

BEACON FREE PRESS

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Exhibit to highlight importance of Beacon's riverfront during American Revolution



A vintage postcard with image of DAR monument atop Mount Beacon. -Courtesy image Beacon Historical Society

In celebration of the nation's 250th anniversary, the Beacon Historical Society will launch an exhibit about Beacon's role in the American Revolution on Saturday, March 7, with a complimentary reception from 1-3 p.m. at its headquarters, 61 Leonard Street, in Beacon. All are invited to attend. "From Mt. Beacon to the Hudson River: Beacon During the American Revolution" explores the city's strategic location on the Hudson River, highlighting the places, people and stories that illustrate Beacon's role in the founding of our nation. It will be on display throughout 2026 during the Society's hours of operation: Thursdays 10 a.m.-noon and Saturdays 1-3 p.m.

One can learn about the importance of Beacon's riverport, the Revolutionary War figures who visited/stayed here, events that transpired and even some of the folklore that has been carried through the generations. The exhibit is a companion to the Society's Revolutionary War in Beacon map (www.BeaconHistorical.org/Rev-250). The historical society's America 250 projects have been supported by the County of Dutchess, Mount Gulian Historic Site, Washington's Headquarters State Historic Society, the Bannerman Castle Trust and others. Participating lead volunteers have included Vicki Fox, Diane Lapis, Emily Murnane and Diane Murphy.

"Beacon is quite unique in that it takes its very name from the Revolutionary War signal fire that was erected in the Hudson Highlands as one of a series of such warning beacons used to assemble militia, indicate the approach of the enemy and direct the movement of military forces," said Denise Doring VanBuren, BHS president. The beacons, 14 feet square at the bottom and rising to a pyramid form about 18 or 20 feet high, were erected on both South Beacon and North Beacon mountains as part of a string that stretched from New England south. Members of the Melzingah Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution placed a commemorative marker on the northern summit in 1900 to honor the Patriots who had manned them. In 1913, residents chose the name "Beacon" in a public referendum for their new city.

The 400-member Beacon Historical Society is also celebrating its 50th anniversary, having been founded during the American Bicentennial in 1976. Annual \$25 membership includes a monthly newsletter, at least eight special lectures each year and other historic programming/events.

Visit www.BeaconHistorical.org for more information and to join.

Students receive hands-on training in Winners Circle Project

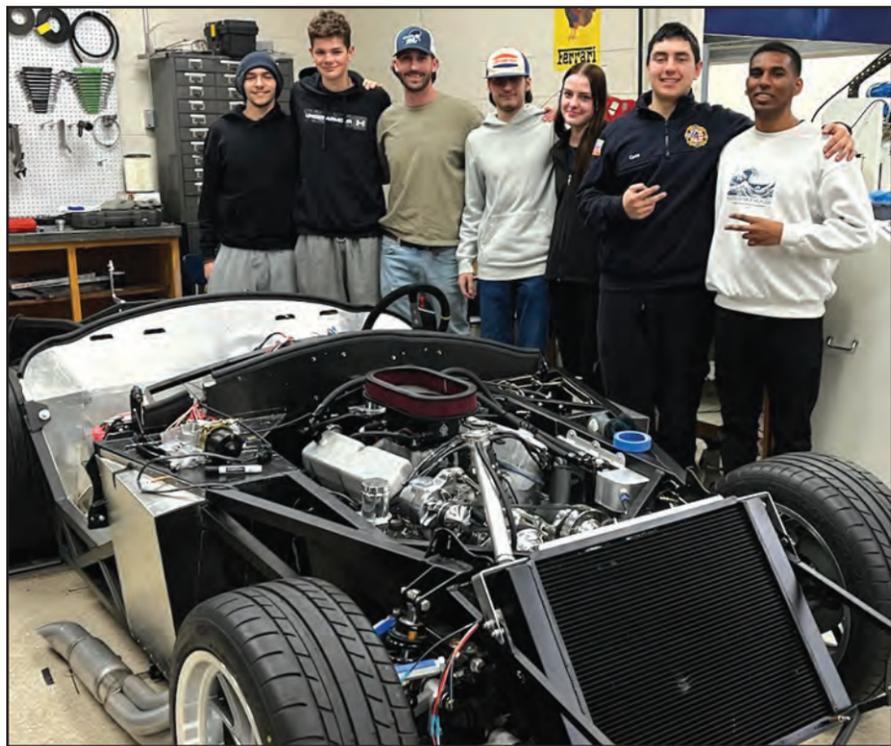
By Staff Writers

Roy C. Ketcham High School and John Jay High School, in the Wappingers Central School District, are part of the hands-on training program called the Winners Circle Project (WCP). Currently there are six high schools in Dutchess County that offer the program. Red Hook Central School District is seeking approval to take part in the program.

Nonprofit founded by FDR High School alumnus

WCP is a nonprofit organization founded by Hyde Park Central School District Franklin D. Roosevelt High School alumnus Pius Mawejje Kayiira. Students in one course build a Factory Five (kit) race car from scratch, while students in a visual communications art course and a marketing/media relations business course learn and use public relations, marketing, journalism and video production skills to promote their car and build a multi-department race team.

The project culminates toward the end of the school year with a competition on all phases at Lime Rock Race Track in Connecticut.



John Jay High School teacher William Roos (third from back) with John Jay Racing members (from back) Jackson S. Joshua W., Roos, Eddie L., Patience B., Joe C. and Arif G. in front of the Factory Five Mk5 Roadster they are working on.

-Photo by Kristine Coulter

Continued on page 3

Dutchess County St. Patrick's Parade set for March 7



This year's St. Patrick's Parade will be held on Saturday, March 7 in Wappingers Falls. Pictured are bagpipers from the Hudson Valley Regional Police Pipes & Drums during the 2025 St. Patrick's Parade in Wappingers Falls.

-Archive photo



The 2026 Dutchess County St. Patrick's Parade Grand Marshal is Dennis J. Murray.

-Courtesy photo

By Morgan E. Maier

A month full of Saint Patrick's Day celebration has begun, as Dutchess County's 31st annual parade will stream through Wappingers Falls on March 7. In line with the past green-soaked iterations, it will be a joyous day for all ages, with some first-time marchers who especially hint at the parade's promising future.

The parade will kick off at 1 p.m., with lineup beginning at noon. St. Mary's Church, 11 Clinton St., will hold 9 a.m.

mass with a dedication to committee members lost this year, including parade founder Kevin Barry; Jane Schimpf; and Michael Kelly. Celebrations of culture and heritage will adorn the parade route as homes and businesses are decked in Irish decor for the annual contest. Decorations will be judged on March 6.

Among scouts, fiddlers, and first responders marching, a new band emerges in the parade line. The Roy C. Ketcham and John Jay high school music

programs teamed up to create a collaborative squad, representing Wappingers Central School District for the first time in the parade. While high school club members have long supported parade efforts, this band is the first to sashay down village streets. Such a debut was made possible through coordination of longtime parade chairman Gene Noone, district superintendent Dr. Dwight Bonk, and the schools' program leaders.

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Dutchess County St. Patrick's Parade set for March 7

Continued from cover

"The groups that want to get into it [the parade] are multiplying every year, the local community getting bigger and better involvement in the parade. It is a good thing that we are getting younger. In fact, our committee is getting younger," said Noone, noting that older members like himself can gear up to retire.

The parade will also honor grand marshal Dr. Dennis J. Murray, president emeritus of Marist University (1976-2016 and 2019-2021). The school was Marist College during Murray's 40-year tenure, which saw the school grow from Poughkeepsie's hometown liberal arts college to an institution of worldwide renown. Murray long petitioned for Marist's university title, granted in 2025.

The grandson of Irish-Catholic immigrants, Murray's roots lie in County Cork and County Mayo. Murray holds an "unwavering commitment to his Irish heritage", as stated in his nomination, he and is the latest in a long line of parade grand marshals representing such values. And parade day is more than an expression of heritage, as several locations around Wappingers Falls will host entertainment and other festivities for the whole family.

For elderly parade-goers and those with disabilities, there will be a wheelchair accessible space in front of Grinnell Library, to prioritize comfort and easy



Dennis J. Murray (left) is announced as the 2026 grand marshal at the annual Emerald Ball.

-Courtesy photo

viewing for all. Parking at The Shoppes at South Hills (the former South Hills Mall), 838 South Road, and Wappingers Junior High School, 30 Major MacDonald Way, is suggested, as village parking is limited.

Before and after the parade, shuttles are available to drop folks wherever they'd like to go.

There will be plenty to celebrate at this parade that each year gets bigger

and better, according to Noone. "There's thousands of marchers, so let's hope we have thousands of people spectating and having a good time," he added.

Caroline Dolfi of Pleasant Valley earns award for 'Dedicated Service'

By Curtis Schmidt

Caroline Dolfi is the epitome of an individual who loves and supports her community on a daily basis – and she has done just that for many years.

For all of her efforts, the owner of the Pleasant Valley Department Store has been named the recipient of the "Gary Veeder Award for Dedicated Service for 2025." Veeder, the first winner of the award, recently presented the plaque to Dolfi and noted that it is "given annually to a person that has improved our community over the years."

The plaque reads - "The hamlet of Pleasant Valley has had a varied history, Talbot's Inn, Masten's Feed Store, Shekomoko Lodge of FM and the Pleasant Valley Mill. Currently, the Pleasant Valley Department Store is one of the landmarks that reminds us of our past. Caroline Dolfi has been quietly active in keeping these

memories alive and volunteering and wearing different hats for many years. For this the committee adds your name to the Gary Veeder Award for the year 2025."

"Pleasant Valley is my town. I've lived here most of my life and I love it," said Dolfi. "My business is in the center of the hamlet, so I am in touch with the community on a daily basis. We have the most wonderful people living and working here – concerned, dedicated citizens always trying to make our town better. I'm happy to be serving on numerous boards and committees – working to keep our community strong and vibrant. I truly appreciate that I was selected among many worthy candidates and I will keep working for our town!"

Among Dolfi's many volunteer activities are the following: President of the Pleasant Valley Cemetery Association, Trustee of the



Caroline Dolfi, owner of the Pleasant Valley Department Store, accepts the plaque from Gary Veeder as winner of the "Gary Veeder Award for Dedicated Service."

-Courtesy photo

Pleasant Valley Presbyterian Church and Trustee of the Dorothy E. Albertson Foundation. She has also served on Pleasant Valley Weekend and Redl Park Committees.

Two of her most cherished awards include (1) being named an Honorary Life Member of the Pleasant Valley Fire Company #1, and (2) Recipient of the 2020 Larkin-Vanamberg Memorial Award - presented to a citizen of Pleasant Valley who shows the same unselfish giving of himself/herself to our community as Ken and Bert did. This award is in memory of two brother firefighters who gave their lives in the line of duty.

The "Gary Veeder Award for Dedicated Service" was created by committee mem-

bers during the administration of Supervisor John Delveccio.

"It was a complete surprise to me when it was presented at a Pleasant Valley Days," said Veeder, who served as Pleasant Valley Town Supervisor from 1976-1980. He noted that the award is non-political and the committee views a recipient that has been active for a relatively long time. "In some cases, their contributions are quiet and not well known, which doesn't decrease the recipient's value to our community," said Veeder.

In addition to Veeder and now Dolfi, previous recipients of the award include Jean Curley and Dieter Friedrichsen.



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Students receive hands-on training in Winners Circle Project

Continued from cover

John Jay High School students take part in WCP

“I was like random,” said Arif G., a club member, about taking part in WCP.

William Roos is a technology teacher at John Jay High School and a club advisor for John Jay Racing for the WCP. Christopher Pallozzi is the business teacher for the club.

“I kept giving him challenges and he’s like ‘I don’t know where he’s at,’” Roos said about Arif. The two kept working – and Arif continues to be in the club.

Another club member, Joshua W. remarked his participation in WCP “definitely helps with Math. It’s a way for me to learn, in different ways, to do math with more than just writing it down on paper,” Josh noted.

Eddie L. said what he enjoys about the club is “the people in it.”

Patience B. said the club members are “amusing” and “I like the fact that we can all come together.”

Roos noted that they make the parts. “We don’t buy them here,” he said.

“The Winners Circle makes it like that much more special. You get close with the other schools,” remarked Joe C., who is also taking part in WCP at John Jay.

Jackson said WCP presents the members with “an opportunity” and “it’s like a community now.”

Roos noted there is also a bit of life coaching that can occur.

“It’s really about the students. There’s a lot of character building here,” he said. He added this could not be done without quality.

“They work together and they learn to respect people because they are working with professionals in a real-world setting,” remarked Roos.

“I think my family thinks [the club] is great. They think it’s a great program,” said Arif. He noted learning about how a carburetor works.

“Students feel more confident driving cars now that they know how to fix things,” added Roos. He said, “This is the greatest thing that could have happened to me in my teaching career.”

Students also do social media for the program and newsletters.

“These guys are crushing it with the marketing,” noted Roos.

In the program, some of the things students learn are: layout, design, construction, mathematics, and problem solving.

“They do a lot of innovation. We design everything,” said Roos, adding they are in the third year of the program at John Jay.

Roos shared about how these students are held to a completely different standard because this is a tangible thing.

“Here, if you don’t put the bolt on the wheel, it’s going to fall off and I’m going

to get hurt. The reality of it, the realness of it...” said Roos. “The car is the shiny thing. [It’s] the experience that is so valuable.”

Joe shared how the program connects them more to the community by having car shows and holding fundraisers.

Roy C. Ketcham students are learning skills

Ronald Remick is with WCP at RCK. Remick is in charge of the marketing side for Ketcham Racing. They create content and support the build team by raising money, he said, via email.

“By taking this class, students learn many hard and soft skills that will help them in the real world after high school,” shared Remick. “Building the car develops technical, mechanical and soft skills.”

Remick noted some skills include: welding, metalworking, electrical install and diagnosis, engine assembly, body work.

Some of the soft skills include troubleshooting, problem solving, collaboration and project management, he said.

“From the marketing side, students learn to use new software to design newsletters, podcasts, YouTube videos and more. Marketing students are in charge of making presentations, obtaining sponsors and running fundraisers so the build team can make improvements to the car,” he said.

Remick shared, “For many students, this class is the reason they come to school each day. It gives them a sense of pride and purpose and opens up many doors for their future.”

WCP about ‘good people’

According to its website (winners-circle.org), WCP states “...our teaching artists will guide students through the process of creating a functioning racing organization over one school year. The program is focused on more than just the technical process of building a car, but what it takes to develop an entire racing team as a business.”

Along the way, students receive career coaching and take field trips that include career exposure experiences and networking. They compete against other school districts, not only in how well they can build a car, but how well they can market it and build a plan for success. Each year, up to 35 students in each school can take part across the three classes.

“Good people is what this is all about,” Kayiira said at a recent presentation at Red Hook High School. “I know that we talk about a car, and the car is really good, but I have failed you as an educator if I have not prepared you to be successful in life. And, in life, you’re on so many different teams. Some of you are on good teams that are filled with good people.”

Kayiira explained that the simulated racing software from Scimitar Software



William Roos, a teacher at John Jay High School, with members of the John Jay Racing Club.

-Photo by Kristine Coulter

allows the students to load the exact specifications of their cars, the weather for the simulated race, temperatures, chassis settings and even tire choices, as they race virtually on circuits all over the world. Thus the simulated race teaches not only car control and race craft but even demonstrates the results of changes to any of the variables. For instance, if the simulated race is in the rain, that requires a different chassis set up as well as different tires. The students can experiment and learn exactly what works.

This part of the project has been amazing, said Kayiira.

“Just recently I watched one of the teams racing in the rain at a circuit in Brazil. I must say it was some of the best racing I’ve ever seen anywhere,” he added.

The students using the simulator take part in a championship that lasts for the entire season.

“You know, we manage to impart a broad range of skills in the project, but we’re not only building cars; we’re build-

ing good and effective people,” Kayiira said. “They learn that teams require a collection of differing skills. They have to work together creatively and manage real-life situations.

“These teams and their leaders never cease to impress,” he said.

When completed, the actual cars will be tested on track over Memorial Day weekend at Lime Rock Park, operated by a professional racing driver. After a number of years in the role, TransAm champion Chris Dyson will take a break and the testing will be handled by Mathew Brabham.

Kayiira noted WCP is “very proud of two Dutchess County winners of scholarships for their performance within their teams: Gianna Orellana of Ketcham Racing (Ketcham High) and Dulce Garcia-Lopez from Dover Legacy Racing.”

Both are rising seniors and will also be invited to a wider series of events over the next year with chances to interact with student leaders from around the world.

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Viewpoints

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Policy on letters:

- Letters that contain statements that are libelous or slanderous will not be published.
- Letters that include personal attacks will not be published, with the exception of political figures.
- Letters written in response to other letter writers must address the issue at hand, rather than mentioning the writer by name and must refer to the headline and date the letter was published.
- Letters referring to news stories must mention the headline and date of publication.
- The Beacon Free Press will not be used as a vehicle to place misinformation.
- Information must be attributed to a specific individual or published item (ie- tell us where or from whom you obtained the information)
- All letters must contain a name, hometown and phone number for verification.
- Letters appearing on the Viewpoints page are the views of the writers alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Beacon Free Press.

March is Brain Injury Awareness Month

To the Editor:

Every March, communities across the country recognize Brain Injury Awareness Month, a time dedicated to increasing understanding of traumatic brain injury and the lasting impact it can have on individuals and families.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, millions of Americans sustain a traumatic brain injury each year, and more than five million people live with long-term disability related to brain injury. Despite how common these injuries are, many effects remain invisible and widely misunderstood.

Brain injuries can result from falls, motor vehicle accidents, strokes, overdoses, sports injuries, or other medical events. While some individuals experience physical impairments, many face cognitive and emotional challenges such as memory difficulties, fatigue, sensory overload, and changes in emotional regulation that significantly affect daily life.

For the past seven years, I have worked with participants in the New York State Traumatic Brain Injury Waiver Program. One lesson stands out: no two brain injuries are the same. Survivors are often misunderstood or judged because their challenges cannot be seen, even though their brains are working harder just to complete everyday tasks.

Awareness begins with understanding. Simple actions — offering patience, communicating clearly, or showing empathy when someone appears overwhelmed — can make a meaningful difference.

This March, I encourage our community to learn more about brain injury and recognize the strength it takes to live with an invisible injury. When we choose understanding, we help make recovery less isolating and our community more compassionate.

Ashley Gutierrez
Hudson Valley

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Essay contest winners announced by DAR



The Melzingah Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution recently announced the winners of the annual American History essay contest.

Pictured from left: Chapter Regent AnnMarie Griffith; Colin Vemulapalli; Grade 6; Eleanor Harrington, Grade 5; Julia Kocon, Grade 8; American History Chair and Vice Regent Cynthia Colarusso.

-Courtesy photo

The Melzingah Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution announced the winners of the annual American History Essay Contest for grades 5–8 during the Feb. 8 meeting held at the Madam Brett Homestead in Beacon. The 2025–2026 topic celebrating America's 250th Birthday, was "Lunch with a Signer." Students were asked to

select one signer of the Declaration of Independence, discuss their actions and service, and explain how they contributed to the country becoming independent. Each student received a certificate, medal, and a cash prize. The winning essays will be sent for judging at the New York State level. The three winners are students at St. Mary School, Fishkill.

Captain to offer talk at Beacon Sloop Clubhouse on March 19

Join Captain Sarah Armour, captain of Mystic Seaport Museum's schooner *Brilliant*, for a talk on building a career in tall ships, sail training, and traditional sail on Thursday, March 19 at 7 p.m. at the Beacon Sloop Club Clubhouse, Red Flynn Drive, in Beacon. Starting as a volunteer and trainee aboard Hudson River Sloop *Clearwater* and growing up in the Beacon Sloop Club around vessels like *Clearwater* and *Woody Guthrie*, Sarah will reflect on how these Hudson River communities shaped her path—and her progression to captain—over a decade of work in sail training and experiential education. The program is free.

For more information, visit <http://www.beaconsloopclub.org>.

Captain Sarah Armour

-Courtesy photo Beacon Sloop Club



Dance at Elks Lounge set for March 13

Get On Down at the Elks Lounge Dance Night on Friday, March 13 at 7 p.m., at 900 Wolcott Avenue (Rt. 9D), Beacon. Lose yourself to an exciting mix of R&B, Latin, Soul, Funk, Disco, Rock, Reggae, Hip-Hop and more, played by DJ Rhoda. Attire is whatever suits your mood — from blue jeans to sparkles. These

dances are informal and even if you come alone, you can always find a friendly partner on the dance floor. \$15 admission includes complimentary snacks, and a full cash bar.

For more information, call Rhoda at 845-765-0667 or email rhodaja@optonline.net.

Elks sponsor Friday Night Lenten Dinners

Elks will hold Friday Night Lenten Dinners at the Beacon Elks Lodge #1493, 900 Wolcott Ave. in Beacon. On Friday, March 6, the dinner will be from 6-7:30 p.m. Meal costs are \$20 for adults, \$18 for seniors

and \$10 for children 10 and younger. One can eat in or take out (\$1 more). Proceeds will benefit charities.

Shrimp scampi, salad, roll and dessert will be served.

Berg, Cary new Howland Cultural Center board members

The Howland Cultural Center (HCC) has two new board members - Philip Berg and John Cary as new members to its Board of Directors for terms beginning in 2026.

Board President Theresa Kraft said, "We are pleased to welcome Phil and John as new members. They each bring valuable backgrounds that will enhance the Howland Cultural Center's mission of preserving our historic building and serving as a community hub for arts, culture, and history. We are excited to continue growing our Board as the Howland Center expands our program offerings and plans future preservation projects for our building."

The addition of two new board members increases the HCC Board size to 12 members and follows several years of exciting program growth at the Center, as well as the completion of a major restoration of the building's portico, which was finished in late 2025.

The Howland Center hosted approximately 20,000 visitors and more than 500 events in 2025, offering community-centered performances, rotating art gallery exhibits, screenings, and special productions as well as regular monthly events and classes. Highlights included the Howland Chamber Music Circle, Artichoke Storytelling Series, Nerd Nite Hudson Valley, Howland's Open Mic Night, LIT LIT Open Mic for Writers, an annual Holiday Gift Show, lectures, and special children's and family-friendly programming. Classes and clubs included the Bridge Club, Tioronda Garden Club, kids after-school art, Mid-Hudson Music Together, creative writing, music and financial literacy workshops, as well as private events.

The new Board members are: Philip C. Berg is chairman of the corporate law practice at Otterbourg P.C. in New York City, representing clients in merger and acquisition transactions, corporate financings, business start-ups and general corporate matters. Berg previously served as a corporate attorney at Cravath, Swaine & Moore, and he also served as law clerk for Hon. Thomas H. Meskill, Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals, Second Circuit. Berg received a JD degree from Harvard Law School and a BA degree in Chemistry from the University of Virginia. He also serves on the board of trustees of the Harvard Club of NYC and previously served as Treasurer and board member of The Players, a private club in NYC founded in 1888 by Edwin Booth, Mark Twain and other leading figures, and designed by Stanford White.

John Cary is a resident of Newburgh, originally hailing from New Orleans. After receiving an MBA from Loyola University, he worked at Bear Stearns and Mellon Financial services in New York City and New Jersey. He then owned and operated a Unishippers franchise for 15 years, developing a small business and entrepreneurial spirit. He then went back to school and earned his doctorate from St. John Fisher University and started teaching full-time at Marist University School of Management. Cary enjoys a variety of sports and outdoor activities including tennis, running, hiking, and walking. Additionally, he has played the guitar (acoustic, electric, and classical) since college, recently focusing on the classical guitar, a challenge he suggests is beyond the acoustic guitar. Cary is married with two boys and enjoys vacationing at the beach.



The Howland Cultural Center Board welcomed two new members, Philip Berg and John Cary. Berg and Cary were recently welcomed by other board members at the Howland Cultural Center in Beacon.

-Courtesy photo HCC

Anyone interested in becoming involved as a volunteer at the Howland Cultural Center, please contact information@howlandculturalcenter.org.

Rebuilding Together Hudson Valley honors community leaders at annual Partner Breakfast

Rebuilding Together Hudson Valley (RTHV) honored outstanding community leaders and partners at its annual Community Partner Breakfast held February 11 at The Heartwood at Vassar College.

Centered around the theme "Our Spokes of the Wheel," the event celebrated the volunteers, donors, contractors, sponsors, board members, and community leaders who work together to advance safe and healthy housing across the Hudson Valley.

Since its founding in 1992, RTHV has invested more than \$8.6 million in capital repairs throughout Dutchess and Ulster Counties. In 2025 alone, the organization engaged 104 volunteers, contributed 1,563 volunteer hours, completed over \$300,000 in market-value repairs, and served 33 residents across 18 homes — including seniors, veterans, and families with children.

"Safe housing is not a luxury — it is foundational," said Darcy McCourt, Executive Director of Rebuilding Together Hudson Valley. "When every spoke in our wheel is engaged, lives change. The partnerships we celebrated today make it possible for families to

remain safely in the homes they love."

The 2026 Honorees include the following:

Ron Stein Volunteer Award

Karen Foerst, Loss Mitigation & Credit Recovery Manager, Walden Savings Bank.

The Ron Stein Volunteer Award honors RTHV's founding father, Ron Stein, who established Christmas in April in Dutchess County in 1992. Foerst was recognized for her long-standing commitment as a volunteer, advocate, sponsor, and community partner who embodies the spirit of neighbors helping neighbors.

Tradesperson of the Year Award

Consigli Construction
Since 2017, Consigli Construction has partnered annually with RTHV to complete critical home repair projects. This year, the firm led a fully volunteer and 100% in-kind renovation that prevented the condemnation of a senior homeowner's residence — restoring safety, stability, and dignity through donated labor and materials.

Building Strong Communities Award

Central Hudson Gas & Electric

For more than 25 years, Central Hudson has supported RTHV through volunteer engagement and home sponsorships, helping repair one to two homes annually with employee volunteer teams. In celebration of its 125th anniversary, the company also helped revitalize RTHV's Home Safety & Fire Prevention Program in partnership with the American Red Cross, expanding the installation of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to protect vulnerable households.

"What I admire most about Rebuilding Together Hudson Valley is that your work is grounded in dignity — in meeting people where they are, in making sure every family

has a safe and healthy home, and in bringing communities together to lift each other up," said Eric Kiszkiel, Vice President of Operations & Safety at Central Hudson.

Cornerstone Award

Marvyn James, Director – System Operations & Emergency Management, Central Hudson Gas & Electric

A member of the RTHV Board of Directors since 2022, Marvyn James was honored for his leadership, volunteerism, governance, and support of the organiza-

tion. His professional expertise in safety and infrastructure resilience strengthens the organization's strategic direction and long-term stability.

The program also featured remarks from Perry Bird, Senior Director of Network Advancement with Rebuilding Together, and Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino. Commendations were presented on behalf of Rob Rolison recognizing each honoree for their service and impact. The Mayor of the City of Poughkeepsie was also in attendance.

"Rebuilding Together Hudson Valley does truly vital work to ensure our neighbors have safe, stable homes and the support they need to thrive," said Senator Rolison. "Their commitment to strengthening housing and building meaningful community partnerships makes a lasting difference across the Hudson Valley. Our team is honored to show up, support their mission, and stand alongside them in this important effort."

RTHV will host National Rebuilding Day on Saturday, April 25, 2026, continuing its commitment to repairing homes, revitalizing communities, and rebuilding lives.

For more information or to get involved, visit www.RTHudsonValley.org.

Residents invited to serve on County Advisory Boards

Legislature Chair Yvette Valdés Smith is inviting Dutchess County residents to serve on volunteer boards and committees that advise County government on a range of important policy issues.

Valdés Smith said, "As the new Chair of the Dutchess County Legislature, I welcome interested residents and stakeholders from across the County to take a seat at the table by joining one of the County's many advisory boards and committees.

"Dutchess County is at a pivotal moment, with numerous challenges and opportunities facing both our communities and residents. We are stronger together, which is why I am seeking input and insights from those who live here so we can build a thriving community for everyone who calls Dutchess home."

Seats are available on the following advisory committees:

- Airport Advisory Committee (must reside near the Dutchess County Airport)
- Community Services Board (Formerly Mental Hygiene Board)
- Dutchess County Criminal Justice Council
- Citizens Advisory Committee on Domestic Violence
- Commission on Human Rights
- Dutchess County Fire & Safety Advisory Board
- Fish & Wildlife Management Board (must be a landowner who resides on rural lands that engage in production of ag commodities or forest products)
- Soil & Water Conservation Board

Residents interested in serving on any of the above committees, please email your resume and a brief statement of interest to

Countylegislature@Dutchessny.gov; include the name of the committee in the subject line.

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Anderson Foundation for Autism leads national dialogue with rebranded podcast

Anderson Foundation for Autism's executive leadership team has announced that it has developed a new strategy and brand for its long-standing podcast.

Hosted by Eliza Bozenski, LMSW, Chief Development Officer of Anderson Foundation for Autism, the radio show, named for autism incidence rates since its inception in 2012, will now be called "1 in 31: Autism Today." Produced by Pamal Broadcasting in Beacon, NY, episodes have featured celebrity guests such as Dr. Temple Grandin, renowned doctors like Dr. Kristin Sohl, local professionals such as Ashley Quitoni (Adaptive CrossFit 845), along with families, advocates, behavioral therapists, educators, documentary filmmakers, and more.

Patrick Paul, CEO/Executive Director of Anderson Center for Autism, said "Over the past decade-plus, Eliza's interviews have helped raise tremendous awareness about autism, from how it presents to what programs can optimize the quality of life for those diagnosed. The show provides a unique platform for us to highlight experts, thought leaders, families, and so many others who are working to advance our mission. As the audience has grown, particularly more recently, it started to become clear to Eliza and her development team at Anderson that the show was ready for a more comprehensive strategy."

Bozenski added, "So many listeners have commented on how much they have learned from our podcast; we believe that we have a responsibility to get this content in front of as many people as possible and knew it was time to think about ways to expand our reach. Renaming the show 1 in 31: Autism Today will help those searching for podcasts specific to autism more easily find us."

She continued, "Given the fact that Anderson Center for Autism has become



Eliza Bozenski, LMSW, Chief Development Officer, Anderson Foundation for Autism, hosts "1 in 31: Autism Today" podcast.

-Courtesy photo

a resource for people from all over our country and the world, it is time we position the podcast to play a more prominent role in the national and international conversation about all things related to autism."

Examples of upcoming guests include Lauren Allen from SUNY Empire and author Brigitte Shipman, who is also a parent of an autistic child. "1 in 31: Autism Today" airs on Pamal Broadcasting stations in the Hudson Valley region of New York, such as WGHQ, WBPM, WHUD, and WGNV. It can also be streamed on Amazon Music, Apple Podcasts, Boomplay, iHeart, Podbean, Podchaser, Spotify, and YouTube.

In addition to serving as Chief Development Officer at Anderson Foundation for Autism and host of 1 in 31: Autism Today, Bozenski serves as a trustee on the Boards of RUPCO and the Mead School. The resident of Rhinebeck, New York holds Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Miami University of Ohio, and a Master's Degree in Clinical Social Work from Columbia University.

Learn more about the 1 in 31: Autism Today podcast by visiting andersoncenterforautism.org/1in31.

Renegades, PSC set Seasonal Job Fair on March 7

The Hudson Valley Renegades, the High-A affiliate of the New York Yankees, and Professional Sports Catering (PSC) have announced that they will be holding a seasonal job fair at Heritage Financial Park on Saturday, March 7 in anticipation of the 2026 season and other Heritage Financial Park events.

From 10 a.m. until 2 p.m., Renegades and PSC staff will be conducting on-site interviews for part-time seasonal employment for the 2025 season. Candidates must be 16 years of age to apply, must be able to pass a background check, and must be able to work all home games (April-September) and additional events as needed.

Job seekers should anticipate filling out a short candidate form onsite and the interview Attendees for the job fair may park in the Legends Lot at Heritage Financial Park no charge. Follow the signs to the left of the main gate to access the entrance to the WMCHHealth Club Lounge.

Dutchess County Public Transportation Bus Route B both Northbound from Beacon and Southbound from Poughkeepsie stops at Heritage Financial Park. See schedules and routes at dutchessny.gov/Departments/Public-Transit/Routes-Schedules.htm.

The Renegades will be interviewing for the following positions: Box Office Staff, Ushers & Guest Services, Front Gate Ticket Takers, Heritage Financial Credit Union Fun Zone Attendants,

Security, Parking Attendants, Cleaning Team, Landscaping, Grounds Crew, Pregame Stadium Operations Staff, Game Entertainment Staff (Pinstripe Posse, Music Operator, etc.), Broadcast Production Staff and Team Store Staff.

PSC will be interviewing for the following positions: Concessions Associates (Cashier, Food Runner, Food Prep, Food Delivery), Suite Attendants, Picnic Attendants and Warehouse,

The ideal candidates must be fun-loving, outgoing, reliable and service-oriented. All applicants must be 16 years of age or older by March 31 to work for the Renegades and Heritage Financial Park. Previous employees need not apply.

To learn more about opportunities available, please visit: milb.com/hudson-valley/about/employment or follow the QR Code below.



Section 1, 9 basketball playoffs scheduled for area HS squads

By Morgan E. Maier

The Arlington High School boys basketball team will vie for a spot in the Section 1 Class AAA basketball championships, squaring off for a semifinal match against the behemoth top seed, Mamaroneck (March 4, 8:15 p.m.). The winner of that match will face the victor of North Rockland and Mount Vernon (March 4, 4:45 p.m.) for the title on March 8, 1:30 p.m. All games to take place at the Westchester County Center.

The Arlington girls look to advance to their own championship final, but a surprise Storm stands in their way. Ally Kaminski scored her 1,000th career point (and counting!) for Ketcham this season, and looks to lead them to a section championship. The winner of the March 4 semifinal will face Mamaroneck or Albertus Magnus for the 'chip, also at the County Center on March 8.

Sectional play is also underway in Section 9, where Our Lady of Lourdes boasts 2-seeds in the boys' and girls' Class AAA competitions.

On another dominant season for the Lady Raiders, Red Hook holds the top seed in Class A. Mid-Hudson Athletic League All-Stars Elenna Magee and Nina Kortbus look to lead the favorites to the title.

Beacon looks to break through the middle of the pack in Class A, while Spackenkill looks primed for an upset of Highland. Beacon, Highland, Red Hook, and Marlboro were hosting the quarterfinals on March 2. Pine Plains holds the 3-seed, looking to upset John S. Burke in Class C.

American Conference MVP and MHAL All-Star Bleck Ngon looks to lead Lourdes over the Newburgh Free Academy Goldbacks on March 5. The Warriors will have home gym advantage, tipping off at 5 p.m.

Meanwhile in Class A, Spackenkill squared off with New Paltz on March 2 for the rights to play the big, bad Beacon Bulldogs. Division champion and 2-seed Red Hook, led by All-Stars Rileigh Jackson and Matt Simmons, looks to make a push across the bracket.

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Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley, Ulster Savings Bank Launch Loan Initiative

The Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley (CFHV) has announced the launch of the Local Impact Fund for Tomorrow (LIFT). LIFT, a new local impact platform, is designed to strengthen the region's nonprofit and community development ecosystem, beginning with a pilot low-interest bridge loan initiative serving nonprofits in Dutchess, Ulster and Putnam Counties.

The LIFT bridge loan pilot is designed to address structural challenges by providing short-term, affordable loans tied to documented grants or contracts. Nonprofits often operate on reimbursement-based government contracts or delayed grant payments. While funding may be contractually committed, organizations must frequently cover expenses weeks or months before funds are received. These timing gaps can delay projects, strain operations, and limit impact. LIFT loans of up to \$50,000 will help eligible nonprofits move projects forward, maintain continuity of services, and stabilize cash flow while awaiting committed funding.

"Nonprofits are essential to the health and economic vitality of the Hudson Valley," said Laura Washington, President & CEO of CFHV. "Through LIFT, we're putting charitable dollars to work in a practical way — helping organizations bridge short-term funding gaps so important projects don't stall. And because these loans are repaid and reinvested, the same dollars can support multiple nonprofits over time."

"Community foundations were created to invest in the places we call home," said Robert J. Cotter, Chair of the Board of

Trustees. "This bridge-loan program is a natural extension of our original mission that started us in 1969 as The Area Fund. By putting charitable capital to work locally, we can help keep important projects moving and strengthen the organizations that make the Hudson Valley a vibrant and resilient region."

At launch, CFHV has committed \$250,000 from its Trustees' Endowment to capitalize the pilot, joined by early fundholder support and the bank's participation. As loans are repaid, funds will be recycled to support additional nonprofits, multiplying the community impact of the initial investment.

"Launching this program required careful planning, thoughtful risk assessment, and the right partners," said Frances Barney Knutsen, CFA, vice chair of CFHV's Board of Trustees and chair of the LIFT Committee, who brings more than 30 years of experience in strategic development and investment analysis. "This pilot gives us a strong foundation for a robust and responsible impact investing platform — one that will allow CFHV to support high-impact projects while maintaining the financial stewardship our donors expect."

Loans will be made by CFHV and originated and serviced by Ulster Savings Bank, which may purchase a participating interest in each loan and will manage loan administration. This partnership brings strong underwriting standards, financial expertise, and accountability to the program.

"Ulster Savings Bank is proud to part-



Laura Washington, President and CEO of Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley, is pictured with William "Bill" Calderara, President and CEO of Ulster Savings Bank.

-Courtesy photo

ner with CFHV on this important initiative," said Bill Calderara, president & CEO of Ulster Savings Bank. "By combining philanthropic leadership with community banking expertise, we can help ensure local nonprofits have the tools they need to continue serving our region."

LIFT is designed to evolve to meet future

community needs. While the pilot focuses on bridge lending, CFHV anticipates expanding the LIFT platform in the future to include additional local impact tools that complement traditional grantmaking.

For more information about LIFT or to learn how to participate, visit CommunityFoundationsHV.org.

Council passes local law on parking

By Kristine Coulter

The Council passed a resolution regarding parking, as well as standing and stopping, during its Feb. 18 meeting.

City of Beacon Mayor Lee Kyriacou had attorney for the city, Nicholas Ward Willis, explain the local law.

Ward Willis stated, "There are four components to this local law. The first concerns reserved parking spaces at the City Hall, municipal hall center, which are being changed from specific names to now stating reserved parking tow-away zones. So, the public is on notice they are reserved parking spaces."

The second concerns the Mase Hook & Ladder parking lot on Main St.

"In the code there are spaces set aside for the fire department. It's no longer set aside for a fire department use, and the city has sold that building. As part of the contract, [it was] agreed three parking spaces would be signed, posted and reserved, for residents of that building, and additionally the parking lot is being renamed to the Mase Hook & Ladder Parking Lot," Ward Willis explained.

"The third component of the local law is one which will allow the police department to enforce parkers who occupy more than one parking space or park outside the designated striping for the parking space either too far

over, backward or front, or into the travel way, which creates issues," said Ward Willis. He noted that now it will be subject to a city code violation and a \$75 parking ticket.

The fourth component concerns restricting parking on the northern side of Main St at Fishkill Ave.

Ward Willis explained the city code "prohibits 30-feet within parking of an intersection, the fire department recommended that this particular intersection be increased to 60 feet," which will allow for a greater turning area for emergency vehicles.

The attorney noted this went to the Traffic Safety Committee.

Kyriacou opened up the public hearing. No one from the public commented. The public hearing was then closed.

It was asked with this new law would oversized vehicles, longer than a parking stall, be a violation. "It would be [a violation]," replied Ward Willis.

It was noted a vehicle has to be inside a stall, both vertically and horizontally.

Kyriacou noted there are two blocks where Main St. is very narrow. He said he assumes the police are mindful and thoughtful about that.

It was stated one would not get a ticket if one was unloading a truck.

Obituaries

Mary Ann Reifeiss



Mary Ann Reifeiss, 87, of Fishkill, NY passed away at her home on February 22, 2026. She was born at home in 1938 to Peter and Catherine (Clifford) Martin in Hollis, Queens, NY. She was the second oldest of eight children, six of whom have predeceased her. She grew up in White Plains, NY, raised her children in Manlius, NY, eventually moving to, and retiring in, Dutchess County, NY.

Mary (Mom, Nana) married Robert F. Reifeiss, Sr. of Yonkers, NY, her love at first sight, in 1960. Robert (Bob, Dad, GrampaBob) predeceased her in 2014.

The special joys of her life were her four children, Robert Reifeiss, Jr., Maryann Reifeiss-Schreck, Elizabeth Reifeiss Krason, and Katrin Reifeiss-Helmick, and their spouses, Wendy,

Richard, Daniel, and Tom. Her eight grandchildren filled her with immense happiness and pride: Hayley and Payton Reifeiss; Catherine, Hannah, and Kylie Schreck; Noah and Leah Krason; and Lukas Helmick.

Mary was an employee of JCPenney Co. for 15 years in Syracuse and Poughkeepsie, NY. Prior to that, she was a Confraternity of Christian Doctrine teacher for five years at St. Ann's Church in Manlius, NY. Mary's greatest joy was spending time with her children and grandchildren, gardening, and refreshing the walls of each of her homes with a new coat of paint. Mary loved a party. She was the best host and entertainer, always going above and beyond when it came to food and decoration, making everyone feel welcome, and well fed, who came into her home. A great sense of humor and laughter, and some dancing, could be counted on. Dancing to Frank Sinatra and doing the Lindy with her husband was a highlight for her throughout their marriage. She could debate politics with the best of them. Mary spent her later years traveling to Europe and up and down the East Coast, and relishing in the company of her children and grandchildren. Mostly, she touched so many peoples lives throughout her long life. She was selfless, always putting everyone before herself and doing her best to care for them.

Mary wanted special mention of her niece Britt for her consistent thoughtfulness and kindness. She also wanted special mention of her nephews Erik, Topher, and their spouses, her niece Kiki, and her brother-in-law Joe. Her cousins Beth and Jennifer, and her Bennett and Buchanan cousins. In addition, her friends Gloria, Sue, and Linda who she shared many good times with, and her hairdresser Karen who always made her look fabulous.

In honor of Mary's life, she asked that donations be made to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in her memory. A Celebration of Life ceremony will take place in the spring.

Mary, Mom, Nana was loved to the moon and back and her presence will be incredibly missed.

To send a personal condolence please visit www.riverviewbyhalvey.com.

Funeral arrangements are under the care of Riverview Funeral Home by Halvey, LLC.

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Obituaries

John Anthony Campanella



John Anthony Campanella was born in the Bronx on August 7, 1936. His parents were Joseph Campanella and Antoinette DeSimone Campanella Leggire. The family owned and operated JO Ann's restaurant in Beekman, NY from 1956 to 1972.

He received his Bachelor of Science Degree from New Paltz State University in 1959. In 1965, he received his Master of Science with a major in Administration.

John started his career in the Wappingers Central School District. From 1959-1963, he taught fourth and sixth grade at Vassar Road Elementary. In 1964, he was assistant principal of Evans Elementary School. In 1965, he was co-coordinator of Education at Gayhead Elementary School and in 1967, became

assistant principal. He was principal at Sheafe Road School in 1968 and stayed there until 1988. In the latter part of 1988, he was principal of Gayhead Elementary School until he retired in 1992.

After retiring from Wappingers Central School District, John was interim principal at the Arlington High School in the Arlington Central School District and the Red Hook High School in Red Hook, NY. He was a Region 4 Representative for SAANYS from 1993-2000. He was also a member of the Knights of Columbus and the Italian Center. When he was not educating children, John worked as a driver for the Van Vlack Cleaners.

Surviving at home is his wife, Sue Lawrence Campanella; 4 sons: John J. Campanella and his wife, Tammy, of Hyde Park, NY, Joseph M. Campanella and his wife, Janet, of Clifton Park, NY, Darrin P. Lawrence and his wife, Tracy, of Oak Ridge, TN, and Steven A. Lawrence and his wife, Louise, of Gastonia, NC.

His love for his grandchildren gave him many happy moments and brought smiles of joy to his face. They are Nicholas Campanella, Courtney Fisher, Blake Campanella, John Michael Campanella, Anthony Lawrence, Rebecca Campanella, Zachary Lawrence, Xander Lawrence, Kyra Lawrence, Dylan Fisher and a special friend, Ayisha Webster. His great grandchildren: Lyla, Axel and Levi Lawrence, Iyla and Gretta Campanella, and Elijah Fisher.

Family will receive their friends on Thursday, March 5, 2026 from 2 to 6 pm at Straub, Catalano & Halvey Funeral Home, 55 E. Main Street, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be offered on Friday, March 6, 2026 at 10 am at St. Mary's Church, 11 Clinton Street in Wappingers Falls. Entombment will follow in Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery, Poughkeepsie.

In keeping with his career and his love of children, the family asks that in lieu of flowers donations be made to the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie (childrenshome.us) and Glaucoma Research (glaucoma.org).

To send the family a personal condolence, please visit our website at www.StraubCatalanoHalvey.com.

Matilda Jean Brooks



Matilda Jean Brooks, 89, of Wappingers Falls NY, passed away peacefully on February 3, 2026 at Vassar Brothers Medical Center. Born on August 11, 1936, in Middlefield, Otsego County NY, Matilda was the daughter of the late J. Andrew and Esther Moore Wahl. In 1956, she married the love of her life, the late John H. Brooks, Sr. That same year, they welcomed their son, John H. Brooks, Jr. Sadly, Johnny passed away at the tender age of five, a loss Matilda carried with quiet strength throughout her life.

Matilda's life was defined by service to others, and she has been honored and recognized with many awards for her unwavering commitments. She was a devoted member of Christ United Methodist Church in Beacon and an active participant in their Women's Group. An active

life member of several veterans' organizations for nearly 50 years, she served as Commander/President and other executive and supportive roles for: the Disabled American Veterans Chapter #144 Auxiliary Unit Castle Point and DAV Dept of NY Auxiliary; the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5913 Auxiliary Wappingers Falls and VFW Auxiliary Dept. of NY District 2; and the Military Order of the Cootie Auxiliary Grand of NY. She has volunteered over 30,000 hours at the VA Hudson Valley Health Care System-Castle Point facility in various roles: inpatient transporter, clothing room, facility info desk, and DAV transport driver. She was a member of Knights of Columbus Trinity Council No. 445. Matilda loved to travel to the conventions, conferences and training sessions throughout NY and across the nation. She has been an inspiration for her dedication to supporting all veterans, active-duty personnel, their families and community, and her endearing smile and generous heart will be sorely missed.

Matilda joined the Chelsea Fire Co. in 1980 as an active firefighter and has assisted at nearly every event since, always ready to lend a helping hand. She was a member of the Fire Police organizations in Dutchess, Putnam and Ulster counties, and the Fire Fighters Assoc. of the State of NY. Born on a farm, she remained dedicated to agricultural interests as member of NY State, Otsego Co. Pomona Grange #16 and Westville Grange #540. Before retirement, Matilda worked as a home care aid for a private agency, for the Dutchess Co. Office of the Aging, and for the Highland Hospital in Beacon. For fun, she loved playing cards and dominos with friends.

Matilda is survived by her brother-in-law, Rev. Fred R. Brooks, Jr.; her many nieces and nephews, great-nieces and -nephews; her goddaughter; and her many friends. In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her siblings, William, George, Andrew, Walter, Minna, and Henrietta, and a few nieces and nephews.

Family and friends are invited to gather on Monday, March 16, from 4 to 8 p.m. at Riverview Funeral Home by Halvey, 2 Beekman Street, Beacon. There will be memorials by her member organizations, and a funeral service will be held at 7:30 p.m., with Pastor Yeon Shin officiating.

To send a personal condolence or share photos, visit www.riverviewbyhalvey.com. Funeral arrangements are under the care of Riverview Funeral Home by Halvey, LLC.

Rose Horton



Rose Horton, a life-long Village of Wappingers Falls resident, passed away peacefully on February 22, 2026 at The Pines at Poughkeepsie Center for Nursing; at the age of 85. She was born on September 20, 1940 in Wappingers Falls, NY daughter of the late Nicholas & Sarah (Trepepi) Francese. Rose attended and graduated from Wappinger Central Schools.

On September 14, 1963, she married Louis I Horton, who predeceased her on December 10, 2017; after 54 years of marriage.

Rose loved the New York Yankees, Star Trek and David Hasselhoff, but most of all her family. She dedicated herself to her work as an insurance broker, and served proudly as President of the Federation of New York Insurance Professionals. Rose was also involved in the Village of Wappingers Baseball Program, where she served as a

Senior League Manager, for many years.

Rose leaves behind to cherish her memory, her three sons, David F. Horton and his wife Eileen Travis Horton; John F. Horton and his wife Rachael Morphet; Louis B. Horton and his wife Kerri Horton. She is also survived by her 9 grandchildren, Alex Morphet, Dylan Morphet and his wife Courtney, Kayley Karpisz and husband Ryan, Patricia Horton and partner Roy, Michael Kostecke, Megan Morphet, Nicole, Alex and wife Brianna Horton, Zachary and wife Erica Horton; her 13 Great Grandchildren, Peyton, Bianca, Kirsten, Ethan, Aidin, Stacia, Benjamin Eli, Lyle, Gabriel, Jasmine, Fordham, Alexander Jr. and Parker. Rose is survived by her older brother Frank Francese and his wife Ruth; sister-in-law Jean Francese.

Along with her parents and her husband, Rose was predeceased by her older brothers Joseph, Vincent and Nicholas Francese.

Her Family gathered with Friends on Friday, February 27th at DELEHANTY FUNERAL HOME, 64 East Main Street, Wappingers Falls, where a prayer service was held. Interment will be private at discretion and convenience of her family. To offer a message of condolence or share a fond memory, please visit: www.DelehantyFuneral.com.

Evalisa Skyrianos



Evalisa Skyrianos, a 30-year resident of Wappingers Falls, formerly of Mahopac, passed away suddenly on Monday, February 23, 2026 at Vassar Brothers Medical Center in Poughkeepsie. She was 55.

Daughter of Rafael Guzman and Margarita Cancel, she was born on July 22, 1970 and was raised in the Bronx.

Evalisa owned and operated her own food truck known as Evie's Eats. She was an avid reader and coffee drinker who enjoyed doing crafts such as Legos, ceramics, and coloring.

She will be remembered as the light and glue of her family. Evalisa was devoted to her husband, children, and most especially her grandchildren, who affectionately knew her as their Abuela.

In 1993, she married Athanasios Skyrianos in Mahopac. Athanasios survives at home in Wappingers Falls.

She is also survived by her sons and their wives: Stavros & Christine Skyrianos of New Paltz and Athanasios Rafael & Stephane Skyrianos of Wappingers Falls; her grandchildren: Arietta, Athanasios, Isabella, and Sofia; her siblings: Olga M. Diaz, Anibal Morales, Eddie Morales, Elsie Cancino, Ana Morales, Max Morales, Irma Morales, Edwin Borrero, Wanda Waring, Vivian Bedford and Diane Skiranos; as well as a host of nieces & nephews including Jayla Perales and Madeline Navarrette; and many other loving relatives.

Evalisa was preceded in death by her brother, Rafael Guzman; and her sister, Julie Sciortino. Calling hours were held on Monday, March 2 at the McHoul Funeral Home of Fishkill, Inc., 1089 Main Street, Fishkill, NY. A funeral service was offered immediately following visitation. Interment followed at Fishkill Rural Cemetery, 801 Route 9, Fishkill, NY.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Alzheimer's Association (www.alz.org) and the Muscular Dystrophy Association (www.mda.org).

For online tributes, visit www.mchoulfuneralhome.com.

Peter Berg



Peter Raymond Berg, 77, fought his last battle and hesitantly stepped into the universe on February 23rd, 2026.

He was born in Ossining, NY on September 15, 1948. From the beginning he had a panache for doing things his way. He was a creative builder and spent his time restoring old houses and vintage cars, he could fix anything. He selflessly helped anyone that needed a hand and was the first to jump in and problem solve when needed.

He volunteered with the United States Army and served in Vietnam in 1968-69. He was honorably discharged in 1970. He spent many years silently mourning his fellow soldiers that never returned. Pete worked as a carpenter and foreman with the Carpenter's Union in Westchester until his retirement. Though he never really stopped working.

In 1981 he married Amy (Geyer) Berg,

before moving to Fishkill in 1984.

Pete was predeceased by his parents August and Eleanor (Quill) Berg. He is survived by his wife and children, Peter G. Berg (NJ), Tracy Berg Bagnato (NJ), Eric Berg (AR) and Evan Berg (NY). His sister Marilyn Sullivan (NY), 8 grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

Pete was known by many as they watched him walk his varied paths through life. He was a member of Sunup Rod and Gun Club and The Dutchess Cruisers.

His family would like to thank the First Responders of Fishkill, amazing neighbors that jumped in to help selflessly on Feb 23rd, the compassionate medical personnel at Castle Point, and West Haven VA hospitals as well as all members of the military that served and continue to serve our country.

The family would like to grieve in private and invite all that knew him to stop by the "house that Pete built," at any time to pay their respects.

May this proud soldier find peace as he journeys on.

Arrangements are under the direction of McHoul Funeral Home of Fishkill, Inc., 1089 Main Street, Fishkill, NY. For online tributes, visit www.mchoulfuneralhome.com.

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Karla, German Shepherd Dog Mix. Adult, 3-8 yrs, Female, Medium 26-60 lbs, short hair, color, Black. She's Affectionate, Playful, Athletic, Protective, Smart and Loyal. Adopt: ARF, Simons Lane, Beacon NY

PETS

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Gabby: Domestic Short Hair Cat. Senior 8+ yrs, Female,small 6 lbs, color: Tortoiseshell, Calico. She's Curious, Friendly, Playful, Athletic, Smart and Funny. Adopt: ARF, Simons Lane, Beacon, NY

Champ, Dachshund & Terrier Mix. Adult 3-8 yrs, Male, Small 0-25 lbs, Medium coat, color, White/Cream, Red/Chestnut/Orange. He's Friendly, Loyal, Loves kisses, Protective and Affectionate. Adopt: ARF, Simons Lane, Beacon NY

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COSTA, KAREN	133200-6065-04-792368-0000		LAWLOR, JENNIFER L	134689-6057-07-692964-0000	
BORSCHER, ERIC	133200-6065-04-800400-0000		LAWLOR, JOHN H		
OBSZARNY, CHRISTOPHER E	133200-6065-08-766893-0000		RABOY, SVETLANA	134689-6059-08-975877-0000	
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LAUB, CRAIG B	133200-6163-03-484453-0000		DITTENHOEFER, JOYCE F	134689-6159-02-936506-0000	
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MAX DEVELOPERS LLC,	133200-6164-02-890593-0000		SHERBAN, GLORIAM		
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MURPHY, MICHAEL L RM			AUSTIN, SHIRLEY		
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65 67 69 PARKSVILLE LLC,	134400-6463-01-449612-0000		DUTCHESS COUNTY,	135400-6962-00-095617-0000	
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that's italian!

by luigi coppola



Pedal to the metal

Mom wears down a policeman during a traffic stop.

The other day I was stopped by a police officer because I had a tail light out. As I was waiting for my ticket to be processed, I remembered when my mother was pulled over for speeding in front of Marist College (now Marist University) many years ago.

I was in the restaurant kitchen prepping something. I heard the kitchen screen door open and slam shut. My mother came into the restaurant and was mumbling to herself. She had a Price Chopper bag in her hand and threw the bag on my father's prep table. She was very clearly angry about something. Worried that she was angry with me, I chose to ignore her mood for fear of retribution. Something that I was very familiar with.

As she walked past me she continued to mumble about something and proceeded through the dining room and into the bathroom. Amazed that she didn't even say hello, I went back to work knowing full well that when she came out of the bathroom I would be told what was wrong. I also braced myself for what I was sure was going to be a great story.

When she came out of the bathroom, she marched through the dining room, into the kitchen, and through open the swinging doors that separated the kitchen from the dining room.

The door slammed against the wall. I knew I was in for a treat.

Apparently, Mom was just stopped in front of Marist College for speeding.

My mother had a bit of a lead foot. She was always in a hurry and always told us she had so much to do, even though she really didn't. Picture the scene if you would: My mother, who was a tiny, 5 foot 1 inch woman, is in her car, in a hurry of course, driving toward the Price Chopper on South Road on a mission for my father. This time it was to buy fresh artichokes. She has her seat belt pulled tight, she is holding onto the steering wheel with her Vulcan death grip and is playing Mario Lanza on the CD player in the car.

Mom had a funny way of driving. She would constantly rock the steering wheel back and forth very slightly. Almost like you would shake your leg when you were nervous.

Anyway, she's driving South on Route 9, passes Marist College and goes through a yellow light. She is in a 30 mph zone and is probably doing close to 45. Naturally, there is a police officer nearby and he proceeds to pull her over.

This is how I perceived the conversation:

Officer: License and registration, please.

Mom: Why?

Officer: License and registration, please.

Mom: Ia no wuzza speeding.

Officer: License and registration, please.

Mom: You don't have to give me a ticket. That's OK.

Officer: License and registration, please.

Mom: That's OK. Listen, I gotta get the artichokes for my husband.

Officer: License and registration, please.

Mom: Listen, Pop is a gonna getta mad if I no get the artichokes to him on time.

Officer: Lady, please get out of the car.

Mom: Why?

Officer: Lady I'm getting mad, Please give me your license and registration or I'm gonna have to cuff you.

Mom: Why you getting so mad? Im a just going to get the artichokes for my husband? You don't have to give me a ticket. That's OK. Don't worry about it.

Officer: Lady, please. Just give me your freaking license and registration.

Mom: You no understand. You don't have to give me a ticket because Pop he's a gonna get mad if Ima not back fast with the artichokes.

Officer: Please get out of the car, I have to frisk you.

Mom: No you toucha me! I know what you have in mind. You leave me alone.

Officer: Please, lady, just give me your license.

Mom: I tolda you. You no have to give me a ticket. That'sa OK.

Officer: Lady, If you don't give me your license, I will have to arrest you.

Mom: OK. Im a gonna give you my license, but you no gonna give me a ticket, OK?

Officer: OK, Lady.

Mom: You gotta promise me. OK?

Officer: I promise! Just give me the freaking license!

After a few minutes the officer comes back to the car:

Officer: I just checked you out, Mrs. Coppola. Everything seems OK. You've got to make sure you drive slower, OK?

Mom: OK. You no giva me the ticket?

Officer: You going to drive slower?

Mom: Yeah. Don't worry.

Officer: Mrs. Coppola, please take it easy.

Don't speed. I'm gonna let you go, but you take it easy, OK?

Mom: Come here. (she pinches his cheek) You a gooda boy. Your mother is a proud ofa you. I no gonna speed no more.

Officer: Thanks Mrs. Coppola. Just take it easy, OK?

Mom: Ya. Im a gonna take it easy as soon as I getta Pop his artichokes. Caio!

I can imagine the poor officer sitting in his car shaking his head as my mother sped off, thinking people shoot at me and it is less aggravating than that lady.

Needless to say, my mother sped to the Price Chopper got the artichokes for Pop and sped back to the restaurant. I have to say the artichokes were very good. Enjoy the recipe for Pop's Stuffed Artichokes.

Stuffed artichokes

- Ingredients**
- 6 whole artichokes
 - 3 slices Italian bread, cubed
 - 1 clove garlic, minced
 - 1/8 cup chopped fresh parsley
 - 1/4 cup grated Romano cheese
 - 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
 - 5 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
 - salt and pepper to taste

Directions

Cut the tips of artichoke leaves to take off the pointy tips, and cut off the stems. Peel the stem with a potato peeler. Fill your sink with water and soak the artichokes for about 20 minutes. Drain and shake off excess water. Holding artichoke firmly by base, firmly slap the top of it on a hard surface like a cutting board a couple of times. This will open the artichoke so it can be stuffed.

In a bowl combine bread cubes, garlic, parsley, Romano cheese, oregano, 2 tablespoons vegetable oil, salt and pepper; mix well by hand.

Press about 1/2 cup of stuffing into each artichoke center. Tightly pack stuffed artichokes together in a large pan or stainless steel tray. Add enough water to reach half way up artichokes and add 3 tablespoons oil and the stem. Cover the pan with aluminum foil or a cover

Bring to a boil over high heat; reduce heat to low and simmer, for 1 hour, or until leaves pull out easily.

Serve in a bowl with grated cheese and ladle the broth in the bowl pouring over the stuffing. Served with a wedge of Italian bread.

Luigi Coppola is one of five brothers born to Francesca and Antonio Coppola. The Coppola family came to America from Naples, Italy in 1954. Antonio and his brothers opened their first restaurant in Poughkeepsie in 1961. Visit their website at www.coppolas.net.

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REQUEST FOR BIDS NOTICE
The Purchasing Agent, County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of sealed bids for: Bid#RFB-DCP-27-26
Freightliner OEM Replacement Parts for Dutchess County Public Transit Vehicles

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Bids will be received until 2:00 p.m. on the 24th day of March 2026 at the Dutchess County Division of Central Services, 378 Violet Avenue, Suite 2, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601. Specifications and bid forms may be obtained by visiting our website <http://www.dutchessny.gov>, selecting "Government", then selecting

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The deadline for Legals is every Monday @ 12 noon for a Wednesday Publication* *When a public holiday falls on a Monday the deadline becomes Friday at noon.

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HUDSON VALLEY NATURALIST

by FRANCINE WIZNER



Was Saint Patrick a snake whisperer?

Analyzing the legend behind Saint Patrick's Day

Even though it has the same number of days as six other months, March always seems like the longest of the year. Saint Patrick's Day Festivities offer a respite as we recover from the long, frosty winter. The Dutchess County St. Patrick's Parade Committee (DCSPPC, Inc. a 501(C)(3)) sponsors an Irish-themed decorating contest. Three businesses and three homes will be awarded top honors for their displays of Irish Spirit on March 6. The St. Patrick's Day Parade will be March 7. Further information about those events can be found at www.dcsppc.org and <https://www.facebook.com/DutchessCountyStPatricksParadeCommittee>.

Another fun and educational way to brighten things up is with themed activities for the upcoming Saint Patrick's Holiday on March 17. Making dyed carnations and fluorescent daisies are favorites. They're great for demonstrating plants' vascular systems.

Saint Patrick

For a multidisciplinary connection, I prefer to focus on eponymous reason for the day: Saint Patrick. The celebration honors the missionary who converted Ireland to Christianity during the 5th Century A.D. According to legend, Saint Patrick (ca. 385-461 CE) used the three-leaf shamrock to represent the Holy Trinity, as well as chased serpents into the sea after they attacked him.

Neither shamrocks nor snakes

Although there are pictures of Saint Patrick holding a shamrock, there is no record of his involvement with the plant when he lived.

The association of Saint Patrick with shamrocks is folklore. The same goes for the snakes.

It is true that there are no Irish Snakes. In fact, Ireland only has two species of land-dwelling reptiles. They are the Viviparous Lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) and the Slow Worm (*Anguis fragilis*). The Viviparous Lizard has been in Ireland 10,000 years. The Slow Worm is actually a legless lizard that was introduced to Ireland in 1970.

An unlikely claim

Ireland's surrounding waters are impassable barriers for terrestrial reptiles. Although land bridges once connected Ireland and Britain to Europe, that was 8,500 years ago, and snakes colonize slowly. Also, the island-nation lacks fossilized snake remains, which have been found many other places. There is no trace evidence to suggest that snakes ever existed in Ireland; ergo, the claim that Saint Patrick gave them their "marching" orders is unsupported.

Another interpretation

Serpents are symbols of evil in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Genesis portrays a snake slyly convincing Eve to eat fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, despite explicit instructions against such action. In Greek Mythology, the Gorgons have hair made of venomous snakes, and looking upon them turns the viewer to stone.

Serpents are also linked to practices of "heathens." Heathens were polytheistic early pre-Christian peoples who lived in the lands around what is now called the North



A stained-glass window at St. Benin's Church in Ireland pictures St. Patrick holding a shamrock.

-Photo by Andreas F. Borchert, CC



A Northern Water Snake in Clinton Corners.

-Photo by Glen White.



The Northern Red-bellied Snake is harmless and is a friend of the garden.

-Photo by John P. Vanek

Sea. They performed ritual sacrifices to honor gods or to gain their favor for purposes such as peace, victory, or good sailing weather.

Saint Patrick converted many heathens to Christianity. In this context, snakes are a metaphor for heathens. That is an opportunity to include cross-curricular English and History learning while celebrating Saint Patrick's Day.

S-S-Speaking of snakes

It would be unwise for someone to release their pet snake in Ireland. Alien species present a risk to well-established fauna. The isolated nature of an island population makes Ireland highly vulnerable to an introduction of a non-native species.

It looks like a snake...

You can find out more about legless lizards (like the Slow Worm in Ireland) with the "Do Now" 4 New Legless Lizards Discovered in California. As with other exercises found in the book, Life Science "Do-Nows" and "Exit Tickets": 180 Days of Warm-Up and Closure Activities, learners generate context-based guesses to fill in the blanks of a reading selection. The activity can be used to teach about classification, evolution, or Saint Patrick's Day!

Snakes and legless lizards share a resemblance, but are only distantly related. If you trace their evolutionary history back far enough, snakes and legless lizards descended from lizards, but they each lost their legs independently.

Dutchess County is 'Snake-Rich'

Regardless of any snake-chasing done by the saint, Dutchess County is "Snake-Rich" according to Zoologist John P. Vanek of

New York Natural Heritage Program and SUNY College of Environmental Science & Forestry. Of the 17 snake species that occur in New York, 14 can be found in Dutchess. According to Vanek, our county is not home to legless lizards. If you do see one here, it might be an unusual happenstance ... or Luck O' The Irish.

(Note: The majority of snakes in New York are harmless. Only the Timber Rattlesnake and Copperhead pose a risk to humans in Dutchess County. If you encounter a snake, give them space, walk around, and carry on. You can later reminisce about your encounter with one of the last truly wild denizens of the Hudson Valley.)

Francine Wizner is a native of the Hudson Valley. She grew up in the Catskills of Greene County and spent over 3 decades teaching in Ulster County. She creates science-themed instructional materials and books, as well as being a Citizen Scientist in the management of her current home in an enchanted woodland of Dutchess County.

Find her at <https://medium.com/@wiznerf>, <https://substack.com/@gkatzchronicle>, and <https://www.pleasantvalleymaplelodging.com>.

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Special Puppet Show: 'The Doubtful Sprout' set for March 29

Get ready to explore the world under your feet in this underground puppet adventure from award-winning puppeteer Liz Joyce! "The Doubtful Sprout" will take place March 29, 10 a.m. at Mid-Hudson Discovery Museum, 75 North Water St., Poughkeepsie. For more information, and to register, visit mhdm.org.

Tunnel down with Worm and Sprout as

they discover the mysterious life found inside soil. Along the way, kids help figure out the secrets that help Sprout grow. Joyce brings this ecological wonderland to life with multiple puppetry styles, projections, and song. For ages 3-8 years old.

The Doubtful Sprout is funded in part by a Family Grant from The Jim Henson Foundation.