrians to gather as they wait to cross the road.
3. Crosswalks to control and direct street-crossing behavior.
4. Sidewalks to provide a safe route to crosswalks for those exiting their cars.

With this package of improvements installed, the state will lower the speed limit to 40 mph, which will help safety, as well.

As Sen. Skoufis noted, these measures will ameliorate the haphazard parking and congestion that has made for a dangerous and stressful condition for visitors and locals along 9D. Whereas 250 cars might have squeezed themselves along the road, the new design will allow for 77 cars in painted parallel spaces.

Even with an additional 36 spaces in parking lots, the number of cars parked in that area will be greatly reduced, with people directed to find overflow parking at Dutchess Manor and other points north and take a shuttle.

We are grateful for the state support and the senator who stepped up as a champion to bring the resources needed to advance this overdue and much needed improvement to public infrastructure and safety at Breakneck.

For those interested in learning more about the planned improvements, visit hhft.org, where you can find lots of info and watch a recorded public presentation from 2020. We’ll also be having a public meeting with the Cold Spring Village Board on May 25. Hope to see you there!

Amy Kacala, Poughkeepsie
Kacala is executive director of the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail.

The Fjord Trail: Good or Bad for Cold Spring?

Jack Goldstein, who chairs the Cold Spring Planning Board, has been outspoken about plans to connect the village and Beacon with the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail. He was interviewed this week by reporter Michael Turton. For responses from the Fjord Trail’s executive director and director of development and community engagement to criticisms of the project, see their letters to the editor on Pages 6 and 7. The HHFT is scheduled to address the Cold Spring Village Board on May 25.

Are you speaking here as chair of the Planning Board or as a village resident?

The Planning Board has been discussing the HHFT at its public meetings. If a question pertains to something the board has addressed, I’ll answer as its chair. Also, the board has authorized me to investigate the potential impacts of HHFT, but if a question pertains to an issue the Planning Board hasn’t reached a consensus on, I’ll speak as an individual.

Do you think the Fjord Trail will be of net benefit?

I can’t answer that question at this point. But speaking as an individual, I do not think it will bring net benefit to the Village of Cold Spring.

The Planning Board typically comments on proposed development within the village boundaries. Should it play a role in the Fjord Trail, which will go past the Village boundaries?

The Village Code authorizes the Planning Board to investigate matters relating to planning and development in Cold Spring. The Fjord Trail is a 7.5-mile linear development of which approximately half is in the Town of Philipstown, in which Cold Spring is located.

It is a large, unified project that will affect our interests. In this case, the role of the Planning Board is to investigate, and if it so chooses, share its findings with the Village Board and the public. Our discussions to date are available at coldspringny.gov.

Are there avenues for formal input from the planning boards of the four municipalities along the trail’s proposed route — Cold Spring, Philipstown, Fishkill and Beacon?

That is a question for the HHFT, but, speaking personally, in my experience there are always avenues. Nothing could be simpler than to share facts in a timely way.

Won’t the state-mandated Environmental Quality Review address many concerns related to the trail?

The Planning Board hasn’t yet gone into the matter of environmental reviews. I’m speaking as an individual who knows enough about best practices to be concerned. HHFT is effectively segmenting their environmental review by beginning in the middle of the Breakneck Ridge area. They are sophisticated people. They understand the implications. Again, my opinion and my words: The village is a sitting duck and should be part of such major projects.

What concerns you about the work being done at Doeckside Park, which will serve as a gateway to the HHFT?

I expressed concern over the secrecy in which the state parks department designed Doeckside, and its lack of candor since. I used the boat ramp and its potential negative impacts on traffic and parking as one example of how little thought the parks department has given to Cold Spring as a stakeholder. The same can be said of the HHFT.

Can an increase in Metro-North rail-road ridership alleviate concerns over traffic and parking posed by the trail?

Speaking for myself: If successful in its own eyes, HHFT will significantly increase both car and train traffic. It is just common sense. That is what it is meant to do. HHFT started at the local level to conserve the trails and improve public safety. It has ballooned into a grandiose plan for a destination amusement park — my view.

Do we want that here? At least, shouldn’t we be asked before the state awards it $20 million?

Has the potential impact of the Fjord Trail been adequately documented in your view?

No.

What is your biggest concern; what would you like changed in the trail’s design?

My personal concern is that the over-tourism intentionally generated by the project, as planned, will destroy the quality of life in our village. I would like to see HHFT improve the last 3 feet of the project to prevent that. Cold Spring, precariously balanced and geographically confined, is an organic, living space, every bit as fragile and endangered as any trail, just as rare and just as important. Not to mention the village lies entirely within a local and federal historic district.

You helped formulate Cold Spring’s communications as plans for the Fjord Trail were held years ago. The project has been totally “re-imagined” — their term — behind closed doors with no external communications. In my view, timely public involvement is an obligation and should be part of such major projects.

It will make it worse.

Several public meetings have been held over the years and there is no shortage of opinions on the Fjord Trail. Hasn’t public input been adequate?

Actually, there is a shortage of opinions on the Fjord Trail. The public meetings were held years ago. The project has been totally “re-imagined” — their term — behind closed doors with no external communications. In my view, timely public involvement is an obligation and should be part of such major projects.
Override (from Page 1)

and Highland Falls-Fort Montgomery, where Garrison sends its high school students to a private academy.

“We’re at a crossroads,” said Superintendent Carl Albano. “The district has to decide if they’d like to maintain all of the quality programs and services and if they’d like to maintain the choice of two quality high schools.”

Tormey, president of the Garrison school board, said she fears that failure to pass the override will result in the loss of important, non-mandated programs. “We can cut art. We can cut band and environmental education. We can cut all of these things. But it doesn’t make us competitive with our neighboring districts.”

Many residents say they support the budget. “Without this override, our kids, our community, our school will suffer,” said Ned Rauch, president of the Garrison School PTA, speaking at the April 6 board meeting.

But others question the size of the proposed increase. “I’m voting ‘no’ to send a message,” said Linda Lomonaco, a longtime PTA member, speaking at the April 6 board meeting.

K-8 Districts and Increases

Below are 11 New York districts, including Garrison, that send their students to high schools elsewhere, along with their proposed 2022-23 tax levies and the percentage increase. Among this group, only Garrison is seeking an override.

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<th>Students</th>
<th>Cost per pupil</th>
<th>Tax Levy (Millions)</th>
<th>% Increase</th>
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<td>683</td>
<td>$22,100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greenwood Lake (Orange)</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>$37,800</td>
<td>$17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyncourt (Onondaga)</td>
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<td>Lake Pleasant (Hamilton)</td>
<td>77</td>
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Source: New York Department of Education; State Comptroller

How did Garrison, which boasts the lowest taxes in Putnam County, find itself needing to raise so much more money to educate about 300 students next year?

The answer is a story of inflation, the formula-driven world of New York public-school finance, and the challenges of being a small, well-off, K-8 district with little control over large portions of its budget, especially the cost of sending its graduating middle school students to high school.

 overrides uncommon

To understand the unusual nature of what Garrison is attempting, consider that over the past five years, 98 percent of budgets proposed by districts across the state have been at or below the cap, according to the Association of School Business Officials of New York. This will be Garrison’s first override vote since the cap was introduced 10 years ago.

In terms of neighboring counties, Jimick points out that Garrison’s tax rate is the second-lowest of the 4 districts in Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, Rockland and Orange counties. If the override is approved, Garrison would be the third-lowest behind Rye City and Pocantico Hills.
Booming Beacon

Updates on development (and recreation) in the city

By Jeff Simms

There’s been a modest uptick in projects before the Beacon Planning Board in recent months. Here are updates on several that are pending.

16 W. Main St.
Number of units: 62
Status: The Planning Board will hold a public hearing on the environmental impacts of the four-story project, at the corner of West Main and Bank streets, at its Tuesday (May 10) meeting.

Beacon Views
Number of units: 40
Status: This Conklin Street project has been on and off Planning Board agendas since 2019. Access to the site has been an issue, but materials submitted to the board indicate that the developer plans to work with the new owners of a Townsend Street subdivision to establish access via Townsend. The developer has also reduced the footprint from 43 townhouses to 40 and will increase wetland mitigation efforts to address environmental concerns at the site. A public hearing on the environmental impacts of the proposal will continue at the Planning Board’s May 10 meeting.

1113 Wolcott Ave.
Number of units: N/A
Status: Plans call for converting the former Reformed Church of Beacon into a 350-person-capacity event space with restaurant and bar. Developers appeared before the Zoning Board of Appeals last month seeking a waiver for 104 of 136 required off-street parking spaces. Project officials have said they expect to make up the shortfall through a combination of nearby public lots, street parking and the Metro-North station. The applicant plans to have attendants on duty during events to ensure attendees don’t cross Wolcott (Route 9D) except at designated crosswalks.

4 Hanna Lane
Number of units: N/A
Status: The property owner is seeking a special-use permit to create an indoor/outdoor event space. A portion of the existing workshop building would be used for performances for up to 99 people, with the adjacent lawn (not the front lawn that faces Route 52) used as an exterior venue for concerts, weddings, rehearsal dinners or artisan markets.

There are 34 parking spaces on the property or the adjacent property, which is controlled by the applicant. There are 49 more spaces owned by Tallix Condominiums on the adjacent property that can be leased on a per-event basis. The applicant noted that it secured permits from the city for its outdoor events last year and received no noise complaints.

2 Cross St.
Number of units: 18
Status: First submitted to the Planning Board as a four-story building in 2019, the developer now proposes a three-story building at the corner of Main and Cross streets. It would include retail on the street level and 18 apartments for seniors, half of them below-market-rate, on the two top floors. The building will be constructed using energy-efficient “passive” design standards, including a green roof.

172 Main St. will retain its facade and be integrated into the new building, while 4 Cross St. will be demolished and replaced with new construction. A publicly accessible “plaza” at the corner of Main and Cross will remain. The applicant has planned parking behind the building, in a lot at 10 Cross St. and in a public parking lot at 152 Main St., but city consultants have asked for more information about the other uses that rely on the Cross Street and municipal parking lots.

364 Main St.
Number of units: 20
Status: The Planning Board approved this three-story mixed-use proposal last month. Initially proposed as a four-story building, it was downsized and will now replace the former Citizens Bank with retail on the ground floor and a total of 20 apartments on the second and third floors.

Tioronda Estate
Number of units: N/A
Status: Developers plan to restore the historic Tioronda Estate, the home of the former Craig House psychiatric facility, as an inn and spa, with a restaurant; “estate-caliber gardens,” according to materials submitted to the Planning Board; and cottage rentals. The Craig House mansion, built in 1859, will be renovated with “core hotel facilities” and four hotel rooms. An addition to the mansion will include eight more rooms, while a new, four-story spa building will feature 83 more. The spa will replace a 1978 accessory building, which will be demolished. Future phases will see resort cottages constructed, along with a “micro-farm” and the restoration of the Tioronda School. The project proposes 272 parking spaces near the hotel, spa and restaurant.

248 Tioronda Ave.
Number of units: 64, plus 25,400 square feet of commercial space
Status: The Planning Board approved the project in 2020, and the Zoning Board of Appeals held public hearings last year on the developer’s request to build residential buildings before the commercial component. The developer said he was having difficulty securing a loan for the commercial building without having a tenant in place, but tenants had been reluctant to commit to the space due to the uncertain timing of its construction, because of supply-chain shortages.

ZBA members expressed concern that the commercial building would never be constructed if the variance was approved, while residents said the developer seemed to be looking for a loophole in the city’s zoning, which requires a commercial component for projects in the Fishkill Creek area. The hearing was adjourned in August and the developer has not returned to the ZBA.

Fishkill Creek Greenway and Heritage Trail
Status: The trail is slated to receive $50,000 in state funding for stabilization and remediation of the Bridge Street bridge, which would create what organizers call a critical pedestrian link between neighborhoods on the east and west sides of Fishkill Creek, and allow access to planned and existing segments of the trail on the east side, and to existing trail networks and passive areas of the Hudson Highlands State Park Preserve and Hiddenbrooke preserve.

Organizers recently received plans describing the trail’s route over the remaining parcels between The Roundhouse and the Bridge Street bridge — parcels which represent a large gap in the greenway, and from which easements will be needed. Construction at 23-28 Creek Drive — the city’s former Department of Public Works facility — is nearing completion, and will include a greenway segment which will be open to the public.
AROUND TOWN

▲ SURPRISE SEND-OFF — The Beacon Police Department recently surprised Vincent Cervone, the owner of Cervone’s Auto Body, to celebrate his retirement after more than 50 years in business. If an officer needed a car towed, Cervone usually got the call.  

Photo by Jeff Simms

▲ STREET EXPERIMENT — On Arbor Day (April 29), Charles Day, along with Tony Bardes, Kory Riesterer and Taro Ietaka — all members of the Cold Spring Tree Advisory Board — grafted four species of flowering trees onto branches of village-owned Callery pears. The mission: to slowly replace the invasive tree without creating gaps in the canopy.

▲ CAUGHT WITH THE CURRENT — Brian Cookstra of Cold Spring shared this photo of his daughter, Ellie. During a walk back from Angie’s Bake Shop, he said, she discovered a new favorite hangout on Main Street.

Photos provided (2)
Bring Ethiopia to Beacon

Following residency, artist’s work on display

By Alison Rooney

How women inhabit their own spaces, when they occupy areas delineated by their gender, is the focus of many of the works by Ethiopian painter Hana Yilma Godine on display at Fridman Gallery Beacon through May 31.

The show, *Substance in Ethiopia*, features recent work Godine created during a three-month residency in Beacon. It includes wintry landscapes and lush florals, along with the Ethiopian-set studies, often made with oils and acrylics on canvas with elements of collage and textiles.

Some of the paintings connect with those presented earlier this year in a solo show, *A Hair Salon in Addis Ababa*, that ran simultaneously at Fridman in Manhattan and the nearby Rachel Uffner Gallery.

It has been a quick transition for Godine from graduate student – she received her master of fine arts from Boston University in 2020 after studying at the Ale School of Fine Arts and Design at Addis Ababa University – to professional artist. Her first solo show, *Space Within Space*, opened at Fridman soon after she graduated.

In the work she exhibited earlier this year, Godine depicts and celebrates the domestic spaces in which women can let down their guard in Ethiopia, particularly social settings in Addis Ababa in which men are not present.

Much of the work she created in Beacon focuses on fabric, which she has described as “a metaphor for the fabric of life, reflecting the multiple fashions, languages, religions and celebrations in Ethiopia. Experimenting with the body as a substance creates a connection that nature, weather, environmental phenomenon and culture have with love embodied in us.”

She notes that the earliest known human fossil, dating to 3.3 million years, was found in Ethiopia in 2000, making her country “the likely place of origin of the human race and of the body.”

Godine’s paintings borrow from the traditions of Ethiopian iconography, particularly in regard to flatness, the elongation of faces, vivid colors and specific light. However, the subject matter, bold colors and use of fabrics make it clear that these are works of the present.

The artist spent her time in Beacon living in an apartment and working in a studio behind the Fridman, and brought along marketplace fabrics from Ethiopia typically used to make dresses. “I look forward to pinning them up on a wall of my new studio and considering what they will become,” she told Art.net.

Godine has returned to Ethiopia, where she keeps her studio. Her country has been wracked by civil war, although there now exists what could be described as a shaky truce.

Fridman Gallery Beacon, at 475 Main St., is open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday from noon to 6 p.m. See fridmangallery.com.
THE WEEK AHEAD
Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)
For a complete listing of events, see highlandscurrent.org/calendar.

COMMUNITY

SAT 7
Donations for Ukrainian Refugees
CARmel
9 a.m. – 7 p.m. Paladin Center
39 Seminary Hill Road
putnancouveraires.com/carmenlakeda.org
The local Polish community and Putnam County will partner to send aid to refugees sheltering in Poland. See the website for a list of needed supplies. Also SUN 8.

SAT 14
Birdathon
PHILIPSTOWN
putnanghaiandaudubon.org
For 24 hours, teams will record as many species as possible in this annual fundraiser for the Putnam Highlands Audubon Society. Cost: $25 per individual or $80 per team.

SAT 14
Funminster Dog Show
PATTERSON
9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Boscobel
1601 Route 9D | 845-265-3638
Friendly dogs of any breed or age can compete in 10 categories, such as best tail, in this event to support the training of service dogs for conditions other than blindness. The entry fee is $20. Cost: $15 adults ($5 ages 12 and younger)

SUN 15
Run and Walk with the Dogs
BEACON
10 a.m. Memorial Park
runs@putnampusadogs.org
Bring your well-behaved dog and run or walk at this 5K to benefit the Animal Rescue Foundation. Cost: $30

SUN 15
Community Safety Day
BEACON
11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Elks Lodge
900 Wolcott Ave. | beaconarc.org
The Beacon Volunteer Ambulance Corps will share info and offer free bike helmets and fittings for children.

SUN 15
Flower Moon Eclipse Gathering
GARRISON
9:30 p.m. – 1:30 a.m. Boscobel
1601 Route 90 | 845-265-3638
boscobel.org
Watch the full lunar eclipse on the grounds, with guidance from Lisa DiMarzo, and a celestial magic lantern show. Cost: $25 ($22 seniors, $15 ages 5 to 18, discounts for members)

MUSIC

SAT 7
Sixties Sing-A-Long
COLD SPRING
7:30 p.m. St. Mary’s Parish Hall
1 Chestnut St.
Tickets available at door.
Bring the family and sing along to Beatles and Motown songs with a band led by Dar Williams.

SAT 7
The Little Things
NEWBURGH
7:30 p.m. Mount Saint Mary College
330 Powell Ave. | 845-913-7137
newburghsymphony.org
The Greater Newburgh Symphony Orchestra will perform an assortment of miniatures at Aquinas Hall with a program that includes Bach, Debussy, Copland and Liadov.

SAT 7
Prognosis
BEACON
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. | 845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The American Pink Floyd Show covers iconic songs from The Wall, Dark Side of the Moon and other albums. Cost: $25 ($30 door)

SAT 7
The Last of the Mo’Ricans
BEACON
8 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | 845-831-4988
howlandculturalcenter.org
The band will perform traditional Puerto Rican jibaro music. Cost: $20 ($25 door)

SAT 7
Eileen Ivers Band
BEACON
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. | 845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The woman-fronted heavy metal band will perform. Cost: $10 student rush)

FRI 13
Orleans
PEEKSKILL
6 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039
paramounthudsonvalley.com
The tribute band will create a New York’s I Love My Park Day.

FRI 13
Rabbits Record Release
BEACON
8 p.m. Dogwood | 47 E. Main St.
lighthclg.org
The band will celebrate its tenth album, Grey Matters.

FRI 13
Dana T. Show
PEEKSKILL
6 p.m. Tompkins Corners Cultural Center
729 Peekskill Hollow Road
tompkinscorners.org
The band will sign copies of his book, Fiddle Tunes from Mississippi, and perform with the Mississippi Travelers String Band. Cost: $20

SAT 14
Harry Bolick
PUTNAM VALLEy
6 p.m. Tompkins Corners Cultural Center
729 Peekskill Hollow Road
tompkinscorners.org
Bolick will sign copies of his book, Fiddle Tunes from Mississippi, and perform with the Mississippi Travelers String Band. Cost: $20

SAT 14
Tom Rush
BEACON
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. | 845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
Rush will perform as part of New York’s I Love My Park Day. Meet at the loop trailhead. Cost: $25 to $35

SAT 14
Dana the Torpedoes
PEEKSKILL
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039
paramounthudsonvalley.com
The tribute band will create a new play by Brenda Withers about old flames who reconnect on the evening commute. Cost: $25 to $35

SUN 15
Michael Davidman
COLD SPRING
4 p.m. Chapel Restoration
45 Market St. | chapelrestoration.org
The pianist will perform a program that includes works by Chopin, Couperin, Franck and Ravel.

NATURE & OUTDOORS

SUN 7
Invasive Plant Sweep
GARRISON
9 a.m. – Noon. Boscobel
1601 Route 90 | 845-265-3638
boscobel.org
Volunteers who help clean up the Woodland Trail will receive free admission to the grounds for the day.

SAT 7
Stunt Dog Experience
PEEKSKILL
1 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039
paramounthudsonvalley.com
Watch tricks, challenges and athletic feats performed by dogs trained by Chris Perondi. Cost: $42

SUN 7
Off Peak
ARMONK
3 & 8 p.m. North Castle Library
914-271-2811 | hudsonstage.org
Kurt Rood and Nance Williamson of Garrison star in this premiere of a new play by Brenda Withers about old flames who reconnect on the evening commute. Cost: $40 ($35 students and seniors, $10 student rush)

SUN 7
The Cake
GARRISON
7:30 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
10 Garrison’s Landing | 845-424-3900
philipstowndepottheatre.org
This Bekah Brunstetter play, directed by Christine Bohour, is about a luxury chef’s reaction to a same-sex wedding in her family. Also SUN 8. Continues weekends through May 22. Cost: $25 ($22 students, seniors)

SUN 7
Nick Di Paolo
PEEKSKILL
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039
paramounthudsonvalley.com
The comedian and radio talk-show host will perform stand-up. Cost: $23 to $37.50
**SUN 15**

**Students from the Beacon City School District will present 2-minute films at this inaugural event. Cost: $8 ($4 children)**

**SAT 14**

**Student Film Festival**

**BEACON**

6:30 p.m. Beacon High School

101 Matteawan Road

donationforbeaconschools.org

*The Butterfield Library’s Silent Film series will feature the 1914 film with Charlie Chaplin and Mabel Normand, and live musical accompaniment by Cary Brown.*

**SAT 14**

**Mabel’s Married Life**

**COLD SPRING**

845-265-3040 | butterfieldlibrary.org

*This sale of gently used children’s clothing, gear, books and games will benefit programs for children. Also SAT 14, SUN 15.*

**SAT 14**

**Kids’ Craft Connection**

**GARRISON**

9:30 a.m. – 10 a.m. 1601 Route 90

boscobel.org

*Eric Tipler will share tips for engaging college admissions officers and students will write a first draft. Registration required.*

**SAT 14**

**College Essay Workshop**

**COLD SPRING**

1 – 4 p.m. Butterfield Library

10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040

butterfieldlibrary.org

*Eric Tipler will share tips for engaging college admissions officers and students will write a first draft. Registration required.*

**SAT 7**

**Plant Sale**

**PLANT SALES**

4:30 – 7 p.m. Putnam Valley Grange

128 Mill St. | putnamvalleygrange.org

*Master Gardener volunteers will be on hand to help make a ball-and-cup craft. Cost: $24 ($13 children, members discounted).*

**SAT 14**

**Trudy Benson | Russell Tyler**

**BEACON**

6 – 8 p.m. Mother Gallery

1154 North Ave. | 845-236-8039

mothergallery.art

*The couple will share their geometric paintings in their first exhibit with the gallery. Through June 19.*

**SAT 14**

**Hello My Name Is | Chomp’d**

**BEACON**

6 – 8 p.m. BAU Gallery

506 Main St. | baugallery.org

*With custom toys by 7 Sketches, 5th Turtle, Hot Actor and the Chomp Group. Through June 3.*

**SAT 14**

**Daniel Berlin**

**BEACON**

6 – 8 p.m. BAU Gallery

506 Main St. | baugallery.org

*Berlin’s paintings and monoprints will be on view, along with works by collective members and a curated group show, *Flux*. Through June 5.*

**TALKS AND TOURS**

**SAT 7**

**History Hike**

**PUTNAM VALLEY**

7 – 9 p.m. Park View

22 Market St. | 845-486-2100

dutchessny.gov

*Statistics will host this discussion of the role of beavers in an ecosystem, their history in New York and how we can coexist.*

**SAT 7**

**The Art of Flower Arranging**

**PHILIPSTOWN**

4:30 – 7 p.m. Stonecrop Garden

81 Stonecrop Lane | 845-265-2000

stonecrop.org

*Frances Palmer will discuss her new book, *Life in the Studio: Inspiration and Lessons on Creativity*.*
By Lily Zuckerman

Veronica Morgan, the new children’s librarian at the Desmond-Fish in Garrison, is no stranger to the library: She worked there as a circulation desk clerk in 2014 before leaving for a job at Rose Memorial Library in Stony Point. Morgan grew up in Highlands Falls, where she attended O’Neill High School. As a student, she gained her first experience in a library when she worked at the circulation desk, organized and shelved books and assisted with children’s programs at Highlands Falls Library.

At Hofstra University, Morgan majored in English literature. After graduating, she worked briefly in retail before landing a job with the National Park Service at the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites in Hyde Park. While there, she realized how much she loved working at libraries.

Morgan enrolled at Long Island University, earning a master’s degree in library science. Her first job was as a children’s librarian at a New York Public Library branch on Staten Island. She then moved to the Desmond-Fish and Rose Memorial before becoming youth services librarian at the Poughkeepsie public library.

When Lucille Merry retired last year as Desmond-Fish children’s librarian, Morgan knew she had to apply.

“Not only is it one of my favorite libraries, but I was really excited to work in the children’s department,” she says. “It is wonderful to share with children the books that I loved when I was younger. To see children discover books that they love and want to share with others is a really lovely thing.”

Morgan says she hopes to launch a story time for babies and continue the relationships that the library has with organizations and schools in the community. Morgan also hopes to refresh the collection by removing outdated books and ordering new copies of popular texts. She says her favorite children’s book is *Caps for Sale*, by Esphyr Slobodkina; she also loves *Sense and Sensibility*, by Jane Austen. In her free time, Morgan and her husband often watch Mets and Islanders games and snuggle with their three cats.

By Nix Spodek

After joking with her partner that it might be fun to move to Beacon, Stephanie Montesanto noticed that the Howland Public Library was hiring.

One thing led to another, and, after 12 years at Westbury Memorial Public Library on Long Island, the quip became reality: She was hired to succeed Ginny Figlia, the Howland children’s librarian who retired in 2021 after 31 years in the position.

“I became a librarian to combine the things I loved the most — working with kids and reading,” Montesanto says, adding that she finds it especially rewarding to watch as children grow up into readers and library lovers. Some of those aspects that drew her to the profession disappeared with the virtual programming of the pandemic, so she is excited to form personal connections again.

“So far, the best part of being in Beacon is how welcoming everyone has been,” she says. Her hope is to retain some of what Figlia introduced but put her own twist on it. She also appreciates the “more laid back” feel in Beacon, in part because it’s a smaller library than in Westbury.

Librarians must always gauge community interest when coming up with programming, Montesanto says. Before the shutdown, there were story times, crafts and similar programs. Then librarians had to pivot to virtual and “learn very quickly how to promote the library, and the things we do for people, in a different way.”

As the restrictions loosen, Montesanto says she is eager to connect with members of the community, especially as the mask mandate lifts and she can see people’s faces — many for the first time.

“I’m so excited to do in-person programming, especially as the weather gets nicer,” she says, noting that story time and baby time will be returning. In addition, “I’m interested in doing programming centered around STEAM, particularly the art aspect,” she says, using the acronym for science, technology, engineering, art and math.

Montesanto, who is bilingual in English and Spanish, says there is a lot of behind-the-scenes work by the staff at Howland for the community. They also try to create a kind and open environment that is a welcoming space for everyone, she says.

By Lily Zuckerman

Veronica Morgan, the new children’s librarian at the Desmond-Fish in Garrison, is no stranger to the library: She worked there as a circulation desk clerk in 2014 before leaving for a job at Rose Memorial Library in Stony Point. Morgan grew up in Highlands Falls, where she attended O’Neill High School. As a student, she gained her first experience in a library when she worked at the circulation desk, organized and shelved books and assisted with children’s programs at Highlands Falls Library.

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Spodek is a ninth grader at Beacon High School and Zuckerman, who lives in Garrison, is a sophomore at the Masters School in Dobbs Ferry. Both are members of The Current’s Student Journalists Program.
The Artist Next Door

Chris Ams

By Alison Rooney

Chris Ams graduated in 2007 from Oakland University near Detroit with a degree in fine art and a focus on illustration.

Then he became a musician. “Music brought me to New York City in 2010,” says Ams. “I was playing in a jazz/funk/soul band and teaching art when a friend convinced me to move to Brooklyn. I’d only been to New York once, for a quick trip, but I decided to take a dive.” Soon after the move, he and his band released an album, Chris Ams & the Favored States.

But there was never a question that art would remain part of his life, says Ams, who moved to Beacon two years ago and is one of the three organizers (with Darya Golubina and Evan Samuelson) of Beacon Open Studios, which will take place this year from July 22 to 24.

“Creative freedom is something I’m very invested in,” he says. “I did some random freelance design gigs, working in publishing, film, even some theater where I had to build puppets.”

Ams’ drawings — a sampling of which can be viewed at chrisamsart.com — often depict fantastical worlds inhabited by creatures and the nature-filled environment they dwell in. With some, it’s difficult to intuit whether they were created digitally or by hand, but most suggest a narrative. He has carved out a reputation as a children’s book illustrator. “Some authors come to me with a specific idea or vision. I do a Sunday morning Zoom class in self-expressive painting and the students are forming their own community, connecting with each other.”

He connected with Golubina soon after the move, hoping to get involved in Beacon Open Studios. When the pandemic prevented it from happening in 2021, they volunteered to help Beacon Arts “build a platform and add a music component. We brought in the River Valley Guild, which focuses on artisanal products; they are offering some outdoor space for artists who may not have their own studio to show their work. We got accepted into Upstate Arts Weekend.

“People here have so many visual influences, and it’s a cool, energized community,” he says. “We’re so excited to showcase the talent up here in a way that stands out.”

Although art is front and center, music is still a part of Ams’ creative life. On July 8, he will be playing an acoustic set with guitarist Emilio Tostado at Reserva, on Main Street in Beacon. Ams says he is a contented Brooklyn-to-Beacon transplant. “I’m super grateful to have landed in such a beautiful place,” he says.
Salad of White Beans, Goat Cheese & Asparagus with Pistachio Dukkah

Serves 6

FOR THE DUKKAH
2 teaspoons coriander seeds
1 teaspoon fennel seeds
½ teaspoon green peppercorns
½ cup roasted shelled pistachios
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon dried mint

FOR THE SALAD
½ cup plain, whole-milk Greek yogurt
1 to 2 cloves garlic, grated
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
Salt and cracked white pepper
3 cups cooked white beans (I used flageolets; substitute cannellini, Great Northern whites or Navy beans.)
½ cup thin-sliced fennel or celery
¼ cup blanched and cooled asparagus spears, bias cut into 1 to 1½-inch pieces
¼ cup fresh mint leaves, cut into 1¼-inch pieces
½ cup roasted shelled pistachios
1 teaspoon fennel seeds

1. For the dukkah: In a small pan, toast the coriander and fennel seeds stovetop over medium heat, shaking the pan until the seeds color and become fragrant (about 2 minutes). Transfer to a small bowl to cool; repeat with the peppercorns for 30 to 60 seconds, adding them to the same bowl as the seeds when done. Once cooled, add the spices, pistachios, dried basil and mint to a small food processor or mini-prep. Pulse to a rough crumble with larger bits of pistachio. Reserve.

2. For the salad: Whisk together yogurt, grated garlic, lemon juice, 1 to 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large bowl. Season to taste with salt and pepper and add beans and fennel (or celery). Using a spatula, gently fold the vegetables to coat in yogurt dressing, being careful not to mash the beans.

3. In another bowl, toss together asparagus, fresh mint and basil chiffonade, with a pinch of salt and a squeeze of lime juice. Add to the beans and herb mix until everything is evenly coated.

4. To assemble, layer the dressed asparagus and herbs over that, and top with a healthy (¼ to ½ cup) dusting of the pistachio dukkah, followed by a drizzle of good olive oil. This is best served at room temperature.

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Small, Good Things

Everything Everywhere All at Once

By Joe Dizenzo

Athough he probably wouldn’t admit to it, Jerusalem-born Yotam Ottolenghi is a certified “celebrity chef,” a reputation he deserves as the bestselling author or co-author of a host of cookbooks, New York Times columnist and co-owner of eponymous delis and restaurants that feature a vegetable-forward cuisine.

The food he espouses is a layered distillation of Middle Eastern flavors and textures, married to a Mediterranean palate and a Southern California (or Hudson Valley) farm-to-table sensibility.

This layering of ingredients, tastes and texture was recently evidenced in his Times recipe for a “chef’s salad” of butter beans, tossed in a dressing of Greek yogurt with less assertive than salty feta, goat cheese’s herb. A mashup of flavor and texture, the dish has no right to be as good as it is, with its jarred butter beans and frozen peas. I can’t quarrel with the frozen peas — a culinary secret weapon that freezes well and is readily available and inexpensive — but the butter beans are more problematic. To my experience, jarred beans always bring a bit of a discernable but unwelcomed taste, no matter how much you rinse them. I tried the recipe with frozen lima beans, blanched briefly in boiling water, drained and chilled, which at the time seemed more agreeable. But that opened up the recipe to digression and expansion, the result of which you see here.

Why couldn’t this recipe or at least the tactics behind it be a conversation between the seasons? Dried beans, especially “fresh” dried beans, no more than perhaps a year old (not the fossilized things you find on supermarket shelves in plastic), cook up nicely with a bit of a “tooth” to them and offer the cook opportunities of choice in both variety and preparation. Keep an eye out at farmers’ markets or look for Rancho Gordo or Purcell Mountain Farms products, both available online.

Instead of frozen peas, what about the asparagus just beginning to appear in green markets? In addition, make the fresh and dried herbs and spices talk to each other. Sliced fennel adds crunch to the beans and is echoed by substituting fennel seed for cumin in the dukkah, while fresh mint and basil is a better mix for the asparagus and mirrored by dried mint and basil in the dukkah. (Were it later in the season, tarragon would have been a great option.) While less assertive than salty feta, goat cheese’s creaminess pulls things together nicely.

This layering approach to recipe composition can be a useful strategy for addressing the omnivore’s real dilemma: balancing seasonality, variety, flavor and surprise with creativity and economy. Serve it on a bed of tender lettuce leaves for a fully satisfying dinner salad, or as Ottolenghi himself would attest, as an excellent side dish to a roast salmon, lamb or pork headliner.

With a little imagination you really can have everything everywhere all at once.
I magine, for a moment, that you spend the weekend cleaning your house and some random dog jumps on the couch, shakes mud on the walls and steals your roasted chicken on the way out.

“Where did that dog come from, and who let it in?”

That’s how I feel about cryptocurrency.

New York State has an ambitious goal of having 70 percent of our electricity by 2030 provided by renewable sources such as solar and wind — while simultaneously trying to electrify everything. Now comes a wrench thrown into the gears: a growing demand for energy to power computers for digital currency “mining.”

If you are not familiar, cryptocurrency is digital money that is exchanged outside of a traditional central authority, such as a bank. Instead, transactions are managed by a decentralized network of its users. In the case of the best known digital currency, Bitcoin, transactions are accounted for in a public ledger that anyone can examine.

This ledger is vast, and anyone in the world, whether individuals or companies, can compete to validate a transaction by guessing the solution to complex mathematical problems, and part of the security of the currency is that it takes a large amount of energy and hardware to do this. The method is known as “proof of work” and the entities, which often combine forces, are known as “miners.” If they win the race to validate, they are rewarded with Bitcoin, which they can divide.

This is where the tremendous energy use comes in — you are playing a guessing game to find and quickly validate to earn the reward. One study calculated that every Bitcoin transaction consumes 1,173 kilowatt hours, more than the average American household uses in a month.

Fossil fuels power 60 percent of Bitcoin mining. But even if these operations could be switched to 100 percent renewables, that would mean that power wouldn’t be available for homes, businesses or transportation.

What’s happening now is that many upstate New York communities are grappling with crypto-mining operations, or warehouses filled with servers operating 24/7 that must be cooled. In some cases, miners have purchased and restarted former fossil-fuel plants, generating power “behind the meter.”

A bill in the state Legislature that is co-sponsored by Sandy Galef (a Democrat whose district includes Philipstown) and Jonathan Jacobson (a Democrat whose district includes Beacon) would ban new crypto-mining facilities that don’t rely on renewable energy. It also would place a two-year moratorium on the issuance of air permits and permit renewals for existing crypto-mining facilities that generate electricity through fossil fuels.

The bill passed in the Assembly on April 26 and was sent to the Senate. An earlier version passed the Senate, 36-27, in June with “nay” votes from Sue Serino, a Republican whose district includes the Highlands, and James Skoufis, a Democrat who is running for re-election in a district that may next year include the Highlands.

The bill would require the state to conduct an environmental review of mining operations. “We must understand the impact of these operations on our state’s ambitious plans to mitigate climate change,” Galef said this week.

Jeremy Cherson is the senior manager of governmental affairs at Riverkeeper, one of many local environmental organizations that support the bill. “The last thing we want to see in the Hudson River watershed is old decommissioned power plants, fossil-fuel plants, being purchased and turned on for the sole purpose of proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining,” he said.

There is also the matter of the e-waste produced by mining operations. The computers are used so intensely that they last only 18 to 24 months before being discarded. By one estimate, cryptocurrency mining produces 30,700 tons of e-waste annually. The facilities also use large amounts of water for cooling, and the water returned to water bodies or wastewater treatment is hotter than what is withdrawn — fluctuations that can affect aquatic species.

“We have climate change warming the water, salt fronts are moving farther north (up the Hudson River) and a rise in invasive species — the last thing we need is another fish blender,” said Cherson.

By Krystal Ford

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May 6, 2022

The Highlands Current
NEW HADLOW LEADER — The board of the Howland Cultural Center in Beacon on Wednesday (May 4) announced it had elected Theresa Kraft as president. Formerly the board treasurer, she succeeds Craig Wolf, who was elected in 2017. Kraft was an original board member of the nonprofit cultural center and returned in 2019. Beginning in August, the center will celebrate the 150th anniversary of its building at 477 Main St., which began its life as the public library and became the cultural center’s home in 1979.

Photo by Meredith Heuer

Students recognized for third-quarter grades

Grade 12
Principal’s List

High Honor Roll

Honors Roll

Grade 10
Principal’s List

High Honor Roll
Grace Bradley, Alissa Buslovich, Frankie DiGi-glio, Oscar Donahue, Colin Hopkins, Sarah Jones, Mary Junjulas, Mac Lake, Elaine Llewelyn, Lola Mahoney, Simon Pieza, Julie Shields

Honors Roll
Alexandra Busselle, William Busselle, James D’Abruzzo, Liam Flanagan, Emily Gilleo, John Mangan, Michael Murray, Jacqueline Muth, Henry O’Neill, Peter Ruggiero, Olivia Scanga, Ivan Siciliano

Grade 9
Principal’s List

High Honor Roll
William Bradley, Carmela Cofini, May Columb, Gael Frezza, Maya Gelber, Dylan Horan, Rauanq Kapoor, Helen Nicholls, Gabriel Petry, Jakob Schmitt, Fiona Shanahan, Ethan Woods

Honors Roll

Grade 11
Principal’s List

High Honor Roll

Honors Roll

Grade 10
Principal’s List

High Honor Roll
Grace Bradley, Alissa Buslovich, Frankie DiGi-glio, Oscar Donahue, Colin Hopkins, Sarah Jones, Mary Junjulas, Mac Lake, Elaine Llewelyn, Lola Mahoney, Simon Pieza, Julie Shields

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Alexandra Busselle, William Busselle, James D’Abruzzo, Liam Flanagan, Emily Gilleo, John Mangan, Michael Murray, Jacqueline Muth, Henry O’Neill, Peter Ruggiero, Olivia Scanga, Ivan Siciliano

Grade 9
Principal’s List

High Honor Roll
Claire Bolte, Alexandra Cairns, Christopher Coronel, Kira Drury, Edwin Dubروف, Hunter Erickson, Leif Heydt-Benjamin, Patrick Locitzner, Thomas Locitzner, Jake Powers, Charles Rowe, Jake Thomas, Crystal Timmons

Honors Roll
Brody Corless, Christian Ferreira, Sophie Koch, Oliver Petkus, Laurel Sassano

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NOTICE OF ANNUAL PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BUDGET, ANNUAL MEETING, ELECTION AND VOTE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Board of Education of the Beacon City School District, Dutchess County, New York, will hold a public hearing on the budget at Beacon High School, 101 Mattawan Road, Beacon, New York, on Monday, May 9, 2022, at 7:00 P.M., for the purpose of presenting the budget document for the 2022-2023 School Year, as follows:

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that a copy of the statement of the amount of money which will be required for School District purposes during the 2022-2023 school year (the Budget), as prepared by the Board of Education, as well as the Exemption Report, listing every type of exemption granted, as provided in Section 495 of the Real Property Tax Law, may be obtained by any resident of the District during the fourteen (14) days immediately preceding the Annual Meeting, Election and Vote, commencing May 5, 2022, except Saturdays, Sundays or any legal holidays during regular school hours, 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., at each of the District’s schoolhouses, at the Administrative Office, and on the District’s website:

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the Annual Meeting, Election and Vote, will be held on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, between the hours of 6:00 A.M. and 9:00 P.M., prevailing time, when the polls will be open for the purpose of voting by voting machine:

A. To elect four (4) members of the Board to be members of the Board as follows:

- Three (3) members to the Board for three year terms commencing July 1, 2022 and expiring June 30, 2025,

- One (1) member for a two year term and six week term commencing May 17, 2022 and expiring June 30, 2024.

B. To vote upon the appropriation of the necessary funds to meet the estimated expenses for School District purposes for the 2022-2023 School Year (the Budget).

C. To vote upon the following proposition: Shall the bond resolution adopted by the Board of Education of the City School District of the City of Beacon, Dutchess County, New York, dated March 23, 2022, authorizing the purchase of school buildings at a maximum estimated cost of $546,000, authorizing the issuance of $546,000 bonds of said School District to pay the costs thereof; and that such sum or so much as may be necessary shall be raised by the levy of a tax upon the taxable real property of said School District and collected in annual installments as provided in Section 416 of the Education Law; and providing that, in anticipation of said tax, obligations of the School District shall be issued; determining the period of probable usefulness and maximum maturity thereof to be five years; pledging the faith and credit of said School District for the payment of the principal of and interest on said bonds; delegating powers to the chief fiscal officer with respect to the issuance and sale of bond anticipation notes and such bonds; having an escrow clause and providing for the publication of an escotop notice, be approved?

D. To vote upon the following proposition: Shall the Board of Education of the Beacon City School District be authorized to establish a capital reserve fund, to be known as the 2022 Facilities Capital Reserve Fund, for the purpose of appropriating sufficient funds necessary for the purpose of financing, in whole or in part, the cost of capital improvements, including but not limited to the construction and reconstruction of additional classrooms, additions, improvements and repairs to its facilities, including original furnishings, equipment, machinery, apparatus, appurtenances and incidental improvements and expenses in connection therewith; as well as and to plan for future District-wide capital improvement projects and expenditures, in the ultimate amount not to exceed $15,000,000,000 over a probable term of ten (10) years; and that such amount shall be raised from the unexpended and unencumbered general fund balance and such other available funds of the Beacon City School District?

E. To vote on any other proposition legally proposed.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that for the purposes of voting, the School District has been divided into two (2) election districts and that an accurate description of the boundaries of these school election districts is on file and may be inspected at the Office of the District Clerk on weekdays when school is in session, during regular work hours, 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., at the Administrative Offices, 10 Education Drive, Beacon, New York.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the 2022 Annual Meeting, Election, and Vote, will be held at the following polling places in the School Election Districts hereinafter set forth:

SCHOOL ELECTION DISTRICT NO. 1 / POLLING LOCATION: BEACON HIGH SCHOOL
Description: First Ward, First and Second Districts.
Second Ward, First, Second, and Third Districts
Third Ward, First, Second, and Third Districts
Fourth Ward, First and Second Districts

SCHOOL ELECTION DISTRICT NO. 2 / POLLING LOCATION: GLENHAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Description: Bound 3d by the north and east by Wappingers Central School District No. 1 of the Towns of Wappinger, Poughkeepsie, Fishkill, East Fishkill and LaGrange in Dutchess County and the towns of Kent and Philipstown in Putnam County, south by the common town line of the Towns of Fishkill and Wappinger and west by the Hudson River.

Bound on the north by the common town line of the of Fishkill and Wappinger, east by Wappingers Central School District No. 1 in the Towns of Wappinger, Poughkeepsie, Fishkill, East Fishkill and LaGrange in Dutchess County and the Towns of Kent and Philipstown in Putnam County.

Bound northerly by former Common School District No. 4 in the Towns of Fishkill and Wappinger, east by Central School District No. 1 in the Towns of Wappinger, Poughkeepsie, Fishkill, East Fishkill and LaGrange in Dutchess County and the Towns of Kent and Philipstown in Putnam County and Central School District No. 1 in the Towns of Philipstown and Putnam Valley in Dutchess County; southernly by Central School District No. 1 in the Towns of Philipstown, Putnam Valley in Putnam County and the Town of Fishkill in Dutchess County; westerly by the Hudson River and the City of Beacon being the former Union Free School District No. 3 of the Town of Fishkill.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that petitioners for nominating candidates for the office of member of the Board of Education must file with the Clerk of the District Clerk by no later than 5:00 P.M. on the 20th day preceding the Annual Meeting, Election and Vote Wednesday, April 27, 2022. Such petitions must be signed by at least one hundred (100) qualified voters of the District, shall state the name and residence address of each signer and the name and official address of the candidate. Petition forms may be obtained at the Office of the District Clerk on weekdays when school is in session, during regular business hours, 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. or can be downloaded from the district’s website.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Board of Education of the Beacon City School District, Dutchess County, New York, has fixed Tuesday, May 3, 2022, at the Administrative Offices, 10 Education Drive, Beacon, New York, as the date on which the Board of Education of the School District will meet between the hours of 1:00 P.M. and 5:00 P.M., prevailing time, for the purpose of preparing the register of the School District for each election district for the Annual Meeting, Election, and Vote, to be held on Tuesday, May 17, 2022, at which time any person shall be entitled to have his/her name placed upon each register if known or proven to the satisfaction of the registrars to be on or thereafter entitled to vote. Persons whose registration to vote with the County Board of Elections is current, pursuant to Article 5 of the Election Law, shall be qualified to vote. Each registrar with the School District Board of Registration, as well as all persons who shall have previously registered for any annual or special district meeting or election and who shall have voted at any annual or special district meeting or election held or conducted at any time during the 2018, 2019, 2020 or 2021 calendar years.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the register of voters so prepared shall be filed in the Office of the District Clerk and shall be open for inspection by any qualified voter of the District between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M., prevailing time, beginning fourteen (14) days prior to the Annual Meeting, Election, and Vote. Said register shall be open for inspection in each of the polling places during the Annual Meeting, Election, and Vote.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that applications for absentee ballots for the Annual Meeting, Election and Vote may be obtained at the Office of the District Clerk or downloaded from the school district website. The completed application must be received by the District Clerk no earlier than thirty (30) days prior to the election, and at least seven (7) days prior to the election if the ballot is to be mailed or the day before the election, if the ballot is to be picked up at the Office of the District Clerk. The completed application can be sent by email, or delivered by a designated agent. Absentee ballots must be received at the Office of the District Clerk no later than 5:00 P.M., prevailing time, on the day of the election. A list of all persons to whom absentee ballots shall have been issued will be available in the Office of the District Clerk during regular office hours until the day of the Annual Meeting, Election and Vote. Any qualified voter may file a written challenge of the qualifications of a voter whose name appears on such list, stating the reasons for the challenge.

NOTICE IS ALSO GIVEN that a qualified military voter who is not currently registered can obtain a military personal registration form on the District’s website, or from the District Clerk between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. A registered military voter may apply for a military ballot by requesting an application from the District Clerk in the same manner. Additionally, qualified military voters can contact the District Clerk to indicate their preference to receive a military personal registration form, absentee ballot application or absentee ballot via mail, facsimile or electronic mail. Ballots must be received by the District Clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on the date of the election. Military voter registration and absentee ballots shall be administered in accordance with the provisions of Section 2018-d of the Education Law and Part 122 of the Commissioner’s Regulations.

Date: March 21, 2022 / Revised: April 4, 2022
By the Order of the Board of Education of the Beacon City School District
Kelly Palagona, School District Clerk

IN MEMORIAM

ANN KARUS MEERPOL 1944–2019

Teacher, Writer, Painter, Singer, Advocate, Activist

beloved Wife, Mother, Grandmother, Sister
Avian Flu (from Page 1)

While the virus does not pose a health threat to humans, it can cling to shoes, pants and car tires. Ball pointed to a 2015 outbreak in the Midwest in which contact tracers figured out that a feed delivery person who visited one infected backyard flock transmitted the virus to every other flock on the route. Poultry inspectors also inadvertently spread the virus in a similar way.

For that reason, those who keep chickens should refrain from visiting the homes of friends who keep chickens. If that can’t be avoided, owners should wear plastic coverings on their feet and disinfect their shoes after visiting flocks.

“Discourage visitors from coming in and out of your poultry yard if you can,” Ball said. “Just be really sensitive to the idea that it can be easily transmitted.”

In terms of symptoms, Ball said to watch for unusual behavior, such as chickens ignoring food, showing discoloration or turning their heads in an odd way. “People who care for chickens are looking at their flock every day,” said Ball. “If anything seems abnormal, let us come down and do a test.”

Like influenza in humans, HPAI follows a seasonal pattern. Generally, once spring migrations are over, usually around the end of May or the beginning of June, the virus dies out. But some flocks of ducks and Canada geese stick around in one place for long periods, such as the geese often seen at Long Dock and Seeger parks in Beacon or Mayor’s Park in Cold Spring. If you have chickens, Ball recommends wearing foot coverings and disinfecting shoes after visiting flocks.

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Residents should also keep an eye out for dead ducks, geese, bald eagles, herons, owls, hawks and turkey vultures, and report the carcasses to the DEC for tracking, said Jim Farquhar of the agency’s Wildlife Bureau.

“This information is helpful not only to understand the scope of the outbreak, but to alert nearby owners of backyard flocks and commercial poultry producers to remain vigilant with good biosecurity measures to protect their investment,” he said. His office can be reached at 845-256-3098.
What’s Happening in Putnam

The process of redrawing legislative boundaries in Putnam County was complicated by a law enacted last fall by New York State, Legislative Counsel Robert Firriolo told legislators in December.

Every 10 years, based on U.S. Census data, the county shifts boundaries so that each of its nine districts has about an equal number of residents. Based on the 2010 census, that number is about 11,000. District 1, for instance, includes Philipstown but also part of Putnam Valley to reach the threshold.

The Putnam Legislature is required by the county charter to appoint a bipartisan redistricting committee. For the past two revisions, enacted in 2001 and 2011, the legislative counsel chaired the committee, which did not include any legislators. The commission makes recommendations to the Legislature for its approval.

On Oct. 27, New York State enacted a law that requires counties that operate under charters, such as Putnam and Dutchess, to redraw their districts if the difference in population between the most and least populated district exceeds 5 percent. The previous standard had been 10 percent, and in 2010 the deviation in Putnam was 8.8 percent, Firriolo said.

The average population per district is currently 10,852. To comply with the state law, the percentage by which the largest district is over and the smallest district is under the average cannot exceed a total of 5 percent.

The deviation based on 2020 census figures is 10.28 percent, Firriolo said, which means that the county will need to make many changes to get to 5 percent. That could include making election precincts smaller so they can be more easily shifted between districts, although towns and villages cannot be divided unless they account for more than 40 percent of the district’s population.

Any changes would not likely go into effect until 2023, Firriolo said.

Redistricting (from Page 1)

District 16, represented by Yvette Valdes Smith, a Democrat elected in November, currently includes Ward 4 and one of the three election districts from Ward 3. Although the map released by the commission does not include election district boundaries, it shows the district taking in Beacon’s eastern neighborhoods and parts of the city’s north and southeast, an area predominantly within Ward 3.

In addition to gaining all or most of Ward 4, District 16 would retain Wards 1 and 2. The area of the Town of Fishkill that lies along Route 9D between Beacon and Philipstown would fill out that district, which is represented by Nick Page, a Democrat first elected in 2018. Before the commission approved its draft on April 26, one member, Patrick Blanchfield, suggested that Beacon could be placed into a single district. But Beacon’s population, which the Census Bureau counted as 13,792, exceeds the “ideal” population of 11,693 for each district, based on the county’s popula-

tion of 292,325 and its 25 districts.

“From the perspective of ‘communities of interest,’ we would want to keep those people together, but we can’t; there’s just too many of them,” said Mona Kleinberg, a Beacon resident who co-chairs the commission.

The final map will likely differ from the draft, in part because Beacon has to finalize new boundaries for its wards. By law, that process must be completed within six months of the release of new population counts from each decennial census. The city’s charter says the population of each ward cannot deviate more than 5 percent from the average for all wards.

The City Council held a public hearing Monday (May 2) on the proposed election district changes, which would move 268 residents from Wards 3 and 4 into Ward 1. Seventy-four residents would move from Ward 3 to Ward 4, while Ward 2 would not change.

The changes would be subject to a city-wide referendum in the fall if at least 277 people, or 5 percent of the number of Beacon residents who voted in the last gubernatorial election, sign a petition within 45 days of passage by the City Council.

The Independent Reapportionment Commission was created in 2020 following the later-than-normal release of the 2020 census data and the disbanding of the original commission last summer after a Democrat appointee was found to be a school board member, violating a prohibition on elected officials.

The reconstituted commission held its first meeting on Feb. 25 and has been meeting twice, and sometimes three times a week, and on consecutive days, to meet its legal deadline.

Joshua Simons, a senior research associate at The Benjamin Center for Public Policy Initiatives at SUNY New Paltz, and a consultant for the commission, reminded them on April 14 that they should refrain from discussing “incumbents, previous elections, or how a particular district has voted or will vote in the future as the law is written.”

Yet, that was exactly the context of an argument that began during the commission’s April 26 meeting, when Blanchfield and Rakow complained that the draft map puts all of Vassar College, currently split among three districts, in District 6, where Republican Tony D’Aquanni defeated Rebecca Edwards, the Democratic incumbent, in November.

Blanchfield, who claimed he does not “follow” which Legislature districts are Democratic or Republican, argued that the change amounted to “taking primarily Democrat voters” and “jamming” them into District 6. He also noted that Edwards and Means are Vassar professors.

“So, we have a Vassar professor on the commission who’s pushing to put Vassar College, a predominantly and overwhelmingly Democrat demographic” into a district held by a Republican, he said.

Means called the claims “baseless” and “unsubstantiated.” And Kleinberg said that the decision to consolidate Vassar into one district was driven by the requirement that the commission consider “communities of interest,” defined as “an area with recognized similarities of interest,” when redrawing districts.

Returning to splitting Vassar among three districts “ruins this entire map,” said Kleinberg.

“Our motivations initially were not partisan. Now, you are turning this into a decision that will be a partisan decision,” she said.

Visit highlandscurrent.org for news updates and latest information.
The Philipstown Planning Board will hold their regular monthly meeting on Thursday, May 19th 2022 at 7:30 p.m. at the Philipstown Town Hall, 238 Main St., Cold Spring, NY. If you are unable to join in person but would like to watch, the meeting will be livestreaming on youtube.com, search for Philipstown Planning Board May 2022.

Like Philipstown on youtube.com, search for the meeting will be livestreaming person but would like to watch, Cold Spring, NY. Town Hall, 238 Main St., 7:30 p.m. at the Philipstown meeting on will hold their regular monthly

The Philipstown Planning Board

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NOTICES

CAT NEEDS A NEW HOME — I have to move and can’t take Lacey, my cat. She is about 4 years old, very friendly, and like her name, loving. She likes to curl up on my lap. She is ok with dogs but not so happy around small children. She has all her shots up to date, and would come with her bed, her tunnel, her favorite scratch pad, as well as litter and litter box, and cat food. I am heartbroken to have to rehouse her and hope someone in the area would love to adopt her. Email debdichter@gmail.com.

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Puzzles

**CrossCurrent**

**ACROSS**
1. Knock
4. *The Thin Man* dog
8. Tabloid writing
12. Post-op area
13. Pace
14. Alike (Fr.)
17. “Hi, sailor!”
18. “Burnt” crayon color
19. Melody
21. Ordinal suffix
22. Game fish
26. Looks intently
29. Chaps
30. Man-mouse link
31. Has bills
32. — de deux
33. Mythical birds
34. Capote nickname
35. Stable diet?
36. Hill of *Moneyball*
37. Raw bar mollusk
39. Impose
40. Ms. Thurman
41. Tristan’s love
45. Tيبة’s place
48. Saltwater fish
50. Mata —
51. Hotel chain
52. Hot tub
53. Rhyming tributes
54. Lake bird

**DOWN**
1. Eyeglass frames
2. Antioxidant berry
3. Brownish purple
4. Reps
5. Jazzy Vaughan
6. Dead heat
7. Country stores?
8. June birthstone
9. “This tastes awful!”
10. Asian language
11. Layer
16. Leg joints
20. Author Fleming capital
23. Earth orbiter
24. Killer whale
25. "One-L lama" poet
26. Attend
27. Wrong
28. Jupiter counterpart
29. Spring month
32. Sunshade
33. Copter blade
35. Skirt edge
36. Singer Timberlake
38. North African
39. Steinway product
42. Privation
43. Hoodwink
44. Coup d’—
45. HBO rival
46. Possessed
47. Hot temper
49. Comic Philips

Answers for April 29 Puzzles

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

**7 LittleWords**

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. winces with embarrassment (7)
2. blocked (10)
3. the “P” in VIP (6)
4. overstatement (9)
5. serving for personal greed (9)
6. strong tendency (10)
7. Japanese charcoal heater (7)

**SudoCurrent**

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

** GIRLS’ LACROSSE**

The Haldane team — playing its first season as a varsity program — picked up three wins in the past week, collecting a pair of 5-4 victories over Blind Brook on April 29 and 30 and shutting out Keio Academy, 8-0, on Wednesday (May 4).

The Blue Devils’ victories followed an 11-9 loss at home on April 28 to Edgemont.

On Wednesday at Keio, Haldane controlled the draws and ground balls and dominated possession in building a 7-0 halftime lead over the winless Unicorns.

Mairead O’Hara led Haldane with two goals and an assist; Carmela Cofini scored twice; Amanda Johanson had a goal and two assists; and Helen Nicholls, Caroline Nelson and Scotia Hartford each scored. Lola Mahoney had nine saves in net.

“Our goal was to perfect running some of our plays,” said Coach Kerri Dempsey. “Our defense played great, our offense had a strong game, and our transition was working well.”

In the April 30 win at Blind Brook, Haldane got the game-winner with 1:52 remaining when O’Hara deposited an unassisted goal.

Mairead O’Hara puts a shot on net against Keio. Photo by S. Pearlman

Haldane, the Blue Devils went up 5-3 with 11 minutes to play, and held on for the victory.

Mahoney recorded 13 saves.

A day earlier, hosting Blind Brook at Haldane, the Blue Devils went up 5-3 with 11 minutes to play, and held on for the victory. O’Hara had two goals and two assists; Johanson, Nicholls and Erin O’Hara each had a goal; and Ruggiero and Cofini each had an assist. Mahoney stopped eight shots.

“Lola has improved so much since the beginning of the season,” said Coach Michael Carofano. “In the fifth inning, with Bella pitching great, and some solid defense backing her up,”

Haldane participated in the 41-team Gold Rush meet at West Nyack on April 30, with Lake Parrell finishing fifth in the boys’ 3,000-meter steeplechase in 10:50.20 and Andriea Vasconcelos taking eighth in the girls’ triple jump at 29-08.50.

** BASEBALL**

In a four-team tournament on April 30, Haldane defeated Palisades Prep, 16-3, but fell, 11-2, to Saunders, which had defeated Peekskill.

In the win over Palisades, Scott Bailey pitched an inning before John Kissinger came to the mound and got the win, fanning nine batters. On offense, Trajan Vollaro homered and drove in three runs, Hunter Erickson tripled and had an RBI, and Ronnie Anzovino had an RBI double.

In the second game, McCarthy, Julian Ambrose and Dan Nakabayashi combined on the mound.

“We got burned on a few balls that got by the outfielders on a field that had no fence,” said Coach Simon Dudar. “We just had some bad luck and ran out of gas on a hot day.”

A day earlier, Haldane picked up a 13-3 win at Yonkers Montessori Academy. Ryan Eng-Wong earned the decision with 10 strikeouts in five innings. McCarthy and Milo Pearsall each had two-run home runs, Ambrose had two RBI and a double, and Jeremy Hall had a pair of doubles.

The Blue Devils (4-6) were scheduled to host Croton-Harmon on Thursday and Putnam Valley today (May 6) at 5 p.m.

At the plate, Vollaro went 2-for-3 with a double and two RBI; Chase Green had two hits, including a double, Jackson Atwell went 2-for-4; Owen Roznik drove in two runs; and Ronnie Anzovino had an RBI.

The Bulldogs (5-6) were scheduled to play Thursday against Lourdes at Dutchess Stadium and to honor their seniors. The team travels to Newburgh Free Academy today (May 6) and Valley Central on Monday before hosting Washingtonville on Tuesday (May 11) at 4:15 p.m.

** SOFTBALL**

Beacon defeated Port Jervis, 252-257, in a match played Tuesday (May 3) at the Southern Dutchess Country Club — its lowest score of the season behind Jack Philipbar (44), Will Martin (44), Mike Serino (52), Dillon Kelly (55), Ronan Moran (56) and Jack Signorelli (64).

Beacon dropped a 201-257 decision to Warwick a day earlier at Southern Dutchess, with Philipbar leading with a 43, followed by Martin (45), Kelly (51), Serino (54) and Leo Lopez (64).

The Bulldogs (4-5) were scheduled to visit Port Jervis and Middletown this week. They travel to Burke Catholic on Monday (May 9) before starting regional tournament play.

** BOYS’ GOLF**

Beacon defeated Port Jervis, 252-257, in a match played Tuesday (May 3) at the Southern Dutchess Country Club — its lowest score of the season behind Jack Philipbar (44), Will Martin (44), Mike Serino (52), Dillon Kelly (55), Ronan Moran (56) and Jack Signorelli (64).

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