

The HIGHLANDS Current



Haldane's Miss New York
Page 2

JANUARY 26, 2024

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No Committees for Montgomery

Putnam sidelines Legislature's sole Democrat
By Leonard Sparks

Nancy Montgomery is not only the lone Democratic member of the Putnam County Legislature, she is now also the only legislator without a committee appointment.



Although the Legislature's eight Republicans appointed Montgomery, who represents Philipstown and part of Putnam Valley, to several boards during an organizational meeting on Jan. 2, Chair Paul Jonke of Southeast
(Continued on Page 8)

GIRL OVERBOARD — A pair of adventurers fit snugly into their sled at Winter Hill in Garrison on Jan. 20 for the trip down, but only one reached the bottom.
Photos by Ross Corsair

Governor's Budget Would Ding Beacon, Garrison

If approved, spending proposal lowers school aid, although Haldane OK

By Joey Asher

Beacon and Garrison are among more than 300 school districts that will receive less state aid in 2024-25 under Gov. Kathy Hochul's proposed budget, although Haldane in Cold Spring would see an increase.

The decreases are the result of a proposal by Hochul to change the formula used to calculate what is known as Foundation Aid,

a portion of state education funding that considers factors such as a district's relative wealth and the number of students it serves. Hochul would like to eliminate a Foundation Aid provision that guarantees districts will receive at least the same amount of aid as the year before, with an adjustment for inflation. In addition, she has proposed reducing that cost-of-living increase to 2.4

percent, from 4.1 percent. If the governor's changes are approved by the Legislature — which is far from certain — Beacon would lose about 3 percent of its state aid, or \$900,000, according to Ann Marie Quartironi, the district's deputy superintendent. The district received \$30.8 million in state aid for 2023-24, which
(Continued on Page 7)

	2023-24 Budget	Property Taxes	State Aid*
Beacon	\$81.3M	\$45.9M (56%)	\$30.8M (38%)
Haldane	\$28.2M	\$22.2M (79%)	\$4.3M (15%)
Garrison	\$12.6M	\$10.7M (85%)	\$1.1M (9%)

*Includes all sources of state aid. Each district also has other sources of revenue such as savings and tuition charged to out-of-district students.



This is how 46 Elk Road in East Fishkill looked in 2022 when Dutchess County sold it at auction for \$161,000.



This is 32 Dorn Road in Beekman in 2022, when Dutchess County sold it for \$165,000.

County Tax Sales in Limbo

Proceeds most now go to previous owners

By Leonard Sparks

The decades-old ability of New York counties to keep money from the auction of tax-delinquent properties is

in limbo after a U.S. Supreme Court decision last year in a Minnesota case found that the previous owners are entitled to the proceeds. Dutchess, Putnam and other counties are awaiting the fate of legislation proposed by Gov. Kathy Hochul in response to the Supreme Court's unanimous ruling in May. The court found that, although Hennepin

County had the right to sell for \$40,000 a house it took title to for \$15,000 in unpaid taxes, keeping the extra \$25,000 violated the "takings" clause in the Fifth Amendment. Hochul has proposed requiring that any proceeds remaining after overdue taxes are paid be turned over to the former owner and any lienholders. According to the New York State Association of Counties, the legislation would give
(Continued on Page 8)

Cold Spring Scores Funding Points

Among state leaders in clean-energy progress

By Michael Turton

Cold Spring is more than holding its own in a statewide race to secure grants for clean-energy initiatives. At the Wednesday (Jan. 24) workshop of the Village Board, Trustee Laura Bozzi reported that the village is currently ninth among 838 municipalities based on points it has earned as part of a state clean-energy program that determines priority for public funding. The Highlands is doing well in general in the fight to mitigate the greenhouse gases that contribute to climate change; Beacon is
(Continued on Page 7)

5Q

FIVE QUESTIONS: LAURA COSMA

By Erin-Leigh Hoffman

Laura Cosma, a 2020 Haldane graduate, is the reigning United States of America Pageant's Miss New York.

Was this your first pageant?

Yes, but I had this dream since I was a little girl to participate in one. I had gone to a dance studio to have some fun and practice my salsa moves and met a woman who had been runner-up for Miss New York USA. She introduced me to my pageant coach, Megan Swanson, who told me about the United States of America Pageant. It has fewer restrictions on who can participate than some of the bigger pageants, which is great for a first-time contestant. It's more inclusive. It has preliminary competitions in some states, but not in New York, so I had an interview with the pageant director.



Did you grow up in Cold Spring?

I am originally from Romania. I moved to Cold Spring with my family when I was 8 years old. I attended BOCES during high school [for vocational training] and became a licensed cosmetologist. After I graduated, I took a year off to figure out what I wanted to do with my life and who I was. I was doing hairdressing but decided to go to Westchester Community College for marketing.

What do you like about pageants?

They're a great way to develop your public speaking, build confidence and make friends. You need to work on yourself to compete. The interview is the most nerve-wracking part because you have to instantly deliver well-equipped responses. Pageants highlight a lot of the great things about women, especially with Miss USOA because there's no restrictions on how somebody looks.

As Miss New York, what are your responsibilities?

You are a role model, so it's making sure your brand reflects your values. People are watching you, especially young people. The sash and gown make you look so fancy, and people are going to pay attention. It's important that you reflect values that you want to be shared with the world. I am a Christian, so those include helping your neighbor, being a good Samaritan, making sure that you are kind and understanding. Growing up, I felt pressured to be tomboyish because I thought I would be more accepted or respected or my opinion would matter more if I was less girly. Breaking away from that and finding myself and my girliness and my power was important. That's the kind of a message that I would like to share to other people who may feel the same way.

Which charity are you working with?

The Hoving Home, a Christian organization centered around rebuilding the lives of women who are recovering from addiction, or have suffered from human trafficking and homelessness. [The Hoving Home has a campus in Garrison.] It's about 12 months for program completion, followed by six months of living a successful life outside of the program. What's great is that the majority of the staff are women who have completed the program. Given that it's a small charity, it often has issues with funding. I also volunteer, and I will be speaking at chapel in March. I'm going to talk about rebuilding your confidence, which is something I had to do growing up because I was a little bit of an outcast. There are some skills that nobody really teaches you.

ON THE SPOT

By Michael Turton

Do all things happen for a reason, or just happen?

“Existence is intentional, consensual, chaos.”



Ro West, Beacon

“Both. Free will is a thing; there is also a design.”



Robin Kidder, Beacon

“Things happen for a reason, not coincidence.”



Ray Wood, Garrison

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Bronx: Officer from Putnam Charged in Death

A New York City police officer from Mahopac was charged Tuesday (Jan. 23) with causing the death of a Bronx man by throwing a cooler as he fled an arrest on a motorized scooter.

Sgt. Erik Duran, 37, faces charges of second-degree manslaughter, criminally negligent homicide and first- and second-degree assault, all felonies, according to the state Attorney General's Office, which investigates deaths involving police officers.

Duran was working undercover on Aug. 23 when officers attempted to arrest Eric Duprey. When Duprey fled, Duran allegedly grabbed a cooler from a table and threw it, striking Duprey in the head. Duprey side-swiped a tree and hit his head on a curb; he was pronounced dead at the scene.

Annandale: Bard to Honor Banned Authors

The Eleanor Roosevelt Center and the Fisher Center at Bard College will present the first Eleanor Roosevelt Awards for Bravery in Literature at the college on Feb. 17. The awards were created in response to a rise in book banning, according to the centers.

The honorees will be Judy Blume for lifetime achievement; Maia Kobabe for *Gender Queer*; Alex Gino for *Melissa*; George Johnson for *All Boys Aren't Blue*; Laurie Halse Anderson for *SHOUT*; Mike Curato for *Flamer*; and Jelani Memory for *A Kids Book About Racism*.

The Mid-Hudson Library System, whose 66 members include the libraries in Beacon,

Cold Spring and Garrison, is a partner in the event. It said in a statement that any title appearing on the American Library Association's annual most-challenged books list is available to cardholders.

Kingston: Committee Drops Cease-Fire Resolution

The Laws and Rules Committee of the Common Council on Jan. 17 failed to advance a proposed resolution calling for a permanent cease-fire in Gaza.

Majority Leader Reynolds Scott-Childress questioned if the Common Council should express a view of the conflict. "The process of voting on this resolution will become increasingly adversarial," he said, according to the *Daily Freeman*. "We have already seen bitter acts of calling out others and taking sides and reducing an incredibly complex issue — reducing it to simple solutions."

Newburgh: City Council Backs Cease-Fire

The Newburgh City Council voted 5-0, with two abstentions, on Monday (Jan. 22) to support a resolution calling for a permanent cease-fire in Gaza, according to the *Mid Hudson News*.

The City Council heard from 40 speakers, including residents of Beacon, before its vote. The resolution calls on President Joe Biden, New York's senators, Rep. Pat Ryan, State Sen. Rob Rolison and Assembly Member Jonathan Jacobson to back a cease-fire.

New York City: Last of Newburgh Four Released

The last member of the "Newburgh Four," each sentenced to 25 years in federal prison for allegedly plotting to shoot down military planes at Stewart Air National Guard Base, among other crimes,

has been released.

James Cromitie was convicted, along with Laguerre Payen, David Williams and Onta Williams (who are not related), of terrorism charges in 2010. The latter three were released in July; a judge admonished the FBI for "inventing the conspiracy" while reducing their sentences to time served plus 90 days.

After Cromitie petitioned for "compassionate release," the judge reduced his sentence to time served plus 90 days, as she had for the other three defendants. She did not reverse his conviction.

Peekskill: Cyber Criminal Avoids Prison

A federal judge in Virginia on Jan. 10 sentenced a Peekskill man accused of enabling the sale of stolen databases to two years of house arrest with GPS monitoring.

Conor Fitzpatrick, 21, will remain on supervised release for 18 more years, until he turns 41, according to the *Peekskill Herald*. In addition, he will not be allowed to access the internet for a year.

Federal prosecutors asked for a sentence of at least 15 years. Fitzpatrick was arrested in Peekskill in March 2023 and pleaded guilty in July to federal charges of offering stolen databases for sale on a site he created called BreachForums.

Port Jervis: First Black Council Member Sworn In

This city in western Orange County on Jan. 1 swore in its first nonwhite council member, reported the *Mid Hudson News*.

Jacqueline Dennison, 63, a lifelong resident who is Black, is a teaching assistant in the Middletown school district. A Democrat, she said she may have been the first nonwhite person to run for a seat. She expressed hope that Port Jervis would someday elect its first female mayor; Elizabeth Miller was defeated in November.

NEWS BRIEFS

Ryan Launches Valentines for Vets

Cards must be postmarked by Feb. 7

Rep. Pat Ryan, whose U.S. House district includes Beacon, has launched his second annual Valentines for Vets program.

Supporters should mail or bring Valentine's Day cards to his office at 605 Broadway, Newburgh, NY 12550 to be distributed to veterans. They must be postmarked by Feb. 7. Packets with multiple cards should include a sheet of paper indicating how many are enclosed.

Former Garrison Resident Charged With Assault

Allegedly attempted to escape from custody

Julie E. Marcinak, 28, a former Garrison resident, has been charged with assaulting two Dutchess County jail guards

during what the Sheriff's Office says was an attempted escape on Dec. 7.

The sheriff said Marcinak attacked the guards at Mid-Hudson Regional Hospital, where she had been taken for treatment. She was charged with assault, attempted assault and attempted escape, all felonies.

Marcinak, who lives in Highland Falls, was arrested in Newburgh on Dec. 4 in connection with two armed robberies in the Town of Poughkeepsie.

Open Space Names CEO

State parks commissioner accepts job

The Open Space Institute has named Erik Kulleseid, a Garrison native who is commissioner of New York State Parks, as its new president and CEO.

Kulleseid earlier spent eight years at the land conservation nonprofit, which since 1974 has preserved more than 2.4 million acres in the eastern U.S. and Canada.

He succeeds Christopher "Kim" Elliman,

who retired after serving as president and CEO since 2004. Kulleseid was the deputy commissioner for open space protection at New York State Parks before being named commissioner in 2019.



Erik Kulleseid

Red Hook: Church Campus Sells for \$14 Million

A 260-acre property that was once a seminary for the Unification Church founded by the Rev. Sun Myung Moon has been purchased by Bard College for \$14 million, according to the *Mid Hudson News*.

Moon was a messianic leader from Korea who said that Jesus appeared to him when he was 16 to anoint him to complete his work. Moon founded the church in Seoul in 1954; the seminary opened in 1975 and closed in 2019, when it relocated to New York City.

Carmel: Kent Man Convicted After Overdose Death

A 47-year-old Kent resident was convicted by a jury on Jan. 17 of selling heroin and fentanyl after being tied to a fatal overdose in Southeast.

According to the Putnam County district attorney, investigators connected drugs sold by William E. Mancusi III to the death, which occurred in November 2021. Undercover officers then purchased a potent mix of heroin, fentanyl and xylazine from Mancusi.

Mancusi will be sentenced on March 5. He faces up to 24 years in prison. According to the DA, Mancusi was convicted in 2014 of driving while impaired by drugs and in 2008 of operating a motor vehicle while impaired by drugs following a collision in which he killed a bicyclist in Dutchess County.



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Home of the Highlands Choral Society

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FOR WORSHIP
REFLECTION
& SONG

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Feb 11	James Hoch
Feb 18	Ron Sopyla
Feb 25	Jeff Golden

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

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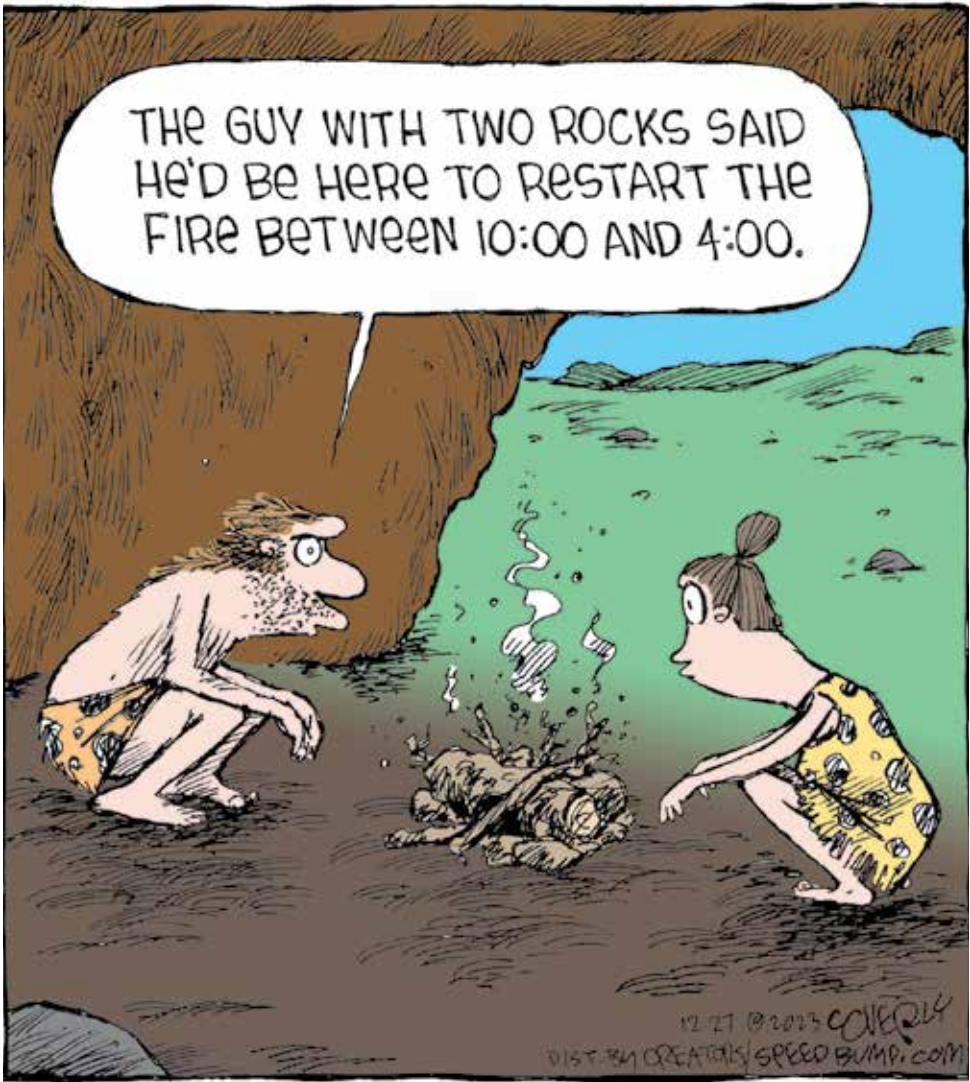
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The Current welcomes letters to the editor on its coverage and local issues. Submissions are selected by the editor (and can include comments posted to our social media pages) to provide a variety of opinions and voices, and all are subject to editing 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.

Correction

In an article in the Jan. 19 issue, we reported that Keith Hershberger had produced plays in Rochester, Michigan. In fact, it was Rochester, New York. In addition, the full name of the honor he won in 1983 for *The Watched Pot* was the Jane Chambers Memorial International Gay Playwrights Award.



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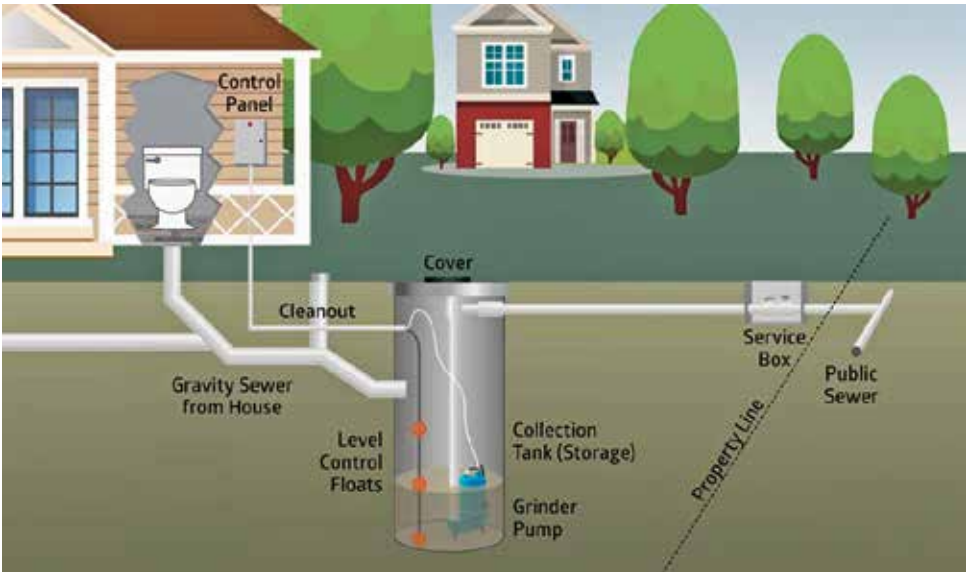
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An illustration by LaBella Associates shows how a grinder pump would work.

Nelsonville Gets Sewer Options

Feasibility study outlines funding challenges
By Leonard Sparks

A consultant is recommending that Nelsonville pursue a \$6.5 million sewer system in which grinder pumps installed at 171 properties would pipe waste to a pressurized main feeding into Cold Spring’s wastewater system.

LaBella Associates’ finalized sewer feasibility study for Nelsonville, released last month, concluded that a traditional gravity-fed system costing \$7.5 million was not feasible because of the hilly terrain such a system would have to traverse to connect to Cold Spring.

The firm estimated that the pumps, which would grind up solid waste collected in an underground tank on each property and pipe it to a central main, would cost \$7,000 each.

Their installation, and the removal of each property’s existing system, would be covered by the initial funding, but owners would be responsible for maintaining and replacing the pumps, which concerned Village Board members during a discussion of the study on Jan. 17.

A third option combining gravity-fed pipes with two pumping stations — one near Main Street and Billy’s Way, the other near Bank Street and Peekskill Road — would compensate for the hilly terrain but cost \$9.1 million, making it the most expensive option.

Choosing to go with pumping stations would also require buying land from “agreeable” property owners, said Mayor Chris Winward. “That in itself is not impossible, but time-consuming potentially,” she said.

Each option would replace the privately owned cesspools, leach fields and septic tanks that village residents use for waste. Because Nelsonville is located in a valley with poor stormwater drainage, those methods, if not maintained, can contaminate nearby surface and groundwater sources, according to LaBella.

Preventing that by connecting to Cold Spring’s system would send an estimated 80,000 additional gallons of wastewater each day to the village’s treatment plant, which has a capacity of 500,000 gallons and treats an average of 290,000 daily. Cold Spring already supplies the 171 Nelsonville

properties with drinking water.

“This is a time bomb out here — all these cesspools,” said Thomas Campanile, a member of Nelsonville’s Village Board. “We’ve got to do something.”

LaBella’s 39-page report, available at bit.ly/nelsonville-sewer-study, also outlines the challenges Nelsonville faces in qualifying for grants to subsidize all or part of the costs.

The village’s relative wealth (\$113,333 annual median household income) and the health of Foundry Brook affect how high it would score on applications for grant programs that prioritize communities that have lower incomes or have waterways that are threatened by wastewater contamination.

LaBella recommended that Nelsonville apply for funding through the state’s Water Infrastructure Improvement Act, which provides grants for drinking water and wastewater projects and awarded \$378 million in December.

Winward said that the funding landscape outlined by LaBella, which also suggests the village consider short- and long-term loans, “was not as rosy as we were first told it might be.”

“I would guess, we wouldn’t be at a place of deciding what to do for a year and a half to two years,” she said. “Without knowing what the financing will look like, we couldn’t bring a final decision to the residents.”



The Watched Pot

an original play
written and directed by
Keith D. Hershberger

Jan.26-Feb.4

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PHILIPSTOWN AGING AT HOME 2024 Winter Programs

Philipstown Aging at Home announces its new season of programs aimed at creating community among seniors. Whether it’s for shared interests like reading or crafting or whether it’s just getting together to talk over concerns, we can all benefit by getting out of our houses and being with friends — old and new.

PAAH is an all-volunteer organization driven by the shared benefit of neighbors helping neighbors. We invite you to join us. Email us at info@paah.net, tell us what you’re interested in and any questions you might have. Our programs are led both by practiced professionals and by fellow seniors with a passion to share. In all cases, the emphasis is on fun, connection and a sense of accomplishment.

- KNITTING**

Leader: Sara Yano | Crocheting and other hand work | Desmond Fish Library
An informal group for handcrafters (not an instruction group) | Starts Mon. Feb. 12, 2:00p
- SPANISH**

Instructor: Vanessa Maldonado | Beginning Spanish |
Every other Tuesday 11AM | Starts Feb. 20 | Butterfield Library
- HIKING**

Leader: Claudio Marzollo | Short, flat hikes
Timing to be announced. Weather dependent.
- WEEKLY BOOK GROUP**

Leader: Sara Yano | In depth reading of book chosen by group.
Thursdays 11:00a | Butterfield Library
- MEMOIR WRITING, SECTION 1 (FULL)**

Leader: Carolyn Ricapito | Monday, 10:30 AM
6 weeks starting January 8 | 25 Butterfield Road, Building B, Cold Spring
- MEMOIR WRITING, SECTION 2**

Leader: Celia Barbour | 8 week program
Tuesdays 3:00 to 4:15p | Starts Feb. 27 | Butterfield Library
- SENIOR SUPPORT GROUP, SECTION 1**

Leader: Susan Freeman | Wednesday, 1:15 to 2:45p | Butterfield Library | **FULL**
- SENIOR SUPPORT GROUP, SECTION 2**

Leader: Susan Freeman | Thursdays, 1:00 to 2:30p | Butterfield Library
- MORE TO OUR STORY**

Leader: Kate Czajkowski | The return of our hugely successful story telling program.
Time, date and location to be announced.
- ANCESTRY**

Leader: Martha Callaway | Dates and Times individually scheduled. | Butterfield Library
Learn how to use the internet and other sources to figure out where you came from working one-on-one with an experienced genealogist to discover your family tree
- TOPFIELD EQUESTRIAN CENTER**

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PAAH Board of Directors: John Allen, Ellen Raphael Collins, Susan Freeman, Martee Levi, Carol Marquand, Claudio Marzollo, Sheila Rauch, Hope Scott Rogers and Sara Yano

Beacon Debates Parking Standards

Also, city administrator criticized over reaction to Gaza protest

By Jeff Simms

The Beacon City Council heard from about a dozen residents during a public hearing on Monday (Jan. 22) on a proposal to eliminate minimum parking requirements for new developments.

Their feedback was split. The proposed law would not apply to single- or two-family homes or accessory dwelling units (ADUs), which make up about 80 percent of the city. But on Main Street and in other commercial areas, it would end the requirement that new developments or substantially rebuilt sites provide a minimum number of parking spaces.

Instead, the Planning Board would have flexibility to determine the number of spaces required based on conditions such as comparable uses, location, walkable access to public transit and the size of the parcel. Single- and two-family houses would still need to provide at least one space per dwelling unit, down from two in the current code. The requirement for ADUs of one space per unit would not change.

The hearing was adjourned until Feb. 20, but council members said they plan to discuss the legislation during a workshop before then.

The move is being considered as the city tries to encourage walkability and reduce the environmental impacts of vehicles. More than 200 municipalities nationwide, including Hudson and Kingston in the Hudson Valley, have dropped minimum parking requirements. Some housing advocates believe that rents will decrease if the expense of acquiring or constructing spaces is removed.

Elaine Ciaccio, a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals, told the Beacon council that she believed the change would push more parked cars into adjoining residential neighborhoods. She also said that decisions about parking supply should not be left to developers and the Planning Board without guidelines in place.

"Why are we giving benefits to develop-

ers without some return?" she asked, noting that "maybe you can get by without a car, but it's really difficult."

Kevin Byrne, a Planning Board member, suggested that the law, if adopted, would become a "practical impediment" toward having the city's interests defended in the planning process. In the absence of minimums, he said that a developer could hire a consultant to provide evidence for the amount of parking the developer wants to provide.

If that happens, the Planning Board would not be "in a position to make a counterproposal or start doing urban planning studies," he said. Byrne predicted that developers would build more units if they did not have to set aside land for parking.

“Putting hands on other people, destroying their property, keeping them from speaking their piece — those are behaviors I wouldn’t allow in my fifth-grade classroom.”

~ Chiara DiLello

Steven Higashide, director of the Clean Transportation Program for the Union of Concerned Scientists, countered that "the evidence is actually very strong that ending parking minimums helps us chip away at the affordable housing crisis." Higashide said that parking adds 17 percent to the average apartment rent and cited an American Planning Association report that said studio apartments in Minneapolis, which began eliminating parking requirements in 2015, had fallen by 2018 from \$1,200 per month to less than \$1,000.

Parking standards are a "blunt tool rooted in a limited set of old data that mostly has been collected in places that are much more suburban than Beacon," he said.

Hayley Richardson, who works for TransitCenter, a foundation that supports public transportation, agreed, calling parking minimums "outdated policies from last century" that make it difficult to plan for anything other than cars. "Adopting this policy is a first step, not a silver bullet," she said. "We have

a lot of work to do to make our city a place where you can truly live without a car."

Richardson encouraged the city to provide better sidewalks, safe bike paths and reliable public transit to make it easier for residents to drive less.

Swearing-in protest

City Administrator Chris White was criticized by residents who said they disapproved of his behavior in response to protesters who interrupted a swearing-in ceremony on Jan. 6 at the Memorial Building.

Before the mayor and council members took their oaths, county and state elected officials each offered general comments. When Rep. Pat Ryan, whose U.S. House district includes Beacon, began to speak, four protesters in medical masks, demanding that Ryan support a cease-fire in Gaza, attempted to unfurl a banner in the back of the room; White and several veterans blocked the group and held the banner so it could not be opened.

As police and some of the veterans escorted the shouting protesters from the room, White wrested a cardboard sign from one of them.

On Monday, Arthur Camins spoke to the council about the "long, honorable history of civil disobedience" in the U.S. by citizens campaigning for social justice and human rights causes. Camins said he felt "shock, grave concern and deep disappointment that a civilian member" of the city government "took it upon himself to forcibly intervene in a peaceful, citizen-led action."

Another speaker, Chiara DiLello, who said she is a teacher, called White's role in the incident "chilling, actually, considering what it implies," and asked the council for an assurance that it would not be repeated. "Putting hands on other people, destroying their property, keeping them from speaking their piece — those are behaviors I wouldn't allow in my fifth-grade classroom," she said.

Later in the meeting, Mayor Lee Kyriacou spoke frankly about the event. Kyriacou said he has "unwavering support for the First Amendment," but noted that elected officials and others in attendance had "expressed concern that people dressed in dark dress and wearing dark masks and not identifying themselves made them feel unsafe."

"That doesn't mean we can't have peaceful protest, but we actually have to work together to make it work," he said. The

mayor said that his wife, who is concerned for his safety, keeps a record of violent episodes involving elected officials, including two last year, when members of two New Jersey borough councils were killed in shootings one week apart.

He spoke also about his two adult daughters, who attended the swearing-in and are both autistic. His youngest daughter was traumatized, he said, when protesters gathered outside his home in 2020 and, "as a result of this event, she has a new item to persevere on."

"We need to work out a way that everyone, and not just the protesters, feels safe," Kyriacou said. "We need to do it in a way that respects people with disabilities and respects all of us. It needs to be a dialogue and it's not a one-way conversation."

The mayor said he was addressing White's behavior as a personnel issue and had "already acted on it."

In other business...

■ Kyriacou named Yvonne Caruthers, Stephen Clair, Garrett Duquesne, Nick Guertin, Jay Healey, Atticus Lanigan, Brent Spodek, Brent Stapleton, Olga Tirado and Jan Worthy to the newly created Fishkill Avenue Concepts Committee. The group, which will develop ideas and advise the City Council on access, zoning, streetscapes and viewsheds along Fishkill Avenue, will be chaired by J.C. Calderon. It is expected to complete its work in six to nine months.

■ The council named Pam Wetherbee, the Ward 3 representative, as acting mayor, which means she will preside over meetings if Kyriacou is unable to attend.

■ The council agreed to extend for two years the special-use permit it first granted the 246-unit Edgewater apartment complex in 2018. According to the developer, three of the seven buildings will be ready in March, and construction on the remaining four will begin in June.

■ The owner at 925 Wolcott Ave., the site of the single-room occupancy boarding-house that was destroyed a year ago by arson, has withdrawn his request that the Zoning Board of Appeals rule on whether he can only build a single-family home on the lot, in accordance with the zoning code and a ruling by the building inspector. The lot is listed for sale for \$279,000.



JAN. 27TH 3:00P

St. Mary's Parish Hall:
*Endangered Sturgeon In The Hudson:
Secrets From Fisheries*
Biologist Amanda Higgs
Register at www.putnamhighlandsaudubon.org

FEB. 3RD 10:00A - 2:00P

Eagle Viewing At Boscobel
www.boscobel.org/events/eagle-viewing/

MARCH 9TH 2:00P

Desmond-Fish Library
*New England Cottontail Rabbits:
Can They Be Saved?*
Dr. Susan Booth-Binczik

Schools *(from Page 1)*

represents about 38 percent of its \$81.3 million in revenue.

In Garrison, the district would lose 17 percent of its overall state funding, or about \$200,000, according to Carl Albano, the interim superintendent. For 2023-24, the district received \$1.1 million from the state toward its \$12.6 million budget.

“ Gov. Hochul is reneging on her promise to fully fund Foundation Aid to our schools.

~ Assembly Member Jonathan Jacobson

Haldane's overall state funding would increase. The district anticipated a 5.6 percent increase in Foundation Aid for 2024-25, or an additional \$157,000 to the \$2.8 million it received for this academic year, according to Superintendent Philip Benante. Under Hochul's formula, Haldane's overall state aid for 2024-25 would jump to \$4.7 million, an increase of nearly \$300,000, said Catherine Platt, the district's business manager. Haldane's budget for 2023-24 is \$28.2 million.

While Hochul's budget would increase

overall school spending by 2.4 percent, to \$825 million, that is \$375 million short of what was anticipated before the proposed revisions to the formula, according to the Association of School Business Officials of New York. As a result, about 45 percent of school districts would experience a decrease in state funding, the ASBO said.

Now the negotiations begin with the Legislature. Its members in the Assembly and Senate who represent the Highlands quickly objected to the proposed changes.

“Gov. Hochul is reneging on her promise to fully fund Foundation Aid to our schools,” said Assembly Member Jonathan Jacobson, a Democrat whose district includes Beacon, while Assembly Member Dana Levenberg, a Democrat whose district includes Philipstown, said the proposal “would force school districts to choose between making cuts or raising taxes.”

“How can the governor claim to advance educational ‘equity’ when she’s taking the most basic resources away from children?” said State Sen. Rob Rolison, whose district includes the Highlands.

Speaking Monday night at the meeting of the Beacon school board, Superintendent Matt Landahl said that the governor's budget should be viewed as “the opening of a negotiation.” He added: “This is far from done.”

among the 401 municipalities registered that can achieve bronze (122, including Philipstown and Dutchess County), silver (10, including Beacon) and gold status.

Bozzi said she hopes the village can meet the criteria by spring to apply for bronze certification. Actions undertaken in Climate Smart Communities also earn points in the NYSEDA program.

Participation “makes Cold Spring more competitive for state environmental grants, including support in addressing the significant flooding we’ve been experiencing and to repair our high-hazard dams,” Bozzi explained in an email.

Planning has already begun for a number of potential Climate Smart projects, ranging from installing LED streetlights and creating forestry programs to green parking lot policies and climate-related public events.

Cold Spring already qualifies for Climate Smart points through actions such as joining Hudson Valley Community Power, a program that supplies the village with electricity purchased from renewable sources.

“This is an opportunity for transformative funding and statewide recognition,” Bozzi wrote. “Our challenge is to move quickly to access the funds before they’re exhausted, but we’re well on our way.”

She noted the programs can be leveraged for grants for infrastructure investments to better manage storms and other climate impacts.

The board on Wednesday created a Climate Smart Task Force, with Bozzi as its coordinator, to advise the Village Board on the NYSEDA and DEC programs. The board also appointed Erik Brown, John Lane, Hass Murphy, Shamala Kandiah Thompson and Paul Thompson, each of whom serves on Philipstown's task force.

Haldane Moves Forward with \$28.4 Million Plan

If approved by voters, taxes would increase 8%

By Joey Asher

The Haldane school district is moving forward with a proposed \$28.4 million capital project that, if approved by voters, would raise school taxes by 7.97 percent over three years.

Phase I of the plan includes a 17,300-square-foot addition to the high school and extensive infrastructure and safety projects, including secure vestibules for the classroom buildings, roof repairs, electrical system improvements, traffic circulation upgrades, faculty bathrooms, upgraded fire alarms, additional Americans with Disabilities Act compliance and the replacement of public-address systems, clocks and security cameras.

Superintendent Philip Benante said that the district is planning to put the project before voters in the fall. At the Tuesday (Jan. 23) meeting of the school board, he received informal approval to finalize costs. The five-member board must vote to put the project before voters at least 45 days before a referendum, Benante said.

At the meeting, board members acknowledged the challenge of getting the public to approve a tax increase.

“We have our work cut out for us to communicate as effectively as we can about why we believe a project of this scope and size is critical at this point,” said Peggy Clements, the president.

“I do acknowledge the challenge,” said Trustee Sean McNall. “I’m confident and feel this is the right thing for us to do.”

“It’s so necessary,” said Maggie Valentine, the vice president. “I look forward to seeing improved conditions in a lot of the spaces. It’s about time.”

Adopted in October, the district's three-phase master plan includes \$108 million in capital improvements over 15 years and is designed to bring its facilities in line with districts that are comparable in quality and size.

According to CSArch, the Newburgh architecture firm that drafted the plan, Haldane's facilities are undersized at 148 square feet per student, compared with 205 square feet in similar area schools. After completion of the entire plan, the district would have 208 square feet per student, according to CSArch.

When originally proposed in September, the cost of Phase 1 was \$35.7 million and would have raised taxes by 10.5 percent.

The district cut out plans to replace the HVAC system in the main building. Several community members had spoken against the proposed HVAC system because it wasn't sufficiently carbon-neutral. The district is studying alternatives. The district has also cut plans for outdoor pavilions.

The second and third phases of the Master Plan would add 29,000 square feet of indoor space and include a gymnasium and 350-seat auditorium at the high school and a fitness and wellness center in the building that houses the elementary and middle schools.

Benante has said that the later phases could be timed for implementation as the first phase is being completed, minimizing further tax increases.

Funding *(from Page 1)*

ranked 13th and Philipstown is 25th.

Bozzi is spearheading grant-writing for proposed village projects which, if approved by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSEDA), would not require matching funds from the municipality.

Cold Spring has already received grants totaling \$35,000 for initiatives such as installation of LED lighting at the water treatment plant, four electric-vehicle charging stations, an energy audit of Village Hall, street tree plantings, a food scrap pilot program and a pollinator garden at Tot's Park.

The approvals for those projects earned the village 6,100 points under the Clean Energy Communities Program. By surpassing 5,000 points, Cold Spring qualified for a \$100,000 grant to spend on projects that it must submit within the next few months.

If the village reaches 7,000 points, it will be eligible for another \$175,000 grant; at 9,000 points, the prize is a \$250,000 grant.

“We can do it,” Bozzi said. “But it’s a race against everybody else and before Oct. 1, 2024, when funding levels decrease.” The program, which has \$25 million to distribute, ends Dec. 31, 2025.

The Wednesday workshop included a preliminary discussion of how the \$100,000 grant might be used, such as an electric vehicle for the Water Department, a charging station at the water treatment plant, solar arrays on village-owned buildings and energy improvements at Village Hall.

The program is distinct from the Climate Smart Communities initiative created by the state Department of Environmental Conservation. Cold Spring, Nelsonville, Philipstown and Beacon are

Audit: Garrison School Needs Tighter Digital Security

By Joey Asher

The Garrison school district has made several upgrades to its information technology systems in response to a routine cybersecurity audit conducted by the Office of the New York State Comptroller, according to Carl Albano, the interim superintendent.

The comptroller issued a report on Jan. 19 in which it determined that “district officials did not adequately secure the district's network user accounts, establish physical controls, maintain complete and accurate inventory records for IT equipment or develop an IT contingency plan.”

The comptroller conducts IT audits at a sampling of districts each year. Haldane was audited in 2019-20 (after which 74 dormant user accounts were deleted) and Putnam Valley in 2022. In addition, the agency audited the Beacon and Haldane district websites in 2018-19.

The Garrison audit, which covered July

2021 to January 2023, concluded that staff did not have sufficient documentation or guidance to respond to an unexpected IT disruption or disaster. It also found that 40 of the 115 enabled non-student user accounts, or 35 percent, were no longer needed, and that 10 assets, including nine laptops and a printer, were not properly recorded in an inventory.

Albano said the district found the audit helpful in identifying ways to improve digital security. “They pointed out a few things that we were not aware of,” he said. “But 90 percent of the things they pointed out we expected.”

Albano said that the district has addressed key issues identified by the comptroller and is now using two-step authentication for log-ins. It also has moved much of its data off-site to a more secure facility in White Plains operated by the Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES).

“Today we believe we’re in very, very good shape,” he said.

Montgomery *(from Page 1)*

kept her off the seven Legislature committees whose rosters are filled by appointments.

Nearly all resolutions that reach the Legislature must first be approved by at least one of the three-person standing committees. While each Republican legislator received assignments to two or three committees, Montgomery will sit in 2024 only on the Budget and Finance Committee, which includes every legislator.

Montgomery is not the first legislator to be shut out of committee assignments. In January 2017, Ginny Nacerino of Patterson, who chaired the Legislature, did not assign a fellow Republican, Dini LoBue of Mahopac, to any committees. LoBue, who lost her bid for reelection later that year, often sparred with her colleagues.

Montgomery, who is in her second, 3-year term, said on Wednesday (Jan. 24) that her exclusion “confirms that this Legislature continues to chip away at the very tenets of democracy.”

“Regardless, I will be present at these committee meetings as I always have, making my voice heard as I always have, and always pulling back the curtain for a more transparent government,” said Montgomery, who is urging supporters to speak up at the Legislature’s next meeting on Feb. 6.

In a letter to Montgomery dated Thursday (Jan. 25) that Jonke shared with *The Current*, he said he had not assigned her to any committees because of what he claimed

Committee Assignments

Dutchess County Legislature

- Nick Page** (D)
(Beacon Wards 1, 2, 3)
- *Environment | Government Services and Administration*
- Yvette Valdés Smith** (D)
(Beacon Ward 4)
- *Minority Leader (ex-officio on all committees)*

State Assembly

- Dana Levenberg** (D)
(Philipstown)
- *Corrections | Environmental Conservation | Housing | Libraries and Education Technology | Local Governments*
- Jonathan Jacobson** (D)
(Beacon)
- *Cities | Corporations, Authorities and Commissions | Election Law | Insurance | Labor | Local Governments*

Putnam County Legislature

- Nancy Montgomery** (D)
(Philipstown/Putnam Valley)
- *None*

State Senate

- Rob Rolison** (R)
(Highlands)
- *Aging | Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Disorders | Cannabis | Children and Families | Cities 2 (upstate/smaller) | Crime Victims, Crime and Correction | Procurement and Contracts*

U.S. Congress

- Mike Lawler** (R)
(District 17, including Philipstown)
- *Financial Services | Foreign Affairs*
- Pat Ryan** (D)
(District 18, including Beacon)
- *Armed Services | Transportation and Infrastructure*

was her “inability to work collaboratively, and to act professionally and collegially.”

He accused Montgomery of eight violations, including “flagrantly disregarding” the rules of order, “failing to confine your comments to the merits of the question”; “failing to maintain a courteous tone”; “injecting personal notes into debate, including personal attacks”; and “speaking more than once on a subject before every other legislator choosing to be heard on the subject has spoken without having received the permission of the chair to do so.”

Further, he said, Montgomery had disparaged past actions by the Legislature and engaged in unspecified activities that “disturbed meetings or that hampered the transaction of business.”

He also accused Montgomery of impugning the integrity of the Republican legislators

by “accusing them of acting solely for political reasons, when it is glaringly obvious that so many of your actions are entirely political.”

Citing the fact that the eight Republican members meet in caucus outside of public meetings, he said Montgomery had been guilty of wrongly accusing the majority of “improper conduct even after you have been provided with conclusive authority that such discussions are entirely proper, ethical and protected by state law.”

Jonke concluded that Montgomery’s training and experience “were outweighed by your lack of professionalism” and that she was “unfit” for any standing committee.

Montgomery has battled for committee appointments since she began representing District 1 in 2019.

In February 2021, the chair, Toni Addonizio of Kent, removed her from the

Personnel Committee, one of two she served on, along with Economic Development & Energy, in 2019 and 2020.

Successive chairs have ignored her requests to be appointed to the Health, Social, Educational and Environmental Committee and the Protective Services Committee. She argued she was well qualified for them based on her experience managing group homes for the developmentally disabled, volunteering for the Philipstown Ambulance Corps and dispatching 911 calls.

She was re-appointed to the Economic Development & Energy Committee in 2021 and 2022 and then removed and appointed to Physical Services in 2023. Her predecessor, Barbara Scuccimarra, a Republican, chaired the Health Committee and served on the Physical Services Committee in 2016, 2017 and 2018 and also served on the Rules Committee in 2016.

Montgomery renewed her request to be appointed to the Health and Protective Services committees on Wednesday in a letter to Jonke.

“You know the committees that I have requested and continue to ignore me,” she wrote. “This year you have chosen to diminish any hope for democracy and eliminate me from any appointed committee.”

Jonke did name her to be the Legislature’s representative to the state’s Forest Practice Board for Region 3, and to its Fish and Wildlife Management Board. She was also appointed to the county’s Capital Projects Committee because it is required to have a member from the minority political party.

During the organizational meeting, Montgomery nominated herself to replace Nacerino as Jonke’s nominee to represent the Legislature on the Putnam County Fire Advisory Board, with Legislator Erin Crowley as alternate.

Montgomery said that she was “not confident” that Nacerino had the emergency-management qualifications to represent the Legislature on the board, but no other legislator seconded her motion and Nacerino’s nomination was approved.

HOWLAND CULTURAL CENTER

Fri – January 26 – 7 PM
OPEN MIC NIGHT
Your host is Jay Strauss. Sign-ups begin at 6:15, drawing for time slots is at 6:45 - \$5 cover

Sat – January 27 – 12-2 PM
“FOCUS ON PHOTOGRAPHERS”
Curators: Larry Kerschberg & Ronnie Beth Sauers
Featuring Photographers:
William Snyder - David Burnett - Tony Cenicola
Pierce Johnston - William A. Loeb
Jane Soodalter - Sandra Belitza-Vazquez
ON EXHIBIT THRU FEB 25TH MOST WKNDs, BY APPT. AND BY CHANCE

Feb 2 - LIT LIT
Feb 3 - ARTICHOKE Storytelling Series
Feb 9 - HCMC + HCC's Classics for Kids - "The Kid"
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Tony Cenicola

Tax Sales *(from Page 1)*

counties six months to turn over the proceeds of foreclosed properties sold between May 25, 2023 (when the Supreme Court issued its decision) and the effective date of the new rules. For sales made before the ruling, a county would only be liable if a property owner had sued for the proceeds within four months.

Protecting counties from claims by owners from previous sales is justified because they were “upholding state laws at the time,” said Mark LaVigne, the deputy director for NYSAC. Hochul’s proposal is “checking all the boxes in terms of meeting the requirements set forth in the Supreme Court decision,” he said.

“We’re trying to make sure that all parties who are negotiating the final terms of this budget understand the process and understand the county impact because, inevitably, no matter what, there will be a county impact,” said LaVigne.

Under existing law, counties relieve school districts, towns and villages of the

shortfalls from uncollected taxes by paying them the amounts that delinquent properties owe. If the owners of those properties fail to repay, counties can petition the state court to grant them title. Many sell these properties at annual auctions.

Dutchess, which made \$950,000 from its last auction in November 2022, did not hold one last year because of the Supreme Court ruling, and may also forgo one this year as it waits to see what the Legislature passes, said Heidi Seelbach, the county finance commissioner.

Absolute Auctions and Realty facilitated the 2022 auction, which included 46 vacant properties and six single-family homes.

One home, a four-bedroom, 2½-bath residence on 2 acres in Beekman with \$5,550 in unpaid school taxes, sold for \$165,000, less than half its market value. A Cape Cod in East Fishkill with four bedrooms and one bath sold for \$161,000 after being foreclosed on for \$3,072 in unpaid school taxes.

Putnam has not held an auction since 2020 in the wake of a pandemic-inspired

moratorium on foreclosures that lasted until January 2022, and now the Supreme Court’s ruling, said Christopher Formisano, a county representative.

Michael Lewis, Putnam’s finance commissioner, is seeking title to 38 properties the county began foreclosure proceedings against in April 2023, a month before the Supreme Court ruling. None of those properties is in Philipstown, but the county acquired title in August to six vacant properties in the town.

Beacon, which makes its school district whole, usually reaches repayment agreements with property owners who owe taxes, said City Administrator Chris White. The city forecloses on a small number of properties, he said.

Most of the state’s counties either suspended foreclosures last year, like Dutchess, or, if they sold properties, held the surplus funds in escrow in anticipation of a change in the law, said LaVigne.

“Some of them were in the process already of doing a foreclosure, so they just completed the foreclosure,” he said.

Reporter's Notebook

Cold Spring Mysteries

By Michael Turton

I realized I could no longer put off writing about Cold Spring's unsolved mysteries when someone stole the pole used to lower and raise the awning at *The Current* office. The morning sun is brutal; I can't even see the computer screen without the awning down.

I first suspected Doug of Doug's Pretty Good Pub because his eatery has an awning. But he had no motive: His awning is not retractable.

Next, I called Louis, the proprietor of Xtra Change, a pawnshop in Mahopac. He could only laugh when I asked if anyone had recently pawned an awning pole. He deals mainly with collectibles and, as far as he knows, no one collects poles, awning or otherwise.

I can't offer a reward for solving any of the mysteries that follow, but lunch is on me if the pole is returned.

Seriously, who steals an awning pole?

Disco anyone?

Mystery surrounds another theft here in the village years ago that impacted my family.



Local celebrations to usher in the year 2000 included a disco ball installed at the riverfront bandstand. My son, Drew, and two of his friends, visiting from Windsor, Ontario, preferred the larger party at Times Square. They returned to Cold Spring by train around 3 a.m. and were immediately met and interrogated by police. The disco ball was missing and glitter on the Canadians' shoes resembled a trail of glitter that led to the platform.

Highly indignant for being considered a suspect, Drew has returned to Cold Spring, but never for New Year's Eve. The disco ball heist remains unsolved.

Let's pretend

In 2012, during a time of tension between Roger Ailes' *Putnam County News and Recorder* and Gordon Stewart's *Philipstown.info* and *The Paper* (later renamed *The Highlands Current*), a third local paper appeared on the scene. *The Pretend Putnam County News and Recorder* was published online by an anonymous satirist at ppcnr.com. It poked fun at *The PCNR*'s claim to be "the only real newspaper" in Philipstown by promising to be the area's "only real pretend newspaper."

Debate raged at our staff meetings: Who was behind the *Pretend PCNR*? Could it have been Gordon? Someone else on the staff? Or any number of progressive residents, unhappy with *The PCNR*? The site has disappeared (be forewarned, the address now redirects to a Japanese porn portal), but the mystery remains.

Arthur Warren was a hero

From 2010 to 2012, *Philipstown.info* allowed readers to submit comments using pseudonyms, thinking it would increase feedback. It did — but it was also a big mistake. Anonymity does not encourage civil discourse. One of the worst offenders was someone using the name Arthur Warren, which was the name of a Cold Spring resident killed in Italy in World War II.

When the policy was changed, requiring all comments to include the author's real name, the mystery fizzled. The phony Mr. Warren's identify never came to light, though we had strong suspicions. Some still try to submit comments with fake names, including one a few weeks ago from a reader who accused me of looking like a 1960s hippie, which I took as a compliment.

Where is A Street?

Most puzzling of all may be a sign on Main Street just east of the traffic light. How did B Street get its name, and why is there no A or C street? New York was a leader in beekeeping by the mid-1800s. Were there bees on B Street? Was B homage to the Butterfields, one of Cold Spring's historically significant families? Did the first families to live on the street all have surnames that started with B? Was it a temporary name that stuck? Or was B simply meant to be?

Sorry, wrong number

Technology is great when it works. Then there's real life. I've had interesting phone calls

during my working life, including a 20-minute chat with an intoxicated long-distance operator, back when speaking to a human being at Ma Bell was a rotary dial away. I had an hour-long call from Ken Dryden, one of my hockey heroes and president of the Toronto Maple Leafs, responding to a letter that I thought would not garner a response from the Zamboni driver, let alone the big boss.

How did B Street get its name, and why is there no A or C street?

Those calls were fun and unexpected. What's not fun and now expected is the barrage of wrong numbers that find my desk. It's not people dialing *The Current* by mistake. It's people calling completely different numbers who somehow end up with me.

I can hear heads being scratched when I tell callers that we're a newspaper, not the skating rink, pizza shop, funeral home, law office, flower shop, car dealer, state park, massage therapist, sculpture park or psychic. I tried being the psychic; that did not pan out well.

The wrong numbers mystery must be solved sooner than a new awning pole and even sooner than finding the disco ball. Any leads are welcome but please include your real name.



VILLAGE OF COLD SPRING ANNOUNCEMENT

RESIDENT PARKING PROGRAM BEGINS MARCH 1

Resident Parking Permits Now Available

Timeline

- Resident Parking Permits are now available for purchase at Village Hall by residents of certain streets.
- Signage for the Resident Permit Parking will be installed over the next several weeks.
- Enforcement will begin March 1.
- Main Street parking meters will be installed in the Spring at a later stage.

Permits

Households on eligible streets may purchase up to 2 permits each. For a list of eligible streets and the permit process, please visit coldspringny.gov.

The Village of Cold Spring's Residential Parking Program addresses a growing parking shortage for residents on residential streets around Main Street.

We are implementing the program in stages. At each stage, the Village will communicate with the public through the Village's website, social media pages, street signage, newspaper ads, and by village email.

Sign up to receive our emails at: coldspringny.gov/subscribe

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AROUND TOWN



▲ **CLASSIC JAZZ** — The Westchester Jazz Alliance Quartet, including the Rev. Stan Fortuna on bass and Charley Krachy of Garrison on tenor sax, performed Jan. 13 at the Howland Cultural Center. The other band members are Dave Frank on piano and T-kash Inuoe on drums. Fortuna, a Catholic priest since 1990, was mentored by jazz pianist Lenny Tristano, as were Krachy and Frank.

Photo by Ross Corsair



▲ **KNIGHTED** — Nancy Olnick (left), co-founder of Magazzino Italian Art in Philipstown, was awarded the Cavaliere Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana (Insignia of Knight of the Italian Republic) at the Italian consulate in New York City on Jan. 11. Olnick received the honor from Ambassador Mariangela Zappia (right) for “merit acquired by the nation.” Magazzino is the only museum in the U.S. devoted to postwar and contemporary Italian art.



◀ **ESSAY WINNER** — Davia Kelleher (center), a seventh grader at Rombout Middle School in Beacon, was one of five middle-school students in the U.S. who received honorable mentions in the annual Hispanic Heritage Month essay contest sponsored by Optimum and TelevisaUnivision. She is shown with, from left, Assistant Principal Amanda Pucino, teachers Erica Hughes and Karen DeCandia, Jay Keel from Optimum and Principal Brian Soltish.

Photos provided



◀ **CAUGHT WITH THE CURRENT** — The Mayor, during a visit to the Bank Square Coffeehouse in Beacon, was unhappy with the amount of poultry news in the latest edition of *The Current* and planned to peck out a letter to the editor.

Photo provided



◀ **HONOR GUARD** — On Jan. 20, somewhere in the Pacific Ocean, Chief Logistics Spc. Shache Cox (right) of Beacon was among the Navy sailors who rendered honors during a burial-at-sea ceremony aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln.

Photo by Clayton Wren/U.S. Navy

The Calendar



Michelle Horton (left) chronicled the case against her sister, Nikki Addimando, who is shown hugging her children after being released on Jan. 4 from a state prison in Westchester County.

HBG/USA | Nicole Addimando Community Defense Committee



A Test Case for Abuse Law

Author to discuss memoir of sister's prosecution for killing partner

By Alison Rooney

In September 2017, a Town of Poughkeepsie woman, Nicole “Nikki” Addimando, shot and killed her partner, Christopher Grover. After Addimando told police during a traffic stop that she had killed him, authorities found the 29-year-old dead on a couch.

Addimando and Grover had met in 2008 when both were gymnastics coaches. They began living together in 2012 after Addimando became pregnant with the first of their two children. She claimed she suffered years of physical and sexual abuse.

“It was kill or be killed,” she told ABC’s 20/20 in a jailhouse interview in February 2023. Grover’s family noted he had never been charged with domestic violence, and prosecutors argued during the trial that Addimando could have left at any time or alerted authorities. She said she believed she was protecting her children by staying and that if she could make Grover happy, the abuse would stop.

In March 2019, Addimando was convicted of second-degree murder and later sentenced to 19 years in prison. But after an appeal, a state court, citing the state’s newly enacted Domestic Violence Survivors Justice Act, reduced her sentence in 2021 to 7½ years. She was released on parole on Jan. 4.

The case was one of the first to test the law, which gives judges more discretion in sentencing for crimes involving domestic violence if the abuse is deter-

mined to be a significant contributing factor to the criminal behavior.

It wasn’t until after Addimando’s arrest in 2017 that her sister, Michelle Horton, heard her sister’s descriptions of abuse. After Addimando began her sentence, Horton rearranged her life to care for her niece and nephew and began a campaign to get their mother out of prison.

At 2 p.m. on Feb. 3, at the Garrison Institute, Horton will discuss her book, *Dear Sister: A Memoir of Secrets, Survival and Unbreakable Bonds*, which will be published on Tuesday (Jan. 30) and is as much a memoir of a bond between sisters as an indictment of the criminal justice system. The event will be hosted by Robyn Moreno, a Cold Spring author, and co-sponsored by the Desmond-Fish Public Library.

Horton says that nothing about writing the book was easy, describing it as “akin to secondary trauma. But even in the darkest situation, there’s levity, resilience and deep hope.

“If I can move the needle showing my own experience from a different perspective, and not just telling people why this was such an injustice, I can show that our experience is not that unique,” Horton says. “What happened in the court system is indicative of most survivors who end up in the system.”

When her sister was arrested, “I was in the mom-blogging world,” Horton says. “But by the time of the sentencing, when everything went wrong, I needed to tell the story and our experiences, because my sister’s case has been so exploited. I wanted to add to the narrative out there, reclaim it for myself.”

(Continued on Page 14)

The Writer Next Door

Celia Reissig

By Alison Rooney

Celia Reissig is pleased that Stanza Books in Beacon stocks her 2020 collection of poems and a one-act play, *Huella/Traces*.

Where to shelve it might prove challenging because the paperback has Reissig’s poems in Spanish, English and Spanglish, with no translations. They reflect her voyages from country to country, language to language, form to form. (Also on hand is a 2016 anthology, *Home: An Imagined Landscape*, which includes a creative nonfiction piece by Reissig, “Where Oblivion Shall Not Dwell”).

Reissig describes herself as a “cultural smuggler” who explores links between cultures and languages, and the personal and the social.

Her parents moved often. She should have been born in Argentina, where her father taught molecular biology. But a dictatorship in place at the time impeded his work, and the couple left.

Her parents had been married in Edinburgh, where her father began his career as a scientist. “He moved on to another scientific lab in Denmark, then zigzagged throughout the world,” she says. “When I was 3, we went to Paris for a few months, then returned to Argentina, where I spent my childhood. Spanish was my first language.”

“Writing has been my constant companion. I found refuge in art.”

A few years later, the family immigrated to the U.S. after navigating a snafu. “My father was offered a position in Long Island, but he didn’t realize it was extended just to him,” Reissig says. “They let him in, not us, and we went to Montreal for a few months.”

She says that being refused entry has resonated deeply with her ever since. “The border situation now is so very different — there was no river migration — but it was traumatic in different ways. How you get here is part of the story. Canada offered no assistance, just asylum. It’s so important to understand that there are different migration patterns and causes.”

Once settled on Long Island, Reissig experienced bullying, much of it directed at her accent. To counter this, she danced, played violin



Celia Reissig at Stanza Books in Beacon

Photo provided

and wrote. “Writing has been my constant companion,” she says. “I found refuge in art.”

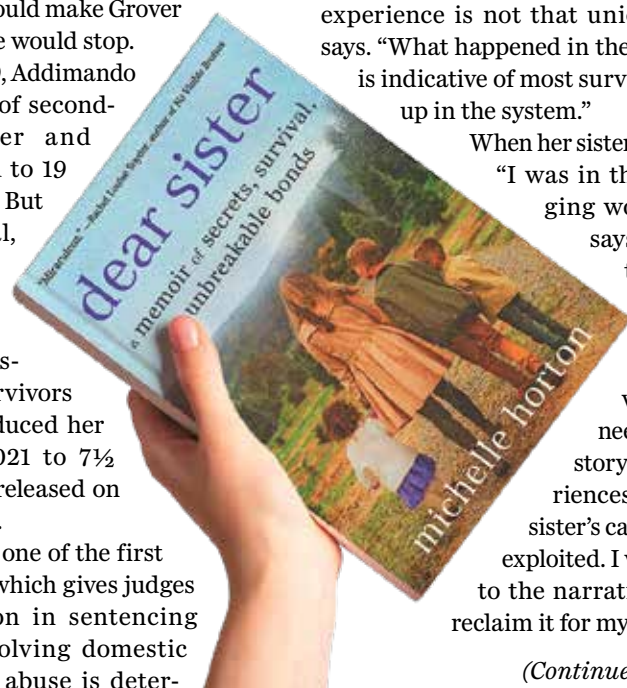
A horrific car accident caused her to jettison her burgeoning dance career as a young woman and prompted an abrupt professional shift. “I switched to French, studied at the Sorbonne for a junior year abroad, then transferred to New York University to study Spanish and French language and literature,” she says. “That’s where I discovered my passion: languages. I’m driven to bringing together linguistic communities.”

After graduating, Reissig moved to Port Chester, in Westchester County, and stayed for 25 years. “There was a wonderful bookstore there, Panacea, which started using my work at readings,” she says. “I formed a Spanish-language book club with other Latina women, and there was a multicultural arts center offering dance, music, visual arts and writing. I was able to use art to heal and to become part of the community.”

Reissig taught Spanish and French at two high schools before earning a master’s degree in Latin American Studies, another in comparative literature, and a doctorate from Fordham that took 14 years while she worked full-time and raised two children.

For the past 30 years, Reissig has been an associate professor of English and Spanish and chair of the Department of Literature and Language at Mercy University [formerly Mercy College]. She is the author of two collections of poetry: *Talking to Myself* (1977) and *Reflexiones/Reflexiones* (2000).

(Continued on Page 14)



THE WEEK AHEAD

Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)

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

COMMUNITY

SUN 28

Year of the Dragon Lantern-Making

BEACON

1 – 3 p.m. Howland Public Library
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134
beaconlibrary.org

Prepare for the Year of the Dragon by making lanterns for the Celebration of Light Parade. Registration required. Also SUN 4.

FRI 2

Blood Drive

BEACON

9:15 a.m. – 2:15 p.m. Recreation Center
23 W. Center St. | rcblood.org/heart

The Red Cross is seeing the fewest number of people giving blood, platelets or AB Elite plasma in 20 years. Donate in February and receive a \$20 Amazon gift card.

SAT 3

Wingfest

POUGHKEEPSIE

3:30 – 8:30 p.m. MJN Center
14 Civic Center Plaza
midhudsonciviccenter.org

Vote for the King of Wings at this 17th annual event, which includes live music and games. *Cost: \$65 (\$35 after 5 p.m.)*

NATURE & OUTDOORS

SAT 27

Endangered Sturgeon in the Hudson

COLD SPRING

3 p.m. St. Mary's Parish Hall
1 Chestnut St.
putnamhighlandsaudubon.org

Amanda Higgs, a biologist who works with the Department of Environmental Conservation fisheries, will talk about restoring the endangered fish, which has existed for 130 million years. *Cost: \$7.50 donation*

SAT 3

Hudson River EagleFest

CROTON

9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Croton Point Park
1 Croton Point Ave.
teatown.org/events/eaglefest

Guides will help you spot eagles and lead bird walks at this 20th annual Teatown festival. There will also be other birds of prey and educational programs. The snow date is SUN 4. Buy tickets online by WED 31 for \$5 discount. Veterans who register are admitted free. *Cost: \$40 (\$23 children, member discount)*



Wingfest, Feb. 3

SAT 3

Maple Sugar Tours

CORNWALL

11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Outdoor Discovery Center
120 Muser Drive | 845-534-5506
hnnaturecenter.org

Choose from a short walk at noon or 3 p.m. or a longer hike at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. or 2 p.m. to see the process of tapping trees and cooking sap to make syrup. The tours continue weekends through March 3. *Cost: \$15 (\$12 members; ages 4 and younger free)*

SUN 4

Eagle Watch

GARRISON

10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Boscobel
1601 Route 9D | 845-265-3638
boscobel.org

Bring binoculars or scopes and birding experts will help you spot eagles along the river. *Cost: \$14 (\$12 seniors, \$7 ages 5 to 18, members free)*

KIDS & FAMILY

SAT 27

StarLab

CORNWALL

10 & 11 a.m., Noon & 1 p.m.
Outdoor Discovery Center
120 Muser Drive | 845-534-5506
hnm.org

In this indoor planetarium, children will learn about constellations and hear stories from Indigenous people and Greeks about how they were named. Best for ages 4 and older. *Cost: \$20 (\$15 members)*

SAT 27

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 Maren Hassinger's work. On SUN 28, it will be Andy Warhol and on SAT 3, Robert Ryman. *Free*

SAT 27

Makerspace Open House

COLD SPRING

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

Find out about all the projects

you can make in the library's creator lab. Registration required.

SUN 28

Storytime

COLD SPRING

10:30 a.m. Split Rock
97 Main St. | splitrockbks.com

Toddlers and preschoolers are invited to read books, sing and move with Gwynne Watkins, a writer, theater artist and mom who lives in Beacon. *Free*

TUES 30

Balloon Machines

GARRISON

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

Experiment with balloons as a power source. Registration required. Rescheduled from TUES 23.

FRI 2

Teen Movie Night

COLD SPRING

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

Children in grades 6 and up are invited to watch *Mean Girls*, the 2004 film about a homeschooled teen who learns hard lessons about social systems in high school. Registration required.



STAGE & SCREEN

SAT 27

Met HD: Carmen

POUGHKEEPSIE

1 p.m. Bardavon
35 Market St. | bardavon.org

The opera, staged in the present day and presented in a high-definition simulcast, stars Agul Akhmetshina in the lead and Piotr Beczala as Carmen's lover. *Cost: \$30 (\$28 members, \$23 ages 12 and younger)*

SAT 27

The Watched Pot

GARRISON

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

This play by Keith Hershberger is about two unconventional women who look back on their lives as one lays dying. Also SUN 28, FRI 2, SAT 3, SUN 4. *Cost: \$25*

SUN 28

Hairspray

WEST POINT

5 p.m. Ike Hall | 655 Pitcher Road
845-938-4159 | ikehall.com

In this Tony-award winning musical set in the 1960s, Tracy Turnblad is determined to appear on a television dance show. *Cost: \$48*

THURS 1

Citizen Kane

POUGHKEEPSIE

7:30 p.m. Bardavon | 35 Market St.
845-473-2072 | bardavon.org

The screening of this 1941 classic is the first in a series of "game-changer" films that represent new approaches and stories in cinema. Directed by and starring Orson Welles, it chronicled the rise and fall of a newspaper tycoon. *Free*

FRI 2

Lit Lit

BEACON

7 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | 845-831-4988
howlandculturalcenter.org

Sign up to read original writing from any genre for 5 minutes at this monthly open mic.

FRI 2

Dan LaMorte and Natalie Cuomo

BEACON

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

The stand-up comedians will perform as part of a series organized by the Laugh It Up Comedy Club in Poughkeepsie. *Cost: \$30 (\$35 door)*

SAT 3

Dear Sister

GARRISON

2 p.m. Garrison Institute
14 Mary's Way | bit.ly/horton-book-2024

Michelle Horton will read from and discuss her book, *Dear Sister: A Memoir of Secrets, Survival and Unbreakable Bonds*, about fighting to free her sister, Nikki Addimando, from prison and raising her children after the Poughkeepsie woman was jailed in 2017 for killing her partner, whom she said had physically and sexually abused her. See Page 11.

SAT 3

The Artichoke

BEACON

8 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | 845-831-4988
howlandculturalcenter.org

This month's storytellers are Tina McKenna, Ivy Eisenberg, Michaela Murphy, Gastor Almonte, Sean O'Brien and Jamie Brickhouse. *Cost: \$20*

TALKS & TOURS

SAT 27

Beacon's West End Story

BEACON

1 – 3 p.m. Howland Public Library
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134
beaconlibrary.org

This will be the closing reception for the project, which portrays the neighborhood before it was altered by urban renewal.

SAT 27

Jenny Howe

COLD SPRING

7 p.m. Split Rock
97 Main St. | splitrockbks.com

In a talk with Virginia Sole-Smith, Howe will discuss her romance novel, *On the Plus Side*, about a woman who gets picked for a makeover show and finds love. RSVP requested.

SUN 28

Art After War

PHILIPSTOWN

12:30 p.m. Magazzino
2700 Route 1 | magazzino.art

For this International Holocaust Remembrance Day program, Alessandro Cassin and Davide Spagnoletto will discuss the lives of sisters Paola and Lorenza Mazzetti, whose art was shaped by the murder of their adoptive Jewish family in 1944. *Cost: \$20 (\$10 seniors and students, \$5 regional residents)*

TUES 30

Desbloquea Tu Éxito

BEACON

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

The Women's Enterprise Development Center will lead, in Spanish, this workshop on a winning mentality for entrepreneurs. Registration required. *Free*

WED 31

Crappy Craft Club for Adults

COLD SPRING

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

Sam Reece (below), author of *Shitty Craft Club: A Club for Gluing Buds to Trash, Talking about Our Feelings and Making Silly Things*, will join the first session of this new monthly gathering by Zoom. Registration required.



WED 31
Understanding the Cloud
GARRISON
3 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020
desmondfishlibrary.org
Learn about how to use virtual space as a tool for organizing data and files and find out how to keep it safe. Registration required.

WED 31
Resolution to Reality
BEACON
5:30 p.m. The View
30 Beekman St. | bit.ly/rizkallah
Lena Rizkallah, a financial advisor, will lead this workshop on investing, saving and managing debt. *Free*

THURS 1
A Brutal Design
COLD SPRING
7 p.m. Split Rock
97 Main St. | splitrockbks.com
Zachary Solomon will discuss his debut novel with Erin Somers.

SAT 3
The Benefits of Mindfulness and Meditation on Cognition
COLD SPRING
Noon. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040
butterfieldlibrary.org
Lourdes Laifer will explain how to reduce stress and think more clearly. Registration required.

SAT 3
Secret Sounds of Ponds
BEACON
8 p.m. Stanza Books
508 Main St.
David Rothenberg will discuss his latest book, which is filled with links and QR codes that take readers to the musician's pond recordings. See Page 15.

MUSIC
SAT 27
Songs for the Ancestors
NEWBURGH
2 p.m. From the Ground Up
104 Ann St. | annstreetgallery.org
Gwen Laster (violin), Damon Banks (bass), Patrick Jones (guitar and vocals) and Todd Isler (percussion) will perform songs from the Black American diaspora to honor those buried in the one-time "colored" cemetery in Newburgh. *Free*

SAT 27
Heavy Metal Blaze
BEACON
4 p.m. The Yard
4 Hanna Lane | bit.ly/hmb-2024
This alcohol-free festival of cannabis, music and art will begin at 4 p.m., when VIP ticket holders are welcome to collect a package that includes a joint, a THC-infused canned cocktail and a chillum glass pipe. General admission begins at 5:30 p.m. Food and beverages will be offered for sale at indoor tents; vintage Nintendo and Sega Genesis games will be available for free play; and Sean Donovan will demonstrate

and create art and signs. Three bands are scheduled to perform: Purple Lung, Low Fiction and Shadow Witch. Ages 21 and older. *Cost: \$35 (\$60 VIP)*
SAT 27
Paper Sun
BEACON
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The tribute band plays the music of Traffic from the 1960s and '70s. *Cost: \$25 (\$30 door)*

FRI 2
Joanna Nova York
BEACON
7:30 p.m. Reserva Wine Bar
173 Main St. | reservabeacon.com
The singer will perform jazz favorites and Brazilian bossanova. *Free*

SAT 3
American Pink Floyd: The Wall
BEACON
8 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The tribute band's show will include lasers, projections and costumes to recreate the experience. *Cost: \$30 (\$35 door)*

SUN 4
The Cat and the Canary
COLD SPRING
3 p.m. Chapel Restoration
45 Market St. | chapelrestoration.org
Local musicians, including Tom McCoy, Lisa Sabin and Rachel Evans



Inner Landscapes, Jan. 27
and her students, will perform baroque gems from Geminiani, Telemann, Rossini and others to support children's programming at the Chapel. Donations welcome.

SUN 4
Faded Rose
BEACON
5:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com
The alternative band will play songs from its upcoming album. Natalie Austin will open. *Cost: \$20 (\$25 door)*

VISUAL ARTS
SAT 27
What the Flock
BEACON
5 – 9 p.m. Clutter Gallery | 139 Main St.
212-255-2505 | clutter.co
The group show will feature works depicting birds by more than 30 artists. Through Feb. 2.

SAT 27
Inner Landscapes
NEWBURGH
7 – 9 p.m. Bank Arts Center
94 Broadway | thebank.art
Savaggi Gallery will mount its first exhibit at the Bank Arts Center — a collection of sculptures by Kate Raudenbush that continues through May 11. A fundraiser reception with live ambient music begins at 5 p.m.; tickets are \$45 or \$109.

CIVIC
MON 29
City Council
BEACON
7 p.m. City Hall | 1 Municipal Plaza
845-838-5011 | beaconnny.gov
THURS 1
Town Board
PHILIPSTOWN
7:30 p.m. Town Hall | 238 Main St.
845-265-5200 | philipstown.com

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22 Church St.	Beacon	3	1/0	1,010	\$460,000
17 Garden Pl.	Beacon	3	2/1	1,302	\$475,000
48 Church St.	Beacon	2	1/0	1,120	\$500,000
4 Jefferson Ave.	Beacon	3	1/1	1,348	\$592,000
10 Scofield Rd.	Fishkill	3	2/0	1,620	\$615,000
46 Judson St.	Beacon	4	3/1	2,270	\$960,000

OFFICE LISTINGS

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Unit 102
Beacon
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3/2 Bath
4,559 Sq Ft
\$2,250,000

5 Churchill Street
Beacon
Multi-Unit
2 Units + cottage
4,673 Sq Ft
\$1,500,000

Charlotte Guernsey
Team Leader, Licensed Associate Real Estate Broker
845.831.9550 | 490 Main Street, Beacon
@gatehousecompass | gatehousecompass.com

THE GATE HOUSE TEAM

The Gate House Team is a team of Licensed Associate Real Estate Brokers and Licensed Real Estate Salespersons associated with Compass. Compass is a licensed real estate broker and abides by Equal Housing Opportunity laws.

The Garrison Institute is located at 14 Mary's Way, near the Philipstown Recreation Center. To register for the free event, visit bit.ly/horton-book-2024.

Recently she collaborated with visual artists at the BAU Gallery in Beacon, doing improv with a musician. “I read poems of mine and he came in with his guitar — a back and forth. We all crave not just living inside ourselves.”

Start Reading Now
February book club selections

Abe Lincoln/Civil War Book Club

THURS 1, 7 P.M.

Leadership in Turbulent Times,
by Doris Kearns Goodwin
Lincoln Depot Museum,
10 S. Water St., Peekskill
Email LincolnDepotFDN@gmail.com.

Fiction Book Club

TUES 6, 7 P.M.

Trilogy, by Jon Fosse
Split Rock Books, Cold Spring
Register at splitrockbks.com.

Elementary Book Club (Grades 2-4)

WED 14, 3:15 P.M.

Ways to Make Sunshine, by Renee Watson
Butterfield Library, Cold Spring
Register at butterfieldlibrary.org/calendar.

Page-to-Screen Book Club

THURS 15, 3 P.M.

The Hate U Give, by Angie Thomas
Desmond-Fish Public Library, Garrison
Register at desmondfishlibrary.org.

Beacon Book Club

THURS 22, 7:15 P.M.

Remarkably Bright Creatures,
by Shelby Van Pelt
Eleven 11, Fishkill
Register at [meetup.com/beacon-bookclub](https://www.meetup.com/beacon-bookclub).

Butterfield Book Club

MON 26, 7 P.M.

Caste, by Isabel Wilkerson
Butterfield Library, Cold Spring
Register at butterfieldlibrary.org/calendar.

Librarian's Choice Book Club

WED 28, 3 P.M.

The Soulmate Equation, by Christina Lauren
Desmond-Fish Public Library, Garrison
Register at desmondfishlibrary.org.

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Dean Acevedo inside his store, Premium Roots NY, at 496 Main St. in Beacon

Photo by M. Ferris

SKATE HARD, SKATE FREE

Skateboard shop opens in Beacon

By Marc Ferris

It's no coincidence that the logo for Premium Roots NY, a new skateboard shop in Beacon, looks like a graffiti tag. Owner Dean Acevedo's choice illustrates the outsider status shared by skaters, street artists and also motorcyclists, hardcore punk rockers and BMX bicycle riders.

But the pastime, as subjective to judge as gymnastics, breakdancing and figure skating, may lose some of its edge after being accepted as an Olympic sport in 2020.

"I dislike the sportification of skating," says Acevedo. "In the streets, we're not competing, we're not giving out scores. We try to encourage each other no matter what the skill level."

The Olympic embrace could change the perception of die-hard skaters as slackers, vandals and trespassers, but Acevedo resents that Ralph Lauren has started designing boards.

"There's a stigma against skating; they were never interested before," he says. "Louis Vuitton made a skateboard for \$2,000 or something like that. It's a slap in the face." (In 2021, Louis Vuitton sold two boards with a custom case for \$58,500.)

Acevedo lives in Cornwall, where he opened his first shop in 2019. He added stores in Nyack and Brooklyn, where he works as a grip in the film industry. In November, he consolidated the two upstate outlets in Beacon, where his Chihuahua, Ryder, is the official greeter.

"I've put him on a board and rolled him across the room, but you can tell he doesn't like it," Acevedo says.

Premium Roots NY sells equipment for serious skateboarders but stocks lifestyle products such as T-shirts, books, hats, beanies, candles, sneakers and a skin-care line. Boards with trucks and wheels attached run about \$125.

The blue discs resembling hockey pucks are skate wax, rubbed on curbs or other surfaces to add skidding power. It's also used to avoid "wheel bite," which occurs when a wheel hits the underside of the board. The wax keeps the wheel spinning — if it locks up, the rider will tumble.

An old soul, Acevedo, 35, sells DVDs and VHS tapes at the shop. He also has published two issues of *Grip* magazine, which refers both to his day job and grip tape, which is sandpaper with an adhesive backing that covers the top of the deck.

During the 1960s, skateboarding became popular with surfers in Southern California who added roller-skate wheels to boards. It became more mainstream after the creation of rubber wheels in the early 1970s.

Some bright minds got the idea to skate in empty pools, which evolved into using huge half-pipes to propel themselves into the air and execute tricks. Tony Hawk, the Birdman, attracted attention in the late 1980s and skating intersected with fashion, hip-hop, tattoo and weed culture.

For freestylers (a term shared with rap), the goal is to defy physics, typically by

jumping with the board, scraping across a surface, maybe flipping it for style points and sticking a landing while in motion. The skill level can be remarkable.

Scanning the urban landscape, freestylers size up the infrastructure for skateability. Curbs, benches, cellar doors and angled corners are alluring. Acevedo points out a long, narrow strip of concrete about 2 inches high and 10 feet long that rises from the sidewalk around the corner from his shop and provides inspiration.

"We're always trying to use what we have and be creative with our moves," he says. Other skaters like to bomb downhill at 60 mph, or just get around town, but they're all tough crowds: Helmets are frowned upon.

"What I love the most about skating is that we represent all ages, all colors, all walks of life," he says. Proving his point, Ophir Ariel, a filmmaker and the father of three girls, stopped by the store.

Ariel says his 10-year-old discovered his board, his 8-year-old wants to emulate big sister and the 5-year-old is also paying attention. He plans to provide them with the proper gear, which will include protective padding.

After Ariel left, Acevedo beamed. "You can go anywhere in the world and make a friend just because you share the love of skating," he says.

Premium Roots NY, at 496 Main St. in Beacon, is open from noon to 6 p.m. on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. See premiumrootsnewyork.com.

What's Online at Highlands Current.org

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

Local Officials

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

Local Government Video Guide

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

How They Voted (Congress)

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

Storm Updates and Resources

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

Community Directory

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

Shop Local Online

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

Community Calendar

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

Real-Estate Data

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

Back Issues

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

Podcast Archives

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

Classic Wheels

1926 Ford Model T Runabout

By Michael Turton

When it comes to making cars, the classic of all classics is the Ford Model T, the first mass-produced and mass-affordable automobile. More than 15 million were sold between 1908 and 1927, a record that stood until the early 1970s, when 23 million Volkswagen Beetles were sold worldwide.

Henry Ford road-tested the first Model T on a hunting trip to northern Michigan; the first unit was shipped to a customer in October 1908. Sales likely got a boost from stunts used to promote the T, such as driving it up Pikes Peak in Colorado and up the steps of the Tennessee State Capitol.

The Ford assembly lines cut the time needed to build the car from 12 hours to 93 minutes; mass production also reduced the cost from \$825 in 1909 (about \$28,000 today) to \$260 in 1925 (\$4,500).

Will Brown, who lives in Garrison, bought his 1926 Model T Runabout in Georgia in 1955. “I paid \$50 or \$60 for it,” he recalled. He had always liked the body style and planned to turn it into a hot rod.

“It’s kind of cute, compact and a very simple vehicle,” Brown said. “It has no gas gauge, no oil dipstick, no heater and both



windshield windows open and close.”

Brown and his wife bought a house in Maine and, around 1975, a barn on the property became the Model T’s home and Brown’s workshop. He transported it in pieces in the back of his 1953 Ford pickup, which is still going strong.

In Maine, Brown decided to restore, rather than customize, his Tin Lizzie. The car was disassembled and every part cleaned, sand-blasted and painted. Rusted panels were repaired and straightened. Even screws and bolts were cleaned or replaced. The 1926 model was the last year with wooden, rather than metal, spoked wheels.

While most of the car is original, Brown replaced the radiator, hood and running boards, the latter found at a swap meet. The trunk floor, and the panel below the trunk, were replaced with parts from a supplier in Texas.

Because so many Model Ts were built, parts are not difficult to find. An estimated 100,000 still exist, including a few hundred in England.

The Specs

- Model: 2-door roadster
- Assembly: Louisville, Kentucky
- Total Production (1926): 342,575
- Engine: 177-cubic-inch, inline 4-cylinder
- Horsepower: 20
- Transmission: 2-speed, manual (foot pedals)
- Top speed: 45 mph
- Weight: 1,650 pounds
- Fuel economy: 20 to 25 mpg
- Cost: \$360 (about \$6,250 today)

The Model T pioneered innovations, such as placing the steering wheel on the left side; casting the engine block and crank-case as a single unit; and using a removable cylinder head for easier maintenance. Early models came with a tool kit and windshields as an option. The engine had to be cranked to start.

Until 1914 and after 1925, Model Ts were available in black, green, gray, blue and red. Between 1914 and 1925 everyone got black. Brown had his Runabout repainted black.

It was capable of reaching 45 miles per hour, but Brown said he wouldn’t drive it that fast. “I’ve had it up to a little over 35 mph,” he said. The throttle is located on the steering column but the car has no speedometer, so Brown used an app on his smartphone to determine speed. He estimates the gas mileage is less than 20 mpg.

The car has two speeds, low and high. Shifting is done with foot pedals. Asked if that’s easy, Brown said, “No.”

After the Browns sold their property in Maine, the Runabout was shipped to Garrison. Will said he enjoys taking it for a spin to Garrison’s Landing during the warm-weather months.

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Out There

Pond Rock

By Brian PJ Cronin

In the 1990s, artists such as Aphex Twin, Oval and Autechre made waves by taking electronic music to squelchy new places. Their music lurched from rhythmic to arrhythmic to ambient, often in the same song, punctuated with pops and squawks.

As it turns out, artists had been making that music for millions of years. But, until recently, no one was listening.

"You can find things in your own backyard that no one's paying attention to," says David Rothenberg on a warm December day behind Haldane High School in Cold Spring. The day before, a rainstorm had flooded parks, shut down roads and swollen the pond we were standing in front of. At our feet, a wireless speaker was broadcasting a concert that could have been recorded in the chill-out tent at the Glastonbury Festival, circa 1995.

The music was coming from a microphone that resembled a hockey puck that Rothenberg had thrown into the water. Some of the rhythmic clicks were the sound of microscopic bubbles being released as plants photosynthesized sunlight into food. Some of the irregular pops were from insects. But the origins of about 90 percent of the sounds are a mystery, even to scientists.

"It's humbling," says Rothenberg. "You can still go to the woods behind your house and hear things that no one can identify."

Tracking down the music of the natural world isn't a recent hobby for Rothenberg, who lives in Philipstown. A jazz clarinetist, he has written several books that document his global travels to study the music of birds, bugs and whales.

When the pandemic struck, Rothenberg's thoughts returned to an anthology he co-edited, *The Book of Music & Nature*. In one essay, David Dunn, a composer and sound artist, described recordings he had made of vernal ponds.

"I have finally reconciled myself to the gut feeling that these sounds are an emergent property of the pond: something that speaks as a collective voice for a mind that is beyond my grasp," Dunn wrote. "Now when I see a pond, I think of the water's surface as a membrane enclosing something deep in thought."

Intrigued, Rothenberg began tossing his microphones into ponds but heard nothing. The artist Zach Poff revealed the answer: Rothenberg was using mics designed to hear whales at a distance. Poff offered to build him a close-contact mic.

What happened next is the subject of Rothenberg's book, *Secret Sounds of Ponds*, published this month. It is filled with links and QR codes that



David Rothenberg uses an iPad and a wireless speaker to "jam" with James Pond.

Photo by B. Cronin

take readers to pond recordings and an online store to order underwater mics for pond explorations.

Rothenberg knows, thanks to European researchers, that the loudest sounds in local ponds are made by the males of an insect called a lesser water boatman. It's not clear how the bugs can be so relatively loud, or why they're making sounds in the first place. Rothenberg notes that if you fish them out of the pond, they instantly fall silent, which may be a clue. Scientists do know how they're generating the sound: By rubbing their penises against their bodies.

As unusual as the lesser water boatmen may be, their calling card has been identified. In a recording made at Lost Pond at Manitoga, there's a flourish of clicks every 40 seconds that sounds like a woodpecker using echolocation. At Savoy Mountain State Forest in Massachusetts, a dense rhythmic thrum slowly increases in intensity and speed over the course of a few minutes, like a DJ dialing up the beats.

When Rothenberg sent the recordings to scientists for help, they essentially shrugged. First, there aren't many scientists studying freshwater bioacoustics. Second, those in the field focus less on individual sounds and more on the cornucopia. Can we identify whether an ecosystem is flourishing or struggling by listening to it? Does pollution or disease

have a sonic signature?

On that December day, the sonic signature of James Pond behind Haldane was leaning toward minimalism, in part because of the cold. Hoping to find a busier groove, Rothenberg reeled in his mic, only to find a confused newt clinging to it. As it happens, newts eat lesser water boatmen. Perhaps the musicians had been devoured.

After throwing the mic into deeper water, Rothenberg connected an iPad to a second speaker. He recorded what the mic was picking up, chopped it up and broadcast it toward the pond in loops. Slowly, the sounds began to swell. More clicks and thrums joined in. New sounds, louder and stranger, joined the chorus. It went on for long enough that it seemed foolish to chalk it up as a coincidence.

What was it? Was the pond jamming with Rothenberg, speaking to him or something else? Rothenberg's work demonstrates that while we know why some animals make certain sounds, the reasons behind most animal songs are unknown. Because only male humpback whales sing, the assumption is that they must be attracting mates. But there's no indication that female whales respond. Maybe whales, and ponds, like people, just like to sing.

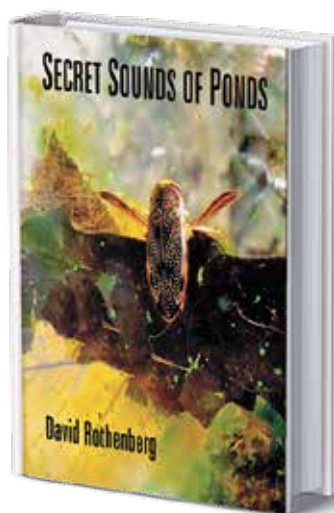
In 1970, the album *Songs of the Humpback Whale* was released. The haunting recordings spawned New Age movements, a *Star Trek* movie and a global effort to save the whales. Fifty years later, Rothenberg and Dunn are part of a growing "pondcore" scene that includes artists such as Leah Barclay, Action Pyramid and Jack Greenhalgh. It's possible this movement could inspire people in the same way as the humpback songs.

Early in his book, Rothenberg recalls

attending a 2019 conference at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where scientists discussed using artificial intelligence to "translate" the language of dolphins, perhaps enabling interspecies communication. The room broke into applause. But when Rothenberg wandered into the lobby he ran into a skeptical Peter Gabriel, who suggested that "speaking" with animals shouldn't be the goal. The music should be enough.

"With music, people dance, fall in love, sing along," the musician told Rothenberg. "With words on a page, you make enemies. People turn their back on you and get ready to argue."

Rothenberg will speak about *Secret Sounds of Ponds* at 8 p.m. on Feb. 3 at Stanza Books, 508 Main St., in Beacon. Listen to his pond recordings at on.soundcloud.com/iYWBu.



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Roots and Shoots

Gardening 365

By Pamela Doan

Is it me or does the gardening season seem to be year-round now? Just as I noticed Christmas décor for sale in stores at Halloween, I now get seed catalogs in November. It creeps up and up. I confess that it's not just the retail industry pushing things along. I am wandering the yard with the dog as the snow melts (again) with visions of peas and pansies dancing in my head.

While I'm stocked with seeds, I fantasize my way through the catalogs anyway. It's a tempting but I remain strong and focus my attention elsewhere. If you're feeling the same way, here are some ideas for what to tackle.

Dormancy pruning is best for deciduous trees and some shrubs; when growth begins in spring as the tree breaks open its buds, it can focus its energy on leafing out and bloom-

ing. The cuts will heal as the season goes on.

Some tree issues can be controlled through pruning. Signs of disease could include branches where the bark has detached and fungal knots. If you can't make a precise diagnosis, consult an arborist.

Dead branches can be a hazard and should be removed if they are near structures or paths. Tree limbs die for environmental reasons, as well as from pests and pathogens. This is another situation where a professional consultation can determine if there are underlying causes that need to be addressed. Many broken and dead limbs result from heavy, wet snow and wind, and that can be noted.

I prune shrubs more often than trees for aesthetic purposes — to influence their shape and, less frequently, their size. Because a woody plant's branching structure is more intricate and dense, it's easier to see what you're doing without foliage. Choose carefully and make sure you understand the shrub's bloom-setting process, or risk a season without flowers.

Shrubs fall into two categories: They either set blooms on last season's growth



Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*) can be pruned in winter or early spring without impacting its flower or fruit set. Photo by P. Doan

(called "old wood") or blooms develop on new growth ("new wood"). Lilacs, for example, bloom on old wood and pruning in winter will cut away the branches that would bloom in June. Forsythia is the same. Both can be pruned without harm, but expect fewer or no flowers.

Hydrangeas are tricky because some bloom on old wood and some on new wood. You need to know the species or observe its patterns. *Hydrangea macrophylla*, a mophead, will set blooms on old wood. If you're confident

in identifying plant parts, you could check the hydrangea and notice if there are buds.

An exception to deciduous tree pruning is the oak family. Because oak-wilt disease, a fungus detected in New York about 15 years ago, can spread more easily to trees that have open wounds, pruning is not advised during spring and summer, according to the state Department of Environmental Conservation. Michigan, where oak wilt has been spreading for much longer, has even more detailed guidelines, advising that all pruning on oaks should be halted from February to June.

An infected red oak species can die in a matter of weeks. The white oaks tend to last longer. Following the guidelines is an easy way to prevent problems.

Winter is also an excellent time for landscape planning. The first day of spring is eight weeks away. (The ladybug on my windowsill seems to know that.)

There's an advantage to working with the bare canvas of a landscape without foliage. If your goal is to install something new, in winter you're working with the contours and flow of the land, shapes that can be built up or revised.

Planning the vegetable garden is a similar exercise in vision and fantasy. All that bare soil could be sprouting seedlings soon. There are useful timetables on many seed retailer sites that help with calculating when to start growing seeds indoors. It's a science based on soil and surface air temperatures, the number of days a plant needs to produce its harvest and the area's last average frost date.

For the Highlands, the last frost date is May 15. While the season is warming earlier and planting dates can shift, the weather is more erratic and in 2023 there was a hard frost a week after May 15. Prepare for everything, and if you plant early, include row covers with your seed order.

Sports (from Page 20)

pounds, all by falls. The team travels to Monticello on Wednesday (Jan. 31).

BOYS' SWIMMING — Beacon lost on Jan. 20 at Cornwall, 90-78, but won three golds: Ronnie Anzovino was first in the 100-meter freestyle in 57.01 and the team won the 200- and 400-meter freestyle relays in 1:47.53 and 4:47.35.

On Wednesday (Jan. 24), the Bulldogs traveled to Warwick Valley, losing 118-65, to drop to 2-6. They are next scheduled to swim at the Section IX championship that begins Feb. 15.

WINTER TRACK — The Bulldogs competed at the 19-team Section IX championships at West Point on Jan. 20.

For the boys, Damani DeLoatch won the long jump at 20-1 and the triple jump at 44-4.5; Jayden Mihalchik won the pole vault at 10-0; Henry Reinke was second in the 1,000 meters in 2:46.55; and Rubio Castagna-Torres was second in the 55-meter hurdles in 8.77. For the girls, Isabella Migliore was fourth in the 600 meters in 1:52.95, followed by Stella Reinke in fifth place in 1:57.20.

The teams will compete in the Section IX Invitational on Sunday (Jan. 28) at The Armory.

Current Classifieds

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AWNING POLE — The pole that we use to open and close our awning has disappeared. If anyone knows its whereabouts, please return it to the outside of The Highlands Current office at 142 Main St. in Cold Spring. Thank you.

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GARDEN HELP — Looking for someone interested in garden work, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8 hours a day. Need to be physically fit, able to lift 50 pounds, hardworking, take direction, timely, neat, work in all types of weather, English speaking. Experience a plus. Must have own transportation. Garrison location. Start in March to October. Email tbielaczyc@gmail.com.

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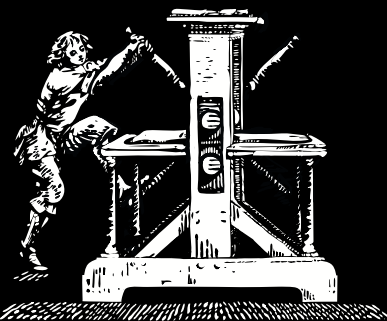
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Puzzles

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
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50	51	52				53	54			55		
56					57					58		
59					60					61		

- ACROSS
1. Hot tub

4. Pack (down)

8. Honeycomb division

12. Joke

13. Teen fave

14. Celestial bear

15. Capote nickname

16. Difficult problem

18. Celery unit

20. Pantheon member

21. Morays

24. Twilight, poetically

28. "Bravo!"

32. Wry Bombeck

33. Raw rock

34. Begets

36. Melody

37. Actress Meg

39. Maintains

41. Wheel connectors

43. Bake sale orgs.

44. — Victor
46. Dugout seating

50. Sociable and lively

55. "Caught ya!"

56. Medicinal plant

57. Vogue rival

58. Singer Phair

59. Reporter's quest

60. Workout count

61. Mimic
- DOWN
1. Boot camp VIPs

2. Section

3. Water, in Mexico

4. Hearts, slangily

5. Big fuss

6. Calendar abbr.

7. Advertise

8. Get cozy (with)

9. Blunder

10. Baton Rouge sch.

11. Felon's flight

17. Eggy quaff
19. Triathlon segment

22. Secular

23. Razor sharpener

25. Algerian port

26. During

27. Red planet

28. Mrs. Dithers of "Blondie"

29. African antelope

30. *Hud* actress Patricia

31. Faxed

35. Equine homes

38. Butterflies

40. Language suffix

42. High school subj.

45. Declare

47. *The Lion King* lion

48. Intel product

49. Visibility hindrance

50. Fire

51. Flamenco cheer

52. At once

53. — -de-France

54. Jungfrau, for one

SUDOCURRENT

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

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

PEACE

LUNCH

MICRO
CROSSWORD

- ACROSS
1. Stockpile, as toilet paper

6. Happen next

7. Sudden contraction

8. Chicago Symphony conductor Georg

9. Summers abroad?
- DOWN
1. *Siddhartha* author

2. Stoned

3. Make ____ (do business on eBay)

1	2	3	4	5
6				
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8				
9				

4. Autumnal colors

5. "Tell Me You Love Me" singer Lovato

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G	I	S	T		D	A	S	H		H	O	E
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4	9	1	8	2	6	7	5	3
2	6	3	4	5	7	1	9	8
9	8	2	3	7	4	6	1	5
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Sports

VARSITY ROUNDUP

HALDANE

By Jacob Aframian

BOYS' BASKETBALL — Haldane lost its first game in over a month on Jan. 18, falling at Putnam Valley, 48-45. It was the lowest number of points scored this season by the Blue Devils this season, and senior Matt Nachamkin accounted for half, finishing with 23.

Two days later, the team had an easier time at Arlington High School against Greenburgh-North Castle in the Coaches vs. Cancer Showcase, winning 83-56, their highest point total of the season.

With Michael Murray replacing Evan Giachinta in the starting lineup — Coach Joe Virgadamo said that he “wanted to change it up a little bit” — the Blue Devils opened the game with a 15-2 run and were up by 20 at the end of the first quarter and by 18 at halftime. Nachamkin led the scoring with 18 points, while Fallou Faye had 15 and was named the game MVP.

The Blue Devils were home again on Monday (Jan. 22) against Leffell, winning 55-48, after falling behind by nine points in the third quarter. Nachamkin scored 17 points, followed by Faye (15), Ross Esposito (11) and Murray (10).

On Wednesday, Haldane traveled to Croton-Harmon, returning with a 74-40 victory. The Tigers were down by only a point at the end of the first quarter but Haldane broke the game open in the second quarter and led by 24 at the half. Luke Bozsik, who started the season on the junior varsity, scored 14 points off the bench, while Nachamkin had 17 and Faye had 15. Virgadamo said the team still needs work on its rebounding.

The Blue Devils, who finished the 2022-23 season in the state title game, were ranked the third-best Class C team in the state as of Jan. 21 by the New York State Sportswriters Association.

On Saturday (Jan. 27), Haldane (11-2) travels to Beacon for the annual Battle of the Tunnel, and on Tuesday visits North Salem.

GIRLS' BASKETBALL — The Blue Devils hosted Putnam Valley on Jan. 14. The visiting Tigers began the game with a 13-0 run and never looked back, winning 61-31, although Haldane kept it even in the third quarter. Marisa Peters led the team with 14 points.

It didn't get much easier on Jan. 20 when Beacon came to the village for the annual Battle of the Tunnel. The Bulldogs at the time had lost only one game this season and handled the Blue Devils easily, 60-23, to keep the trophy, which they won with a



The Beacon girls won the Battle of the Tunnel at Haldane on Jan. 20 to keep the trophy until next season.

Photos by Skip Pearlman



Camilla McDaniel hit 2 three-pointers against Beacon; she is guarded here by Devyn Kelly.

46-27 victory last year at Haldane.

Reilly Landisi led Beacon with 20 points, followed by Daveya Rodriguez with 18. For Haldane, Kayla Ruggiero scored 11 and Camilla McDaniel and Marisa Peters each had six.

Haldane lost at North Salem, 55-42, on Monday (Jan. 22), despite an 8-0 run to start the second half that put them up by one behind two free throws by Ruggiero and back-to-back three-pointers from McDaniel, who finished the game with 100 for her career.

That would be their last lead of the game, however, as North Salem reasserted control. “We’ve done a better job in recent weeks of cutting back on our turnovers, but we need to be more aggressive going to the basket,”

said Haldane Coach Charles Martinez.

On Wednesday, the Blue Devils visited Croton-Harmon for the Coaches vs. Cancer Awareness Game, falling 42-26, for their fifth consecutive loss. The teams together raised nearly \$700 for cancer research.

Haldane (6-10) will be at Peekskill today (Jan. 26) and hosts North Salem on Tuesday at 6:15 p.m.

WINTER TRACK — Haldane competed on Jan. 22 in the sectional league championships at The Armory in New York City.

For the girls, Aine Duggan finished second in the 1,500-meter race walk in 12:46.16; Samantha Thomas was second in the 55-meter dash in 8.18 and fifth in the

300-meter dash in 48.98; Ashley Sousa was second in the 600-meter run in 1:49.15 and second in the 1,500 meters in 5:48.65; and Penelope Andreou was second in the 3,000-meter run in 14:16.47. The 4x800 relay team won that event in 14:03.12.

For the boys, Milo Pearsall was third in the 55-meter dash in 6.88, followed by Jake Thomas (6.91) and Rhys Williams (6.97); James Frommer was second in the 600 meters in 1:31.98; Jack Illian won the 3,200 meters in 10:36.94 and was second in the 1,600 meters in 4:57.39; Merrick Williams won the 55-meter hurdles in 9.39; and the 4x200 relay team won in 1:38.55.

The team returns to The Armory on Feb. 3 for an invitational hosted by Warwick Valley.

FOOTBALL — Evan Giachinta was named last week as a first-team selection to the Class D All-State team by the New York State Sportswriters Association. The senior running back ran for 1,501 yards and scored 16 touchdowns, leading the Blue Devils to their first Section I title since 2018. He has committed to play lacrosse for High Point University in North Carolina. Senior quarterback Ryan Van Tassel was named to the second team in Class D and lineman Jack Hartman and linebacker Erik Stubblefield received honorable mentions.

BEACON

By Nick Robbins

BOYS' BASKETBALL — The Bulldogs easily won at O'Neill, 83-50, on Jan. 18 for their fifth victory of the season in preparation for hosting Haldane at the annual Battle of the Tunnel at 3 p.m. on Saturday (Jan. 27). Beacon won the first match-up in 2020 but Haldane has claimed the most recent three. Next week, the Bulldogs (5-7) host Port Jervis on Monday at 4:30 p.m.

GIRLS' BASKETBALL — It was a busy week for Beacon, with four games and three wins. After defeating Haldane on Jan. 20 in the Battle of the Tunnel, the Bulldogs won at home over O'Neill, 53-21, on Monday (Jan. 22) behind 27 points from Reilly Landisi. The Bulldogs fell at Middletown on Wednesday, 51-41 (Landisi again scored 27), and hosted Port Jervis on Thursday. Beacon (11-2) will travel to Chester on Tuesday (Jan. 30) and host Millbrook at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday.

WRESTLING — Beacon lost at Pine Bush on Wednesday (Jan. 24), 42-30, with Avery Davis winning at 170 pounds, Nixon Salinas at 190 pounds and Owen Lynch at 215

(Continued on Page 18)