School Taxes: Is Garrison a Warning Sign?
With high inflation and declining aid, more districts may be squeezed

By Joey Asher

Are the Garrison School budget struggles this year and last with the state tax cap a warning sign for other districts?

Yes, especially if inflation doesn’t slow down, according to those who track school finances in New York state, such as the Association of School Business Officials of New York (ASBO of NY) and the New York State Council of School Superintendents.

“Across the board there is concern about the longer-term outlook and how districts manage the effects of inflation,” said Robert Lowry, deputy director of the Council of School Superintendents.

Many districts have been protected for the last two years from the effects of inflation, largely because of an influx of state assistance known as Foundation Aid. Overall, the money sent to districts from Albany increased 7 percent in last year’s budget and 13 percent this year, Lowry said. Short-term federal pandemic relief payments have also acted as a buffer.

But as Foundation Aid levels off and COVID-19 dollars dry up, inflation could wreak havoc for district budgets because of
Flick Ford, 69, grew up in the Hudson Valley and now lives near Albany. An exhibit of his watercolors, Portraits of Putnam County Fish, will be on display at 160 Main St. in Cold Spring from noon to 5 p.m. on May 13 and 20.

How did you develop your meticulous painting process?

Wherever I caught a fish, I would take photographs while it was still alive, to get the color. I shot close-ups of the head, the tail, the whole thing, and from various angles. I also put it in different light so I could take a highlight or catch a reflection or capture some iridescence. I put the fish on ice and, when I got home, I laid it on a brown paper bag to make a tracing. If you paint from photographs you get a slightly distorted image, but with a tracing I would have the perfect morphology. I then render the outline on watercolor paper. I would hand-draw the head and tail and the colors from the photographs. Finally, I would cook and eat the fish.

Is there a technical name for these types of paintings?

They are taxonomic-plate-style paintings, which allowed the Victorians to hang them in their drawing rooms and parlors. They brought science into the household. They were supposed to be extremely accurate. People like myself still do them.

How do you hope people react when they see your paintings?

I want to get people to look at one particular animal or fish and get a real appreciation for it. For instance, most people think of a white perch as just a silver fish. But I see the bronze in there and other colors. A good scientific illustration will show you stuff that you don’t see right away unless you have a strong eye for detail.

Your exhibit will include 24 species. Can you tell us about one fish?

For Putnam County, the most important panfish was the white perch. They were an extremely important staple for the development of the area. They were netted by the hundreds, and even thousands, in most lakes and impoundments. They were smoked and eaten fresh. It’s an interesting fish to try to catch. They’re always on the move. When you find them, you have to make a lot of casts as fast as you can and get as many lines in the water as fast as you can. You’ll catch a bunch and then they’ll disappear. They’re delicious. Along with the striped bass, they’re a real Putnam County delicacy.

You grew up fishing all over New York. What is your favorite fish to catch?

I love brook trout, especially painting them. It’s native to the East Coast. It’s the most colorful trout. It has a flame-red belly during breeding season. They have a vermiculated pattern on their back with blue and red spots. They’re just plain beautiful. I would encourage people to Google them for more information. They’re always on the move. When you find them, you have to make a lot of casts as fast as you can and get as many lines in the water as fast as you can. You’ll catch a bunch and then they’ll disappear. They’re delicious. Along with the striped bass, they’re a real Putnam County delicacy.
EPA: Marathon Site Ready for Development

On April 25, the federal Environmental Protection Agency issued its latest five-year review of the former Marathon Battery Co. site on Kentville Avenue in Cold Spring. The agency completed the remediation of the highly polluted site in 1996.

“We continue to believe that this property is ready for residential and/or mixed-use redevelopment,” the EPA told Cold Spring Mayor Kathleen Foley in an April 24 letter.

Any development would require some EPA approvals, such as for drilling wells, although any project on the site would likely tie into the village water system.

The review — the sixth the agency has conducted — also notes that before any construction, a developer must have an agreement with the EPA detailing plans for mitigation of vapor intrusion from volatile organic compounds that remain in the groundwater.

Pamela Tames, the project manager for the EPA, told The Current that such mitigation has been successful at many locations, including by using systems commonly used to mitigate radon, a naturally occurring gas.

The EPA will continue to test groundwater to determine if contaminant levels are declining as expected over the next 10 to 20 years. The agency’s next review will be in 2028.

A history of the Marathon site, from when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers built the 46,000-square-foot battery factory in 1952 through the EPA cleanup, is online at highlandscurrent.org/marathon.

Marathon (from Page 1)

concerns about the change, including over traffic, the number and type of housing units, the impact on the Haldane school district and the capacity of village water and sewer systems.

“The last thing we want to do is add 200 more residents,” said Dan Valentine, a lifelong resident, on April 26, noting that vehicle access is difficult: The site can only be reached via Wall Street and Rock Street, both one-way, with egress limited to Kemble Avenue, also one-way.

“Is there another option besides more residential?” he asked.

Ted Fink, the village planning consultant for the zoning update, said the Cold Spring comprehensive plan recommended Marathon as a potential mixed-use development, instead of industrial, because it would better reflect the character of the village. He noted the plan was drafted over a five-year period with considerable public input.

Fink explained that, under Planned Mixed-Use, the Planning Board would use a three-step process to review any proposal. The process would include public engagement, studies and plan approvals, he said, and ensure any development “bears a very strong resemblance to the rest of the village.”

Later in the meeting, addressing questions about the impact on infrastructure, Mayor Kathleen Foley said the most recent major development, the Butterfield project, included “a bruising public process” in which many things did not go the village’s way. “We learned lessons from that and have tried very hard to build a process to make sure that doesn’t happen again,” she said.

Sean Kearney, a Cold Spring resident who is vice president of Kearney Group, which owns the Marathon site, said he found himself in “a weird position; as a developer, light-industrial probably works better for us. Why would I go through this very cumbersome process?”

But as a resident, he said he can see that the result of the new zoning makes sense, “a village within the village. … We’re viewing this the same as you; it’s new to us.” He said the company has not yet developed a concept for the property.

One resident questioned whether “granny cottage” accessory buildings permitted under the parkway mixed-use zoning would be used as short-term rentals. But Jennifer Zwarich, who chairs a committee updating the code that regulates STRs, said such use at Marathon is prohibited in the update of that chapter.

Michael Reisman, a village resident, said in his interpretation of the proposed zoning, up to 77 residential units could be allowed at Marathon. In outlining the build-out analysis contained in an environmental assessment form for the new zoning, Fink put the number at 63.

The Planning Board requested that the public hearing remain open until June 1.

Foley said the hearing could remain open while recognizing a deadline for a $20,000 grant for the completion of the overall code update.

During public comment on Wednesday, a Stone Street resident encouraged the board to be “more creative” and to consider such uses as a community or teen center or new firehouse.

Aaron Freimark suggested all new construction should be required to be electric-vehicle ready. He also asked if the proposed 30 percent open space requirement could be increased to as much as 50 percent to reduce the scope of development.

Bill Pugh commented: “We’re pushing zoning on 98 percent of the village to address 2 percent of the village; it seems wrong.” He suggested Marathon be used for parking, which he said could generate $3 million in annual revenue.

Documentation related to the code update for zoning, noise and signs is available at coldspringny.gov under the Board of Trustees tab.

In other business...

■ The board approved a request on April 26 by the Cold Spring Police Department to hire Maddox Buel as a parking enforcement agent for 28 weeks at a rate of $20 per hour.

■ The board on April 26 approved the Philipstown Trail Committee’s request to conduct an audit of Cold Spring sidewalks in partnership with the village.

■ The U.S. Military Academy will offer ferry service to Cold Spring during the week before West Point graduation on May 27. The 125-passenger ferry will drop off and pick up passengers at the dock three times a day.

■ The Cold Spring Boat Club submitted plans for installing a new bulkhead. The club, which leases the riverfront property from the village, is responsible for the cost; the village must co-sign permit applications. The village engineering firm will review construction details, and work could begin as early as October.

■ The board approved a resolution to file a request with the state Legislature to significantly expand the number of streets where residential parking permits will be issued as part of the village parking plan. Currently, residential permit areas include streets west of the Metro-North tracks and 11 streets to the east.

Fresh local flowers for MOTHER'S DAY!
LETTERS AND COMMENTS

Garrison School budget

On May 16, Garrison residents will once again be asked to vote on approving the school budget. My two sons graduated from Garrison and are enrolled at Haldane High School, where they both are having a great experience, thanks in no small part to the great educations they received in elementary and middle school.

I hope that my neighbors will join me in voting to approve the budget, so that current and future students can continue to enjoy the benefits of the great school that my sons attended. This year’s tax levy represents an increase of 3.29 percent, which is the maximum allowed under the state tax cap. As we are all made well aware each time we go to the supermarket, inflation over the past year has significantly exceeded 3.29 percent, and the school board has had to make some difficult decisions and cuts to come in under the cap. These cuts include reducing the art teacher position and consolidating a bus route, as well as spending down reserves.

Garrison is a strong district that draws families with children to our community and supports our property values. Let’s all work to keep it that way by approving this year’s budget and supporting our school.

Jesse Linnin-Pack, Garrison

We write to urge voter approval of the 2023-24 budget proposed by the Garrison Board of Education.

As past presidents of the Garrison school board who have collectively served the district for four decades, we know the challenges involved in delivering an excellent education for Garrison students while at the same time being careful stewards of taxpayer resources.

We have studied the administration’s excellent budget presentation at gufs.org. For the second year in a row, inflation exceeds the allowable tax cap increase. The board and the administration have made significant cuts and drawn down reserves to stay within the tax cap limit while maintaining educational quality. None of these cuts are easy but they have been made with the district taxpayers in mind.

Garrison taxpayers enjoy a lower school tax burden than in neighboring districts, while receiving unrivaled educational value. Garrison students consistently excel by every measure of academic performance. Prospective homebuyers are willing to pay a sizable premium for homes in a highly rated district like Garrison.

The board and administration of the Garrison district have presented a budget that is fair and responsible; one that maintains educational quality and preserves the substantial advantage taxpayers enjoy relative to other districts. We urge voters to approve it on May 16.

Anita Prentice, Garrison

This letter was also signed by Stan Freilich, James Hoch and Ray O’Bourke.

COVID-19

On April 19, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revised its COVID-19 vaccine recommendations, expanding eligibility for a second bivalent vaccine dose for adults over age 65 and to all immunocompromised adults.

This second bivalent dose is being made available only to these two groups because they are more vulnerable to hospitalization and death. The timing of dosing will maximize protection because there is mounting evidence that the vaccine’s effectiveness begins to wane after 4 to 5 months.

The original vaccine is off the market and CDC recommends that everyone ages six months and older receive the bivalent vaccine, regardless of whether they were previously vaccinated.

The good news is that, in recent months, COVID cases, hospitalizations and deaths have gone down substantially. However, community immunity levels are waning and new variants are emerging. For these reasons, it still makes sense for all of us to be protected. In Philipstown, more than 70 percent of the population has not yet received the bivalent vaccine, and in Beacon, it is greater than 80 percent.

The take-home message for Philipstown and Beacon residents is that anyone who has not yet had the bivalent vaccine that became available in September should get it. If you are over 65 or immune-compromised and already had your bivalent vaccine, you should strongly consider getting a second shot.

The bivalent vaccine is free until May 11 and then will be covered by most insurance plans. It’s also conveniently available at Drug World in Cold Spring and pharmacies in Beacon (see vaccine.gov). You can even schedule a home visit in Philipstown by calling 845-265-6352.

Let’s join together as two communities, get the bivalent vaccine and improve protection for all, especially those over 65.

Alan Brownstein, Philipstown

This letter was also signed by Dr. Marianne Sutton and Heidi Snyder who, with Brownstein, represent Keeping Philipstown Healthy.

Fjord Trail

Many of us moved to Philipstown to be close to state parks, and there are about 20,000 acres in the Hudson Highlands and Fahnstock parks, with dozens of marked trails. Some offer excellent views of the

(Continued on Page 5)
river, including the Osborn Trail and the North and South Redoubt trails in Garrison, and the Fishkill Mountain trails. That is one of the issues I have with the proposed Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail (HHFT): A private nonprofit and state parks intend to pour more than $100 million into turning one stretch in these hundreds of miles of trails into a High Line-like attraction—a stretch that is already overtaxed, filling Cold Spring to bursting. Why aren’t these powerful bodies acting in an ecologically prudent manner as a community seeking to send more of the traffic to other destinations in our parks system?

I live near Fahnestock and am in there all the time, yet I see very few hikers or bikers. I’m happy about that for selfish reasons, but I am clearly privileged, and this is an inequitable arrangement. The same can be said about the Sugar Leaf Trail and the all-but-unmarked Watergrass Trail in Garrison—the state and privileged neighbors want to keep them a well-guarded secret. And so apparently does the patron of the Fjord Trail, who lives in Garrison but whose vision for a miles-long concrete boardwalk, destroying views and a riverbank, is fastened on a community not his own.

Philip Weiss, Philipstown

I understand that Protect the Highlands opposes construction of the southern portion of the Fjord Trail, which was conceived as a community-driven solution to help manage Cold Spring overcrowding and tourist hiker access to our state park resources. An early phase of the project—adapting the area at the entrance to the Breakneck Ridge trail—is underway. As a member of New York state park Taconic Regional Commission, I am particularly concerned about safe, responsible access, infrastructure, equitable access to our parklands and ongoing maintenance and transportation. The Fjord Trail is intended to address those issues and has engaged the most reputable consultants in traffic management, crowd control, infrastructure needs, parking and transportation.

As a longtime Philipstown resident, I have seen the Highlands struggle under the pressure of mounting visitation. Some say Cold Spring is the “rock star” of Hudson Valley tourism. Already being so attractive to visitors, I’m happy about that for selfish reasons, but I am clearly privileged, and this is an inequitable arrangement. The same can be said about the Sugar Leaf Trail and the all-but-unmarked Watergrass Trail in Garrison—the state and privileged neighbors want to keep them a well-guarded secret. And so apparently does the patron of the Fjord Trail, who lives in Garrison but whose vision for a miles-long concrete boardwalk, destroying views and a riverbank, is fastened on a community not his own.

Philip Weiss, Philipstown

If accessibility and safety are of such concern to HHFT, why not improve the thoroughfares to Little Stony Point that already exist? Route 9D and Fair Street?

For a fraction of the cost of the ill-conceived and environmentally damaging Dockside boardwalk, these streets could have functional sidewalks and crosswalks, safety barriers and speed enforcement. Such additions would provide year-round benefits for all residents, including Haldane students.

Hikers would use these to begin the trail at Little Stony Point, as was HHFT’s plan before it decided to turn the Cold Spring waterfront into the High Line on Hudson.

Tom Stephens, Cold Spring

Ten years from now, we will scratch our heads wondering how the Fjord Trail could ever have been controversial. Philipstown and Beacon residents will get the most use and enjoyment out of it. We will be proud of it.

I dispute the prediction that the Fjord Trail itself will be a draw. Maybe it will at first, but will all the congestion, resistance and high cost, that will wear off. It is a connector trail. It will safely connect tourist attractions that already exist. People do not go to Niagara Falls because they built a connecting trail between viewpoints. People come here for Breakneck, Bull Hill and Mount Beacon, and they will continue to come, in increasing numbers, for those glorious hikes whether or not the Fjord Trail is built.

All of us have seen visitors walking along the shoulder-less 9D like they are in Disney World, pushing strollers, walking dogs along the narrow road, oblivious to the 55-mph speed limit.

If the Fjord Trail could get those folks off the road, that alone wins my support.

Greg Miller, Cold Spring

The landscape architects hired for the Fjord Trail have worked on other climate-sensitive projects and I am interested in hearing about the details. I believe there is a misconception about the environmental impact and the designers could do a better job of communicating their plans. Long Dock in Beacon is a shining example of what the Fjord Trail could be. I watched the waterfront development at the Beacon train station for seven years, from its start. We know much of the river shoreline has been disturbed for more than 100 years. The restoration brought back wildlife and habitat, including pollinators and native plants.

What kind of plans are there to restore the natural habitat that existed pre-Industrial Revolution, and how will the restoration help mitigate the rising water levels caused by climate change?

Adam Osterfeld, Philipstown

Calculating the cap

If properties in Garrison were correctly assessed, you would have a lot more money in the pot (“School Taxes: What Are the Limits?” April 28). And wasn’t the Lakeland Central School District mentioned in this article? Hundreds of Philipstown families live in the Lake-land Central School District but are never included in the school budgets discussion.

Kathleen Kourie, Garrison

Under attack

Putnam County’s LGBTQ+ community members are a target. At public education meetings, community members have stood at podiums and called trans people, including children, sick and perversive. One person at a Carmel school board meeting recently had the gall to suggest that trans people are more likely to be mass shooters by a trans-identified person in any recent history, compared with the dozens to hundreds of straight, white cisgender male shooters who have terrorized our schools and communities for decades upon decades.

Local LGBTQ+ and ally business owners who are taking the lead in organizing events are regularly being called “pedo-philes” and “groomers” in social media groups and public meetings. Protests are being planned and threats are being made. The harassment, lies, defamation and general ugliness range from disgusting to illegal.

This is not something any community member should have to contend with, but I can’t help but feel encouraged, in a sense. Throughout history, when any movement toward social justice starts to take hold in a real way, there is a violent backlash from those desperately clinging to the status quo.

As our community moves toward change, there will be those who oppose it. That’s OK. What’s not OK is publicly calling anyone who embraces LGBTQ+ identity a pedophile or groomer intent on sexually abusing children. If you support the views of someone who feels empowered to accuse their neighbors of a felony without having even met them, you might want to rethink your stance.

To be sure, this is a national narrative that is being parroted back by local puppets of the powers that be, but the local harm it is doing is real. If you don’t like drag events, don’t go. If you’re homophobic or transphobic, stay away from LGBTQ+ people and events, but you don’t get to tell public schools they can’t acknowledge and vali-

date their students’ experiences.

The rhetoric being spewed by a handful of community members who seem to think it’s their job to oppose people’s identities and existence, and who are using children as the scapegoats to justify their hateful views, is going to result in actual violence in Putnam County if we allow it to continue escalating. No matter who you support, I doubt you want that.

No one is hurting you and, no matter how many lies you want to tell, no one is hurting children. We all have children we love in our lives; you are not the designated Defenders of All Children. We all want children to feel safe and included. You’re not making this community safer.

And just remember that the more aggressive, angry and defamatory you are, the more evident it is that we are winning.

Eileen McDermott, Brewster

McDermott is the founder of Putnam Pride.

Hand to hand

Your “On the Spot” question in the April 28 issue—“What’s the biggest crowd you’ve been part of?”—elicited a memory of what wasn’t a crowd in the classic sense, but there were a whole lot of people involved across the entire country. My family went down to the west side of Manhattan for that strange event called Hands Across America. I’m not entirely sure what was meant to be proved, nor whether it had any impact in the long run, but for a moment it felt good.

Anne Spoonhour, via Facebook
Board Says Plant Discharge Will be Low-Risk

Local legislators, public still wary of Indian Point release
By Brian PJ Cronin

Although the vast majority of people who have commented on a planned discharge of low-grade radioactive water from the former nuclear plant at Indian Point into the Hudson River oppose the move, members of a state committee said the releases would not be out of the ordinary.

The 26-member Indian Point Decommissioning Oversight Board spent the bulk of its April 27 meeting outlining how discharges of water from the plant’s spent-fuel pools into the river were a regular occurrence during Indian Point’s 60 years of existence, and how the discharges were and will continue to be far below limits established by federal agencies.

Tom Congdon, the executive deputy and deputy chair of the state Department of Public Service, who chairs the board, said the amount of radiation the public would absorb from the projected release would be “less than the radiological exposure one gets from eating a banana.”

Holtec International, which is decommissioning the plant, delayed a plan to release 45,000 gallons of water in May. That and subsequent planned releases sparked wide opposition, and the Oversight Board added a virtual meeting on April 25 to accommodate the number of people who wanted to comment.

While Congdon acknowledged that there have been questions about whether the federal standards are outdated, and if the standards are accurate if applied to women, children and the elderly, he said the amount of radioactive tritium that would be discharged is extremely low. In order to exceed the Environmental Protection Agency limits for the amount of tritium allowed in drinking water, Congdon said that someone would have to drink two liters of discharged water a day for a year.

“Concentrations matter,” he said. “The numbers matter. We’re talking about very, very small concentrations.”

A presentation by a representative of the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission outlined the frequent discharges from Indian Point since 2005, and the low levels of tritium in each release.

Seven communities upriver from the Highlands get their drinking water from the Hudson River, and Rich Burroni, a Holtec representative, said that water sampling by the company and the state Department of Health at Roseton, south of Poughkeepsie, has not detected any noticeable tritium.

Despite such assurances, elected officials at the meeting urged Holtec to consider other disposal options. Dr. Rich Becker, supervisor of the Town of Cortlandt, noted that it’s not unusual for medications to be taken off the market even after being approved by the Food and Drug Administration. He also noted the new, lower limits the EPA is advising for tritium in drinking water. “The science changes,” he said.

Burroni said that, including the 620,000 gallons of water in the two spent fuel pools, the amount of tritiated water that would be released is between 1.3 and 1.5 million gallons. The releases are scheduled to occur in September, April 2024, June 2024 and August 2025.

State Assembly Member Dana Levenberg and State Sen. Pete Harckham, who are both members of the Oversight Board, are co-sponsoring legislation in Albany that would prevent Holtec or any other entity from discharging radioactive materials into the river. They asked why the releases weren’t scheduled during colder months, when people would not be swimming and paddling in the Hudson.

Burroni said that since the discharges are safe, it doesn’t matter if they happen when people are swimming in the Hudson. “It really makes no difference,” he said. “What we discharge to the river is what we discharge to the river; it’s going to be less than or equal to 1 percent of what the NRC tells us.”

Other methods of dealing with the water received pushback from members of the Oversight Board.

A proposal to load the water on barges and dump it far into the Atlantic Ocean was dismissed by John Sipos, an attorney with the Department of Public Service, as being a violation of international law.

Storing the unfiltered water in tanks on-site and waiting for it to become less radioactive — tritium has a half-life of 12.5 years, meaning that it takes that long for it to become half as radioactive — was not seen as an option because 5 percent to 10 percent of the tanks eventually leak, which would send untreated, unfiltered water into the river. “All you’re doing is delaying the inevitable,” said Dave Lochbaum, a retired nuclear engineer who serves on the board.

While the EPA is preventing Holtec from releasing tritiated water into Cape Cod Bay from the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant, an agency representative said that was because Holtec had not provided enough information for a permit. That is not an issue at Indian Point.

Burroni said the delay at Pilgrim has forced Holtec to lay off workers there. Last month, he warned that if the planned releases continue to be delayed at Indian Point, layoffs might occur here as well, a point not lost on Harckham.

“It’s not helpful to the process, when I get calls from labor leaders, whom I’ve worked with for many years, saying ‘Pete, Holtec is telling us that if you don’t stop talking about the water, they’re going to have to lay us all off,’” he said.

Following the meeting, Levenberg said in a statement that the public still doesn’t have satisfactory answers about the potential impacts of the discharges.

“The safe decommissioning of Indian Point remains the No. 1 issue that constituents write to me about,” said the legislator, whose district includes Indian Point and Philipstown. “Arguments like ‘We’ve been doing this for years’ and ‘We are all exposed to lots of radiation’ are offensive to people who have lost loved ones to cancer, or are dealing with children with genetic abnormalities. Ideally, we should be trying to eliminate exposure whenever possible and seeking alternatives to exposing people to unnecessary radiation.”

NEWS BRIEF

Nursery School Names Director
Rosemary Rodino to retire after 40 years

The First Presbyterian Church of Philipstown has named Ashley Dubiel as the next director of its Community Nursery School and Learning Center. She will succeed Rosemary Rodino, who plans to retire after 40 years with the school.

Dubiel will the fourth director of the secular school, which was founded in 1968. She is a former student at the nursery school under Rodino and her mother, Suzanne Giachinta, is a former teacher at the school. Her older daughter is a graduate and her younger daughter is a current student.

The school, which operates on weekdays during the school year, is accepting registrations for 2023-24. Email communitynurseryschoolcs50@gmail.com.

Garrison Art Center Presents
'59 Views of the Hudson Valley'

A fundraising auction of regionally-inspired artworks celebrating our 59th year in Garrison.

Saturday, May 13, 2023
Viewing & Reception start 3 pm
Auction begins 5 pm
Tickets available on our website and via QR code
23 Garrison’s Landing (845) 424-3960 garrisonartcenter.org/2023-auction
I...
The Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail offers a community-driven solution for managing regional tourism and will make the beauty that surrounds us more accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

The Fjord Trail will:

- Keep pedestrians off neighborhood streets & away from busy & dangerous Route 9D
- Offer 7.5 new miles of trail with six entry points, distributing visitors between Cold Spring & Beacon
- Provide & manage critical amenities & infrastructure, which local municipalities have not been able to afford
- Create riverfront & trail accessibility for seniors, people with disabilities & families with children
- Protect our local environment by repairing erosion, managing invasive species & increasing shoreline resiliency to sea level rise

“The Hudson Highlands do not belong to one group, one state, or one generation. They belong to all who wish to enjoy their beauty while preserving them for the future.” – Richard Shea, Village of Cold Spring Resident

We encourage you to learn more about the Fjord Trail:
visit hhft.org / email info@hhft.org
Dutchess Forms Domestic Violence Unit

Sheriff’s office partners with Family Services

By Leonard Sparks

Dutchess County Judge Jessica Segal sentenced William Dicke, whom a jury convicted of killing his girlfriend during a domestic dispute in Rhinebeck by running over her with a van, to 25 years to life on March 7.

One month later, on April 10, Dutchess’ other county judge, Edward McCloughlin, handed down another life sentence — to Paul Senecal, convicted of stabbing to death his ex-girlfriend’s daughter at her home in the Town of Wappinger. Senecal is ineligible for parole.

Before the killing of Melanie Chianese, 29, in May 2022, police had charged Senecal with “a multitude” of domestic violence-related crimes and he had issued several protective orders, said Matthew Weishaupt, chief assistant district attorney for Dutchess County.

Reported cases of domestic violence increased in Dutchess during the pandemic. Now, the women and men who face assaults and harassment from partners, and the prosecution of their abusers, will be the focus of a new four-person unit within the Dutchess County Sheriff’s Office.

Announced on April 28 by Sheriff Kirk Imperati, the initiative will be composed of two deputies, a victims’ advocate and an administrative person and will be a collaboration with Family Services, the Poughkeepsie-based nonprofit that has sought a specialized unit for years.

Domestic-violence cases tend to be “time-intensive” and complex, in part because abusers and victims are often in relationships complicated by children and financial dependence, said Leah Feldman, CEO of Family Services.

The organization employs the advocate, who will join the initial response to victims and link them with services and other supports.

“Having individuals who have specialized training in working with domestic violence cases just makes the response even more enhanced for law enforcement,” said Feldman.

The unit will be busy: Dutchess County’s police agencies reported an average of 834 victims of domestic assaults, sexual offenses and violations of protective orders annually from 2019 to 2021, according to the most recent data reported by the state Department of Criminal Justice Services.

The majority of victims, 55 percent, were women abused by intimate partners, and another 16 percent were men, according to DCJS. Other family members, including children, accounted for 31 percent of the victims during the three-year period.

Officers in Beacon reported 27 domestic-violence victims from incidents in 2021, more than the year before but fewer than the 38 in 2019.

Four cases include the arrest in January of Max Kleinman of Beacon, who was charged with stabbing a woman in the neck inside her home on Wolcott Avenue. City police responding in August to a domestic disturbance between a male and female on Fishkill Avenue charged Aaron Thompson of Ellenville with pointing a loaded handgun at a family.

Newburgh: Festival Still On

After a week of turmoil, organizers of Newburgh Illuminated reached a tentative agreement with the city to hold the festival this summer.

The nonprofit that puts on the festival had objected to conditions set by the city and said it planned to cancel the event. But the two sides agreed to have the festival end earlier, at 9 p.m. to give city workers time to clean up, place limits on crowd size and push the date from early June to July 22.

Earlier, the city had adjusted the festival footprint by one block on Liberty Street and one block on Broadway to provide better access to first responders. The city also has budgeted $50,000 for operations.

Carmel: Krivak Seeks $200 Million from Putnam, State

Andrew Krivak is seeking $150 million from Putnam County and $50 million from New York State for the 23 years he spent in prison before being exonerated in the 1994 killing of 12-year-old Josette Wright from Carmel.

In a claim filed March 30, Krivak seeks $100 million in compensation and $50 million in punitive damages against Putnam and the county’s District Attorney’s Office and Sheriff’s Department.

Other defendants include District Attorney Robert Tendy and sheriff’s investigators.

A separate claim filed on April 3 asks for a $50 million payout under New York’s Unjust Conviction and Imprisonment Act.

A state judge overturned Krivak’s 1997 conviction in 2019. Tendy opted for a retrial based on part in a signed confession. Krivak’s attorneys argued it had been coerced, and a jury acquitted him on Feb. 24.

Krivak’s co-defendant, Anthony DiPippo, was twice convicted and granted new trials before being acquitted in 2016. He received $2.9 million from the state and settled a federal civil-rights lawsuit against Putnam County for $12 million.

“If even we got every dollar that was listed in the two claims it would not sufficiently compensate Mr. Krivak or anybody for 23 years of wrongful incarceration for a heinous crime that you didn’t commit,” said Oscar Michelen, his attorney.

Poughkeepsie: DCC Launches Cannabis Program

Dutchess Community College announced on April 17 that it will begin this fall to offer a four-class, 15-credit program in Cannabis Retail Management.

According to the school, the course will teach students retail management skills, including storeroom operations, cost control, customer service and cannabis science.

“With 34 new dispensaries set to open in the Hudson Valley alone over the next year, our graduates will be ready to take advantage of well-paying opportunities to advance their careers,” said Maureen Gittelman, a hospitality and tourism professor, in a statement.

Albany: State Bans ‘Indien’ Mascots

The state Board of Regents on April 18 voted to ban schools from having Native American mascots.

Mahopac and Ketcham in Wappingers Falls are the final two schools in the area that have not abandoned Native American imagery. Both use the nickname “Indians.”

The state said it would withhold aid from districts that do not comply and gave schools until June 30 to retire their mascots and two years to eliminate all imagery.

Sports trophies and other historical artifacts with Native American imagery can remain, the state said. Mahopac plans a student vote in June to select a new mascot.

Carmel: Sheriff Says No Basis for Arrest

In February, three Carmel High School students posted doctored videos on TikTok that appeared to show district administrators and members of the Putnam County Sheriff’s Department spewing racist tropes. The material also showed a simulated school shooting.

Last month, Sheriff Kevin McConville told a county Legislature committee that he had investigated the circumstances of the videos and determined there was no threat, and that the students did not have access to firearms. District Attorney Robert Tendy said he also evaluated the videos and saw no violation of the law.

“Were the statements disgusting, racist and abhorrent?” Tendy said. “Yes. But that does not mean a crime was committed. It happened because of three really stupid kids. And I had no grounds to arrest them. I’m glad that I don’t, frankly. They are being appropriately disciplined” by the school district.

Kingston: Buyback Nets 235 Weapons

The state of New York held nine simultaneous gun buyback events on April 29; the one closest to the Highlands took place at the American Legion in Kingston, where authorities collected 235 firearms.

The Office of the Attorney General offered $500 per assault rifle or ghost gun; $150 per handgun; $75 per rifle or shotgun and $25 per non-working, replica, antique, homemade or 3D-printed gun, with no questions asked.

Since 2019, the state has purchased 7,000 guns at buyback events.
AROUND TOWN

PRINCESS IN SPACE — WindSync performed Interstellar Cinderella at the Howland Cultural Center in Beacon on April 30. Here, Emily Tsai, an oboist from Washington, D.C., portrays Cinderella, who is known for her ability to fix spacecraft. The concert was part of the Howland Chamber Music Circle’s Classics for Kids series.

Photo by Ross Corsair

REHAB READY — The pedestrian tunnel under the Metro-North tracks in Cold Spring underwent a power wash last week in preparation for surface repairs, seal coats and a mural.

Photo provided

LITERARY FEST — Four authors — Tania Guarino, Raven Howell, Catherine Ciocchi and Karen Kaufman Orloff — read from and signed their children’s books on April 29 at the Butterfield Library in Cold Spring.

NEW OFFICER — Arkeem Gorham was sworn in as a Beacon police officer on Monday (May 1) by Mayor Lee Kyriacou, with Chief Sands Frost looking on.

Photos provided

REAL ESTATE MARKET

HOME SALES IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD IN THE LAST 30 DAYS

BEACON CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROPERTIES</th>
<th>CITY</th>
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Your favorite neighborhood experts, now empowered by the network and technology of Compass.

Contact us for a free market analysis.

Charlotte Guernsey
Team Leader, Licensed Associate Real Estate Broker
845.831.9560 | 490 Main Street, Beacon
@ga@gatehousecompass | gatehousecompass.com

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Playing with the Masters

Artist challenges interpretations in BAU show

By Alison Rooney

As much observer as creator, admirer of canonical works and deconstructor of them, Nataliya Hines is an artist who considers big-picture ideas.

Pulled in by master paintings and other works by the emotion they evoke and the questions they raise for her, she resets them in ways — through collage, watercolors and acrylics — that challenge interpretation. She never intends to diminish their power, she says.

Beginning May 13, Hines will share her latest works in a show at the BAU Gallery in Beacon. It continues through June 4.

Its title, *Lazarus Taxon*, references paleontology. A Lazarus taxon is a taxon — a classification for related organisms — that disappears and reappears in the fossil record. It also refers to species or populations that were thought to be extinct.

“I took pieces I had been exposed to and made them my own, figuring out what my visual language would be,” Hines explains. “This allowed me to study these pieces in a more interactive way. The first was [da Vinci’s] ‘Lady with an Ermine.’ I started recreating the piece with acrylic paint; I wanted to see how close I could get to the original. There was no pressure because this wasn’t a creative exercise, it was technical. That allowed me to think, ‘I wish I had made that. Oh — I can!’

“I thought about other pieces I was interested in, like Delacroix’s ‘Orphan Girl in the Cemetery.’ I thought about the choices Delacroix made — he’s a complicated character — and I wondered about ways I could recreate it in a more empathetic way.”

In this and other studies of women painted by men, Hines attempts to reflect an awareness, fueled by authors such as bell hooks and Laura Mulvey, of the influence of the “male gaze.”

None of this was front and center during Hines’ early days studying art. She attended the Long Island High School for the Arts and later the School of Art and Design at SUNY Purchase, where, in 2017, she earned a bachelor’s degree in visual arts with concentrations in printmaking and art history. It was in the process of silk-screening, she says, that she learned that “re-contextualizing the way a work is viewed alters its meaning.”

She was particularly attracted to intaglio, “because it connects to the way people worked in 16th and 17th centuries. It was a tangible way to interact with the material.”

After graduation, Hines moved to New York City, where she was offered a gallery show. Prompted by an image she saw on ESPN, it featured prints and drawings focused on hare coursing, a frequently banned “game sport” in which sighthounds chase a hare.

(Continued on Page 14)
THE WEEK AHEAD
Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)
For a complete listing of events, see highlandscurrent.org/calendar.

COMMUNITY

SUN 7
Rabies & Distemper Clinic
BEACON
9 a.m. – Noon. Memorial Park 198 Robert Cahill Drive
facebook.com/ArfAnimalRescue

Bring dogs and cats for vaccine updates at this annual event organized by the Animal Rescue Foundation. Proof of prior vaccinations required. Cost: $15 each

SUN 7
Hat Parade
BEACON
1 p.m. Churchill Street Lot

Honour Beacon’s hat-making legacy and show off your hat. The parade will begin next to Hudson Valley Brewery and proceed on the south sidewalk along Main Street and end at Dogwood for judging.

SUN 7
Cold Spring Farmers’ Market Benefit
GARRISON
4 – 7 p.m. Garrison Institute
14 Mary’s Way | csfarmmarket.org

Celebrate 20 years of the market with food from Fresh Company, local beer and wine, and music. Cost: $275

FRI 12
Spaghetti Night
GARRISON
5 – 8 p.m. Continental Village F.D.
84 Liberty St. | facebook.com/washingtonsheadquarters

This 20th-anniversary celebration at the museum will include tours, a film screening, art- and zine-making workshops, remarks from elected officials and a happy hour on the lawn.

RIVER SWEEP

SAT 6
Little Stony Point
PHILIPSTOWN
8:30 – 11:30 a.m. 3011 Route 9D riverkeeper.org/sweep

Join Boy Scout Troop 67 to clean up the park and riverfront area, plant native vegetation and remove invasive species. The cleanup scheduled for Dockside Park in Cold Spring is full.

SAT 6
Waterfront
BEACON
8:45 – 11:45 a.m. Beacon Sloop Club 2 Red Flyrn Drive
riverkeeper.org/sweep

Metal Winters and the Sloop Club will lead this cleanup. Parking is available at the train station. At 8:45 a.m., Jodiann Lindhj will discuss her store, Rehill Restore.

SAT 6
Long Dock Park
BEACON
9 – 11:30 a.m. 23 Long Dock Park riverkeeper.org/sweep

This cleanup will cover the Klara Sauer Trail from Long Dock to Dennings Point. Parking is available at Long Dock. There will be a short talk at 9 a.m. on the impact of waste on the environment.

TALKS & TOURS

SAT 6
Tenant Rights
BEACON
11 a.m. Howland Public Library 313 Main St. | 845-831-1134 beaconlibrary.org

The Hudson Valley Justice Center will lead this seminar to explain renter rights, including during eviction proceedings.

SAT 6
Front Row Seat to History
BEACON
4 p.m. Reserve Wine Bar 173 Main St. | beaconhistorical.org

At this benefit for the Beacon Historical Society, Heltl Elowick, the White House News Photographers Association director, and Jon Elowick, an Associated Press photographer, will discuss what was discovered in the archives for the association’s centennial, as well as the work of Harry Van Tine, the subject of an exhibit at BHS. Cost: $20

FRI 12
Cornish Estate Tour
PHILIPSTOWN
10 a.m. Hudson Highlands State Park 3206 Route 9 | putnamhistory.org

Thom Johnson will discuss the abandoned Stern-Cornish estate, the family who lived there and the ruins. The tour is part of the Putnam History Museum series of history hikes. Cost: $33 ($26 members)

SAT 13
A Day of 18th-Century Entertainments
NEWBURGH
10 – 5 p.m. Washington’s Headquarters 84 Liberty St. | facebook.com/washingtonsheadquarters

The historic site will host games, crafts and entertainment on the lawn, weather permitting.

SAT 13
AAPI Book Discussion
GARRISON
3 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library 472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020 desmondfishlibrary.org

Facilitated by Justice McCray, this discussion for Asian-American Pacific Islander Heritage Month will focus on favorite writings by AAPl authors.

FRI 12
Twice Told
WAPPINGERS FALLS
7 p.m. Norma’s 2948 E. Main St. | normas.com

John Blesso, Michael Bogdanoff-Kriegh, Stephen Clair, Karen Faith, Eva Garcia, Alex Humphreys, Anna Brady Maruss, Terry Nelson, Linda Pratt, Drew Prochaska, Lena Rizkallah and Donna Minkowitz will read work inspired by the photographs of Margot Kingon.

SAT 6
Hyprov
PEEKSKILL
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley 1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039 paramounthudsonvalley.com

This show features Colin Mochire, a comedian best known for Whose Line Is It Anyway? and Azad Meeci, who hypnotizes 20 volunteers from the audience. The most receptive are then organized into an instant improv troupe. Cost: $37 to $57

SAT 7
Madagascar, The Musical
WEST POINT
3 p.m. Eisenhower Hall Theatre 655 Pitcher Road | 845-938-4159 letshtail.com

See the hit Dreamworks musical about animals from the Central Park Zoo who take an unexpected journey. Cost: $43

SAT 7
Frank and the Women of Oz
PEEKSKILL
3 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley 1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039 paramounthudsonvalley.com

Marcy B. Freedman wrote and will perform this production that brings to life the women behind and beside L. Frank Baum, the author of The Wizard of Oz and other stories. Baum attended a military academy in Peekskill and later staged a performance in the city. Cost: $25

FRI 12
Jaws
BEACON
6:30 & 7:30 p.m. Boat’s leave dock 845-831-6346 | bannermancastle.org

Movie night returns to Bannerman Island with a screening of the 1975 film about a killer shark terrorizing a beach town. Cost: $40

SAT 13
Student Film Festival
BEACON
2:30 & 6:30 p.m. Beacon High School 
101 Matteawan Road
foundationforbeaconschools.org

Short films by Beacon elementary students will be shown at the early screening and by middle and high school students at the later screening. Cost: $9 ($7 seniors, $3 children)

PLANT SALES

SAT 7
Cherry Blossom Festival & Plant Sale
PEEKSKILL
10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Peekskill Riverfront bit.ly/peekskill-cherry-festival

The festival, sponsored by the Peekskill Rotary, will include games and activities for children, food, craft vendors and raffles. Free

SAT 6
Plant Sale
BEACON
10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Common Ground Farm Cross and Main Streets commonroundfarm.org

The organic farm will have vegetable and herb starts to add to your garden.

SAT 13
Plant Sale
CARMEl
8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Memorial Park 201 Gypsy Trail Road
845-278-6738 | x220 caramel.cce.cornell.edu

Find heirloom and hybrid vegetable plants, herbs, annuals, perennials and native plants at this annual fundraiser for the Cornell Cooperative Extension. Get advice, have your soil tested and learn about honeybees from Rodney Dow. There will be activities and crafts for children, too.

SAT 13
Plant Sale
FISHKILL
9 a.m. – Noon. Town Hall 807 Route S2 facebook.com/verplanckgardensclub

The Verplanck Garden Club will host its annual event with bedding plants, Mother’s Day gifts, annuals, perennials and herbs.

SAT 13
Houseplant Swap
GARRISON
11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Emblem Farm 472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020 desmondfishlibrary.org

Bring a plant to give away and go home with a new one.

SAT 6
A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum
WAPPINGERS FALLS
8 p.m. County Players Theater 2684 W. Main St. | 845-298-1491 countyplayers.org

The Sondheim musical set in Rome follows a servant trying to make his way to freedom. AlsoFri 12, SAT 13, SUN 14. Cost: $35 ($23 seniors, military, ages 12 and younger)

SAT 13
Student Film Festival
BEACON
2:30 & 6:30 p.m. Beacon School 101 Matteawan Road
foundationforbeaconschools.org

Short films by Beacon elementary students will be shown at the early screening and by middle and high school students at the later screening. Cost: $9 ($7 seniors, $3 children)
SAT 6
Creating Botanical Art: East Meets West
PHILIPSTOWN
2:30 p.m. Stonecrop | 81 Stonecrop Lane
845-265-2000 | stonecrop.org
Susan Lanzano, whose work is on view in the Gardener’s Bothy, will discuss her style and techniques. Cost: $15 (members free)

SAT 13
Portraits of Putnam County Fish
COLD SPRING
Noon – 3 p.m. 160 Main St.
Flick Ford’s paintings will be on display. See Page 2. Also SAT 20.

SAT 13
Beacon Schools Exhibit
BEACON
1:30 – 3:30 p.m. Howland Public Library
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134
beaconlibrary.org
Artwork by students from all the schools in the district will be on view.

SAT 13
59 Views of the Hudson Valley
GARRISON
3 p.m. Garrison Art Center
23 Garrison’s Landing | 845-424-3960
garrisonartcenter.org
For this benefit auction, 59 artists were invited to create work in their chosen medium inspired by the region. The viewing will begin at 3 p.m. and the auction at 5 p.m. Cost: $25

SECOND SATURDAY
SAT 13
I Am The Passenger, Part I
BEACON
4 – 6 p.m. Mother Gallery
1154 North Ave. | 845-236-6039
motheregallery.art
This group show will feature non-objective painting. Through June 17.

SAT 13
Paul Kessel
BEACON
4 – 7 p.m. Garage Gallery
17 Church St. | garagegallery.com
The street photographer’s work will be on view through May 28.

SAT 13
Khara Gilvey
BEACON
5 – 7 p.m. Hudson Beach Glass
162 Main St. | 845-440-0068
hudsonbeachglass.com
Gilvey’s rugs and objects will be on exhibit through June 4.

SAT 13
Frank Mysterio | Nervisw3rk | Mech Designs x Winvill
BEACON
6 – 9 p.m. Cluster Gallery | 139 Main St.
212-255-2505 | cluster.co
Sculpture, figures and multiples by the artists will be on view through June 2.

SAT 6
DIY Hat Station
BEACON
11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Howland Public Library
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134
beaconlibrary.org
Children ages 4 to the fifth grade can drop by to make a hat for the parade on SUN 7.

SAT 6
Compass Arts Showcase
BEACON
12:30 – 6 p.m. The Yard
4 Hanna Lane | compassarts.org
Children and teens from the dance and theater programs will perform at 1:30 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. The Beacon Rising Choir will sing at 5 p.m. There will also be an art gallery, food trucks and sensory play. Also SUN 7. Cost: $15 for one day, $25 for both ($5/$8 ages 5 to 15, $20 per day at door)

SAT 13
Nataliya Hines | Group Show
BEACON
6 – 8 p.m. BAU Gallery
506 Main St. | baugallery.org
In Gallery 1, Hines creates narratives using religious imagery and portraiture in her show, Lazarus Tuxon. See Page 11. A group show in the other galleries will include work by Pamela Zaremba, Ilse Schreiber Nol, Eileen Sackman, Mary McFerran, Linda Lauro-Latzin, Matthew Gilbert, Joel Brown, Robyn Ellenbogen, Daniel Berlin and Jehab Baum. Through June 4.

SAT 13
Surrender
BEACON
6 – 9 p.m. Super Secret Projects
484 Main St. | supersecretprojects.com
Darya Golubina will explore mental health in her solo show. Through June 3. See Page 15.

SAT 13
Michelle Silver | Bradley Silver
BEACON
8 p.m. Distortion Society
172 Main St. | distortionsoociety.com
The artists’ paintings will be on display at this gallery and tattoo studio’s grand opening. There will also be a family fun hangout from noon to 3 p.m.

SAT 6
Katie the Catsitter 3 Party
COLD SPRING
3:30 p.m. Splitt Rock Books | 97 Main St.
845-265-2080 | splittrockbooks.com
Colleen A.F. Venable, author of the popular graphic novel series for readers ages 8 to 12, will read from and sign her latest book. Readers are invited to submit drawings of cats for display.

THURS 11
Mother’s Day Craft
BEACON
11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Howland Public Library
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134
beaconlibrary.org
Children ages 4 to the fifth grade are invited to make a gift for mom.

NATURE & OUTDOORS
WED 10
Woodland Garden Tour
PHILIPSTOWN
5:30 p.m. Stonecrop | 81 Stonecrop Lane
145-265-2000 | stonecrop.org
A staff horticulturist will lead the tour. Cost: $10

THURS 11
Stressed-out Soils
MILLBROOK
7 p.m. Cary Institute
2801 Sharon Turnpike | caryinstitute.org
Ecologist Jane Lucas will discuss her research that looks at the impacts of climate warming, pesticides, drought and other threats, the soil food web, microbes and storage of water and carbon. Join in person or via Zoom.

SAT 13
The Magic of Alpines
PHILIPSTOWN
9 a.m. Stonecrop | 81 Stonecrop Lane
845-265-2000 | stonecrop.org
Learn about Stonecrop’s collection of plants that grow in challenging conditions — thin soil, high altitude, little water — then plant an alpine container to take home. Cost: $70 ($50 members)

SUN 7
Kids’ Fishing Day
NELSONVILLE
8 a.m. – 4 p.m. Reservoir | Fishkill Road
845-265-2000 | stonecrop.org
Learn about Stonecrop’s home. Cost: $70 ($50 members)

SUN 7
Upcycled Art-Making
GARRISON
1 – 3 p.m. Garrison Art Center
23 Garrison’s Landing | 845-424-3960
garrisonartcenter.org
Candace Winter will lead children in an ecologically conscious workshop; their art will be displayed at the Youth Climate Summit at the Garrison School.

TUES 9
Flower Vases
GARRISON
6 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020
desmondfishlibrary.org
Create a vase during the monthly workshop. Registration required.

THURS 11
Key of Q, the LGBTQ+ and Allied A
NEWBURGH
7:30 p.m. Lotus Yoga | Cross & Main bt/l/penelope-beacon
LotusWorks Gallery will present this outdoor concert by the Broadway performer, including work from her upcoming album, inside armour. Cost: $11

SAT 6
Penelope Wendlandt
BEACON
7:30 p.m. Lotus Yoga | Cross & Main bt/l/penelope-beacon
LotusWorks Gallery will present this outdoor concert by the Broadway performer, including work from her upcoming album, inside armour. Cost: $11

SAT 6
Old Bones Odessey
BEACON
8 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | 845-831-4988
howlandmusic.org
This album-release show will include Ellen Kaye with Ethan Fein (guitar), Jackie Priesti (backing vocals), Diane Monroe (violin), Koa Ilo (bass) and Andrew Drellis (reeds). Cost: $25 ($30 door)

SAT 6
Le Vent du Nord
BEACON
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The band from Quebec plays its own style of traditional francophone folk. Cost: $35 ($40 door)

SUN 7
Pete Seeger Fest
PUTNAM VALLEY
2 p.m. Tompkins Corners Cultural Center
729 Peekskill Hollow Road
tompkinscorners.org
The performers at this seventh annual celebration of the folk singer’s music and life will include David and Jacob Bernz, Betty and the Baby Boomers, the Neverlee Brothers, Rick Nester, Laurie Siegel and Patrick Stanfield Jones, Joe Kaminsky and Sarah Underhill. Donations welcome. Free

THURS 11
Rob Scheps Core-tet
COLD SPRING
7:30 p.m. Chapel Restoration
45 Market St. | chapelrestoration.org
The performance will also be a celebration of Scheps’ new book, Thirty Original Compositions. Cost: $25

FRI 12
Pure Imagination
BEACON
7 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | 845-831-4988
howlandculturalcenter.org
Key of Q, the LGBTQ+ and Allied A Capella Singers of the Hudson Valley will perform. Cost: $35 donation

(Continued on Page 14)
THE WEEK AHEAD
(Continued from Page 13)

FRI 12
Amyblu
BEACON
7:30 p.m. Reserve Wine Bar
173 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The singer will perform a cabaret-style set with guitarist Max Mayer.

FRI 12
Dar Williams
BEACON
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier
379 Main St.
845-855-1300
The singer and songwriter will play music from her latest release, I’ll Meet You Here, and other favorites, in this fundraiser for Scenic Hudson’s urban tree planting initiatives. The Breakneck Boys will open. Cost: $35 ($40 door)

SAT 13
Halsey
BEACON
6 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | 845-831-4988
howlandmusic.org
Produced by Michelle Rivas, the evening will include music and dance with Penelope Wendtlandt, composition by Enrique Eold and video projections by the Anarchist Mountains Trio. Cost: $20 ($25 door)

SAT 13
Back to the Garden 1969
BEACON
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier
379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The tribute band will play songs by musicians who performed at Woodstock. Cost: $30 ($35 door)

CIVIC
MON 8
State Assembly Office Hours
COLD SPRING
1 – 4 p.m. Town Hall
238 Main St. | nysassembly.gov/mem/Dana-Levenberg
Get help navigating state agencies and information about state programs from Assembly Member Dana Levenberg’s staff.

MON 8
City Council
BEACON
7 p.m. City Hall
1 Municipal Plaza
845-838-5011 | beaconny.gov

MON 8
School Board
BEACON
7 p.m. Beacon High School
101 Matteawan Road
845-838-6900 | beaconk12.org

MON 8
Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail
COLD SPRING
7 p.m. Haldane Auditorium
15 Craigside Drive
845-265-3611 | coldspringny.gov

WED 10
Village Board
COLD SPRING
7 p.m. Village Hall | 85 Main St.
845-265-3611 | coldspringny.gov

School Safety (from Page 1)
acceptance of what we’re trying to offer,” such as technology to make schools more impregnable and expedite police response. McConville did not specify which districts have not responded favorably, but Superintendent Philip Benante said on Tuesday (May 2) that Haldane is participating. The Garrison district did not respond to an inquiry.)

Addressing the legislators, McConville explained that after the Buffalo and Uvalde killings, he and then-County Executive MaryEllen Odell discussed using $2 million of the county’s share of federal COVID-19 relief funding to improve school security.

To follow up, he said, he and others visited districts and asked for their “wish lists” for protection. Responses didn’t start arriving until September and some were prohibitively expensive, such as a $1.3 million for a telephone system or the installation of bullet-proof glass, the sheriff told legislators. “Two million dollars seems like a lot, but it’s not enough to target-harden in a more appropriate or more effective way,” he explained.

Legislator Ginny Nacerino of Patterson, who chairs the committee, observed that in many schools “it’s just glass everywhere. It’s such a dangerous situation.”

But, she added, “I don’t know that we can afford to [replace] it all at once. But we should really be looking at that.”

Given the fiscal restraints, McConville said his department started to explore less-costly measures, such as a “door ajar” system that issues audio and visual alerts when an exterior door is open. Another option, which he described as “pretty ingenious,” utilizes a school’s WiFi system and connected devices, such as phones and laptops, to notify authorities of a threat and pinpoint the location.

In January, when the Sheriff’s Department held a demonstration of the WiFi-based product, only a few district representatives showed up despite numerous invitations. “The response wasn’t what we thought it should be,” he said.

The Sheriff’s Department wants to begin a trial of the system in a school that expressed interest, he added. To participate, districts must provide data on the number of devices they want connected to the system and “a little bit of a commitment” for that, McConville said.

He said that when he visited districts, he tried to get officials to sign agreements giving the Sheriff’s Department “urgent immediate access” to security installations such as closed-circuit TV or card-dependent entry. But various school officials seemed hesitant, which he called “very troublesome and very disheartening.”

Nacerino, too, said she is “disappointed” to hear school districts are dragging their feet on this. They should’ve been on board from Day One. You can’t preach that you support school safety and then not seize the opportunity to improve school safety by doing a coordinated effort with law enforcement,” Benante said Tuesday that Haldane’s facilities department and the door-ajar vendor have been discussing implementation of that tool. He also said that McConville spoke to the Haldane school board earlier this year about Sheriff’s Department access to Haldane’s camera system and using a 3D-imaging program to assist first responders. The district’s lawyer has reviewed the proposed memorandum of understanding, which is now back with the county attorney.

Visit highlandscurrent.org for news updates and latest information.

Hines (from Page 11)
The show was popular and led to another the following year. Unable to afford a printing studio, Hines began painting again and decided to focus on the class ramifications of game sports. “In medieval times, the nobility would commission serfs to breed greyhounds and hunting dogs and they were instructed to disable undesirable dogs,” she explains. “Over time, it became illegal for serfs to own them, but they could breed their own litters from discarded dogs. That is how whippets, a smaller breed, emerged. They inadvertently created the fastest dog in existence. It lent itself strongly to putting together an allegorical type of work.”

After that, Hines suffered what she calls “art block.” She was drawn out of it by a 2022 commission to “paint a beloved Italian greyhound in the style of Klimt.” Of Slavic descent, more recently she’s “making more decorative things, trying to lighten up a little bit, inspired by the surrealistic imagery of folklore.”

Hines, who lives in western Connecticut, is relatively new to the Beacon Artists Union. “I had participated in two of their juried shows, in 2021 and 2022,” she says. “I was very interested in the model — artist-run, reasonable dues, everyone has a job, and it adds up to a traditional gallery. RAU has been great. I’m a housecat; without prompt-
Embracing Fears

Beacon artist focuses on discomfort, perseverance

By Alison Rooney

A fter shepherding and energizing Beacon Open Studios, painter Darya Golubina will be spotlighted in a solo exhibition, *Surrender*, that opens at Super Secret Gallery on May 13 with a reception from 6 to 9 p.m. It continues through June 3. “The works are largely about my relationship with my mental health and physical body,” Golubina says. “Lately, I’ve found myself curious and exploring the limitations I set for myself, versus those I find myself existing within, placed upon me by my environment. This body of work is about discomfort, perseverance and acknowledgment.”

Born in Kiev, Ukraine, Golubina emigrated to the U.S. when she was 8 years old. She graduated from the School of Visual Arts in New York City in 2010, then spent eight years pursuing a photography career. She maintains a photo studio in the city while using a space in Beacon for her painting. She also runs Tiniest Gallery Beacon, a public art project she started with her friends during the pandemic to “combat isolation and uncertainty.”

Golubina describes her painting as heavily influenced by her childhood, when she suddenly found herself “a spectator in a foreign country, unable to communicate.”

The artist says that she hopes her work will “inspire empathy and provide a ground for a unified understanding. By embracing and truly loving our limitations and fears, we can find strength in vulnerability and learn to live with compassion.”

Super Secret Gallery, at 484 Main St., in Beacon, inside Hyperbole, is open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. See supersecretprojects.com.
Tony Moore: Eternal Becoming
Ceramic Sculptures and Fire Paintings
April 8 – May 7
Reception: Saturday April 8, 5–7 pm
Artist Talk: Sunday April 23, 2–4 pm
TonyMooreArt.com

By Marc Ferris

Silhouette Series
Hudson Valley Brewery

These wheat brews, designed to evoke nostalgia, are considered brunch-worthy due to their relatively low alcohol content (5 percent) and resemblance to mimosas, says Jamal Howell, the lead brewer at the Beacon brewery.

The orange-and-vanilla version is akin to a frozen creamsicle bar and another flavor with oats, blueberries and maple syrup evokes eating pancakes and blueberry oatmeal. Raspberry lemon offers a twist on pink lemonade. Coconut and vanilla, designed to taste tropical, is almost like taking a bite out of a vanilla cream pie.

The brewery specializes in sour IPAs, but the unfiltered Silhouette offerings are designed to be fruitier and sweeter than most of its other styles, Howell says. Using the same souring agent found in yogurt, Howell created the lineup to be “easy on the palate and not too aggressive.”

“We never know what’s coming next as we play around with fruits, botanicals and other flavors,” he says. “If you come in May, we’ll have one thing and then in September, there’s a whole new lineup. It keeps us — and the consumers — on our toes.”

Spring Landscape Lager
Industrial Arts Brewing Co.

Industrial Arts rotates its seasonal Landscape Lager lineup every year, but they are always made from New York ingredients and the Beacon brewery donates all the profits from the series to agricultural and environmental causes.

The latest release is a Helles Bock, a German style that’s “a little beerier than a typical lager, more malty and higher alcohol,” explains Geoff Wenzel, research and development brewer.

The beer consists of two types of malted barley, hops, yeast and filtered Beacon tap water. Industrial Arts is known for hoppy styles, but this spring, “we wanted the malt to shine through,” says Wenzel.

Light Visions
Obercreek Brewery

This beer, which has 5.8 percent alcohol, is an oak-aged “farmhouse” ale, a broad term of European origin that suggests a beer made from the best available ingredients on a farm.

The dry brew includes black currants, a hint of vanilla bean and milk sugar to add body. A raspberry version is also available. The ale is bottle-conditioned, like Champagne, so the subtle berry flavor and gentle natural carbonation will change over time, says Kyle Miller, head brewer at the Wappingers Falls brewery.

“It’s ready to go now, but you can put a few bottles down for years and they will evolve,” says Miller. “There will be lots of flow between the flavor profile, the bacteria and the wild yeast.”

BONUS:
Summer in a Can
Liquid Fables, Beacon

This vodka-based white sangria, at 9 percent alcohol, is flavored with peach, pear and orange and goes down more like a punch than a stiff drink, says owner Matt Green.

Liquid Fables has two ongoing series with new blends. Untold Fables tests ingredients and techniques; a recent iteration consisted of gin, black currants, raspberries and blueberries. Another was rye whiskey, blood oranges, cherries and a hint of maple syrup.

Core & Cask blends New York apples with rye whiskey, also sourced in-state. The alcohol content ranges from 8 percent to 12 percent. It will be easier to keep up with the round-robin of rotating creations when they roll out a draft line at the Beacon tasting room, Green says.
The previous generation did all the work and we’re jumping on their backs,” Lilburne says. “But we’re looking to shift toward more sustainable farming and more energetic wine styles. Big, jammy reds are out of fashion amongst the new generation of drinkers, who prefer lighter, prettier styles.”

In his first endeavor, he and a partner created the brand CO, for co-fermentation. Their concoctions used grapes as a base and blended in harmonious orchard fruits designed to enhance the flavor and aromatics. Lilburne called them “orchard wines.” In the fields, grazing sheep replaced herbicides.

Next, he created the Mise en Place brand, grown on a leased 6-acre plot, where he experiments with pinot noir grapes and rosé styles. His latest release blends Syrah and Touriga Nacional, a floral grape variety that originated in Portugal.

“The wares of a company that imports honest wines and styles locked in,” he says. “I’m a few years away from having my wines and styles locked in,” he says. Lilburne says he moved to Australia to create his wine because the bar for entry was lower than in California and he relished veering away from the country’s established vintners, who have made the country the fifth-largest wine exporter, surpassing even the U.S.

By 2014, he was bouncing around wineries including a large one in Australia. “I had to experience everything in my life before I got here and it felt right to start making wine, so everything is in the right place to commence the next chapter.”

His promise to create “honest” wines rests on growing grapes organically, using wild yeast and adding sulphites—a preservative often blamed for headaches and hangovers—only when necessary.

At the moment, Lilburne is producing 400 cases a year. To augment his income, he visits Melbourne wine shops to represent the wares of a company that imports honest wines from around the world. He calls it “the edgy side of the business.”

Amid all the innovation and experimentation, Lilburne is still finding his groove. “I’m a few years away from having my wines and styles locked in,” he says.
Small, Good Things

A 100-Year Feast

By Joe Dizney

I recently made a road trip from Cold Spring to south Louisiana. Driving south through the Shenandoah Valley and Blue Ridge and Great Smoky mountains as spring made its way north — blooming forsythia, dogwoods and the deep green of the Blue Ridge Mountains — was both familiar and treat enough.

My destination was Thibodaux, a small university town in Acadia, located on Bayou Lafourche about 40 miles from its headwaters at the Mississippi River in Donaldsonville, where I was born. Bayou Lafourche meanders southeast for 105 miles through Assumption Parish and Napoleonville, where I grew up, onward through Thibodaux, where I briefly went to school, and onward through Acadia swamps and wetlands to the Gulf of Mexico.

The area is, needless to say, familiar. For this trip, I rented a shotgun cottage in a residential neighborhood bordered by parks, churches and schools just a couple of blocks from my mother's apartment. As I walked my dog and traveling companion, Cleo, in the neighborhood, fractured flickers of stray Mardi Gras beads gleamed in the street lights.

My mother was never much interested in knowing the celebrant liked it. The glint likewise colored the gravel and crushed oyster shells that edge sidewalks and gardens, reminding me how exotic it might seem to alien eyes. After dark, the nocturnal smells were just as familiar — and foreign: gardenias, night-blooming jasmine and random fragrances perfumed the cool breezes.

But I am a man on a mission: My mother, Elmire Marie Dizney (née LeBlanc), born on April 2, 1923, was celebrating a century on Earth, and I was here to entertain. A large part of that entertainment is food, and as this is South Louisiana, the food spread out over a few weeks of a rolling celebration would include the hyperlocal specialties: shrimp, oysters, soft- and hard-shell crabs, blood sausage, hoghead cheese and gumbos of all sorts. Crawfish were in season and available in many forms—bisque, stew, étouffée, crawfish boudin (!). My mother was never much interested in cooking — that tendency I got from her mother, my grandmother Mimi (Elmire Marie LaFaye LeBlanc). But my mother does “like her groceries,” as they say here, and over the course of my visit we sampled pretty much all of the above.

But for the first intimate immediate family celebration with mom and my surviving brother, Sam, and sister, Adele, I did what I do. I cooked. While this offering is honestly not Cajun (or even particularly French) in any way, it was embraced and consumed heartily by the celebrant, family and (Cajun) friends who were privy to the leftovers. I can't be sure but I suspect it would even have gotten a nod of approval from my grandmother. I know the celebrant liked it.

Crab & Artichoke Frittata

Serves 4 to 6

1 small potato (Yukon Gold or red-skinned), peeled, cubed (about 1 cup)
10 large eggs
½ cup heavy cream
3 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped fine
2 tablespoons fresh tarragon, chopped fine
1 teaspoon crushed red pepper
1 teaspoon lemon zest
1 teaspoon kosher salt
3 tablespoons butter
2 medium leeks, white and lightest-green part, cleaned, quartered lengthwise and sliced (about ¼ inch)
2 small cloves garlic, minced
6 ounces marinated artichoke hearts, drained well, roughly chopped
4 ounces baby spinach (about two handfuls), roughly chopped
1 to ½ cup lump crabmeat
½ to ¼ cup parmesan, shredded

1. Boil potato cubes for 10 minutes in a small saucepan filled with enough salted water to cover. Drain well and reserve. In a medium bowl, whisk together eggs, cream, basil, tarragon, chili flakes, lemon zest and about ½ teaspoon salt. Set aside. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Heat a 10-inch (nonstick) oven-proof skillet over medium heat. Add butter and heat for at least 1 minute. Add ½ of the leeks and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Add garlic and cook 1 minute longer. Add potatoes and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, followed by the artichokes and the remainder of the leeks. Cook to warm through, about 2 minutes. Add spinach and about ½ teaspoon salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until spinach is wilted, about 2 minutes.
3. Add crab to skillet, stir to combine. Pour egg mixture over all; allow this to begin to set, about 4 minutes. Add ¼ cup Parmesan and place in heated oven. Remove from oven and cool for 5 minutes. Slice into wedges; serve warm.
It’s NOT a done deal.

The Fjord Trail is a work in progress. Our community can influence it. Your opinion matters. Come out and make your voice heard!

Community Meeting
Haldane School Auditorium
Monday Evening 7:00pm

ProtectTheHighlands.org
State Budget Electrifies Buildings

Plan also boosts child care, local school funding

By Leonard Sparks

Adopted on Wednesday (May 3), more than a month behind sched- ule, the New York State budget for 2023-24 includes a ban on gas-powered appliance and heating systems in new resi- dential buildings, more funding for schools, an expansion of child care subsidies and a hike in the minimum wage.

The $229 billion spending plan, which represents a 3.9 percent increase, was due by April 1, the start of the state fiscal year. But Gov. Kathy Hochul and legislators struggled to reach consensus on amend- ing a bail law and ultimately failed to agree on a plan to expand affordable housing.

They did agree on a first-in-the-country ban on the use of natural gas and heating oil in new buildings to reduce carbon emissions by forcing developers and households to use electric appliances and heating systems.

The first phase of the ban takes effect on Dec. 31, 2025, when new buildings under eight stories will have to be all-electric, except for new commercial and industrial structures exceeding 100,000 square feet. All new buildings will be subject to the law beginning Jan. 1, 2026.

Hochul and legislators agreed to a roster of exemptions, including car washes, crematoriums, emergency backup power systems, hospitals, restaurants and water and wastewater treatment systems.

Except for car washes, the state's expen- sions mirror the ones named in Beacon's version of a fossil-fuel ban. Approved in March, the city's law requires all-electric appliances and heating systems in new construc- tion and major renovation proj- ects beginning on Jan. 1, 2024.

The budget also:

- Amends a 2020 bail reform law by remov- ing language that directs judges who deter- mine a defendant is a flight risk to employ the least restrictive alternative and direct conditions that will reasonably assure the principal's return to court.

- Increases the minimum wage in the Hudson Valley and most of the state to $15 in 2024, followed by $15.50 in 2025 and $16 in 2026. In New York City, on Long Island and in Westchester County, it rises to $16 in 2024. Beginning in 2027, the minimum will be indexed to inflation.

- Allocates $124 million to fund break- fasts and lunches for all students at schools where 35 percent or more of students qual- ify for free meals, which includes Beacon (47 percent).

- Raises $1.1 billion for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority by increasing a payroll tax on the largest businesses in New York City and provides $300 million in one-time aid to the agency, which operates Metro-North. The state will also spend $65 million to reduce a proposed fare increase from 5.5 percent to 4 percent.

- Criminalizes the sale of cannabis or cannabis products without a license and establishes fines of up to $20,000 a day.

State Sen. Rob Rolison, a Republican whose district includes the Highlands, voted “no” on the spending plan, saying that it “fails to effectively address the crises of public safety and affordability.”

His criticisms also included the gas ban and the state’s decision to keep a portion of federal funding for Medicaid expansion that had been going to counties, who say they will have to raise property taxes to make up for the lost revenue.

“The cumulative result of these failures will be another exodus of people and busi- nesses out of New York State,” said Rolison. “Albany can, and must, do better.”
Fjord Trail (from Page 1)

which is scheduled for completion by 2030.

Has the project changed throughout its development?

When the project was conceived in 2006, it was imagined as a walking path connecting Beacon and Cold Spring alongside the shore of the Hudson River.

More recently, as Breakneck Ridge became one of the most popular trails in the country, the project underwent a significant expansion and redesign. The goal was to address a series of emerging problems: throngs of hikers and cars along Route 9D; the lack of safe access to the river for swimming; Main Street in Cold Spring becoming overrun with visitors on weekends; the lack of public restrooms; and the dearth of outdoor access for people who need smooth surfaces.

The trail was also redesigned to take into account projected sea-level rise because of climate change.

Who’s building it?

The lead agency is Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail Inc., a subsidiary of the nonprofit environmental group Scenic Hudson, which is working in partnership with state parks. The lead design firms are SCAPE Landscape Architecture, Gray Organschi Architecture and the structural engineering firm Past + Epp. Kate Orff of SCAPE was recently named by Time to its annual list of the 100 most influential people in the world and is the first landscape architect to receive a MacArthur Foundation “genius” grant.

“Fjord?” Really?

A fjord is a long, narrow inlet in valleys carved by glacial activity. While the term is usually associated with Scandinavian countries, there are a few fjords in the U.S., including one east of the Rockies, in the Highands.

Where is the money going to come from?

The project is being funded through a combination of private donations and state grants. The organization expects that mix to continue, in addition to private grants from foundations and revenue raised through parking fees and other sources.

What’s the construction timeline?

Work has begun on the first phase: The Breakneck Connector. This $85 million segment includes a 445-foot span over the train tracks and a half-mile trail between the north end of the bridge and the Metro-North stop at Breakneck.

It also includes a 345-foot trail from the south end of the bridge to the Breakneck trailhead; parking areas along Route 9D; two comfort station buildings and a trail steward station; upgrades to the train station and platforms; dedicated parking for emergency responders; and upgrades to the Upper Overlook area along the Breakneck Ridge Trail. This segment should be completed in 2025.

Across its entire length, the project will include a swimming area at Little Stony Point; additional river access points; a treetop play area on the north part of the trail near Beacon; public restrooms in Cold Spring and at other parts of the trail; and a boardwalk along the river from Dockside to Little Stony Point, eliminating the need for hikers to walk down Fair Street.

A free or low-cost shuttle is planned to reduce vehicular traffic and encourage visitors to use public transportation to come to the area. The former Dutchess Manor building on Route 9D is being restored and converted into a visitor’s center.

Has an environmental review been completed?

An environmental review of the Breakneck Connector was completed in December, at which point the state Department of Environmental Conservation gave its approval to that part of the project.

A draft of the master plan for the entire project is under environmental review, and there is also a separate review underway for the shoreline trail. The review will incorporate data about traffic, parking and visitor numbers from this summer and fall.

It’s expected to be made public in January 2024, and a public hearing on the review will be held a few weeks after that.

Will the trail cross private land?

The vast majority of the project is on public land under the jurisdiction of state parks, the state Department of Transportation, Metro-North, the Town of Fishkill and the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (which controls the aqueduct). Amy Kacala, the executive director of the Fjord Trail, said this week that agreements for the use of those lands are in various stages of negotiation. She added that the project has secured rights from a handful of private property owners and is negotiating with others along the preferred route.

Who has raised concerns?

A grassroots group in Philipstown called Protect the Highlands is concerned that the trail will contribute to overcrowding rather than alleviate it, and that the boardwalk planned from Dockside Park will alter its character and be too disruptive of the shoreline. It argues that Cold Spring should have a greater say in the direction of the project and that the trail could connect Breakneck Ridge and Beacon without extending to the village.

Can I still submit a question for the public session?

The deadline has passed, but there will be an opportunity at the meeting for public comments and questions. Speakers will be asked to keep their comments to under three minutes.
School Tax

how the state-mandated property tax cap is calculated each year. Since 2012, the formula for school districts has limited the growth of property taxes to the rate of inflation or 2 percent, whichever is less. “Each year’s tax cap decision has long-term consequences, because the previous year’s levy is the starting point in calculating the tax cap,” the ASBO of NY noted in a recent report.

That cap wasn’t a challenge for most districts from 2012 to 2020, when inflation hovered around or well below 2 percent. But problems arose when inflation jumped to 4.7 percent in 2021 and 6.5 percent last year, pushing more districts’ caps below the rate of inflation. Two years ago, 79 percent of districts in the state had tax caps higher than the rate of inflation, according to ASBO of NY. Last year, that fell to 8 percent. In the Hudson Valley only 16 percent of districts had a cap higher than inflation last year, the highest level for the state’s nine regions.

Meanwhile, Foundation Aid is distributed based on need. As a relatively wealthy district, Garrison received an increase of $34,000 in Foundation Aid between last year and this year. As a result, inflation has challenged the Garrison school budget. This year the district has proposed a 3.3 percent property tax levy increase and is not seeking a tax cap override for its $12.45 million budget. But to make ends meet, the district is having to spend nearly $700,000 in savings and make $220,000 in cuts, including reducing a full-time art teacher to part-time, reassigning Committee on Special Education chair duties to the school psychologist, and dropping a bus and driver from its contract fleet.

Last year, the district was able to override its 2.2 percent cap when more than 60 percent of voters approved a 6.6 percent increase. A request for a 9.18 increase earlier had failed.

Haldane and Beacon, for various reasons, including higher amounts of Foundation Aid, have not yet faced those circumstances. (The state budget for 2023-24, approved this week, includes $719,000 in additional Foundation Aid for Haldane and $621,000 for Beacon, but only $17,200 for Garrison.)

Unless inflation comes down, Garrison officials acknowledge the district may need to seek a tax-cap override during next year’s budget cycle. “The revenues are not covering expenses,” said Carl Albano, the superintendent. “That’s not a good long-term strategy.”

Garrison isn’t the only district having difficulty because of the combination of high inflation and relatively low Foundation Aid. According to the School Board Association, about 250 districts qualified for the minimum amount of state aid, including the Byram Hills district in Westchester County. “We all have similar issues with increases in salaries, health insurance and retirement expenses,” said Jen Lamia, the superintendent.

For those districts that have received more aid, it came just in time to soften the impact of high inflation.

Starting in 2022 and ending with the proposed 2024 budget, the state Legislature began ramping up Foundation Aid to about $24 billion a year. As a result, many needier districts have seen substantial increases. For example, Brewster schools are expected to receive an additional $7.9 million between 2022 and 2024. Haldane is expected to receive $1.1 million more over that time.

Foundation Aid is the money that the state is obligated to pay as the result of a lawsuit brought in 2007 that sought to make sure every district benefited in equal measure. But once the current state budget cycle is over, the foundation aid will likely be deemed fully funded. There will be no more large increases to mask high inflation.

The ASBO and the New York State School Board Association have each called for a revision to the cap formula to allow districts to grow their budgets up to the rate of inflation.

Without such an adjustment, “you’re going to have districts that will feel a squeeze and they’re not going to be willing to go above the cap,” said Brian Cechnicki, executive director of ASBO of NY. As a result, those districts will have to either cut programs or deplete their savings, both of which Garrison is doing.

But a revision to the formula appears unlikely, said Assembly Member Dana Levenberg, a Democrat whose district includes Garrison. “There hasn’t been a public appetite for changing the tax cap,” she said. “People know that school taxes are quite high.”

In the state Senate, the chair of the Education Committee opposes any change. “Our region suffers from extremely high property tax bills, and I’m not in favor of modifying the cap under these circumstances,” said Shelley Mayer, a Democrat from Yonkers.

However, other changes may be coming to Foundation Aid. In February, Betty Rosa, the state education commissioner, called for a study on how to improve the funding formula, which hasn’t changed since 2007. Mayer said she supports spending $1 million on that effort.

One of the weaknesses of the Foundation Aid formula is its reliance on poverty data from the 2000 census, said Brian Fessler, director of governmental relations for the state School Board Association.

That outdated data has impacted the Harrison district in Westchester, which, like Garrison, receives minimal Foundation Aid, said Louis Wool, the superintendent. Wool said that even though his district has many wealthy residents, 24 percent of students live at or below the poverty line. “Extreme wealth can skew how a community appears” in the data, he said.

In Byram Hills, Lamia said that her district, which is located near Armonk, is grouped by the Foundation Aid formula with districts with lower costs of living, unfairly lowering its allocation of aid.

Garrison qualifies for little Foundation Aid largely because it has so few poor or disabled students, said Joseph Jimick, the district’s business administrator. But the hamlet has its own unusual challenges. For example, because of its small size, one or two students who require special education services can consume a larger percentage of the budget. He said Garrison can often transport one child with special needs to an out-of-district program, but the annual cost can reach $200,000.

### Share of NY school tax caps above and below inflation

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### Range of Tax Caps for NYS Schools, 2022-23

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*Includes Haldane (1.96) / **Includes Garrison (3.29) / ***Includes Beacon (3.64)
Puzzles

**CrossCurrent**

**ACROSS**
1. Cuts off
2. Cookout, briefly
3. Jacob’s brother
4. In — land
5. Goatee’s spot
6. Here (Fr.)
7. Saharan
8. Submit
9. Give temporarily
10. Jacob's brother
11. Jacob's brother
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39. Jacob’s brother
40. Lean to one side
41. Redacted
42. Job-safety org.
43. Ache
44. Ice cream parlor
45. Russian pancakes
46. Pen name
47. Took part in a bee
48. 1040 org.
49. Inventor Whitney
50. Nobelist Walesa
51. Nobelist Walesa
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**DOWN**
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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. Scottish wind musicians (6)
2. Uses a knife (4)
3. Where Sanah is capital (5)
4. Chooses as a teammate (5)
5. Flooring in a roll (8)
6. Buffet options (6)
7. Scolded (9)

**SUDOCURRENT**

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**Answers for April 28 Puzzles**

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BOYS’ LACROSSE

Haldane picked up three wins last week to improve to 11-2, while Evan Giachinta became the fourth player in program history to record 100 goals and 100 assists.

On Tuesday (May 2) in Cold Spring, the Blue Devils overwhelmed Pawling, running to a 10-0 halftime lead on the way to a 15-1 victory.

Giachinta, a junior, had two goals and three assists in the game, pushing him past 200 career points. He becomes the first Haldane player to surpass the milestones since his brother Sam Giachinta did so four years ago. The three other athletes were all seniors.

“Evan is probably one of the best lacrosse players I’ve ever coached, and one of the hardest workers,” said Coach Ed Crowe.

Keeper Jordon Hankel made three saves. Gaugler and Dylan Rucker each had a goal. Haldane also won the game 16-8 on Wednesday (May 4) before hosting Marlboro on Saturday (May 6).

GOLF

Beacon senior Joe Battle was named to the team All-State and senior Benjamin Bozsik received honorable mention.

Although only a junior, Evan Giachinta has already scored 100 goals and recorded 100 assists for Haldane lacrosse.

By Skip Pearlman

BOYS’ LACROSSE

Haldane senior Matteo Cervone of Haldane was named sixth-team Class C All-State in Boys’ Lacrosse by the New York State Sportswriters Association.

On Monday (May 1), Haldane hosted Dobbs Ferry in a Class C varsity boys’ lacrosse game at the Haldane Sports Complex. The Blue Devils defeated the visiting Bulldogs by a score of 10-5.

The game was a defensive battle, with each team scoring five goals. Haldane’s defense held Dobbs Ferry to just 18 shots on goal, while the Blue Devils had 23.

Haldane senior John Kissinger scored four goals and two assists, while senior Ryan Landis scored two goals and one assist. Freshman Jordon Hankel made three saves in goal.

Dobbs Ferry’s best performance came from senior Max Schell, who scored three goals and one assist.

The Blue Devils improved to 11-2 with the win, while Dobbs Ferry dropped to 4-9.

Haldane is scheduled to travel to Blind Brook, with Ruggiero scoring two goals and Mahoney stopping eight shots.

The Blue Devils are in third place in the Class C East division with a record of 6-4 and are looking to make a run for the Class C state title. Haldane is currently ranked No. 13 by the New York State Sportswriters Association.

Jesse Hagen advances the ball against Pawling. Photos by S. Pearlman