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NY State launches private well PFAS testing, mitigation rebate pilot program

Governor Kathy Hochul announced that residents in Dutchess and Putnam Counties who get their drinking water from private wells can apply for free per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) testing. If mitigation is necessary, they will be eligible for a rebate to install a PFAS water treatment system or connect to a public water supply.

The New York State Private Well PFAS Testing and Mitigation Rebate Pilot Program, helping fulfill the Governor's 2025 State of the State commitment, will also be accepting applications in Orange, Suffolk, Ulster and Westchester over the coming months.

"My administration is committed to protecting the health of New Yorkers by tackling emerging contaminants in drinking water," Governor Hochul said. "As we continue to learn more about the adverse health effects of PFAS, New York State is taking unprecedented steps to protect our communities. We're working with counties to address PFAS and provide peace of mind for private well users including those in small and disadvantaged communities."

The New York State Department of Health, in partnership with the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC), has budgeted \$1.5 million per county to support this pilot project. These funds will support a limited number of participants in six counties selected for the pilot because they have large numbers of private wells and a higher likelihood of PFAS contamination.

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino said, "We encourage all Dutchess County residents who rely on private well water to take advantage of this opportunity to have their water tested at no cost through this important New York State pilot program. Testing your well is a critical step in protecting your family from the potential risks posed by 'forever chemicals,' and state rebates are available to help cover treatment costs if needed."

Eligible participants can have their private well tested for PFAS by NYS DOH at no cost. If PFAS test results indicate perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) or perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) levels at or above the current New York State public drinking water standards of 10 parts per trillion (or nanograms per liter), participants can apply for a rebate once the water treatment project is complete. Participants may receive up to \$5,000 for a PFAS water treatment system or up to \$10,000 to connect to a public water supply.

Eligible participants include those who own or rent property with a private well. Additional eligibility requirements are found on the Department of Health website.

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Parade, syrup contest, vendors highlight annual Sugar Maple Celebration at Sharpe Reservation



Pete Salmansohn (left) and Julian Morgan (as Dr. William Sharpe) lead the parade during a previous Sugar Maple Celebration.

-Photo courtesy The Fresh Air Fund's Sharpe Reservation

By Kristine Coulter

The annual Sugar Maple Celebration will be held at The Fresh Air Fund's Sharpe Reservation in Fishkill on Saturday, March 28, from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. This is the public's chance to see how maple sugar is made and to see some of the more than 2,000 acres of this site with its lakes, ponds, streams and trails. Each summer, children from New York City's underserved communities come

to Sharpe Reservation to explore the outdoors, make friends and learn new skills, according to organizers. Throughout the year, school groups and community members participate in environmental education programs, it was noted.

"Throughout the day we will have storytellers and live animal shows on stage in the Blavatsnik Center. Visitors can also enjoy our traditional Farmers Market

Vendor Hall, the annual Maple Syrup Judging Contest, the Maple Parade, food trucks, and fresh waffles made by the Stony Ground 4-H Club. And of course, we'll have maple syrup demonstrations in the sugar shack," said Timothy Stanley, Sharpe Reservation Director.

This is the 21st year the event is being held.

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CELEBRATING 250 YEARS OF AMERICA

Town of Fishkill residents can tour historic sites with passport book, earn a pin

By Kristine Coulter

The first part of the Town of Fishkill's America 250 celebration has started with the Town of Fishkill Passport book. The books were delivered to town residents by members of the Town of Fishkill Highway Department, Buildings and Grounds and volunteers. Town of Fishkill Supervisor Ozzy Albra and Highway Department Superintendent Carmine Istvan also hand-delivered some of the passports.

"The reaction has been strongly positive," said Albra.

Istvan echoed those sentiments. "There has been a lot of positive feedback. Everybody loves the idea."

With the passport book, one can visit and learn about historical sites in the town. Then, check it off as one visits each of the sites.

Some of the sites included in the book are:

- Bannerman Island, located in the Hudson River, Route 9D north of

Breakneck

- Mount Gulian, 145 Sterling St., Beacon

- Stony Kill Farm, 79 Farmstead Lane, Wappingers Falls

- Kip House, Old Glenham Road, Fishkill

- Texaco Research Center, Old Glenham Road, Fishkill

- Brinckerhoff House, Route 52 and Route 82 intersection, Fishkill

- Mount Beacon Monument, on Mount Beacon

When one has visited the sites receive a 250th pin by going to the Fishkill Town Hall, 807 Route 52. Stop by the Supervisor's Office and pick up a pin, said Albra.

"It's a beautiful pin" and "it's high quality," added Albra.

"My favorite location, as Fishkill Historical Society President, is the Van Wyck House Homestead - that's our home base," remarked Istvan.

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PASSPORT



TOWN OF FISHKILL

America 250

The Town of Fishkill's Passport book celebrates 250 years of America.

-Courtesy image

CELEBRATING 250 YEARS OF AMERICA

Town of Fishkill residents can tour historic sites with passport book



Among the historic sites listed in the Town of Fishkill's Passport book, which celebrates 250 years of America, are Stony Kill Farm (above) and Mount Gulian Historic Site (left).

-Archive photos

Continued from cover

"Complete as much [as you can], you don't have to do everything. The objective is to bring community pride..." said Albra.

"The Town of Fishkill is heavily invested in the celebration of the 250th," the supervisor remarked during a recent town board meeting.

Albra shared, "We're doing more than counties. We're doing more than a lot of municipalities. We want you to participate in this. I thank my board members,

past and present, for getting this operation going. This took about four or five years to figure this stuff out." He thanked the employees and residents at the Senior Center who put the packets together.

Other events coming this year to celebrate 250 years of America are:

- Fishkill Historical Society Independence Gala, April 18, from 5-9 p.m. at Rombout Fire Company Station #1, 901 Main St., in Fishkill. For more information, visit <http://fishkillhistoricalsociety.org> or contact trustee@fishkillhistoricalsociety.org.

- Event at Heritage Financial Park, June 5 at 6 p.m. The event will include historical readings, a musket volley, a fireworks display and more. The event is free. It is described by Fishkill officials as the "premiere 250th event anywhere in the Hudson Valley."

- Installation of Replica of George Washington's Sword, this Fall. Fishkill resident John Bailey forged the sword Washington is holding in the famous painting, *Washington Crossing the Delaware*. The painting, the work of artist Emanuel Leutze, depicts

Washington crossing the Delaware River on Dec. 25, Christmas night, during the American Revolution. The piece of art is at The Met Fifth Avenue in Gallery 760 in Manhattan.

According to the MET website, "This epic painting honors a critical turning point in the American colonists' war against Great Britain. It was a great success in Leutze's native Germany—given the country's own revolutionary fervor of the period—as well as in the United States, where it quickly became an iconic image, frequently recast by later artists."

Family history, building bonds are catalysts for Kim Williams

By Dina Pace

For Kimberley Williams, community involvement has never been something separate from her professional life - it is simply part of who she is. As the Senior Vice President of Retail Operations and Marketing for Williams Lumber & Home Centers, a third-generation family business serving the Hudson Valley and Catskill Region for nearly 80 years, Williams has spent decades supporting both customers and communities across the region.

When asked about the organizations she has supported, Williams is quick to point out that the list reflects the many communities her company serves. Williams Lumber itself regularly supports a wide range of local causes, including regional charities, first responder organizations, and community initiatives such as Trees for Troops, which helps provide Christmas trees to military families, and Girls and Boy Scout troops throughout the region.

"Our communities are the reason our

company has been able to thrive for eight decades," Williams says. "Supporting the organizations and people who make this region so special has always been part of our mission."

That philosophy, she explains, was shaped early in life by watching the example set by her parents and grandparents. The Williams family story began in 1946 when her grandfather, Stan Williams, purchased Gibson Lumber on East Market Street in Rhinebeck. What started as a single location eventually grew - under the leadership of her father, Sandy Williams - into a network of seven stores serving communities throughout the Hudson Valley and Catskills.

"My parents believed deeply in showing up for your community," Williams explains. "My father not only helped grow the company, but also volunteered as a first responder and played a vital role in bringing 911 emergency services to our region. That kind of commitment to help-



A large crowd was on hand at the Beekman Arms in Rhinebeck on March 12 to congratulate Kim Williams on winning the annual Good Egg Award. From left are Rhinebeck Area Chamber of Commerce President Luciano Valdivia, Chamber Executive Director Liana Galardi, Williams, and Rhinebeck Mayor Gary Bassett.

-Photo by Curtis Schmidt

ing others was something we grew up seeing every day."

Those early examples created a lasting impression. For Williams, volunteering and supporting local organizations has never felt like an obligation - it simply feels like the right thing to do.

"You help because someone needs help," she says. "If you're fortunate enough to have the ability to contribute - whether that's time, resources, or simply bringing people together - you should."

While she is honored to receive the Good Egg Award from the Rhinebeck Chamber of Commerce, Williams says the recognition really belongs to the many people who have worked alongside her over the years.

"This award reflects the efforts of so many people - our associates, our family, and the countless volunteers who quietly make our communities stronger every day," she said.

For Williams, the most meaningful part

of volunteering is not the recognition, but the relationships it creates.

"One of the greatest gifts of being involved in community organizations is meeting people you might never have met otherwise," she says. "You get to work alongside individuals and families who care deeply about making things better for others."

Over time, those shared efforts often turn into lasting friendships and connections. "When you work together toward something positive - whether it's supporting a local charity, helping a family in need, or strengthening a community organization - you build bonds that go far beyond the moment."

For Williams, that sense of connection is what truly defines community - and why she remains committed to giving back.

"At the end of the day," she says, "being part of a community means helping to take care of it."



IMPACT
PR & Communications

Mountain View Strategic Wealth Hosts Inaugural MVP Awards Ceremony







See story page 8

Parade, syrup contest, vendors highlight annual Sugar Maple Celebration at Sharpe Reservation



Andrew Stanley (front) and Pat Farrell tap black walnut trees.

A Sugar Maple Celebration attendee with a new crown made at last year's event. His shirt reads: "Weekend Forecast 100% Chance of Maple Tree Tapping."

-Photos courtesy The Fresh Air Fund's Sharpe Reservation

Continued from cover

Stanley explained via email, "This year we expanded our sugar bush and now tap over 200 maple trees and more than 40 black walnut trees. After a very cold winter, it took a few days for the trees to thaw, but once they did the sap began running strong over the past two weeks. With this recent warm spell, the season may continue for another week or two before the trees begin to bud. Sugar makers hope for four to six weeks of cold nights and warm days for the best sap flows."

More than a dozen schools have already attended the site's Winter Day programs, noted Stanley.

"Each class taps a maple tree and watches the sap begin to drip. The sound of that first drop hitting the bottom of the tin bucket is unforgettable—a reminder that the forest is awakening, and winter is passing the baton to spring," he remarked.

Governor Kathy Hochul highlighted the state's upcoming Maple Weekends — which will take place March 21-22 and March 28-29.

Hochul said in a press release, "I encourage New Yorkers to participate in Maple Weekends, learn more about the sugaring process, sample some of our world-class items and stop by their local Welcome Center for special promotions that feature our maple community." There will be additional events and activities taking place at New York's Welcome Centers.

New York State ranks second in the nation in maple production, and in 2025, the industry produced 829,000 gallons, according to the Governor's Office.

"Sharpe Reservation is owned and operated by The Fresh Air Fund, whose mission is to give children from New York City the opportunity to experience summer camp and connect with nature.

We have an amazing program and a dedicated staff who are always eager to share their knowledge. This event is a special opportunity for us to open Sharpe to the community and celebrate the maple tree and the sweet gift the forest gives each spring," said Stanley. He described the summer months coming "alive with Fresh Air campers from New York City who spend their days exploring the woods, swimming, and experiencing the joy of summer camp."

He added, "For many of our guests, visiting Sharpe is an annual tradition—a time when old friends reconnect, and new friendships begin. Throughout the year, Sharpe hosts outdoor education programs for school groups, youth organizations, scouts, and church groups, and serves as a retreat center for day and overnight conferences in a natural setting."

The Fresh Air Fund's Sharpe Reservation is located at 436 Van Wyck Lake Road in Fishkill.

NY State launches private well PFAS testing, mitigation rebate pilot program

Continued from cover

Dutchess County private well users can apply online through the New York State Department of Health's website. The application period will remain open while funding is available. Completed applications will be reviewed in the order they are received.

People who get drinking water from a public water system are not eligible for this program. The New York State Department of Health and the Dutchess County Department of Health have a sep-

arate public drinking water compliance program in place requiring local water systems to monitor and address PFAS and other contaminants, it was stated.

Private well owners should regularly test wells for bacteria at least once a year, and other contaminants every three to five years, to ensure water is suitable for household use, according to County officials.

To learn more about New York's Private Well PFAS Testing and Mitigation Pilot Program at health.ny.gov/PrivateWellPFAS.

Cary-led study reveals ticks carrying more than one pathogen are on rise

Tick-borne diseases are on the rise in the northeastern U.S., with many ticks carrying more than one pathogen. So reports a recent analysis published in "Ecosphere" by researchers at Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies in Millbrook and the SUNY Center for Vector-Borne Diseases at Upstate Medical University.

As part of the study, led by Cary Institute disease ecologist Shannon LaDeau, more than 2,000 black-legged ticks were screened for a suite of 16 pathogens at the Upstate Tick Testing Laboratory. Ticks were collected over nine years from forested plots at the Cary Institute's campus. The site is home to a long-term research project on the ecology of tick-borne disease.

The study focused on nymphal ticks, the life stage most likely to spread tick-borne diseases to people. "Rates of infection tend to be even higher in adult ticks because they have more opportunities to feed and acquire pathogens," LaDeau notes. "But they are also bigger and so easier for people to detect and remove before they spread disease."

A key finding is that more nymphal ticks are carrying multiple pathogens. Of the thousands of ticks that were collected between 2014 and 2022, roughly 1 in 10 tested positive for at least two disease-causing pathogens.

"Overall, it's a concerning co-infection rate that has been increasing over time," LaDeau noted.

Most commonly found together were *Borrelia burgdorferi*, the bacterium that causes Lyme disease, and *Babesia*

microti, a parasite that causes a malaria-like disease known as babesiosis. Co-infection with these two pathogens was more frequent than expected, approaching 11% by the end of the study.

These results have important public health implications because the two pathogens require different treatments. Lyme disease is treated with antibiotics such as doxycycline, while *Babesia* infections are treated with antiparasitic medications.

"In the Northeast, when someone gets sick after a tick bite, medical professionals should be testing for both pathogens to ensure proper diagnosis and treatment," said LaDeau.

More than 38% of the ticks tested were capable of spreading at least one disease-causing pathogen to people.

"The probability of being exposed to a pathogen by a single bite from a nymphal tick is approaching 40%," said coauthor Richard Ostfeld, a disease ecologist at Cary Institute who has been studying tick-borne diseases for decades. "That seems uncomfortably high. These ticks are so small, most people don't even realize when one is feeding on them."

Babesia microti, the parasite behind babesiosis, was the most common, found in more than 21% of the nymphal ticks that were tested. Babesiosis is characterized by fever, chills, sweating, muscle pain, fatigue, and anemia. Most cases are mild, but occasionally, babesiosis can be fatal. *Babesia* was more widespread than the researchers expected; past research had placed this parasite's prevalence at less than 10%.

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GENERAC

Viewpoints

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Policy on letters:

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- Letters that include personal attacks will not be published, with the exception of political figures.
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- 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.

Beacon Highway Department met winter weather challenge 'head-on'

To the Editor:

Once again Mother Nature tried to prove that she is in charge and will challenge us in every way possible. And, once again, the Beacon Highway Department met that challenge head-on.

It was a difficult winter—one we will not soon forget. But while many of us cozied up next to a fireplace or sat sipping a hot cup of tea or cappuccino, the members of this department swung into action—working tirelessly—to keep our streets clear and safe.

Michael Manzi, your crews did it again! How fortunate is Beacon to have such dedicated members of this community.

Charles Dunn
Beacon

Garden Volunteer meeting set for April 22

Learn about the many ways to be involved in the gardens at The Homes of Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, the Beatrix Farrand Garden at Bellefield and the Vanderbilt formal gardens at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, April 22 at the Wallace

Visitor Center, Roosevelt Vanderbilt National Historic Site in Hyde Park.

No experience is necessary and schedules are flexible. Volunteers learn, make new friends and give back to the community.

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Empire Training Center for the Arts opens applications for Arts Administration Program

Following the success of their Stagecraft and Technology program in 2025, Poughkeepsie-based workforce development initiative Empire Training Center for the Arts (ETCA) has announced the launch of their Arts Administration training program, now accepting applications. The deadline to apply is March 31.

The program is designed for adults interested in administrative careers in the performing arts and live entertainment, offering training in the areas of Fundraising, Communications, and Company Management. Applications are open to all adults ages 18 and over who have received a high school diploma or GED. No previous experience in performing arts or live entertainment is required.

The program runs from April 21 through August. From April through early summer, participants engage in training three days per week. As part of the program, participants then transition into a full-time, seasonal, paid employment opportunity with New York Stage & Film, working on their summer season at Marist University.

Empire Training Center for the Arts (ETCA), co-founded by veteran arts leaders Trish Santini and Frank Butler, is in response to a longstanding need to provide professional training for communities historically underrepresented in the arts, to develop well-prepared technical and administrative employees, and to create a more equitable arts sector.

ETCA's inaugural training program launched in July 2025, with graduates entering the workforce this past December. To date, ETCA graduates have received work opportunities at PS21: Center for Contemporary Performance, Theater for the New City, Northern Dutchess Symphony Orchestra, Hudson Valley Symphony Orchestra, Jazz in the Valley, Beacon Bonfire, The Stissing Center for Arts and Culture, and The Chance.

"On the heels of the success of our first Stagecraft and Technology program, we are now turning our attention to supporting the next generation of arts administration professionals. Once again, our program is designed to provide high-quality skills training coupled with employment opportunities and network building -- all to provide the greatest potential for our graduates to build meaningful careers. We are very excited about this partnership with New York Stage & Film and are grateful to Ian and the entire team at S&F for their generosity and support of our next cohort of students," said Trish Santini, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Empire Training Center for the Arts.

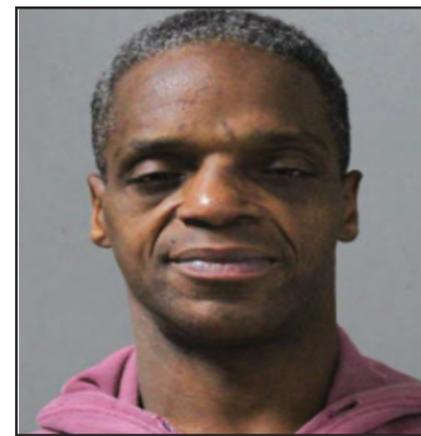
"The training at Empire Training Center for the Arts is first-rate, and we look forward to working with their graduates this summer as we produce and develop a full lineup of film, television, musicals, and plays for our 41st season in Poughkeepsie!" Ian Belknap, Artistic Director, New York Stage & Film, remarked.

D.A.: Jury convicts 'Onsight' of first-degree murder

Dutchess County District Attorney Anthony Parisi announced on March 12, following nine days of testimony and just over three hours of deliberations, a Dutchess County jury convicted 52-year-old Shrone Wright, also known as "Onsight" of Poughkeepsie, of the crime of first-degree manslaughter for causing the death of 50-year-old William Gearhart, also known as "Captain Bill."

District Attorney Anthony Parisi said, "William Gearhart lost his life as the result of a senseless act of violence on a Poughkeepsie street. Today the jury carefully weighed the evidence and held the defendant accountable for that fatal act. While nothing can restore Mr. Gearhart to his family, this verdict affirms that violence of this kind will be met with accountability in Dutchess County. I want to commend the jurors for their service and thank the prosecutors, investigators, and law enforcement partners who worked tirelessly to seek justice in this case."

According to the D.A.'s Office, the jury concluded that on the evening of November 6, 2024, in the City of Poughkeepsie, in the area of Pershing Avenue, the defendant engaged in a physical altercation with Gearhart and caused his death by a single stab wound to



A jury convicted Shrone Wright, also known as "Onsight," of first-degree murder.

-Photo courtesy of Dutchess County District Attorney's Office

Gearhart's upper torso.

The City of Poughkeepsie Police Department handled the investigation. The case was prosecuted by Unit Chief Frank Petramale and Senior Assistant District Attorney Robert DeMono. The trial was conducted in Dutchess County Court before the Honorable Jessica Segal, who has scheduled sentencing for May 12, it was stated.

Tioronda Garden Club to celebrate America's 250th with garden contest

The Tioronda Garden Club has announced a contest in celebration of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. To honor this historic milestone, members invite residents to participate in the Patriotic Garden Contest, which will showcase creativity, civic pride and the love of gardening.

Participants are encouraged to design and display gardens that reflect the spirit of America – past, present and future. Gardens using patriotic colors (red, white, blue, or purple flowers and incorporating flags, or symbolic elements inspired by the ideals of liberty and independence) are suggested.

The contest is open to all residents within the community. Garden types can be front yards, backyards or container gardens.

Judging criteria will include creativity, use of patriotic themes and overall visual impact. Judging will be done by the garden club executive team at the end of June.

The submission deadline is June 15. To enter one's garden, please call 914-456-6278. Leave your name, address and telephone contact information.

There will be a first, second and third place will. Certificates will be awarded to winning entries.

VETERANS NEWS WITH ADAM ROCHE

Honoring the women who have served our nation



As we celebrate Women’s History Month in March, we recognize the women who have helped shape our nation in countless ways. As a Marine and now the Director of the Dutchess County Office of Veterans Affairs, I’m proud to reflect on the remarkable role women have played in the U.S. Armed Forces. Women have defended our freedom, often quietly, often without recognition, but always with courage and commitment.

Throughout our nation’s history, military service has been viewed through the lens of men’s experiences. Women, though, also defended our country. Take the American Revolution, for example, when women supported the colonies’ fight for independence as nurses, messengers, and cooks. Some even took up arms for the cause, including Massachusetts’ Deborah Sampson, who disguised herself as a man and enlisted in Continental Army, serving from 1782-1783 under the name Robert Shurtliff before being honorably discharged.

During the Civil War, thousands of women brought care and compassion to soldiers, tending to their injuries and saving lives on both sides of the conflict. While some had loved ones fighting in harm’s way, others simply volunteered out of a sense of duty; no matter their motivation, every woman’s service was heroic and appreciated.

The 1900s brought with them more formal roles for women in the U.S. military during World War I, whether they worked as translators, nurses, or telephone operators, among other key duties. Non-combat roles expanded for American women in World War II, as newly created units – such as the Women’s Army Corps (WAC), the Navy’s Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES) and the Coast Guard’s Semper Paratus Always Read (SPAR) – attracted hundreds of thousands of women who took up critical roles like code-making, mechanical repair and aircraft ferrying.

The enthusiasm with which so many women served our country during these global military operations only reinforced that the strength of our Armed Forces has

never been defined by gender, but rather by the ability and devotion of those who selflessly sacrifice to protect their neighbors.

Over the years, roles for women in the military have expanded in operations worldwide, including during the Korean and Vietnam wars. They later became pilots and engineers; and, as military policy evolved, women began to assume leadership roles like commanders and unit leaders. They continue to serve in every branch and career field with ever-increasing responsibilities.

Unlike in colonial days, women in our Armed Forces are no longer a novelty; they’re a necessity, comprising approximately 16 percent of active-duty military personnel, flying combat missions, commanding ships, leading troops and helping shape the future of national defense.

Women’s contributions to our nation’s defense are all the more remarkable when you realize how many balance their military duty with responsibilities of family life. The uniform they wore during their military tenure did not define their commitment to serve; their dedication to make their community a better place is what makes them stand out.

The same is true at the County’s Office of Veterans Affairs, where we’re blessed to have two veterans, Deputy Director Julie Leslie and Veterans Service Officer Beth-Anne Canero, who continue to serve their fellow veterans.

Julie told me, “Being a female veteran means more than having worn the uniform—it means carrying a lifelong commitment to service, resilience, and leadership. We stepped forward in a place that once doubted us, proving that strength has no gender and courage has no limits. Even after the uniform comes off, the mission does not end. We continue to serve in our communities, our families and our country, showing the next generation that dedication, sacrifice, and patriotism are not moments in time but a lifelong promise.”

Added Beth-Anne: “We walked a road cleared by the courage of earlier generations whose service and sacrifices opened doors, forged a path, and lifted standards for every



Dutchess County Office of Veterans Affairs Deputy Director Julie Leslie counsels a local veteran at the recent Dutchess County Veteran Town Hall at American Legion Post 1302 in Poughkeepsie.

-Photo courtesy of Dutchess County Government

warrior who would follow. No matter who we were or what branch we served in, we took the same oath, executed with the same grit, and now have the same duty to pay it forward for our next generations of warriors. In the end, a veteran is defined not by identity, but by service, belonging, and a calling, a calling to once have served in uniform and now a calling to serve our communities as veterans.”

Sadly, our nation hasn’t always fully recognized the contributions of female veterans. Far too often, these women’s brave sacrifices didn’t receive the same appreciation as that of their male comrades. In Dutchess County, though, we honor all men and women who have kept us safe.

Last May during National Nurses Week, for example, County Executive Sue Serino and I celebrated City of Beacon resident Edie Meeks, one of approximately 9,000 women who served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War and received no recognition for their sacrifice upon their return.

Do you know of a deceased veteran –

male or female – worthy of Dutchess County’s recognition? County Executive Serino and I begin our 2026 series of Honor-A-Veteran ceremonies next month, again celebrating the lives and service of local departed servicemembers. Last August, Air Force Sgt. Michele AnnMarie Swarner Kinsell, a former Wappinger resident, was the first female recognized through our “Honor-A-Veteran” program, and we look forward to commemorating more local heroes this year. You can learn more about the program, including how to nominate a veteran, at dutchessny.gov/honoraveteran.

Every month, but particularly this March, I encourage you to thank the female veterans in your life and in Dutchess County. Take a moment and listen to their stories. Share their experiences with your children.

When we recognize the sacrifices made by our female veterans, we aren’t just recognizing their past; we ensure their personal histories will continue to inspire the next generation of courageous young women who will keep us free.

Dr. Andrew R. Guajardo appointed Dutchess County Medical Examiner

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino has appointed Andrew R. Guajardo, M.D. to serve as Medical Examiner within the County’s Department of Health. The Dutchess County Legislature unanimously approved the appointment at its March 9 board meeting.

Serino said, “I am pleased to welcome Dr. Guajardo as Dutchess County’s new Medical Examiner. We are grateful he has accepted this important responsibility, and I am confident that his professionalism, experience and commitment to public service will serve the residents of our community well in this new role.”

Dr. Guajardo, who grew up in the Hudson Valley, will return to the region to join Dutchess County Department of Health after serving with the Utah Office of the Medical Examiner, where he served as Assistant Medical Examiner starting in 2019 and has most recently served as Deputy Medical Examiner since 2024.

Dr. Guajardo holds triple board certifications in Anatomic Pathology, Neuropathology and Forensic Pathology. He earned his M.D. from New York

Medical College in Valhalla, NY in 2013, after earning his Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry with a concentration in Forensic Science and Toxicology from John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City. He completed his post-graduate medical training from 2013-2018 at the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, MD and later completed a fellowship in Forensic Pathology for the New Mexico Office of the Medical Investigator from 2018-2019. He is also an accomplished instructor, presenter and author of numerous publications.

Dr. Andrew R. Guajardo said, “I am honored to serve as Dutchess County’s Medical Examiner, and I thank County Executive Serino for this appointment. Throughout my career, I have worked with care, professionalism and respect for the families I’ve served. I’m grateful for the opportunity to return to Dutchess County and bring my experience to this role. I look forward to working with the County team to ensure this important work is carried out with compassion, integrity and a strong commitment to



Dr. Andrew R. Guajardo
-Photo courtesy of Dutchess County Gov’t

our community.”
The Dutchess County Medical Examiner’s Office (MEO) investigates

deaths that are sudden or unexpected, as well as natural deaths when the individual was not under a doctor’s care, and deaths resulting from homicide, suicide, or accidents. These investigations determine how and why a person died, providing families with clear and timely answers. In 2025, the MEO handled more than 1,500 cases, including 409 scene investigations and 450 cases requiring further review. The office conducted 53 autopsies, 75 external examinations, 119 death certifications, and three consultations.

Dr. Guajardo will officially begin as Medical Examiner on Monday, March 23. He replaces former Medical Examiner Dr. Dennis Chute, who retired last year. Deputy Medical Examiner Dr. Mary Grace Centeno has served as Medical Examiner during the interim.

Dr. Guajardo grew up in Hudson Valley, living in both Westchester County and Dutchess County. He returns to the area with his wife and daughter and their dogs to enjoy favorite pastimes of hiking, photography, road cycling and cooking.

Elks host 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. 20, 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.

Eggplant rollatini with salad, garlic knots and dessert will be served.

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HUDSON VALLEY NATURALIST

by Francine Wizner



This floral magnate is a gnat magnet

Jack-in-the-Pulpit is a tyrannical boss!

When I hiked more regularly with my retired friend Barbara, she used to point out the wildflowers along the way. She spotted Bluebells, Trilliums, and Lady's Slippers – and paid them homage before continuing the hike. I trekked along, with an, “oh, yeah” or “pretty,” in response to her glee. My purpose was the workout.

Since I've moved to a hermitage in Dutchess County, I enjoy more personal time, but I see Barbara less frequently. When she visits, I show her the enchanted woodland outside my door. I'm now excited by the displays of Trout Lilies and Wild Ginger Blossoms. How proud I am of the discoveries that I have learned to notice!

A flower like a BOSS

One of our local ephemerals, Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*), has a remarkable shape. The part that you might call a flower is a specialized structure. The central spike, or spadix, is “Jack”; the hooded canopy, or spathe, is the “Pulpit.” The spadix contains many tiny flowers at its base.

The spadix produces an aroma that attracts fungus gnats. The small flies are important pollinators in moist, shaded forest understories. Of course, pollinators are “working” for plants and are “compensated” with nectar as they assist with plants' reproduction. But *Arisaema triphyllum* exerts more control over that relationship. *A. triphyllum* is a tyrannical BOSS.

Carnegie, Gates, and *Triphyllum*

CEOs like Andrew Carnegie and Bill Gates are magnates who built empires in the steel industry and personal computing. Carnegie controlled mines and railroads; Gates managed operating systems and digital applications. Steel continues to be instrumental in numerous industries; Microsoft and Windows continue to lead in the computing market. Both Carnegie and Gates prioritized growth and profit over employee well-being.

Arisaema triphyllum is an inconspicuous forest dweller that is one of the most efficient managers of unpaid labor in eastern North America. The plant's spadix mimics the smell of mushrooms, which is where fungus gnats lay their eggs. The fungal smell is concentrated within the striped spathe, which also acts as a visual lure to entice the gnats to enter the dark, damp crevice. Upon entry, gnats lose their footing due to the spathe's waxy coating; they fall to the bottom.

Distressed at not finding any fungus upon which their future larvae can feed, the flies continually bounce off of the spadix as they struggle to escape. In so doing, they become covered with pollen. If they are lucky enough to find a hole at the bottom of the spathe, the gnat can fly off to pollinate the next *A. triphyllum*. However, sometimes there is no “escape hatch.”

Adaptive strategy

Andrew Carnegie embraced new technologies and controlled every step of production. Bill Gates prompted

Microsoft to move from software to an internet cloud focus. Likewise, innovation is key to the *A. triphyllum* “business model.” It changes its sex based on its “assets.”

Young, small plants are usually male. It takes less energy to make pollen than fruit. Once the plants have stored enough nutrients in their underground corm, they transition to large, healthy females, capable of growing berries. If a plant is damaged or the soil is poor, it can “downsize” back to a male, or even a non-flowering state, the following year to conserve resources.

Female *A. triphyllum* (Jill-in-the-pulpit) do not have a hole at the bottom of their spathe. Therefore, not only don't fungus gnats get “paid” with nectar, they toil to their death for the plant they were drawn to like a magnet. And *A. triphyllum* ensures their legacy survives the environment's harshest conditions.

Who's your Daddy?

No doubt the empires built by Carnegie and Gates are impressive. They dominated in their respective industries. The early spring forest floor is a specialized niche. And now we all know who commands fungus gnats.

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



Jack-in-the-Pulpit can change its sex to maximize energy. Once the male plants have stored enough nutrients in their underground corm, they transition to large, healthy females, capable of growing berries.

-Photo by Francine Wizner

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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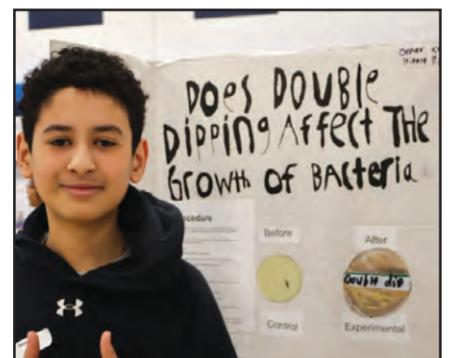
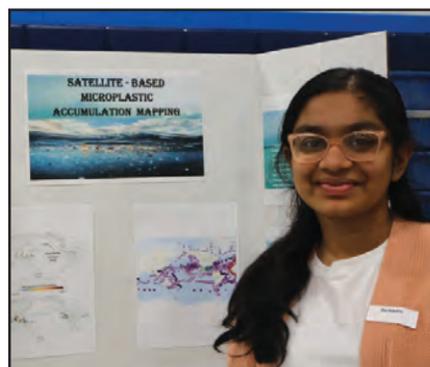
Microplastics, bacteria growth among some of the projects at Wappingers CSD science fair



The Wappingers Central School District held its annual Science Fair. Students in grades 5-12 shared their well-researched projects with judges and the community. “I am so proud of everyone involved in making this event happen,” said Wappingers CSD Superintendent Dr. Dwight Bonk. “Our students did a phenomenal job!”

Clockwise from top left, Dr. Bonk with students during the Science Fair. Students with their projects, which included growth of bacteria, and another one on microplastics.

-Courtesy photos Wappingers CSD



that's italian!

by luigi coppola

Palm trees and problems

The Coppola Clan ends their St. Thomas vacation with chaos at customs.



Some time ago, my wife and I went to the Millbrook DMV to get our "Real ID" driver's licenses. We had an appointment at 4:15 and showed up early. We got our number, and sat down. As we were waiting for our number to get called, the security guard got friendly with us and asked us if we had our info and reviewed what we had to make sure that we were ready for our turn. He asked us if we had a picture ID and naturally, we had our current driver's licenses. He spoke of being questioned about his ID in the summertime because he is Italian and gets very dark, and as such his picture doesn't match his face very well.

While we talked, it sparked a memory of when I was young and went on vacation to St. Thomas and the great Coppola international, domestic incident that occurred.

After New Year's my father would close the restaurant for two weeks and we would go on vacation. Somehow my father discovered St. Thomas in the US Virgin Islands before it was a thing. He would rent a condominium on the beach, and we would all go, my grandmother included. We had a great time, hanging out on the beach, snorkeling, fishing and swimming. Being on the beach so much, we would all get tanned very dark. In the afternoon, Pop would go up and cook us all lunch; and when it was ready we would enter to Italian music and a huge meal, usually followed by a nap then more beach time. It was great; while on the beach, my grandmother would sing Italian songs. If we went to a restaurant, she would find a piano and we would sing Italian songs. One time we were walking around the harbor and a homeless person played guitar and sang along to Italian songs he somehow knew.

The problems occurred when we were leaving St. Thomas.

The US Virgin Islands is a United States territory, so passports are not necessary. However, you still need to go through customs. So here we are, the Coppola Clan, eight persons strong, on line, in the sweltering heat, waiting our turn. Back then, customs in St. Thomas resembled a cattle farm, and we were being rustled through. You could almost hear the cows mooing, and it didn't smell pleasant, either. Naturally, my brother Vinny and I were acting up, making the experience even worse than it should have been.

So there we are: My father, my mother, both speaking with broken English; me and my brothers, sun-tanned dark; and my grandmother, who speaks no English at all, clutching her Nonna purse and her heavy winter overcoat. Get the picture?

First up my father and mother. My father hands over his papers, answers his questions in broken English, and is immediately flagged and has to go over to one side. My mother, seeing what has happened, grabs me and Vinny through the line. The officer asks me and Vinny our names, addresses, etc. We answer in perfect English and get waved through without so much of a mumble. As we were waved through, I asked my mother, "If Pop has to stay, who's going to make the lasagna?" Naturally our big worry.

Next up: my brothers; again, no problem, and they escort Nonna through also. At this point they just want to get this huge group of people through and really didn't care about any of us ... except Pop.

My father, seeing this, starts cursing out the

officers in half Italian, half English. Telling them, he wasn't Cuban, he was Italian. The officers, with their Caribbean accents, can't understand my father and my father can't understand them. Thank God, because at this point Pop was really cursing them out. My mother starts fumbling through her purse and pulls out Pop's passport or as they say "passaporta." Meanwhile, my grandmother is in the back praying the rosary.

When the officers were done interrogating Pop, he was waved through and rejoined the Coppola Clan.

Once we got on the other side, my grandmother removed the coat she had over her arm, revealing 6 bottles of rum she had sneaked through customs. Vinny and I were in shock. She came up to us as we had our mouths open; and as she laughed she gave each a smack across our cheeks.

With that, our flight was announced, just as we were making our way through. A five-minute routine checkpoint ended up being a hour-long ordeal. With that we boarded our flight for New York, thus ending the great Coppola international, domestic incident.

I'm sure I'm not the only one that has had experience like that. I'm sure my children could tell stories of me getting through the airport. It was never easy.

Anyway, enjoy this recipe of Pop's lasagna.

Lasagna Ingredients

- 2 32 oz. jars Coppola's Tuscan Sauce
- 1 lb. meatloaf mix
- 15 lasagna noodles
- 2 lbs. Ricotta
- 1 1/2 cups grated Parmesan

- 1 pound mozzarella, grated
- 4 egg yolks

Method

In a large nonstick frying pan, brown the meatloaf mix. Drain the fat and add two jars of sauce and let simmer, being sure to stir and break apart the ground meat. Let sit.

Heat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. In a large pot, boil water, and cook pasta close to al dente. In a large bowl, combine the ricotta and Parmesan and mix until well blended. Mix in egg yolks and set aside.

In a 13-by-9-inch baking dish, spread a thin layer of sauce and cover with noodles. Spread a layer of ricotta cheese mixture over noodles. Top with mozzarella, another layer of sauce, and repeat. The third layer should be topped with sauce and mozzarella. Cover and bake for 40 minutes; remove cover and bake for an additional 25 minutes. Remove from oven, and let stand for 20 minutes.

To serve, cut into squares, and serve with drizzled with more sauce. Add grated cheese to taste.

Serve with crusty Italian Bread and ice cold Pinot Grigio.

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. Luigi and his brothers Nick, John, Antonio and Vincent have carried on the family tradition in the way their parents taught them, using classic recipes taught to them at their apron strings. Visit their website at www.coppolas.net.

Bannerman Castle Trust gets ready to open new season of tours and events

The Bannerman Castle Trust (BCT), with offices & gallery at 150 Main St. in Beacon, has announced the upcoming 2026 schedule of tours and events on Bannerman Island. An incredible variety of great tours, programs, and events have been scheduled from Spring through Fall.

Proceeds from tours and all ticket sales help the BCT continue the mission to restore and preserve the historic structures and trails on Bannerman (a.k.a. Pollepel) Island - a popular destination for visitors looking for unique Hudson Valley experiences. Visitors can explore the island's historic trails, gardens and museum with experienced tour guides, and hike some trails on their own. The island is also a great place to enjoy a show or event including plays, concerts, movie nights, dinner events and environmental programs.

All tours begin aboard the BCT's tour boat, the MV Estuary Steward, which leaves from the Beacon dock (across from the Beacon Metro North Train Station). The 25-minute scenic cruise to the island features breathtaking views of the Hudson River Highlands. Public tours (including travel) last just over two hours and run from May 1 - November 1. As always, Saturday, Sunday and Holiday tours run throughout the day at 11 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. - with additional Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday day & evening

tours listed at: www.bannermancastle.org. Private Charter Group Tours are also available by calling Neil Caplan at 845-440-3318.

A public volunteer day called I LOVE MY PARK DAY (sponsored by Parks & Trails, NY) is scheduled for Saturday, May 2.

There will be two fundraising dinner events on Bannerman Island this year including the popular Titanic First Class Dinner on Saturday, May 23 (with just one seating for 44 people from 5 -10 p.m.) and the Annual Farm to Table Chef's Dinner on Saturday, September 5 (with 2 seatings for 44 people each, between 3 -10 p.m.).

The BCT's Annual Butterfly Day (for all ages) features lectures and butterfly themed festivities hosted by Butterfly experts on Wednesday, August 19. Tours are scheduled for 11 a.m. and noon.

Third Sunday Music Concerts are presented every Third Sunday of the month on Bannerman Island from May - October for the 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. tours only. This tour includes a self-guided tour and features live music on the island's stage. This year's concerts include the Lucky Luna Band on May 17, Bryan Scar on June 21, The Costellos on July 19, Tara O'Grady on August 16, Jeffrey Kirm on September 20 and Route One on October 18.



The Costellos will perform this season on Bannerman Island.

-Courtesy photo

Friday Movie Nights on Bannerman Island include: "Indiana Jones: The Last Crusade" on May 8; "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid," June 5; "1776" (The Musical) celebrating America's 250th Anniversary, July 3; "Strangers on a Train," July 10; "Ever After," July 17; "Contemporary Silent Movies with Live Music" (Special Film Event) on August 6; "The Princess Bride," August 14; "Blue Hawaii," August 21; "The Great Gatsby," Sept.11 and "Gremlins" on October 2.

2026 Theater events include "EPIC Broadway on Bannerman Island" on Friday & Saturday, July 24 & 25 (possible additional dates on July 31 & August 1), "Dracula: The Journal of Jonathan Harker" running from September 15 - 20 and September 23 - 27 (Rain dates: Sept. 22 & 24) and "The Flock: Skyla Schreter Dance" project, with dates to be announced August - October.

Please call 845-831-1001 for more information on BCT programs or visit bannermancastle.org to purchase tickets.

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Mountain View Strategic Wealth hosts inaugural MVP Awards Ceremony

In celebration of its commitment to its clients and the greater Hudson Valley financial community, Mountain View Strategic Wealth recently hosted the inaugural Mountain View Performance (MVP) Awards luncheon at Heritage Food + Drink in Wappingers Falls. Created by Founder and Chief Investment Officer John Morgan AIF®, APMA®, the MVP Awards recognized exchange-traded funds (ETFs) that achieved the greatest total return, within their respective categories, and were owned in client accounts for at least six months during 2025.

The first-ever recipients of the MVP Awards were:

- Domestic Equity: iShares S&P 100 ETF, which saw a 19.81% return in 2025.
 - International Equity: Fidelity Enhanced International ETF, recognized for a 37.28% return.
 - Risk-Managed Equity: Allianz U.S. Equity Six Month Buffer 10, a suite of six ETFs that utilizes option strategies designed to protect the investment from the first 10% of a market correction.
 - Fixed Income: J.P. Morgan Active Bond, which realized an 8.22% return.
- “Our partnership with global invest-

ment management firms is integral to our clients’ success in reaching their long-term financial goals,” said Morgan. “Celebrating four partners that were particularly important to the shared success of Mountain View Strategic Wealth and its clients in 2025 is an opportunity to reflect on our victories over the past year.”

Mountain View Strategic Wealth, a Dutchess County-based registered investment advisory firm, provides investment management, financial planning and estate planning services to clients from Buffalo to Florida and as far west as Illinois. To learn more about the firm and its partners, visit www.mvswealth.com.

Founded in 2018 and built upon decades of experience, Mountain View Strategic Wealth, LLC is a Hudson Valley-based financial planning and registered investment advisory firm with a future-focused, long-term view, and clients who span from Buffalo to Florida and as far west as Illinois. The firm provides tailored investment management for individuals, families and trusts; retirement and college planning; estate, legacy and insurance planning and more.



Pictured, from left are Samuel Rothschild, senior regional vice president, Allianz; Nick Crowley, regional director, Fidelity; John Morgan AIF®, APMA®, founder and chief investment officer, Mountain View Strategic Wealth; Mike Yanocha, CFP® and executive director, J.P. Morgan; John Ecklund, managing director and investment specialist, J.P. Morgan; and Rachel Krall, VP and market leader, iShares.

Courtesy photo by Tom Moore

Registration for Parks Summer programs now open

Featuring hands-on activities such as hiking, survival skills, tracking, Nerf tag, exploring nature and building group problem-solving skills, Dutchess County Parks’ Adventure, Survival and Eaglet Adventures summer programs help connect youth ages 6-17 to nature. These popular programs are offered at Bowdoin

Park in the Town of Poughkeepsie and Wilcox Memorial Park in the Town of Milan. To help make the registration process more efficient, there will be two separate opening days for online registration at DutchessNY.gov/ParksEducation:

- Opened on March 17 - Adventure Programs

- 9 a.m. March 19 - Survival and Eaglet Programs

The Adventure and Survival programs are held Monday-Thursday, from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., with early drop-off and late-pick up options available. Each session costs \$200 per student, and due to the popularity of the programs, there is a limit of one program session per child.

Eaglet Adventures will be offered Monday-Thursday, August 3-6 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Bowdoin Park. Cost is \$150 per student. Session is limited to 12 children.

View the summer programs brochure online.

Adventure Programs (Registration opened Tuesday, March 17)

Adventure (ages 9-11): July 6-9 or July 20-23 at Bowdoin Park

Adventure (ages 12-14): July 13-16 or August 3-6 at Bowdoin Park

Living Adventure (ages 15-17): August 10-13 at Bowdoin Park

Adventure Program participants will spend the first part of the week working on group tactics, leadership and problem-solving skills in preparation for two days of gameplay, using foam weapons to battle monsters and bandits, solve puzzles and explore the woods to accomplish a quest that changes every summer. Living Adventure combines gameplay, survival skills and nature study as participants spend the four days of camp live-action role-playing a unique storyline, using their knowledge to solve mysteries, purify water, build shelters and maybe even save the day!

Survival Programs (Registration opens Thursday, March 19)

Survival (ages 9-11): July 6-9 or July 20-23 at Bowdoin Park

Survival Intensive (ages 12-15): July 13-16 at Bowdoin Park

Complete Survival (ages 12-15): July 27-July 31 at Wilcox Park. This program requires previous participation in Survival Intensive and ends with an optional overnight stay.

Survival Program combines nature study and survival skills. Participants will explore forest habitats, hike and observe native wildlife. This summer will focus on shelter construction, camouflage, team building and other survival skills. Survival Intensive builds on that learning, blending survival techniques with an understanding of how prehistoric people lived in harmony with the land. Complete Survival ties together all the survival techniques learned and puts them to the test in a mock-survival situation, including an optional overnight stay.

Eaglet Adventures program (Registration opens Thursday, March 19)

Eaglet Adventures (ages 6-8): August 3-6 at Bowdoin Park

This program gives children a chance to become better explorers and scientists. Participants will develop skills to identify animal tracks, discover pond life and begin to see the interconnection that keeps the natural world in balance. Includes games, hands-on learning, crafts and adventure!

Other naturalist programming, including group weekday Archery, Junior Survival, Scout Programs and School Field Trips, are available by appointment and reservations can be made by calling the Parks office at 845-298-4602.

For registration and programming information, please visit DutchessNY.gov/Parks.

Jacobson accepts endorsements from Democratic committees, Working Families Party

Assemblymember Jonathan Jacobson (D-104) has been unanimously endorsed for reelection by the Orange, Dutchess and Ulster Democratic Committees. He has also been endorsed by the Working Families Party.

In accepting the endorsements Jacobson said, “I am proud of my record of delivering for the district from utility reform to expanding opportunities to go to colleges and being retrained to championing the removal of lead-contaminated water lines. I am also proud of delivering extra money to municipalities, schools, libraries and not-

for-profits as well as dealing with constituent problems from Central Hudson bills to unemployment claims.”

“While we have done a lot, there is more to do. I am fighting to change how utilities rates are determined. I am also combatting monopolistic practices in the health insurance industry,” said Jacobson.

The 104th Assembly District is comprised of the Cities of Poughkeepsie and Beacon in Dutchess County, the City and Town of Newburgh in Orange County, and the towns of Marlborough, Lloyd and Plattekill in Ulster County.

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Senator Rolison highlights commitment to support communities through internship opportunities

Reaffirming his commitment to supporting students and learners throughout the Hudson Valley, New York State Senator Rob Rolison welcomed his 50th office intern to the team. Providing hands-on opportunities to learn about state government, public service, and community advocacy, several former interns have gone on to be hired full-time, continuing their work in service to the people of the 39th Senate District.

Interns have spanned local high schools and colleges, including Spackenkill High School, Beacon High School, Arlington High School, Roy C. Ketcham High School, Wallkill Senior High School, Our Lady of Lourdes, Dutchess Community College, Marist University, Vassar College, SUNY New Paltz, SUNY Albany, SUNY Cortland, Baruch College, Binghamton University, and Georgetown University, among others, as well as participants in programs such as the Dutchess

County Regional Chamber of Commerce's Youth Leadership Program.

In addition, the Senator has worked to ensure opportunities are accessible to all, including hosting students with disabilities. His office has also supported seniors seeking additional work experience and meaningful ways to stay engaged in their community.

"Public service is about lifting others up and helping people find opportunities to learn, grow, and contribute," said Senator Rolison. "I'm proud that our office has served as a place where students, young leaders, individuals with disabilities, and seniors alike can gain experience and be part of the work we do every day for the people of the 39th District."

Senator Rolison remains committed to expanding opportunities for community members of all ages and backgrounds to engage in civic life and public service.



New York State Senator Rob Rolison is pictured with two interns. At the right is Riley, now employed by the County Executive's office.

-Photo courtesy Senator Rolison's Office

DCC awarded \$2 million to expand training programs in Fishkill

The New York State Office of Strategic Workforce Development (OSWD) awarded nearly \$2 million to Dutchess Community College (DCC) to expand training programs in advanced manufacturing and clean energy technology at the College's Center of Excellence for Business, Industry and Innovation (COEBII) in Fishkill.

DCC plans to use the funding to expand its existing microcredential pathways for electrical technology, advanced manufacturing, and HVAC careers to 630 participants over three years at COEBII. The College will expand credentialing opportunities by supporting instructor training and certification to provide more varied and advanced modules in advanced manufacturing and clean technology.

By expanding these training programs, DCC will help address growing workforce shortages in HVAC, advanced manufacturing and electrical technology as the Hudson Valley's clean energy and manufacturing sectors continue to expand.

"This grant is a tremendous investment in DCC and the future workforce of the mid-Hudson region," said DCC President Peter Grant Jordan. "With a demonstrated record of preparing and training our graduates to be career-ready at graduation, DCC is a trusted partner to both industry and individuals looking to step into high-demand jobs with family-sustaining wages."

Additional workforce education programs are expected to grow COEBII's enrollment from 90 students this year to an anticipated 450 by the 2029-30 academic year. The initiative is supported by the Council of Industry, Dutchess County and other regional partners in clean energy, advanced manufacturing and workforce development.

The Pay for Performance Operating Grant supports workforce training programs that provide industry-recognized credentials in high-demand fields across New York State. To be considered, DCC needed to demonstrate that the proposed programs will prepare New Yorkers for

jobs that are in-demand and offer career advancement opportunities and provide outcome data throughout the grant period to evaluate efficacy of programs. Industry engagement, including investment in collaborative approaches with stakeholders to address labor needs and career-readiness, are also critical components for grant consideration.

"This grant represents the next step in the Center's evolution," said Susan Rogers, vice president of Institutional Effectiveness and chair of the COEBII Steering Committee. "With support from OSWD, we will expand training in

advanced manufacturing and clean technology careers to meet the future demands of our region and to continue providing the training our community has come to expect from DCC."

As part of the grant application, DCC had to demonstrate that students can access wraparound supports that reduce barriers to training and employment for unemployed, underemployed and underrepresented populations including case management, stipends, transportation assistance, academic assistance and job placement.

Scrivner appointed to role of Executive Director with DCSPCA

The Dutchess County SPCA (DCSPCA) Board has announced the appointment of its Acting Board President, Monica Scrivner, to the role of Executive Director, effective March 1. The role of Executive Director serves as chief executive and administrative officer of the no-kill shelter (which is not associated with the ASPCA).

Scrivner—a resident of Highland, joined the Board of the DCSPCA in January 2025 and became its Acting Board President in August 2025.

Scrivner has worked in the financial sector for more than 20 years. She specializes in team leadership, financial strategy, and change management.

The DCSPCA's current Board Secretary, Samantha Turk, will be stepping into the role of Board President, while Board Director, Kellie Mee, will step into the role of Secretary.

Turk said, "We're thrilled to share the news of Monica's appointment with our staff, volunteers, and the Hudson Valley community today. In the short time Monica has been with the organization, she has worked closely with the team to implement stronger financial controls and redevelop community relations.

"Scrivner commented, "I am deeply grateful for the trust and confidence placed in me to become the Executive Director of the Dutchess County SPCA, an organization that has been close to my heart for many years. Having grown up in Dutchess County, adopting several beloved animals, and forming lifelong friendships through this mission makes it especially meaningful to continue serving our community and the



Monica Scrivner

-Courtesy photo

animals we love in this new capacity."

From January to March 2026, Scrivner will transition into the Executive Director role in a volunteer capacity.

The DSPCA offers vital animal care services to the community. In addition to shelter and adoption services, it offers a safety net program for residents experiencing an emergency temporarily preventing them from caring for their animals, a pet food pantry for those experiencing food insecurity, a low-cost community clinic, and a retention program that helps animals stay with their families, thus avoiding the need for animals' surrender.

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Obituaries

Barbara Claire Schafer



Barbara Claire Schafer passed away on Thursday, March 12, 2026, at home surrounded by loving family, she was 77. Barbara was born on July 14th, 1948, to Captain Fasting Wathne and Marguerite Styles Wathne at 12:12 am in Jersey City, N.J. Her parents predeceased her, Fasting at somewhat of a young age of 63, Marguerite at the age of 93 and still sharp as a tack until just days before her passing. Barbara had one sibling, John Wathne, nine years her senior, who predeceased her. Her sister-in-law, Sue Wathne, resides in Ft. Lauderdale, FL, nephew Richard of Idaho and niece Allison of Carmel, NY. Barbara will always be her father's "little girl". He would bounce her on his knee, even as a teenager and sing his Norwegian baby songs. Marguerite was a child of the Great Depression; she was strong, independent, and the rock upon which a family could be built.

Barbara is survived by a loving family; some here in the Hudson Valley and others spread around the States. Her boyfriend and her have been dating for 60 years, married for the last 58 years. John Russell Schafer and Barbara lived in Wappingers Falls for 48 years in the same house on Crabapple Court, a special place on this planet. The last five years they have resided with their daughter, Amanda Pantaleo, and son-in-law, Nick Pantaleo, and two grandchildren, Abbey (12) and Andrew (9). This has made her final journey easier. There are the Schafer's of Virginia; Barbara's first son, John Jr. and daughter-in-law, Diana of Manassas, VA, their three sons, Barbara's grandsons, Stephen (31), Ryan (29), and Kevin (26). Stephen and his angel Taylor (wife) have given Barbara her first great grandchild, Brady (1), who just took his first steps this month. Barbara's second son, William, of Fairfax VA, and his son, David (26), who lives in Tucson AZ. Barbara was gifted with six grandchildren and one great grandchild. She believed in life at the moment of conception, cherished the days she could nurture a baby, a tigress of protection, a guidance counselor when it came to college choice and future education.

There was a time when Barbara said, "how are we going to pay for college for our children". I said we will have to face that when it comes. Barbara said, "I think I will get my RN" and so she did in record time from Dutchess Community College. She passed her boards with flying colors and began her 23-year career in nursing. She started at Central Dutchess Nursing Home in the village of Wappingers Falls, moved on to Craig House Hospital in Beacon, spent some years on the night shift at the Montrose V.A., took a position with Astor Home (Dutchess County BOCES Beta Site) and then finished her career with Dutchess County BOCES. She believed in parents' rights to know what their minor children are doing. She loved the adolescent mind with all the "drama". God bless her!

Barbara is dying in the adjoining room as I write this. Death does not come unexpectedly with this disease, which I refuse to call dementia and implore all who read this to delete that unfortunate label and call this unresolved mystery, CD, Cognitive Decline. Barbara's journey started in her late sixties, early signs not recognized at first, but needed much support and supervision over the last five years. She probably had a mixed type of Alzheimer's and vascular CD, both signs were present.

I would like to share some of the activities Barbara and myself relied on in her final months to keep on going. Love letters of the past helped us get through those days when Barbara was not receptive. Barbara saved every letter going as far back as 60 years and these written words spoken again, opening up her mind to us! The golden oldies helped tweak her mind into drive mode, and then we came upon the song "Barbara" by the Temptations, but not the Temptations that we all know, a different group. She would refuse to get to her feet in the morning, but that song in her ears made her want to dance with me again, and she raised herself up. Then there was the activity of counting our "life's angels" in the middle of the night. These were people who made all the difference in our world. The list got longer and longer, could be people that only came into our world for a minute, but they made all the difference. Then there was Kim, a neighborhood kid that grew up in our Crabapple world, who decided that her life's work was caring for the sick and elderly. Oh, what Barbara called her, the stares she got, and the messes she cleaned up, but she always soldiered on with the faith of David, a heart of gold, and the strength of an Ox! Thank you, Ann Marie, for sending us such an angel.

Barbara, the name, means beautiful. I look at her dying now and I see my beautiful Barbara. Love you forever.

P.S. I forgot to mention one four-legged gift from God. Ollie, a shelter dog, we picked up from Compassionate Dog Rescue two years ago. People tell me he is the happiest dog they ever met, he loves people and has greeted many visitors from Hospice each week. Ollie takes us to the dog park as well, a pillar of mental health.

Calling hours will be held from 5:00-8:00 PM on Thursday, March 19 at the McHoul Funeral Home, 895 RT 82, Hopewell Junction NY. A Mass of Christian Burial will be offered at 10:00 AM on Friday March 20 at Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Roman Catholic Church, 1925 RT 82, Lagrangeville NY. Interment will follow at the Fishkill Rural Cemetery, 801 RT 9, Fishkill NY. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Compassionate Animal Rescue Efforts of Dutchess County (CARE of DC) and Cure Alzheimer's Fund (curealz.org).

Angela M. DeLorenzo



Angela M. DeLorenzo, a longtime Poughkeepsie / Wappingers Falls resident, passed away peacefully at her home surrounded by her loving family on March 15, 2026; at the age of 83. She was born in Gloversville, NY on May 25, 1942, daughter of the late Thomas & Victoria (nee Cipullo) DeRosa.

On November 25, 1961 in Gloversville, NY, she married the love of her life, Donald J. DeLorenzo; who survives her at home. The two were each other's lifelong companions, their love was like no other: a true blessing.

Affectionately known by her family 'Meme', she will always be remembered for her love of angels, and crocheting different lovable items for her family, such as blankets and scarves. Among many things such as her shopping trips with her daughter, she thoroughly enjoyed being around her family.

Meme always dedicated her love and affection to her children and grandchildren. Along with her devoted husband of almost 65-years, Angela is survived by her three children and five grandchildren: Donald J. DeLorenzo Jr., and his daughter Marrisaa; Mark J. (Nicole) DeLorenzo and his sons Nicholas and Joshua; and Jana M. (James) Kane and her daughters Lindsie (Trevyn) Whitlock and Lea Victoria Kane. Angela also got to cherish her first great-grandson Landyn James Whitlock. She is also survived by her two sisters, Geraldine Venneman, Rosemarie Janetsky, and several nieces & nephews.

Along with her parents, Angela also cherished the memory of her stillborn daughter Donna DeLorenzo, who passed away October 27, 1967. Her Family will receive Friends on Saturday, March 21st from 9-11AM at DELEHANTY FUNERAL HOME, 64 East Main Street, Wappingers Falls, NY; where a Service will be offered at 11AM followed by interment to St Mary's Cemetery 19 Clinton Street, Wappingers Falls, New York. To offer a message of condolence or share a fond memory, please visit: www.DelehantyFuneral.com.

Paul Johnson



Paul Johnson, a former resident of Newburgh, NY and recent years of Beacon, passed away peacefully on March 8, 2026, in the Fishkill Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing; at the age of 86. He was born on April 29, 1939, in Seaford, St. Thomas, Jamaica; one of five children to his parents Richard and Estella (Millwood) Lewis.

From a young boy, Paul was honest and ambitious, so naturally he evolved into a hardworking man. He immigrated to the United States and New York in 1964. He worked hard at construction and was very good with his hand. He kept a small circle of friends and was devoted to his Jamaican Family.

Paul is survived by his last living sib-

ling, his sister Mary Lewis Hamilton, and extended family.

He never forgot his humble beginnings and kept in very close contact with his favorite sister Mary who resides in Canada. He willingly offered financial support to his youngest sister Lynn back in Jamaica during her lifetime, she has predeceased him.

Paul was an extremely private man of few words but always had a big welcoming smile, showing his gaped teeth, a strong family characteristic.

During the last decade of his life, he fell ill and in recent years resided at the Fishkill Center in Beacon, NY until his passing.

His Canadian Family would like to extend their gratitude to all the staff and nurses at the Fishkill Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing, who were unwavering in taking care of all Paul's needs with utmost respect.

May eternal rest be granted unto Paul, and perpetual light shine brightly upon him. Gone but not forgotten. Rest in peace.

Arrangements were entrusted to the compassionate and professional care of the DELEHANTY FUNERAL HOME, 64 East Main Street, Wappingers Falls, New York. To offer a message of condolence or share a fond memory, please visit: www.DelehantyFuneral.com.

Oakwood Friends partners with Guilford College in 'Forever Friends' program



Oakwood Director of College Counseling Haniya Mee, center, with other Friends school college counselors at Guilford College in North Carolina.

-Courtesy photo Oakwood Friends

Twelve college counselors from independent Quaker-affiliated high schools stretching from Rhode Island to North Carolina recently visited Guilford College for two days of tours, discussions and meetings with students, faculty and administrators. Oakwood's Director of College Counseling and New York State Association for College Admission Counseling (NYSACAC) President-elect Haniya Mee joined administrators from other Friends schools including Wilmington Friends School in Delaware, Sandy Springs Friends School in Maryland and New Garden Friends School in North Carolina for the tour.

The visit included the announcement of "Forever Friends," a new partnership offering direct admission to Guilford College for graduates from participating Friends schools that sign formal agreements with the College. The program strengthens ties between Guilford — the only Quaker-founded college in the Southeast — and Friends schools across the country.

Reflecting on the partnership, Haniya shared "Attending a Quaker college is a natural next step for students who have been educated in a Quaker environment. At Guilford, our students will be welcomed and supported just as they have been throughout their middle and high school years at Oakwood. Guilford is deeply committed to educating the whole student, fostering a community where young people grow not only academically, but also discover their place in the world and how to contribute meaningfully to it."

Oakwood has a long history with Guilford College with close to fifty alumni attending since 1925. Barrett Nnoka, Oakwood Class of 1974 and Guilford Class of 1978, shared his thoughts on the partnership — "I became of age attending two Quaker schools, Oakwood and Guilford.

At both institutions, we gathered as a community, guided by the light, and the belief that we were all equal in the eyes of God."

A more recent graduate of both schools, Hadis Daqiq, an international student from Afghanistan from the classes of 2015 and 2019 respectively, reflected, "My education at Guilford College and Oakwood Friends School showed me why liberal arts matters. Studying gender, psychology, and geology expanded how I understand identity, behavior, and our place in a much older world. That breadth fosters creativity and perspective — qualities essential in shaping technology responsibly in the age of AI."

Chad Cianfrani, Oakwood's Head of School, expressed enthusiasm about the "Forever Friends" program, "Oakwood's partnership with Guilford College reflects the enduring strength of Quaker education — a shared commitment to nurturing the light within each student and preparing young people to lead lives of purpose, integrity, and service. We are proud that our graduates have the opportunity to continue their educational journeys in a community where the values of equality, reflection, and meaningful engagement remain at the center of learning."

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Beacon students honored for PRIDE

The following students were recognized for demonstrating Beacon High School PRIDE (Positivity, Respect, Integrity, Determination, Engagement) during the 2nd quarter of the 2025-2026 school year.

Jay Adams, Aaron Aduamah, Kaylyn Adusei, Nadeen Ahmed, Femmie Akinwunmi, Macy Alencastro, Kiann Allen, Natalie Allen, Alexandra Alon, Nathanael Alvarado, Kevin Asencio, Trevor Bacon, Emanuele Bagala, Sarp Bagriyanik, James Bailey, Viviana Bailey, Jahcier Ballard, Desmond Barchetto, Ziarra Beamon, Morgan Bedell, Kurtis Belgrave, Caroline Bell, Vincent Bergerson III, Tamirnes Bernstein, Lucas Booth, Giovanna Bottiglieri, Alana Bradshaw-Washington, Roman Brandt-Cannon, Juniper Breault, Jaden Brito, Aniyah Brown, Matthew Browne, Serenity Bunn, Janyia Burch, Wyatt Burgos, Fiona Burke-Smith, Xylie Burns, Erica Cabrera, Michael Cahill, Samuel Callan, Andrew Caporale, Julian Carpio, Henry Cerchiara, Jennifer Chacon, Chase Christman-Evans, Skylar Clair, Dylan Claro, Christian Clay, Peter Cohen, Sebastian Concepcion, Zamaya Cone, Lia Cosentino, Tyzeer Cox, Misleidy Cruz Cruz, Jesus Cruz Llivipuma, Mateo Cruz, Eleanor Culler, Claire Cumming, Shuprova Das, Jason David, Isabella Davila, Maliah Decoteau, Zoey Dedring, Bentley DeGuisto, Jake DeLuise, Ramon Dewey-Brink, Caroline Diaz, Victoria Diaz, Naim Dika, Ryan DiNobile, Maysie Doyle, Kylie Ebeling, Tye Elias, Braedan Eraca, Abilena Eriksmoen, Tyler Evans, Willow Faiella, Kyle Fairbanks,

Teo Fairbanks, Malik Faison, Fionn Fehilly, Lilah Fisher, Khloe Franklin, Isabella Galbo, Leo Garcia, Jack Garrett, Kayla Gerardes, Jhanea Gibson-Bocus, Gabriel Godbee, Emilio Guerra, Lucien Guido Taylor, Henry Gute, Anastacia Guzman, Julian Hannah, Jesse Harvey, Emmett Havers, Silas Hayes, Cole Heath, London Hernandez, Tyler Horton, August Hunter, Shaun Jabar, Hailee Jennings, Teanna Jennings, Samantha Johnson, Jaden Jones, Everly Jordan, Drew Kelly, Gabrielle Khalil, Makayla King, Josiah Lind, Isaac Long, Mary Lopez, Markus Louis, Yianniz Male, Josue Martell, Ruby Martin, Ethan Maxaner,

Lena Meibauer, Ian Melhado, Gianna Mercer, Oliver Meyer, Zachary Mihalchik, Jaylen Mitchell, Elena Moleano, Elise Moran, Glory Morris, Aaliyah Nelson, Jaiera Newton, Adrien Okoye, Gabriel Peluso, Lilly Pendley, Hudson Penn, Sarah Pillcurima Panama, Roman Proft, Luca Ragone, Leela Ramdeen, Diannie Ramirez, Bella Ridore, Delano Rigby Jr., Angelo Rodriguez, Derek Rohr, Trevi Romanelli, Adrian Roquel, Gabriel Roquel, Sebastian Roquel, Charlotte Rossi, Bowie Roy, Julian Sala, Baron Santana, Jonathan Saraceno, Abdul-Rahman Sayibu, Dominic Sceppaquercia, Genevieve Shrawder,

Shane Signorelli, Finn Simons, Savannah Smith, Landon Soltish, Jamir Spence, Hannah Spencer, Aiden Spiecker, Declan Sprague, Lyra Staab, Januario Stageman, Gannon Statini-Perez, Clive Stewart, Avery Strang, Harper Strang, Suri Stuart, Adryanah Sweat, Shea Tanaka, Mia Tapia, Kylie Thomas, Michai Thompson, Brevin Timm, Gavin Troiano, Everett VanCott, Connor Varricchio, Joshua Velazquez, Eliot Waterman, Aslynn Way, Slater Way, Zyaire West, Jah'Real Whitted, Andy Whittemore, Cayden Williams, Luna Yawman, Ysabella Zappala, Nicholas Zippo.

this week's puzzle solutions

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

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

2	5	3	1	3	2
3	1	2	5	4	1
5	4	3	1	3	2
1	2	5	2	4	1
3	4	3	1	5	3
4	2	5	4	2	4

SUDOKU
This week's answer

Sugnrn solution

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NOTICE TO OWNERS OF VIABLE FARMLAND IN DUTCHESS COUNTY
Pursuant to Section 303-b of the NYS Agriculture and Markets Law Article 25AA, the Dutchess County Legislature has designated the period April 15 through May 14, 2026, during which Dutchess County landowners who own "predominately viable agricultural land" may request that their land be newly included in the County's Agricultural District 21. In order to be considered for such inclusion, an application must be made on or before May 14, 2026. Only parcels judged to be "predominately viable agricultural land" will be included. The application is to be completed online and is available at: <https://gis.dutchessny.gov/ag-districts/>. If you require assistance with applying, please contact the Dutchess County Soil and Water Conservation District office at 845-677-8011 ext. 3 or apply in person at the Farm & Home Center 2715 Route 44, Suite 3, Millbrook, NY 12545. Landowners whose parcels are already included in an Agricultural District are not required to apply as part of the annual inclusion process. Inclusion in an Agricultural District provides potential right-to-farm protections for qualifying farm businesses, including protection against laws that unreasonably regulate farm operations in agricultural districts, limited protection from private nuisance claims, and

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notification of property buyers about farming practices prior to the purchase of property in agricultural districts.
The Agriculture and Farmland Protection Board will review applications and submit a report to the Dutchess County Legislature, which will hold a public hearing in July and forward any approved applications to the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets for certification. Only parcels judged to be "predominately viable agricultural land," pursuant to Section 303-b of the New York State Agriculture and Markets Law will be included.
GREGORY TOTINO, DEPUTY CLERK, DUTCHESS COUNTY LEGISLATURE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NOTICE
The Purchasing Agent, County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of proposals for: Bid #RFP-DCP-46-26
Aging Health Promotion and Development Contractor
Proposals must be submitted electronically through the Empire State Purchasing Group's Regional Bid Notification System (BidNet Direct) Portal on or before 2:00 p.m., March 24, 2026. Specifications, proposal forms and submittal instructions may be obtained by visiting our website <http://www.dutchessny.gov>, selecting "Government", then

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selecting "Bidding and RFP Opportunities". For additional information, call 845-486-3613.
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NOTICE
The Purchasing Agent, County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of proposals for: Bid #RFP-DCP-45-26
Coached Visitation Services
Proposals must be submitted electronically through the Empire State Purchasing Group's Regional Bid Notification System (BidNet Direct) Portal on or before 2:00 p.m., April 2, 2026. Specifications, proposal forms and submittal instructions may be obtained by visiting our website <http://www.dutchessny.gov>, selecting "Government", then selecting "Bidding and RFP Opportunities". For additional information, call 845-486-3613.
REQUEST FOR BIDS NOTICE
The Purchasing Agent, County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of sealed bids for: Bid #RFB-DCP-30-26
Uniforms and Accessories for Dutchess County Sheriff's Office Personnel
Bids will be received until 2:00 p.m. on the 2nd day of April 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 "Bidding and RFP Opportunities". For additional information, call 845-486-3613.

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and bid forms may be obtained by visiting our website <http://www.dutchessny.gov>, selecting "Government", then selecting "Bidding and RFP Opportunities". For additional information, call 845-486-3613.
REQUEST FOR BIDS NOTICE
The Purchasing Agent, County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of sealed bids for: Bid #RFB-DCP-07-26
After-Hours Telephone Answering and Messaging Services
Bids will be received until 2:00 p.m. on the 31st 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 "Bidding and RFP Opportunities". For additional information, call 845-486-3613.
NOTICE TO BIDDERS-RFB-DCB-2026-06
NAME OF PROJECT: Hot Mix Asphalt (HMA) Concrete In-Place
Project Description: This project involves the furnishing and installing of hot mix asphalt (HMA) concrete overlays, shoulder back-up material, providing pavement milling services, traffic control services and providing other incidental services associated with installation of asphalt

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concrete overlays. These services will typically be used for highway and parking lot construction, reconstruction and/or repair. However, other similar projects could also be undertaken using these services. The County of Dutchess official bid documents for this project are obtained from the **Empire State Purchasing Group's Regional Bid Notification System** at www.bidnetdirect.com/new-york/county-of-dutchess. Copies of bidding documents obtained from any other source are not considered official copies. It is incumbent upon all potential bidders to view all posted addenda prior to the bid close date. You may obtain an official copy by registering on the Empire State Regional Bid Notification System at www.bidnetdirect.com/new-york/county-of-dutchess or by using the link provided at www.dutchessny.gov, selecting "Government" then selecting "Bidding and RFP Opportunities." For those without Internet access, you may obtain an electronic copy of bidding documents by contacting the Dutchess County Department of Public Works at dpcwcontracts@dutchessny.gov, or in person, Monday through Friday, 8 am to 4 pm: Dutchess County DPW, Business Office, 1st Floor, 626 Dutchess Turnpike, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603. Upon request, all interested parties may review the hard copy of the Bid Specifications and Drawings by

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visiting the above referenced address. **All Addenda will be posted on BidNet Direct (aka Empire State Purchasing Group) site. Bids due on or before 11:00 AM, Wednesday, April 15, 2026,** and at that time publicly opened and read aloud. Bids received after that time will not be accepted. **Bids for the above project will be received by:** Caroline A. Miller, Contract Specialist, Dutchess County Department of Public Works (DPW), 626 Dutchess Turnpike, 1st Floor Poughkeepsie, NY 12603. All interested parties are invited to attend. The bid opening for this solicitation may also be attended through Microsoft Teams Audio Conferencing. Anyone who wishes to hear bids read aloud via Teams, will need to call into the phone number listed below. We ask that you call in at least three minutes prior to bid due/time to ensure you are connected properly. All calls will be asked to identify themselves by name and organization. Join Microsoft Teams Meeting +1 516-268-4602 United States, Hempstead (Toll) **Conference ID: 395 648 899#**. Each bid shall be submitted as one paper original and one electronic flash drive copy and be accompanied by Bid Security (bid bond, certified check, official bank check) or a Letter of Credit (in a form agreeable to Dutchess County) in the amount of 10% of the bid amount. Bidders' security will be retained until the suc-

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cessful bidder has signed the Owner-Contractor Agreement and the County has finalized the Agreement. Each bid with Bid Security shall be enclosed in a sealed envelope bearing the name of the Project, Name of the Bidder, and the date and hour of the bid opening, which must be visible upon delivery. **Questions will be accepted by the close of business Wednesday, April 8, 2026** and emailed to Caroline Miller at dpcwcontracts@dutchessny.gov with the County's response published in Addenda prior to 48 hours before the bid opening date. **The "Anticipated Start of Construction" is May 1, 2026, and the "Anticipated Completion Date", is December 31, 2026. This RFB may be subject to NYS Department of Labor Prevailing Wage Rates PRC #2026007025. IMPORTANT: Starting December 30, 2024: NYS DOL Contractor and Sub-Contractor Registry Requirements.** View Bid Specifications regarding the **APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM**, if applicable. The County reserves the right to waive irregularities in bids and in bidding and to reject any or all proposals.

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.

Parade of Green brings St. Patrick's Day festivities to Main St. in Beacon



Clockwise from top left: The annual Beacon's St. Patrick's Day Parade of Green took place on Main St. on Saturday, March 14 in Beacon. Bagpipers make their way down the parade route. New York Red Knights take part in the annual festivities. The Ghostbusters ECTO-H3 was along the route with Slimer. Waggin Wheels was one of the community businesses that took part in the celebration. Beacon Youth Football participants, parents and coaches smile as they make their way down the parade route and offer thanks to Tim and Linda Owen for their donations. This year's parade was dedicated to Erika Thomaselli and Daniel Coughlin.

-Courtesy photos by Mike C.

Beacon High School student earns camp scholarship

The Federated Garden Clubs of New York State, the Tioronda Garden Club is an affiliate, sponsors a DEC (Department of Environmental Conservation) scholarship each year for students to attend a one-week environmental educational camp during the summer of 2026. The recipient of this year's scholarship is Beacon resident Shannon Colandrea. Shannon is plan-

ning a career as an Environmental Scientist after her graduation from Beacon High School. Congratulations was offered to Shannon.

Special thanks was offered to Tioronda Garden Club member Emily Murnane. Murnane runs the Green-Teen Cornell Cooperative Extension Program at Beacon High School for her encouragement and support.

'Les Misérables' coming to Haldane Central School District

Haldane Drama will present "Les Misérables," a musical by Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schonberg. Performance dates are March 20, 21 at

7 p.m. and March 22 at 2 p.m., at the Haldane School Auditorium, 15 Craigside Dr., Cold Spring in Putnam County.

NEW YORK HOMEOWNERS: 2026 HOME IMPROVEMENT FUNDING NOW AVAILABLE IN YOUR AREA

Roof • Windows • Siding • Bathrooms • Heating & More

Is your home telling you it's time?

- ✓ Roof showing age, leaks, or storm damage
- ✓ Old, drafty windows driving up energy bills
- ✓ Outdated bathrooms or exterior issues
- ✓ Projects you "planned" to do-but put off because of cost

You may qualify for special home improvement funding programs not available to the general public.

- ✓ Lower out-of-pocket costs
- ✓ Spread payments over time
- ✓ Move forward without delaying needed work

Even homeowners who could pay cash are encouraged to check eligibility.

ENROLLMENT IS LIMITED
Programs, appointments, and installations are available on a first-come, first-served basis in your area. Programs change frequently and may close without notice.

CALL NOW TO CHECK ELIGIBILITY
888-849-9991
or visit NyProgramFunding.com



APPROVED APPLICATIONS WILL HAVE THE WORK COMPLETED BY A QUALITY REPAIR CREW PROVIDED BY HOMEOWNER FUNDING. NOT AFFILIATED WITH STATE OR GOV PROGRAMS. LICENSE NY-RC-H-21274