

# The HIGHLANDS Current



After the Bite  
Page 13

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Unlike box-office stars, most struggle to get health insurance

By Joey Asher

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Actors and Beacon residents Erin Cummings (left), Christian Campbell and America Olivo are members of SAG-AFTRA, which is on strike. Photo by J. Asher

## Beacon Woman Dies in Fishkill Creek

Police say victim accidentally fell into water

By Jeff Simms

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Sukanya Basu

According to a police statement, a witness reported that the woman fell down a 15-foot embankment into the creek around 6:40 p.m. Police, along with fire and emergency medical personnel, responded to the area of 50 Leonard St., near The Lofts at Beacon Falls apartment complex.

On Thursday, police identified the woman as Sukanya Basu. According to an obituary posted by Riverview Funeral Home by Halvey, Basu was a workforce strategy consultant with Mercer and a former assistant professor of economics at Vassar College. She held degrees from St. Stephen's College in Delhi, India; the Delhi School of Economics; and the University of Rochester.

Police said that when an officer pulled Basu out of the water, she was unconscious and unresponsive. She was pronounced dead at a hospital.

Basu is survived by her daughter, Mira Messing. A funeral service is scheduled for Sunday (July 23).



Ben Noll

See Next Page

Weather forecasts from other side of world

By Brian PJ Cronin

Meteorologist Ben Noll grew up in Orange County before taking a job with New Zealand's National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research. Despite living on the other side of the world, he forecasts the weather in the Highlands and Hudson Valley at [bennollweather.com](https://bennollweather.com) and in his Substack newsletter at [bennollsays.com](https://bennollsays.com).

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(Continued on Page 8)



SEA CREATURES — The Howland Public Library in Beacon, on July 12 invited children to create sea creatures with strips of colored paper, quilling tools and glue. Photo by Ross Corsair

## Plea Deal Possible in Beacon Disappearance

Woman and husband charged in death of her ex

By Leonard Sparks

The lawyers for a former Beacon woman and her husband charged in the death of her ex-husband may be negotiating a plea deal, according to court filings.

Jamie and Nicholas Orsini were arrested on June 15 and charged with conspiring to kill Steven Kraft. The Marlboro resident

has not been seen since April 28, 2020, after he returned the two daughters he shared with Jamie Orsini to her home on West Church Street following a custody visit.



Steven Kraft

Prosecutors with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York charged each Orsini with one count of carjacking resulting in death, which carries a maximum sentence of life in prison or death, and one

count of conspiracy, which carries a maximum sentence of five years. The couple's lawyers asked for a postponement, until Aug. 9, of a preliminary hearing scheduled for July 12 in White Plains.

The two suspects are being prosecuted separately. In both cases, according to court filings, prosecutors said they needed a postponement because the Orsinis' lawyers have been “engaging in preliminary discussions with the government concerning possible disposition of this case without trial” as well

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# The HIGHLANDS Current

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Ben Noll

Photo provided

## Watching From Afar

*Meteorologist tracks Highlands from other side of world*

By Brian PJ Cronin

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5Q

FIVE QUESTIONS: RYAN BIRACREE

By Alison Rooney

On Sunday (July 23), at 3 p.m., Ryan Biracree will host a death cafe at the Desmond-Fish Public Library in Garrison, where he oversees digital services.

What is a death cafe?

The goal is for it to be an open and welcoming space to talk about any issues related to death. There's no agenda. We could find ourselves discussing grief: how to mourn and how not to mourn. Or the conversation could gravitate toward the business of death and dying, which can include anything from how to make a will to feelings about our own mortality. It's not a support group or therapy.

How did you become involved?

I've always had conversations with friends and family about death and dying. My degrees are in poetry and I taught literature for many years. Though I haven't done formal training, which is available, there are no set requirements for a death cafe except that there is no advertising. It's an open discussion and there will be snacks! Tea and cake! I worked on "death doula" training, which helped me formulate how to talk about death and accept any discomfort there might be. In many ways, death has been removed from the home: Bodies get taken away, embalmed, it's an



industry. It's developing an appreciation for the multiplicity of ways we are present with death. I will help guide people through topics, beginning with a question-focused approach, centered around the notion of "What have you always wanted to say but worry that people will think you're strange?" It's open to everybody, all ages. There's no pressure to contribute. The most critical component is listening without expectation or judgment.

What does a death doula do?

Some focus on working with the individ-

ual who is dying to take care of the logistics of death, the practical side of things. Others take on a more holistic level, like coming to terms with dying, asking oneself, "How can I leave? How can we feel we've said everything we want?" Others work with families, helping them handle grief, or they provide day-to-day help during the process.

Is this a new program for the library?

It's the first at Desmond-Fish, but there have been thousands of them worldwide since the first in 2004. When you run a death cafe, there's no fee, no organizational framework, just an upholding of the principles. We're hosting it on a Sunday when the library is closed; we're opening up exclusively for this program. It's the first one we've done. I hope there'll be more, perhaps monthly.

Do you think the program is particularly resonant now?

We're coming out of a pandemic where for two or three years we were inundated with a consciousness of death but also prevented from experiencing it firsthand. So many people were prevented from mourning with others. We're coming out of a period where grief and mourning were robbed from many people at the same time, that we culturally experienced a mass death. We need to be with others and talk about this.

ON THE SPOT

By Michael Turton

Would you rather skydive, fly in a glider or sit in your rocking chair?

“Fly in a glider, just for the bird’s-eye view.”



Leon Pralatowski, Cold Spring

“A glider ride; less risky that skydiving.”



Natalie Sandik, Philipstown

“Sit in my rocking chair with a book; I’m smart.”



Vincenzo “Big Vinny” Vaccaro, Beacon

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2nd	11:00am-2:00pm	Ian Moore
9th	11:30am-1:30pm	Andrew Jordan
16th	11:30am-1:30pm	Larry Locust
23rd	11:30am-1:30pm	Evan Mason
30th	11:30am-1:30pm	Hey Bub

AUGUST

6th	10:00am-2:00pm	Ian Moore
13th	11:30am-1:30pm	Tony DePaolo
20th	11:30am-1:30pm	Emily Beck
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# Court Orders New Redistricting

*Ruling impacts U.S. House, state Senate*

By Leonard Sparks

A lower-level appeals court ordered New York's redistricting commission to redraw the maps used in last year's U.S. House and state Senate elections, when Republicans flipped congressional seats held by Sean Patrick Maloney and three other Democrats.

The Appellate Division, Third Department ruled, 3-2, on July 13 that the Independent Redistricting Commission must redo the districts, which were created by a court-appointed special master after the commission's Democrat and Republican appointees failed to reach consensus.

Three Highlands representatives are

“Instead of running better candidates, having a coherent strategy, or messaging on issues New Yorkers actually care about, Albany and Washington, D.C., Democrats would rather gerrymander their way to power.

~ Rep. Mike Lawler

affected by the ruling: Rep. Mike Lawler, whose House district includes Philipstown and who narrowly defeated Maloney; Rep. Pat Ryan, whose House district includes Beacon; and state Sen. Rob Rolison, whose district includes Beacon and Philipstown.

The Third Department's decision reversed a ruling in September by a judge in Albany, who dismissed a lawsuit filed by five voters seeking redrawn districts before the 2024 elections.

The voters argued that the congressional and state Senate maps violated a state Constitution requirement that the Independent Redistricting Commission submit a second plan for approval if state legislators reject its first one.

They also claim that the Court of Appeals, in its ruling allowing the appointment of a special master to redraw the current districts, intended that they be temporary and not used until redistricting takes place again following the 2030 census.

Republicans denounced the Third Department's decision and vowed to appeal. Rep. Elise Stefanik, who represents an upstate district, and Ed Cox, who chairs the state Republican Committee, issued a joint statement that claimed Democrats “will gerrymander the map to target political opponents and protect political allies — all to the people's detriment.” Lawler also criticized the ruling. His district is considered one of Democrats' key targets for regaining control of the House in 2024.

“Instead of running better candidates,

having a coherent strategy, or messaging on issues New Yorkers actually care about, Albany and Washington, D.C., Democrats would rather gerrymander their way to power,” said Lawler.

Partisanship has shadowed what was supposed to be a nonpartisan process for nearly two years.

In 2021, the Democrat and Republican appointees to the 10-member Independent Redistricting Commission, which redraws boundaries after every census so that every elected official represents about the same number of people, failed to agree on new maps.

Democrats in the state Legislature then created their own maps, which were approved by Gov. Kathy Hochul. But several Republican

voters sued, and in March 2022, Judge Patrick McAllister of the Steuben County Supreme Court invalidated the Legislature's maps.

After the Court of Appeals, New York's highest court, upheld the decision, McAllister appointed a special master — Jonathan Cervas, a postdoctoral fellow at Carnegie Mellon University's Institute for Policy and Strategy — to redo the maps. Cervas estimated that his districts would increase the number of competitive congressional seats to eight from three and competitive state Senate seats to 15 from six.

The maps Democrats created for the state Assembly were used for the 2022 elections but were redrawn this year and approved by Hochul.

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Supporting local businesses has never been sweeter! From July 1 to 31, *The Current* invites you to explore new flavors around Beacon and Cold Spring. This is the best kind of competition: the more ice cream you eat, the more chances to win... more ice cream! Pick up your passport card at any of the participating shops below. Three winners will be announced by Aug 7. Enjoy!



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Tell us what you think

The Current welcomes letters to the editor on its coverage and local issues. Submissions are selected by the editor (including from comments posted to our social media pages) to provide a variety of opinions and voices, and all are subject to editing for accuracy, clarity and length, and to remove personal attacks. Letters may be emailed to [editor@highlandscurrent.org](mailto:editor@highlandscurrent.org) or mailed to The Highlands Current, 142 Main St., Cold Spring, NY 10516. The writer's full name, village or city, and email or phone number must be included, but only the name and village or city will be published. For our complete editorial policies, see [highlandscurrent.org/editorial-standards](https://highlandscurrent.org/editorial-standards).

LETTERS AND COMMENTS

Time for trails

In June, Sen. Chuck Schumer and Rep. Pat Ryan, whose district includes Beacon, joined the mayor of Kingston to announce a \$22 million federal grant to improve biking and walking connections throughout Kingston, including extensions of a rail trail and links to parks and the waterfront. It is the largest grant award in the city's history — and Beacon must seize its chance to follow suit.

The bipartisan infrastructure law passed by Congress in 2021 provides historic levels of federal transportation funding, and the Biden administration has already awarded billions of dollars for local projects that make it easier and safer for people to walk and bike around their communities. Since I began working on transportation issues 16 years ago, there has never been more available funding.

But much of the money may only be around through 2026, when the infrastructure law is set to expire. That makes it critical for the City of Beacon and Dutchess County to develop grant proposals. This may be the best opportunity in a generation to build the Beacon-Hopewell Junction rail trail, a protected bike lane to the Metro-North station (studied by the county in 2018) and the improvements envisioned by our Main Street Access Committee. It's also a time for new ideas. What about making our train station ADA-accessible on the waterfront side, or safe bike connections to the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge?

It's true that the city is already managing major projects, like the new fire station and the upcoming reconstruction of Fishkill Avenue. If going after additional grant funding requires hiring municipal staff or bringing consultants on board, we should do it. I'm positive that City Administra-

tor Chris White understands the potential; only a few years ago, he was working for Ulster County, managing the plans for some of the Kingston projects that were just awarded grants.

Steven Higashide, *Beacon Higashide, an urban planner, is the author of Better Buses, Better Cities: How to Plan, Run and Win the Fight for Effective Transit.*

Storm runoff

Gov. Kathy Hochul described the recent storm and flooding in the Hudson Highlands as a "1,000-year event" ("Storm Wreaks Havoc in the Mid-Hudson"). Although that may be true based on historical data, it will not be true going forward. Extreme weather is becoming more frequent and more severe due to the climate crisis. Although impacts of climate change are here now, we can act to prevent them becoming much worse in the coming decades.

To limit the effects of climate change, the U.S. must generate much more of its energy from clean sources. Clean-energy projects require permits, and the current permitting system makes it easier to build a fossil fuel energy plant or a gas pipeline than a solar or wind plant or power transmission lines. Reform of the permitting system will allow the U.S. to meet its climate goals (such as those in the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022), remove the backlog of clean-energy projects, create jobs in rural areas and improve air quality in disadvantaged communities. We all benefit from the decreased carbon dioxide emissions facilitated by clean energy.

Please contact your elected officials: Hochul, Sens. Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, your congressional representative and local officials, and tell them that you

support clean-energy permitting reform. We in the Highlands have seen the impacts of climate change in the last weeks, and we know the time to act is now. Whether storms like we have seen recently occur every 100 years or every 10 years is up to us.

Alison Spodek, *Beacon Spodek is an associate professor of chemistry and environmental studies at Vassar College and a member of the Mid-Hudson chapter of the Citizen's Climate Lobby.*

There is a forgotten street in Beacon. South Walnut Street, between DeWindt and Beacon streets, has been flooding for more than 40 years during moderate to heavy rainfalls, even if they last only 10 to 15 minutes. Stormwater is percolating through porous, antiquated sewer lines and backing up into basements, creating a hazardous condition. Yards, sidewalks and the street are being eroded.

The city has ignored all pleas to take remedial action, except for cleaning the drainage structures, which has been proven not to be the solution. South Walnut Street has appeared on the capital plan several times but keeps getting replaced by less-dire projects. Even the master plan alludes to the problem of poor drainage on South Walnut.

If funds had been procured when the problem surfaced, the repairs could have been completed. Now the excuse is that it's too expensive. If current weather patterns persist, the situation will worsen and the city's nonfeasance will be a major reason for the flooding and damage to property. If this area was on Main Street, the problem would have been resolved years ago. It shows where the priorities are situated. Homeowners are second-class citizens in

(Continued on Page 5)



## LETTERS AND COMMENTS

*(Continued from Page 4)*

Beacon. Businesses, tourists and development are the priorities.

A petition has been forwarded to the city requesting relief from this intolerable situation.

Don Gallo, *Beacon*

I noticed you cite the National Weather Service official rainfall reading for Cold Spring as 6.25 inches ("Storm Updates"). That reading is the reported rainfall I submitted to the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network (CoCoRaHS) from our home station (a standard analog CoCoRaHS rain gauge) located 5 miles northeast of the villages in North Highlands. The National Weather Service posted that as the reading for Cold Spring in its rainfall reports for the flooding on July 9 and 10, presumably because it was the closest "official" reading to the village.

Perhaps someone in the village would be willing to sign up at cocorahs.org to provide a more local official reading, which is the purpose of the "citizen science" volunteer organization.

Jon Kiphart, *Philipstown*

We experienced the deluge and aftermath on the other side of the Hudson River ("Train from Poughkeepsie to Croton in Eight Hours," July 14). We were headed north on the Palisades Parkway on July 9 between 3 and 3:30 p.m. toward home in Fort Montgomery. We crossed to the south lanes at the Anthony Wayne Recreation Area and decided we could go through the Seven Lakes region to get to the road to West Point, avoiding trouble.

Were we ever wrong. I'll spare you the harrowing details, but we eventually slept overnight in our car at the (fully booked) Holiday Inn. The road to our home was washed away. Who knew flooding could be a factor on a mountain road?

Karan Masonheimer, *via Facebook*

This is why I always bring a book for the train.

Paula Lanier, *via Facebook*

Mother Nature always wins.

Joseph Saullo, *via Facebook*

Those poor people — hot, no food, toilets full, no way out. I would have been a basket case.

Geri Moran, *via Facebook*

Better than being stuck in a submarine.

Keith Locke, *via Facebook*

Your article is absurd and ridiculous. I was on that train. It was one of the most traumatic and terrifying experiences of my life. We all thought we were going to die. Many of us were wondering if the cops, who were being very rude and aggressive in the beginning, toting around their guns, were there to kill us to save face for the MTA. The toilets were flooding urine and feces. Children, adults, disabled people, not able to eat for hours, were trapped in torment and hopelessness. The "water boxes" being passed around were filled with mildew because they had been stored in a spot on the train

over four years before we'd left the station in Poughkeepsie.

How many people did you interview for this article? Two? And you read some tweets? That doesn't even qualify as corroborating evidence! Do it over again. And this time tell the truth.

David Ostrowski, *New York City*

## Migrants

On July 5, the Putnam County Legislature voted to make permanent the county executive's order to curb an imaginary migrant crisis in Putnam ("Putnam Passes Measure Targeting Migrants," July 7).

As a result, Putnam has essentially declared itself an anti-sanctuary, "rule-of-law" county, and has ensured that our taxpayer dollars will be spent fighting a lawsuit with New York City because the order and the policy passed by the Legislature are unconstitutional and go far beyond the authority of a county government.

New York City has stated in its lawsuit, and repeatedly elsewhere, that any migrants relocated to other counties would be housed at the city's expense. The assertion that we would be paying for any of this is a lie meant to stoke the Legislature's base — and base they are. At the meeting, people came flaunting shirts with expressions such as "We don't owe illegals anything," and "Punisher" symbolism as they booed and shouted over people trying to speak.

We already have no homeless shelters in Putnam. This order would restrict them further, and also would attempt to regulate private businesses — total unconstitutional overreach.

In the comments I tried to deliver over the shouts of those in favor of the policy, and eye-rolling from legislators, I noted that the stream of accusations being made about "illegals" coming here to bring crime and threaten our safety are ludicrous. These people are coming here the right way. They are asylum-seekers. They are here legally.

Many were professionals in their home countries, like Venezuela, which has experienced economic collapse, or they are fleeing poverty and destruction due to natural disasters and political unrest. To suggest, like the legislators did, that we need this order because we are "struggling to survive" here (Legislator Erin Crowley), or are under some kind of imminent threat of "busloads of people" being sent to Putnam (Legislator William Gouldman) is insane.

New York City has sued Putnam and 30 other counties passing these unconstitutional executive orders, and has already won federal injunctions against the orders in Rockland and Orange counties. That is because, while the county executive and Legislature hilariously attempt to declare this a constitutional and rule-of-law county, they are trampling all over the Constitution.

A "shared services agreement" is a ploy to ensure that migrants will never be admitted here, since the county government would clearly never approve such an agreement.

Eileen McDermott, *Brewster*

Without purporting to solve the complex

*(Continued on Page 6)*

# The Current Wins 18 National Awards



**T**he *Highlands Current* on July 10 won 16 awards from the National Newspaper Association and two from the Society for Features Journalism for work published in 2022.

The *Current* was among 92 newspapers in 33 states to win awards from the National Newspaper Association. The paper has won 109 NNA awards since 2016.

Among papers of all sizes, Chip Rowe and Leonard Sparks, along with designer Pierce Strudler, won first place for community service for the Black history series, *Always Present, Never Seen*. The staff also won second place for headline writing and Ross Corsair took second place in video journalism for "Chakra's Garden," about Chanthou "Chakra" Oeur, a native of Cambodia who lives in Philipstown.

In the advertising division, Strudler won first place for best use of color for a pie-baking contest ad.

Among smaller papers, *The Current* won first-place awards for local news coverage and special section and feature series, the latter two for *Always*

*Present, Never Seen*. Joey Asher won third place in sports features for *The Future of Football*.

Among weekly papers, *The Current* won first place for in-depth series for *Always Present, Never Seen* (Brian PJ Cronin's *Trails [Too] Well Traveled* received an honorable mention) and first place for education coverage for Jeff Simms' *Are the Kids Alright?* The paper also won second place for general excellence and feature profile, for Michael Turton's story about the indestructible Jay Brennan.

Among weeklies, Strudler won third place for front-page design and Simms won third place for reporting on local government for "Beacon's Paper Streets." Ross Corsair received honorable mention for a feature photo.

In the Society for Features Journalism contest, *The Current* won second place among papers with circulations of less than 90,000 in the inclusion and representation in features category for *Always Present, Never Seen*. In the feature series category, Cronin received an honorable mention for *The Challenge for Churches*.



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## LETTERS AND COMMENTS

(Continued from Page 5)

issues related to housing asylum-seekers in Putnam County motels, it is worth noting the irony of the opposition by County Executive Kevin Byrne (an Irishman?) and other officials whose ancestors were the victims of virulent anti-Catholic, anti-Irish and anti-Italian discrimination and hatred in the past.

History repeats itself, here by the descendants of victims of discrimination who are eager to turn their enmity to the latest wave of immigrants, using the same tired clichés to demonize them as their own ancestors were demonized.

Arthur Lehman, *New York City*

These are human beings in serious need. So much for generous and caring Americans. What is wrong with you people?

Mike Starn, *via Instagram*

The prayer before [our] meetings makes this particular issue particularly bizarre.

Nancy Montgomery, *via Instagram*  
Montgomery represents Philipstown and part of Putnam Valley on the Putnam County Legislature.

### Prophecy Hall

I am dismayed that the Beacon Planning Board has turned its backs on the hundreds of residents who have voiced concerns about the Prophecy Hall development and has instead leaned upon narrowly approved “professional” studies (“Prophecy Hall Clears Hurdles,” July 14).

I am waiting to hear what the project is bringing to Beacon that we don’t already have. Assessing a situation after it’s approved sounds confusing.

Marilyn Joseph, *Beacon*

The idea that this project is in a “quiet residential area” is a joke. This building is in the middle of Route 9D, a major thoroughfare that has many businesses nearby. I get not wanting to live near a business, but in building and buying near a former church building it should have been clear that there would be uses for the location that could or would result in people attending events.

Jeffery Battersby, *Beacon*

I live close to the proposed project and want to be clear that I would not oppose it if I lived on Main Street (Beacon’s business district) and Prophecy Theater was trying to open its concert hall/event space there. However, I live in a residential building in a residentially zoned district; a building approved by the Planning Board.

If the Planning Board disregards the obvious adverse impacts this project would have on its neighbors and finds a way to greenlight it, the board would effectively be throwing the residents of this quiet residential section under the bus while sending a clear message that the city elevates the rights of inappropriate and disruptive businesses over those of taxpaying residents.

Matthew Bloom, *Beacon*

It seems the River Ridge folks forget that no one wanted their condo building built on Route 9D, either. How quickly the NIMBY card is played. They live on a major thoroughfare, across from a firehouse, and they are concerned about potentially noisy concerts twice a week where they might want to keep their windows closed for two hours? People can’t move to a city and expect there not to be a moderate amount of noise. The noise from Billy Joe’s Ribworks across the river [on the Newburgh waterfront] is going to be louder than this place.

Erin Giunta, *via Facebook*

Having sat through two years of Planning Board meetings and public hearings, I am disheartened to see that the board has voted to approve a “negative declaration,” indicating that the board believes the project will not adversely affect the environment.

There is still a vote to come for the special permit and site plan. The City of Beacon ordinance states that in order to approve a special permit, the project will not be more objectionable to nearby properties by reason of noise, fumes, vibration or other characteristics than would be the operations of any use that doesn’t require a special permit.

A reasonable person can clearly see that this project will significantly and permanently harm our neighborhood. The developer has said he will restore the church and cemetery. They use this as a “selling point.” But in the two years they have owned the property, it has fallen into even greater disrepair, and they have yet to specify any detailed plans for restoration. This lack of maintenance indicates to me that they will not be good neighbors.

If this project is approved, it will be setting a dangerous precedent, putting an entertainment venue in a historic building in a residential neighborhood. What would be next? Converting the Rose Hill Manor Day School into a comedy club?

Yes, I live next door to the proposed project, so I will be among the 400 nearby residents who will be significantly damaged. And yes, I have a vested interest. But then again, who would want a next-door venue with multiple events of up to 150 attendees each being dropped off and picked up every Friday, Saturday and Sunday? Wolcott Avenue traffic is already backed up for a

mile on weekends.

Noise is not the only issue. The patrons at Billy Joe’s do not park in our neighborhood, nor do they enter and leave an entertainment venue 150 at a time at all times of the day.

Steven Jaffe, *Beacon*

The developer has built into his plan the ability to host multiple events in single days, multiple times a week, so the suggestion that people would just keep their windows closed for short periods is not fair or reasonable. After sitting through nearly every Planning Board meeting for the past year, I know many residents — old Beacon and “new” Beacon (whatever that means) — find this unacceptable.

Shelley Simmons-Bloom, *via Facebook*

There is a reason why this project has been in a public hearing (and 15-plus iterations) for two years: It does not have a viable business model or sufficient parking, and it is not zoning-compliant. The developer has reduced the scale of attendees but wants to be able to host multiple events per day, which goes back to the original plan of 300-plus attendees per day.

Thankfully, as of now, the proposal to place a public path through the historic cemetery has been taken off the table.

Rachel Rivkind, *via Instagram*

### River rescue

Unfortunately, this story is yet another sad reminder of how the former Putnam County executive and her puppets on the Legislature stripped the Sheriff’s Office of the funding for its Hudson River patrol, as well as the free boat provided to the county by New York State, over a political vendetta (“Park Manager Risks Life to Aid Swimmers,” July 14). We shouldn’t be relying upon civilian boaters in these situations.

Frank Staub, *via Facebook*

Because signs are posted that no swimming is allowed at Little Stony Point, the swimmers were clearly trespassing and should be charged and made to pay the costs of their rescue.

Robert Cullen, *via Facebook*

(Continued on Page 7)

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## LETTERS AND COMMENTS

*(Continued from Page 6)*

I counted 12 emergency vehicles racing at high speed down Route 9D to aid this rescue. Many of these folks are volunteers. I'm glad lives were saved, but what a complete waste of resources — all because some knuckleheads chose to ignore the multiple no-swimming signs.

We should be discouraging swimming in the Hudson off the shoreline; otherwise, we are incentivizing moral hazards, risking more waste and, most important, endangering first responders.

Ben Cheah, *via Facebook*

Instead of a warning, let's put up a large sign with photos of all the swimmers who didn't obey the no-swimming sign and are now corpses.

Laurie Gallio, *via Facebook*

Here is another instance where the coordinated efforts of State Parks, Scenic Hudson, the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail and private citizens can and likely will improve safe access to the river. Go HHFT! A swimming program at Little Stony Point with barrier ropes and a supervisor would do a great deal to improve safety. Ever see the River Pool in Beacon? No reason why a larger version at Little Stony Point wouldn't work.

Lynn Miller, *via Facebook*

A river pool at Little Stony Point would give people a safer option for swimming in the river, which some folks obviously already do despite the fact it is prohibited at the park. But it's been removed from the Fjord Trail plan and won't be reconsidered until the main trail is complete, and then only if it is deemed helpful to visitation management and/or is actively requested by the community.

MJ Martin, *via Facebook*

*Martin is the director of development and community engagement for the Fjord Trail.*

## Haldane plan

I was gobsmacked by the numbers in the proposed capital improvement plan for the Haldane school district ("Haldane Reviews \$108 Million Plan," July 7).

In my work as a project manager since 1993, I have estimated, built and remodeled several K-12 schools and universities. In New York City, the top end of such enterprises rarely exceeds \$900 per square foot. The three phases of the capital plan for Haldane calculate to \$1,884, \$2,728 and \$2,287 per square foot.

Those numbers far exceed any school project in New York history; the highest recorded was \$1,400 per square foot, which shocked people and stirred outrage.

Such enterprises are beyond the pale of reason. Perhaps an extra decimal informs the planner's budget equation?

Derek Graham, *Cold Spring*

## Free parking

Beacon should not adopt paid parking ("Wide Angle: The High Cost of Free Parking," July 7). Maximum municipal profit from tourists should not come at the expense of the residents, and a pay-to-play

model is an inequitable "solution" that bars our marginalized and vulnerable residents from accessing main districts in our city.

Paid parking in Beacon would increase demand for police presence and overburden lifelong residents with unnecessary fines and daily fees. If the concern is about car emissions from cruising, we should be focusing on ways to make the city a safer place to bike and expanding free shuttle service.

Justice McCray, *via Instagram*

*McCray is a member of the Beacon City Council.*

City residents should receive free permits. When I lived in Washington, D.C., this was floated for the different wards (it was adopted after we left). It allowed residents to park free 24 hours a day (except during street cleaning) but restricted street parking for non-residents to two hours per day.

I feel like that is a fair model and could reserve parking for people who live near Main Street. The cost of enforcement would be a larger issue, though. I don't feel we should burden the police with enforcing parking, although I do wish they would enforce laws against bad driving.

Harper Langston, *via Instagram*

There should not be paid parking on Main Street. The residents of Beacon who park on the streets when the tourists are not around should not be punished for the weekend warriors.

We don't have a parking garage in Beacon — maybe it's time to build one?

Carlin Felder, *via Instagram*

If only there were a way to reduce the number of cars parking in Cold Spring, like a giant boat that dropped people off.

Michael Barone, *via Instagram*

## Seastreak

Fascinating: The Cold Spring Village Board turned away summer tourist dollars ("Seastreak Denied August Dockings," July 7). I'm sure the small businesses in Cold Spring will make up for it during those busy winter months.

Peekskill is rebuilding its pier to accommodate large vessels — hopefully our community welcomes visitors with open arms.

Frederick Dennstedt, *via Instagram*

## Gun orders

I don't think red-flagging 220 people in a county with 300,000 people can be characterized as a "skyrocketing" increase ("Orders Barring Gun Possession Skyrocket," July 14). Exaggerating just riles people up about gun rights, while 99.93 percent of the Dutchess population can still have all the guns they want.

James Case Leal, *via Instagram*

## Coffee shops

There should be a moratorium on coffee shops in Beacon ("Coffee with an 'Artisinal' Flair," July 7). Bank Square and Trax were all that was needed on each side of town and God knows why there is a coffee shop that has cats crawling all over the place.

Christopher Pelaia, *via Instagram*



Dana Levenberg

*File photo*

## Living Green

# Legislative Wins

By Krystal Ford

If the air isn't hazy and air quality poor because of Canadian wildfires, our roads are washing away in floods. The climate crisis is playing itself out in our backyard and, while there are a handful of dedicated climate-deniers and players who benefit financially from climate delay, most people are realizing the urgency of our predicament.

Will that sense of urgency translate into political action? When the state Legislature wrapped up its session last month, there was progress made.

Among the big climate wins were new laws that require state-owned properties that receive power from the New York Power Authority to run on renewable energy by 2030 (the Build Public Renewables Act); ban fossil-fuel hookups in newly constructed buildings of seven stories or fewer after Dec. 31, 2025, and for taller buildings as of Jan. 1, 2029 (the All-Electric Building Act); and create a Climate Action Fund, at least 33 percent of which will be earmarked for consumer and small-business clean energy.

These three bills became law through the budget approval process. Other notable bills passed by both houses and waiting action by the governor would protect Class C streams (designated by use, not size, in this case for non-contact recreation) and prevent corn, soybean and wheat seeds from being treated with neonicotinoid pesticides ("neonics") starting in 2027 to protect birds and bees.

Dana Levenberg, a Democrat whose district includes Philipstown, was elected last year and joined Jonathan Jacobson, a Democrat whose district includes Beacon, in representing the Highlands. When Levenberg campaigned for the seat, climate change and sustainability were prominent on her platform. She's been busy so far: Eight of her prime-sponsored bills passed both houses of the Legislature, more than any other first-year member of the Assembly had.

One bill that garnered much support (and opposition) was the Save the Hudson Act, which would prevent Holtec, the company that is decommissioning the Indian Point nuclear power plant, from discharging wastewater from the plant into the river. (Jacobson is a co-sponsor.) It passed both houses and also awaits action by the governor.

While some bills weren't passed, such as the Climate Superfund Act, the Clean Fuel Standard, Just Energy Transition Act and New York Home Energy Affordable Transition Act (NY HEAT), Levenberg said: "We're moving in the right direction."

You know the old saying that you can't put the cart before the horse? Levenberg said she believes "we need to do both. We need things to happen simultaneously. We've already waited so long to address the climate. I am so glad we are doing that now. But we can't drag our feet for very long."

The Climate Superfund Act would require oil and gas producers in the state to pay \$30 billion over the next decade for their share of total greenhouse gas emissions since 2000. It's only fair that those who contributed significantly to the buildup of climate-warming greenhouse gases in the atmosphere bear a share of the costs of needed infrastructure investments to adapt to climate change.

Levenberg said she will continue to push for the NY HEAT Act, which would cap energy bills at 6 percent of a low- or middle-income household's monthly income, end New York's remaining fossil-fuel subsidies and create a transition plan to reduce the state's reliance on natural gas.

Now that the legislative session is over, Levenberg will be back in the district. Her office is planning a breakfast called Sustaining our Seniors on Wednesday (July 26) at Cortlandt Town Hall that will include information on affordable energy upgrades and an electric car demonstration.

"My mantra is building healthy communities that are environmentally, economically, physically, mentally healthy," Levenberg said. "I am always focusing on that."

As the smoke fades and the roads are repaired, we should rest up, enjoy being outdoors when we can and set our sights on the next legislative session. Like Sisyphus, keep pushing the boulder up the hill in the hope we succeed.

## Ben Noll *(from Page 1)*

warming world. That's not debatable. We need to be more aware of some of the things that we're likely to experience. Change has always happened in the Earth's climate, but it's obvious that we're playing a role now.

**You noted on July 8 that because the temperature is getting hotter in the Hudson Valley, the atmosphere will be able to hold more moisture, which will increase the likelihood of major rainstorms and flash floods. And the next day we got flooded.**

It's crazy. And when you take those same sets of meteorological conditions that caused the flooding, and you run that 10, 20, 50 years into the future with an even warmer atmosphere, with everything else being equal, we'd expect even more rain than what occurred. As the temperature continues to rise, the atmosphere's moisture-holding capacity continues to rise. Based upon that, we'd expect more rain half a century down the line than what happened on July 9.

**What are some of the other ways in which climate change is affecting the Hudson Valley?**

The temperature is the most obvious. That comes with a compression of the winter season. You're having fewer cold extremes, and you're getting warmer earlier while getting colder later. You're squeezing the winter and seeing summer expand out. That

may increase the growing season, and there will be fewer frosty days with time. The Hudson Valley climate is becoming more like a climate that you find in the mid-Atlantic. You're shifting that latitude band down south a little bit, so the Hudson Valley's becoming more like Baltimore or Washington, D.C.

**“** The Hudson Valley climate is becoming more like a climate that you find in the mid-Atlantic. You're shifting that latitude band down south a little bit, so the Hudson Valley's becoming more like Baltimore or Washington, D.C.

I broke it down into month-by-month trends. With temperature, it's trending warmer in every single month of the year. But I thought it was interesting to see that the winter is the season that has the strongest warming trend in the Hudson Valley, which doesn't bode well for a guy like me who loves snow.

So temperature change is the biggest trend. The moisture trend is probably No. 2. Although the atmosphere has a higher moisture content, that doesn't necessarily mean that every single year is going to be progressively wetter. There are other natural driv-

ers that sit in Mother Nature's edging room that are squeezing moisture out of the clouds. In one particular year those drivers might be encouraging more high pressure, which means that, although there may be more moisture up there, it's not coming down. So annual rainfall still shows a lot of variability.

However, in terms of extremes — like we've seen with the hurricanes in the last couple of years that have brought flash flooding, or the extreme thunderstorms and how much moisture is in the atmosphere that we can wring out — that's where you're going to see the record totals being hit more routinely and more easily. There's also humidity. I'm not seeing any sharp jumps over the last six decades; it's more like a gentle upward trend, and some recent years have been among the most humid, such as 2018 and 2020.

With snowfall, the last couple of decades we've seen a general downward trend. It's a interesting one because snowfall is still inherently variable. Let's say we have a big storm system coming up the East Coast, a nor'easter. There's more moisture available for it than it would otherwise have. And if it's just cold enough for it to snow, then you can still have a blizzard. But we're sitting closer to that fine line of being cold enough for snow, or changing to have a wintry mix and then going to rain.

With rising temperatures, that rain/snow line is going to sit farther inland, which is going to push the snow up the mountains. Down in the Hudson Valley, especially those towns on the river that are subject to the effects of maritime air from the Atlantic, and the Hudson running warmer, that could also be an issue. We saw it last winter, where it may have snowed inland or in higher elevations away from the river. But in those towns right along the river's edge, it was a real struggle to get it to be frozen precipitation.

That doesn't mean that we won't have big snowfalls. When it happens, I know people are going to say: “You said climate change was going to end this, but we've gotten a lot of snow this year.” But it's about the big picture. It's about what it's looked like over the last couple of decades, and that broader trend, rather than year-to-year variability.

**What should Hudson Valley towns be doing to prepare for these changes?**

This is where the rubber meets the road. My area of expertise is going through the data, picking out the signals from the noise and doing the forecasting. I would say that, using what we saw on July 9 as an example, and the eroding of the road networks, you need to build back stronger. Build back things that are going to be more resilient to extremes: the hotter temperatures, the more extreme rainfall. Maybe the snow part is a bit of good news; the roads won't get as beat up over the winter. But we need resiliency, which may mean higher costs, but those things will be hopefully serving you long into the future, toward the end of the century.

**Is it hard to forecast the weather for a place where you no longer live?**

Nowadays, you can forecast for anywhere on the globe, as long as you have an internet connection. I look at weather station informa-

tion, forecast model information and satellite information. That's all online. Where it gets tough is when you're in a storm situation, and it's unfolding in real time and you don't have your eyes on the ground. That's where social media comes in; that's my virtual look. Over the years, when I've come back to the region for a couple of weeks, the forecasting is inherently easier because I'm there and experiencing the conditions.

**New Zealand has a reputation as a place that's going to be “safe” from climate change, so billionaires are buying land and building bunkers. Will it be safe?**

No! That thing with people building bunkers down here started because there was research that showed that if there were a nuclear war, we'd be the least susceptible to the ill effects because we're in the Southern Hemisphere and the air flows from that are unlikely to bleed south here. But in terms of climate change, that narrative has been flipped on its head. We're a small island in the middle of the South Pacific. The ocean is a huge part of the economy and our way of life here. We've had a bunch of marine heat waves. Our coastal waters have run anywhere from 4 to 8 degrees Fahrenheit warmer than average.

With those heat waves, we started to see tropical fish migrating southward. Fish that wouldn't normally be here are moving here and driving some of the local species out of their natural environments. We saw penguin mortality. That's not something you think of in the Northern Hemisphere, but we're close to Antarctica and we do have penguins. In the summer they feed on and near our coasts; they're looking for fish. But because the marine heat wave was making our coastal waters so warm, the fish they eat are seeking deeper, colder waters, so the penguins were having to swim farther out to sea. That activity was leading them to become thin, and then they were getting hypothermia as a result of a warming climate.

**“** There are no climate havens. No one is immune to the effects of extreme weather. We're continuing to warm the globe. But the quicker we make the changes that we need to make ... well, at this point we can't avoid all the extreme events.

We've also had tropical cyclones and hurricanes. Last year we had a number of humongous floods. We had over 20 inches of rain in a month. I see a close parallel to what has happened in the Hudson Valley this month.

There are no climate havens. No one is immune to the effects of extreme weather. We're continuing to warm the globe. But the quicker we make the changes that we need to make ... well, at this point we can't avoid all the extreme events. But we can choose a more tolerable level of extremes. It's the lesser of multiple evils.

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PHOTO BY T. CHARLES ERICKSON

# State Accepting Proposals for Former Prison

*Housing prioritized for property served by Beacon water*

By Leonard Sparks

New York is prioritizing housing as its development arm begins searching for a firm to buy and redevelop the former Downstate Correctional Facility property, which lies north of Beacon and draws water from the city.

Empire State Development on Tuesday (July 18) released a long-anticipated request for proposals for the 80-acre, state-owned site on Red Schoolhouse Road in Fishkill, which opened in 1979 as a 1,200-cell maximum-security prison and closed in March 2022.

In the request, Empire State Development specifies it will favor proposals that allocate at least 20 percent of residential units to affordable housing.

The state has set aside up to \$8 million in grants for the winning proposal. Responses are due by Aug. 23.

Although the state is prioritizing housing, Fishkill Supervisor Ozzy Albra said he would prefer to see a commercial development on the property, which is zoned for single-family homes, with one residence



The Downstate prison property

Photo provided

allowed for each acre.

Albra said he is not opposed to housing, but does not want “500, 600 residential units” on the property. “We’d like to see some type of industry, like a microchip plant or a battery plant,” he said. “I’d rather see something that creates a lot of money and creates jobs.”

The request for proposals says that the property may be eligible for a zoning variance, but Albra noted that would be subject to approval by the Fishkill Town Board. The

request also notes that “a general project plan” through Empire State Development could be considered to override local zoning.

Downstate has 37 buildings with a total of 558,000 square feet. In addition to supplying water, Beacon also treated the prison’s sewage.

New York announced the closure of Downstate and five other prisons in November 2021, estimating that the shutdowns would save \$142 million annually. The Department of Corrections and Community

said at the time that its inmate population had declined 57 percent since 1999, leading to the closure of 20 correctional facilities.

The 40-acre former site of the Beacon Correctional Facility has also been identified for redevelopment. The property sits a block off Matteawan Road between Beacon High School and the Fishkill Correctional Facility and is the largest available undeveloped tract in the city.

In 2019, Empire State Development awarded development rights for the site, also known as Camp Beacon, to Urban Green Food, a New York City-based firm that plans to create a “bike farm” with a hotel and courtyard, an indoor track-and-field venue and an arena for indoor cycling known as a velodrome, along with dozens of acres of farmland and bike trails.

Eric Anderson, the founder of Urban Green Builders, the parent company of Urban Green Food, spoke to the City Council in 2019 about his proposal and said in November 2021 that he intended to bring the project to the Beacon Planning Board last year.

Urban Green Builders has yet to submit an application to the Planning Board. Mayor Lee Kyriacou said in August that he proposed to Empire State Development that the state allocate \$6 million to create another access road to Camp Beacon that would “change the nature of what you could do on that site.”

## Beacon School Board Hit With Another Vacancy

*Board also names new South Avenue principal*

By Jeff Simms

For the fifth time in three years, the Beacon school board finds itself down a member because of a resignation.

John Galloway Jr., who left the board last month, said on Wednesday (July 19) that his colleagues had been “an amazing team to work with” but “it is best for me to stay away from anything political.” Galloway said he is creating an organization called Make It Through Today, “which will be centered around self-love and acceptance.”

Through the organization, “I can make an impact on the community without any political influences in the way — just simple love and care,” he said. The project will include community holiday events, back-to-school drives — “any way I can help my community,” he said.

At the board’s June 5 meeting, Superintendent Matt Landahl praised Galloway, who graduated from Beacon High School in 2015. “To have someone [on the board] who so recently went through the school district, with all the connections he has in the community — he was a powerful person to get to know and to learn from,” Landahl said.

Galloway was appointed to the board in October 2020 and elected to a three-year term in May 2021. The board can appoint a new member to serve until the next election, in May 2024, or leave the seat open. A third but seldom-used option would be to ask the Dutchess County Board of Coop-

erative Educational Services (BOCES) to appoint a new member.

No action was taken during the board’s meeting on Monday (July 17); the discussion will continue on Aug. 14.

Board Member Anthony White on Monday suggested posting an announcement asking for candidates. White has opposed filling vacancies via appointment in the past but said the board should be consistent.

Other board members noted the turmoil surrounding the 2020 appointments of Galloway and Jasmine Johnson, both of whom are Black, after an outcry over the board’s lack of diversity. (Johnson, a 2006 Beacon High School graduate, won election in 2021 but resigned in April 2022.)

While White and Eric Schetter, who was elected in May, said they have heard from community members interested in joining the board, Kristan Flynn and Meredith Heuer, the board president, each said they were reluctant to repeat what happened three years ago. With one seat already open, Board Member James Case-Leal resigned in September of that year, a week before the first in-person meeting following the pandemic shutdown, which was held on Sept. 29 with about 50 spectators socially distanced at Beacon High School’s Seeger Theater. In a resignation letter, Case-Leal said he wanted to make room for Galloway and Johnson, “two well-qualified candidates of color,” to be appointed.

Several members of the audience who addressed the board that night criticized its lack of racial diversity and suggested that

its members did not represent the Black community. At one point, after the board announced it would fill only one of the open seats that night, Heuer had to stop the meeting when audience members began shouting at each other.

“I believe that the people who joined the board were given incorrect information about the board,” Flynn said on Monday. “Looking back, it was so divisive. It shredded us for a while.”

There was also discussion Monday of reducing the size of the nine-member board, an idea that has been floated from time to time in recent years.

“Having a stable board is important to a stable district,” Heuer said. “Does [appointing a new member] increase our stability or does it decrease our stability? I’m not sure I know the answer.”

Along with Galloway, Johnson and Case-Leal, Michael Rutkoske, in his second term, resigned in July 2020 and Antony Tseng, in his third term, resigned in March of this year. Both cited work commitments.

### New principal

The board on Monday appointed Kelly Amendola as principal of South Avenue Elementary. She will start on July 31. Amendola taught middle school science in the Bronx for nine years and, for the last three years, has been an assistant principal at South Middle School in Newburgh.

Amendola succeeds Daniel Glenn. Brian Archer, the district’s director of evaluation and student services, had been the acting principal for the past five months.



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**MCKEE:**

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**FROWN**

**UPSIDE**

**DOWN”**

**JULY 23 @ 11:00 AM**

**FOR WORSHIP**

**REFLECTION**

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The Highlands Choral Society is a nonprofit organization offering nondenominational services, fully-staffed Children’s Hour, youth choir, and community

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# Beacon Boardinghouse Denied But Appeal Expected

*Owner wants to rebuild after arson destroyed structure*

By Jeff Simms

The Beacon Zoning Board of Appeals on Tuesday (July 18) upheld the building inspector's decision that the owner of a boardinghouse destroyed earlier this year by fire must rebuild in accordance with the zoning code.

The single-room occupancy house, at 925 Wolcott Ave., had been what is known as a "legal non-conforming use" in an area zoned for single-family homes. According to materials submitted to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), the three-story, 4,136-square-foot building was constructed before 1965 and had been used as a boardinghouse for short-term renters since then.

The unoccupied house was destroyed on Jan. 3 in a fire that a former tenant, 57-year-

old Brian P. Atkinson, pleaded guilty to starting. Atkinson, who was scheduled to appear in City Court for eviction proceedings filed by the owner of the house on the day of the fire, turned himself in to Beacon police.

Atkinson pleaded guilty on May 31 in Dutchess County Court to the most serious charge against him, third-degree arson, a felony which carries a maximum sentence of 5 to 15 years in jail. Judge Edward McLoughlin agreed to drop two other charges while sentencing Atkinson to 4 to 12 years in state prison and granting an order of protection for Yeshia Berger, the owner of the boardinghouse.

Berger has argued that he should be permitted to rebuild the house in keeping with a building permit he received in December to convert its 16 rental units to nine. However, Building Inspector Bruce Flower earlier this year denied that request, citing three provisions in Beacon's zoning code.

On Tuesday, the five-member ZBA voted to reverse two and uphold one of Flower's determinations regarding the building.

The members disagreed with Flower that the non-conforming use had been "removed" by the fire, noting that the blaze was started by a third party outside of Berger's control.

The board also reversed Flower's decision that a non-conforming building cannot be "structurally altered during its life" if the alterations amount to more than 25 percent of the building's fair market value. In that instance, board members said that Flower's decision would have been upheld before the arson, but that the fire effectively ended the building's "life."

Finally, the board agreed that the city code requires structures that have been more than 50 percent destroyed, such as by fire, to be rebuilt according to the current zoning regulations — in this case, as a single-family home.

Berger would only have been allowed to proceed with his December plans if the ZBA had reversed all three of Flower's determinations. Berger's attorney, Taylor Palmer, said that his client will appeal and/or ask the board to issue a variance.

Palmer argued that, according to the zoning code, a property owner has a year to rebuild a structure — even in the event of a total loss — and maintain the non-conforming use.

Numerous residents submitted letters to the Zoning Board opposing a new boardinghouse; the board also received a petition with more than 100 names asking it to deny Berger's request.

One neighbor on Tuesday called the area surrounding the site "the most dangerous intersection in Beacon" because of fights and gunfire she said had taken place there. "I've seen it all on that property," she said.

In its resolution denying Berger's request, the ZBA said it was not "deciding the merits of the applicant's proposed use and/or any opposition" but was only making decisions on the building inspector's determinations.

# Dutchess, Newburgh Await Contamination Settlements

*Billions proposed to settle lawsuits over tainted water*

By Leonard Sparks

Dutchess County and Newburgh are among the public entities eligible to receive a share of \$11.5 billion that four companies have proposed paying to settle thousands of lawsuits over water supplies contaminated by "forever chemicals" that don't easily break down in the environment.

The Dutchess County Water and Wastewater Authority and the City of Newburgh expect to receive compensation from 3M, one of the leading manufacturers of polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), and from three other companies involved in their use: Chemours, DuPont and Corteva.

3M, which said in December that it would cease making PFAS by the end of 2025, announced on June 22 that it will pay \$10.3 billion over 13 years so operators of public systems can treat their contaminated water and test for the chemicals. Twenty days earlier, Chemours, DuPont and Corteva said they would pay a combined \$1.2 billion into a fund to settle claims.

Companies that have manufactured or made or used products containing the chemicals have faced an estimated 4,000 lawsuits as states and the Environmental Protection Agency have moved to lower the amounts allowed in drinking water.

Fueling the alarm are studies linking the chemicals — used since the 1940s in products ranging from nonstick and stain- and water-resistant coatings to foams that suppress fires caused by highly flammable liquids like jet fuel — with health problems such as kidney and testicular cancers, high cholesterol and low birthweight.

Newburgh stopped drawing drinking water from Washington Lake, its longtime primary source, in May 2016 over high levels of perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), one of the most-used chemicals from the PFAS class.

The city temporarily switched to its backup source and, since then, the state has been reimbursing the city for purchases from New York City's Catskill Aqueduct. Newburgh sued the manufacturers in 2018.

Michelle Kelson, Newburgh's corporation counsel, said both settlements still require court approval and that potential beneficiaries will be given an opportunity to object to the proposals and opt in or opt out. The distribution of funds will be based on a mathematical formula that has yet to be determined, she said.

"It is too early in the process to estimate when funds will be distributed," said Kelson.

Dutchess County's Water and Wastewater Authority filed lawsuits against 3M and other companies because of contamination in 11 of the 18 water systems it owns and operates. Michael Keating, the authority's executive director, said two of those

systems are above New York State's limit of 10 parts per trillion for PFOS and PFOA, another widely used PFAS.

The well supplying one of the systems has been turned off and another system whose wells are contaminated is being connected to Hyde Park's water system.

"We're happy that something's being done to help us cope with the whole PFAS issue," said Keating. "The compensation, hopefully, we get out of the lawsuit, that remains to be seen if it's going to cover all the costs."

Other litigants include Dutchess County, which sued over a contaminated well that supplied Hudson Valley Regional Airport in Wappinger Falls, and the Putnam Valley school district, which sued 3M and other companies in December over the contamination of the well at its elementary school.

The chemicals have also been detected in Beacon and Cold Spring. The levels of PFOS

measured in Beacon's water supply ranged between 0 and 2.4 parts per trillion (ppt), and PFOA levels were measured as high as 1.88 ppt in 2021, according to the city's water-quality report for 2022.

The most recent water-quality report on Cold Spring's website is from 2017, three years before the state adopted its standards for PFOA and PFOS and required that public water systems begin routine testing for the chemicals.

But the village's 2021 report, provided by the Putnam County Health Department, shows its water testing positive for 1.59 ppt of PFOA in the fourth quarter of that year; neither PFOA or PFOS were detected in any other test from 2021. Cold Spring's 2022 report is not yet available.

Visit [highlandscurrent.org](https://highlandscurrent.org) for news updates and latest information.



**FIRE ON KEMBLE AVENUE** — The Cold Spring Fire Co. and six other fire departments battled a house fire reported at 6 a.m. on Thursday (July 20). The residents escaped before the roof collapsed.

CSFC

# Cold Spring After the Rain

*Resident concerned about flooding along Church, Garden Streets*

By Michael Turton

At the July 12 meeting of the Cold Spring Village Board, Mayor Kathleen Foley praised “the entire community for coming together and coming through the storm” on July 9.

In thanking first responders, she said the Cold Spring Fire Company had answered 22 calls in a 24-hour period related to the heavy rain. In addition, the Cold Spring Police answered eight storm-related calls, Officer-in-Charge Larry Burke told *The Current*.

Foley lauded Superintendent of Water and Wastewater Matt Kroog for being on duty on a Sunday to keep water levels under control at the sewage treatment plant on Fair Street. As a result, no wastewater was discharged into the Hudson River, a situation that occurred in several other municipalities.

“It was very impressive, you and your team,” Foley told Kroog.

During the public comment period, Church Street resident Phil Heffernan raised concern about flooding along a small, intermittent stream behind properties on Garden Street and Church Street as a result of the heavy rain. Heffernan said the stream has been ignored by the village and that its flow is plugged by silt where it leaves an underground pipe to enter the surface stream.

Foley interjected that the village is working with its consulting engineer, state and federal representatives, but that the problem begins much farther upstream.

“The problem starts all the way up in the Nelsonville Woods,” she said, adding that the stormwater system, which is largely underground until it enters the Garden Street-Church Street stream, “is sorely under-engineered and wholly inadequate.”

She said advocacy is needed in order to get state and federal funds to fix the problem because “we don’t have the money.”

Heffernan said he didn’t have time to wait for remediation that could take a decade and suggested the village dredge the problematic section of the stream.

“It’s not that simple,” Foley said. “It is part of a much larger picture. Even if we dug, it’s not going to be resolved, particularly with the force and ferocity of the storms we’re having.”

She said the storm system redesign is a long-term initiative and that measures are needed as a “bridge” to get to a solution.

“We need immediate solutions, interim solutions, and they all need to be integrated into a larger plan,” Foley said.

When Heffernan commented he would assemble a “team” to dig out the drain using shovels, Foley suggested he instead meet with her and Hahn Engineering on site to consider interim options.

## In other business...

■ The board increased docking fees, including for Seastreak’s annual fall cruises. The old rates of \$8 per foot for boats

that drop off passengers but don’t remain at the dock and \$12 per foot for boats that stay docked will increase to \$11 and \$16, respectively. Rates had not been increased since 2017. The board also approved the 2023 Seastreak schedule to include week-end cruises, including some Fridays, from Sept. 15 through mid-November.

■ Community Day is scheduled for Sept. 2, with the annual Philipstown Behavioral Health Hub 5K run to be held that morning. A request by the Chamber of Commerce to hold a music and wellness event along Main Street on Sept. 23 was tabled pending discussions with the Police Department regarding traffic and security. The possibility of combining the Sept. 23 event with Community Day was discussed but not adopted. The Chamber’s annual Cold Spring Aglow event was approved for Dec. 8.

■ Burke reported that the Cold Spring Police Department responded to 60 calls for service in June. It made one arrest for disorderly conduct. Officers issued 20 traffic tickets and, with the assistance of a weekend parking enforcement officer, 162 parking tickets.

■ The Cold Spring Fire Co. answered 25 calls in June, including those involving mutual aid to other fire companies and a rescue at Little Stony Point.

■ The mayor was authorized to amend the contract with Royal Carting to add Saturday trash pickup.

■ Cold Spring designer Alex Wilcox Cheek presented a series of designs on behalf of a team working on revisions to the village seal. The revisions are intended to make the seal more suitable for a range of uses, from parking stickers and letterhead to note cards and signage. The bandstand will continue to be the focus of the design.

## Damage Reporting

New York State is collecting reports of damages to local homes and businesses to support an application for federal disaster relief.

An inventory of damages is needed to determine if the amount of private property damage in this region meets the threshold for federal reimbursement, explained Assembly Member Dana Levenberg, whose district includes Philipstown and Putnam Valley, in an email to constituents.

“Note that this form is not an application for relief programs, but the information you submit will be helpful in our efforts to get more relief,” she wrote. “Separately, be sure to document your damage in photos and keep receipts for costs related to storm damage in case you qualify for reimbursement.”

The Damage Self-Reporting Tool is located at [bit.ly/storm-damage-report](https://bit.ly/storm-damage-report).



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James Helbock  
(1935-2023)

James William Helbock, a resident of Cold Spring, NY passed away peacefully on July 12, 2023, surrounded by his loving family. He was 88. Born and raised in Brooklyn, NY, son of James C. and Margaret (Vogel) Helbock, Jim led a remarkable life filled with courage, dedication, and service to others.

After graduating from high school and marrying Maria Heinrich on October 10, 1954, Jim enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and earned the rank of sergeant. He then embarked on a distinguished career with the New York City Police Department (NYPD), where he rose to the rank of Deputy Chief. Throughout his tenure, Jim served as the Commanding Officer of the Bomb Squad, Mounted Police, Photography, Crime Scene, and Health Services units. After retiring from the NYPD, Jim began a new chapter as the Chief of Security for the Rockefeller family.

Jim’s pursuit of excellence was enhanced by a lifetime commitment to learning. He attended the prestigious FBI National Academy in Quantico, VA. He also earned a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Fordham University, graduating Summa Cum Laude.

Jim also served his community - Cold Spring, NY where the Helbocks moved in 1969 and Palm Harbor, FL where Jim and Maria wintered in retirement. He was President of the Cold Spring Lions Club and the Pine Ridge Men’s Club (FL). He also served on the Board of Directors at Pine Ridge. In addition to his profes-

sional and community achievements, Jim was a devout Catholic and faithful parishioner of Our Lady of Loretto Church where he was an usher. As a final example of his commitment to serving humanity, Jim and his family have donated his brain to the Mount Sinai/JJ Peters VA Medical Center National Brain and Tissue Repository, to aid in finding a cure for brain related disorders.

While Jim accomplished much in his professional life, his greatest source of pride and joy was his family. He shared 68 wonderful years of marriage with his beloved Maria. Jim was a devoted and caring father to his children, Patricia (Philip) D’Amato of Cold Spring, Christine (Brian) Berg of Menomonee Falls, WI, Gregg (Ann) Helbock of Hull, MA, Paul (Maria) Helbock of Cold Spring, and Judith Helbock-Senft of Wallingford, CT. He is also survived by his fifteen grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, sister, Carolyn McCarty of Locust Grove, VA, sister-in-law, Claire Brusie of Carmel, NY and numerous nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his sisters, Rose Ortega, Agnes Helbock and Doris Feehan.

A Funeral Mass to honor Jim’s life will be celebrated at Our Lady of Loretto Church on Thursday, July 20 at 11 am. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to Our Lady of Loretto Church, 24 Fair Street, Cold Spring, NY or the Alzheimer’s Association ([act.alz.org](http://act.alz.org)) in Jim’s name, as a reflection of his commitment to helping others.

AROUND TOWN



**FRUIT PIZZA** – Chef Rebecca Weber hosted a workshop for children to create edible designs at the Desmond-Fish Public Library in Garrison on July 15. One child constructed a turtle (left).



**COMMUNITY COOKOUT** – Beacon residents held an annual cookout at South Avenue Park on July 15. The event included food, raffles and basketball. *Photos by Ross Corsair*

In a still from *After the Bite*, beachgoers scan the water for sharks.

"Know your risk when entering the water."

## The Calendar

# THE SHARK ATTACK THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING

## In new film, Ivy Meeropol casts a wide net

By Alison Rooney

Ivy Meeropol, a documentary film director and producer who lives in Cold Spring, says she likes to embark on each new project with an open mind. She aims to explore while shooting, avoiding plugging people into what she expects from them.

She found that mindset to be particularly helpful while shooting *After the Bite* two summers ago in and around Wellfleet, Massachusetts, in what is known as the Outer Cape. In 2018, a swimmer was killed by a great white shark, the first such fatality there in 82 years. The sharks are likely drawn toward shore by an increase in seals, which, in turn, are probably thriving because of federal protections.

On an exploratory shoot, Meeropol visited Muskeget Island, the southernmost breeding place of grey seals. "I always had the seals in mind," she says. "I knew in my gut there was a bigger story, which was how what was thought of as a conservation success story with the seals was causing so many problems."

Starting with the swimmer's death and its emotional, scientific and civic ramifications

on the beach community, Meeropol expands outward, casting her net to include fishermen of Portuguese descent who've earned their livelihood in the waters for decades, New England pragmatists and eccentrics, and scientists, many of them women, who are exploring the effects of climate change.

"This is happening with this one community, which is figuring out how to handle these rapid changes, and consider others, like smoke from the [Canadian] forest fires," Meeropol says. "This story captures major changes, some good, some bad, looking at how we handle them. I think the Cape community is doing well, without vilifying anyone."

It was important to Meeropol not only to get the science right, but to get the people right, and, perhaps most of all, the community, to which she has a personal connection.

The filmmaker grew up in western Massachusetts and spent a lot of time at the Outer Cape as a child and after she graduated from college, when she moved into a house her parents had bought. She spent a winter "regrouping, writing. I met my husband there, along with a whole slew of friends. I love the life out there, merging Old World fishing community, artists, gay people. It felt like another home, and I returned every year."

Later, after working in politics in Washington, D.C., she found herself "needing a



Ivy Meeropol directs filming. Photos provided

retreat and finding it there, again. It led me to start writing again, and gave me that loneliness you need to generate productivity. Being by myself there helped me figure out the path I'm on now."

Much more recently, struck with the idea for the film, Meeropol "spent the entire pandemic meeting people [from the community] and filming them from my phone."

A couple of years later it has all come together as *After the Bite*, which premiered

(Continued on Page 16)

## More Meeropol

*Bully. Coward. Victim.*  
*The Story of Roy Cohn* (2019)

This film looks at the life of the Joe McCarthy ally and Donald Trump mentor who died of AIDS in 1986. In the early 1950s, he established his reputation prosecuting Meeropol's grandparents, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, as spies.

*Indian Point* (2015)

This film examines the risks and rewards of the nuclear power plant, located 45 miles from midtown Manhattan. (It was closed in 2021.)

*The Hill* (2006)

This six-part series, which appeared on the Sundance Channel, goes behind the scenes on Capitol Hill with Rep. Robert Wexler, a Florida Democrat.

*Heir to an Execution* (2004)

In her debut film, Meeropol explores the lives of her grandparents, who were executed in 1953.

Two stills from Ivy Meeropol's documentary, *After the Bite*

# THE WEEK AHEAD

Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)

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

## COMMUNITY

SAT 22

### PowWow

BEAR MOUNTAIN

11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Anthony Wayne Recreation Area  
Palisades Interstate Pkwy  
bearmtpw23.eventbrite.com

More than 500 Native American artists, educators, singers, dancers and performing groups from across the Americas will participate and there will be booths with food, crafts, jewelry and more for sale. Members of the Lakota, Navajo, Mohawk, Seneca, Cherokee, Aztec, Mayan, Samoan, Hawaiian and other tribes will be there. Also SUN 23. *Cost: \$15 (\$10 seniors, students, children ages 6 to 12)*

WED 26

### Capturing Our Community

COLD SPRING

Noon. Butterfield Library  
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040  
butterfieldlibrary.org

Pick up a disposable camera and explore the neighborhood with a group to take photos that will be used in an exhibition with the summer theme, All Together Now.

SAT 29

### Putnam Country Fest and 4-H Showcase

CARMEL

10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Memorial Park  
20 Gypsy Trail Road  
cceputnamcounty.org

See the projects and animals that 4-H youth have prepared along with musical performances by David Amram, the NY Cruisers and the Nimham Mountain Singers. There will be food, games, crafts and family activities. Also SUN 30.



## TALKS & TOURS

SUN 23

### Death Cafe

GARRISON

3 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020  
desmondfishlibrary.org

Join a discussion about death led by librarian Ryan Biracree, who is a death doula. See Page 2.



Kindness Rocks, July 28

TUES 25

### Community Read

GARRISON

3 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020  
desmondfishlibrary.org

Join a discussion of Dara Horn's *People Love Dead Jews: Reports from a Haunted Present*, an exploration of Jewish history alongside the rise of anti-Semitism.

SAT 29

### Flower-Arranging Workshop

WAPPINGERS FALLS

10 a.m. Common Ground Farm  
79 Farmstead Lane  
commongroundfarm.org

Farmer Katie will lead a walk through the fields to gather flowers and demonstrate methods for making bouquets. *Cost: \$40 (\$25 members)*

## KIDS & FAMILY

SAT 22

### Science Heroes

GARRISON

2 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020  
desmondfishlibrary.org

Talewise will lead a hands-on storytelling adventure with experiments for children ages 5 and older. Registration required.

MON 24

### Student Conservation Club

GARRISON

2 – 4 p.m. Constitution Marsh  
127 Warren Landing Road  
constitution.audubon.org

High school students interested in conservation and environmental issues will work on projects and explore the marsh at meetings every other week this summer. Registration required.

TUES 25

### Bugs On Wheels

BEACON

4 p.m. Howland Public Library  
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134  
beaconlibrary.org

Learn how to design and construct racing “bugs.” For children ages 4 to 10. Registration required.

WED 26

### Escape Room

BEACON

4 p.m. Howland Public Library  
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134  
beaconlibrary.org

Students ages 11 and older will have an hour to solve a mystery. Registration required.

FRI 28

### Kindness Rocks

GARRISON

3 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020  
desmondfishlibrary.org

Materials will be provided to create goodwill with a message or design on a rock that will be added to the library walking path.

## STAGE & SCREEN

SAT 22

### Screenings

BEACON

12:30 p.m. KuBe Art Center  
211 Fishkill Ave.  
beaconopenstudios.com

The Beacon Film Society will showcase short documentaries, experimental films and fictional works by David Sampliner and Rachel Shuman, Louise Bartolotta, Ophir Ariel, Reuben Hernandez and Mark Sanders as part of Beacon Open Studios. Also SUN 23 at Cinehub.

SAT 22

### Bugsy Malone Jr.

GARRISON

4:30 & 7 p.m.  
Philipstown Depot Theatre  
10 Garrison's Landing | 845-424-3900  
philipstowndepottheatre.org

The Depot Kids will stage the musical, based on the 1976 film, about rival gangs of children in the 1920s striving to get the upper hand. The actors, in grades 4 to 7, are directed by teen mentors Percy Parker, Sam Bates, Helen Hutchinson and Robert Freimark. *Cost: \$12*

SAT 22

### Love's Labor's Lost

GARRISON

7:30 p.m. Hudson Valley Shakespeare  
2015 Route 9 | 845-265-9575  
hvshakespeare.org

Amanda Dehnert directs this

production as four young men try to uphold their commitment to their studies and not be tempted by the arrival of four women. Also MON 24, WED 26, THURS 27, FRI 28, SUN 30. Through Aug. 27. *Cost: \$10 to \$100*

SAT 22

### On Golden Pond

WAPPINGERS FALLS

8 p.m. County Players Theater  
2681 W. Main St. | 845-298-1491  
countyplayers.org

The well-known play about family and connection focuses on Ethel and Norman, a couple spending their 48th year at an idyllic summer cottage, with a visit from their daughter and her family. *Cost: \$22 (\$20 seniors, military, students and ages 12 and younger)*

SAT 22

### Accattone

PHILIPSTOWN

8 p.m. Magazzino Italian Art  
2700 Route 9 | magazzino.art

For the sixth annual Cinema in Piazza series, presented with the Cold Spring Film Society and Artecinema, curator Roberta Minnucci will focus on Rome. Pier Paolo Pasolini's 1961 film follows a man who lives on the edge of society, surviving by prostituting women until his most successful worker is jailed and his fortunes turn. *Cost: \$20 (\$15 seniors, \$10 students)*

SAT 22

### Vinny DePonto: Mind Reader

BEACON

8 p.m. Howland Cultural Center  
477 Main St. | howlandculturalcenter.org

The performer received critical acclaim for his off-Broadway show. *Cost: \$30 (\$35 door)*

SAT 22

### Moonrise Kingdom

COLD SPRING

8:30 p.m. Dockside Park  
coldspringfilm.org

The Cold Spring Film Society will screen Wes Anderson's 2012 film about a pair of 12-year-olds who fall in love and run away, and the adults that must find them on an island as a storm approaches. *Free*

SUN 23

### Suzanne Cleary

PUTNAM VALLEY

3 p.m. Tompkins Corners Cultural Center  
729 Peekskill Hollow Road  
tompkinscorners.org

The poet, whose most recent collection is *Crude Angel*, will read from her work, followed by an open mic. *Cost: \$10*

SUN 23

### Summer Dance Fest

PEEKSKILL

5 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley  
1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039  
paramounthudsonvalley.com

Gateway Arts Collective's multicultural celebration will include local dancers as well as guest artists from other companies. *Cost: \$15*

SUN 23

### Roma

PHILIPSTOWN

7 p.m. Magazzino Italian Art  
2700 Route 9 | magazzino.art

For the sixth annual Cinema in Piazza series, presented with the Cold Spring Film Society and Artecinema, curator Roberta Minnucci will focus on Rome. Federico Fellini's 1972 homage recounts his move as a young man from his native Rimini. *Cost: \$20 (\$15 seniors, \$10 students)*

SUN 23

### Henry V

GARRISON

7:30 p.m. Hudson Valley Shakespeare  
2015 Route 9 | 845-265-9575  
hvshakespeare.org

HVSF presents the epic tale of King Henry and his war to seize the French crown. Emily Ota plays the lead. Also SAT 29. *Cost: \$10 to \$100*

SUN 23

### Pinot & Augustine

BEACON

8 p.m. Howland Cultural Center  
477 Main St. | howlandculturalcenter.org

The clown duo will perform vintage pieces of circus theater with music and pratfalls. *Cost: \$15 (free for ages 12 and younger)*

SUN 23

### Screenings

BEACON

8 p.m. The Yard | 4 Hanna Lane  
beaconopenstudios.com

Story Screen will showcase films by local filmmakers, including Amani Jamal, Jeremy Kolodziejski, John Frith, Mike Burdge and Tim Hall.

THURS 27

### The Prom

GARRISON

7 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre  
10 Garrison's Landing | 845-424-3900  
philipstowndepottheatre.org

Depot Teens will stage this musical about four Broadway actors on a journey to a conservative Indiana town that is banning a lesbian student from attending the prom with her girlfriend. Also FRI 28, SAT 29, SUN 30. *Cost: \$12*



FRI 28

### Peekskill Film Festival

PEEKSKILL

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

The selections include features, shorts, documentaries and animation by emerging filmmakers. Also SAT 29. *Cost: \$20*

**SAT 29**  
**Goonies**  
**BEACON**  
6:30 & 7:30 p.m. Boats leave dock 845-831-6346 | [bannermancastle.org](http://bannermancastle.org)  
Visit Bannerman Island for an outdoor screening of the 1985 film about a group of misfit kids in search of lost treasure. *Cost: \$40*

MUSIC

**SAT 22**  
**At The Movies**  
**NEWBURGH**  
4 p.m. Mount Saint Mary College 330 Powell Ave. 845-913-7157 | [newburghsymphony.org](http://newburghsymphony.org)  
The Greater Newburgh Symphony Orchestra will perform music at Aquinas Hall from well-known soundtracks, including *Indiana Jones*, *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* and *The Godfather*. *Cost: \$25 to \$50 (students free)*

**SAT 22**  
**A Jazz Journey Through the Five Senses**  
**COLD SPRING**  
5 p.m. Butterfield Library 10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040 [butterfieldlibrary.org](http://butterfieldlibrary.org)  
Daniel Kelly and his daughter, Sofia, will create a multisensory experience. *Free*

**SAT 22**  
**Trove**  
**GARRISON**  
5 p.m. Manitoga | 584 Route 9D 845-424-3812 | [visitmanitoga.org](http://visitmanitoga.org)  
Ben Neill (below) and Eric Calvi will perform his site-specific ambient composition at the Quarry Pool. *Cost: \$40 (\$35 members)*



**SAT 22**  
**Beacon Open Studios Concert**  
**BEACON**  
6:30 p.m. The Yard | 4 Hanna Lane [beaconopenstudios.com](http://beaconopenstudios.com)  
The first-ever concert organized by Beacon Open Studios will include performances by Rose Stoller, Katie Martucci, Glenn Echo and Carrtoons. *Cost: \$20*

**SAT 22**  
**Bass Bridge Quartet**  
**BEACON**  
8 p.m. Ballet Arts Studio | 107 Teller Ave. [bassbridge.eventbrite.com](http://bassbridge.eventbrite.com)  
The multi-instrumental players,

including Che Chen, Dave Hofstra, William Parker and Dave Sewelson, will perform on upright bass. *Cost: \$20 (\$30 door)*

**SAT 22**  
**Duke Robillard Blues Band**  
**BEACON**  
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. 845-855-1300 | [townecrier.com](http://townecrier.com)  
The guitarist, vocalist and songwriter will lead his band in swing, blues, standards and rockabilly. *Cost: \$30 (\$35 door)*

**FRI 28**  
**Best of the Beatles**  
**BEACON**  
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. 845-855-1300 | [townecrier.com](http://townecrier.com)  
Hudson Valley musicians will perform songs released in 1968, 1969 and 1970. *Cost: \$25 (\$30 door)*

**FRI 28**  
**Eugene Tyler Band**  
**BEACON**  
8:30 p.m. Dogwood 47 E. Main St. | [dogwoodbeacon.com](http://dogwoodbeacon.com)  
The trio will play music from its latest release, *The Bear*.

**SAT 29**  
**DizzyFish & The Uptown Horns**  
**BEACON**  
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. 845-855-1300 | [townecrier.com](http://townecrier.com)  
This cover band performs hits from the 1970s. *Cost: \$45 (\$50 door)*

**SUN 30**  
**KJ Denhert**  
**BEACON**  
7 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. 845-855-1300 | [townecrier.com](http://townecrier.com)  
The songwriter and guitarist and her band blend urban folk and jazz. *Cost: \$25 (\$30 door)*

VISUAL ARTS

**SAT 22**  
**Upstate Art Weekend**  
[upstateartweekend.org](http://upstateartweekend.org)  
More than 130 galleries, museums and artists will have exhibits throughout 10 counties, including Dutchess and Putnam. Locally, Studio Tashtego, Magazzino Italian Art, Garrison Art Center, Manitoga, Dia:Beacon, Mother, Howland Cultural Center, Ethan Cohen Gallery at KuBe and Beacon Open Studios will participate. Also SUN 23, MON 24.

**SAT 22**  
**Open Studios**  
**BEACON**  
Noon – 6 p.m. Various [beaconopenstudios.org](http://beaconopenstudios.org)  
This 15th annual event features a self-guided tour and will include more than 70 local artists and events, a concert and a film screening. Also SUN 23.

**SAT 22**  
**James Murray**  
**GARRISON**  
Noon – 5 p.m. Garrison Art Center 23 Garrison's Landing | 845-424-3960 [garrisonartcenter.org](http://garrisonartcenter.org)  
Sculptures by Murray and his students will be on view around the grounds, and the artist will demonstrate his techniques of steam bending and wood assembly. Also SUN 23.

**SAT 29**  
**NBNY Art Seen**  
**NEWBURGH**  
1 – 5 p.m. Various [newburghart.org/nbny-artseen](http://newburghart.org/nbny-artseen)  
Many galleries and art spaces will be open for an art walk. See website for a list of participants.

CIVIC

**MON 24**  
**City Council**  
**BEACON**  
7 p.m. City Hall | 1 Municipal Plaza 845-838-5011 | [beaconny.gov](http://beaconny.gov)

**WED 26**  
**Village Board**  
**COLD SPRING**  
7 p.m. Village Hall | 85 Main St. 845-265-3611 | [coldspringny.gov](http://coldspringny.gov)

2023

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Scholar-in-Residence

Weekend 1

Saturday, July 22, 2023  
Accattone  
Pier Paolo Pasolini, Italy, 1961

Sunday, July 23, 2023  
Roma  
Federico Fellini, Italy, 1972

Weekend 2

Friday, August 18, 2023  
La forma del limone -  
Astrattisti a Roma  
Giorgio Cappozzo, Italy, 2004

Tutto su mio padre  
Fabio Sargentini  
Fabiana Sargentini, Italy, 2003

Saturday, August 19, 2023  
Caro Diario  
Nanni Moretti, Italy, 1993

Sunday, August 20, 2023  
La Grande Bellezza  
Paolo Sorrentino, Italy, 2013

Doors open at 7:00 p.m.  
Movie screenings  
begin at dusk  
Tickets available on  
[magazzino.art](http://magazzino.art)

# Across Generations

*Library campers interview seniors*

By Mackenzie Boric

**A**t a four-day summer camp at the Butterfield Library in Cold Spring that ended July 14, the rising first through fifth graders had a chance to interview local seniors about their many decades of life.

The camp's theme this year was All Together Now, with an emphasis on kindness, friendship and community outreach.

"I thought it would be a good idea to get these different age groups to come together," explained Katherine Latella, who oversees children's programming for the library. "Not many kids live near their grandparents and some seniors don't have grandchildren."

Latella recruited seniors who participate in a memoir-writing class at the library, as well as those involved with Philipstown Aging at Home.

The day before the interviews, Latella held a workshop for the children to prepare. She went over questions they might ask, how to take notes and the importance of good listening skills.



Katherine Latella (far right) with the campers and seniors

Photo by M. Boric

When the seniors arrived, Latella suggested an icebreaker: "If you could be any animal for a day, what would you be?" followed by "two truths and a lie," which allowed the seniors to share fun facts about their lives.

After the children and seniors were paired up, some stayed on the main floor and the others went downstairs to record their interviews for a new library podcast. Once the interviews were finished, they transitioned to reading time, with the seniors reading to the campers or vice versa.

Adele Stern, 82, said she enjoyed talking about her career in the 1960s as a stockbroker. "I stumbled upon it," she explained. "My only options [at the time] were to become a

teacher or a nurse, among other things. I did not want to become a secretary."

Nina Pidala, 69, said her favorite part was "getting to know a child who spoke three languages and taught me how to say 'yes' and 'no' in Russian."

Ali Amata and Winter Steltz, both 9, said they thought the event was beneficial to young and old. "This is good if you don't have grandchildren because it can feel like you do," said Winter. The campers said they would certainly participate once they were senior citizens.

The interview was fun "because I got to know my partner," said Ali. "It wasn't just me asking questions. It was a conversation."

## Sharks *(from Page 13)*

in June at the Provincetown Film Festival, near where it was largely set. It will be released on HBO at 10 p.m. on Wednesday (July 26), with streaming the same day on Max. The film, says Meeropol, is what she envisioned from the start, "in terms of where the story goes. I knew the general shape, but not how it would come together."

"It was a complicated edit. I met so many people who were a story by themselves. I had to pick and choose what characters we'd focus on, who was essential to telling the story. When I go into a story I have naiveté which I try to maintain while doing the film. If I think I'm an expert, the film will lack that discovery and excitement."

"Exploring while shooting, I go into projects with open mind, and try not to plug people into what I expect. In this, I didn't predict I would focus on fishermen so much. Turns out they have as deep a knowledge as the scientists — it's just a different knowledge."

"I kept searching for people who would talk about the sea. I was looking for someone who would talk about the mystery of the ocean with awe. To me, I love that this little slice of protected seashore is a small window into what it could be: let the ocean recover, let it find its own balance again. Sometimes you can't see what you have until you step away."

# Fit tourism to the town, Not the town to tourism.

Our vibrant village of 2,000 people is at risk of being swallowed by the Fjord Trail's vision of mass tourism projected to bring an estimated 600,000 visitors to Cold Spring in the first year alone! Cold Spring will become a fantasy tourist attraction blighted by choking traffic and crowds.

Let's not allow Cold Spring to become collateral damage to the overblown scale of the Fjord Trail.

Join the call to significantly scale back the Fjord Trail proposal to complement rather than obliterate our historic village and the surrounding natural landscape.



ProtectTheHighlands.org

## Mouths to Feed

## Slow Drip

By Celia Barbour



I feel lazy. How lazy do I feel? Too lazy to think up a good reply to that question.

Topping a long list of additional things that I feel too lazy to do in this heat is cook. Tonight for supper I had a wedge of avocado, some cheese and half a peach. For dessert, I had a handful of blueberries and the other half of the peach. I was perfectly satisfied, but my husband was a bit perplexed when he came downstairs to an empty table.

Perhaps I should take comfort in the cool breeze of knowing that I am not alone. According to research published by the University of Chicago's Energy Policy Institute, worker productivity drops by 4 percent for each degree that ambient heat rises above 80.6 degrees Fahrenheit. That research was conducted in factories across India, but equivalent results were found by researchers in cities around the world, from Athens to Los Angeles.

The University of Chicago team also found that a mere 1-degree increase in the average daily temperature across a 10-day span "increased the probability that a worker would be absent by as much as 5 percent."

It's disheartening that researchers find it necessary to use an economic caliper to weigh the impact of heat on human beings. And still: Is it any wonder I feel like phoning it in?

Not everyone gets like this in July. I know people who feel super-energized in summertime; who love the heat, relish the feeling of sweat on their skin and would wear flip-flops and shorts year-round if they could. They actually go out dancing on hot days. On purpose. I'm guessing their ancestors did not come from the snowy north.

But tempting as it is to allow my genes to justify my apathy and thus conclude that nothing can be done, there are times when I actually need to muster enough energy and enthusiasm to accomplish something — cook a meal, write an article, make the bed.

This got me wondering what, if anything, gets me fired up in summertime. Many things, as it happens. No. 1 is lake swims. It's what I yearn for most during cold months. Tied for second are summer fruits and lingering daylight. After that comes simple cotton dresses that allow you to get dressed in 10 seconds flat, fireflies and ice cream.

Do you remember how it felt to be a kid standing in line at an ice-cream parlor or truck, waiting for your turn to order? How unbearably exciting it was to imagine the flavor you'd choose? How every cell in your body seemed to anticipate your first taste?

If I were a researcher at the University of Chicago, I would study how to take that energy and transfer it over onto another task, so you could show up for, say, a dentist appointment or a Zoom meeting with your boss filled with the passion you feel for dahlias or ice cream sundaes.

Until someone solves that puzzle, I will

## Caramel Sauce with Ice Cream and Fruit

1 cup sugar  
 ¾ cup heavy cream  
 1 tablespoon butter  
 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice  
 ¼ teaspoon sea salt, or to taste

## FOR SERVING:

Vanilla ice cream  
 Peaches, blueberries and/or other summer fruits



Put the sugar and ¼ cup of water in a small saucepan. Stir once or twice, then place over medium-high heat and bring to a simmer without stirring; use a pastry brush dipped in water to brush down the sides of the saucepan (this helps prevent crystallizing).

Reduce heat to medium-low and continue to cook the sugar mixture without stirring, until it turns golden. Swirl the pan gently and keep cooking until it's a deep amber color, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in the cream (careful; it will spatter) using a wooden spoon. Add the butter, lemon juice and salt.

Allow to cool slightly before tasting, then adjust the salt and lemon if needed. Serve warm, over ice cream, with sliced peaches or berries, or other favorite fruits. Store any leftover sauce in a covered container in the refrigerator for up to one week.

cherish the uplift I get from things I love. And I will focus my culinary energy on making food I can cook once, stash in the fridge, then enjoy for several days, like this wonderful caramel sauce, a favorite since my ice-

cream truck days. Next time Peter shows up in the kitchen hungry, I can offer more than DIY sliced avocado. "How about ice cream for supper?" I'll say. "It's July, after all."



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## Current Classifieds

## HELP WANTED

**TEACHER ASSISTANTS** — The Community Nursery School and Learning Center (10 Academy St., Cold Spring) is hiring teacher assistants and substitutes for the upcoming school year. School hours are mornings beginning mid-September. All interested parties are asked to reach out via e-mail [communitynurseryschoolcs50@gmail.com](mailto:communitynurseryschoolcs50@gmail.com).

## SERVICES

**CONCIERGE SERVICES** — Attention busy professionals and active seniors: Mature Columbia University alum available to assist with your personal-admin needs, light-duty household chores, scheduling medical appointments and contractors, event planning, shopping, some cooking and driving, house-sitting, some pet care. Excellent references. Hourly rates. Prefer an exclusive live-on premises arrangement if we work well together. Call Thomas at 914-621-2703. Thank you.

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## FOR RENT

**COLD SPRING OFFICE** — 3182 Route 9 Plaza, 400 to 1,200 square feet, second floor, with private bath, kitchenette and parking. Call Ron at 914-490-9606.

## FOR SALE

**2004 SILVER CHEVY SUBURBAN** — 4-wheel drive, 120,000 miles, cream leather seats, heated seats. Excellent running condition. \$4,500. Call Clara at 914-497-0866.

## EVENTS

**MODERN MAKERS MARKET** —Artisans, artists, food, live music, ice cream and Thai tea are coming to Cold Spring Aug. 12 and 13, from 11 to 5 p.m. Free admission and free raffle. For more information and to see who is exhibiting go to [www.HopsontheHudson.com](http://www.HopsontheHudson.com). Handcrafted, One of a Kind and Small Bath. Come and Shop Local! Come by train and take a short, four-block walk to the market. Parking can be found on all side streets in the village. Woodworkers, potters, craft beverages and so much more. St. Mary's is the place!

**TAG SALE? Car for sale? Space for rent? Help wanted? Place your ad here for \$9.95. See [highlandscurrent.org/classifieds](http://highlandscurrent.org/classifieds).**

## Roots and Shoots

# Mid-Season Highlights

By Pamela Doan

Things I've noticed that are fun to share:



## River birch in groups of three

I like this effect. The grouping makes an impact with the hues of shedding bark creating texture in all seasons. The branches hang gracefully, which is especially noticeable in birch that are 15 feet to 20 feet tall. These trees thrive in wetter conditions but I see them in areas where this wouldn't be the case. As is usually true, when a species is planted on the edge of its optimal conditions, in wetter soil it can thrive with full sun and in medium soil it can use a bit of shade throughout the day for balance.

## Bottlebrush buckeye

On a recent plant-shopping excursion, I noticed a wall of shrubs growing in a shady area with spires of tiny white flowers covering it. It was a "where have you been all my life?" moment. Even though I'm certain the deer will love it to death, I am committed to finding a way to bring this woody plant



Bottlebrush buckeye is a shrub that likes shade and forms thickets.

Photos by P. Doan

into my landscape.

Bottlebrush buckeye (*Aesculus parviflora*) likes to grow on the edge of the woods in part-to-full shade and will form a thicket. That's not a consideration for tidy foundation planting but certainly one that will enjoy taking up space in a larger area. Although it is found more often in the Southeast, it is hardy in Zone 5 and would manage here, as it was thriving in the Catskills, where I saw it.

## All of the fungi

I could take photos of mushrooms all day, given the recent swampy humidity and downpours. There are more shapes,

sizes and colors than I've seen. All of these spores have been here waiting for the right conditions to sprout and delight me with their funky selves.

Mushrooms require careful observation or they can be missed. A cluster of slender, white shoots I found and was hoping might be ghost pipe (*Montropa uniflora*), a rare herbaceous plant that doesn't have chlorophyll, was helpfully identified on social media as smoky coral fungus instead.

It resembles a sea urchin with wavy shoots coming up among the moss. Important: I am not a forager and am not consuming mushrooms I find in the yard and the woods, even if I think I can identify them.



Smoky coral fungus is one of the many funky fungi responding to the recent rains.

## Snakes

OK, not a plant, but it's apparently been a good year for snake populations, based on the daily sightings in my yard. I live in good habitat. There are a lot of rock walls, brush piles and wood stacks that house mice and other prey. There are tall grasses and a pond and stream that are good habitat for frogs. Sorry, no chicken eggs this year. A black rat snake favors our coop, but sadly the hens are past their laying years. Or are they?

## Bring on the pollinators

July is the peak of buzzing and fluttering in my yard and all the activity brings me joy. If you garden for ecological reasons, the reward is getting to have up-close experiences with the diversity of insects that will appreciate the efforts.

## Speaking of pollinators

Every year groups of dedicated gardeners are filling public spaces with expanding native plant gardens. Check out the Philipstown Town Hall landscaping, the Desmond-Fish Public Library meadow, the Butterfield Library gardens or the pocket meadows popping up around Beacon, to name a few. I'll write more about these efforts in a future column.

## Rain barrels or swales?

After last year's extended drought and the very dry spring in the Highlands, gardeners were installing rain catchment systems and seeking out hardy plants that could thrive with less water. After our recent bouts of extreme precipitation — are we really at 14 inches of rain so far this July? — now we're thinking about how to direct the water, create places for it to soak in and protect plantings (and structures) from too much rain.

Models for New York in a warmer climate have predicted these scenarios and we are now in, as the saying goes, "the new normal." For gardeners, climate resilience means we need it all in our landscapes. Go ahead and install the rain barrels, plant a rain garden or three, build a swale. We need to be creative and strategic about how to grow and conserve landscapes that flow with this essential resource and acknowledge its power.

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[howlandculturalcenter.tix.com](http://howlandculturalcenter.tix.com)

## Actors (from Page 1)

To make ends meet, Campbell said that he and his wife rely on rental income from investment properties in Newburgh and California.

His best-paying recent gig was a made-for-TV movie, *A Killer Romance*, that was filmed in November in Newburgh for the streaming service Tubi. "I played an assassin who has sensitive feelings," he said. "It's a comedy."

He worked seven days for \$500 a day. "Eighty percent of the work I do doesn't feel like fair pay," he said. "It feels like a hobby."

Members of both unions are demanding better pay and a new formula to calculate residuals. Fran Drescher, the SAG-AFTRA president, told CNN that "everything that you watch, that you enjoy, that you're entertained by are scenes filled with people that are not making the big money."

SAG-AFTRA has 36,000 members in New York state. They include Erin Cummings, who lives in Beacon and describes herself as a "journeyman actor." Her first professional gig was in 2004 on *Star Trek: Enterprise*, in which she was credited as Prostitute No. 1. "Not Prostitute No. 2," she noted. "Prostitute No. 2 had a lot more lines."

While her roles have improved over the years, she said she has a hard time making ends meet. She had more work in 2022 than in the previous four years but only worked on six television episodes, for a total of 30 days on set. The rest of her time was spent at auditions.

Under the existing union contract, she earned \$9,200 per episode, minus 10 percent



Actor Greg Miller, who lives in Cold Spring, earns most of his income creating multimedia presentations for investment banks.

Photo by J. Asher

to her agent and 10 percent to her manager.

She and her husband, actor Tom Degan, are able to scrape by, "but it's a far cry from a five-bedroom mansion with a swimming pool and a waitstaff that people imagine for actors," she said. "It's a very average, modest three-bedroom home for ourselves and our two children."

Cummings noted that she and her husband do receive residuals, which are smaller payments when the episodes are replayed. But most of those earnings, she said, are from roles she had before streaming services began.

Indeed, how to calculate streaming residuals is a major issue in negotiations. Drescher has said that calculating residuals is difficult because streaming networks "won't tell us how many people are watching."

Also at issue are attempts to use artificial intelligence to replace journeymen performers and extras, said Carrie Gibson, another Beacon actor with a long resume, including playing a barista in the HBO series *Barry*.

Gibson said that many production companies are asking actors for body scans and the rights to use those digital likenesses in perpetuity to populate

backgrounds. "What I love to do is being completely threatened by AI," Gibson said.

At the same time, the digital revolution has expanded opportunities. Beacon resident Kristina Klebe has dozens of film and television credits dating to 2003. But some of her work these days is as a voice-over actor for video games. This year she will voice Sissy in *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, based on the 1974 horror film.

But, like other local actors, she said she spends much of her time auditioning. She supplements her income as a host on WJGK-FM (Energy 103), a pop station in New Windsor.

"I find it so sad that people look down on actors and writers when most of us are low-income workers," she said. "We are lucky if we get a couple of jobs a year."

For many working actors, a major achievement is to earn the \$26,470 necessary to qualify for health insurance, said Greg Miller, who lives in Cold Spring. Miller said he has qualified in 10 of the past 15 years. Indeed, the union says only 13 percent of its members make enough to qualify for health insurance.

Miller earns most of his income creating multimedia presentations for investment banks. "I've never made life-changing money in the acting business," he said. He sees the strike as "the latest example of the classic conflict between the suits and the laborers."

"It's just another moment where the people who have wealth are changing the rules where more money flows to them and less flows to the rest of us," he said.

## Disappearance (from Page 1)

as "about whether the government will seek the death penalty."

The Orsinis, who moved to Amsterdam, New York, near Albany, soon after Kraft disappeared, were arrested there at 6 a.m. on June 15. A state police affidavit said the investigation relied on GPS and cellphone data and surveillance video from public and private cameras.

Prosecutors allege the couple began plotting Kraft's murder at least two days before he disappeared. Security footage and a receipt from the Home Depot on Route 9 in Fishkill showed Jamie Orsini buying, with cash, items that included a 10-foot-by-100-foot tarp, duct tape and a Tyvek suit and boots, according to the complaint.

Video from the parking lot captured Nicholas Orsini helping Jamie Orsini load the supplies into the couple's GMC Envoy, said prosecutors.

That same day, according to the complaint, the pair drove to Newburgh to allegedly determine how to dispose of Kraft's car. Data from their phones and video footage tracked the couple traveling from West Church Street over the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge to Newburgh.

The next day, according to prosecutors, Nicholas Orsini visited the Walmart on Route 9 in Fishkill and purchased a "burner phone," which can be activated without the user having to open an account using personal information.

Prosecutors said that Kraft, a former

U.S. Marine who was 34 when he disappeared, had custody of his daughters from 4 to 7 p.m. on Tuesdays and every other weekend.

On the day he disappeared, Kraft picked up his daughters from his ex-wife's home in Beacon at 4 p.m., drove them to a Sonic restaurant in the Town of Newburgh and then to his apartment in Marlboro, before returning them to Beacon at 7 p.m.

Police said they used location data to confirm that Jamie and Nicholas Orsini followed him to the restaurant.

The next day, Kraft failed to show up to his job at a deli in Marlboro, and on May 4, investigators found his 1999 Camry abandoned at Third Street and Carpenter Avenue in the City of Newburgh.

One of the earliest pieces of evidence was surveillance footage showing Kraft's car crossing the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge on April 28. Nicholas Orsini is now accused of being the driver. He allegedly parked the car, walked a mile to a Sunoco station on Route 9W, discarded one of Kraft's phones along the way (another was left in the car) and used the burner phone to call a taxi to take him back to Beacon.

In the days following Kraft's disappearance, the Orsinis traveled "extensively" between Beacon and Amsterdam, where Nicholas Orsini's family owns farmland, prosecutors said. Nicholas Orsini drove



Nicholas Orsini

to Amsterdam the day after Kraft disappeared, according to court documents, stopping at the Walmart in the Town of Newburgh to buy a new burner phone.

Over the next few days, Nicholas Orsini searched Google using the term "is galvanized steel fireproof" and the couple rented space at a storage facility in Middletown, according to court documents.

Nicholas Orsini also bought from the Home Depot in Fishkill two 31-gallon galvanized steel trash cans, an angle grinder and ax, three bottles of charcoal lighter fluid, a flame lighter and 16 bundles of firewood, prosecutors said.



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## OBITUARIES

**The Rev. Frank Geer (1948-2023)**

The Rev. Francis “Frank” Hartley Geer, 75, who served as rector of St. Philip’s Episcopal Church in Garrison for 30 years until his retirement in 2018, died July 19 at his home in Plymouth, Massachusetts.

He was born on March 19, 1948, in Honolulu, the son of Francis and Miriam (Lewis) Geer. He was raised in Manhattan with his brothers, Lew, Bob and Bill, and spent many summers with his family on Fishers Island, on the New Jersey shore and at the Ginger Quill Ranch in Colorado. Geer graduated from Rutgers University in 1970.

In January 1971, after learning his draft number would release him from being sent to fight in Vietnam, he traveled on the Trans-Siberian railroad. After returning to the U.S., he earned a master’s degree in history from Rutgers in 1972 and also met Sarah Davis, a Russian language and literature major, on a beach in New Jersey. They married and moved to California, where Geer earned a master’s degree from Church Divinity School of the Pacific.

In an interview with *The Current* in 2017, Geer recalled how he came to Garrison. At that time, he was in his fourth year as an assistant pastor at a church with 3,000 congregants. He had earlier completed four years of postgraduate seminary study, four years as a Protestant chaplain at a Roman Catholic hospital and four years at a hospital that specialized in heart transplants. Geer said he was beginning to think that he would never spend more than four years in the same job.

“I made an appointment to see the bishop of New York, and I told him I felt I was ready to be rector of my own church,” he recalled. “He had known me for some time — he had given the permission for me to enter the priesthood — and agreed with me.”

The bishop drew up a list of a dozen parishes in need of a rector. “When he got to St. Philip’s, Garrison, I stopped him and said, ‘That’s a nice church,’” Geer recalled. Geer had visited Garrison as a child, coming from his New York City home with a friend whose grandparents lived there, and he remembered it fondly.

He was hired by St. Philip’s in 1987 and during the 1990s also was director of religious services at St. Luke’s-Roosevelt Hospitals in Manhattan. In addition, he served on the New York State Task Force on Life and the Law and the boards of The Hastings Center in Garrison and Hartley House in Hell’s Kitchen. In 2002, after the 9/11 attacks, he and science writer John Horgan collaborated on a book, *Where Was God on September 11?*

After retiring in 2018, he and Sarah moved to Plymouth. Although he was an avid fisherman, Geer told *The Current* that what he most looked forward to in retirement was painting. He was hooked after taking watercolor lessons from Garrison painter Don Nice, who was a member of the congregation. “I dream of sitting around on a beautiful afternoon and painting,” Geer said. “I gave my granddaughter a [paint] set, too.”

Geer said of his time as a pastor: “This is more than just a job. You’re a part of people’s lives.”

Along with fishing, Geer loved conversations, board games, poetry, laughing, black cherry jam, the music of Bruce Springsteen and the New York Giants.

Along with his wife, he is survived by his children, Samuel Geer (Christina) of Minneapolis and Phoebe Geer (Matthew Speiser) of Garrison; his grandchildren, Mary, Davis, Nathaniel and Theodore; and his brother, William Geer. A memorial service is being planned.

**Other Recent Deaths***Beacon*

Sukanya Basu, 42  
Paul Cavaccini, 81  
Ricky Riccoboni, 86

Kristi Rosseland, 56  
Rachel Stephens, 49  
Antonio Tropeano, 70

*Philipstown*

James Helbock, 88  
Leonard Lim, 76  
Patricia Lysko, 90

For obituaries, see [highlandscurrent.org/obits](http://highlandscurrent.org/obits).

**Christopher Darman (1990-2023)**

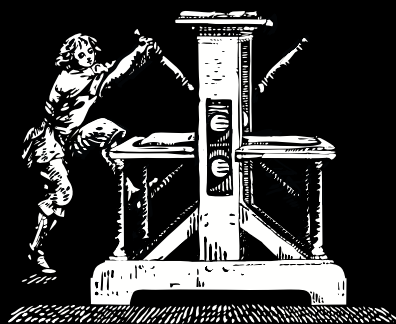
Christopher Darman, 32, of Wappingers Falls, and formerly of Cold Spring, died on July 12 at Mid-Hudson Regional Hospital.

He was born on Nov. 19, 1990, in Cold Spring, the son of Joseph Darman and Debbie Lloyd. The 2008 Haldane High School graduate owned Darman Construction.

Christopher had many hobbies, including bonsai, writing, calligraphy, gardening, building anything and everything, camping, fishing and clay shooting. He loved spending time at the family cabin in Maine. His son, Theo, was his whole world, his family said.

Along with his parents and son, Christopher is survived by his fiancée, Amanda Playford, and his siblings: Sheri Squillace, Jenifer Internicola, Melissa O’Neill (Daniel) and Rebecca Darman. He is also survived by his nieces and nephews, Andrew, Payton, Gianna, Gavin, Madelyn, Ava and Liam.

Friends and family gathered July 18 at Clinton Funeral Home in Cold Spring. Interment will take place at Cold Spring Cemetery.

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Ground  
studio**

Puzzles

CROSSCURRENT

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16				17			
18							19	20				
			21		22	23		24				
25	26	27			28		29			30	31	32
33				34						35		
36				37					38			
			39	40			41		42			
43	44				45			46		47	48	49
50					51	52	53					
54					55				56			
57					58				59			

- ACROSS
1. Artist Chagall

5. Witty one

8. Infatuated

12. — about (roughly)

13. Copper head?

14. Arkin or Alda

15. Famed circus impresario

17. A deadly sin

18. Tuscan city

19. Raps callions

21. Craving

24. “— was saying ...”

25. Pocket bread

28. Chart toppers

30. Cagers’ gp.

33. Author Tan

34. Highway divisions

35. City area, for short

36. LP speed

37. Staffer

38. College VIP

39. Luau bowlful

41. Cold War initials

43. Chin covers

46. Old hat

50. Forearm bone

51. Every year

54. Blue material?

55. Swiss canton

56. Campus digs

57. Hefty volume

58. Cotillion celeb

59. Follow orders
- DOWN
1. Floor cleaners

2. Con

3. Judicial garb

4. Brain protectors

5. Pallid

6. — Dhabi

7. Jewels

8. Grand parties

9. Kitchen foil type

10. React in horror

11. Picnic invaders

16. Squealer

20. Mama Elliot

22. Spiced tea

23. Brahmanist

25. Standard

26. Little rascal

27. Ear membrane

29. Casual tops

31. Buddy

32. *Shark Tank* network

34. Set down

38. *The Godfather* star

40. Emulate Lincoln

42. Resort

43. Small statue

44. Ticklish Muppet

45. Tater

47. Uppity sort

48. Foolproof

49. TV trophy

52. Before

53. Tease

SUDOCURRENT

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

WORDLADDER

Can you go from READS to DIALS in 6 words?  
Change one letter for each rung in the ladder.

READS

DIALS

MICRO  
CROSSWORD

- ACROSS
1. Genie’s offering

5. Bailiwick

6. Destiny’s \_\_\_\_ (“Say My Name” girl group)

7. *Sex and the City* cocktail, briefly

8. “You’re a Grand Old Flag” composer

- DOWN
1. Cowboy’s “Hooray!”

2. From Limerick

3. Historic Alabama city

	1	2	3	4
	5			
6				
7				
8				

4. Wore

6. VI x L

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S	E	L	F		A	R	C		S	A	P	S
A	R	E	A		N	E	O		P	L	O	T
M	A	S	T	O	D	O	N		L	E	N	A
			C	A	Y		F	L	A	X	E	N
P	I	L	A	F		H	U	E	S			
A	L	I	T		M	A	S	T	H	E	A	D
L	S	D		P	O	R	E	S		V	C	R
M	A	S	T	E	R	E	D		S	E	L	A
			A	R	T	S		S	C	R	U	B
T	A	H	I	T	I		A	I	R			
O	P	A	L		M	A	S	T	I	F	F	S
R	O	L	E		E	L	I		B	L	A	H
I	P	O	D		R	E	F		E	U	R	O

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

S	K	I	T	S
K	A	B	U	L
I	N	A	B	A
E	G	R	E	T
S	A	S	S	

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TOAST  
ROAST  
ROOST  
BOOST

Answers for July 14 Puzzles

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**Scenes of Summer**

Philipstown Little League teams competed in 10 All-Star games between June 22 and July 13 — and our photographer was there for each of them. See [highlandscurrent.org](http://highlandscurrent.org) for more photos.

*Photos by Ross Corsair*