

BEACON FREE PRESS

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December 3, 2025

Democratic legislative majority selects leaders for 2026



Barrington Atkins
-Courtesy photo

During a Nov. 17 meeting of incoming Democratic County lawmakers, the new Democratic majority unanimously selected current Assistant Minority Leader Barrington Atkins (City of Poughkeepsie) to become Majority Leader and Legislator Kristofer Munn (Red Hook) to become Assistant Majority Leader for the 2026 legislative term.

The Democratic caucus also voted unanimously to support current Minority Leader Yvette Valdés Smith for Chair of the Legislature at the official chair vote in January.

Control of the 25-member Dutchess County Legislature flipped from a 15-10 Republican majority to a 15-10 Democratic majority following the November election. This will be the first Democratic majority since the 2008-2009 term.

“Leader Valdés Smith helped make these electoral successes possible by working closely with all our members to ensure we focus on the people of Dutchess County,” said Legislator Munn. “It is only natural that she should lead the Legislature to continue that work.”

“Leader Atkins’ has worked tirelessly for the residents of Dutchess County in his current position,” said Valdés Smith. “Legislator Munn’s energy, experience, and a long track record of supporting his fellow legislators make him a perfect fit to return to leadership.”

“We have an amazing group of legislators - both newly-elected and incumbent - with a diverse set of skills and experiences,” said Munn. “I can’t wait to see what we can achieve together.”

Holiday décor to highlight tours at Mount Gulian in December

By Kristine Coulter

Take a step back in time by visiting the Dutch Colonial home of the Verplanck family, known as Mount Gulian. The historic site’s doors will be open for the annual Holiday Tours.

The following is the schedule for the tours: Wednesday, Dec. 10 through Sunday, Dec. 14 and Wednesday, Dec. 17 through Friday, Dec. 19. Tours will be offered at noon, 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. each day. Organizers prefer it if one makes a reservation, but walk-ins will be accommodated if space allows. To make a reservation, call Mount Gulian at 845-831-8172 or email info@mountgulian.org. Payment may be made on the day of one’s tour.

“Visitors to Mount Gulian especially enjoy seeing the house in traditional Victorian Christmas décor. With the rooms lavishly decorated with fresh greens, an 8-foot Christmas tree from Sunny Gardens, and a kissing ball that hangs from the foyer’s ceiling, our visitors often remark about the pleasant fragrance throughout the house. The tours are all indoors, and besides giving our usual house tours, we will talk about how the Verplancks merrily celebrated Christmas in the 1800s,” stated Elaine Hayes, executive director of the site. Hayes noted that members of the Verplanck Garden Club, as well as Mount Gulian Board Trustees, staff and volunteers with the decorating of the home.

Added to the tours this will be some



The Dining Room is decorated for the holidays at Mount Gulian Historic Site. Holiday tours are being offered throughout this month.

-Courtesy photo Mount Gulian Historic Site

of Virginia Verplanck’s century-old Christmas cards, from her personal scrapbook in the Mount Gulian collection, said Hayes.

“The winter holidays during Victorian times were, most importantly, times for family gatherings, sharing and reflection. People would travel long distances,

sometimes in difficult weather and rough roads to be with friends and relatives. The Verplancks always had a Christmas tree, lit with little wax candles, even though a tree was not common at the time,” Hayes explained.

Continued on page 2

Municipalities to host holiday events December 6, 7

By Kristine Coulter

The holiday festivities continue this weekend as more municipalities hold their annual Christmas and Hanukkah events. Parades will also be held to celebrate the season.

Christmas, Hanukkah events set in East Fishkill

The annual tree-lighting ceremony will be held in East Fishkill at the East Fishkill Community Center, 890 Route 82, on Saturday, Dec. 6 from 4:30-7 p.m. This is an event for residents and registration is required.

Caroling will take place at 4:30 p.m. by members of 4th Wall Productions. Then one may visit with Santa & Mrs. Claus around 5 p.m.

East Fishkill Recreation Director Bill Green said there will be some new games, roasting marshmallows, photos with Santa & Mrs. Claus, crafts “and a few surprises.” Holiday music will be provided by Bob Martinson.

Continued on page 9



The Village of Fishkill will hold a lights parade on Sunday, Dec. 7.

-Archive photo

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Putnam Chorale to perform holiday concerts throughout December

By Kristine Coulter

Let music put you in the holiday spirit. The Putnam Chorale is presenting a series of concerts, “Shimmering Night, Songs of Mystery and Wonder.”

The first performance is set for Saturday, Dec. 6 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Joachim Church, 51 Leonard St., in Beacon. Then on Sunday, Dec. 7, at 3 p.m., the performance will be in Carmel, in Putnam County, at St. James the Apostle Church, 14 Gleneida Ave.

“This concert features ethereal contemporary and classical works that span the space between the earth and the celestial bodies of the sky, the stars and the moon. There is a holiday aspect to the songs, but you won’t hear traditional carols at this concert. The 80-person chorus will be accompanied by harp, cello and piano,” explained Katherine Gambino, a member and president of the Chorale.

Dr. Jason Tramm is the music director and conductor of Putnam Chorale.

The Chorale has grown under Tramm’s leadership, according to Gambino.

“In “Shimmering Nights,” we invite listeners to catch a glimpse of the hidden light that lives in quiet moments - the hush before dawn, the stillness of snowfall, the glow of wonder in the



Members of the Putnam Chorale will perform holiday songs in their concerts throughout December.

-Courtesy photo Putnam Chorale

heart,” said Tramm in a statement. “As singers and accompanists come together, we hope to offer an experience both intimate and transcendent, a musical reflection on the mystery and beauty that surrounds us.”

What one would consider a “more traditional holiday concert” will take place at 7 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 19. This concert will be held at the Graymoor Visitor Center, 1350 Route 9, Garrison, Putnam County.

Gambino remarked there will be songs like “Jingle Bells” and “Deck the Halls” that feature a jazzy rhythmic beat. “You’ll also hear classics like Vivaldi’s “Gloria” and the “Holly and the Ivy” and rousing spirituals like “See Dat Babe,” she said.

Other locations may be found on the website: putnamchorale.org/next-event. Senior reduced pricing is available, noted Gambino.

Tramm came up with the title of the

concert series “due to the nature of the music and lyrics in the program,” explained Gambino.

“The Chorale prides itself on offering audiences music performances of very high quality to local audiences. It enhances the community’s experience and allows the singers to learn and perform music of the highest caliber,” stated Gambino.

For tickets, please visit <https://www.putnamchorale.org>.

Holiday décor to highlight tours at Mount Gulian in December

Continued from cover

Admission to the tours is \$15 adult; \$12 senior; \$8 youngsters (6-18 years of age). Admission for children under 6 years old and Mount Gulian members is free. One may sign up to become a Mount Gulian member. For more information, go to www.mountgulian.org.

Hayes stated, “Our Holiday tours are the highlight of the year, and many visitors return year after year. The Victorians basically invented the way Americans celebrate the holiday, so we try to blend our history and the modern celebration all in one fun visit. Come join us this season!”

Holiday Tours are made possible with the support of the Daughters of the Cincinnati.



Holiday Tours will be offered at the Mount Gulian Historic Site in December.

-Courtesy photo

Dance at the Elks Lodge on Dec. 13

Get On Down at the Elks Lounge Dance Night on Saturday, Dec. 13 at 7 p.m., at 900 Wolcott Avenue (Rt. 9D), Beacon. Lose oneself to an exciting mix of R&B, Latin, Soul, Funk, Disco, Rock, Reggae, Hip-Hop and more, played by DJ Rhoda. These dances are informal and even if one comes alone, one can always find a friendly partner on the dance floor. Admission is \$15 and includes complimentary snacks, and a full cash bar.

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

Beacon Volunteer Firefighters honored for 50 years of service



The Beacon Engine, Lewis Tompkins Hose Company, and Mase Hook and Ladder held their Annual Dinner together on Saturday, Nov. 22. Members who have attained 50 years of service were recognized including William DeCarlo Jr. and Rich Mete from Beacon Engine, David Eraca, Lenoard Splain, Robert Ferrone and Don Knight from Mase Hook & Ladder and Kevin Scofield and Phil Candia from Lewis Tompkins Hose Company. All those firefighters who were present were recognized by Dutchess County Volunteer Firefighters Association 1st Vice President Kyle Pottenburgh, Hudson Valley Volunteer Firefighters Association 2nd Vice President John O’Brien, Firefighters Association of New York Public Relations Committee Person Vincent Galvin and Firefighting Museum president Kyle Pottenburgh. A total of 23 firefighters, in the above photo, gave at least 1150 years of service to the City of Beacon.

-Photo by Vincent Galvin

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Tompkins Community Bank Delivers Over \$1,500 In Donations For Local Food Pantries



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**See story,
page 8**



DC Sheriff's Office Youth Cadets raise \$10,000 for 'Hope for Holidays' program



The Dutchess County Sheriff's Office Youth Cadet Program raised approximately \$10,000 worth of groceries, personal hygiene items and cash donations for Family Services on Saturday, Nov. 22 in Poughkeepsie.

-Courtesy photo DC Sheriff's Office

Approximately \$10,000 worth of groceries, personal hygiene items and cash donations were collected for Family Services by members of the Dutchess County Sheriff's Office Youth Cadet Program on Saturday, Nov. 22 at ShopRite on North Road in Poughkeepsie.

The cash donations will go toward Family Services Center for Victim Safety and Support "Hope for the Holidays Program." This program provides holiday gifts and festive meals to families and children during the upcoming holiday season.

The Dutchess County Sheriff's Office Youth Cadet Program is a chartered Northeast Regional Law Enforcement Education Association (NERLEEA) Youth Cadet Post that provides training and experiences in the field of Law Enforcement to Dutchess County youths. It is designed for Dutchess County Youth aged 14-20 who are interested in the criminal justice field.


The program runs during the school year and has an emphasis on developing an understanding of the roles and responsibilities for law-enforcement, as well as developing positive mentorships between our youth and advisors with an emphasis on the youth themselves becoming positive influences and role models within their respective communities.

Latin Dance set for December 18

Dance Beat will be held on Thursday, Dec. 18 at 7 p.m. (doors open at 6 p.m. for dining and music), at the Towne Crier Café, 379 Main Street in Beacon. Enjoy the sounds of Salsa, Merengue, Bachata, Reggaeton and much more, played by DJ Rhoda. Song requests are welcome.

Fine dining and bar service are available before and during the dance. Admission is \$15, which can be paid at the door. For reservations (not required), please call the Towne Crier at 845-831-5500.

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



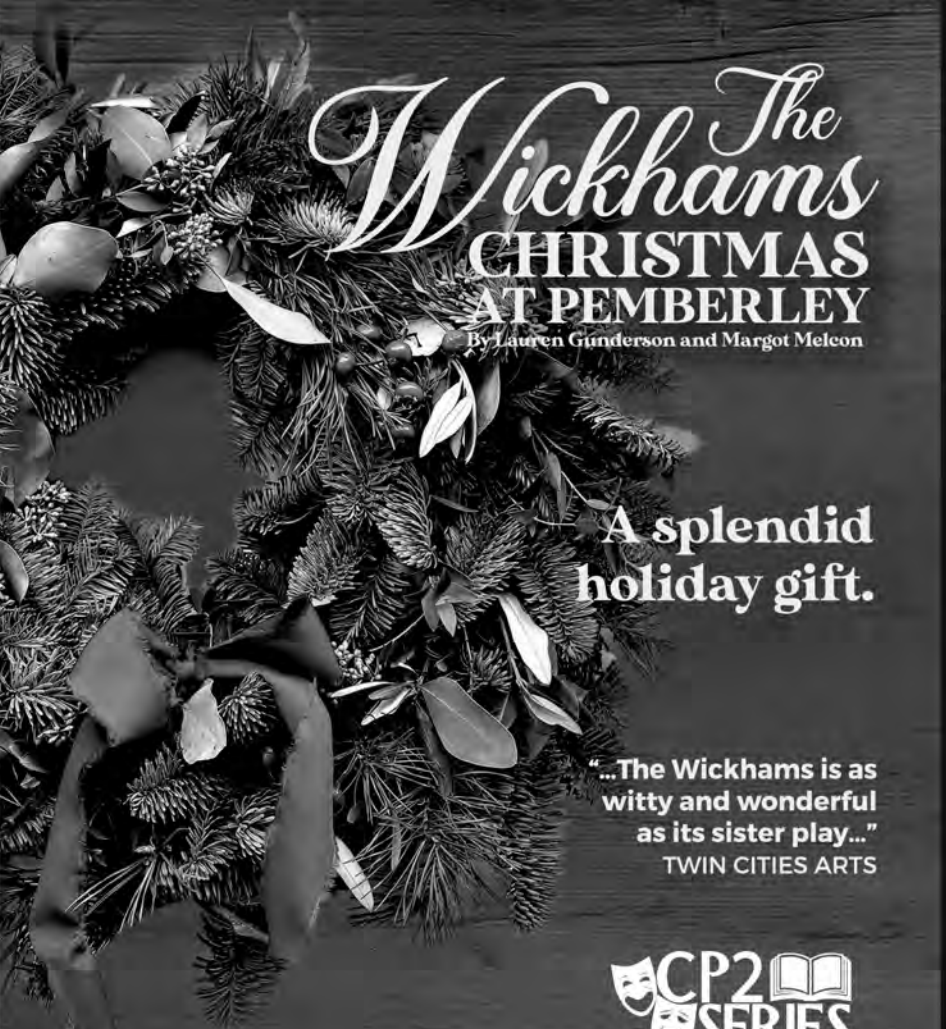
Miss Bennet

CHRISTMAS AT PEMBERLEY

By Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon

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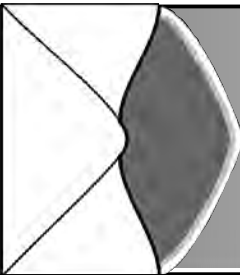
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Viewpoints



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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.

Grateful for community members’ generosity

To the Editor:

We are grateful to share the impact of this year’s Turkey on Every Table initiative. An effort made possible through strong partnerships and the generosity of our community.

Program Partners:
I Am Beacon
Key Food
Salem Tabernacle Church
Faregrounds (a new and welcome partnership)

Program Highlights:
• 395 initial sign-ups
• 353 families fully prepped for distribution
• 344 turkey + meal packages successfully delivered to local households

Each number reflects a family supported, a meal shared, and a moment of dignity preserved. This program continues to show what can happen when neighbors, volunteers, and local organizations work together with purpose.

We extend our sincere thanks to everyone who volunteered, donated, or helped spread the word. Your support strengthens our community in meaningful ways.

We especially want to recognize the Knights of Columbus #446 for their hands-on assistance. Their help unloading turkeys and meal bags, providing brand-new winter coats for local youth, and handling all of our cardboard recycling made a significant contribution.

We also extend a warm thank-you to the Beacon Unicorn Fund of the Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley, who not only provided financial support but also donated copies of their children’s book Pink Unicorn’s Magical Day. These books were distributed to families with children under eight, adding a thoughtful and joyful touch to the day.

Thank you to all who helped make the 2025 Turkey on Every Table initiative a success. Together, we continue to bring hope, warmth, and nourishment to Beacon families.

Reuben Simmons Jr.
I Am Beacon

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'Raise the Age' reforms needed

Editor’s note: The following is a letter sent to Gov. Kathy Hochul from NYS Senator Rob Rolison.

Dear Governor Hochul:

I write to bring your attention to the growing concerns regarding Raise the Age. Numerous law enforcement and media reports have noted the sharp rise in youth crime since 2018. While there are many factors contributing to this increase, it's clear that the Raise the Age reforms passed in 2018 are making our streets less safe - especially for our youth.

As a former law enforcement officer, I worked with juvenile offenders and helped them any chance that I could. I believe in restorative justice and agree with much of the reasoning behind “Raise the Age” reform. However, the status quo is in dire need of significant changes. Repeat offenders, those affiliated with gangs, and offenders using a deadly weapon need to be held accountable and cannot be immediately released back into our communities.

I’m respectfully requesting that you include common sense reforms to Raise the Age in your Executive Budget. I recently authored S.8531, legislation that gives more judicial discretion over the removal of cases to family court and makes illegally using or possessing a firearm an exception to a case being removed to family court. I believe any or all of the changes in my bill would go a long way to fixing the system and improving public safety. Thank you for your time and attention to this critical issue.

NYS Senator Rob Rolison
39th District

22-year-old man indicted by grand jury for 16 counts of alleged unlawful surveillance

The Dutchess County District Attorney’s Office announced last week that Kyle Petrozzi, 22, was arraigned in Dutchess County Court on an Indictment returned by a Dutchess County Grand Jury charging Petrozzi with 16 counts of Unlawful Surveillance in the Second Degree, all Class E Felonies.

District Attorney Anthony Parisi stated, “This defendant’s alleged actions represent a serious invasion of personal privacy. No one should ever have to worry that a space as private as a bathroom is being monitored. Marist University responded quickly and worked closely with law enforcement throughout the investigation. We are grateful to the Marist community for their support and to the victims, whose cooperation was essential to the case.”

The alleged incidents charged in the Indictment occurred over a period between April 27 and May 10. Petrozzi, who was enrolled as a senior, is alleged to have set up surveillance cameras in gender neutral bathrooms throughout Dyson Hall. Several people, both men and women, were allegedly filmed inside the bathrooms. Petrozzi was set to graduate in May 2025 but was expelled due to the allegations, according to the D.A.’s Office.

The case was investigated by the Town of Poughkeepsie Police Department and is being prosecuted by Deputy Unit Chief Nicholas LaStella and Assistant District



Kyle Petrozzi
-Courtesy photo Dutchess County D.A.’s Office

Attorney Samantha Rios. Under New York’s bail laws, the charges in the Indictment are non-qualifying offenses, according to the D.A.’s Office. Judge Jessica Segal presided over the case and ordered the defendant to be released under probation supervision and to surrender his passport.

As with any criminal case, the charges described above are merely accusations, and Petrozzi is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Open house for Route 52 and Route 82 intersection improvements in Fishkill

The New York State DOT will host an open house to present proposed improvements to the intersection of Route 52 and Roue 82. The preferred alternative would be a modern roundabout to replace the existing signage.

The open house is set for Thursday, Dec. 4, from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Fishkill Town Hall, 807 Route 52.

According to the DOT, the project benefits include reduce traffic congestion while enhancing overall intersection operations, enhanced safety for motorists and pedestrians, and provide streetscaping.

The construction would begin in the Spring of 2027 and expected to be completed in Spring of 2028.

For more information, call 845-431-5877.

EXIT Realty announces new team member

EXIT Realty Connections has announced that Siobhan Brosnan has joined its growing team of dedicated real estate sales professionals.

EXIT Realty Connections, 2790 W. Main St., Wappingers Falls, is a member of EXIT Realty New York Metro’s expanding network of independently owned and operated brokerages across the region.

Celtic harp performance December 8

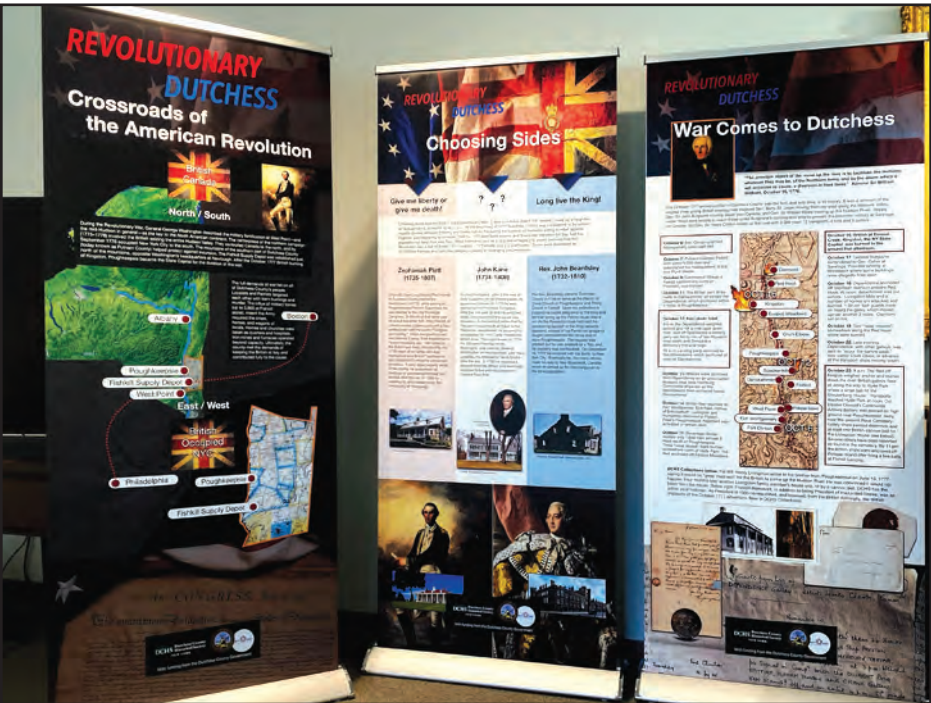
On Monday, Dec. 8, from 1-2 p.m., the Highland Harper, Candace L. Coates will be performing on the Celtic harp at the Reed Memorial Library, 1733 Route 6, Carmel, Putnam County.

Please check their website, <https://carmellibrary.org>, as registration for this special event may be required.



FIRST OF TWO PARTS

Dutchess County at crossroads of the American Revolution



Three of a total of six retractable banners that reveal the centrality and importance of Dutchess County during the Revolutionary War. They are available for loan through DCHS.

Editor’s note: Six retractable banners, supported with a 2025 grant from Dutchess County government for activities celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States, or “Rev250,” are being published by the Dutchess County Historical Society (DCHS). There are two sets that can be loaned for periods of time depending on availability. They can be reserved through DCHS by email Bill Jeffway at bill.jeffway@dchsny.org and viewed online at dchsny.org/rev250-banners. Published here is the first of a two part summary of the history of local involvement in our nation’s founding as revealed by recent research.

By Bill Jeffway

During the Revolutionary War, General George Washington described the military fortification at West Point-and the Mid-Hudson in general-as the key to the North American continent. The centerpiece of the northern campaign (1775-1778) involved the British seizing the entire Hudson Valley. They controlled Canada to the north, and by September 1776, occupied New York City to the south.

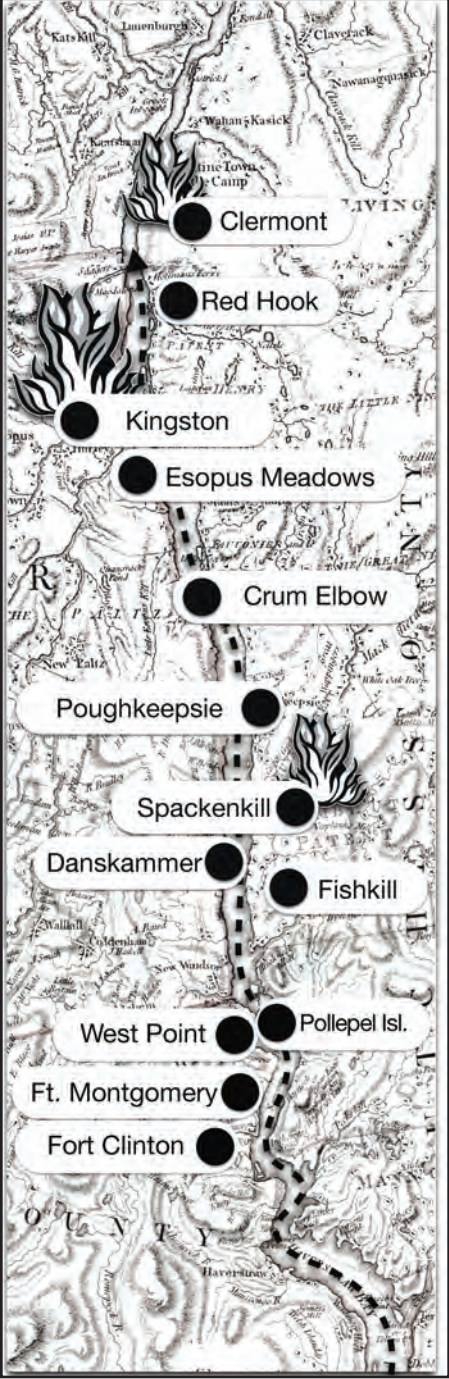
The mountains of the southern part of Dutchess County (today known as Putnam County) helped protect against incursion. The Fishkill Supply Depot

was established just north of the mountains, opposite Washington’s headquarters at Newburgh. After the October 1777 British burning of Kingston, Poughkeepsie became the State Capital for the duration of the war.

The full demands of war fell on all of Dutchess County’s people. Loyalists and Patriots targeted each other with barn burnings and murder. The influx of military forces (up to 3,000 at Fishkill alone), meant the Army required the crops, horses, and wagons of locals. Homes and churches were taken as quarters and hospitals. Iron mines and furnaces operated beyond capacity. Ultimately, the county met the demands of keeping the British at bay and contributed fully to the cause.

Choosing sides

Choosing sides was not easy in the Revolutionary War. It was a civil war where the “enemy” could be a neighbor, an acquaintance, a relative or an in-law. At the beginning of 1775, Dutchess County was considered to be almost equally divided between Patriots and Tories, but by the spring the number of residents willing to rebel against England was beginning to increase. Still, by 1776 both John Adams and Alexander Hamilton felt that half the population of New York



War comes to Dutchess County! The October 1777 armed conflict in Dutchess County that lasted from the 6th to the 23rd, was the only local armed conflict. It was a remnant of the original three-prong British strategy that would have seen simultaneous approaches from the west from the Mohawk Valley, from the north from British Canada, and from the south from British occupied New York City. Among DCHS collections are the logs and ledgers of the British ships, requested of the British Admiralty in 1935 by then U.S. President (and local historian) Franklin Roosevelt. An example is among the images which appear on the banners.

was Tory. While estimates vary as to the percentages it is widely believed that the Revolution was a war of thirds - 1/3rd Loyalists, 1/3rd Patriots, and 1/3rd unaffiliated. Some were described as occasional Patriots who switched allegiance based on changing circumstances.

Zephaniah Platt (1735-1807)

Originally from Long Island, Zephaniah Platt moved to Dutchess County before the Revolution. In 1775, while serving as Poughkeepsie Precinct Supervisor, he was elected to the 2nd Provincial Congress. In March of that same year he and a few other firm, Whig Friends of Liberty erected a lib-

erty pole with a flag emblazoned with the words “Congress and Liberty.” When the sheriff arrived and ordered it away, Platt threatened to “knock his brains out.” His hatred of the British was likely intensified by the 1778 death of his father who was imprisoned on a British “loathsome [sic] prison ship” where he contracted smallpox. A fairly large property owner in the county, he augmented his holdings by purchasing forfeited Tory estates after the war. In 1798 he resettled in, and helped found, the community of Plattsburgh. His former home still stands in Poughkeepsie at the intersection of Overlook and Old Degarmo Roads where the American Legion is located.

John Kane (1734-1808)

An Irish immigrant, John Kane was an early supporter of the Patriot cause, as appointed Colonel. In 1775 he was elected to the Provincial Congress. After the first year of War he switched sides, convinced that the cause was hopeless. A descendant wrote that he “became disgusted at an insult to his Patriotism, abandoned his property to confiscation [in 1777], and moved into British lines.”

For eight weeks in 1778 his 350-acre Pawling estate, Sharvogne, was used by General Washington as headquarters. Like many Loyalists, he removed to Nova Scotia after the war. In 1783 he received a pension from the British and eventually returned to live with his children in Upstate New York. A portion of his original home with a beautiful Federal era addition is owned and maintained by the Historical Society of Quaker Hill and Pawling.

Rev. John Beardsley (1732-1810)

The Rev. Beardsley came to Dutchess County in 1766 to serve as the Rector of Christ Church in Poughkeepsie and Trinity Church in Fishkill. Upon his ordination in England he swore allegiance to the King and felt that taking up the Patriot cause was a sin. As the Revolution took hold and his unwavering support of the King became apparent, several of his Patriot congregants sought permission for him to be able to leave Poughkeepsie. The request was granted but he was arrested as a Tory and his property was confiscated. On December 16, 1777 he removed with his family to New York City. Eventually he, like many others, made his way to New Brunswick, Canada where he served as the first clergyman to the local population. His former home in Poughkeepsie, known as Glebe House on Main Street, is owned by the City of Poughkeepsie and still stands.

The second and final part of this series will examine the many materials that locals had to provide in addition to military materials, such as food and clothing. We will profile some local persons who saw the American Revolution as a chance to launch millions of journeys toward personal freedom regardless of race, gender, faith or economic status.



Bill Jeffway is the Executive Director of the Dutchess County Historical Society and can be reached at bill.jeffway@dchsny.org or 845-293-7711.

Dates for Support Connection groups in December announced

Below is a list of Support Connection’s Support Groups this December for those impacted by breast, ovarian, and any gynecological cancer.

Dec. 3: Breast, Ovarian and Gynecological Cancer Post Treatment Support Group, 7-8 p.m., via Zoom

Dec. 10: Offered Via Zoom – Ovarian and Gynecological Cancer Support

Group, 7-8 p.m., via Zoom

Dec. 15: Breast Cancer Support Group-(Hybrid Format- In-Person and Zoom videoconference option) 7-8 p.m., at NewYork-Presbyterian Hudson Valley Hospital, 1980 Crompond Rd., Cortlandt Manor, Westchester County.

They have other support groups for

women with breast, ovarian, or other gynecological cancers. For details, please visit the calendar.

Pre-registration is required for all groups. To register or to learn more, please call 914-962-6402 or 800-532-4290. Support Group meeting location for in-person groups and/or Zoom login info will be provided to anyone who registers.

In addition to support groups, their professional Peer Counselors are available to provide unlimited one-on-one, individual support. Anyone dealing with breast, ovarian, or any other gynecological cancer can learn more by visiting their website: www.supportconnection.org or by calling toll-free at 800-532-4290.

Arnoff announces candidacy for NY Senate District 39

Social worker and small business owner Emma Arnoff has officially announced her candidacy for New York State Senate, District 39.

Arnoff is the owner of The Sensory Space located in Poughkeepsie that supports neuro-divergent children and their families through play therapy and psychotherapy.

“My top priorities will be driving down our cost of living,” said Arnoff. “That means expanding mental health services, advocating for housing that’s affordable, and taking on the corporate monopolies such as Central Hudson, that are taking advantage of working families across the Hudson Valley.”

Arnoff aims to use her experience as a local business owner and social worker to address the issues that Hudson Valley families are facing on a daily basis. “I have seen firsthand how the growing expenses of daily life are impacting my clients and the bottom line of my small business. We need new leaders who will work diligently to find new ways of supporting local business growth and bringing costs down for our community.”

Arnoff added, “From raising my children here to running a business that serves families in need, I’ve built my life here in the Hudson Valley. Now, I’m running to ensure that those same families won’t get left behind.” Emma lives in Lagrange with her husband, Dan, and their twins, Miles and Henry.

Senate District 39 includes parts of Dutchess, Orange, and Putnam counties including the towns of Poughkeepsie, Lagrange, Union Vale, Beekman, Pawling, Fishkill, East Fishkill, Wappinger, Montgomery, Newburgh, Philipstown, Putnam Valley, and the cities of Beacon, Poughkeepsie and Newburgh. In 2024, former Democratic Senate Candidate Yvette Valdes Smith came within 2,074 votes or less than 1.5% points of ousting Rolison.



Emma Arnoff

-Courtesy photo

This Senate district is one of three in the state that was won by Presidential candidate Kamala Harris but held by a Republican incumbent Senator, making it a top pick up opportunity for the New York State Democratic Senate Campaign Committee (NY DSCC).

Ballet Arts Studio to present ‘The Nutcracker’

By Alex Tsahalís

Over the last 230 years, Tchaikovsky’s “The Nutcracker” has become as much a staple of Christmas festivities as “’Twas The Night Before Christmas.” This year, Ballet Arts Studio (BAS) will be performing it at Beacon High School, 101 Matteawan Rd.

Based on a book by the French writer Alexandre Dumas, “The Nutcracker” tells the story of Clara, a young girl who is gifted a nutcracker by her godfather. That night, the Nutcracker comes alive, and Clara is swept into a war between him and the Mouse King. After saving the Nutcracker, he turns into a prince and takes Clara to the Land of Sweets, where a number of candies from across the world dance to celebrate the prince and Clara.

The performance by Ballet Arts Studio this year will be monumental.

“This is our first time having the show in Beacon,” said Katie Bissinger, the Artistic Director of BAS. “I also believe this is the first full length ballet produced in Beacon. I checked with the Beacon Historical Society and they didn’t have any record of a prior show.”

In prior years, the show was produced

in Rockland County with Ballet Rockland. The move to Beacon marks the first independent production they’ve done, and gives the dancers a chance to perform for their community. The performers in the show are mainly students from BAS and span a wide variety of talent levels.

“The dancers are as young as seven and some of the adults in the party scene are as old as 72!” says Bissinger. “We also have members of our adult classes and we’re bringing in a professional from New York City to dance the part of the Cavalier with the Sugarplum Fairy.”

This performance is also very special to Bissinger, as all of the costumes and set pieces are from her childhood dance studio. “The legacy of ballet is passing down a love of the art form,” she says. “That aspect is highlighted for me when I see my childhood on the stage.”

The show will be held on Dec. 13 at 1 and 5 p.m. in the Pete and Toshi Seeger Theatre in Beacon High School. Tickets are \$25 for adults, \$15 for seniors, and \$5 for children under five. Tickets can be purchased from balletartsstudio.com

GIVE BLOOD GIVE LIFE

Who needs blood?

Under normal circumstances, every two seconds someone in America will need a blood transfusion. Blood transfusions are used for trauma victims - due to accidents and burns - heart surgery, organ transplants, women with complications during childbirth, newborns and premature babies, and patients receiving treatment for leukemia, cancer or other diseases, such as sickle cell disease and thalassemia.

County officials’ collaborative efforts help residents in need

During this season of gratitude, Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino expresses her appreciation for the many collaborators who came together to support vulnerable County residents when the federal shutdown delayed Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits earlier this month. Dutchess County Government stepped up to help provide immediate food resources to thousands of neighbors in need. That commitment continues as the County supports those impacted by the uncertainty surrounding the federal Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP).

Serino said, “When the federal government’s inaction threatened to let our neighbors in need go hungry or cold, Dutchess County moved fast. With our community partners, county departments, and my fellow County elected officials, we worked together to plan and take action with unprecedented speed, making sure our neighbors could feed their families and heat their homes. I am so grateful to all

who helped make it all happen.”

When November’s federal SNAP benefits were held up due to the shutdown, Dutchess County stepped in immediately, committing up to \$1.5 million, working with Dutchess Outreach, Inc. to mobilize a county-wide emergency food response with the weekly purchase of thousands of pounds of food locally sourced from area businesses and suppliers. Thousands of local families were provided fresh, nutritious food groceries at multiple emergency food distribution events organized by Dutchess Outreach and at food pantries throughout the county until SNAP benefits were restored.

The County’s quick, decisive action was made possible through the efforts of several key partners, including:

- Dutchess Outreach’s Executive Director Renee Fillette-Miccio, PhD, who leads the County’s Food Security Council, provided the necessary input on local need, informing the County’s determination to invest \$150,000 a week for food distribution during

the shutdown and worked with food pantries across Dutchess County.

Renee Fillette-Miccio, PhD, said, “I am thankful to County Executive Serino and our partners in Dutchess County Government for mobilizing the resources needed to provide steady, critical support for our food pantries. They listened to the realities on the ground and took swift, decisive action when thousands of families were at risk. This crisis also gave us the opportunity to demonstrate a more efficient and effective way to bring food to our neighbors - one that prioritizes local sourcing so we can support our local businesses at the same time. By purchasing from local farmers and suppliers, we moved fresh food quickly to those impacted by the federal government’s inaction on SNAP while reinvesting those dollars back into our community. It was smart, compassionate, and community-centered action, and we are deeply grateful to everyone who made it possible.”

- The Dutchess County Legislature, including Chairman Will Truitt and Minority Leader Yvette Valdés Smith, who worked in a bipartisan manner to swiftly authorize the financial commitment to fund this vital initiative with unanimous support.

Truitt said, “In times of crisis, government must act swiftly and decisively, and that’s exactly what we in Dutchess County did. I’m proud to have worked alongside County Executive Serino and my colleagues in the Legislature to ensure no Dutchess County resident was left without food or heat. This bipartisan effort is the latest embodiment of our shared commitment to protecting our

most vulnerable neighbors when they need us most.” Valdés Smith said, “Dutchess County’s immediate mobilization of food and heating resources when local families were hurting shows how much can be accomplished when people work together. The speed and efficiency of this effort is testament to the strong partnerships we have here in Dutchess County.”

- The Office of County Comptroller Dan Aymar-Blair, worked with the Department of Planning & Development and the County Attorney’s Office for an expedited contract and payment process that allowed for immediate payment of the weekly food purchases. Aymar-Blair said, “The Comptroller’s Office was happy to be part of this collaborative effort. We took the necessary steps to be able to expedite the release of funds to pay for immediate food distribution, working together with the various county departments to help local families through a difficult time.”

The County is now using the authorized funding to assist those who have been impacted by the uncertainty surrounding HEAP, which has not yet opened for the winter heating season. The County has been providing emergency, one-time support for HEAP-eligible individuals who have no fuel or have had their home heating source shut off. In addition to these efforts, the County also re-established the “Dutchess Responds” fund through Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley for residents and businesses who want to make monetary donations to assist neighbors in need with food resources and home heating assistance.

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Adoption Day celebrates children in safe, permanent homes



Dutchess County Court is a partner in adoption. Pictured (from left) are Family Court Judges Denise Wason and Joseph Egitto, as well as Family Court staff, during the Adoption Day celebration last month.

-Courtesy photos Dutchess County Gov't



Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino (right), and DCFS Commissioner Sabrina Jaar Marzouka (second from left) joined adoptive families during Adoption Day Celebration, held in late November.

National Adoption Month spotlights the importance of family and permanence for children. Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino joined the County’s Department of Community and Family Services (DCFS) and Dutchess County Family Court at a special Adoption Day Celebration event at the Mid-Hudson Discovery Museum in Poughkeepsie last Friday, celebrating the year-round efforts to connect children

with safe, nurturing, and permanent homes through adoption.

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino said, “Every adoption is a story of hope, resilience, and unconditional love, and we are deeply grateful for Dutchess County’s adoptive families who provide love, safety, and stability to children in need. Our DCFS staff works with compassion and commitment to make those connections

possible and ensure every child has the opportunity to grow up in a safe and supportive home.”

From newborns to teens, children in Dutchess County who cannot remain safely with their birth families are given a second chance at stability and love, thanks to the dedication of DCFS staff and the generosity of foster and adoptive

parents. Since 2023, DFCS has facilitated 31 adoptions – each a testament to how the department helps transform the lives of children and families they work with.

If one can open one’s heart and one’s home to a child who needs it, one can learn more about DCFS’ foster care and adoption programs at dutchessny.gov/adoption.

Cuban music legend to perform Dec. 5 at Towne Crier

Pre-eminent Cuban musician, composer and singer Pedro Luis Ferrer makes his first appearance at the Towne Crier Cafe in Beacon on Friday, Dec. 5, at 8 p.m.

Ferrer occupies a unique place in Cuban music and social culture. He started his career in 1969, and has written songs that have endured in the minds of several generations in Cuba, where he is well known and well loved, both by the intellectually inclined and the more general audience.

Ferrer has written songs that have endured in the minds of several generations in Cuba. He plays a variety of Cuban music styles, but his main style is Guaracha, a vibrant genre originating in 18th-century musical theater, contributing greatly to a national consciousness during the time of Spanish colonialism. His lyrics are charged with humor, social commentaries and obsessive references to food, which is something that’s present in the music of some of his predecessors (“soneros” like Los Compadres, Trio

Matamoros, Barbaroito Diez, etc).

But it is the pointing social commentaries that distinguish his lyrics from the more trivial ones of his contemporaries. His witty, sardonic social commentary so irked the Castro regime that in the late ’90s the government banned his music from the state-run media (which in Cuba means all media).

Ferrer plays Spanish guitar and Cuban Tres (a guitar-like instrument), and will be accompanied by his daughter Lena Ferrer, who’s also a composer. Lena started accompanying her father when she was 14, almost 30 years ago. Lena also plays marimbula (also known as “bajo de flejes,” a Cuban percussion instrument derived from the African Mbira), clave, maracas and guiro. Their voices complement each other to produce a harmonic and contrapuntal unity where tradition and contemporaneity are combined.

The Towne Crier is at 379 Main St. in Beacon. Visit www.townecrier.com or call 845-855-1300 for tickets.



Cuban musician and composer Pedro Luis Ferrer will perform at the Towne Crier in Beacon on Friday, Dec. 5. Ferrer’s daughter Lena (pictured) will accompany her father.

-Courtesy photo

Howland Public Library, Braver Angels HV present ‘Skills for Disagreeing Better’

The Howland Public Library, in partnership with Braver Angels Hudson Valley, invites the community to participate in “Skills for Disagreeing Better,” an interactive workshop designed to help people bridge political divides through respectful and empathetic communication. The workshop is set for Thursday, Dec. 11, from 6-7:30 p.m.

In today’s climate of polarization, many Americans struggle to have constructive conversations about important issues. This workshop offers practical tools for listening and speaking across political differences, fostering understanding without the need for agreement, and finding common ground.

Participants will:

- Gain insight into the values and concerns of people with differing political views.

- Learn techniques for listening so that others feel heard and respected.

- Practice sharing their own perspectives in ways that encourage dialogue rather than debate.

Open to everyone, this 90-minute workshop combines reflection, discussion, and skill-building exercises to help participants engage more thoughtfully with those who see the world differently. Spots are limited, please register at BeaconLibrary.org

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Eight Ketcham baseball players sign collegiate letters of intent



Roy C. Ketcham High School baseball players are seated in front of banners for their college teams. From left are, Josiah Figuereo, Christian Maltais, Giancarlo Henry, Tyler Durkin, Nick Mondesando, Ensley Perez, Shane Finnigan and Chris Lupo.

-Courtesy photo

By Morgan E. Maier
To kick off Thanksgiving break, Roy C. Ketcham High School held a signing day for eight student-athletes committed to playing collegiate baseball. The milestone matches a program-high in commitments for a single class, as seven northeast schools will be thankful to welcome the Storm next fall.
Decked in their respective school gear, Tyler Durkin, Josiah Figuereo, Shane Finnigan, Giancarlo Henry, Chris

Lupo, Christian Maltais, Nick Mondesando, and Ensley Perez celebrated their college commitments on Tuesday, Nov. 25. Friends, family, coaches, and Ketcham baseball alumni were in attendance to support the reigning Section 1 champions and last year's state finalists.
"This is an incredible group of young men who have put so much time into their craft, and this day recognized that," said Ketcham head coach Pat Mealy.

The Storm's postseason tear caught eyes across the Empire State, with dominant pitching and defense pairing nicely with the devastating offense. The success symbolizes an ongoing legacy of Ketcham baseball, one that each class instills in the next. The Class of 2026's resume is rife with individual and team accolades. And there are still months to go before taking the diamond together one last time.
"When players come into the program, they see the players that came before them and have no choice but to work to the highest level, or they will not be here long. This group of seniors now had an incredible group of seniors with the last few classes to really emu-

late - and they have carried the torch remarkably well," said Mealy, who has led this program since 2001.
One player is set to reunite with a few former teammates at the next level - Mondesando, the major power-hitting pickup for Monmouth University. Mondesando is a state-ranked outfielder (#2 by Prep Baseball Report) who garnered All-Region honors in his junior season. He will reunite with 2023 state champion Ryan Mealy and 2024 alum Riley Weatherwax on the Hawks squad.
Perez, the Storm's anchor at the back-stop, will continue his career behind the plate at SUNY Cortland. He joins an illustrious Dragons program, the reigning State University of New York Athletic Conference (SUNYAC) champions. Maltais brings his infield talents and speed on the basepaths to Endicott College in Massachusetts.
Ketcham's talented trio of right-handers will scatter across the tri-state. Lupo joins a Mountain Valley Conference powerhouse at Herkimer, a program that went to the NJCAA Division-III Final Four in 2025. Durkin, equal parts offensive prowess and pitch control, will hurl at St. Peter's, a Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference rival of the Marist Red Foxes. Finnigan will take the mound at Manhattanville, backed up by Henry in the infield. Figuereo will continue developing as a dual force on the mound and behind it, an asset to the Fairleigh Dickinson Knights as both pitcher and shortstop.
"With this signing comes great responsibility in them to sharpen their tools even more and prepare for this upcoming spring like college baseball players. The program that we run here prepares our boys for college baseball and we will continue to do that," added Mealy. "We take great pride in leaving no stone unturned."

Tompkins Community bank delivers over \$1,500 in donations for local food pantries



From left are Glenn Wu, Ford Young, Jenna Mazzacone, Kristen O'Keefe, Alison Romano, Deborah Callaghan, Patty Scharf, Kimberly Chadwell, Carol Schmitz, Tim Russell, David Carey, Catherine Conrad, Arthur Micol, and Sue Musumeci, rounding up the donations.

-Courtesy photo

For the second consecutive year, Tompkins Community Bank's (Tompkins) Acorn Community Alliance, the bank's team of community volunteers, supported local food pantries with more than \$1,500 in donated non-perishable food items, household essentials and personal hygiene products through its "Fill the Vault" donation challenge.
As families across the Hudson Valley continue to face food insecurity,

these contributions from Tompkins employees and customers will help Dutchess Outreach, Putnam Community Action Partnership and the Community Food Pantry of Sleepy Hollow and Tarrytown in Westchester bridge critical gaps caused by delayed SNAP benefits.
Together, Tompkins is filling the vault with generosity and helping nourish neighbors in need.

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love to cook

by vicki frank day



Chewy-crisp cookie

In the right hands, a craving can result in a delicious new recipe.

A craving, according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, is an intense, urgent or abnormal desire or longing. Medical News Today says a food craving is a sometimes-uncontrollable desire for typically unhealthy foods. The reasons we have cravings can be hormonal, stress-related or emotional. Sometimes it's simply the body's way of telling you what you need.

I'm a firm believer in listening to cravings. Not overindulging, mind you, but occasionally giving in to them. Many is the time I've had a hankering for something, given in to it and known it was the right thing to do. Often, I think, it's what the heart and soul need. Feeling under the weather? Nothing chicken soup can't "cure." Bruised heart? Warm, gooey brownies might just do the trick. And more often than not, a good, old-fashioned grilled cheese sandwich is just the soothing comfort you need.

There have been many times for me that something I crave has turned into a go-to recipe. That was the case just the other day. I had a specific hankering for cookies, but not just any would do. What I craved were peanut butter cookies, but with a crispy-chewy texture. The recipe I had was for soft ones, but that just wasn't what I wanted. So, I put on my thinking cap, perused the pantry and – voila! – a box of crisped rice cereal left over from my last batch of treats said 'Hey girl!' Perfect!

Before we get to it, a little, overly simplified lesson on baking chemistry. What makes the texture of a cookie? (I consulted a few sources, including America's Test Kitchen, to find out.) To be clear, texture is affected by numer-

ous factors: the leavening agent used (baking powder (caker results) vs. soda), the type of flour, baking time and temperature, whole eggs or just yolks, etc. But for a basic explanation: If you like crisp cookies, the best way is to use low moisture white sugar. Another is to ensure the dough spreads while baking, so use melted butter rather than cold or softened butter. Baking at a lower temperature for a longer time also helps. For chewier cookies, which is what I wanted, brown sugar is key. Its color comes from its molasses content, making it moister (that's why you can, and should, pack it when measuring). Softened, rather than melted, butter adds air and fluffiness to the dough when you cream it with the sugar, making the cookies rise as they bake. You'll still get cookies that spread, but they won't be as flat or crunchy but should have crisp edges. So, by using a certain combination of ingredients you can get the results you want, in this case chewy-crisp.

PEANUT BUTTER CRISPIE COOKIES

The simple addition of crispy cereal was just the thing and, I think, it puts these over the top. A sprinkling of potato chip crumbs made these not only crave-worthy, but downright addictive. I strongly recommend you try them!

INGREDIENTS

- 2 ¼ cups flour, sifted
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks), butter, softened (I used salted butter)



Peanut Butter Crispie Cookies.
-Photo by Vicki Frank Day

- 1 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs (preferably room temperature)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 cups crisped rice cereal
- Crumbled potato chips

METHOD

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line baking sheets with parchment paper. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda and powder and salt.

Set aside. In a large bowl, cream the butter, peanut butter and sugars until smooth and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time. Add vanilla and mix just to combine. Stir in crispies.

Drop generous spoonfuls of dough onto prepared cookie sheets about 2 inches apart (they will spread a little). Sprinkle tops with potato chip crumbs pressing gently (without flattening the cookies) so the potato chip crumbs stick. Bake until golden brown, 10-15 minutes. (I actually had to bake my first batch a little longer). Cool on the cookie sheet several minutes before transferring to a cooling rack. They need to set up a bit first or they'll fall apart on the rack.

Makes about 36 cookies.

Cravings are very personal. Everyone's are different and often depend on specific circumstances. I think from time to time it's OK to give in to them. If doing so makes you happy or soothes your soul, a little indulgence might just be worth it, especially if it inspires a new favorite recipe to share. I'm not even sorry if I just gave you something new to crave. Enjoy!

Vicki Frank Day's background includes over two decades in various aspects of the food service industry. In addition, she has over 27 years' experience in marketing, graphic design, copy writing, food styling and research. She believes cooking should be a fun adventure, that food should be an experience and that every day can be a special occasion. Email her at vickiloves2cook@gmail.com.

Municipalities to host holiday events December 6, 7

Continued from cover

The rain date is Sunday, Dec. 7. The inaugural Hannukah Celebration is set for Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 5:30 p.m., at the East Fishkill Town Hall, 330 Route 376. There will be the Menorah Lighting, said Green. He also noted those in attendance can partake in kosher doughnuts, latkes and chocolate. "These two events allow people from all backgrounds to enjoy the holidays and meet their neighbors and have fun!" said Green.

Wappinger schedules tree lighting, parade, calls with Santa

The annual Tree Lighting and Celebration of Lights Parade will take place on Saturday, Dec. 6 at Brexel-Schlathaus Park, All Angels Hill Road, in the Town of Wappinger. "Our Town of Wappinger Celebration of Lights Parade and Christmas Tree Lighting is a truly special way to kick off the holiday season, and we are excited to welcome residents to our spectacularly decorated Brexel-Schlathaus Park. This event is about more than lights and decorations, and there's a lot of that this year, it's about neighbors coming together, celebrating community spirit, and creating memories with family and friends,"

Neil Young 80th birthday celebration at Howland Public Library on Dec. 4

"Shakey," an acclaimed Neil Young tribute performance by musician Briz, in honor of Neil Young's 80th birthday, will be held at the on Dec. 4 at 6 p.m. at the Howland Public Library, 313 Main St. in Beacon. The event invites audiences to step back in time and experience the sound and atmosphere of Young's early career, recalling intimate performances at legendary venues such as The Bitter End in the Village, The Cellar Door in Georgetown, and Massey Hall in Toronto. For the past 15 years, Briz has brought

said Town of Wappinger Supervisor Joseph Cavaccini. "For those who have never attended before, this year is the perfect time to join us. From our second annual festive parade and the magic of seeing the tree and park illuminated to the joy on our children's faces, it's an experience that captures the warmth and togetherness of the season in a way that's hard to describe until you're there."

There will be the Light Up Wappinger Decorating Contest on Saturday, Dec. 13 and Sunday, Dec. 14. Wappinger residents may decorate their homes or businesses by registering that address online with the Town, according to information about the event. Voting will open on Dec. 13 and Dec. 14. Some of the categories for prizes are Most Traditional, Most Creative, Best Use if Inflatables and Best Neighborhood Spirit, according to organizers.

"The Celebration of Lights is just one of several holiday events offered throughout the season, each designed to bring our community together and remind us of the importance of connection, gratitude, and shared traditions. It is our hope that these events continue to strengthen the sense of hometown pride that makes Wappinger such a special place to live, not just during the holidays, but all year long," remarked the supervisor.

"Shakey" to venues across the country, performing classics including "Heart of Gold," "Cowgirl in the Sand," "Ohio," and "Needle and the Damage Done." His show blends music with narrative, offering listeners a "Journey Through the Past" that highlights Neil Young's remarkable career, influence, and enduring legacy. And, as fans of the show know, a healthy dose of flannel is part of the experience.

Admission is free but registration is requested. Register at BeaconLibrary.org.

Seniors in the town can register for the Holiday Luncheon at Villa Borghese, 70 Widmer Road, on Wednesday, Dec. 17. One must register to attend, according to Town officials. Contact the Senior Center at 845-297-3670.

For the little ones, there will be Letters to Santa, which will be through Sunday, Dec. 14. One can drop off the letter at the "Magical" mailbox at the Wappinger Town Hall, 20 Middlebush Road. For those who drop off a letter for Santa to read, make sure to include one's return address, just in case he can send a letter back.

Parade of Lights to take place in the Village of Fishkill

The Parade of Lights will make its way

down Main St. in the Village of Fishkill at 6 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 7. The parade will include floats, trucks, cars, motorcycles and more. Line up for the parade is at 5:15 p.m. at Church St. and Main St.

Daniel Burke, who is organizing the parade, said there are more than 40 vehicles signed up for the parade this year. "Every year we're trying to make [the parade] bigger and bigger," said Burke.

The organizers began working on this year's event at the beginning of October.

"I love that I am able to do this for the Village and for people who live in the community," he said.

Burke offered thanks to Village of Fishkill Mayor Kathy Martin and the Village Board.

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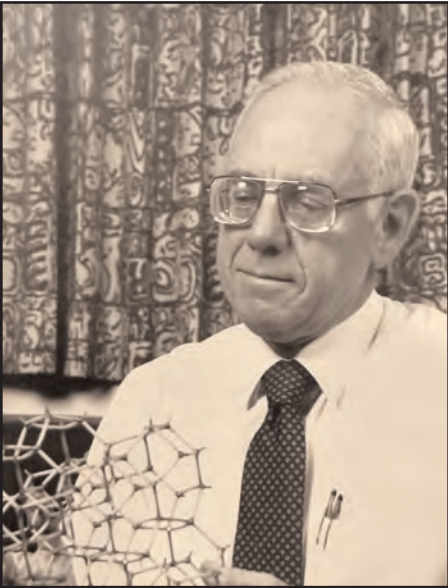
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Obituaries

John T. Nolan Jr.



After a long and happy life, John T. Nolan Jr., 95, passed away peacefully on November 25, 2025 at Taconic Rehabilitation and Nursing at Hopewell.

John was born in Boston on April 15, 1930 to John and Margaret Nolan. He graduated from Catholic University in 1951 with a BS degree in Chemistry and from MIT in 1955 with a PhD in Organic Chemistry. In 1955, he married Mary Sharkey of Galway and Roscommon, Ireland, and together they moved to Dutchess County.

He was employed at the Texaco Research Center in Glenham and retired in 1992 as Director of Strategic Research. Besides his career with Texaco, John had been active in a number of local community activities. He

was one of the original Directors of the Dutchess Community College Foundation and its first Chairman. Subsequently, he served as its Planning Chairman, responsible for developing its long-range plans. Other activities included being a Director of the Greater Southern Dutchess Chamber of Commerce, a chairman of the local Society of Plastics Engineers, a Chairman of the Texaco Research Society, a member of the Advisory Council of the Dutchess County Science Fair, and a tutor with the local Literacy Connections, helping students enhance their reading and math skills. He was a member of the American Chemical Society, Sigma Xi, and Phi Beta Kappa.

John was a devout Catholic whose faith was a big part of the man he was. It was reflected in how he lived his life and treated others. He was a member of St. Mary's Church in Fishkill, serving as a lector and Eucharistic minister. He was a former teacher and high school director of the CCD program at St. Mary's. In more recent years, he served as a Mass server at Mt. Alvernia Franciscan Retreat Center in Wappingers Falls. He served as a volunteer at St. Francis Hospital in the Pastoral Care Department.

In addition to his beloved wife, Mary, survivors include two daughters, Anne Winberg (Steven) of Alexandria, VA, and Margaret Smallin of Wappingers Falls, NY; two sons, Stephen Nolan (Diane) of Marlboro, NJ, and Michael Nolan (Maria) of Gaithersburg, MD; his daughter-in-law, Andrea Kent, of Southampton, NY; six grandchildren: Michael, Lindsay, Paige, and Sean Nolan, and Rebecca and Christopher Burns; two great grandsons, and one great granddaughter. He was pre-deceased by his son, John Nolan III, and son-in-law, Jerry Smallin.

John and his wife loved spending time on the beach at their condo in Hilton Head, SC, as well as their frequent travels around the country and world. He was devoted to his family, and spending time with them brought him the most joy.

Rest in peace, our beloved husband, father, grandfather, and great grandfather. You will be so very missed. May God give you peace and joy.

A memorial service will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Hudson Valley Hospice or Catholic Charities.

Thomas P. Byrnes



Thomas Patrick Byrnes, a Brooklyn born son of Ireland, was born on July 14, 1929, and recalled to God peacefully in his sleep on November 21, 2025, at the age of 96.

Thomas grew up during the Depression and did whatever work was available, delivering messages by bicycle, setting bowling pins, and serving as a barker at Coney Island during his high school years. Every few years he traveled with his mother, Hannah McHugh, to visit family on Achill Island, where he helped cut turf, learned the old songs, and gathered dilk from the shoreline.

Thomas served as a Staff Sergeant in the Korean War before returning home

to start his career.

In 1955, he married the love of his life, Ann Clune Dillon, and together they settled in Poughkeepsie, New York, and raised six children: Thomas Jr. (deceased), Mary, Karen, Keith, Jeffrey, and Christopher. His devotion to his family was an inspiration to anyone who knew him.

After earning his degree, he began his career with IBM. He started as head timekeeper and later worked in management development and training. His work took the family to Stuttgart, Paris, and Hong Kong, moves that marked important chapters in their lives.

Thomas had a few personal interests his family remembers well. He kept a folder of roller coasters he hoped to visit one day and had a particular talent for spotting used-car bargains, often buying a car simply because he knew someone in the family could use it. He could also command a room with his engaging personality, singing, and storytelling.

After the passing of his wife and son in 2024, Thomas lived in Ellenville, New York, where his family cared for him in his final years.

He is survived by his five children, 15 grandchildren, and 13 great-grandchildren.

Family will receive their friends on Monday, November 24, 2025 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Straub, Catalano & Halvey Funeral Home, 55 E. Main Street, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590.

A Mass of Christian Burial was offered on Monday, December 1, 2025 at St. Mary's Church, 11 Clinton Street in Wappingers Falls. Thomas will then be laid to rest beside his wife and son at St. Mary's Cemetery, Wappingers Falls.

To send a personal condolence, please visit www.StraubCatalanoHalvey.com.

Angelo N. Ferrara



Angelo N. Ferrara, a resident of the Village of Fishkill since 1956 and formerly of Peekskill, peacefully passed away on Friday, November 28, 2025, at Vassar Brothers Medical Center. He was 97.

Born on February 9, 1928, to the late Joseph and Carmela (DeMarsico) Ferrara, Angelo grew up in Shrub Oak, NY. At Shrub Oak High School, he earned varsity letters in baseball, football, and basketball, serving as captain of two of those teams. After graduating, he enlisted in the U.S. Army, where he proudly served as a sharpshooter. He was honorably discharged from active duty in 1947 and was awarded the World War II Victory Medal and the Good Conduct Medal.

Following his military service, Angelo

earned a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering from The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in Manhattan.

He enjoyed a 35-year career with IBM, working at several Hudson Valley facilities, and retired as an Executive Manager in 1990.

A parishioner of St. Mary, Mother of the Church in Fishkill, Angelo served faithfully as a lector and eucharistic minister.

His commitment to public service included 14 years on the Village of Fishkill Board of Trustees, retiring as Deputy Mayor in 2021. He had previously served as Chairman of the Village Planning Board.

Angelo was also active in numerous civic organizations, including the St. Francis Hospital Board of Directors, Literacy Volunteers for Dutchess County, the Selective Service Board, the American Heart Association, and the United Way, where he had served as Chairman. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus St. Mary's Council #4065 and a charter member of the 4th Degree John Paul II Assembly #2917. He belonged as well to the American Legion Manny Bacon Post #1758, the John E. Grissy Gun Club in Union Vale, and the Stone Church Fishing Club in Hyde Park.

An avid outdoorsman, Angelo enjoyed hunting, fishing, hiking, and camping. He loved to travel with his wife, Rita, and especially cherished spending winters at their home in St. Thomas, USVI. He was also a loyal New York Yankees fan – despite never quite agreeing with the team's manager.

In his youth, Angelo was a skilled stock car driver who competed in racing events throughout the northeast. It was at one such race that he met the love of his life, Rita M. Bonacio. The two were married on August 31, 1952, in Cold Spring, NY, and were blessed with 73 years of marriage. Rita survives at home in Fishkill.

In addition to his wife, Angelo is survived by his daughter, Rene Kardas of Hopewell Junction; his son, Stephen Ferrara and his wife Kelly of Walkkill; his grandchildren, Tyler Kardas and his fiancée Erin, Benjamin Ferrara, and Sarah Mardis and her husband Samuel; his brother, Paul Ferrara and his wife Cathy; and many nieces, nephews, and other loving relatives and friends.

He was predeceased by his siblings and their spouses—Charles and Irene Ferrara, Anthony and Mae Ferrara, Felicia and Louis Tarantelli, and Joseph and Marie Ferrara—as well as his son-in-law, Edmund Kardas.

Calling hours will be held on Thursday, December 4, 2025, from 3–7 p.m. at the McHoul Funeral Home of Fishkill, 1089 Main St., Fishkill, NY. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Friday, December 5, 2025, at 1 p.m. at St. Mary, Mother of the Church, 106 Jackson St., Fishkill, followed by entombment at Fishkill Rural Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105 (www.stjude.org) or the New York Foundling, Development Department, 590 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10011 (www.nyfoundling.org).

Andrew Glen Boettcher



Andrew Glen Boettcher, a Fishkill resident since 1964, passed away on Monday, November 17, 2025, following a long illness surrounded by his family. He was 62.

Son of the late Benedict A. and Joan (Hopf) Boettcher, he was born in Orange, NJ on February 8, 1963. In 1982, Andrew graduated from John Jay Senior High School, where he was an active member of the school's basketball and baseball teams. He later received a bachelor's degree from Pace University in accounting.

Prior to his retirement, Andrew worked as a senior financial analyst at Verizon Communications in Westchester County. He previously

worked for Texaco Research company in Beacon, and Snapple Company.

An avid sports fan, he played in adult basketball and softball leagues. Drew was also an excellent sports photographer who took joy in photographing the New York Yankees and his siblings, nieces and nephews sporting events. Andrew actively participated in Fantasy Sports Leagues. He was an uncanny statistician who used his sports data expertise to design custom formulas and predict outcomes of various sporting competitions.

In addition to his passion for sports, Andrew also took great pride in his landscaping and gardening skills, having the nicest yard on the block.

Survivors include four siblings: Steve Boettcher & his wife Bonnie of Fishkill, Gregory Boettcher of Hopewell Junction, Pam Allgauer of Poughkeepsie, and Laura Boettcher of Beacon; his nieces and nephews: Erika Allgauer, Evan Allgauer, Shelby Boettcher, and Tyler Boettcher; in addition to countless other loving family members.

He was predeceased by his father, Benedict, on January 24, 2019; and most recently, his mother Joan, who passed away on October 30, 2025.

Calling hours will be held from 2:00pm to 4:00pm on Saturday, December 6 at the McHoul Funeral Home of Fishkill, Inc., 1089 Main Street, Fishkill, NY. A memorial service will begin at 3:30pm.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation at www.cff.org.

For online tributes, visit www.mchoulfuneralhome.com.

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Final report in 3-part series on open major capital projects released by Comptroller

The Dutchess County Comptroller's Office has completed the third and final report in a three-part series dedicated to examining all open major capital projects. The first part was released in May 2022 and focused on major Department of Public Works Buildings and Parks projects over \$1 million. The second part, released in 2024, assessed the effectiveness of the County's current capital project plan-

This third part of the capital projects audit series reviews the servicing of debt and capital project-related activities from January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2024. Debt service payments are funded by using taxpayer dollars and allocated during the annual budget process. In 2024, total debt service payments from the General Fund amounted to \$25 million, repre-

senting 4.5% of the County's adopted budget. Of this amount, nearly \$15.8 million was applied to principal payments, reducing the County's long-term debt obligations. \$9.2 million was used to cover interest expenses.

"I am pleased to announce the completion of this series of special reports and hope that the County utilizes our Office's Findings and Recommendations in pursuit of making

sure that our crucial and expensive capital projects continue to make the best use of taxpayer dollars,” said Comptroller Aymar-Blair.

The Comptroller’s Office would like to thank the Department of Finance for their assistance in the preparation of this report.

The Capital Project Status Review, Pt. 3: Servicing Debt Special Report can be found on the Comptroller’s website.


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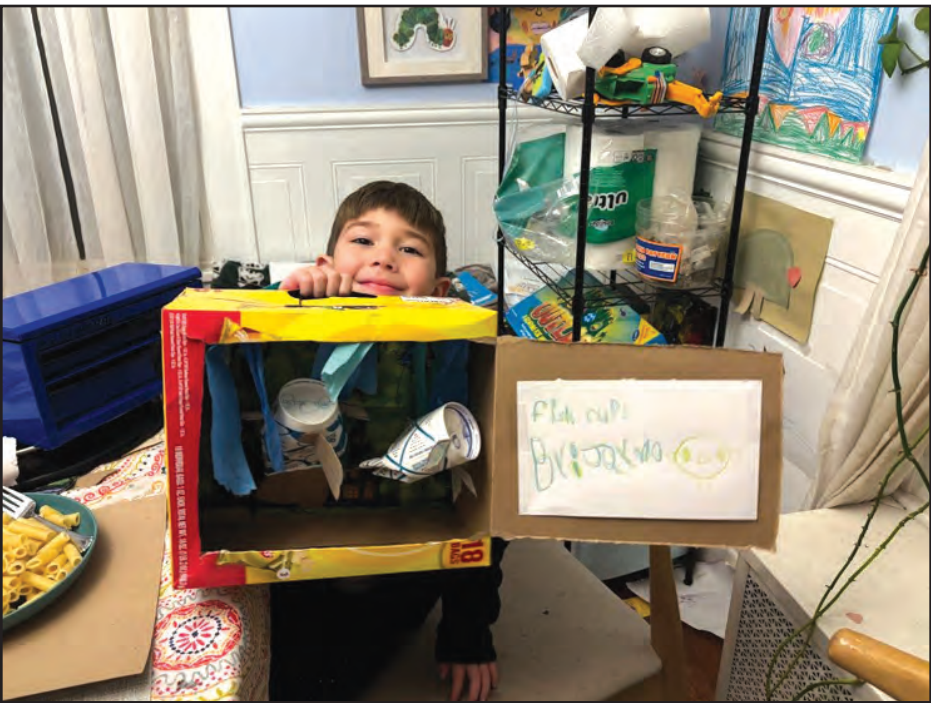
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Serino announces ‘America Recycles Day Art Challenge’ winners



Winners of Dutchess County’s second annual “America Recycles Day Art Challenge included (above, left) Jameson Armstrong, 1st Grade, Overlook Primary School, “Fish Cups”; (above, right) Cynaii Fils, Sa’Mai McClinton and Jasim Lewis of Ms. Kathleen Orza’s 5th Grade class, Warring Elementary School “Protect Our Oceans to Protect Our Future”; Emma Tsang, 8th Grade, Van Wyck Junior High School, “Our Beautiful Marine Life.” Winner of the 9th Grade to 12th Grade category was Lexie Stephens, of Mr. Roberto Romani’s 10th Grade class, Spackenkill High School. Stephens’ work is untitled.



Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino applauds the winners and runners-up of the County’s second annual “America Recycles Day Art Challenge,” a creative initiative led by the Division of Solid Waste Management to educate students about recycling and inspire them to find new uses for everyday items that might otherwise end up in the trash.

Serino said, “Dutchess County is incredibly proud of the imagination and dedication shown by every student who took part in this year’s ‘America Recycles Day Art Challenge.’ By turning everyday items into meaningful art-work, our young creators are not only promoting environmental responsibility but also showcasing their amazing talent. Their creativity should be an example, reminding us all about the importance of caring for our environment.”

The art contest highlighted creative works crafted from recyclable and reusable materials, inspiring participants of all ages to think critically about sustainability and the value of recycling. Open to all school-aged students across Dutchess County, the contest drew entries from more than 40 young artists. The Division of Solid Waste Management has selected winners and runners-up in each of the following age categories:

Kindergarten to 2nd Grade

Winner: Jameson Armstrong, 1st Grade, Overlook Primary School, “Fish Cups,” a sculpture focused on marine life made using cardboard, paper cups and paper.

3rd Grade to 5th Grade

Winner: Cynaii Fils, Sa’Mai McClinton and Jasim Lewis of Ms. Kathleen Orza’s 5th Grade class, Warring Elementary School, “Protect Our Oceans to Protect Our Future,” an underwater scene depicting ocean life, made using water bottles, tissue paper and other recyclable materials.

Runner-up: Ryan Brown, 4th Grade, Homeschooled, “Giraffe Head,” made from paper bags, cardboard boxes and more to construct a wearable giraffe head.

6th Grade to 8th Grade

Winner: Emma Tsang, 8th Grade, Van Wyck Junior High School, “Our Beautiful Marine Life,” a 3-D sculpture of a marine creature made entirely out of recyclable materials including tin foil, aluminum cans, paper and more. Emma was inspired to make this after seeing how much waste accumulated at her birthday party, and she wanted to spread awareness about how fish can mistake garbage for food.

Runner-up: Loyette Henry, Sierra Sand and Zoey Sweeney of Ms. Shanon O’Hearn’s 7th Grade class, Tabernacle Christian Academy, “Recycling Saves Lives,” a depiction of the deep sea and how objects like plastic can harm ocean life, made from plastic water bottles, cardboard, newspaper and other recyclable materials.

9th Grade to 12th Grade

Winner: Lexie Stephens, of Mr. Roberto Romani’s 10th Grade class, Spackenkill High School, “Untitled,” a 3-D sculpture of a life-sized electric guitar, amplifier and foot pedal made entirely out of cardboard, newspaper and more.

Runner-up: Sophia Beeman, of Mr. Roberto Romani’s 11th Grade class, Spackenkill High School, Simon, a portrait of the artist’s aunt’s dog, Simon, whom she loves very much, made using newspaper, magazines, cereal boxes and other recyclables.

The Division of Solid Waste Management develops programs that help reduce waste and ensure the proper and safe disposal of discarded materials throughout Dutchess County. For more information on the County’s continuing recycling and sustainability efforts, residents can visit the Division of Solid Waste Management webpage via www.dutchessny.gov

“America Recycles Day” is a national observance on Nov. 15 that promotes recycling awareness and encourages communities across the United States to adopt more sustainable practices.

