

The HIGHLANDS Current



DIY on Display **Page 11**

APRIL 25, 2025

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Daniel and Arielle Honovich *Photo provided*

Farm Wins Lawsuit Over Putnam Rules

*Judge overturns rejection
for special district*

By Leonard Sparks

A Putnam judge on April 16 ruled that the county Legislature violated state law when it rejected a recommendation to add a Patterson farm raising chickens, cows and other livestock to a special agricultural district.

Judge Victor Grossman invalidated a 5-3 vote by legislators to deny Ridge Ranch's application to be added to the Agricultural District and ordered them to reconsider the farm's request. The county Agriculture & Farmland Protection Board had recommended that Ridge Ranch be added.

Legislators based their August vote on an "erroneous" criterion established in 2007 that requires farms in the district have one of the top six of the state's 10 classifications for soil, said Grossman. That requirement is "irrational, arbitrary and capricious" because the classifications concern crops, not livestock, he said.

In addition, an official with the state Department of Agriculture and Markets said in response to questions that soil types were developed to determine assessed values for taxes, not eligibility for agricultural districts.

Grossman also found that Neal Tomann, a Philipstown resident who is interim director of the county's Soil & Water Conservation District, "subverted" the protection board's 9-2 vote for Ridge Ranch's inclu-

(Continued on Page 9)

Haldane Suspends DEI Policy

*District cites legal advice,
fear of losing funds*

By Joey Asher and Jeff Simms

The Haldane school board voted unanimously on Tuesday (April 22) to suspend its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policy in hopes of safeguarding \$450,000 in federal funding threatened by the Trump administration's opposition to DEI programs.

The district's resolution suspended the policy "pending clarification of the conflict between the respective positions of the state and federal governments regarding Title VI [of the Civil Rights Act of 1964] and DEI."

The five-member board also approved a resolution certifying compliance with Title VI, which prohibits racial discrimination in federally funded programs. The Trump administration had set a Thursday (April 24) deadline for local school districts to eliminate "illegal DEI practices" or potentially lose funding.

However, on Thursday, a federal judge in New Hampshire temporarily blocked the administration's guidance forbidding DEI efforts in K-12 public schools. The ruling came in a lawsuit brought by the National Education Association and the American Civil Liberties Union, which accused the

(Continued on Page 6)

Pantry on Wheels

*Food truck brings the
farm to Philipstown*

By Michael Turton

Ruby Koch-Fienberg has always loved farming and food systems — an interest that led her in 2022 to earn a master's degree in food studies from New York University.

"I wanted to work with farms, helping them connect more with food pantries," said Koch-Fienberg. "When this job appeared on my radar, it was the perfect fit."



Koch-Fienberg

The job is serving as ag and food systems coordinator with Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) for Putnam County, which is based in Carmel. Koch-Fienberg coordinates the extension's Farm to Truck Program, which provides free produce to Putnam County residents facing food insecurity.

CCE contracts with Meals on Main Street, a nonprofit in Port Chester, to deliver food each week. Farm to Truck also drops food at pantries.

On Wednesday (April 16), the Meals on Main Street mobile pantry spent 45 minutes parked at the Chestnut Ridge retirement community and the Philipstown Friendship Center for seniors. It served 85 people at the two stops, said Irma Arango, who has worked for Meals on Main Street for 15 years.

Another 25 people had picked up food at the Brookside Senior Citizen Coop in Philipstown earlier in the day. The truck also makes weekly stops in Putnam Valley, Putnam Lake, Patterson, Carmel, Kent and Mahopac.

"I like engaging with the people," Arango said. "I see their need and I see

(Continued on Page 9)



DOG RUN — Guiding Eyes for the Blind brought 20 puppies to Stewart International Airport in New Windsor on April 19 as part of their training to become guide dogs, whose tasks include helping people who are flying. The dogs were accompanied by volunteer "puppy raisers."

Photo provided

Feds Target Electric School Buses

*Haldane has applied for EPA
grants*

By Joey Asher and Jeff Simms

Across the country, more than 500 school districts are waiting on \$1 billion in Environmental Protection Agency grants to help pay for more than 3,400 electric buses.

In Cold Spring, Haldane has applied for

EPA grants to purchase four buses to meet Gov. Kathy Hochul's mandate that schools no longer purchase gas-powered buses after 2027 and convert to electric fleets by 2035.

If approved, interim Superintendent Carl Albano said the EPA grants would offset \$170,000, or almost half, of each \$400,000 bus. The district is also hoping to get \$147,000 per bus from the New York State

(Continued on Page 7)



The school district in Oakland, California, uses only electric buses. *Photo by Jeff Chiu/AP*

5 FIVE QUESTIONS: GABRIEL MCKEE

By Brian PJ Cronin

Gabriel Mckee, who lives in Beacon, is the author of *The Saucerian: UFOs, Men in Black and the Unbelievable Life of Gray Barker*. He will talk about the book on May 16 during Nerd Nite Hudson Valley at the Howland Cultural Center.

What drew you to Gray Barker?

I was co-editing a compendium of the vast UFO book library of science-fiction author Jack Womack. I found that the weirdest books had been written and/or published by Gray Barker [1925-1984], who owned a small press in Clarksburg, West Virginia. His writing style was showy and exciting, and he lived a fascinating life as a gay man in a small town in the 1950s, writing about flying saucers.

What was his impact on pop culture?

He essentially invented the men in black [government agents who silence UFO witnesses — Barker wrote a book called *They Knew Too Much About Flying Saucers*], although the movies took a different spin on the idea. In UFO culture, and conspiracy culture in general, Barker's influence is harder to pin down. He preceded the internet in a lot of ways because he was publishing the writings of people who didn't have another outlet.



You look at Slenderman, a myth that emerged in internet forums [in 2009], and it's like Barker's stories in the 1960s about the Mothman. This happened in the '60s through zines that came out once or twice a year. On the internet, it's instantaneous.

You write that UFOs are a literary phenomenon. What do you mean?

We don't have access to UFOs except through stories told about them. Even somebody who sees a UFO is seeing it in the context of a grander cultural narrative. To me, that's more interesting than speculations about the physical reality.

You refer to Barker as a "queer pioneer." How does his sexuality tie in?

The curator of the Barker Collection [at the Clarksburg public library], David

Houchin, has a theory that you can only be eccentric for one thing, particularly in a small town. Maybe it was easier for Barker to be known as the UFO guy than for his sexuality. He was never fully closeted, and certainly not after he was arrested in the early '60s. There's a lot of sexuality in his writing, particularly in *The Silver Bridge* [a book about the Mothman], in which he makes a connection between paranormal and sexual experiences. He was there for the people on the fringes, whether you're gay in the South or claiming to have contacted beings from Venus. Those were both ways of being an American in the mid-20th century.

Have UFOs lost their magic?

They're a lot less fun than they were a long time ago. The subculture that I chronicle took some dark turns in the late '80s and '90s, particularly toward right-wing politics. That takes a lot of the joy out of it. Many people who share the narratives don't have a sense of the cultural history. You'll see variations of stories that circulated 50 or 60 years ago turning up but without the context of the process through which they were written and shared and developed when they were new. My personal interest in UFO literature drops off a lot after the '80s, because it's variations on the same thing, video evidence notwithstanding. It needs a narrative to surround it.

ON THE SPOT

By Michael Turton

If you had a talk show, who would you want to interview?

“David Bowie, were he still alive, for all the stories we haven't heard.”



Peter Hamboussi, Cold Spring

“Jane Goodall, because the wrong species is in charge of our planet.”



Rita Landy, Cold Spring

“German filmmaker Werner Herzog: very funny, very interesting.”



Michael Anderson, Beacon

“Work In Decay”
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Then and Now



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NEWS BRIEFS

No School Board Challengers

Incumbents will return in Haldane, Garrison

The Haldane and Garrison school board elections on May 20 will feature only familiar names, with four incumbents running to keep their seats.

In Garrison, Sarah Tormey and Kent Schacht submitted nominating petitions by the Monday (April 21) deadline to run for new 3-year terms on the seven-member board. Tormey will run unopposed for her third term and Schacht for his second full term after being elected in 2021 to fill a vacated seat.

The other members of the Garrison board are Dan Jasnow (whose term ends in 2026), Jocelyn Apicello (2026), Eric Arnold (2027), Peter Lesser (2027) and Jennifer Harriton-Wilson (2027).

At Haldane, Sean McNall and Ezra Clementson submitted nominating petitions by the April 21 deadline and will run unopposed to retain their seats. Clementson will seek his second, 3-year term and McNall his third term. The other members of the board are Peggy Clements (2026), Maggie Valentine (2027) and Michelle Kupper (2027).

In Beacon, three of the nine board seats will be on the ballot, those held by Meredith Heuer, Alena Kush and Semra Ercin. For a nominating petition, email jackson.v@beaconk12.org. The deadline is April 30. The other members are Kristan Flynn (2026), Anthony White (2026), Eric Schetter (2026), LaVonne McNair (2027), Flora Stadler (2027) and Christopher Lewine (2027).

Fundraising Continues for Beacon Family

Gas, grocery cards being collected at library

An online fundraising campaign for a Beacon family whose home was destroyed had raised more than \$69,000 by Thursday (April 24).

Gene Murphy, 81, was killed in the April 15 blaze, which destroyed his family's home and its contents at 9 Alice St. Services were held Wednesday (April 23).

Murphy's great-grandson, Markus Louis, a 15-year-old sophomore at Beacon High School, remains at Westchester Medical Center with severe burns. A donor has covered the family's clothing needs but gift cards to stores such as Walmart and Ocean State Job Lot or gas stations can be dropped at the Howland Public Library, said a family friend, Patrick O'Dell said.

The Murphy family is "beyond appreciative for the outpouring of love," he said. The fundraiser is online at dub.sh/murphy-family. It has a \$70,000 goal, but the family's costs will far exceed that, said O'Dell.

Route 9D Goes to One Lane

State alternates traffic between Fair, Fishkill

The state Department of Transportation on Monday (April 21) closed one lane of Route 9D between its intersection with Fair Street in Philipstown and Hartsook Lane in the Town of Fishkill until at least Sept. 25.

The closure is for construction work that began last summer. The Fair Street intersection is just south of Little Stony Point, while the Hartsook intersection is parallel to Bannerman Island.

In response to the closure, the Village of Cold Spring said it would suspend parking on Fair Street and, at the discretion of the on-duty police officer, the street may be made one-way northbound on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. In addition, parking on the northbound and westbound side of Northern Avenue between Fair Street and Route 9D will be eliminated.

State Joins 'Lights Out' Program

Designed to save migratory birds

New York State has joined a program to assist migratory birds that use the stars to guide them to summer breeding grounds.

Many species of shorebirds and songbirds rely on constellations; outdoor lighting, especially in bad weather, can disorient them and cause fatal collisions with windows, walls, floodlights or the ground.

The state said it would turn off non-essential outdoor lighting on buildings it manages from 11 p.m. to dawn through May 31, as well as from Aug. 15 to Nov. 15. State agencies are encouraged to draw blinds when possible and turn off non-essential indoor lighting. Residents are asked to switch off unnecessary lights.

Amnesty Extended for Meter Upgrades

About 450 Beacon households must switch

Beacon has extended its amnesty period for about 450 water customers who have not scheduled a free replacement of a radio transmitter on their meters.

Those customers were assessed a \$250 fine on their April bills but will be able to reverse the charge if they make an appointment by May 1, the city said. Once upgraded, the meters use a cloud-based connection to provide real-time readings. See dub.sh/beacon-meters or call 877-860-8376. The city has about 4,600 water customers.

Dutchess Looking for Volunteers

County has committee, board openings

The Dutchess County Legislature announced on April 18 that has open seats for residents on its volunteer committees and boards.

The boards include the Citizens Advisory Committee on Domestic Violence, the Climate Smart Task Force, the Community Services Board, the Environmental Management Council, the Fire and Safety Advisory Board, the Fish and Wildlife Management Board, the Stop-DWI Policy Planning Board and the Tick Task Force.

Qualifications and terms vary. See dub.sh/dutchess-boards.



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LETTERS AND COMMENTS

Town hall

Last week, I sent Rep. Mike Lawler a petition signed by about 750 people demanding that he conduct his taxpayer-funded district town halls, held in public spaces, in a more open way, so that he must listen to the concerns of his constituents.

During his first term, his town halls were so heavily regulated that the ability of constituents to have a conversation with him was basically nonexistent — even though he would solemnly swear in his introduction that “conversation” was what he wanted. No follow-up questions were allowed, nor were photography and recording of sound or video. Most egregiously, he initially prevented reporters from taking photos or recording the event.

On Sunday (April 27), Lawler will finally hold the first of four promised town halls, this one in Rockland County. But as we all learned in his first term, it isn't really a “town hall” when it consists almost entirely of longwinded, and typically non-responsive, filibustering by the congressman; when the choice of questioners (controlled by the congressman) is restricted almost entirely to supporters, including Republican elected officials who, unlike ordinary constituents like us, have access to the congressman outside of the town hall; when

Lawler dismisses the value of any question that challenges his beliefs as coming from “left-wing media”; and when there is no opportunity to ask follow-up questions.

Will he listen? The experience from his first term has not made me optimistic, but we must continue to demand better. And we will.

Margaret Yonco-Haines, *Garrison*

A dozen swing-district and centrist House Republicans are warning Speaker Mike Johnson that they won't vote for a budget reconciliation package that cuts Medicaid too deeply. I'm surprised that Rep. Lawler hasn't joined them.

According to a coalition based in Albany called Medicaid Matters, in District 17 (which includes Philipstown and Putnam Valley), 211,500 people are covered by Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program — 45 percent are children and teens and 9.7 percent are adults ages 65 and older. In addition, 13,300 people with disabilities receive Medicaid and it pays for the care of 64 percent of nursing home residents.

The 12 lawmakers wrote to Johnson and other GOP leaders that “balancing the federal budget must not come at the expense of their health and economic security. We cannot and will not support a final reconciliation bill that includes any reduction in Medicaid coverage

for vulnerable populations.”

I'm hoping Lawler will choose to protect his constituents instead of the billionaires and corporations benefiting from Trump's planned tax cuts.

Judy Allen, *Putnam Valley*

MTA Board

Neal Zuckerman, who represents Putnam County on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority board, has been an exemplary public servant in every position he has held (“Putnam Executive Calls for MTA Rep to Resign,” April 18). He is resourceful, diplomatic and nonpartisan in his dealings.

Dar Williams, *Cold Spring*

It is not lost on me how ironic it is to find myself defending the MTA — an agency I hold responsible, along with state and federal authorities, for the tragic death of my husband in 2013. And yet I feel compelled to speak out now because what's at stake is far greater than politics — it's about public service, safety and truth.

Recently, the Putnam County executive, Kevin Byrne, called in a letter for the resignation of Neal Zuckerman from the MTA board. Unfortunately, instead of handling this matter with professionalism and discretion, Byrne chose to post the letter online and send it to the press without first extending the courtesy of delivering it to Zuckerman directly. At the very least, respect among colleagues and seriousness of purpose should have guided a more thoughtful approach. Our constituents expect us to lead with integrity, not perform for headlines.

Thankfully, most members of the county Legislature declined to sign a similar letter, demonstrating a clear understanding that we must not allow partisanship to undermine effective governance or derail progress.

The stated rationale for demanding his resignation — opposition to congestion pricing — overlooks the fundamental challenge we face: how to fund the MTA in a sustainable and equitable way. With federal aid receding, congestion pricing is projected to generate at least 30 percent of the funding needed for the MTA's 2025-29 capital plan. That plan is not just about convenience but safety, reliability and modernization.

If there are concerns about congestion pricing, let's address them constructively. Rep. Mike Lawler and Byrne are in positions to advocate for solutions like exemptions for first responders, nurses and public workers who must drive. Let's push for solutions that reflect our shared values. But undermining an effective and respected representative on the MTA board — particularly one who has served with such distinction — does nothing.

(Continued on Page 5)



LETTERS AND COMMENTS

(Continued from Page 4)
ing to move us forward.

On a personal note, I want to speak to Neal's character. In the months after my husband, Jim Lovell, was killed on Dec. 1, 2013, in the Spuyten Duyvil Metro-North derailment, I traveled to Manhattan repeatedly to demand change from the MTA board. Some of its members made it painfully clear that they did not consider "safety first" a serious priority. But Neal listened and helped shift the culture of that board. In the wake of my family's loss, he helped us navigate a system that too often lacks humanity.

He did it with compassion, clarity and resolve. He understood that board service is not just about budgets and policy. He has never used his position to seek political office or personal gain. To suggest otherwise is unfair and profoundly misleading.

Nancy Montgomery, *Philipstown*
Montgomery represents Philipstown and part of Putnam Valley on the Putnam County Legislature.

Congestion pricing has been an all-around win. I recently had to drive into Manhattan and it was worth \$9 to get in and out easily and quickly. The lack of traffic probably saved me over an hour. As a pedestrian and commuter by train, I've noticed the noise and air quality are already so much better.

I remember having to drive into Manhattan years ago when the office of Chris Christie, then governor of New Jersey, created an artificial traffic jam near the George Washington Bridge to punish the mayor of Fort Lee. If it were up to Rep. Mike Lawler and his GOP cronies, I'm sure they'd love to find ways to punish their political opponents and, as usual, the only losers would be commuters and taxpayers. Congestion pricing has far more benefits for more people than drawbacks for a small number of people. Send Byrne and Lawler packing.

Harper Sanchez, *via Instagram*

Tax sharing

Thank you for covering this important story ("Putnam Executive Vetoes Lower Sales Tax," April 18). However, you misquoted me. At the press conference on April 15, I praised my executive colleagues and the county executive for working together in a substantive way and then, at the request of the county executive, gave examples of ways the shared sales tax could benefit the Village of Cold Spring.

One was for engineering and upgrades of our aged stormwater infrastructure, necessary because the village is positioned between steep elevations and a rising river, and storms are only getting stronger with climate change. I also cited tourism management uses for the money — help we have been asking the county to give for a long time, to no avail.

I did say that the county Legislature appears to be hoarding money in its sales tax surplus, but that statement was made at the Legislature meeting on April 1, not

at the press conference. While that meeting was contentious, the press conference was collegial and united, with the towns and villages speaking in a single voice. It's time for county Legislators Birmingham, Ellner, Jonke, Addonizio and Sayegh to listen and to come on board with the rest of the elected officials in Putnam.

Kathleen Foley, *Cold Spring*
Foley is the mayor of Cold Spring.

Community Nursery

This is so sad to hear ("Community Nursery to Close," April 18). My children and my grandchildren all attended and received such wonderful care and made great friends. The staff was the best.

Cathy Greenough, *via Facebook*

My brother and I attended the first year and one of my sons attended, too.

Patty Frisenda Craft, *via Facebook*

All four of my kids went through and got a great head start. We still have the hand-print plates.

Joe Curto, *via Facebook*

My three oldest children attended under Rosemary Rodino's leadership and have wonderful memories and lifelong friends from those days. My youngest grandson is there now with Tara and Julianna and having an equally wonderful experience. I've subbed in the 4-year-old class and seen firsthand how

much fun the kids have and how deeply the teachers care for their students.

We are heartbroken that my grandson and the rest of the fall babies who aren't ready for pre-kindergarten won't be able to spend next year there.

Denise Loatman-Owens, *via Facebook*

Sidewalks

I was sitting at home, at my piano, in my house, which is on Route 9D just north of Main Street. I'm in my wheelchair, as usual. Every day I play for an hour, and on the weekends, within that hour, I always see about 30 people walking down 9D toward Breakneck.

They are day-trippers; sometimes they have dogs. They're walking down 9D on the side, or what I call "the white line of death." I used to be a competitive runner and would stand on the shoulder when there was traffic. But there is no shoulder on 9D, and no sidewalk. It needs a proper sidewalk, like the one in front of The Nest, from the top of Main Street to Boscobel and from the top of Main Street to Little Stony Point.

There are going to be more people here, whether we like it or not. I used to live in the Hamptons and every five years or so, I'd move from South Hampton to Bridge Hampton to East Hampton, and finally to Montauk. But even that got crowded out, so I moved to Philipstown. My family has been here since 1968 and the area is just growing and growing. There's nothing you can do about it.

I hope the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail

works out, because more people will be connected to the environment and appreciate it. The Fjord Trail will also benefit people like me. We can see the river and enjoy life instead of being stuck at home watching people walk the white line of death.

Brian Nice, *Philipstown*


Comptroller

I disagree with the letter in the April 18 issue that said Dan Aymar-Blair is "committed to the truth." During his campaign for Dutchess comptroller last year, Aymar-Blair described county government as being mismanaged by Republicans in both the executive and legislative branches.

Last month, Standard & Poor's again confirmed Dutchess County's solid AA+ bond rating, which is the highest S&P rating among county governments in New York state. S&P noted Dutchess County's multiple strengths: a strong track record of sound fiscal management, conservative budgeting practices and robust reserve levels, among other attributes. S&P is a private, objective financial rating organization, with no political ax to grind.

Aymar-Blair has not been honest when he mischaracterizes how Republicans in Dutchess government are safeguarding our revenues. They are doing a terrific job. That is why I am supporting Will Truitt, the chair of the county Legislature, for comptroller in the November election.

Richard Trent, *Poughkeepsie*



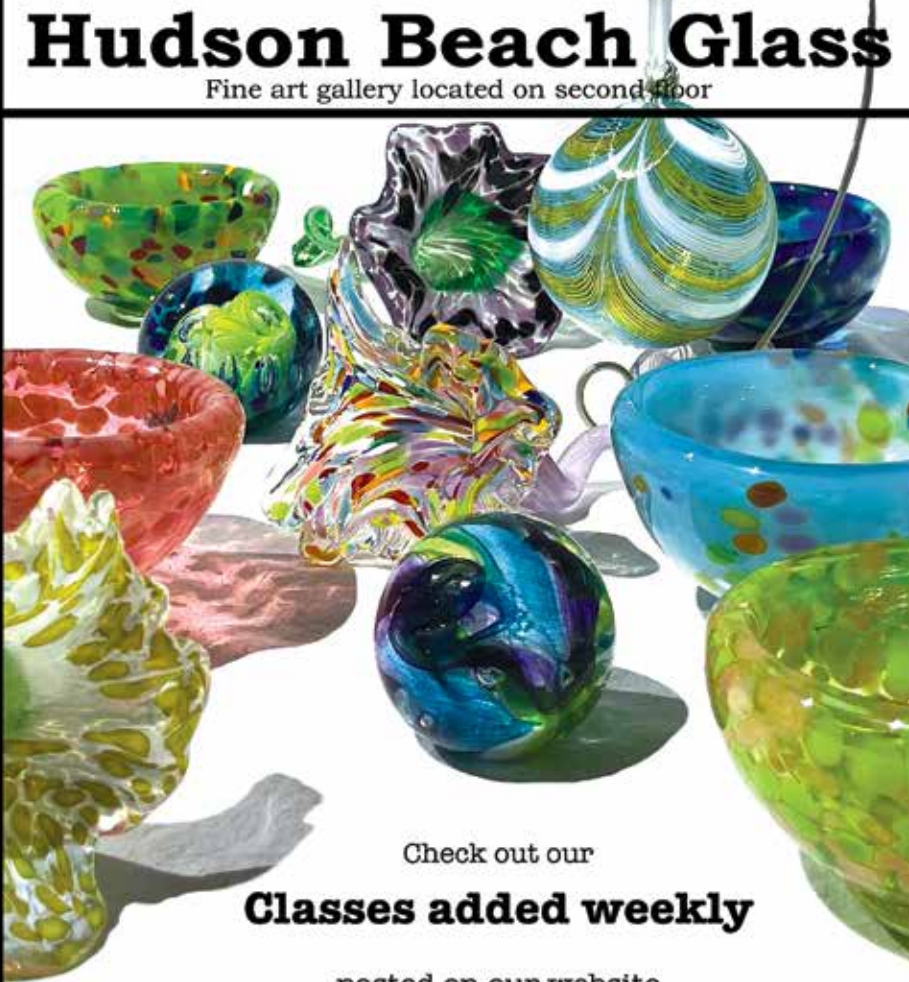
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NEWS BRIEF

Howland Library

	APPROVED 2024-25 BUDGET	PROPOSED 2025-26 BUDGET
EXPENDITURES	Employee Benefits	\$327,250.00
	Salaries & Wages	\$871,652.47
	Library Materials	\$80,900.00
	Library Programming	\$27,513.53
	Building & Operations	\$79,300.00
	General & Administrative	\$102,840.00
	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$1,489,456.00
REVENUES	Transfer Funds	\$20,000.00
	Earned Income	\$9,150.00
	Donations	\$7,000.00
	Grants/Interest/PILOT	\$26,200.00
	TOTAL REVENUES	\$62,350.00
AMOUNT TO BE RAISED BY TAXES		\$1,427,106.00
TOTAL NET		\$1,489,456.00
		\$1,569,014.48

Howland Library to Hold Vote
Budget and three open seats on ballot

The Howland Public Library in Beacon will hold its annual budget and trustee vote on Thursday (May 1) from noon to 8 p.m. at the library. It is open to residents of the Beacon City School District.

The library’s proposed 2025-26 budget is \$1.569 million, a 4 percent increase. Of that, about \$1.254 million is for employee salaries and benefits and \$116,000 for programming and materials. The library

plans to raise \$1.488 million from taxes.

There are five candidates — Jason Chase, Ruth Danon, Sarah From, Kathy Furfey and incumbent David Lemon — for three board vacancies, each with a three-year term. The candidate’s biographies are posted at beaconlibrary.org/annual-vote.

The other board members are Jessica Conway, Jeffrey Yang, Helen Lowery, Emily Murnane, Elizabeth Murphy, Emily Pullen, Brooke Simmons and Joe Vergolina. Conway and Yang are not running for re-election.

Haldane DEI (from Page 1)

Republican administration of violating teachers’ due process and First Amendment rights.

In February, the U.S. Education Department told schools and colleges they needed to end any practice that differentiates people based on their race or they would risk losing their federal funding. Craig Trainor, the acting assistant secretary for civil rights, issued a “Dear Colleague” letter arguing that a Supreme Court decision in 2023 banning race-based college admissions extended to DEI policies in public schools.

“DEI programs, for example, frequently preference certain racial groups and teach students that certain racial groups bear unique moral burdens that others do not,” Trainor wrote. “Such programs stigmatize students who belong to particular racial groups based on crude racial stereotypes. Consequently, they deny students the ability to participate fully in the life of a school.”

Earlier this month, the department ordered states to gather signatures from local districts certifying compliance with civil rights laws, including rejection of what the federal government calls “illegal DEI practices.”

The directive did not carry the force of law but threatened to use civil rights enforcement to rid schools of DEI practices. Schools were warned that continuing such practices “in violation of federal law” could lead to U.S. Justice Department litigation and termination of federal grants and contracts.

At least 15 states, including New York, said they would not comply with the federal order. “We understand that the current administration seeks to censor anything it deems ‘diversity, equity & inclusion,’” wrote Daniel Morton-Bentley, a lawyer for the New York Education Department. “But there are no federal or state laws prohibiting the principles of DEI.” He added also that the federal government had “yet to define what practices it believes violate Title VI.”

At Haldane, interim Superintendent Carl Albano called the federal dollars, which are used to educate students with disabilities, provide student lunches and fund other initiatives, “a significant amount of money” that “could be at risk if you keep these policies in place.” He said that Haldane’s legal counsel had advised suspending the DEI policy, at least temporarily.

The district adopted its DEI policy in December 2022 in “recognition of the inherent value of diversity and acknowledgement that educational excellence requires a commitment to equity in the opportunities provided to students and the resulting outcomes.”

The policy noted that Haldane’s mission is to prepare its students to succeed in “an ever-changing global society,” a goal that requires incorporating a DEI lens “into every facet of its work.”

The policy provides guidelines for integrating DEI into family and community engagement, student support, discipline

and training. Regarding curriculum, it asks educators to “incorporate diverse perspectives, materials and texts so that students are taught topics not just from one single perspective, but from multiple perspectives.”

Additionally, it directed the district to create a workforce “that is not only diverse and inclusive, but one that recognizes and values the differences among people.”

On Tuesday, Board Member Sean McNall said that, because the policy “codified a cultural commitment that was already in place,” suspending it as a precaution “doesn’t really in any way impact how we’re operating.”

“I have been assured that there will be no change to curriculum, no change to treatment of students. I think there will come a time where we might want to get input from the public and I would welcome that.”

~ Michelle Kupper
Haldane Board Member

“Part of me can’t believe that we’re questioning the goodness of a policy that’s promoting diversity, equity and inclusion,” said Board Member Michelle Kupper. “I have been assured that there will be no change to curriculum, no change to treatment of students. I think there will come a time where we might want to get input from the public and I would welcome that.”

In Beacon, federal funding makes up about 2 percent, or \$1.7 million, of the district’s proposed \$87.7 million 2025-26 budget. It funds four elementary reading teachers as well as instructional supplies.

Superintendent Matt Landahl said the district has no “illegal” DEI programs, and that clubs at Beacon High School such as the Black Student Union or Students for Gender Equality are open to all, as are any clubs at the district’s six schools. The district’s “core belief” that diversity is a strength “guides our thinking with everything that we do, and we’re going to stay true to our beliefs and keep moving forward,” he said.

The Garrison district includes diversity, equity and inclusion as one of the goals in its six-pronged “vision of a graduate.” The school board has a DEI committee but Superintendent Greg Stowell said the district “is and will continue to be in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.”

Stowell said the district “is a welcoming and affirming environment for all and has structures in place to ensure that every student, regardless of background or circumstance, receives the support they need to achieve equity in access, opportunity and outcomes.”

The Associated Press contributed reporting.



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Cold Spring Considers Food Truck

By Michael Turton

The Cold Spring Village Board on April 16 discussed a request to operate a food truck on private property at the entrance to Dockside Park from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., five days a week.

Mayor Kathleen Foley said that while Chapter 71 of the Village Code offers some guidance regarding licensing, it is not specific to food trucks and “is silent on private property requests.”

Foley said she expects other, similar requests but feels the board is “ill prepared” to review and license such operations. “We need to be mindful of mitigating impacts in residential areas,” she said.

Trustee Eliza Starbuck asked about the

possibility of approving the request while regulations are drafted. “It’s a residential parcel and it’s for eight hours a day, five days a week,” Foley said. “It’s not someone requesting to put a food truck inside Dockside [a state park managed by the village]. It’s private property and neighbors need to be considered.”

The board asked the village attorney to draft a resolution for a six-month moratorium on issuing food-truck licenses. Foley said the time will be used to draft regulations that take zoning and impact mitigation into account. “There are lots of possibilities to do food trucks really well,” she said.

For more Village Board news, see highlandscurrent.org.

Electric Buses (from Page 1)

Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA).

Albano said that while he knows there have been questions about whether federal climate grant programs will continue under President Donald Trump, the district has received no indication that the program has been terminated. Haldane was told a decision would be made on its grant applications by the end of April. If it can’t secure federal grants, the district will likely seek additional state funding, he said.

So far, the Beacon, Haldane and Garrison districts do not have any electric buses, although Garrison has two hybrid vans. Haldane is seeking grants to buy its four electric buses and Beacon voters have approved the purchase of two, which have been ordered.

Statewide, only about 100 of 45,000 buses are electric, although about 1,000 have been approved or ordered as of February, according to Adam Ruder, director of clean transportation for NYSERDA. At the same time, residents in a handful of districts, including Hyde Park, have voted against electric bus purchases, even with state grants cutting the cost.

The New York State Educational Conference Board, a coalition of groups that represent superintendents, PTAs, school boards, teachers, business officials and administrators, has raised concerns. In January, the board published a paper stating that Hochul’s mandate “will force districts to reduce educational opportunities for students, increase taxes and spend exorbitant sums, and cause voter unrest.”

Although the Garrison School doesn’t own most of its buses — they are provided under contract with Orange County Transit — the district is studying the range of the electric buses that would transport students to and from Garrison’s K-8 campus and to Haldane, Putnam Valley and O’Neill high schools. The vendor’s seven buses are parked at Garrison during the day. If they were electric, the district would need to install chargers and the electrical capacity to run them, Joseph Jimick, the district business manager, said earlier this year.

A year ago, voters in the Beacon district

approved the purchase of two electric buses at a cost of \$495,000 each, including chargers. The district was awarded a \$257,000 state grant and the buses are scheduled to arrive this summer and be put into service in the fall. “Our thinking is we’re still on track until or if we hear otherwise,” Superintendent Matt Landahl said this week. He said in February that the district, with a fleet of 57 buses and vans, would need to upgrade its garage before buying any more electric buses.

Some districts across the country that purchased buses in anticipation of receiving EPA grants now face large bills. For example, in Oklahoma, the Shawnee Public Schools, a 3,300-student district near Oklahoma City, spent nearly \$1.5 million on four buses that it believed would be reimbursed from an infrastructure law passed by Congress under President Joe Biden.

The district requested the funding in November but was told that it would be delayed due to a technical glitch. It said that, since Trump took office, it has been calling the EPA and emailing regularly without a response.

The money is part of a Clean School Bus Program that was to provide \$5 billion over five years. So far, the program has gone through two earlier rounds. Nearly \$1 billion was issued in the first round as rebates to 400 schools for 2,500 buses; in the second round, grants totaling nearly \$1 billion funded more than 2,700 buses at 275 districts.

The EPA hasn’t explained why the funds are on hold or if they will be released. A spokesperson said the EPA does not comment on pending litigation; multiple lawsuits have been filed over frozen funding, including against the EPA.

More than 25 million students take diesel-fueled buses to school each day in the U.S. — with Black, Latino and lower-income students in urban areas more likely to rely on them. Although two to three times more expensive upfront, electric buses can save districts as much as \$100,000 over the life of the bus in fuel and maintenance costs, said Katherine Roboff, a representative of the World Resources Institute’s Electric School Bus Initiative.

The Associated Press contributed reporting.



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Study Finalized for Storage Proposal

Project near Beacon border faces opposition

By Leonard Sparks

A Beacon developer proposing to build a self-storage facility on land between Interstate 84 and Van Ness Road has finalized its responses to concerns from city and Fishkill residents about aesthetics, traffic and safety.

In an environmental-impact statement submitted on April 10 to the Fishkill Planning Board, 1292 Route 9D LLC said its two story, 26,000-square-foot facility would be a low-visibility, low-traffic project and not “change or diminish” the character of the area or quality of life for people living south of the property, which sits across 9D from the Southern Dutchess Country Club.

The 30-foot-high structure would be set back 200 feet, or twice the required distance, from the highway and contain 333 self-storage units (ranging from 24 to 240 square feet), 26 parking spaces and a loading area.

The developer, based at 268 Main St. in Beacon, estimates that 37 vehicles (including two trucks) will enter the facility on weekdays and 42 (three trucks) on Saturdays. The vehicles must use a driveway just north of Van Ness Road and can only enter from northbound 9D and turn right when exiting.

That “right in/right out” requirement by the state Department of Transportation

means southbound drivers visiting the facility will have to go past it and use one of Beacon’s residential streets to turn around.

In comments submitted in October, Mayor Lee Kyriacou said the use of residential streets for through traffic is “inconsistent with best practice” and would harm the community character of Dutchess Terrace, Rock Hill Road and Verplanck Avenue. To avoid having to continue south to turn around, some drivers may attempt illegal left turns or dangerous U-turns, he said.

Fishkill residents living on streets north of Interstate 84, such as Dogwood Lane and Chiappardi Place, expressed concern that drivers exiting onto northbound 9D will use their streets as a turnaround to go south.

To prevent visitors from using those streets, 1292 Route 9D LLC said it would require the facility’s operator to post online directions for entering and exiting, specifying routes that do not require use of the local streets. The developer also said it would petition GPS providers to dictate routes that avoid residential streets.

Because the property is in Fishkill’s restricted-business zone, where self-storage facilities are not allowed, the developer needs a special permit from the Planning Board in addition to site-plan approval.

Granting a special permit requires a finding from the board, with input from the building inspector, that a project “is substantially simi-



A rendering of the storage facility presented to the Fishkill Town Board

lar” to other uses in the district and “consistent with the stated purposes of the district.”

According to 1292 Route 9D LLC, its project “is consistent with the surrounding land uses and the built environment” because it will generate “minimal traffic, noise and air emissions” and be screened from the view of neighbors.

At the board’s urging, 1292 Route 9D LLC assessed two alternative projects — a residence and a hotel. It concluded that a hotel would generate more traffic than the storage facility and require more tree clearing and parking spaces. A single-family home would not be “economically viable,”

according to the developer.

Liz Axelson, a senior planner with Clark Patterson Lee and the Planning Board’s consultant, said in October that a restaurant, small hotel or bed-and-breakfast would be more appropriate. “The assertion that the proposed self-storage would complement any of the nearby uses is not well supported, in my opinion,” she said.

According to Clark Patterson Lee, 11 self-storage facilities exist within 5 miles of the proposed site. The Fishkill Town Board in August 2023 approved a one-year moratorium on approvals for self-storage, citing concerns from residents about a flood of applications.

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Farm Lawsuit *(from Page 1)*

sion when he told legislators that the farm failed to meet the soil requirement and lacked a site plan or stormwater protection plan for “alleged environmental concerns” over runoff.

Daniel Honovich, a veterinarian, runs Ridge Ranch with his wife, Arielle, who has a degree in animal science and teaches special education for the Mahopac school district. The couple raises and breeds Scottish Highland, Brahman Gyr and Zebu cows, along with chickens, goats, mini donkeys

and rabbits. They also host tours, birthday parties, “goat yoga” and other activities.

Grossman’s ruling “is a reminder that facts still matter and that the law must be applied fairly,” said the Honovichs in an emailed statement on April 19. “This small win for our farm is a giant win for farmers across the region. If it helps even one other farm avoid what we went through, then the fight was worth it.”

Established by the state in 1971, the Agricultural Districts program is intended to “conserve, protect and encourage the development and improvement” of farm-

land. The benefits to farmers include being exempt from “unreasonable” local laws that might restrict operations.

The county Agriculture & Farmland Protection board is supposed to consist of six farmers and representatives from the Legislature; the Department of Planning, Development and Public Transportation; Real Property Tax Services Agency; Soil and Water Conservation District; and Cornell Cooperative Extension Putnam County.

Four other farms recommended for the Agricultural District — Big Red Barn Farm in Putnam Valley and Cascade Enterprises

in Carmel, which board horses; and Lobster Hill Farm in Southeast and Ridge Ranch in Patterson, which breed livestock — were also rejected by the Legislature in August.

Despite the board’s support, Tomann told the Legislature’s Physical Services Committee a month earlier that the applicants failed to meet one or more of eight factors that the county determined in 2007 “shall be considered” for inclusion.

In addition to soil type, the factors include an on-site assessment by the board, the absence of local, state or federal violations and adherence to best practices.

Mobile Pantry *(from Page 1)*

the smiles on their faces when they see the truck.” She said clients sometimes leave thank-you notes. “People are so grateful.”

A Philipstown woman who picked up food at Chestnut Ridge said she relied on the weekly deliveries. “It’s good for so many things, especially fresh vegetables,” she said.

The mobile pantry that day had milk, onions, potatoes, beets, carrots, kale, radishes, apples, baked goods and frozen salmon. The selection will grow as the season progresses.

CCE launched Farm to Truck in May 2024 with a \$2 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It is operated in partnership with New York Food for New York Families, a division of the state Department of Agriculture and Markets.



Alejandra Bega and Irma Arango of Meals on Main Street

Photo by M. Turton

The program supports regional agriculture by purchasing produce from about 20 farms in Putnam (including Longhaul and Glynwood in Philipstown), Dutchess, Columbia,

Orange and Westchester counties.

“We’ve spent more than \$700,000 [on locally grown products] and expect to spend \$1.3 million by the end of August,” said Koch-Fienberg. She said Putnam residents made more than 3,000 trips to the food truck in March, which included many repeat customers. Nearly 300,000 pounds of produce, meat, eggs and dairy products have been distributed since the program began a year ago.

Koch-Fienberg said it can be hard for people to ask for help, especially in communities considered wealthy. “Pockets of every community experience need,” she said. “We absolutely have need in this county.”

The most recent data compiled by the United Way for its ALICE Project (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) indicates that 37 percent of households in Putnam are above the poverty level but

below the annual income needed for basic survival, including savings for emergencies.

Koch-Fienberg said that it’s not clear if the federal grant that funded Farm to Truck will be renewed when it ends in August. “People have come become so reliant on the program, she said. “It’s incredibly sad for it to have an uncertain future.”

Mobile Pantry Schedule

Monday: Putnam Valley

9:45 a.m. Library
11:00 a.m. Senior Center

Wednesday: Philipstown

9:00 a.m. Brookside
10:00 a.m. Chestnut Ridge
11:30 a.m. Senior Center




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AROUND TOWN



▲ **SUN RIVER** — Rep. Pat Ryan (foreground) visited Beacon on April 17 to help break ground on expansions at Sun River Health made possible by \$2 million in federal funds. The community health center, at 6 Henry St., will expand hours; construct an urgent care center; add a Main Street entrance; and increase space for behavioral health services. *Photo provided*



◀ **BELL RINGER** — Margy Leahey Gerber, a retired history professor who lives in Philipstown, rang the bells at St. Philip's Church in Garrison on April 18 to commemorate the 250th anniversary of Paul Revere's "midnight ride" in 1775. *Photo provided*



▲ **COLOR CHOICE** — The owner of 37 Main St. in Cold Spring is asking passersby to vote online for which of nine pastels (at right) they prefer for the siding. The trim will be white. *Photo by Michael Turton*



◀ **SMOOTH RUNS** — A city crew repaved the skateboard park at Memorial Park this week; it will soon reopen with movable ramps in a temporary layout. Permanent fixtures and an art wall are expected in June. *Photo by Jeff Simms*

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May 2-18

photo by Cecilia De Bucourt

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PHILIPSTOWN DEPOT THEATRE

The Calendar

DIY

ON DISPLAY

Artists and writers celebrate do-it-yourself ethos

By Marc Ferris

Inspired by hardcore punk of the early 1980s, the do-it-yourself spirit that spawned the zine scene rages on.

Back then, the mainstream media mocked the music and the mosh pit, so fans of the bands chronicled the anti-commercial goings-on in minute detail because no one else was going to do it for them.

But the zine world eclipsed the crude, smudgy black-and-white punk rock periodical phase a long time ago. As book artists elevate printmaking to new levels of sophistication that bring color and creativity to the form, 24 practitioners will display their work at the Beacon Art Book and Zine Fair on Saturday (April 26).

Organized by the Beacon Photo Club's leading lights, Emma McDonald and Diana Vidal, the fair will allow its members to share their work, including Beacon resident Randy Calderone, who self-published a paperback filled with dozens of photos taken around the Hudson Valley, most focused on urban decay. All seven selections shown in a just-closed group exhibit at Grit Gallery in Newburgh are included in the collection.

The photo club began in 2023, when McDonald and Vidal met at KuBe Art Center. "We immediately clicked on the same train of thought: to create more of a community and share work, resources and inspiration," says McDonald. "Art books, photo books and zines often came up in conversation at our meetings and after putting out a call for submissions, we were blown away by the amount of interest from participants and by the caliber of their work."



Sample spreads from *My Anatomical Journal*, by Marianne Petit

Photos provided

The event will include workshops on collage techniques and creating one-page zines. Marianne Petit, one of the more accomplished creators attending, is a professor at New York University who raised \$40,000 on Kickstarter to publish a pop-up alphabet book. Her work is housed in museums, private collections, the British Library and the Library of Congress.

The zine and art book world is a substantial subculture due to a confluence of factors, including the general art-world bubble, says Petit, who lived in Beacon for a few years during the pandemic but got "priced out" and moved to Amenia.

In addition, "printmaking is a technical field that fosters communal spaces: people share presses, teach paper arts and develop a generous open-source community," she said. "It's also less expensive at the entry level and easy to transport. I can fold entire exhibits that fill up a room into one suitcase."

Members of Chelsea Rae Mize's writing



Marianne Petit

group, Little Histories, will share a table and offer typewritten poetry on-demand. She will display the three-zine series, *Sex*, *Drugs* and *Rock n' Roll*, which compiles work from other artists in 30-page collections, along with the somewhat risqué four-volume set, *Short Shorts*.

After a stint in Hollywood writing screenplays, Mize ended up in Beacon and self-publishes bestselling cozy mysteries,

a distinct genre that centers on a murder but lacks violence and prurience. Her *Dog Groomer* series features humorous juxtapositions between punny titles and the cute pooch on the cover.

Also a cartoonist, her life transformed after meeting a "punk anarchist squatter" who lived in lower Manhattan and "wrote an incredible fantasy story about George W. Bush," she says. "I'd never encountered a DIY ethos so full of talent and that's why I self-publish my books. There's pros and cons to it, but the direct-to-consumer relationship inspired me."

The Beacon Art Book and Zine Fair will take place at the VFW Hall, 413 Main St., in Beacon from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday (April 26). Admission is free. See beaconphotoclub.com/beaconartbookfair. The schedule includes a collage workshop for kids at 11 a.m., a one-page zine workshop at 2 p.m. and ongoing community art projects.



Randy Calderone



"Toy Truck Memorial," by Randy Calderone



Chelsea Rae Mize selling her zines at an event



A zine by Chelsea Rae Mize

THE WEEK AHEAD

COMMUNITY

SAT 26
Ree-Play Sale
BEACON
9 a.m. – 2 p.m. University Settlement
724 Wolcott Ave. | weeplayproject.org

Browse this annual tag sale of secondhand children's clothing (infant to size 14/16), baby gear, books, games, bikes and maternity goods, with proceeds benefiting children's programming and Beacon parks and playgrounds. Bring your own shopping bags. Also SUN 27.

SAT 26
Shredder Day
COLD SPRING
9 a.m. – Noon. The Nest
44 Chestnut St.

A commercial shredder will be on hand for Philipstown residents and businesses to dispose of personal and business documents. Paper clips and bindings must be removed. Donations welcome. *Free*

SAT 26
Volunteerism Forum
BEACON
10 a.m. I Am Beacon
15 South Ave. | iambeacon.org

A panel of local experts will discuss how to make a difference and be engaged in the community. Registration requested.

SAT 26
Autism Awareness Walk
BREWSTER
11 a.m. – 2 p.m. Tilly Foster Farm
100 Route 312
putnamcountyny.gov/aaw

People of all abilities can participate in the walk, learn about community resources and enjoy food and activities.

SAT 26
Art Book & Zine Fair
BEACON
11 a.m. – 4 p.m. VFW Hall
413 Main St.
beaconphotoclub.com/beaconart-bookfair

Meet book and zine makers and see their work. See Page 11.

SAT 26
Community Day
GARRISON
11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Garrison Art Center
23 Garrison's Landing
845-424-3960 | garrisonartcenter.org

Shop for resale art supplies, learn about printmaking and the pottery wheel, and view current exhibits.

SAT 26
Highland Lights Procession
PHILIPSTOWN
7:30 p.m. 190 Snake Hill Road
dub.sh/highland-lights

The fourth annual procession will include community-made lanterns that showcase insects and their habitats. Register online. Rain date: SUN 27.

WED 30
Putnam Career Expo
BREWSTER
3 – 7 p.m. Tilly Foster Farm
100 Route 312 | putnamcountyny.gov

Bring your resume and learn about opportunities working for the Putnam County government in health care, law enforcement, mental health or youth and senior services.

THURS 1
Hub Miles for Mental Health
PHILIPSTOWN
Philipstown Behavioral Health Hub
dub.sh/hub-miles-2025

Walk, hike, run or bike at your own pace in May to raise funds for the mental health center. *Cost: \$28 (\$54 team, \$22 students)*

FRI 2
Spring Thrift Apparel Sale
COLD SPRING
5 – 7 p.m. St. Mary's Church
1 Chestnut St.
coldspringthriftalliance.org

Shop for adult clothing, shoes and accessories to benefit the church and Philipstown Food Pantry. This two-hour early-bird session has a \$20 entry fee, but the sale is free on SAT 3 and SUN 4, when the hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.



Riverkeeper Sweep, May 3

SAT 3
Opening Day
WAPPINGERS FALLS
1 – 4 p.m.
Sports Museum of Dutchess County
72 Carnwath Farms Lane
sportsmuseumofdutchesscounty.org

Join the museum for an opening day ceremony, dedication of the Patsy "Pat" Zerbe Women in Sports Room, refreshments and entertainment.

SUN 4
Hudson Valley Marathon
HIGHLAND
5 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Walkway Over the Hudson
87 Haviland Road
hudsonvalleymarathon.com

Participate in a marathon, half-marathon, 10K, 5K or 1-mile race. *Cost: \$22 to \$135*

SUN 4
Kids Fishing Derby
PHILIPSTOWN
8 a.m. – 4 p.m. Cold Spring Reservoir
Fishkill Avenue

This annual event is organized by the Nelsonville Fish & Fur Club for children and teens ages 15 and younger. *Free*

EARTH DAY

SAT 26
Clean-Up and Block Party
BEACON
9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Various
dub.sh/beacon-cleanup

Contribute to a clean-up and

plant pollinator gardens from 9 a.m. to noon and visit an environmental fair at Hudson Valley Brewery, 7 E. Main St., from noon to 3 p.m. The event is sponsored by the Green Beacon Coalition and the Conservation Advisory Committee. Register for clean-up online.

SAT 26
Earth Day Fest
PHILIPSTOWN
10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Boscobel
1601 Route 9D
coldspringfarmersmarket.org

Shop the Cold Spring Farmers Market, enjoy live music and nature walks and learn about local environmental activities.

NATURE & OUTDOORS

SAT 26
Bird Walk
PHILIPSTOWN
7 a.m. Little Stony Point | 3011 Route 9D
putnamhighlandsaudubon.org

Look for spring migrating birds during this walk with guides from the Putnam Highlands Audubon Society.

SAT 26
Plant Sale
PHILIPSTOWN
9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Stonecrop
81 Stonecrop Lane | 845-265-2000
stonecrop.org

This annual event brings together a dozen nurseries and vendors. *Cost: \$5*

SAT 3
I Love My Park Day
9 a.m. – Noon. Various

Cleanup sites include Hubbard Lodge, Stony Kill Farm, Bannerman Castle and Little Stony Point. Find sites and register at ptny.org/events/i-love-my-park-day.

SAT 3
Riverkeeper Sweep
BEACON
9 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Various
dub.sh/riverkeeper-sweep

Volunteer to help with the annual cleanup organized by Riverkeeper at the Beacon waterfront, Dennings Point, Long Dock Park or by kayak. Register online.

SAT 3
Riverkeeper Sweep
COLD SPRING
9 a.m. – Noon. Dockside | 34 West St.
dub.sh/riverkeeper-sweep

Volunteer to help with the annual cleanup organized by Riverkeeper. Register online.

SUN 4
History Hike
COLD SPRING
4 p.m. West Point Foundry Preserve
80 Kemble Ave. | 845-265-4010
putnamhistorymuseum.org

Learn about the role of the foundry in the Civil War and the Industrial Revolution. *Cost: \$15 (\$12 members)*

STAGE & SCREEN

SAT 26
Guys & Dolls
BEACON
7 p.m. Beacon High School
101 Matteawan Road
beaconplayers.com

The Beacon Players will stage the musical comedy set in Depression-era New York City about women and their gambling men. Also SUN 27. *Cost: \$12 (\$8 seniors, students)*

SAT 26
Hysteria!
BEACON
8 p.m. Passion | 473 Main St.
dub.sh/hysteria-beacon

This women-led improv show is based on "true stories of history's most presumptuous broads." Ages 16 and older. *Cost: \$10*



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Admission \$5 / Members no charge
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🌱Special Lecture - Ornamental & Edible Native
Plants to Know and Grow
with Allyson Levy & Scott Serrano of Hortus Arboretum
Saturday, May 3rd, 2pm - 3:30pm
\$30 / \$20 (members). Reservations online at www.stonecrop.org



Peter and the Wolf

With Crankie and Shadow Puppets, followed by an Instrument Petting Zoo

SATURDAY, APRIL 26
AT 1:00P & 3:00P

SUNSET READING:
Susan Minot
SUNDAY, APRIL 27 AT 4:00P

Free with reception on the portico to follow





45 Market St.,
Cold Spring

For tickets please visit
chapelrestoration.org



MON 28
Plastic People
COLD SPRING
6 p.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040
butterfieldlibrary.org
Watch the 2024 documentary about the impact of plastic and the growing problem of microplastics.

TUES 29
Beacon's Movie Star
BEACON
7 p.m. VFW Hall
413 Main St. | beaconhistorical.org
Watch the 1945 film, *They Were Expendable*, starring Beacon native Robert Montgomery, at this fundraiser for the Beacon Historical Society. *Cost: \$50*

WED 30
The Big Parade
COLD SPRING
11 a.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040
butterfieldlibrary.org
As part of its centennial celebration, the library will screen this 1925 film about the horrors of the Great War.

FRI 2
The Tango Diaries
GARRISON
7:30 p.m. Philipstown Depot Theatre
10 Garrison's Landing | 845-424-3900
philipstowndepottheatre.org
Alice Jankell will direct this play framed by the passionate dance form. See Page 15. *Cost: \$25 to \$45*

FRI 2
Big Fish
WAPPINGERS FALLS
8 p.m. County Players Theater
2681 W. Main St. | 845-298-1491
countyplayers.org
This musical adventure tells the larger-than-life story inspired by a father's tales. Also SAT 3 and weekends through May 18. *Cost: \$30 (\$28 seniors, military, students)*



SUN 4
The Center Will Not Hold
GARRISON
2 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020
desmondfishlibrary.org
Watch the 2017 documentary about the writer Joan Didion, followed by a discussion led by Priscilla Goldfarb. The director, Griffin Dunne, will appear at a library event on June 15. *Free*

SUN 4
Feel Recordings in the River Field
BEACON
4 p.m. River Center | 8 Long Dock Road
feelrecordings.eventbrite.com
Poet Edwin Torres will be joined

by Alex Waterman (cello), Sean Meehan (snare) and Gryphon Rue (electronics) for an eco-poetic sound event. *Cost: \$10 or \$15*



VISUAL ART
SAT 26
Amy Talluto
GARRISON
3 p.m. Garrison Art Center
23 Garrison's Landing | 845-424-3960
garrisonartcenter.org
The artist will discuss the creative process behind the works in her exhibit, *Skeleton Key*.

FRI 2
Portraits of Putnam County Fish
GARRISON
6 – 8 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020
desmondfishlibrary.org
Flick Ford will discuss his paintings at this opening reception.

SAT 3
Between Observation and Abstraction
COLD SPRING
5 – 7 p.m. Buster Levi Gallery
121 Main St. | busterlevigallery.com
The solo show by Lisa Diebboll will feature her paintings and studio work. Through May 31.

KIDS & FAMILY
SAT 26
Peter and the Wolf
COLD SPRING
1 & 3 p.m. Chapel Restoration
45 Market St. | chapelrestoration.org
The Prokofiev musical will be staged with puppets and a full orchestra. *Cost: \$25 (\$10 children)*

SUN 27
Poetry Reading
COLD SPRING
5 p.m. Split Rock Books | 97 Main St.
845-265-2080 | splitrockbks.com
Students are invited to read or recite a poem at this open mic organized by the Haldane Arts Alliance.

SAT 3
Willy Wonka Kids
BEACON
10 a.m. & 12:30, 3 & 5:30 p.m.
Beacon High School
101 Matteawan Ave.
beaconperformingartscenter.com
Four casts from the Beacon Performing Arts Center will stage the Roald Dahl classic about a

magical candymaker. *Cost: \$10 (\$7 seniors, \$6 children, teens)*

MUSIC
SAT 26
Hudson Watch Trio
COLD SPRING
2 p.m. St. Mary's Church
1 Chestnut St. | musicatstmarys.com
The violin, cello and piano chamber group's program will include works by Mendelssohn and Jean-Baptiste Loeillet. Donations welcome. *Free*

SAT 26
Bicentennial Lafayette Tour
WEST POINT
7 p.m. Ike Hall
655 Pitcher Road | 845-938-4159
ticketsatike.universitytickets.com
The French National Orchestra's program celebrates the bond between France and America through the Marquis de Lafayette's role in the fight for independence. *Free*

SAT 26
Best of The Eagles
PEEKSKILL
8 p.m. Paramount Hudson Valley
1008 Brown St. | 914-739-0039
paramounthudsonvalley.com
The tribute band will play the iconic hits of the timeless band. *Cost: \$44 to \$58*

(Continued on Page 14)

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THE WEEK AHEAD

(Continued from Page 13)

SUN 27
Zigue
PUTNAM VALLEY
4 p.m. Tompkins Corners C.C.
729 Peekskill Hollow Road
tompkinscorners.org
The quartet will lead a workshop at 1 p.m. before performing a concert of traditional Québécois music. *Cost: \$20 (\$40 with workshop)*

WED 30
Creative Conversations
COLD SPRING
6:30 p.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040
butterfieldlibrary.org
Pianist Daniel Kelly will be joined by flutist and composer Jane Rigler to engage the audience in a deep listening experience. *Cost: \$15 donation*



Zigue, April 27

SAT 3
Pete's Birthday
BEACON
1 p.m. Sloop Club | 2 Red Flynn Drive
beaconsloopclub.org
Bring an instrument and join a circle of song to honor the late Pete Seeger.

SAT 3
Rising Artists
PHILIPSTOWN
6 p.m. Boscobel | 1601 Route 9D
845-265-3638 | boscobel.org
The Chamber Music Society of Palm Beach will stage a program that includes works by Shostakovich, Puccini and Dvorak. *Cost: \$55 (\$35 ages 4 to 18, free for 4 and younger)*

SUN 4
Pete Seeger Festival
PUTNAM VALLEY
1 p.m. Tompkins Corners C.C.
729 Peekskill Hollow Road
tompkinscorners.org
This annual festival will include

sets by the Move Choir, the Trouble Sisters, Rick Nestler and others to celebrate the late folk singer. Donations welcome. *Free*

TALKS & TOURS

SAT 26
Juniper
COLD SPRING
5 p.m. Putnam History Museum
63 Chestnut St.
putnamhistorymuseum.org
Local historian Mark Forlow will share his knowledge of gin and lead a tasting. *Cost: \$60 (\$55 members)*

SAT 26
Mary Newell & Heller Levinson
BEACON
7 p.m. Stanza Books | 508 Main St.
845-440-3906 | stanzabooks.com
Newell will read from her new poetry collection, *Entwine*, and Levinson from *Shift Gristle* and *Query Caboodle*.

SUN 27
Susan Minot
COLD SPRING
4 p.m. Chapel Restoration
45 Market St. | chapelrestoration.org
The writer will read from her latest novel, *Don't Be a Stranger*, for the Sunset Reading Series. Donations welcome. *Free*

TUES 29
Poet Laureate Reception
BEACON
6:30 p.m. Howland Public Library
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134
beaconlibrary.org
Ruth Danon, a Beacon resident who was recently named as both the Beacon and Dutchess County poet laureate, will be honored at a reception. See Page 14.

THURS 1
Wills, Trusts & Powers of Attorney
GARRISON
2 p.m. Desmond-Fish Library
472 Route 403 | 845-424-3020
desmondfishlibrary.org
Co-hosted by the library and Philipstown Aging at Home, this presentation will address what to consider and how to execute your legacy and wishes.

THURS 1
After the Operation
COLD SPRING
7 p.m. Split Rock Books | 97 Main St.
845-265-2080 | splitrockbks.com
Elizabeth Gray will discuss her recovery following surgery to remove a brain tumor, which inspired this new collection of poems.

SAT 3
Losing Darkness
COLD SPRING
2 p.m. Butterfield Library
10 Morris Ave. | 845-265-3040
butterfieldlibrary.org
A panel that includes Shannon Calvert, president of the Westport Astronomical Society, and Joseph Montuori, president of Sustainable Putnam, will discuss how light pollution affects our health and the natural world.

CIVIC

MON 28
City Council
BEACON
7 p.m. City Hall | 1 Municipal Plaza
845-838-5011 | beaconny.gov

THURS 1
Library Budget Vote & Trustee Election
BEACON
Noon – 8 p.m. Howland Public Library
313 Main St. | 845-831-1134
beaconlibrary.org

THURS 1
Town Board
COLD SPRING
7:30 p.m. Town Hall | 238 Main St.
845-265-5200 | philipstown.com

Week Ahead edited by Pamela Doan (calendar@highlandscurrent.org)
For a full listing of events, see highlandscurrent.org/calendar.

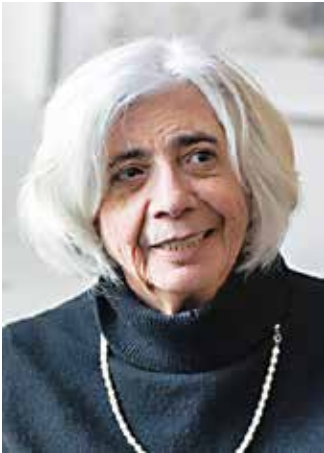
Beacon Names Poet Laureate

Ruth Danon earlier given Dutchess title

The City of Beacon and the Howland Public Library last week announced a committee has chosen Ruth Danon as the Beacon Poet Laureate for 2025-27.

Danon recently also was named the Dutchess County poet laureate. She will be honored at a reception at the library at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday (April 29), with remarks by Mayor Lee Kyriacou and the outgoing poet laureate, Peter Ullian. Register at beaconlibrary.org.

Danon is the former director of the creative and expository writing program at New



Ruth Danon

York University's School of Professional Studies. She is the author of four poetry collections, the founder of Live Writing and a founding curator of Beacon LitFest.

The Beacon committee also named Mark Ungar, a professor at the CUNY Graduate Center, as deputy poet laureate. He is working on a collection



Ungar

of poetry about refugees, short stories about the Amazon and a novel of speculative fiction.



A daily oasis for National Poetry Month

The Desmond-Fish Public Library in Garrison and *The Highlands Current* are back with another year of One Poem a Day Won't Kill You! Each day in April, a recording will be posted at bit.ly/hear-poem-2025 featuring a community member reading a favorite published poem.

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Intimate Power

Depot Theatre presents dance drama

By Marc Ferris

Five rehearsals in, the folks responsible for producing *The Tango Diaries* at the Philipstown Depot Theatre in Garrison had mastered the outline.

Attention turned to fine-tuning, including lighting, blocking (where to stand and how to move) and what inflection to use when saying a line, which could be changed on the fly by the playwrights in the room.

For months, Alice Jankell has acclimated to her new role as the venue's artistic director. (She succeeded Nancy Swann, who retired after 20 years.) Now serving as a hands-on director for her first play as an employee, she's keen on spotlighting a work that showcases why Argentina's chief cultural export exerts such a powerful hold around the world that it has "saved people's lives," according to the promotional copy. The play, which features dancing and live music (via electronic keyboard), opens May 2.

A pro's pro, Jankell spent the last four

decades compiling a blizzard of prestigious acting, writing and directing credits, including musicals for Disney. Last year at the Depot, the Kent resident directed *Dirt* in conjunction with the Putnam Theatre Alliance, a coalition she helped kickstart during the pandemic.

Early rehearsals for *The Tango Diaries* unfolded with purpose and playfulness. Ideas ricocheted between the stage, Jankell's seat and the play's writers, Ron Hutchinson and Alisa Taylor, who are driving up from Brooklyn for each rehearsal and performance with their white lapdog, Lucy, in tow.

"More than any other dance, the tango touches the human condition in a deep manner, which is why there's a global obsession over it," Jankell says. "The largest festival is in Finland."

This is the play's premiere as a stage production, though 6 million people listened to a radio version on the BBC, which is quite a feat because there's no way to see people dance over the aural airwaves.

One of Jankell's directorial challenges is to weave choreography with drama to ensure fluidity on the small stage. Characters often pierce the fourth wall.

Local actors include Maia Guest, Sara Jay Halliday, Erin McGuff-Pennington, Dante Nastasi, Mike Pirillo and John Christian Plummer. Haldane senior and intern Oliver Petkus occupied the assistant director chair for one rehearsal. Musicians and four dancers (two of whom have prominent acting roles) travel from New York City.

The tango itself is constructed of several set steps that can be reassembled in any configuration. One person leads, the other follows, and "that interplay is the challenge," says Jankell. "It's a visceral transfer of power, mixed with intimacy; it takes great concentration to do it well."

Married to a psychiatrist, Jankell views the dramatic arts like a sociologist: "It's a way to explore how people navigate each other, like two dancers. Theater helps us understand human behavior."

The Philipstown Depot Theatre is located at 10 Garrison's Landing. The Tango Diaries opens at 7:30 p.m. on May 2 and continues weekends through May 18. See depottheater.org for tickets, which are \$25, \$30 or \$45 each.



Alice Jankell

Photo provided

Current Classifieds

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PROPERTY CARETAKER — The Property Caretaker will manage the maintenance and upkeep of multiple properties on the farm, some of which host events and overnight guests. This is a hands-on position that is responsible for painting, plumbing and electrical work while also overseeing a preventative maintenance program. Please see our website at glynwood.org/job-opportunities for a full job description and to apply.

FARM STORE — The Glynwood Farm Store is a mission-driven local foods store and retail destination located in a beautiful setting on Glynwood's working farm and 250-acre historic property. The Farm Store serves as both a welcome center and gateway to the public (visitors, supporters, customers), as well as a reliable food access point for our community. At the shop, we sell our own grown USDA-Organic vegetables, nose-to-tail cuts of Animal-Welfare-Approved meat, and distinctive products from regional farms. Please see our website at glynwood.org/job-opportunities for a full job description and to apply.

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Opera 101 at the Howland

Met Chorus Artists will perform on May 4

By Marc Ferris

A few photos on the Met Chorus Artists website show five singers and an accompanist performing at the Howland Cultural Center in 2018.

On Sunday (May 4), the group will return with a pianist and narrator along with two tenors, three sopranos, a mezzo-soprano and a bass-baritone to present *History of Opera: Up Close*.

There's a long tradition of classical chamber settings featuring vocalists, usually paired with a piano or small ensemble. The repertoire is known as *lieder* in Germany, *melodie* in France and *art songs* elsewhere, says Sara Heaton, a soprano who will be performing.



Heaton

But selling tickets for stripped-down vocal concerts can be a challenge, says Akiko Sasaki, music director at the Howland Chamber Music Circle.

In 2017, Sasaki introduced a Classics for Kids series and eight years ago, Met Chorus Artists performed a show for the wee ones. On May 4, they will present a young person's

concert in the afternoon that pulls examples from *The Magic Flute* to punctuate points.

The 4 p.m. adult-oriented retrospective is being performed for the first time ever. Selections range from the Baroque era, represented by Claudio Monteverdi (born 1567) and George Friedrich Handel, to contemporary opera, including works by Igor Stravinsky and Kevin Puts (born 1972). Excerpts by the genre's one-name stars — Mozart, Verdi, Wagner and Puccini — will also air.

Heaton and Sasaki's friendship spawned the 2018 visit from Met Chorus Artists, a nonprofit outreach for members of the Metropolitan Opera chorus.

"We started it a few years ago with the goal of bringing the music to other spaces outside the opera house and to work on a smaller scale than the grand opera that we do at the Met," says Heaton.

Sasaki also takes chamber music beyond the concert hall by programming pop-ups in libraries, art galleries and Beacon Music Factory (on May 3). But the Howland Cultural Center, with its renowned acoustics for unplugged instruments, is a special place to see such a performance, she says.

"A program like this fits well in a chamber setting," she says. "It's exciting because opera is usually performed in a big house with 4,000 people in the audience. Here, the singing fills up the room and you can feel their vibrato."



The Met Chorus

Photo by Jennifer Taylor / Met Opera

The narrator, Whitney Young, a composer and conductor who shatters the stereotype with sleeves, neck tattoos and attitude, inspired the format after several singers in the Met Chorus attended Young's lecture on the history of the string quartet at the Strand Bookstore in Manhattan. The lecture was augmented with a cellist, violist and two violinists who provided live examples on the spot, says Heaton, who lived in Beacon for seven years but moved in 2022 to Westchester to shorten her commute to Lincoln Center.

Bringing an expansive ensemble from New York City that provides flexibility to mix and match presents a more varied

performance than a soloist singing lieder and art songs. "This is such a great format," she says. "We worked hard putting together a taste of Opera 101."

The Howland Cultural Center is located at 477 Main St. in Beacon. Opera for Kids will be performed at 1 p.m. on May 4. Tickets are \$15 for adults and free for children. All ages are welcome, but it is recommended for ages 6 and older. The Met Chorus Artists concert is scheduled for 4 p.m. on May 4. Tickets are \$35, or \$10 for students ages 25 and younger. See howlandmusic.org/tickets for both shows.

Douglas H. Banker

Douglas H. Banker passed away on April 16th from complications of pneumonia. He was the loving husband of 65 years to Sarah Griffin Banker, father of Alexander (Skippy), Jean (John Miottel) and Abigail (David Lieber) and grandfather of Carter, Sarah, Henry Lieber, Woody Miottel, Lila, Annatie Miottel and Travis Lieber.

A longtime resident of New York City and Garrison, New York, Doug was born in Rye, New York, and grew up in Greenwich, Connecticut. He was predeceased by brothers Vincent C. (Bindy) Banker, Peter A. Banker and David L. Banker.

Doug attended Phillips Exeter Academy, Yale University and Harvard Business School. Doug's professional career included stints as an investment analyst at Reynolds & Co., founding member of the Ipex Group, a private equity firm, and chairman of R.W. Pressprich.

An avid gardener and conservation advocate, Doug was a founder and served as president of the Hudson Highlands Land Trust. As president, Doug executed 25 conservation easements that HHLT entered into in its first decade of existence, totaling over 677 acres of protected land, including the North Redoubt Historic and Nature Preserve.

Doug's passion was music. A proud member of the Yale Whiffenpoofs, he was an active member of the St. Philip's Church Choir and Highlands Choral Society for close to 40 years. Over the course of his



life, he created and performed a series of musical "evenings," including an evening of World War I music and poetry, the art songs of Charles Ives, a theater adaptation of Steven Vincent Benet's John Brown's Body, a Yip Harburg evening, a Rogers and Hart evening and a Gershwin evening.

These evenings of narrative history and song were presented at the Century Association, the New York Historical Society, the Newport Music Festival, the Depot Theatre in Garrison and other benefits in the New York Area. He was known to break into song at any time or place and his voice will be missed by all who heard it.

Donations in lieu of flowers may be made to the Hudson Highlands Land Trust (hhlt.org) or the Highlands Choral Society (highlandschapel.org).

Funeral Arrangements are under the direction of Clinton Funeral Home, Cold Spring.

PAID NOTICE

Obituary

Charles Gorges

Charles Gorges of Garrison passed away suddenly on April 18, 2025, at home. He was 75. He was born on Feb. 28, 1950, in Yonkers to the late George and Marie Gorges.

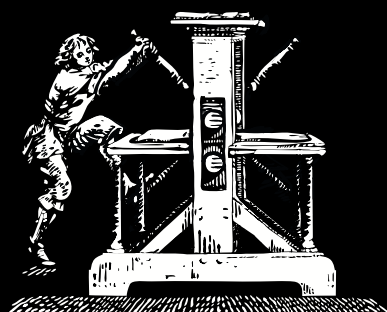
Charles retired from Entergy (Indian Point) after 40 years, where he worked in many capacities.

He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Diane Gorges, his children, Amanda and Brad Gorges, and his sister, Maryanne Darcy. He is also survived by his mother-in-law, Chickie Pidala, and sister-in-law, Janet Croney, as well as numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. He was predeceased by his sister, Joan Cerniglia.

Funeral services will be private for the family under the direction of Clinton Funeral Home, Cold Spring.

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Out There

The Silent Majority

By Brian PJ Cronin

The most beautiful words in data journalism — except for *free coffee* — are *longitudinal study*.

Polling often obscures more than it illuminates. Questions can be vague or misleading. If you ask, “Do you approve of the president’s handling of immigration?” the respondent will base their answer on whatever they *think* the president’s immigration policy is. And polls are just a snapshot. With the stock market and egg prices hopping up and down like a rabbit on hot coals, someone’s opinion on the economy may be out of date before the next sunrise.

But a longitudinal study — in which you ask the same questions or observe the same group for a long period of time, even decades — removes volatility. And if the questions have a range of possible answers, as opposed to “yes” or “no,” you get a more nuanced picture of how people are feeling.

My favorite example of this is a poll that the Yale Program on Climate Change Communication has conducted at least once a year for nearly 20 years. Instead of asking people if they believe that climate change is real and primarily caused by humans, it asks them to put themselves into one of six categories: Alarmed, Concerned, Cautious, Disengaged, Doubtful or Dismissive.

Sometimes, for fun, I ask friends to guess what percentage of Americans think climate change is a hoax. The answers range from 30 percent to 80 percent. In fact, according to Yale’s surveys, it’s about 10 percent; the Dismissive group fluctuates between 9 percent and 12 percent. Doubtful has also remained steady at 12 percent.

If you think climate change isn’t real, or



even if you’re not sure, nothing in the past 20 years — the avalanche of studies, the hotter summers, the heavier storms, the droughts, the wildfires, the floods, the lack of snow, species on the verge of extinction — has made you change your mind. That is why I don’t write too many columns trying to “convince” people that climate change is real.

What *has* changed is that the Cautious (18 percent) and Concerned (28 percent) groups have shrunk while the Alarmed group has grown (26 percent).

The problem is that nearly everyone in the Dismissive group seems to have a podcast, a gig on cable news, a paycheck from a fossil fuel company or a desk in the White House. For the sake of comparison, a 2021 poll by the University of New Hampshire found that 12 percent of Americans believe the moon landings were faked, and last I checked we weren’t reorienting the economy and manufacturing sector around that (knock on wood).

The contrast gets even starker when you zoom out. A 2024 poll from Oxford University found that 89 percent of people around the world want their governments

to do more to mitigate climate change. Do you know how hard it is to get 89 percent of people to agree on anything? We can’t even get that many people to agree that the moon landings happened.

If you’ll forgive me for writing about the Pope for two columns in a row, I was struck

this week by how often people who work in climate said, in the wake of Pope Francis’ death on April 21, that it was his 2015 encyclical letter *Laudato Si’: On Care for our Common Home* that gave them the courage to get involved in climate in the first place. They had thought that caring about the climate was a fringe belief. But if the head of a faith-based, conservative, 2,000-year-old global institution was taking the science seriously, maybe it was mainstream.

As the Trump administration continues its attempts to roll back environmental regulations, there’s a temptation to throw up your hands. “He won the election, so I guess this is what the country wants.” But the Oxford poll found that two-thirds of Americans think this country should do more about climate.

If the country is going to make any progress on climate over the next few years — or at least stop the backsliding — the silent majority in the Highlands and around the country and world needs to make itself heard.

This column is part of The 89 Percent Project, an initiative of the nonprofit Covering Climate Now (coveringclimatenow.org).

Our Ninth Annual

Pete Seeger Festival

SUNDAY, MAY 4
2:00 – 5:00P

FREE Family-Friendly Event!

Celebrate the musical, environmental and humanitarian legacy of our neighbor, mentor and friend with music, fine crafts and refreshments. Donations will be shared with local organizations that Pete created, including the Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, the Beacon Sloop Club and the River Pool at Beacon.

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NOTICE

NOTICE OF ANNUAL PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BUDGET, ANNUAL MEETING, ELECTION AND VOTE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Board of Education of the Beacon City School District, Dutchess County, New York, will hold a public hearing on the budget at Beacon High School, 101 Matteawan Road, Beacon, New York, on Tuesday, May 6, 2025 at 7:00 P.M. for the purpose of presenting the budget document for the 2025-2026 School Year.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that a copy of the statement of the amount of money which will be required for School District purposes during the 2025-2026 school year (the Budget), as prepared by the Board of Education, as well as the Exemption Report, listing every type of exemption granted, as provided in Section 495 of the Real Property Tax Law, may be obtained by any resident of the District during the fourteen (14) days immediately preceding the Annual Meeting, Election and Vote, commencing May 6, 2025, except Saturday, Sunday or holidays during regular school hours, 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., at each of the District's schoolhouses, at the Administrative Offices, and on the District's website.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the Annual Meeting, Election and Vote, will be held on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, between the hours of 6:00 A.M. and 9:00 P.M., prevailing time, when the polls will be open for the purpose of voting by voting machine:

A. To elect three (3) members to the Board of Education as follows: Three (3) members to the Board of Education for three-year terms commencing July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2028; and

B. To vote upon the appropriation of the necessary funds to meet the estimated expenditures for School District purposes for the 2025-2026 School Year (the Budget).

C. To vote on any other proposition legally proposed.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that for the purposes of voting, the School District has been divided into two (2) election districts and that an accurate description of the boundaries of these school election districts is on file and may be inspected at the Office of the District Clerk on weekdays when school is in session, during regular work hours, 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., at the Administrative Offices, 10 Education Drive, Beacon, New York.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the 2025 Annual Meeting, Election and Vote, will be held at the following polling places in the School Election Districts hereinafter set forth;

SCHOOL ELECTION DISTRICT NO. 1
POLLING LOCATION: BEACON HIGH SCHOOL
Description: - First Ward, First and Second District - Second Ward, First, Second, and Third Districts - Third Ward, First, Second and Third Districts - Fourth Ward, First and Second Districts

SCHOOL ELECTION DISTRICT NO. 2
POLLING LOCATION: GLENHAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Description: Bounded on the north and east by Wappinger Central School District No. 1, Towns of Wappinger, Poughkeepsie, Fishkill, East Fishkill and LaGrange in Dutchess County and the towns of Kent and Philipstown in Putnam County; south by the common town line of the Towns of Fishkill and Wappinger and west by the Hudson River.

Bounded on the north by the common town line of the of Fishkill and Wappinger, east by Wappinger Central School District No. 1 in the Towns of Wappinger, Poughkeepsie, Fishkill, East Fishkill and LaGrange in Dutchess County and the Towns of Kent and Philipstown in Putnam County and Union Free School District No. 3, Town of Fishkill, south by Beacon City line and west by Hudson River.

Bounded northerly by former Common School District No. 4 in the Town of Fishkill and Wappinger, easterly by Central School District No. 1 in the Towns of Wappinger, Poughkeepsie, Fishkill, East Fishkill and LaGrange in Dutchess County and the Towns of Kent and Philipstown in Putnam County and Central School District No. 1 in the Towns of Philipstown and Putnam Valley in Dutchess County; southerly by Central School District No. 1 in the Town of Philipstown and Putnam Valley in Putnam County and the Town of Fishkill in Dutchess County; westerly by the Hudson River and the City of

Beacon being the former Union Free School District No. 3 of the Town of Fishkill.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that petitions for nominating candidates for the office of member of the Board of Education must be filed with the District Clerk by no later than 5:00 P.M. on the 20th day preceding the Annual Meeting, Election and Vote, April 30, 2025. Such petitions must be signed by at least one hundred (100) qualified voters of the District, shall state the name and residence address of each signer and the name and residence address of the candidate. Petition forms may be obtained at the Office of the District Clerk on weekdays when school is in session, during regular business hours, 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the Board of Education of the Beacon City School District, Dutchess County, New York, has fixed Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at the Administrative Offices, 10 Education Drive, Beacon, New York, as the date on which the Board of Registration of said School District will meet between the hours of 1:00 P.M. and 5:00 P.M., prevailing time, for the purpose of preparing the register of the School District for each election district for the Annual Meeting, Election and Vote, to be held on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at which time any person shall be entitled to have his/her name placed upon such register if known or proven to the satisfaction of the registrars to be then or thereafter entitled to vote. Persons whose registration to vote with the County Board of Elections is current, pursuant to Article 5 of the Election Law, shall be qualified to vote without further registering with the School District's Board of Registration, as well as all persons who shall have previously registered for any annual or special district meeting or election and who shall have voted at any annual or special district meeting or election held or conducted at any time during the 2021, 2022, 2023 or 2024 calendar years.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the register of voters so prepared shall be filed in the Office of the District Clerk and shall be open for inspection by any qualified voter of the District between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M., prevailing time, beginning fourteen (14) days prior to the Annual Meeting, Election and Vote. Said register will be open for inspection in each of the polling places during the Annual Meeting, Election and Vote.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that applications for absentee and early mail ballots for the Annual Meeting, Election and Vote may be obtained at the Office of the District Clerk or downloaded from the school district website. The completed application must be received by the District Clerk no earlier than thirty (30) days prior to the election, and at least seven (7) days prior to the election if the ballot is to be mailed, or the day before the election, if the ballot will be picked up at the Office of the District Clerk. The completed application can be sent by email, or delivered by a designated agent. Absentee ballots and early mail ballots must be received at the Office of the District Clerk by no later than 5:00 P.M., prevailing time, on the day of the election.

A list of all persons to whom absentee and early mail ballots shall have been issued will be available in the said Office of the District Clerk during regular office hours until the day of the Annual Meeting, Election and Vote. Any qualified voter may file a written challenge of the qualifications of a voter whose name appears on such list, stating the reasons for the challenge.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that military voters who are not currently registered may apply to register as qualified voters of the school district. Military voters may request an application to register as a qualified voter from the District Clerk. Military voter registration application forms must be received in the Office of the District Clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 5, 2025. In order for a military voter to be issued a military ballot, the school district must have received in the office of the school district clerk a valid ballot application no later than 5:00 pm on May 5, 2025. A military voter may designate a preference to receive a military voter registration, military ballot application or military ballot by mail, facsimile transmission or electronic mail in their request for such registration, ballot application, or ballot. Such designation shall remain in effect until revoked or changed by the military voter. Ballots for military voters shall be mailed, or otherwise distributed, no later than May 6, 2025.

Roots and Shoots

Are Pesticides Safe?

By Pamela Doan



It's not spring without promotional postcards filling my mailbox promising to rid my yard of biting insects. It's all safe and positively organic, they say; I can enjoy the warm weather free of mosquitoes, ticks and bee stings.

But calling in insecticide sprayers or reaching for the Raid has consequences. Anything in the category of pesticides — which include fungicides, herbicides, rodenticides and insecticides — has impacts beyond their intended use, even if applied according to the label instructions. There's a build-up of the chemicals in our bodies, homes and yards, as well as the water, soil and air that affect every creature.

My go-to expert on this topic is Jennifer Lerner, a senior resource educator with Cornell Cooperative Extension Putnam County.

What are the big myths about pesticides?

That they are “organic” or kill only certain insects. It's the story that makes us feel better about using them. When you read the label, the warnings are listed. The landscape owner must advocate for their safety and what's best in their landscape and not fall prey to irrational fears.

Are pyrethroids (a common class of pesticides) called organic because they are derived from chrysanthemums?

Pyrethroids are not organic. They are synthesized. They have collateral effects on other insects. Nothing is selective, although some pesticides are relatively benign. Manufacturers are required to list all the actions on the label.

Let's talk about integrated pest management (IPM), which is a way to assess a problem, like an insect eating a desirable plant, and understand possible approaches and risks to humans and the environment. How should gardeners use IPM when it comes to pesticides?

IPM doesn't forbid pesticides, but it's a way to set yourself up to use the least amount with the least harm — the right time, the right amount, the right situation, the right conditions. For example, many gardeners use insecticidal soap. But instead of using one pesticide one time, they end up using multiple applications of something less effective. That may do more damage to the environment and the insects we want to protect. [Pamela notes: For more about IPM, see northeastipm.org or cornell.edu/integrated-pest-management.]

Does spraying your yard work against ticks?

There are chemicals that can reduce ticks,



Insecticides and herbicides aren't selective about what they kill. Photo by P. Doan

but perimeter sprays give you a false sense of security. You need personal protection, too, like permethrin-treated, light-colored clothing that's tucked in and daily tick checks. You can reduce habitats for ticks, but it's difficult because there are so many types of ticks and they each thrive in different settings.

Creating tick-free zones is another layer of protection. They can't live where it's very dry or where they're exposed to sun and wind. Short-mown grass is less likely to have ticks. Create a gravel border where kids are active, like around a play set.

What about “tick tubes”?

These are designed to target white-footed mice, which carry ticks, when they build nests. There are also bait boxes in which the mouse goes in and eats bait that has a pesticide that reduces the number of ticks. But now studies are showing a higher incidence of pesticides in birds that nest with fur.

Any tips for how to manage mosquitoes?

Reduce breeding sites by getting rid of standing water. Mosquito dunks are effective in a place where you can't change the water. In a naturally occurring body of water, there are plenty of predators to keep the population down. Wear long sleeves and pants and use repellents. The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has a list of the most effective (cdc.gov/mosquitoes). Yard sprays are only temporarily effective because mosquitoes fly and are highly mobile. Pesticides that are used for mosquito reduction will have a collateral effect, too.

Why is the collateral effect bad?

Insects are part of this incredible food web. Even the black flies that are out right now are important food sources for migratory bird species. And no, there isn't anything else for them to eat. We're seeing a reduction in insect species and we are seeing how this impacts bird species and their resilience. Every time you use a pesticide, you should ask yourself, “Is the effect that I desire important enough to endanger myself and the environment?”

Puzzles

CROSSCURRENT

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11
12						13				14		
15						16				17		
		18				19				20		
21	22			23				24				
25			26		27		28					
29				30			31			32	33	34
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44					45				46			
47				48				49			50	51
52				53				54				
55				56				57				

- ACROSS
1. Persian Gulf emirate
6. Little lie
9. Chances, for short
12. Winner’s gesture
13. “All bets — off”
14. Haw preceder
15. Thesaurus compiler
16. Bach’s *Coffee* —
18. Deserves
20. Legal document
21. Salonga of *Miss Saigon*
23. Commotion
24. Deli array
25. Arsenal supply
27. Wear down
29. Othello character
31. Indian instruments
35. Mea —
37. Coin aperture
38. Be buoyant
41. — out a living
43. Glacial

44. Hoops great Monroe
45. Ornamental beetle
47. Cheery refrain
49. Arcade pioneer
52. Revue segment
53. Prohibit
54. Serious
55. That lady
56. Walgreens alternative
57. On mom’s side
- DOWN
1. TiVo, for example
2. Mil. morale booster
3. *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* role
4. Baseball’s Tommie
5. Office leader?
6. Element
7. 401(k) relatives
8. London’s Big —
9. Butler’s love
10. — four (small cake)
11. Plane assignments
17. Chirps
19. Perfect
21. Science room
22. Brit. record label
24. 1501, in Roman numerals
26. Available for work
28. Japanese seaport
30. Snip
32. “Open sesame” speaker
33. Sinbad’s bird
34. Pigs’ digs
36. Praline nuts
38. Greek cheeses
39. Coniferous tree
40. Emulate Douglass
42. Obliterate
45. Serb or Croat
46. Heaps
48. *Shark Tank* network
50. Emeritus, briefly
51. Hot temper

SUDOCURRENT

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

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WORDSEARCH

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

FIVE SPOT

Solve each row by replacing one letter from the answer above or below and scrambling to make a new word. When complete, the top and bottom words will have no letters in common.

C	O	U	N	T

- Nobleman
- A place you might find answer #1
- Cessation of hostilities
- Container for eggs or oranges
- Center
- Make available to others

OWLS NAP BLAH
GEEK IISH EIRE
RANI GEE UBER
ENABLE WALESA
OER WAR
AHAB INAWHILE
BEL AAU AES
SEGMENTS MNOP
EEL TRY
DARNIT RASHAD
ASIA ALI TARE
STAG LEA IDEA
HONE KIN CAAN

Answers for April 18
B V B Z C I Y X L C
O M P U L X E V F D
Z L G K N G R S I D
Q S D W G N P H H I
R J G S H R Y E F I
E G N B I S N Z Q H
T P W N U I V D V U
S F G S B E B U C N
A Z E T U L I P R T
E J R E V O S S A P

DENIM, TIMED, EDICT,
ETHIC, CHEAT, PATCH

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

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Sports

VARSITY ROUNDUP

BEACON

By Nick Robbins

BASEBALL — Beacon had 18 hits in a 13-6 win at New Paltz on April 17 — Ryan Smith and Mercer Jordan each had four and Derrick Heaton and Alex Young hit home runs. On the mound, Zach Schetter recorded the save, striking out seven over three innings.

Schetter would get his second save in a week on Tuesday (April 22) when the Bulldogs won at Wallkill, 5-4. Jordan went 3-for-3, including a clutch solo homer that gave Beacon the lead in the sixth inning.

A four-game win streak came to an end on Wednesday when Beacon lost, 9-5, to John Jay-East Fishkill. On Saturday (April 26), Beacon (6-3) will host a tournament with Chester, Marlboro and Rhinebeck, with games at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. The Bulldogs host Burke Catholic at 4:15 p.m. on Monday and travel to Port Jervis on Wednesday.

SOFTBALL — The Bulldogs continue to search for an offensive spark, losing 19-0 to visiting New Paltz on April 17 and 11-1 at Pine Bush on Tuesday (April 22). Beacon (2-6) hopes to generate some offense during a three-game homestand beginning at 4:30 p.m. today (April 25) against Port Jervis, followed by Washingtonville at 11 a.m. on Saturday and Spackenkill at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

BOYS' GOLF — Beacon came up short on Monday (April 21) to Ketcham, 222-250, at Southern Dutchess Country Club. The Bulldogs were led by Tom Senior (46) and Ronan Moran (47). Beacon (1-6) traveled to Port Jervis on April 23 and Minisink Valley on April 24 and will host Burke Catholic on Wednesday (April 30).

BOYS' TENNIS — The Bulldogs swept three opponents at home this week, improving to 7-2. Beacon blanked Valley Central, 7-0, on Tuesday (April 22) before dominating Monticello by the same score in both matches in a doubleheader on Wednesday. The team travels to Monroe-Woodbury today (April 25) and Goshen on Monday before hosting Warwick on Tuesday and Cornwall on Wednesday. Both matches start at 4:30 p.m.

TRACK AND FIELD — Beacon competed at the 39-team Mountie Madness, a meet hosted by Suffern, on April 17. Noah Spiak won the 400-meter hurdles in 56.66, while Caellum Tripaldi was 17th of 172 runners



Julianna Minos slides into second during Haldane's win on Tuesday over Westlake. For more photos, see highlandscurrent.org.

in the 1,600 meters (4:31.15), Jayden Mihalchik was 25th of 106 competitors in the shot put (37-01), Christian Clay was 25th of 168 runners in the 400 meters (54.56) and Izaiah Mitchell was 33rd of 176 runners in the 200 meters (23.81).

For the girls, Mikaela Sanchez was 17th of 87 runners in the 400 meters (1:06.4), Khloe Franklin was ninth of 23 runners in the 400-meter hurdles (1:17.45) and Bethany Rudolph was 15th of 86 competitors in the shot put (26-07) and seventh of 36 in the discus (77-11). Beacon competes today (April 25) at the Iron Duke Relays at Marlboro.

HALDANE

By Jacob Aframian

BOYS' LACROSSE — On April 17, Haldane suffered its worst loss of the season, falling at Pearl River, 21-3. The Blue Devils lost again on Monday (April 21), 11-6, at Blind Brook. The game was tied early at two but the Trojans scored five goals in three minutes to break it open.

In the second quarter, Haldane held Blind Brook scoreless but could only muster one goal, by Fallou Faye. Copper Corless led the team with three goals, Faye finished with two and Alex Gaugler had one. The Blue Devils lost their fifth in a row on Wednesday, 11-9, to visiting Arlington. Faye scored three times.

Haldane (3-6) is on the road today (April 25) at Port Chester and travels to Westlake on Thursday.

GIRLS' LACROSSE — After a layoff of more



Haldane's Kayla Ruggiero (at right) scored five goals against Croton-Harmon on Tuesday.

Photos by
Skip Pearlman

than a week, the Blue Devils lost at home on Tuesday (April 21) to Croton-Harmon, 18-10. Kayla Ruggiero had five goals and Samantha Thomas scored four, while Vivian Eannacony tallied 14 saves, including her 100th career stop. On Monday (April 28), Haldane (2-4) hosts Blind Brook at 4:45 p.m. and on Wednesday travels to Valhalla.

BASEBALL — The Blue Devil bats came alive on Monday (April 21) at Poughkeepsie during a 17-3 win over the Pioneers, scoring more runs than in their previous five games combined. Milo Pearsall went 3-for-5 with a home run and 3 RBIs, Lincoln McCarthy hit a two-run homer and Leo Lanza was 2-for-2 with 3 RBIs.

On Saturday (April 26), Haldane will face Sleepy Hollow in the first round of a tournament at Port Chester. The team has a game scheduled for Monday at 4:45 p.m. at

Mayor's Park and will host Putnam Valley at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday.

SOFTBALL — Haldane won its sixth game in a row on Tuesday (April 22), defeating Westlake, 8-4. Callie Sniffen went 2-for-2 with a triple, double and an RBI. Lainey Donaghy was 2-for-3 with a double and 3 RBIs and Anya Mercurio went 2-for-2 with a double. On the mound, eighth-grader Allegra Clementson had 14 strikeouts.

The Blue Devils suffered their first setback this season on Wednesday at Tuckahoe. During the 4-0 loss, Haldane left eight runners on base. The team (6-1) travels today (April 25) to North Salem and on Saturday at 11 a.m. hosts Woodlands. Next week it hosts Edgemont at 5 p.m. on Monday, travels to Irvington on Wednesday and hosts Croton-Harmon at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday.