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APRIL IS AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH



The Walkway Over the Hudson offers a tram through the entire length of the Walkway. It also inspired the Walkway to participate in two different trainings to help its ambassadors best serve visitors and fellow volunteers with autism or neurodivergent needs.

-Courtesy photo

Access, knowledge highlight Anderson Center training

By Morgan E. Maier

Spring is upon Dutchess County, where local shops, farms and outdoor spaces have spent the off-season preparing for their guests. For a growing list of businesses and organizations welcoming a new season, that checklist includes Autism Supportive Programs, offered by Anderson Center Consulting and Training (ACCT).

Two of these include Walkway Over the Hudson and Fishkill Farms.

For visitors from Poughkeepsie, Highland and across the country, the Walkway Over the Hudson welcomes everybody to explore its 1.8-mile path

above the Hudson River. For Tamara Palmateer, manager of volunteer services and programs, the knowledge gained through ACCT training translates to many levels of Walkway operations - not just to ambassadors, but also to others in leadership or supervisory roles. Palmateer and her team participated in a two-part training with ACCT. One component was designed to teach groups about autism, how it may look, and others. The supportive employment training further equipped Tamara and her team to train ambassadors with autism or difficulties adjusting to certain stimuli.

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Anderson's goal of enriching lives is essential for Emerson family



The Emerson family includes, from left Jason, Maria, Avery, Grandfather Richie Arra, Zach and Jonas.

-Courtesy photo

By Cynthia Baer

April is designated as Autism Acceptance Month. Formerly known as Autism Awareness Month, Autism Acceptance Month is meant to highlight the issues affecting people with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), their families, educate the public about support services, and celebrate and destigmatize the perspectives of those living with autism.

Jason and Maria Emerson are a family of five, nine if you include their four-legged babies (two dogs and two cats). Jason is a stay-at-home dad. Maria is the Director of OBGYN at Montefiore/Nyack and also practices out

of Highland Medical in two separate offices. Jonas, the oldest, is finishing up his senior year of High School at Don Bosco Prep in New Jersey and off to Wesleyan University in the fall. Avery and Zachary are twins. Zach is in his junior year at the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan. He is a member of their pop-ensemble playing piano/keyboard. Avery loves the water, swimming, water parks, the ocean. He will also never refuse a trip to a trampoline park and is a resident at Anderson Center for Autism.

Continued on page 2

County Clerk Brad Kendall announces retirement plans

Brad Kendall announced on Monday that he will not seek a 6th term as County Clerk and will conclude his service as County Clerk at the end of his current term on December 31, 2027.

"After much thought and reflection and discussion with my family and with Barbara, my sweetheart of 48 years, I've decided to retire next year at the end of my 5th term as County Clerk. For the past 20 years, it has been a privilege to lead my dedicated co-workers in the delivery of exemplary public service," said Kendall.

He added, "I'm especially grateful to Anne-Marie Dignan, Deputy County Clerk for Legal Services, Lisa Ayala, Deputy

Clerk for DMV and Sandra Strid before her, Deanne Flynn, Secretary to the County Clerk and Will Tatum, County Historian for their leadership and service to the people of Dutchess County."

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino said, "Congratulations to my friend, Brad on an outstanding career in public service and a well-deserved retirement! For almost 40 years, Brad has made a lasting impact on our community, first at the town level and over the past three-plus decades with Dutchess County Government. Throughout his career, Brad has always put our neighbors first and has been a mentor to me since I began in elected office. I am so very lucky to call him a friend and to have worked with him all these years. His dedication to his team and community shines

in how he rolls up his sleeves and works alongside them at the counter in the DMV. We are glad he's not leaving quite yet, and we look forward to continuing our work together over the next year and half before he begins his next chapter of life that is sure to be filled with joy, relaxation, and precious time with his family."

As for the next 21 months, Kendall said he is looking forward to the implementation of electronic filing in the criminal court of Dutchess County, finalizing the Clean Slate Act and completion of the renovations of the 1st and 2nd floor of the County Office Building.

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Brad Kendall

-Courtesy photo

CELEBRATING OUR FIRST

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APRIL IS AUTISM ACCEPTANCE MONTH

Access, knowledge highlight Anderson Center training

Continued from cover

The Walkway offers a tram through the entire length of the walkway, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., seven days a week. It was first available a few days a week as a support for people with mobility difficulties, and has since become a mainstay across the Hudson. It also inspired the Walkway to participate in two different trainings to help its ambassadors best serve visitors and fellow volunteers with autism or neurodivergent needs.

Long after ACCT training sessions, the Anderson's team continues to be a resource for the groups that run these Autism Supportive Environments. For Palmateer, Anderson is a resource that helps her organization run smoothly, whether in answering questions or assistance interacting with someone on the spectrum.

"In any type of leadership role, you want everybody to be as prepared and ready as possible. Anybody can benefit from having more training on working in the pavilions, but [the training] is specifically understanding the barrier or hurdle that people with autism generally have," said Palmateer.

Anderson Center Consulting and Training also provides additional resources to the Walkway, like the sensory kit available in the Walkway pavilions for any visitor or volunteer who may need the support. For training volunteers, Palmateer opted for a visual guide that clearly outlines tasks and expectations for ambassadors on shift. Orientation has been changed to include a clear outline of

the training schedule and topics, plus overviews of bathrooms and building layouts, so volunteers can map their surroundings. This protocol is meant to alleviate any orientation stresses without singling out any prospective volunteers. Whether a person employing these on-site accommodations is working or visiting, they can make an unnerving experience a positive one.

Some groups have also visited Fishkill Farms for its commitment to accessibility. With the help of ACCT and its training program, Fishkill Farms can continue its mission for all who may hear it. Skills in teaching about healthy foods and farms are all the more valuable for the farm's multifaceted team, now further equipped with a better understanding of guests with autism.

The training featured a point-of-view shot of a boy with autism during a visit to the mall. The sights, sounds, and enhanced lighting and noise created an environment too much for him to cope with. Where others noticed shouting or crying, trainees were looking at what the boy was seeing to invoke such a response. It was over-stimulation. Seeing a difficult scenario from a different perspective was ACCT's lasting impact on Katie Ross, Fishkill Farms' manager of marketing, communication and events.

"It's always nice to have a refresher, to keep learning and improving," said Ross. "We're a part of the community. We want to be as welcoming as possible, and we want to meet people where they're at."

ACCT is dedicated to the same, offering virtual training when a mass in-person



A volunteer ambassador guides a group of children on the Walkway Over the Hudson. -Courtesy photo

training is not feasible. Training sessions are set around the group's individual schedules to accommodate everyone who will participate in the training. The online session worked best for the Fishkill Farms crew, without a meeting room big enough to hold the entire team. Anderson gladly obliged.

At Fishkill Farms, the impact of ACCT is not limited to in-person interactions, explained Ross. The website was also updated to include icons, an easy-to-navigate

layout, and a full page about what to expect at the farm, market, or cider room.

Local businesses are seizing the opportunity to learn from the resource that is the Anderson Center Consulting and Training. There are many ways to ensure a home, organization, or event is autism-friendly - asking questions is just the first step!

Learn more about Autism Supportive training opportunities by visiting <https://www.andersoncenterforautism.org/anderson-center-consulting-training/>.

Anderson's goal of enriching lives is essential for Emerson family

Continued from cover

Says Jason, "When Avery was 18 months old, it became clear that he was on a different trajectory than his brothers. He began performing visual and physical stimulations and engaging in parallel play rather than fully engaged play with his brothers. Also, having a twin brother gave us a basis for comparison when observing certain milestones of development."

Willow Baer, Commissioner of the NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities states that, "In 2025, of more than 75 million people in the world who identify as living with autism, 35,000 live in New York State. We have certainly moved beyond the former 'awareness' and expect that people with autism are accepted just as they are, with all the diverse traits that make people unique."

When the question of differences between being aware of and acceptance of an autistic person was posed to Jason,

his answer came quickly.

"That's easy," he said, "one precedes the other. It has to begin with awareness, fundamentally understanding that a 'thing' exists, that it can be studied and understood to the best of our ability. Only then, can we accept that 'thing' for what it is. You can substitute the word 'thing' with Autism or Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD), or for anything you want. When we approach acceptance, we learn how to coexist with that 'thing' and not attempt to suppress, change or ignore it."

That being said, Jason and Maria personify the quality of acceptance when it comes to talking about their son.

"We love Avery's intellect and his curiosity (although this can sometimes get him in trouble), which certainly keeps us on our toes. He's a great cuddle bug!" says Jason. "While some people with IDD have an aversion to touch, that is certainly not the case with Avery. He also loves trains; toy trains, cartoons about trains, 'Thomas The

Tank Engine.' And he loves music - some of his favorite albums are by a band called 'They Might Be Giants.' Oh, and he loves Trader Joe's."

When Avery was approved for residential placement, Anderson Center of Autism was the first school the Emersons toured. It was also the last.

"From the moment we stepped onto the campus, we knew this would be Avery's home away from home," Jason says. "Combine the sprawling campus with the dedicated administration/leadership, the kind and compassionate staff that work in the school and residences, Anderson has it all."

The strong sense of community there makes a difference too.

Adds Jason, "This is really a strong point for Anderson, both on campus and off. They are always seeking ways to enrich the lives of the residents with activities that bring the community together. Recent on-site events included tie-dye making, a site visit by Two by Two Animal Haven, movie / bingo nights in the recreation center and an Olympic themed spirit week. Some recent off-site trips included the American Dream mall and a trip into NYC to see MJ the Musical.

As a Board Member of the Anderson Center for Autism, Jason Emerson sees first-hand how effectively Anderson is in their ability to raise awareness and foster acceptance within the community.

"They (the PR committee) do an amazing job promoting awareness for Anderson both within Dutchess County and throughout the Hudson Valley. Their messaging is multi-faceted in such that they convey their achievements in addition to offering solutions/opportunities to families & organizations who may have

otherwise been uninformed."

Case in point, as part of Autism Acceptance Month, the Village of Rhinebeck Autism Supportive Community Committee and Upstate Films, hosted a free community screening of "Autism: The Musical" on April 11. This 2007 documentary follows the lives of five autistic children who write and perform their own music. A panel discussion will follow.

Says Committee Chair, Joe Phelan, "This is just one of the many opportunities we offer to increase awareness about autism and neurodiverse populations. I hope it give people a platform to ask questions and reach a better understanding and acceptance."

These days, there are many ways to learn more about Autism. Start by typing a search for Autism Acceptance (for your geographical region).

Adds Jason, "Of our personal favorite resources is the 1 in 31: Autism Today podcast hosted by none other than 'The Voice of Anderson' Chief Development Officer Eliza Bozenski. She's been at it for many years and has hours of valuable content."

It is interesting to note that the effective title of the podcast has been forced to change over the years, as the diagnosis rates have changed. It started out as 1 in 88 and is now 1:31: Autism Today. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the prevalence of ASD has risen significantly over the past two decades, with a shift from 1 in 59 children in 2014 to 1 in 31 children in 2022, based on data released in April 2025. This change reflects a trend toward increased acceptance, better awareness, improved screening, and expanded diagnostic criteria.

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Community Foundations Announces Key Leadership Hire to Support Growth, Impact



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**See story,
page 8**



COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS OF THE HUDSON VALLEY



Benjamin Krevolin

Volunteer to help keep municipalities clean

By Kristine Coulter

Local municipalities are seeking volunteers to help beautify the local area as they host Earth Day, Arbor Day, Clean Up and Spring events.

City of Beacon event set for April 18

Help continue to make the City of Beacon beautiful. Take part in the Beacon City-wide Clean Up on Saturday, April 18, from 9 a.m. to noon. One may volunteer for 30 minutes or hours, it was stated, and garbage bags and buckets will be provided. Organizers recommend wearing work gloves, boots, long pants and sleeves.

Then from noon to 3 p.m. there will be the Earth Day Fair at Hudson Valley Brewery, 7 East Main St.

To sign-up, please go to the City's website, <https://beaconny.gov>, for the link. When one registers, there are different sites that one can choose to help clean, such as Memorial Park, Madam Brett Park and Rocky Glenn (Hip Lofts).

**Spring Fling & Arbor Day Celebration
April 25 in East Fishkill**

This year, East Fishkill Recreation will host a Spring Fling on April 25. There will also be a special Arbor Day tree planting.

Children can take part in an Easter Egg Hunt. The festivities take place from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the East Fishkill Community Center, 890 Route 82, in East Fishkill. This event is for residents only.

This event is co-hosted with the East Fishkill Police Department and the East Fishkill PBA.

Town of Wappinger to hold Earth Day Clean Up

Town of Wappinger Supervisor Joseph Cavaccini said April is "shaping up to be a vibrant and active month across the community." In an email to Wappinger residents, he noted the numerous programs offered by the Town.

"In particular, I invite you to join us for our annual Town-Wide Earth Day Clean Up. This is a wonderful opportunity to come together as neighbors, give back to our community, and take pride in keeping our Town clean and beautiful," stated the supervisor.

The day is set for Saturday, April 25, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The meeting location is the Wappinger Town Hall, Middlebush Road. This event is open to residents and non-residents. According to organizers, the cleanup will involve a variety of tasks, such as cleaning the following:

- Roadsides
- Parks
- Planting/weeding/landscaping

Those interested in taking part should register for each person that will be attending. To register, visit https://wappingerny.myrec.com/info/activities/program_details.aspx?ProgramID=29938.

For more information, call 845-297-2744 or email Supervisor@TownofWappingerNY.gov.

In the Wappinger hamlet of Hughsonville, the Hughsonville Community Clean Up will take place on Saturday, April 18, at 9 a.m. The meeting location is at Obercreek Farm Stand, 81 New Hamburg Road. The team will clean from the bridge by Old Troy Road to the light on Route 9. According to information about the event, safety vests and bags will be provided. One should bring their own gloves.



Municipalities will hold annual Earth Day, Spring and Clean Up events this month. Pictured is from a previous Town of Wappinger event.

-Archive photo

Beacon Poet Laureate to celebrate LiveWriting series on April 17

Ruth Danon, the Poet Laureate of Beacon and acclaimed author, continues her celebrated LiveWriting series on Friday, April 17, at the historic Howland Cultural Center, 477 Main St. in Beacon. This installment, titled "Poet-Publishers from Hudson Valley and Beyond," features four distinguished literary figures who balance the creative act of writing with the vital work of independent publishing.

Curated and hosted by Danon, the evening will feature readings by Michael Broder, Stephen Motika, Elizabeth Murphy, and John Yau. Doors open at 7 p.m., and the program runs from 7:30-9:30 p.m.

"The LiveWriting series was born from the idea that the spoken word creates a unique bridge between the writer and the community," said Danon. "For this event, we are highlighting individuals who not only produce exceptional poetry but also act as stewards for the voices of others through their work as publishers. It is a testament to the labor of love that sustains the literary ecosystem in the Hudson Valley and across the country."

The Featured Readers:

- Michael Broder is the author of the chapbooks "Drug and Disease Free" (Indolent Books, 2016) and "This Life Now" (A Midsummer Night's Press, 2014). He is the founder and publisher of Indolent Books, a press dedicated to publishing work that is provocative, risky, and socially engaged.

- Stephen Motika serves as the director and publisher of Nightboat Books, one of

the most respected independent poetry presses in the U.S. He is the author of the poetry collection "Western Practice" and several chapbooks, including "Private Archive" and "Arrival and At Mono."

- Elizabeth Murphy is the director and publisher of Grid Books, an organization dedicated to publishing creative work from the margins, with a particular focus on older writers and artists. Her collection of poems, "Little Prayers," was published by Pressed Wafer.

- John Yau is an award-winning poet, art critic, and curator who has published over 50 books of poetry, fiction, and criticism. His most recent book is "Diary of Small Discontents" (Omnidawn). Yau is also the publisher of Black Square Editions, known for its eclectic and avant-garde catalog.

The LiveWriting series is made possible, in part, with support from Poets & Writers and NYS Council on the Arts.

Tickets are available at bit.ly/LW-APR17.

Ruth Danon is the Poet Laureate of Beacon and the author of several books, including "Turn Up the Light" and "Word Has It." She is the founder of LiveWriting: A Project for the Reading and Writing of Poetry and taught for many years at New York University. Her work focuses on building literary community and exploring the intersections of language and experience.

For more information, visit www.ruthdanon.com.

LOOKING FOR ANTIQUES OR COLLECTIBLES ?



Stop by the Cold Spring Methodist Church

216 Main Street, Cold Spring, NY
Saturday, April 25 from 9-3

They are hosting a **Grandma's Attic Sale!**

You'll find tables of good deals and reasonably priced treasures.

Kitchen will be opened for breakfast and lunch.

There is table space available to rent for \$25 if you would like to sell your items.

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Viewpoints

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters may be edited for legal considerations, reader interest and length. Please include a telephone number and address for verification purposes. **Deadline for letters is Friday at noon.** Letters must be submitted by e-mail to be considered for publication. Letters can be e-mailed to newsplace@aol.com, and the phrase "Letter to the Editor" should be included in the subject line of the e-mail.

Policy on letters:

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

I Am Beacon expands impact in 2025

To the Editor:

"If there's one word that defines 2025, it's building. We listened to our community, responded in real time, and showed what's possible when people come together to support one another.

I Am Beacon has released its inaugural 2025 Annual Report, highlighting a year of growth, expanded programming, and a strengthened commitment to serving Beacon residents—building on 13 years of showing up when it matters most.

That commitment was tested in real time. During a government shutdown that disrupted SNAP benefits for many local families, I Am Beacon expanded its Turkey on Every Table program far beyond expectations, supporting 344 families—more than three times its original goal.

Throughout the year, the organization continued advancing its mission to strengthen community connection and create opportunities for local families and youth. New initiatives—including an Easter Dinner Basket program and a community forum on volunteerism—were designed to address immediate needs while fostering long-term engagement.

Across its core programs, I Am Beacon reported measurable impact:

- 344 families supported through Turkey on Every Table
- 138 school supply kits distributed through the Back 2 School Block Party
- 45 students served through the Class in a Bag program
- \$6,110 raised for the Making a Difference Scholarship
- 177 participants in the I Run Beacon 5K
- 61 families supported through the Easter Dinner Basket program

The organization's work continues to be powered by volunteers, donors, and community partners. According to a 2025 survey, 41% of participants reported feeling more connected and empowered to voice local needs, while one in three gained opportunities to volunteer and give back.

As it approaches its 14th year, I Am Beacon is focused on expanding its reach and building a more sustainable model to support long-term growth.

Join us in building what's next.

Visit www.iambeacon.org to read the full 2025 Annual Report and learn how to donate, volunteer, or partner with I Am Beacon.

Reuben Simmons
Executive Director, I Am Beacon

Wappingers CSD supports petition filed to examine readiness of school bus fleet electrification

To Chair Rory M. Christian and Commissioners:

The Wappingers Central School District ("WCSD") respectfully submits this letter in support of the petition filed by the Lower Hudson Education Coalition ("LHEC") in Case 26-00643, requesting that the Commission initiate a dedicated informational proceeding to examine electric utility readiness to support school bus fleet electrification under Education Law § 3638.

The Wappingers Central School District is the 9th largest school district in New York State and is located in Dutchess and Putnam Counties. The district provides transportation service opportunities to approximately 11,000 students and operates the largest District owned and operated transportation fleet in New York State which consists of approximately 261 school buses. The District does also contract for transportation services with an outside vendor. The district is served by Central Hudson.

WCSD supports the State's long-term goal of transitioning to zero-emission school transportation. We are committed to improving air quality for our students and reducing the environmental impact of our operations. At the same time, we have a fiduciary obligation to our taxpayers and a responsibility to our families to ensure that school bus service remains reliable, safe, and fiscally sustainable throughout this transition.

Our district completed a Fleet Electrification Plan in 2025, which identified that full fleet electrification will require an eight stage phase in process to accommodate the vehicle fleet, across our three transportation compounds. Currently, our bus compounds do not have enough power, and will require the addition of a 2.5MW utility transformer and 560kW of additional power to accomplish this task. Between all three locations the following charger stations are recommended: 126 20kW ports, 46 30kW ports and 24 60kW ports. New switchgear, service (including end boxes, panels, meters, etc.) and distribution equipment will be needed at all three compounds. There will need to be significant site work completed (i.e.: trenching of asphalt) during the initial three phases. The estimated capital cost is approximately \$134,000,000 to \$140,000,000. At this time, we do not have lead time estimates for any new service from Central Hudson. These are costs and timelines that our district cannot control and that directly affect our ability to meet the statutory deadlines. It is for these reasons that we support LHEC's petition. The critical constraint our district faces in planning for fleet electrification is not the availability of electric buses or incentive funding—it is the electric grid infrastructure required to charge them.

We support LHEC's request for a dedicated proceeding because school districts need reliable, utility-specific information to make responsible capital planning decisions. Our board of education approves budgets annually and capital projects through voter-approved bond referenda. We cannot commit taxpayer funds to bus purchases and charging infrastructure without confidence that the electrical service those investments depend on will be delivered on a timeline and at a cost that our community can absorb. The Commission is uniquely positioned to require utilities to provide that information and to establish the accountability framework that the current ad hoc process lacks.

For these reasons, WCSD respectfully urges the Commission to grant LHEC's petition in Case 26-00643 and initiate a dedicated informational proceeding at the earliest opportunity.

Dr. Dwight Bonk
Wappingers Central School District Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Marie Johnson
Wappingers Central School District Board of Education President

Editor's Note: According to Wappingers Central School District Superintendent Dr. Dwight Bonk, Wappingers Central School District supports New York State's long-term goal of transitioning to zero-emission school transportation; they are committed to improving air quality and reducing the environmental impact of the operations. But they also have a responsibility to their taxpayers and families, to consider the potential cost and service disruptions. Recently, the Lower Hudson Education Coalition (LHEC) requested that the NYS Public Service Commission initiate an informational proceeding to examine the readiness of the electric utilities to support this electrification under Education Law § 3638. Wappingers CSD Board of Education President Marie Johnson and Bonk co-wrote a letter in support of this petition.

Register for the Wappingers CSD Senior-Senior Prom

Roy C. Ketcham (RCK) High School will be holding their Annual Senior-Senior Prom for senior citizens living in the Wappingers Central School District on Sunday, April 26, from noon to 4 p.m. in the Roy C. Ketcham High School cafeteria. This year organizers ask Seniors to dust off your favorite boots and bring your best bling for a "Denim & Diamonds" Prom!

Through the generosity of Outback Steakhouse on Route 9 in Wappingers Falls, a dinner will be prepared and served to the guests at this event. RCK students and staff members will join the seniors on the dance floor.

Although there is no cost to our senior citizens for this wonderful affair, reservations are still required. Please contact Lina Marchetti at 845-298-5100, extension 31008 to make reservations. The event is strictly limited to 100 people, so reservations will be booked on a first come, first-served basis. We will begin to take reservations on April 7. The deadline

to register for this event is April 21.

This event could not happen without the help of Wappingers CSD's community friends. They are grateful for their support and donations: 21 Burgers & Wings, BJ's Wholesale Club, BEAST, Café Con Leche, The Cakery, Carol's Deli, County Players at the Falls Theatre, Durants Party Rentals, Dutchess Biercafe, The Falls Diner, Foam & Wash Car Wash, Fuss Hair Bar, Gino's Restaurant, Hannaford, Heritage Food & Drink, Longobardi's Restaurant, Los Hornitos Restaurant & Bakery, Nonna's Pizzeria, Perkins Restaurant & Bakery, Portofino Pizza & Pasta, Roma Deli, Sabellico Greenhouse & Florist, Salsa Fresca Mexican Grill, Sara's Mediterranean Grill, Stewart's Shops, Texas Roadhouse, Three Sprouts Valley, Wendy New Nails along with Ketcham's National Honor Society, National Spanish Honor Society, Student Council, Senior Class, Interact Club, Step Team, RCK Music Department, WCSD Food Services and more!

C.A.R.E.S. Van in Fishkill on April 23

Congressman Pat Rync will have the C.A.R.E.S. Van (Constituent Advocacy Resource Empowerment Services) will be at the Fishkill Town Hall, 807 Route 52, on Thursday, April 23, from 2-4 p.m.

One-on-one assistance will be provided in helping to answer questions about Federal programs and services.

For more information, call 845-443-2930.

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VETERANS NEWS WITH ADAM ROCHE

Month of the Military Child recognizes unique challenges for service members' children



They bring a tear to the eye of even the most hardened of us: videos of deployed servicemembers, surprising their children after months away from home. It might be a fatigue-clad mom walking into her son's classroom, as he runs into her waiting arms, hugging her as tightly as possible. Perhaps it's Dad, in full military uniform, emerging from the opposite dugout as his daughter steps to the plate, the two sharing an embrace more meaningful than any play on the diamond.

The emotions are undeniable – a parent's love for their child, the kids' relief knowing that, at least for now, Mom or Dad are home and out of harm's way – and these videos share a glimpse into the lives of countless military families across the country. We often talk about the burden military spouses face, and rightly so; all too often, though, the plight of troops' children doesn't seem to get the same attention.

In April, our nation pauses to recognize the sacrifices of the sons and daughters of our dedicated service members. Established in 1986, the Month of the Military Child is a time to celebrate the more than 1.6 million kids with parents in the service, many of whom deal with frequent moves and being away from their parents during deployments.

As the Director of the Dutchess County Office of Veterans Affairs, I've been for-

tunate to have met many military families and can say with certainty their children carry a unique and often unseen burden, a unique stress that deserves our respect, understanding and support.

Military children grow up in a world defined by their parent's service. While most of their friends measure time by birthdays or their year in school, children of service members often measure time by relocations, deployments and their parent's homecomings. These kids know all too well what it means to say goodbye, often for months at a time, and never knowing exactly when Mom or Dad will return. Goodbyes like these are never easy; rather, they are a mixture of pride and quiet strength coupled with uncertainty and worry.

Life for a military son or daughter can be very different than their peers' childhoods. Picking up and moving are common occurrences for these kids; that often means attending numerous schools before graduating high school. Each of those moves means a fresh start in another school: making new friends, adjusting to new teachers and learning a new community. Sure, this can build adaptability and confidence, but it often brings a sense of loneliness and instability.

No matter where they currently call home, children's responsibilities can shift

when a parent is deployed. It might mean older kids take on extra chores like helping care for their siblings or being the moral support for the parent left at home. Younger kids often can face a hard time adjusting to the change in routine, or they might feel a bigger mental load than they're prepared for, worrying about their parent's safety or finding their absence during birthdays, holidays and school events too much to bear.

Still, military children can be remarkably resilient in how they deal with these challenges: learning to adapt, staying strong and supporting one another – the same traits their parents in uniform display every day. Not just that, they take great pride in their parent's service, which teaches them about commitment and sacrifice, setting them up to become capable, compassionate young adults who value service and community.

Aware of all that these children face each day, we each have an opportunity to support them, knowing that even a small act of kindness can have a big impact. Teachers can show empathy for the child's living situation and welcome them to their latest school. Classmates can offer to be a child's first friend in their new hometown. In Dutchess County, we continue to be a community that embraces our service members,

offering countless services and programs to support their families.

Our partners at the New York State Department of Veterans' Services is honoring military children this month with free events throughout the state, including a pair in the Hudson Valley this weekend. On Saturday, April 18, the State will host a free day of fun at Legoland New York in Goshen (Orange County), beginning at 11 a.m. On Sunday, April 19, military children and their families can enjoy a free visit to the U.S.S Intrepid, the floating museum docked at Pier 86 in New York City, starting at 10:30 a.m. Each of these events are free, but registration is required by emailing benjamin.pomerance@veterans.ny.gov.

The Month of the Military Child reminds us that service to our nation isn't limited to those who wear the uniform. Service members' loved ones, particularly their children, also face sacrifices that are unique but no less selfless than those made by their parent in the Armed Forces. In the face of uncertainty, these children display courage; in times of change, they demonstrate strength; facing life's most difficult moments, they are often their family's hope.

Each of these kids, no matter their age, deserve our kindness, respect and gratitude – not just in April, but every day.

Swanson appointed next City Administrator

By Kristine Coulter

Mayor Lee Kyriacou announced the appointment of Ben Swanson to the position of City Administrator, upon the retirement of current Administrator Chris White. Swanson has worked for the city for four years with the City of Beacon.

"I heartily recommend Ben's appointment," said Kyriacou during the council meeting on April 6.

In a letter dated March 31 to the Council, Kyriacou wrote – and read at the meeting: "Ben's appointment should come as no surprise. We created the Deputy City Administrator position this past December, emulating the succession planning that professional organizations undertake to ensure leadership continuity and stability. We appointed Ben to that position, in reflection of his accomplishments ... and as our expected choice in the event of leadership change."

Kyriacou stated to the Council in the letter that Swanson "has my full endorsement and confidence in his ability to undertake this role – relying on his graduate education, professional background, more than four years' experience with the City, and the many managerial roles he has since taken."

Various managerial roles Swanson has, some of them for years noted Kyriacou, are:

- Housing information
- Climate Smart
- Traffic Safety Committee and other Committees

- Attends intergovernmental meetings
- Attends meetings with City Department heads, City Engineer, City Planner, City Attorney and legal team - runs meeting in Administrator's absence.

- Oversees special events
- Manages (and developed) City film licensing system, including application forms, evaluation criteria, fees, department coordination (police, fire, highway, water, recreation).
- Constituent Communications

"In prior appointments we have gotten copies of the resume," said Ward 1 Councilmember Lestar Gorton. She noted she believes "Ben can handle it," adding she thought the process was rushed.

"Since he's gotten here, [Ben's] taken on more," said White. He's been supervising contractors the City works with, and he's been dealing with projects, added White.

"My only regret, I haven't even announced my retirement in this form, my only regret is I didn't push for him years earlier," added White.

It was stated by White that Swanson "will be wise and judicious with what he does."

Councilmember at-large Amber Grant stated she wished Swanson had been appointed to the Deputy City Administrator role sooner.

Grant added that she is "strongly supportive of backfilling the Deputy City Administrator role," because she does not want to see fall through the cracks.

Ward 4 Councilmember Carolyn Glauda

said she seconded the remark about filling the Deputy City Administrator position quickly. Glauda added she wished there was more information in the packet about Swanson, but Swanson has her confidence.

Ward 2 Councilmember Zach Smith asked how important direct executive experience would be to White.

White remarked to the Council, "I will tell you this, one of the reasons we wanted to do this tonight, a lot of department heads and a lot of the staff are concerned about where the city goes now. I've had a very good run, and you know many of them are a bit confused that I'm leaving now. I think having Ben in gives them reassurance."

Councilmember Sergei Krasikov said he has worked with Swanson, and he is always professional. Krasikov gave his full support to Swanson stepping up to the City Administrator position. He noted he shares the concerns that Deputy City Administrator position be filled quickly.

Councilmember at-large Paloma Wake absolutely appreciated the points other members had made. Swanson's work history could have been made more public, she recommended. Swanson did post his resume online during the meeting.

"I do know [Swanson] to be incredibly capable, and he can take on this position," said Wake. She had heard from department heads that they support Swanson and that is "the biggest endorsement."

Wake added she agrees with the desire for a public search to fill deputy city administrator position.

Gorton remarked that it would have been nice to know sooner that department heads were behind this transition.

"As long as the Council is on board, this is

the recommendation, and then the search will go on for filling that slot (deputy administrator) to develop the next person to take on that role again," explained Kyriacou.

White added that Swanson has a law degree from NYU and a finance degree from Iowa State University.

"We've been doing very well, and I think Ben can build on that," said White.

Swanson stated to the Council, "I wanted to thank you all for your trust, for this opportunity. I'm so honored to be appointed as the City Administrator and for the confidence you all are placing in me to keep Beacon's amazing momentum going forward."

"I look forward to rolling my sleeves up and continuing the important work you do in this room" and the day-to-daywork done in City Hall.

Swanson told Kyriacou that "it means a lot to me you brought my name forward."

Swanson wished White "many amazing adventures ahead." He also thanked the Council, his colleagues and the department heads.

White previously told Beacon Free Press he would be retiring in mid-June and wants to make this transition go as smoothly as possible.

"There's no question in my mind that you're the right person," the mayor told Swanson.

Swanson told Beacon Free Press last week via email, "I'm grateful for all the support from the Mayor, Administrator, Council, staff, and community. I feel so fortunate to have had the opportunity to get to know Beacon and many of the creative and passionate people who live here during these past years. It's truly an inspiring place to live and work."

Kendall announces retirement plans

Continued from cover

"Thank you to all those I work with. You continue to make every day a great day," said Kendall.

He was first appointed to public service as a member of the Town of Dover Planning Board in 1988. In 1993, he was elected to the Dutchess County Legislature representing first the residents of Dover and then the residents of Dover and Union Vale. In 2000, he was elected Chair of the County

Legislature, a position he held for the next seven years.

On December 29, 2006, Kendall was appointed by then Governor George Pataki to fill the unexpired term of retiring County Clerk Colette Lafuente. He was subsequently elected County Clerk in 2007 and reelected in 2011, 2015, 2029 and 2023.

He has previously served as President of the New York State Association of County Clerks and received the Association's Lifetime Achievement award in 2019.

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RENEGADES ROUNDUP

Tough start as HV drops 5 of 6 games to Blue Rocks

By Morgan E. Maier

The Hudson Valley Renegades lost their first home series to the Wilmington Blue Rocks, High-A affiliate of the Washington Nationals. The early-season matchup saw quite a few cold evenings, debuts, and some final score déjà vu as Wilmington took 5 of 6 from the Renegades.

CRAZY 8s

The Renegades allowed exactly 8 runs in three of four losses to Wilmington, and twice fell by a score of 8-6. The first, the Renegades started the homestand with some free baseball, punctuated by a Camden Troyer's quasi-inside-the-park home run. If the wind had taken the ball a few inches further out, Troyer would have had an easier commute to home plate. Instead, it was fortuitously booted by a Wilmington outfielder as Troyer headed around second. Ultimately scored as a double on a fortuitous error in the outfield, Camden's carousel around the bases tied the game for the 'Gades. Wilmington later sealed the extra innings win with three runs in the top of the 11th. The Renegades dropped another 8-6 decision on Saturday, April 11, after Wilmington put up 5 runs in the 4th inning (they'd done the same on Wednesday, April 8, to propel an 8-3 win). The streaky scoring for Wilmington was too much for the Renegade offense to undo.

Xs and Os

Renegades batters are showing disci-



Hudson Valley Renegades players, from left, Eric Genter, Cole Gabrielson and Jackson Fristoe are pictured on opening night at Heritage Financial Park.

-Photo by Dave Janosz

pline to start the year, with the second-fewest (as of April 11) strikeouts in the South Atlantic League (SAL). The pitchers have the second-most punchouts, with 89. Baserunning numbers tipped heavily in favor of Wilmington this series, with the majority of runs scored via clusters in a single inning. Pitchers are further being burned by bases on

balls. Hudson Valley pitching is tied with the Asheville Tourists for third-most walks (42) in the league, just behind Brooklyn (44) and Greensboro (43).

What stings worse than the league-leading 11 opposing batters plunked by Renegades' pitching, Hudson Valley is third-fewest in runs scored. They were outscored 32-20 by the Blue Rocks.

Renegades have the fourth-fewest hits with 47; Wilmington is just behind with 43. A steady offensive performance by catcher Eric Genter (9-for-18, 1 RBI, 2 R) highlighted Hudson Valley's offense against the Blue Rocks homestand. Three multihit games, including a 3-5 performance in the opener, were an especially eye-catching element of Genter's six-game hitting streak. Genter didn't get on base in the finale, which the Renegades lost 5-2.

Serna & Cebert stretch starts

The Yankees were one-hit by the Athletics for a loss on April 9. Hudson Valley followed the lead that evening, handing Wilmington its own combined one-hit shutout. Starter Luis Serna was fierce, fanning 10 Blue Rocks and allowing just one baserunner in seven stellar innings. In a bounce-back outing from the extra-inning loss on April 7, Tony Rossi earned the save on a six-pitch out. On April 11, Jack Cebert went 7.1 innings with 8 strikeouts on April 10. He'd give up just two earned runs, but the Renegades' offense stalled after a single first-inning score. Hudson Valley loaded the bases in the ninth, but would leave all three stranded in the 3-1 loss. The Renegades close out the first full-length series with a 3-5 overall record and hold 5th place in the South Atlantic League. The 'Gades will next travel to Maryland to face the fourth-place Frederick Keys, now the Baltimore Orioles' High-A affiliate after replacing the Aberdeen Ironbirds.

Pitchers Kohn, Serna have strong debuts for Renegades

By Morgan E. Maier

Within the plethora of new faces on the Hudson Valley Renegades pitching staff, two starters dealt a win in their debuts. Pico Kohn and Luis Serna dominated in their Renegades debuts, while their longevity and the capacity to hold a lead supported batters and the bullpen alike.

Signed out of Mississippi State in July 2025, Pico Kohn began his professional debut with a three-pitch strikeout on Opening Day. His deceptive delivery had the Brooklyn Cyclones spinning and guessing incorrectly, to the tune of 8 strikeouts. Kohn went 5.2 strong innings, allowing just three hits, including a solo home run. He escaped a bases-loaded jam with the Renegades leading Brooklyn 2-1, powered by a pitching repertoire and temperament of a seasoned veteran.

The Alabama native garnered national attention as a high schooler, rolling to a 9-2 record his senior year, with a minuscule 1.17 earned run average (ERA). He began in the bullpen at Mississippi State before a UCL injury sidelined him in 2023 and most of 2024. Kohn and his nipping slider returned with vigor and a slide into the Bulldogs' starting rotation. As a redshirt junior in

2025, the lefty led the Bulldogs to the Tallahassee Regional, where they were eliminated by eventual College World Series contender Florida State. Six weeks later, the Yankees drafted Kohn in the fourth round, the 134th pick.

Serna similarly dazzled in his April 9 High-A debut. The right-hander, revered for his change-up, . He threw 74% (63 of 85) of pitches for strikes, only walking one Blue Rock. Just 21 years old, Serna joined the Yankees organization in 2021. As a member of the FCL Yankees, Serna was a Baseball America rookie All-Star in 2022. He amassed a 1.96 ERA in 41.1 innings pitched, while striking out 56. He set a career high in strikeouts in Single-A Tampa in his penultimate start of 2024, before missing all but four games for the Tarpons in 2025. The Mexico native, primed by years of experience in the prospect leagues south of the border, looks to continue elevating his performance in High-A.

Kohn was placed on the 7-day injured list following his outing, but Serna will likely make his second start in Maryland for the Renegades' first-ever faceoff with the Frederick Keys, April 14-19.



Luis Serna allowed just one hit in seven innings and matched a career-high with 10 strikeouts against Wilmington batters last week.

-Photo by Dave Janosz

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that's italian!

by luigi coppola



Vacation adventures

There's never a dull moment...

Vacations in my family were never a relaxing, wonderful trip. They always ended that way, but the trips to and from never were easy. Something always happened, and usually it was because either they didn't understand my father or he didn't understand them.

This happened throughout my life with my parents. Whether it was getting a ticket for going through a YELLOW light, or getting held up in customs because we had a coconut in our suitcase, something always seemed to happen.

This particular adventure happened a long time ago when my father was taking a trip to Florida by himself.

My father always brought his homemade wine with him when they went down to their condo in Florida, and usually there was never any problem. The sight of two older Italians usually got my parents certain privileges. However, this time in particular, my mom was not traveling with my father, and he realized that things are totally different when you're alone.

My mom drove my father to Stewart airport early. It was 6 a.m., and the airport was pretty empty. My mother pulled up to the curb and noticed a police car parked at the curb in front of her. She went up to the officer's window to let him know that she was going to help my father bring his luggage inside. Quickly she realized that the officer was fast asleep in his car. Figuring that she would be in and out before he woke up, she helped my father bring his luggage inside.

Into the airport they walked, lugging luggage and a box of wine, tied up with string. Not only was the box tied with string, it was tied up well enough that there was no way in hell anyone would be able to untie the box and retie it. This box looked like it was ready to travel overseas on the Titanic.

So, my mother helped my father to the check-in counter, kissed him goodbye and went back to the car. By the time she got out to the car, the officer was awake and furious that someone had parked a car at the curb and right behind him. So here comes my mother, this little Old Italian lady walking out to her car, not realizing that you were not allowed under any circumstances to park at the curb of an airport.

In the meantime, my father was explaining to the counter person that this cardboard box was filled with bottles of homemade wine. They wanted him to untie this box that would give Harry Houdini a hard time. He was having a difficult time explaining to them in his broken English that he did this all the time, and there never was a problem. They didn't care, and they wanted him to open the box. After much debate, the now exhausted flight stewards allowed him to check the box, and on he went to the checkpoint to get scanned before to the waiting area.

In the meantime, outside, my mother was getting yelled at by this officer because she had left the car at the curb. Once he was done yelling at her, she looked him right in the eyes and in full Italian mother mode, explained to him, that if he wasn't asleep in the car, she would have been able to tell him what was going on; and if he really wanted to pursue this any further, she would be more than happy to tell his boss, that he was asleep in the car instead of watching what was going on at the airport. She then scolded him for harassing a little old lady and told him that if he were his son, she would smack him for being so disrespectful.

In the meantime, Pop was setting off alarms at the check point. After taking off his belt, shoes, wallet, chain, watch, wedding ring, and glasses, he still set off the alarm. So now they had to strip search him. My father started to protest, saying that

he was an old man and this was a complete waste of time. However, all they heard was this unrecognizable accent; and in the post-911 world, he had to be searched.

Back at the curb, the poor officer was apologizing to my mother for yelling at her and asking if he could go help my father inside. My mother told him that she already did, and now it was time for her to go home. She then got in her car and drove away while this poor shell-shocked officer was left at the curb watching her drive away.

Back inside, my father had stripped down, and the TSA officers were realizing that my father's back brace had metal clips on it, and that was what was setting off the alarms. So my father got his back brace hooked back up, got dressed again, all the while cursing out the TSA agents for harassing a little old man and making him undress. Those poor TSA agents didn't know what to do or say. First of all, they didn't understand a thing that he was saying, and second, they were afraid to. So, when he was done getting dressed and cursing them all out, off he went to his flight.

That night, I was at my mother's house for dinner, and she was telling me her part of the story. She made one of my favorite dishes, Roasted Chicken with Potatoes. She was telling me her story, not realizing what had happened to her husband. Earlier that day, my father called me to let me know that he had arrived and told me his story. So, while my mother was telling me about what happened to her outside the airport, I was reliving what happened to my father at the same time inside the airport. It was like an Abbot and Costello movie!

You almost feel bad for the people at Stewart airport, don't you? While you are thinking about this little story, please enjoy the recipe for Roasted Chicken

with Potatoes.

Roasted Chicken with Potatoes

Ingredients

3 lbs. chicken, legs or breasts of even size
20 fresh sage leaves
5 potatoes, peeled and quartered
1 cup dry white wine
2 garlic cloves
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
salt and pepper, to taste

Method

Season chicken with salt and pepper; set aside. Finely chop 4 of the sage leaves; set aside.

In large ovenproof skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat; fry garlic and remaining whole sage leaves until garlic is lightly browned, 1 minute. With slotted spoon, set sage aside for garnish. Remove garlic and chop; set aside. Brown chicken, in batches, 5 to 6 minutes. Transfer to plate.

Add potatoes to pan. Sauté until browned, about 7 minutes. Pour off fat. Return chicken and any accumulated juices to pan. Add wine, remaining salt and pepper, and reserved chopped garlic and chopped sage; bring to boil.

Place the entire pan into the oven and roast at 425 degrees, basting 2 or 3 times, until sauce is thickened and juices run clear when chicken is pierced, 30 minutes. Serve garnished with reserved fried sage leaves.

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.

Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, Inc. receives NYS Department of Environmental Conservation \$67,022 grant

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Amanda Lefton announced on March 30 that more than \$5.1 million to reduce the negative impacts of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species on natural resources, infrastructure, agriculture, and local economies. The 51 awarded projects will strengthen prevention, early detection, rapid response, management, and restoration efforts statewide, supporting long-term ecosystem health, economic stability, and community wellbeing.

"Managing invasive species and mitigating their negative impacts to our lands and waters is essential to the environment, public health, and quality of life," said Commissioner Lefton. "Investing in science-based management and strong local partnerships is strengthening New York's efforts to combat invasive species, protect biodiversity, build more resilient ecosystems, and protect our forests, waters, farms, and communities."

Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, Inc. (HHFT) was awarded \$67,022 for their Upper Overlook Restoration & Resiliency Project, which will restore a 1.7-acre section of Hudson Highlands State Park Preserve that has been heavily degraded by invasive shrubs, vines,

and herbaceous species.

The project's overarching goal is to reduce invasive plant dominance, reestablish native forest structure, and build a durable monitoring and adaptive management framework that supports long-term ecological recovery and resilience.

The project will implement a four-part workplan to reduce invasive plant cover; restore native tree, shrub, and herbaceous layers; implement long-term monitoring and adaptive management; and engage volunteers and partners in long-term stewardship. Work will occur from 2026-2029, with continued monitoring and adaptive management through 2034.

Upon completion of the project, the Upper Overlook project area will exhibit significantly reduced invasive plant pressure, renewed native tree growth, and stable native herbaceous and shrub layers, supported by a scientifically rigorous monitoring program and an engaged stewardship community. The restored site will be more resilient to future disturbance, aligned with DEC and Lower Hudson Partnership for Regional Invasive Species (LH PRISM) strategic objectives, and serve as a model for restoration within high-use State Park landscapes.

The Upper Overlook Restoration & Resiliency Project is being implement-

ed during HHFT's construction of the Breakneck Connector & Bridge, which is part of the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail. Upper Overlook is within one of

three major trailhead areas that are closed during construction, which will increase the restoration project's chances for success.

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HUDSON VALLEY NATURALIST

by Francine Wizner



The peculiar purgative of Medieval monasteries



A bowl crafted from Buckthorn by Roy Jacobsen of Fargo, North Dakota.

-Photos courtesy of the artist

From left, Buckthorn berries in early summer. They ripen to purple in September-October.

-Photo by Matt Lavin from Bozeman, Montana, USA Wikipedia CC Buckthorn

One of my outside chores is curbing the growth of plants that I have deemed "yucky." I'm referring to vegetation flourishing in the woods that is taking over large sections. My Yuck List mirrors the many invasive species identified by Cornell Cooperative Extension and the DEC. They include Multiflora Rose, Japanese Barberry and others. One day, whilst performing my duties, I directed my loppers to, what I now call, The Spiny Scatbush. It is more commonly known as Buckthorn.

Coming to America

In its native European range, Buckthorn is a hardy shrub that is kept in check by insects, herbivores and pathogens that have co-evolved with it. It forms effective natural barriers. It provides nectar for pollinators. Its unique two-tone quality makes it desirable for small-scale furniture and décor

objects. Its density makes it a slow-burning firewood.

Settlers brought Buckthorn to America in the 19th century as a fast-growing hedge. But, by the early 1900s, the shrub started to dominate due to its many adaptations. Buckthorn has an extended growing season and shades out natives; Here, it has few pests or diseases to control its spread. It alters the soil's chemistry, thus inhibiting the growth of surrounding plants. It is prolific because birds eat the berries and evacuate the seeds over long distances.

Anthraquinone

Some plants, such as Wild Senna, Rhubarb and Buckthorn, produce anthraquinones for defense against microorganisms. Separately, anthraquinones stimulate bowel contractions and cause diarrhea. Despite this painful effect, wildlife will con-

sume Buckthorn during harsh winters. But, generally, animals learn to avoid eating plants with the toxin.

Not people

The Church of England Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Alban is a significant historic site. Prior to construction of a welcome center, an archaeological excavation unearthed graves containing remains of individuals from the Norman Period (c. 911-1204 CE). Found evidence suggests that the decedents included monks, dignitaries and early benefactors of the monastery, then known as the Benedictine Abbey at St Albans.

Biomarkers in the skeletal remains, as well as further excavations of the surrounding orchard, provided details of medieval monastic life within the community. Characteristics of the bones, such as thickness, mineral density and collagen levels, indicate that the decedents ate rich animal protein diets and had ailments such as obesity. Typically, arm bones from the general population of that era exhibit joint degeneration and asymmetry from manual work. The decedent's arm symmetry indicates that they led more sedentary lives.

In earlier excavations at St Albans, researchers discovered prodigious amounts of Buckthorn seeds mixed with fragments of cloth in the abbey's cesspits. The quantity of seeds, along with the textile "lavatory paper" suggests that monks routinely used Buckthorn as a purgative. The berries were made palatable as a spiced syrup.

Middle Age MiraLAX

Medical belief at the time was that health required a balance of "humors." Imbalances,

rather than infections, were thought to cause illness. Treatments were intended to remove excess fluids and restore physical and spiritual alignment. They included the use of agents to induce sweating, bloodletting (therapeutic phlebotomy), emetics (to induce vomiting) and purgatives (to cause bowel contraction).

Medieval peasants ate seasonal, plant-based diets. That was viewed as too coarse for the refined stomachs of the elite. Monastic consumption at high-status abbeys included up to 6,000 calories a day of meat, fish, eggs and white bread. Clergy followed patterns of strict fasting, followed by days of feasting. It wouldn't be surprising if they suffered from excess weight and constipation.

Monasteries, such as St Albans, were the centers of knowledge and healthcare of the day. As such, they maintained herb gardens and medical guides. Indeed, a suite of medicinal herbs have been found growing at St Albans. Among them: Buckthorn. Humoral Theory would have prescribed it as a means of managing chronic constipation.

History and honor

The unearthed medieval remains were studied to understand the abbey's early history. That purpose has been served; the decedents were subsequently reburied. They were not placed on public display for ethical and religious reasons. Among the archeological discoveries were the remains of Abbot John of Wheathampstead, whose work influenced the restoration of St Albans after the plague. A lifelike digital reconstruction of Abbot John's face is on display in the exhibition area; his remains were reburied in a vault near the Shrine of St Alban.

The Spiny Scatbush

Beyond the "cathartic" purge attributed to Buckthorn berries, they were also a source of pigments in medieval manuscript illumination. St Albans would have used them in its scriptorium. They were used for illustration in North America in the early to mid-19th century, as well. Today, the invasive could be made to positive use by woodworkers or natural dye artisans. I wish someone would make a constructive application of the Buckthorn growing locally.

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.

Community Foundations announces key leadership hire to support growth, impact

Building upon the nonprofit's momentum in driving impactful change in the Hudson Valley, Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley (CFHV) announced the recent addition of Senior Vice President of Development, Benjamin Krevolin, to the CFHV team. Krevolin's leadership will aid in strengthening the organization's grant-making and will expand its programming. Particularly, his involvement will bolster CFHV's capacity-building training series that equips local nonprofits with the tools and resources they need to thrive.

"Bringing Benjamin onto our leadership team reflects both where we are as an organization and where we're going," said Laura Washington, president and CEO of CFHV. "His experience, vision and deep connections to the Hudson Valley will help us grow our impact and better serve our community of nonprofit partners, fund holders and donors."

Krevolin has 25 years of experience in fundraising, arts administration and nonprofit leadership. A Stone Ridge resident raised in Poughkeepsie, Krevolin most recently served as the Director of Development for Mohonk Preserve in Ulster County and the Shelburne Museum in Vermont, following his role as Chief Advancement Officer for Bard Graduate Center. He also previously served as President of Arts Mid-Hudson, where he oversaw grantmaking, technical assistance and advocacy efforts, and held roles at Vassar College supporting scholarships, faculty research and capital initiatives. Krevolin holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Vassar



Benjamin Krevolin

-Courtesy photo

College and a post-graduate diploma from The Juilliard School. He remains deeply engaged in the Hudson Valley community through board service and regional leadership.

Krevolin will play a critical role in advancing CFHV's mission of strengthening philanthropy in the Hudson Valley, supporting nonprofit organization partners and addressing the evolving needs of communities throughout the region.

For more information about Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley and its work, visit CommunityFoundationsHV.org.

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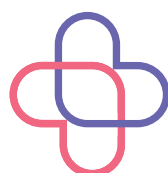
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County Flags lowered to honor former County Attorney Fedorchak

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino has directed all Dutchess County Government facility flags to be lowered to half-staff following the death of former Dutchess County Attorney James Fedorchak last week.

"Jim Fedorchak was a devoted public servant who served the residents of Dutchess County with dedication,

integrity and professionalism. He was a mentor to so many and his positive influence continues on throughout Dutchess County Government. We extend our heartfelt prayers and sympathy to his family and friends. Jim will be greatly missed," said Serino.

Fedorchak first began in the Dutchess County Attorney's Office in 1974, following

his completion of his Juris Doctor degree from Loyola University of New Orleans School of Law, and served until 1979. Following an expansive career practicing law in private practice, Fedorchak returned to Dutchess County Government in February 2010, serving as Dutchess County Attorney until his retirement in October 2020.

Flags will remain lowered until interment.



James Fedorchak

Obituaries

Elizabeth Mary Costello



Elizabeth Mary Costello, a lifelong resident of the Wappingers Falls area, passed away peacefully at home on April 7, 2026, just two days shy of her 98th birthday. She was born in Poughkeepsie, NY on April 9, 1928, the daughter of the late James and Anna (née Hawthorne) Costello. Though born in Poughkeepsie, her family later moved to New Hamburg, where she attended Wappinger Central Schools.

Elizabeth was a communicant of Saint Mary's Church in Wappingers Falls and a member of the Wappinger Senior Center, where she enjoyed her time. She loved playing cards, was an enthusiastic bingo player, and took great pride in her gardening.

In her younger years, Elizabeth enjoyed fishing, swimming, and ice skating. During her working years, she found joy in bowling alongside her sister Jane and sister-in-law

Gloria, often traveling together for weekend tournaments. Later in life, she continued to enjoy traveling, especially with her sister Jane and sister-in-law Betty. Above all, Elizabeth cherished family gatherings, particularly Sunday dinners, and had a special love for animals—especially her dogs.

To call Elizabeth feisty would be an understatement but she was fiercely loyal and deeply generous. Though she lived modestly, she rarely missed a chance to slip a few dollars into the hands of the younger members of her family.

She began her career at the Hat Factory in Beacon and later worked for many years in manufacturing at IBM in Poughkeepsie and East Fishkill, retiring in 1983. She embraced retirement fully, always finding ways to stay busy. In her later years, as her appetite for large meals waned, she developed a fondness for nighttime snacking. Her bedside table was never without her favorites: green grapes, a banana, a sleeve of graham crackers, bologna and cheese and "don't be stingy" on the Hershey's Kisses. A habit that even brought a smile to her doctor's face.

Elizabeth is survived by her many nieces and nephews: Eileen Andros (Brian), Charles LeRoy (Karen), Nancy Niet (Frank), James LeRoy (Loretta), Patricia McNamee, Mike Costello, James Costello (Yvonne), David Costello (Patricia), William Costello, Lawrence Costello (Meme), Jean Harrington, and Kevin Costello. She is also survived by numerous great-nieces and nephews, great-great-nieces and nephews, and even a great-great-great-nephew.

She was lovingly cared for at home by devoted aides and family members, with special gratitude to Lia Sanchez, Laurie Schmauch, and Pattie McNamee for their compassionate care.

Family and friends will gather to honor Elizabeth's life and lay her to rest at St. Mary's Cemetery in Wappingers Falls on Friday, April 24 at 11 AM. To offer condolences or share a memory, please visit www.DelehantyFuneral.com.

Gloria Palumbo



Gloria Palumbo, 87, of Wappingers Falls, NY, passed away peacefully Thursday, April 9th at home. Gloria was born July 13th, 1938 in Highland, NY, the daughter of the late Giuseppe and Pasqualina Picco. She attended Highland Schools and worked as a typist for the Central Hudson sponsored "Almanac" radio show.

On July 22nd, 1961, she married John Palumbo in St. Augustine's Church. She was a devoted wife, mother and grandmother, playing a major role in the raising of three of her granddaughters after the untimely death of her daughter-in-law, Mary Nell Prenting.

Gloria is survived by her beloved husband, John Palumbo; her son, Joe Palumbo; her sister, Janet Picco; grandchildren Dan, Grace, Charlotte, Lucy and Lilyanna Palumbo and daughter-in-law Bernadette Palumbo. Gloria was predeceased by her

son, David Palumbo, who cared for her with deep devotion and was there to welcome her home; her brothers, Gene and Enrico Picco; and her sisters, Edith Roberto and Ines Picco.

Gloria will be remembered for her deep love for her family and her quiet generosity toward everyone fortunate enough to know her. We'll love you forever.

Her family would like to thank all the medical professionals who cared for her in the latter stage of her life, most notably Dr. Edward Schneider, who made house calls when Gloria became bedridden, and Dr. Kamran Haleem. Her family would also like to extend their gratitude to her loving caregivers; Nicola, Diana, Terri, Beyonca and Kim, who provided emotional as well as physical support.

Calling hours were Tuesday, April 14th at DELEHANTY FUNERAL HOME, 64 E. Main St., Wappingers Falls, NY. A Mass of Christian Burial will take place Wednesday, April 15th, at 10:00am at St. Mary's Catholic Church, 11 Clinton St., Wappingers Falls, NY; followed by interment in St. Mary Parish Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Hudson Valley Hospice, 374 Violet Ave., Poughkeepsie, NY 12601. To offer a message of condolence or share a fond memory, please visit: www.DelehantyFuneral.com.

Bobbie L. Zappala



Bobbie L. Zappala, a longtime resident of Beacon and Fishkill, passed away peacefully on Sunday, April 5, 2026, at the age of 39, after a long and courageous battle with cancer. She was born on August 9, 1986, in Mount Kisco, New York, the daughter of John Zappala and Helen Wilke, both of whom survive her.

Bobbie was a devoted daughter, mother, sister, and friend. In addition to her parents, she is survived by her two children, X-Havier and Ysabella, who were her entire world, as well as their father, Javier Gonzalez, with whom she shared 17 years. She is also survived by her sister, Theresa (Curtis) Jackson; her nieces, Kataryna and Elliana; and many loving aunts, uncles, and cousins, including her Uncle Joseph, Uncle

Gary, and Aunt Mary. She also leaves behind her loyal dog, Chance, who rarely left her side and was a constant source of comfort throughout her journey.

Bobbie had a spirit that was impossible to ignore. She was strong-willed, stubborn, and wonderfully sassy, with a sense of humor that could brighten even the darkest day. She loved fiercely and unconditionally, always putting others before herself. Her home—and her heart—were always open to others. Over the years, she became a second mother to many, earning the affectionate title of "Mama Bobbie" from the countless children she welcomed, supported, and loved as her own.

Bobbie began her Scouting journey in 2013 as a dedicated leader for X-Havier's Cub Scout Pack and later supported Ysabella as well. She mentored many young Scouts, guiding them in achieving the Arrow of Light, the highest honor in Cub Scouting. In 2019, she proudly founded Troop 41G, the area's first girls' BSA troop, and served as Scoutmaster until her retirement in 2023, helping grow the troop and shape its foundation. Her commitment to Scouting was recognized with her induction into the Order of the Arrow in 2020. Bobbie was especially proud of her children, celebrating X-Havier's achievement of Eagle Scout and Ysabella becoming the troop's first Star Scout.

Despite the challenges she faced over the past year, Bobbie showed incredible resilience and bravery. She faced each day with determination, humor, and an unwavering love for her family. Her strength was an inspiration to all who knew her.

Her family received friends on Saturday, April 11, 2026, at Delehanty Funeral Home, 64 East Main Street, Wappingers Falls, New York, where a brief service of remembrance was held. Interment followed at Fairview Cemetery, 375 Washington Avenue, Beacon, New York.

In keeping with Bobbie's love for flowers, the family kindly encourages floral donations.

To offer a message of condolences or share a fond memory, please visit: www.DelehantyFuneral.com.

Daniel L. Lowney



Daniel L. Lowney, a life-long Village of Wappingers Falls resident, passed away at his home on April 7, 2026; at the age of 56. He was born in Poughkeepsie, NY on August 5, 1969, son of the late Leo D. & Nancy J. (nee Pulcastro) Lowney.

Daniel was a faithful member of Saint Mary's Church in Wappingers Falls. He volunteered his time at the Grinnell Library in Wappingers Falls, and belonged to The Friends of Carnwath in the Town of Wappinger. He was an avid gardener.

Danny had worked for many years as a hair stylist at Dazzles Salon in Wappingers Falls.

Daniel is survived by his two loving sisters, Lee Anne Freno and her husband

Paul; Elizabeth Paszkiewicz and her husband Peter. His three nieces and three nephews: Sarah (husband Michael), Jacob, Emma, Joshua, Andrew and Olivia, whom he adored. He is also survived by his two aunts, Louise Lowney and Nancy Fulvio, and several cousins and dear friends.

Along with his parents, Daniel was predeceased by his two uncles, John Lowney and Cornelius 'Neil' Lowney; and his cousin John Lowney Jr.

His Family received Friends on Monday, April 13th at DELEHANTY FUNERAL HOME, 64 East Main Street, Wappingers Falls, NY. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Tuesday, April 14th at St Mary's Church, 11 Clinton Street, followed by a private cremation. Interment will take place at later date in St. Mary's Cemetery in Wappingers Falls.

In lieu of flowers his family wishes for memorial donations to be made to the Monastery of St. Clare, 70 Nelson Avenue, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590 or to the Cat Sanctuary of Mid-Hudson Animal Aid, 54 Simmons Lane, Beacon, NY 12508. To offer a message of condolence or share a fond memory, please visit: www.DelehantyFuneral.com.

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

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

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Hello, my name is Binx! I am a 7 month old Collie mix looking for my forever home! I am super sweet and playful and love everyone I meet. I'm good with kids, dogs and cats. I am fully vetted up to what is age appropriate and I can't wait to find my new family. If you would like to adopt me please go to www.incrediblepupspetresuce.com and submit an adoption application.

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Walkway event honors Fred Schaeffer



From left are NYS Senator Rob Rolison, a representative of the Ulster County Legislature, a representative of NYS Assemblywoman Didi Barrett, NYS Senator Michelle Hinchey, Fred Schaeffer, Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino, Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger and Rob Dyson, who had been one of Fred's earliest supporters and collaborators.

-Photos by Jim Donick



Several area governmental leaders honored Fred Schaeffer on Sunday, April 12. From left are NYS Senator Michelle Hinchey, Schaeffer and Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino.

FRED SCHAEFFER

VISIONARY, VOLUNTEER, FOUNDING LEADER

This plaque recognizes Fred Schaeffer, whose enthusiasm and volunteer service helped galvanize the community effort that transformed the former Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge into Walkway Over the Hudson State Historic Park.

With deep gratitude to Fred and all who helped build the Walkway.

Dedicated by Friends of the Walkway

A plaque honoring Fred Schaeffer as the "Father of the Walkway" was unveiled on Sunday, April 12.

By Jim Donick

Hundreds of Walkway enthusiasts gathered amidst a sea of Red Walkway Ambassador vests to honor Fred Schaeffer, the "Father of the Walkway," on Sunday, April 12.

Though the original idea for saving the bridge belonged to Bill Sepe, it was Schaeffer who imagined it growing to be "the friendliest park in the world" and led the effort to fund it and turn it into the glorious reality it has become.

Friends of the Walkway Over the Hudson Executive Director Lori Robertson hosted the tribute and introduced a number of dignitaries, who shared recollections of Fred's untiring efforts to build support by bringing any and all out onto the walkway when it was still just the remains of a burnt out railroad bridge.

Rob Dyson, one of Fred's earliest supporters and collaborators recalled being

brought out to "see the view" one February day many years ago when the wind was howling and the temperature was six degrees Fahrenheit. Despite the circumstances, he was enchanted by the view and committed himself to the vision.

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino, knowing that the bridge has almost from its inception been known as "the great connector," echoed the words of many in offering that same title to Schaeffer for his monumental effort in bringing so many people together to create a park that would go on to welcome people from all over the world.

Robertson finished the proceedings with the note that this event had two purposes - first and foremost to honor Fred Schaeffer - but also to kick off the Fred Schaeffer Ambassador Legacy Fund that would serve to keep Fred's dreams vibrant through the Walkway's all-but-unique Ambassador Program.

Latin Dance Night set for April 23

A Night of Latin Dancing will be presented by Beacon Dance Beat on Thursday, April 23 at 7 p.m. (doors open at 6 p.m. for dining and music), at the Towne Crier Café, 379 Main Street, in Beacon. Lose yourself to the wonderful sounds of Salsa, Merengue, Bachata, Reggaeton and much more, played by DJ Rhoda. Song requests welcome.

Fine dining and full bar are available before and during the dance. Admission is \$20, which can be paid at the door. For reservations (not required), please call the Towne Crier at 845-831-5500.

this week's puzzle solutions

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

This week's answer
SUDOKU

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K	O	R	E	A	D	A	H	O	R	I	S	S	T	U	N	T	O	P	T	T	U	B	A		

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

Sugnrn solution

Legal Notices

REQUEST FOR BIDS NOTICE
The Purchasing Agent, County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of sealed bids for: Bid #RFB-DCP-35-26 On-Call Parking Lot Repair Services Bids will be received until 2:00 p.m. on the

Legal Notices

28th 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

Legal Notices

and RFP Opportunities". For additional information, call 845-486-3613.
City of Beacon One Municipal Plaza - Suite One Beacon, New York 12508 Phone (845) 838-5002
April 10, 2026
SUBJECT: Variance Application

Legal Notices

Applicant: David Simon and Laura Volpacchio Address: 17 Pleasant View Avenue Tax Grid No.: 30-6054-13-227338-00 Zoning Classification: R1-10 Dear Neighboring Property Owner: David Simon and Laura Volpacchio, 17 Pleasant View Av-

Legal Notices

enue, have applied to the Zoning Board of Appeals for relief from Section 223-17D, Attachment 1, to allow for the construction of an addition to the existing garage, which requires relief from the following: 1. Section 223-17, Attachment 1, to allow for a side yard setback of 5 feet (15 ft. required)

Legal Notices

The full application is available online at: <https://www.beaconny.gov/index.php/agendas-minutes/> The Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing for this application at its meeting to be held on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 7:00 PM, in the Municipal Center courtroom, One Municipal Plaza, Beacon, New

Legal Notices

York. You are invited to be present to voice your support or objection to this appeal. Comments can also be provided via email no later than 4:00 PM on April 21, 2026, to Mercedes Perez, Zoning Board Secretary, at mperez@beaconny.gov
Mercedes Perez
Zoning Board Secretary

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

© StatePoint Media

Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

Suguru

		1		1	
	2	4	3		4
			5		
				1	

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The heavy lines indicate areas, called cages, from one to five squares in size. Fill each cage with unique digits, counting up from 1. So for example a 2-square cage contains the numbers 1 and 2; and a 5-square cage contains the numbers from 1 to 5. Adjacent (touching) squares, even ones that touch diagonally, may never contain the same number.

THEME: FILL-IN-THE-BLANKS

ACROSS

1. Double's trick
6. Pick
9. Marching band member
13. North one or South one, in Asia
14. Morse Code dash
15. Root of iris
16. Indian black tea
17. Mother lode stuff
18. Disinclined
19. *Mad as a _____
21. *Fit as a _____
23. Pilgrimage to Mecca
24. *_____ A Sketch
25. R&R destination
28. Table, in Mexico
30. Aerie baby
35. Otter's den
37. *_____ as a button
39. Type of union
40. Axillary, in biology
41. *Bored to _____
43. Fit of shivering
44. Treated with calcium hydroxide
46. Recipe amt.
47. Not fiction
48. *Lawrence and DiCaprio movie "Don't _____"
50. Like some hard times
52. *To the _____ degree
53. Not less
55. *Hi-_____ graphics
57. *Fly off the _____
60. *Storm in a _____
63. Louisiana swamp
64. *"_____ whiz!"
66. Did like a lunatic
68. Mr. T and friends
69. *Am is to I a _____ is to we
70. Certain pudding ingredient
71. Mosquito net, e.g.
72. Local area network
73. Leavening agent

DOWN

1. Reggae's cousin
2. Silly talk
3. Minor one in the sky
4. Not o'er
5. Type of gong instrument
6. *_____ -Eaters
7. *_____ for the course
8. *"Grand _____ Auto"
9. Walked on
10. Caspian Sea feeder
11. *"Take a _____ Out of Crime"
12. Type of tree
15. Idiom for outdated or trite (2 words)
20. Tape deck button
22. *Break the _____
24. Palatable
25. *_____ we dance?
26. President Franklin Roosevelt's diagnosis
27. *"Remember the _____!"
29. Cooking grease
31. Tennis' Steffi
32. Flotsam and jetsam alternative
33. Something educed
34. *By the skin of your _____
36. Hiker's journey
38. Gaelic language
42. *_____ tire
45. Lollipop brand
49. D.C. mover and shaker
51. Not very far
54. Fit for a king
56. Go "Boo!"
57. *A _____-hate relationship
58. Pirates' affirmatives
59. Famous flood survivor
60. *Nirvana's "Smells Like _____ Spirit"
61. Iris holder
62. *Three _____ in a pod
63. "Kapow!"
65. Pitcher's stat
67. Banned insecticide, acr.

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12	
13						14				15				
16						17				18				
	19				20			21	22					
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48					49		50			51		52		
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	57	58	59					60				61	62	
63						64	65			66				67
68						69				70				
71						72				73				

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Masque & Mime to perform the music of ABBA in 'Mamma Mia!' April 17-19



Pictured are "Mamma Mia!" cast members, from left, Madison Williams, Isabella Felidi, and Jamie Mastrantuono.



Madisyn Spagna, as "Sophie" in "Mamma Mia!," during one of the recent rehearsals of the musical by Roy C. Ketcham High School's Masque & Mime drama club.

By Kristine Coulter

"Mamma Mia!," here we go again...The ABBA musical will be performed by Masque & Mime, the drama club at Roy C. Ketcham High School, on April 17-19 in the school's Bove Theater, 99 Myers Corners Road, in Wappingers Falls. Shows on Friday and Saturday are at 7 p.m. and the 2 p.m. show is on Sunday. The musical is described as "A mother. A daughter. Three possible dads. And a trip down the aisle you'll never forget!"

Isabella "Bella" Felidi is a cast member, and in the fall, she is part of the hair and makeup crew.

Bella, who is portraying "Donna Sheridan," described the show as being "about a young woman named Sophie who is getting married and wants her estranged Dad to attend but the catch is that she doesn't know who it is! There [are] three possible Dads, and she knows this by secretly reading her mom's old diary from the summer that she was conceived. It follows her journey to figure it out, and you get the backstory of Donna's life, including her hilarious friends Tanya & Rosie and Sophie's three possible fathers (Sam, Bill and Harry). It also is set to the music of ABBA, and all your favorite songs are going to be performed, and we have a fantastic ensemble full of talented dancing queens and kings for you to dance along with."

Songs such as "Dancing Queen," "Money, Money, Money" and "Gimme! Gimme! Gimme!" will be performed by

the cast.

Members of the drama club have posted on social media "Friday Fun Facts." One such fact is that "Mamma Mia!" is the 8th longest-running Broadway show, with 5,773 performances over the course of 14 years.

Director Stacy Lynch Schroeder was asked via email how rehearsals have been going. Lynch Schroeder replied, "Rehearsals have been incredibly energetic and collaborative. Our students have really embraced the spirit of "Mamma Mia!"—there's a lot of joy, humor, and heart in the room every day. From learning the iconic music of ABBA to building strong character relationships, the cast and crew have been working hard to bring this story to life. It's been exciting to watch their confidence and chemistry grow with each rehearsal, and we can't wait to share that energy with our audiences."

Madisyn Spagna is a cast member as well as co-treasurer for the club. Madisyn plays "Sophie Sheridan."

"My favorite part of this process has been bringing Sophie to life! I see myself so much throughout her character, and being able to portray her character through songs and scenes has been a dream! I also have enjoyed making stronger bonds and friendships with my Masque & Mime family," said Madisyn.

Lynch Schroeder was asked if she had a favorite scene. She replied, "It's hard to choose just one, but I especially love the moments where the ensemble



The cast of "Mamma Mia!"

-Courtesy photos Masque & Mime

comes together—those big, high-energy musical numbers like "Voulez Vous" really showcase the talent and enthusiasm of our entire cast. There's something special about seeing the full company on stage, telling the story through music and movement. Without giving too much away, audiences can definitely look forward to some unforgettable group numbers that will have everyone smiling and hopefully singing along!"

Bella stated, "People should come out and see a performance because it is a great show, and above all, a FUN experience. You will laugh, sing, dance and cry with

us. Our cast is so incredibly talented, and I am so proud of the hard work we've all put in; the audience is really in for a treat. Every single person shines so bright; you won't be disappointed!"

Madisyn said, "People should come and see a performance because this show is just SO MUCH FUN! It is such an infectious, feel-good show combining ABBA's timeless, and well-loved music, with a story surrounding female friendship and heartwarming mother-daughter story! We have such a talented and hardworking cast. You do NOT want to miss this one!"

To purchase tickets, go to rcktkts.com.

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Dance party to raise funds for Beacon Litfest

A Dance Party 1970s-style will be held on Friday, April 24, from 7-10 p.m. at the Denning's Point Distillery in Beacon. A dance party fundraiser will be held for the Beacon Litfest. Event will feature DJ Felix Hernandez of WBGO and Rhythm

Revue fame! There will be costumes, photo ops, and more.

For more information, visit beaconlitfest.org.

Tickets are \$20. Go to Beaconlitfest.org.

Spring Tag Sale at Mt. Alvernia April 25

A Spring Tag Sale will be held at Mt. Alvernia, 158 Delavergne Ave. in Wappingers Falls, from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., on Saturday, April 25. There is something for

everyone. Sale benefits Mt. Alvernia. Among the items for sale will be household items, small appliances, toys, jewelry and more.