

# The HIGHLANDS Current



A Perfect Score  
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Part II: Autism at School

## Teaching Across the Spectrum

*If parents don't believe their child is getting the education he or she deserves, they must confront a highly regulated system.*

By Joey Asher

State and federal laws entitle every child who has a physical or cognitive disability to a “free and appropriate public education” in the “least restrictive environment.”

But if a child has autism, and parents don't feel a public school district is reaching that standard, they may have to battle to get it.

Last year, Elliot Mister entered the prekindergarten program at Glenham Elementary School in the Beacon district with an undiagnosed case of autism spectrum disorder. “His teacher almost immediately started pulling me aside,” recalled his father, Andy. “They were

calling the security guard because he was trying to run away.”

That surprised his parents because Elliot had not had similar issues at summer camp or preschool at The Randolph School in Wappingers Falls.

To get help from the district, Elliot's parents said they sent dozens of emails, talked repeatedly with teachers and administrators and spent \$1,400 on a special-education advocate. Finally, they

filed a complaint with the state Education Department.

(Because of privacy laws, school officials and teachers cannot comment on specific children. However, *The Current* attempted multiple times to speak to Beacon Superintendent Matt Landahl and Heather Chadwell Dennis, the assis-

tant superintendent for pupil personnel services, who oversees special education, about the services the district provides to neurodivergent children. Each declined to comment.)

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## Getting the Feet Back to Main Street

*First Friday and Second Saturday struggle to rebound after pandemic*

By Marc Ferris

In the wake of the pandemic shutdown, efforts to revitalize First Friday in Cold Spring and Second Saturday in Beacon — events designed to entice visitors and shoppers — have been spotty and foot traffic in general is down, said shop owners surveyed during a walk down both Main Streets.

In Cold Spring, the Chamber of Commerce promotes First Fridays, encouraging stores to stay open late and hold special sales or events. Before the pandemic, the chamber handed out orange flags for merchants to place outside their shops to signal their participation. It also prints posters.

Earlier this month, on Sept. 1, only three shops displayed the flags and most stores closed at their regular time. Last year, First Friday ran from May to October; this year it ended a month earlier.

“It's really an art gallery thing, but there aren't many left in Cold Spring,” said Martee Levi of Buster Levi Gallery at 121 Main St.

On Sept. 1, Levi served wine, cheese and sweets as a dozen people milled about inside the gallery and on the sidewalk. Studio

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## St. Mary's Again Faces Precipice

*For third time in 10 years, church says end is near*

By Michael Turton

The Rev. Steve Schunk, the priest-in-charge at St. Mary's in Cold Spring, said on Sept. 27 the Episcopal church may close in 2024 if its finances don't improve dramatically, putting its expansive lawn at the corner of Main Street and Chestnut Avenue in jeopardy.

The 1.5-acre great lawn serves as an unofficial village green, hosting winter tobogganers, the annual Halloween parade, craft fairs and other community events.

Schunk said St. Mary's has a \$50,000 gap in its 2024 budget, which includes \$180,000 to \$200,000 in expenses. Sixty percent covers utilities, insurance and upkeep for the 155-year-old church and three buildings; 30 percent provides minimal pay for clergy and staff; and 10 percent is sent as dues to the Episcopal Diocese of New York. In addition, Schunk said the church and buildings need an estimated \$3 million in repairs and upgrades.

In a meeting on Sept. 27, Schunk and senior warden Vincent Tamagna identified three paths for the church, with the preferred scenario being the solicitation of

(Continued on Page 7)



The great lawn, with St. Mary's Church, on an October afternoon

Photo by M. Turton

## High Rates Depress Local Housing Market

*Buyers, sellers pull back as borrowing costs rise*

By Leonard Sparks

Interest rates on mortgages fell below 3 percent during the first year of the pandemic shutdown, helping to fuel a frenzy that accelerated home sales in Beacon and Philipstown and drove rising prices even higher.

Now, with the rate on a 30-year fixed mortgage exceeding 7 percent, the highest level in 23 years, home sales are slowing and prices cooling as potential buyers recoil at taking on higher monthly payments, according to local real-estate agents.

The most recent quarterly report from the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, covering April to June, concluded that “affordability challenges” were limiting the market in Putnam County, where sales fell 17.4 percent from the same period in 2022.

Those challenges, according to the report, included “elevated sales prices and higher borrowing costs,” and the decision by “would-be sellers with low-rate mortgages” to stay on the sidelines “in hopes market conditions will improve.”

About 35 percent fewer single-family homes sold in Beacon and Philipstown during the 12-month period that ended Aug. 31 than the year before, according to

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5Q

FIVE QUESTIONS: **GEORGE ATKINSON**

By Zach Rodgers

George Atkinson, 96, lives in the same house in Beacon where he was born in 1927. His responses are excerpted from an interview for the *Beaconites* podcast.

**What was your early childhood like?**

I was 2 years old when the stock market crashed and my whole childhood was spent in the Depression. We were pretty fortunate. My father had a job, and my older brother had a job, so we weren't as bad off as some. It was a week-to-week struggle, but we got through it. My father's name was Richard Atkinson and he worked for the New York Rubber Co. Rubber was a pretty stable industry throughout the Depression. One of the big products was conveyor belts for the coal mines. My mother was born in Ohio, but her mother's family was all here in the Beacon-Newburgh area. Her father was a coal miner who got injured when my mother was about 3 years old, and he couldn't continue working in Ohio. So they moved back here to what is now Beacon.

**Tell me about the house where you were born.**

I think the price was \$2,400. My parents moved in and my father started to renovate

the house with what money was available. Little by little it got to be a decent home. It was paid for and I figured I didn't want to get involved with paying a mortgage on another house, so it worked out pretty well.

**How old were you when you had your first job?**

My father died a year before Pearl Harbor and my middle brother, Richard, was drafted into the Army. So at 14 I was the man at the house. In the high school they had a brand-new machine shop and a brand-new woodworking shop. For any kid who was mechanically inclined, it was like going to heaven. I went to work in a machine shop, making the steering mechanism for the Liberty ship motors. The Liberty ships were freighters carrying freight and troops all over the world.

Except for people like doctors and lawyers, nobody had expectations

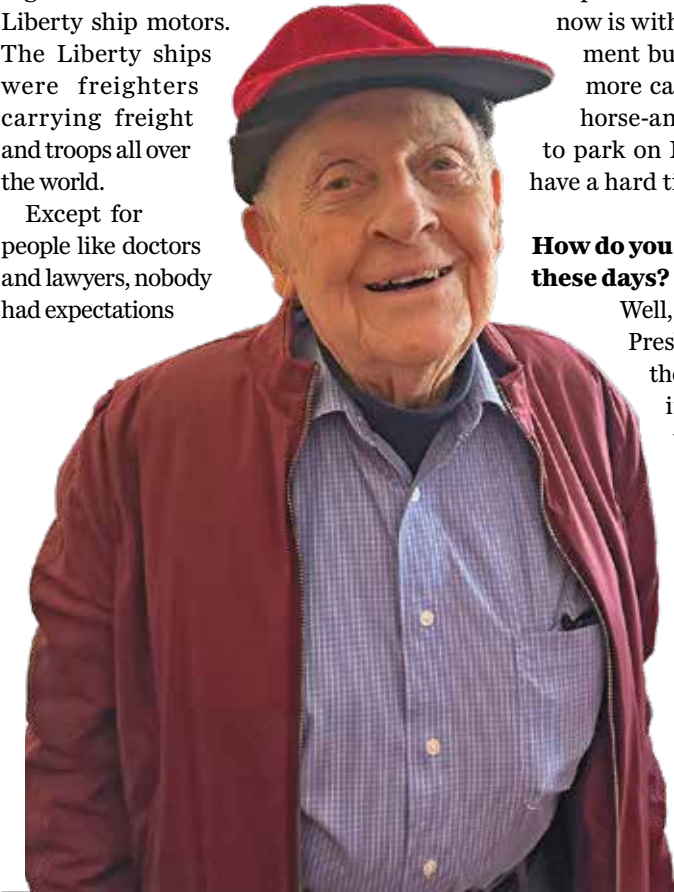
of ever going to college; they simply couldn't afford it. Back then, if you wanted to go to the Beacon doctor for something, nothing too serious, you paid him \$2 for an office visit. If he came to your house, it was \$3. But still, he was wealthy. He lived in a big house, had twin tennis courts alongside, belonged to the yacht club, had a yacht, flew airplanes, and was one of the first ones to have a television set.

**What do you think of the recent changes in Beacon?**


The whole Hudson Valley got pretty run-down for a long period, from Yonkers all the way up to Albany. In Beacon, we're in pretty good shape right now. But progress creates a lot of problems, also. My contention right now is with all these four-story apartment buildings. You got more and more cars feeding out into the old horse-and-buggy streets. If you try to park on Main Street, you're gonna have a hard time.

**How do you spend your time these days?**

Well, I'm a 73-year member of the Presbyterian church, I belong to the historical society and I'm involved with an organization called the Experimental Aircraft Association. All over the world, people are building their own airplanes. Now, I never got to build an airplane, although I wanted to. But in our local chapter, one member is building an airplane. I go up once a week and do what I can to help. It's a night out and a little camaraderie.




“ I was 2 years old when the stock market crashed and my whole childhood was spent in the Depression.



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ON THE SPOT

By Michael Turton

**What was your favorite fairy tale as a kid?**

“ Jack and the Beanstalk, the adventure and mystery, wondering what he'd find. ”



Carol Casparian, Cold Spring

“ King Arthur. I liked the knights, the wizards and fairy creatures. ”



Kevin Bertholf, Beacon

“ I loved the *real* Grimms' fairy tales, not the Disney version. ”



Eva Gerard, Beacon





## Kent: Town Considers Revaluation

The town assessor told the Kent Town Board on Sept. 19 that the municipality is overdue for a revaluation of the property values that determine school tax bills.

According to *The Putnam County Times*, some residents saw dramatic increases in their Carmel school district tax bills this year. A representative from the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services said this was in part because towns in the district typically perform reassessments every year, while Kent has not.

A reassessment would not increase the amount of taxes collected by the district, which is determined by the size of its budget and the levy. But it would change individual tax bills. "Short of doing a reassessment, there's no way to get everybody back to where they should be," said Town Assessor Seth Plawsky.

One resident dismissed the idea that Kent was paying more because it hadn't done a reassessment. "If all other things are equal, if the school board raises its tax

levy by 1.9 percent, you would expect your tax bill to go up by 1.9 percent. Mine went up by 10.2 percent," said Cliff Narby. "The Office of Real Property Services has done a very poor job of appraising how well the assessors in those other towns did their assessment and, as a result, the Town of Kent taxpayers are being screwed. We're going to subsidize the other towns."

## Stormville: Prison Guard Sentenced

A federal judge sentenced a former guard at the Green Haven Correctional Facility to three months in prison for punching an inmate and lying about it.

Taj Everly, 33, of Cortlandt Manor, had asked for probation, according to *The Journal News*. Everly, who pleaded guilty to depriving the prisoner of his constitutional rights, had been facing a sentence of 2 to 2½ years.

The assault took place in May 2020. Everly's attorney argued that the inmate had made a veiled threat, and that when the guard saw him later in the day he decided to "preemptively send a message to Mr. [Eion] Thom that attacking him would be a bad idea." He then "panicked and concocted a story that Thom hit him first."

Six months earlier, Everly had been slashed in the head by another prisoner. His lawyer said he was working under extreme stress and had acknowledged wrongdoing.

But a federal prosecutor said Everly came clean only after learning there was body-camera footage of the assault.

## Carmel: Group Sues to Save Historic Home

A preservation group has sued New York City in an effort to save a historic home that has fallen into disrepair.

Friends of Belden House, chaired by Ann Fanizzi of Carmel, filed the lawsuit in Putnam County Court against the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, which owns the building, saying it failed to use \$2.9 million committed by the state in 2006 for restoration. Instead, the DEC plans to demolish the 18th-century structure.

New York City bought the building in 1896 when it constructed a nearby dam, using it as an office and custodian's residence until the 1990s. In 2005, after Putnam County said it would not provide funds to restore it, New York City said it would rehabilitate it for office space.

Fanizzi told *The Putnam County Times* that after the financial crash of 2007 "the money went away." She said restoration would now cost closer to \$5 million.

## Westchester: County Offers Lanternfly Vacuums

The Westchester County Parks Department said on Sept. 26 it had purchased

10 high-powered vacuums to lend to municipalities to suck up spotted lanternflies, invasive pests that showed up in the Hudson Valley last year after first being seen in Pennsylvania in 2014.

According to *The Journal News*, the federal government has said that anyone who encounters a spotted lanternfly should kill it.

## Peekskill: Man Goes Missing

Police continue to search for a 22-year-old Peekskill man who disappeared in August.

Jason Sacasari Martinez left his wallet and credit cards behind when he departed for work at ShopRite on Route 6 in Cortlandt Town Center. His brother, Steve, said there was a ping from Martinez's phone from Oregon Road.

Steve thought perhaps his brother was on Oregon Road at the cemetery where his mother, Manuela Martinez, is buried. She died in April 2021. "It happened during COVID and it was a very difficult time for us," he told the *Peekskill Herald*. "I wasn't conscious at that time as to how hard it was."

In early September, forest rangers searched 1,000 acres in Depew Park and Blue Mountain Reservation because Martinez was known to hike there.

Anyone who has seen Martinez, or has any information, is asked to call the Peekskill Police at 914-737-8000.

## Hudson Beach Glass

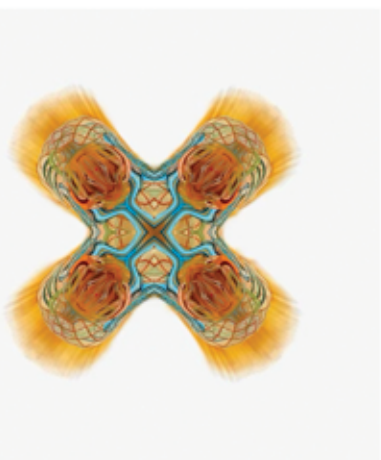
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The HIGHLANDS  
**Current**









## The HIGHLANDS Current Wins National Award

**T**he *Highlands Current* won an outstanding coverage award from Local Independent Online News (LION) on Tuesday (Oct. 3) for Brian PJ Cronin's *Trails (Too) Well Traveled*.

Published in September 2022, the series examined attempts to balance the desire to encourage people to explore the outdoors and the damaging effects an abundance of park visitors can have on the environment.

The *Current* won among news sources with annual revenue of \$500,000 to \$1.1 million. The other nominees were *Cardinal News* in Roanoke, Virginia, and *Mission Local* in San Francisco.

The newspaper was a finalist in the 2020 LION contest for investigative reports for *Secret Putnam* and won for investigative reports in 2019 for "The Extremist Next Door."

### LETTERS AND COMMENTS

(Continued from Page 4)

fits of inclusivity? Whether at school or in the community at large, we are all enriched when difference is welcome. Many of humanity's most celebrated individuals, past and present, are atypical thinkers. Schools thoughtfully engaging all learners is good for every student; it is good for all of us.

It is excellent that Haldane and Garrison are welcoming more and more students. How unfortunate, and inaccurate, that this article portrays inclusion as a hardship, as a problem. Hopefully future features in this series will highlight the vast benefits of learning and growing together.

Carolyn Llewellyn, *Cold Spring*

### Rail trail

It may seem expensive to spend \$278,000 for a feasibility study ("Dutchess Hires Firm to Study Rail Trail," Sept. 22). But it involves preliminary survey and right of way analysis (note, there is a law firm from the Midwest contesting property rights), inspection and analysis of all the bridges and structures, utility investigations, traffic and road-crossing analysis, soils and contamination analysis, conceptual design and more. I did the survey for the Poughkeepsie Rail Trail, which is one-tenth the length of this, and that was \$120,000.

Tom Cerchiara, *via Instagram*

### Trading post

Thousands of times I have passed this landmark and asked myself, "Why?" ("What is the White Deer Trading Post?" Sept. 15). Thanks to Marc Ferris, we now know its fascinating history. Investigative research underlies all great newspapers such as this one. Point proved by your memorable and arresting article.

William Harris, *Cold Spring*

### Wide Angle

## Dirty and Loud

By Stowe Boyd

**A**h, fall has returned ... along with one of its true joys: the deafening sound of gas-guzzling leaf blowers.



Some models produce more than 100 decibels of wall-penetrating, low-frequency noise. They can blow air at up to 280 miles per hour. This easily intrudes into the home, and with more people working from home that is now a work problem, not just a disturbance of a weekend barbecue.

Beacon has a regulation (Section 149-6) that limits outdoor sound levels in residential zones to a maximum of 60 decibels in the daytime, so in principle the loudest leaf blowers should be banned. But the city exempts leaf blowers and other lawn equipment from the ordinance. Considering it's the loudest residential noise, that's just crazy. Cold Spring allows more noise, setting its residential sound limit for power equipment of 5 horsepower or less at 75 decibels at 50 feet.

Leaf blowers are more than loud. They are environmental disasters in a convenient, hand-held form. The dust they blow up can contain pollen, mold, animal feces, heavy metals and chemicals from herbicides and pesticides that increase the risk of lung cancer, cardiovascular disease, premature births and asthma.

More than 100 municipalities in the U.S. have banned or limited the use of gas-powered leaf blowers. Larchmont, in Westchester County, passed a ban in September 2020. Montclair, New Jersey, prohibits gas leaf blowers except between March 15 to May 15 and Oct. 15 to Dec. 15, and limits the times when they can be used, so zealous neighbors or the crew they hired can't wake you at 6 a.m. on Sunday. (Notably, these prohibitions do not apply to electric leaf blowers.)

California will ban gas-powered leaf blowers starting next year, but until then, the state's passenger vehicles produce less pollution than its lawn equipment does, because California has the most stringent car emissions laws in the country.

How much pollution are we talking about? In one oft-cited study, Edmunds.com found in 2011 that a two-stroke, gas-powered leaf blower was worse for the environment than a Ford F-150 Raptor pickup. Specifically, "hydrocarbon emissions from a half-hour of yard work with the two-stroke leaf blower are about the same as a 3,900-mile drive from Texas to Alaska in a Raptor." That's astonishing, and terrible.

The journalist James Fallows has an apt analogy: "Using a two-stroke engine is like heating your house with an open pit fire in the living room — and chopping down your trees to keep it going, and trying to whoosh away the fetid black smoke before your children are poisoned by it."

Earlier this year, the Beacon City Council considered whether to ban leaf blowers. City attorneys drafted a law that would restrict the use of blowers, including a ban



from May 15 to Sept. 30. The arguments focused on the noise.

City Administrator Chris White made an odd argument against the proposed ban. "I don't think you want to send police to give tickets to low-income workers because they are using a tool of their trade," he said. The counter is that the city created ordinances to prohibit noise but allows loud equipment anyway. The incomes of the people wielding them is irrelevant.

We should ask our municipal governments to explicitly ban gas-powered leaf blowers as soon as possible, say, starting Jan. 1. Lawn maintenance companies would have to shift to electric. Perhaps

a year later, we could include other gas-powered equipment, and require zero-emission lawn mowers, lawn edgers and hedge trimmers. A year after that, we could add chain saws, snowblowers, power washers and portable generators, except during declared emergencies or by permit.

It's time for us to get out of the Stone Age. After all, our yards are part of the environment, too.

*Stowe Boyd, who lives in Beacon, specializes in the economics and ecology of work and the "anthropology of the future." This column focuses on the local impacts of larger trends.*

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# 7 reasons to be concerned about the proposed “Fjord Trail”

Scenic Hudson, NYS Parks and a billionaire donor want to build a major tourist attraction they say will be “the epicenter of tourism in the Hudson Valley” and have “national prominence.” This mega-development will bring an unmanageable number of tourists, degrade the environment, and ruin the historic village of Cold Spring.

**1. Traffic:** Over 600,000 visitors a year are projected to come to Hudson Highlands State Park, with most bound for the Fjord Trail (source: HHFT presentation 2/2/23). It will cause gridlock in Cold Spring with its one-way-in, one-way out streets and traffic backups from Boscobel to Little Stony Point and beyond. And it’s likely to be much worse: Scenic Hudson’s own consultant projected 267,699 visitors a year to Walkway Over The Hudson (source: WOTH Final Report) but it drew 720,000 the first year alone! (source: Scenic Hudson Annual Report 2010) If the same thing happens with the Fjord Trail we won’t get 600,000 — we’ll get 1.6 million. We can’t trust their numbers.

**2. Crowds:** Over 340,000 tourists a year will arrive by train, with most getting off in Cold Spring (source: HHFT presentation 2/2/23). Along with the Sea Streak tourboat crowds, the historic village we love will become an over-crowded tourist trap, unpleasant for residents and visitors alike.

**3. Higher Taxes:** Local taxpayers, directly or indirectly, will foot the bill for additional EMS, police, traffic control, trash collection, water, wear and tear on the village, and other unreimbursed costs.

**4. Wildlife Habitat:** A boardwalk on concrete pilings in the river with 8-ft. high chain-link fencing (source: HHFT Master Plan) will cause the destruction of trees between the boardwalk and shoreline, degradation of wildlife habitat, and threats to endangered species. This bloated project will do serious damage to the nature along the river. Our natural heritage and biodiversity should not be sacrificed for a tourist attraction when there are already lower-impact solutions that will keep tourists safe and still give access to the river.

**5. Shoreline Commercialization:** HHFT’s contract with the state allows it to sell advertising, concession stands and corporate sponsorships anywhere on the trail, which they say “might be important sources of funding for both development and operations.” In other words, making money off public lands while desecrating the scenic shoreline. (source: Agreement between HHFT and NYS OPHRP, 4/1/21)

**6. Historic Character and Quality of Life:** Mass tourism will turn charming Cold Spring, on the National Register of Historic Places, into a soul-less tourist trap as upwards of a million people a year travel to or pass through our tiny village of 2,000. Quality of life will plunge. Let’s fit tourism to the town, not the town to tourism.

**7. Denial of Home Rule:** Our state constitution guarantees municipalities the right to self-determination over their futures regarding streets, property, and the health and safety of the people. We must not allow HHFT and its partners to take our rights away.

Tell your elected representatives, Scenic Hudson, HHFT, and NYS Parks that Philipstown will not be “collateral damage.”

We’ve made it easy for you to email the decision-makers. Go to [ProtectTheHighlands.org/rep](https://ProtectTheHighlands.org/rep)s and make your voice heard!



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# Putnam Executive Proposes \$195M Budget for 2024

*Next up: scrutiny by the nine county legislators*

By Liz Schevtchuk Armstrong

**P**utnam County Executive Kevin Byrne this week proposed spending \$195.2 million on government for 2024, an increase of 9 percent over 2023.

The tentative budget, Byrne's first since taking office in January, awaits county Legislators' approval. Revenue expected from property taxes remains the same as in 2023, at \$46.6 million, but Byrne also recommends withdrawing \$10.9 million from county reserves, compared to the \$1.8 million that his predecessor, MaryEllen Odell, wanted to withdraw a year ago.

Byrne's budget lowers the tax rate to \$2.87 of every \$1,000 of assessed value, which Byrne said was the lowest property tax rate

for Putnam since 2008. It also anticipates collecting \$77.5 million in sales tax revenue.

Byrne scheduled a budget presentation for Thursday (Oct. 5), followed by a public hearing by the Legislature. Its nine members, including Nancy Montgomery, a Democrat who represents Philipstown and part of Putnam Valley, plan to make any revisions and adopt a budget by Oct. 31, although changes can still be made to the adopted budget.

The tentative budget allocates \$1.347 million for the Legislature, a slight reduction from the final 2023 budget. It provides \$932,863 for the county executive's office, a drop of about 5 percent from 2023.

Other tentative allotments include \$7.77 million for the Bureau of Emergency Services, an increase of about 7 percent; \$7.41 million for the Health Department, a decrease of about 6 percent; and \$29.8 million for the

Social Services Department, or about the same amount as budgeted last year.

The District Attorney's Office would receive \$2.31 million, a slight increase, while the Sheriff's Department would get \$21.6 million, a slight decrease. Money for the jail would rise to \$12.5 million, compared to \$11.9 million in the 2023 budget.

In his prepared remarks, Byrne noted that his budget includes "no merit increase or cost-of-living adjustment for myself, the sheriff, the clerk, the district attorney or county coroners. That doesn't mean these officials aren't doing a remarkable job or are not deserving, it simply means we are taking steps, leading by example, to demonstrate fiscal discipline at a time when so many of our residents are struggling."

Under the tentative budget, two cultural institutions in Philipstown again would benefit: The Putnam History Museum in

Cold Spring would get \$57,093 and the Constitution Island Association would receive \$10,350, the same amounts as 2023.

The money devoted to the green trolley that runs from Memorial Day to Veterans Day between sites in Philipstown and the vicinity remains unclear. Transportation Manager Vincent Tamagna said Wednesday (Oct. 4) that a line in the tentative budget earmarking \$2.5 million for "leased transportation" covers the trolley as well as bus service on the east side of the county. The trolley share has been averaging \$28,656 over the last three years, he said, although he declined to provide further details without a Freedom of Information Law request.

In his prepared speech, Byrne announced an initiative to revamp the transit program in northeast Putnam, adding that he hopes to expand it to western Putnam, as well.

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

## St. Mary's (from Page 1)

enough donations to cover the immediate shortfall this year and the creation of a \$5 million endowment in 2024. Citing the area's relative wealth, Tamagna said: "If we can't come up with \$5 million in Cold Spring, then maybe we shouldn't be here anymore."

A second option would be to develop the great lawn and lease the rectory and parish hall, which has a commercial kitchen. The church would continue to provide spiritual support but would no longer have outreach programs.

A third option, they said, would be to close the church. "If we do have to close, if we cannot be sustainable, the property reverts back to the diocese," Schunk said. "And they will develop their asset; the Episcopal Church is land rich, cash poor."

Tamagna cited Gov. Kathy Hochul's call for increased affordable housing in communities located along rail lines and distributed a rudimentary drawing of a housing development on the great lawn. "Everything's on the table," he insisted.

Tamagna, a former Putnam legislator who is now transportation manager for the county, said the parish had considered placing a conservation easement on the property,

but that approach would only bring in up to \$500,000, or revenue to fund the church for a few years. "We need \$5 million," he said.

When asked if St. Mary's could sever the great lawn and sell it, Schunk said it was more likely the church would lease the land to a developer, a strategy he said has been used by other parishes. In 2017, the Rev. Shane Scott-Hamblen, who was then rector, said the entire 3-acre property had been valued at \$2.96 million and the lawn at \$275,000. That the lawn could be easily developed is far from certain; the parcel would need to be rezoned from educational, religious and cultural.

This is not the first time St. Mary's has faced the abyss, or warned that its great lawn was at risk of being swallowed up. In 2013, Scott-Hamblen said the church was going broke "despite every effort at fundraising." Things had not improved by 2017, when he reported the church's endowment was "nearly gone." In a bid for community support, he described the corner lot as prime real estate that would be ripe for development.

The next year, Scott-Hamblen resigned after 16 years at St. Mary's because the church could no longer afford a full-time rector. Schunk works part time.

Schunk and Tamagna met with commu-

nity leaders on Tuesday (Oct. 3) to advise them of the dire financial situation. In an email, Cold Spring Mayor Kathleen Foley said everyone agreed saving the lawn "is vital for our collective community life." She noted that it is also critical to stormwater infrastructure because Back Brook flows beneath it.

It is unlikely St. Mary's can continue without outside assistance. Schunk said attendance at weekend services, which

averaged 30 people before the pandemic shutdown, has dropped to 19. That reflects a national decline in churchgoing. A recent Gallup Poll found only 20 percent of Americans say they attend church weekly.

Schunk said over the years St. Mary's has been largely supported by residents who are not members of the parish. He hopes that will continue. "We do need the help," he said. "We can't soft-pedal it."

## Gergely Pediatrics

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## Soup & Salad Take Out Church Rummage Sale!

**Saturday, October 14th beginning at 10:00am.**

Our soup and salad is the absolute best around combined with lots of stuff to "rummage through" makes a great day of fellowship!

**Lemon Chicken Orzo or Beef Tomato Soup  
Salad for 2, bread & cookies all for only \$15.00**

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# What’s Online at Highlands Current.org

These resources can be accessed through the pulldown menu on the top of each page, under “Resources” and “Reader Guide.”

### Local Officials

This is a list of elected and appointed officials at the local, state and federal level and how to contact them with your praise or protests.

### Local Government Video Guide

OK, it’s not Netflix, but here’s a list of sites where you can watch videos of local and county public meetings.

### How They Voted (Congress)

Summaries of consequential and newsworthy legislation in the U.S. House and how Rep. Mike Lawler (Philipstown) and Rep. Pat Ryan (Beacon) voted. Updated weekly when Congress is in session.

### Storm Updates and Resources

Storm-watcher resources and contacts for when the power goes out.

### Community Calendar

This is the full Monty — we only have room for the highlights in print.

### Community Directory

This is a continually updated guide to local businesses and cultural sites, with addresses, phone numbers and web links.

### Shop Local Online

We created this during the pandemic; it’s a list of local retailers that allow you to order online.

### Real-Estate Data

These graphs are created on-the-fly by a firm called Dataherald and include the number of new listings in Putnam and Dutchess counties, the number of home sales and median home sale prices.

### Job Search

Provided by Indeed, these are continually updated listings for open positions in the Highlands and surrounding areas.

### Back Issues

This is an archive of our past issues, in PDF format, from June 2012 to date, except for the latest issue, which is emailed to *Current* members on Friday morning.

### Podcast Archives

Here are links to all the episodes of our podcast, for easy listening. The three most popular downloads so far have been interviews with a barefoot Ironman competitor; Dinky Romilly of Philipstown, who discussed her civil rights work and her famous mother; and the author of a book about stone walls.

## Housing Drop (from Page 1)

data compiled by the OneKey Multiple Listing Service. The number of new listings and median sales prices have also dropped and homes in Beacon are staying on the market an average of 14 days longer, according to OneKey.

Nevertheless, the lack of homes for sale still leads to bidding wars and offers higher than listed prices, according to local agents.

Inventory is at a record low nationally, and continues to be at a record low in Philipstown, said Bill Hussung, owner of Robert A. McCaffrey Realty in Cold Spring. “We are absolutely seeing an impact from rising interest rates,” he said.

In Putnam County, 612 single-family homes have sold through September, significantly below the 826 during the first nine months of 2022 and the 1,025 during 2021, according to the Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors.

Like buyers, sellers face the same dearth of available properties and the same decision about taking on mortgages at a higher rate, said Hussung. “They start to see what’s out there and realize that it’s not what they thought,” he said. “So, they’re just going to hold on to their house a little longer.”

The forces are the same in Dutchess County, where sales from April to June fell 15 percent compared to the same period in 2022. With buyers and sellers staying

## By The Numbers

	BEACON		PHILIPSTOWN	
	2022	2023	2022	2023
New Listings	122	110	135	103
Closed Sales	109	71	109	70
Median Price	\$510,000	\$507,000	\$685,000	\$649,000
Avg. Days on Market	41	55	67	58
Avg. Inventory	22	22	34	31

Source: OneKey Multiple Listing Service, through Aug. 31 for each year.

put, the median price for a home sold in Beacon, although still at \$507,000 for the year ending Aug. 31, had dropped slightly from a year earlier.

7.31%

Average 30-year mortgage rate as of Sept. 28. The average rate two years ago was 3.01 percent.

Source: Freddie Mac

A home on Phillips Street in Beacon that was listed for \$604,900 in May sold for \$506,000 in September, and a condo at 249

Main St. that sold for \$580,000 in September had been priced at \$679,950.

The opposite is happening for other properties in Dutchess, where homes for sale decreased by 23.8 percent in the second quarter of this year compared to April through June in 2022, according to HGAR.

Buyers, particularly ones wielding cash, are pouncing when high-quality properties become available, said Charlotte Guernsey, who owns Gate House Realty in Beacon. A house on Deer Lick Lane in Beacon that the owners listed for \$649,000 in August sold for \$715,000 on Oct. 2.

“The prices are still staying high because when a good house does come on the market, they’re fighting over it,” she said.

### NEWS BRIEFS

## Desmond-Fish Library Posts Survey

*Asks for input about changing name*

The Desmond-Fish Public Library in Garrison, as part of its response to reporting about the alleged Nazi sympathies of its late co-founder, Hamilton Fish III, is conducting a survey to gauge sentiment for changing the library’s name.

A committee of library board members, staff and residents developed the 13-question questionnaire as part of a review process that

has included historical research, programming and public discussions. The survey, which includes space to suggest names, is online at [surveymonkey.com/r/dfplnamereview](https://surveymonkey.com/r/dfplnamereview). The deadline is Nov. 1.

## Dutchess Awards Youth Service Grants

*County distributes nearly \$300K for programs*

Dutchess County on Tuesday (Oct. 3) announced it has awarded nearly

\$300,000 in grants to fund 24 programs for youth development, including in Beacon.

The Beacon Volunteer Ambulance Corps. received \$16,781 for its Junior Corps Member Program for teens ages 15 to 17, which teaches skills needed for emergency medical services, patient care and communication; the Foundation for Beacon Schools was given \$8,000 for its 2024 student film festival; the City of Beacon received \$5,000 for its eight-week summer swim academy; and Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County was awarded \$20,000 for its Green Teen community gardening program.

# Current Classifieds

### WANTED

**CHILDREN’S LIBRARIAN** — The Putnam Valley Library seeks an enthusiastic and creative full-time children’s programming librarian/library assistant. Duties will include purchasing books and running programs for children and teenagers, staffing the children’s reference desk, collaboration with the school district, conducting the summer reading program and social media advertising. College degree and experience with children preferred. \$37,000 to \$47,000 annually. Please email your resume and cover letter to [director@putnamvalleylibrary.org](mailto:director@putnamvalleylibrary.org).

[putnamvalleylibrary.org](mailto:putnamvalleylibrary.org).

**VINTAGE VIDEO EQUIPMENT** — Local artist seeking all types of vintage video equipment including tube TVs, CRT monitors, VCRs and VHS, camcorders, security cameras, video mixers, etc. Offering cash and able to pick up your heavy TVs. Please email pictures to [rooster@artistrooster.net](mailto:rooster@artistrooster.net). Have a wonderful day!

### SERVICES

**HEALING BODYWORK** — With Joy Matalon. Featured in NY Magazine as “one of the 15 best massage therapists offering

CranialSacral Therapy,” with a specialty in SomatoEmotional Release. In addition, I offer Swedish massage incorporating CranialSacral Therapy. Trained in Medical Massage, Process Acupuncture, Meditation and Foot Reflexology with over 30 years’ experience. Garrison and Ossining locations. House calls available. Call 914-519-8138 or visit [Joymatalon.com](http://Joymatalon.com).

### POSITION WANTED

**HOME MANAGER** — Mature Columbia Univ alum seeks live-in/live-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.

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



# Fishkill Avenue Rezoning Could Be Scaled Back

*Council weighs its options on development of corridor*

By Jeff Simms

It's unclear when a vote will take place, but the Beacon City Council must soon decide whether to rezone a mile-long stretch of the Fishkill Avenue corridor; to rezone it, but in a scaled-back manner; or, in the least likely scenario, to enact a short-term building moratorium while it studies potential impacts.

The council discussed all three options during its Monday (Oct. 2) workshop and appeared to be leaning toward the scaled-back option, although council members said they hoped to hear from the public at their Oct. 10 meeting. While there is no hearing scheduled, residents can provide feedback during time set aside at the beginning and end of the meeting for public comment.

A group of more than 60 residents has already submitted a petition asking that parcels in the corridor abutting Mead Avenue remain residential.

The discussion of rezoning about 30 properties between Memorial Park and Mill Street began in earnest last month after the city received inquiries about four lots, totaling 3.5 acres, that are for sale in the corridor.

The lots, owned by the Healey Brothers auto dealerships, were listed after the company announced in April that it was moving its Ford dealership to a larger location on Route 9 in Poughkeepsie. Construction is also underway on a Healey Hyundai facility on Route 52 in Fishkill that is expected to open in December.

Rezoning, council members have said, would encourage mixed-use development that could include affordable housing and would complement a rail trail that the city hopes Dutchess County will construct along the dormant Beacon Line, which runs parallel to portions of the corridor.

Dutchess has yet to commit to building the trail but said last month that it has hired a firm to conduct a feasibility study.

Over the summer, a federal agency denied Metro-North's application to abandon the line over an apparent technicality, but the commuter railroad is free to reapply to pause usage along the line, which would allow the creation of a trail.

On Monday, the council seemed close to bringing its rezoning proposal to a public hearing when Mayor Lee Kyriacou suggested tapping the brakes. Rather than create a new zoning district, Kyriacou said the council could enhance the building-design standards in the industrial and general-business districts in the corridor and require new buildings to be two stories — a strategy that planning consultant John Clarke said would ward off fast food and limit automotive uses.

(Two fast-food establishments have inquired about the parcels on the market, City Administrator Chris White told the council.)

The city is "going faster than we would otherwise" to create a zoning district, Kyriacou said. "If we just want to limit that [fast food-type] activity and do the minimum changes that would put that in place, and allow us the time to do a more systematic review, then all we would have to do is require a minimum of two stories and impose design standards [in the existing zones]."

The creation of a district, he said, would be more appropriate to discuss during the city's next update to its comprehensive plan, tentatively scheduled for 2027.

Clarke cautioned that tweaking the existing zones "changes a lot of things," and would force the council to require the same design standards of parcels zoned for industrial and general-business use elsewhere in Beacon. Other council members said that most of the work for a creating a zone had already been finished.

Wren Longno, who represents Ward 3, asked if the council could proceed but create a scaled-back Fishkill Avenue zone. The council also briefly discussed creating a committee to study the corridor and enacting a moratorium while that group does its work, but the idea did not appear to have significant support.

While the council considers its options, the Beacon school board weighed in with an opinion this week. In a letter to the council, school board President Meredith Heuer said that development in the corridor could affect the school district's enrollment and transportation plans.

If new residential buildings are to be built in the Fishkill Avenue area, Heuer asked that the zoning make it "easier and more friendly for students traveling by foot or bicycle to and from school" and "address current traffic congestion that our buses and families experience."

Meanwhile, Thomas Wright, a member of the city's Conservation Advisory Committee, sent the council a letter urging it to hold a public planning session where community members could give feedback. "In order to create the best possible result for this zone, the process needs to be more than just encouraging members of the public to speak during public-comment sessions" during meetings, he wrote.

Doing nothing in the corridor is not an option, Council Member Dan Aymer-Blair said on Monday, referring to a three-story, mixed-use building recently approved on Conklin Avenue.

"With the current zoning, unless we change something, you're going to have that Conklin Avenue building all up and down Fishkill Avenue," he said. "I don't think that's what the people who live in that neighborhood want."

# Notes from the Cold Spring Village Board

By Michael Turton

■ The Cold Spring Village Board, at its Wednesday (Oct. 4) meeting, completed a final review of proposed revisions to Chapter 126 (Vehicles and Traffic) and Chapter 127 (Residential Parking Program) of the Village Code and scheduled public hearings for Oct. 18 at 7 p.m. at Village Hall. The residential parking program will include issuing permits to residents who live on 11 streets east of the Metro-North tracks. Twenty streets in the upper village will be added later. The changes will also include paid parking on Main Street on weekends and holidays. The revised chapters are posted on the village website.

■ The village will pick up bulk trash at curbside on Oct. 21.

■ The Village Board revoked a permit for the Sloop Clearwater to dock on Oct. 20 because the request was not for a public education program but for the wedding of a former sloop captain. Seastreak is scheduled to stop at Cold Spring that same day but will dock at Bear Mountain State Park after passengers disembark.

# Main Course on the Market

*After 27 years, owner will retire*

By Michael Turton

The Main Course, Cold Spring's "great good foods to go" and early morning coffee spot, is for sale, although owner Kevin Lahey said he has no plans to close the doors right away.

"We're hoping to have a nice transition where somebody buys it and keeps The Main Course as much as they can, and keeps the staff," he said on Wednesday (Oct. 4).

Once the business is sold, Lahey plans to retire. A horticulturalist by trade, Lahey worked as a gardener for 25 years before opening The Main Course with Joan Turner



The Main Course opened in Cold Spring in 1996. Photo by M. Turton

in 1996. She left the business in 2007.

"I wasn't trained in food services or cooking," Lahey said. "The Main Course was my second job!"

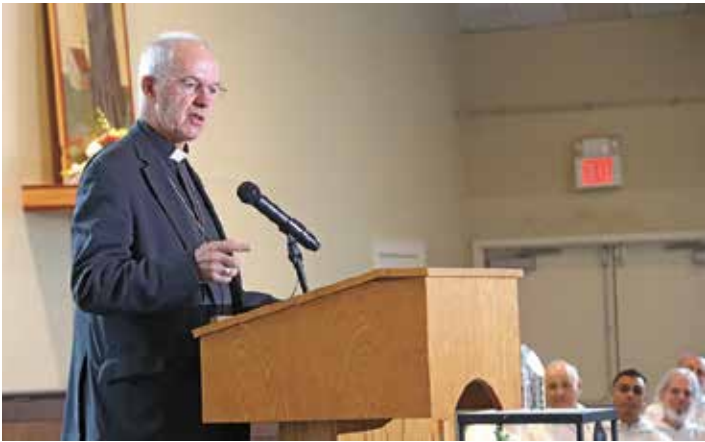
He said the hours are "absolutely" the hardest part of running the shop at 39 Chestnut St.; his workday often starts at 2 a.m. The best part, he said, has been getting to know people in the community.



AROUND TOWN



▲ **SPIRIT OF BEACON** — After being rained out on Sept. 24, the annual Spirit of Beacon Day was blessed with perfect weather on Sunday (Oct. 1). The afternoon parade included a performance by musicians from Beacon High School. For more photos, see [highlandscurrent.org](https://highlandscurrent.org). *Photo by Ross Corsair*



◀ **ARCHBISHOP VISIT** — The Archbishop of Canterbury visited the Franciscan Friars at Graymoor in Garrison on Sept. 23 to accept the Paul Watton Christian Unity Award, named for the order's co-founder. After the ceremony, the friars gave the archbishop, the Most Rev. Justin Welby, and his wife, Caroline, a tour of the grounds. It was the first visit to Graymoor by an archbishop of Canterbury since 1972. In May, Welby crowned King Charles III. *Photo provided*

▲ **GARRISON CRAFTS** — The Garrison Art Center shortened the hours of the first day of its annual craft show on Sept. 30 at Garrison's Landing because of rain but enjoyed the same great weather on Oct. 1 as the Spirit of Beacon. The art center this year moved the show from August to the end of September. Shown here is painter Kelly Edwards, who owns the Arbor Gallery in Carmel. *Photo by Ross Corsair*

NOVEMBER 7

VOTE FOR TEAM PHILIPSTOWN

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SUPERVISOR

FLAHERTY

PHILIPSTOWN TOWN COUNCIL

FARRELL

PHILIPSTOWN TOWN COUNCIL

PERCACCILOLO

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HOTALING

PHILIPSTOWN HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

THOMPSON-TINSLEY

PHILIPSTOWN TOWN JUSTICE

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2023 GALA

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Get tickets, bid in our online auction, and learn more at [hvshakespeare.org/gala](https://hvshakespeare.org/gala).





Vanessa Murphy is shown with one of the paintings she submitted with her AP drawing exam.

Photo by Una Hoppe

## The Calendar

# Perfect Paintings

### Beacon student aces AP art exam

By Jeff Simms

Most students don't take the Advanced Placement drawing exam until their second year with Mark Lyon, a Beacon High School instructor who teaches a two-year course on studio art and drawing.

It's also worth noting that the AP drawing exam isn't a one-time event with paper and pencil, such as students take for math, English and other subjects as a measure of their aptitude for colleges. It is a digital submission of the best of a year's work, tied together by a theme, with concise explanations.

In the first year of Lyon's class, students work with a variety of media and concepts as they establish what he calls a "foundational approach" toward the exam. By the end of the year, "they focus on their own body of work, and in some ways that is the beginning of the

Advanced Placement exam," he says.

In the second year, students hone their skills and answer questions that will guide their work: How do I express myself as an artist? What theme will I use?

In other words, the student is asked to evolve as an artist, "which is a very, very challenging thing," Lyon says. "The classroom becomes a vehicle to help them do that."

Vanessa Murphy, who transferred as a sophomore to Beacon High School from Spackenkill, completed Lyon's two-year course in a year. But faced at the beginning

of the 2022-23 school year with choosing a theme for her AP submission, she was unsure.

For the exam, students submit a "sustained investigation" — a dozen or more works, plus a 600-character artist's statement — along with five "selected works," accompanied by short explanations of materials, process and purpose.

Virtually everything Murphy would work on during the school year would build toward the May submission, so the theme had to be something she knew well.

"I was thinking about things I come into contact with every day," she explains. "Then I got hungry, and I thought: Food — great idea."

As it turned out, the idea *was* great, as Murphy received a perfect score from the Advanced Placement board. She is one of only 304 students, of an estimated 20,000 worldwide who submitted work in 2023, to achieve that.

What does a body of work focused on food look like? Initially, it was bleak. "My Brazilian heritage, friends, family, eating disorders, mental and physical health have all been examined through the lens of my emotional experiences with food," Murphy writes in the introduction to her AP submission.

Those feelings are captured in dark — thematically and in the colors used — paintings depicting Murphy alone, troubled by self-image and the voices in her head. In her submission, Murphy describes one piece — a self-portrait in which she has an orange in her mouth — as utilizing a "lifeless color palette, like a stuffed pig."

As the year progressed, she began to consider other aspects of her relationship with food. "It can be very intimate," she says. "When you're talking over food, it's a



Murphy works on one of the paintings in her submission.

Photo provided



very personal thing to share."

Other pieces show three friends, one with her head resting on another's lap, with bowls and plates scattered about, and friends joining a girl at a table as she peers playfully at a cake marking her 16th birthday.

Beacon High School Principal Corey Dwyer was the first to learn of Murphy's perfect score when he was notified in July. "Vanessa is an incredibly talented artist, so it wasn't necessarily a surprise," he said. "But to see that she was one of only a small number of test-takers worldwide to earn it is impressive."

"I wasn't completely confident when I submitted it," Murphy admits. "But I was very happy to know that I did the best that I could."

Lyon has Murphy, who is now a senior, in his class again for 2023-24, but since she took the AP exam a year earlier than most students, it's more of an independent study, he says.

After graduating in June, Murphy plans to attend art school. The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York City is her first choice; the Rhode Island School of Design, where she attended a program this summer, is also in the mix.

Despite the accolades, Murphy insists she has plenty of room to grow. "I want to do more experimentation and challenge myself through working with different mediums," she says. "I want to dig deeper into my concepts to understand why I make the art that I do, which will help me convey my ideas in my work."





# THE WEEK AHEAD

Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)

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

## COMMUNITY

### SAT 7 Thrift Sale

**COLD SPRING**  
11 a.m. – 6 p.m. St. Mary's Church  
1 Chestnut St.

This annual sale of gently used clothing, shoes and accessories, organized by the Climate Smart Initiative, Philipstown Loop and the church, will benefit the Philipstown Food Pantry. Also SUN 8, MON 9.

### SUN 8 Potluck Picnic

**NELSONVILLE**

Noon – 3 p.m. Masonic Lodge  
18 Secor St.

Bring a dish and non-alcoholic beverages to share with neighbors.

### SUN 8 Fall Gala

**GARRISON**

4:45 p.m. The Garrison  
2015 Route 9 | hvshakespeare.org

This annual fundraiser for the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival will honor Margot Harley and Marit Kulleseid. There will be an auction, musical performances and dinner. *Cost: \$350 to \$700*

### WED 11 Flu Shot Clinic

**GARRISON**

2 – 6:30 p.m. Garrison Firehouse  
1616 Route 9  
putnamcountyny.com/fluclinic

The Putnam County Health Department will provide vaccinations. Appointment required; register online. *Cost: \$30 (free for 65 and older or with Medicare card)*

### WED 11 Loteria Afternoon

**COLD SPRING**  
3 p.m. Butterfield Library  
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040  
butterfieldlibrary.org

Play the classic game, which is similar to bingo, to mark Hispanic Heritage Month (which continues through SUN 15). Also enjoy guacamole and collect prizes.



### SAT 14 Harvest Fest

**PUTNAM VALLEY**

Noon – 4 p.m.  
Tompkins Corners Cultural Center  
729 Peekskill Hollow Road  
tompkinscorners.org

There will be crafts, artisans,



Pumpkin Festival, Oct. 15

food from Smok'd and live music by the Bottoms Up Dixieland Jazz Band, the Kitchen Table Band and Linda Thornton and Tim Pitt. *Cost: \$10 suggested donation*

### SAT 14 Solar Eclipse Watch Party

**COLD SPRING**

Noon – 2 p.m. Butterfield Library  
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040  
butterfieldlibrary.org

Sponsored by NASA, the program will include science experiments, games and snacks. Eclipse glasses will be provided. Registration required.

### SAT 14 Watch the Solar Eclipse

**GARRISON**

12:15 – 2 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020  
desmondfishlibrary.org

Bring chairs and snacks to watch from the library lawn. Glasses will be provided.

### SAT 14 Spirits Festival

**POUGHKEEPSIE**

5 – 9 p.m. MJN Center  
14 Civic Center Plaza  
midhudsonciviccenter.org

Sample whiskey, gin, vodka and tequila from distilleries, paired with food. *Cost: \$64 (\$119 VIP)*

### SAT 14 Taste of the Valley

**PHILIPSTOWN**

6:30 – 9 p.m. Glynwood Farm  
362 Glynwood Road  
haldaneschoolfoundation.org

Enjoy food and drink while supporting the Haldane School Foundation. *Cost: \$125*

### SUN 15 Pumpkin Festival

**BEACON**

Noon – 5 p.m. Riverfront Park  
2 Red Flynn Drive | beaconsloopclub.org

This annual Beacon Sloop Club

event will include pie and soup, artisans, a children's stage and live music by Betty and the Baby Boomers, Sharleen Leahey and Sarah Underhill and The Stockport Middleground. Donations welcome. *Free*

## KIDS & FAMILY

### SAT 7 Touch a Truck

**COLD SPRING**

2 – 4 p.m. Community Nursery  
10 Academy St.

Large vehicles will be available to explore. Donations are welcome for the Rosemary Rodino Scholarship and Equipment Fund.

### SAT 7 Campfire Sing-A-Long

**WAPPINGERS FALLS**

5 p.m. Common Ground Farm  
79 Farmstead Lane | compassarts.org

Gina Samardge and members of the Beacon Rising Choir will lead a sing-a-long. *Cost: \$10 to \$50*

### TUES 10 Art With Bugs

**GARRISON**

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

The Creators Workshop will use dead insects for an art project. Children ages 12 and younger should be accompanied. Registration required.



Solar Eclipse Watch Party, Oct. 14

### THURS 12 Retro Board Game Night

**BEACON**

3:45 p.m. Howland Public Library  
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134  
beaconlibrary.org

Children and teens ages 11 and older are invited to play games popular in the 1980s and '90s.

### SAT 14 Wee Play Costume Swap

**BEACON**

Noon – 5 p.m. Beacon Recreation Center  
23 W. Center St.  
facebook.com/weeplaybeacon

Search for the perfect child's costume. Donate costumes at Clutter, the Howland Library or the Refill Store. Also SUN 15.

### SAT 14 Nature Scavenger Hunt

**COLD SPRING**

2 p.m. Sugarloaf Trail Lot  
philipstowngardenclubny.org

The Philipstown Garden Club is launching a series of events for families with children ages 4 to 12. Registration required.

## STAGE & SCREEN

### SAT 7 Putnam Fall for Dance

**KENT LAKES**

3 p.m. Arts on the Lake  
640 Route 52 | artsonthelake.org

Members of the Putnam County Dance Project, Dances by Isadora/ NYC and the Erick Hawkins Dance Company will perform. Also MON 9.

### SAT 7 Your Bizarre Day

**WAPPINGERS FALLS**

7 p.m. Norma's | 2648 E. Main St.  
bit.ly/bizarre-day-show

Comedy improvisers will act out audience members' most bizarre experiences. *Cost: \$5*

### SAT 7 David Cross

**POUGHKEEPSIE**

7 p.m. Bardavon | 35 Market St.  
845-473-2072 | bardavon.org

The comedian will perform as part of his Worst Daddy in the World tour. *Cost: \$42 to \$62*

### SAT 7 In Conversation with The Sopranos

**PEEKSKILL**

7:30 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley  
1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039  
paramounthudsonvalley.com

Comedian Joey Kola will host a

panel discussion with actors Steve Schirripa (Bobby Bacala), Vincent Pastore (Big Pussy) and Michael Imperioli (Christopher), followed by a Q&A. *Cost: \$59 to \$82*

### SUN 8 Hilarie Burton Morgan

**POUGHKEEPSIE**

3 p.m. Bardavon | 35 Market St.  
845-473-2072 | bardavon.org

Jeffery Dean Morgan will discuss with the author her memoir, *Grimoire Girl*, about moving from Hollywood to a working farm in Rhinebeck, and how to create your own book of wisdom. Ticket includes signed copy. *Cost: \$42*

### FRI 13 CP2 Series Readers Theatre Mini-Festival #1

**WAPPINGERS FALLS**

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

There will readings of *The Cake* and *The New Century*. Also SAT 14, SUN 15. *Cost: \$15 (\$20 for both)*

### SAT 14 Pay Dirt

**MAHOPAC**

5 p.m. Putnam Arts Council  
521 Kennicut Hill Road  
bit.ly/pay-dirt-preview

The Putnam Theatre Alliance will present scenes from its upcoming play about a struggle over land before the American Revolution in what would become Putnam County. Registration required. *Free*

### SUN 15 Tony Howarth

**PUTNAM VALLEY**

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

The poet will read from his latest collection, *The Grievs That Fate Assigns*, followed by an open mic. *Cost: \$10*

## TALKS & TOURS

### SAT 7 Bannerman Island

**PEEKSKILL**

2 p.m. Lincoln Depot Museum  
10 S. Water St. | lincolndepotmuseum.org

Historian Thom Johnson will discuss the rocky island and its historical significance and uses through the centuries. *Cost: \$10*

### SAT 7 Learn About Wildlife Rehabilitation

**GARRISON**

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

Alexa Marinaccio and Maggie Ciarcia-Belloni will discuss what is involved in wildlife rescue and helping animals recover — and they're bringing an opossum. *Free*

### SAT 7 Get Rooted

**COLD SPRING**

5 p.m. Butterfield Library  
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040  
butterfieldlibrary.org

Robyn Moreno will read from her



memoir about a 260-day spiritual journey to heal herself from burnout and painful family relationships by studying *curanderismo*, her Mexican grandmother's medicinal practice.

**THURS 12**  
**Revaluation in Philipstown**  
**COLD SPRING**  
7 p.m. St. Mary's Church | 1 Chestnut St.  
*Journal News* tax columnist David McKay Wilson, who recently wrote about homes in Philipstown that have higher or lower assessments than their market values, will moderate a discussion about the system that determines how much homeowners pay.

**FRI 13**  
**Fire Tower Hike**  
**CARMEL**  
10 a.m. Nimham Mountain  
845-265-4010  
[putnamhistorymuseum.org](http://putnamhistorymuseum.org)  
Learn about the person the mountain is named for, Sachem Daniel Nimham, and the area's history during a hike led by educators from the Putnam History Museum and the Cornell Cooperative Extension. See website for meeting location. *Cost: \$15 (\$12 members)*

**SAT 14**  
**Bird Walk**  
**WAPPINGERS FALLS**  
7:30 a.m. Stony Kill Farm  
79 Farmstead Lane  
[putnamhighlandsaudubon.org](http://putnamhighlandsaudubon.org)  
The Putnam Highlands Audubon



The Making of the Daniel Nimham Sculpture, Oct. 14

Society will lead this search for migratory birds and unusual species. Registration required.

**SAT 14**  
**The Making of the Daniel Nimham Sculpture**  
**COLD SPRING**  
5 p.m. Putnam History Museum  
63 Chestnut St. | 845-265-4010  
[putnamhistorymuseum.org](http://putnamhistorymuseum.org)  
Watch a documentary about sculptor Michael Keropian's creation of the recently dedicated statue on view in Fishkill. The artist and director will answer questions

following the screening and the Nimham Mountain Singers will perform. Donations welcome. *Free*

**SUN 15**  
**Guided Walk: Foundry Cove**  
**COLD SPRING**  
1 p.m. Putnam History Museum  
63 Chestnut St. | 845-265-4010  
[putnamhistorymuseum.org](http://putnamhistorymuseum.org)  
A history tour about Indigenous people in the area will begin at the museum and continue through Foundry Cove. *Cost: \$10 (\$8 members)*

**SUN 15**  
**Saving Native Plant Seeds**  
**GARRISON**  
1:30 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library  
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020  
[desmondfishlibrary.org](http://desmondfishlibrary.org)  
Join Master Gardeners in the pollinator garden to learn how to collect, prepare and store seeds. Registration required.

**VISUAL ART**

**SAT 7**  
**No Name, No Slogan**  
**BEACON**  
2 – 4 p.m. Howland Cultural Center  
477 Main St. | [howlandculturalcenter.org](http://howlandculturalcenter.org)  
The Brasiles Art Collective curated this avant-garde art exhibit; a free lecture on the history of the movement is scheduled for 8 p.m. Through Nov. 11.

**SAT 7**  
**David Provan**  
**GARRISON**  
3 p.m. Garrison Art Center  
23 Garrison's Landing | 845-424-3960  
[garrisonartcenter.org](http://garrisonartcenter.org)  
The visiting artist, whose exhibit, *Barely Not Impossible*, is on view, will discuss his work.

**SAT 7**  
**Brushstrokes**  
**COLD SPRING**  
6 – 8 p.m. Lewis and Pine  
38 Main St. | [lewisandpine.com](http://lewisandpine.com)  
The store will debut its new gallery, Found Space, with an

exhibit of work by Yali Lewis.

**WED 11**  
**Sip & Ghost Painting**  
**COLD SPRING**  
6 p.m. Butterfield Library  
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040  
[butterfieldlibrary.org](http://butterfieldlibrary.org)  
Transform a painting that was found at a thrift store with your creative touch in a ghostly cast. Registration required.

**THURS 12**  
**Day of the Dead Arts & Crafts**  
**COLD SPRING**  
1 p.m. Butterfield Library  
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040  
[butterfieldlibrary.org](http://butterfieldlibrary.org)  
Adults are invited to use papel picado templates to make perforated paper decorations symbolizing air and marigolds for the library's Day of the Dead celebration on Nov. 1.

**FRI 13**  
**Flowers, Trees and Transformations**  
**COLD SPRING**  
5 – 8 p.m. Buster Levi Gallery  
123 Main St. | [busterlevigallery.com](http://busterlevigallery.com)  
Lucille Tortora will be at the gallery to talk with visitors about her photographs, which are on display through Oct. 30.

(Continued on Page 14)

CELEBRATING

250

1770 - 2020 years

ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH  
IN THE HIGHLANDS

SUNDAY, OCT. 22, 2023

10 AM

Worship Service with  
The Right Rev. Allen Shin

11:30 AM

Dedication of 250<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary  
Lych Gate Stone

12 PM

Reception in Parish Hall

1 PM

Tour of Church and Churchyard

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the beginning of  
our Celebration  
of the  
250<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary  
of  
St. Philip's Church  
in the Highlands  
Garrison, NY

St. Mary's Church, Philipstown Loop,  
and Philipstown Climate Smart Initiative invite you to our:

Autumn Thrift Sale

October 7 and 8: 11am-6pm  
October 9: 11am-3pm

FEATURING:  
Halloween costumes (all-ages)  
Women's and men's clothing  
Coats, Jewelry, Handbags, Scarfs, Belts  
and Shoes (in best condition)

St. Mary's Parish Hall, 1 Chestnut Street, Cold Spring, NY 10516



THE WEEK AHEAD

(Continued from Page 13)

MUSIC

SAT 7  
Porchfest

**COLD SPRING**  
11 a.m. - 8:30 p.m. Main Street  
coldspringnychamber.com  
Businesses and organizations will host concerts — including by Aria Anjali, Kat and Stephen Selman, Heavy Nettles, Sam Sauer and J. Rattlesnake — followed by a closing set by the Daniel Kelly Trio at 7:30 p.m. at the bandstand. See the website for the schedule. Rescheduled from SUN 24. *Free*

SAT 7  
Delightful Diversion

**NEWBURGH**  
7:30 p.m. Mount Saint Mary College  
845-913-7157 | newburghsymphony.org  
The Greater Newburgh Symphony Orchestra's program at Aquinas Hall will include works by John Adams and Dvorak, as well as Poulenc's *Concerto for Two Pianos*. *Cost: \$30 to \$75*

SAT 7  
Bell Bottom Blues

**BEACON**  
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.  
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com  
This tribute band will play Eric

Clapton's music from the beginning of his career with Cream and Derek and the Dominoes through his solo work. *Cost: \$30 (\$35 door)*

SUN 8  
Faded Rose

**BEACON**  
7 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.  
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com  
The alternative band has a '90s flair. Bittersweet Descent will open. *Cost: \$20 (\$25 door)*

THURS 12  
The Man in Black

**PEEKSKILL**  
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley  
1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039  
paramounthudsonvalley.com  
Shawn Barker will perform the music of Johnny Cash. *Cost: \$35 to \$50*

FRI 13  
Classic Zeppelin Live

**PEEKSKILL**  
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley  
1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039  
paramounthudsonvalley.com  
Kashmir, a tribute band, will play Led Zeppelin hits in character. *Cost: \$35 to \$50*

FRI 13  
Mike + Ruthy of the Mammals

**BEACON**  
8 p.m. Howland Cultural Center  
477 Main St. | howlandculturalcenter.org  
Mike Merenda and Ruth Ungar will play traditional and original folk rock music. *Cost: \$25 (\$30 door)*

FRI 13  
Cheryl Wheeler & Kenny White

**BEACON**  
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.  
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com  
The singers and songwriters will perform. *Cost: \$35 (\$40 door)*

SAT 14  
Boots by the Bandshell

**WAPPINGERS FALLS**  
3:30 - 8:30 p.m. Bowdoin Park  
85 Sheafe Road | dutchessny.gov/parks  
This third annual country music festival will music by the Thunder Ridge Band, and as well as line dancing, family games and a bonfire.

SAT 14  
Shamarr Allen

**COLD SPRING**  
7:30 p.m. Chapel Restoration  
45 Market St. | chapelrestoration.org  
The singer and trumpet player will play music from his latest release, *True Orleans 2*. *Cost: \$25*

SAT 14  
Vic DiBitetto

**PEEKSKILL**  
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley  
1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039  
paramounthudsonvalley.com  
The comedian known as the Italian Hurricane will do stand-up. *Cost: \$35 to \$55*

SAT 14  
Richard Shindell

**BEACON**  
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.  
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com  
The singer, known for the stories in his music, will play songs from his latest release, *Careless*. *Cost: \$35 (\$40 door)*

SUN 15  
Joseph Lin

**COLD SPRING**  
4 p.m. Chapel Restoration  
45 Market St. | chapelrestoration.org  
The violin and viola player's program will include music by Bach. Donations welcome. *Free*

SUN 15  
Russell Thompkins Jr. & The New Stylistics

**PEEKSKILL**  
7 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley  
1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039  
paramounthudsonvalley.com  
Members of the original 1970s band unite with new players for an evening of R&B. *Cost: \$35 to \$65*

TUES 10  
City Council

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

TUES 10  
Dutchess Legislature

**POUGHKEEPSIE**  
7 p.m. Legislative Chambers  
22 Market St. | 845-486-2100  
dutchessny.gov

WED 11  
Village Board

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

PHILIPSTOWN

DEPOT

THEATRE

CINEMA DEPOT PRESENTS:

NINE

Hosted by Phil Geoffrey Bond

The 2009 movie musical starring Daniel Day-Lewis, Marion Cotillard, Penélope Cruz, Judi Dench, Fergie, Kate Hudson, Nicole Kidman, and Sophia Loren

— Oct. 6 —

DEPOT MAINSTAGE PRESENTS:

BRUSH STROKES

The Premiere of an original musical by Jim Semmelman, with music by David Shenton

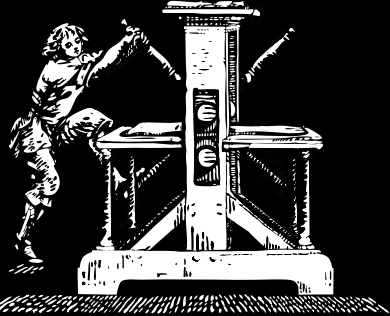
Starring Lynne Wintersteller, Mark McGrath, and Rachel Fairbanks.

— Oct. 27 - Nov. 5 —

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www.philipstowndepottheatre.org

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# Art on the Wall, and in the Chairs

Beacon gallery combines exhibits with tattoos

By Erin-Leigh Hoffman

Which comes first, the tattoos or the art? “Curiosity about the gallery leads to curiosity about the tattooing,” explains painter Michelle Silver, who, with her husband, Bradley, owns Distortion Society, a tattoo studio and art gallery on Main Street in Beacon. Gallery visitors will “sit down and flip through Bradley’s portfolio for 20 minutes and ask all these questions. They digest the practice of tattooing in a similar way that they digest the art on the walls.”

The Silvers, who opened Distortion Society in May, recently moved the gallery from 172 Main St., where they had a short-term lease, across the street to 155 Main. “We wanted to get our business up and running before moving to a permanent location,” Michelle Silver says.

The gallery opened with an exhibit of work by Bradley and Michelle in May and June, followed by a solo show by painter and tattoo artist Evan Paul English in July, a group exhibition by Super Secret Projects in August and, most recently, photographs by Rosie Cohe and Daniel Shapiro.

A solo show of paintings by Laura Bochet, *Somesthesia*, opens with a reception from



“I Think We’re Almost There (A Reminder),” by Michelle Silver

7 to 9:30 p.m. on Oct. 14. Bochet, along with Choon Lee, is a tattoo artist based at Distortion Society; visiting artists include English, Jerrra Blues and Chelsea Dom.

Michelle and Bradley Silver met in college in Boston before reconnecting through friends when both lived in Brooklyn. They moved to Philipstown four years ago and have two children: Julian, 5, a kindergartener at Haldane, and Nico, 18 months.

Michelle says that Bradley, who was head artist at White Rabbit Tattoo Studio in Manhattan for seven years, dreamed of having his own



Tattoos by Bradley Silver

place. “It’s awesome to be able to control my environment and to be close to home,” Bradley says. “It’s all just an upgrade on life.”

For Michelle, the gallery has been an opportunity to expand her own practice as a painter and as a gallery owner. “Taking on a curatorial role is new for me,” she says. “It’s something that I’m exploring as I go along, but it’s been rewarding.”

She says Distortion Society seems to fit well in Beacon. “There is such a vibrant arts community here,” she says. “And residents are open-minded. There are a lot of tattooed



Bradley and Michelle Silver Photos provided

people here and it has more counterculture-like, diverse fields.” Bradley notes the importance of being on the Metro-North line from New York City, which makes it easy for guest artists and clients to reach them.

He says opening the shop with his wife “has been quite a journey itself,” from working on mood boards together to envisioning their new space. “It’s cool that we did that, and we did it together,” he says. “Now we have this under our belt, and we know what to expect and can build out the store a little bit better.”

*Distortion Society, at 155 Main St., is open from 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Wednesday to Friday and 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday, or by appointment. See [distortionsociety.com](http://distortionsociety.com) or call 845-202-0680.*

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14 Brookside Rd.	Fishkill	3	2/1	1,955	\$595,000
65 Russell Ave.	Beacon	3	2/0	1,492	\$602,000
5 Huber Rd.	Fishkill	5	3/1	2,160	\$670,000
40 Robinson St.	Beacon	3	1/1	1,545	\$730,000
8 Pleasant View Ave.	Beacon	3	2/0	1,699	\$730,000
14 Masters Pl.	Beacon	4	3/0	2,228	\$765,000

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## Start Reading Now

October book club selections

- Reading with Writers**  
WED 11, 7 P.M.  
*The Creative Act: A Way of Being*, by Rick Rubin  
Split Rock Books, Cold Spring  
Register at [splitrockbks.com](http://splitrockbks.com).
- Elementary Book Club (Grades 2-4)**  
THURS 19, 3:15 P.M.  
*Word Travelers and the Taj Mahal Mystery*, by Raj Haldar  
Butterfield Library, Cold Spring  
Register at [butterfieldlibrary.org/calendar](http://butterfieldlibrary.org/calendar).
- Howland Haunted Book Club (Ages 12+)**  
THURS 19, 3:45 P.M.  
*The Babysitters Coven*, by Kate Williams  
Howland Public Library, Beacon  
Register at [beaconlibrary.org](http://beaconlibrary.org).
- Page-to-Screen Book Club**  
THURS 19, 5:30 P.M.  
*The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*, by Sherman Alexie  
Desmond-Fish Public Library, Garrison  
Register at [desmondfishlibrary.org](http://desmondfishlibrary.org).
- History Book Club**  
THURS 19, 7 P.M.  
*Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class*, by Jefferson Cowie  
Split Rock Books, Cold Spring  
Register at [splitrockbks.com](http://splitrockbks.com).
- Book Buds (Ages 8-10)**  
TUES 24, 6:15 P.M.  
*Sheets*, by Brenna Thrummler  
Howland Public Library, Beacon  
Register at [beaconlibrary.org](http://beaconlibrary.org).
- Beacon Book Club**  
THURS 26, 7:15 P.M.  
*Rebecca*, by Daphne du Maurier  
Location TBD  
Register at [meetup.com/beacon-bookclub](http://meetup.com/beacon-bookclub).
- Butterfield Book Club**  
MON 30, 7 P.M.  
*The Haunting of Hill House*, by Shirley Jackson  
Butterfield Library, Cold Spring  
Register at [butterfieldlibrary.org/calendar](http://butterfieldlibrary.org/calendar).



Angie Venezia at Golden Hour Books in Newburgh Photo by Reed Loar

# Newburgh Gets a Bookstore

Couple opens first in city in 25 years

By Alison Rooney

Angie Venezia wants to get it right. Along with excitement, she feels the responsibility that comes with opening the first independent bookstore in the City of Newburgh in at least 25 years.

There hasn't been a bookstore there since Clough's on Liberty Street closed in the mid-1990s. There is a Barnes and Noble in the Town of Newburgh, but The Barking Goose closed in 2021.

"It's nerve-wracking," Venezia admits. "Because bookstores mean so much to many people, it feels like there is so much at stake, especially in a city that doesn't have one."

Her store is Golden Hour Books, and it's a month old, not counting the months before spent with her husband, Reed Loar, scouting a location, rebuilding the interior, adding the furniture he built and placing the initial book orders.

The store's name came out of a brainstorming process. "I was thinking river, son, horizon," she says. "I love the 'golden hour' in Newburgh. It's a beautiful time of the day, with the light cutting through the brick buildings. My neighbors here are the friendliest people, thrilled to have a bookstore."

Venezia and Loar moved to Newburgh three years ago, amid the pandemic shutdown. Venezia, who had spent 14 years in publishing, most recently in publicity for imprints of Knopf Doubleday and Penguin Random House, immediately noticed there was no independent bookstore. She had a thought to open one.

The couple chose Newburgh because they had fallen in love with the city during visits to the Hudson Valley and because the pandemic left Venezia feeling untethered from her New York City-based job with no author tours to plan. In Newburgh, her thoughts turned to bookselling, and what kind of bookstore she wanted to open.

She says her time in the publishing industry gave her a foundation. "I know quite a lot about books that have come out over the past 15 years, and I have a handle on the new books coming out that our customers might be interested in and should read," she says. "I want to establish our point of view here, and there's an incredible backlist out there."

Finding the right space was an early challenge until a friend who works to pair landlords and tenants "was working with my landlord on trying to brainstorm what types of small businesses this area of Broadway needs," Venezia says. "It came together from there."

“All categories are curated thoughtfully, not in order of any kind of hierarchy, but visually organized.”

~Angie Venezia

The building is notable for its outside mural — "We can say, 'It's that green building with the mural on the side,'" Venezia notes — and is adjacent to a garden maintained by Heart & Soil florist.

Golden Hour stocks new and used books, which Venezia says makes the store "a place that is affordable but is also somewhere to shop for new releases." New and used books are shelved together, "which is still unusual, but becoming more and more common," she says. "It's nice to be able to run out and buy the hardcover of a book just reviewed by *The New York Times* while also pulling out something you've never heard of before."

"All categories are curated thoughtfully, not in order of any kind of hierarchy, but visually organized," she says. "The store is a very small space and I intentionally opened without it brimming with books. I wanted to see what customers would want before filling up."

## More Local Bookstores

**Antipodean Books (Garrison)**  
29-31 Garrison's Landing  
[antipodean.com](http://antipodean.com)

**Beacon Reads (Beacon)**  
309 Main St. | [bit.ly/beacon-reads](http://bit.ly/beacon-reads)

**Binnacle Books (Beacon)**  
321 Main St. | [binnaclebooks.com](http://binnaclebooks.com)

**Bruised Apple Books (Peekskill)**  
923 Central Ave.  
[bruisedapplebooks.com](http://bruisedapplebooks.com)

**Field Library Bookstore (Peekskill)**  
934 South St.  
[thefieldlibrary.org/library-bookstore](http://thefieldlibrary.org/library-bookstore)

**J. Mercurio Books (Garrison)**  
[jmercuriobooks.com](http://jmercuriobooks.com)

**Riverside Books (Nelsonville)**  
[bit.ly/riverside-books](http://bit.ly/riverside-books)

**Split Rock Books (Cold Spring)**  
97 Main St. | [splitrockbks.com](http://splitrockbks.com)

That there are many books by women is "an organic manifestation of my taste, a reflection of my point of view as a reader. I love championing women authors."

The children's area is already popular, and the couple (who have an 18-month-old son) have started a monthly story time in partnership with the Little Friends Learning Loft. (The next one is Oct. 28.) Sci-fi and fantasy has been a good seller, along with cookbooks and food writing. "It's gratifying to have people come in, tell me what books they're reading, and suggest what I should sell in the store," Venezia says.

Golden Hour is also working with Newburgh Brewing (for a November event) and the Newburgh Library, and is planning to partner with local charities, host writer talks (the first is Nov. 2 with novelist Isle McElroy, author of *People Collide*) and "get the wheels turning on some book clubs," Venezia says.

For now, she's taking it slowly as she gathers feedback. "I'm glad I took time and waited for people to say what they liked before fully stocking the store. It's a huge risk, opening a small business anywhere. There have been many moments in this process where I've overthought and second-guessed myself, but the main lesson I've learned is to just trust your gut. I eventually wound up not deviating much from my plans at the start. Now that we've opened all those instincts have been reaffirmed."

*Golden Hour Books, at 181 Broadway in Newburgh, is open from 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. See [goldenhourbookstore.com](http://goldenhourbookstore.com) or call 845-787-4185.*



# Garrison Teen Drops 'Beats 4 Justice'

*Partnership benefits low-income Mississippi youth*

By Clara Tripp

Garrison resident Leo Horton is harnessing his passion for music to create change far beyond his hometown.

The 17-year-old's talent emerged about a year before the pandemic shutdown, when he downloaded a digital audio workstation program called FL Studio. He experimented with the music-sequencing software, and during the lockdown learned to transform his simple drum patterns into complex tracks.

Soon after, Horton began to solicit rappers for "placements," or use of his beats as the foundational instrumentals in their songs. He has since produced multiple tracks for the Harlem-based rapper Shawn "FINNA" Piccardi and the Colombian artist Yeissy El Ingeniero del Flow.

This year, on Spotify, Horton released three of his own singles, infused with a distinct blend of his central influences: Afrobeats, rap and pop. The first song, "BAD," was written, produced and recorded in his bedroom with "a \$100 mic I took from my sister's karaoke machine," Horton says.

In March, Horton traveled to Jackson, Mississippi, with his father, Radley, a climate professor at Columbia University, who was working on an environmental justice project. The experience inspired Horton, a senior at The Masters School in Dobbs Ferry, to support youth there from a predominantly Black and low-income neighborhood.



Leo Horton, third from left, worked with students in Mississippi as part of his Beats 4 Justice initiative.

Photo provided

"I thought it would be so great to connect with these kids and form a bridge between our communities," he said. "And I was like: 'Music is the perfect way to do this.' Because I'm a kid I can bond with them, but I can also teach them without it being weird."

Horton dubbed his program Beats 4 Justice and joined forces with Mississippi Citizens United for Prosperity (MCUP), a community organization, to offer music production classes for middle schoolers. Ramona Williams, MCUP's executive director, recruited 15 local students plus 15 more from Grenada, a rural town north of Jackson, to participate. To obtain equipment, Horton contacted adult acquaintances in Garrison and Dobbs Ferry, who contributed old computers and funding. He also reached out to the company that makes FL Studio. "I was like: 'Hey, I'm doing this thing in Mississippi, could you guys donate 15 licenses

with the software?'" he said. "And they actually did. Each one was worth about \$900."

At the end of August, Horton and Piccardi traveled to Jackson for four days. They kicked off the program by sharing a short video by the Louisiana-born producer Weezy, who deconstructed the process of creating "Yes, Indeed," by Drake and Lil Baby. The two teenage instructors distributed computers and began walking through the basics of FL Studio.

"About halfway through that, we realized that they weren't listening anymore to what we were saying," said Horton. "They had their headphones on and were making beats on their own, which was great to see. They had figured it out on their own — the good thing about the software is that it's very intuitive."

Another popular lesson involved writing lyrics. "We gave everybody pens and pencils, played some tight beats and then everybody

got their flows and started writing to them," said Horton. "Once we actually had lyrics written, we got out the microphone and everybody recorded on top of one of the kids' beats."

Horton reflects on that inaugural visit with a sense of success and pride. Although the facilitators and participants hailed from vastly different environments, they swiftly bonded over a shared enthusiasm for music and creative expression, just as he had envisioned.

"I think about this so much, because I've had so many experiences in my life where music has brought me together with someone," he said, recalling a trip to Indonesia when he was 8. There, "we didn't even speak the same language; we weren't even the same age. But we formed such a deep bond, just dancing and singing to music."

Horton and Piccardi will continue to meet regularly with the Jackson students over Zoom throughout the year. "I was trying to stress to them that when we went down there, it was only the beginning of the project — we were just getting introduced," said Horton. They left behind a studio with 15 computers, 15 licenses to FL Studio, a microphone, two studio monitor speakers and an audio interface. It will be accessible to the middle schoolers through a Jackson community center.

Horton is hoping to expand Beats 4 Justice into underserved communities in Putnam and Westchester counties, and is developing a website that will include FL Studio tutorials. He intends to continue producing his own music and to pursue ethnomusicology, the study of the music of different cultures, especially non-Western ones, in college.

*Clara Tripp, who lives in Garrison and is a junior at the Ethical Culture Fieldston School in the Bronx, is a member of The Current's Student Journalists Program.*

# An Eye for the Past

*Haldane grad opens two vintage clothing stores*

By Lily Zuckerman

With a bedroom filled to the brim with racks and piles of second-hand clothing, it's no surprise that Sofia Wallis loves fashion.

But the vintage dresses and wedding gowns, and coats and footwear collected by the Garrison teenager and 2023 Haldane High School graduate are the inventory for two online secondhand stores Wallis runs from her bedroom: Farmer's Daughter Vintage and Jaded Vintage.

Shoppers visiting either store will find clothing, shoes and accessories ranging from a silk wedding gown and a 1940s lace dress to Peter Max-style 1960s pants and a vintage handbag.

Wallis, 18, launched Jaded Vintage on Instagram (@jadedvtg) and the online thrifting site, Depop, while in high school.



Sofia Wallis

Photo by L. Zuckerman

When she graduated in June, she decided to create a sister business, Farmer's Daughter (shop-farmersdaughter.com and @shop.farmersdaughter). Wallis handpicks each item and often repairs or restores clothing before reselling.

"The Depop page for Jaded Vintage matches the fact that it's curated for vintage that is super funky, loud and bold," she said.

"The look I was trying to create for Farmers Daughter is more whimsical, airy and light."

Wallis, who tries to visit thrift stores whenever she travels, sources her clothes from many places, ranging from unsorted Goodwill bins in New Jersey to estate sales in the Hamptons. Sometimes, people she knows will contact her if they find the types of clothing she sells on Farmer's Daughter and Jaded Vintage.

"The Goodwill bins are priced per pound, so it's worthwhile to buy in bulk," said Wallis.

To attract customers, Wallis posts often on Instagram. For the past two years, she and Maya Osborne, a friend from Haldane, have photographed each other for the clothing sites using backdrops and playing around with angles.

Osborne says Wallis has a good eye for clothing that has resale potential and a strong sense of what's trending. "The photo shoots exercise both of our brains," she said.

Wallis has grown as a business owner. When she only operated Jaded Vintage, sales happened occasionally, so packing, shipping and other aspects of running a mail-order business were more manageable. But adding a second business can be overwhelming, she said.

"The best advice I would have given myself is to go into all aspects of the business being organized — not just with the merchandise but with expenses, communication and social media," she said.

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





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Simon Keough



Ann Borthwick and Joe Cogliandro

Photos by M. Ferris (3)

# Chicken People

By Marc Ferris

It's not just farms. Chickens are coming home to roost as backyard coops gain popularity. This past June, the Putnam Valley Grange, founded in 1897, held its first Chicken Summit.

Some people get their birds from mail-order outfits such as Meyer Hatchery in Ohio and My Pet Chicken in Georgia. Others attend a well-known livestock auction in Connecticut. The Feed Barn in Mahopac, along with Tractor Supply in Wappingers Falls, also sell birds and materials. A Tractor Supply representative said that, nationally since 2018, its sales of poultry and poultry feed have more than doubled.

It's even possible to rent a bird to test the waters, said Terry Raskyn, a chicken cultivator and vice president at the Grange, which will hold its next poultry swap meet on Oct. 14.

When she lived in Garrison, Lydia JA Langley left a lasting legacy by fostering many chicken keepers through her Home to Roost consulting service. She and her husband, former Putnam County Sheriff Robert Langley Jr., moved to Long Eddy and established Three Barn Farm after he lost his bid for a second term in November 2021.

Around 20 years ago, Garrison resident Ann Borthwick began buying eggs from Langley and enjoyed them so much that in 2015 she added chickens to her menagerie, which now includes six sheep, two donkeys, three dogs and more than a dozen birds.

She doesn't trust marketing terms such as *organic*, *cage-free* or *free-range*. "Once you have fresh eggs, it's hard to go back," she said.



Jen Wanous



Lydia Langley File photo by Cheryl Harrington

"The deeper I got into the topic, the more I realized that everything to do with chicken production is disgusting and inhumane. We assume that there's nothing going on in their heads and breed them for wings to eat."

Borthwick marvels at the birds' behavior. "They talk to each other," she said. "They're very social, show emotion and care for one another. They even have friends; when a best friend dies, they never make any others. They just go off on their own."

Few chicken keepers cultivate birds for meat, said Raskyn, although she did once turn a cantankerous rooster into soup.

Jessica Jelliffe, who lives in Beacon, began hosting chickens at her house in 2014, in part to teach her child about responsibility and, eventually, how to deal with death.

Like Borthwick, Jelliffe gives them names. "They're so interesting because of their connection with the dinosaur [they share an amino-acid sequence with T. Rex] and the way they behave," she said. "They sit on our laps and eat out of our hands. I consider them to be more like pets than barnyard animals."

After the initial learning curve, people can wade into the topic as deep or shallow

as they want, said Jen Wanous, who moved from Brooklyn to Beacon in 2020 with partner Simon Keough and owns eight birds.

"It's low-maintenance, maybe two hours a week," she said. "They're self-sufficient and do their own thing. Consulting a blog post is usually all it takes to troubleshoot."

She, too, believes each bird has its own personality. "We adopt pet voices when we call their names," she said. "They look at you, hang out around and run to you whenever they see you, like little friends." (As with any pet, she is, of course, feeding them.)

The Town of Philipstown sets a limit of 10 chickens on lots of less than 2 acres; Beacon caps flocks at 12 birds; they can leave the coop but not "run at large." Roosters are prohibited.

In Putnam Valley, ever since town officials took Vincent Piliero's birds away a few years ago, he has lobbied to reform an ordinance that requires at least an acre to keep chickens and only allows 20 per acre. Piliero wants the town to allow eight chickens per half-acre and four per quarter-acre. Though he circulated a petition, spoke with the supervisor and recruited the Lake Peekskill Civic Association to his cause, the needle has barely moved.

"I know people who have chickens on less than an acre, which is unfair," he said. "Any change would be easy to enforce, just like other sanitation regulations. There shouldn't be a blanket rule banning chickens, especially up here in the country."



**Margaret (Greta) Graham**  
(1933 - 2023)

Margaret (Greta) Graham (nee Summers), 89, a Philipstown resident since 1969, died Sept. 29, 2023, after a short illness.

Greta was born in Hamilton, Scotland, on Dec. 17, 1933, the middle of five children of Hugh and Mary Summers (nee Connolly).

She met Donald at a dance hall in Scotland and they later married in 1960. They moved to the U.S. soon after and settled in their home on Main Street in Nelsonville. With help from family and friends, Donald and Greta restored a smaller house in Nelsonville, fondly named "The Wee Hoose," which they later retired to. They relished living in the Cold Spring area as it reminded them of Scotland with the beautiful river and mountain views.

Greta enjoyed traveling and dancing with Donald whenever they had the chance! Her hobbies included gardening, attending estate sales, playing the slots at casinos, and baking and cooking. (Her special shortbread recipe was loved by many!) She volunteered at events at the First Presbyterian Church of Philipstown, where she and Donald were members and developed lasting friendships. She also volunteered at the Nelsonville elections.

Greta worked for many years cooking for the Putnam County Senior Center in Cold Spring before retiring; she enjoyed working with the seniors and helping them out whenever possible. When Donald and Greta retired, they were very active with the local senior group, attending meetings, lunches and day trips.

Her greatest joys were her children and grandchildren. "Mimi" loved spending time with them, always interested and proud of their accomplishments and adventures.

Greta was predeceased by Donald in 2021 and is survived by her daughters, Diane Rosasco (James) and Cheryl Rockett (James); her grandchildren: William Rockett, Isabel Rosasco and Thomas Rockett, and several nieces and nephews.

There will a graveside service in Cold Spring, NY at a future date to be determined. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Philipstown Food Pantry ([presbychurchcoldspring.org/food-pantry.html](http://presbychurchcoldspring.org/food-pantry.html)).

Funeral arrangements are under the direction of Clinton Funeral Home.

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“Chickens talk to each other. They're very social, show emotion and care for one another. They even have friends; when a best friend dies, they never make any others.

~Ann Borthwick, Garrison



## Second Saturday *(from Page 1)*

Tashtego, at 158 Main St., the only other gallery on the thoroughfare, closed at its normal time but offered a 15 percent First Friday discount. J. Murphy's had music and Foundry Montessori offered two hours of free babysitting.

"It requires a commitment by businesses and community — it's not an overnight thing" to build, said Erin Murphy, chair of the Main Street Committee of the Cold Spring Chamber, although she added, referring to the pandemic shutdown, "second years are always better than the first year back.

"Some businesses are consistent and some participate only once in a while," she said. "Some businesses are new to it this year and maybe they'll be more consistent next year if they think it's beneficial to partake and offer their own spin."

Doug Price's Pretty Good Pub bustled with customers on Sept. 1. "I'm on board with anything to encourage people to go out, but you have to be creative and have more going on," he said. "People come home from work on Fridays and feed the kids or settle in. It should be something like Last Saturday."

Cold Spring restaurants, along with Flowercup Wine and Barber and Brew, do well most Fridays, but Foundry Rose leaned into the spirit on Sept. 1 with a Red, White and Rose Oyster Night and a jazz duo.

Foundry Rose typically closes at 4 p.m. but often hosts a jam on third Saturdays that continues until 9 p.m., said MaryRose Donaghy, one of the owners.



Pamela Zaremba at BAU Gallery, which times its art openings to Second Saturday

Photo by M. Ferris

"Post-COVID is not what I expected," she said, surveying the streetscape. Pointing to the lot next door where a pop-up food cart planned to stay for the weekend but was closed on First Friday, "there could be more energy," she said.

At the Cold Spring General Store, the sales on First Friday this year were about the same as last year, said Assistant Manager Kylie Standish.

In Beacon, where Second Saturday began more than 25 years ago, many galleries host convivial gatherings and time their show openings to coincide with the calendar. Jake's Main Street Music often hosts an acoustic jam session and Natalia Huang opens her piano studio.

In May, Alyssa Follansbee at Happy Valley Arcade launched a promotion where anyone who visits a Beacon gallery during Second Saturday and gets a hand stamp can receive a 10 percent discount at participating bars and restaurants.

Mor Tzivoni, who owns Miss Tea at 520 Main St., stays open an extra hour but "it's really just another Saturday," she said. Tzivoni is considering tastings, sound baths and herbal ceremonies to celebrate the new moon.

The Second Saturday tradition began in the 1990s when musician Thom Joyce floated the idea; BeaconArts later got involved to promote it.

"Our role over time has changed," said Matthew Agoglia, the president of BeaconArts. "We used to print a map and have arts walks, but no one wants printed maps anymore — it's got to be online. We're more of an information hub and advertise and promote events held by our members.

"We don't have any role in hosting events anymore — it has always been a joint effort between the business community and the artist community," he said. "The tools for communications used by small businesses and artists are so sophisticated these days, but we are here to foster alliances and spread the word."

He added: "Rumor has it that there is a Beacon Chamber of Commerce, and we would like to work with them." (The chamber has been inactive for a number of years, with sporadic efforts to revive it.)

Although Second Saturdays is entrenched, the scene is split between each end of Main Street. Clutter Gallery, Marion Royael Gallery and Hudson Beach Glass, which triangulate

where Main and Cross streets meet, provide a hopping party on the west side.

Garage Gallery, located a half block north of Main Street on North Elm Street, holds openings from 4 to 7 p.m. On the east end, the Howland Center displays art from 1 to 5 p.m. every Saturday. BAU Gallery and Super Secret Projects Gallery in the back of Hyperbole clothing store host festivities that go deeper into the evening.

"We serve wine and people hang out with the artists," said Carolyn Baccaro at Hyperbole. "It's like a little salon speakeasy back there."

Openings at BAU Gallery "are so much fun," said Pamela Zaremba, a member of the Beacon Artists Union, which runs the space. "We've had music, a poetry reading, a belly dancer and performance art, so we're thinking about other ways to draw people in."

No one revels in Second Saturdays like Clutter Gallery, the only one to fly in an artist from England to this month's event and to remain open past 10 p.m.

It offers adult beverages to passersby of legal drinking age, which can sometimes be a hard sell. But it's fun to repose on the benches in front of the store and watch the human parade, even if it has thinned out.

### Joseph Monteleone (1945-2023)

Joseph Monteleone of Garison passed away peacefully on Sept. 28, 2023, at Hudson Valley Hospital surrounded by his family. He was 78.

He was born on Feb. 16, 1945, in the Bronx to the late Aniello and Emilia Costello Monteleone.

Joseph grew up in the Bronx and married Marian Iafratto on Oct. 16, 1966, at Immaculate Heart of Mary in Scarsdale. Joe was drafted into the U.S. Army in January 1967, where he served honorably as a Sergeant in the Military Police.

Together, they spent the next 57 years creating their love story. Joe was an avid pigeon fancier and achieved both the NPA's Master Breeder and Master Judge awards. He retired after 30 years owning JM Recycling Services.

He is survived by his devoted wife of 57 years, Marian; his loving children Joseph Monteleone and his wife Patty, Michael Monteleone and his wife Siobhan and Mark Monteleone; and his cherished grandchildren Alexandra, Amanda, Hannah, Luke, Isabella, Olivia, Allison, Emma, Sophia and Maria-Helena. He is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews.

Joseph was predeceased by his brother, Fred, and his sister, Angela Gleason.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Tuesday, Oct. 3, 2023, at Our Lady of Loretto, 24 Fair St., Cold Spring. At the conclusion of Mass, the U.S. Army rendered honors. Interment will be private.

In lieu of flowers, the family has asked for donations to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital ([stjude.org](http://stjude.org)) or to the Tunnel to Towers Foundation ([t2t.org](http://t2t.org)).



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## SECOND SATURDAY OPENINGS (OCT. 14)

### A Collaborative Portrait of a Community

1 – 4 p.m. Howland Public Library  
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134  
[beaconlibrary.org](http://beaconlibrary.org)

This exhibit of photos, presented as part of a project exploring the lives of residents affected by urban renewal, documents the West End community. Through December. A preview of the Rise Up student film, *Lines of Demarcation*, *Memories from Beacon's Black Communities of the 20th Century*, will be screened, as well.

### Making Marks

4 – 7 p.m. Garage Gallery  
17 Church St. | [garagegallery.com](http://garagegallery.com)  
Lily Prince's landscapes and

Stephen Grossman's drawings will be on view through Oct. 29.

### TNT Plastic | Grizzly Workshops Ecoplasm

5 – 9 p.m. Clutter Gallery  
139 Main St.  
212-255-2505 | [clutter.co](http://clutter.co)

Figures and multiples from the artists will be on view through Nov. 3.

### At 80 — A Retrospective

6 – 8 p.m. Lofts at Beacon  
18 Front St.  
845-202-7211 | [loftsatbeacon.com](http://loftsatbeacon.com)

More than 50 years of work by Robert W. Paschal, including ink drawings, multimedia and acrylics, will be on view through Oct. 31.

### Robyn Ellenbogen | Clara Curbera | Linda Lauro-Lazin

6 – 8 p.m. BAU Gallery  
506 Main St. | [baugallery.org](http://baugallery.org)

Ellenbogen's multimedia work, *Looking Toward Avalokitesvara*, will be on view in Gallery 1. Curbera's paintings, *Apple of Your Eye*, will be in Gallery 2, and Lauro-Lazin's digital work will be in the Beacon Room. Through Nov. 5.

### Identity

6 – 9 p.m. Super Secret Projects  
484 Main St.  
[supersecretprojects.com](http://supersecretprojects.com)

The group show will be on view through Nov. 4.

### In Spirit

7 – 9 p.m. LotusWorks Gallery  
261 Main St. | [lotusworksgallery.com](http://lotusworksgallery.com)

The group show will include work by 18 artists. Through Nov. 11.

### Somesthesia

7 – 9:30 p.m. Distortion Society  
172 Main St. | [distortionsociety.com](http://distortionsociety.com)

Laura Bochet's solo exhibition of paintings explores the feeling of memory in the body. Through Dec. 2.

### Hugo Ball Night

8 p.m. Howland Cultural Center  
477 Main St.  
[howlandculturalcenter.org](http://howlandculturalcenter.org)

Ball and the Dada movement will be celebrated with a lecture, poetry reading and musical performances. *Cost: \$15*



## Autism *(from Page 1)*

In February, six months after he began school, Elliot began spending two hours a day with a special-education teacher who set up a reward system with goals and stickers. He also started receiving occupational and speech therapy.

"It totally helped," said Andy Mister. But getting there "was Kafkaesque."

That kind of experience is typical for many parents of neurodivergent children, said Victoria Sanjuan, the family's Poughkeepsie-based advocate. "Beacon didn't do anything terrible," she said.

Triesha Edwards, another special-education advocate, noted that there is space for the education advocacy industry because "special education is highly regulated and parents don't know how to navigate it."

Further, autism can sometimes be challenging to diagnose because it manifests in complex and varied ways. "When a child has a diagnosis of cerebral palsy, it is fairly obvious," said Edwards, who is based in Ulster County. "For a child with autism, it's not always as clear-cut."

The number of children diagnosed as autistic is growing. Nationally, 1 in 150 children received the diagnosis in 2000, compared to 1 in 36 today, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In New York, 1 percent of special-needs students were diagnosed with autism in 1997, compared to 11 percent today, according to the state Education Department.

That has put financial pressure on school districts, especially smaller ones, because they must provide specialized services to more children but cannot raise taxes above a state-mandated cap without widespread community support. One result is an unregulated industry of advocates that has arisen to help families negotiate with districts for services, said Marie Lewis, clinical director of the National Special Education Advocacy Institute, near Philadelphia.

Lewis estimates there are as many as 10,000 advocates nationwide; rates range from \$50 to \$250 an hour. Many are parents who were trained on the job while advocating for their own children. *The Current* spoke to four advocates; each said that more than half of their cases involve autism spectrum disorder.

### Case studies

Leilani Rodriguez said she moved from Port Chester to the Highlands because the Westchester County district's schools lacked occupational therapists to help her autistic son. By contrast, she said, "The special education people in Beacon were amazing."

She has since moved to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, for work, and said she is frustrated that the Individualized Education Program developed for her son in Beacon has not completely carried forward there. Specifically, the district won't provide her son with door-to-door service on a small bus. Unlike in Beacon, her son must ride a larger bus, which "overwhelms him," she said. So, her husband drives their son to and from school each day.

Bryanna Mehling said the Beacon district has been a "very good partner" in helping her neurodivergent child. But it took more



Andy Mister and his wife, Alex McQuilken, with their children Elliot (left) and Sunday

Photo by J. Asher

than six months to get her elementary schooler a specialized iPad that helps non-verbal students communicate. If a child wants lunch, she can touch an icon that says she's hungry. Or if the child is angry, there are buttons to indicate moods.

Obtaining the "augmentative and alternative communication device" was delayed while the district looked for an agency to evaluate her child for the device, Mehling said. "Everything has to go through a process."

Mehling said she paid an advocate \$2,200 to help persuade the district to provide additional therapy with the device, as well as other services. "I don't know how we afforded it, to be honest," she said.

Since Elliot Mister's autism was not diagnosed before he entered school, he had to start from scratch, getting tested, meeting with the district's Committee on Preschool Special Education, creating an Individualized Education Program, and then assembling the service providers necessary to execute the IEP.

His case was also complicated because, at the pre-K level, Beacon had no classes for special-needs children like Elliot. So the district had to search, unsuccessfully, outside of the district for a placement, said Sanjuan, the family's advocate. "Out-of-district searches are always a debacle," she said.

In April, the state Education Department, after hearing the Mister family's complaint, awarded "compensatory services" because of what it ruled was the Beacon district's initial failure to provide 10 hours a week with a special-education teacher as required under Elliot's IEP.

In the last five years, according to the Education Department, parents have filed nearly 1,600 complaints against districts they believe are not providing their children the free and appropriate public education required by law. There have also been 80,000 hearings to resolve disputes with local districts.

Those figures include a handful of complaints from parents in the Highlands and a few hearings, as well as settlements reached after frustrated parents threatened to sue. These settlement agreements are typically only available through Freedom of Infor-

mation Law requests, with names redacted.

*The Current* has obtained a few through that process. In 2020, the Haldane district in Cold Spring agreed to reimburse the parents of a special-needs student \$41,350 for three years of private-school tuition and up to \$15,000 for counseling, transportation and attorney's fees. In 2019, the district paid the parents of a student \$70,000, as well as half the tuition at a private school, up to \$34,026 annually.

In the latter case, the parents agreed to allow the student to be evaluated and observed at the private school by members of the Haldane Committee on Special Education to develop an IEP, as required by law.

In 2017, an investigation concluded that the Beacon district had failed to provide a high school student with an appropriate public education and reached a settlement with his mother, Melissa Thompson, a former Beacon school board president. She had filed her complaint not with the state but with the federal Office for Civil Rights on behalf of her son, who is Black. She alleged teachers did not fulfill the requirements of his learning plan.

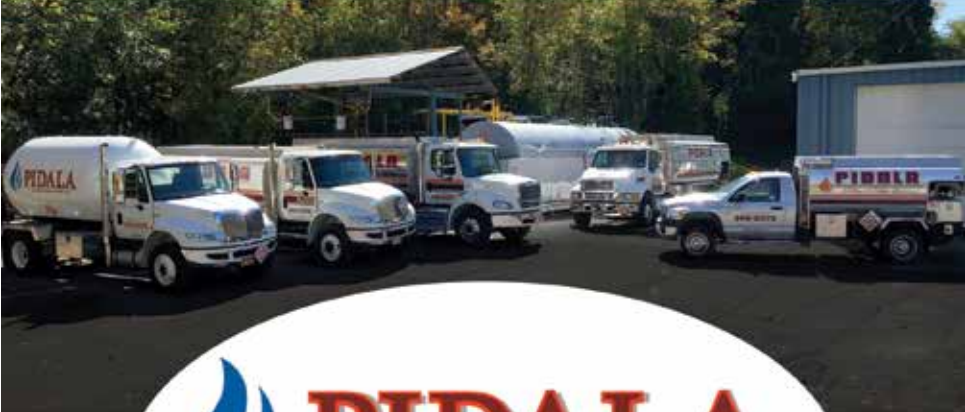
The agreement stipulated that the district provide training to all administrators, teachers and counselors, as well as IEP managers, on implementing learning plans for students with disabilities. At the time, Thompson called that component a "critical piece" of the settlement.


After all their efforts in Beacon, the Misters moved this summer to Vestal, near Binghamton. There, the district wanted to give Elliot only 30 minutes a day with a special-education teacher, so the family hired another advocate to help negotiate an IEP with two hours a day, as well as physical, speech and occupational therapy.

"It seems OK," Andy Mister said. "But we had to fight for it."

For Part I of this series, see [highlandscurrent.org](https://highlandscurrent.org).

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## Out There

# The Buried Streams of Beacon

By Brian PJ Cronin

Nine years ago, Jennifer Epstein was pushing her newborn son in a stroller through Memorial Park in Beacon when she found what looked like a gravestone. There wasn't a body buried underneath. Instead, it was a body of water.



The white monument sports a plaque commemorating the Asylum Brook Project, in which the eponymous stream was buried in a 60-inch pipe in 1933, during the Depression. Epstein, a freshwater ecologist who was working at the time for Riverkeeper, had never heard of Asylum Brook. Standing in front of the plaque, she emailed the Beacon Historical Society.

*Asylum Brook got its name from the fact that its headwaters seemed to emerge near the Matteawan State Hospital, known for much of its existence as a facility for the "criminally insane."*

It was the first step in a nine-year research project that Epstein undertook as a labor of love. (She and her family now live in Bolivia, where her husband, Adam Kendis, is director of college counseling at Santa Cruz Cooperative School.) Earlier this year, Epstein posted *The Story of Asylum*

*Brook* at [bit.ly/asylumbrook](https://bit.ly/asylumbrook).

Asylum Brook got its name from the fact that its headwaters seemed to emerge near the Matteawan State Hospital, known for much of its existence as a facility for the "criminally insane." Starting in 1912, inmates were assigned to bury the stream because prevailing wisdom considered wetlands to be incubators of disease. The state Assembly believed the work "would furnish a pleasant variety of labor without mental strain" for the prisoners.

Burying the brook made it stronger, intensifying its flow downstream. The City of Beacon was created in 1913 from the villages of Matteawan and Fishkill Landing, but at their borders on Main Street between Eliza and Chestnut it was constantly flooding, an ill omen. Residents spent two decades demanding action, interrupting City Council meetings and filing lawsuits.

That led to more pipe being laid (and memorialized) in 1933, but it wasn't enough. As the hospital expanded, more land was paved and more wetlands were funneled through the pipes. The city finally found the money in the late 1950s to finish the job.

If you stand at the memorial marker and think you can hear the ghostly sounds of the brook, you're not hallucinating. It still rushes underneath nearby storm drains and funnels through a 1959 pipe into Fishkill Creek just below the dam at the Roundhouse. There's only one place that the brook still flows naturally: just behind the Madam Brett Homestead, on its way to the creek.

The saga of Asylum Brook is not unique. As cities expanded in the 19th and 20th centuries, many transformed ecosystems of streams and brooks into ecosystems of pipes. But streams are not fixed entities. Their paths change, their banks change,



Asylum Brook was rerouted to empty into Fishkill Creek below the Roundhouse dam.

Photo by B. Cronin

their height and depth change, even the types of vegetation that grow alongside them changes. Add climate change, population change and land-use change, and streams previously tamed will break free. "They're dynamic," said Epstein. "We've tried to make them static, and it's not working anymore."

Some cities have "daylighted" their hidden streams, such as what Yonkers did with the Saw Mill River. As the frequency of catastrophic flooding increases in New York City, some environmentalists are advocating the city daylight some of its many underground rivers, such as Tibbetts Brook in the Bronx, to ease the strain on the overburdened sewage system.

Burying Asylum Brook solved a host of problems, but daylighting it would involve, among other things, ripping up the baseball fields at Memorial Park where Epstein's children played Little League. But with development projects being sought for the land where inmates once buried Asylum

Brook, Epstein believes daylighting the brook at its source should be considered.

Thanks to heavy rains hitting the Hudson Valley with increasing frequency and intensity, freeing some of the brook could prevent flooding. "A lot of climate mitigation strategies have to do with restoring natural hydrological flows, and restoring the ability for water to seep into the ground, instead of being funneled quickly through pipes," said Epstein.

She also thinks it's worth looking deeper into Beacon's hydrological history to see what other streams may be flowing underneath. During her research, older Beacon residents mentioned a pond near Willow and Elm streets that they used to boat and ice skate on; they also recalled catching frogs from its marshy surroundings.

Where did it go? Epstein hasn't had a chance to find out, but as the mounting flooding disasters of the 21st century have been showing, nothing stays buried forever.

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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			

- ACROSS
1. Sketch

5. Shock partner

8. Verdi heroine

12. Ms. McEntire

13. Scale note

14. Mosque VIP

15. Shakespeare title starter

16. Centennial State

18. Man’s youth

20. San Francisco gridder

21. Newt

22. Take to court

23. Give a leg up

26. Madrid museum

30. Klutz

31. Author Tan

32. Have a bug

33. Swagger

36. Open-mouthed

38. Mornings (Abbr.)

39. A Gabor

40. Painting of a scene

43. Public speakers
47. 16th-century Spanish explorer

49. Loafer, for one

50. Scent

51. Nourished

52. Vitriol

53. Marries

54. Mao — -tung

55. Egg part
- DOWN
1. Colorless

2. Move, in realtor lingo

3. With skill

4. Cleanses

5. Fancy neckwear

6. Fireplace fuel

7. Right angle

8. More ventilated

9. One-named supermodel

10. Miami- — County

11. Latin love

17. “Movin’ —” (*The Jeffersons* theme)
19. Frequently

22. Devious

23. Short ’do

24. Galley item

25. Son-gun link

26. Comic Philips

27. Small battery

28. Quick swim

29. Flamenco cheer

31. Billboards

34. Mists

35. Prayer ender

36. *Selma* director DuVernay

37. Fitzgerald title character

39. Wear down

40. Garbage barge

41. Morse —

42. Yankee nickname

43. Praiseful pieces

44. Wheeling’s river

45. Bakery buy

46. Hunt for

48. Sternward

SUDOCURRENT

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

WORDLADDER

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

MALES

TIGER

MICRO  
CROSSWORD

- ACROSS
1. Brazilian ballroom dance

6. “Give me a break!”

7. Juan’s mom

8. Part of a school uniform

9. First lady?
- DOWN
1. Waterston and Raimi

2. No longer dozing

3. Roman 2504

4. Ballet studio rail

5. Grateful Dead’s “Without \_\_\_\_”

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
	9			

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

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

O	S	A	K	A
G	C	L	E	F
R	A	T	E	R
E	L	O	P	E
S	E	N	S	E

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## VARSITY ROUNDUP

### HALDANE

By Jacob Aframian

**FOOTBALL** — Against Bronxville at home on Sept. 29, the undefeated Blue Devils put themselves in a hole early, falling behind 13-0 before coming back for a 35-27 win.

Bronxville scored just over a minute into the game on a 51-yard touchdown run, and again on its next possession with a 43-yard run. The Broncos nearly scored again with 1:40 left in the quarter but Haldane's defense held on fourth-and-four at the 10-yard line.

In the second quarter, quarterback Ryan Van Tassel lofted a pass to Brody Corless, who kept his feet inbounds to score, making it 13-7 with 8:58 left. A drive by Bronxville to inside the Haldane 5-yard line ended with an interception by Fallou Faye. With seven seconds left in the half, Van Tassel hit Jesse Tippet in the back of the end zone for a 10-yard touchdown that gave the Blue Devils a 14-13 lead.

Haldane opened the second half with a drive that was capped off by a 20-yard TD run by Van Tassel. Later in the quarter, he threw a seven-yard TD pass to Michael Murray, and a two-point conversion made it 28-13. Evan Giachinta ran for a 35-yard TD in the fourth to close the scoring for the Blue Devils.

Van Tassel completed 13 of 17 passes for 131 yards and three touchdowns, while Giachinta had 24 carries for 192 yards and Murray caught 10 passes for 107 yards.

The Blue Devils (4-0) will host Dobbs Ferry (2-1) at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday (Oct. 7). The Eagles defeated Bronxville, 12-7, earlier in the season and lost to Valhalla, 27-26, last week.

**BOYS' SOCCER** — Croton-Harmon broke Haldane's five-game winning streak on Tuesday (Oct. 3) with a 3-1 victory over the Blue Devils. The Tigers scored on a penalty kick in the first half, but Clem Grossman assisted Max Westphal on a free kick with 24 minutes left in the second half to even the score.

Croton-Harmon capitalized on another penalty kick to take a 2-1 lead, then put it away with a goal with eight minutes left. "It just wasn't our day," said Coach Ahmed Dwidar.

On Wednesday, the Blue Devils won at Pawling, 3-0, behind goals from Samuel Cardona, Frankie DiGilio and Westphal. Haldane (5-4) hosted Putnam Valley on Thursday and will travel to Blind Brook on Saturday (Oct. 7), Walter Panas on Monday and North Salem on Wednesday.

**GIRLS' SOCCER** — The Blue Devils had a tough several days, losing on Sept. 28 at home to North Salem, 8-0; coming up short against Franklin Roosevelt at Straatsburg on Saturday (Sept. 30) 2-0; and falling at Croton-Harmon, 5-0, on Monday. Haldane



Devyn Kelly controls the ball for Beacon on Tuesday in a 2-1 win over O'Neill.



Beacon junior Noelle Haase (27) is about to put a goal in the net on Tuesday against O'Neill. For more photos, see [highlandscurrent.org](http://highlandscurrent.org).

*Photos by Skip Pearlman*

(4-5) travels to Putnam Valley today (Oct. 6) before hosting Pawling on Tuesday and Putnam Valley on Wednesday. Both home games start at 4:30 p.m.

**VOLLEYBALL** — After losing to Southington, 2-0 (25-16, 25-14), at the John Jay Cross River Tournament on Sept. 30, the Blue Devils (1-10) traveled to North Salem on Thursday and today (Oct. 6) are scheduled to host Walter Panas at 6 p.m. before a week off.

**CROSS-COUNTRY** — On Wednesday (Oct. 4), Haldane competed in a meet against

runners from Hendrick Hudson, Peekskill, Yorktown and Sleepy Hollow. Owen Powers finished eighth, followed by Silas Emig (19), James Frommer (20) and Brendan Shanahan (28). The Blue Devils will travel east on Saturday (Oct. 7) for the Brewster Bear Classic.

**GIRLS' TENNIS** — In a doubleheader on Tuesday (Oct. 3), Haldane defeated Pleasantville twice, each by a score of 4-1. Eleanor Dubroff and Ella McKeel won both matches at second and third singles, respectively, and Julie Shields and Camilla McDaniel and Mary McBride and Scout Thakur deBeer won at doubles.

### BEACON

By Nick Robbins

**FOOTBALL** — In a game delayed until Monday (Oct. 2) because of poor weather, Beacon lost to visiting Saugerties, 35-14, to fall to 0-5. The Bulldogs struggled on special teams, allowing three blocked punts, including one returned for a touchdown. Quarterback Jazziah Whitted was 4 for 19 for 115 yards. He threw two touchdowns but also three interceptions. Gio Browley had two catches for 59 yards, while Mason Supple had one grab for a 36-yard touchdown. Kaevon Ricketts, who was moved to fullback because of injuries, had 12 carries for 50 yards. The Bulldogs host New Paltz (1-4) today (Oct. 6) at 5:30 p.m.

**GIRLS' SOCCER** — Beacon moved to 7-2 after two impressive wins, knocking off Chester, 8-1, on Monday (Oct. 2) and O'Neill, 2-1, on Tuesday. Against Chester, Reilly Landisi and Devyn Kelly each scored twice; against O'Neill, Abbie Ahmed scored late to break the tie. Beacon faced Chester again on Thursday. Next week, the Bulldogs host Liberty at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday (Oct. 10) and travel to Kingston on Thursday.

**BOYS' SOCCER** — The Bulldogs played strong defense in a scoreless draw with Cornwall on Sept. 28; defeated Liberty, 1-0, behind a goal by Liam Murphy on Tuesday (Oct. 3); and blanked Fallsburg, 5-0, on Wednesday with two goals by Jaidyn Caccamo and another by Murphy. The Bulldogs (7-2-1) travel to Lakeland on Monday (Oct. 9) and host O'Neill at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday.

**TENNIS** — The Bulldogs went 1-2 this week, losing at home, 4-3, against Goshen and 7-0 at Middletown before defeating Monticello, 6-1. Beacon (5-5) hosted Port Jervis on Thursday in its last match of the season.

**VOLLEYBALL** — Beacon had a game on Monday (Oct. 2) canceled before traveling to Port Jervis on Wednesday (Oct. 4), winning 3-1. The Bulldogs (9-1) hosted O'Neill on Thursday and will host Newburgh on Wednesday (Oct. 11).

**GIRLS' SWIMMING** — Beacon struggled Monday (Oct. 2), losing 95-71 at home against Franklin Roosevelt, but had three first-place winners: Meara Kumar in the 200 individual medley in 2:45.08; Serena Stampleman in the 100 fly in 1:16.17; and the 200 free relay team in 2:00.33. The Bulldogs (1-4) swam at Cornwall on Thursday and host New Paltz on Tuesday (Oct. 10).