

The HIGHLANDS Current

DECEMBER 29, 2023

NYPA Newspaper of the Year

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The Sports Bra Project
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Affordable Housing — in the Backyard

Beacon residents find benefits in 'accessory dwelling units'

By Leonard Sparks

Stella Hlad's search for a condominium to buy in Beacon, to be closer to her son, Scott Ramsey, led to a frustrating reality.

Beacon's real estate market, with some condos selling for more than \$1 million and the average sales price for a home at \$525,000 in November, represented an unscalable wall for her, even with \$250,000 to spend.

"There's no way we could have purchased a home for her in town," said Ramsey.

So, they built one in the backyard.

On a recent Monday, Stella showed off the features of her 450-square-foot "tiny house," built behind the Walnut Avenue home of Ramsey, and his partner, Brian Donnelly. Under a slanted cantilevered roof, and behind corner windows, Stella's new refuge offers a bedroom, bath, kitchen and living room, hallways wide enough for a wheelchair, and a



Stella Hlad's new digs are a "tiny house" built in the backyard of her son's home.

Photo by L. Sparks

launching pad for her busy social life.

"I love Beacon," she said. "I just feel like the luckiest person to have landed here."

In a city where residential construction is dominated by high-priced apartments and condominiums, a few homeowners are choosing to build accessory dwelling units (ADU) like Hlad's as housing for relatives or income-producing apartments.

About 30 units had been developed

before September 2022, when the Beacon City Council voted to amend the zoning code to streamline the process for building ADUs between 200 and 1,000 square feet. The Building Department issued permits for four ADUs in 2022, and one this year, said City Administrator Chris White.

With last year's changes, Beacon allows one ADU per single-family lot and requires

(Continued on Page 17)

2023, Updated

With 2024 fast approaching, our reporters caught up with and updated select stories from the past year.

JANUARY

Beacon homicides — Beacon began 2023 with two unsolved killings still under investigation. Rene Vivo, a 65-year-old veteran known as "Scout," was fatally stabbed near the intersection of South Brett and Main streets on Christmas Day 2021. On May 14, 2022, Lionell B. Pittman Jr., 32, was shot to death in a parking lot at the Forrestal Heights apartment complex on West Center Street.

Update: Det. Sgt. Jason Johnson said this week that both cases are still being investigated but could not comment further. According to the FBI, nationally only about 64 percent of murders and 53 percent of violent crimes are "cleared" in cities the size of Beacon.

Rebuilding after arson — After a single-room occupancy boardinghouse at 925 Wolcott Ave. was destroyed by fire on the morning of Jan. 3, police charged a former tenant, Brian P. Atkinson, with arson. He was sentenced in May to 4 to 12 years in state prison.

The property owner, Yeshia Berger, has sparred with the Zoning Board of Appeals over whether the house must be rebuilt as a single-family home, as required by zoning, or if he can rebuild the structure with nine apartments. Before the fire, Berger had received a permit from the Building Department to convert its 16 rooms to nine larger units but in July the ZBA upheld the building inspector's decision that Berger must rebuild in accordance with the zoning code. Berger then asked the board to grant him a variance to build the nine-unit building.

Update: Berger has asked the ZBA to consider either an "area" or "use" variance for his project. Based on comments from ZBA members, it appears the board in January will agree to consider Berger's

(Continued on Page 8)

Dutchess Wins Lawsuit Over Migrants

New York City gets six months to clear Poughkeepsie hotel

By Leonard Sparks

A state judge barred New York City from using Dutchess County's hotels to house migrants and gave the city six months to remove dozens of people staying at the Red Roof Inn on Route 9 in Poughkeepsie.

Judge Maria Rosa ruled on Dec. 13 that New York City's use of the hotel beginning in May turned it into a de facto shelter, which requires approval from the state Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance and submission of a security plan to the agency and Dutchess County.

(Continued on Page 17)

How They Voted

Governor signs round of bills passed by state legislators

By Chip Rowe

As of this week, Gov. Kathy Hochul has enacted 774 bills passed in the 2023-24 legislative session. Three bills await her signature and she has vetoed 114.

Below are summaries of select laws and the votes cast by Republican Rob Rolison

(whose Senate district includes the Highlands), Democrat Dana Levenberg (whose Assembly district includes Philipstown) and Democrat Jonathan Jacobson (whose Assembly district includes Beacon).

Election years

On Dec. 22, Hochul signed legislation that will move elections in towns such as Philipstown, villages such as Cold Spring and Nelsonville, and counties such as Dutchess — but not cities such as Beacon, where elections can only be changed through a constitutional amendment — to even-numbered years to align with state

(Continued on Page 7)



Rolison



Jacobson



Levenberg

5Q

FIVE QUESTIONS: ARYEH SIEGEL

By Leonard Sparks

Aryeh Siegel is a Beacon-based architect whose projects have included The Beacon theater, The Lofts at Beacon and The Roundhouse.

What drew you to architecture?

I was always interested in buildings. I started in college as a journalism major and didn't see that as something I wanted to continue. I took time off after the first year and worked on technical drafting for a friend's father, who is an architect. It clicked. I thought that architecture was a good combination of the practical, technical and artistic — a blend of things that I was interested in doing.

When did you move to Beacon?

It was 1999, from Brooklyn. My wife was pregnant, and it wasn't going to work with three humans in that small apartment. I read an article about Cold Spring so we came up here and started talking to real-estate agents. One suggested Beacon. Right after Dia:Beacon opened in 2003, a lot of people started coming up and looking at buildings on Main Street and the industrial buildings along Fishkill Creek. I think there was only one other architect, so I kept myself busy with renovations.



What projects have you worked on?

Most are Main Street projects, residential remodeling projects or industrial-conversion projects along the creek. When the Tallix Foundry moved across the river, I worked on the artist live/work lofts there. Then there's The Roundhouse, with the hotel and restaurant. I also worked on 1 East Main. There's a couple of buildings on Creek Drive: One [23-28 Creek Drive] was new construction and the other [Creek Drive Lofts] was a renovation. I'm working on a new construction at 536 Main St., on a lot that's been vacant for years.

Are there any features with Beacon's historic buildings that are unusual?

A lot of Main Street buildings are Victorian with a significant cornice at the top and vertical window openings on the storefront. There's an arched window detail

that a lot of people used, often a cap on vertically oriented windows and a minor cornice over a storefront. For the industrial buildings along the creek, they have similar details, less dressed up and repetitive. The Howland Center — that's a special one. They've managed to raise money to keep it up. The Roundhouse is interesting because it uses buildings on both sides of the creek and integrates it into a campus.

Do you prefer restoration or new construction?

New construction is a bit easier because you're not trying to weave something that's there with another use. But the puzzle of doing adaptive-reuse projects is also interesting; it's a different way to think about a building. It's more about, as much as possible, using what's there.

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Featuring Photographers:
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Pierce Johnston - William A. Loeb
Jane Soodalter - Sandra Beiltsa-Vazquez

Jan 12 - LIT LIT
Jan 13 - Westchester Jazz Alliance Quartet
Jan 14 - HCMC - Johnathan Biss - Piano
Jan 17 - Artichoke Presents Open Mic Night
Check our website + media for more events, info + tickets

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ON THE SPOT

By Michael Turton

What's one of your hopes for 2024?

To move somewhere new and really start my life.

Alex Laird, Beacon

That people consider what they have, appreciate it and help each other.

Debbie Darman, Philipstown

That everyone tries to listen to each other.

Tongji Philipqian, Beacon



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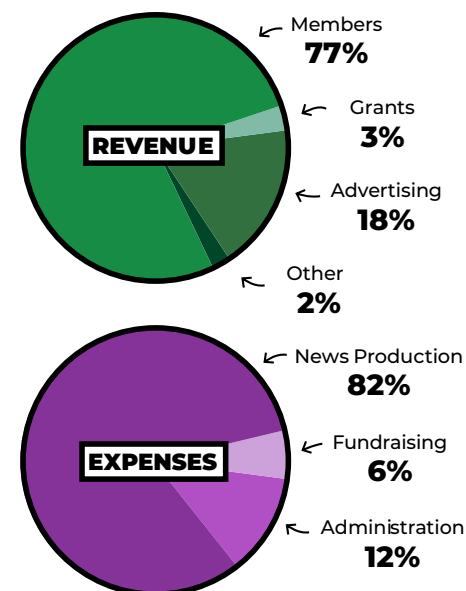


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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR (2021, 2022)

* New York Press Association, 2013 - 22



NNA* Winner: 109 Better Newspaper Contest Awards

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NYNPA* Winner: 28 Awards for Excellence

* New York News Publishers Association, 2017 - 22

Tell us what you think

The Current welcomes letters to the editor on its coverage and local issues. Submissions are selected by the editor (including from comments posted to our social media pages) to provide a variety of opinions and voices, and all are subject to editing for accuracy, clarity and length, and to remove personal attacks. Letters may be emailed to editor@highlandscurrent.org 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.

LETTERS AND COMMENTS

Fjord Trail design

Wow! How awesome would the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail be to those of us who love the outdoors but are not able to hike up the mountains ("Fjord Trail Unveils Preliminary Hudson Shoreline Design," Dec. 22). Imagine a holiday season with grandparents or children in strollers visiting, and being able to take a stroll along our beautiful river with them, without needing to leave town.

It's about time Cold Spring saw some of the investment other towns around us have seen, improving our quality of life, too. I'm looking forward to seeing neighbors and their families enjoying Cold Spring and the Hudson River once this is finally done.

Phil Mackintosh, *Cold Spring*

This is going to be great. We deserve access to the river.

Erin Giunta, *via Instagram*

Finally, some progress in the town that says "no" to any change.

Anthony Lise, *via Instagram*

The rendering of the shoreline trail showing a wide, on-grade trail is so misleading. Either HHFT plans to add massive amounts of fill to the river or to build the trail right next

to the railroad tracks, where trains barrel by at up to 80 mph. For a detailed view of the landscape along the proposed route and why what HHFT is proposing isn't feasible given the required 25-foot setback from the tracks, see protectthehighlands.org/shoreline.

Peter Henderson, *Cold Spring*

After taking a close look at the Protect the Highlands site, I am a little disappointed at some of the misleading and disingenuous elements in its slideshow. Despite specifying a 10-foot-wide dimension for the trail, it is clearly closer to 7.5 feet in its drawing representation, enhancing the supposedly "too small" design. Further, the "iconic view" of the Breakneck shoreline from the middle of the Hudson at roughly a height of 75 feet above the water is something no one is seeing, except for helicopters flying down the river.

If you believe there is a good case to be made in objecting to this project, why use suspect arguments and misrepresentation? I doubt practically only a very few members of this community have ever even laid eyes on the vegetation where Breakneck hits the river (I have), let alone are aware of how the area looked 100 years ago when the aqueduct was being constructed (total construction wasteland).

If Protect the Highlands wants to effectively impact if and how the Fjord Trail proceeds, I suggest rather than putting misrepresentations on its website and yard signs, its members focus on more robust interpretation of the great collection of project documents the site provides, to better educate your neighbors on exactly where there are real issues.

Thomas Ambrose, *Cold Spring*

This area of the river is one of few remaining natural-looking sections between, let's say, Iona Island and Poughkeepsie. It's visible by boat, either private or tour boats like the Seastreak and others; by car and bike from 218/Storm King Highway; from Cornwall; and from hiking trails and overlooks in Storm King State Park.

Many more people enjoy the view and beauty of the Breakneck shoreline and this section of the eastern shoreline than a few private helicopter passengers.

I support a simple trail or path between Cold Spring and Beacon, but not one that increases traffic, degrades the village for residents or diminishes the landscape.

Aaron Wolfe, *Cold Spring*

This proposed design solves an identical problem to one that exists between Fort Washington Park (aka the George Washington Bridge or the Little Red Lighthouse) and the Path to Nowhere, and the proposed design is longer: 1,000 feet versus 2,500 feet. I'm glad SCAPE is in charge. My preference would be to take a lane away from the West Side Highway in that area. There are three lanes going each way and that's way too many.

Ira Gershenhorn, *New York City*

Your latest article on the Fjord Trail misrepresented Protect the Highlands. We do not advocate starting a shoreline trail from Little Stony Point, and in fact, instead of having Amy Kacala speak for us, a phone call to any board member (you know us — we are all locals) would have set the reporter straight.

A look at our website would have shown no indication of that misstatement. We advocate a safe trail, preferably upland with minimal environmental destruction. We will expect a correction.

Grace Kennedy, *Cold Spring*

Kennedy is a board member of the nonprofit Protect the Highlands, along with Michael Bowman, Dave Merandy, Susan Peehl, Sheila Rauch and John Zuvic. In fact, the organization advocates starting the trail at Breakneck, which was an editing error on our part. It was not a statement made by Amy Kacala.

This seems like a fabulous young woman and a disastrous project ("Q&A: Kate Orff," (Continued on Page 5))



LETTERS AND COMMENTS

(Continued from Page 4)

Dec. 22). There is little if anything positive about changing the shoreline of the Hudson River; getting fantastic people to work on it doesn't change the damage.

Rhonda Donohue, *via Instagram*

Shopping access

I have thought several times of writing this letter about my inability to access most of the shops and restaurants on Main Street in Cold Spring ("Can Everyone Shop Main Street?" Dec. 15). I have limited mobility and use a cane or rolling walker ("rollator") to get around.

My trip to Main Street begins in frustration with the lack of handicapped parking. I count probably six designated parking places on Main Street and these are often in use by delivery trucks. The second obstacle I encounter is that most storefronts have high-entry steps without hand railings or ramps.

Another handicapped person I know counts on walking downtown and finds so much broken pavement on the sidewalks that this is difficult.

Handicapped people are unable to access Main Street businesses in the town in which we live. This causes handicapped people to drive to nearby malls and shopping centers, which do provide access and parking.

One solution I would like to see: money budgeted for repairing broken pavement, which is a village responsibility.

As to entry access, this seems to be the responsibility of the individual business to install ramps or sturdy railings. I would like to see the mayor and the appropriate

village officials take action toward meeting the federal Americans with Disabilities Act standards. The standards at present seem far too low, when crumbling sidewalks form more of a hazard than an aid to mobility.

Carolyn Ricapito, *Cold Spring*

Beacon speeding

If we want to change resident and visitor driving behavior, there must be enforcement ("Beacon Roads With Worst Speeding ID'd," Dec. 22). As a resident, I observe other residents and visitors, on a daily basis from my home to my place of business, speeding, going through stop signs, double parking, parking in yellow-striped no-parking zones, not stopping at pedestrian crossings, engine idling and leaving their autos unattended and running while double parked or in no-parking zones.

If you don't enforce, you encourage and increase more negative driving behaviors, which will lead to an increased percentage of accidents, or worse.

Ron Donofrio, *Beacon*

Dutchess vetoes

Dutchess County Executive William F.X. O'Neil leaves a spiteful and unworthy legacy: Although he was unhappy with the outrageous salary increases, he just couldn't make himself veto the 2024 budget ("Dutchess Executive Punishes Legislators," Dec. 22). Happy sales tax increase, folks. They will all be taking it out of your back pocket and putting it in theirs.

Ginny Buechele, *Pawling*

NEWS BRIEFS

Continental Commons Approved

Fishkill Planning Board gives OK

The Fishkill Planning Board on Dec. 14 unanimously approved a site plan and special-use permit for Continental Commons, a hotel and shopping development planned for Route 9, opposite Home Depot near Interstate 84.

The project, first presented to the Planning Board by developer Domenic Broccoli in 2015, faced opposition from the Friends of the Fishkill Supply Depot and some members of the Fishkill Town Board. However, a state judge ruled last year that the Town Board had to approve extending a water and sewer district to reach the 10.5-acre site. Sewage and wastewater will be treated by Beacon's plant.

The land was once part of the sprawling Fishkill Supply Depot, which Gen. George Washington established as a military base that stretched from northern Philipstown to the Village of Fishkill and present-day Beacon. It includes a cemetery that critics argued may contain Revolutionary War dead.

Minimum Wage to Rise

Will increase by 80 cents on Jan. 1

The minimum wage in upstate New York will increase by 80 cents on Jan. 1, to \$15 per hour.

In New York City, Westchester County and on Long Island it will increase by \$1, to \$16.

The minimum wage is scheduled to rise 50 cents in 2025 and again in 2026, to reach \$16 in upstate New York and \$17 in New York City, Westchester and on Long Island.

The minimum wage for home-care aides will rise by \$1.35 an hour on Jan. 1 to \$17.55 upstate and \$1.55 per hour to \$18.55 elsewhere, with further increases in 2025 and 2026.

MLK Day Contest Opens

Deadline for students is Jan. 4

For the 10th year, the Beacon Sloop Club and Southern Dutchess Coalition are sponsoring an MLK Day student essay contest, with a Thursday (Jan. 4) deadline.

Students in grades 1 to 12 in the Beacon City School District are invited to write about King's quote: "Only love can overcome hatred, bitterness and fear. I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear."

The essay should reflect what was happening in the U.S. that might have inspired King to say this. Participants should explain what they feel he meant and what it might mean to them.

Every participant will receive a certificate at the MLK Celebration on Jan. 15, and six winners will receive a \$50 award provided by Rhinebeck Bank. For entry details, see bit.ly/mlk-essay-2024.

My View

Letter from Lviv

By Michael Reisman

I spent the first 10 days of November in western Ukraine, volunteering with Lviv Volunteer Kitchen to prepare vacuum-packed, dehydrated meals (including borscht) for the front. The country is a war zone, and the U.S. State Department advises against traveling there. So why did I go? My practiced answer to Ukrainians who asked was "to help Ukraine stay independent and free." If a conversation developed, I mentioned that I wanted to show Ukrainians that Americans still care about them, almost two years after the brutal Russian invasion and despite our congressional mishegoss.

A couple of times I mentioned that my Jewish grandmother grew up not far away — living through a Russian attack and occupation herself in 1914 — and some of my ancestors were from Lviv, when it was known as Lemberg, Galicia, and was part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. I never told anyone that I wanted to be a war tourist, but maybe that's another reason.

During the day, I peeled and chopped carrots, potatoes, beets and other vegetables. During the evenings, I sampled the restaurants and bars with fellow volunteers from across Europe, making sure to get home well before midnight curfew.

One afternoon I drove around Lviv with a Ukrainian 20-something, delivering supplies to a roasting plant. Like many Ukrainians, Ihor is a chain smoker. As we barreled around the narrow, cobblestoned streets (he was at the wheel) and then hauled 50-pound sacks and crates from the truck to a loading dock, he told me that many of his friends had been killed and he thought the war would go on for another 10 years.

I asked if he was worried about getting drafted, as press gangs (military recruiters) roam the old town in Lviv rounding up young men. Ihor said that he had already served in the territorial defense in

Kharkiv during Russia's siege from February to May 2022. In any event he planned to go to the U.S. I inquired how he could possibly get out of Ukraine, as men aged 18 to 60 are barred from leaving. Ihor smiled, winked and lit another cigarette.

One night I went to the opera. Front-row seats were \$10. Before the curtain, the house manager said that in case of an air alert we should proceed to the shelter downstairs. Then everyone in the packed house rose to their feet and the orchestra launched into the Ukrainian national anthem. After the orchestra finished, a burly man in a camouflage jacket a few seats from me shouted "Slava Ukraini!" ("Glory to Ukraine!"), and the audience answered, "Heroim Slava!" ("Glory to the Heroes!"). For 3 1/2 hours we watched an over-the-top performance of *Carmen* and forgot about the war.

On my day off, I took a walking tour with a historian named Alex Denisenko. I hadn't realized I was living in the former Jewish ghetto. Alex casually told me that during a recent tour, a Russian missile had flown overhead. We dropped in to see Meylakh Sheykhet, the Ukraine director of the Union of Councils for Jews in the Former Soviet Union, which provides meals to Ukrainians who have fled the front (whether or not they're Jewish). He hopes to rebuild the Golden Rose Synagogue, constructed in 1582 and destroyed by the Nazis in 1942.

Later, we stopped at a building in which Raphael Lemkin lived while studying law in the 1920s. A Polish Jew, Lemkin invented the word *genocide*.

At times the war seemed far away, until I heard air raid sirens or walked past hollow-eyed soldiers in fatigues enjoying a few moments of leave with their families. One day I was in the main square when the Ukrainian version of taps played on a trumpet brought everything to a halt — buses, trams, pedestrians. A funeral procession passed: recently killed soldiers. I made a pilgrimage to the Lychakiv cemetery. During my brief visit to Lviv in June 2022, a small number of freshly dug graves had occupied a corner of an area they call the Field of Mars. Now it's full.

Reisman is a lawyer who lives in Cold Spring.



Reisman, in Ukraine, holds a beet he had peeled and chopped. Flags from volunteers' countries hang from the wall behind him.

Photo provided

Wide Angle

New York's Decline

By Stowe Boyd



Over the past three decades, “economic dynamism” — an aggregate measure of an array of factors — has fallen across the U.S., with the average state dropping by 30 percent between the early 1990s and the start of the pandemic in 2020.

The measure was created by the Economic Innovation Group (EIG), a think tank based in Washington, D.C., and updated most recently in May in a report called *Dynamism in the West, Stagnation for Much of the Rest*.

While New York is the fourth most populous state, it has not fared well compared to Florida, Texas and California. New York has dropped 24 spots on EIG's index in the past five years and is now at No. 46. The other three states have been consistently in the top 10. (The most dynamic state econ-



omy is in Delaware, followed by Utah and Idaho.)

The index includes components such as the rate of new startup companies; the share of workers at firms less than five years old; housing permits per 1,000 residents; and worker churn. The highest dynamism rankings are for states with the most aggressive rates of building. New York has created 1.2 million jobs over the past 10 years but only 400,000 homes, driving up costs and leading many to leave the state.

The dynamism measure also includes

the business-growth rate; the labor-force participation rate; how many inventors with patents are residents; and the migration rate, which reflects the desire of people to move to New York. The state suffers in all these measures, and its ratings have fallen like a rock over the past decade.

One large reason for this is population. According to the Fiscal Policy Institute, from 2010 to 2020 New York's population grew by 4.2 percent, or 823,100 people, mostly in New York City. But in 2020-21, the state lost 2.1 percent of its residents, or 431,100 people. The people leaving are

those who are less well-off and can't afford the rising costs. These are the sort of working- and middle-class people who would stay if the economy were creating better-paying jobs.

It appears from other data that the millionaires who fled during the pandemic are returning and perhaps could play a role in sparking higher dynamism. But historically, the largest growth comes from the creation of small businesses, and the conditions in New York — the housing crisis, workers leaving and high taxes — do not point to an immediate turnaround.

The trend might turn because of outside forces such as the Federal Reserve lowering interest rates, but it will require major shifts in other factors, especially housing and the departure of workers, for New York to return to the top 20 in the economic dynamism index.

As goes New York City, so goes New York. We'll have to see if conditions bedeviling the city retreat over the next decade, but we should remain pessimistic about the next few years.

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.

Notes from the Cold Spring Village

By Michael Turton

Route 9D ‘calming’

In a process that Mayor Kathleen Foley described as “boring but important,” the Cold Spring Village Board approved a litany of more than 40 appointments, designations and schedules on Dec. 20 as part of its annual reorganization meeting.

The approvals ranged from reappointment of village staff and work assignments for the mayor and trustees to the members of standing committees, the reappointment of John Furst as village attorney, the naming of M&T Bank as the official depository and approval of meeting schedules.

The Putnam County News and Recorder was reappointed as the official newspaper, based on a state law that requires paid circulation. A request by *The Highlands*

Current to be considered an additional official newspaper was not approved but the board supported a resolution by newly seated Trustee Aaron Freimark that named *The Current* as an additional paper for legal notices.

The Planning Board will include two new members heading into the new year: Jesse St. James and Ben Cheah. St. James will be named chair, although his appointment was tabled pending the completion of his duties as a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The board approved a schedule of fees, including everything from permits related to construction projects, file searches and fines to docking fees, short-term rental permits and metered parking rates.

Storm response

Summarizing the village response to the high winds and heavy rains that struck Cold Spring on Dec. 17, Foley reported that wastewater treatment plant was able to accommodate increased flows without discharges above normal levels, and that fresh-water treatment was modified at the plant on Fishkill Road to address changes in bacteria levels caused by the rainfall.

“It's pretty spectacular that tiny teams at the wastewater plant and water treatment plant brought us through that storm without problems and kept everyone's drinking water safe,” Foley said.

The mayor also commented on the Cedar Street culvert, which was breached during the storm, causing flooding. The Putnam County Bureau of Emergency Services assisted the village with pumps to draw down the water, she said, adding that flows from the pumps were contained by state Department of Transportation catch basins and didn't go farther west than Locust Ridge.

“The Cedar Street culvert is an ongoing problem; it can't handle the volume and velocity of storms we're experiencing as part of climate change,” Foley said.

The mayor said the culvert is not one of the village locations that can benefit from Federal Emergency Management Agency funding in the wake of July's severe storms because, although it failed, it wasn't actually damaged, which is a requirement for federal funding. She said the village will pursue “resiliency” funding from FEMA, which the site may qualify for.

Some residents have expressed concern that pumping at Cedar Street during the July storm contributed to flooding in the area around Main Street east of Chestnut Avenue.

“It's not a fast process,” Foley said. “We're going to look at multi-year strategies and project planning,” and, as engineering progresses, the board will hold a public workshop to report in detail.

Expanded grant application

Cold Spring's \$25,000 grant application to the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, led by Trustee Laura Bozzi, is being expanded. The application to the Clean Energy Communities Program, which initially included funding requests for the installation of four electric-vehicle charging stations, a pilot food scrap recycling program and 10 medium-to-large pollinator-friendly trees for village streets, will now incorporate an energy audit of Village Hall.

The study will provide “a comprehensive, fuel-neutral evaluation of potential cost effective, low-cost/no-cost and capital upgrades” to coincide with planned renovations of the building.

Garrison's Landing water

The board approved, in principle, an agreement with the Town of Philipstown to have the village water department conduct routine testing for the Garrison's Landing water district.

The town is in the process of hiring a new company to operate the system after the previous firm didn't renew its contract. Village staff will only be responsible for water testing, treatment and reporting results to the county Health Department. Formal adoption of the 90-day agreement is contingent upon the determination of fees, which Foley said will be based on overtime rates since village staff already work eight hours or more per day.

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Brittney Lynn Turner
(1978-2023)

Brittney Lynn Turner passed away unexpectedly on Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023.

Brittney was a resident of Beacon and was born in Cold Spring on April 26, 1978. She graduated from Haldane High School in 1996 and went on to receive her bachelor's degree from American University in Washington, D.C. During her time at American University, Brittney studied abroad in Madrid, Spain, and upon graduation she enjoyed the summer traveling through Europe.

Brittney worked in New York City in the corporate office at Tiffany & Co before deciding to pursue her dream of working in the medical field. As a child Brittney was diagnosed with leukemia and often spoke of how the care she received as a child sparked her interest in becoming a nurse. Brittney received her nursing degree from New York University in Manhattan, and during that time traveled to Africa to care for AIDS patients. Upon her return, she worked in the children's intensive care unit at John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland.

For the last 14 years Brittney worked at St. John's Riverside Hospital in Yonkers as a registered nurse at the Hope Center where she was promoted to head nurse. Brittney was dedicated to the care of those living with HIV and HepC, and beloved by both her co-workers and clients.

Brittney is survived by her beloved sister, Megan Turner, and her niece, Mikyla Morgan. She had many loving cousins, aunts and uncles. Brittney is predeceased by her parents Dorothy and Lawrence Turner of Cold Spring.

Arrangements were entrusted to the care of the Libby Funeral Home, 55 Teller Avenue, Beacon, New York. A Celebration of Brittney's Life will be planned for a later date at the convenience of her family. To offer a message of condolence or share a fond memory, please visit LibbyFuneralHome.com.

PAID NOTICE

How They Voted (from Page 1)

and national elections.

The law excludes the offices of county sheriff, county clerk, county district attorney, judges, town justices or any office with a three-year term, such as those of Putnam County legislators.

Anybody in office on Jan. 1, 2025, will complete their full term, but those elected after Jan. 1, 2025, will have their terms shortened to align with an even-numbered year.

Practically this will move the Cold Spring (mayor and two trustee seats, 2-year terms) election scheduled for 2027 to 2026; the Nelsonville election (two seats, 2-year terms) scheduled for 2027 to 2026; the Philipstown election (two of the four Town Board seats, the highway commissioner and the town clerk, 4-year terms) from 2031 to 2030; and the town supervisor (2-year term) from 2027 to 2026.

The move does not affect the Putnam County executive, whose four-year term is on the ballot in even-numbered years and next up in 2026.

Dutchess County legislators serve two-year terms and were last elected this past November; the 2027 election will move to 2026. The next two elections for county executive, a four-year position that was also on the ballot in November, will take place in 2027 and 2030.

Passed by Senate, 39-23

Rolison ☒

Passed by Assembly, 89-57

Jacobson ☒ Levenberg ☒

Electric bills

On Dec. 22, Hochul signed legislation sponsored in the Assembly by Jacobson that bans utilities such as Central Hudson from "back billing" for services delivered to homes and small businesses more than three months earlier. The law also requires utilities to include the previous 13 months of usage charges with each bill.

"For more than two years, customers of Central Hudson have been plagued with non-billing, late billing, inaccurate bills and excessive use of estimated billing," Jacobson said in a statement. "This new law is an important step in alleviating this intolerable situation. Utilities have a simple responsibility to bill timely and in a transparent manner."

Passed by Senate, 48-13

Rolison ☒

Passed by Assembly, 132-12

Jacobson ☒ Levenberg ☒

Horse meat

On Dec. 13, the National Day of the Horse, Hochul signed a law that prohibits the slaughter of horses for human or animal consumption. Violators can be fined up to \$2,500 per horse.

After Congress banned the USDA from inspecting horse meat in 2007, and U.S. slaughterhouses closed, tens of thousands of horses were exported to Canada for slaughter, mostly to sell the meat in Europe and Japan. By 2021, that number had dropped to 23,000, according to the Humane Society.

According to the group Equine Advocates, California, Texas, Illinois and New

Jersey and other states ban only human consumption; the Humane Society says that "U.S. horse meat is dangerous to humans because of the unregulated administration of numerous toxic substances." The legislation takes effect on April 11.

Passed by Senate, 60-1

Rolison ☒

Passed by Assembly, 105-43

Jacobson ☒ Levenberg ☒

Autorenews

On Dec. 13, Hochul enacted legislation that requires companies to notify customers of automatic subscription renewals 45 days before the charge and to provide clear instructions for canceling. (On Dec. 20, the state attorney general sued Sirius/XM Radio, alleging it has "deliberately long and burdensome cancellation processes"; it cited Sirius/XM data that it took customers an average of 11.5 minutes to cancel by phone and 30 minutes to cancel online.)

Passed by Senate, 58-0

Rolison ☒

Passed by Assembly, 148-0

Jacobson ☒ Levenberg ☒

Checkout fees

Hochul on Dec. 13 signed a law that allows merchants to have separate pricing for cash versus credit-card sales. However, both prices must be displayed, such as on the price sticker, and the surcharge cannot be more than what the credit card processor charges (e.g., 3 percent). The law codifies a 2018 decision by a state court that ruled merchants who charge more for credit-card purchases must provide the cash and credit prices in "dollar and cents." It takes effect Feb. 11.

Passed by Senate, 62-0

Rolison ☒

Passed by Assembly, 148-0

Jacobson ☒ Levenberg ☒

Lead pipes

On Dec. 20, Hochul signed legislation that requires water utilities to publicly share the number and location of any distribution lines made of lead.

Passed by Senate, 57-4

Rolison ☒

Passed by Assembly, 105-35

Jacobson ☒ Levenberg ☒

Hunting contests

On Dec. 22, Hochul signed legislation that makes it illegal to organize or compete in a contest that offers prizes for killing wildlife such as coyotes, crows, squirrels and rabbits, but excluding white-tailed deer, turkeys, fish and bears, whose populations are regulated by the state.

Passed by Senate, 46-15

Rolison ☒

Passed by Assembly, 88-53

Jacobson ☒ Levenberg ☒

New judges

On Dec. 22, Hochul enacted a law that adds a judge to state courts in Brooklyn, Queens and the 9th District (which includes Dutchess, Putnam and three other counties and will now have 34 justices), as well as to family, city and civil courts in New York

City, in response to a backlog of cases from the pandemic shutdown.

Passed by Senate, 61-1

Rolison ☒

Passed by Assembly, 147-0

Jacobson ☒ Levenberg ☒

LLC ownership

On Dec. 23, Hochul signed a law to create a database of the owners of limited liability corporations that will be accessible to government agencies and local, state and federal law enforcement. The original bill would have created a database open to the public but Hochul, citing privacy concerns, used a "chapter amendment" to remove public access. The vote was for the original bill.

Passed by Senate, 41-21

Rolison ☒

Passed by Assembly, 89-55

Jacobson ☒ Levenberg ☒

Reparations

On Dec. 19, Hochul signed legislation to create a nine-member "community commission on reparations remedies" for the descendants of enslaved people. The commission will issue a report within 12 months after its first meeting with recommendations "to address longstanding inequities."

Passed by Senate, 41-21

Rolison ☒

Passed by Assembly, 105-42

Jacobson ☒ Levenberg ☒

For more votes, see highlandscurrent.org.

JOB POSTING

PHILIPSTOWN HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT FULL-TIME DIESEL MECHANIC OPENING

- Applicant must have a current and clean CDL license or permit
- Must work 40 hrs a week and long overtime hrs during the winter months
- Health and dental benefits
- NYS retirement
- Resume with application

Pick up applications at:
Philipstown Highway Department
50 Fishkill Rd.
Cold Spring, NY 10516

2023, Updated *(from Page 1)*

request as a use variance. If it is approved, that would allow the boardinghouse “use” in the single-family neighborhood. It is not clear if the ZBA will vote whether to approve the variance in January.

Renaming Desmond-Fish — The board of the Desmond-Fish Public Library in Garrison created a working group to investigate the alleged Nazi sympathies of the library’s co-founder, Rep. Hamilton Fish III, in response to MSNBC host Rachel Maddow’s podcast, *Ultra*. One of the goals of the review is to determine if the library should be renamed.

Update: Since October, members of the library’s Name Review Working Group have received more than 500 responses to a community survey, according to Anita Prentice, president of the board of trustees. If the group recommends changing the name, it would be considered by the board at its Jan. 27 meeting. The board is also reviewing a draft of what will be a library policy governing the naming and renaming of “any feature of the library’s buildings, grounds and collections,” said Prentice.

FEBRUARY

Radioactive water — Holtec, the company decommissioning the Indian Point nuclear power plant near Peekskill, announced on Feb. 2 that it planned to empty radioactive wastewater from the spent fuel tanks into the Hudson River. It said the levels of radioactivity would be far below the levels allowed by the federal government and no different than discharges by the plant while it operated.

Update: The announcement launched nearly a year of legal wrangling and protest. Two state lawmakers introduced legislation, signed by Gov. Kathy Hochul in August, that banned Holtec from discharging the water into the river. Holtec says it is undecided on what to do with the wastewater and has not ruled out suing New York State.

MARCH

Dire warmings — After another warmer-than-usual winter, farmers in the Hudson Valley were on edge as to how their crops would fare. “You’re at the mercy of the weather,” said Mark Doyle of Fishkill Farms.

Update: Doyle said this week that it turned out to be a rough season. “The variation between extremes of warm winter weather and cold damaged the peach crop severely and a late frost in the beginning of May damaged the apple crop, although not nearly as badly as the extraordinary damage experienced by the vineyards,” he said. “We ended up growing a pretty respectable apple crop and were keen to see our customers roll in for the fall harvest season. Alas, the weather conspired against us again, and rain on at least one of the days of each of the eight prime weekends cut revenues quite considerably. There’s always next year, but the lack of funds is going to make it a close thing to get there.”



Fire destroyed a boarding house at 925 Wolcott Ave. in Beacon, leading to the arrest of a resident for arson and a battle with the city over rebuilding. *File photo by Valerie Shively*

APRIL

Rail trail litigation — A St. Louis-based law firm held a series of meetings with property owners along the dormant Beacon railroad line, which Dutchess County is studying as the potential site of a recreational rail trail. The firm, Stewart, Wald & McCulley, says it specializes in rails-to-trails litigation in which it seeks payment from the federal government for the “taking of land” in conjunction with conversion projects like the one that could happen along the Beacon line.

Update: Steve Wald, an attorney at the firm, said Wednesday (Dec. 27) that Stewart, Wald & McCulley has been retained by more than 200 landowners who are seeking “just compensation” for land their “predecessors in title” likely lost in the 1800s, when railroads and boats were the primary means of transportation. If a rail company condemned or otherwise acquired an easement (without paying for it) on land needed for tracks, the current landowners could be entitled to compensation, Wald said.

Metro-North, which owns the railroad, filed an abandonment application with the federal Surface Transportation Board on Dec. 21. The agency filed a similar application earlier in the year but was denied in July when the board said Metro-North should apply to “rail bank” — or pause usage along the line — rather than abandon it. Metro-North wrote in its latest filing that it anticipates a request for interim trail use will soon be made, which would allow it to negotiate with agencies in Dutchess or Putnam County to operate and maintain a rail trail.

Rail banking would also mean the Beacon line would remain part of the national rail network and would allow Metro-North to retain its right-of-way along the line. It’s unclear whether that move would throw a monkey wrench into Stewart, Wald & McCulley’s plans. Wald said Wednesday that he expects the Surface Transportation Board to approve Metro-North’s application. “Once that happens, we will immediately file suit in the U.S. Court of Federal Claims,” he said.

Krivak sues the state

— Andrew Krivak, who spent 23 years in prison before being exonerated on Feb. 27 in the killing of 12-year-old Josette Wright from Carmel, filed a claim seeking \$50 million from New York under the state’s Unjust Conviction and Imprisonment Act. Krivak also sued the county in federal court for unspecified damages. Putnam earlier had settled with Krivak’s co-defendant, Anthony DiPippo, for \$12 million after a judge overturned his conviction.

Update: In August, a judge approved a \$5.7 million settlement between Krivak and the state. The lawsuit against Putnam County is ongoing, although the county has asked for it to be dismissed.

JUNE

Beacon disappearance — Federal prosecutors charged Jamie Orsini and



Kraft

her spouse with killing her ex-husband, Steven Kraft, who disappeared in April 2020 after returning his daughters to her residence on West Church Street in Beacon. Police found Kraft’s car abandoned in Newburgh but have not found any remains. Jamie and Nicholas Orsini, who now live near Albany, were each charged with one count of carjacking resulting in death, which carries a maximum sentence of life in prison or death, and one count of conspiracy, which carries a maximum sentence of five years.

Update: After both Orsinis began discussing possible plea bargains with prosecutors that could take the death penalty off the table, Jamie Orsini filed a motion in October to dismiss the carjacking charge. Her attorney argues that prosecutors do not allege that Kraft’s murder “had a sufficient nexus to a carjacking” and that the disposal of his car in Newburgh “does not qualify as a carjacking” under the law she is accused of violating. Judge Philip Halp-



The Peekskill Brewery crafted a beer honoring Riverkeeper before abruptly announcing it was closing. *Photo provided*

ern, of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, had yet to rule on the motion as of Thursday (Dec. 28).

Parking lot lawsuit

— St. Andrew & St. Luke Episcopal Church sued Beacon in June after the church alleged that the city had “unilaterally” fenced off a parking lot behind the church, which is on South Avenue, and used it to store construction equipment and building materials for the \$14.7 million firehouse that is being constructed next door.

Update: According to a letter filed Nov. 22 in Dutchess County Court, representatives for the church and the city met twice in November. A Nov. 17 meeting ended with Beacon Mayor Lee Kyriacou agreeing to circulate “the conceptual framework which has now been identified as a potential resolution.” An attorney told the court that the parties were “optimistic about working out a resolution,” but nothing has been filed since.

JULY

River beer — To highlight Riverkeeper’s efforts to protect Peekskill Hollow Brook, the main source of Peekskill’s drinking water, the Peekskill Brewery created a beer named after the environmental organization. The brewers used water from Peekskill Hollow Brook and foraged ingredients growing alongside it.

Update: Peekskill Brewery, which had been in business for 15 years, abruptly closed in November. “We have done everything we could to keep operating, including incurring debt and restructuring operations several times to meet customers’ changing preferences and behaviors,” its owners said. “However, Peekskill Brewery’s sales have not returned to pre-pandemic levels and we can no longer afford to operate.”

SEPTEMBER

Bus changes — The Garrison School began the year with a curtailed bus service that was expected to save \$120,000 annu-

(Continued on Page 9)



Haldane High Principal Julia Sniffen says teachers had no objections to the idea of a No-Cell Motel.

File photo by Joey Asher

(Continued from Page 8)

ally. The result, some parents said, were much longer bus rides, sometimes as long as 45 minutes. Administrators said they would do their best to minimize the disruption by attempting to ensure that if a student had a long ride in the morning, the child would have a shorter ride in the afternoon.

Update: After the challenges of the first week, the bus routes are "operating smoothly," according to Carl Albano, the acting superintendent. "Although some longer bus routes were unavoidable due to the elimination of one large bus from our fleet, I am confident that every K-12 student in our district has safe transportation to and from school," he said. Ned Rauch, who has two children at the school, said the 10-minute morning bus rides are "smooth and hiccup-free" but said he picks up his children after school because the ride is 45 minutes, "rendering it all but useless for us."

Longer postal routes — Beacon carriers on Sept. 9 began driving to Newburgh to pick up mail from a regional sorting center near New York Stewart International Airport. They had previously sorted mail at the Beacon post office. The U.S. Postal Service said the creation of more than 400 regional Sorting & Delivery Centers nationwide, including at Stewart, is part of a 10-year cost-saving plan.

Lawrence, a Postal Service representative, said that during the holidays "our carriers often do work earlier in the mornings and later in the evenings to ensure we have delivered all mail for our customers in time for Dec. 25."

Cellphone motels — Students at Haldane High School returned to a policy that required them to deposit their phones into a repurposed shoe organizer — the No-Cell Motel. "It's been wonderful," said Christian Hoolan, who teaches calculus and algebra. "When I'm modeling problems, the kids are engaged. I don't have to worry about kids looking at Snapchat or Instagram."

Update: Principal Julia Sniffen said she could "count on one hand" the problems she's had with students resisting the policy. However, she said she planned to send out a reminder when classes resume next week because she expects many students received new phones for Christmas.

Church finances worsen — The Rev. Steve Schunk, the priest-in-charge at St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Cold Spring, painted a dismal picture of the historic church's finances, saying it faced an immediate \$50,000 budget gap. At stake were the viability of the church itself, and the potential loss of the 1.5-acre great lawn, an integral part of village life, to residential or other development. Even more daunting was senior warden Vinny Tamagna's assertion that to be sustainable the church needs a \$5 million endowment fund.

Update: Schunk said on Tuesday (Dec. 26) that the church received the last \$1,000 needed to balance its budget on Dec. 22 when singer/songwriter Dar Williams hosted a benefit concert. In addition, a small group of residents has begun meeting "to explore types of funding vehicles," Schunk said. "We are excited and will likely have more news in February." He said he had met with the Episcopal Diocese of New York, which owns the property, about getting help.

Police cameras — On Sept. 20, the Cold Spring Village Board approved new and updated police policies, including the use of body and vehicle dash cameras. The village purchased officer body cameras with a

\$14,000 grant from the state Division of Criminal Justice Services.

Update: Mayor Kathleen Foley said on Wednesday (Dec. 27) that the cameras are being rolled out by shift as officers are trained. "The first deployments served as tests to work out kinks in use and data retention," she said, adding that the system seems to be running smoothly. Foley noted that acquiring new dash-cams for CSPD vehicles is dependent upon available grants. She said the village recently applied for funding to upgrade location-security cameras.

OCTOBER

Bodies to books — The pandemic forced Keith Laug to close Zoned Fitness in Beacon. To survive, he established Kejola Books, collecting people's surplus books by making "house calls" throughout the Hudson Valley and through drop-offs. He resells books on eBay, Facebook and other sites.

Update: On Tuesday (Dec. 26) Laug said Zoned Fitness has reopened and is so busy he's considering expanding to include a membership gym in Beacon. And Kejola Books is still going strong. "The response was great," Laug said. "I've helped many in the community find new homes for their unwanted books."

Reporting by Joey Asher, Brian PJ Cronin, Jeff Simms, Leonard Sparks and Michael Turton

JOB POSTING

PHILIPSTOWN HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT IMMEDIATE FULL TIME DRIVER OPENING

- Applicant must have a clean CDL or CDL Permit
- Must work 40 hours a week and long overtime hours during winter months
- Resume must be submitted with application

Pick up applications at:
Philipstown Highway Department
50 Fishkill Rd.
Cold Spring, NY 10516

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 at the Philipstown 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.

AROUND TOWN



▲ **SCOUTS VISIT TOWN BOARD** — Boy Scouts from Pack 137 visited the Philipstown Town Board, where they learned about local government. The Scouts opened the meeting by leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

Photo provided



▲ **NEW BRIDGE** — A 65-foot bridge on the Hubbard Perkins Loop Trail in Fahnestock State Park is nearing completion, part of the last phase of a restoration project funded by the state, the Open Space Institute and private donors. It replaced two iron beams that were often underwater after storms.

Photo by Paula Andros



▲ **GROCERY EXPANDS** — Foodtown in Cold Spring took over the former Soho Salon space this month, giving Raymond Chen more space for his fish and sushi counter. It was the second expansion for the grocery, which in 2014 took over the former post office.

Photo by Michael Turton

▼ **GARDEN CLUB PROJECT** — Members of the Photography Committee of the Philipstown Garden Club recently created a patchwork display of photos of botanical materials found in their yards or local woods. It is on display at the Cold Spring Coffeehouse, 92 Main St.

Photo provided



The Calendar

Father, Son and Many Musical Friends

Sharkey & the Sparks to perform at Towne Crier

By Alison Rooney

Mark “Sharkey” McEwen, lead guitarist for the Slambovian Circus of Dreams, and his son Ben, 20, are the force behind Sharkey & the Sparks, which will perform at the Towne Crier in Beacon on Jan. 6.

We spoke with Sharkey, who has lived in Philipstown since 2006, and Ben, a 2021 Haldane High School graduate who is a sophomore at Boston University studying film and television. Their responses have been edited for brevity and clarity.

Sharkey: I think of myself as shy but I got the inspiration to start doing open mics in 2016. I had never done one before. Ben had just started playing guitar. He has been intrigued by music ever since he was a kid. He joined the school band on percussion and took a guitar class in middle school, and taught himself with my help and an assist from YouTube.

How many 20-year-olds do you know who love the same music you gravitate to? Ben and I happen to jointly love and appreciate it. It’s such a gift to have this young person in my life who shares the same love of music.

I was starting to perform with Ben as a duo at these open mics when, in 2017, Phil Ciganer [the Towne Crier owner] said: “You guys are really good — could you put a set together?” We did our first show there that year.

I got my nickname because my dad called me “Sparkplug” as a kid and, in my teens, a friend called me “Sharkey” and it stuck.

Ben: Playing with my dad has always been a pleasure and is synonymous with how I learned guitar. I learned some chords and was already listening to the Beach Boys, the Beatles, Journey — all the classics from back then — trying to figure them out. My main inspiration, besides my dad, was surf music. Those riffs just sounded so cool and were a steppingstone into more complex music.

Learning music from the 1960s and ‘70s made me grow as a musician because of the variety of chords. It expanded my vocabulary. I could see myself in the song rather than some arranged part; it was guitar music. It’s amazing how much overlap there is between the music my dad and I love from this time.

Sharkey: Ben had been wanting to start a band in high school, and he formed one with Quinn Petkus and other friends in early 2020. The group had several rehearsals and were making plans to perform, but the pandemic hit.

In 2021, Ben and I went to Arizona to visit my mother, and it was an opportunity



Sharkey McEwen and his son, Ben

Photo by Amy Kubik



Sharkey and Ben McEwen

Photo by Alejandro Lopez

to spend time, while driving, listening to all kinds of stuff. We decided it would be fun to form a band around our duo and do a show before Ben went to college.

What I find so special is that it all happened organically. I invited RJ McCarty and Felipe Torres, whom I had long-term musical relationships with, along with Premik Russell Tubs and Luis Perez, who at the time were newfound musical acquaintances. Ben did the same. It led us to find musicians who filled the roles we needed. Quinn was a natural choice because he is a fine bass player and plays trombone, and Quinn’s brother, Oliver, also plays trombone.

Ben and I make the decisions about what songs to play. There’s so much music we want to do. We want to mix it up but it’s hard to cut. Our song list is tricky to put a label on. We focus on the ‘60s and ‘70s, but we play some songs from recent years and some originals.

For example, we have “Lollipops and Roses,” a fast, jazzy instrumental tune



Sharkey & the Sparks earlier this year at the Towne Crier, from left: RJ McCarty, Sharkey McEwen, Felipe Torres, Ben McEwen, Premik Russell Tubs, Luis Perez, Quinn Petkus and Oliver Petkus

Photo by Stuart Berg

on which Ben plays bass and Quinn plays trombone. Then, from the same era, we have “Everybody’s Everything,” by Santana, rocking, with a horn section, too. Then there’s “Love Song,” by The Cure, which is a slightly Goth, melancholy rock ‘n’ roll tune. We play a spectrum between a jazzier, soulful kind of music and rock. A lot of them — 80 percent, we figured out once — happen to be love songs, so I guess we love love songs!

When we did our first show, in January 2022, the lineup included drums, horns, bass, keyboards and background singers. At the end of the night, 11 people were onstage. The feedback we got was it was special to see the generations together.

Ben: Because I’ve been playing with my dad for so long, it’s easy to take for granted just how well we play together. Even our singing harmonies are complementary. It anchors our group and creates a unique

sound. As my Aunt Amy would say, “You guys are the future!” When I think of that, not only is it encouraging, it inspires me to foster that spirit in everything I do and maybe even work with a younger protégé, just as my dad has done for me.

The expanded Sharkey & the Sparks is such a fun project. It is built on family and friends. I can see that in the audience. Lots of people come to us after the show and comment on the joy they felt watching us play. A lot of times, dads will come up to us and say they wish they had something like that with their dad growing up or their son now.

Sharkey: To me, the purpose of this band is joy. After a show, my face aches from smiling so much.

The Towne Crier is located at 379 Main St., in Beacon. Tickets for the show, which begins at 8 p.m., are \$25 at townecrier.com or \$30 at the door.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)

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

FIRST DAY HIKES

MON 1

Little Stony Point

PHILIPSTOWN

11 a.m. – 2 p.m. 3011 Route 9D
facebook.com/littlestonypoint

MON 1

Stony Kill Farm

WAPPINGERS FALLS

11 a.m. – 1 p.m. 79 Farmstead Lane
stonykill.org

MON 1

Walkway Over the Hudson

POUGHKEEPSIE

1 – 3 p.m. | 61 Parker Ave.
walkway.org

COMMUNITY

SAT 30

Silent Book Club

BEACON

4 p.m. Beacon Volunteer Ambulance
1 Arquilla Drive | 845-831-4540
beaconvac.org

Bring something to read and share space with other people who are reading.

MON 1

11th Annual Polar Plunge

PEEKSKILL

Noon. Riverfront Green
thisismefoundation.com

Registration required by SAT 30 to participate. All donations benefit the This is Me Scholarship Fund.

TUES 2

Audubon Christmas Bird Count

PUTNAM COUNTY

Various locations

Email phas@putnamhighlandsaudubon.org to participate in this annual survey of species.

FRI 5

Athletic Hall of Fame Inductions

BEACON

5 p.m. St. Rocco's Society
26 S Chestnut St.

Beacon High School will induct three members of the Class of 1973 (Dave Eraca, Rodney Paulin and Joe Simmons); two members of the Class of 2018 (Jummie Akinwunmi and Lenny Torres Jr.); the 2012 softball team; and basketball coach Randy Casale.

KIDS & FAMILY

SAT 30

Play Sets

BEACON

10:30 a.m. Dia:Beacon
3 Beekman St.
845-231-0811 | diaart.org

Families with children ages 5

and older are invited to explore the galleries; in this session, Dia educators will focus on Binky Palermo's work. On SAT 6, the focus will be on Dan Flavin. *Free*

MUSIC

SAT 30

The Big Takeover

BEACON

8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. | 845-855-1300
townecrier.com

Singer and songwriter Nee Nee Rushie and her seven-piece band will perform music rooted in Jamaican pop. *Cost: \$25 (\$30 door)*

SAT 30

Zohar & Adam

BEACON

8 p.m. Reserva Wine Bar
173 Main St. | reservabeacon.com

The Cabo brothers, a post-jazz duo, will be joined by Ben Mizrach.

SUN 31

Almost Queen

PEEKSKILL

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

Celebrate the new year with the Queen tribute band and opening act Steve Leonard. *Cost: \$37 to \$89*

SUN 31

Chris O'Leary Band, Dan Brother Band and Boom Kat

BEACON

9:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

Ring in the New Year with live music, food and a champagne toast. *Cost: \$60*

FRI 5

Buffalo Stack

BEACON

8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

The singer, songwriter and guitarist Andy Stack leads the band. *Cost: \$20 (\$25 door)*

SAT 6

David Fung

NEWBURGH

5 p.m. Calvary Presbyterian Church
120 South St. | thornwillowinstitute.org

The pianist's program will include compositions by Beethoven, Dett and Schubert. *Free*

SAT 6

Sharkey & The Sparks

BEACON

8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

Sharkey McEwen will play covers and originals with his son, Ben, and their band. See Page 11. *Cost: \$25 (\$30 door)*

TALKS & TOURS

SAT 30

The Highlands Adventures of William Howell

NEWBURGH

1 p.m. Washington's Headquarters
84 Liberty St. | facebook.com/washingtonsheadquarters

This lecture about the amateur photojournalist and pathfinder will be presented as part of the Cure for Cabin Fever series. *Free*

THURS 4

Growing Small Fruit

VIA ZOOM

Noon. Cornell Cooperative Extension
cceputnamcounty.org

Learn how to grow blueberries,



Kakizome, Jan. 6

blackberries and raspberries in this course for home growers and small farmers. *Free*

SAT 6

New Year's Intentional Workshop

GARRISON

10 a.m. Garrison Art Center
23 Garrison's Landing | 845-424-3960
garrisonartcenter.org

Create a visual map to set a path for yourself in the New Year. *Cost: \$40*

SAT 6

Kakizome

POUGHKEEPSIE

1:30 p.m. Arts Mid-Hudson
9 Vassar St. | 845-454-3222
artsmidhudson.org

Learn and practice the art of ritualized Japanese calligraphy to draft inspirations and wishes for the New Year. *Free*

STAGE & SCREEN

FRI 5

After the Bite

GARRISON

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

This 2023 film, screened as part of the ongoing Depot Docs series, examines the ripple effects on a Cape Cod community following a fatal shark attack in 2018.

Director Ivy Meeropol, who lives in Philipstown, will answer questions. *Cost: \$25*

CIVIC

TUES 2

School Board

COLD SPRING

7 p.m. Haldane Library
15 Craigside Drive | 845-265-9254
haldaneschool.org

TUES 2

Putnam Legislature

CARMEL

7 p.m. Historic Courthouse
44 Gleneida Ave. | 845-208-7800
putnamcountyny.com

WED 3

Village Board

COLD SPRING

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

THURS 4

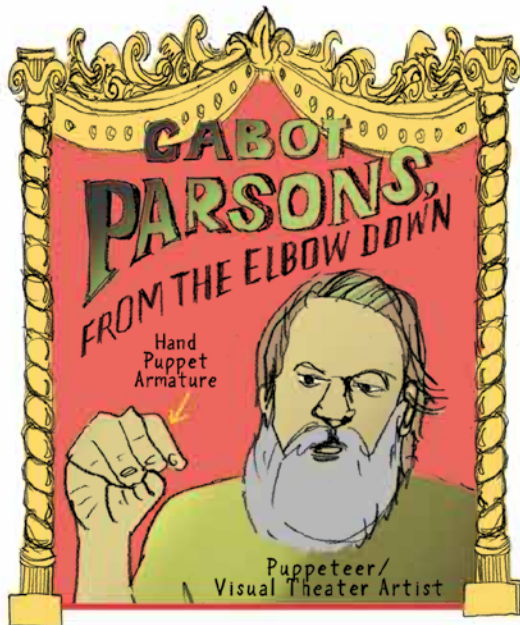
Town Board

PHILIPSTOWN

7:30 p.m. Town Hall
238 Main St. | 845-265-5200
philipstown.com



Buffalo Stack, Jan. 5



CABOT PARSONS' RIGHT HAND HAS PROBLEMS WITH OVER-THINKING AND OVEREATING, WHICH ISN'T GREAT BECAUSE...

I'VE GOT THE PRE-DIABETES.



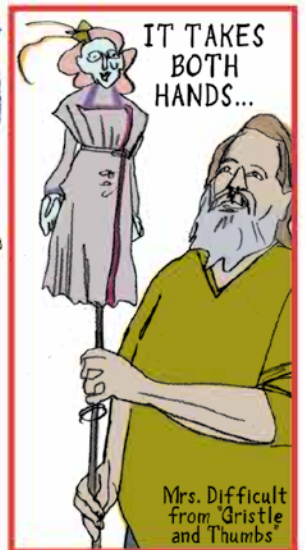
HIS LEFT HAND STRUGGLES WITH AN ADDICTION TO CHILDREN.

I CAN'T HELP IT. THEY'RE SO...JUICY.

THE LITTLE BABIES ARE LIKE A NICE AMUSE-BOUCHE.



IT TAKES BOTH HANDS...



...FOR MRS. DIFFICULT TO LOOK DOWN HER RECTITUDINOUS NOSE AT THE SEASHORE.

...CLAVICLES AND SHOULDERS... ANKLES...

...LICKED BY THE SUNSET...

...LIKE A BEACH FULL OF DEMONS ON HOLIDAY!

from 'A Difficult Speech'

WHEN CABOT'S HANDS AND FOREARMS ARE OCCUPIED...

An invitation to attend God's funeral blows in



...HIS HEAD SOMETIMES HELPS OUT WITH THE STAGING.

lightbulb attached to hat



I WRITE, DIRECT, AND CREATE PUPPETS FOR SHORT FORM, ADULT THEATER. I HAVE THIS GREAT IDEA...

...AND THEN I HAVE TO BUILD IT.



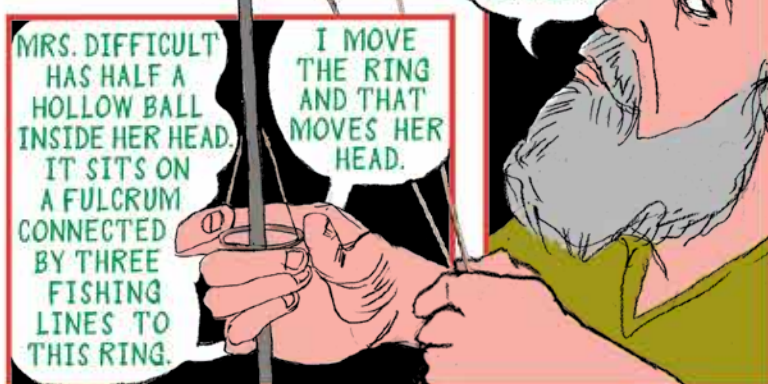
THE THEATER ISN'T HAPPENING WITH ME ON STAGE...

...IT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR MIND, AND IN THE MIND OF THE PERSON NEXT TO YOU AND THE PERSON NEXT TO THEM.



MRS. DIFFICULT HAS HALF A HOLLOW BALL INSIDE HER HEAD. IT SITS ON A FULCRUM CONNECTED BY THREE FISHING LINES TO THIS RING.

I MOVE THE RING AND THAT MOVES HER HEAD.



THIS MAGIC TAKES PLACE AT PUPPET SLAMS ALL OVER THE EAST COAST.

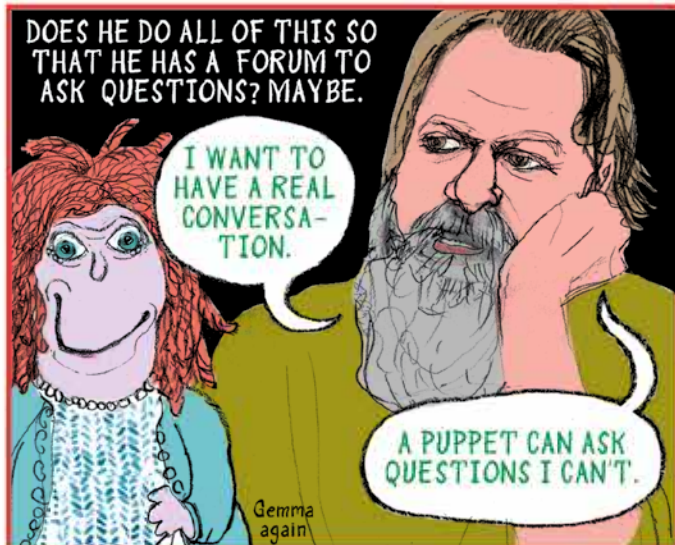
LA MAMA PUPPET SLAM
THE NATIONAL PUPPET SLAM
THE NATIONAL PUPPETRY CONFERENCE AT THE ONEILL (2-time Akin)
THE UCONN PUPPET SLAM
&
PUPPET SLAMS FROM BOSTON TO BALTIMORE



DOES HE DO ALL OF THIS SO THAT HE HAS A FORUM TO ASK QUESTIONS? MAYBE.

I WANT TO HAVE A REAL CONVERSATION.

A PUPPET CAN ASK QUESTIONS I CAN'T.



WHAT KIND OF WORLD ARE WE LIVING IN?



WHAT KIND OF CHRISTIAN PUTS CHILDREN IN CAGES?



WHAT KIND OF JESUS LETS THEM?



FROM THE ELBOW DOWN, THE AUDIENCE RESPONDS.

AROUND TOWN HOLIDAY



▲ **NUTCRACKER DELUXE** — Sixty-eight dancers from the Dutchess Dance Company, the Ballet Arts Studio in Beacon and Ballet Rockland performed *The Nutcracker* in Thiells on Dec. 16, with plans to bring the performance to Beacon next year. For more photos, see highlandscurrent.org.

► **ALL ABOARD**— The Cold Spring trolley became the Polar Express on Dec. 14 for a program at the Butterfield Library. After librarian Katherine Latella read the popular children’s book by Chris van Allsburg aloud, and children and their parents enjoyed cookies and cocoa, everyone boarded the express for a roundtrip ride to the bandstand. For more photos, see highlandscurrent.org.

Photos by Ross Corsair



▲ **HOLIDAY VISITS** — Members of St. Philip’s Episcopal Church in Garrison, including many children, made the rounds on Dec. 15 of the senior housing at Chestnut Ridge in Cold Spring to share Christmas carols with residents. Many seemed touched by the gesture.
Photo by Ross Corsair



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For more information:
Thomas M. Cervone
PH: (845) 485-3100
E: marketing@crproperties.com
Web: www.crproperties.com

www.crproperties.com

Out There

My Top 5 Days of 2023

By Brian PJ Cronin



It's that time of year when journalists lay out their lists of the year's best cultural offerings. Honestly, I'm not sure anyone cares about my top movie of the year (*The Boy and The Heron*) or TV show (Netflix's *Hilda*) or album (weird experimental drones mixed with field recordings that I am only allowed to play when my family is away). Sometimes the lists can be overwhelming. Who had time to watch all that TV? Who are all these singers? Cocaine Bear was real?

Let's start a new tradition: What were your five best days outside in 2023? Here's my list:

5 March 1: As you may remember, we didn't get much snow last year. By late February we had barely seen a flake. As soon as *The Current* noted that, we got hit with 6 inches. Fearing that it wouldn't last, I strapped on my hiking spikes and went up the Pocket Road trail to Lamb's Hill. Being on top of the ridge with the Highlands blanketed in white is always glorious; it was even more so



Sept. 30: The underappreciated Ithaca Falls

Photo by B. Cronin

because I knew it would be fleeting.

4 Dec. 5: During a run at Madam Brett Park just past nightfall, heading toward Long Dock, I heard a pack of coyotes having what sounded like a raging party. Their cries echoed across the cove and Metro-North tracks. Maybe they were celebrating because Denning's Point had been closed to humans for the season and they had it all to themselves? I've heard them in groups on Mount Beacon, but never

down by the river. It was beautiful. But I finished my run in the other direction.

3 Sept. 30: My wife and I went to Ithaca to celebrate our wedding anniversary and, look, I don't want to get all freshman-year dorm room about it, but have you ever been to Ithaca? Like, really been there? Despite owning the ubiquitous "Ithaca is Gorges" T-shirt, I had never taken the time to explore its gorges and waterfalls. As my son said after seeing Ithaca

Falls (150 feet high, 175 feet wide, in downtown): "This place looks like a screen saver."

2 April 9: With so many microclimates tucked away in Highland hollows and slopes, you can often find hints of the coming season. With the days getting longer, I set out on a 19-mile hike from my front door in Beacon to the summit of Bull Hill, and back by way of the Mount Beacon reservoir, Fire Tower, Squirrels Hollow and the Cornish Ruins. The air felt a little warmer, the colors a little richer, the light a little sharper. No visual signs of spring, but if you breathed deeply enough at the rushing brooks, you could catch a whiff of a warm, pungent sweetness of the soil.

1 Sept. 23: I had signed up for the inaugural Wild Goose 100-mile race across the New Jersey line in Wawayanda State Park. Shouldn't be too hot, the wildfire season is dying down, what could go wrong? Cue the tropical storm. Incredibly, the race was not canceled, and 50 of us lined up as the first tendrils of Tropical Storm Ophelia lashed the park. During the first mile, a runner yelled, "This storm will just make the stories we'll tell about this day that much better!" We all cheered. Twelve hours later, the same runner left in an ambulance.

Needless to say, things went downhill fast. The course consisted of three loops that we continually revisited, allowing us to appreciate how thoroughly the park was flooding. Puddles on one loop became rivers, bridges became reefs. Night fell and the temperature dropped. I had to quit at Mile 50 because I could not stop shaking. I was so thoroughly soaked I felt I might devolve into a prehistoric fish.

Why is that No. 1? Because slogging through that mess with 50 other idiots was a blast — all of us trying to cheer each other up, telling stories, giving advice and sharing snacks. In general, the longer a race, the less competitive it is. Maybe it's because we've all been humbled by failure, but it might be because we know that one of the best things about outdoor adventures are the people you share them with.

Here's hoping I see more of you out there in 2024.



HIGHLANDS CHAPEL
Home of the Highlands Choral Society

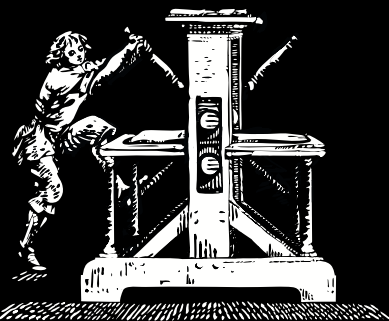
THIS SUNDAY:
MARC SABIN
"ENDINGS AND BEGINNINGS"
DEC 31@11:00AM
FOR WORSHIP REFLECTION & SONG

Jan 7 Mark Connell
Jan 14 Martin Luther King Sunday
Jan 21 Pete Salmansohn
Jan 28 Richard Gerber

The Highlands Choral Society is a nonprofit organization offering nondenominational services and community.

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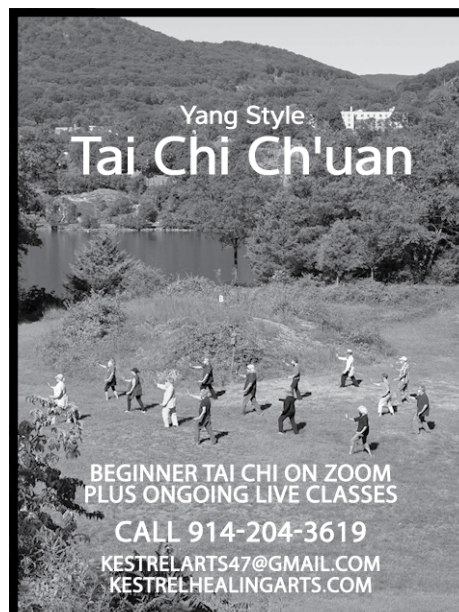
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MEETING

PHILIPSTOWN ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

The Philipstown Zoning Board of Appeals will hold their regular monthly meeting on Monday, January 8th, 2024 at 7:30 p.m. at the Philipstown Town Hall, 238 Main St., Cold Spring, NY.

If you are unable to join in person but would like to watch, the meeting will be livestreaming on [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com), search for Philipstown Zoning Board January 2024.

MEETING

PHILIPSTOWN CONSERVATION BOARD

The Philipstown Conservation Board will hold their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, January 9th, 2024 at 7:30 p.m. at the Philipstown Town Hall, 238 Main St., Cold Spring, NY.

If you are unable to join in person but would like to watch, the meeting will be livestreaming on [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com), search for Philipstown Conservation Board January 2024.



Peter Vetoulis
(1949-2023)

Peter J. Vetoulis a resident of Nelsonville, passed away peacefully on Saturday, Dec. 23, 2023 at Adira @ Riverside in Yonkers. He was 74 years old.

He was born on December 22, 1949 in the Bronx to the late Nicholas and Chryssoula Baltajis Vetoulis. Peter graduated from DeWitt Clinton High School in the Bronx and went on to Lehman College, Manhattan Community College and Empire State College. In 1974, at St. Brendan's Church in the Bronx, he married Barbara Ann Crowley.

He was a telephone technician for IBEW Local No. 3 for over 30 years. A proud U.S. Marine Corp veteran, Peter attended New York Law School while raising his family in Nelsonville and worked in private practice since being admitted to the New York Bar in 1991. He loved the New York Yankees and was a dedicated coach for the Philipstown Little League for many years. He was a hard worker with a great sense of humor who loved Halloween.

Peter was pre-deceased by his brother, Michael Nicholas, and is survived by his devoted wife of 50 years, Barbara, loving children, Michael Vetoulis, Christopher and his wife Abby Vetoulis, and William Vetoulis, as well as cherished grandchildren Lauren Katherine, Lukas Michael, Ava James and Levi Nicholas.

He is also survived by his sisters, Sevastoula Kasparian of Flushing, New York, and Mary Sole of Whitestone, New York, and numerous nieces and nephews.

The Devine Liturgy was celebrated on Friday, Dec. 29, 2023, at Saint Basil's Church, Garrison, New York. Interment followed with military honors in Cold Spring Cemetery.

PAID NOTICE



Classic Wheels

1968 Porsche 912 Coupe

By Michael Turton

While vintage vehicles tend to be “a guy thing,” Ed Preusser’s 1968 Porsche 912 coupe is a family affair.



Preusser’s father, Edward, bought the Porsche in 1976 for \$3,000 (about \$17,000 today) after seeing a classified ad in *The New York Times*.

When his father died in 2021, the Porsche became a prized possession for Ed, his younger brother, John, and his mother, Nora. “I like that our father bought it so long ago, and we kept it,” Preusser says. “It reminds me of him. We did most of the work on it, father-and-son stuff.”

Ed Preusser enjoys driving the Porsche to a sports car mecca that was one of his dad’s favorite haunts: Lime Rock Park in Lakeville, Connecticut, which opened in 1957. “My father went to Lime Rock a lot when it started,” he says. “He was just a teenager and it was there he got the sportscar racing bug.”

The elder Preusser owned a Porsche 356 and an Austin Healey 100 but put sports cars aside after he married and had children. But in 1976 the bug returned and he bought the Porsche 912 with 63,195 miles (it now has 85,572).

Preusser said the Porsche was in fair condition, although the engine was worn out and a previous owner had painted over the original white. “Chocolate brown was a big color in the late ’60s and early ’70s,” he notes.

Other than silver paint and two engine rebuilds (which gave the car a bit more power), the Porsche is original, including the interior. Preusser has taken care of routine maintenance such as on the brakes, clutch and gearbox. Parts were difficult to find in the ’80s but that changed when the 912 became a collectible.

THE SPECS

- MODEL:** 2-door coupe
- ASSEMBLY:** Stuttgart, Germany
- PRODUCTION YEARS:** 1965-69
- TOTAL PRODUCTION:** 32,000
- ENGINE (REBUILT):** air cooled, 4-cylinder, dual carburetor, 1720cc/105 cubic inch
- HORSEPOWER:** 120
- TRANSMISSION:** 4-speed floor manual
- TOP SPEED:** 130 mph
- FUEL ECONOMY:** 27.6 mpg
- 1968 PRICE:** \$4,700 (\$42,470 today)

Preusser takes exception to what he says is a misperception that the Porsche 356 and 912 are “glorified Volkswagens.” He says virtually no parts are interchangeable between the brands. The notion may have come about because Ferdinand Porsche also designed the Beetle.

Preusser said the 912 is not particularly fast, but he’s reached 125 mph at Lime Rock. “It’s an all-around easy car to drive, handles really good, stops really good and is a fun around-town car.”

Special versions of the Porsche 912 were built for the German autobahn police and the Dutch police. The 100,000th Porsche, built in 1967, was a 912 Targa delivered to the police in Baden-Württemberg, Germany.

After production of more than 30,000 Porsche 912s, the model gave way to the six-cylinder 914 in 1970. The 911 was reintroduced to the North American market as the 912E for the 1976 model year, with just over 2,000 produced.

Preusser is clear about any debate over the pronunciation of Porsche. “It’s *Por-sha*, not *Porsh*,” he says.



Start Reading Now

January book club selections

Abe Lincoln/Civil War Book Club

THURS 4, 7 P.M.
The Killer Angels, by Michael Shaara
Lincoln Depot Museum, 10 S. Water St., Peekskill
Email LincolnDepotFDN@gmail.com.

Mystery Book Club

WED 10, 7 P.M.
Blaze Me a Sun, by Christoffer Carlsson
Split Rock Books, Cold Spring
Register at splitrockbks.com.

Elementary Book Club (Grades 2-4)

WED 17, 3:15 P.M.
Zara's Rules for Record-Breaking, by Hena

Khan
Butterfield
Library, Cold
Spring
Register at
butterfieldli-brary.org/cal-endar.



Page-to Screen Book Club

THURS 18, 3 P.M.
Wonder Struck, by Brian Selznick
Desmond-Fish Public Library, Garrison
Register at desmondfishlibrary.org.

Butterfield Book Club

MON 22, 7 P.M.
Yellowface, by R.F. Kuang
Butterfield Library, Cold Spring
Register at butterfieldlibrary.org/calendar.

Librarian's Choice Book Club

WED 24, 3 P.M.
What You Are Looking For Is in the Library, by Michiko Aoyama
Desmond-Fish Public Library, Garrison
Register at desmondfishlibrary.org.

Beacon Book Club

THURS 25, 7:15 P.M.
The Hidden Place, by Helene Wecker
Oda Restaurant, Fishkill
Register at meetup.com/beacon-bookclub.

Housing *(from Page 1)*

that the owner live on-site and not use the unit for short-term rentals such as those booked through Airbnb. Projects can exceed 1,000 square feet if the apartment will be built in an existing accessory building constructed before Aug. 1, 1989.

The Planning Board reviews proposals for accessory dwelling units that are separate from an existing single-family home or change the footprint of the home. Beacon's building inspector can approve apartments within a single-family home.

Despite a setback before the Zoning Board of Appeals in June, Kristin Battersby and her father, Jeff Battersby, want to preserve the hoary 19th-century garage at the end of the driveway alongside the family's house on Willow Street. Their goal is to convert the crumbling, two-story structure into a 1,040-square-foot, one-bedroom rental apartment.

"It's a relic of Beacon gone by, so I'd love to keep it and make it affordable," said Kristin Battersby.

Affordability is not just a fading reality for low- and moderate-income families looking for housing in Beacon. Even a studio condo

“ It's a relic of Beacon gone by, so I'd love to keep it and make it affordable.

Kristin Battersby

in Beacon can cost more than the \$250,000 spent to construct her ADU, said Hlad.

The original plan on Walnut called for a 300-square-foot structure to comply with Beacon's limit on the amount of space allowed for the accessory building. Even though construction of the accessory unit required lopping off a third of the garage, they still exceeded the limit by 138 square feet.

But by the time they submitted their application to the Planning Board in April 2022, they had decided to increase the size, even though it meant having to seek a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals and the addition of six weeks to the approval process, said Ramsey.

The board granted the variance the next month and construction began in fall 2022. "If we're going to make this giant investment, and it's for the rest of our lives, it's



Kristin Battersby and her father, Jeff Battersby, want to transform a former garage into a one-bedroom apartment.

Photo by L. Sparks

worth the additional six weeks," he said.

Hlad agreed. She first started coming to Beacon for several months each summer to escape the Texas heat, but found herself staying longer. During the approval and construction process, she lived on the second floor of Ramsey and Donnelly's house, which had been a two-family residence with a second kitchen upstairs.

The ADU will be her residence for eight months out of the year, with the remaining four months spent with her other son in

Texas. Her social life includes volunteering with the Beacon Historical Society, reading essays at the monthly LitLit open mic at the Howland Cultural Center and worshipping at St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Garrison. "I have so many friends in Beacon," she said.

The Battersbys want to convert their garage into an apartment with a kitchen and living area downstairs, and a second-floor bedroom. The apartment would also help recoup the price of preserving the building, which has "beautiful, late-1880s architecture," said Kristin Battersby.

Their application to the Planning Board in October 2022 had two hurdles. The garage is built on property lines, without the rear and side setbacks required. Beacon also prohibits more than one main building on a residential lot, and the Battersby's house is already zoned for two families.

The Zoning Board of Appeals waived the setback requirements in July, but voted against allowing the conversion of the garage because a majority of the board said it would constitute a second main building.

The Battersbys remain committed to the project. "We're still working with the city and our architect to make it possible to rehab that building," said Jeff Battersby.

Lawsuit *(from Page 1)*

She gave the city 180 days to remove every migrant from the hotel. Rosa's order allows the county to continue inspecting the hotel and providing medical and other services to the migrants, who are seeking asylum in the U.S.

William F.X. O'Neil, Dutchess' departing county executive, said on Dec. 18 that "logic has prevailed" and that New York City "was wrong in its secretive and haphazard relocation of homeless asylum-seekers to Dutchess.

"We applaud Judge Rosa for her wise and thoughtful decision," he said. "She was not swayed by the hyperbole and sensation that has surrounded this case."

The number of migrants remaining at Red Roof is unknown, say Dutchess officials, because New York City and DocGo, the company hired to find them lodging, have been "unresponsive" to requests for infor-

mation. The county believes that "many have already chosen to return to New York City."

Dutchess County filed suit on May 19, two days before New York City began busing asylum-seekers to the Red Roof Inn.

With the filing, which also names the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, the owners of the Red Roof Inn and a Holiday Inn on Route 9 in the Town of Poughkeepsie, Dutchess joined a wave of emergency declarations and legal actions as counties in the Hudson Valley and upstate sought to prevent New York City from housing migrants in their hotels.

In July, Putnam County legislators, by a 7-1 vote, approved a law stipulating that "no municipality outside of Putnam County may offer or provide temporary housing within Putnam, thereby creating a homeless shelter, without first entering into a shared services agreement" with the county.

The vote enshrined as policy temporary

executive orders that County Executive Kevin Byrne began issuing in May as New York City started using hotels in the lower Hudson Valley to house migrants. Also in July, a state judge dismissed Putnam from a lawsuit filed by New York City against 30 counties because Byrne had not extended his executive order.

New York City began relocating migrants in the spring to alleviate pressure on its shelter system, which has filled with asylum-seekers. In August, Mayor Eric Adams said the city had sheltered and provided services to more than 100,000 migrants since April 2022.

At a Town Hall meeting in September, Adams said: "Let me tell you something, New Yorkers. Never in my life have I had a problem that I did not see an ending to — I don't see an ending to this. This issue will destroy New York City."

To free up space, New York State created

a \$25 million program to provide rental assistance to migrants willing to relocate to upstate counties. The state has also been pressing the federal government to expedite work authorizations for asylum-seekers so they can afford their own housing.

Gov. Kathy Hochul said in October that the state had identified more than 18,000 jobs available with 400 employers willing to hire migrants authorized to work in the U.S.

Attorney General Letitia James on Dec. 22 released a letter she and 18 other attorneys general sent to Alejandro Mayorkas, the secretary for Homeland Security. They urged him to address barriers to work permits, including fees and delays in processing applications.

"It is unconscionable that after all the suffering they've endured on their journey, they encounter bureaucratic roadblocks preventing them from pursuing the American dream," said James.

Current Classifieds

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Sports Bra Fairy Godmothers

Beacon-based project helps girls worldwide

By Joey Asher

Finding a good sports bra isn't easy if you're a female wrestler in the Alaskan village of Savoonga on Saint Lawrence Island in the Bering Sea.

But it's recently become easier because of Sarah Dwyer-Shick, a Beacon resident who founded the nonprofit Sports Bra Project to supply girls with otherwise limited access to the garments because of logistics, culture or economics.

The bras sent to the Savoonga wrestlers, who live 34 miles from Russia, are among 20,000 the project has distributed to 16 U.S. states and 35 countries since 2015.

"People often donate new and used baseballs, basketballs, soccer balls and cleats," says Dwyer-Shick, a former high school and college athlete who is director of coaching and recreation for the East Fishkill Soccer Club. "But sports bras need to be new and it's often one of those pieces of sports equipment that is forgotten."

That's because women's sports at all levels are mostly run and coached by men, says Dwyer-Shick. "Breasts are not something you talk about with your male coach. We want those in leadership to understand that you give the boys compression shorts and jockstraps, and you give the girls a bra. It's the same thing."

The organization collects bras from drives organized by organizations such as the Marist College women's basketball team or the Seattle women's pro soccer club, or by individuals such as the Manhattan teenager who collected more than 200 for her bat mitzvah project.

Dwyer-Shick founded the Sports Bra Project after traveling with Kickin' Back,



Young soccer players in Mexico display the sports bras they received from the project.

Photo provided

a Hudson Valley charity, to distribute sports equipment in Namibia, in southern Africa. On a whim, she brought 40 sports bras that she had purchased at Marshalls and TJ Maxx. While intended for girls in rural areas, she also gave them to members of the national soccer team. "There are a lot of countries where they're just adding women's soccer programs and they're underfunded," she says. The Sports Bra Project has since provided bras to five national soccer teams.

Dwyer-Shick distributes the bras from a one-room office in a building on Henry Street in Beacon. Aside from one part-time administrator, all involved, including the founder, are volunteers.

"We want to normalize the needs and experiences of female athletes," she says. "Talking about the sports bra as a piece of equipment does that."

A sports bra can be life-changing for a teenage girl, notes Tela O'Donnell Bacher, a high school wrestling coach who lives in Homer, Alaska, and distributes bras for the



project. The only child of a single mother, she showed interest in sports in the sixth grade. An aunt recognized the need and gave her a Nike bra for Christmas.

"It was teal with black piping," Bacher says. "I thought, 'Oh, my god, this is the coolest thing.'" The bra gave her the confidence to become a wrestler, and she went on to earn a spot on the first U.S. women's Olympic wrestling team, which competed in the 2004 games in Athens, Greece.

Bacher, who also works with the nonprofit Wrestle Like a Girl, attends Alaska wrestling competitions. When she sees a girl competing in a regular bra, she offers the coach a sports bra. Most male



Sarah Dwyer-Shick shows off donated sports bras at her Beacon office.

Photo by J. Asher

coaches don't speak to their athletes about sports bras, she said. "It's a difficult conversation to have," she says. But many coaches later contact her and ask for more bras.

In the past five years, Bacher has distributed about 600 sports bras in Alaska for the project and another 200 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, where she traveled for a girls' wrestling event.

"We get to be sports-bra fairy godmothers to all these girls and give them all these opportunities to feel comfortable in their skin while they do their sport," she says.

To learn more about the Sports Bra Project, or to donate, visit thesportsbraproject.org.

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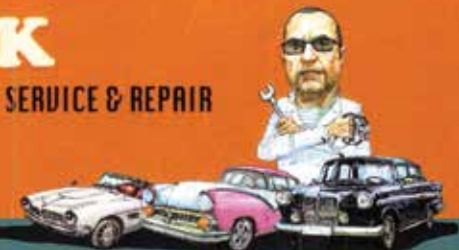
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Puzzles

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			

- ACROSS
1. Jog
5. Cry
8. Goblet feature
12. Stead
13. Spanish aunt
14. Tortoise’s opponent
15. Ride-sharing arrangements
17. Work units
18. Sixth sense
19. Forbidden acts
21. Stylish wrap
24. Flintstones’ pet
25. Comic strip possum
26. “Yellow” band
30. Where Lux. is
31. Primitive
32. Brit. record label
33. Slapstick missile
35. Perched on
36. Evergreens
37. Icky

38. Where Gauguin painted
41. Pen name
42. Out of the storm
43. Temporary lodging
48. Furnace fuel
49. Snaky fish
50. Jazzy Fitzgerald
51. Maintained
52. Lay down the lawn
53. Deli loaves
16. Sugary suffix
20. Tennis champ Murray
21. Detail, briefly
22. Go sightseeing
23. Shrek, for one
24. Writer Lessing
26. Whims
27. Jared of *Panic Room*
28. Book after “Joel”
29. Shrill barks
31. Send forth
34. Off course
35. Sagittarius
37. USO audience
38. Dash gauge
39. Skin soother
40. Make well
41. Hardly hirsute
44. Old Olds
45. Layer
46. Pub order
47. — *Kapital*

- DOWN
1. Pampering, for short.
2. Estuary
3. Not ’neath
4. Elvis’ birthplace
5. Halt
6. Texas tea
7. Historic French prison
8. Cyndi Lauper hit
9. Poi base
10. Thus
11. Disarray

SUDOCURRENT

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

WORDLADDER

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

BILLS

STARS

MICRO
CROSSWORD

- ACROSS
1. Comedian Kaling who played Kelly Kapoor on *The Office*
6. Ann _____, Michigan
7. “For _____!” (slangy “I’m not joking!”)
8. Online tech news site
9. Embroidered letters on a towel
- DOWN
1. Women’s History Month
2. Dunne of *I Remember*

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
9				

- Mama
3. Mav or Laker, briefly
4. Blockheads
5. Timeline divs.

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

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

	F	I	Z	Z
B	A	S	I	E
A	M	A	N	A
H	E	I	G	L
A	D	D	S	

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SEARS
STARS
STARE
STARK

Answers for Dec. 22 Puzzles

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Sports

VARSITY ROUNDUP

BEACON

By Nick Robbins

BOYS' BASKETBALL — Beacon lost on Dec. 21 to Monroe-Woodbury, 85-50, but snapped a four-game losing streak on Wednesday (Dec. 27) with a 74-68 victory over John Jay East Fishkill in the opener of the eight-team Duane Davis Christmas tournament at Lourdes. The Bulldogs (2-5) advanced to the semifinals on Thursday against Arlington. They travel to Monticello on Wednesday (Jan. 3).

GIRLS' BASKETBALL — Beacon moved to 5-0 after a 73-26 win over Sullivan West on Dec. 21 behind Reilly Landisi's 18 points and Rayana Taylor's 16 points and 13 rebounds. The Bulldogs hosted Saugerties on Thursday (Dec. 28) and travel to Spackenkill on Wednesday (Jan. 3). They have won each game by an average of 40 points.

WINTER TRACK — Damani DeLoatch won the triple jump at 43-11 and placed third in the long jump at 20-7 at the Section IX Holiday Classic at Washingtonville on Dec. 22. Jayden Mihalchik was sixth in the pole vault at 9-0 and Rubio Castagna-Torres placed 10th of 31 runners in the 55-meter hurdles. For the girls, Kyla Richardson was seventh of 52 runners in the 55-meter dash in 7.63.

The Bulldogs competed on Wednesday (Dec. 27) in the Pearl River Holiday Festival at Rockland Community College in Suffern. Jonah Mensch finished sixth of 116 competitors in the 300-meter dash in 39.72 and fourth among runners from smaller schools in the 55-meter hurdles in 9.49; August Wright was 10th of 22 runners in the 1,000-meter run in 3:04.82; and DeLoatch won the long jump among smaller schools at 20-02.

For the girls, Christine Robinson was 20th in 8.64 and Janaya Fluellen was 21st in 8.66 among 141 smaller-school competitors in the 55-meter dash. In the 200-meter dash, Fluellen was 25th among 130 runners in 31.87.

Beacon will compete today (Dec. 29) in The Armory High School Holiday Classic in New York City.

WRESTLING — The Bulldogs took part this week in the Mid-Hudson Tournament at Arlington High School. As of Wednesday (Dec. 27), Jude Betancourt had won four matches at 152 pounds, advancing to the second round. Avery Davis also went 4-0 at 170 pounds.



Za'layni Shand drives against Sullivan West on Dec. 21.

Photos by Cadence Heeter

HALDANE

By Jacob Aframian

BOYS' BASKETBALL — The Blue Devils traveled to Valhalla on Dec. 21, coming home with a 56-46 win. Haldane got off to a fast start, holding the Vikings scoreless for the first six minutes of the game and leading by nine points at the half and the end of the third quarter.

Valhalla fought back in the fourth quarter, cutting the Haldane lead to three points with three minutes left in the game. But the Vikings missed crucial free throws, which allowed Haldane to hang on.

Matt Nachamkin, who will play next season for Williams College, finished with 31 points, followed by Luke Bozsik, newly called up from the junior varsity squad, who scored 10 off the bench.

Coach Joe Virgadamo was happy with the win but said his Blue Devils need to continue to work on their rebounding.

Haldane (4-1) hosted Chester on Thursday

(Dec. 28) and will be at home again on Thursday (Jan. 4) against North Salem at 6:15 p.m.

WINTER TRACK — Haldane competed on Wednesday (Dec. 27) in the Pearl River Holiday Festival at Rockland Community College in Suffern. Jake Thomas was second among 75 runners from smaller schools in the 55-meter dash in 7.32, while Merrick Williams was sixth in 7.54. For the girls, Samantha Thomas was eighth among 141 small-school runners in the 55-meter dash in 8.39, followed by Anna Nelson at 10th in 8.46.

The Blue Devils travel on Thursday (Jan. 4) for a meet at Rockland Community College.

FREE-THROW CONTEST — The Knights of Columbus, Loretto Council, No. 536, will host their annual free-throw contest at 6 p.m. on Jan. 12 at the Philipstown Recreation Center in Garrison for Philipstown residents who are 9 to 14 years old as of Jan. 1, 2024. The winners in each division advance to the district competition. For an entry form, see bit.ly/536-free-throw or call Dan Dillon at 845-519-7769.



Daveya Rodriguez fires a jumper over a Sullivan West defender.

Pro Updates

Elijah Hughes, the Beacon native and Syracuse star who was a second-round pick in the 2020 NBA draft and played for Utah and Portland before signing with Milwaukee in 2022, is averaging 11 points per game in his second season with the Bucks' G League affiliate, the Wisconsin Herd. He scored 17 points on Wednesday (Dec. 27) in a win over the Long Island Nets.

Lenny Torres Jr., a Beacon High School grad who was selected by the Cleveland Guardians as the 41st pick of the 2018 Major League Baseball draft, was 5-2, with a 5.03 ERA, for Cleveland's High-A minor-league affiliate, the Lake County Captains. The 2024 season begins April 5.

Prospects to Pinstripes is a 5-minute documentary produced by Chris Bellando and Sean Mooddeen, students at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, for *The Current*. The film is about three former players for the Hudson Valley Renegades, the minor-league team based at Heritage Financial Park (Dutchess Stadium) near Beacon, who are playing for the New York Yankees: Austin Wells, Jasson Dominguez and Anthony Volpe. It's posted at highlandscurrent.org/prospects-pinstripes.



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