The HIGHLANDS COLUMN THE HIGHL

Turkish Cuisine Page 11



March 1, 2024

NYPA Newspaper of the Year

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Beacon Council Pivots on Cease-fire

Members likely to vote on resolution Monday

By Jeff Simms

ne week after hearing 50 residents, most of them from Beacon, speak for more than two and a half hours, the City Council reversed course and during its Feb. 26 workshop drafted a resolution calling for "an immediate and permanent cease-fire" in Gaza. The council is expected to vote on the resolution on Monday (March 4).

If approved, the resolution will be sent to

President Joe Biden, as well as other elected officials who represent Beacon and the Highlands: U.S. Sens. Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Rep. Pat Ryan, Gov. Kathy Hochul, state Sen. Rob Rolison and state Assembly Member Jonathan Jacobson.

The resolution's final copy was released midday Thursday and acknowledges the "deep personal impact" the war has had on community members. It suggests the city can help ease pain and division "through a statement of shared understanding and advocacy for the desires of the community to be heard."

It condemns discrimination, harass-

(Continued on Page 9)



CELEBRATION OF LIGHT — Beacon residents celebrated the Year of the Dragon on Feb. 24 with an evening parade with lanterns on Main Street. For more photos, see highlandscurrent.org.

Photo by Ross Corsair

Beacon School District Proposes \$49 Million Plan

Capital project would mean tax increase

By Jeff Simms

The Beacon City School District has proposed a \$49 million capital project, its largest in years, for district residents to consider when they vote on the 2024-25 budget and elect three school board members in May.

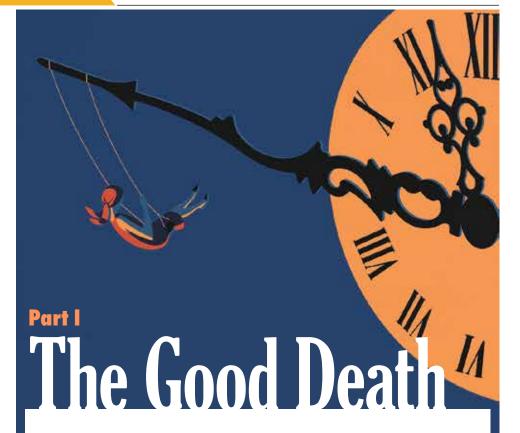
The proposal would fund sweeping improvements at all six of the district's school buildings, with the work to be completed in the summers of 2026, 2027

and 2028. If approved, it would also be the first school capital project to trigger a property tax increase in at least 15 years.

Before being added to the May 21 ballot, the school board must approve the plan, which is expected to happen at its March 18 meeting.

The district estimates that a home valued at \$300,000 would see a \$127 annual tax increase. With the state STAR exemption, which affords homeowners savings on school taxes, the increase would be \$114, and it would be \$91 for seniors enrolled in the Enhanced STAR program. The tax

(Continued on Page 9)



Many residents of the Highlands have embraced the "death-positive" movement, which hopes to shape the endings of our stories.

By Joey Asher

hen a doctor told Lisette Cheresson's family that their mother was no longer eligible for a liver transplant, they decided to take her home immediately.

"The doctor was flabbergasted," says Cheresson, a Beacon resident whose mother died in 2018 in North Carolina. "He said: 'Are you sure? We can keep her alive."

"We had to honor what we promised her," she recalls. "Mom didn't want to die in a hospital."

They hired a private ambulance to take her home that evening. Family members were at her bedside when she died the next morning.

"It was one of the most profoundly beautiful moments of my life," says Cheresson. "It is transcendent when people are given an opportunity to experience these sacred intimate moments in ways that are meaningful to them."

As part of a growing movement that has been described as "death positive," people in the Highlands and around the country are looking for ways to embrace life's final moments and turn death into something beautiful and meaningful. The movement is driven by death doulas, podcasters, hospices, writers, singers, funeral directors and "death café" facilitators.

In part motivated by her experience with her mother, Cheresson joined an army of doulas, also known as death midwives, who help families talk openly about dying and individuals achieve a "good death."

Hudson Valley Hospice, which serves Dutchess and Ulster counties, has trained about 80 end-of-life doulas since 2017, said Lisa Wilson, a spokesperson. Wilson said the doulas help plan and manage the final days of patients' lives to ensure they have a good death, including the friends, music and even smells they want present in their final moments. "They talk with them about how they want the end to go," she says.

Doulas also help with legacy projects such as farewell videos and letters. She says a doula helped a Fishkill woman in her 90s assemble a board of photographs to be displayed at her wake.

(Continued on Page 15)

Illustration by Jon Krause



FIVE QUESTIONS: JON SCOTT BENNETT

By Michael Turton

he first episode of a five-part documentary about the 1949 Peekskill riots directed by Jon Scott Bennett, who lives in Putnam Valley, will debut at jonscottbennett.com on Thursday (March 8) and at the Field Library in Peekskill on March 30.

What led to the riots?

Tension was bubbling about the "colonies" or "cooperatives" in northern Westchester and southern Putnam. They were occupied by working-class Jews and African Americans, many of whom were trade unionists passionate about leftist politics, who established cheap bungalows as affordable summer homes. They were seen in that very conservative area as outsiders, as communists, and considered a threat.

If there was a spark, it was a speech that Paul Robeson, a singer, actor and Black activist, gave in Paris. Some press coverage claimed he said African Americans would not fight against the Soviet Union, which was not true, but the reports caused national outrage. When people around Peekskill learned Robeson was coming to give a concert, they felt they had to do something to keep what they saw as un-American activities out of their city.





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There were two riots. How did they differ?

The concert was scheduled for Aug. 27 on Oregon Road in Cortlandt, at the site of what is now the Hollow Brook Golf Club, About 2,000 people were expected from the summer colonies. People also came from Peekskill. and they probably outnumbered them. Veterans and others blocked the entrance. Concertgoers were attacked, cars flipped over, the stage and audience chairs burned.

The concert was rescheduled for Sept. 4 near the turning circle at Oregon Road and Red Mill Road. Twenty thousand to 30,000 people, many in support of Robeson, traveled there on three narrow country roads. The people caught in the bottlenecked traffic faced a barrage of rocks and bottles. It was a miracle no one was killed: hundreds were severely injured. There were many examples of police harassing and abusing concertgoers, but blame also needs to be put on the superintendent of the state police, the district attorney of Westchester and the supervisor of the Town of Cortlandt for allowing a veterans' parade at the concert entrance. There's no way they didn't know there would be trouble.

Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie were there, but have their roles been embellished over the years?

History has a funny way of doing that. Woody Guthrie was a relative unknown he didn't perform; he was simply a guard. His songs afterward highlighted the story. Pete Seeger was better known and is in the documentary, discussing performing at the second concert, his experiences during and after, and his song, "Hold the Line." I focus on the under-discussed parts of the story, such as crucial Black and Jewish perspectives that have been overlooked in favor of the more sanitized, less-controversial story of Pete Seeger. That said, he is relevant and important to the story.

What was your biggest challenge while making the film?

There was an attempt to block

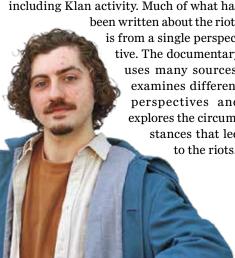
my efforts by certain museums or historical societies - small entities run like little fiefdoms by people who've lived here their entire lives. They want their version of history and don't want the area to look bad. A few said this story has been done to death or is best. forgotten. They prevented me from accessing archives. I was fortunate to find other sources, people who felt my frustration. I even spoke to people who were at the riots. Some provided feedback at test screenings. One woman, now in her 90s, was driving to the Aug. 27 concert and remembers people

It's still relevant. The documentary examines the systemic racism, antisemitism and oppression of the working class that Robeson tried to combat and that we're still combating. Even today, a lot of people are afraid to talk about him. When people talk about race riots, they think of it as a Southern thing. But as New Yorkers, we have a long history of skeletons in our closet, including Klan activity. Much of what has

been written about the riots is from a single perspective. The documentary uses many sources, examines different perspectives and explores the circumstances that led to the riots.



trying to overturn her car. The story is 75 years old; why retell it





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By Michael Turton

Do you prefer movies / books set in the past, present or future?

I'm a sucker for history; we learn from

the past.

Sheila Sousa, Nelsonville

I prefer science fiction: I'm naively optimistic about the future.



Tom Ciccarelli, Beacon

Books about the past transport me and spark my imagination.



Juanita Rincon, Nelsonville



Wappingers Falls: Day Care Abruptly Closes

Parents were scrambling to find child care following the sudden closure of a Route 9 preschool, according to WRRV.

J.A.C.E. Daycare and Early Learning Program, located in the Imperial Shopping Plaza, announced Feb. 20 that it would close at the end of the month. It offered care from 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

The daycare is owned by Rachel Bieber, according to Mid Hudson News, which reported that a venture capital lender secured a judgment against her on Feb. 16 for a \$179,000 debt.

Fishkill: Charges Dropped Against Council Member

he case against John Forman, a member of The case against John Loring, ...
the Fishkill Town Board who was arrested in October for allegedly stealing campaign signs of his opponent, will be dismissed if he is not arrested again in the next six months, according to Mid Hudson News.

The prosecution of Forman, who was

charged with misdemeanor criminal possession of stolen property, was handled by a district attorney from Columbia County and heard by a judge in the Town of North East.

"We are happy that this misunderstanding has been put behind us," Forman's attorney, Anthony DeFazio, told the news site.

Forman was charged when he was found with a sign that had been equipped with a GPS tracking device by Louise Daniele, another member of the Town Board.

Wappingers Falls: Woman Hits 100 mph on Route 9

Long Island woman on Feb. 22 drove A more than 100 mph southbound from Poughkeepsie on Route 9 until she crashed into a police squad car, injuring two officers, according to the New York State Police.

When intercepted in Wappinger Falls at 11:30 p.m., the woman was driving south in the northbound lanes, reported Mid Hudson News. She was pulled over by a state trooper but jumped the median and struck the police vehicle. A trooper then boxed in the woman's SUV to keep her from fleeing.

Police said the suspect, after being placed in the back of a cruiser, began kicking the door and windows, cursing and spitting. She was placed in a "spit mask" and leg restraints and was taken to MidHudson Regional Hospital for evaluation.

Hopewell Junction: Mobile Marijuana **Dispensary Shut Down**

Police this week arrested a 22-year-old Hopewell Junction resident for allegedly operating an illegal mobile cannabis dispensary, according to Mid Hudson News.

Eli Herrera was charged with misdemeanor criminal sale of cannabis. His truck was spotted by AJ Beephan, a member of the state Assembly, who alerted the state Office of Cannabis Management. It determined that Herrera did not have a retail license; the Town of East Fishkill also does not allow dispensaries.

After Herrera's arrest on Monday (Feb. 26), the truck was impounded and towed.

LaGrange: Councilman Sues Resident, Colleague

Town of LaGrange council member sued a resident and another member of the council for \$10 million, alleging they defamed him and conspired to release audio recordings on YouTube of executive sessions that are closed to the public.

The lawsuit by Alfred Rabasco names Hopewell Junction resident David Mashiah and Council Member Rich Ryan.

According to Mid Hudson News, Rebecca Valk, the town attorney, read a statement at the Feb. 21 meeting that listed what she

considered to be threatening behavior by Mashiah, such as allegedly calling the town to inquire about its active shooter plan, claiming to state agencies that he is a town official and following people to their cars after meetings.

Valk said that "all evidence is pointing" to Ryan as the one "feeding recordings to this man." She said to Ryan: "When I or someone else is physically harmed, responsibility will fall on you."

Sullivan County: Man Arrested After **Facebook Post**

Barryville man who police say was Ahiding out because he was \$8,700 behind on his child-support payments was arrested after attempting to sell a motorcycle on Facebook Marketplace.

According to Mid Hudson News, Marcus Molnar, 46, had fled to Wayne County, Pennsylvania, in September to avoid a warrant. Deputies from the Sullivan County Sheriff's Office noticed that Molnar had placed a listing for a Harley Davidson online and posed as buyers. When Molnar met them on Feb. 24 in Barryville, he was arrested.

Sheriff Mike Schiff told the news site that his office was "on a roll," executing five child-support warrants in 10 days.

Visit highlandscurrent.org for news $updates\ and\ latest\ information.$



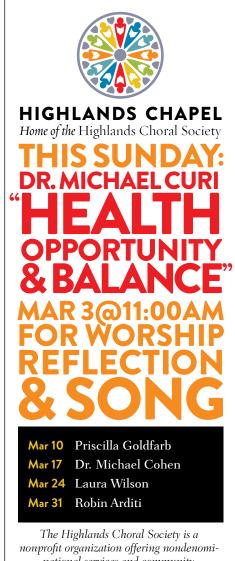
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March 16 at 7:30p [SOLD OUT]

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LETTERS AND COMMENTS

Beacon bus

Those of us who live at the base of Mount Beacon love the Loop Bus and are dismayed at the proposed changes ("County to Explain Beacon Bus Changes," Feb. 23). Turning this service into a Main Street shuttle with limited hours threatens this vital service in our community. These changes will negatively impact many residents who depend on this bus route daily, and these cuts eliminate all public transportation options for anyone $\,$ living south of Main.

If the plan to change the Loop route goes through, it will eliminate the service to the Mount Beacon trailhead. The nearest stop for residents in this elevated part of the city is 0.7 miles away, which is impractical on rainy, hot or smoky days, especially when carrying luggage or heavy bags.

The county argues that the route has low ridership, and that the Main Street Access Committee recommended a shuttle for populated areas. The report should have mentioned how the Loop takes riders to and from low- to higher-density regions.

Ridership is down because the bus runs irregularly and has no posted timetables. It has gotten a reputation for being unreliable, but it doesn't need to be that way.

As development comes online and the city contemplates relaxing parking regulations,

it's irresponsible to cut public transit and call $\,$ it an improvement. Let's talk about expanding it to the growing parts of the city. Let's take the Main Street Access Committee's suggestion of providing direct routes, increasing frequency to make timetables irrelevant and improving the bus and shelter designs.

I am among the nearly 1,000 people who have signed a petition calling for the route to be improved, not eliminated, for those who need it most.

Carolyn Bennett Glauda, Beacon

How about a bus along Fishkill Avenue to serve the laundromat, Trax Expresso, Red Pepper Diner, Asian Ginger Chinese Restaurant, Stinson's Hub, District Social, Industrial Arts Brewing, Barking Frog, Crown Fried Chicken and Halal Grill, Gold Label Liquor, Roma Nova, Auto Zone, Family Dollar, Enterprise Car Rentals, Mavis Auto, Lanks Auto Shop, High End Automotive, Hudson Highlands Veterinary and others.

Not once has a free bus driven down this stretch. It could wait in the shopping plaza, then drive the "golden mile" of Main Street to the train station and back. It seems the Hedgewood Home for Adults is such a blight that it and all those businesses are not considered part of Beacon.

Dennis Moroney, Beacon

Raki rescue

Just finished reading this marvelous account of Raki's return ("My View: What We Lost, and What We Found," Feb. 23). So happy for everyone, especially Raki. Give Fred Osborn a regular column!

Richard Gerber, Lake Peekskill

Gospel truth

Thanks to Michael Turton for his report on my documentary about the New Orleans gospel artist Raymond Myles, and for recognizing the challenges that face an independent filmmaker ("A Gospel Star's Life, Murder and Legacy," Feb. 23).

While the serenity of Cold Spring is the antithesis of the grit and groove of New Orleans, the communities truly share artistic, familial and spiritual synergies. I wish I had better communicated how my relationships in Cold Spring, coupled with the faith of my family, have been instrumental in making the film.

Leo Sacks, New York City

Stewart airport

The back and forth over Stewart Airport initiated by Stowe Boyd's nostalgia piece about a fantasy of re-regulating the airline industry illustrates perfectly why we never get anything done anymore ("Wide Angle: Why You Can't Fly from Stewart," Feb. 9).

I spent 20 years in the airline industry but you don't need me to say that regulation is never coming back, not in the way Boyd suggests. What mystifies me is that Stewart has long been identified as the best option to be New York City's fourth regional airport to provide relief to Kennedy, LaGuardia and Newark. The Port Authority has reams of studies supporting the idea.

Everyone also knows that what is required to make it happen is a reliable mass transportation link with New York City. Every study will show that such a link will make Stewart viable because it will be both accessible to the city and a lot cheaper to use. That will bring discount air service to our region.

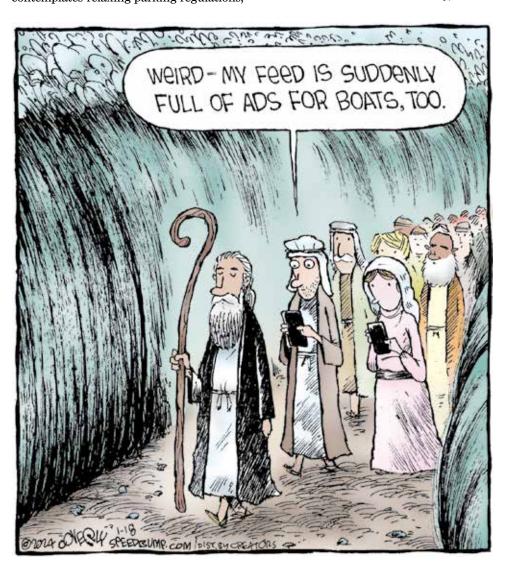
Airports bring significant employment and business creation, so Newburgh and the surrounding region will benefit directly beyond the increased access to air travel.

In terms of public investment, this is as much a win/win project as you are ever likely to find. There is a passenger rail line, the Port Jervis line which goes to Hoboken, that passes not far from Stewart. There is also a rumor we are spending billions of federal dollars on infrastructure.

In a bygone era, this would have been a political no-brainer, with every local politician, from mayor to representatives in Albany and Washington, loudly calling for funding.

(Continued on Page 5)

John Schieneman, Cold Spring



LETTERS AND COMMENTS

(Continued from Page 4)

Donkey hoops

I had to look up videos to see if donkey basketball was real ("Looking Back in Philipstown," Feb. 9). It is! One thing is for sure, there's no fast break in the game. Fun to watch, but the donkeys look confused and a bit irritated. Thanks for the laugh, *Highlands Current*!

Lynn Miller, Cold Spring The editor responds: That game took place in 1949 between members of the Beacon and Cold Spring Lions clubs, but donkey basketball is far less common now as a fundraiser because it's viewed as cruel to the donkeys and dangerous to the players, who sometimes are injured and file lawsuits.

Beacon line

The current owners of railroad-adjacent properties bought or acquired them for a given amount of money for a specified amount of land ("Landowners Along Beacon Line Want Payments," Feb. 23). They bargained for what they got with no reasonable (or unreasonable) expectation that they would be entitled to additional property for which they had neither bargained nor paid. To expect to be paid for land they never owned seems counterintuitive.

William Cornett, Beacon

Could these lawsuits delay the rail trail by two to four years? Or, could the trail go ahead concurrently?

Brett Miller, Beacon

The editor responds: There's nothing to delay until a government or other entity commits to building a trail.

I joined a class-action lawsuit years ago in conjunction with Albany County's rail trail, expecting token compensation at best, which was not how things played out. Those along the rail trail who joined the lawsuit received a nice payout. My ex-wife and I received \$35,000, of which a third went to the lawyers. It took several years start to finish, but did not impact the opening of the trail.

Denis Meadows, via Facebook

Despite this annoyance, this is how things done in the past need to be remedied. I've surveyed many railroads-for-trails projects. It comes down to how the title was taken and the language in the original documents. This railroad was taken in the 1850s through the 1860s and was taken from landowners in a variety of ways. Sometimes the railroads bought the land, sometimes they bought an easement and sometimes they condemned it through the courts. If the state is going to invest, it needs to have a clear title.

Tom Cerchiara, via Instagram

Beacon license

I thought this was supposed to help minorities and veterans ("Beacon Receives First Cannabis License," Feb. 23). Typical Beacon: Take care of outsiders first. Beacon is now run by outsiders.

Stephen Olivencia, Beacon

If you couldn't tell from our photo, we are a minority and woman-owned busi-

By the Numbers

How Much Local Courts Collect

By Leonard Sparks

ach month, New York's 1,189 town and village courts deposit the fines, fees and surcharges they collect into the state Justice Court Fund, which splits the proceeds between them, counties and the state. In 2022, the fund collected \$189.3 million, according to the state Comptroller's Office, which oversees it.

Of the 2022 revenues, the fund distributed 61 percent (\$115 million) to the courts that collected them, 36 percent (\$69 million) to the state and the balance (\$5.4 million) to counties. (City courts such as in Beacon are administered and funded by the state court system and do not send revenue to the Justice Court Fund.)

The figures at right show how the amounts that local courts receive can fluctuate depending on factors such as the volume of traffic tickets and civil and criminal court cases, as well as changes in state law.

| _ | | TOTAL | STATE | COUNTY | LOCAL | | | | |
|-------------------|------|---|-----------|---------|-----------|--|--|--|--|
| COURT | 2014 | \$101,777 | \$42,893 | \$341 | \$58,543 | | | | |
| OS | 2018 | \$106,509 | \$31,639 | \$527 | \$74,344 | | | | |
| 5 N | 2019 | \$120,000 | \$36,183 | \$50 | \$83,767 | | | | |
| COLD SPRING | 2020 | \$94,640 | \$27,006 | \$103 | \$67,532 | | | | |
| -D | 2021 | \$79,322 | \$20,839 | (\$10) | \$58,493 | | | | |
| <u> </u> | 2022 | \$93,719 | \$21,732 | \$0.80 | \$71,987 | | | | |
| _ | | | | | | | | | |
| COURT | 2014 | \$16,377 | \$5,080 | \$1,080 | \$10,217 | | | | |
| | 2018 | \$11,348 | \$4,340 | (\$10) | \$7,018 | | | | |
| H | 2019 | \$5,702 | \$2,082 | (\$40) | \$3,660 | | | | |
| Ž | 2020 | \$2,187 | \$717 | \$0 | \$1,470 | | | | |
| NELSONVILLE | 2021 | \$3,399 | \$1,534 | \$15 | \$1,850 | | | | |
| Ä | 2022 | \$8,236 | \$4,011 | \$0 | \$4,225 | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| URT | 2014 | \$201,276 | \$88,302 | \$4,496 | \$108,479 | | | | |
| 00 | 2018 | \$160,927 | \$84,077 | \$7,546 | \$69,304 | | | | |
| Z } | 2019 | \$223,987 | \$117,874 | \$3,715 | \$102,398 | | | | |
| PHILIPSTOWN COURT | 2020 | \$118,547 | \$58,296 | \$2,144 | \$58,108 | | | | |
| Ë | 2021 | \$198,064 | \$76,624 | \$2,025 | \$119,416 | | | | |
| Ŧ | 2022 | \$130,411 | \$58,110 | \$2,985 | \$69,316 | | | | |
| _ | | Source: New York State Comptroller's Office | | | | | | | |

ness, which is still a rarity in the cannabis industry. When we first built out our gallery space, it was the winter of 2020, when Main Street was crippled by the effects of COVID. But we stuck it out and made our space into something that has been a benefit to Beacon and its residents.

We live here too, and have been consistently and continually dedicated to making Beacon a better place for all of its residents, both old and new. We sincerely hope that you take the time to get to know us before you make snap judgments. We are happy to be a part of this community and we appreciate everyone here who makes it such a great place to live.

Aaron Sanders, Beacon Sanders is the co-owner, with Skyla Schreter, of LotusWorks.

Redistricting

Your Feb. 23 article presented a well-written analysis of the congressional redistricting maps created by the independent commission, including that it will not make Rep.

Mike Lawler's re-election more difficult, and that the changes made are unlikely to affect the outcome. Your headline ("New Redistricting Benefits Lawler, Ryan"), however, left those facts behind. Perhaps there are facts to justify it but nothing in the article supports it, making it fictional and misleading.

Dwight Arthur, Mahopac

The editor responds: Lawler defeated a five-term Democratic incumbent by 3,200 votes among more than 278,000 cast. Anything less than a dramatic change in the boundaries is to his benefit, which is likely why he called on the state Legislature to immediately approve the revision and complimented lawmakers when they made only minor changes. (See Page 7.)

George is well

George Stevenson is Cold Spring's local hero, a fine folk artist, a fount of good cheer and our treasure ("Reporter's Notebook: Relax, Cold Spring: George is Doing Well," Feb. 23).

 ${\bf Jonathan\ Kruk}, {\it Philipstown}$

When George was in Vietnam, someone took a photo of him without a T-shirt on. Many people from Cold Spring mailed him one.

We're thrilled to present the U.S. Premiere of Red Silk It's a fictionalized drama in two acts. It tells the riveting story of the iconic but troubled

poet, Anne Sexton, and her complex - and controversial - relationship with her two

psychiatrists. (One of whom became her lover.) Hit House Creative, partnering with Beacon LitFest at Howland Cultural Center,

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The former owners of 21 Huyler Drive in Hyde Park are among the plaintiffs suing Dutchess County over the proceeds from its foreclosure auctions.

Absolute Auctions & Realty

Dutchess Sued Over Foreclosure Sales

Plaintiffs seek proceeds after back taxes paid

By Leonard Sparks

he former owners of four properties are suing Dutchess County in response to a U.S. Supreme Court determination that municipalities cannot keep all the proceeds from properties they auction off for unpaid taxes.

Their federal lawsuit is the kind New York counties began bracing for after the Supreme Court ruled in May 2023 that although a Minnesota county could sell for \$40,000 a house it took title to for \$15,000 in unpaid taxes, keeping the extra \$25,000 violated the Constitution.

Based on the Fifth Amendment, which prohibits private property from being "taken for public use without just compensation," the plaintiffs allege that Dutchess is guilty of "unjust enrichment" by keeping the proceeds left over after the back taxes are paid.

Darlene Deary, one of the plaintiffs, said in a complaint filed Feb. 23 in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York that she owed \$75,000 in unpaid property taxes and penalties for 21 Huyler Drive in the Town of Hyde Park when Dutchess auctioned the house for \$444,000 in April 2022.

That month Dutchess also auctioned, for \$186,000, a home at 75 Deer Pond Road in Union Vale after Nancy and Randall Bose lost title because of \$30,000 in unpaid property taxes and penalties, according to court documents.

The plaintiffs, who name Dutchess County and its finance commissioner, Heidi

Seelbach, as defendants, also include a couple who owed \$30,000 when their home on Lafko Drive in the Town of Poughkeepsie was sold for \$212,000; and the estate of a deceased woman whose 3-acre lot in East Fishkill was sold for \$69,000 after being foreclosed on for \$14,783 in back taxes.

They are seeking unspecified damages from Dutchess, which made \$950,000 from its most recent auction in November 2022. The county did not hold one last year because of the Supreme Court ruling, and said it may forgo one this year.

In Putnam County, Finance Commissioner Michael Lewis began a foreclosure proceeding on Feb. 22 in which the county is seeking title to 45 properties, including five in Philipstown. But because of the Supreme Court ruling, there are no immediate plans to auction the properties, the county said.

One pending remedy is legislation proposed by Gov. Kathy Hochul in response to the court decision that would require 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 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, deputy director for NYSAC.

NEWS BRIEF

Auto Shop Sues Bank Over Stolen Funds

Bookkeeper cashed checks worth \$714K

Pishkill Auto Body on Route 52 is suing PCSB Bank to recoup \$714,000 that a former bookkeeper stole over more than two years.

The company said in a lawsuit filed Feb. 23 in Dutchess County Supreme Court that PCSB "failed to use ordinary care in validating the authorized signatory" on checks

payable to "cash" and presented by Suzanne Whitman from November 2019 to May 2022.

Whitman, who was arrested and charged in December 2022, forged the name of someone who was authorized to sign the checks, according to Fishkill Auto Body.

The Poughkeepsie resident pleaded guilty in March 2023 to grand larceny. She also pleaded guilty to attempted grand larceny in a separate case in which she attempted to defraud Ulster Savings Bank on a \$450,000 mortgage. She was sentenced to up to 18 years in prison.

Second Firm Files Rail-Trail Lawsuit

Like others, alleges 'taking' of private property

By Jeff Simms

second law firm has filed a lawsuit, the third overall, against the federal government for authorizing public usage of land belonging to people who live along a 41-mile stretch of the dormant Beacon rail line.

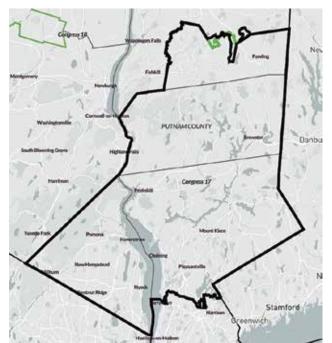
The suit, filed by the Lewis Rice firm, based in St. Louis, appears virtually identical to a pair of suits filed earlier this month by Stewart, Wald & Smith, another firm in St. Louis. The filings came after the federal Surface Transportation Board allowed Metro-North, which owns the line, to close it, opening the door for a sponsor to construct a rail trail.

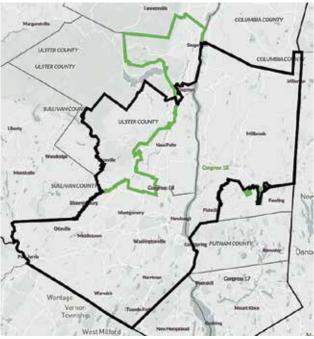
The board also allowed Metro-North to retain its right of way in case it chooses to reactivate the line, which runs from the city waterfront into Connecticut. Although a Metro-North representative said the agency has no plans to do that, the lawsuits argue that retaining the right-of-way violates the Fifth Amendment by seizing private property for public use without compensation.

Stewart, Wald & Smith's lawsuits were each filed on behalf of 86 landowners; the Lewis Rice suit is on behalf of nine. Both firms said they may add plaintiffs to their filings.

The suits seek compensation for the property owners for the land "taken" by the U.S. government and the diminished value of plaintiffs' remaining property. The land in question was either condemned or had an easement applied when the rail line was laid in the 19th century but the current owners retain title. Because the land is no longer being used for a railroad, the owners should be compensated, the lawsuits claim.

Visit highlandscurrent.org for news updates and latest information.





(left)
The final map
for District
17 included
only a minor
change at
its northern
boundary,
shown in
green.

(right)
The changes
made to
District 18
were more
dramatic,
shown in
green.

Legislature Revises New House Districts

Lawler praises Democrats for 'restraint'

By Leonard Sparks

ov. Kathy Hochul approved new maps on Wednesday (Feb. 28) for the state's 26 U.S. House seats that leave largely untouched the district that includes Philipstown but reshapes the contours of the one that contains Beacon.

Hochul's signature capped a whirlwind week in which the state Legislature's Democratic majority rejected a redistricting plan approved by the Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC), the bipartisan body created to redraw congressional and state Senate and Assembly districts after the decennial census.

Despite fears from Republicans that the Democrats would redraw maps to tilt competitive seats in their favor ahead of the November election, the plan approved Wednesday does not contain large-scale changes to the one offered by the commission.

The state Senate voted 45-17 to approve the new maps, and the Assembly, 118-30. Rob Rolison, a Republican who represents Beacon and Philipstown in the state Senate, voted against the plan. Dana Levenberg, a Democrat whose Assembly district includes Philipstown, and Jonathan Jacobson, a Democrat whose Assembly district includes Beacon, each voted in favor.

Rep. Mike Lawler, a Republican whose District 17 seat in the U.S. House includes Philipstown and is one of the seats Democrats hope to flip in November, said he was "glad to see both the Senate and Assembly exhibit restraint."

"While there were numerous attempts throughout this process to engage in a partisan gerrymander, the final map largely abides by the New York Independent Redistricting Commission's bipartisan version and ensures fair, competitive districts across the state," he said.

District 17 will remain mostly as it was when Lawler narrowly defeated five-term Democratic Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney in 2022. The IRC slightly altered its northern boundary in Dutchess County, removing the Green Haven Correctional Facility in Stormville and adding parts of the Town of Beekman.

The changes to District 18, which is represented by Rep. Pat Ryan, a Democrat, and includes Beacon, were more dramatic. Under the IRC plan, the district would have become bluer by removing parts of conservative-leaning western Orange and Ulster counties and adding Saugerties, Woodstock and other

Democrat-leaning parts of northern Ulster.

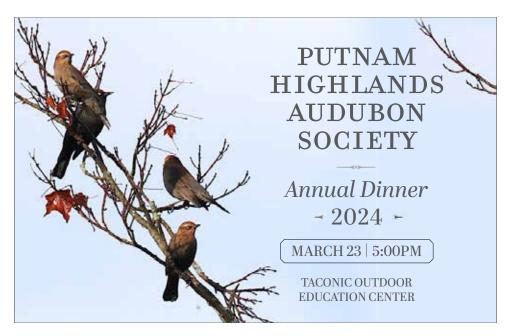
The finalized boundaries add the same parts of northern Ulster. But instead of removing parts of Orange, the Legislature removed a swath of western Ulster County that includes Ellenville.

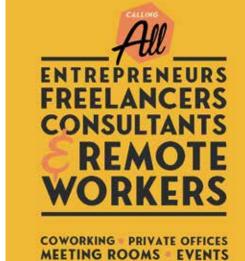
Had they been in place in 2020 and 2022, the changes in Districts 17 and 18 would not have had a dramatic effect on the results for president or governor, according to an analysis by the Center for Urban Research at City University of New York.

Levenberg said in a statement that the Legislature made "minor" tweaks that "reunited some counties and communities of interest. As the elected representatives of the people, it is only right for us to have the final say. We are more in touch with the people in these communities on a daily basis."

The maps replace those drawn by a court-appointed expert for the 2022 elections after the IRC commissioners failed to agree and maps created by the Legislature's Democratic majority were ruled to be an unconstitutional gerrymander.

The state's highest court, the Court of Appeals, ruled in December that the congressional boundaries used in the 2022 election were valid for one-time use only, rather than through 2030, when the next federal census will be conducted.





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PAID NOTICE

Let your voice be heard!

Welcome to The Fjord **Trail Survey**

This survey is an independent initiative, designed as a crowdsourcing tool to gauge the sentiments of Cold Spring and nearby residents in an anonymous and objective manner. This survey has no affiliation with nor is sanctioned by any local or state government, Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail (HHFT), Scenic Hudson, Protect the Highlands, or any other group or organization which advocates for or against the HHFT. We hope the results will provide useful data to inform community members and local and state officials about how Cold Spring and area residents feel about the HHFT.

Instructions:

- Please read each question and circle your answer or answers.
- Please print any comments.
- Please be courteous in the comments section. Any vitriol in the comments section will disqualify your survey and your voice won't be heard.
- Your responses are non-attributional and confidential. We won't use your email to track you down. Promise.
- Please respect the integrity of the process; don't send in multiple surveys to reinforce your position(s). But please do encourage others to participate in the survey.
- Feel free to make copies of the blank survey and give to your friends and family to complete: the more surveys submitted, the better the survey validity.
- When you have completed the survey, please use your phone to take a picture of it or scan it to a .pdf file and email to: fjordtrailsurvey@gmail.com.
- If you are unable to use your phone to take a picture or scan to .pdf, you may enter the results into an email. (For example: Question 1-Answer a; Question 2- Answer c. etc.)
- You may complete the survey in hard copy and drop in the Survey drop box at 1 Marion Avenue, Cold Spring.
- We'll manually collate the data and provide aggregate results via the Current as soon as we can, depending on the number of surveys received.
- We will accept surveys for one week; until midnight, Thursday, March 7.

1. Where do you live? (select one)

In Cold Spring Village:

- a. West of Lunn Terrace
- e. Nelsonville b. North of Main Street, west of 9D
- f. Philipstown (other than Cold Spring or Nelsonville)
- c. South of Main Street, west of 9D
- g. I do not live in Cold Spring, Nelsonville or Philipstown

d. East of 9D

2. If you live in Cold Spring Village, how long have you lived here? (select one)

Outside the Village:

- a. 0-5 years
- b. 6-15 years
- c. More than 15 years
- d. I'm a "Springer": I've lived here all my life
- e. I do not live in Cold Spring Village

3. How old are you? (select one)

- a. 21 years or younger
- b. 22-45
- c. 46-64
- d. 65 or older

4. How do you receive information about the HHFT project? (select all that apply)

- a. Informally from friends or family
- b. The Current or other news media
- c. Cold Spring village board meetings or website
- d. HHFT website (hhft.org), Facebook or informational materials (flyers, mailers, etc.)
- e. HHFT/Scenic Hudson meetings/information sessions (either attending in person or watching the video afterwards)
- Scenic Hudson website (scenichudson.org), Facebook or informational materials
- g. Protect the Highlands website (protectthehighlands.org) or informational materials
- h. Other (please list)

5. What is your position on whether or not the HHFT should be constructed: (select one)

- a. Yes, in its entirety from Cold Spring Dockside Park to Beacon
- b. Limited: from Little Stony Point to Beacon
- c. Limited: from Breakneck to Beacon
- d. Limited: from the Fjord Trail Visitor Center at Duchess Manor to Beacon
- e. No, it should not be built at all

6. If you selected yes to the above question, what is your reason? (select all that apply)

- a. Increased revenue for the Village restaurants, bars and shops
- b. Environmental improvement of the Hudson River and its shoreline
- c. Additional hiking opportunities and area awareness for both residents and visitors
- d. Other reason(s):

7. If you selected either a limited option or no to the above question, what is your reason? (select all that apply)

- a. Increased visitor/pedestrian burden to Cold Spring
- b. Increased vehicular traffic in Cold Spring
- c. Environmental damage to the Hudson River ecosystem and shoreline caused by trail construction
- d. Continuing environmental damage to the Hudson River and shoreline caused by visitors to the HHFT
- e. Other reason(s):

8. Do you think the Cold Spring Village board should declare a position on whether or not the HHFT is built?

- a. Yes; its position should be based primarily on feedback from Cold Spring residents via a survey
- b. Yes; its position should be based primarily on the board's judgement as elected officials
- c. No; the HHFT is a New York State issue and the Village Board should stay out of it

| 9. Comments. Please add any comments below, or place in the body of your email: | |
|---|---|
| | _ |
| | |

Email to: fjordtrailsurvey@gmail.com

Cease-fire (from Page 1)

ment and hate speech and notes that the U.S. holds "immense diplomatic power" to save Palestinian and Israeli lives. In addition to asking for a cease-fire, it urges the Biden administration to condemn violence against civilians and unjust imprisonment; calls for the release of hostages; and calls for increased humanitarian aid in Gaza.

At Council Member Jeff Domanski's suggestion, it also includes language regarding climate change and how it can exacerbate global conflicts.

The move marks a shift for the council, which rarely opines on national or international issues. However, its last four meetings have been dominated by discussions of a cease-fire. Dozens of residents have spoken on the topic, with the vast majority asking the city to issue a resolution, while council members have debated whether it falls within their purview.

With Paloma Wake, an at-large member, the lone holdout, the council agreed on Feb. 13 that it would not consider a resolution, but the deluge of public comments seemed to sway some members on Monday.

"I have heard nothing but pain and hurt and fear from literally everybody on this issue," said Amber Grant, who is also at-large. "I don't see any way out but through. I don't necessarily think that this is the core of what the council does but there seems to be harm all around the community, regardless of what we do on this issue."

Grant suggested that the council draft something that "does not adjudicate foreign affairs, does not try to create a solution" but instead "recognizes the healing that our community needs to do."

Council Member Dan Aymar-Blair said he agreed, and that "the cost of inaction," or time lost from focusing on the rest of its agenda, would be high if the council chose not to write a resolution.

Wake, who has consistently pushed for the city to weigh in on the conflict, as Newburgh, Albany and Hudson have with resolutions supporting a cease-fire, said she believes the issue is within the council's jurisdiction "insofar as foreign affairs affect the people in our communities."

During the more than 60-minute discussion, Mayor Lee Kyriacou, who was traveling and joined the meeting by Zoom, spoke only once, and that was to voice his opposition. "We should not be entertaining or passing resolutions regarding foreign affairs," he said. "We need to focus here, and if there are things we want to do in Beacon — if we want to use our convening authority and look for help from the faith community, that's certainly doable.

"Most of the people in the community, not necessarily the ones who have spoken out, but the vast majority probably just want us to do our business and focus on the city," he said, adding that the council should consider a rule or charter change to determine how it handles matters outside of its traditional charge.

Aymar-Blair said he agreed, to a degree. The council should think about "how we deal with this going forward" but "this room has been jam-packed for a month with people who are suffering and in pain

Ryan Calls for Cease-fire in Gaza

Democrat has been targeted by protesters

Rep. Pat Ryan, a Democrat whose U.S. House district includes Beacon, called on Feb. 23 for a cease-fire between Israel and Hamas.

In a statement, Ryan called for a "mutual temporary cease-fire to both secure the return of hostages and to send a massive surge of humanitarian aid to Gaza."

Ryan had resisted supporting a ceasefire but said his view changed because of Israel's plans for a ground offensive on Rafah, which has a million refugees who have fled the fighting.

"The threat of an attack there simply cannot proceed," he told the *Daily Freeman* in Kingston. "The urgency to get this cease-fire just goes up every single minute, every single day."

Ryan said a pause in the fighting would allow the return of roughly 100 hostages, including six Americans, being held by Hamas. "Both sides of the negotiating table, I fear, are more incentivized to keep fighting rather than to save lives and stop the violence," he said. "That's really why I want to add my voice and make clear they need to get to an agreement here."

Gaza health officials say more than 30,000 Palestinians have died since Oct. 7, when Israel declared war on Hamas after the group kidnapped more than 250 people and killed about 1,200 more in an attack.

On Wednesday (Feb. 28), Nate Soule, a spokesperson for Rep. Mike Lawler, a Republican whose district includes Philipstown, said that Lawler's position "has been consistent and clear since the start of this conflict: Hamas must lay down their arms, return all the hostages and turn over those responsible for the Oct. 7 attacks for there to be a cease-fire. There was a cease-fire in place on Oct. 6, and Hamas broke it."

and we need to address that," he said.

Working with the framework of a document provided by Grant and Pam Wetherbee, who represents Ward 3, the council dictated portions of the resolution on the spot on Monday. As it worked, the City Hall courthouse was again packed with onlookers, many of whom held signs advocating a cease-fire.

No public hearing is required on Monday since the council is considering a resolution, not a local law, so council members will likely hear public comment on the issue to begin their meeting and may vote on it later that night.

How Taxes Would Increase

| Assessed Value | Standard | STAR | Enhanced STAR |
|----------------|----------|-------|---------------|
| \$300,000 | \$127 | \$114 | \$91 |
| \$400,000 | \$170 | \$157 | \$134 |
| \$500,000 | \$212 | \$199 | \$176 |

Source: BCSD

Beacon Schools (from Page 1)

impact could decrease over time if new construction, which would spread the district's tax levy, continues in Beacon.

Superintendent Matt Landahl told the school board on Monday (Feb. 26) that building condition surveys, which New York State requires every five years, led the district to consider a range of upgrades. "We're struggling to keep up with the needs of our older buildings, including the high school, which is our newest building" from 2002, he said. Regarding the tax increases, "we don't take this lightly at all. We're racing to keep up with our aging buildings," Landahl said.

"It doesn't make sense to make any of these investments a la carte anymore," said Kristan Flynn, who chairs the board's Facilities & Operations Committee. "If we're going to fix them and make them most effective, we have to fix everything around them."

If voters approve the funding, the district would make heating and ventilation upgrades at the six schools, replace selected roofs depending on need, address Americans with Disabilities Act compliance, create secure visitor entrances and make energy-efficiency upgrades, among many other projects and repairs. Many classrooms will receive new flooring, ceilings, lighting, windows and doors, while the stage and theater at Beacon High School will be upgraded and new playground equipment installed at Sargent and Glenham elementaries.

The tennis courts and baseball and softball fields at the high school will be improved and the cafeterias and gymnasiums at the four elementary schools and Rombout Middle School will be air-conditioned, creating "cooling centers" for students to rotate through on hot days.

Landahl said he plans to meet with parent-teacher organizations at each school in March and April, and will hold virtual and in-person community meetings in April to discuss the projects. The school board on Monday approved an emergency resolution for one repair that can't wait. The gymnasium ceiling at South Avenue Elementary, the district's oldest building, is in danger of collapsing after back-to-back heavy snowfalls and rain in January, Landahl said. The repair, which could cost up to \$300,000, will be paid for through a combination of insurance coverage and a capital fund approved by voters in 2021.

"We don't take this lightly at all. We're racing to keep up with our aging buildings."

~ Superintendent Matt Landahl

Physical education classes have been held outside or in a sectioned-off area of the cafeteria while the gym has been inaccessible. Because it's an emergency, the state is expected to fast-track the design approval, and the goal is to have students back in the gym this school year, the superintendent said.

Meanwhile, the bulk of the work on the \$26 million capital project from 2021 will conclude this summer. At Beacon High School, highlights of the projects that remain include upgrades to two science classes and the television and media studio. The athletic track will also be refurbished. Two science labs and two art classrooms will be renovated at Rombout, among other projects.

At the elementary schools, a new library will be constructed at Sargent near the entrance of the building; JV Forrestal will get new playground equipment; South Avenue will have its front loop and sidewalk reconstructed and upgrades made to the playground; and Glenham will get additional parking and new drop-off loops. Some work will also be completed in the summer of 2025 at Glenham.



Philipstown Reform Synagogue Celebrates its 20th Anniversary at Shabbat Across America!

Friday, March 8 2024 Honoring Rabbi Helaine Ettinger for her 10 years of leadership! Come and meet us!

5:30pm

Parish Hall Episcopal Church Of St. Mary Corner Route 9D & Main St., Cold Spring, NY

Space is limited so RSVP with number of guests: prs.shabbat.2024@gmail.com

AROUND TOWN



▲ THREE-RING FUN — The family-run Royal Hanneford Circus, which gave its first show in England in 1690, performed in Poughkeepsie on Feb. 24 as part of a national tour. There were many feats of derring-do and, as a finale, an acrobat was "shot" from a cannon.

Photo by Ross Corsair



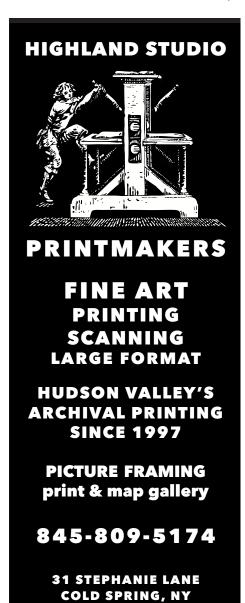
▲ SURPRISE! — Be A Friend, a nonprofit based in Cold Spring that provides support and encouragement to students who are bullied, surprised a teenager on Monday (Feb. 26) at the Topfield Equestrian Center in Philipstown with 1,129 handwritten letters and cards; a video message from Iain Armitage, the star of her favorite show, Young Sheldon; and a visit with the horses. Photo by Ross Corsair



▲ DEDICATION — Bob Bondi was honored on Feb. 20 in Carmel with a plaque at the Putnam County Office Building commemorating his 30 years of service as an elected official, including 10 as a county legislator and 20 as county executive. Before the ceremony, County Executive Kevin Byrne gave Bondi, who retired in 2010 and owns a dairy farm in Steuben County, a driving tour of county facilities. Photo provided



◀ NEW OWNERS — John and Tara Flagler of Cold Spring (left) signed the papers on Feb. 21 to become the new owners of The Main Course. They are shown with former owners Kevin and Amy Lahey and their daughter, Kate. The bakery is open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and Tara Flagler said the staff agreed to stay. Photo provided



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The Calendar



Down to EARTH

Theater alliance debuts new play



Playwright Nan Nelson-Ewing



Director Alice Jankell

By Alison Rooney

Playwright Vickie Ramirez

he Putnam Theatre Alliance, a partnership between the Philipstown Depot Theatre, Arts on the Lake in Kent and the Tompkins Corners Cultural Center in Putnam Valley, is seeing the results of its collaboration over three March weekends with the premiere of a new play, *Dirt*.

Dirt is the culmination of a two-year project that began during the pandemic shutdown when the alliance commissioned three playwrights who were strangers to each other — Nan Nelson-Ewing, Vickie Ramirez and Kate Moira Ryan — to write one-act plays using archival material from the Putnam History Museum in Cold Spring and the Philipse Manor Hall State Historic Site in Yonkers, among other sources.

Each was assigned a character: Daniel Nimham, chief of the Wappinger tribe, landowner Mary Philipse Morris and Cesar, a miller enslaved by the Philipse family. "In my case, I took that as a carte blanche to write a complete arc about Daniel and his world," Ramirez recalls. "The adventure was finding out in the next step how Daniel's perspective and his world interacted with the other two pieces."

Before being interwoven, the one-acts were presented in readings under the title *Pay Dirt* because each revolved around land ownership. For the British, land was passed down to a male son, while for the Dutch it could be bequeathed to a daughter. For the Wappinger, there was no concept of ownership, only stewardship.

Each character struggles with allegiances, says director Alice Jankell. "During those years many Wappinger, including Chief Daniel Nimham, went off to fight for the British during an earlier conflict, then returned home to find their land was taken from them.

"Meanwhile, the Philipse family increased their land holdings twentyfold," she says. "People had to make decisions about whether to fight for the crown or colony, and sometimes found themselves face to face with people they had fought alongside 12 years before" during the French and Indian War.

"After doing this abundant research, the big-picture question became, 'How do we turn it into a play?'" Jankell says. The answer was to "humanize it by focusing on individuals with huge decisions to make."

The research sparked conversations about land ownership and what constitutes home, says Jankell. "We started looking carefully at rocks, stones, gravestones for enslaved people. The more we looked, the more we saw there were stories, secrets, redactions, drama and emotions. A theater's job is not to decide who is right and who is wrong. It's not to lecture. Theater's job is to tell human stories and connect them on an emotional level.

"We became less and less partisan as we went along, and came to understand that usually, decisions were made by people based on their families," she says. "That led us to 'Who's going to write these people?'
The answer was people of the heritage."

Ramirez had little difficulty developing a vibrant, complex character who lived several hundred years ago. "People are people, aren't they?" she says. "Whether it's thousands of years ago or right now, we all care about our family. We get angry if we feel we were deceived, or taken advantage of."

The diverse cast has Native American, Scottish and Argentinian actors, including Jaz Astwood, Dylan Carusona, Devin Gibbs, Hasan Gray, Maia Guest, Damien Hughes, Jolie Cloutier and Gabriel Pages. The assistant director is Hampton Fluker.

DIRT will be presented at the Philipstown Depot Theatre on March 8, 9 and 10; at Arts on the Lake on March 15, 16 and 17 and at Tompkins Corners on March 23 and 24. Tickets are \$10 to \$30. See philipstowndepottheatre.org/upcoming-events for links.



Damien Hughes



Devin Gibbs



Dylan Carusona



Gabriel Pages



Hasan Gray



Jaz Astwood



Jolie Cloutier



Maia Guest

Turkish Breakfast Comes to Beacon

Istanbul native opens Nilufer's on Main Street

By Leonard Sparks

t home in her native Istanbul is where Nilufer Goodson first fell in love with the joys of homemade cooking and communal meals prepared by her mother and grandmother.

Her goal is to offer that same level of intimacy at Nilufer's Home Kitchen, the cafe she opened Feb. 10 at 135 Main St. in Beacon.

Her menu is filled with Turkish fare such as pacanga toast, pita sandwiches and cilbir, along with coffees and brewed teas, a daily soup and salads, and pastries and breads popular in her home country, such as simit.

But the first item listed on the menu is Goodson's Turkish breakfast, a 20-item feast whose staples include greens, fresh and dried fruits, breads and cheeses, a cured beef sausage



Nilufer Goodson, a native of Istanbul, opened her eponymous Turkish cafe this month at 135 Main St. in Beacon.

Photo by L. Sparks

called sucuk, an egg dish called menemen, and a tahini flavored with molasses.

Goodson, who has been cooking for three decades and in 2007 became the first woman hired as an executive chef in Turkey, said she decided last year that it was now or never to fulfill her goal of owning a restaurant.

Since opening, the cafe has been "packed," and three parties have booked private dinners, said Goodson, who used to cook vegan and vegetarian entrees, side dishes and desserts as the chef at the Beacon Natural Market. "It looks nice and it tastes good," she says of the food. "Everybody leaves here full."

Goodson's imprimatur is not just in the name. Diners entering the restaurant are greeted by a display of her colorful, handmade mandalas, dreamcatchers, rugs and shawls.

A wall by the counter holds framed prints of the torrent of stories published by newspapers in Turkey when Divan Brasserie Bebek in Istanbul hired Goodson as the nation's first female executive chef. She also hung photos of scenes from Turkey, including one of the famed Hagia Sophia mosque in Istanbul.

(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

SAT 2

St. Patrick's Day Parade

WAPPINGERS FALLS

1 p.m. West Main Street | dcsppc.org

The 29th annual Dutchess County parade will include 17 floats and 11 marching bands, along with community organizations. The grand marshal is Andrew O'Grady, CEO of Mental Health America Dutchess County. Park at The Home Depot/Imperial Plaza lot or take a shuttle from South Hills Mall or the Wappinger Middle School.

WED 6

College Fair

BEACON

6 – 8 p.m. Beacon High School 101 Matteawan Road

More than 50 schools have registered for this event, which is open to high school students in Beacon and the surrounding area, including Philipstown. The snow date is THURS 7.

FRI 8

Shabbat Across America

COLD SPRING

5:30 p.m. Philipstown Reform Synagogue 1 Chestnut St.

philipstownreformsynagogue.org

The synagogue invites people to share dinner and make friends to celebrate this annual event and the 10th anniversary of Rabbi Helaine Ettinger as its leader. Email prs.shabbat.2024@gmail.com for seating availability.

SAT 9

Putnam Repair Cafe

MAHOPAC

10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Mahopac Middle School 425 Baldwin Place Road sustainableputnam.org/repair-cafe

Fixers will help restore your broken items and save them from the landfill at this event hosted by Sustainable Putnam. *Free*

SAT 9

Parade Of Green

BEACON

Noon. Main Street

facebook.com/paradeofgreen

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day at this community event, which will include local organizations, bands and festivities.

TALKS & TOURS

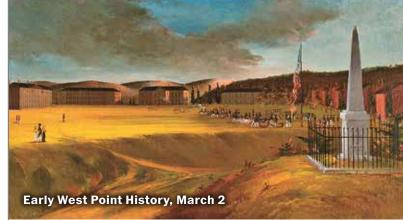
SAT 2

Early West Point History

PEEKSKILL

2 p.m. Lincoln Depot Museum 10 S. Water St.

Samuel Watson, a military history professor at West Point, will discuss the founding of the academy in 1802 and highlights from its early history. *Free*



SAT 2

Hekate's Return

BEACON

8 p.m. Stanza Books | 508 Main St. 845-440-3906 | stanzabooks.com

Mark Harris will discuss his new novel and the launch of Stanza's small press.

SUN 3

Nature's Palette

GARRISON

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

Laura Leigh Lanchantin will lead this three-hour workshop about using stones to make watercolor paints. *Cost:* \$75

TUES 5

Cafe Y Charlar

COLD SPRING

11 a.m. Butterfield Library 10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040 butterfieldlibrary.org

Vanessa Maldonado will lead this Spanish conversation group. Registration required.

TUES 5

Hopped Up on History

BEACON

7 p.m. Two Way Brewery 18 W. Main St. | beaconhistorical.org

Test your Beacon knowledge at this monthly trivia series hosted by the Beacon Historical Society.

HURS 7

Virtual Trivia Night

CARMEL

6:30 p.m. Via Zoom | bit.ly/cove-care-trivia

Teams of up to 10 players can compete to raise funds for CoveCare Center, which serves young people and seniors populations in Putnam County. *Cost: \$25*

SAT 9

Wellness for Moms

COLD SPRING

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

Moms are invited to enjoy a yoga class, lunch and crafts while their children are kept busy by Haldane students and local seniors. Registration required.

SAT 9

Conserving Our Native Rabbit

GARRISON

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

Wildlife biologist Sue Booth-Binczik will talk about the declining population of the New England cottontail and conservation efforts. Registration required. The event is co-hosted by the library and the Putnam Highlands Audubon Society.



SAT 9

It Lasts Forever and Then It's Over

COLD SPRING

7 p.m. Split Rock Books | 97 Main St. 845-265-2080

splitrockbks.com

Anne de Marcken will discuss her debut novel with Summer Hart about a woman's experience in the afterlife.



SAT 9

Sam Rebelein and Clay McLeod Chapman

BEACON

8 p.m. Stanza Books | 508 Main St. 845-440-3906 | stanzabooks.com

The writers will read from their latest horror novels and discuss the genre. Rebelein's *Edenville* is set in the Hudson Valley and Chapman's *What Kind of Mother* is a folk-horror classic.

KIDS & FAMILY

SAT 2

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 the work of Robert Smithson. *Free*

TUES 5

Taylor Swift Friendship Bracelet Workshop

COLD SPRING

3:15 p.m. Butterfield Library 10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040 butterfieldlibrary.org

An instructor will help students in grades 5 and up make bracelets inspired by the pop star. Registration required.

WED 6

Magic Movement

BEACO

10 & 11 a.m. Howland Public Library 313 Main St. | 845-831-1134 beaconlibrary.org

Meredith Casimiro, a dance and movement therapist, will lead a class for pre-walkers at 10 a.m. and toddlers and walkers at 11 a.m. Registration required.

THURS 7

SEL Storytime

COLD SPRING

3:30 p.m. Butterfield Library 10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040 butterfieldlibrary.org

This session of the social and emotional storytime series for students in kindergarten through second grade will focus on how to be brave. Registration required.

THURS 7

S.T.E.A.M. Stories

BEACON

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

Students in kindergarten through fifth grade can enjoy stories that focus on the science and engineering behind roller coasters.

FRI 8

Reading Party for Teens

COLD SPRING

6:30 p.m. Butterfield Library 10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040 butterfieldlibrary.org

Students in grades 7 and higher are invited to share whatever they are reading. Registration required.

NATURE & OUTDOORS

SAT 2

Maple Sugar Tours

CORNWALL

11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Outdoor Discovery Center 120 Muser Drive | 845-534-5506 hhnaturecenter.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. Also SUN 3. Cost: \$15 (\$12 members, ages 4 and younger free)

SUN 10

Winter Tree ID Walk

BEAR MOUNTAIN

1 p.m. Bear Mountain State Park 55 Hessian Drive | nysparks.com

Park rangers will lead a guided hike and show how to identify trees without their leaves. Parking is \$10. Free

VISUAL ARTS

SIIN 3

Still I Rise

POUGHKEEPSIE

1 – 3 p.m. Arts Mid-Hudson 696 Dutchess Turnpike artsmidhudson.org

Many of the participating artists will discuss their work at this closing reception of a group show celebrating Black History Month. Registration requested.

SUN:

An Artist's Journey in the Arctic Circle

CARRICON

2 p.m. Garrison Art Center 23 Garrison's Landing

845-424-3960 | garrisonartcenter.org Adar Pilar Cruz will discuss her experiences and share the art she created on the trip.

THURS 7

Many People, One Place

6 - 7:30 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library 472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020

desmondfishlibrary.org
Artwork by Garrison School
students will be on display, and the
student jazz ensemble will perform
at 6 p.m. Through April 7.



SAT 9

Art is Elementary

BEACON

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

Artwork created by students from Beacon's four primary schools will be on display at this annual show.

SECOND SATURDAY

SAT 9

Mass Hysteria! A Cats & Dogs Group Show!

BEACON

5 – 9 p.m. Clutter Gallery | 139 Main St. 212-255-2505 | clutter.co

See multiples and prints. Through April 5.

SAT 9

Joel Brown | Elemental

BEACON

6 – 8 p.m. BAU Gallery 506 Main St. | baugallery.org

Brown's ceramic forms will be on display in the Beacon Room and *Elemental*, a group show, in Galleries 1 and 2. Through April 7.

(Continued on Page 13)

CATO

Shhhh

BEACON

6 – 9 p.m. Super Secret Projects
484 Main St. I supersecret projects.com

This group show by Super Secret Projects members is a secret.

STAGE & SCREEN

CIIN 3

Late Nite Catechism

PEEKSKILI

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

This interactive comedy by Vicki Quade and Maripat Donovan imagines the audience as a roomful of students who are asked to answer questions to win rewards or reflect on their shortcomings. *Cost: \$39 to \$59*

FRI 8

Dirt

GARRISON

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

The play explores local history through the lives of Wappinger chief Daniel Nimham, an enslaved miller and an heiress from a ruling family. See Page 11. Also SAT 9, SUN 10. *Cost: \$30*

FRI 8

CP2 Series Readers Theatre

WAPPINGERS FALLS

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

This third annual mini-festival will include the reading of two plays: See Photograph 51 today and the matinee on SAT 9, and Silent Sky on Saturday evening and the SUN 10 matinee. Cost: \$15 (\$20 for both)

FRI 8

Tig Notaro

PEEKSKILL

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

The comedian and actor will perform her stand-up show, *Hello Again. Cost: \$67 to \$85*

FRI 8

Red Silk

BEACON

8 p.m. Howland Cultural Center 477 Main St. | 845-831-4988 howlandculturalcentertix.com

This two-act play by Lois Achimovich, produced by Hit House and Beacon Litfest, is making its U.S. premiere. Directed by Bronwen Carson and starring Shane Killoran and Beacon actors John Blesso and John Hartzell, it explores the relationship between Pulitzer Prizewinning poet Anne Sexton and two of her psychiatrists. Also SAT 9, SUN 10. Cost: \$30 (\$35 door)



SAT 9

From the Foundry Archives

COLD SPRING

7:30 p.m. Chapel Restoration 45 Market St. | chapelrestoration.org

Joanna Castle Miller, Lisa Pertoso, TJ Del Reno, Don Romaniello and Michael Short will perform improv comedy with prompts from the history of Cold Spring and the West Point Foundry. *Cost: \$15*

MUSIC

SAT 2

Beacon Rising Choir

BEACON

6 p.m. First Presbyterian Church 50 Liberty St. | bit.ly/beacon-rising-3-2

The choir, which has nearly 70 members, will perform favorites and new songs backed by a band. The concert was rescheduled from Feb. 9. Cost: \$15 (\$10 seniors)

SAT 2

Red Hot Chili Pipers

WEST POINT

8 p.m. lke Hall | 655 Pitcher Road 845-938-4159 | ikehall.com

Described as "bag-rock," the ninepiece ensemble promises energetic music. *Cost: \$42*

CHING

Cherish the Ladies

REACON

5:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St. 845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

Joanie Madden leads this group of musicians, singers and dancers who perform and interpret traditional Irish music. *Cost:* \$45 (\$50 door)

THURS 7

Andy Cooney's Irish Celebration

PEEKSKILL

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

Cooney will perform Irish favorites with Ciara Fox, George Casey and the Emerald Fire Irish Dancers. Cost: \$35 to \$50



FRI 8

Forever Simon & Garfunkel

BEACON

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

In this tribute, Sean Altman and Jack Skuller will perform songs by the duo. *Cost:* \$30 (\$35 door)



SAT

A Celtic Celebration

PUTNAM VALLEY

7:30 p.m. Tompkins Corners Cultural Center | 729 Peekskill Hollow Road tompkinscorners.org

Liz Hanley, Jefferson Hamer and the TC Ceili Band will perform. Cost: \$20

SAT 9

West Point Band and Westchester Symphonic Winds

WEST POINT

8 p.m. Ike Hall | 655 Pitcher Road 845-938-4159 | westpointband.com

The collaborative concert will focus on the works of American composers over three centuries. *Free*

CAT

The Life and Music of George Michael

PEEKSKILL

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

The tribute concert will feature the late singer's music with Wham! and as a solo artist. *Cost: \$50 to \$70*

SAT 9

Tom Chapin

BEACON

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

The three-time Grammy winner will present his annual birthday concert. *Cost: \$30 (\$35 door)*

SUN 10

Daimh

BEACON

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

The five-piece Gaelic group will perform music from its latest release, *Tuneship. Cost: \$30 (\$35 door)*

SUN 10

Hudson Valley Irish Fest Fundraiser

PEEKSKILL

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

Violinist Daisy Jopling will be joined by the Peekskill City Singers, Ovation Strings and the Narrowbacks. *Cost: \$32 to \$50*

CIVIC

MON 4

School Board

BEACON

6 p.m. Beacon High School 101 Matteawan Road 845-838-6900 | beaconk12.org

MON 4

City Council

BEACON

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

TUES 5

School Board

COLD SPRING

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

TUES 5

Putnam Legislature CARMEL

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

NED 6

Village Board

COLD SPRING

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

THURS 7

State of the County

BREWSTER

7 p.m. Tilly's Table | 100 Route 312 putnamcountyny.com/sotc2024

County Executive Kevin Byrne will deliver his annual address. Register to attend in person or watch via livestream.

THURS 7

Town Board

COLD SPRING

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



Looking for co-working space?

Come to Whistlestop Workspace at Garrison Landing.

Renovated historic building, newly appointed desks, free coffee, great wifi, right at the Hudson and the Garrison train station. Retail kiosk also available.

Email hazuckerman@gmail.com or text 646.351.3702.

Work away from home in a relaxing environment.

Turkish Cuisine (from Page 11)

"I tried to make this place reflect who I am," says Goodson. "I'm a very colorful and joyful person who enjoys life — every minute, every opportunity."

Her road to opening a cafe began as a dishwasher in New York City after she arrived in 1997 from Istanbul speaking limited English. She worked in a succession of restaurant kitchens before enrolling at the Institute of Culinary Education in Manhattan, graduating with honors in 2004.

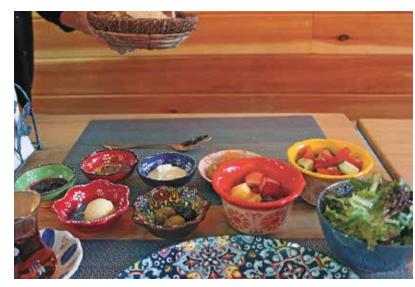
She and her husband, weary of New York City's crowds, moved in 2005 to Beacon, where Goodson began working for the Beacon Natural Market. Two years later, after returning to Turkey, she landed the job with Divan, but only after being turned down by many other restaurants.

"Many people I called, they said, 'A woman can't do this job,' "Goodson recalls. "I opened the door and there are now a lot of women chefs."

On Monday (Feb. 26), Goodson posted a photo on Instagram of a handwritten note addressed to "my dearest guests," thanking her customers.

"It's happening the way I dreamed," she says.

Nilufer's Home Kitchen, at 135 Main St., is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday to Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday to Sunday. Call 845-765-0077.



Nilufer's Home Kitchen specializes in the Turkish breakfast, a 20-item feast. Photo by L. Sparks

NEWS BRIEFS

No Challengers in Nelsonville

Village election scheduled for March 19

There are two candidates for two open seats on the Nelsonville Village Board and no one is challenging incumbent mayor Chris Winward.

The election is scheduled for March 19. Residents can register to vote on March 9 from noon to 5 p.m. at Village Hall.

Douglas Anderson is seeking the seat on the five-member board that will be vacated after one term by Thomas Campanile, while David Moroney is asking voters for a fourth, 2-year term. Winward, who was elected in 2022, is seeking a second term. Dennis Zenz, the longtime town justice, is running unopposed for a 4-year term.

Early voting and absentee ballot applications, which can be downloaded at nelson-villeny.gov, must be submitted by March 12.

Missing Beacon Man Found Dead

Police had been searching since February

The body of a Beacon man who had been missing since early February was discovered Feb. 20 in the woods behind the Fishkill Glen condominiums.

Detectives from the Beacon Police

Department identified the remains of Mark Camillo, 62, who suffered from schizophrenia. Beacon police said in a statement that while autopsy results are pending, Camillo's death did not appear to involve foul play.

Beacon Ambulance Upgrades

Agency certified for advanced EMT

The Beacon Volunteer Ambulance Corps announced this week that it will provide Advanced Emergency Medical Technician service beginning Monday (March 4).

AEMT is the level above Basic Life Support provided by EMTs and the level below Advanced Life Support provided by paramedics, said Antony Tseng, the BVAC program director. With the change, Beacon will become the first AEMT-level ambulance service in Dutchess County.

The nonprofit applied in October to the Hudson Valley Regional EMS Council to upgrade its service and was approved after a review by the council and the state Bureau of Emergency Medical Services and Trauma Systems.

Because of the city's growth, "BVAC is taking this step in an attempt to stay ahead of our community needs," Tseng said. It responds to about 3,000 calls annually.

Visit highlandscurrent.org for news updates and latest information.





SUMMER PROGRAMS AT GARRISON ART CENTER

July 29-August 9

Summer Art Institute (SAI) is a two-week program open to all high school students entering, currently in, or who have graduated in 2024.

July 1-July 12 and July 15-July 26

Summer Arts on the Hudson (SAH) for rising K to 8th graders. SAH is a full-day, 2-week program with two sessions available.

August 12-23

Art a la Carte (ALA) is a full or half-day program, one or two weeks, for rising 2nd-8th graders.



To register, visit www.garrisonartcenter.org or use the QR code.





Go to highlands current.org/join The Highlands Current March 1, 2024 15

Ashes to Ashes

Cremation has become as common as burial — or you could be composted

By Joey Asher

When Anthony Calabrese of the Clinton Funeral Home in Cold Spring became a funeral director 20 years ago, about 10 percent of people opted to be cremated after they died. Today, he says, it's about 50 percent.

That is consistent with the experience of other local funeral directors, as well as nationwide. The National Funeral Directors Association says 60 percent of bodies are cremated and that figure is expected to top 80 percent by 2045.

In addition, the association estimates that 8 percent of burials are "green," where the body is interred without embalming and permitted to decompose naturally, sometimes without a casket. Nationwide, it says 60 percent of people showed interest in that option in 2022, up 5 percent from the year before. (Locally, funeral directors say they've collectively had only a handful of such requests.)

One of the challenges with green burials is the limited number of "natural" cemeteries that allow them, although over the past five years they have doubled to about 200, according to a green burial directory at the site US Funerals

The closest dedicated green cemeteries to the Highlands are in Sleepy Hollow and Rhinebeck, and Wappingers Rural Cemetery has a green burial section.

Bill Halvey of Straub, Catalano and Halvey in Wappingers Falls is the only local director who has had a request for human composting, which became legal in New York in 2022. The body is placed in a container with straw, alfalfa and woodchips, he says, and over about three months, microbes transform the body into about a cubic yard of compost.

Because New York has no facilities that compost the deceased, Halvey sent the body to Washington, one of five other states that allow the practice.



After experiencing her mother's death, Lisette Cheresson of Beacon became a doula to assist others with the process.

Photo by J. Asher



Ryan Biracree, a Desmond-Fish librarian, runs regular death cafés in Garrison.

Photo provided

The Good Death (from Page 1)

Words and music

Talking about death is the idea behind the death café that Ryan Biracree began last summer at the Desmond-Fish Public Library in Garrison, where he works as the digital services librarian. "Discuss death, dying and the dead — with tea and cake," read his promotion for a session held Feb. 25. (The next one is March 17.)

Since 2011, there have been more than 17,600 such gatherings worldwide, according to deathcafe.com, a site created by Jon Underwood in London after he was inspired by "café mortals" held at bistros in Geneva by a Swiss sociologist, Bernard Crettaz. When Underwood died suddenly in 2017 at age 44, his mother and sister took over. (Underwood also founded a consumer site for people to review funeral directors.) The first death café in the U.S. took place in Columbus, Ohio, in 2012.

"Death cafés allow people space to talk about things without getting weird looks from family and friends," says Biracree. The sessions typically draw 20 to 30 people.

Rather than talking, singing to the dying

is the idea behind the Threshold Choir, co-founded 10 years ago by Cat Guthrie, a Garrison singer-songwriter. The choir visits the bedsides of the sick and dying to perform a repertoire that might include "We Are All Walking Each Other Home," "Rest Easy" and "I Am Giving You Light."

The first Threshold Choir sang in California in 2000; today there are more than 200 worldwide. Guthrie's choir sings twice a month at bedsides around the Hudson Valley, including at the Rosary Hill Home for terminal cancer patients in Hawthorne.

"Music puts you in a different place," says Guthrie, who, along with other family members, "sang out" to her parents when each died years ago. "We have stepped away from being present for people when they are sick and dying," she says.

Death positive

The term *death positive* was coined by Caitlin Doughty, a podcaster who runs a Los Angeles funeral home and created a site called The Order of the Good Death. "Why are there a zillion websites and references to being sex-positive and nothing for being death-positive?" she tweeted in 2013.

More broadly, the movement to provide good deaths dates at least to the 1970s, when hospices and palliative care took hold to aid the dying process. "In America, we don't handle death very well," says Wilson

at Hudson Valley Hospice. "Hospice is a way of helping people die a death with dignity."

Patrick Halvey, director of the Riverview Funeral Home by Halvey in Beacon, sees the death-positive movement as a throwback to the home funerals that his grandfather managed when he started the business in the 1930s. In those days, Halvey said, death "wasn't scary or taboo" and families were intimately involved.

Why are there a zillion websites and references to being sex-positive and nothing for being death-positive?

~ Caitlin Doughty

Over the years that changed with the culture, he says. The alienation from death has been so pronounced for some, that many families opt out completely, he says. "A lot of families say, 'Let's do nothing. We'll have a cremation and do nothing.' "He sees the movement as a good thing, "an attempt to get more involved in death and demystify the death and dying process."

As part of that trend, Joe Schuka, the managing director at Libby Funeral Home in Beacon, says that over the last 20 years, he has seen a growth in families getting more involved in preparing the body of a loved one for a funeral, including washing and dressing.

"They want to take care of their loved one every step of the way," Schuka says, noting that the internet offers tutorials on how to prepare the body.

In addition, more terminally ill people, such as Cheresson's mother, are choosing to die at home. About five years ago, homes surpassed hospitals as the most common place to die as more people opted for a "good death," according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the National Center for Health Statistics cited in *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

The good death is a key theme of *The Watched Pot*, a play by Garrison playwright Keith Hershberger that was produced last



Patrick Halvey of Riverview Funeral Home in Beacon

Photo by J. Asher

(Continued on Page 16)

The Good Death (from Page 15)

month at the Philipstown Depot Theatre in Garrison. It tells the story of the final days of Sarah, who is attended to by her life partner, Mary, and other family members as she dies at home.

Hershberger says his play drew from his own experiences at the bedsides of five people as they died, including his father, Earl, in Michigan in 2010.

Hershberger and his siblings had gathered at their sleeping father's bedside when one of his brothers had the idea of toasting his life with his favorite scotch. Hershberger woke his father and said: "We're all here to celebrate your life with you and wish you well, and we have your favorite whiskey."

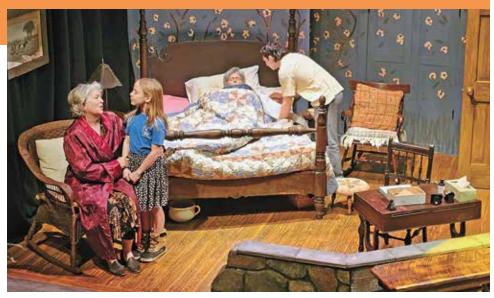
"His eyes shut and his mouth opened

like a baby bird," Hershberger recalls with a laugh. They soaked a sponge in scotch. "He sucked and sucked and wouldn't let go," Hershberger says. "I said, 'Dad there's more,' and his mouth sprung open. He 'drank' three or four of those sponges. We thanked him for being a part of our lives and we wished him well on his journey. He went to sleep and, in the morning, he died.

"It's a profoundly moving and meaningful thing to be able to share a person's last moments with them," Hershberger says. "It's a gift to be able to give them a peaceful ending."

Next week:

New ways of grieving



The good death is a key theme in *The Watched Pot*, which was performed last month at the Philipstown Depot Theatre.

Photo provided

FOR RENT

BEACON — Private and professional offices for rent at 123 Rombout Ave. in a very quiet building with many amenities. Each office includes electric, heat, 24-hour access with waiting lobby, kitchenette, off-street parking lot. You can combine offices for more space. All offices can accommodate multiple desks and employees. Center office is a conference room. Perfect for all therapists, designers, artists, accountants, attorneys. Flexible leases up to 1 year. Call/text 845-265-2330.

SERVICES

AP HISTORY TUTOR — With a few months left to AP exams, leave nothing to chance. A published historian and journalist, I will work with students on memorizing content, improving writing, and perfecting strategies for AP World and AP US History exams. Contact: hudsonhighlandshistory@gmail.com.

DOG WALKER/PET SITTER — I love animals, and, as a designer looking for a supplemental

Current Classifieds

part-time job, would love to take care of your pet and/or walk your dog. I am available weekday afternoons/evenings and I live in Cold Spring. We have two dogs and a cat of our own, so if your dog enjoys doggy companionship, I can bring along one of our girls. Email manyalasagna@gmail.com.

HEALING BODYWORK — With Joy Matalon. Featured in NY Magazine as "one of the 15 best massage therapists offering CranialSacral Therapy," with a specialty in SomatoEmotional Release. In addition, I offer Swedish massage incorporating CranialSacral Therapy. Trained in Medical Massage, Process Acupuncture, Meditation and Foot Reflexology with over 30 years' experience. Garrison and Ossining locations. House calls available. Call 914-519-8138 or visit Joymatalon.com.

SAXOPHONE LESSONS — Available to teach saxophone, all levels. \$50/lesson. References available. Email jazzdude60@gmail.com.

BE WELCOMED. BE PAMPERED. BE

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Eloise Pearsall (back row, third from right) and other seniors on the



Haldane/Croton/Hendrick Hudson team were honored in the fall. Thomas Locitzer, above and at right, competes for Peekskill's merged team.



Photos provided

Haldane Swimmers Make a Splash

Merged varsity teams offer chance to compete

By Clara Tripp

aldane High School students Thomas Locitzer, Eloise Pearsall and Dominica Awananch have been making a splash while competing as swimmers this year, but not for their home school.

With Haldane short of enough swimmers to field a team, they joined teams that include students from multiple schools — Pearsall and Awananch with swimmers from Croton-Harmon and Hendrick Hudson this past fall and Locitzer with students from the same schools, along with Peekskill, for the past two winters.

Pearsall, a senior who began swimming at age 6, had spent her first three falls at Haldane competing on the school's cross-country team, which she captained. But she took matters into her own hands for her final year, proposing to Athletic Director Tom Cunningham that she and other Haldane students swim with the Croton/Hendrick Hudson team.

"I've been with the same people since kindergarten mostly, so it was cool being able to do a school thing with new people." she said.

Both she and Locitzer are not total fish out of water, having been teammates with the other schools' swimmers with the Patriot Swim Team club program, which is based in Beacon.

Locitzer, a junior who said he has been swimming for as long as he can remember, competed for eight years for the Patriot Swim Team. The pandemic temporarily halted the program, and Locitzer kept swimming by joining Peekskill's merged team during his sophomore year. Peekskill had opened its team to students from Haldane, Hendrick Hudson and Croton-Harmon.

He said that first season, during which his parents drove him to daily practices and meets, differed greatly from the challenges he faced as a freshman on the Haldane football team. He was relatively unacquainted with football, but at Peekskill he was an experienced swimmer on a team with many first-timers.

"If I wasn't good at swimming, I don't know if I would have liked it," said Locitzer, who was named All-League last year. "But I was the second or third best on the team, so most of them [teammates] liked me because of that."

Locitzer, whose specialty is the breaststroke, was usually allowed to complete his assigned sets at practice independently, rather than with a coach. But compared to the club team, he said he has less freedom to choose the races in which he will compete.

Pearsall also swam for Patriot Swim and many of her teammates from that team were members of the Croton/Hendrick Hudson merger. Beginning in August, Pearsall and Awananch traveled 40 minutes each morning to Yorktown High School for 90-minute practices.

"It helped that I have my driver's license,"

said Pearsall. "It was a lot, but it was worth it." $\,$

Socially, the transition was relatively seamless (aside from the lack of Haldane representation on CRO-HUD merchandise), she said. The Croton and Hendrik Hudson students were "super welcoming," said Pearsall.

At the team's senior meet, Pearsall and 11 other swimmers were honored, and the team also recognized academic staff members for their support. Pearsall invited Jackie McGrath, a social studies teacher, and Awananch invited Barbra Jennings, an English as a New Language teacher. Both teachers received varsity letters from the student-athletes.

There was something else to celebrate that

day. The merged team defeated Wappingers Central, 52-43, for its third win of the season. Both Awananch (50-yard freestyle in 44.84) and Pearsall (100-yard freestyle in 1:05.48) had personal-best times.

Pearsall, who will study broadcast and digital journalism at Syracuse University in the fall, wishes she had proposed the Haldane merger with Croton and Hendrick Hudson sooner, but looks forward to seeing it continue. "It'd be cool to be able to go back to Cold Spring and see that I started something," she said.

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

On the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival & the Future of Our Town

Do you feel enough land has been taken off the tax rolls for nonprofits and parks that you don't get to or want to use?

Do you know changing the zoning of the former Garrison Golf Course property (125 acres) to the zoning for the Shakespeare Festival loses Philipstown approximately \$170,000 in property tax, plus business revenue?

Do you feel there should be a moratorium on the former Garrison Golf Course property, or any future property combined for single use by a nonprofit, causing a loss of more tax revenue?

Do you feel our elected officials or nonprofits could be looking for other land, presently off our tax rolls, to be used by or shared with the Shakespeare Festival, as was the case when the Festival was at Boscobel?

Do you feel the golf course property, in particular, could be used to build 100 homes on 1-acre lots, or a business that would pay even more in taxes?

Do you feel our elected officials should be thinking about how to reduce our taxes by promoting businesses in town that could pay some?

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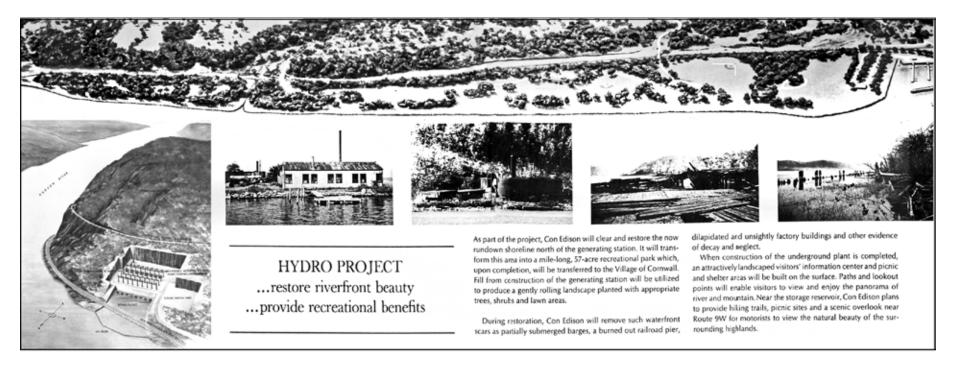


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Puzzles

CROSS CURRENT

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | | 5 | 6 | 7 | | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 12 | | | | | 13 | | | | 14 | | | |
| 15 | | | | 16 | | | | | 17 | | | |
| | | | 18 | | | | 19 | 20 | | | | |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | | | | 24 | | | | | | |
| 25 | | | | | 26 | | | | | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | | | | 31 | | | | | | 32 | | |
| 33 | | | 34 | | | | | | 35 | | | |
| | | | 36 | | | | | 37 | | | | |
| 38 | 39 | 40 | | | | | 41 | | | | | |
| 42 | | | | | 43 | 44 | | | | 45 | 46 | 47 |
| 48 | | | | | 49 | | | | 50 | | | |
| 51 | | | | | 52 | | | | 53 | | | |

ACROSS

- 1. Not so hot?
- 5. Dog tags, e.g.
- 8. Quick look
- 12. Antioxidant berry
- 13. French vineyard
- 14. Impetuous
- 15. Dungeon's quality
- 17. Actress Rae
- 18. Small batteries
- 19. Detroit hoopster
- 21. Like a neglected lawn
- 24. Coop group
- 25. Within (Pref.)
- 26. Foppish behavior
- 30. Caustic cleaner
- 31. Loud
- 32. Dean's list stat
- 33. Writer Steel
- 35. Three- sloth
- 36. Barn birds
- 37. Travesty
- 38. Jane Eyre author

- 41. Tofu source
- 42. Chicago's Mayor Lightfoot 21. Use a blowtorch
- 43. Hanging loosely
- 48. Location
- 49. Swiss canton
- 50. Roasting spot
- 51. Church song
- 52. Domino spot
- 53. Harvest

DOWN

- 1. Bankroll
- 2. Obamacare acronym
- 3. Scooted
- 4. Japanese emperor
- 5. Frosts a cake
- 6. Hosp. workers
- 7. Hitchcock forte
- 8. Overly proper
- 9. Bridge position
- 10. Canadian gas brand
- 11. Star Trek II villain
- 16. Aye undoer

- 20. "500" race
- 22. New Age singer
- 23. Genesis garden
- 24. Salutes
- 26. Prettified
- 27. Composer Stravinsky
- 28. Detail, briefly
- 29. Created
- 31. Salamander
- 34. Sea off Sicily
- 35. "Fearless" singer Swift
- 37. Boating hazard
- 38. Humdrum
- 39. Gilmore Girls daughter
- 40. Utah city
- 41. Use scissors
- 44. Exodus hero
- 45. "- had it!"
- 46. Museum-funding org.
- 47. Econ. measure

SUDO CURRENT

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

WORDLADDER

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

WRITE

PRIDE

MICRO CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1. Yarn bundle
- 5. Minds
- 7. The Maltese Falcon actor Peter
- 8. Nautical crane
- 9. Eye sores?

DOWN

- 1. Believes
- 2. Lyle Lovett's "If I Had
- 3. Brazen

- _ Irving of the Dallas Mavericks
- 6. Collector's goals

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

| Τ | Α | O | 0 | S |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | C | _ | Z | G |
| Ν | 0 | Ν | Е | Т |
| 0 | R | С | Α | S |
| | Ν | Н | L | |
| | | | | |

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Jahcier Ballard



Derek Fortes



Michai Thompson Photos by Cadence Heeter

Sports

VARSITY ROUNDUP

After Two Upsets, Beacon Boys Advance to Title Game

Beacon, Haldane girls eliminated in state tournament

By Nick Robbins

he Beacon High School boys' basketball team, seeded No. 5 in the Section IX, Class A tournament, upset No. 1 New Paltz, 61-52, on Wednesday (Feb. 28) to advance to the title game today (March 1) at 5 p.m. at Mount Saint Mary College in Newburgh against No. 2 Saugerties. It will be streamed on nfhsnetwork.com.

Beacon was down 15-11 at the end of the first quarter but kept New Paltz at arm's length from that point. Derek Fortes and Ryan Landisi each scored 14 points, while Jahcier Ballard had eight and Jazziah Whitted, seven.

The Bulldogs, who started the season 2-7 before winning 10 of their final 11 games, had the chance to play New Paltz only after upsetting the No. 4 seed, Red Hook, on Monday (Feb. 26), 56-54, when Fortes blocked a last-second three-point attempt by the Raiders. He finished with 20 points; Michai Thompson and Marciano Rodriguez each added 11.

Beacon edged Red Hook, 56-53, during the regular season after giving up a 19-point, third-quarter lead.

On the final play, "we took away two of their best shooters, forced the ball to a different shooter, Derek got out there and made a play," said Coach Patrick Schetter.

Beacon started the game at Red Hook with a blistering tempo, opening up an 11-0 lead. The Raiders didn't score until 2:52 left in the first quarter. But Beacon got sloppy and the game was tied at 27 at halftime.

It stayed even until the end of the third quarter, when Beacon took control. During one play, Ballard drove to the hoop, drawing contact. He missed but got the rebound and, while lying on his back, dished it to Thompson, who drained a three to give the Bulldogs the lead.

Fortes scored down low for what would be the winning basket with 1:30 remaining in the game, giving Beacon a 55-54 lead. After being fouled with a minute left, Landisi hit one of two free throws to make it 56-54.



Camilla McDaniel scored 10 of Haldane's 11 points in the third quarter. For more photos, see highlandscurrent.org.

Photos by Skip Pearlman

GIRLS' BASKETBALL — The Bulldogs fell at Wallkill, 64-40, on Feb. 22 to finish their season at 16-4 before receiving the No. 3 seed in the Section IX, Class A tournament. They traveled on Wednesday (Feb. 28) to take on No. 2 Red Hook (13-5).

It did not go as planned, and the Bulldogs fell, 57-46. Beacon was hampered by foul trouble; the officials called 19 on the Bulldogs versus 11 on the home team.

The discrepancy, which was far more lopsided early in the game, upset Coach Christina Dahl, who was ejected with 6:11 left after arguing two calls against Daveya Rodriguez in quick succession that fouled her out. Red Hook made five of six free throws it was awarded after the technicals, expanding its lead to 44-29.

"The girls worked hard but the calls didn't go our way tonight. We have no control over that," said Assistant Coach Carolann Del Bene.

Reilly Landisi led the Bulldogs, who finished 16-5, with 18 points, and Devyn Kelly added 17.

WINTER TRACK — Damani DeLoatch placed third in the triple jump on Feb. 24 at the Ocean Breeze Elite Invitational on Staten Island, with a total of 46-1.5. He will return to Ocean Breeze on Saturday (March 2) for the state championship.

HALDANE

By Jacob Aframian

GIRLS' BASKETBALL — Haldane's season came to an end on Feb. 25 in the Section I, Class C semifinals when the Blue Devils lost to Tuckahoe, 58-34, at the Westchester County Center in White Plains.

Tuckahoe, the No. 1 seed, began the game with a 13-0 run and its swarming press and fast-paced offense appeared to catch the Blue Devils off guard.

By the end of the first quarter, the Tigers had a commanding 26-6 lead, although for the rest of the game the Blue Devils



Elaina Johanson looks for a teammate during the game against Tuckahoe.

were much more competitive. Ruby Poses hit three 3-pointers in the first half and Camilla McDaniel had 10 of Haldane's 11 points in the third quarter.

"I'm proud of the girls, for not just the season we had, but for the fact that they didn't give up," said Coach Charles Martinez. The Blue Devils, who finished 3-18 last season, improved to 9-13.

BOYS' BASKETBALL — The Blue Devils, who finished the regular season at 17-3 and are ranked as the best Class C boys' team by the New York State Sportswriters Association, had the week off as they wait for their Section I title game at 7:15 p.m. on Sunday (March 3) at the Westchester County Center.

No. 1 Haldane will face No. 3 Leffell (13-8), which upset No. 2 Tuckahoe, 47-36, on Feb. 25. The title game will be streamed at locallive.tv. The Blue Devils defeated Leffell during the regular season, 55-48, one of only four Haldane wins in which the margin of victory was fewer than 10 points.