Shakespeare Festival Completes Review
Planning Board approves environmental remedies
By Leonard Sparks
The Philipstown Planning Board on Nov. 16 approved the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival’s strategies for minimizing noise and traffic, and other environmental impacts from its new venue at the former Garrison Golf Course.

With its unanimous approval of a “findings statement,” the board completed an environmental review that began in July 2022 amid concerns from neighboring homeowners about noise from amplified performances, roads clogged by theatergoers and the destruction of scenic views from the property on Route 9.

The Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival (HVSF) still has to secure site-plan approval from the Planning Board, zoning amendments from the Town Board and permits from various agencies. But that final plan will include new turn lanes and other measures to reduce traffic, the planting of new trees and other mitigation measures.

“Are we pleased to have reached this milestone, and we continue to be committed to serving as a good neighbor, a local cultural resource and a model for environmental sustainability in the performing arts,” said Kendra Eron, managing director for the festival, and Davis McCalden, director for the festival, and Davis McCalden.

Environmental Cleanup Set for Site
Developer plans townhouses, apartments along creek in Beacon
By Brian PJ Cronin
A cleanup 17 years in the making is finally scheduled to begin by next month at the Beacon Terminal, as the site’s new owner plans to convert the long-dormant buildings along Fishkill Creek into housing.

The work is expected to begin sometime between Nov. 28 and Dec. 5 and last approximately three months at the 11-acre property, which is located at 555 South Ave., next to the parking lot for Madam Brett Park, and has been vacant since 1995.

The cleanup, which involves the removal of 3,740 cubic yards of contaminated soil, is being done as part of the state Department of Environmental Conservation’s (DEC) Brownfield program, in which developers receive tax breaks for cleaning up contaminated properties.

Beacon Commons (16 West Main St.)
Number of units: 62 apartments
Status: Approved in November 2022, this project received a special-use permit allowing parking on the adjacent residentially zoned parcel. It returned to the Planning Board this month and was granted a six-month extension of the permit while the developer finalizes construction details.

Booming Beacon
Updates on development projects in city
By Jeff Simms
It has been a year since the last one of these updates, and while submissions to the Planning Board have slowed in recent months, there was plenty of activity over the summer. Here’s where things stand on notable developments, plus information on projects approved since our last update.

Reporters Notebook: Visitor Center Confidential
By Michael Turton
I recently spent two shifts in the Cold Spring Visitor Center with Chamber of Commerce volunteers Gerry Singer and Nat Prentice.

There was a feeling of deja vu as my mind leapt back to when I answered tourists’ questions for a living. Fresh out of college, I was the first male travel information officer hired by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism. I was a very green, 21-year-old country bumpkin working in a large, all-female office in downtown Toronto.

My slightly older colleagues had a field day initiating the rookie, including calling me on the 1-800-Tourism line to grill me mercilessly about a nonexistent nudist camp near my hometown. Eventually, I understood the hoots of laughter coming from the next office.

Once my brain returned to Cold Spring, I started thinking about the village, its dual role as a community and tourist destination, and the visitor center that’s part of both.

Weekend crowds are sometimes beyond intense. I know the aggravation of being
What prompted your move to multimedia storytelling, and away from dance performance?

Once it’s done, the dance is gone, just images remain. I got interested in making films because I wanted the work to stay around longer. I edit the films. Once the material is given to me, I reframe and make it into dance for the screen. I don’t simply want to recreate.

With Remembering Pina, you fused “movement memories” with dancers’ remembrances of Pina Bausch. What did the process entail?

We all wrote down a story of our memories of Pina, then came up with gestures while retelling the stories. Then we went into different sections, where I worked with everyone separately. We shot it as material before we made it into a performance. Then we rehearsed, which for me meant finding different ways to work with people. There were stories spoken while others developed completely out of the movement.

You’ve worked with Beacon composer J. Brooks Marcus several times. How do you collaborate?

I and my collaborator Jonny Taylor, would come in and have me listen. In some cases, J. used songs he had already written. They could watch the shadows left in the movement of the dancers, feeling a rhythm and the timing, and they also worked in a lot of different genres, making it more popular and contemporary — covering a lot of bases, from jazz to pop. In Pina, some of the music is sad, some clever, some ridiculous, some humorous. That was Pina!

Does aging inspire most contemporary dancers and choreographers, or do the body’s physical constraints inhibit them?

This is funny because my next film, tentatively called Dancing On the Wheel of Time, will be on aging and dance. It is inspiring me. Aging has to be reckoned with. My early teachers were old and took their dance to their death. Now it’s a young world. You have to change, and aging is a part of dance.

Was funding easier to find earlier in your career, or now?

Back then we were starving artists. The thing was, it never stopped us. In Europe, they’re funded. Here it’s very, very hard. I feel fortunate to have been in New York City when I was young, and also fortunate to be able to work in Beacon. I moved here in 2004 and initially had no one to work with. Now we have a big trust, and know we can rely on each other. The next film will be an ode to them.

CineHub is located at 20 West Main St., Suite 4 in Beacon. There is a suggested donation of $20, payable at the door. For reservations, email susanosberg@mac.com or call 845-831-1832.
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From New Member
Aubrey Carter, Putnam Valley

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The Highlands Current

November 24, 2023

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

Stabilization Center

Recently, I attended a meeting for the public featuring a presentation by Steve Miccio, CEO of People USA, which plans to launch a Crisis Stabilization Center in Putnam County (“Putnam Crisis Center Faces Backlash,” Nov. 17). The location was to be in Brewster and the center would have been a sorely needed option for Putnam residents experiencing mental health crises.

Unlike other mental health services available in the county, the center would have provided a walk-in option for people needing emergency assistance but who don’t meet the criteria for hospitalization. People USA operates such a facility in Dutchess County, and it has been wildly successful.

At the public meeting, a group of parents shouted down the idea for the sole reason that the planned location was near a daycare center. Despite the fact that another mental health facility — Mental Health Association Putnam — had operated in the same space for years, parents made comments about hypothetical clients, who they seemed to think would overwhelmingly consist of pedophiles, criminals and active drug users.

Nevermind that Miccio’s presentation noted that children and families are 50 percent of those served by the Dutchess Center, and that the top three diagnoses are depression, anxiety and trauma. The assumption that children are better off without more mental health services in the county than with them is completely backward.

The hypocrisy is mind-blowing. A county run by Republicans, the party that protects and defends the Second Amendment at all costs and regularly blames the “real problem” on inadequate mental health services, just shot down the one opportunity this county has had in decades to provide better options to people.

I see an inordinate number of parents in Putnam wasting time screaming on social media about drag queens and drag story hours, or filing false reports about LGBTQ-affirming teachers and curricula under the guise of concern for kids. No one is buying it anymore. It’s painfully clear that your true motivations stem from the age-old, incredibly unimaginative Fear of the Other.

The parents who complained and the decision-makers who denied this center should be ashamed.

Eileen McDermott, Brewster
Editor’s note: Putnam County Executive George Latimer has said the county would to launch a Crisis Stabilization Center in Putnam County, perhaps in an existing state mental health facility.

LETTERS AND COMMENTS

Cold Spring parking

Cold Spring clearly will not have enough residential parking permits for all who are eligible (“In Cold Spring, A Price on Parking,” Nov. 17). This begs the question: What is the process for applying for a permit and, more importantly, what is the process for deciding who gets one? Will the process be first-come, a lottery or some unstated selection process? And most importantly, will the process for allocating limited residential permits be transparent and fair?

Bill Pugh, Cold Spring

Tax increase

Now that the Phillipstown Town Board has approved steep tax increases, the time has come to collect the taxes fairly (“Phillipstown Approves Tax Hike,” Nov. 17). Only a town-wide revaluation done by an outside company can take a look at property values and assess everyone fairly. It has been shown that the wealthiest among us are under-assessed and the most-modest homes are overpaying, subsidizing the high-end properties. The town supervisor says they will do one. I’d like to know when.

Kathleen Kourie, Garrison

Opioid Overdoses

The cause of opioid addiction is the same as the cause of gun violence, animal abuse, racism, sexual assault, gender abuse and every conceivable negativity in our lives: We look away (“Overdose Death Worsen,” Nov. 17).

In order to resolve the opioid addiction problem, the Food and Drug Administration needs to be the first to stop looking away. From there, maybe Congress will follow suit and stare down the gun lobbyists? Do they have the guts? Do we have the guts to hire/vote for leaders with integrity who will stop looking away?

Fern Sartori, Beacon

Empty bowls

Thank you so much to The Highlands Current for including our event in the paper (“Soup in Every Bowl,” Oct. 13). Because of your article and the amazing support of our kind and generous community, Filling Empty Bowls raised over $5,000 to address food insecurity in our region. We were also able to support St. Mary’s Church in its efforts to raise money by hosting community events.

We are especially grateful to the local artists, businesses, individuals and families who gave so generously of their work, their food, their dollars and their presence. What a blessing to live in such an amazing place.

Alicia Leeds, Cold Spring

Leeds is the founder of Filling Empty Bowls.
Second Shooting in a Month in Beacon

Byrnes names new Putnam commissioner

Second Shooting in a Month in Beacon

Police release few details, seek witnesses and more information

Beacon police are investigating the second shooting in the city this month.

Officers responded to the area of Washington and Depuyster avenues on Monday (Nov. 20) around 6:30 p.m. after receiving reports of shots fired. Upon arrival, officers located a “crime scene,” the police said in a news release which provided no further details.

A short time later, a local hospital received a male victim with a non-life-threatening gunshot wound. He was treated and later released. The department did not release the victim’s name but said it is continuing to investigate the incident and asked witnesses or anyone with information that would further the investigation to contact the detective division at 845-831-4111.

Earlier this month, a 16-year-old male was shot near the Tompkins Terrace apartment complex. The victim, whose name was also not released, was transported to a local hospital in stable condition after receiving a superficial gunshot wound to his arm.

Byrne Names New Putnam Commissioner

Servadio will lead social services

Sara Servadio will replace the retiring Michael Piazza as commissioner of the Putnam County Department of Mental Health, Social Services and Youth Bureau. County Executive Kevin Byrne announced on Nov. 17 that Servadio has been serving as deputy commissioner of the department since February 2022. Her 20-plus years of experience includes positions with various nonprofits and the Westchester County Department of Community Mental Health, said Byrne. The Legislature is expected to approve Servadio’s appointment at its next meeting on Dec. 5. Piazza’s retirement took effect on Nov. 9.

“Sara Servadio is a consummate professional who brings a level of dedication and leadership that is unmatched in her field,” said Byrne. “I am confident that under her guidance the many operations she oversees, especially our mental health services, will thrive.”

Dutchess Committee Approves Large Raises

County executive, legislators, clerk to benefit

Incoming Dutchess Executive Sue Serino and other county officials will receive hefty salary increases in 2024 under budget amendments approved on Nov. 15 by the Legislature’s Budget, Finance and Personnel Committee.

The vote, 9-3, was largely along party lines, with Randy Johnson, a Democrat representing the City of Poughkeepsie, voting with eight Republicans in favor of the raises, while all three “no” votes came from the committee’s other Democrats. Serino, a Republican who defeated Democrat Tommy Zurhellen in this month’s general election, will receive $185,500 next year, compared to the current county executive salary, $157,424. County Clerk Brad Kendall will be paid 26 percent more ($150,000 versus $119,330).

The committee also approved a 56 percent raise for the Legislature’s chair (to $54,500), a 68 percent increase for legislators ($27,500) and a 81 percent boost for the majority and minority leaders ($45,500). Assistant party leaders would also receive a pay hike: 76 percent to $36,500. Committee chairs, who are currently unpaid, would receive $3,000 stipends beginning next year.

Legislator Will Trout, a Republican representing parts of Hyde Park and the Town of Poughkeepsie said the increases will “compensate for the position so that we can attract new candidates in the future.”

But Yvette Valdes Smith, the Democrats’ minority leader whose district includes Beacon, said: “I know how much we all give as public servants. However, this huge increase in salaries cannot be justified.”

A public hearing on the budget is set for Dec. 4 at 7 p.m. A vote to adopt the plan is scheduled for Dec. 7.

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Open Call for Art

Plucked Notes With A Quick Dispatch
Artists’ Benefit for Doctors Without Borders
One day only
100% proceeds of art sales donated

Lois announced Monday (Nov. 20) that she is resigning, effective Dec. 30, to work with the state Comptroller’s Office as deputy comptroller of local government and school accountability. The Democrat first won election as Dutchess comptroller in 2017 and was re-elected to a second four-year term in 2021.

“I am proud of the work that my staff and I have done to protect tax dollars and report to the residents of this great county how their government spends its funds,” said Lois.

The same day as Lois’ announcement, O’Neil named Pulver as his choice to fill the position, effective Dec. 31, until a special election is held next November to fill the remainder of Lois’ term, which ends in 2025. Earlier this month, Pulver lost his bid for re-election to a sixth term.

Hochul Signs Bills Honoring Local Veterans

Portions of three state roads to be renamed

Gov. Kathy Hochul signed on Veterans Day (Nov. 11) legislation to rename portions of three state roads in Fishkill for war veterans who lived in the town.

A section of Route 52 will be named the Chief Daniel Nimham Memorial Highway. Nimham was the chief of the Wappinger tribe and fought alongside Americans during the American Revolution, where he was killed in action.

A trail in the Hudson Highlands State Park is named for Nimham. A statue honoring Nimham is also standing at Routes 52 and 82 in Fishkill.

Hochul also signed legislation designating part of Route 9 as the Sergeant Eligh A. Briggs Memorial Highway. Briggs fought for the Union Army during the Civil War and received a Congressional Medal of Honor after being wounded in service.

A third bill signed by the governor dedicates a portion of Route 82 as the Corporal Derick Franklin Brinckerhoff Memorial Highway. Brinckerhoff enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1946 and was killed in the Korean War during the Battle of Pusan. He was awarded a Purple Heart.

Two state legislators representing Fishkill — Sen. Rob Rolison, whose district also includes Beacon, and Assembly Member Anil Beephan — sponsored the bills.

MUSIC AT ST. MARY’S presents

Jazz for the season

featuring

Art Labriola, Lew Scott, Mike Larocco

Saturday, December 2, 2023
2 PM
Free - donations accepted

Local composer, recording artist and jazz pianist Art Labriola will be accompanied by Lew Scott on bass and Mike Larocco on drums to perform American jazz favorites, including jazz treatments of Christmas carols.

To donate art for the benefit go to theoganzstudio.com

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Beacon to Drop Parking Requirements?

Council to set public hearing on proposal

The Beacon City Council is expected on Monday (Nov. 27) to schedule a public hearing on code amendments that, if adopted, would eliminate minimum parking requirements for new developments or projects involving the reconstruction or substantial alteration of a site. The council will also refer the proposal to the Planning Board for its review.

Planning Consultant John Clarke told the council on Nov. 6 that more than 200 municipalities nationwide — including Hudson, Buffalo, Boston and Burlington, Vermont, in the Northeast — have dropped minimum parking standards as a way of encouraging affordable and walkable cities. The idea, Clarke said, is that cities such as Beacon have continued to rely on outdated standards set in the 1970s and ’80s that require a set number of parking spaces for various land uses.

For example, Beacon’s code currently requires at least one space for every four seats or pew spaces in a place of worship, theater or athletic field. But those standards, in addition to almost always overestimating the need for parking, cause the cost of development to rise significantly, Clarke said.

For residential developments, parking represents 10 percent to 20 percent of the total cost of development and adds 17 percent to the average apartment rent, said Clarke. “And there’s a lot of people who don’t have cars, or don’t need cars, who can get by with walking and public transit in places like Main Street in Beacon,” he told the Planning Board in August.

In parts of Beacon, parking requirements have not been updated in decades, yet households in the city are 26 percent smaller now than they were in the 1970s. “If you require less parking, you can lower rents, in theory,” Clarke said, “because developers don’t have to spend so much on land or upkeep.”

Kingston also recently dropped its minimum requirements and goes a step further by delineating in its code 10 automobile demand-reduction strategies, such as creating bicycle parking spaces, promoting ride-sharing and mass transit, supporting free or subsidized transit-to-work shuttles and encouraging “live near your work” programs.

If Beacon were to drop minimum parking requirements, Clarke suggests adopting maximum requirements in their place. For example, an apartment complex would require a maximum of one space for each dwelling unit, plus a quarter of a space for each bedroom, plus half a space for each live/work unit containing a retail area.

The Planning Board, rather than relying on “arbitrary” standards set decades ago, could review site-specific conditions such as comparable uses, location, walkable access to public transit and the size of the parcel during its review of each project.

“Right now the Planning Board is hamstrung by minimum parking requirements as a starting point,” Clarke told the council. Dropping those requirements would allow the board to “look at the size of the parcel, whether there’s a historic building on it or not and give extra consideration to a variety of factors.”

Freed of the burden of parking minimums, the board could “be providing alternatives and working with applicants to give them a whole range of transportation options,” he said. “This is a new and different way of looking at the world.”
November 24, 2023

152-158 Fishkill Ave.
Number of units: 16 apartments
Status: This project, which was approved in September, will see a multifamily structure and auto detailing shop demolished to make way for a 2½-story, mixed-use building about a block from Main Street. The first floor will be office space, with one- and two-bedroom apartments above. The adjoining lots were merged through the subdivision approval process. It will provide 53 parking spaces on-site and six more along Fishkill Avenue. The developer agreed to use landscaping to protect across-the-street neighbors from being disturbed by lights from the site.

248 Tioronda Ave.
Number of units: 64 apartments
Status: The Planning Board approved this project, which also includes 25,400 square feet of commercial space, in 2020. The developer in 2021 asked the Zoning Board of Appeals for permission to build the residential buildings before the commercial component of the project. A public hearing was held and adjourned, but the developer never returned to the ZBA. The chair of the city’s Conservation Advisory Committee alleged during the City Council’s Nov. 13 meeting that the developer has violated Fishkill Creek development standards by constructing a building too close to the creek bank. The Beacon building inspector is looking into the claim.

2 Cross St.
Number of units: 18 apartments
Status: The Planning Board approved this project, a three-story building at the corner of Main and Cross streets, in 2022. It will include retail on the street level and 18 apartments, nine of them for seniors, on the two top floors. The developer is hoping to utilize county and state programs that would keep all of the apartments below market rate, but that has not been finalized. In March Dutchess County awarded the project $1,575,000 from its housing trust fund for the creation of housing units affordable to households earning between 60 percent and 100 percent of the area median income. The all-electric building will be constructed using energy-efficient design elements, including a green roof. 172 Main St. will retain its facade and be integrated into the new building, while 2 Cross St. will be demolished and replaced with new construction. The site will include a publicly accessible plaza at the corner of Main and Cross. The project returned to the Planning Board earlier this year to amend its site plan to include 25 parking spaces, with four additional spaces land-banked for future use, on the east side of Cross Street, adjacent to the new building.

364 Main St.
Number of units: 20 apartments
Status: The Planning Board approved this three-story mixed-use project in April 2022. Initially proposed as a four-story building, it was downsized and will replace the former Citizens Bank with retail on the ground floor and 20 apartments on the second and third floors. Construction is expected to begin in the spring.

Beacon Views
Number of units: 37 townhouses
Status: This project near Conklin Street was approved in July 2022. Access to the site had been an issue until the developer reached an agreement with the owners of a Townsend Street subdivision to establish access via Townsend, off of Route 52. The proposal, introduced to the Planning Board in 2019, was delayed over wetlands on the site and the question of whether its development would adversely impact the environment. The Planning Board approved a 90-day extension of the project’s site plan and subdivision approval in June (after two previous extensions late in 2022).

The Lofts at Beacon (Beacon HIP Lofts)
Number of units: 28 lofts plus artist studios
Status: Because this project is in the Fishkill Creek development zone, the City Council sent the proposal to the Planning Board for its environmental review, which concluded in June. Afterward, the project was to go back to the council for a vote on the concept plan but that has not happened yet. Following the council’s vote, it will return to the Planning Board, which will complete the site-plan review. The expansion of the apartment complex, off of Mason Circle, is proposed to include a two-story building with 28 loft apartments and 30,000 square feet of artist and artisan studios, along with a 66-space parking lot with 14 more spaces land-banked for future use.

What’s Online at HighlandsCurrent.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 newsy legislation in the U.S. House and how Rep. Mike Lawler (Philipsburg) 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 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.

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Meet Designer Christopher Radko* who will be in person to meet and greet.

*No affiliation with the Christopher Radko brand which Mr. Radko sold 17 years ago, and is owned by Rauch Industries.
Haldane Capital Plan Moves Forward

Benante says focus on ‘needs instead of wants’

By Joey Asher


Those are among the critical campus needs to be addressed by the $35.7 million first phase of the recently adopted Haldane Campus Master Plan, according to district leaders.

The three-phase plan, as currently proposed, would cost $108 million and take 15 years to complete. To pay for it, Haldane recently announced it would need to raise taxes by 10.5 percent, a move that would have to be approved by district voters.

The plan includes a long list of high-profile projects, including a new auditorium, an additional gymnasium, additional tennis courts and a new open air “out-i-torium” on the school’s central lawn.

But Phase 1, as it’s currently configured, is loaded with more functional upgrades — “needs instead of wants,” said Philip Benante, the district superintendent.

“It’s really about addressing the most critical needs on campus having to do with space and safety and creating appropriate classrooms for kids and teachers,” added Peggy Clements, president of Haldane’s school board.

Earlier this month (Nov. 13), the district held a community forum to hear public input as it works to “finalize the exact components” in Phase 1 to be presented for a vote, which would likely be next fall, Benante said.

The initial phase has 45 separate projects, including new classrooms, improved access for people with disabilities and upgraded clocks and fire alarms. Here are some of Phase 1’s major projects:

New high school wing ($16.4 million)

The costliest item would be a 17,300-square-foot addition to the east end of the high school. The addition will have four classrooms to “ensure that our kids and staff have a quality educational experience,” Benante said.

Currently, many high school students are taking classes in the Mabel Merritt Building, which was originally designed for offices. The building’s four makeshift classrooms are either oddly configured or too small, Benante said, adding that the building also has security challenges.

One classroom has a support pillar in the middle blocking views. Students also complain of “clutter,” Benante said, noting that “if someone holds open a door, it’s easy to get in.” Phase 1 addresses that with secure entry vestibules for both major buildings.

Main building ($7.1 million)

The plan calls for replacing the HVAC equipment and adding air conditioning. But several community members at the district’s forum on Nov. 13, as well as the school board’s meeting the following day, questioned whether the project included clean-energy options. Benante said the district and its architect are reviewing this part of the project.

Safer traffic flows ($2.2 million)

The plan aims to improve pedestrian safety, said Benante. “We have an unhealthy mix of car, bus and pedestrian traffic in the current design,” he said. “The updated design will better separate vehicular traffic from pedestrian traffic on campus. It also includes additional sidewalks and more clearly designated crosswalks to improve staff, student and visitor safety.”

Secure entry vestibules ($454,000)

In light of concerns about campus violence, it’s too easy for strangers and guests to enter the school buildings, Benante said, noting that “if someone holds open a door, it’s easy to get in.” Phase 1 addresses that with secure entry vestibules for both major buildings.
HVSF (from Page 1)

unable to find either a parking spot on my
street or a seat at my local pub, the latter being more upsetting.
But here's the thing: Whitehall, a village in Washington County, was recently named New York's worst small town. I prefer our small village, a great place to live and nice enough that others want to visit.

Visitors did not produce any shockers for Gerry or Nat. They asked about restaurants, maps, train schedules, directions, restrooms, Seastreak and how to get to the river.

How to get to the river? Seriously?

A silly question at first. But to first-time visitors unfamiliar with the little brick structure at the entrance to a tunnel that will take them to the river, it's a logical question. It reminded me that there are no bad questions. Like when, on one of my first trips into Manhattan, I asked how to get back to Grand Central Station — while standing at its entrance.

My strongest impression of the folks who came to the visitor center for help, and others on foot nearby, was how happy they were. Maybe it was the great weather, or finding a parking spot right away, but they were definitely a contented lot.

I'm not naive. I know the tales of how cranky tourists can be if they're waiting in a long line outside on a chilly day, stomach growling, baby crying. But at the booth, they were demonstrably grateful for even the smallest favor: being offered a map, pointed toward a trail or told where to buy bottled water.

Younger visitors seemed more enthralled with their phones than their destination. I jokingly wondered if they were Googling photos of Cold Spring.

Others snapped photos by the dozen; some even used a camera. They shot things new to them: historic buildings, ivy-covered walls, creative signage, store windows — the things residents, including me, often overlook.

I pondered what villagers might photograph to capture their community as they see it, beyond the mandatory sunset photo?

I'd shoot a quiet, early morning Main Street, the guy zooming by on his bike with two kids on the back, Richard cutting someone's hair at Barber and Brew, and artist George Stevenson sitting out front of Cold Spring Pizza. And dog photos.

I probably would not photograph the trolley. Three women asked Gerry about it, hopped aboard for the Beacon run and returned giddy over how much fun they had. Yet the trolley remains an enigma. As crazy-busy as recent weekends have been, it managed to stay mostly empty, confirming that it is a good idea that has yet to work.

What does work is the visitor center, and like the Philipstown community, it functions thanks to volunteers. This season, 14 local residents gave up some 300 hours from their weekends to help visitors feel welcome. They handled more than 3,500 inquiries; the number of people they helped was much greater because the vast majority of their responses benefitted a couple, a family or a small group.

While my time in the visitor center produced no startling revelations, it reinforced some familiar themes. Additional trash bins are still needed in some areas. More public restrooms, increased access to Main Street bathrooms or extra porta-

Johns would help.

A visitor center water fountain would be great. Strategically placed weekend food trucks could benefit residents and visitors alike. Some commonsense marketing might fill empty trolley seats.

Innovate leaves are all but gone. The number of people seen on the little bridge, decreasing. Seastreak has weighed anchor. The visitor center has wound down. Main Street feels different already.

Think I'll head to a Cold Spring restaurant this weekend.

Site Cleanup (from Page 1)

nated parcels, usually former factories. The site's current owner, Rodney Weber, is also the developer of Edgewater, a 246-unit, seven-building apartment complex near Pompkins Avenue that broke ground last year. The DEC said that Beacon Terminal will be "redeveloped by constructing new buildings and renovating some existing buildings to construct townhouses, duplexes and triplex units."

Weber declined to specify when the project might be coming before the Beacon Planning Board for review, but new construction is prohibited until the DEC determines that the cleanup is successful. Both Weber and the DEC said that remediation is not expected to be complete, and the DEC has weighed anchor. The visitor center has wound down. Main Street feels different already.

Think I'll head to a Cold Spring restaurant this weekend.

Site Cleanup (from Page 1)

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Site Cleanup (from Page 1)
Fine Wines at a Price

Nelsonville dealer specializes in rare vintages
By Joey Asher

If you're looking for a nice gift for a wine lover this holiday season, you might visit Blacksmith Wines in Nelsonville, where you can buy a case of three bottles of red burgundy from the Romanée-Conti vineyard in France.

The price: $87,500.

The pricey bottles reside in the old H.D. Champlin & Son Horseshoeing and Wagon-making shop on Main Street. The weathered red brick building is on the National Register of Historic Places but passersby will see nothing indicating that it houses a wine shop.

Inside is an intriguing place — more musty warehouse than store. Wine cases are stacked in the back. A dusty old forge sits near the front counter. Most business is conducted by appointment or online. While some bottles go for under $50, the average is $250.

Blacksmith is "hiding in plain sight," said Mark Mancinelli, the former Garrison resident who owns and runs the store from his home in Bologna, Italy.

"It may sound ludicrous that we have wines that cost $30,000 a bottle," he said. "But that's a function of the market. We have this enormous trove of rare, vintage wines that are priced less than almost anybody in the United States."

Blacksmith's clients represent a broad range of wine lovers, but many of them view buying fine wines as "asset allocation," said Mancinelli. "Am I going to allocate money to this, to the stock market, the art market or to something else?" he said.

Those clients often allot $40,000 to $80,000 a year for "buy programs" with a long-term goal of building a million-dollar cellar, Mancinelli said.

One client, Carl Nelson, of Garrison, sees Mancinelli as both friend and consultant. Mancinelli enrolled him in a program with Bordeaux and Burgundies, said Nelson, who typically spends $100 to $200 a bottle and buys 150 to 200 bottles a year to stock his 2,000-bottle cellar.

Mancinelli has "helped me buy great vintages of cabs [cabernets], and we've gone after some really great old-school Italian and French wines," said Nelson.

Mancinelli caught the bug while attending the Rochester Institute of Technology, where he drank lots of "cheap" wine, he said. "Then I had some Syrah [a variety of grape] called Qupe from California and I thought: 'This is much better than the other stuff. Why is that?'

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

COMMUNITY
SAT 25
Pottery Show & Sale
GARRISON
10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Garrison Art Center
23 Garrison’s Landing | 845-424-3960
garrisonartcenter.org

Work by more than 30 regional potters will be available, along with jewelry and art. Also SUN 26. Donations for the Putnam Community Action Partnership food pantry will be collected.

SAT 25
Holiday Gift Show & Sale
BEACON
Noon – 5 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | howlandculturalcenter.org

Find crafts, jewelry, ceramics and artwork by regional artisans at this annual sale. Weekends through Dec. 22.

SAT 25
Alumni Basketball Game
COLD SPRING
4 p.m. Holdale Gym
15 Craigside Drive | holdaleschool.org

Watch Haldane High School alumni compete after the varsity girls scrimmage at noon and the varsity boys scrimmage at 2 p.m. Cost: $5 ($2 students)

TUES 28
Breakfast Meeting
COLD SPRING
9 a.m. Magazzino Italian Art
2700 Route 9
coldspringsymchamber.org

The Chamber of Commerce’s monthly meeting will include a tour of the new pavilion and updates.

TUES 28
Red Cross Blood Drive
GARRISON
Noon – 5 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020
desmondfishlibrary.org

Schedule a time at redcrossblood.org or walk in. While supplies last, donors will receive a free pair of Elf socks.

THURS 30
Winter Glow Tree Lighting
GARRISON
5:30 p.m. Winter Hill | 20 Nazareth Way

The community tree lighting will happen at dusk. Enjoy hot drinks, too.

FRI 1
Holiday Tree Lighting
NELSONVILLE
6 p.m. Village Green Park
(across from 258 Main St.)
nelsonvilleny.gov

There will be carols, cocoa and cookies.

SAT 2
Annual Christmas Fair
BEACON
9 a.m. – 3 p.m. St. Joachim’s Church
(school gym)
51 Leonard St. | stjoachim-stjohn.org

Shop for holiday gifts, décor, jewelry and more. There will be raffles, food and crafts for children, too. Also SUN 3.

THURS & SCREEN
THURS 30
A Christmas Carol
POUGHKEEPSIE
7 p.m. Mahoney’s Irish Pub and Restaurant
35 Main St. | bannermancastle.org

Enjoy a 3-course meal and a performance of Dickens’ classic tale, performed by Theatre on the Road, at this Bannerman Castle fundraiser. Dress as a character and you may win a prize. Cost: $100 ($40 children)

THURS 30
Mining the Moon | Remembering Pina
BEACON
7 p.m. CineHub
20 W. Main St. | susanrosberg.com

The filmmaker and choreographer Susan Oshberg will screen 2 documentaries of dance performances. See Page 2. Cost: $20 suggested donation

FRI 1
A Christmas Carol
PUTNAM VALLEY
7:30 p.m. Tompkins Corners Cultural Center
729 Peekskill Hollow Road
tompkinscorners.org

Jonathan Kruk will portray more than 30 characters in his solo retelling of the classic Dickens tale. Cost: $20

SAT 2
Wizard of Oz Jr.
GARRISON
2 p.m. and 4 p.m.
5:30 p.m. Winter Hill | 20 Nazareth Way

The featured artists are Christine Dubois, Debussy and Buendia.

SUN 3
Morocco: Timeless Beauty
CROTON-ON-HUDSON
11 a.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040
butterfieldlibrary.org

Natala Shaginian will discuss an approach to health and wellness to help you flourish. Join via Zoom or in-person. Registration required.

TUES 28
Fossils
GARRISON
3:30 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020
desmondfishlibrary.org

Learn how fossils are recovered and make some of your own during this family science night. Registration required.

THURS 30
Earring Making
GARRISON
11 a.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040
butterfieldlibrary.org

Joan Lloyd will teach everyone how to make personalized beaded earrings. Participants can also make masks to donate to a women’s shelter. Registration required.

FRI 1
Teen Movie Night
COLD SPRING
6 p.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040
butterfieldlibrary.org

Students in grades 6 and up can watch Elf! Registration required.

KIDS & FAMILY
SAT 25
Twilight Tour
GARRISON
4 – 7 p.m. Boscobel
1601 Route 9D | 845-265-3638
boscobel.org

The Filmmaker and choreographer Susan Osberg will make dinosaur masks and headbands and then show off your creations. Registration required.

SAT 2
Earring Making
GARRISON
11 a.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040
butterfieldlibrary.org

The Parcel Flower Co. will teach participants how to make holiday décor with dried flowers, foraged materials and evergreens. Cost: $80

TUES 28
Dino Craft and Mini Parade
GARRISON
3:30 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020
desmondfishlibrary.org

Make dinosaur masks and headbands and then show off your creations. Registration required.

TUES 30
Victorian Tea Party
COLD SPRING
3:15 p.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040
butterfieldlibrary.org

Join Julia Butterfield would have done and enjoy a tea party and make Victorian-era crafts. Registration required.

MUSIC
SAT 25
Doansburg Chamber Ensemble
COLD SPRING
7 p.m. St. Mary’s Church
1 Chestnut St.
doansburgchamberensemble.org

The featured artists are Christine Smith (flute), Joy Plaisted (harp) and Ina Libera (viola). The program will include works by Diabelli, Dubois, Debussy and Buendia. Cost: $37 ($34 seniors, students)

Support our nonprofit. Become a member!
SAT 25
**The Best of the '70s**
**BEACON**
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. | 845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
Eric Herbst and Dizzyfish will play timeless songs from the decade. Cost: $30 ($35 door)

SAT 25
**The Fixx**
**PEEKSKILL**
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley 1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039 | paramounthudsonvalley.com
The organist known for her holiday-themed music. Cost: $20

WED 29
**That's All Folk**
**BEACON**
7 p.m. Howland Cultural Center 477 Main St. | howlandculturalcenter.org
Gedney, of Open Book, will play a solo set. Cost: $25 ($30 door)

FRI 1
**Holiday Fanfares**
**BEACON**
7:30 p.m. St. Joachim’s Church 51 Leonard St. | putnamchorale.org
The Putnam Chorale will perform songs by John Rutter, Daniel Pinkham and Gwyneth Walker. See Page 14. Cost: $25 ($20 seniors, free for ages 12 and younger)

FRI 1
**Sylvia Cuenca**
**BREWSTER**
7:30 p.m. Uncle Cheef 988 NY-22 Unit C | unclecheef.com
The drummer and her band will play jazz sets at 7:30 and 9 p.m. Cost: $20

FRI 1
**Clare Maloney & The Great Adventure**
**BEACON**
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. | 845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The multi-instrumentalist and her band will play music from their release, Every Five Seconds. Cost: $20 ($25 door)

SAT 2
**Jazz For The Season**
**COLD SPRING**
2 p.m. St. Mary’s Church 1 Chestnut St. | stmaryscoldspring.com
Art Labriola (piano), Lew Scott (bass) and Mike LaRocco (drums) will play jazz favorites and holiday songs. Free, donations accepted

SAT 2
**Akiko Tsuruga**
**BREWSTER**
7:30 p.m. Uncle Cheef 988 NY-22 Unit C | unclecheef.com
The organist known for her release Sweet and Funky will play with her band. Cost: $20

SAT 2
**Molly Mason and Jay Ungar with Mike & Ruthy**
**BEACON**
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. | 845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The family band will play holiday-themed American roots music. Cost: $25 ($40 door)

SAT 2
**Scott Bradlee’s Postmodern Jukebox**
**PEEKSKILL**
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley 1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039 | paramounthudsonvalley.com
As part of its Life In The Past Lane tour, the band will play covers of American music from doo-wop to soul to country. Cost: $47 to $79

SAT 2
**The Return of the Year-End Hootenanny**
**BEACON**
7:30 p.m. Uncle Cheef 988 NY-22 Unit C | unclecheef.com
Two tribute bands will seek to settle the question about which is the greatest rock band. Cost: $40 to $70

SUN 3
**Dream Choir**
**PUTNAM VALLEY**
7:30 p.m. Tompkins Corners Cultural Center 729 PEEKSKILL Hollow Road | tompkinscorners.org
The community chorus directed by Cat Guthrie and Tom McCoy will sing “happy”-themed songs. Cost: $10

SUN 3
**Beatles vs. Stones: A Musical Showdown**
**PEEKSKILL**
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley 1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039 | paramounthudsonvalley.com
Two tribute bands will seek to settle the question about which is the greatest rock band. Cost: $40 to $70

**CIVIC**
MON 27
**Dana Levenberg Office Hours**
**COLD SPRING**
1 – 4 p.m. Village Hall | 85 Main St. | nyassembly.gov/mem/Dana-Levenberg
The Assembly member’s staff will be available to meet with constituents and help with issues.

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

**The Return of the Year-End Hootenanny, Dec. 2**

**Village of Cold Spring Holiday Tree Lighting**
The Village of Cold Spring Recreation Commission invites you to this year’s holiday tree lighting ceremony Saturday, Dec. 2nd @ 4pm (Rain/snow date: 12/3 @ 4pm)
Santa and Mrs. Claus will be arriving by fire truck, courtesy of the Cold Spring Fire Company. Refreshments provided by the Hudson House. Caroling by the Hudson Highlands Girl Scouts. See you at the bandstand!
Interview With a Maestro

By Leonard Sparks

Jason Tramm became conductor of the Putnam Chorale in July. The veteran music director serves as associate professor and director of choral activities at Seton Hall University, where he leads the university’s chorus, chamber choir and orchestra. He will lead the chorale in two upcoming holiday performances in Beacon and Brewster.

When did your interest in music and singing begin?

I grew up in Rockland County and was a singer since before I can remember. At 5 years old, I was a soloist for my local church in West Nyack. For me, it was just like breathing. It’s never been a choice for me. I’ve always been a musician, and always knew I wanted to be in music. I gravitated to conducting when I was studying for my master’s degree [at the University of Hartford]. Really, it’s the same thing — it’s expression, connecting with other people and moving hearts.

Why the switch to conducting?

I was a high school teacher in New Jersey and I knew that something was missing. I conducted when I was teaching, but never really thought of it as a career option. One day I just decided it was something I had to do. I founded a summer festival with a 60-voice chorus and that was a huge success. I have a friend from the Metropolitan Opera who sang. That concert led me to do my doctorate at Rutgers on a full scholarship.

What is the conductor’s role?

If you have a coach in football, it’s something-like that. It’s also like the captain of a ship. Most of my job as conductor is spent by myself at 3 in the morning studying music. What the audience sees is the tip of the iceberg; the rest is below the waves — picking the music, selecting the rehearsal plan. I tell my students at Seton Hall that it’s like an electrical wire that goes from the composer’s intentions to the audience. That’s the conductor.

Is conducting an orchestra different from leading a chorale?

They need different things. In a choral setting, you have a whole semester to work on a project. In a symphony you usually only have three rehearsals and it’s a quick turnaround most of the time. We really spend the time with the chorale. We mold the sound, the vowels, the way that the choir speaks, and it’s a process that takes months. We get to know each other and it’s really a rewarding thing. It feels like home.

What’s special about chorales?

It’s a beautiful thing; it’s a unique alchemy. We’re greater than the sum of our parts. We get together and make special music happen. The groups I lead tend to focus on the master-works. So we’re taking this 400 years of choral repertoire and digging in deep.

What attracted you to the Putnam Chorale?

I knew some of the members through one of my other choruses, the Taghkanic Chorale, and they were telling me about this group. I did my research and it seemed like a great group of people who really have a commitment to making fine music. There’s a great mix of people in this group, and almost every group. There’s a mixture of professional music teachers who have musical backgrounds and degrees in music. There are also people who just love to sing. They represent every possible career and background, but what unifies them is their love of music.

What can audiences expect from the upcoming performances in Beacon and Brewster?

I selected a really high-octane program with brass and organ and percussion. There’s going to be thrilling fanfares and some really interesting and exciting music.

Performances will be held on Friday, Dec. 1 at 7:30 p.m. at the Church of St. Joachim at 51 Leonard St. in Beacon and on Sunday, Dec. 3 at 3 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 83 Main St. in Brewster. Tickets are $25 for adults, $20 for seniors, and free for children 12 and under. Visit putnamchorale.org.

Most of my job as conductor is spent by myself at 3 in the morning studying music.
Roots and Shoots

Gifts for Gardeners

By Pamela Doan

Skip the gloves and trowel. Every gardener already has enough supplies. To delight a gardener friend with a useful gift, check out some of these ideas, instead.

Rain gauge

My rain gauge is very simple and tops out at 6 inches. It’s stuck into a flower pot on the patio and it’s an easy way to keep track of watering needs. My guide is: less than an inch in a week and new transplants will probably need supplemental water. Gauges come in many sizes and price points.

If you want to take a major step up, go for Productive Alternatives’ Stratus rain gauge. It meets the standards of the National Weather Service, is precise and measures up to 11 inches at a time, which is useful given the kinds of storms we’ve had. Prepare to amaze your friends with highly specific data about precipitation.

productivealternatives.org

Pollinator plants

For a gardener who is ready to transform the yard into an ecological paradise, Prairie Moon’s Pollinator Introduction Kit has all the important elements. The seed mix for locations that get full and partial sun will cover up to 1,000 square feet and features a diverse range of plants that are native and will grow in our hardiness zone. Instructions for site preparation and sowing are included.

The kit also includes a nesting shelter for native bees, a guide about how plants interact with and support insects, and a “Prairie in Progress” sign to share your intentions.

If that is too big of a step for you, the Wild Seed Project also has seed mixes with species that are easy to get started. For example, the sunny/dry mix includes black-eyed Susans, butterfly weed, foglove beardtongue, smooth blue aster, spotted bee balm and an aster. Each will establish quickly and in general conditions without much fuss, and the plants will bloom from spring through the fall.

prairiemoon.com/pollinator-introduction-kit.html

shop.wildseedproject.net

Brave the Wild River: The Untold Story of Two Women Who Mapped the Botany of the Grand Canyon

In the 1930s, when this story by author Melissa L. Sevigny begins, traveling the Colorado River by boat for hundreds of miles through the Grand Canyon was like taking a trip into space in 2023. Few people had tried it (and fewer survived). When botanists Elizada Clover and Lois Jetter embarked on their six-week endeavor to collect and categorize plants, the nation’s media was riveted and the odds were against them.

This story riveted me, too, and spans water rights in the West, development, women’s achievements and challenges in science, while also being an adventure story about plants. Gardeners (and all of those other people who aren’t gardeners) can take a vicarious journey this winter. Be prepared to want to head off to Arizona after reading this.

melissasevigny.com/books/brave-the-wild-river

Fedco Coloring Book and Art

Brought to you by the makers of my favorite seed catalog, this 26-page coloring book includes illustrations from past year's catalogs. Fedco uses botanical art from old seed companies intermixed with staff drawings throughout its black-and-white seed, tree and bulb catalogs.

Make them your own by coloring and framing them. There are also prints of cover art available.

fedcoseeds.com/ogs/fedco-coloring-book-9461

Flower press

This wood press comes with supplies to dry and flatten favorite blooms and foliage to create your own dried flower displays. They could become a collage of seasonal highlights from the yard or a hike.

gardeners.com/buy/heirloom-flower-press/8597440.html

Bird bath

I’ve come to accept that I can’t have a bird feeder without attracting other wildlife, specifically bears. The winters have been too uneven and hibernation isn’t happening consistently. To avoid creating negative interactions with bears, I’m going with a birdbath, instead. It’s a way to enjoy closeups and still provide a service. The Dances With Stone carved rock birdbaths are appealing and easy to maintain.

www.etsy.com/shop/DancesWithStone

Wine Store (from Page 11)

To fill the void, in 2016 he started Blacksmith, buying from distributors, dealers and private collectors. As the son of a Newburgh postman, Mancinelli knows many see wine collecting as elitist. “If people want to pursue the greatest wines in the world at any cost, that’s their business,” said Mancinelli, who now runs an investment fund. “You become out of control,” said Mancinelli, who now owns a 2,000-bottle, walk-in cellar.

I never forget the simple things. It’s just fermented grape juice.

~Mark Mancinelli

“The pathology of the collector is totally out of control,” said Mancinelli, who now runs an investment fund. “You become obsessed with having the most accurate representative wine from every region.”

For example, he once became fixated on a 1978 Barolo called Colina Riondo de Serralunga Speciale, which goes for $3,500. “Does anybody need that? No,” he said. “But if you’re obsessed?”

After moving to Garrison in 2010, his wife wondered “how I could ever need another expensive bottle of wine when you have a collection of over 3,000 bottles,” said Mancinelli. So, in 2013, he stopped collecting, only to feel like “I had lost a good friend.”

To fill the void, in 2016 he started Blacksmith, buying from distributors, dealers and private collectors. As the son of a Newburgh postman, Mancinelli knows many see wine collecting as elitist. “If people want to pursue the greatest wines in the world at any cost, that’s their business,” said Mancinelli, who moved to Bologna with his family last year. “But I never forget the simple things. It’s just fermented grape juice.”

Blacksmith Wines is open by appointment from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 386 Main St. in Nelsonville. Call 845-666-7260 or visit blacksmithfinewines.com.

WANTED

VOLUNTEER DRIVERS NEEDED IN PHILIPSTOWN/COLD SPRING

Putnam County OSR and the Putnam SeniorCorps Volunteer Program needs your help in the Philipstown/Cold Spring area. If you are over 60 and enjoy driving, Putnam SeniorCorps is looking for volunteers to drive seniors to local doctor appointments.

As a volunteer driver in Philipstown/Cold Spring, you will pick up a county car or, if needed, drive to local doctor appointments and return the County car back to the Friendship Center. The driver transports the client to and from their appointment and returns the County car back to the Friendship Center location. Trip times vary and are extremely flexible based on your availability.

You will be inspired to help others after just one trip! Please contact Irene Pawliczko of Putnam SeniorCorps at (845)808-1734 to volunteer.
Sweet (Potato) Talk

By Celia Barbour

In the past three days, I’ve had three separate conversations about sweet potatoes. I don’t know if there is an upper limit on how many times sensible people ought to discuss these roots; whatever it is, I don’t feel that I have come close.

No shade. This is not because sweet potatoes themselves are especially interesting. They have a typical New World backstory: Originally from northern South America, they were brought to Europe by Columbus and within a century had become a staple vegetable in China and the Philippines.

Botanically they are roots, not tubers. Dietetically, they are better for your blood sugar than regular potatoes. Economically, they are the seventh-most-important agricultural crop in the world, which, I admit, is kind of surprising.

But it’s conversationally that they really shine. No, not because they can talk, but because they are so comforting to talk about. And it takes a human being with a memory rich in years to do them justice.

You know how in literature, there are only a handful of basic plots — rags to riches, hero’s journey, confronting the beast, etc.? Well, food lore also has its signature plots, and the one that sweet potatoes most often turn up in is structured like this: I used to hate X because it was always made with Y, but then I tried it Z-style and now I love X! It never gets old.

Today’s Y was crushed pineapple and marshmallows. Yesterday’s was canned cherries. In both cases, Z — the hero who saved the day — was plain old roasting, with olive oil, salt, and pepper; but a few days ago, the heroic Z was microwaving.

Why do I love these little dramas so much? I suppose because they remind me of one of the great blessings of food: No matter how well you think you know it, food can still surprise you.

You don’t even need to spend your life sampling new cuisines and ingredients to experience this phenomenon. You can simply revisit familiar dishes with a fresh eye or a new twist, or you can revive old ones you’d forgotten you once loved. And even the most routine recipe never turns out the same way twice, because you’re a person, not a machine. Cooking is a never-ending journey into the familiar.

So it makes sense that this week’s recipe is a rethink of three of my favorite fall dishes, recipes I’ve been making for years (all three have appeared in this column). I spend a lot of my downtime imagining new recipes, and that’s how this one came to life, as I contemplated various tweaks and adjustments. Then, because I almost like dried cranberries, I marinated some in sherry vinegar and added them to the mix.

Then I went out on a walk and talked about it with one of my favorite people in the whole world. Which reminded me of something else I’d almost forgotten: That the table isn’t the only place you can connect with people you love over food.

Sweet Potatoes with Candied Pepitas and Pickled Cranberries

This recipe works well at room temperature, and can be served with or without the kale.

- ½ teaspoon cumin
- ¼ teaspoon each cayenne, smoked paprika and cinnamon
- 2 pounds sweet potatoes (see note 1)
- Olive oil
- Salt & pepper
- ½ cup pepitas (pumpkin seeds)
- 2 teaspoons butter
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 3 tablespoons sherry vinegar
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- ½ small shallot, thinly sliced

Kale salad, for serving (see note 2)

Heat oven to 400. Line a baking sheet with parchment or a nonstick pad.

In a small bowl, combine the cumin, cayenne, cinnamon and smoked paprika; divide into 2 portions and set aside.

Scrub the sweet potatoes and trim off any soft spots. Cut into ½-inch chunks.

To a medium bowl and toss with just enough olive oil to coat, plus salt, pepper and half the spice mixture. Spread on the prepared baking sheet and place in the oven. Roast 25-30 minutes, rotating pan halfway through.

Meanwhile, in a small skillet over a medium flame, heat the butter. When it foams, add the pepitas and sugar. Toss to coat, then cook about 1 minute. Add the other half of the spice mixture and continue to cook until the pepitas start to pop and turn light gold in places, watching carefully, about 1 minute more. Transfer to a plate to let cool. You’ll need about half of these for the salad; save the rest in an airtight container and use for snacking!

Wipe out the skillet, add the sherry vinegar and cranberries, and heat to a simmer for about 30 seconds then remove from heat and add the sliced shallot and a pinch of salt and pepper. Toss well and set aside.

When the sweet potatoes are tender and golden brown, remove from oven and allow to cool slightly. Toss with the cranberry mixture and a generous drizzle of olive oil. Mix with the pepitas just before serving, over kale salad if desired.

Note 1: I like this recipe best with Japanese sweet potatoes, which have a firmer texture and a less-sweet flavor than traditional sweet potatoes but look best with a combination. Note that you might need to roast the varieties separately, as the orange ones cook slightly faster.

Note 2: For the kale salad, remove the ribs from a bunch of kale. Slice thinly crosswise and toss with olive oil, salt and pepper. Set aside, tossing from time to time, to soften the kale. Before serving, taste a few shreds and add a little more vinegar or lemon juice if needed.
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Firefighters Answer the Recruiting Call

By Michael Turton

Members of Philipstown's four fire departments are used to answering the call to help people in need, but it usually involves a fire, motor vehicle accident or mountain rescue.

On Nov. 12, the Cold Spring, Continental Village, Garrison and North Highlands volunteer fire companies answered a call to Surprise Lake Camp, but this time it was to meet an acute need of their own — new volunteers.

They gathered for a photo shoot led by Jay Brenner, a retired professional photographer and member of the Garrison Fire Company. Brenner’s photos will be used by a recruitment organization recently formed by the four companies and appear on its new website, philipstownfire.org.

“We had great individual photos but needed shots of a cross section of firefighters and apparatus from all four fire companies,” Aaron Leonard, president of the Cold Spring Fire Company said, adding that the photo shoot underlined their mutual need for new volunteers.

Photos by M. Turton
By Michael Turton

“It’s just a beautiful car, great style; those were good years,” Garrison resident Jack Villetto said when asked what he likes most about the 1939 Ford De Luxe coupe he acquired less than a month ago.

The restoration company Hot Rods and Custom Stuff agrees.

“The 1939 Ford … represents what may be considered the pinnacle of ‘art deco’ design applied to the automobile … characterized by its symmetry, elegance, glamour, functionality and modernity,” the California-based car experts wrote on their website.

Friendship was also a factor in Villetto’s recent acquisition.

“A good friend of mine in Hopewell [Junction] gave it to me,” he said. That’s a good friend indeed, not to mention a good price.

Other than receiving a new layer of glossy black paint courtesy of its previous owner, everything on the car is original, Villetto said, including the corduroy-fabric, single-bench seat. He is only the third owner; the odometer reads just 20,000 miles.

The car has standard features for the 1930s, such as a push-button starter, crank windows and a front windshield that tilts outward to improve ventilation. Another standard feature apparently made it a popular choice for bootleggers back in the day: two large luggage compartments — the trunk and an additional space accessed by lifting the back of the seat.

Front and rear bumperettes, AM radio, fender skirts, fog lamps and a locking gas cap were other options available back then but not included on Villetto’s car.

A 221-cubic-inch, straight eight-cylinder engine provides about 90 horsepower. Equipped with a three-speed manual floor shifter, the coupe could reach 120 miles an hour out of the factory.

“When you go 50 miles an hour in it, you know you’re doing 50; I wouldn’t take it over that!” Villetto said. “It’s nice to drive but they don’t stop very well, and they float a bit.”

Asked about gas mileage he said only: “Not good; it has a tiny single carburetor.”

Gas was 10 cents a gallon in 1939 ($2.20 in 2023).

Ford introduced hydraulic brakes in 1939, a feature both Chrysler and General Motors had added years prior. By 1940, bulb and reflector lamps had given way to sealed-beam headlights.

Villetto, who also owns a 1939 Ford Standard, said he would not change anything about his De Luxe. “I love it,” he said, adding that he has no plans to enter it in car shows.

The Specs

Manufactured: Dearborn, Michigan
Production years: 1937-1940
Model: Two-door coupe
Coupe production: 37,326 units
Coupe convertible: 10,422 units
Engine: 221-cubic-inch V8
Horsepower: 90
Transmission: Three-speed floor manual shifter
Cost: $790 ($17,482 in 2023)
Top Speed: 120 mph

Cold Spring Aglow

An evening of community, candle light and supporting local

FRIDAY DEC. 8 | 4-8 PM

We invite the community to participate in the 2023 Aglow community cause benefiting the Philipstown Behavioral Health Hub. Do you have a special relative you wish to memorialize—a friend or significant organization to honor? Let each candle glow in tribute.

To donate and make a tribute go to coldspringnychamber.com/aglow
Getting it right matters | fiscal responsibility

✓ No local tax dollars are being used to build, maintain, or operate the Fjord Trail.
Neither the building of the Fjord Trail, nor its maintenance and operation, will impact the municipal budgets of Cold Spring, Philipstown, Fishkill, or Beacon.

✓ HHFT has secured all funds necessary to complete the Breakneck Connector & Bridge phase of the project and is successfully fundraising for future phases.
Though the actual capital cost of future phases can only be determined once the environmental review process is complete, the project is approved, and planning progresses beyond the conceptual design stage, HHFT has already secured pledges and contributions for these future stages.

✓ HHFT will be responsible for its own operating and maintenance budget.
HHFT’s fundraising sources will include: contributions from private donors and foundations; grants; special events; and operating revenue, including parking fees and programming at our visitor center.

✓ The Fjord Trail is a public-private partnership based on a well-tested model.
HHFT will be responsible for maintaining and operating the trail on behalf of New York State, which will own it. This partnership will mobilize philanthropic capital and private sector management, while leaving ownership and ultimate authority in State hands. HHFT is subject to extensive financial reporting to OPRHP, which monitors its partners’ financial capacity to meet their obligations. Our financial statements and annual tax returns are also available to the public.

✓ HHFT has established an endowment-type reserve fund to ensure we meet our obligations to maintain and operate the Fjord Trail.
HHFT has already successfully raised millions of dollars in contributions from multiple sources to seed this operating reserve, which will continue to scale up as each phase of the Fjord Trail is completed.

✓ Project area communities have a lot to gain.
The trail will be a new, convenient recreational resource for walkers, runners, cyclists, and residents of all ages and abilities to enjoy seven days a week. Additional benefits to Cold Spring residents could include infrastructure improvements in the lower village and along Fair Street, wayfinding signage, and more public restrooms and maintenance of Dockside Park, if Dockside is selected and approved as one of the six main entry points.

Want to learn more or share your ideas for the trail?

Visit PhilipstownAdvocatesForTrails.com
Join the grassroots group fostering collaborative conversation about how the Fjord Trail can best serve our community.

Come to this Sunday’s Afternoon Chat:
November 26 from 2-4 PM at Hubbard Lodge
Email us: info@hhft.org
Visit: hhft.org

Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail

Facebook: HudsonFjord
Instagram: fjord_trail
Joe Stubblefield Jr. (1971-2023)

Joe Lavant “Stubs” Stubblefield Jr., 52, died unexpectedly on Nov. 11. He was born to Joe and Willene Stubblefield on Aug. 29, 1971, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he and his sister, Keizia, were raised until they moved to New York in 1988. Joe graduated from Peekskill High School at the age of 17.

Joe is survived by his mother, Willene Stubblefield; his sister, Keizia Tamez; his seven sons, Jordyn Macaluso-Stubblefield (24), Justyn Stubblefield (18), twins Sean and Erik Stubblefield (17), Kaiedy Stubblefield (8), Joe Stubblefield III (7) and Landon Stubblefield (3); and many cousins, aunts, uncles and nephews. Joe was predeceased by his father, Joe L. Stubblefield Sr.

“Hero” is an understatement for what he has been to his mother. Joe enjoyed providing for his family and was always looking for more ways to help others. He loved a good joke yet was serious when it came to work. Joe held many jobs, from electric-stair installer to semiconductor technician to loading engineer to making truck deliveries — and so many more.

He had many titles in his life, but his favorite role was that of a father. Joe and his sons had an unbreakable bond. His love, support and encouragement is something that cannot be replaced. He was their No. 1 support and encouragement is something that cannot be replaced. He was their No. 1

His family will receive friends on Saturday (Nov. 25) from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Salem Tabernacle Church, 7 Delavan Ave. in Beacon, where a Celebration of His Life service will be held at 11 a.m. A private cremation will follow, and interment will be at the discretion of his family.

Shirley Trimble (1939-2023)

Shirley M. Trimble, 83, a lifelong area resident, passed away at home surrounded by her loving family on Nov. 8.

Daughter of the late Harold and Marie Fleming (Fleming) Niver, she was born in Beacon on Dec. 20, 1939. Shirley was a founding member of the Cold Spring Boat Club as well as a founding member of the Ladies Auxiliary of the North Highlands Fire Department.

She was an avid reader who loved to cook and bake and host her family on weekends and during the holidays. Her other hobbies included boating, swimming and going shopping. More than anything else, Shirley cherished spending time with her family.

On June 1, 1957, she married Kenneth A. Trimble Jr. They lived on the family’s farm and during the holidays. Her other hobbies included boating, swimming and going shopping. More than anything else, Shirley cherished spending time with her family.


Other Recent Deaths

Philipsburg
Mary Ellen De Felice, 80
Elle Freda, 98
Beacon
Anne Gentile, 72
Betty Kilbride, 84

Paid Notice

Notice is hereby given that a license, number NA-0340-23-246457 for a Beer, Wine, Cider and Liquor has been applied for by Magazzino Italian Art Foundation to sell Beer, Wine, Cider and Liquor to内的 establishment under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 2700 Route 9 Cold Spring NY 10516 Town of Philipsburg on premises consumption. Magazzino Italian Art Foundation d/b/a Magazzino Italian Art Foundation

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The Blue Devils and tight end Jake Thomas proved too elusive to stop against Burke Catholic.

**Championship (from Page 24)**

On the second play of Haldane’s first drive after the half, Brody Corless burst through a defensive hole for a 61-yard gain. A few plays later, Giachinta worked his magic and ran it 58 yards to the Haldane 1. On the next play, the Eagles punched it in for a touchdown, cutting the lead to 29-12.

In the fourth quarter, Giachinta completed his hat trick by scoring his third touchdown of the game. But the Eagles answered immediately, as quarterback Rory Farrell lofted the ball downfield to a wide-open Benzinger, who ran it 58 yards to the Haldane 1. On the next play, the Blue Devils proved too elusive to stop against Burke Catholic’s defenders for a 22-yard touchdown.

After another two-point conversion, the Eagles ran it 58 yards to the Haldane 1. On the next down, cutting the lead to 29-12.

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Puzzles

ACROSS
1. Squid squirt
4. Beloved
8. “Ditto”
12. The Simpsons barkeep
13. Killer whale
14. Director Kazan
15. Get older
16. Feel elated
18. Two-dot punctuation mark
20. Triage ctrs.
21. Calendar entry (Abbr.)
24. Smiles broadly
28. Flight costs
32. “Phooey!”
33. Hosp. area
34. Rich cake
36. Quarterback Manning
37. Arrears
39. NPR show hosted by Terry Gross
41. Thoreau piece
43. Gym site, for short
44. Promptly
46. Film trophy
50. Rock fan’s imaginary instrument
55. Employ
56. Satan’s purchase
57. Separate
58. Crib
59. Ginormous
60. Cookware
61. Newt

DOWN
1. Apple computer
2. NASA scrub
3. Memorized
5. Historic period
6. Oft-torn knee part, for shot
7. Yard tool
8. Had a hunch
9. Carte lead-in
10. Roman 1002
11. Corn spike
17. Sphere
19. Klutz
22. Campus VIP
23. Towel material
25. Vicinity
26. Niger’s neighbor
27. Swizzle
28. Staffer
29. Frozen desserts
30. Abrades
31. Goblet feature
33. Hosp. area
34. Rich cake
36. Quarterback Manning
37. Arrears
39. NPR show hosted by Terry Gross
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60. Cookware
61. Newt

SudoCurrent

WordLadder
Can you go from OWNED to ASHES in 6 words? Change one letter for each rung in the ladder.

OWNED

ASHES

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MicroCrossWord

ACROSS
1. Work on a manuscript
5. R&B singer Hendryx
6. Mary’s sister on Downton Abbey
7. ____ diet
8. Fashion sense

DOWN
1. Conclude by
2. Lacy furniture mat
3. Brand of chips?
4. Sierra Nevada lake
6. Mini-albums, briefly

Answers for Nov. 17 Puzzles

For interactive sudoku and crossword answers, see highlandscurrent.org/puzzles.
Advances to state semifinals against Stillwater

By Jacob Aframian

Riding high after their sectional win over rival Tuckahoe, the Haldane Blue Devils beat Section IX winners Burke Catholic, 37-19, to take the Class D Regional Championship on Nov. 17 in an emotional game overshadowed by off-the-field tragedy.

A head-on crash on Route 9 in Philipstown on Nov. 11 killed Joe Stubblefield, the father of Haldane linebacker and kicker/punter Erik Stubblefield. The team dedicated Friday’s win to his memory.

“All those guys have been friends for a very long time, and they look out for one another and support one another,” said Haldane Coach Ryan McConville.

Stubblefield walked to his mother, Dana Heffernan, after the win and shared an emotional embrace. Joe Stubblefield was known to be loud and proud when watching his son play. “He would be ecstatic right now,” Heffernan said. Erik added: “I would always try to show out for him. And now I’m still doing that because I know he’s watching me.”

If his father had been there, Erik Stubblefield said he would “give him a big hug and tell him I love him.”

Haldane dedicated its win over Burke Catholic to the memory of Joe Stubblefield, who was killed in a car crash in Philipstown on Nov. 11 and is the father of linebacker and kicker Erik Stubblefield (bottom left in gray hoodie).

On the next possession, however, with 5:33 left in the quarter, Stubblefield suffered an injury in the middle of an Eagles drive when another player stepped on his ankle. Stubblefield was able to hop off the field with the help of McConville and team trainer Meghan Crowe but would not return to the game. “It’s hurting a lot, but I’m going to ice it as much as possible and make myself ready for the next game,” he said afterward.

The Blue Devils soon found the end zone again as running back Evan Giachinta muscled his way past Eagles defenders for a touchdown from 2 yards out. With Stubblefield unable to kick the extra point, Haldane went for the two-point conversion and got it, upping their lead to 15-0 with 9:57 left in the second quarter.

Burke Catholic looked to respond. Needing only a yard on a fourth-and-1 from the Haldane 19, a bad snap by the Eagles allowed Haldane’s Michael Murray to recover a fumble. A couple of minutes later, Van Tassel returned the favor, with the quarterback’s fumble giving Burke Catholic the ball around the Haldane 33.

With 1:49 left on a third-and-1 from the Blue Devils’ 24, Liam Benzinger broke a tackle and scampered in for a Burke Catholic touchdown. The Eagles failed on the two-point conversion, leaving the score 15-6 at the half.

(Continued on Page 22)