Where’s All the Snow?
Blankets of white missing during warm winter
By Leonard Sparks
Rain pelted the liquid surface of the shuttered ice rink at Philipstown Recreation Department on Tuesday (Feb. 21) afternoon.
Out of February’s 21 days, it was the 21st in which the high temperature stayed above freezing. A day earlier, the temperature had topped out at 61 degrees, the third time in a week it had reached the 60s.
There are other images from this weird winter: seemingly untouched displays of ice scrapers and plastic toboggans outside Drug World; lost revenue for ski areas and plow business; and unused snow-removal budgets and stockpiles of road salt.
In addition, on Feb. 10, a teenager died after the ice broke while he and another teen walked on a body of water in Taconic State Park in the Town of North East — on a day when the temperature reached the 50s.
A summer characterized by below-normal rainfall and water-conservation alerts in Beacon and Cold Spring has been followed by another drought: above-normal temperatures that have spawned a nearly snowless winter in the Highlands.
Lake Junjulas of LJ Lawn and Property Maintenance in Cold Spring, who normally plows snow during the winter, is using the extra time to get organized ahead of the spring season.
“It’s weird because this is winter but it’s not winter, [and] it’s not quite spring,” he said. “So, it’s this weird season that I’ve never really experienced before.”
High temperatures in January averaged 45 degrees and in February, 48 degrees.

Beacon Council Seeks Feedback
Will address electrification, Tompkins Terrace tax breaks at hearings
By Jeff Simms
The Beacon City Council will hold a pair of public hearings on Monday (Feb. 27) — one on a proposal to ban the use of fossil fuels in new residential and commercial buildings and the other on a proposed 40-year PILOT agreement with the owner of the Tompkins Terrace apartment complex.
The council began discussing the fossil fuel ban in earnest last month and has fast-tracked the proposal in hopes of adopting a law that would take effect Jan. 1, 2024. That would be two years earlier than similar state legislation, proposed this month by Gov. Kathy Hochul, to prohibit the use of fossil fuels in new construction of single-family homes or apartment buildings of three stories or less by the beginning of 2026.
Initially, it appeared the city’s first move would be to require new residential construction to go all-electric, but during the council’s workshop on Tuesday (Feb. 21), the proposal was expanded to include new commercial buildings.
That’s because City Administrator Chris White, Mayor Lee Kyriacou and city attorneys spoke recently with New York State energy officials who assured them that, aside from a handful of exceptions, the technology for electric heating and hot water equipment is reliable for all new construction.
If Beacon’s law allows the same exemptions that are anticipated to be in the state’s legislation, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) “said the technical feasibility is there” to require electrification of all other new construction, White remarked during the council’s workshop. “It gave me confidence that we’re not going off the rails here.”
Following that guidance, the exemptions in Beacon’s draft law are for backup generators, manufactured homes, manufacturing facilities, commercial food establishments, laundromats, laboratories, hospitals and other medical facilities, crematoriums and backup power for critical infrastructure, such as wastewater treatment facilities.
Kevin Devaney Jr. has covered high school sports in the Hudson Valley since 1998 and is currently vice president of digital content at LocalLive Networks.

How does LocalLive.tv cover high school sports?
We help schools livestream and record boys’ and girls’ sports at all levels, not just varsity football and basketball. We serve over 200 schools in 17 states, especially in the Northeast. Schools pay us a fee and lease the cameras. We install them and handle all elements of video broadcasts: shooting the games, program scheduling, video storage, etc. Our operators control the cameras remotely. Most schools have two cameras, but larger ones can have up to 12 installed at their pool, hockey rink, gym, auditorium and fields. A base of 150 to 200 operators shoots the majority of our games.

How did COVID affect business?
We started about a year and a half before the pandemic. The perception of LocalLive.tv then was that we served prep and large, rich schools. When COVID hit, nobody was allowed at games. It amplified the need for our service. We're here to stay. I don't know of too many schools now that don't livestream football.

How have high school sports changed in your 25 years of reporting?
I used to go to games and report about it in a print newspaper that would be published 12 hours later. Then it was on a website, then video and then smaller, shorter videos or social media. Now, games can be viewed live on a phone. I don't think kids have changed, but parents are more demanding of coaches. Sports culture has also changed. Kids have much more information about the surrounding schools’ athletes. And there are more sports being played outside of school. Kids play on travel teams, have private coaches.

Are the upcoming high school basketball playoffs a high-pressure time?
It’s actually less stressful. The games are more important, but there are fewer of them. Early in the season we cover way more games. But in the playoffs, we can really hone in and give better-quality service, better promotion. If I had to choose between attending the NBA final or the state high school final I wouldn’t think twice. I’d sell the NBA tickets.

You also cover local government, churches and the arts. How do those audiences differ?
It depends on how interesting it is. We have plenty of board of education meetings with 30 to 40 viewers and high school football games with 50 or 60. But once in a while, you get a championship game or a very contentious school board meeting that has 1,000 or more viewers. We cover about 30 churches, mostly Catholic and Episcopal, plus a couple of synagogues. Church audiences aren’t huge, but we'll get over 100. We’ve learned that people want to watch their local Mass, hear their local priest.
Beacon Council (from Page 1)
While the law would allow limited fossil fuel use in those types of buildings, they represent “a small piece of the pie” in terms of greenhouse-gas emissions, White said. Council Member Dan Aymar-Blair, who, along with Council Member Paloma Wake and Beacon Climate Action Now, introduced the idea of banning fossil fuels during a rally last fall, pushed back on the exemptions, saying instead that as the electric technology evolves for those more-intense uses, “that invites more businesses to move to Beacon.”

But “if we want to be a model to hundreds of other communities, we should have pretty closely” to what is expected to be in the state legislation, Kyriacou responded. The council ultimately compromised, allowing the exemptions, but, according to the draft, it will require the heating and hot water systems in the exempted uses to be electric. (For example, a newly constructed restaurant would be required to install electric-powered heating and hot water equipment, but would be permitted to use fossil fuels to power its kitchen.)

The exempted buildings would also have to be outfitted to transition to all-electric as technology evolves.

In the case of major renovation projects, the city’s proposal requires a shift to all-electric if the project exceeds 75 percent of the heated floor area and involves the replacement or new installation of a heating or hot water system. If a renovation meets the 75 percent threshold but does not include the replacement or installation of a heating or hot water system, electric systems would have to be installed if they are replaced within five years.

Tompkins Terrace
The second public hearing on Monday will be a continuation of the Jan. 30 hearing on a proposed payment-in-lieu-of-taxes, or PILOT, agreement.

Related Companies, the owner of the Tompkins Terrace low-income housing complex, has asked the City Council to approve a 40-year PILOT agreement before Related begins a $14.5 million rehabilitation project at the development. The company initially planned to ask the Dutchess County Industrial Development Agency for the PILOT but pivoted later to the city, which already administers similar agreements with three other low-income complexes and the Beacon Housing Authority.

Under a state agreement, Related, which purchased Tompkins Terrace in 2018, makes an annual payment equal to 10 percent of the rent collected in the previous year. The money is distributed to the Beacon school district, the city, Dutchess County and the Howland Public Library. (The payment for 2022 was about $284,000.) The company has proposed a new agreement that would begin with a Year 1 payment of $310,000 and increase 2½ percent each year, for a total of $19.75 million over the four decades.

However, the city has heard from a handful of residents who say that a 40-year agreement would be lopsided in Related’s favor. A year-by-year review of the last 10 years of Tompkins Terrace payments show them increasing far more than 2½ percent several years during that period (but also decreasing some years).

Related said it needs to have the PILOT in place before beginning the rehab, which will see the 193 units outfitted with new doors, painting and kitchen and bathroom improvements. HVAC equipment will be replaced and community upgrades, such as a computer lab, free Wi-Fi in all units, new playgrounds and new water heaters, will also be installed.

The city says it will include provisions in the PILOT guaranteeing that tenants cannot be forced out and that Tompkins Terrace rents remain below market rate. Both hearings will be part of the City Council’s meeting on Monday, which begins at 7 p.m.

Breakneck (from Page 1)
Accessible via the recently built Nimham Trail, which connects Breakneck’s first summit to the Wilkinson Memorial Trail.

The first major construction phase of the Fjord Trail, known as the Breakneck Bridge & Connector, is scheduled to begin next winter and project to be completed by the end of 2025.

This phase will include the construction of a shared-use trail parallel to Route 9D from the Metro-North train station at Breakneck Ridge to the newly positioned trailhead, new parking areas, ADA-compliant restrooms, an ADA-compliant bridge over the train tracks and the replanting of native species. The full project is scheduled for completion by 2030.

The Philipstown Food Pantry would like to thank all of you listed below for your generous donations. Your donations have helped us serve many members of our community. We truly appreciate your kindness and thoughtful. Thank you!

Thank you to:

Dorothy Gillman
Patti Smith PE
Michelle D Smith Fund
Jamit Vitkavage
The Topfield Foundation, Inc.
Barbara Macedo
Katherine Smelter
Barbara Macedo
Danny & Cathy Dillon
Bev & Bruce Taylor
Susan Early
Irene Karlen
Dorothy Williams & St Mary’s Church
Maggie & David Gordon, Jr.
Thomas & Erica Kivel
Kings of Columbus #536
James Harvey Hustis, VFW Post 2362
Delmar Kaarlen Jr.
Davoren Farm LLC
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Maloney
Penny & John Seekircher
Second Chance Food
Community Foundation of Hudson Valley
Andrew
Dr. Frank E Lucente
Angie’s Bakery
Owen & Zshavvin Sullivan
The Endless Skeln
Danny & Carol Valentine

and other generous donors.

A special thanks to All of our Volunteers & Drivers.
LETTERS AND COMMENTS

Beacon project

In your Feb. 17 story about the Beacon Planning Board hearing for the Prophecy Theater proposal at 1113 Wolcott Ave., a neighbor is quoted as asking: “What would you do if this damn thing was in front of your house?”

He hit the nail on the head. As noted by the city’s planning consultant and members of the public, the complexity of the operating schedule makes adherence impossible to track or enforce. Many of us who live no more than a few feet away from this site have valid and serious concerns around the impact on our families’ quality of life if it is approved.

And we are not a “small group,” as we have been represented to be. To date, more than 350 people have signed a petition and hundreds of letters of concern have been submitted to the Planning Board focused on noise, traffic, parking, trespassing and safety. This project belongs in a business district, away from residential complexes and streets. It is potentially a nice idea but in the wrong location.

Shelley Simmons-Bloom, Beacon

Prophecy Theater reduced the maximum capacity and the days on which events may be held but it has not reduced the many serious concerns which will impact the more than 400 families who live nearby, such as:

1. There is no mechanism for preventing event-goers from trespassing on neighboring properties before, during and after events.
2. There is no on-site parking for the event venue, which means event-goers will park on the narrow streets near the venue or in private parking lots. If there were enough room for on-site event-parking, it would reduce the disturbance to neighbors.
3. The Planning Board’s noise consultant has indicated that there are many issues that have not been addressed, such as the noise event-goers will inevitably make on arrival and departure.
4. The city code allows for a conference center as an accessory to a hotel. Prophecy Theater is hardly an accessory to the proposed 30-room hotel, and it is more a concert hall than a conference center.

During the most recent Planning Board meeting, some Planning Board members and residents noted that, if the developer is sincere in saying that the venue is going to be a conference center and not a concert venue, the proposed hours of operation should reflect that. Rather than late-night hours and weekends, a conference center would be more focused on daytime hours on weekdays.

The nearby community is happy to see that the Planning Board is referring the parking and traffic issues to the Traffic Safety Committee, and I urge the board to follow the spirit of the city code and not allow Prophecy Theater to build this entertainment venue on the Dutch Reformed Church site.

Steve Jaffe, Beacon

Indian Point

Richard Burroni of Holtec may not want us to use the term “dumping” about the company’s planned release of Indian Point’s radioactive water into the Hudson River this summer (Letters and Comments, Feb. 17). Whatever you call it, it’s a bad choice for the seven communities that draw drinking water from the Hudson; people who swim, boat and fish in the river; and the children who play along its banks, not to mention the fish and river life.

Several experts, including Ed Lyman, director of nuclear power safety at the Union of Concerned Scientists, and Arnie Gundersen, chief engineer of Fairewinds Energy Education, have said that the best solution would be to leave the water where it is, in the fuel pools emptied of the fuel rods. That would allow the tritium (which can’t be separated from the water) to decay over time into non-harmful helium. Lyman said: “Keep storing indefinitely and eventually the problem will solve itself.”

Federal regulations allow 60 years for decommissioning. Spent fuel could remain at the site even after the decommissioning is completed, according to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

The mayor of Buchanan, Theresa Knickerbocker, wants Holtec to complete the decommissioning in the shortest possible time so the site can be repurposed. Holtec wants to oblige her by cutting costs and corners, and keeping as much of the $2.4 billion in decommissioning funds it has received — collected from ratepayers when the plant was operating — to line executives’ and shareholders’ pockets.

But the soil and groundwater on the property are contaminated, and it’s highly unlikely that Indian Point can be transformed for use as a park, shopping center or housing. The site should be remediated to the degree required, but residual radioactive elements to which people should not be exposed are likely to remain.

The wisest adaptive reuse would be for a large, utility-scale solar array with battery storage, and possibly wind energy, since the Hudson is somewhat of a wind tunnel. The new owner could generate renewable energy at a site already ideal for grid interconnection, and provide revenue to Cortlandt, Buchanan and the Hendrick Hudson school district.

So Holtec, leave the water where it is. It’s cheaper than moving it anywhere.
and better for everyone up and down the Hudson River.

Judy Allen, Putnam Valley

ChatGPT

Student essays generated by AI engines are relatively easy to discern with the trained eye ("Local Teachers See Opportunity in Artificial Intelligence," Feb. 17), and there are several applications that detect AI-generated content as quickly as it is generated. ChatGPT essay engines are still in the development and not ready for prime time.

It’s depressing to learn that a teacher whined in The Atlantic that ChatGPT will mean “the end of high school English ... or maybe the end of writing.” That cynical statement has little merit and is inconsistent with contemporary learning structures and teaching qualifications.

I also disagree with the idea of integrating ChatGPT into Haldane’s English program as a research tool or otherwise. There are far too many other areas of lagging studies that take precedence. Parents and the PTA should not stand for that curriculum.

Derek Graham, Cold Spring

These school officials have it exactly right: ChatGPT is here to stay, and there’s much more disruptive tech to come. Our educational, governmental and social institutions are so far behind the curve with respect to tech literacy and utilization.

Governments, schools and public libraries should all have software engineers on staff. Software has become a primary means through which economic and social value is created and controlled, and we’d be well-served to educate ourselves and our children in the necessary skills to ensure continued agency and economic relevance.

Derek Enos, via Instagram

Putnam Valley

Thanks to The Current for your coverage of Putnam Valley and the contamination issues ("Putnam Valley Fire Department Seeks Cleanup Costs," Jan. 27).

As you reported, the fire department has filed a lawsuit against a contractor whom it claims is responsible for dumping thousands of yards of contaminated fill on its property.

What nobody seems to be doing, including the state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) or the Putnam County Health Department, is investigating whether the toxins and chemicals found at the fire department site on Oscawana Lake Road have also been found in the elementary school water ("Putnam School Sues Over Pollution," Dec. 30).

The Putnam Valley fire department has two locations: one on Canopus Hollow Road, where it has its current firehouse, and the other on Oscawana Lake Road, closer to the school, where it is building its new fire station.

During the years that the fire department conducted the remediation on the Oscawana Lake Road site, the water, air and soil were monitored and analyzed to make sure that the toxic chemicals were removed to the satisfaction of the DEC. The latest and final certification report for the DEC was submitted in November.

As it stands now, and due to the reporting in local media, residents who live in the area have become concerned about whether their wells are tainted.

The DEC and Putnam Health Department are well-funded by taxpayers and are supposed to be watching out for the health of the citizens and the environment of our town. Where are our Town Board members, county legislators or the county executive, Kevin Byrne? Why aren’t they demanding some accountability from these agencies? It’s long past time for the residential wells in the area to be tested, and it should not be the responsibility of the homeowners to do so.

We pay enough for the “privilege” of living in one of the most expensive places in New York.

Patty Villanova, Putnam Valley

Cold Spring police

Cold Spring spends $500,000 each year on its police force (“Should Cold Spring Police Stay?” Feb. 17). This is money Putnam County does not need to spend on additional policing through the Sheriff’s Department. We already subsidize the county with our sales tax revenue. Should Cold Spring continue subsidizing county policing, too?

Aaron Freimark, Cold Spring

Any town that has tourism needs a police force, plain and simple.

Len Getler, Cold Spring

Vacant lot

I live in Beacon in the building next to the vacant lot at 536 Main St. and the tenants here are upset by the prospect of a retail building and office space going in (“One of the Last to Go?” Feb. 17). Thursday through Mondays we can barely park because of the weekend crowds. I can’t go grocery shopping because when I come back, there are no spaces, even in the small section marked for “tenants,” which everyone ignores.

The residents living over Melzingah Tap House also use the lot because they don’t have their own. Our tenants have 16 cars and there at least another 10 from residents above the Tap House. It’s horrible.

This building would make us not only lose any sort of view but all sunlight. Plus, construction dust will be coming into our windows while it is being built.

The Planning Board members don’t seem to care; they had their heads in their phones during the Feb. 15 meeting. Why do we let the same three builders destroy the city? I have written the Planning Board twice; neither letter has been acknowledged.

Melissa Nastassi, via Instagram

Just what the residents of Beacon need — designer rugs.

Melissa Buerkett, via Instagram

Fjord Trail

Breakneck Ridge is one of the great draws of the Hudson Highlands. Unfortunately, it stresses the resources of the park and emergency services, and impacts Cold Spring’s quality of life. The future Fjord Trail along the river will make a bad situation worse.

But this story can have a happy ending. With electronic ticket reservations, we could control visitation to a level that preserves our natural environment and allows even the locals to enjoy our premier trails. This system is used in parks across the country.

Next time you see a village, town or park official, ask them why we haven’t tried electronic ticketing for Breakneck Ridge. It’s a 21st-century solution to an increasingly damaging problem.

Rich Franco, Cold Spring

Thank you for service

In 1968, my favorite cousin, David, and I went on the same bus to take the U.S. Army physical. David passed. I did not because they diagnosed me with a serious heart condition that I have had treated for over the past 60 years. I went to law school. David went to Vietnam. It seems none of my problems has been a heart condition that I have had treated for over the past 60 years.

Robert McClean, Nashville

Thank you for service

After reading your story about your favorite cousin and your experience with the U.S. Army physical (“Something You Don’t Know About Me: Through the Eyes of David Fray,” Feb. 3), I had to share my story.

I also disagree with the idea of integrating ChatGPT into Haldane’s English program as a research tool or otherwise. There are far too many other areas of lagging studies that take precedence. Parents and the PTA should not stand for that curriculum.

Derek Graham, Cold Spring

Volunteers for the Village of Cold Spring hosted a wine tasting fundraiser to help support quality coverage of all that matters to you.

Membership is the way you can help.

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The Highlands Current
Winter Coat Drive Underway
Donations benefit Walter Hoving Home

A winter coat drive that continues through March 10 will benefit the Walter Hoving Home in Garrison, a faith-based residential program that assists women struggling with addiction.

Donations can be dropped off at the Philipstown Volunteer Ambulance Corps at 14 Cedar St. in Cold Spring or the Garrison Volunteer Ambulance Corps at 1 Buena Vista St.

Record Attendance at State Parks

More than 79 million visitors in 2022

Visits to New York’s state parks, historic sites, campgrounds and trails hit a record 79.5 million in 2022, according to state data. That was 1 million more than in 2021 and a 43 percent increase since 2008.

Bear Mountain was the seventh-most-popular park, with 2.4 million visitors, behind Niagara Falls (9.4 million), Saratoga Spa in Saratoga Springs (3.5 million), Denny Farrell Riverbank in New York City (3 million) and three parks on Long Island: Jones Beach (9.3 million), Robert Moses (3.8 million) and Sunken Meadow (3.1 million).

State Park Attendance

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<th>2007</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2021</th>
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<td>481K</td>
<td>476K</td>
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*Includes Breakneck

Burning Leaves Set Fire to Neighbor’s Gazebo

Garrison resident issued two violations for damage

Embers from burning leaves on one property ignited a fire in Garrison that damaged a gazebo on a neighboring property earlier this month, said the Department of Environmental Conservation on Wednesday (Feb. 22).

The incident took place on Feb. 13 off Schuyler Road, where a 79-year-old homeowner was burning leaves. The 82-year-old owner of the gazebo had a seizure but the rangers who responded provided medical care until an ambulance arrived, said the DEC.

Rangers issued the person who burnt the leaves two violations for setting a fire which endangered the property of another.

Tree and Shrub Sale Opens

The Cornell Cooperative Extension Putnam County is hosting its annual tree and shrub seedling sale through March 24. Order at putnam.cce.cornell.edu/2023TreeShrub. Pickup will be April 21 and 22 at Tilly Foster Farm in Brewster.

Native plant plugs are also available.

The extension is also offering a 12-session beekeeping course for students ages 12 to 15 led by Rodney Dow, a Garrison resident. The Saturday morning program will begin in Putnam Valley on March 11 and move to the Tilly Foster Farm when the weather gets warmer. Register at putnam.cce.cornell.edu.

COVID-19 BY THE NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
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<th>PUTNAM</th>
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<td>Primary vaccination:</td>
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<td>Garrison:</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive tests, 7-day average:</td>
<td>↓ 5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of deaths:</td>
<td>146 (+1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State health department, as of Feb. 22 (vaccine data as of Feb. 17). Boosted is the percentage of people eligible for additional shots who are up to date. Numbers in parentheses are changes since Jan. 25. Note: Because of the small incremental changes to the vaccination numbers, we print this chart in the last issue of each month, although updates are made more frequently online.

SOUP & SALAD TAKE-OUT

February 25th 2023
12:00 - 4:00p.m. (or until sold out)

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1 Quart of Soup: Lemon Chicken Orzo or Beef Tomato;
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Grady told the *Daily Freeman* that he immediately had second thoughts about his comment to Parisi and told him so. “He asked if that meant I was doing a 180-degree reversal and I said, ‘Yes.’”

The DA said he distributed a memo in January outlining the rules that the staff will need to follow if the case comes down to Weishaupt and Parisi. Both parties were slated to make their endorsements on Thursday (Feb. 23).

**Saugerties: Trustees Adopt Parking Regulations**

Trustees in Saugerties earlier this month adopted regulations that will require new residential buildings in the business district to have three parking spaces for every two housing units — although there isn’t anywhere left for new construction. According to the *Daily Freeman*, the change came after residents protested an application last year to allow a nine-unit apartment building to have three parking spaces instead of four.

The Ulster County Planning Board recommended that the village consider waiving, “potentially in combination with a payment-in-lieu-of-parking,” to fund additional municipal parking.

The code enforcement officer noted that the change only affected residential projects. “On the commercial side, we don’t have requirements for parking in the business district,” he said.

**Dutchess Man Fights To Clear Pot Conviction**

**DA opposes effort to vacate plea under legalization law**

*By Leonard Sparks*

Michael Graubard has just one arrest and one conviction in his life, according to his attorney, Wei Hu. But Graubard’s guilty plea in 2014 to possessing 114 pounds of marijuana is now one of the first tests of a state law enacted in March 2021 that not only legalized the possession of up to 3 ounces but also gave people with pot convictions a chance to clear their records.

Graubard and Hu are appealing an October 2021 decision by Judge Jessica Segal of Dutchess County Court to deny his request to have his conviction for first-degree criminal possession of marijuana, a Class C felony, fully vacated under provisions of the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA), that he immediately had second thoughts about his comment to Parisi and told him so. “He asked if that meant I was doing a 180-degree reversal and I said, ‘Yes.’”

The DA said he distributed a memo in January outlining the rules that the staff will need to follow if the case comes down to Weishaupt and Parisi. Both parties were slated to make their endorsements on Thursday (Feb. 23).

A person in the defendant’s shoes today … if they were arrested with 114 pounds of marijuana, is getting arrested and facing incarceration.” said Diehn.

He pleaded guilty to the charge in June 2014, three months after Dutchess County sheriff’s deputies found the marijuana and nearly $9,000 in cash after stopping a car he was driving in the Town of Amenia. He served nearly two years in prison and underwent two years post-release supervision.

Now, Graubard wants to take advantage of MRTA, which eliminated some marijuana crimes and mandated that the court system automatically expunge the records of people who are eligible. The DA opposes the effort, however, and is pressing Graubard to seek relief through the bars of the law.

**Albany: Hochul Outlines Mid-Hudson Proposals**

Gov. Kathy Hochul on Tuesday (Feb. 21) highlighted proposals in her 2024 budget that will send funds to the Mid-Hudson Region, including $3.6 billion in school aid, $337 million to reduce gun violence, $250 million in housing infrastructure and $240 million in transportation capital projects, including $45 million for bridge repairs.

The governor’s proposed budget also includes $60 million for Bear Mountain State Park, $57 million for addiction services and $45 million for the expansion of upstate semiconductor manufacturing.

The same day, Hochul announced that the Village of Sleepy Hollow and the Town of Cornwall will each receive $4.5 million in funding as the Mid-Hudson Region winners of NY Forward, which provides funds for smaller communities to revitalize their downtowns. In her 2024 budget, Hochul proposes spending another $100 million on the NY Forward program.
The Highlands is also barren. Just 3.6 inches of snow were recorded in Beacon in December and January, according to the National Weather Service.

Vicky Kelly, who collects long-term data about air and water pollution and precipitation as manager of environmental monitoring at the Cary Institute, said global warming is bringing more rain and less snow in the winter months. “Rain in the winter is bad, because it can flood,” she said. “In the future, I think there will be a shift in what constitutes a snow day — instead there will be more ‘weather days’ because of flooding.”

Bianca Bergue, a Beacon resident who attends the Masters School in Dobbs Ferry, said “snow days have always been such an exciting and spontaneous thing to look forward to.” But because there are so many planned but unused snow days this year, the school on Feb. 13 simply gave students a day off.

Lily Zuckerman, who lives in Garrison, is a junior at the Masters School in Dobbs Ferry and a member of The Current’s Student Journalists Program.

The End of Snow Days?

Climate change, remote learning threaten tradition

By Lily Zuckerman

Generations of local high school students have fallen asleep with the hope that, come sunrise, a forecasted snowstorm will close the schools, freeing up the day for sledding at Winter Hill in Garrison or Memorial Park in Beacon.

Unfortunately, snow days are under threat because of the pandemic-tested ability of school districts to switch to virtual learning and a lack of snow as Highlands winters grow warmer.

Districts traditionally account for weather-related closures in their calendars to meet a state mandate that students receive at least 180 instructional days during an academic year. In September, the New York State Board of Education amended its policies to allow districts to switch to online learning instead of calling in for bad weather.

Administrators at the Beacon and Garrison districts say they are keeping traditional snow days, for now. Beacon closed on Jan. 25 ahead of a forecasted snowstorm that did not materialize.

In contrast, Haldane has instituted a hybrid model: Its calendar sets aside a maximum three days for inclement weather, said Philip Benante, the superintendent. If there is bad weather beyond that, the district will shift to remote instruction.

None of that matters, however, if there is no snow, which is becoming less predictable as climate change creates warmer winters in the Northeast. On Jan. 30, New York City marked its 332nd consecutive day without measurable snow, five days short of the record of 337 days set on Dec. 15, 2020. (That record remained intact when several inches fell in Central Park on Feb. 1.)

Where’s the Snow? (from Page 1)

(through Sunday, Feb. 19), according to data from a weather station on Route 9, just north of the border between Dutchess and Putnam counties.

Both figures are the warmest for those months since at least 2009, and followed a December that averaged 43 degrees, a six-year high.

The relative balminess is preventing precipitation from becoming snow. In Beacon, snowfall totaled 0.6 inches in January, 3 inches in December and none in November, according to data from a weather station that measures precipitation in the city.

Dutchess and Putnam counties are in an area of the state where total snowfall through January was 10 inches to 20 inches below normal, according to the Northeast Regional Climate Center at Cornell University.

The impact on municipal budgets is palpable. Philipstown has used some of its salt and spent on overtime, but “nothing like in years past,” said Adam Hotaling, the town’s highway superintendent.

Beacon has so far used a “very small fraction” of the $269,000 budgeted for snow-removal this year and still has leftover salt to use from last year, said City Administrator Chris White. “We are still using 2022 salt and haven’t had to dip into 2023’s funding yet,” he said.

Samantha Borisoff, a climatologist with the Northeast Regional Climate Center, said the jet stream, a band of wind that blows west to east along the boundary between cold and hot air, has kept warm temperatures over New York and other Northeast states. It has also blocked storms from the Midwest and Ohio Valley from reaching the Mid-Hudson region, she said.

Because of that, precipitation in the form of rain, melted snow and ice has been near or above normal, and snowfall below normal, in the southeastern part of New York, including Dutchess and Putnam counties, said Borisoff.

Warmer, rainier winters in the Northeast are rooted in climate change, she said. “Each month and season can have natural variability, but climate change increases the likelihood of experiencing these unusually warm temperatures,” she said.

Major snowstorms are still possible in our area with enough cold air. Cooler temperatures, but still above freezing, are forecast for the rest of February. For March, the federal Climate Prediction Center is forecasting temperatures that lean above-normal, and equal chances of below-, near- or above-normal precipitation.

“You get winters like this and it just feels like you’re constantly waiting for that one big storm,” said Hotaling.

50 inches
Oneida (Camden), Feb. 1, 1966

38 inches
Sullivan (Callicoon), Feb. 16, 1958

34 inches
Dutchess (Wappingers Falls), Dec. 14, 1895

29 inches
Orange (Gardenville), Jan. 20, 1961

27 inches
Westchester (Eastchester), Dec. 27, 1947

25 inches
Putnam (Carmel), Dec. 27, 1947

20 inches

Source: National Centers for Environmental Information

There is no shortage of ice scrapers and sleds at Drug World in Cold Spring.

Although Philipstown set up its ice rink on Jan. 15, skaters are still waiting.

Photos by L. Sparks
Remembering Snows Past

GARRISON Jan. 8, 2022
Photo by Ross Corsair

COLD SPRING Feb. 2, 2021
Photo by Teresa Lagerman

BEACON March 14, 1888
Beacon Historical Society

GARRISON March 8, 2018
Photo by Karen Thompson

COLD SPRING Dec. 17, 2020
Photo by Michael Turton

BEACON Feb. 2, 2015
Photo by Ethan Harrison

COLD SPRING Dec. 17, 2020
Photo by Michael Turton

Remembering Snows Past

GARRISON Jan. 8, 2022
Photo by Ross Corsair

COLD SPRING Feb. 2, 2021
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BEACON March 14, 1888
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GARRISON March 8, 2018
Photo by Karen Thompson

COLD SPRING Dec. 17, 2020
Photo by Michael Turton

BEACON Feb. 2, 2015
Photo by Ethan Harrison

COLD SPRING Dec. 17, 2020
Photo by Michael Turton
AROUND TOWN

ICY JUMP — The 25th annual “polar bear plunge” took place on Feb. 18 at Camp Mariah in Fishkill to raise money for the Special Olympics. The 58 teams and 708 participants, such as the nine above who locked arms to steel themselves, leaped into the lake in groups over seven hours. The event raised $250,000, including $6,000 from members of the Cold Spring Fire Co. The air temperature was a balmy 35 degrees.

Photo by Ross Corsair

PUPPY STAR — Bea, who is deaf and came to the Animal Rescue Foundation shelter in Beacon with her sister, was one of the featured players in Puppy Bowl XIX that took place on Super Bowl Sunday (Feb. 12) and was broadcast on Animal Planet. The event this year included 122 puppies from 67 shelters, including 11 such as Bea with special needs.

Photo by Elias Weiss Friedman

WASHINGTON’S BIG DAY — Re-enactors at Washington’s Headquarters in Newburgh last weekend celebrated the general’s 291st birthday. The historic site dates to 1782, the final year of the Revolutionary War, when Washington lived there while commanding the Continental Army. John Koopman, who shares Washington’s height and build, portrayed him.

Photo by Ross Corsair

SENATOR VISIT — Rob Rolison, the former Poughkeepsie mayor who was elected to the state Senate in November, visited Beacon High School on Feb. 17 to speak with students about civic participation.

Photo by Una Hoppe

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THANK YOU SO MUCH!

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IT’S NOT TOO LATE TO GIVE!
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CONNECT WITH US @PhilipstownHub
By Alison Rooney

All roads lead back to Beacon. Or at least they appear to for Matt Kinney, a painter, sculptor, woodworker and stoneworker who moved to Beacon in 2003. He has left several times since, most recently returning a few months ago following a pandemic sojourn in Massachusetts, where he grew up.

A sampling of Kinney's work, in a variety of media, will be part of "The Beginning of Spring," a group show curated by Zeng Han at the Wappinger Town Hall. It opens on Saturday (Feb. 25) with a reception from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Kinney's first encounter with the Highlands occurred just after 9/11. He had been working at a Brooklyn foundry in the "sand department," where they made pull-apart molds. He became enamored of the process, learning on the job, and began casting his own sculptures.

"There's this alchemy of glowing, liquid bronze metal — breaking the mold open is like having a gift," he says.

After 9/11, Kinney landed a job in the sand department at Polich Tallix, a foundry then located in Beacon, but eventually found it too hazardous. He began working at University Settlement Camp, and when that closed, joined with Pat Freeman, the camp's then-director, in a carpentry business.

His passion for art was evident in childhood. After graduating from high school, he enrolled at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. "When pre-computer graphic design — which I saw as 'very clean hands pressing little squares' — was required to continue with illustration, I switched to drawing." He eventually left Pratt and earned a fine arts degree from The School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

While Kinney was living in New York City, he created thousands of ink paintings, primarily working in plein air. "You'd show up, pay the model, have no instruction and work for a few hours," he recalls. "Ink and water was an easy choice; it would dry quickly."

In Beacon, he renovated and sold a home, using the proceeds to maintain a studio in Newburgh. In 2018, he traveled to China for a two-year residency at the Boxes Art Museum in Foshan, where he made 25 pieces that were also later shown at the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts and other locations.

In 2020, amid the pandemic, he put everything in storage and moved back to his hometown of Boxford, Massachusetts, to live with his family. It was there and then that he decided to dive into ink painting again, this time with animals as subjects, particularly endangered species.

“I love cave drawings and am interested in animism and how animals have been portrayed throughout civilization," he explains. "Now that I’ve been creating them, I’ve been learning more about them. Recently, zebras died in the Horn of Africa, mini-extinctions because of climate change. It’s a desperate situation, so maybe creating this can bring awareness.”

When he returned last year to Beacon, he took up residence in a friend's camper and studio. It was there he painted his first large-scale animal in oil for clients in Manhattan.

In December and January, Kinney had his second New York City solo show, consisting of monochromatic oil paintings, at Robin Rice Gallery. (The first, in 2002, was organized by his drawing studio and featured his inks.)

“It was a great opening, which brought together old friends, faces not seen in 15 years,” he says. “It was awesome to bring these animal paintings to concrete and glass. I framed them myself, painted the gallery walls and felt willing to do whatever it took.”

The Wappinger Town Hall gallery, at 20 Middlebush Road in Wappingers Falls, is open weekdays from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The show continues through March 8. See mattkinney.net.
THE WEEK AHEAD

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

COMMUNITY
SAT 25
Soup & Salad Take-Out
BEACON
6 p.m. Christ Church
Order dinner for two (lemon chicken orzo or beef tomato soup, salad, bread and cookies) for $15. Walk-ins welcome.

Wine for Whiskers
GARDNER
1 – 4 p.m. Whitecliff Winery
facebook.com/beaconspring

BEACON
Celebration of Light
SAT 25
benefiting Mid Hudson Animal Aid.
1 – 4 p.m. Whitecliff Winery

SAT 25
Maple Sugar Tours
11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Outdoor Discovery Center
120 Muser Drive | 845-534-5506
hhnm.org
Visitors can choose a sugar-bush tour at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. or 2 p.m. that includes a moderate 1-mile hike, or a maple-lane tour at noon or 3 p.m., which is a short walk. Also SUN 26, SAT 4, SUN 5. Through March 19. Cost: $12 ($10 members, free ages 4 and younger)

FRI 3
Lit Lit
BEACON
7 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | 845-831-4088
howlandculturalcenter.org
Email litlitseries@gmail.com if you would like to read at this monthly open mic. The featured writer is Maria Teresa Hart, the author of Doll.

THURS 2
Lucky SPHERO
COLD SPRING
4 p.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040
butterfieldlibrary.org
Children can learn about coding and guide the robot through an obstacle course.

KIDS & FAMILY
SAT 25
Maple Sugar Tours
CORNWALL
11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Outdoor Discovery Center
120 Muser Drive | 845-534-5506
hhnm.org
Visitors can choose a sugar-bush tour at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. or 2 p.m. that includes a moderate 1-mile hike, or a maple-lane tour at noon or 3 p.m., which is a short walk. Also SUN 26, SAT 4, SUN 5. Through March 19. Cost: $12 ($10 members, free ages 4 and younger)

TALKS & TOURS
SAT 25
Maple Sugar Tours
CORNWALL
11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Outdoor Discovery Center
120 Muser Drive | 845-534-5506
hhnm.org
Visitors can choose a sugar-bush tour at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. or 2 p.m. that includes a moderate 1-mile hike, or a maple-lane tour at noon or 3 p.m., which is a short walk. Also SUN 26, SAT 4, SUN 5. Through March 19. Cost: $12 ($10 members, free ages 4 and younger)

Uncontaminated Sound: Reflections, Mar. 4

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that a Public Hearing will be held by the Town Board of the Town of Philipstown on March 2, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at the Philipstown Town Hall, 238 Main Street, Cold Spring, NY. The purpose of the Public Hearing is to hear comments for/against Hudson Highlands Reserve’s Application for Alternate Road Standards which requests Town Board approval of certain alternate road standards pursuant to the Town Code §150-16 to authorize construction of a road at 12% grade where the maximum grade permitted is 10%. A complete copy of the application is available for inspection upon request sent to townclerk@philipstown.com and is also available on the Town’s Website, Philipstown.com.

BY ORDER OF THE TOWN BOARD
Tara K. Percaccioio, Town Clerk
Dated: February 22, 2023
(Newsies), Brennyn Lark (Six), Jelani Remy ( Ain’t Too Proud) and Kissy Simmons (The Lion King) as they perform scenes and songs from shows that celebrate Black artists.
Cost: $32 to $50

SAT 25
Paula Poundstone
POUGHKEEPSIE
8 p.m. Bardavon | 35 Market St. 845-473-2072 | bardavon.org
The humorist and podcast host will perform her one-woman show.
Cost: $45

FRI 3
CP2 Series Readers
Theatre Mini-Festival #3
WAPPINGERS FALLS
8 p.m. County Players Theater 2681 W. Main St. | 845-298-1491 countyplayers.org
The County Players will present dramatic readings of two plays, Constellations, by Nick Payne, and Ada the Engine, by Lauren Gunderson. Also SAT 4, SUN 5.

SAT 4
Uncontaminated Sound: Reflections
BEACON
7 p.m. Howland Cultural Center 477 Main St. | 845-831-0179
Jeffrey Lewis and others will present an evening of music, comedy and dance to open an exhibit of Robert Lundberg's photographic series of contemporary performers.
Cost: $30 ($40 door)

MUSIC

SAT 25
The Dark Horses
BEACON
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. 845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The tribute band will perform music by George Harrison.
Cost: $25 ($30 door)

SUN 26
Cherish the Ladies
BEACON
7 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. 845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The Celtic group will play traditional Irish music and step dance.
Cost: $45 ($50 door)

FRI 3
Girl Party
BEACON
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. 845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
Deni Bonet will host this music circle featuring female musicians, including Sloan Wainwright, KJ Denhert and Emily Cavanaugh.
Cost: $20 ($25 door)

SAT 4
Best of the ’70s
BEACON
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. 845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The band’s set will include hits from dozens of artists.
Cost: $30 ($35 door)

SUN 5
Gabriela Martinez
BEACON
4 p.m. Howland Cultural Center 477 Main St. | howlandmusic.org
In a program titled “Resonances,” the pianist will perform works by Missy Mazzoli, Reinaldo Hahn, Caroline Shaw, Adam Schoenberg, Viet Cuong, Sarah Kirkland Snider and Heitor Villa-Lobos. The concert is part of the Howland Chamber Music Circle series.
Cost: $35 ($80 students ages 25 and younger)

CIVIC
MON 27
Assembly Office Hours
COLD SPRING
7 p.m. Village Hall | 85 Main St. 845-265-9254 | coldspringschool.org
Meet with Dana Levenberg, whose state Assembly district includes Philipstown, to share concerns about local issues.

TUES 28
School Board
COLD SPRING
7 p.m. Auditorium 15 Craigside Drive | 845-265-9254 | coldspringschool.org

MON 27
City Council
BEACON
7 p.m. City Hall | 1 Municipal Plaza 845-838-5011 | beaconny.gov

TUES 28
School Board
COLD SPRING
7 p.m. Village Hall | 85 Main St. 845-265-3611 | coldspringschool.org

WED 1
School Board
GARRISON
7 p.m. Garrison School | 1100 Route 9D 845-424-3689 | gufs.org

THURS 2
Town Board
PHILIPSTOWN
7:30 p.m. Town Hall | 238 Main St. 845-265-5200 | philipstown.com

TRUNKS

SAT 25
Broadway Perspectives, Feb. 25

SUN 5
Gabriela Martinez
BEACON

Paula Poundstone
POUGHKEEPSIE

MARCH 25 AT 9AM
TICKETS: $40
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I

In part, Paul Kottman says, so “they can

afternoons at the Butterfield Library. They

never heard a debate,” he recalls.

New York City, stepped in as a volunteer.

comparative literature at The New School in

when her father, who teaches philosophy and

was unable to find a faculty sponsor. That’s

sity of Chicago.

in 2021 and is now a student at the Univer-

his older daughter, Sophia, who graduated

Kottman. It was created as a club in 2017 by

Shanahan, Owen Sullivan-Hoch and Marc


Photo by A. Rooney

tumble down the hill and then stand and orate.” The club met during the pandemic

over Zoom, which was “not so bad for

debate, but they missed the entire social,

personal side of things,” he says.

For the uninitiated, there are multiple
debate formats. The one used by Haldane

is called “world schools,” which Kottman

feels is the most flexible.

After brainstorming and calculating and

prioritizing arguments from both sides, the

debaters are split into two teams of three.

In a timed response, a student provides the

strongest, most detailed advocacy, followed

by another student addressing the opposite

viewpoint.

These are followed by two other students

who lobby for and against in a less compre-

hensive way. Another student provides a

rebuttal and one designated the “whip”

sums up the debate. The students can’t pick

which side they represent; that’s done with

a coin toss.

“What’s unique about world-school

format is each speaker has their own moment in the spotlight,” says Helena Kott-

man. “That is valuable for practicing skills in a friendly setting, especially for kids in

the younger grades.”

At a recent Friday meeting, the topic

under debate was whether Puerto Rico

should be granted U.S. statehood. Shanah-

han, the first speaker, provided an over-

view of the arguments for Puerto Rico to

remain a territory, citing the advantages

of self-governing and invoking everything

from racist ideology to “if it was going to

happen, it would have happened already.”

Sullivan-Hoch advocated statehood,

naming the benefits of cultural diversity in

the U.S., better security and political stabil-

ity. Lunin-Pack and Helena Kottman then

presented “second speeches” advocating

one view, then the other.

At the conclusion, Paul Kottman offered a

critique, saying the rebuttals had been

fine but that the students needed to antici-

pate what arguments might arise.

Helena, who is a junior, says the experi-

ence has been invaluable. “Debate is misin-

terpreted as passionate conflict between two sides,” she says. “But it’s not about how

much you believe what you’re saying, it’s how you argue it. There’s value in knowing

what both sides believe.

“There are no practical applications, just a lens to view and critique what’s going on

in the real world, but to be able to develop that critical thinking skill is valuable in any

setting,” she adds. “There are effective ways to rebut. You learn that it’s too easy to take

a not-very-generous interpretation of their argument, but as an effective debater you

take the most general approach you can and go beyond that.”

Her father agrees. “Students at this age

seem more ready to handle issues that have
two sides to them, have opposing ideas, not

just win an argument,” he says. However,

he adds, “we discovered that not every topic

lends itself to debate. For example, topics

that have incompatible viewpoints, such as
gun rights or abortion, may be too in

conflict with one another.

“We want to get them hearing themselves

and each other, not just talking but listen-

ing,” he says. “They’re better listeners than six

months ago. They’re learning to have dialogue,

not just two monologues. They’re taking

into account what the other person says.

“They also learn to think through a prob-

lem they may not know much about, doing

research to gain evidence. There’s plenty of

collective brainstorming, coming up with

arguments using influential reason and

persuasion, as well as logic. It would be a

good activity for any age to practice, but

especially at this age. I’ve enjoyed it more

than I thought I would, considering it’s an

age group I’m not used to teaching.”

During this school year, the team has

hosted teams from Arlington, Poughkeep-

sie and Dover for scrimmages. On March 3,

it will participate at an annual middle- and

high-school tournament at Bard College,

tackling three topics chosen by the school.

The team hopes in 2023-24 to attend more

tournaments, courtesy of a PTA grant, and

it also would like to encourage the creation

of a middle school team.

The Age

of Debate

Haldane team strives to see both sides

By Alison Rooney

In this age of vitriolic arguments, are

school debate teams a polite anomaly?

The students on the Haldane High

School debate team would argue that

question. In fact, they’d argue both sides,

backed by copious research.

The team, which has seven members

(Colin Hopkins, captain Helena Kottman,

Gabe Lunin-Pack, Simon Pieza, Keira

Shanahan, Owen Sullivan-Hoch and Marc

Firpo), is guided by Helena’s father, Paul

Kottman. It was created as a club in 2017 by

his older daughter, Sophia, who graduated

in 2021 and is now a student at the Univer-

sity of Chicago.

When Sophia decided to create a team, she

was unable to find a faculty sponsor. That’s

when her father, who teaches philosophy and

comparative literature at The New School in

New York City, stepped in as a volunteer.

“I know what an argument is, but I had

never heard a debate,” he recalls.

The team meets for an hour on Friday

afternoons at the Butterfield Library. They

try to meet outdoors whenever possible,

in part, Paul Kottman says, so “they can

From left: Colin Hopkins, Simon Pieza, Marc Firpo


477 Main Street, Beacon, NY 12508
www.howlandculturalcenter.com
howlandculturalcentertix.com

Tix: $20 adv / $25 door: howlandculturalcentertix.com
Perfect Pairing

Wine bar brings flavor and flair to Beacon

By Kat Merry

Pedro Sousa and Tanner Townsend felt they knew exactly what Beacon was missing when they opened Reserva, their bustling wine bar at 173 Main St.

Sousa, from Brazil, and Townsend, from Texas, both attended the Culinary Institute of America and planned to pursue a career in the field before they met. Recently married, they have combined their skills and passion to bring to life their vision of a neighborhood wine bar.

“We wanted to create an atmosphere that felt like you were stepping into a wine bar in the middle of Manhattan,” says Sousa. The 1920s aesthetic — including the building’s original brick walls and a vintage piano atop a custom-built stage — enhances that feel, while the tapas menu is a nod to Sousa’s Brazilian culture.

“We liked the idea of doing a tapas-style menu because it allows people to share and interact with each other,” says Sousa, who tests dishes with chef Michael Houston and styles each plate before it’s served. The menu ranges from classic tomato soup and grilled cheese to a Brazilian dish called paó de queijo, a tapas treat of bread and cheese with homemade guava confit for dipping. Most dishes are gluten-free.

Reserva’s wine list complements the South American tastes by reflecting some of the places the pair has visited, including Curacao, where they honeymooned.

Townsend, who also owns a string of coffee shops in Poughkeepsie, was familiar with Chill, a wine bar that previously occupied the space but closed during the pandemic. “It was a great spot as-is, but it needed a little love,” he says.

So the couple rolled up their sleeves and did the work themselves, such as building the raised stage. “We wanted it to showcase the artists while keeping the intimate feel of the space,” Townsend says. But nothing was more difficult than hand-laying tile in the restrooms. “We chose massive tiles that looked just like marble,” says Townsend, who had years of renovation experience but had never worked with tiles that large and fragile.

“It was definitely a labor of love,” he says. “But we had a vision and we didn’t stop until it was captured.”

Along with Reserva, which opened in December 2021, the couple operates a “food styling” business. They are sought after by Hudson Valley restaurants and cafes who commission them to take drool-worthy photos of their cuisine for marketing and social media. Sousa is the stylist and Townsend the photographer. (His prints are hung on the walls throughout Reserva and available for purchase.)

Reserva has an open kitchen, so diners can see the chef preparing dishes, and features live music on weekends. Last year, Sousa and Townsend hosted a drag show — it was a great success, they say — and they’re planning similar events. Initially only open in the evening, the bar recently extended its hours on Saturday and added Sunday brunch.

Reserva is open from 5 to 10 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday, 5 to 11 p.m. on Friday, 2 to 11 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Sunday. Reservations are accepted only for parties of eight or more. Call 845-202-7107 or see reservabeacon.com. Live music begins every Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m. Clara Cavalcante Ferreira will perform tonight (Feb. 24) and Alex and Bobby Yaps on Saturday (Feb. 25). The first Friday of each month is flamenco night.

Living Green

Big Savings Ahead

By Krystal Ford

Whenever my friend from Canada and I get together, after we catch each other up on the family news we often segue into grocery prices.

“Philadelphia cream cheese, $6!” I say. She volleyes back: “$30 for a cantaloupe!”

It doesn’t matter where you live, inflation is showing few signs of letting up. I’m hopeful that the Inflation Reduction Act, passed by Congress last year, will at least help provide energy relief while reducing carbon pollution.

The Inflation Reduction Act is a huge deal and everyone should be aware of the funding available for energy efficiency and clean-energy upgrades. You can estimate your benefits at rewiringamerica.org/app/ira-calculator. For example, a family of four living in Philipstown with a household income of $90,000 could be eligible for $14,000 in upfront discounts, $7,050 in tax credits and an estimated annual energy bill savings of $1,150.

To get the word out, Joe Montuori, executive director of Sustainable Putnam, is making the rounds of local libraries. He gave his first presentation in Carmel and jokes it was a full house with 15 people — that was the capacity of the room. He will speak at the Desmond-Fish Public Library in Garrison on March 11.

Montuori says the audience in Carmel was strictly residents interested in reducing energy use and saving money. Although one woman was happy to learn she was entitled to a $500 tax credit for insulating her attic, he says most of the questions were about heat pumps and reflected confusion about ground source (geothermal) and air-sourced (ducted and ductless units also known as mini-splits).

There was also the false claim that heat pumps don’t work in winter, especially in the northeastern climate. Homeowners, let alone architects and contractors, have not kept up with the technology.

Montuori says that, unlike past incentives offered for solar, the Inflation Reduction Act funding is established for the next 10 years. That means “you can plan out how to decarbonize to maximize the tax credits,” he notes. “For instance, you could get a hot water heater one year, and the following year get a heat pump.”

More importantly, money will be available upfront for people with low and moderate incomes. “This will be much more accessible to everyone,” he says.

The list of home improvements that will be eligible for funding is long. It includes weatherization (insulating and sealing homes); electrical panel upgrades; Energy Star appliances (e.g., replacing a gas stove with induction); electric vehicles and home-charging stations; heat pumps for heating, cooling and hot water; and solar panels and battery backup systems.

Recognizing that it can be daunting to figure out where to start, Sustainable Putnam created a step-by-step guide at sustainableputnam.org. It also offers free consultations.

“I want everyone to know how they can reduce their costs, be more comfortable at home, have healthier homes with clean air and know that we are doing something good for the climate, our children and our grandchildren,” Montuori says.
Classic Wheels

1951 Ford F-1 Pickup

By Michael Turton

You never know what can happen at a Christmas party. Steve Etta attended one in Connecticut in 2018 and ended up taking home a 1951 Ford F-1 pickup.

The Cold Spring resident said that while everyone was guessing the age of a vintage vehicle, another partygoer mentioned he had an older pickup for sale. Was Etta interested? “I’ve always been interested in old cars, but I was looking for a Mustang,” he says.

Nevertheless, a short time later, “we went up to his place in Hudson,” Etta recalls. “He had three garages full of old cars and a couple of old tractors.”

The bright red Ford caught his eye. He doesn’t know a lot about its history other than it had been restored in 2009 and spent time with owners in New Jersey and Baltimore. It has 116,130 original miles on the odometer.

Steve Etta attended a Christmas party.

“The Ford was appealing enough to bring home a plaque from the first car show that Etta entered, at Bear Mountain. He has since shown the truck in upstate New York and Connecticut.

Etta loves taking it for a spin — it gets about 12 miles per gallon — but keeps it off the road in the winter. Even without a radio, he says it’s more fun to drive than the engine he drives for the Cold Spring Fire Co. “It rides pretty well,” he says. “Everyone looks at it; I like it when they add a wave.”

The Ford Motor Co. spent about $15 million in today’s dollars redesigning its trucks after World War II before introducing the F Series, or Ford Bonus-Built. The first of 14 generations of F Series trucks was manufactured from late 1947 through 1952.

Models ranged from the lightest F-1 pickup to the heaviest “Big Job” F-8.

Johnson Pidala was a reminder of his murder and Connecticut.

With the F Series, Ford became the first automaker to offer a frame specifically designed for its trucks, a departure from the practice of using car chassis.

Ford boasted that the F-1 was “wider, longer and taller.” Known for its style and comfort, it featured wider doors, increased leg room, adjustable bench seats and a curved, one-piece windshield. It also had a V8 engine. For $10, buyers could have a V8 ornament added to the front grill.

Owners didn’t have to worry about jumper cables. In the event of a dead battery, the truck could be restarted using a crank.

F Series trucks underwent a number of changes in 1951, including a larger rear window and updated door panels. The pick-ups got a redesigned tailgate and a hardwood bed.

At a Christmas party, Etta attended a Christmas party.

The phone number for Cold Spring Pizza operated a fish market and served fresh lunches and dinners.

The Helpful Elf at Chestnut St. provided catering and “hundreds of volumes of pleasantly priced” cookbooks through a catalog service.

I apparently missed out on the Sunday Burgermeister Brunch at Breakneck Lodge.

Ruth Eisenhower, who would later entertain and serve customers at Grey Printing for years, operated Creative Types typing service at 38 Garden St.

Not all the directory’s advertising conjured up pleasant memories. John Marciniak rescued me more than once with his tongue-twisters and I quickly grew to like the man. Seeing the ad for Garrison Garage was a reminder of his murder outside his shop on New Year’s Eve in 2008.

Thankfully, a few things stuck me as funny.

The Hudson Peddler country store didn’t bother including its address. The ad simply stated: “Located on the other side of the tracks.”

The Cold Spring Fire Co. listed two numbers, one for fires, the other for “social calls.”

And Hudson Valley Security Systems asked, “Are you alarmed?” and provided the answer: “You should be.”

The phone number for Cold Spring Pizza was 265-9512 — same as today — but the area code was 914 rather than 845.

What old but new music was playing in the background at the time? The top song on the Billboard charts in 1990 was “Hold On,” by Wilson Phillips. But a re-release of “Unchained Melody,” which had been a hit for the Righteous Brothers in 1965, also reached No. 1. That’s a great oldie, no matter the year.

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Julius Boccia (1930-2023)

Julius Boccia, 92, a former Beacon city judge, died Feb. 2.

He was born in Beacon on March 1, 1930, the son of Gaetano and Brigida (Ammorati) Boccia. After attending St. John's School and Beacon High School, he earned his law degree from St. John's University. He also earned a master's degree at New York University and was admitted to the bar in 1954.

Julius practiced law from 1956 until his retirement and was principal of Phillips, Heaney & Schofield from 1963. Julius was a member of the Beacon Republican Committee, the Dutchess County and New York State bar associations and the Southern Dutchess Chamber of Commerce (including as past president). He also was a life member of the Elks Club, St. Rocco's Society and the Knights of Columbus.

Julius served in the U.S. Army from 1954 to 1955 and was stationed in Germany with the 2nd Armored Infantry Division (Hell on Wheels). He was a lifelong registered Republican, ran for the county Legislature in 1967 (losing by two votes!) and served as assistant district attorney in Dutchess County from 1959 to 1963 and Beacon city judge from 1992 to 2000.

He is survived by his wife, the former Marian Parisi; his stepchildren, Michael Fisher and Rene Coughlin; his siblings, Marian Parisi; his stepchildren, Michael Nobile (Amy) of Hyde Park, along with five grandchildren, Michael, Sam and Charlie. Charlie is also survived by his siblings, Robert Nobile and Louise Allen.

A funeral service was held on Jan. 23 at Clinton Funeral Home in Cold Spring, followed by interment with military honors at Cold Spring Cemetery.

Charles Nobile Jr. (1934-2023)

Charles Nobile Jr., 88, a former longtime Philipstown resident, died Jan. 17 at his home in New Paltz.

Born June 27, 1934, at St. Vincent's Hospital in New York City, he was the son of Charles and Mary (Cella) Nobile. He attended Our Lady of Pompei Parochial School until age 12, when he moved with his family to Garrison.

After attending the Garrison Union Free School, he graduated in 1953 from Haldane High School, where he played four years of football and basketball. His senior yearbook described him as “handsome and muscular,” “always a hello” and “amiable Charlie.”

After graduation, Charlie worked for Polhemus Construction before joining the armed services in 1956 and serving 18 months in Germany with the 3rd Armored Division. On Oct. 7, 1961, he married Rose Marie Dillon...

That same year, Charlie began a 34-year career with the state Department of Corrections and Community Supervision at the Green Haven and Downstate correctional facilities, attaining the rank of lieutenant. At Downstate he spent several years in charge of the transportation unit.

Following his retirement in 1995, Charlie enjoyed target shooting, golf, telling a good story and spending time with his family. Above all, Charlie was a family man who loved his children and grandchildren and would do anything for them, his family said. One of his favorite expressions was “tutta la famiglia,” which means “all the family,” or “family is everything.”

Rose Marie, his wife of 49 years, died before him. He is survived by his sons, Michael Nobile (Stephanie) of Beacon, Peter Nobile (Kym Tiffany) of Gardiner and John Noble (Amy) of Hyde Park, along with five grandchildren, Matt, Tori, Michael, Sam and Charlie. Charlie is also survived by his siblings, Robert Nobile and Louise Allen.

A Celebration of Life will be held in the spring. Memorial donations may be made to Shriners Hospitals for Children (shrinerschildrens.org) or a charity of choice.
**Out There**

**Snow Job (Less)**

**Winter in black and white**

By Brian PJ Cronin

I don’t think I really understand winter until I fell in love with a farmer.

Our courtship began in spring, when Earth was exploding with new life by the hour. As a result, I didn’t see her much, even though she had essentially already moved in. She would wake before the sun and come home after it had gone down, tanned and exhausted.

“Just wait until winter,” she’d say at some point during the five-minute window between when she came home and when she’d pass out asleep.

Winter came and we cocooned. We read books, drank hot beverages, watched the snow pile up outside and, well, didn’t leave the house much. We didn’t feel guilty about this because what else is a farmer supposed to do in the winter? And even though I wasn’t a farmer, I started to see the wisdom in structuring your life this way.

Many cultures have a season in which the world tells you to slow down, stay in and do less. The American South has its broiling summers, Southeast Asia has its monsoon season and West Africa has the Harmattan, the dusty, windy season in which the air gets so dry it can cause nosebleeds.

This winter is very different. We’re now married, she’s no longer a farmer, we are definitely not cocooning and you probably can’t either. Neither, it would seem, are crocuses or prairie dogs, although neither has been able to make an early appearance here in the Highlands due to the unusually warm, snow-less weather.

Although I can’t see them, the same is probably also true for black-legged ticks and emerald ash borers, snug in their underground dens and tree trunks instead of being killed off by sustained cold temperatures, biding their time until they emerge under the sun in the spring, when Earth gets so dry it can cause nosebleeds.

What I’ve found most striking about the game isn’t so much the heartwarming storyline, or the clever puzzles the two characters must solve together in order to progress, but the long stretches of the game where not much happens and the two of you quietly walk through white forests and blanketed, empty towns.

A snow-covered street now seems like a more fantastical, escapist setting for a video game than any distant planet or medieval kingdom. “Where are all the people?” my son asked as we navigated the cub and fawn down an unplowed street.

“They’re snowed in,” I replied. “You remember what that’s like.”

“Oh yeah,” he said, dimly recalling a distant memory from his childhood of what winter was like in the old days (i.e., five years ago.)

My heart soared earlier this week when a flurry of fat flakes came down as I was running down the northeast face of Mount Beacon, but they melted as soon as they hit the 40-degree ground.

That’s been one upside to a warm winter with little ice or snow: better conditions for long runs in light layers among the mountains, and clear streets for packing in as many errands and activities as the day allows. But three months of this instead of a blizzard at home has left me feeling extended. “Like butter scraped across too much bread,” is how Bilbo Baggins describes it to Gandalf in the early chapters of *The Fellowship of the Ring*.

Of course, what both Gandalf and the reader suspect at that point is that Bilbo’s troubles don’t come from a busy schedule but from the perverse effects of long-time exposure to the cursed One Ring, which he has, until then, been unable to give up.

“Silly hobbit,” I think to myself as I recall the passage. “Why can’t he just give up the thing that’s causing all of his problems?” And then we get in my car to run more errands, the emissions from my tailpipe keeping up the atmosphere, warming and weirding the winter even further.

As we drive into town, the sky glows in the ever-increasing afternoon as the sun slowly makes its way back to Earth, lengthening the days. Sometimes, the light looks like a glorious spring evening, inviting us to keep going, keep pushing, just cross one more thing off the to-do list, just take on one more project. And sometimes the brilliant golden light looks like a candle burning at both ends.

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**Roundup (from Page 20)**

At Franklin Roosevelt, Haldane was down by a point, 24-23, at halftime but led 38-34 at the end of three quarters and closed strong. Cervone scored 12 points, followed by Matt Nachamkin (11), Bozik (11) and Evan Giachinta (8).

“We rebounded extremely well in the second half,” Virgadamo said. “That will be a key piece for us in sectionals. Our half-court offense looked good, we handled the press well and we shared the ball.”

Beacon (14-6) will likely be the No. 4 seed in the Section IX, Class A playoffs, which begin on Saturday (Feb. 25), but the game time and opponent had not been determined as of press time.

**BOYS’ SWIMMING**

Beacon finished 13th of 21 teams at the Section IX championships held Feb. 16-18. Monroe-Woodbury won the title.

The Bulldogs scored points in seven events: The 200-yard medley relay team finished 14th in 1:58.59; the 200-yard freestyle relay team finished 13th in 1:41; and the 400-yard freestyle team was 13th in 4:04.93. In individual events, Carlos Lazo was 16th in the 100-yard freestyle in 53.79 and Bryce Manning was 16th in the 100-yard breaststroke in 1:11.15.

**GIRLS’ BASKETBALL**

Beacon (12-5) will open the Section IX, Class A tournament on Saturday (Feb. 25), although the game time and opponent had not been determined as of press time.

Haldane (3-17) will play Tuesday (Feb. 28) at the Westchester County Center at 6:30 p.m. The Blue Devils, seeded No. 4, will face No. 1 Tuckahoe (12-8).
Puzzles

**CrossCurrent**

**ACROSS**
1. Shade of blue
6. Wanderer
11. Physician, slangily
12. Lessened
14. Veep before Biden
15. — del Fuego
16. Some fridges
17. Egypt’s Anwar
19. Have a bug
20. Sunrise direction
22. — Alamos
23. Faction
24. Cybercommerce
26. Pungent relish
28. Scratch
30. Pub pint
31. Passageway for Santa
35. Three Sisters sister
39. — Godiva
40. Dict. info
42. Star Trek II villain
43. ”Hail, Caesar!”
44. Carvey and Delany
46. “— had it!”
47. Winter, for one
49. Lon of horror films
51. Inventor’s insurance
52. Oregon city
53. Modern messages

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**DOWN**
1. Prepare leftovers
2. Black Sea port
3. Feminine principle
4. High cards
5. Winter, for one
6. Carvey and Delany
7. Prepare leftovers
8. Black Sea port
9. Feminine principle
10. High cards
11. Prepare leftovers
12. Black Sea port
13. Feminine principle
14. High cards
15. Winter, for one
16. Carvey and Delany
17. Prepare leftovers
18. Black Sea port
19. Feminine principle
20. High cards
21. Winter, for one
22. Carvey and Delany
23. Prepare leftovers
24. Black Sea port
25. Feminine principle
26. High cards
27. Winter, for one
28. Carvey and Delany

**Solutions**
29. Stinging insects
31. Purse fastener
32. Attack
33. Think up
34. Hankering
36. Polished
37. Sanctuaries
38. In the blink of —
41. Confronted
44. Word of warning
45. Actress Elisabeth
48. Gender
50. Bio stat

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**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. hardy plantlike organisms (6)
2. E.B. White’s mouse Stuart (6)
3. Alanis’ little pill quality (10)
4. 007, for one (5)
5. soared (6)
6. moves in great numbers (6)
7. audible wave (5)

**SudoCurrent**

Answers for Feb. 17 Puzzles

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

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Haldane Grad Rises to Division I
Garrison resident plans for soccer beyond Binghamton

By Michael Turton

Devin Heanue has admired some of soccer’s biggest names, including England’s David Beckham and Brazil’s Denio.

But the 21-year-old Garrison resident said the biggest influence on his own game has been closer to home: his older brother, Macdara.

“He’s the one who got me into the game, and we still train a lot,” said Heanue, who is preparing for his final season playing Division I soccer at Binghamton University (State University of New York at Binghamton).

The game, he says, “is almost therapeutic. When I step on a field to play a 90-minute game or even for practice, everything else goes silent. It can be a love-hate relationship at times, but always something I love.”

“When I was younger, I played a bit of everything, some basketball and a little hockey,” he said. “But I never committed as much time as I did for soccer.”

Heanue began team play at age 7 at the Palumbo Hawks in the Westchester Youth Soccer League, then played for FC Westchester in the U.S. Development Academy. “I’d play a bit higher in the midfield,” he recalled. “I love getting forward. I love shooting.” He scored twice for the Bears in 2022.

“I’d like to play at the next level, whether in the U.S. or overseas,” he said. Stateside that means the USL; in Europe, Heanue has his eye on Ireland’s Premier Division.

The pandemic shutdown, so he gained an extra year of athletic eligibility. Now a senior at Binghamton, he’ll play again in the fall while pursuing a master’s degree.

Binghamton competes in the nine-member America East Conference, which also includes the University at Albany, Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, the New Jersey Institute of Technology, UMass Lowell, Bryant and UMBC (University of Maryland, Baltimore County).

“There are never guaranteed, winnable games,” Heanue said. “Every team in the conference is talented and competitive.”

Last season, the Binghamton men’s team reached the conference semifinal after posting a 3-2-2 record in regular season league play.

The fall schedule is grueling. Along with academics, Heanue spends 20 hours per week on soccer, including two or three games, up to five practices and two or three weight-training sessions.

Heanue primarily plays left fullback. “The No. 1 priority of that position is keeping a clean sheet, making sure that opponents don’t score,” he explained. “For me, it’s a balance between times I go forward on offense or stay back and help the defense.”

Like most players in most sports, Heanue likes going on offense, an inclination that goes back to his early days at the Palumbo Academy. “I’d play a bit higher in the midfield,” he recalled. “I love getting forward. I love shooting.”

The NCAA suspended play during Heanue’s sophomore year of college because of the pandemic shutdown, so he gained an extra year of athletic eligibility. Now a senior at Binghamton, he’ll play again in the fall while pursuing a master’s degree.

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(Continued on Page 18)