

BEACON FREE PRESS

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Storm recovery efforts ongoing across county

From County reports
Clean-up and power restoration efforts continue across Dutchess County, following the severe summer storm that ripped through much of Dutchess County on Saturday, July 4th, causing significant damage with downed power lines, trees and other damage.

The storm's most significant impacts were in the City and Town of Poughkeepsie, East Fishkill, Hyde Park, LaGrange, Beekman, Union Vale and Village and Town of Pawling.

The following are updates from Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino's conference call held Monday morning with local municipal leaders; County officials from the Public Works and Emergency Response departments; and representatives from Central Hudson and NYSEG, among others to discuss restoration efforts:

Central Hudson has restored power to approximately half of its impacted customers, with more than 19,000 customers in Dutchess County, still without power as of Monday. Anticipated global restoration (90% of customers) was expected by 10 p.m. on Tuesday, July 7.

NYSEG reported over 3,400 customers still without power in Dutchess County, with most customers expected to be restored on Monday and global restoration (90% of customers) was expected by 4 p.m. on Tuesday, July 7th.

Both utilities are working with mutual aid and contract crews to help expedite restoration efforts. Important reminders for those who are utilizing generators: Generators must be placed outside, at least 20 feet away from structures for safety, with their exhaust directed away from the structure.

Dutchess County Public Works' highway division crews, as well as local municipal crews continue to work in coordination with Central Hudson and NYSEG to clear roadways as quickly as possible. Downed phone and cable lines are presenting challenges for highway and utility crews and creating obstruction issues on state roadways such as Route 55. Motorists are urged to use caution, as traffic lights may be without power in affected areas, and should be treated as a 4-way stop for safety.

Green Teen Beacon's free farm stand opens for season

By Francesca Oliva
Green Teen Beacon's free farm stand has returned, continuing its commitment to providing free, locally grown produce to the community throughout the summer and fall. The farm stand opened on July 2, and will operate every Thursday from July to October from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Beacon Recreation Center. Each week, produce grown by Green Teen youth produce in their garden, or from their partner farm Common Ground Farm, is available for anyone to take.

"It is a no question asked distribution where anybody, no matter what their situation is, can come and get some fresh vegetables," said Emily Murnane, the 4-H Program Manager at Green Teen Beacon. This year, Nightingale Farm from Marlboro, will also be joining as a partner.

All produce that is distributed is grown using chemical-free growing practices and with organic seeds. Visitors to the stand can expect to see tomatoes, kale, leafy greens, zucchini, herbs and other seasonal fruits and vegetables throughout the summer.

In addition to providing fresh locally grown produce, Green Teen provides paid job opportunities for Dutchess County youth. Teen workers can receive vocational training, learn agricultural skills and participate in community development through their job at Green Teen.

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The Beacon Green Teen has opened its farm stand for the season. -Courtesy photo

Tall ships, flyovers mark July 4th party in NYC

By Jim Donick
The 250th birthday of the United States was marked in New York City with a party like only New York can throw. The harbor and the Hudson River provided a backdrop that showed off the largest-ever gathering of Tall Ships in the U.S., maybe in the world. There were over 400 ships from all over the world taking part.

As a comparison, the fabled Spanish Armada, a fleet previously unparalleled, was only about 130 ships. The party on the river wasn't limited to the water. Flyovers were provided first by the U.S. Navy's Blue Angels and then followed by historic aircraft, helicopters and representatives of allied air forces, including the famed French Airfare aerobatic team, which made its flight up the river with jet exhausts blowing red, white, and blue.

The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter, Eagle, kicked off the parade of ships.. This 295 foot long Barque was joined by three of her four sister ships, the German Gorch Fock, the Portuguese NRP Sagres III and the Romanian Mircea. There was even a rumor circulating that this very rare reunion might be a perfect time to race them against each other. There is more than enough water outside the harbor to satisfy this dream.

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The United States Coast Guard's USS Eagle was assigned to lead the parade of Tall Ships on the Hudson River on July 4th.

-Photo by Jim Donick.

More photos on page 8

Serino directs \$35,000 toward cooling assistance for seniors and medically vulnerable residents

With New York State’s Cooling Assistance Program (CAP) already depleted, Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino is again making sure help is available for older adults and medically vulnerable residents to stay safe and cool during the summer heat. The County Executive has dedicated \$35,000 in County funding to provide free window air conditioning units to eligible residents in need.

The initiative is being coordinated through the County’s Department of Community & Family Services (DCFS) and Office for the Aging (OFA), with distribution and installation provided through the County’s partnership with Community Action Partnership for Dutchess County (CAPDC).

“The summer heat can be a huge concern for many of our older adults and neighbors with health conditions - especially those on fixed incomes who struggle to afford the air conditioners that keep them safe and cool,” said Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino. “With this funding, we can help ensure those most at risk can get the help they need to stay cool as temperatures rise. I encourage all eligible adults to reach out and apply today.”

Modeled after New York State’s Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Cooling Assistance Benefit program, Dutchess County’s initiative is available to residents who:

- Are 65 or older OR have a medical condition that is made worse by heat;
- Meet income eligibility requirements; and
- Do not currently have a working air conditioner in their home.

Applications are available online at <https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/Community-Family-Services/Docs/REVISED-COOLING-Application-Fillable-Online-Form.pdf> and will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis until funding is exhausted. Priority will be given to older adults with medical conditions that may be worsened by extreme heat. Those who have received an air conditioner within the past five years either through HEAP or the County’s cooling assistance program, are not eligible.

Those who have the New York State of Health Essential Plan must apply through the Essential Plan Cooling Program: <https://share.google/8JGikbG3ghhL1No0Y>.

Applications should NOT be mailed. Completed applications and required documentation may be submitted by email to Zoe.Levy-Serrano@dfa.state.ny.us or Donna.Parker2@dfa.state.ny.us; by faxing them to 845-486-3232; or presented in person at one of the following locations:

- Dutchess County DCFS
60 Market Street, Poughkeepsie
- Dutchess County DCFS
223 Main Street, Beacon
- Dutchess County DCFS
131 County House Road, Millbrook
- Dutchess County OFA
114 Delafield Street, Poughkeepsie

Once approved, CAPDC staff will conduct an in-person visit to assess needs and determine the most appropriate cooling solution, followed by installation of the air conditioner.

Eligible older adults with questions, including requests for an application, can call DCFS at 845-486-2578 or OFA at 845-486-2555.

Green Teen Beacon’s free farm stand opens for season

Continued from cover

“They have the opportunity to be the actual agents of change in their community,” said Murnane, “They’re the ones who are fixing problems instead of just having to suffer problems. They can see that there’s a problem in the community and that they could be part of the solution for it.”

The farm stand serves about 40 households each week, with some visitors lining up as early as two hours prior, to ensure they receive their produce.

“We’ve got people who’ve been coming to our market for years... people who are very, very reliant on this as their food source during the summer,” said Murnane.

The farm stand has helped create connections between Green Teen workers and community members. Many farm stand visitors return week after week throughout the summer, allowing relationships to develop between the teens

and the community.

“The adults in the community get to know the kids of the community, and then when the kids are walking around in the community, they’re not strangers,” said Murnane.

According to Murnane, seeing the impact of their work firsthand is one of the most rewarding parts of the program. The teens spend weeks planting, maintaining and harvesting crops, all of which they can see go directly to local families.

“It’s a lot of hard work for these kids to be out here working in the garden and working day after day in the heat and the sun growing the food, and to actually see that go on to make a difference for someone, it really gives the kids something to be proud of,” said Murnane.

The Green Teen Free Farm Stand will continue every Thursday through October from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Beacon Recreation Center. Community members are encouraged to stop by and receive seasonal fresh local produce at no cost throughout the season.

Discuss ‘The Loneliness of Sonia and Sunny’ on July 23

The EFCL Evening Book Group will meet to discuss this month’s book, “The Loneliness of Sonia and Sunny” by Kiran Desai at the East Fishkill Community library, 348 Route 376, at 6:30 p.m. on

Thursday, July 23 in East Fishkill. Copies of the book are available within the Library system. All are welcome to come and join in the discussion of this work.

CCEDC welcomes Sam Storey as new Executive Director

Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County has announced that Sam Storey has joined the organization as its new Executive Director.

Storey brings more than a decade of experience leading community and economic development initiatives through nonprofit organizations, local government partnerships, and research institutions. Most recently, he served as Executive Director of the York Road Improvement District in Baltimore, Maryland, where he led efforts to revitalize North Baltimore through economic development, environmental stewardship, public safety initiatives, workforce development, and community partnerships. His previous experience includes leadership roles with the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore and the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, as well as research positions focused on housing, workforce development, and public policy.

Storey holds a Master of Public Affairs from the University of Texas at Austin’s Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs and a bachelor’s degree in Public Policy

from Stanford University.

As Executive Director, Storey will work with Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County’s Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and community partners to advance the organization’s mission of delivering research-based education and programs that strengthen individuals, families, businesses, farms, and communities throughout Dutchess County.

“I am honored to join Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County and excited to become part of this community,” said Storey. “I look forward to working alongside our dedicated staff, volunteers, board members, and partners to build on CCEDC’s legacy and expand the organization’s impact across Dutchess County.”

“The executive director position requires a multifaceted leader with a great variety of skills from finance management, grant expertise, fund development and programmatic development, and as one of our board members stated, the perfect candidate should also know how to fly and wear a cape,” said

Chris Shave, President of CCEDC’s Board of Directors. “We found just the hero we were looking for in Sam Storey. He has an incredible depth of experience and a passion to be here serving our communities in Dutchess County.”

Storey began serving as Executive Director on July 1. The position had been held since mid-December by the CCEDC Family and Consumer Education Program Director Jessica Canale, who took on the additional duties of Interim Executive Director. Canale’s additional work was possible with the support of Kristin Ludl, Senior Administrator, Human Resources and Operations Management, who also shouldered more responsibilities.

“The board was thrilled to have this dedicated dynamic duo at the helm during this transitional time,” said Shave. “Having Jessica and Kristin divide the duties and responsibilities of the executive director was the perfect plan. We appreciate their effort and professionalism.”



Sam Storey -Courtesy photo

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Local PT shares injury prevention tips as World Cup soccer excitement grows



Vinny Colantuono of the Center for Physical Therapy remembers his days of playing soccer. Now, as World Cup soccer excitement grows, he is helping local performers stay safe and prevent injuries.

-Courtesy photos



By Matthew Fetzer

The FIFA World Cup has come to the United States and interest in soccer has continued to grow. However, as more Americans take up the sport, the risk of injury also increases.

According to a study by the Sports and Fitness Industry Association, “In January 2023 [the month following the 2022 World Cup], roughly 6.7% of Americans reported participating in soccer. By May 2026, that figure has grown to nearly 8%, representing approximately 24.9 million Americans playing indoor or outdoor soccer.”

The study also showed that 34.4% of the U.S. population planned to follow the tournament.

With millions of people expected to play soccer this year, including a heavy turnout in the Hudson Valley, local physical therapist Vinny Colantuono of the Center for Physical Therapy is sharing his advice on how participants can reduce their risk of injury and stay on the field.

“Meet your body where you’re at,” Colantuono said. “Try to understand that you’re watching World Cup games where they’re playing at such a high level. Make sure that you do what you can do in the time being. Don’t push yourself too much in the short term and then slowly, but surely kind of build up that intensity.”

Colantuono works at the Center for Physical Therapy in Wappingers Falls. He is also Director for the Center for Physical Therapy at Marist University. A Dutchess County native, Colantuono played soccer for Arlington High School. The sport also brought him close to Wappinger’s very own Tyler Adams, who is currently playing for the United States national team.

“I have great memories as I played with Tyler growing up for many years for our youth clubs and in New York Red Bulls

camp,” he said.

“Guys like Tyler stay healthy, take care of their bodies, and play at a high level due to that care. He is a great example of an elite-level player,” he added.

Colantuono’s soccer career didn’t just end in high school, as he went on to play Division I at the University of Rhode Island, and then moving on to the semi-professional club, Kingston Stockade FC. He knows all too well the importance of preparation before playing.

“I think through those ranks there’s so many of my teammates that might’ve gotten injured because they hadn’t played in a while and then just started to play some pickup,” he said. “I think a huge misconception is that when you’re in the gym and you’re training for just strength, it might not prepare you enough for a high-level sport that works on a lot of different qualities like change of direction, sprinting mechanics, etcetera. To the general public I would say do movements that are seen in the sport you want to play.”

Colantuono noted, “It’s not injury prevention, but more so injury mitigation,” as nobody can ever truly prevent an injury while on the field, but there are ways that players can get themselves ready to play. In addition to avoiding overexertion and incorporating movement exercises before taking the field, hydration is key for both adult and youth players; especially during the summer.

“You might be coming from work and going straight to a league game. If you’re not hydrated, or if there’s a lack of nutrition, it’s easy to pull up with some cramps or strain a muscle,” he said.

As the World Cup continues to showcase some of the world’s greatest players, Colantuono hopes people of all ages will use the tournament as motivation to get on the field while also making safe play a priority.

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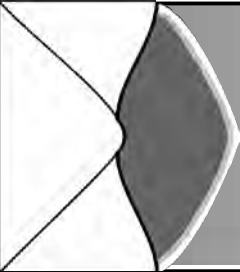
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Viewpoints



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- 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.

Hose

Editor’s note: The following poem is in remembrance of a special friend.

To the Editor:

People knew him as “The Hose.”
The Hose was also known as Jim.
His song was sweetly high and clear,
It had depth and goodness, quite like a hymn.
His voice dripped with gentleness; He had no foes.
But he forgot to love himself.
We’d gather round to greet him;
We’d ask about his health.
His attitude was casual.
Didn’t see vitality as wealth.
He didn’t see.
He couldn’t see.
“Go get checked out!” exclaimed his coterie.
He chose to keep himself so blind.
Running away from his condition, Putting a padlock on his mind.
Hose had a quiet way about him.
Music was his luminous alter.
Following his innermost whim,
Strumming softly his guitar,
This minstrel couldn’t falter.
A teddy bear with the gift of serenade,
He crooned so enticingly,
We were blissfully enveloped
In his musical escapade.
Friends say that in his steamy youth,
He was sturdy and athletic, a demigod of the sun.
Like Tarzan, he’d swing into a pool
And emerge the laughing one.
A former firefighter, the epitome of bravery.
In shielding another, he fell through a floor.
This act so-oozing courage,
Rendered Tarzan moments long-ago lore.
When he fell down, his health fell too.

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The fear of losing him engulfed his crew.
We seemed to sense, his crowd who knew him as the Hose.
On Christmas Eve, he bade good-bye to all his earthly woes.
He is so very deeply missed.
We shower on his sacred path
Our terrestrial blessings and an angel’s kiss.

Carmel H. Forte
Astoria, Queens

Newburgh-Beacon Bridge Shuttle Service now includes weekends and holidays

Governor Kathy Hochul announced last week that beginning on Saturday, July 4, the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge Shuttle will offer weekend and holiday bus service between Newburgh and Beacon, providing more connections for Orange County residents to MTA Metro-North Railroad trains running to and from New York City. The new weekend and holiday service builds on the shuttle - which has seen its ridership more than double over the past year. In December, the Governor announced expanded weekday service on the shuttle, which began in January.

“We’ve heard from residents on the west side of the Hudson River about their limited public transit options and in 2026 we are changing that,” Hochul said. “In January, we expanded weekday bus service and now I am proud to announce that based on how successful the expanded service has been, we are adding enhanced weekend and holiday service. And we are not done: earlier this year, I convened the West of Hudson Transit Study to address the significant transit issues for residents living west of the Hudson River and today’s announcement is another step forward in addressing those issues.”

Operated by Leprechaun Lines on behalf of the New York State Department of Transportation, the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge Shuttle currently offers 65 trips each weekday, up from 41 last year, and connects with at least 54 Metro-North trains each weekday, up from 25 last year. The new weekend and holiday service will run from 7:45 a.m. to 8:52 p.m. and will connect to 27 trains between 8:15 a.m. and 8:23 p.m.

The buses are timed to allow passengers to seamlessly connect with trains traveling to and from New York City. The bus schedule is available online, along with additional information. More importantly, the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge Shuttle will remain complimentary for all passengers through the end of 2026.

Representative Pat Ryan said, “This is an exciting moment for our Orange County community, and for the Hudson Valley as a whole. We’ve been fighting for years for better West-of-Hudson transit options, and this expanded service makes real progress towards the transit system our community deserves – one that is faster, cheaper and better equipped to handle the needs of our growing community. I look forward to working with my fellow Advisory Committee members on more exciting opportunities for Hudson Valley connectivity.”

New York State Department of Transportation Commissioner Marie Therese Dominguez said, “New York State DOT is thrilled to expand service to

include weekends and holidays and, even better, it remains complimentary until the end of this year.”

New York State Bridge Authority Executive Director Dr. Minosca Alcantara said, “In addition to carrying one of the Northeast’s busiest interstate highways, the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge has evolved into a vital multimodal transportation link for the Hudson Valley and the surrounding region” and “This investment reflects a broader vision for transportation—one that expands mobility, creates opportunity, strengthens regional connections and helps our communities thrive.”

In February, the New York State Department of Transportation launched a comprehensive study to improve regional transit coordination and cross-county connections in the Hudson Valley for commuters living west of the Hudson River. The West of Hudson Transit Study will center on service improvements to bus networks, including local routes, regional commuter bus service, and microtransit. It will also review ferry services and transit bus enhancements to existing rail corridors.

A stakeholder advisory group for the West of Hudson Transit Study, chaired by Congressman Ryan, will be convened to give guidance and feedback over the course of the study:

- Congressman Pat Ryan (Chair)
- Ken Zebrowski, President, Rockland Business Council
- Conor Eckert, President & CEO, Orange County Partnership
- Dr. Kris Young, President SUNY Orange
- Dr. Darrell Wheeler, President, SUNY New Paltz
- Alexandra Obremski, President & CEO, Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress
- Dennis Doyle, Director, Ulster County Planning Department
- Todd Diorio, President, Hudson Valley Building and Construction Trades Council
- Melissa Everett, Executive Director of Sustainable Hudson Valley

In addition to the input from the Stakeholder Advisory Committee, the West of Hudson Transit Study will also include a robust stakeholder and public engagement component to ensure that the feedback and priorities of local communities and the public are heard.

For more information, find us on Facebook, follow us on X or Instagram, or visit our website. For up-to-date travel information, call 511, visit www.511NY.org or download the free 511NY mobile app.

Spirit of Coney Island arrives in Beacon on July 12

The Beacon Litfest welcomes celebrated Artist and Author Richard Eagan for the debut of his art memoir, “Hysterical Coney Island,” on Sunday, July 12 from 3-5 p.m. at Happy Valley Arcade.

Eagan, co-founder of the Coney Island Hysterical Society, has spent decades shaping, documenting, and mythologizing the visual culture of America’s most iconic amusement district. In a live presentation at 3:30 p.m., Eagan will share stories and art from his personal archive, discuss the making of the art memoir, and reflect on his long creative partnership with artist Philomena Marano and the many artists, performers, preservationists, and dreamers who kept Coney Island’s spirit alive through eras of

upheaval and reinvention.

Guests are enthusiastically encouraged to come in costume, channeling the iconic characters of the Coney Island freak show era. Strongmen, snake charmers, bearded ladies, human oddities—everyone is invited to bring a little spectacle. Rumor has it we may even spot a mermaid or two wandering through Happy Valley’s neon glow.

Signed copies of “Hysterical Coney Island” along with special themed drinks designed by Happy Valley Arcade will be available for purchase.

The event, produced by The Beacon Litfest, will be held at Happy Valley Arcade, 296 Main St, Beacon . It is free and open to the public.

that’s italian!

by luigi coppola

The Focaccia Fire & The Biscotti Apocalypse

A two-act Italian kitchen disaster saga

Darren walks into the restaurant like a man carrying emotional baggage — not the heavy kind, the *my mother tried to cook again* kind. I’m at the front desk talking to my brother John when he spots me, and his whole face lights up with that unmistakable expression customers get when they know they’re about to deliver premium-grade chaos.

He doesn’t order. He doesn’t say hello. He just looks at me like he’s delivering a message from the Vatican and says: “Luigi... my mother Joanne tried making your focaccia recipe.”

Right away, you know this isn’t going to end with “and it came out beautiful.”

He takes a deep, dramatic breath — the kind people take before confessing to a priest — and continues: “She set her oven on fire.”

Now he’s fully committed. Hands flying. Eyes wide. He’s reliving the trauma in real time.

He explains how Joanne followed the recipe *exactly* — except for the part where she poured olive oil like she was blessing the oven. The focaccia goes in, the oil drips down, hits the heating element, and suddenly the oven lights up like Times Square on New Year’s Eve.

Darren says the smoke alarm started screaming. The dog started barking. Joanne started yelling, “LUIGI SAID OLIVE OIL!” like I personally instructed her to ignite the appliance. OK maybe I’m exaggerating a little bit. But in my mind, that’s what I’m picturing

He’s waving his arms, reenacting the flames, the panic, the chaos — again,

maybe a little exaggerated — and John and I are standing there thinking:

This is nothing. This is a warmup act. This is the appetizer before the real disaster.

Because my family? We don’t do “small fires.” We do cinematic catastrophes.

And that’s when the memory hits — the one John told me — the one that makes Joanne’s focaccia fire look like a scented candle.

John and I look at Darren and say: “This is amateur hour. Let me tell you about Pop.”

Act II - Pop and the Biscotti Apocalypse

Pop makes biscotti every week. Not for company. Not for holidays. For himself. He brings them home like contraband and toasts them in his popup toaster — a toaster so old it probably remembers when bread was invented. One day, the biscotti gets stuck.

Not “stuck.” Welded.

Pop tries everything — and I mean everything:

Slams the lever down like he’s trying to launch a rocket.

Smacks the side of the toaster with the confidence of a man who believes all appliances respond to physical intimidation.

Tilts it back and forth like he’s burping a colicky baby who owes him money.

Gives it the full Italian “COME ON!” hand wave, the kind that has solved absolutely nothing in the history of electricity but somehow feels mandatory.

Pokes at it with a butter knife, muttering, “Stupida biscotti... she no listen,” as if the biscotti is being defiant on purpose.

Blows into the toaster slots, like he’s giving CPR to a dying accordion.

And of course — none of this works. Because Pop isn’t troubleshooting. Pop is performing.

Then the toaster decides it’s had enough of this life and bursts into flames. Most people would unplug it. Some would smother it. A few would call the fire department. Pop? Pop goes full Rambo: Kitchen Edition.

He grabs the nearest liquid — a gallon of milk. And he doesn’t pour it. He deploys it. Milk everywhere. Toaster drowning. Counter flooded. Cabinets dripping like a dairy waterfall. The smoke hits the ceiling. The steam rises. The kitchen soundtrack is sizzling wires and Pop yelling, “I FIX IT!”

John walks in and freezes. The kitchen looks like the final scene of *Apocalypse Now* — but with biscotti shrapnel and the smell of burnt milk. Pop turns around, holding the empty milk jug like a war trophy, and calmly says: “John... the biscotti, she got stuck.”

As if that explains the smoldering toaster graveyard. Soooooo enjoy my recipe for chocolate hazelnut biscotti. And please DO NOT PUT THESE IN THE TOASTER.

¾ cup butter

Method

Whisk ½ cup melted butter and sugar together until light and fluffy.

Add the eggs and vanilla extract, mixing until fully combined.

Whisk the flour, baking powder, and salt in a separate bowl.

Add the dry ingredients to the wet mixture, stirring just until incorporated.

Fold in the ½ cup chocolate chips and ½ cup hazelnuts until evenly distributed.

Shape the dough into a 12inch log on a lightly floured surface.

Bake the log at 300 degrees for about 30 minutes until golden brown and firm.

Cool slightly, then using a serrated knife, slice into 1inch pieces.

Bake the slices, at 350 degrees for 15 minutes, again until crisp and crunchy.

Cool completely.

Melt the chocolate and ¼ cup of chocolate chips. Drizzle mixture over the flat biscotti. Sprinkle chopped hazelnuts. Let cool again.

Serve with espresso

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.

Wappingers CSD elementary school teacher honored



Board of Education Trustee Peggy Kelland; Superintendent Dr. Dwight Bonk; Senator Rob Rolison; Flip Gertler; Principal Andrew McNally.

-Courtesy photo

NYS Senator Rob Rolison presented Fishkill Elementary School teacher Flip Gertler with the NYS Senate Educators Inspiring a Generation award; it is given to teachers that go above and beyond for their students, thus shaping future generations. Senator Rolison spoke about the powerful impact that teachers have, and his immense gratitude for their important work.

In his nomination letter, Dr. Bonk noted, “As Superintendent of Schools, I have personally witnessed the integral role that Mr. Gertler plays in motivating and inspiring his students. He works tirelessly both in and out of the classroom, with a steadfast commitment to student success, innovative teaching practices, and leadership in our community. In his additional role as President of the Wappingers Congress of Teachers, he is a consummate leader who truly cares about our district and leads by example by advocating on behalf of our students and families.”

‘Beg to be Loved’ opens at Distortion July 11

Distortion Society will present “Beg to be Loved, Beg to be Touched,” an experience of soft sculpture installations from textile artist Holly McCabe, curated by Jaime Ransome. McCabe works with vintage cloth and contrast topstitching to create viscerally and compassionately manipulated wall-mounted soft sculptures. Each work is meticulously crafted from vintage materials, discarded and donated, then revived in McCabe’s studio. Scraps of cotton, wool, polyester and faux leather have been salvaged by the artist and pieced together into something deserving of love, attention, and care. Every seam is a scar repaired through time and care between McCabe’s thoughtful fingers.

“Beg to be Loved, Beg to be Touched” will be on view at Distortion Society, 155 Main Street, Beacon from July 11 through October 3. The gallery is free and open to the public. There will be an opening reception on July 11, from 7 – 9 p.m.

These variable, modular installations are created and installed through an intuitive process of physical manipulation: bending, tearing, patching, and stretching each fabric to reflect and adhere to the properties of the next. Enriched by punk DIY values and informed by her digital and studio arts education, McCabe’s work embodies the raw emergence of self that comes from processing chaos, rebellion, self-care, and cathartic self-expression.

Within each installation lives a duality of feminine experience: fragility, experimentation, and resilience—like girlhood itself. But also matured, weathered, and finally at peace—like womanhood. Each work is variable, moveable, touchable, and tactile; made up of surfaces that have been cut, torn, and rebuilt stronger and softer. The fabrics incorporated are both precious and ordinary: pieces that have been worn to weddings, parties, road trips, breakups, to work and back. Dripping tendrils threads, seamed in contrast stitching, in tones and shadows of red, blue, green, and beige define the McCabe aesthetic - weaving together an ecosystem of works that are both aesthetic and emotional. The final works are products of —the last remnants of—a life well explored.

July events at HCC

The following are upcoming July events at the Howland Cultural Center, 477 Main St., in Beacon.

Fri., July 17: Ruth Danon curates Live Writing, a night of poetry.

Sat., July 18, 8 p.m.: “An Evening with twyla,” young artist concert, her first-ever solo show. Tickets online now at [twyla](http://twyla.com).

Sun., July 19, 4 p.m.: Trio Sefardi brings their traditional renditions of the songs of the Sephardim, mostly sung in Ladino. Tickets are now available.

Fri., July 24, 7 p.m.: Open Mic Night

Sat., July 25, 8 p.m.: It's the Artichoke Storytelling Series! tickets on sale NOW at artichokeshow.com.



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Former Renegades Lombard, LaGrange set to play in annual MLB Futures game

Major League Baseball (MLB) has announced the rosters for the 2026 MLB All-Star Futures game presented by Nike. The Futures game is set Sunday, July 12 at noon and will be broadcast on NBC.

Former Renegades players Carlos Lagrange and George Lombard, Jr. have been selected to represent the Yankees on the American League team managed by Larry Bowa.

Lombard Jr., 21, is the consensus #1 prospect in the Yankees system and currently plays with the Yankees' Triple-A affiliate, the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders. He played for the Renegades across the 2024 and 2025 seasons, batting .269/.401/.376 in 53 games.

This will be Lombard, Jr.'s second Futures Game appearance, having also been selected in 2025. MLB Pipeline rates Lombard, Jr. as the #20 prospect in baseball.

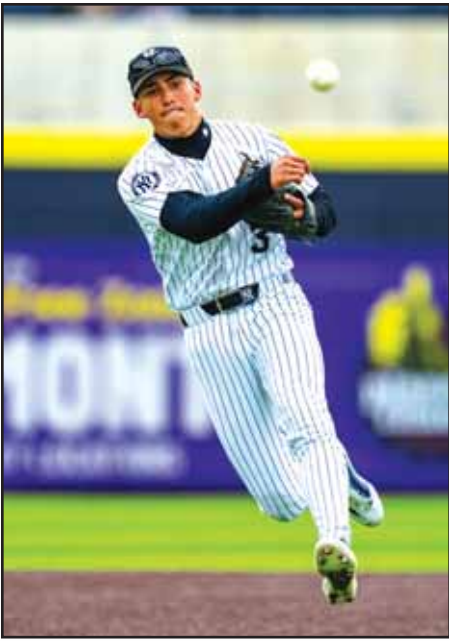
Lagrange, 23, is rated as the #4 prospect in the Yankees system and also currently plays for

Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. He pitched for the Renegades in 2025 and went 4-2 with a 4.10 ERA and 64 strikeouts in 41.2 innings across eight starts. This is his first Futures Game selection. MLB Pipeline rates Lagrange as the #85 prospect in the sport.

Additionally, 2025 Renegades manager James Cooper has been announced as the Third Base Coach for the American League squad. Cooper led the Renegades to a franchise-record 79 wins in 2025 and is currently managing the Double-A Somerset Patriots.

Since the Futures Game began in 1999, 26 former Renegades players have been named to a Futures Game roster, including 2001 Futures Game MVP Toby Hall, Evan Longoria (2007), Jeremy Hellickson (2010), Anthony Volpe (2022) and Spencer Jones (2023, '24). The full Futures Game rosters can be found on MLB's website.

Sunday, July 12 at Noon and will be broadcast on NBC.



George Lombard, Jr., left, currently plays with the Yankees' Triple-A affiliate, the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre RailRiders. He played for the Renegades across the 2024 and 2025 seasons, batting .269/.401/.376 in 53 games. Carlos LaGrange also currently plays for Scranton/Wilkes-Barre. He pitched for the Renegades in 2025 and went 4-2 with a 4.10 ERA.

-Photos by Dave Janosz



SOUTH ATLANTIC LEAGUE NORTH		W	L	PCT	GB	L10	STRK
	Greensboro PIT	11	4	.733	-	8-2	L1
	Wilmington WSH	9	6	.600	2.0	6-4	L2
	Frederick BAL *	8	6	.571	2.5	5-5	W3
	Brooklyn NYM	7	7	.500	3.5	6-4	L3
	Hudson Valley NYV	7	8	.467	4.0	5-5	W2
	Jersey Shore PHI	2	12	.143	8.5	1-9	L8

SOUTH ATLANTIC LEAGUE SOUTH		W	L	PCT	GB	L10	STRK
	Asheville HOU	10	5	.667	-	9-1	W1
	Winston-Salem CWS	9	6	.600	1.0	7-3	W1
	Bowling Green TB *	8	7	.533	2.0	4-6	W1
	Rome ATL	7	7	.500	2.5	5-5	W5
	Hub City TEX	5	10	.333	5.0	3-7	L1
	Greenville BOS	5	10	.333	5.0	1-9	L1



July		
07/08/26	vs. Rome	06:35 PM
07/09/26	vs. Rome	06:35 PM
07/10/26	vs. Rome	07:05 PM
07/11/26	vs. Rome	05:05 PM
07/12/26	vs. Rome	01:05 PM
07/28/26	vs. Jersey Shore	06:35 PM
07/29/26	vs. Jersey Shore	12:05 PM
07/30/26	vs. Jersey Shore	06:35 PM
07/31/26	vs. Jersey Shore	07:05 PM





Renegades Extra!





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14 HVCU Employees Across Six Counties Graduate From Area Leadership Programs





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PR & Communications



See story, page 8

RENEGADES ROUNDUP

Renegades salvage split in home series vs. Blue Rocks



Infielder Kaeden Kent, left, and pitcher Franyer Herrera starred for the Renegades as they split a home series against the Wilmington Blue Rocks. -Photos by Dave Janosz

By Morgan E. Maier
The Hudson Valley Renegades couldn't beat the heat against the Wilmington Blue Rocks this week. After being held scoreless in the series opener, Hudson Valley salvaged the split, celebrated America, and came out on the right side of a few one-run decisions in the process.
The Renegades are now 35-42 on the season and in fourth place of the Northern Division of the South Atlantic League.

(Not) Caught Stealing - The Renegades clung to a 5-4 win on a rainy Fourth of July. It was a bursting defensive display to rival the fireworks, as Josue Gonzalez threw out four Blue Rocks on the basepaths. He even caught infielder Eli Willits twice, as Franyer Herrera picked off another at first.
Core Jackson, Cam Troyer and Wilson Rodriguez all reached second base with ease on the Wilmington catcher. But

Jackson was racing fire this week, racing to three stolen bases in the Renegades' loss on July 2.
777 - Either side scored seven runs in three games of the six, but neither could hit the straight. The Renegades were 2-1 in those contests, matching their highest-scoring inning of the series in the last at-bats of the finale. Kyle West matched Wilmington's three-run top of the ninth in one swing. One mash, three runs, and a big jackpot for the home team to salvage the sweep. Roderick Arias capped another impactful series with a 3-4 day.
The Renegades stay home to host the Rome Emperors for the last series before the All-Star Break. Promotions feature some whacky wizardry; dashing princes and princesses; and the Renegades' second-ever musical!

RENEGADES FEATURE

Arias turns into 'hitting machine' as Renegades 'Player of the Month'

By Morgan E. Maier
On July 1, the Hudson Valley Renegades named Roderick Arias the team's Player of the Month. It is no secret why.
The switch-hitting Arias has the speed to score from any base, power to hit 'em past the wall, and a proclivity for knocking in runs.
Arias played in all but one of Hudson Valley's June matchups. He amassed 7 stolen bases, 17 runs batted in, and a .416 on-base percentage (1.049 OPS) over 22 games.
Arias opened July with a 2-RBI performance, a bright spot of the Renegades 5-3 loss to the Wilmington Blue Rocks. A single to score Eric Genter got the Renegades score of the

second inning, cutting a 4-1 deficit. A later sacrifice fly put the Renegades within one, but Wilmington resisted the comeback effort to complete the wire-to-wire win.
A two-hit, 3-RBI night on July 2 helped Hudson Valley outlast Wilmington, 9-7. Arias drove the second pitch he saw behind the right field fence. A groundout and RBI single rounded out Roderick's night, as he did his job in extending a 9-1 Renegades lead. The Blue Rocks battled back, but fell just short in the ninth inning.
Arias finished the series 7-for-21 with one home run and 7 RBI. The infielder exploded for another multi-hit masterpiece in the July 5 series finale. He offered a 3-4 night, plus an RBI.



Switch-hitting Roderick Arias amassed 7 stolen bases, 17 runs batted in, and a .416 on-base percentage over 22 games for the Renegades during June. -Photo by Dave Janosz

Tall ships, flyovers mark July 4th party in NYC



Continued from cover

Sloops and schooners from all over the world were in evidence as well, having come from Sweden, Netherlands, Monaco and many other countries. Others were from as far away as India, and much of South America. The tall ships sailing by often had their yards manned by their crew, sometimes hundreds of feet in the air.

The USA, a country founded on access

to the sea, provided a fair number of ships from up and down the coast. New York's South Street Seaport came out with their 1885 schooner, Pioneer. Baltimore's Pride of Baltimore II came up from the Chesapeake. There were so many more that space would never permit listing them.

Ships, aircraft, and thousands of happy and enthusiastic people - what more could one ask for on a birthday party for the ages?



Clockwise from top left, Our oldest ally, the French, sent along their famous Air Force Aerobatic team to join in the flyovers during the parade. They are called "The Patrouille de France (PAF)." The French Patrol performs all over the world. The Pioneer is a resident of New York harbor, calling the South Street Seaport her home. The Peruvian Vessel BAP Union, the Polish ship Dar Młodzieży and the Dutch topsail schooner "Oosterschelde."

-Photos by Jim Donick

14 HVCU employees across six counties graduate from area leadership programs

Demonstrating its commitment to developing talent from within and creating opportunities for long-term career advancement, Hudson Valley Credit Union (HVCU) announced that 14 team members across six counties have recently completed leadership programs. These comprehensive courses – ranging in length from five days to 10 months – aim to educate and motivate professionals to expand leadership capabilities, enhance community participation and respond effectively to changing conditions.

"Our members, employees and the communities we serve are at the heart of everything we do," said Desiree Wolfe, executive vice president, chief experience officer. "One of the ways we put people first is by investing in our employees — supporting their growth and ensuring our members are served by knowledgeable, engaged profes-

sionals."

The credit union's 2026 graduates included the following individuals, by program:

Columbia and Greene County Chambers of Commerce's Leadership Columbia-Greene

- Melissa O'Shea, Branch Supervisor, Hudson

Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Dutchess

- Dawn McFadden, branch manager, Beacon
- Ashley Simoni, manager, consumer loan underwriting, Dutchess County

Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce's Executive Leadership Program

- Jijo Koshy, assistant vice president, IT service delivery, Dutchess County

- Leann O'Brien, director of consumer lending operations, Dutchess County
- Leadership Orange**
- Yoselyne Nava, branch supervisor, New Windsor
- Leadership Orange E.D.G.E.**
- Edward Eliassen, branch supervisor, Montgomery
 - Destiny Quinonez, branch supervisor, Middletown
 - Alex Quintana, branch supervisor, Chester
- Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Sullivan**
- Kaylee Wagner, branch manager, Grahamsville
- Ulster Chamber Foundation's Leadership Ulster**
- Cynthia Bruno, assistant branch manager, Rhinebeck
 - Alycia Cates, branch supervisor, Highland
 - Stacie Schoonmaker, contact center team leader, Ulster County



Jijo Koshy, left, assistant vice president, IT service delivery, and Leann O'Brien, director of consumer lending operations, are both graduates of The Chamber Foundation's Executive Leadership Program in Dutchess County.

-Courtesy photo

Volunteer New York's Leadership Westchester

- Swati Sharma, assistant branch manager, Cortlandt

"It's a privilege to work alongside so many talented, dedicated individuals, and

I look forward to seeing each one of them utilize these new skills to expand their leadership capabilities," added Wolfe.

To learn more about HVCU and its commitment to members, employees and the areas it serves, visit www.hvcu.org.

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Geeks OnSite

City of Beacon celebrates 250 years of America



Clockwise from top left: The City of Beacon celebrated America's 250th anniversary on July 4th in the Veterans Memorial Building on Main St. Col. Seanegan Sculley, Associate Professor Department of History and War Studies at the U.S. Military Academy West Point, makes remarks. NYS Assemblyman Jonathan Jacobson offers words about the significance of this anniversary. John MacEnroe, Retired Army officer and Beacon REV250 Committee member, welcomes those in attendance.

-Photos by Kristine Coulter

Annual Reading of the Declaration of Independence tradition continues in Village of Fishkill



The annual Reading of the Declaration of Independence took place on the steps of Van Wyck Village Hall in the village of Fishkill on Independence Day. Village of Fishkill Mayor Kathy Martin was in attendance. Members of the Village of Fishkill Fire Department fly the American flag. NYS Senator Rob Rolison read the document this year.

The local churches, including the First Reformed Church, took part in the ringing of the bells- which was rung 250 times for in honor of the United States of America's 250th anniversary.

-Photos by Kristine Coulter, courtesy photos



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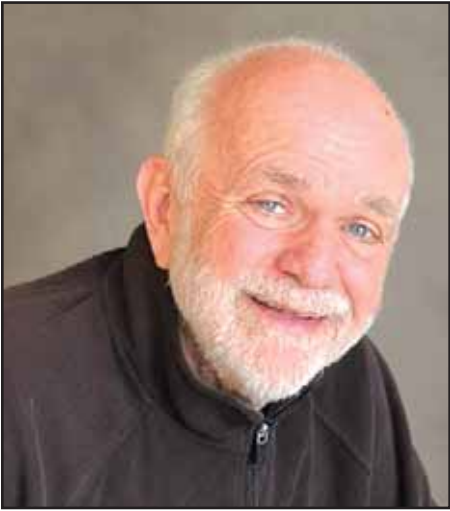
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Obituaries

George E. Burke



George E. Burke peacefully entered into eternal rest with his Lord on Saturday, June 27, 2026 while at home with family and under the compassionate care of Hospice.

Born on April 29, 1947 in New York City, he was the son of the late George J. and Rosella M. Burke, and brother of the late Rosemary K. Burke. On September 5, 1971, in the chapel at Mercy College, he married the former Carol Itri. Their loving marriage spanned 51 years until Carol's passing on March 6, 2023.

A graduate of Westlake High School in Thornwood, NY, he continued his education earning a Bachelor's Degree from Mount Saint Mary College in Newburgh, NY, and a Master's Degree from Western Connecticut State College in Danbury, CT. In his early work years, he was a Visual

Merchandise creating imaginative display windows at Macy's and Lord & Taylor. After completing his education, he dedicated his professional life to educating others and the formation of young minds. He taught at St. Joachim - St. John School in Beacon and following its closure, continued his vocation as an educator at Our Lady of Lourdes High School in Poughkeepsie. He also shared his knowledge and passion for learning as an adjunct professor at Mount Saint Mary College.

During the summers for many years, senior citizens enjoyed the Road Scholar bus tours led by George, based out of Mount Saint Mary College. Each session was a full week and had a different Hudson Valley theme. As a lover of history, he enjoyed every one.

In his retirement and until recently, he embraced his love of teaching and classic films by conducting a highly popular credit free film class for senior citizens at The Desmond Center in Newburgh, NY. He was an avid lover of films and extremely knowledgeable.

In the late 60's, he belonged to a folk group at Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Valhalla, NY. It was known as BASIC (Brothers and Sisters in Christ) and produced lasting cherished friendships. He also belonged to the Saint Denis Parish Men's Group, meeting Saturday at 7 AM in Hopewell Junction.

George loved being part of his spiritual communities. He was part of Cursillo first, serving as Rector (leader) three times. When Tres Dias began, he was instrumental in getting it started, serving as a member of Team #1. He remained involved in both for many years.

George is survived by his son, Jonathan Burke of Hillsborough, NJ, as well as his cousins and many members of his extended family.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Thursday, July 2, at St. Mary Mother of the Church, 106 Jackson Street, Fishkill. Entombment followed at Fishkill Rural Cemetery.

George's family extends their heartfelt gratitude to his devoted friends, Petrina and Kevin, for their kindness, support and loving care. Appreciation is expressed to the dedicated staff at Hudson Valley Hospice for their compassionate care.

George will be remembered for his loving outreach to family and friends, brilliant blue eyes, and infectious laugh.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Hudson Valley Hospice, St. Mary Mother of the Church, Fishkill, the Town of Newburgh Animal Shelter, or to a charity of one's choosing.

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

Gary Stafford



Gary Stafford, a resident of Hyde Park, NY and formerly of Mamaroneck, NY; passed away peacefully at home surrounded by his family on June 30, 2026; at the age of 84. He was born in New York, NY on February 20, 1942, son of the late Michael & Frances (Cornell) Stafford.

Gary served in the United States Army from 1964 and until 1966, when he received an honorable discharge for his service from the Vietnam Era.

On September 14, 1969 at St. Vito Church in Mamaroneck, NY, he married Rossana Baglioni, who survives him at home.

Gary owned and operated a driving school, the Halstead School of Driving in Mamaroneck, NY; until he retired.

He was an avid collector of knives, coins and various war memorabilia. Gary also was a an animal lover & enjoyed boating.

Along with his beloved wife of 56-years, Rossana; Gary is survived by his daughter and son-in-law Diana and Joseph Petrocca, and his grandson Joseph Petrocca Jr..

His Family will gather to remember and honor his life on Saturday, July 11, 2026 in the Ferncliff Cemetery Chapel, 280 Secor Road, Hartsdale, NY at 1:00PM where a prayer service will be offered and military honors will be conducted by the United States Army Honor Guard.

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

Dilys Clark



Dilys Clark (née Hunt), born July 31, 1932 in Cambridge, England, passed away on July 1, 2026 surrounded by her loved ones. For those who knew her, there is no doubt that the few paragraphs in an obituary will never be able to capture who she was as a family matriarch, friend, and person.

She attended St. Katherine's College in London, England to become an educator, a role that she carried with her throughout her life, both in and out of the classroom. After moving to Wappingers Falls, NY in 1963 she joined the Poughkeepsie Sports Car Club, the New Hamburg Yacht Club, and County Players Community Theater, where she was the costumer for over 30 years and an honorary lifetime member. Dilys was quick witted,

loved to share stories, and was passionate about family history, spending many hours researching connections and sharing what she found with others.

She was the Head Nursery School Teacher at New Hackensack Nursery School starting in 1967, worked at IBM starting in 1978, and resumed her role as a teacher at The Little Angels in 1992.

Dilys is survived by her children, Nick Clark (Peri Pomposello), Jill Clark, (Dan Wisneski, 2023), her grandchildren, Lauren Clark, Chrissy Rivers (Seth Rivers), Hunter Wisneski, and her great grandchildren, Liam and Theo Rivers.

Services will not be held due to her threat of haunting us if anyone tried to make a fuss. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in her honor to County Players Community Theater; 2681 West Main Street, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590 or online at <https://countyplayers.org/donate/>

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

James 'Jim' Smith



James "Jim" Smith, of Wappingers Falls, New York, passed away after a brief illness on July 4, 2026. He was 69 years old. Jim was born in 1957 in Greenpoint Brooklyn, New York, to James Smith and Helen Smith (née Ensmenger). An only child, Jim was pre-deceased by both of his parents.

From an early age, Jim learned the value of working with his hands from his father, who had a talent for construction and fixing just about anything. Those skills stayed with Jim throughout his life. As a young man, he enjoyed working on cars, a lifelong passion that eventually led to a career with the New York State Department of Transportation, where he proudly served as a State School Bus Safety Inspector. He had a special love for classic cars, especially his prized 1970 Chevrolet Chevelle SS.

Jim met the love of his life, Maria Smith (née Galeotafiore), in their

Brooklyn neighborhood. They married and shared 42 wonderful years together, building a life filled with love, laughter, and devotion. Together they welcomed their son, Jimmy, whom Jim adored. Some of his happiest memories were the many fishing trips and father-and-son adventures they shared. Jim was heartbroken by Jimmy's passing only 10 months prior and carried his love for him always.

In 2007, Jim and Maria moved their family from Brooklyn to Wappingers Falls, New York, where they made their home.

Jim had a sharp wit and an unforgettable sense of humor that brought smiles to those around him. He enjoyed watching car restoration shows, listening to rock music (especially Ozzy Osbourne) and even named one of his dogs Ozzy.

Jim is survived by his beloved wife, Maria; his father-in-law, John Galeotafiore; his brothers-in-law, Michael Galeotafiore (Jennifer) and John Galeotafiore (Elizabeth); and his five nieces and nephews, all of whom will cherish his memory.

Jim will be remembered for his love of family, his mechanical skills, and his quick humor. He will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved him.

Visitation will be on Tuesday, July 7, 2026 from 2 to 6 p.m. at Straub, Catalano & Halvey Funeral Home, 55 East Main Street in Wappingers Falls.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be offered at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, July 8 at St. Mary's Church, Clinton Street in Wappingers Falls. Entombment will follow at Fishkill Rural Cemetery, Route 9 in Fishkill.

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

Howland Public Library announces new hours

To make the Howland Public Library more accessible to working families, commuters, and weekend visitors, they are shifting to a brand new schedule starting Monday, July 6.

Here is the new schedule:

Monday - Friday: 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

The library is at 313 Main St. in Beacon.

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New York Stage & Film returns to Marist University for an exciting summer season



New York Stage and Film opens its 2026 season at Marist University this weekend. From left, Sandra Okuboyejo, Mia Gerachis, Jasmine Amy Rogers rehearse “Shelter,” from New York Stage and Film’s 2025 Summer Season at Marist.

-Photos by Deborah Lopez



From left, Dave Harris, Kassi Wilson, Genesis Oliver, Alex Garcia, Brittany Bradford, Toney Goins, Amara Granderson, David Shih, Julyana Soelistyo, Barzin Akhavan and Lizan Mitchell in “Manakin.”

By Francesca Oliva

New York Stage & Film will return to Marist University this summer with a lineup of new creative works, giving Hudson Valley audiences the opportunity to experience theater while it is still being developed. Beginning July 10, the season will feature eight new plays and three musicals, bringing together artists, performers and audiences for a behind-the-scenes look at the creative process.

“When you think about going to a big theater-loving city like New York City or London, you go to see an end result ... here, you’re seeing it begin in its raw form and that can be really thrilling,” said Ian Belknap, Artistic Director for New York Stage & Film.

Founded in 1985, New York Stage &

Film has spent decades supporting playwrights, performers and directors as they develop new work. The summer season is a place where artists can experiment, collaborate and refine their storytelling abilities before they reach larger audiences.

“There will literally be a copy machine down the hall that’ll kick out new pages that are warm, and we’ll run that upstairs into the theater, where an actor will read them out loud, and the audience will hear them for the first time ever,” said Belknap.

“Sometimes even at the same time as the playwright,” added Isabelle Fereshteh Sanatdar Stevens, Associate Artistic Director.

New York Stage & Film has traveled to the Hudson Valley each summer for over 40 years for their summer season, where many of the works showcased have gone on to Broadway and Off-Broadway productions, such as “Hamilton” and “Hadestown.”

“A founding idea of the organization was to be in an environment where you could take artistic risks and be away from any type of critical pressure,” said Belknap. Artists-in-residence and creative professionals live in community on Marist University’s campus, preparing for play readings and musical workshops throughout the summer.

Unlike a traditional theater performance where you are seeing a final product, New York Stage & Film allows audiences to be a part of the process. Their responses to a piece help artists understand how a story connects with viewers and what changes could be made moving forward.

“Every audience has a different sensibility and imagination, so for an audience to come in and hear pieces, it is kind of a

huge part of the developmental process, said Belknap, “seeing what they respond to and what they are interested in can be really informative in a play’s journey.”

This year’s season also expands New York Stage & Film’s presence throughout Dutchess County with a new collaboration at The Bardavon, located in the heart of Poughkeepsie. This partnership will allow select productions to be seen in a larger venue while providing “enhanced and stronger production values to support these projects,” according to Belknap.

“We are excited to be in the city of Poughkeepsie,” said Belknap, explaining that the collaboration connects the organization with the surrounding community outside of Marist’s campus.

The 2026 summer season features many diverse perspectives and stories, with adaptations of classic works to new musicals exploring identity and human connection.

Among the works being developed this summer is a new stage adaptation of Dashiell Hammett’s “The Maltese Falcon,” directed by Belknap and adapted by Betty Shamieh. This reading brings the famous noir story of crime and desperation set in the backdrop of Great Depression-era San Francisco to the stage.

This season will also feature a reimagined production of Andrew Lloyd Webber’s “Whistle Down the Wind,” in collaboration with Tony Award-winning Deaf West Theatre and directed by Bill Rauch (“CATS: The Jellicle Ball”). Set in the southern United States in the late Fifties, this production will incorporate the unique perspectives of both deaf and hearing children.

“There will be a multimodal version of

“Whistle Down the Wind,” both in ASL [American Sign Language] and English, and there will also be live captioning happening,” said Belknap. “That alone, even in pre-production work, has been one of the more satisfying things I’ve ever worked on.”

Belknap described the production as “a really unique” project and a must-see event of the season.

Another featured work is “Paper Menagerie,” a musical adaptation based on the short story by Ken Liu, with music by Thao Nguyen. This piece explores themes of family and memories, as a young man reflects on his relationship with his mother and his cultural identity.

Belknap described the musical as “a beautiful retelling of finding oneself through losing your parent.”

Beyond the individual productions, Sanatdar Stevens said what makes this year’s season exciting is the variety of stories being brought to the stage. From new adaptations to original works, each project approaches storytelling differently and gives audiences the opportunity to be immersed in the theatrical process.

“At the end of the day, theater is really just a way to connect and see the world through a new perspective,” said Sanatdar Stevens.

Musical workshops and play readings will take place at Marist University’s Symphonic Hall and at The Bardavon in Poughkeepsie. Tickets can be purchased by calling The Bardavon’s Box Office directly at 845-473-2072 or visiting in person at 35 Market Street. Additional information is available through New York Stage & Film’s website, newyorkstageandfilm.org.

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-76-26
21 Ton Equipment Trailer
Bids will be received until 2:00 p.m. on the 21st day of July 2026 at the Dutchess County Division of Central Services, 378 Violet Avenue, Suite 2, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601. Specifications and bid forms may be obtained by visiting our website <http://www.dutchessny.gov>, selecting “Government”, then selecting “Bidding and RFP Opportunities”. For additional information, call 845-486-3613.

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

this week’s puzzle solutions

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

This week's answer

SUDOKU

GN	IN	EE	TE	ST	YE			
VO	CO	SI	PA	IN	AN			
NE	IS	VA	OV	HO	KU			
SN	HA	TA	NO	PO	TA			
	TO		FO					
RE		NO	UN	HE	DE			
NE		AM	PE	PL	EA			
TO		GO	SL	EA	RL			
OT		TA	IN	LE	AF			
NS		GO	LA	AB	BC			
		TS	AR	TA				
DE		PA	RA	PI	CI			
RN		AD	OR	LI	VI			
IO		PO	LI	LE	TO			
W		PO	GO	CL	OA			

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

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

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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

2					
					1
	3				
5		4			3
					4

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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: THE 4TH OF JULY

ACROSS

1. Dagger's partner

6. Elephant party, acr.

9. Do like volcano

13. Fire (2 words)

14. Pro football org.

15. Jonas Salk's conquest

16. Like a Harvard building?

17. ET carrier

18. Bedeck

19. *Tasty Fourth of July outings

21. *Float processions

23. Black gunk

24. Ivan the Terrible, e.g.

25. The Jackson 5's 1970 hit

28. Caffeine source

30. TV classic "____ Heroes"

35. Folio page

37. Abel's big brother

39. Fortune teller's card

40. Rank in British peerage

41. Archipelago parts

43. Head for (2 words)

44. Beseech

46. Impermanent employee

47. Prayer's end

48. Gardener's trimmer

50. Part of speech

52. Am is to I as ____ is to we

53. Calista Flockhart's husband

55. Likewise

57. *Salad tuber

60. *____ Famous Hot Dog Eating Contest

64. Nonsense

65. Female gametes

67. "A Doll's House" playwright

68. Cuckoo

69. Opposite of guzzle

70. Cuckoo for what puffs?

71. Eyelid affliction

72. Driver's aid

73. Giving a once-over

DOWN

1. Hair holder

2. First name in jeans

3. Auricular

4. ____ provocateur

5. Island off Alaskan coast

6. Wildebeests

7. *For most, the 4th is a day ____

8. Onomatopoeia for splash

9. *Drink at a barbecue

10. Weary walk

11. Ireland, once

12. *Patriots ____ over Loyalists

15. Long John Silver's pet

20. Crocus, pl.

22. Ooh partner

24. Last part (2 words)

25. 1st letter of Hebrew alphabet

26. Famous Memphis street

27. Felt concern

29. *"...twilight's ____ gleaming"

31. Lady of "A Star is Born"

32. Smell

33. Post-it user

34. *"Born on the Fourth of July" director

36. *Popular July 4th decoration

38. Captain of Nautilus

42. Phlegms

45. Sully one's reputation

49. Go bad

51. Public announcement

54. Fowl perch

56. Exclamation of delight or dismay (2 words)

57. Bridge, in Paris

58. Colloquial approval

59. Ditty

60. Back of neck

61. Ascus, pl.

62. Ne

63. Glitch

64. Part of O.H.M.S.

66. Strive

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8		9	10	11	12	
13						14				15				
16						17				18				
19					20			21	22					
			23				24							
25	26	27		28		29			30		31	32	33	34
35			36		37			38		39				
40					41				42		43			
44				45		46					47			
48					49		50			51		52		
				53		54			55		56			
	57	58	59					60				61	62	63
64						65	66			67				
68						69				70				
71						72				73				

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The solutions to the Sudoku, Crossword puzzle and Suguru can be found on page 14.

hudson valley naturalist

by francine wizner



The intrigue of fizzy drinks & fuzzy trees

Famed film director Alfred Hitchcock famously popularized the mimosa cocktail in the United States, enjoying the libation so thoroughly that his biography, “It’s Only a Movie,” lists it as his “top drink.” The Master of Suspense allegedly touted mimosas as a “morning-after” hangover cure. Today it’s a staple at bridal showers, celebratory brunches, sunrise jubilees, and other such a.m. soirées. But the cocktail’s history began in the 1920s.

The precursor, “Buck’s Fizz,” was invented in 1921 at London’s historic Buck’s Club. It featured a 2:1 ratio of champagne to orange juice, famously giving members an excuse to drink before lunchtime. A few years later, at the Ritz Hotel in Paris, a more daytime-friendly alternative with a 1:1 ratio was dubbed the “mimosa.” It was this version Hitchcock preferred, offering greater hydration, sugar, vitamin C, and the classic “hair of the dog.”

France in the 1920s: The Golden Age of Mimosistes

Hitchcock may have first encountered his favorite drink’s floral namesake while shooting on location along the sun-drenched coastline of the French Riviera. In winter, a multitude of Mimosa trees bloom in a sea of brilliant yellow that contrasts with the blue of the Mediterranean.

Mimosa (*Acacia dealbata*) was discovered in Australia in the early 1800s during a French scientific voyage. By the 1860s, wealthy aristocrats were planting them in the south of France, where they escaped into the wild. Local horticulturists soon realized the acidic soil of the Tanneron Hills was an ideal growth medium.

By the 1920s, the *mimosiste* industry exploded. Thanks to bud-forcing greenhouses and the expanding European railway network, local cultivators transitioned to a global enterprise. At its peak, they shipped up to 30 tons of fresh yellow blossoms daily to cold northern cities like Paris and London, cementing a traditional craft that survives today.

Hey, mate, that’s called Silver Wattle back home

When *Acacia dealbata* arrived in France, botanists misidentified it because its foliage resembled the true *Mimosa* genus. They christened it “mimosa” in error. Back in Australia, it is known as silver or blue wattle, named for the glaucous sheen on its fern-like leaves and bark. Similarly, the latter part of its scientific name originates from the Latin *dealbare*, meaning “covered in a white powder.”

British settlers in the late 1700s called it “wattle”—meaning woven twigs—because they used the flexible branches to weave frameworks for mud huts. Silver wattle was a utilitarian pioneer in the Southern Hemisphere; mimosa became a sun-drenched symbol of European high society in the North. The tree is practically a botanical double agent—Hitchcock would love the intrigue!

Mimosa trees in Dutchess County

I have seen a couple of mimosa trees in Poughkeepsie—and I am hunting for more! We have a type of true mimosa tree: *Albizia julibrissin*. Though completely different genera, *Acacia dealbata* and our Dutchess County mimosa are cousins within the legume family.

The evergreen *Acacia dealbata* thrives in USDA Hardiness Zones 8 to 10 and blooms fuzzy yellow pom-poms in late winter. Meanwhile, our green-leaved, deciduous mimosas grow in Zones 6 to 9 and bloom silky, pink powder-puffs in late summer.

Both cousins share the unique behavior of folding their fern-like leaves at night or in response to darkness. Our Dutchess mimosas are even more sensitive, slowly closing their fronds during rain, heavy cloud cover, or when gently held.

The Greeks said it first

Long before it was a plant or a drink, the name originated from the Ancient Greek ‘mimos’ (mime or act) combined with the suffix ‘-osa’ (to resemble). In the 17th century, the term was adapted into Modern Latin



Mimosa tree.

-Photo by Francine Wizner

as a botanical genus name. Scientists named plants like the *Mimosa pudica*, the “sensitive plant,” because its sudden movements made it look like the plant was mimicking animal behavior.

Leaflets drop, glasses raise: Sip happens

If a cocktail containing orange juice and champagne is a Mimosa, a cocktail with pink grapefruit juice should be called an Albizia.

The Albizia Cocktail

1 part pink grapefruit juice
1 part Sparkling wine (or sparkling apple juice/water for a mocktail)
1 dash Elderflower liqueur (or syrup)
Garnish: Sugar rim and a pink grapefruit twist

Enjoy it while watching one of Hitchcock’s films — like the one where Norman Bates remarked that Marion Crane “ate like a bird.” The line reminds me that the director once told Dick Cavett that puns are the highest form of literature. (I think so, too.)

Raise a glass to the Master of Suspense. Sip a fizzy cocktail, admire a fuzzy tree, drop your leaflets and unwind. Cheers!

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

Bannerman Castle Trust announces Calendar of Events for July

Book a tour to Bannerman Island & Castle in the Hudson River Highlands! The Estuary Steward tour boat accommodates 44 passengers and departs from the Beacon Waterfront Dock directly across

from the Metro-North Train Station at 2 Red Flynn Drive, Beacon (May-October). Enjoy a guided, or self-guided tour of Bannerman Island. Visit the historic Bannerman Castle ruins and gardens and

explore the original Bannerman residence, now a museum! For a schedule of events including; walking tours, theater events, movie nights, concerts, dinner events and other special events (and to purchase tickets, visit <https://bannerman-castle.org/tours-events/bannerman-island-tour>.

Friday, July 17 – Bannerman Island Movie Night

Experience “Strangers on a Train” on Bannerman Island. This brilliant 1951 Alfred Hitchcock Film is considered one of Hitchcock’s finest! A psychological drama and thought-provoking murder mix-up starring Farley Granger and Robert Walker in very memorable performances. For tickets: <https://bannerman-castle.org/tours-events/bannerman-island-tour>.

Sunday, July 19 – Third Sunday Music Concert Series

The BCT will present The Costellos, playing Maverick Pop originals and other great songs you will know and love. The concert is FREE for visitors taking the 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. tours! For tickets visit: <https://bannerman-castle.org/tours-events/bannerman-island-tour>.

Friday & Saturday, July 24 & 25

“Epic Broadway on Bannerman Island” Broadway in Beacon presents an unforgettable Broadway revue set against the

stunning backdrop of the historic Bannerman Residence. Featuring professional actors who have all performed on Broadway, this spectacular evening brings iconic songs from the Great White Way to life on the Hudson River. Experience powerhouse vocals, beloved showstoppers, and theatrical magic in one of the most breathtaking outdoor venues in New York. Epic Broadway on Bannerman Island is sponsored by The Festival, a 3-day outdoor music festival celebrating Broadway’s biggest stars. For tickets visit: <https://bannerman-castle.org/tours-events/bannerman-island-tour>.

Main Gallery Exhibition – The Bannerman Castle Trust’s history exhibition continues. This show features changing artwork, photographs and artifacts from the Bannerman Family Collection, focusing on BCT’s development since 1994. Works by contemporary artists focusing on Bannerman Island and the Hudson River Valley are also featured.

West Wall Exhibition – Virginia Donovan (Paintings) and Mary Ann Glass (Photo-Mixed Media). Ongoing show featuring Hudson Valley Paintings & Photography. (All art sales support preservation projects on Bannerman Island). Gallery Hours: Sat. & Sun. noon – 5 p.m., weekdays by chance & appointment. Group tours are available by calling 845-831-1001.

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