Fernando Flies the Coop
Friends and strangers rescue errant parrot
By Liz Schevetchuk Armstrong

He skipped out on his dearest friend, toured the treetops over Philipstown, stirred a commotion on social media and prompted a resident to give him a finger when he crashed a birthday party.

But Fernando, a 14-year-old Amazon parrot, survived with nary a ruffled feather, to the relief of his owner, Heather Howard Canavan of Garrison, who lost several days’ sleep during his absence.

Canavan, Fernando and her other pets live on Travis Corner Road near Route 9. On July 30, Fernando was teasing one of the household’s three small dogs when the door opened just wide enough for pooch and parrot to slip through.

“He was not accustomed to being outside at all,” Canavan said of her bird. He stopped on the porch, but, at that moment, a neighbor started a lawnmower, alarming Fernando, who flew to the treetops in the yard.

There he remained for four days, despite constant coaxing. Canavan put a cage and food outside and rigged a ladder and other aids to help him come down.

Fernando called out but stayed put.

Canavan went on social media to ask others to be on the lookout for her bird. People near and not so near responded with messages of concern, promises of prayer, offers to help and suggestions, which included directing a light hose spray into the tree so Fernando would think it was raining and descend.

Canavan of Garrison, who lost several days’ sleep during his absence.

Canavan went on social media and prompted a resident to put.

On television and social media, public officials and residents shared photos, videos and damage reports from the previous day’s flooding, which led to a federal disaster declaration for Putnam, Dutchess and six other counties.

“Because it was a monumental storm,” Canavan said, “Just make sure you get this one right,” said Kiphart.

What he found in the cylinder — 6.25 inches of water — was the highest single-day measurement he had ever recorded and became part of a historical record to meteorologists, hydrologists, municipal officials, insurers and his neighbors.

It would account for nearly half the 14.21 inches he recorded in July.

Kiphart and Jesse Stacken of Beacon are volunteer weather monitors for the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail & Snow Network (CoCoRaHS), a system of precipitation gauges covering each state and locations in Canada, Puerto Rico and the Bahamas, Guam and Virgin Islands.

(Continued on Page 8)

Land Trust ‘Renaturalizing’ Former Garrison Golf Course
Rehab includes removing heavy metals from greens
By Joey Asher

The Hudson Highlands Land Trust is in the midst of an extreme makeover of the former Garrison Golf Course, “renaturalizing” two greens by removing heavy metals from the soil.

The property was donated in 2021 to the HHLT by the course owner, Chris Davis, who also gave land to the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival. The land trust’s 57 acres include the second through seventh holes along Snake Hill and Philipse Brook roads.

“My goal is to get people to question whether this was ever a golf course,” said Carmela Buono, the preserve manager and a restoration specialist with the HHLT.

One of the first steps was to remove 550 tons of soil contaminated with arsenic, mercury and cadmium from the sixth and seventh greens.

(Continued on Page 9)

Measuring a Changing Climate
Local volunteers feed data to national network
By Leonard Sparks

Jon Kiphart walked out to his soggy yard in Philipstown on July 10, the same journey he has taken at 7 a.m. every morning for the last 15 years.

But Kiphart, who lives on East Mountain Road South, knew the journey to view a plastic cylinder mounted on a wood post would be “kind of important.”

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(Continued on Page 8)

He Built a Line, Then Crossed It
Scenic Hudson not a fan of guerrilla art installation
By Brian PJ Cronin

In April, Thomas Bregman, the former head of the Hudson Highlands Nature Museum, began stacking rocks along the river at Long Dock Park in Beacon.

“Dozens of people stopped to ask, ‘Are you building a wall?’ ” Bregman said this week. “I’d say, ‘Well, yeah, and...’ From that came the most fascinating conversations.”

With a tip of the hat to Robert Smithson’s “Spiral Jetty,” which Bregman visited while he was on the staff of the Storm King Art Center, Bregman was constructing what he called “Torqued Jetty,” a 3-foot-high, 63-foot-long stone wave that snaked into the Hudson River.

“It leads to people paying closer attention to the river,” he said. “It’s funny that a human addition seems to do that.”

Bregman chose the spot because this stretch of the river is usually the location of the salt front, the shifting barrier between the salt water flowing up from the Atlantic Ocean and the fresh water flowing down from Lake Tear of the Clouds in the Adirondacks. It’s also in the shadow of Storm King, the site of the decades-long legal battle to stop a power plant that led to the formation of Scenic Hudson.

Bregman spent several hours a day working.

(Continued on Page 20)
By Marc Ferris

Denise Doring VanBuren, president of the Beacon Historical Society, recently completed a three-year term as president general of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution.

For people who are not familiar, what is the DAR?

It’s a service organization founded in 1890 that is comprised of members who have documented their lineage from a man or woman who supported the cause of independence during the American Revolution. It operates what is believed to be the most valuable piece of real estate owned exclusively by women in the world: a city block near the White House that contains a genealogical library, domestic arts museum and a 4,000-seat auditorium. We have nearly 3,000 chapters around the world. Despite the pandemic, I managed to visit 56 states and countries during my term, traveling 167,000 miles.

Your goals included improving the group’s image. What is that about?

For more than a decade, the DAR has been working hard to welcome more women of color. We established task forces for lineage research into African American, Latino, Jewish and other specialties to help more women document their descent from a patriot. We have never tracked race or ethnicity on our applications, but I’ve been a member for 40 years and it is working. Too many people have the misconception that we are all well-to-do and/or elderly. I joined when I was 28, and that is a fairly common story. My DAR patriot is Jacob Plattner, a miller from Columbia County who fought in the militia.

Is the DAR active in this area?

There are two chapters, Enoch Crosby in Brewster and Melzingah in Beacon. We placed the Beacon Monument on the top of Mount Beacon in 1900 and have marked many other places of historical significance. In 1954, the DAR saved the Madam Brett Homestead, which is the oldest building in Dutchess County, dating to about 1709. It was going to be razed for an A&P Supermarket. The Melzingah chapter also spearheaded the effort to honor Beacon’s veterans through patriotic banners. In August, we will support a Dutchess County naturalization ceremony where 65 new citizens will be welcomed.

Are you related to President Martin Van Buren, who was a native of the Hudson Valley?

The surname belongs to my ex-husband, who is, I believe, descended from the president’s first cousin. I have never had time to research it thoroughly. I have documented my descent from [Van Buren’s] wife, Hannah Hoes, so it’s kind of neat that our children have lines on both sides that go back to New Netherland.

Why is local history important?

Beacon is changing so fast and all of the wonderful new folks who are attracted to our beautiful Main Street are only the latest generation of people who have discovered this special place. Beacon is much more than its built environment, its industrial accomplishments or attractions like the Mount Beacon Incline Railway or Dia. It’s the sum total of all those parts. The magic didn’t happen overnight. How can you know who you are and where you are going unless you understand the history that brought you to this point?

FIVE QUESTIONS: DENISE DORING VANBUREN

What’s left on your “must do” list for this summer?

I need to go paddleboarding out by New Paltz.

Get out of too-expensive New York, hopefully to Oklahoma.

I have to swim in the ocean at least once and go to the Dutchess County Fair.

What are you looking forward to?

I am excited to watch my children grow up, have children of their own and share with them the heritage and the history of this wonderful part of the world.

Live Music Every Week!

JUNE
4th 10:00am-2:00pm  Ian Moore
11th 11:30am-1:30pm  Matt Miglion
18th 11:30am-1:30pm  Mario Bacac
25th 11:30am-1:30pm  Tony DePholo
JULY
2nd 10:00am-11:00am  Lyra Music Festival
2nd 11:00am-2:00pm  Ian Moore
9th 11:30am-1:30pm  Andrew Jordan
16th 11:30am-1:30pm  Larry Lucut
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 DePholo
20th 11:30am-1:30pm  Emily Beck
27th 11:30am-1:30pm  Andrew Jordan
Cold Spring Creates Water Emergency Stages

Plus, notes from the three most recent meetings

By Michael Turton

The Cold Spring Village Board on Wednesday (Aug. 16) approved rules for water emergencies caused by droughts, adopting a three-tiered approach for conservation when village reservoirs reach critically low levels.

The previous law was vague, stating only that the mayor and board could proclaim a water emergency whenever conditions warranted.

The updated law specifies three stages, when reservoir levels drop to 80, 60 and 40 percent of capacity. Restrictions on water use by residents and businesses become more stringent at each stage.

Under the regulations, the failure to adhere to restrictions during water emergencies can result in fines of up to $150 per offense. Tampering with water system equipment carries fines of up to $250 per violation.

The village declared its most recent water emergency in August 2022, when the capacity across its three reservoirs dropped to 45 percent.

The board also...

- Scheduled public hearings at Village Hall for Sept. 6 to hear feedback on proposed changes to Chapter 126 (Vehicles and Traffic) and Chapter 127 (Residential Parking Program) of the Village Code.
- Authorized the purchase from T2 Systems of two payment kiosks to be installed on Main Street as part of the village parking plan.
- Approved a recommendation from the Planning Board to grant a waiver for a required off-street parking space at 60 Main St., the former location of Houlihan Lawrence realty. The property owner, Bantry Apartments, has proposed a change of use from office to retail.
- Accepted the low bid of $66,500 from Fred A. Cook Jr. Inc. to dispose of 350,000 gallons of sewage sludge from the wastewater treatment plant on Fair Street. A second bid from TAM Enterprises Inc. was $184,800.
- Appointed James Labate and Henry Feldman on Aug. 9 as Cold Spring’s representatives on the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail’s Data Committee, which will assess studies undertaken as part of a draft environmental impact statement expected to be released in early 2024. The committee will hire a consultant to review the studies using a stipend provided by HHFT.
- Heard from Putnam County Legislator Nancy Montgomery that a location has been selected in Brewster for a Putnam County Stabilization Center to be funded using $2.3 million the county received through the American Rescue Plan Act. The mental health facility will be run by People USA, which operates the Dutchess County Stabilization Center.
- Adopted a law that enables the village to award contracts either by the lowest bid or “best value,” as defined by state law.
- Received a report from the Cold Spring Fire Co. about its busy July, with 28 of the 70 calls related to the heavy rains. There were also 10 elevator rescues. The Cold Spring Police Department responded to 71 calls, and officers issued eight traffic and 61 parking tickets. One arrest was made under the mental health law.
- Approved an increase on July 26 in dock fees. Boats docking briefly for passenger drop-off will pay $11 per linear foot, while boats parked for extended periods will pay $16 per linear foot.
- Approved sequencing for repairs to the village dams, beginning at the upper dam and followed by the Foundry dam and lower dam. The plan was recommended by an engineering consultant to meet state requirements.

Lost Parrot (from Page 1)

Fernando was caught after crashing a birthday party.

Lost Parrot

age him to perch on a finger and to take him indoors.

On Day 7, Fernando discovered an outdoor birthday party underway in Garrison. He landed, no doubt hungry and looking for a handout. According to Frank Pidala, who was there, his sister, Lisa Pidala Stagliano, held out a finger and Fernando climbed aboard to enjoy a slice of watermelon, one of his favorite treats. Salvatore Pidala promptly notified Canavan: “We have Fernando here.”

Exultant, Canavan posted on Facebook: “They got my baby; they got my baby; they got my baby! I’m coming to get you, Fernando!”

Frank Pidala attributed his family’s role to “being at the right place at the right time.” Despite being weary, Fernando was soon “back in the groove” at home, chomping blueberries and lording over a visitor from atop his cage.

However, he is expected to fly again in the not-too-distant future, but aboard an airline, as Canavan relocates to Vancouver Island, British Columbia, to assist her elderly mother there.

“Magical,” she said of her parrot’s rescue, as they prepared for a new stage in their lives. “There is always hope. Never give up!”

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Prophecy approval

We appreciate The Current’s reporting of the Planning Board’s decision to approve the Prophecy Hall theater and hotel development of the former Reformed Church of Beacon (“Prophecy Hall Approved,” Aug. 11). Residents should note that some Planning Board members expressed deep concern about the impact of the development on the communities closest to it. After two years before the Planning Board, more than 350 petition signatures and hundreds of comments submitted against it, this controversial project was still approved.

To say we’re disappointed to see commercial interests prioritized over residential concerns is an understatement. Our neighborhood is zoned as residential, yet with a special-use permit it can be transformed into a busy, noisy business area. The conditions placed on this project are because it is in a neighborhood, but will they be enough?

This decision has set a worrisome precedent; if a commercial project like this can be approved in our community, it can happen to any other residential area in Beacon. Everyone should be concerned about that.

Shelley Simmons-Bloom, Beacon

Happy to see this go through but disappointed by the limits the city put on the venue. An 8:30 p.m. end time for shows? A closing time of 10 p.m. would have been reasonable and would have supported live theater and music in a way that it should. I hope that at some point the city has the opportunity and the temerity to review this significant limitation.

Jeffery Battersby, Beacon

I believe wholeheartedly that the people behind this project are honorable and have vision, and I am grateful that the stewardship of this historic treasure is in their hands. This is exactly the project this site needs. Wishing them much success despite the extreme and, in my mind, absurd limitations placed upon it.

Kelly Ellenwood, Beacon

How about with every new hotel room we close a non-owner-occupied Airbnb and make those available to residents?

Lesly Deschler Canossi, via Facebook

West Point

In its pursuit of an ideological victory, Students for Fair Admission is missing the myriad differences between service academies and other universities (“Affirmative Action Group Takes Aim at West Point,” Aug. 11). When you apply to a military academy, you are being interviewed for a job. Once accepted, you are paid a salary, receive health benefits and follow all the rules governing military life throughout your academic career. Further, employment is guaranteed for five years upon graduation. You are attending a university but, make no mistake, you are in the military.

Beyond that, military academy admission is a completely closed system of quotations and required references, anyway. To cite one example not mentioned in the article: Each state has a fixed number of slots to allocate to applicants from that state. If the Students for Fair Admission lawsuit is successful, shouldn’t residents of states with relatively small populations, such as Rhode Island, Delaware, Idaho or Wyoming, file a lawsuit because too many Texans have been admitted?

It appears that Chief Justice John Roberts understands this. If this case reaches the Supreme Court, I hope reason prevails with its more ideological members.

John Schieneman, Cold Spring

Philippstown roads

Here we go again. The Philippstown Highway Department has been doing an outstanding job of constructing and maintaining our dirt roads, but someone just can’t resist the chance to promote pavement (“Our Plan is to Start Paving,” Aug. 11).

The dirt roads came through the fierce storms very well. Some repairs were needed, but they are fast and less expensive on dirt roads. We are lucky to still have them; they are an aspect of what makes Philippstown famous and special.

Thank you, Highway Department — the long hill where I live on Old Albany Post Road fared well.

Betsy Calhoun, Garrison

One idea would be for the residents of Old Albany Post Road to fund its maintenance, since this passion project is important to so many of them. Supervisor Van Tassel, who has a lot of common sense, is right: These storms are more than once every 100 years. I’m a Philippstown taxpayer who’s tired of supporting impractical initiatives when the funds can go to so much better use.

James Wiesler, Philippstown

Beacon parking

I’m shocked that a church would sue the City of Beacon over a parking lot (“Beacon, Church Still at Odds,” Aug. 11). The city owns the lot, which offers free parking, and it’s only temporarily closed because of the expansion of the firehouse.

This renovation will improve fire protec-

(Continued on Page 5)
(Continued from Page 4)
ed for everyone in Beacon, including St. Andrew & St. Luke. Is parking convenience worth delaying that? It’s commendable that St. Andrew provides the valuable service of a food pantry, but the money spent for this lawsuit by the church and the city would be better spent helping the underserved in Beacon.

The church needs to consider, what would Jesus do? When asked about paying taxes, Jesus said: “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.” Sage advice that St. Andrew should consider. Give the City of Beacon what is theirs and give to God what is God’s.

Elise LaRocco, Beacon

Voting machines

On Aug. 2, the New York State Board of Elections certified the ExpressVote XL Universal Voting System, which uses a touch screen to produce a paper ballot. It is unbelievable that the Board of Elections would do this.

For over 10 years we have voted using an optical scan/paper ballot machine that voters mark and place in a tallying machine themselves. Then we observe as the paper ballot is dropped into a metal box. It is easy to vote and we know that our paper ballot can be recounted manually, if necessary, at a later date.

We have heard about all the problems that states have encountered with voting on computers and that many have determined to change to a paper ballot system that we have in New York.

So why would we abandon a system for one that is more complicated, more expensive and less transparent? I would encourage counties to say “no” to ExpressVote XL and continue to use the optical scan/paper ballot machine.

It took New York State a long time to choose scanning/paper ballots over the use of computer voting, and it proved to be the right decision, then and now. It takes voters some time to get used to a new system and trust the process, which is what happens when you have your marked ballot in your hands and not on a screen.

Some people, when they vote, take more time to make selections. A long line could develop at the touch-screen machine as people take their time, which means the company sells more machines to the counties — costing taxpayers more money.

We need voters to be confident that their votes are counted, and computers do not build on that confidence when we hear so often about hacking. I have heard that voters like the process we have and feel that there is no pressure to rush their vote when they individually mark the ballot.

Please make your voices heard with your county and state legislators so we can stop this voting change in its tracks and protect the security of our votes. In this case, simple voting is best.

Sandy Gaeft, Ossining

Gaeft is a former longtime member of the state Assembly and member of its Election Law Committee; her district included Philipstown.

Asylum-seekers

In his letter in the Aug. 11 issue, Putnam County Executive Kevin Byrne fails to mention the actions taken by governors in Florida and Texas that have added to the woes of both New York City and the people fleeing persecution and violence in their home countries.

If not for the actions of Republican governors such as Ron DeSantis and Greg Abbott, New York City would not be in the position of finding homes for thousands of refugees. If there had been any form of notification in the spirit of working cooperatively, New York City and New York State would have had time to figure out how to properly place refugees in housing and, God forgive, jobs. Instead, the busing of migrant refugees to New York City without notice has been used as a cruel tactic in a petty assault.

Byrne correctly identifies the problem as decades in the making, so his assertion that President Biden has not taken ownership is a bit disingenuous. Does the county executive really think that the Republican Party would work with the president to solve this crisis?

Byrne should concentrate on his role as the putative leader of a small county in upstate New York. When a local official starts calling out the president of the United States, he has obviously lost his way.

Richard Shea, Cold Spring

Shea is the former Philipstown supervisor.

Letters and Comments

Will Hochul Sign Indian Point Bill?

Test results unknown until after wastewater release

By Brian PJ Cronin

Local elected officials gathered in the rain on Tuesday (Aug. 15) outside the Westchester County Center to urge Gov. Kathy Hochul to sign legislation that would stop Holtec, the company decommissioning the Indian Point nuclear power plant, from discharging wastewater from spent fuel pools into the Hudson River.

The bill, introduced by state Sen. Pete Harckham and Assembly Member Dana Levenberg, whose districts include Indian Point, earlier this year passed the Senate unanimously and the Assembly with bipartisan support. However, the governor has given no indication whether she intends to sign it, negotiate for changes or veto it.

“I hope she reads [the unanimous Senate vote] as a sign of the bill’s statewide support,” Harckham said.

The first wastewater discharge from Indian Point is scheduled to begin in late September or early October, and would be released at 200 gallons per minute in 18,000-gallon batches for a total of about 330,000 gallons. A Holtec representative told The Current that the first discharge “should take a few months from start to finish, as each batch would take time to test, treat and release.”

Holtiec estimates that, over the next few years, the amount of wastewater discharged will be more than 1 million gallons. The company and the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission have said that the amount of radioactive material in the discharges will be far below the allowable limits and no different from the dozens of routine, regulated discharges that took place over the decades the plant was in operation.

Those assurances have failed to mollify elected officials or dozens of local municipalities, including Cold Spring, Philipstown, Beacon and Westchester County, that have passed resolutions condemning the fall discharge.

At the rally on Tuesday, Harckham noted that Gov. Maura Healy of Massachusetts recently blocked Holtec from performing a similar discharge into Cape Cod Bay from the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant, which it is also decommissioning, and that Japan’s plan to begin releasing wastewater into the Pacific Ocean from its Fukushima nuclear power plant, the site of a 2011 disaster, drew condemnation and economic threats from China and South Korea.

“This is a global movement of citizens standing up and saying that our water bodies are not going to be used as dumping grounds for industrial waste,” said Harckham. “These are central to economic prosperity, economic vitality and economic sustainability.”

Levenberg said that during the most recent meeting of the Indian Point Decommissioning Task Force, she and other board members learned that although Holtec will test the wastewater before its release, the results won’t be known until after the discharge begins.

“It makes no sense whatsoever to test, and before they have results, let the water go out,” said Jim Creighton, deputy supervisor of the Town of Cortlandt. “If they were testing to protect us from what’s in that water, they would test it and get the results before allowing the water out.”

If Hochul signs the bill into law, it’s unclear what would happen to the wastewater. Harckham and Levenberg (whose district also includes Philipstown) have said their preference would be to have the water stored on-site for at least 12 years, the amount of time it takes for the tritium in the water to decay to half its current potency. But Mayor Theresa Knickerbocker of Buchanan, the village that contains Indian Point, has said she won’t allow that.

Harckham told The Current that if the bill is signed, “everybody takes a deep breath and we work collaboratively the way we do at the Decommissioning Oversight Board. We work with Holtec, the unions, the municipalities, and we figure out what the next steps are.”

State Sen. Pete Harckham and Assembly Member Dana Levenberg at the rally.

Photo by B. Cronin
The article below is by Timothy D. Snyder, Richard C. Levin Professor of History at Yale University, specializing in the history of Central and Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and the Holocaust. It is reprinted here by Bevis and Clara Longstreth of Garrison out of grave concern for tyrannies threatening our democracy.

We Can Have the Constitution, or We Can Have Trump

I once saw Arnold Schwarzenegger give a speech in Washington, D.C. It was a polished performance about making green politics cool. Republicans were whispering to each other: “too bad we can’t nominate this guy.” They meant: for president.

Schwarzenegger could not run for president because Section I of Article Two of the Constitution forbids it. The president must be a “natural-born citizen,” which is understood to mean someone who was born in the United States, or whose parents were citizens. Schwarzenegger, though a U.S. citizen, was born in Austria to Austrian parents.

Section I of Article Two is one, but not the only, place where the Constitution defines who may run for president. Whereas Section I of Article Two has to do with a factor over which a person has no control, place of birth and legal status of parents, Section III of the Fourteenth Amendment concerns how an American citizen behaves. It forbids officeholders who try to overthrow the Republic from holding office again. It reads:

“No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or an elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.”

It is obvious on a plain reading of this part of our Constitution that (absent a two-thirds vote of both houses of Congress) Donald Trump is now ineligible for the office of the presidency. He took an oath as an officer of the United States, and then engaged in insurrection and rebellion, and gave aid and comfort to others who did the same. No one seriously disputes this. Trump certainly does not. His coup attempt after losing the 2020 election is the platform on which he is now staging what he portrays as his 2020 election is the platform on which is his ineligibility for that office alongside his conduct was blameworthy.” This wording suggests that Trump can run for president, and that we as voters remain free to assess whether his behavior justifies his candidacy. It was troubling, for me at least, to see The New York Times coverage of the article relativizing its central finding with this vague but suggestive formulation: “voters remain free to assess whether his conduct was blameworthy.” This wording suggests that Trump can run for president, and that we as voters can then consider his ineligibility for that office alongside his blameworthiness. That is wrong, because it misunderstands what ineligibility is.

Arnold Schwarzenegger would also like to run for president in 2024. He thinks he would win, and he may well be right. But we cannot decide to elect a president who is not a natural-born citizen. This is not an issue we are “free to assess,” because we are governed by the Constitution. For the same reason, we cannot vote for oath-breaking insurrectionists such as Donald Trump. Such people are barred by the Constitution from running for president.

We can have the Constitution, or we can have Trump.

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P A I D  N O T I C E
It's been nearly eight months since I wrote a farewell to Cold Spring for The Current, and a lot has happened.

My parents and two younger sisters and I returned to Santiago, our original home, and I have tried to fit myself back into a place I left when 8 years old and no longer remembered. I have learned a lot and wanted to share with friends in Cold Spring, my beloved former home, some of my experiences.

We came to the U.S. in 2015 for my father to attend college, and for medical treatment for myself. I still remember gripping my bright-pink suitcase with shaking hands after we landed at JFK. I could only count to nine in English but quickly became the best English speaker in my family. I attended elementary, middle and high school at Haldane until we returned to Chile in December.

Chile is truly a beautiful place; it's understated and less refined than any place in the U.S. that I saw, but it has its charm. It's a dry place, so it does not look like a typical, tropical South American country.

It gets drier every year, which can be attributed to climate change. People here always say that it's ironic that the First World countries emit more fossil fuels and generate more toxic waste but are the ones that least feel the changing climate.

To me, there is nothing as beautiful as the Chilean desert. As part of a school trip, my classmates and I went to San Pedro de Atacama, which left me speechless. San Pedro, the oldest town in Chile, is located north, next to the mining district, which is where I was born.

It's a great spot for tourists. The town has gorgeous attractions, such as the Salar of Atacama, where you can find flamingos and natural geysers, and lakes that are 4,000 meters above sea level in the middle of the desert.

What interests me most is the culture and history. The Inca Empire resided there from the 1450s to 1550s and fought hard with other tribes to keep their land, just like the Atacamas (who named the area).

Today, you can see where the Incas hid from enemies up in the mountains with cobblestone walls, and you can find their tombs, which are marked by piles of rocks, and you can walk along the infamous Inca Trail. Some historians say that when the colonizers came, they cut the Indigenous people's tongues out and, since they only communicated orally, their language was lost forever.

If you ever get the chance to visit Chile, your first destination should be San Pedro de Atacama. Aside from the friendly people, there are beautiful hikes along some of the highest mountains in the Andes, and small villas developed in the few oases that you find in what is known as the driest desert in the world.

One of my favorite things about San Pedro is the night sky. The sky has so little light pollution and humidity that the world’s main observatories have been set up there. One of them is ALMA (Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array), which is part of a network of telescopes that captured the first image of a black hole in 2019.

Getting accustomed to the people here has been a challenge, but one that has been fruitful. In my experience, Chilean culture is focused on the heart and feelings, to the point where every circumstance is weighed by emotions.

It's a warm and human way of interacting, but it can also be too much at times.

This is coming from someone who was taught about the “personal bubble” in third grade at Haldane. Imagine my shock when I realized that people still have to be introduced with a kiss and a hug.

Although I miss Cold Spring and its people more than anyone could imagine, I am learning a lot about who I am and where I come from. Being with family, especially my grandparents, has been so rewarding. So has, of course, being with the love of my life, my dog Dr. John Watson, named for the Sherlock Holmes character.

Edwards Salas is a member of The Current’s Student Journalists Program and our first correspondent in Santiago.
Jon Kiphart of Philipstown has been measuring rain and snow levels since 2008.

Weather (from Page 1)

Launched in 1998 at Colorado State University, CoCoRaHS has more than 26,000 observers who strive to increase “the density of precipitation data” and raise awareness of weather and climate.

As the only observer in Beacon, Stacken has collected data since 2017. For the July 9 storm, he measured 5.28 inches inside the gauge installed in his yard on Robinson Avenue.

He has reported just one rainier 24-hour period — Sept. 1 to 2 in 2021, when Tropical Storm Ida lashed the Highlands and dropped 6.71 inches in Beacon. Like July’s storm, Ida triggered a federal disaster declaration and exemplified the intense rain events that have become more frequent with climate change.

“The more observers we have out there, the more scientists will be able to analyze the data,” said Stacken.

Kiphart traces his interest in the weather to childhood. He grew up in Ohio and his father, an aerospace engineer, taught him about weather and forecasting. The family had a barometer and rain gauge.

What he learned proved valuable when he began flying planes as an adult, and his interest in the weather continued after he moved to this area in 2000. “Living in the Highlands, you become a lot more subject to the weather,” he said. “You have to become weather-aware.”

After a career spent on the road staging live events, Kiphart began working from home, which gave him the flexibility needed to volunteer for CoCoRaHS, which involves checking gauges at the same time each day. The organization considers 7 a.m. to be ideal.

“Nobody’s ever done this granular look at precipitation data across this big a scale of land,” said Kiphart. “So, my little contribution every day is all part of what they’re using to try to figure out what’s going on.”

Stacken, a pianist, composer and educator, joined CoCoRaHS because his brother, a naturalist and meteorologist in Minnesota, “made me do it,” he said, with a laugh. The commitment was a concern, said Stacken, but feeding his chickens already required a trip each morning to the backyard.

Most days, he is entering zeros for precipitation, but measuring is more complicated in the winter, when volunteers need to gauge snowfall but also melt the snow to measure the amount of water it contains.

“At the end of the season, it’s fun to look at the data and see how much total precipitation we had over the year,” said Stacken.

Because there are not more local observers, the data can be imprecise. Kiphart’s postal address is in Cold Spring, but his house is located in Philipstown at an elevation of 854 feet above sea level (compared to 108 feet for the village) and he lives closer to Beacon than the village.

Between December 2022 and March, Kiphart recorded 37.2 inches of snowfall. But Stacken, whose Beacon home is more than 600 feet lower, reported 3.6 inches. (He did not report snowfall data for the storm that occurred Feb. 27, when 6 inches fell on some parts of the Highlands.)

In their time as observers, both men have noticed trends. Kiphart said that recent storms have dropped “gloppy moisture-laden snows” that, although not deep, are hard to move. “I broke my snowblower once trying to clear it because you can’t get any traction,” he said.

Stacken has noticed long periods of dryness followed by storms with heavy rainfall. He has also noticed how the topography can create microclimates, with some storms affecting just one part of Beacon.

“Those’s why I’d love to see more CoCoRaHS observers,” he said.

Weather Central
For more information and data, visit cocorahs.org.
Boardinghouse Owner Asks for Variance

January arson destroyed Beacon structure

By Jeff Simms

A month after it ruled that a Beacon boardinghouse destroyed by fire must be rebuilt as a single-family home to comply with current regulations, the Zoning Board of Appeals this week began considering the property owner’s request for a variance.

If approved, a variance would allow Yesha Berger to rebuild a structure at 925 Wolcott Ave. with single-room occupancy for short-term renters.

The ZBA discussed the request and held a public hearing on Tuesday (Aug. 15) but did not vote. It did approve an agreement that gives Berger until Sept. 25 to challenge the ZBA ruling in Dutchess County Court, although that deadline may be extended if the board continues to review his request.

Tuesday’s meeting was the latest chapter in a highly unusual sequence of events at the site.

On Jan. 3, a former tenant started a fire that destroyed the 4,136-square-foot, three-story structure. The tenant, Brian P. Atkinson, 57, turned himself in to Beacon police. He had been due in court that morning for eviction proceedings. Atkinson pleaded guilty on May 31 to the most serious charge against him, third-degree arson, and was sentenced to 4 to 12 years in state prison.

Berger had received a building permit in December to downsize the building’s density from 16 rental units to nine. After the arson, he sought permission from the city to rebuild the boardinghouse, which had been a “legal non-conforming use” in an area zoned for single-family homes.

Bruce Flower, the city building inspector, denied Berger’s request, citing a provision in the zoning code requiring structures that have been more than 50 percent destroyed, such as by fire, to be rebuilt according to current standards. (Beacon’s zoning code does not permit boarding-houses, but 925 Wolcott and several others like it had been grandfathered in as long-standing non-conforming uses.)

In July, the ZBA upheld Flower’s decision.

On Tuesday, Berger’s attorney, Taylor Palmer, argued that his client faces a “unique hardship” because of the arson. Palmer has asked the ZBA to grant either an “area variance,” which would allow the boardinghouse to be restored as a legal non-conforming use, or an “area variance,” which would allow the boardinghouse to be rebuilt as a single-family home.

If one of them is not approved, Palmer indicated that Berger would probably file a lawsuit.

Palmer said Berger could not “realize a reasonable rate of return” on the parcel if he builds a single-family home, but board members questioned data provided by a financial consultant as evidence.

A 2022 appraisal showed the boardinghouse property was worth $1.7 million, said Bill Pforzheimer, the consultant. Conversely, single-family homes in Beacon ranging from 2,000 to 5,000 square feet have sold for an average of $832,000 — a “very large discrepancy,” he said.

According to Dutchess County records, Berger purchased the parcel in July 2022 for $650,000. And while a single-family home may generate $2,000 to $4,000 per month in rent, Berger was making $20,000 per month renting the single-room occupancies, Pforzheimer said.

“But the former use is not relevant” because the structure no longer exists, said Jordan Haug, the ZBA chair. In addition, board members wanted to know how much Berger had received from an insurance payout, and the estimated costs of rebuilding — numbers that Pforzheimer said he did not have.

The board also asked its attorney, George Alissandratos, for help defining “reasonable return.”

Flower noted that Berger began work on the boardinghouse before receiving a building permit. “The place was pretty much wide open because of the demolition that had already taken place,” Flower said.

“When the fire was lit, it basically went through the building much quicker than if it was a finished space.”

During the public hearing, a half-dozen neighbors asked the board not to grant either variance. No one spoke in favor.

“With any type of investment, there’s a lot of inherent risk, just like with the stock market,” said Lisa Wagner, who lives on Sargent Avenue. “If I was going to buy a property and use it as an investment, I would want to know my worst-case scenario [such as a fire]. I’d check that out first.”

The zoning board has also received a petition with more than 100 names asking it to deny Berger’s request. Another neighbor said “every weekend there was a fight” at the site, echoing previous public comments.

The board adjourned the public hearing until its Sept. 19 meeting and voted 4-1, with Judith Smith dissenting, to hire a consultant to research Pforzheimer’s arguments.

Visit highlandscurrent.org for news updates and latest information.
The Real Estate Market is Booming!
Contact these top local agents to see the latest listings, or to sell your home

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646-354-9842 | claudia@hudsonriverlinerealty.com
hudsonriverlinerealty.com

Charlotte Brooks
OWNER & PRINCIPAL | BROKER HOUSE FINCH REALTY
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housefinchrealty.com

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AROUND TOWN

HUDSON HUNK — Aaron Taylor-Johnson, star of the upcoming Marvel film Kraven the Hunter, and perhaps the next actor to play James Bond, graces the cover of the September issue of Esquire available Aug. 22. Recognize the setting? The photos were taken on Bannerman Island.

TAPS FOR BEACON — Each evening at 5 p.m., a bugler dressed in a period uniform plays “Taps” at the National World War I Memorial in Washington, D.C. This past week the ceremonies honored the Veterans of Foreign Wars post in Beacon and its namesake, Pvt. William B. Wilson, who was killed in action in Belgium in 1918. See youtube.com/DoughboyFoundation. As it happens, “Taps” is credited to Gen. Daniel Butterfield (1831-1901), a Civil War general and Cold Spring resident.

Photo provided
Through the Embers of Time

Cold Spring composer to celebrate two writers

By Alison Rooney

In a 2018 interview with The Current, on the occasion of his Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall debut, composer Eric Starr spoke of the genesis of a piece he had just begun.

Five years later, it has come to fruition and will be the centerpiece of Starr’s Sept. 9 performance at the Howland Cultural Center in Beacon of A Celebration of Women in History, a tribute to poet Vera Brittain (1893-1970) and novelist Winifred Holtby (1898-1935), best known for South Riding.

The project celebrates, he says, “two extraordinary British women in history who were authors and social campaigners. It uses a kind of mixed-media presentation of poetry with original music to create a portrait of love and loss, ambition and courage.”

The piece came about, he says, because he had wanted to write for cello and piano and, while looking for inspiration, came across “Perhaps,” a 1916 poem by Brittain, “which gave me the shivers.”

The piece was born from it. The creative process is mysterious, and I accept that.”

When he began writing Celebration in early 2018, he felt “at an impasse in my own life at that time, and humanity itself, asking a lot of questions, thinking about the material self versus the spiritual self. I turn to poetry a lot, but couldn’t find inspiration; nothing worked.”

He found “Perhaps” in a collection of Brittain’s poems titled Because You Died. “Something clicked and I went to her archives, where I spent time holding her original diaries, which were moving, as she’s writing some horrible things about that ghastly war [World War I],” he recalls.

“Ultimately, it was strangely uplifting, because in her sorrow we see someone who is showing so much fortitude.”

Of his subjects, he says: “I don’t know them, certainly don’t speak for them, but have spent years learning as much as I could about them. On some level, I wanted the music to be intimate, imagining their inner thoughts, the sense of loss they experienced. Instead of sitting at the piano and thinking with my musical mind, I tried to be as quiet and still as possible,” he adds. “I was a conduit exploring where the art comes from, to where it flows.”

The composition contains a poem spoken before each piece of music. “The music ponders existence, through the horrors of (Continued on Page 15)

Perhaps

By Vera Brittain

Perhaps some day the sun will shine again,
And I shall see that still the skies are blue,
And feel once more I do not live in vain,
Although I feel bereft of You.

Perhaps the golden meadows at my feet
Will make the sunny hours of Spring seem gay
And I shall find the white May blossoms sweet,
Though You have passed away.

Perhaps the summer woods will shimmer bright,
And crimson roses once again be fair,
And autumn harvest fields a rich delight,
Although You are not there.

But, though kind Time may many joys renew,
There is one greatest joy I shall not know
Again, because my heart for loss of You
Was broken, long ago.

(Continued on Page 15)
THE WEEK AHEAD
Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)
For a complete listing of events, see highlandscurrent.org/calendar.

COMMUNITY

SAT 19
Become a Citizen
BEACON
11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Howland Public Library
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134
beaconlibrary.org
Drop in to learn how to become a U.S. citizen and pick up the necessary documents. Registration required.

SAT 19
Back to School Block Party
BEACON
Noon – 3 p.m. South Avenue Park
iambeacon.org
Help “stuff the bus” with school supplies for families in need and learn about local organizations at this event hosted annually by I Am Beacon. See the website for a list of supplies; they can be dropped at Key Food through SUN 27.

SAT 19
Yoga on the Farm
WAPPINGERS FALLS
9 a.m. Common Ground Farm
79 Farmstead Lane
commongroundfarm.org
Join a vinyasa-style yoga class led by Liz Craig. Cost: $10 to $30

KIDS & FAMILY

WED 23
Switch Bowling
BEACON
3:45 p.m. Howland Public Library
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134
beaconlibrary.org
Children ages 9 and older can compete in a tournament. Registration required.

FRI 25
Butterfly Festival and Concert
WAPPINGERS FALLS
4 – 7:30 p.m. Stony Kill Farm
79 Farmstead Lane | stonykill.org
On this, the final day of the farm’s weeklong festival, there will be hay rides in a butterfly wagon, children’s activities, food trucks and a concert by Big Band Sound.

COMMUNITY

SAT 19
Senior Fiesta
COLD SPRING
1 p.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040
butterfieldlibrary.org
For National Senior Citizens’ Day, the library will host a Zumba class, art workshop and games, and serve snacks and drinks.

SAT 26
Family Fun Day
GARRISON
3 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
10 Garrison Landing | 845-424-3900
philipstowndepottheatre.org
Learn about the theater’s programs and enjoy a performance by young singers. There also will be face painting and other activities.

The rain date is SUN 27.

STAGE & SCREEN

SAT 19
The Man Without a World
PUTNAM VALLEY
7:30 p.m. Tompkins Corners Cultural Center
729 Peekskill Hollow Road
tompkinscorners.org
Eleanor Antin’s modern silent film, released in 1992, is set in a Poland shetil in the 1920s. Alicia Svigals (klezmer) and Donald Sosin (piano) will provide a live score. Cost: $20

SAT 19
Love’s Labor’s Lost
GARRISON
7:30 p.m. Hudson Valley Shakespeare
2015 Route 9 | 845-265-9575
hvshakespeare.org
Four young men try to uphold their commitment to their studies and not be tempted by the arrival of four women. Also nightly from WED 23 to SUN 27 (closing). Cost: $10 to $50

SAT 19
Cinema in Piazza
PHILIPSTOWN
8 p.m. Magazzino Italian Art
2700 Route 9 | magazzino.art

SAT 19
Clue
BEACON
8 p.m. The Yard | 4 Hanna Lane
storyscreenpresents.com
Six victims are invited to an isolated mansion by a man who knows a dark secret about each of them. Bring chairs or blankets. The screening will include trivia, raffles and a costume contest. Hosted by Story Screen Presents. Cost: $10

SAT 19
Portrait of Jennie
BEACON
6 & 7 p.m. Boats leave dock
845-831-6346 | bannermancastle.org
Visit Bannerman Island to see this 1948 Oscar winner starring Joseph Cotton and Ethel Barrymore. Set in New York City during the Depression, the story has a supernatural twist. Cost: $40

SAT 19
Clue
COLD SPRING
8:30 p.m. Dockside Park
coldspringfilm.org
As part of its summer series, the Cold Spring Film Society will screen the 1986 sci-fi film starring Sigourney Weaver and Carrie Henn. Free

SAT 19
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 MON 21 (closing). Cost: $10 to $50

SAT 26
Art Walk
NEWBURGH
1 – 5 p.m. various locations
newburghart.org/rhbay-artseen
Galleries will be open for a walking tour. See website for a map of participants.

SAT 26
Janice Caswell
GARRISON
3 p.m. Garrison Art Center
23 Garrison’s Landing | 845-424-3960
garrisonartcenter.org
The artist will discuss her collaged paintings and assemblage on display as Mapping the Invisible.

FRI 25
Back to School Block Party, Aug. 19
BEACON
The rain date is MON 21.

BOOK SALE

Garrison CRAFT
9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Located at the Garrison Art Center
Free admission; credit card purchase appreciated
845-424-3960
garrisonartcenter.org

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SAT 26
Vivien Collens
NEWBURGH
3 – 5 p.m. Holland Tunnel
46 Chambers St.
hollandtunnelgallery.com
The artist, who moved to New York City in 1977, will exhibit her sculptures based on urban and natural environments.

SUN 27
Realism on the Hudson
BEACON
1 – 3 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | 845-831-4988
howlandculturalcenter.org
Work by members of the American Artists Professional League will be on view through Oct. 1.

MUSIC
SAT 19
Laurel Canyon
PEEKSKEEL
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039
paramounthudsonvalley.com
The tribute band will perform the songs of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young. Cost: $35 to $45

SAT 19
Manticore
BEACON
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The Emerson, Lake and Palmer tribute band will play the hits. Cost: $25 ($30 door)

SUN 20
Darryl Brown and Little Bones
BEACON
11 a.m. & 12:30 p.m. Boats leave dock
bannermancastle.org
Enjoy an outdoor musical performance at Bannerman while taking a self-guided tour of the island. Cost: $40 ($35 ages 11 and younger)

SAT 26
Summer Children
BEACON
8 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | 845-831-4988
howlandculturalcenter.org
The folk, jazz and bluegrass quartet will debut their new album, Secret World. Cost: $20 ($25 door)

SAT 26
Jason Gisser Band
BEACON
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The soul-rock band will be joined by Paul Byrne and the Bleeders. Cost: $15 ($20 door)

CIVIC
MON 21
City Council
BEACON
7 p.m. City Hall | 1 Municipal Plaza
845-265-3611 | beaconny.gov

TUES 22
Rep. Mike Lawler
Town Hall
CARMEL
5:15 p.m. Fischer Middle School
281 Fair St. | bit.ly/lawler-aug-22
Open to residents of the 17th District. Reserve a spot online. No noisemakers, signs or tripods.

WED 23
School Board
GARRISON
7 p.m. Garrison School | 1100 Route 9D
845-424-3689 | gufs.org
The meeting will include a public hearing on the district safety plan and remote emergency instruction.

LABOR DAY WEEKEND

SEPTEMBER 1 | 7PM
CHAUSSON & YSAŸE CONCERT
Arnaud Sussmann, violin | Jennifer Frautsch, violin | Benjamin Beilman, violin
Nick Canellakis, cell | David Requiro, cell | Milena Pájaro-van de Stadt, viola
Michael Stephen Brown, piano

SEPTEMBER 2 | 2PM
VIOLIN MAKER TALK
Master Luther Samuel Zygmuntowicz explores the science and craftsmanship of the violin, demonstrating authentic Stradivari and the Strad-style violins he crafts.

SEPTEMBER 4 | 6PM
GREAT LAWN CONCERT
Arnaud Sussmann, violin | Jennifer Frautsch, violin | Nick Canellakis, cell | David Requiro, cell | Milena Pájaro-van de Stadt, viola
Jonathan Vinocour, viola

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TICKETS AND INFORMATION AT BOSCOBEL.ORG
Now in its fourth year, our Student Journalists Program provides an opportunity for students who attend high school in Philipstown and Beacon to be mentored by professional journalists while they serve as correspondents for our nonprofit newspaper and website.

The reporting of correspondents selected for the program will appear at highlandscurrent.org and select stories will be printed. The staff, when editing stories by our student correspondents, will provide detailed feedback and suggestions to improve and refine their reporting.

Students will be expected to submit photos and video (when applicable) as part of their assignments. Due to the generous support of our Highlands Current members, correspondents will be compensated for the stories and photos that we publish online and/or in print. If you are interested in becoming a student correspondent, you can review the requirements and apply at:

highlandscurrent.org/sjp

Chip Rowe, Editor
The Highlands Current
**Starr (from Page 11)**

war, but also, through Winifred, from a pastoral Yorkshire village," he explains. "Music takes us back, through the embers of time, to another place."

Starr’s collaborators for the performance will be cellist Hannah Holman and pianist Lara Saldanha, along with actor Brandy Burre, a Beacon resident who will read the poems. It will be the first time Starr has performed at the Howland Cultural Center.

A native of western New York, Starr runs a teaching studio in Cold Spring, where he specializes in piano and drums but mentors the occasional composition student. Starr says his work probably falls under the “contemporary classical” category; his influences range from impressionist composers such as Debussy and Ravel to jazz artists like Bill Evans, Pat Metheny and Lyle Mays.

“I teach a lot of youngsters, usually age 5 and up; right now my oldest student is an octogenarian,” he says. “It’s a great way to hybridize my life, teaching, composing. I meet a lot of interesting people with interesting stories.”

**Animator (from Page 11)**

engineering — after graduating, she taught the subject at CalArts. “I tended to ignore sound until the end, but it’s so important,” she says. “A lot of filmmakers are scared to start working with it until they have footage in front of them.”

Between the wildfires in the fall of 2019 to the world shutting down because of the pandemic in March 2020, Maloney’s first year of teaching was unusual. “We lost access to all the recording equipment, and the labs and the computers and software was a nightmare,” she says.

In Philipstown, Maloney says she cherishes being near her family (her parents live here) and having time to pursue projects. She just returned from working at a summer camp for the arts in Vermont. Earlier this year she taught animation sound design at the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn; this fall she will teach animation at Bennington.

In the meantime, she’s working on an animated sci-fi film, *Re Shannon*, about a girl who keeps getting cloned. “The interest for me was a sense of distortion of time, and thinking about how a person might experience their life if they continuously have these gaps,” she says. “They’re reborn without understanding why or how. What I was thinking of most was this sense of not having control.”

To see Serpentine and other animations, visit bronwynmaloney.com.

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*The Howland Cultural Center is located at 477 Main St., in Beacon. A Celebration of Women in History will be performed at 8 p.m. on Sept. 9. Tickets are $20 at howlandculturalcenter.org or $25 at the door.*
Those green beans kept turning up in conversations for the rest of the week, like a happy, if persistent, ghost.
GWEN LASTER’S VIOLIN SPEAKS.

Every time I pick up my instrument I see it as a way to communicate.

In the Detroit Public Schools...

I was lucky.

We start with a melody or harmonic structure. After that it’s a spontaneous conversation.

Jazz is the highest form of freedom. What I play depends on what the other musicians are saying to me through their instruments.

My motivation to learn European classical music was so I could take it and go to other places.

Maybe we’re bringing together two different tonalities, Carnatic scales and Hindustani scales. Or maybe there’s something that’s on everyone’s mind, like the guy with the chokehold on the subway...

At first you’re in the learning process, you’re inspired by other people’s work. I bought all the vinyl I could find with a violin on it.

But to excel Gwen needed technique.

As you become a mature musician, there needs to be some impetus behind why you’re expressing yourself. Something you’re reading or a situation in your personal life finds its way into your work.

Harvey Winkl

Damon Banks

A few months after that, Sandra Bland was pulled over for a traffic violation in Texas and put in a jail cell where she was later found dead.

I watched the video of the arrest over and over. I never thought she hanged herself like they said.

Gwen’s feelings about this became “Cigarette,” the first movement in what would become her Black Lives Matter Suite.

I wrote the second movement reflecting on Samuel Harrell’s death at Fishkill Correctional Facility, and the last movement on the Newburgh Four.

In both cases, Gwen was able to hear what the families had to say. And turn that into music.

One of those situations was being pulled over by the police on Route 9 for reasons unknown. Gwen’s car was then towed after police said her insurance had been expired for nine days before she renewed it.

I was like, why am I sitting in the back of a cop car?

Why did they put me down? Check my purse?

Marly Rock

*On July 27, 2023 a federal judge stated the FBI invented the conspiracy and ruled three of the men should be released.
William Johnson of Brooklyn was hanging his arm outside a train window when it hit the iron work of a drawbridge north of Beacon and broke his elbow.

Matteawan residents were complaining about the unnecessary whistle-blowing by engineers from the Dutchess & Connecticut Railroad.

Looking Back in Beacon

By Chip Rowe

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

150 Years Ago (August 1873)

William Johnson of Brooklyn was hanging his arm outside a train window when it hit the iron work of a drawbridge north of Beacon and broke his elbow.

Matteawan residents were complaining about the unnecessary whistle-blowing by engineers from the Dutchess & Connecticut Railroad.

Black residents of Fishkill Landing met to discuss a plan to get their children admitted to the white public schools.

J.C. Beckwith of Matteawan was target-shooting with an old horse pistol when it exploded in his hand and the muzzle struck him in the forehead.

William Hall was digging a well with his young son playing nearby when the pick cut Railroad.

Mr. Polyed’s mill near Fishkill’s bridge was burnt down.

Beacon mayor asked for donations to the White Sulphur Springs, at the expense of the city, which would have water to sell us.”

George, a Poughkeepsie man, was injured when he fell through the wrought iron roof of a building.

Six Beacon men were injured when a beer keg exploded at a lawn party in Glenham for lab workers from the Texas Company (former Texaco).

Raymond Woodfield of Beacon was elected great prophet of the New York State Council of the Improved Order of Red Men, a fraternal organization that mimicked Native Americans.

A 30-year-old Brooklyn woman died of an apparent heart attack while competing in a traveling minstrel show.

Get It Done

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POSITION WANTED

HOME MANAGER — Mature Columbia Univ alum seeks live-in/on-premises position assisting with personal-admin needs, light-duty household chores, scheduling contractors and medical appointments, shopping, some cooking and other duties. Excellent references. Salary to be discussed. Call Thomas 914-621-2703.

HELP WANTED

ORGANIZER AND LAUNDRY — Busy Garrison residents looking for a weekly house organizer to do laundry and organize home, home offices, garage and auxiliary spaces. We have a house cleaner who comes once a week, so this is strictly organization: tidying, laundry, ironing, closet organizing; garage, art supplies and bookshelf organizing, etc. Solution-minded person needed for creative family of collectors and creators. Marie Kondo devotees welcome! Please do reply with experience with laundry and clothing care. Text 917-842-0534.

SPORTS REPORTER — The Highlands Current is looking for someone to help with coverage of Beacon and Haldane high school sports during the fall, winter and spring seasons. Ideal candidates will have experience in sports reporting or other forms of journalism. This is a freelance position that will include coverage of one game per week during the fall, winter and spring seasons, and creator of our sports section and coverage. $250 per week based on the number of games/teams that must be covered. Deadlines are Wednesday night. Email a resume, samples of work and writing samples to editor@highlandscurrent.org.

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 914-490-9060.

Current Classifieds

August 18, 2023

Support our nonprofit. Become a member!
Vienna waltz contest at the Camp Beacon casino. She and her sister were renting a cabin on the property for the summer.

Three Beacon men refused to serve on an Army draft board unless it was moved from Poughkeepsie to southern Dutchess County.

A 20-year-old inmate at the Matteawan State Hospital for the Criminally Insane died of heat exhaustion after being placed in a “restraining sheet” as temperatures soared to nearly 100 degrees. Hospital officials said the patient had been restrained after threatening an attendant with a piece of steel sharpened against a stone.

The Rev. Mattie Cooper announced that Springfield Baptist Church would hold a Labor Day barbecue with gospel music at its new building at 28 Beekman St.

After a 10 p.m. shoot-out — gathered outside the locked doors of City Hall to protest the lack of a youth center, while the City Council met upstairs. As two commissioners left the meeting, a young man called out: “What we want is a place where we can go and not be bothered by you, and you, and you,” pointing at the council members and police officers. Mayor Robert Cahill, who rejected a request to meet with the teens, left through a back entrance. He told a reporter: “There is plenty for them to do, even more than when I was a kid. If they want to congregate, let them congregate in their own yards.”

In response to complaints from residents about a lack of enforcement when bags of garbage were left on curbs before collection day, Cahill said at the City Council meeting that the police had enough to do fighting vandalism at the city’s water supply areas, confronting “defiant teenagers” and rounding up stray dogs. He noted that the city landfill was running out of space, so pick-up of stray dogs. He noted that the city landfill was running out of space, so pick-up more than once a week was not possible. The landfill was running out of space, so pick-up of stray dogs. He noted that the city landfill was running out of space, so pick-up of stray dogs was not possible.

Two teenage hitchhikers from Newburgh were arrested after they allegedly stabbed and bound a driver before forcing him into the trunk of his car. The 20-year-old Newburgh man had picked up the teens at 11 p.m. at the Beacon end of the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge. After driving around, the suspects dumped their injured victim near the Beacon disposal plant, where a worker called police.

A consultant told the state Urban Development Corp. that Beacon, Poughkeepsie and Haverstraw were not suitable for the construction of a deep-water Hudson River seaport and instead recommended Newburgh.

Don McLean, the Philipstown resident best known for his hits, “American Pie,” “Vincent” and “Dried,” reportedly sang one song during an appearance at the Dutchess County Fair, said he had a sore throat and turned the stage over to Pete Seeger, the folk singer and Beacon resident.

25 Years Ago (August 1998)

Facing a lawsuit by the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars, the City Council said it would spend $27,000 to repair the roof of the Memorial Building. Mayor Clara Lou Gould said no agreement had ever been made with the vets about maintenance, but the city administrator pointed out that the city owned the building.

The state opened a maximum-security “modular unit” with 100 cells at the medium-security Fishkill Correctional Center. The free-standing unit was designed to house disruptive inmates sent from other prisons.

The performers at Clearwater’s annual corn festival at Riverfront Park included David Crosby, Pete Seeger, Melanie, Asha, Nan and Stir Fried. The City Council named James McCollum, a senior foreman for the city water department, as superintendent of water and sewer. The post had been vacant for a decade; the city was paying a private firm to manage the filtration plant.

Police were searching for Arthur Deerling, 46, a Vietnam veteran who was last seen boarding a Metro-North train at the Beacon station on June 20 on his way to an appointment at the Veterans Affairs hospital at Montrose.

A Beacon woman who worked as a cashier at Walmart in Fishkill was arrested for allegedly allowing two friends to buy $1,700 in merchandise with a stolen credit card and counterfeit bills.

A 20-year-old man survived a 170-foot fall from the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge. “He did survive,” said a state police investigator.

The Tallix Foundry in Beacon unveiled a 12-ton, 24-foot-high clay model of a horse that it planned to cast. The sculpture, “Il Cavallo,” was based on a drawing by Leonardo da Vinci of a clay model that was destroyed in 1499 by invading French soldiers. In 1977, an airline pilot, Charles Dent, read in National Geographic about da Vinci’s model and began to raise the money to replicate it as a gift to Italy for display in Milan.

Visit highlandcurrent.org for news updates and latest information.

**Local Bestsellers**

Based on combined hardcover and paperback sales reported for May and June at Split Rock Books, 97 Main St., in Cold Spring.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
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<tr>
<td>Get Rooted</td>
<td>Robyn Moreno</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat Talk</td>
<td>Virginia Sole-Smith</td>
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<td>Trust</td>
<td>Hernan Diaz</td>
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<td>The Creative Act</td>
<td>Rick Rubin</td>
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<td>Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow</td>
<td>Gabrielle Zevin</td>
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<tr>
<td>How to Read a Tree</td>
<td>Tristan Gooley</td>
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<td>The Golden Frog Games (Witchlings 2)</td>
<td>Clairibel Ortega</td>
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<td>Katie the Cat sitter No. 3</td>
<td>Colleen AF Venable</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weather Together</td>
<td>Jessie Sima</td>
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<td>School Trip</td>
<td>Jerry Craft</td>
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<td>Dog Man: 20,000 Fleas Under the Sea</td>
<td>Dav Pilkey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spy Camp: The Graphic Novel</td>
<td>Stuart Gibbs</td>
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Notably, Bregman didn’t have a conversation with Scenic Hudson, which manages Long Dock Park. That resulted in a series of mutually unpleasant confrontations that culminated in Scenic Hudson last week dismantling Bregman’s work with a skid steer.

Bregman said he purposely didn’t ask for permission because he thought of his work as guerilla art. “The work of guerilla and street artists can be disturbing to authorities and the general public exactly because it doesn’t align with acceptable forms of artistic expression and creativity,” he said, explaining why he thinks it was dismantled.

Or, it might have been the chain saw. When an intense summer storm washed up a hefty log against “Torqued Jetty,” Bregman made a series of cuts to create “Hudson Waves.” His chain saw was loud enough to attract the attention of park staff, who told him he was disrupting the natural ecology of the shoreline. Bregman countered that nothing about the Long Dock shoreline is natural: It’s fill left over from the former port, and the rocks he hauled out were ship ballast.

Bregman was asked to cease, desist and leave, but he returned the next day to add five final cuts. As soon as he fired up the chain saw, park staff reappeared. This was followed by a cease-and-desist letter, and then the skid steer.

Public art can still be found at Long Dock. George Trakas’ “Beacon Point” has been there since 2007, created in collaboration with Scenic Hudson and Dia:Beacon. And many children build driftwood huts and other structures.

Scenic Hudson said that unless those structures disrupt the ecology or involve power tools, its policy has been to let the elements dismantle them. It also said that, had Bregman asked for permission, the situation might have ended differently.

“He could have simply approached us beforehand, so our ecology and parks experts could review the idea, perhaps even collaborate to help create an installation that considers the river ecology and public safety,” said Seth McKee, executive director of The Scenic Hudson Land Trust. “But he took it upon himself to decide what is best for Long Dock Park with disregard for others who are connected to that place — a place many others cherish as it is.”

“I’m a fan of Bregman’s art but not of his approach,” added Riley Johndonnell, director of communications for Scenic Hudson. “We can all empathize with how the world can feel a bit upside down these days, but I’m not sure where and when it is acceptable to arrive, uninvited, to a natural sanctuary with an unsanctioned chain saw, do what you wish, how you wish, and disregard the property owner’s posted signs and requests to stop.”

Bregman said he doesn’t dispute the facts, and doesn’t harbor any ill will toward Scenic Hudson, an organization that he said he reveres. He concedes that returning with his chain saw was “poking them in the eye.” He’s also came to realize that “Torqued Jetty” did have an effect on the ecosystem. Standing on its remnants, he pointed out how ducks would shelter in the curves of the structure during heavy winds, and how the jetty broke the energy of the waves, leading to sediment buildup in different places.

He always figured the wall would be dismantled by the elements — so, in his view, it was simply hastened along. He also wanted to forge a more intimate relationship with the land, and in that regard, the project was successful. “I remember moving some of these individual pieces,” he said. He pointed to a particularly large rock. “That one was tough.”

Bregman said his next project will be “Scorched Earth,” an installation he’s creating in Newburgh with his partner, Amy Bandolik, that will reproduce the aftermath of a destructive wildfire. He has the permission of the property owner.
Evergreens in the Garden

By Pamela Doan

This season I’ve had opportunities to work with gardeners incorporating evergreens into landscapes. In the past, conifers haven’t been that interesting to me, although I am awed by the majestic white pines in the woods behind my house and curious about eastern red cedars (Juniperus virginiana), which have sprouted where I’ve limited or stopped mowing. I have lots of judgmental opinions about arborvitae lining property edges, a barrier of green that stands through the seasons. There must be more creative and aesthetically pleasing ways to create a fence than trees crowded branch to branch.

When browsing at garden centers — don’t we all do that? — I see the same cultivars of arborvitae, yews and juniper repeatedly, almost as if the Gymnosperm family were limited to the few that can be plopped against the foundation of a house and ignored. Once I dug in, I discovered many lovely and interesting evergreens and started to appreciate that, because of the breeding, there are sizes and shapes that cover the most specific needs.

In landscape design, evergreens are said to provide “structure” to a garden. They hold it together by looking the same in all seasons, providing a backdrop for deciduous trees and the herbaceous layer. I get the concept but don’t agree that only evergreens can hold the space. Branch structure and the seed heads of dormant perennials and grasses can be equally beautiful during the dormant season and look intentional, too. A database like conifers.org is a useful starting point for discovering evergreens native to the Northeast. After some searching, I’ve realized how few I’ve seen growing naturally. I need to get out more — and I get the starting point for discovering evergreens is to consider how to protect them from the deer. Even the sharpest needles aren’t a deterrent when food is scarce. It’s also the reason that seedlings don’t make it in the forest.

I planted two northern white cedars (Thuja occidentalis) from one-gallon containers years ago and carefully fenced them. But after two winters when the snow was deep enough for the deer to reach them, they are now 15 feet tall but the lowest 4 feet are missing branches.

The challenge of placing a tree near the roadside is to make sure road crews don’t hack it during clearing. Smaragd (Thuja occidentalis) is on the shorter side, topping out at 12 feet. This one can be tricky, though, because it has a narrow, columnar form, rather than the fullness of other evergreens. I would complement it with shrubs that have a round shape and spiky blooming perennials.

The De Groot’s spire cultivar can grow up to 20 feet tall and is much fuller in shape, half as wide as it is tall when full size. It would look lovely with clusters of red twig dogwood and white flowering perennials to accentuate the blue-green foliage.

For an area that is larger and can accommodate a mix of hardwoods and evergreens, experiment with the spruce pine (Pinus virginiana), eastern red cedar and blue atlas cedar (Cedrus atlantica), which is going to be more tolerant of our winter temperatures. Add in a redbud (Cercis canadensis), a few gray birches (Betula populifolia) and a hardwood like an oak species, and there will be shade and beauty for everyone to enjoy, including wildlife and birds, in every season.

I can’t recommend any hemlocks (Tsuga spp.) because of the damage done by the hemlock woolly adelgid, a pest active during the winter that leaves a white powder on branches. It is widespread in the Hudson Valley; researchers are focusing on biocontrols, such as releasing predator beetles and flies to fight back.

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Fishkill Rural Cemetery
801 ROUTE 9, FISHKILL, NY 12524

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2023
AT 2:00 PM

Scan this code with your phone for more information or to sponsor a wreath.

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342 SOUTH AVENUE, POUGHKEEPSIE, NY 12601

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2023
AT 2:00 PM

Scan this code with your phone for more information or to sponsor a wreath.

For more information please contact 845-831-0179
The annual summer Beacon Hoops basketball league for children and teens ages 10 to 16 concluded this week, although the second half of one title game was rained out twice.

In the championship game of the newly created girls’ division, The Highlands Current defeated Don Knight Plumbing & Heating, 25-18. In the coed Rookies division (ages 10-12), IO Infusion won, 35-21, over Baja 328. And in the delayed coed Juniors division (ages 13-16) championship, A-Sicka Heals Foundation came back to defeat Sal’s Pizza, 53-44.

Following the games, the league named its All-Star teams. For the girls’ division, the team is Taylor Chippendale, Norajean Cotter, Alexa Pena, Za’Layni Shand (MVP), Madeline Smith, Louisa Virgadamo and Juliana Wilchez.

For the Rookies division, the All-Stars are Robert Cotto, Emmanuel Felix-Morris, Weston Hetrick, Kellen Knittel (MVP), Kipton Knittel, Luca Lentini, Xavier Lora, Mason McNair, Gavin Parks, Kevin Pegram and Zyaire West.

The Juniors All-Stars are Jahcier Ballard, Jayden Bostick, Gio Bowley, Cyrus Cowings (MVP), Amare Franklin, Ryan Landisi, Richie Omira, Brady Phillipbar, Marciano Rodriguez, Michai Thompson and Jahreal Whitted.

The All-Star games are scheduled for Saturday (Aug. 19) at the Loopers Plaza court beginning at 10 a.m.

Photo by George Velazquez

BEACON HOOPS COMPLETES SEASON
Puzzles

Cross Current

ACROSS
1. Solidify
4. Tummy muscles
7. Rum cake
11. Sir Guinness
13. Cistern
14. Modern taxi rival
15. Wife of Jacob
16. Melody
17. Shoe fillers
18. Wash thoroughly
20. Canadian flag emblem
22. Uncivilized
24. Prepared potatoes
28. Medium
32. Condition
33. Orem’s place
34. Talk on and on
36. Actress Merrill
37. Talk a blue streak?
39. Extreme
41. Tolerate
43. Light brown
44. Tropical tree
46. Salon sounds
50. — and Away
53. Charged bit
55. Duel tool
56. Fan publication
57. Bar bill
58. Pro —
59. Mr. Stravinsky
60. JFK info
61. Author Brown

DOWN
1. Bamboozle
2. Singers Natalie and Paula
3. Troubling signs
4. Link
5. Letters from Greece?
6. Throat affliction
7. Self-serve meal
8. Honest politician
9. Spell-off
10. Illustrations
12. Communal meal at a place of worship
19. “Humbug!”
21. DDE’s opponent
23. Peruke
25. Secular
26. Sicilian spouter
27. Bargain
28. Brownish purple
29. Dazzle
30. Lawn party site
31. Automobile
35. Cudgel
38. Epoch
40. — Kapital
42. Select group
45. Castle defense
47. Apple tablet
48. Anti-fur org.
49. Penn or Astin
50. Submachine gun
51. Glutton
52. Family card game
54. Cagers’ gp.

Sudo Current

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

ALUMS

______

______

______

______

______

______

CLUES

Word Ladder

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

ALUMS

______

______

______

______

______

______

CLUES

Micro Crossword

ACROSS
1. Quick bread served at an afternoon tea
6. Colleague of Prancer and Blitzen
7. Spy Kids co-star Vega
8. Food truck postings
9. Sizzling barbecue sound

DOWN
1. Guys’ dates
2. Power co. supply
3. Tragic king
4. Selma director DuVernay
5. Release money
6. Throat affliction
7. Self-serve meal
8. Honest politician
9. Spell-off
10. Letters from Greece?

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F
ting of an odyssey from the Garrison Golf

Championship. Montoya, a native of Cuba who

on the PGA Tour, including in the 1979 PGA

Montoya, a longtime club pro who played

the Fishkill Golf Course on Route 9.

took his 13-year-old to the driving range at

kind of old after two years,” he said.

found that sport too bruising. “It got

stown Recreation league but

played lacrosse in a Philip -

at the Garrison School and

various sports as a student

round. He had dabbled in

Jasper had never played a

drive and the work ethic. And

coach. “He has a very good chance of

team leader, said Jeff Steinberg, the Pioneer

California, where he has helped its golf

Club to Pioneer High School in San Jose,

in the Northeast. Jasper's aunt and uncle,

for Jasper to play year-round — not easy

practice putting and his swing. Then he

was off for me lately.”

It’s been a little bit off for me lately.

weights at the gym with his uncle. After

school, he hits the range for 90 minutes to

school, he hits the range for 90 minutes to

school. He rises every morning at 5:15 to lift

ies. He also finished fourth on July 12 with

around the Northeast, winning on July 19

at the Blue Hill Golf Club in Pearl River

when he shot a 71 (-1), including four bird-

ies. He also finished fourth on July 12 with

a 75 (+3) at The Bridge in Sag Harbor.

And he played a round at the Fishkill Golf

Course with Montoya. “I told his father, ‘I

think Jasper is ready to go on the tour,’ ”

Montoya said.

Jasper said he’d love to play profession-

ally someday. “But right now I’m focused on

college,” he said. “We’ll see what happens

from there.”

Moves to northern California
to hone his golf game

By Joey Asher

or many teenagers, the pandemic

lockdown meant hours of Netflix and

video games.

For Jasper Timmer, it marked the begin-

ning of an odyssey from the Garrison Golf

Club to Pioneer High School in San Jose,

California, where he has helped its golf

team win two league championships.

Jasper, 16, who will be a junior this fall, is a

team leader, said Jeff Steinberg, the Pioneer

coach. “He has a very good chance of

accented during here six days before freshman year

started,” Jasper said.

and his father headed from the

airport to the Santa Teresa Golf Club,

Pioneer’s home course. By coincidence, the

club placed Jasper into a foursome with

Oliver Smith, a senior who was the team

captain. “It was nice to meet someone right

off the bat,” said Jasper.

While golf wouldn’t start until the

spring, Steinberg started to hear about the

newcomer from his other players. “This

Jasper kid is pretty good,” they told him.

When Steinberg saw him play, he was

stunned. “I had a hard time believing that

he’d only been playing since the beginning of

COVID,” he said. “He has an absolutely natu-

ral swing. And he can hit the ball a mile.”

In San Jose, Jasper’s life is about golf and

school. He rises every morning at 5:15 to lift

weights at the gym with his uncle. After

school, he hits the range for 90 minutes to

practice putting and his swing. Then he

plays 18 holes before doing his homework.

When asked what part of his game needs

the most work, he said, “Right now? Putting.

It’s been a little bit off for me lately.”

This summer, back home in Garrison,

he played nine PGA junior tournaments

around the Northeast, winning on July 19

at the Blue Hill Golf Club in Pearl River

when he shot a 71 (-1), including four bird-

ies. He also finished fourth on July 12 with

a 75 (+3) at The Bridge in Sag Harbor.

And he played a round at the Fishkill Golf

Course with Montoya. “I told his father, ‘I

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Garrison Teen Has Drive

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