



Graffiti Art
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The HIGHLANDS Current

MARCH 29, 2024

NYPA Newspaper of the Year

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CHICAGO FANS – Haldane Drama had a full house for each of its three performances over the March 22 weekend of the hit Broadway musical. The cast included Emily Gilleo, Merrick Williams and Delaney Corless, shown here.

Photo by Ross Corsair

Extreme Future *Report details local impact of climate change*

By Brian PJ Cronin

In 2018, *The Current* published a series called “How Hot? How Soon?” that asked how climate change would affect the Highlands.

Now, thanks to a newly released report by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), we have an answer: Annual average temperatures in Dutchess and Putnam counties are projected to increase between 4.1 and 6.1 degrees by the 2050s and between 5.7 and 10 degrees by the 2080s, compared with the averages between 1981 and 2010. The state’s average temperature has increased by 2.6 degrees over the last century.

The report says that, without “serious action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions” that cause global warming, New Yorkers can expect the decades to be significantly hotter, with many more extreme weather events.

“We have known for a long time that climate change is real,” said Radley Horton, a Philipstown resident who is a scientist

(Continued on Page 8)

Mental Health Ribbons Meet Resistance

Beacon council to consider alternatives, plus meeting decorum

By Jeff Simms

A group of mental health advocates will be unable to tie ribbons on lampposts along Beacon’s Main

Street to recognize May as Mental Health Awareness Month.

Doing so violates the zoning code, which prohibits posting flyers, stickers or other items on city buildings, trees or lampposts and utility poles unless authorized. That was news to the Mid-Hudson chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), which hung the white ribbons in Beacon from 2014 to 2022.

Representatives from the organization asked the City Council during its March 18 meeting for permission to tie ribbons and place lawn signs as part of its promotion this year. Doing so reminds passersby of the importance of mental health and helps reduce the stigma around asking for help, said George Czornyj, executive director of the Mid-Hudson chapter. The nonprofit

(Continued on Page 7)



A NAMI ribbon on a lamppost outside Fishkill Town Hall in 2021 NAMI/Facebook



Sylvan Pond in Continental Village may soon be gone.

Photo by L. Sparks

Putnam to Drain Sylvan Pond

State demanding costly dam repair

By Leonard Sparks

In 1987, when Marie-Louise Best and her family first toured the house they would buy on Aqueduct Road in Continental Village, they noted the view of Sylvan Pond from the windows.

Eight years later, neighbors and a crew from the Philipstown Highway Department worked together to pull mattresses, hard-

ened bags of cement, a cash register and other debris from the water.

In a paean Best wrote for the *Putnam Reporter Dispatch* after the cleanup, she quoted Henry David Thoreau, who described a lake as “a landscape’s most beautiful and expressive feature. It is Earth’s eye; looking into which the beholder measures the depth of his own nature.”

“It is such a pretty view,” Best said on Wednesday (March 27). “In the fall it’s beautiful, with the leaves reflecting off the pond.”

(Continued on Page 18)

5Q FIVE QUESTIONS: BETH GEORGE

By Jeff Simms

Beth George owns Bagel-ish, which will open soon at 226 Main St. in Beacon.

How did you get into bagels?

My son had food sensitivities and couldn't eat wheat, but he could eat an ancient grain called spelt. When he was 6, I asked him what he was missing most and he said a bagel, so I created one. That was 20 years ago. Once I understood the value of real food and what people can and cannot eat, I wanted to put out a product that most people could say, "This is incredible, and I can eat it."

You describe yourself as a "bagel consultant." What is that?

It's a self-created job. My bagel mentor, Frank Mauro,



who just died, suggested I become a consultant. I'm an attorney but I built a bagel factory without any experience.

That was in Maine, where I created Spelt Right. The person I bought my equipment from asked me to bring the concept to New York. Frank saw the experience I had building bagel formulas and running my factories. He had experience in the front of the house because he had run a chain in the 1970s. He thought he could coach me and I could become a bagel consultant.

How many bagel-makers have you worked with?

About 60. Between 2013 and 2019, Frank and I worked on about 30 projects, many of them inter-

national. He would say, "This company in Paris wants to do a bagel program. You want to go to Paris?" I went to the Bahamas because a woman had bagel equipment but didn't know how to use it. Now she owns the Dunkin' Donuts franchise in Nassau.

I started putting in a few stores here and there between 2015 and 2018. During COVID, people contacted me because I could train remotely. Everything is science and math; as long as you understand the metrics, you can adjust. During COVID, a friend of my husband's also pitched my story to *The New York Times*, and I got a three-page feature. The calls started rolling in — hundreds a day. It brings me more satisfaction and joy than I could have imagined to see people thriving, although I wasn't prepared to be an international bagel consultant.

What is the science behind a great bagel?

It's starting with the best ingredients you can and a flour that is as pure as it can be. Then the water has to meet specific metrics. That's a formula that a water filtration company can come up with. And then time. Time is essential with any sort of yeast product. That means getting the dough and the yeast to break down the sugars and proteins in a way that you get the texture you want.

What brought you to Beacon?

I needed a home for my bagel shop and training center. I was searching for what I consider the perfect downtown that isn't too far from Englewood, New Jersey, where I live. Beacon checked all the boxes. It's creative, it's friendly, it's dynamic and it's contained. It's amazing to say, at 60, not that I'm starting something new but I'm doing it differently. I thought Beacon would be a great place to bring my craft to the world.

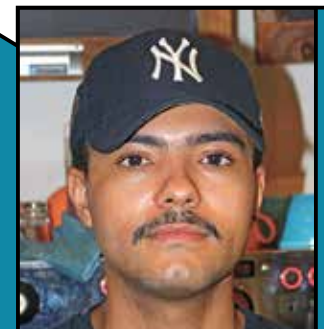
Visit highlandscurrent.org for news updates and latest information.

ON THE SPOT

By Michael Turton

What's your favorite New York City destination?

“SoHo is nostalgic for me; I spent a lot of my childhood there.”



Sean Alequin, Garrison

“Times Square. I like all the lights.”



Carolyn Davis, Beacon

“Trump Tower. I love the view, the bar, everything about it.”



Eddy Qelaj, Beacon

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NOTICE

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

If you are unable to join in person but would like to watch, the meeting will be livestreaming on youtube.com, search for Philipstown Zoning Board April 2024.

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Wappinger: Town Pauses Development

The Town Board enacted a moratorium at its March 11 meeting on the construction of large-scale multi-family housing developments.

According to *Mid Hudson News*, Supervisor Joseph Cavaccini noted that, at 28 square miles, Wappinger is the smallest town in Dutchess County but has the second-highest density, with 40 percent of housing occupied by multiple families.

"We are looking to identify areas to preserve, limit further congestion and overcrowding, as well as foster new development in places that are innovative and that make the most sense for our community," he said.

White Plains: Official Arrested on Ethics Charge

A Westchester County assistant health commissioner was arrested March 20 on allegations that he failed to report to the county Board of Ethics that he had earned more than \$95,000 over three years as an

environmental health consultant.

According to the county district attorney, Peter DeLucia, 54, of South Salem, was charged with three felonies because he allegedly did not disclose the earnings on his annual financial disclosure forms in 2020, 2021 and 2022.

Poughkeepsie: Council Rejects Cease-fire Resolution

A resolution calling for a cease-fire in Gaza fell one vote short on March 19 of being adopted by the Common Council.

Earlier this month, the council chair shut down a meeting after speakers began to shout at each other and council members during public comment on the proposed resolution.

The resolution was not on the agenda for the March 19 meeting. After being introduced, only four of the nine members voted to approve it, one short of a majority. Three members abstained and two voted no.

"I believe that this is an international issue and I was elected to take care of city matters," said Ernest Henry, who abstained, a sentiment echoed by his two colleagues who did not vote.

After the vote, audience members berated the council and each other. At one point, one spectator shouted down others in the audience: "You're not from Poughkeepsie! The four of you! You're from Beacon!"

NEWS BRIEFS

Two Beacon Men Arrested on Drug Charges

County task force investigates fentanyl and cocaine sales

In separate investigations, officers from a task force overseen by the Dutchess County District Attorney's Office arrested two Beacon men on charges of selling illegal narcotics.

The district attorney said in a news release that the task force has been investigating the sale of fentanyl and other illegal drugs in Poughkeepsie, Hyde Park and surrounding areas.

On Monday (March 25), officers arrested Jose J. Cruz, 22, of Beacon, in the Town of Hyde Park near Saint Peters School on Violet Avenue. The task force said it had learned that Cruz was planning to leave for Miami later that day. During a search of his residence, officers said they found fentanyl and cocaine packaged for sale and a handgun and ammunition.

Cruz was charged with felony criminal possession of a controlled substance and remanded to the Dutchess County Jail without bail.

Earlier, on March 22, as part of an investigation of drug sales in Beacon, the task force arrested Jerami Davis, 34, who was charged with four felony counts of selling cocaine. After being arraigned, he was released to the supervision of the county probation department.

Fjord Trail Releases Survey Results

Questions sent to select Cold Spring residents

The Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail on Tuesday (March 26) released the results of a survey it offered to Cold Spring residents who live along Fair Street and on the river side of the Metro-North tracks.

HHFT said it mailed the 25-question survey to 147 households and received 66 responses, or 45 percent. Two-thirds of those who responded live on Fair Street.

Forty-five percent of respondents expressed a great deal of support for connecting Little Stony Point to Breakneck, and 24 percent moderate support, according to HHFT. Thirty-two percent expressed a great deal of support for connecting Dockside to Little Stony Point, and 23 percent moderate support.

Eighty percent of respondents said they felt somewhat or very informed about the project, but 54 percent said they did not understand "how HHFT's visitation management tools will work together to change pedestrian flow, traffic flow and parking patterns." For the complete results, see hhft.org/about-the-fjord-trail/community.

MTA Approves \$15 Manhattan Toll

Congestion pricing plan faces multiple lawsuits

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority board, by an 11-1 vote on Wednesday (March 27), approved a \$15 daily toll for lower Manhattan that faces multiple federal lawsuits from New York and New Jersey.

Under the MTA's first-in-the-nation congestion pricing plan, passenger and small commercial vehicles entering Manhattan below 60th Street will pay \$15 during the day and \$3.75 at night. Trucks and some buses will pay higher tolls, \$24 to \$36 during the day depending on their size, and \$6 to \$9 at night.

The plan includes various discounts and credits for low-income drivers and people who pay tunnel tolls and exemptions for government vehicles and people with disabilities. The MTA says the toll will reduce congestion and air pollution and raise \$1 billion yearly for capital projects.

"We think it's innovative and we think it's necessary," said Neal Zuckerman, a Garrison resident who represents Putnam County on the MTA board and chairs its finance committee. "The reality is, this is the greatest city on Earth, it's expensive to run and it needs many sources of funding."

The MTA hopes to start charging drivers in June but is facing lawsuits from New Jersey officials, who predict the plan will increase air pollution; Hudson Valley officials, who say it is unfair to commuters; residents of lower Manhattan; and New York City teachers.

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The Peekskill Riots Episode 1
Documentary by Jon Scott Bennett

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LETTERS AND COMMENTS

State of Putnam

In "Six Takeaways from the State of the County" (March 15), *The Current* wrote that Putnam County Legislator Nancy Montgomery "for years has been campaigning for video broadcasts, without success."

On the contrary, video broadcasting is a huge success for Montgomery. Her vocal advocacy over the last five years clearly convinced the Legislature of the greater transparency and community involvement that video access could provide.

Unfortunately, we know that the Republican majority will continue to hold caucuses behind closed doors that are not recorded and exclude Montgomery, a Democrat. Still, I applaud her for her continued advocacy for full community access to our government. Open government is true democracy.

Likewise, regarding the county's participation in the state Climate Smart program, stating that an application will finally be submitted is an understatement. Against resistance, Montgomery advocated that the Legislature enact a critical resolution, which it did in 2019. Climate Smart provides grants to local governments to "take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to a changing climate" and "offers grants, rebates for electric vehicles and free technical assistance."

Over the past five years, Montgomery has continually requested updates on the county's application, only to find nothing being coordinated. The lack of certification had resulted in the loss to the county of thousands of dollars.

Now, finally, County Executive Kevin Byrne says an application has been submitted for bronze certification. With the environmental and fiscal environment that the county finds itself in, it is shameful that this took five years. Thank you to Legislator Montgomery for fighting to get this done.

Inaction and inaccessibility are unacceptable in any governmental body. Our communities — and our journalists — should applaud Montgomery's dedication and foresight.

Edie Weintraub-Danovitz, *Philipstown*

Alternative routes

The large turnout at the March 11 meeting hosted by the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail (HHFT) at Dutchess Manor was impressive, as was the expertise on display ("A New Route for Fjord Trail?" March 22). It seems clear that the Fjord Trail is determined to listen to the community's input and to address our concerns. The improved Breakneck train stop is already helping. Weekend hiker traffic seems to me at least to have diminished. A fully improved station with restrooms and

Correction

A story in the March 15 issue reported that the Beacon landfill at Dennings Point was closed and capped in 1968. In fact, it was limited in 1978 by the state Department of Environmental Conservation to industrial waste (such as sludge), closed by the DEC in 1985 and capped soon after.

other amenities will help even more.

The crowds will continue to come no matter what the community does — how to manage the crowds is the issue. The Fjord Trail people seem to have good ideas about how to do that. Continued community involvement in these discussions is more critical than ever.

Bob Plante, *Cold Spring*

I am pleased that HHFT is open to considering minor variations of access paths from the Metro-North station in Cold Spring to Little Stony Point. It's a small concession to the needs of those who live here and a welcome change from the arrogant position that only starting in Dockside Park will do, and that HHFT and its army of prestigious, prize-winning experts know better than mere locals.

There is a saying that a successful negotiation is one from which all parties emerge equally unhappy. There is some truth to that. Everybody will have to give up something to create a broadly acceptable outcome. That's better than some people giving up a lot so that others get a lot.

David Limburg, *Nelsonville*

I wanted to express my enthusiasm for the Fjord Trail and the presentation on March 11. Admittedly, I am close to and advocate the project. Still, the session provided a volume of info that everyone who attended can ponder when the state holds its meetings.

I was excited to see that there is still wiggle room on the starting point and that the ecology of the project is of paramount concern to all parties. The renderings made me incredibly hopeful of the beautiful possibilities. I live in the village and I'm familiar with the hordes of people who come on beautiful weather days. However, the claim by detractors that this is built for tourists seems myopic. The trail will be available seven days a week, even when it's not perfect weather. As someone with arthritis in my knees, I look forward to being able to walk alongside the river and enjoy its majesty for many flat miles. I am eager for this to become reality.

Timothy Haskell, *Cold Spring*



(Continued on Page 5)

LETTERS AND COMMENTS

(Continued from Page 4)

At the March 11 presentation, the Fjord Trail showed Cold Spring portions of the trail as full-width, multi-use trails blazed through the center of the village, obliterating street trees and sidewalks. Framing the design options this way sets the framework in place to argue that the only place to blaze the trail through Cold Spring is through its most untrammled portions: Dockside Park and between Mayor's Park and the river, because it makes no sense to blaze a 10-foot-wide trail along Fair Street or up Main Street. Given these parameters, it is easy to argue for a terminus at Dockside because it is relatively undeveloped and poses little in the way of physical barriers, other than requiring an over-water causeway.

Rather than finding a nuanced solution that responds to the varied and complex character of an 18th-century village with 21st-century problems, HHFT opts for leaving crumbling pedestrian infrastructure as is and building in the one place that is easy to build on because there is nothing built there yet. Is developing on and in front of our only collectively owned undeveloped open spaces the only option? Or have the parameters merely been set up to make it seem like this is the only option?

Ethan Timm, *Nelsonville*

For a longer version of this letter, including photos, see highlandscurrent.org.

I have zero confidence in the HHFT consultant's scoring methods; it's the typical smoke HHFT is blowing and has little foundation in science. Where is the "no-trail-from-Cold-Spring" option? The values reported for options — whether 24 or 24,000 — strike me as subjective and meaningless. Instead of allaying concern, they create alarm.

The decision on a route appears to be predicated on "the least invasive and abhorrent choice possible," or the least worst-case scenario, according to one consultant. If all the choices are poor, the answer is clear: The idea was ill-conceived, and that will never change.

Derek Graham, *Cold Spring*

How will everyone get to the trail? Route 9, Route 9D and Route 301 are two-lane,

curving roads with lots of traffic already. In the summer, with the Shakespeare Festival and the trail both happening on a Sunday afternoon, it will be like the Long Island Expressway during rush hour.

Barry Goggin, *via Facebook*

Parking lot

It's incredible how much money this nonprofit religious organization, St. Andrew & St. Luke Episcopal Church, has forced the city to waste on lawyers ("Beacon Church Asks Judge to End Dispute with City," March 22). Even further, taxpayer funds are being wasted to appease the church by building extra space, repainting, redirecting and re-signing the side streets.

All of this is despite the fact that the legal claim by the church to the parking lot is spurious, at best. It could have bought the lot years ago, and the deeds on the property seem clear and valid in Beacon's favor. The lawsuit may slow down the construction of the fire station, which on top of wasting taxpayer funds potentially makes all of us less safe.

As an Episcopalian, I find it shameful the local church and Episcopal Diocese of New York continue to selfishly pursue this course of action. Not only should this suit be dismissed, but the diocese should be forced to pay the city's legal fees.

Harper Sanchez, *via Instagram*

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

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NOTICE

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

If you are unable to join in person but would like to watch, the meeting will be livestreaming on youtube.com, search for Philipstown Conservation Board April 2024.



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Revitalizing the Breakneck Corridor

As part of the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail project's Phase 1: Breakneck Connector and Bridge, we are making vital improvements to help manage visitation and restore habitat in this area. In preparation for work beginning later this year, Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail is:

Making Room for Public Restrooms, Safer Parking, and an Improved Train Station

Utility poles are being relocated from the west side of Route 9D to the east side, to create space for these much-needed amenities. This will also remove the poles and wires from the river view in this section of the Route 9D Scenic Byway.

Restoring Native Habitat

Invasive trees in the Breakneck corridor are being replaced with 2,080 native shrubs, 430 native trees, and other native plants to foster ecological health, restore habitat, and increase environmental resilience.

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Regrading soil will increase drainage capacity, creating improved conditions for native flora and decreasing flooding along Route 9D.

For updates on work progress and a look at planned improvements, scan the QR code below or visit qrco.de/BNCwork.



Beacon Council *(from Page 1)*

said volunteers would remove the items by the end of May.

Following NAMI's presentation, City Administrator Chris White objected, saying the city has undertaken a multi-year campaign to clean up its lampposts. There was no further discussion that night, but during the March 25 workshop several council members said they hoped the city could compromise with NAMI.

White said on March 25 that, since his hire in 2021, cleaning up visual clutter on Main Street has become one of his signature issues. "We have removed — and this is no exaggeration — thousands of flyers, lawn signs, stickers and other things," he said.

The city has already repainted half of the decorative lampposts on Main Street and is about to paint the other half, White said. Sixty traffic signs have been replaced because stickers made them illegible. At the city's request, Royal Carting also empties Main Street trash cans six days a week instead of four.

Three years ago, when he permitted NAMI to hang ribbons, White said he was less familiar with the zoning code, plus "there was no reason to stop it because the poles were full of everything."

Council Member Jeff Domanski said he appreciates the efforts to clean up Main Street, "but with a public health issue like this one, drawing as much physical attention as you can to it is essential."

Domanski, Dan Aymar-Blair and Paloma

Wake said they would contact NAMI to see if the group would consider an alternative method of getting its message out. "It's important to elevate this, to normalize talking about it," Aymar-Blair said.

"We have so many ways to communicate now that don't involve putting visual litter all over Main Street."

~ City Administrator Chris White

White noted that Beacon spends \$80,000 each year to have a behavioral health specialist work with its police department and in 2022 gave NAMI a \$3,400 grant for its peer-to-peer counseling program. "I'm glad to do real action that supports mental health," he said. "Thirty years ago, you had no other way to get the word out. We have so many ways to communicate now that don't involve putting visual litter all over Main Street."

White also said he would have to allow other groups to post their materials if he permits NAMI, "so I've just said 'no,' and your [city] code supports that." Domanski argued that there's a distinction between mental health and other issues.

But "the moment you start making

distinctions, you've already violated the law," said Mayor Lee Kyriacou.

Czornyj said Wednesday (March 27) that he is open to working with the city on an alternative. "We want this to be a win-win for all," he said.

Meeting decorum

The City Council hasn't changed its rules on decorum at meetings, but said it may enforce the rules more strictly.

The council was flooded with public comments in recent weeks as it considered a resolution calling for a cease-fire in Gaza. The March 4 meeting began with a 3½-hour public comment session that grew heated at times, including when a woman from Wallkill began shouting at the council after she went over the three minutes allowed for each speaker and White unplugged the microphone.

Council Member Pam Wetherbee acknowledged on March 25 that many people came from outside Beacon for the March 4 meeting. She asked whether the council could listen to Beacon residents and business owners first and not allow comments from people watching online who do not identify themselves.

Under state law, the council cannot require speakers to give their names or addresses, City Attorney Nick Ward-Willis said. But the council may ask that speakers volunteer whether they are from Beacon "because it may be germane to that particular issue," he said. "It's hard to have a hard-and-fast rule

that's going to apply to all circumstances."

Kyriacou noted that the council began holding meetings via Zoom during the pandemic shutdown and has continued to allow comments from virtual participants. He suggested it may be time to phase out the practice, but Aymar-Blair objected.

"It's hard when we have those long meetings, but I feel like it's also our responsibility to create that opportunity, and if it's one or two meetings a year, maximum five a year, I'll bear it," Aymar-Blair said. Paloma Wake agreed, saying the virtual option keeps the meetings accessible.

Kyriacou said he felt the out-of-town attendees had intimidated Beacon residents at the March 4 meeting. When that happens, the mayor may limit public comment to Beacon residents only, Ward-Willis said.

"What we need to do is set a procedural understanding and set norms," said Domanski, who added that he is opposed to restrictions on who can speak. "It won't be perfect but we need to set a decorum and understanding about what we're trying to achieve."

Kyriacou countered. "By allowing some of the silliness [on March 4], others didn't take it as silly," he said. "They took it as serious and they took it as 'I don't feel like I should speak. I feel like I'll be targeted.' Those are the comments I heard from people after the meeting. That told me I did this wrong."

Visit highlandscurrent.org for news updates and latest information.

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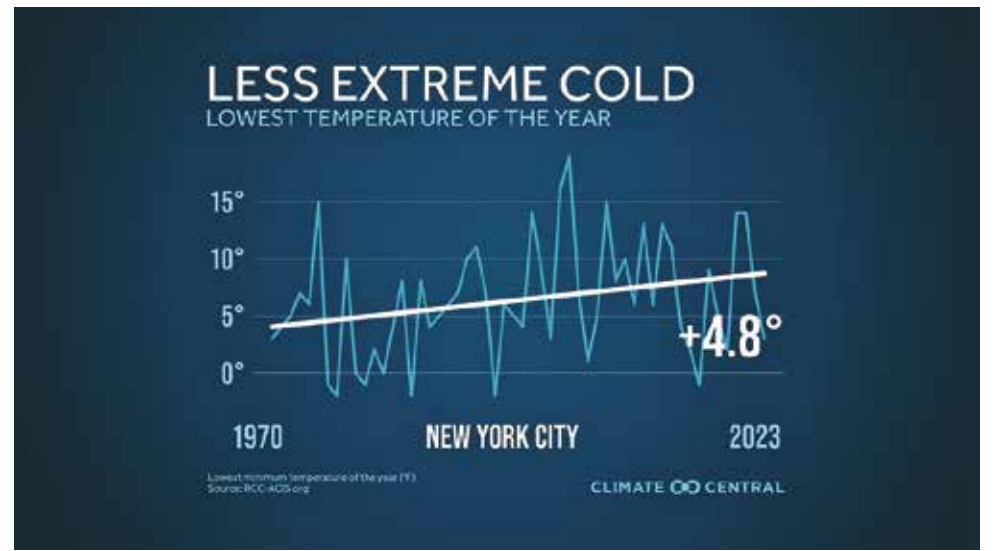
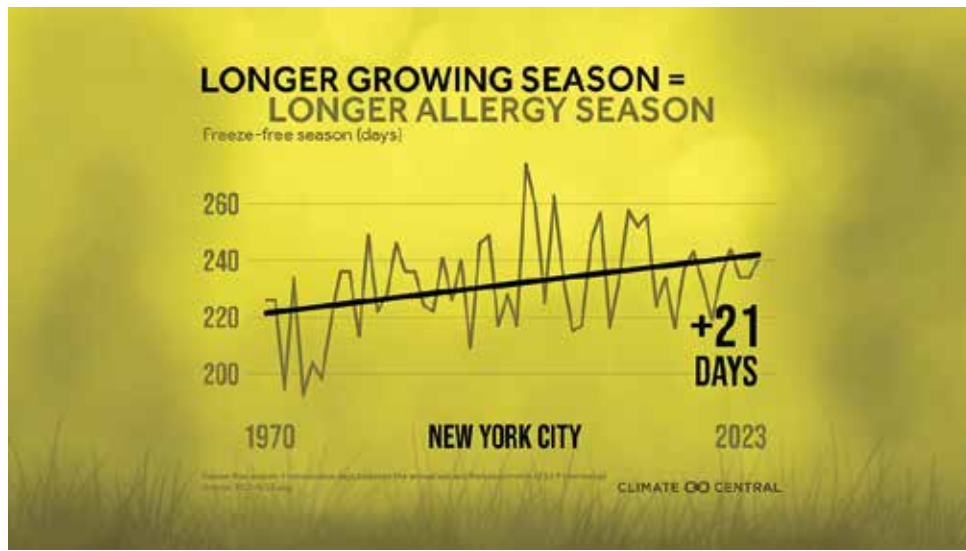
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Climate (from Page 1)

at Columbia University’s Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory and worked on the report. “It’s going to be severely impactful, humans are responsible and there are solutions.

“You could have discerned that from a report written 30 years ago,” he said. “But now climate change is happening faster than we thought it would. We could be heading into a future that nobody thought was possible 10 or 20 years ago. And I suspect a portion of folks in the Hudson Valley are probably starting to feel that way too.”

After the severe flooding in July and a warm winter, “people can feel that this is outside of that range of natural variability,” said Horton, who will speak with David Gelber, head of The Years Project, who also lives in Philipstown, on April 6 at the Desmond-Fish Public Library about the current state of climate change.

The NYSERDA report, at nysclimateimpacts.org, is extensive but incomplete. A section that details the projected economic impacts of global warming on the state will be released later this year. Amanda Stevens, the report’s editor, said drafting the final chapter has been eye-opening.

“The amount of warming isn’t set in stone yet,” she said. “We shouldn’t [view it as] either reduce our emissions or adapt. We need to do both. That’s a key takeaway.”

The New York State Climate Impacts Assessment doesn’t address how the state could reduce greenhouse gas emissions because a 2022 scoping plan covered that. However, Stevens said that the assessment can help communities and decision-makers prepare.

“I use that term *decision-makers* broadly because it could mean municipal govern-



Radley Horton, who lives in Philipstown, is a climate scientist who worked on the new state report.

File photo by Meredith Heuer

ments, state agencies or even farmers who need to understand what kinds of crops they’ll be planting,” she said.

Fleeting winters, brutal summers

The assessment divides the state into 12 regions and dives into how climate change will affect each one.

The projections for the South Hudson, which includes the Highlands, were calculated using long-term data collected at a station in Dobbs Ferry, Westchester County. The Highlands has an average of 18 days yearly when the temperature reaches 90 degrees. Based on the data, we can expect that average to jump to 41 to 64 days by

mid-century and 48 to 87 days by 2100.

We can also expect milder winters, like the one that just passed. Historically, our area averages 105 days where the temperature dips below freezing. That number is expected to fall to 54 to 82 days by the 2050s and between 25 and 67 days by the 2080s.

Storms like the one that the Highlands experienced on March 23, when more than 2 inches of rain fell in 24 hours, are projected to become more common. Instead of the current average of three storms a year, the assessment projects 4 or 5 by mid-century and 4 to 6 by the end of the century.

Total annual precipitation is projected to increase between 4 and 11 percent by the

2050s and 7 and 17 percent by the 2080s. That increase in rain, combined with projected sea level rise that affects the Hudson River (12 to 17 inches by the 2050s and 25 to 46 inches by the 2100s), means our area can expect more flooding and storm surges, especially when hurricanes are added to the mix.

Droughts will become more common, the report says, a finding that may seem at odds with projections of wetter summers. But as temperatures increase, the atmosphere holds more moisture.

“At the same time, those high temperatures are evaporating more water from plants and the soil,” Stevens said. “So there’s more moisture going into the atmosphere, and the atmosphere can hold more of that moisture. When it rains, we get a lot of it coming down at once. In between, we’ll potentially get these periods of drought; because the atmosphere is holding more moisture, it doesn’t have to rain as often.”

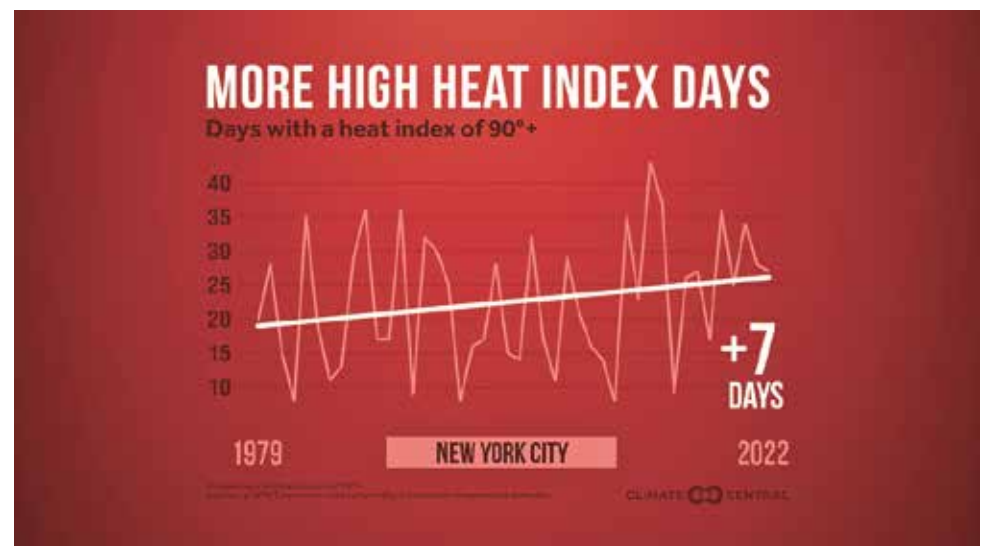
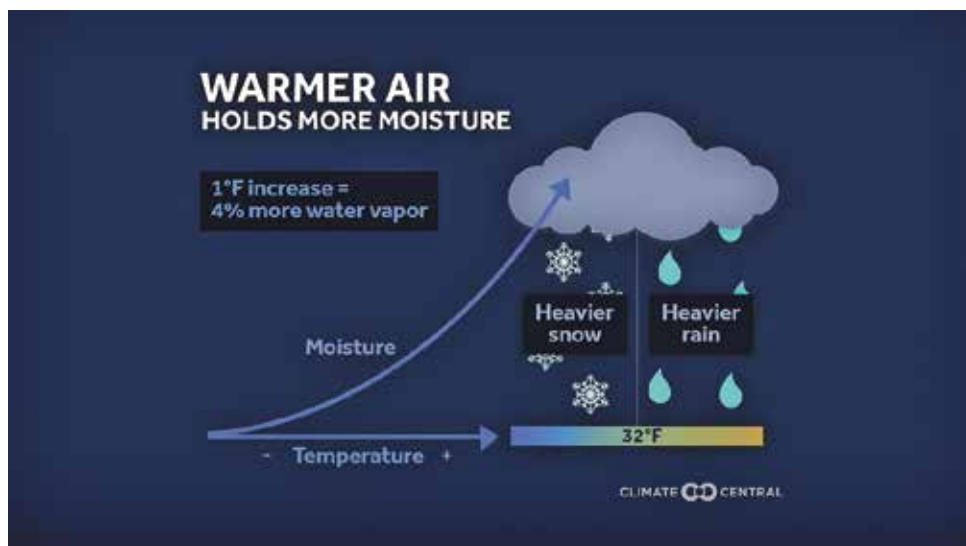
Horton suggested that the extreme weather the Highlands has experienced is a good indication of what to expect. “What if it was more severe?” he asked. “What if it was a longer heat wave? What if the power was out for longer? What were those points that almost broke in our system, and what can I do to protect myself next time?”

“Some of the things that we thought about during the pandemic, like having a supply of non-perishable food on hand, are useful from a resilience perspective.”

The nonlinear future

Besides geographic regions, the report details the challenges that global warming will pose to New York agriculture, trans-

(Continued on Page 9)



(Continued from Page 8)

portation, buildings, health and safety and other sectors.

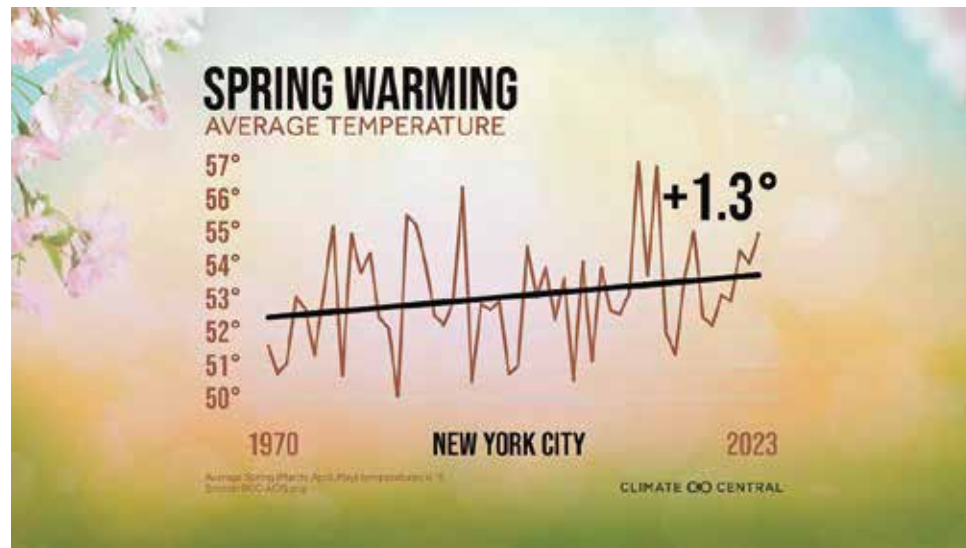
For farmers, the assessment warns that climate change will act as a threat multiplier. Extreme weather, droughts, heat waves, late spring freezes and more pests will exacerbate labor shortages and tight profit margins.

“Who’s vulnerable? Who can’t afford air conditioning? Who is exposed to terrible air quality that compounds with extreme events, such as heat waves, in ways that can lead to death or asthma cases?”

~ **Climate scientist Radley Horton**

Farmers are well aware of these threats and are working to adapt by improving soil health, adding hoop houses and high tunnels to protect crops, installing wind machines and fabric orchard covers to counter frost damage and harvesting at night when the weather is cooler. But the assessment notes that farmers will need technical support, financial assistance and research.

In its chapter on buildings, the report recommends that new construction and retrofits consider building not for current



conditions but for the climate to come. Green roofs are touted because they absorb water to mitigate flooding, counteract urban heat and keep buildings cooler, which decreases the need for air conditioning and puts less strain on the electric grid. The assessment urges builders to consider increased rain-falls, strategies for keeping out the increasing populations of rodents and insects that thrive in hotter and wetter climates and ventilation designed for outdoor air quality that is expected to worsen.

Many of the worst effects of global warming will be felt in communities the state has identified as “disadvantaged,” including Beacon. Many residents in such communities lack the money for retrofits to their homes or are renting.

That echoes a message repeated through-

out the report: Climate change affects everyone in New York, but not everyone is affected equally. People of color, Indigenous peoples, low-income individuals, immigrants, the unhoused and older adults will be especially vulnerable, it says.

“Adaptation touches on all aspects of society,” said Horton. “Who’s vulnerable? Who can’t afford air conditioning? Who is exposed to terrible air quality that compounds with extreme events, such as heat waves, in ways that can lead to death or asthma cases?”

“By addressing climate adaptation, we have a lens into a much broader campaign against various social ills, be they poverty, histories of redlining or failures to give everybody a seat at the table.”

Addressing these failures now is crucial because of what Horton refers to as “nonlin-

ear trends” in climate data. Worldwide ocean temperatures, for example, have jumped in the past year for reasons that aren’t clear, even considering natural variability and seasonal variations such as El Niño, a climate pattern that pushes warm water in the Pacific Ocean toward the Americas.

More nonlinear trends are emerging from recent climate data, showing that global warming is increasing. As a result, we may be further behind in adaptation and mitigation than we thought. “That’s deeply disconcerting, but it’s important to face those possibilities,” said Horton.

Horton warned that we may start to see concurrent nonlinear trends in other areas. Real estate values could drop precipitously because of sea-level rise or repeated flooding, and food prices could spike because of frequent agricultural disasters. “And who the heck knows what the failure to have proper winters, like this year, is going to mean for our ecosystems?” he asked. “We’re in uncharted territory.”

There are positive nonlinear trends: The price of installing wind and solar power has fallen faster in the past 10 years than anyone predicted, and there’s been an increase in people purchasing electric vehicles. Other positive trends will take time to appear as legislation takes effect, electricians are trained and networks of EV chargers come online. But Horton says we may be approaching or have reached critical tipping points, even if we aren’t aware of them.

Charts by Climate Central (climatecentral.org)

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

March 29 – Good Friday

12 noon - Ecumenical Liturgy,
St. Mary’s in the Highlands

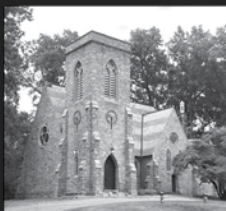
4:00 pm - Children’s Service

March 31 – Easter Sunday

7:00 am - spoken Sunrise Service
with Eucharist
followed by breakfast

10:00 am - Festival Eucharist
followed by an
Easter Egg Hunt in the Churchyard

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The HIGHLANDS
Current



AROUND TOWN



▲ **SANDWICH STOP** – Seven members of the Dutchess County 4-H recently visited Melzingah Tap House in Beacon, where Chef Paige Rodano helped them make sandwiches with pork donated by a farm in Clinton Corners. The teenagers are visiting restaurants to prepare for the Aug. 24 livestock sale at the Dutchess County Fair. *Photo provided*

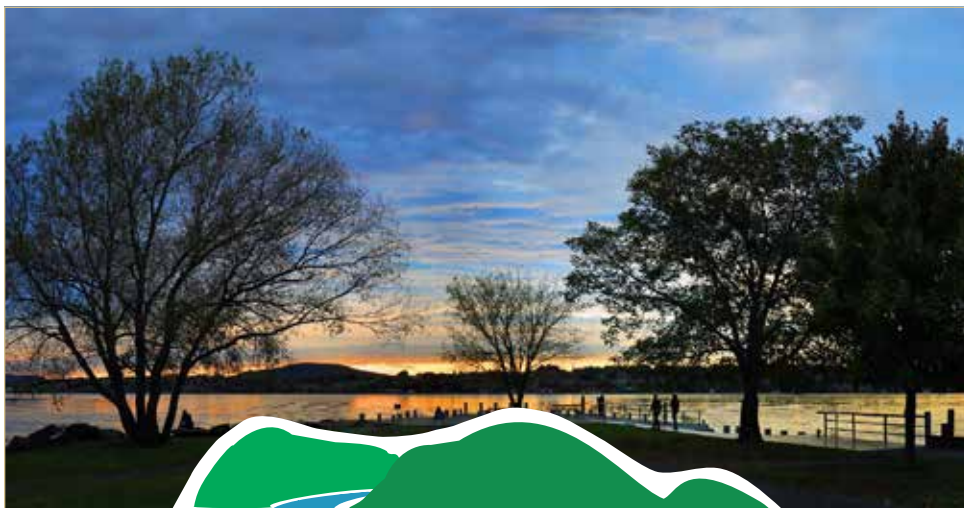


◀ **WINNING BEER** – Brewmasters Jamal Howell and Michael Renganeschi show off the silver medal that Hudson Valley Brewery in Beacon won in the Kettle and Simple Sours category for Incandenza at the eighth annual craft beer competition organized by the New York State Brewers Association. *NYSBA*



◀ **BATTER UP** – The Little Stony Point Citizens Association hosted its annual Maple Syrup Day on March 24, with free pancakes; coffee, tea and hot cocoa provided by Juanita's Kitchen; and live music.

Photo by Ross Corsair



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The Artist Next Door

SKATCHFACE



Skatchface with his painting, "Uncle Scram"

Photo by M. Ferris

By Marc Ferris

For someone with an artistic tempest inside his head, Mike "Skatchface" Long is a mellow dude. Art is not what he does — it's how he lives.

Long grew up skating with the older kids in Poughkeepsie, developed his style and became low-key but well-known, especially among the tight-knit street art crowd. The latest issue of Newburgh-based hardcore punk 'zine *Outsider* devoted a spread to his work. A storefront he painted in Miami was included in *Mana Public Arts: Murals by Leading Street Artists from Around the World*, published in December.

Last summer he moved to Beacon and calibrated his living circumstances well. He works at a modest home studio, his sons attend school nearby and one of his gigs is across the street. He just landed a job in New Windsor painting sets for Broadway shows, which he prefers to commuting to New York City.

"Here, artists are taken seriously," he says of Beacon. "You can be creative and make a living; it's not a pipe dream."

At 43, he is at a turning point. He still bombs around on a skateboard but sometimes his back flares up. His oldest son is in high school and his youngest is 9.

So far, he has managed to pay the bills making art. He earned a degree in graphic design and got his nickname from an Austrian classmate who often asked to see his "skatchbook," meaning sketchbook.

The *face* in Skatchface refers to his specialty. Some have grotesque, distorted expressions. Some scowl, others look frightened, and nearly all are painted in the wild.

"The art establishment has no awareness of what the graffiti artists do," says Beacon pop artist Ron English, for whom Long has apprenticed over the last four years. "They're anti-capitalist, for one thing. One part of their social life is creating art on freight trains that will travel around the country. Highbrow artists try to sell what they create. But it's like jazz: When you do a deep dive, you understand and appreciate it more."

With a family to support, Long took white-collar design jobs that he says slowly crushed his spirit. "It wasn't helping the creative process when the sun would come up and go down while I sat at my desk," he says. But he kept other outlets alive. "My passion is finding that cool spot at an abandoned place, being outdoors and creating."

Around 100 of his intricate pieces stretch from Miami to Boston, and Long is starting to add his mark to the expansive brick and concrete canvases at the abandoned industrial sites that dot the Highlands.

(Continued on Page 15)



THE WEEK AHEAD

Edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)

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

COMMUNITY

SAT 30

Highland Lights Workshop

GARRISON

Noon – 3 p.m. & 3 – 6 p.m. HVSF
2015 Route 9
bit.ly/highland-lights-workshops

Help create lantern puppets of fish and river creatures to highlight the aquatic theme, Full Fathom Five, for this year's procession, scheduled for April 20. Also SUN 31, SAT 6, SUN 7, SAT 13, SUN 14. Register online.

SUN 31

Trans Day of Visibility

BEACON

4 – 7 p.m. KuBe Arts Center
211 Fishkill Ave.
facebook.com/BeaconLGBTQ

There will be a DJ and refreshments during this community celebration. Donations will benefit Queer Soup Night.

WED 3

Visitor Projection and Management

BEACON

6 p.m. Dutchess Manor
263 Route 9D | hhft.org

The Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail will share its plans to handle visitors. Registration required.

FRI 5

Hudson Valley Tattoo Convention

POUGHKEEPSIE

Noon – 10 p.m. MJN Center
14 Civic Center Plaza
midhudsonciviccenter.org

More than 200 tattoo artists will showcase their techniques and styles. Also SAT 6, SUN 7. Cost: \$25 (\$65 for a 3-day pass, \$85 VIP, ages 12 and younger free)

SAT 6

Penny Social

BEACON

1 p.m. VFW Hall
413 Main St. | arfbeacon.org

This fundraiser for the Animal Rescue Foundation will include bingo, an auction, a flea market and raffles. Calling starts at 3 p.m.

VISUAL ARTS

SUN 31

In Light of Water, Birds Take Flight

BEACON

2 p.m. Dia:Beacon | 3 Beekman St.
845-231-0811 | diaart.org

As part of Dia's *Poetry &* series, Jeffrey Yang will create a participatory orchestra with sound artist and composer Susie Ibarra. Register online. Museum admission is free today for Hudson Valley residents upon request; see bit.ly/dia-free-day. Cost: \$20 (\$18 seniors, \$12 students and disabled visitors, \$5 ages 5 to 11, free for Beacon and Newburgh residents)

FRI 5

Untitled (Loverboy)

BEACON

10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Dia:Beacon
3 Beekman St.
845-231-0811 | diaart.org

This 1989 work by Felix Gonzales-Torres will open for long-term viewing. Cost: \$20 (\$18 seniors, \$12 students and disabled visitors, \$5 ages 5 to 11, free for Beacon and Newburgh residents)

TALKS & TOURS

MON 1

Passion With Purpose

BEACON

6:30 p.m. Beahive | 6 Eliza St.
845-418-3731 | beahivebzzz.com

In this panel discussion, moderated by Bridget O'Neill, entrepreneurs Katie Osborn of Via Collective, Carlin Felder of eXp Realty and Caryn Challman of Sattvic Fern will share stories of "leaping, taking risks and navigating blindly but with support and determination."



THURS 4

Solar Eclipse Crocheting Craft

COLD SPRING

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

Adults are invited to create a keepsake using provided materials with guided instructions. Registration required.

SAT 6

Climate Change Now

GARRISON

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

Philipstown residents Radley Horton, a climate researcher, and David Gelber, the founder of The Years Project, which covers the climate crisis, will discuss what they see as the current challenges and reasons for hope.

SUN 7

Willitt Jewell

COLD SPRING

2 p.m. Putnam History Museum
63 Chestnut St. | 845-265-4010
putnamhistorymuseum.org

At the museum's 118th annual meeting, Jennifer Cassidy, the county historian, will discuss the life and work of Jewell, who died in 1966 and was best known as a reporter and photographer for *The Putnam County Courier*. Join in person or via Zoom. Registration required.

KIDS & FAMILY

SAT 30

Play Sets

BEACON

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

Families with children ages 5 and older are invited to explore the galleries; in this session, Dia educators will focus on the work of Robert Irwin. On SUN 31 the focus will be on Kawara. Free

SAT 30

Easter Egg Hunt

COLD SPRING

11 a.m. Tots Park
4 High St. | 845-265-3191

The Knights of Columbus will host their annual hunt for children ages 8 and younger. Bring baskets and a donation for the Philipstown Food Pantry. Rescheduled from SAT 23.

SAT 30

Easter Egg Hunt

COLD SPRING

11 a.m. Faith Church | 245 Main St.

Children ages 12 and younger are invited to participate, and there will also be a petting zoo. Rescheduled from SAT 23.

TUES 2

The Super Mario Bros. Movie

GARRISON

7 p.m. Philipstown Rec | 107 Glenclyffe
philipstownny.myrec.com

Watch the 2023 animated film based on the video game series. Registration required. Free

WED 3

Windsocks

GARRISON

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

Children ages 3 and older are invited to make a festive outdoor decoration to take home. Registration required.

THURS 4

Bling's the Thing

GARRISON

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

Joan Lloyd will lead an earring-making workshop. Make one pair



EASTER

SUN 31

St. John the Evangelist

BEACON

7 & 10:30 a.m. & Noon
35 Willow St. | stjoachim-stjohn.org

The noon service will be in Spanish.

Our Lady of Loretto

COLD SPRING

8:30 a.m. & Noon. 24 Fair St.
ladyofloretto.org

St. Joachim's

BEACON

9 a.m. 51 Leonard St.
stjoachim-stjohn.org

United Methodist

COLD SPRING

9 a.m. 216 Main St.
facebook.com/csshunc

First Presbyterian

BEACON

10 a.m. 50 Liberty St.
beaconpresbychurch.org

St. Andrew & St. Luke Episcopal

BEACON

10 a.m. 15 South Ave.
beacon-episcopal.org

St. Mary's Episcopal

COLD SPRING

10 a.m. 1 Chestnut St.
stmaryscoldspring.org

Faith Church

COLD SPRING

10 a.m. 245 Main St.
faithchurch.cc/coldspring

St. Philip's Episcopal

GARRISON

10 a.m. 1101 Route 9D
stphilipshighlands.org

Followed by Easter egg hunt

Springfield Baptist

BEACON

10 a.m. 8 Mattie Cooper Square
facebook.com/springfieldbaptistc

Star of Bethlehem

FISHKILL

10 a.m. 37 Lamplight St.
starchurchny.org

This will be a joint service with Faith Temple.

Tabernacle of Christ

BEACON

10 a.m. 483 Main St.
tabernacleofchristchurch.com

Salem Tabernacle

BEACON

10 a.m. 7 Delavan Ave.
salemtabernacle.com

St. Joseph's Chapel

GARRISON

10:15 a.m. 74 Upper Station Road
ladyofloretto.org

First Presbyterian

COLD SPRING

10:30 a.m. 10 Academy St.
presbychurchcoldspring.org

United Methodist

BEACON

10:30 a.m. 60 Union St.
beaconmethodist.org

to keep and another to donate to a women's shelter. Registration required.

FRI 5

Wall-E

GARRISON

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

Children can watch the 2008 film about a robot that goes on a journey to save an uninhabitable earth.

FRI 5

After Hours Game Night

BEACON

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

Middle school students can play board games and eat snacks.

SAT 6

Filmmaking Workshop

BEACON

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

Elementary school students can learn techniques to create entries

for a May film festival hosted by the Beacon School Foundation. The submission deadline for the festival is MON 8. Registration required.

STAGE & SCREEN

SAT 30

The Peekskill Riots

PEEKSKILL

2 p.m. Field Library
4 Nelson Ave. | peekskill.org

This documentary series explores Peekskill's racial history, beginning with a 1949 concert by Paul Robeson, a Black performer and activist, that was disrupted by protesters and turned violent.

WED 3

Totality: The American Eclipse

COLD SPRING

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

In preparation for the April 8 eclipse, watch a 2017 documentary about the cultural impact of the alignment of the sun and moon.



Merz Trio, April 7



Bruce Katz, April 5

(guitar) and Randy Ciarlante (drums) will play blues, soul-jazz and New Orleans-inspired roots music. The Dan Brother Band opens. *Cost: \$25 (\$30 door)*

SAT 6 David & Jacob Bernz

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

The Beacon father-and-son duo will play folk music with guests. *Cost: \$20*

SAT 6 The Neil Diamond Experience

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

The tribute band includes stories in its performance of the singer's hits. *Cost: \$42 to \$57*

SAT 6 Stella Blue's Band

BEACON
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

The Grateful Dead tribute band will play a high-energy show. *Cost: \$20 (\$25 door)*

SUN 7 Cajun Jam

PUTNAM VALLEY
1 p.m. Tompkins Corners Cultural Center
729 Peekskill Hollow Road
tompkinscorners.org

Bring an instrument, a dish to share or just a desire to dance to this open session.

SUN 7 West Point Concert Band

WEST POINT
2 p.m. Ike Hall
655 Pitcher Road | ikehall.com

The chamber music concert's theme is American song and dance.

SUN 7 Merz Trio

BEACON
4 p.m. Howland Cultural Center
477 Main St. | howlandmusic.org

The chamber music group's theme is Night Songs and will include works by Hildegard von Bingen, Thelonious Monk and Alma Mahler. *Cost: \$35 (\$10 students)*

CIVIC SAT 30 Early Voting

PHILIPSTOWN
8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
North Highlands Firehouse
504 Fishkill Road | putnamboe.com

Philipstown voters registered with a party can vote ahead of the TUES 2 presidential primary.

SAT 30 Early Voting

FISHKILL
9 a.m. – 6 p.m. Town Hall | 807 Route 52
elections.dutchessny.gov

Beacon voters registered with a party can vote ahead of the TUES 2 presidential primary.

MON 1 City Council

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

TUES 2 Presidential Primary

BEACON
6 a.m. – 9 p.m. Memorial Building
413 Main St. | elections.dutchessny.gov

TUES 2 Presidential Primary

BEACON
6 a.m. – 9 p.m. Rombout Middle School
88 Matteawan Road
elections.dutchessny.gov

TUES 2 Presidential Primary

PHILIPSTOWN
6 a.m. – 9 p.m. Various | putnamboe.com

TUES 2 County Legislature

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

WED 3 Village Board

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

THURS 4 Town Board

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

FRI 5 Lit Lit

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

Read original work in any genre at this literary open mic.

FRI 5 America's Top Psychic Medium

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

Matt Fraser, known for his television series, will do live readings. Audience members must be at least 18 years old. *Cost: \$50 to \$99*

SAT 6 25th Anniversary Anthology Reading

POUGHKEEPSIE
2 p.m. Arts Mid-Hudson
696 Dutchess Turnpike
artsmidhudson.org

To celebrate the launch of the Calling All Poets anthology, former Dutchess poet laureates and CAPS

competition winners will read their work.

MUSIC

SAT 30 The Prezence

BEACON
8:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

The Led Zeppelin tribute band will recreate a concert experience. *Cost: \$30 (\$35 door)*

FRI 5 House of Hamill

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

The folk trio includes Rose Baldino, Brian Buchanan and Caroline Browning. *Cost: \$25*

FRI 5 Bruce Katz Band

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8:30 p.m. Towne Crier | 379 Main St.
845-855-1300 | townecrier.com

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EVENTS

EASTER EGG HUNT — Join us for our annual free Easter Egg Hunt and petting zoo for ages 0-12. Faith Church Cold Spring, 245 Main St., Cold Spring, Saturday, March 30, 11 a.m. For more info, contact Pastor Luis at 845-203-0400 or luis.garcia@faithchurch.cc.

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TAG SALE? Car for sale? Space for rent? Help wanted? Place your ad here for \$9.95. See highlandscurrent.org/classifieds.



Café Silvia

Photo by Marco Anelli and Tommaso Sacconi/Magazzino

A Hidden Gem – For Now

Magazzino café offers a taste of Italy

By Marc Ferris

Fast to flash a quicksilver smile, chef Luca Galli is a born schmoozer who enjoys lingering over a well-prepared meal or cup of espresso. But when duty calls in the kitchen, he is serious as a surgeon.

Galli is developing the menu at Café Silvia, a restaurant and beverage oasis in the new Robert Olnick Pavilion at Magazzino Italian Art in Philipstown. It is named for Olnick's wife, Silvia, mother of Nancy, who founded the museum along with her husband, Giorgio Spanu.

Over the last six months, in-the-know locals consider it to be a best-kept secret – and one open on Mondays.

"It's a divine hidden gem that has resonated in the community," says Melissa Meyers, a Garrison resident and neighbor of Spanu and Olnick. "I had heard about this project and never expected it to be this wonderful. You look out and it feels like Tuscany."

She refers to the picture window that offers a view of the donkey corral, 20 garden beds for growing ingredients and a ridge in the background. The café doubles as the museum gift shop and the concrete confines are surprisingly cozy. An interior window peeks in on one of the pavilion's galleries.

Spanu and Olnick met Galli 20 years ago in Italy. They make him feel at home by providing a culinary playground with two critical Italian imports. Standing in the near-pristine kitchen, Galli beams with pride over

his Unox oven and Irinox blast chiller, which execute myriad food preparation techniques at the press of a digital button.

Galli, who lives in Garrison, goes for simple, subtle and delicate. "If the waiter has to explain the dish, the flavors are going to be difficult to identify," he says.

He started easy, with panini and a frittata of the day made with eggs from Spanu and Olnick's farm. He recently introduced lasagna Bolognese, chickpea and scallop soup and ravioli with spinach and ricotta cheese and a light dusting of Parmesan cheese. Fish and vegetable dishes are in the works.

Also a sommelier, Galli will expand the wine list from the current selections of red, white and prosecco. By late spring, when the patio opens, the plan is to transform it into a trattoria apertivo with small plates and boards filled with meat and cheese.



Latte macchiato



Chef Luca Galli

Photo by Matt Borkowski/Magazzino

"I have a lot of ideas, but I'm not going to rush anything," he says.

Galli, who was born near Milan, worked in restaurant kitchens in Italy, London and New York City. He also spent 15 years cooking on yachts that sailed the Mediterranean Sea and beyond.

The attention to detail at Café Silvia can be remarkable. Serving trays are lined with sticky rubber, and Galli worked with his coffee consultant in Italy to test the water's pH level to determine the ideal beans to use in the espresso (a blend of Arabica and Robusto to add acidity). He even calibrates the coffee grinder.

Only observant visitors will notice the fresh-made jams, soups and sauces packed in sealable jars tucked onto shelves below

the main counter.

A chest-high window opens into the kitchen, where the chef and his assistants, Jack Cimino and Robert Betterbid, improvise dance moves like the twist or shoulder shimmy to avoid colliding.

With 40 indoor seats and 20 more outside, the place can get busy in a hurry. Galli spoke about building bonds with his staff, which is pivotal to delivering on the vision. "My expectations are high, even for myself," he says.

Enjoying a dish during downtime, Cimino turns introspective. "When I started here, I was unmotivated, depressed and had no lust for life," he says.

"I was this close to firing him," says Galli, almost pinching together his thumb and index finger.

"He pushed me in a way that drew me out of my shell and instilled a strong work ethic," says Cimino, who lives in Cold Spring. "I thank him for bringing new value to my life."

Then, a group of diners arrived just before closing time. Like athletes called into the game, the men clicked into performance mode.

Café Silvia, located at 2700 Route 9 in Philipstown, is open Friday to Monday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Beginning April 5, and continuing on select Fridays through September, Galli will prepare and discuss meals from nine Italian regions. Tickets are \$50 at magazzino.art.



Toasted bread with grilled eggplant, burrata and Milano salami



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Jericho Hill, a Seattle band whose members are veterans, played at VetRep's Savage Wonder Festival in 2022.



Actors Krysta Rodriguez and Michael Gaston are shown at a reading in 2023 of Deborah Yarchun's "The Calm Before."

Chris Meyer, who served in the U.S. Army for 14 years, is the founder, president and artistic director of VetRep.



The Exit 12 Dance Company performed at the Savage Wonder Festival in 2022.

Photos provided

Skatchface (from Page 11)

Taggers gotta tag, so his scrawled signature is also seen on the back of street signs, in bar bathrooms and on traffic light-control boxes. He affixes stickers to accommodating surfaces.

Through Long's work with English and English's wife, Tarssa Yazdani, he has become part of the family. Part of his job is to complete practical tasks with computers and cameras to help conceptualize projects, but the trio also dreams up weird ideas and often films them.

One brainstorm evolved into a sardonic book-burning event during Beacon Bonfire. Participants chanted slogans, contorted their faces like maniacs and toasted marshmallows.

Long's sons took part. He supports their creative expressions but is laissez-faire. Clearly, he is proud that his eldest plays guitar in an alt-punk band, his youngest doodles and they both skate to a degree.

To stretch his skill set, he plans to delve into sculpting and enjoys playing with an air compressor-powered spray paint gun for the first time.

"They say you can't teach an old dog new tricks," he says, wearing cutoff shorts splattered with blotches of paint. "So if you keep learning new tricks, you're not an old dog."

Vet Theater Coming to Beacon

Group will occupy former bank building

By Jeff Simms

Admittedly, military veterans and professional theater might seem like strange bedfellows at first. But Chris Meyer, a 14-year U.S. Army veteran and third-generation theatrical performer, proves that notion wrong, and he's bringing the show to Beacon.

Meyer plans today (March 29) to sign a lease-to-own agreement for his Veterans Repertory Theater, or VetRep, to occupy the historic, 12,000-square-foot former bank building at 139 Main St. The group will move in over the next month.

The nonprofit's expansion from Cornwall, in Orange County, where it will retain a gallery and performance space, into Beacon was somewhat unexpected. "We had our blinders on and weren't looking to go across the river," says Meyer, 48. But after connecting with the development group Hudson Todd, which said it wanted to sell the former Mechanics Savings Bank to an entity that would benefit the community, he found a "convincing reason to expand into a whole new market."

VetRep, which Meyer founded in 2021, plans to open over Columbus Day weekend in October and host its second Savage Wonder Festival of Veterans in the Arts. The first event, held in 2022 at the Sugar Loaf Performing Arts Center near Chester, featured theater,

multimedia art, poetry, live music, dance and spoken word.

Already booked for this year's festival is comedian Rachel Feinstein, who, through her marriage to a New York City firefighter, checks the "veteran-adjacent" box. (The members of VetRep's staff and its playwrights are current or former military, law enforcement or first responders, or their immediate family members.)

The 2024 festival will coincide with completing the first phase of renovations inside the 1929 building, which Meyer says is in great shape. The group plans to construct a performance space on the first floor and two concessions, "but we want to keep the soul and the character of the building intact," he says. VetRep hopes to later add a second theater and multimedia performance space.

For more than 60 years, the building was home to Star of Bethlehem Baptist Church, a historic Black congregation that sold the property in 2021 and will hold services this weekend for the first time at a new space in Fishkill.

Following Savage Wonder in October, VetRep is planning year-round programming, including during the holidays and for New Year's Eve, Meyer says. It typically has the same troupe of actors perform a play written by a veteran and another established play that ties in. It also is organizing a gallery for artwork by veterans.

Meyer comes from a family of artists and performers. In the 1940s, his grandfather



portrayed villains on *The Adventures of Superman* radio series and was the original "Tonto" on *The Lone Ranger* radio serial, he says. His mother was a dancer and in the 1960s was part of the Broadway production of *Fiddler on the Roof*. An aunt had a 30-year career as a soap opera actor.

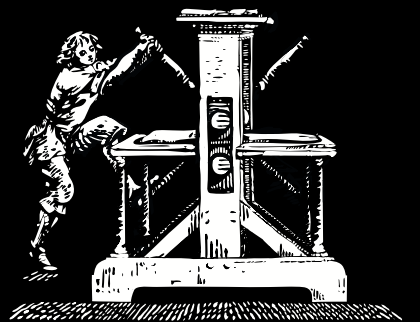
After graduating from college, Meyer acted and performed stand-up comedy in New York City and directed his first play in 2001, the weekend before 9/11. He enlisted shortly after the terrorist attacks, serving in Europe, Africa and Central Asia. He left Afghanistan in 2020 and returned home a few months later.

While there is a therapeutic component to the arts, Meyer says VetRep was not created to provide therapy. "We're not here to help veterans," he says. "We're veterans who want to help the theater." People will come once to "support the troops," he says, but to keep them coming back, "it has to be because the content is awesome."

For that reason, VetRep has no allegiance to any genre or subject matter, although it has performed primarily comedies, says Meyer. "If one [production] happens to be a war story, that's fine, but that's not our criteria," he says.

To learn more about the Veterans Repertory Theater, and to buy tickets for its productions in Cornwall, see vetrep.org.

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Crocus are one of the earliest blooming spring flowers and important for bees.



Trout lily has distinctive mottled brown shapes on its leaves.



Bloodroot blooms before its single leaf unfurls.

Photos by P. Doan

Roots and Shoots

Cool Spring Flowers

By Pamela Doan



During my daily walks in the woods with the hound, as she runs her nose along the ground tracking all the creatures that have passed through, I am running my eyes over the ground, searching for signs of emerging plants. It's a mutually enriching experience for us both.

The snowdrops snuck up first, as always. *Galanthus nivalis*, while native to Europe and Asia, has naturalized here and will roam a little in the yard. It's hardy enough to keep its blooms after being buried in snow and doesn't mind fluctuating temperatures from last week's warmth to this week's freeze.

Daffodils, while being cheerful, are not my particular favorite, so I cut them and make bouquets. I enjoy seeing their tips poking through, however. Bulbs are more visceral than other plants in their route from below ground to above. There is no trace of them and then there is. I forget where they were planted and when, and then suddenly one morning a shoot appears.

The crocus are an important early source for pollinators and, on warm days, I've seen bees enjoying my patch. While none are native here, they are not problematic in the land-

scape and are easy to source in the fall when they need to be planted. They naturalize quickly and, because their blooms are finished by the time the grass needs mowing, planting them in lawns is a nice touch. *Crocus sieberi*, a Mediterranean native, and *Crocus vernus*, from the Netherlands, are the most commonly found.

The hepaticas — *Americana* and *acutiloba*, commonly known as liverleaves, are similar enough to need an identification key. I'm looking for their pale pink to white bracts in the bare woods. They should be easy to spot even though, at 6 inches tall, they are quite small.

I'm lucky to have quite a few bloodroot throughout my landscape. These native corms were used by Indigenous people to treat fevers. Look for it as *Sanguinaria canadensis*. The white flowers are showy but live up to the name of spring ephem-

erals and tend to disappear within a week. The foliage unfurls after blooming and is a single stem with a large round, cutout leaf that lasts through the season, becoming an attractive groundcover.

Because of deer, it's rare to find trillium, another lovely spring flower. They are like tulips for deer, a delicious snack. If you have a fenced yard or container garden, try growing them. I've been warned to carefully choose a supplier, however. Many trilliums sold commercially are not cultivated, leading to population loss in their native habitat.

The trout lily, also known as a dogtooth violet (*Erythronium americanum*), has cool mottled foliage and a tiny vase-shaped flower that hangs upside down, making it difficult to photograph (I've tried). Go for a side shot. It likes to pop up from under the leaf cover in sunny locations. It gets the "trout" part of its name from the resem-

blance of its leaves to brook trout markings.

Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) are sky blue in a tubular-shaped bloom that droops from the top of the plant. They are in the borage family. I have yet to find them growing outside of cultivation, but I'm eager to try them in my woods. I've found them commercially as bare-root plants and seeds. Seeds need to be cold-stratified, so try for a winter sowing.

Besides deer, the early growth of invasive species that shade out and displace spring ephemerals in woodlands is the biggest threat to their survival. Most of the plants I've mentioned are becoming harder to find. In my woods, the barberry leafed out two weeks ago and dominates the spaces where these plants would otherwise be found. When I look into the forest, it seems like the mass of green growth in the understory would be a good sign, but it's not. Another season of flame-weeding, a method of concentrated burning of stalks of barberry, is ahead for me.

For a significant display of flowering spring bulbs, visit Stonecrop Gardens in Philipstown, which opens Monday (April 1). They plant tens of thousands of bulbs.

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April book club selections

Abe Lincoln/Civil War Book Club

THURS 4, 7 P.M.

Lincoln and the Fight for Peace,
by Joshua Zeitz

Lincoln Depot Museum,
10 S. Water St., Peekskill

Email LincolnDepotFDN@gmail.com.

Lit Book Club

TUES 9, 7 P.M.

Erasure, by Percival Everett
Stanza Books, Beacon

Register at stanzabooks.com/events.

Sci-Fi Book Club

TUES 16, 7 P.M.

Shards of Earth, by Adrian Tchaikovsky
Stanza Books, Beacon

Register at stanzabooks.com/events.

Elementary Book Club (Grades 2-4)

WED 17, 3:15 P.M.

Beezus and Ramona, by Beverly Cleary
Butterfield Library, Cold Spring

Register at butterfieldlibrary.org/calendar.

Page-to-Screen Book Club

THURS 18, 3 P.M.

The Devil Wears Prada, by Lauren
Weisberger

Desmond-Fish Public Library, Garrison

Register at
desmondfishlibrary.org/events.

Librarian's Choice Book Club

WED 24, 3 P.M.

Ariel, by Sylvia Plath

Desmond-Fish Public Library, Garrison

Register at
desmondfishlibrary.org/events.

Beacon Book Club

THURS 25, 7:15 P.M.

A History of the World in 6 Glasses,
by Tom Standage

Location TBD

Register at meetup.com/beacon-bookclub.

Butterfield Book Club

MON 29, 7 P.M.

Poems by Emily Dickinson and
Amanda Gorman

Butterfield Library, Cold Spring

Register at butterfieldlibrary.org/calendar.

Elementary Book Club (Grades 3-5)

TUES 30, 6:30 P.M.

A Wrinkle in Time (Graphic Novel), by
Madeleine L'Engle

Howland Library, Beacon

Register at beaconlibrary.org/calendar.



Albany: State Distributes Housing Funds

New York State announced on March 18 that it would distribute \$56 million in tax credits and \$204 million in subsidies to build or preserve 1,852 homes in 29 developments.

In the Mid-Hudson region, Reservoir Place in Carmel, a five-building, 75-building complex under construction on vacant land by Kearney Realty and the Housing Action Council will receive \$4.6 million. Kearney also will receive \$5.4 million for its Locust Hill development in Rhinebeck.

The state is sending \$6.6 million to the developers of Harmony Hall in New Paltz, a 51-unit senior complex, and \$8.6 million for the second phase of the Admiral Halsey Senior Village in Poughkeepsie. The latter project is being co-developed by the nonprofit Hudson River Housing.

Newburgh: Storm Clouds for Festival

Newburgh Illuminated, which did not happen in 2023 because of disagreements between festival organizers and the city, faces the same dilemma in 2024.

According to *Mid Hudson News*, organizers have asked the city to bring in state police troopers and Dutchess County Sheriff's deputies to help City of Newburgh Police, as well as to provide golf carts. "There is no way that I can, or the handful of us, can manage a 100,000-person festival that covers miles on foot," said organizer Rich Fracasse.

Mayor Torrance Harvey has said the city cannot agree to those terms, according to *Mid Hudson News*. The festival, established in 2013, usually takes place in June. It was postponed last year on April 12 and canceled on May 8.

Stewart Airport: Breeze Adds Fort Myers

Breeze Airways announced on Tuesday (March 26) that it will offer twice-

weekly service from New York Stewart International Airport to Fort Myers, Florida, beginning Oct. 2.

The airline will offer service on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Breeze also flies from Stewart to Charleston, South Carolina, and Orlando, Florida.

West Point: Cadet Drowns While on Leave

A West Point cadet drowned while on leave in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, the U.S. Military Academy announced on Tuesday (March 26).



Morris

Havin Morris, 21, of Pleasanton, California, died Monday. His tactical officer, Maj. Rebecca Gogue, said in a statement that Morris was "a bright, resilient young man with a determination to succeed in all he did."

Morris' family was notified of his death by the Army and assigned a casualty assistance officer.

Sylvan Pond (from Page 1)

The view could be gone by as early as summer 2025 because Putnam County plans to drain Sylvan Pond and eliminate what has been a spot for contemplation and recreation for residents on Aqueduct, Ridge Road and Lake Court.

While information on the history of Sylvan Pond and how Putnam came to own it is scant, Neal Tomann, a Philipstown resident who is interim manager of the county's Soil & Water Conservation District, said the state Department of Environmental Conservation has issued an ultimatum: fortify the earthen dam or drain the water.

The agency's concern, Tomann told the Town Board on March 20, is that a storm could fill the shallow pond and send floodwaters toward downstream properties along Sprout Brook Road.

He described the dam, which has a channel that drains pond water to an unknown destination, as "highly improvised" and designated by the DEC as Class B, meaning there

is the potential for severe damage to nearby properties if it fails. Rebuilding the dam to reduce that risk would cost an estimated \$750,000 — an amount Tomann said is more than the county's annual budget for dams.

Putnam owns nine dams, Tomann said, acquiring many of them through tax liens. He does not know how Sylvan Pond became one of them; online property records do not list a previous owner.

A history of Continental Village published in 1972 and written by Carlton Scofield, a former Peekskill historian, includes a map identifying Sylvan Pond. Best and another resident, Kendra Parker, recalled it as a spot for fishing, ice-skating, swimming and other activities.

Parker and several other Continental Village residents who attended the Town Board meeting asked Tomann about alternatives. She worries about losing habitat for ducks, snapping turtles and other wildlife. "We don't want to live around a swamp," she said.

Tomann said that even if residents

bought the property, they would still have to repair the dam or drain the pond.

In her 1995 column for the *Putnam Reporter Dispatch*, Best described how her young daughter and son fed ducks and skipped rocks in warm weather and skated with their father when the pond iced over in the winter.

A neighbor named Justine Bruno, armed with a wheelbarrow, launched the 1995 cleanup effort when she began clearing overgrowth around Sylvan Pond because her daughters had returned with rashes after feeding the ducks, said Best.

Other neighbors joined in and soon after, the Philipstown Highway Department brought a backhoe, wood chipper, dump truck and "elbow grease" to their aid, she said.

Now, a faded green sign inscribed, "Please Keep Pond Clean, By Troop 2280" juts from the ground a short walk from a part of the shore where two rocks protrude into the water.

"I can't tell you how many times I've seen a kid sitting on those rocks thinking, and young families taking their kids down there," said Best. "It's really nice."

2024 SCHOLARSHIP GUIDE

Each year *The Current* compiles a list of scholarships available to students who live in Beacon and Philipstown. Each listing includes who qualifies to apply, the amount of the award and the application deadline.

The 2024 version of the guide has been posted at highlandscurrent.org/scholarships.

Don't delay: Many applications are due April 1.



Puzzles

CROSSCURRENT

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- E-business
- Boring type
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- Messy places
- Leaks slowly

- Allergy season sound
- Hourglass fillers
- Melrose Place* actor Rob
- Lion* star Patel
- Yank at
- Misanthrope
- choy
- "— outta here!"
- Library array
- plume
- Wise sayings
- "Scram!"
- Preventive shot, in slang
- 40 winks
- Sidesteps
- Lipstick shades
- Repairs
- Rent
- Foolproof
- Hollywood trickery (Abbr.)
- Ruby or Sandra

- DOWN**
- Picturesque
 - Life's work
 - Onassis nickname
 - Cask sediment
 - '50s Ford
 - Peter the Great, e.g.
 - Shortly
 - Day- — paint
 - Car safety feature

SUDOCURRENT

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

WORDLADDER

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

WASTE

PARTE

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MICRO CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- Spanish girlfriend
 - Sudoku-solving skill
 - Took the Tesla
 - Chowhound
 - ___ *Hope* (one-time soap opera)

- DOWN**
- Birch family tree
 - Coral reef eel
 - "___ Woman" (Ray Charles single)

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
9				

- Particular
- Some laptops

M	I	D	A	S		M	I	R		K	A	T			
I	S	A	L	L		E	V	A		E	D	A			
D	O	Y	O	U		D	A	Y		B	O	O	K		
		J	U	S	T	I	N			O	G	R	E		
H	M	O			H	O	N			O	T	H	E	R	
E	L	B	A			D	A	C	H	A					
M	I	S	L	E	D			Y	O	N	D	E	R		
						B	R	Y	A	N		Y	A	L	E
P	A	D	U	A			C	I	S			Y	I	P	
A	T	O	M			H	E	C	T	I	C				
D	A	Y	S	P	A	S				O	P	A	R	T	
D	R	E			U	R	I			N	O	R	M	A	
Y	I	N			P	E	T			E	D	E	N	S	

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

F	A	T	S	
I	B	E	T	
X	E	R	O	X
	A	R	N	E
	R	Y	E	S

- CROWD
CROWN
CROWS
CROPS
DROPS
PROPS

Answers for March 22 Puzzles

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Sports

VARSITY ROUNDUP

HALDANE

By Jacob Aframian

SOFTBALL — For the first time since 2019, Haldane has a varsity softball team. The Blue Devils open at home with games scheduled for Tuesday (April 2) against Tuckahoe and Wednesday against Yonkers Montessori. Both start at 4:30 p.m.

Last year, senior Mary Mikalsen (now at Siena College) and sophomore Callie Sniffen played for Putnam Valley. (Sniffen was the league MVP and hit a record 12 home runs.) Before disbanding after the 2019 season, Haldane won six Section I, Class C titles in 10 years.

The 2024 team will be young, with four middle school players in the starting lineup. Sniffen returns, but the sole senior is Bella Tomizawa, who plays first base and outfield. The team is coached by Jeff Sniffen, who is assisted by Analisa Aste and junior varsity coach Kirsten Amato.

GIRLS' LACROSSE — Haldane opened its season March 22 with a 10-4 win at Rye Neck behind six goals by Samantha Thomas and 11 saves in goal by Vivian Eannacony.

The Blue Devils scored first with a goal from Kayla Ruggiero at the 7:49 mark; the Panthers tied the score five minutes later. Less than 30 seconds later, Ellen O'Hara scored off the pass from Marisa Peters,



Ellen O'Hara, shown in a game against Mahopac last year, is among the players returning for Haldane.

File photo by Skip Pearlman

followed by two goals by Thomas 12 and 50 seconds later.

Rye Neck cut the lead to 4-2 in the second quarter but O'Hara and Thomas each scored to put the game away. The Panthers never got closer than three goals.

The Blue Devils, who finished 10-7 last season, are not scheduled to play again until April 9, when they host Croton-Harmon.

BOYS' LACROSSE — Last season the Blue Devils went 13-5 but were upset in the Section I, Class D semifinals by Briarcliff. They lost nine seniors to graduation but return a strong core, with five players already committed to play in college: Evan Giachinta (High Point), PJ Ruggiero (Dickinson), Liam Gaugler (Vassar), Frankie DiGiglio (Vassar) and Jordon Hankel (Sage). Haldane starts its season on Saturday (March 30) at Mahopac before traveling to South Carolina next week for a spring break tournament.

BASEBALL — Haldane's first game, scheduled for March 23 against Dobbs Ferry, was rained out. The team will play at Yonkers Montessori on Wednesday (April 3) and host Tuckahoe at Mayor's Park at 4:30 p.m. on Friday. The 2024 squad includes many new faces, including nine freshmen. Three rotation pitchers — Hunter Erickson, Jake Hotaling and Milo Pearsall — return, along with four-year starters Trajan McCarthy behind the plate and Jeremy Hall in center field.

BEACON

By Nick Robbins

BASEBALL — Coach Bobby Atwell, whose team went 15-7 last season before falling in the semifinals of the Section IX tournament, has nine returning starters, including six seniors who have committed to play in college: Jack Antalek (Mercy), Liam Murphy (SUNY Rockland), and Anthony Borromeo, Mikey Fontaine, Ronnie Anzovino and Jackson Atwell (SUNY Orange).

The team includes juniors Derrick Heaton, Ryan Smith and Mercer Jordan and sophomores Ryan Landisi and Zach Schetter. The Bulldogs open the season at home at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday (April 2) against Burke Catholic.

BOYS' GOLF — After starting 2023 by losing four straight matches, the Bulldogs rattled off seven consecutive victories to finish 7-4. Will Martin, Brady Philipbar and Enis Dika return. Beacon begins the season April 9, hosting Monticello at the Southern Dutchess Country Club.

BOYS' TENNIS — The Bulldogs, who finished second in the league with an 11-5 record in 2023 (including an upset win over Newburgh), return five starters: Frank Zezza, Beckett Anderson, Imroz Ali, Charlie Zellinger and Charlie Klein, who reached the sectional quarterfinals. Three freshmen — Julian Rivers, William Flynn and Shaun Jabar — join the squad. Coach David Ryley

noted that, following a reshuffling of the Section IX leagues, Beacon will compete against Cornwall, Goshen, Minisink Valley, Monticello, Warwick Valley and Washingtonville. It begins the season by hosting Valley Central at 4 p.m. on Wednesday (April 3).

GIRLS' GOLF — The Bulldogs, who finished 7-7 last season, return 11 golfers, including nine seniors and MVPs Sophia Campagiorni and Elizabeth Ruffy. Eight players join the team. Beacon opens its season on Thursday (April 4) against John Jay East Fishkill at the Southern Dutchess Country Club.

SOFTBALL — The Bulldogs hope to improve on last season's four-win campaign. They lost six seniors to graduation but return nine other players. Beacon opens with two home games, hosting New Paltz on Tuesday (April 2) at 4:15 p.m. and Burke Catholic on Wednesday at 4:30 p.m.

TRACK AND FIELD — The Bulldogs move outdoors behind Damani DeLoatch, who finished second in the state in the triple jump during winter track, and runners Rubio Castagna-Torres, Henry Reinke, Bryce Manning and August Wright. For the girls, Stella Reinke and Isabella Migliore return from the winter, along with Lilly Pendley and Rachel Thorne, the only Beacon girls to compete in cross-country and indoor and outdoor track. The Bulldogs begin the season on Wednesday (April 3) at a meet with Washingtonville and Monroe-Woodbury.



DUNK CHAMP — Matt Nachamkin of Haldane won the slam dunk contest at a senior game hosted on March 21 by the Lower Hudson Basketball Coaches Association at Peekskill High School. He is shown with Coach Anthony Saunders of the LHBC.

Photo provided