

New year
starts with
swearing-in
ceremonies

By Kate Goldsmith

Municipalities across the Northern Dutchess News readership area launched 2026 with swearing-in ceremonies. These annual events, usually taking place in early January, are where newly elected or appointed officials formally take their oath of office, affirming their commitment to perform the duties of their office and promising to uphold the country's laws and Constitution.

A majority of voters in the region chose to keep their incumbent town supervisors. Re-elected were Michael Whitton (D-Clinton), Richard Yeno (R-Dover), Al Torreggiani (R-Hyde Park), Brian Walsh (R-Pine Plains), Mary Albrecht (R-Pleasant Valley), Elizabeth Spinzia (D-Rhinebeck), Steven Frazier (R-Union Vale) and Gary Ciferri (R-Washington). Albrecht, Spinzia, Frazier and Ciferri ran unopposed.

In races where incumbent supervisors were not on the ballot, voters elected Republican Laureen Abbatantuono in Beekman, Republican Anthony Marinaro in LaGrange, Democrat William Jeffway in Milan, and Democrat Julia Descoteaux in Stanford. Abbatantuono and Jeffway ran unopposed.

In Red Hook, the town supervisor position was not on the ballot this election cycle, nor was the mayor position in the Village of Millbrook.

Several towns provided photos of their respective ceremonies, which follow on page 3 and 6.

Working together is message of
new Legislature Chair Valdés Smith

By Curtis Schmidt

Yvette Valdés Smith (D-Fishkill, Beacon) addressed residents of Dutchess County and the Legislature with a unifying message of working together after being elected as Chair during the Reorganization Meeting on Jan. 5.

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

"Swearing-in ceremonies serve as strong reminders that there is more that brings us together, than could ever drive us apart as Americans," said Valdés Smith. "Swearing to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America and the Constitution of New York is a tradition and commitment that I hold in my heart and mind as a guiding principle."

In welcoming nine new legislators, she said, "I'm proud to say that we are a diverse body and come from wide ranging backgrounds. What we all have in common is our commitment to serving our neighbors, friends, family - no matter what party you belong to or don't belong to. We work for each of you. And we are

here to listen, govern, and make our residents' lives better."

Valdés Smith also praised veteran members of the Legislature, saying "In my past two terms, we have accomplished a great amount of work together for the people of Dutchess County. We have accomplished much of that work in a bipartisan manner - through collaboration and respect. I am confident that we will continue and build upon that work as we deliver for every district across Dutchess. Together, we have kept property taxes low, fought a sales tax increase, increased our housing trust fund, and have invested in our Climate Smart goals."

Looking ahead, she said, "We have much to accomplish. We will make Dutchess a county that works for all - not just for some. We deserve affordable, safe, equitable

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Yvette Valdés Smith (D-Fishkill, Beacon) speaks at the Reorganization Meeting of the Dutchess County Legislature on Jan. 5. She was elected Chair of the Legislature, now controlled by Democrats for the first time since the 2008-2009 term. Photo by Curtis Schmidt

Aymar-Blair takes Oath of Office
in ceremony at FDR Museum

By Curtis Schmidt

For Dan Aymar-Blair, "a one-year term is a test and a three-year term is trust."

The Dutchess County Comptroller was referring to his recent re-election to the role as he addressed a large crowd at his Oath of Office Ceremony on Saturday, Jan. 10 at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Museum in Hyde Park.

Aymar-Blair defeated Gregg Pulver in the 2024 race for Dutchess County Comptroller and served the final year of the four-year term of Robin Lois, who resigned to become the state's deputy comptroller for local government and school accountability.

In November, he defeated Republican challenger Will Truitt to serve a regular term. His four-year term is shortened by one year (as are thousands of offices in NY) because local elections are moving to the even years.

After taking the Oath of Office administered by newly-elected Dutchess County Court

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Dan Aymar-Blair is sworn in as Dutchess County Comptroller by Dutchess County Court Judge Kara Gerry at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum on Jan. 10 in Hyde Park. Pictured with Aymar-Blair are members of his family. Photo by Curtis Schmidt

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Treybich confirmed as Counsel to Dutchess County Legislature

At the body's January Organization Meeting, the Dutchess County Legislature confirmed Michael Treybich, Esq. as Counsel to the Dutchess County Legislature. Pursuant to the County Charter, the position of Legislative Counsel is appointed by the Chairman and confirmed by the full Legislature. Treybich is an attorney in private practice in the City of Poughkeepsie.

Treybich said, "It is my honor and privilege to put my skills to use on behalf of the Dutchess County Legislature and to serve the people of Dutchess County, my home."

Chair Yvette Valdés Smith said, “Michael Treybich has the experience and deep legal expertise that is essential for the role of legislative counsel. In addition to his extensive knowledge and skills, he is also incredibly well respected in our community. Mr. Treybich will serve the Dutchess County legislature well, and we look forward to working with him.”

At the reorganization meeting, Legislators Michael Polasek (R-LaGrange) and John Metzger (R-East Fishkill) brought up a point of order related to the position of Counsel to the Legislature.

Polasek commented later, “We do not question Mr. Treybich’s qualifications, and our concerns were never about the individual appointed. Our concern is with process and precedent. The County Charter provides for a fixed five-year term for Counsel to the Legislature, and terminating a sitting counsel mid-term without articulated cause, findings, or due process raises serious institutional questions. The intent of the original law is

clear: this position was designed to provide continuity and professional independence, not to turn over with changing political majorities. We also raised concerns that the Legislature acted without the benefit of independent legal advice due to an inherent conflict, and we proposed addressing the issue through a local law to bring clarity and long-term stability. While the resolution has passed, we believe this issue warrants further review so it does not repeat itself.”

Legislator Kristofer Munn (D-Red Hook, Tivoli and Rhinebeck) responded, "The charter language is clear: the legislative counsel serves 'at the pleasure of the legislature' as do the vast majority of legislative appointments. The suggestion that counsel could be terminated if there was some sort of cause or findings proves that point. The five-year term simply states how long he or she can act in that capacity without reappointment. In addition, NYS legal ethics give clients unfettered authority to choose their own attorney and it would be unethical for an attorney to try to remain where he is not wanted."

Treybich's 17 years of experience as an attorney includes acting as parliamentarian for and representing dozens of companies, condominium and coop boards in their governance, running annual meetings, and their commercial lawsuits; and municipalities, elected officials and candidates in election law matters. His clients have trusted him to deliver results in million dollar commercial cases and he has successfully sued and defended lawsuits by mortgage lenders and insurance companies who failed to meet their obligations.

Working together is message of new Legislative Chair Valdés Smith

continued from cover



Yvette Valdés Smith, new chair of the Dutchess County Legislature, emphasized legislators working together to benefit residents during her address at the Reorganization Meeting on Jan. 5. *Photo by Curtis Schmidt*

and supportive communities throughout our great county. And we are committed to stewarding in an era of progress, growth and sustainability. Economic development will strengthen and grow as we invest in our communities. We have spoken to thousands of residents throughout our county, and the Message is Clear - the county must do more to support our working families, seniors, veterans, and those struggling with mental health.

Affordability, housing, EMS and transportation must be addressed at every level of government and we as your legislators are committed to finding solutions and easing the burden so many of us have felt.”

She added, “My door will always be open, and I will serve as everyone’s Chair, and I’m grateful and honored to do so.

“Dutchess County, we hear you - We are here, ready to work for you.”

Aymar-Blair takes Oath of Office in ceremony at FDR Museum

continued from cover

Judge Kara Gerry, Aymar-Blair initially thanked his family members and commented, “That’s the hardest part of this type of work – sometimes you have to put your most sacred priorities second.”

He added, "I am pleased to work with Sheriff Kirk Imperati, District Attorney Anthony Parisi, County Executive Sue Serino and everyone who witnesses my commitment to the people of Dutchess County."

According to the Dutchess County website, the comptroller serves as both the chief accounting officer and chief auditing officer of the county, auditing “all county departments and outside agencies funded by the county.”

Aymar-Blair said his role is “to assess, to study what we have learned and to do better in the future.” He promised to serve the needs of the people of Dutchess County, innovate, lead and overcome challenges.

Guest speaker New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli called Aymar-Blair “an in-depth partner to help (county residents) navigate challenging times.” He said federal cuts will be felt at the state level and local towns and counties and “we will be doing our best to minimize the effect of those cuts, but they will make it very difficult on all of us.”

He said Aymar-Blair will be “a voice for accountability and keep you informed of how money is used and being spent. He uses plain language to explain government accounting. He is a model for what being a comptroller is all about, a fiscal watchdog and an ethical compass, putting people first.”

Yvette Valdés-Smith, newly-elected chair of the Dutchess County Legislature, said "In Dan, we have clarity and



NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli speaks during the Oath of Office Ceremony for Dutchess County Comptroller Dan Aymar-Blair on Saturday, Jan. 10. *Photo by Curtis Schmidt*

transparency, making sure your tax dollars are not wasted. Integrity is the cornerstone of good government. Dan is a win for all of the people of Dutchess. He is a true public servant."

Additional speakers included NYS Assemblymember Didi Barrett and Dutchess County Legislator Brendan Lawler. Dr. Edward L. Hunt, pastor of the Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, provided the invocation; County Veteran Services Director Adam Roche led the Pledge of Allegiance; Sarah-Grace White sang the National Anthem; members of the Marine Corps League of Dutchess County Carmen Ramputi Detachment 861 handled the Presentation of Colors, and the emcee was Nedra Patterson Thompson, majority leader of the Poughkeepsie Common Council.

COUNTY CLERK'S RECORD ROOM TO BE
TEMPORARILY RELOCATED STARTING JAN. 15

Record seekers encouraged to utilize 24/7 online record access

Starting Thursday, Jan. 15, the Dutchess County Clerk's Record Room and Requisition Desk will be temporarily relocated to the third floor of the County Office Building (COB) at 22 Market Street in Poughkeepsie. The facilities, currently located on the second floor, will close to the public at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 14, for the move and will reopen on the third floor at noon on Thursday, Jan. 15. Signage will be posted directing visitors.

The temporary relocation is part of ongoing work in the COB on a multi-year, building-wide HVAC improvement project. During construction, which is anticipated to continue through the summer, there may be delays with accessing paper records or record retrieval. Many Dutchess County land and legal records are available 24/7 online at <https://www.dutchessny.gov/countyclerk>. Dutchess County Supreme Court records are also available online at the New York State Courts Electronic Filing (NYSCEF) website.

For questions or concerns, contact the DC Clerk's office at (845) 486-2125.

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New year starts with swearing-in ceremonies

continued from cover



The Town of Amenia held its swearing-in ceremony on Tuesday, Jan 6, at Town Hall. Dutchess County Clerk Brad Kendall presided over the ceremony. Left: Sworn-in were (from left) Highway Superintendent Megan Chamberlin, Town Justice Chris Klingner, Court Clerk Dawn Klingner, Councilperson & Deputy Supervisor Nicole Ahearn, Town Supervisor Rosanna Hamm, Councilperson Walter Dietrich and Councilperson Vicki Doyle. Right: Following the ceremony, Kendall (far left) joined the group for a photo. *Courtesy photos*



On Jan. 5 at Beekman Town Hall in Poughquag, new Town Supervisor Laureen Abbatantuono was sworn in by Town Justice Christopher Tramaglino. At left, Abbatantuono's husband holds the Bible during the ceremony. Above, right: Beekman Highway Superintendent Anthony Coviello (far left) poses with Abbatantuono and her family. *Courtesy photos*



The Town of Dover held its swearing-in ceremony on Dec. 17 at Town Hall. Right: Town Supervisor Richard Yeno was sworn in for his fourth term by Town Justice Redmond Abrams Jr. Yeno's wife, Dover Tax Collector Dina Marie Yeno, holds the Bible. Left, top: Other officials sworn in that night were Councilmembers Susan Jackson and Roy Thomas Holmes (far left); Dina Marie Yeno (center right) and Town Justice R. Wren Abrams Sr. (far right), who was sworn in by his son, Justice Redmond Abrams Jr. (center). Left, bottom: The Yenos are pictured (from left) with future son-in-law Tyler Tompkins and daughters Chelsea and Danielle and Chelsea. *Courtesy photos*



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NOTE: Letters to the Editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Dutchess News.
Letters must be e-mailed to be considered for publication. We cannot accept handwritten or faxed letters.

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Thank you to all who have donated
to help the people of Ukraine

To the editor:

With Russia's tremendous escalation of attacks on heat, power and water as temperatures in Kyiv plunge below zero, I want to remember and thank the Stanford Fire Company and their clothing, jacket, and sleeping bag drive back during that first winter of full scale war.

Thank you to everyone who donated--those items are saving lives still.

Mark Lagus
Town of Northeast

'So many of our worries are
specters of our own creation'

To the editor:

My father died 8 years ago this month. Although we weren't as close as we might have been, I find myself missing him more as the years go by. Perhaps sadder memories melt with time, leaving the happier ones to shine. Maybe as I have gotten older, life has humbled me, and I look less harshly on his shortcomings now that my own have become so exposed. I don't know.

As I stand by his grave, I think of all the worries, stress, fears and anxieties that weighed him down at times, now forgotten and buried with him. I gaze about his neighbors and realize they too shared many of the same troubles. How unimportant they all seem now, though at the time they robbed them of their peace. No one cares now, certainly not those in the grave, but it does seem strange to me that those things which so often haunt us are so quickly and easily forgotten.

There's a lesson in all this. So many of our worries are specters of our own creation. How silly to dwell on them.

Rest in peace, Dad. There are no more bills, no more restless nights, no more worries.

It's advice we who stand on the other side of the grave would do well to take.

Jeffrey Mahoney
Hyde Park

The empire and its ruling class

To the editor:

The United States is in a time of transition, from democracy to imperial rule. Of course, the overthrow of Venezuela was a long time coming. Trump wasn't the only president to shred international law and proclaim that anything the empire wants is fair game. No, our two party, one military industrial complex has been waging illegal wars for years.

Trump's overthrow of yet another country, however, is without the usual nuance or pretense. Perhaps he doesn't have the vocabulary to say things in more than one way. The U.S. wants all the world's oil, so it is willing to destroy the Middle East to get it. Israel is our partner in crime, and no slaughter of the Palestinians is too much. No subterfuge here.

One change in U.S. imperialism is the level of profiteering that our president is willing to take part in. He will be building gambling casinos on the bones of six million Palestinian people - A Gilded Age charnel house.

Another aspect of this different direction seems even more dramatic. The rest

of the world has come to expect naked imperialism from our country, so there is little change in their expectations. The "land of the free" will continue taking what it wants. No, this transition is about who runs the empire once it has committed itself to crimes against humanity. Like various authoritarian regimes in the past, the U.S. will now be run by its billionaire class, freed from all the complexities of representative democracy. Welcome to a fascist America.

Fred Nagel
Rhinebeck

Two impending wars

To the editor:

What does it take to start a war and what constitutes a war? World War I started with a single bullet shot assassinating Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and other countries taking sides. Sort of like the neighborhood fights you may have seen that start with two neighbors.

You may have witnessed the start of World War III with Trump's invasion of Venezuela. The first blood has been shed by seven American Servicemen among the "boots on the Ground" (Cuba lost 30). Trump's pretext was a war against drugs, but it really is the greed for Venezuela's oil. Trump the "bully-dictator" followed with his threats against Columbia, Mexico, Iran, Cuba, Greenland (Denmark our NATO ally), Panama, the take-over of the Western Hemisphere.

I wonder how much support Trump will get from his "young men" vote

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Investing in our community: The lasting power of local giving

By Laura Washington

As we begin a new year, many of us are planning for the year ahead. During these conversations, the importance of investing in our community has never been clearer. Here in the Hudson Valley, local giving is a year-round commitment and a critical investment in our regional resilience.

Your Role – Supporting the Causes That Matter to You - When you give locally, you:

- Keep essential services running dur-

ing the toughest months of the year.

- Support nonprofits that provide food, shelter, childcare, education, and mental health care.
- Strengthen the volunteer networks that hold our communities together.
- Help build long-term systems that ensure our towns and cities remain livable, equitable, and vibrant.

Local giving offers something uniquely rewarding: the ability to see the impact of your contributions. You can meet the organizations you support, witness the change your dollars help create, and take pride in knowing your generosity strengthens the place you call home.

An Invitation to Belong - One key insight from the conversations I have been having since joining Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley stands out: "Service isn't a transaction. It's an invitation to belong."

As we turn the calendar and look ahead to the year before us, I invite you to embrace that sense of belonging, not only through your charitable gifts but also through your presence, partnership, and belief in the Hudson Valley's potential.

Think of your recent giving and your commitments for the year ahead as:

- A vote of confidence in the Hudson Valley's future.
- A commitment to equity and opportunity for all our neighbors.
- A gesture of belonging in a region where we rise or fall together.



Laura Washington

Whether you contribute to a local nonprofit, volunteer your time, or collaborate with us at CFHV to build long-term community investments, your generosity shapes the narrative of who we are and who we can become.

As we start this new year, I invite you to invest where you live. Together, we can ensure that the Hudson Valley remains not just a home, but a place where every family, child, and community can thrive.

Laura Washington is President and CEO of Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley.

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supporters when their blood comes at risk. Remember Trump the “draft dodger,” his statement at the French cemetery “the American WWII dead were Suckers,” and his now persecution of the seven letter signers who warned our military about “illegal orders.”

Dr. Lance Dode and Trump niece Mary Trump have written about Trump’s mental illness. Donald Trump is now 79 years old, having passed the life expectancy of 72.7 for his birth year and showing his age in many ways. His advisors should tell him many dictators have left this world, almost all by acts of violence, such as Adolph Hitler 56, Benito Mussolini 61, Gaddafi 69, Ceasescu 71, Marcos 72, Saddam Hussein 69, Joseph Stalin 74, Mao Zedong 82, and Pol Pot 72.

The second is a different kind of war, but a rebellion of the American Women who Trump and followers want to take away their rights of equality gained after the women’s 178 year suffrage fight. Trump doesn’t think domestic abuse should be called a crime (Museum of the Bible speech, Sept 8, 2025) or control over their own body. I suggest they look back to the 1992 Lorena & John Bobbitt case where Lorena sliced off John’s penis after suffering his physical abuse. 172 million women have a voice and will look for a uniter.

Possibly we should consider the inequality of wealth distribution in this country as a third driving force where the upper 10% of earners own almost two-thirds of total wealth and the lowest 50 percent of earners owned only 2.5% of total wealth.

David F. Queen
Red Hook

**Hudson Valley Air Quality Coalition
urges attention to wood-burning smoke**
To the editor:

As we head into another New York winter, the American Lung Association and the Hudson Valley Air Quality Coalition, urge communities to pay closer attention to a familiar, yet often overlooked, source of pollution: wood-burning smoke. Although wood fires may evoke a sense of comfort and tradition, the emissions they produce are far from harmless.

Residential wood-burning releases carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides and fine particulate matter that are the same dangerous pollutants we see during the wildfire smoke events that have blanketed our state in recent years. These pollutants worsen asthma and OPD symptoms, and are particularly harmful to children, older adults and people with pre-existing heart and lung disease.

Emerging research underscores these dangers. A recent Yale Journal of Environment and Human Health report found that exposure to wood-smoke carcinogens like benzene and formaldehyde raise lung cancer risk regardless of geography or individual health status. This evidence makes clear that wood-burning pollution is a significant and preventable public health threat.

While this occurs, fossil fuel pollution continues to burden New York’s communities, contributing to rising rates of respiratory illness and the growing impacts of climate change. Winter is a stark reminder that our reliance on both wood and fossil fuels for heating is unsustainable for our lungs and our climate. That’s why New York must fully implement strong, clean renewable energy policies and move forward without delay on the cap-and-invest program. This program will cut harmful air emissions, make polluters pay, and help accelerate our transition to cleaner, healthier heating options.

We encourage New Yorkers to take care this winter by limiting wood-burning when possible, and we urge state leaders and Governor Hochul to advance the clean energy solutions that will protect our health for generations to come, and save New Yorkers money in the process.

Max Micallef
NYS Advocacy Manager, Clean Air
Initiatives, American Lung Association

Lorraine Farina
Director, Hudson Valley
Air Quality Coalition

**Public service is about
improving people’s lives**

*The following is a letter written by
Assemblyman Anil R. Beephan Jr. to his
colleagues about public service.*

To my colleagues in public service:

Congratulations to each of you as you take the oath of office and begin this new chapter of leadership. Regardless of party or ideology, I am proud to call you partners in government, united by a shared responsibility to serve the people who placed their trust in us.

I have never believed in prioritizing politics over people. Our residents expect—and deserve—leaders who are willing to work together, listen thoughtfully, and focus on solutions rather than divisions. I look forward to collaborating with each of you in that spirit as we address the issues that matter most to our communities.

We have no shortage of work ahead. From the urgent need for affordable and reliable energy, to finally designating EMS as an essential service, to confronting our housing crisis and rising medical costs, the challenges before us are significant—but not insurmountable when approached with cooperation and good faith.

Public service is about outcomes, not headlines. It is about improving quality of life, strengthening our communities, and ensuring that government works for the people it serves. I am eager to work alongside you to advance policies that reflect those values and deliver meaningful results for our residents.

Once again, congratulations, and best wishes as you begin your term of service. I look forward to the work ahead and to what we can accomplish together.

Anil R. Beephan Jr.
New York State Assemblyman
District 105

County Executive Serino welcomes Chair Valdés Smith, all legislators



Yvette Valdés Smith, left, new Chair of the Dutchess County Legislature, is pictured with County Executive Sue Serino. *Courtesy photo*

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino gave the following statements following the 2026 Reorganization Meeting of the Dutchess County Legislature on Jan. 5.

“We congratulate each member of the Dutchess County Legislature, both newly elected and those returning, as they are sworn in tonight and begin the 2026 Legislative session. These 25 women and men represent 20 towns, eight villages and two cities, and we look forward to working together in our shared service to all the people who call Dutchess County home.

“Congratulations as well to Yvette Valdés Smith on her election as Chair of the Legislature. Together, we are marking an exciting moment in Dutchess County

Government history - the first time women are serving concurrently as County Executive and Chair of the Legislature. I look forward to continuing our collaborative relationship as she steps into this new leadership role. I know we share a commitment to always serving with the best interests of our neighbors in mind.

“There is much work ahead and my experience has taught me that the best results come when we listen to one another and work collectively. My door is always open for the conversations and collaborations that build positive and productive partnerships and help to enhance the lives of our Dutchess County neighbors.”

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SAVE YOUR TREE FOR THE WINTER BONFIRE IN RHINECLIFF

Rhinecliff residents can save their holiday trees for the ninth annual Winter Bonfire on Saturday, Jan. 24, at Firemen’s Field, Beginning at 4 p.m. (snow date: Jan. 31). Dress warm and join us to celebrate Winter around a bonfire burning local holiday trees. Drop your tree off at Firemen’s Field by the parking area. Trees must be cleared of décor. People living within the Rhinecliff Fire District can call Joe at (845) 489-0835 to arrange a pick-up from the end of their driveway. Firemen’s Field is located on Valley Way Road and Loftus, next to the Old Schoolhouse Condos. In the photo, Richard Kopechansky organizing donated trees for the Bonfire. *Courtesy photo*



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New year starts with swearing-in ceremonies

continued from page 3



The Town of Clinton held its swearing-in ceremony on Jan. 7 at Town Hall. Town Justice James Brands conducted the swearing-in ceremony for all elected representatives. Clockwise, from top left, are Town Supervisor Michael Whitton with spouse Alice Clancy as witness; Deputy Town Supervisor and Councilperson Eliot Werner with spouse Cynthia Koch as witness; Justice Barbara Seelbach with Court Clerk Elizabeth Johnson as witness; Councilperson Katherine Mustello with spouse Ronald Mustello as witness. *Courtesy photos*



Hyde Park Town Supervisor Al Torreggiani is flanked by (from left) son-in-law Erik Pfohl, daughter Sally Pfohl and Judge Jean McArthur, who swore Torreggiani in on Jan. 2 at Town Hall. *Courtesy photo*



The Town of Red Hook's swearing-in ceremony took place on Jan. 1 at Town Hall. From left are Council Members Kristina Dousharm and Ken Migliorelli, the re-elected Town Clerk Deanna Cochran, and her deputy, Alex Collins-Field. Town Justice Lisa Loughran (right) conducted the ceremony. *Courtesy photo*



New LaGrange Town Supervisor Anthony Marinaro is sworn in on Jan. 1 at Town Hall by Town Justice Stephen O'Hare. Marinaro's wife Christine holds the Bible as their children look on. *Courtesy photo*



Stanford Town Justice Dennis Buchal. swore in new Town Supervisor Julia Descoteaux on Jan. 1 at Town Hall. Seated to the left of Descoteaux are Eric Haims, Councilperson & Deputy Town Supervisor; and Theodore Secor, Councilperson. *Courtesy photo*

4-H CONNECTION



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4-H youth show dedication as programs thrive through Winter

By Jim Barey, CCEDC
4-H Program Manager

Wintertime in the Hudson Valley: many mourn the loss of sunlight, the lack of warmth, and the difficulty moving through snow and over ice. One group of dedicated youth will continue to grind right through the cold: Dutchess County 4-H members! While others are warming themselves by the fireplaces, 4-H members are making their own warmth by quilting or sewing or suiting up in coveralls and tromping through snow to care for different animals. While the world rests in winter, 4-H keeps going.

Many in Dutchess County associate 4-H with the fantastic displays and excellent sportsmanship that their 4-H members bring to the annual Dutchess County Fair. What they may not realize is 4-H programming occurs year-round! In 2026, Dutchess 4-H Educators are gearing up for county level events such as 4-H Club Officer Training, Club Leader Forums, Public Presentations, and 4-H Winter Day-Camps. 4-H members are finishing woodworking projects, showing cattle and hogs, identifying insects, and running for club offices to prepare for a great year ahead.

Staying indoors this winter, the Clover Crew 4-H club members are hard at work building and creating. In a quote from their secretary, Daisy, "The club received pallets from the (Dutchess County) fairgrounds and each member repurposed them into a different

project depending on what they thought would be a cute decoration or something helpful for their family." Daisy also wrote about making a key holder for her father and his employees to utilize.

Moving out to the barns, Mia Serino, a first year 4-H member of the Here Comes the Beef 4-H club, reported on the opportunity to exhibit beef cattle on a broader scale. Mia attended the Battle at Berkley livestock shows in Berkley County, West Virginia, learning the ins and outs of showmanship, fitting, and ringside sportsmanship. These skills will bolster Mia later this year as she works with her own animals to prepare for a busy show season in New York. Mia commented "The judges at this show were extremely knowledgeable, giving exceptional reasons for their placing in the classes, as well as the ring help who made figuring out when you go in the ring and what class is going on a little less stressful."

No matter the age or project, all 4-H members deserve some off-season down-time. But the commitment that each of them showed just in the month of December, is nothing short of admirable. From palettes to pigs, and key holders to cows, Dutchess 4-H members work through the winter, to better themselves and their world around them.

For more information on 4-H events and upcoming workshops, reach out to the Cornell Cooperative Extension Dutchess County 4-H Team at ccedc4h@cornell.edu, or call 845-677-8223.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Skating rink open to the public
Town of Clinton Recreation announces that the Friends Park Ice Skating Rink is open to the public for open ice skating, weather permitting. Helmets encouraged. Friends Park is at 2350 Salt Point Turnpike, Clinton Corners.

DC Parks' rental reservation system opens for pavilions, camping & more
Dutchess County Parks recently announced 2026 reservations are open for pavilions, campsites, kayak slips, boathouse, and other facility rentals. Due to the popularity of rental facilities, the online reservation system for rentals at Bowdoin, Quiet Cove, and Wilcox Park will open on staggered dates to handle demand and ensure a smooth reservation process for guests and staff alike.

Reservations for Bowdoin Park Pavilions opened on Jan. 13. Reservations for Quiet Cove boathouse and kayak slips opens on Tuesday, Jan. 20; and reservations for Wilcox Park pavilions and campsites opens on Tuesday, Jan. 27. Reservations can be made online at dutchessny.gov/ParksEducation (login required). Some facilities, including Maple Knoll Lodge and Scout Field, are only available by calling the Parks office. Rental fees vary by facility and are due upon reservation. Additional permits or proof of insurance may be required. Visit dutchessny.gov/parks or call (845) 486-4600 for complete information.

Winter Rhinecliff Soup Sales
Winter Rhinecliff Soup Sales, sponsored by Rhinebeck Grange #896, are offered on the third Thursday of the Month: Jan. 15, Feb. 19 and March 19. Soup is sold by the Quart. \$10 per quart. Take-out only. Pick up at Morton Memorial Library, 82 Kelly St., between 10:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Email: JoBaer2@gmail.com to be emailed the soup choices for each month and pre-order online.

Registration opens Jan. 15 for weekend archery classes at Bowdoin Park
Registration for the winter session of Dutchess County Parks' weekend archery classes at Bowdoin Park in Poughkeepsie will open on Thursday, Jan. 15, at 9 a.m. Sessions begin on Jan. 31 and will take place inside Bowdoin Park's community center auditorium. The program consists of five classes, held on Saturdays, with various time slots to accommodate more students. The sessions, each an hour long, are designed for children ages 8 and up, and adults with any level of archery experience. Space is limited, so be sure to register early at www.DutchessNY.gov/ParksEducation.

The first session will cover basic archery safety and skills for new participants. Most of the sessions will be spent practicing with the bows, allowing participants to learn through experience. All equipment is provided. The total cost for the program is \$70 per person and includes all five classes and equipment.

Dates for the archery sessions are Jan. 31, Feb. 14, Feb. 28, March 7 and March 14 (all Saturdays).
Time slots: 8:30-9:30 a.m.; 10-11 a.m.; 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; 2-3 p.m.; and 3:30-4:30 p.m.

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

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

Upcoming events at Stanford Grange
Stanford Grange will host its Annual Winter Soup Dinner on Saturday, Jan. 17, at the Stanford Grange Hall, 6043 Route 82, Stanfordville, at 5 p.m. All dinners are take out only. The menu will consist of your choice of a quart of homemade soup (chicken noodle, winter minestrone, or butternut squash), your choice of bread (French bread or homemade cornbread), garden salad

with dressing, and pineapple upside down cake for dessert. Donation is \$17 per dinner. For reservations, please call Grange Secretary Ryan Orton at (845) 868-7869. Please note which kind of soup and bread you would like when you call to order.

Stanford Grange #808 will host a Fraud & Scam Awareness Presentation for Seniors by the Dutchess County Sheriff's Office on Saturday, Jan. 24, from 10 a.m. to noon, at the Stanford Grange Hall, 6043 Route 82; Stanfordville. Those attending will learn how to recognize common scams targeting seniors, protect personal information, avoid phone and internet fraud, and what to do if a scam is suspected. Admission is free, and a continental breakfast will be available. For more information, contact Grange Chaplain Heidi Bornemann at (914) 484-0919.

Stanford Grange #808 will host a Defensive Driving Course on Saturday, Jan. 31, at the Stanford Grange Hall, 6043 Route 82, Stanfordville, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Cost is \$38 per person. This course allows New York drivers to receive a 10% discount off their collision and auto liability insurance and remove up to 4 points on your license for any violations incurred in the last 18 months. The class includes festive classroom participation and informative movies as well as a delicious homemade lunch served by the Grange Dinner Committee with a free will offering asked. For more information or to request an application for the course, contact Grange Secretary Ryan Orton at (845) 868-7869.

Red Hook Repair Cafe set Jan. 24
The Red Hook Repair Café will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 24, at the Red Hook Community Center, 59 Fisk St. in Red Hook. This is volunteer-driven event featuring skilled neighbors who fix your broken items for free. Bring your lamps, small appliances, watches, clocks, jewelry, computers (and I-phones), small electronics, sewing items needing mending, broken zippers, toys, sewing machines, and more. Our repair coaches will do their best to have you leave pleased with your repaired items.

Coming up at the Copake Grange
The great Chili Cook-off takes the edge off winter at Copake Grange #935, 628 Empire Road, on Saturday, Jan. 24, from 5 to 7 p.m. Spice up the evening with a delicious variety of chilies. Those in the mood for cooking, can bring their favorite chili in a large crockpot. Those in the mood for eating can choose from plenty of tasty concoctions to eat-in or take-out. Prizes go to the favorites. Attendees are invited to taste, vote and eat. Free admission. The price of chili is \$5 to eat-in or take-out. To get more information email copakegrange@gmail.com or visit www.copakegrange.org/events

The Chatham Trio showcases an engaging program of solos, duets, and trios for clarinets and piano at Copake Grange #935, 628 Empire Road, on Saturday, Jan. 31, from 4 to 5:30 p.m. The program includes opera arias by Mozart, a concert piece by Mendelssohn, and works by other classical masters, along with klezmer and soundtrack selections. All ages are invited to be entertained and have their appreciation of classical music enhanced.

Pancake Breakfasts in Rhinecliff
The Rhinecliff Volunteer Fire Company and Rescue Squad host Winter Pancake Breakfasts on Sunday Mornings from 8 to 11:30 a.m. on Feb. 8, March 8 and April 12. Enjoy a pile-high of "Rhinecliff's Best" pancakes, sausage, fruit, coffee and juice. It's all-you-can-eat, so bring your appetite and your friends! Breakfast is \$10 for adults, \$4 for children (children under age 6 eat for free).

Breakfast is held at the Rhinecliff Firehouse (corner of Shatzell & Orchard, Rhinecliff). Proceeds Support the Rhinecliff Vol. Fire Co. Call Cynthia at (845) 876-5738 or e-mail csaniewski1@gmail.com for more information.

Upcoming events:
Thursday, Jan. 15, 5-7 p.m.
Marine Corps League Post 861
413 Main St., Beacon

Saturday, Jan. 24, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
Veterans Town Hall with VA Hudson Valley & MHA Dutchess Veterans Programs
American Legion Post 1302
55 Overlook Road, Poughkeepsie

Friday, Jan. 30, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Veterans Memorial Building
413 Main St., Beacon

Visit dutchessny.gov/veterans for more information.

Arlington wrestlers win, Presidents show strength at Highland tournament

By Morgan E. Maier

Though only one team was victorious at the Highland High School round robin wrestling tournament, each of the 10 attending programs displayed their strongest talents on Saturday, January 10. Reigning Section 1 champion Arlington and the emerging Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidents scored a barrage of statement wins and top finishes, capped by the Admirals' win in the team tournament.

Led by captains Antonio Quinones and Dylan Rodrigue, who earned their weight class titles in rapid succession, Arlington scored 250 team points for the tournament win. Senior Dennis Byrne kick-started the momentum in the final stage with a third place finish in the 126-pound class.

"My team is on a mission. They know when they're at a winnable tournament from a team standpoint. They have a great mindset, they're out there trying to get pins. The ultimate reason we're here [at the Highland tournament] is to get mat time, learn lessons, to get better as the season goes on," said Arlington head coach Dave Grafmuller following the tournament's third round.

Chase Mulvany took first in the 110-pound final over John Jay's Pharoah Wright, 13-2. Xavier Durandisse took on another Wappingers wrestler, Sami Shahid, securing gold and 18 points for his Admirals team with the fall at 4:07. Liam Tompkins outlasted reigning Section 9 champion Jacob Declair with an 8-0 win. Antonio Quinones followed by securing first place in the 157-pound group at 1:55. Abdur Deonarayan took second and fourth in the 215-pound group.

Talan Rampolla came third in the 103-pound weight class after an impressive pool play performance, including one especially gritty, come-from-behind victory to earn a placer (top six) position.

"They're really buying into making their opponents work for everything, so they can be on the mat longer, they can learn more, and hopefully end up with the win," added Grafmuller of his team's mid-tournament performance.

Different than the normal wrestling bracket, the round-robin style offers an opportunity to face unknown teams and opponents, and further grow from each second of experience.

The Roosevelt wrestlers displayed their aggressiveness, as noted early by head coach Eric Scuitto.

"I see a lot of excellent hand fighting. We're taking lots of good risks, we're seeing it, and we're immediately taking the shots and wrestling in better positions. A lot of confidence today, a lot of grit, and a lot of resilience in tough situations," said Scuitto.

Scuitto was pleased with his team's opening performance, as they won 11 of 13 first round matches. The team that once appeared at the very Highland tournament with a handful of overall wins ended tied for fifth place with the hosting Huskies. The growth is palpable, the potential undeniable for this program.

The individual performances, including 11 placers (top six finishers), highlighted the Presidents' tournament. Brennan Paul, Malakhi Sellers, and Dillon Scott took a team-high third place in their respective weight classes. Paul got the pin in 3:22, while Sellers went the distance in a dominant 18-1 performance. Cingston Lambert took 6th in the 190-pound class, pinned by Arlington's Griffen Realmuto.

"It's nice to be back in the action. We were at some really challenging tournaments, the Mid-Hudson Tournament and Eastern States, so it feels good to come to a tournament that we can all compete in, and know that we're right in the mix," added Scuitto.

Vets and families invited to DC Veteran Town Hall

The Dutchess County Office of Veterans Affairs, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and Mental Health America (MHA) of Dutchess County invite veterans and their families to a Dutchess County Veteran Town Hall on Saturday, Jan. 24, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at American Legion Post 1302, 55 Overlook Road in Poughkeepsie. This free event will connect local veterans with local service providers for an open, informative discussion focused on the programs, services and supports available to local veterans, their loved ones and caregivers.

Attendees at the Dutchess County Veteran Town Hall will have the opportunity to:

- Familiarize themselves with the Dutchess County Office of Veterans Affairs, meet its director, Adam Roche, and the learn about work he and his staff perform daily to advocate for local veterans;
- Hear from local VHA leadership about benefits, enrollment and services, along with other important updates about how they are putting veterans at the center of everything they do;
- Connect with fellow veterans offering shared lived experience support through MHA's Vet2Vet peer support program;
- Ask questions directly of veterans service providers and leaders; and
- Access guidance on navigating benefits, claims and local resources.

Staff from the Office of Veterans

Affairs will be on hand to explain the full range of services Dutchess County offers, including benefits counseling, claims assistance, transportation support, outreach initiatives and referrals to community partners.

This town hall is part of Dutchess County Office of Veterans Affairs' continued effort to expand outreach to veterans. Dutchess County Veterans Affairs also recently added a "mobile" Veterans Service Officer (VSO), who is available in the community during evening hours to help veterans and their families receive in-person assistance with understanding and applying for the benefits they've earned. The VSO has scheduled outreach at the Marine Corps League Post 861, 413 Main Street in Beacon, on Jan. 15 and at VFW Post 7765, 30 Elizabeth Street in Red Hook, on Feb. 9; both outreach sessions are scheduled from 5 to 7 p.m., and more are being scheduled throughout Dutchess County in the coming weeks and months. Upcoming VSO outreach sessions will be listed on the Veterans Affairs calendar of events: <https://www.dutchessny.gov/Calendar-Page.htm?myselectedDeptid=213>.

The Dutchess County Office of Veterans Affairs helps veterans and their families understand, apply for and receive the benefits they've earned through their service. For more information about the Dutchess County Veteran Town Hall or County Veterans Affairs' services, residents can call the office at (845) 486-2060.

DC Veterans office to host outreach events

The Dutchess County Office of Veterans Affairs recently launched Operation: Mobile Outreach. A Veterans Services Officer is visiting local communities to help every veteran, especially those recently discharged, as well as family members and caregivers, navigate the extensive, and often overwhelming process of applying for benefits from the VA, State and Dutchess County.

Come to a Mobile Outreach event to:

- Learn about & register for benefits;
- Find out about emergency funding & transportation assistance;
- Have your questions answered;
- Get help with health care, disability, education & training, housing assistance and more.

No appointment needed.

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A night of film favorites: NDSO presents ‘Epic Movie Scores’ Jan. 24

Northern Dutchess Symphony Orchestra (NDSO) welcomes the new year with “Epic Movie Scores” on Saturday, Jan. 24, at 7:30 p.m., at the Marriott Pavilion at The Culinary Institute of America, 1946 Campus Drive, Hyde Park. Conducted by Music Director Kathleen Beckmann, the concert features returning guest artists Jiayi He, harmonica, and Marka Young, violin. The program includes film music from “Back to the Future,” “Forrest Gump,” “The Great Escape,” “Dances with Wolves,” “Schindler’s List” and more, concluding with a medley of classic James Bond themes.

Both guest musicians are returning favorites to NDSO. Jiayi He, an internationally recognized harmonica virtuoso, has performed at major venues including Carnegie Hall and the United Nations and has been featured on numerous television networks. Violinist Marka Young, known for her warm tone and expressive style,

serves as Assistant Concertmaster of the Hudson Valley Philharmonic and has appeared as a soloist nationwide.

Tickets for this concert are priced at \$38 per person, with special discounts available for seniors and students. Family ticket packages are \$40 for one adult and two students. To learn more and purchase, visit www.ndsorchestra.org or call (845) 445-9606.

Formed in 2006 to bring live orchestral music to northern Dutchess County and the surrounding Hudson Valley, the Northern Dutchess Symphony Orchestra is now celebrating its 20th season. Recognized as the Arts Mid-Hudson 2025 Art Organization Awardee, the orchestra continues its mission of offering outstanding live performances of classical and popular music at family-affordable prices. Since its founding, NDSO has been under the dedicated leadership of Kathleen Beckmann, who serves as both conductor and artistic director.



Northern Dutchess Symphony Orchestra's Jan. 24 concert will feature blockbuster movie scores. Featured performers are harmonicaist Jiayi He and violinist Marka Young. Courtesy photos

Virtual Live-Staged Readings to offer thrills & chills on Jan. 17

The Two Of Us Productions, the award-winning theater company based in Columbia County, will open its 2026 Virtual Live-Staged Readings with a new pair of chilling Suspense Theater radio dramas. This performance is being presented on Saturday, Jan. 17, at 7 p.m., via Zoom, in collaboration with Roving Actors’ Repertory Ensemble (RARE) Inc.

“Return Trip” - A routine visitor’s bus departs a psychiatric hospital on a winter night, winding its way through the mountains as snow begins to fall. The passengers are strangers – nervous, quiet

and eager to get home.

They don’t know that the driver is dead. Escaping confinement, a dangerous patient has taken the driver’s place, disguising himself among the terrified travelers. As the storm worsens and an avalanche traps the bus on the road, fear turns inward. Accusations fly. Every passenger becomes a suspect. Every silence feels like a lie.

“Cabin B-13” - A luxury ocean liner. A honeymoon voyage. And a man who vanishes without a trace. When Ann boards the ship with her new husband, she expects romance and calm seas – not

terror. Within hours, her husband is gone. Crew members insist he never existed. Passenger lists show no record. Even their stateroom, Cabin B-13, is said not to exist.

As the ship cuts silently through the night, Ann is trapped between truth and madness, pursued by a conspiracy designed to erase her reality. Onboard secrets, shifting identities, and calculated deception turn the voyage into a deadly psychological game – where survival depends on uncovering who is lying ...

and why.

To learn the rest of these stories you’ll have to R.S.V.P to www.TheTwoOfUsProductions.org and then see these thrilling dramas in the comfort of your own home on Jan. 17 at 7 p.m. This performance is free to the public, donations are gratefully accepted.

Upcoming Suspense Theater shows are set on Feb. 7 and 28, when The Two of Us Productions will present two more sets of classic thrillers.



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Healthy and happy

Lentil Pilaf is a hearty, nutritious and satisfying winter dish.

We're just far enough into January that it's safe to write about eating healthier without it seeming like a New Year's resolution. In years past I've made known the fact that I'm not a firm believer in them, but that's not to say I'm opposed to anyone who does. It's just I know myself well enough that I'm not apt to stick to any resolutions I might make in the throes of fresh-start zeal, no matter how good the intentions.

I'm actually writing about healthy eating because, after the holidays' mass consumption of rich, decadent foods, my body is craving lighter, fresher meals because High Cholesterol has moved in and it's time for her to pack her things and go. The other day, a tossed salad was just what I needed to kick things off, but because it's so cold outside I'm now wanting warm comfort. Usually, for me, that means The Big Three: pot pies, cheesy gratins and pasta in cream sauce; but they traditionally don't fit the healthy bill, so it was time to put on my thinking apron.

I thought it logical to start by substituting ingredients in The Big Three to lighten them up but, much like drinking non-alcoholic wine, it just wasn't the same and only served to remind me that what I wanted was the real thing. So then I made a mental list of my favorite non-salad healthy foods, which included salmon, lentils, ground turkey, nuts, avocados, root vegetables and bitter greens. Putting all of those together would be delicious, but I chose just a few inspired by a fond memory.

Once upon a time, my sister and I shared an apartment. We were working for a landscaper at the time and not only were in great shape but also had access to some great fresh produce generously given to us from clients' gardens. We also had a small garden patch of our own, so vegetables were always on the menu. But woman cannot live on vegetables alone (well, those hard-working women couldn't), so a favorite go-to meal for us was lentil pilaf with sauteed beet greens on the side, which was my starting point. Sadly, I did not have beet greens, but I did have arugula, so I made a side salad with a bright lemon-olive oil dressing, which was the perfect contrast to lighten up the hearty pilaf and rich salmon.

The lentil pilaf we made back then was a boxed Near East product, which has since been discontinued. That meant that, if I wanted it, I had to come up with a recipe on my own based on what I remembered. A little research and experimentation helped get me the results I wanted: a healthy, hearty dish to feel good about.

LENTIL PILAF

When researching the best way to include lentils in this recipe, it was widely suggested that they should be par-boiled before adding to the rice to ensure they're fully cooked, so that's what I did. Once cooked, they're added to a skillet with uncooked rice and the broth added does the rest. In my excitement I forgot how much rice and lentils expand when cooked, so this makes a LOT of pilaf. If you like it as much as I do that isn't a problem, because it's a great side for a salmon dinner and there's leftovers for lunch the next day or two. If you won't use it within a few days or don't have a crowd to feed, you might want to cut the recipe in half. Make it vegetarian by swapping out chicken stock for vegetable broth. You can use brown rice instead of long-grain white, but it may need longer cooking time. A note on rice: you should always rinse it under cold water until the water runs clear. This removes any dust and dirt but also washes away excess starch for fluffier cooked rice. You will need a large skillet with a lid for this.

- INGREDIENTS**
- ¾ cup lentils (I used brown lentils)
 - Olive oil (for the skillet, about 2 tablespoons)
 - 1 medium onion, chopped
 - 2 carrots, peeled and chopped (1-2 cups worth)
 - 2 cloves garlic, minced
 - 1 cup uncooked long grain rice (like Basmati), rinsed under cold water
 - Salt and pepper to taste
 - 2 cups chicken broth or stock (you may need to add ½ cup more as it cooks)
 - Cumin, cinnamon and coriander to taste (start with ½ teaspoon of each – you can always add more)
 - A squeeze of fresh lemon juice
 - Chopped fresh parsley (optional)
- METHOD**

Place the lentils in a sieve and rinse well with cold water. Put them in a medium saucepan and add water to cover by 2 inches. Add ½ teaspoon salt. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low and simmer, 10-15 minutes (no more or they get too mushy. I cooked mine for 12 minutes.). Drain and set aside.

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil. Add carrots and onion and sauté until onions start to brown and carrots are just tender, 5 -10 minutes. Stir in garlic, salt and pepper. Add uncooked rice and cook for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add lentils, stir and cook 5 minutes more.

Add chicken stock, spices and lemon juice and stir to mix. Cover and cook over medium-low heat until rice is done, 15-20 minutes. Check after 15. If it seems dry, add a little more stock, cover and

cook a few minutes more.

Add more seasonings to taste. Sprinkle with fresh parsley and serve. Makes 6-8 side portions.

Tasting lentil pilaf again after so many years was as comforting as it was delicious. It was admittedly not quite the same as I remember, I think because I don't know what the packaged variety used for seasoning. But it's easy enough to tweak it and play with spices to suit your taste (and mine). Served alongside salmon pan-seared with olive oil, salt, pepper and fresh orange juice and a baby arugula salad was just what I wanted: warm, flavorful comfort that made me feel good inside and out. No cheese or cream sauce necessary! 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

Lentil Pilaf served with salmon and arugula salad. Photo by Vicki Frank Day

experience and that every day can be a special occasion. Email her at vickiloves2cook@gmail.com.

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By David Kalvitis

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The King Ranch

A re-routed vacation to Texas finds Mark and Sue visiting the largest working agricultural operation in the country.

“The ghost of Richard King still walks the halls of the Menger Hotel.” So said our tour guide Karen Knight, as we crossed Alamo Plaza under a full moon. After an aborted attempt to vacation in the South American country Suriname, Sue and I ended up in San Antonio, Texas. Always interested in agriculture, we decided to check out the King Ranch, the largest working agricultural operation in the country, bigger than the state of Rhode Island.

First, we stayed at South Padre Island for a few days, which is sort of the Fort Lauderdale for Midwesterners. We even met some folks from Alaska, after I became famous for taking a dip in the tumultuous Gulf of Mexarica. One morning we drove an hour south to Brownsville, for a quick visit to Mexico. Sue and I were surprised how easy it is to walk over the border and back, at least for people with U.S. passports. On a Tuesday

morning, we parked our car on the street across from the Port of Entry, putting four dollars into the four-hour parking meter. Then we paid one dollar each to walk across the bridge over the surprisingly skinny Rio Grande River (it looked more like Wappingers Creek). The pueblo of Matamoras was bleak—the only open store was a 7-11.

At a fairly nice restaurant above a parking garage, I drank a bottle of Modelo especial while Sue braved a Coke Zero poured over Mexican ice. I tried to engage the waiter in political conversation. Not surprisingly, he was reluctant to voice an opinion. Just a shrug of the shoulders. Heading back an hour later, we stood in line just long enough to play “Delta Dawn” on my phone (“all the folks ’round Brownsville say she’s crazy”). We just walked past the border patrol. I’ve been subjected to more screening at the Mid Hudson



Cattle at the King Ranch in Texas are Santa Gertrudis, a breed produced by crossing longhorns with Brahman and Shorthorns.



Mark and Sue booked the same room at the Menger Hotel in San Antonio where Capt. Richard King – founder of the King Ranch – died. It’s said King’s ghost walks the halls of the hotel. *Photos by Mark Adams*

Civic Center.

The King Ranch was established in 1853 by Captain Richard King (he was a steamboat captain) who lived a hard-scrabble life before amassing a fortune running steamboats along the Rio Grande during the Mexican-American War (1846-1848). When King bought the ranch, it was already home to wild longhorn cattle. These iconic longhorns were well suited to survive the harsh arid conditions of southwest Texas—they could survive several days without water—but their meat was tough and tasteless. King set about improving the breed by crossing the longhorns with Brahman and Shorthorn cattle, finally creating the Santa Gertrudis, ideal for warm weather beef production. Nowadays, half of the 10,000 head on the ranch are sold for breeding purposes, and the other half for steaks. Interestingly, our guide Marlette Richardson told our group that the King Ranch closed down its slaughterhouse twenty years ago when government regulations made it too complicated to operate – and this is on a 10,000 head ranch! What does this say about the problems our Hudson Valley farmers are experiencing when it comes to beef processing?

The King Ranch is also famous for its horse breeding operations, specializing in quarter horses, although it did raise the thoroughbred Assault, the 1946 triple crown winner.

Looking to the future, King Ranch (now partly owned by Taylor Sheridan of “Yellowstone” fame) is branching out into crops – 70,000 acres of cotton and sorghum, hunting expeditions, a saddle shop, dozens of John Deere dealerships, and a turf grass company (odd for a ranch that is experiencing a ten-year drought). Agritourism is a tiny addition; only eight people were on the only tour of the day. The Ranch’s herd of longhorn cattle is maintained as a tourist attraction.

At the age of 61, Captain King traveled to San Antonio to see his doctor. He died of stomach cancer in his bed at the Menger Hotel. But his ghost lives on.

Amazingly, Sue and I were able to book the same room during our stay in San Antonio. The bed is still there! Sue believes in ghosts. We’ll see what happens tonight.

Stay tuned.

Mark Adams is an agricultural advisor to the Dutchess County Executive, Dutchess County B.O.C.E.S. and Cornell University.

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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

1

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2

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1

1

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

THEME: ON THE FARM

- ACROSS

1. Laura Ingalls' notebook

6. Boozer

9. Biblical pronoun

13. Sacred text, to some

14. "Fat chance!"

15. Afrikaners' ancestors

16. Cake spread

17. Chowd down

18. Clear the blackboard

19. *Barn chore

21. *John Deere, e.g.

23. Nirvana's "Come as You ____"

24. Spasm of pain

25. Broadband access overseer, acr.

28. Mark for omission

30. Recessed space

35. "____ and the Real Girl," movie

37. "Shoot!"

39. E in baseball box score

40. Oil org.

41. Intelligent

43. A mixture or medley

44. Children's respiratory disease

46. Foggy view?

47. Politicians, for short

48. In a sympathetic manner

50. Ski hill ride

52. Maiden name indicator

53. Bald eagle's nest

55. Repeated Latin dance step

57. *a.k.a. harvester

61. *Opposite of pasture

65. *Common varieties are yellow, red and white

66. Tall tale

68. Smooth, in manner

69. Audience's approval

70. "____ at ease"

71. Stomach sore

72. Caribou or moose

73. Soldier's bed

74. Harsh
- DOWN

1. *Separate cream from milk

2. Locus, pl.

3. Seed coat

4. Form of Japanese poetry

5. Encircle

6. Deep pile carpet

7. *Cereal grass

8. Sorority letter

9. Cleopatra's necklace

10. Thermostat option

11. Guesstimate phrase (2 words)

12. Olympic cast-out, e.g.

15. Charles Darwin's vessel

20. Must-haves

22. Ribonucleic acid, acr.

24. Fine

25. *Group of chickens

26. Birthplace of Caprese

27. Oedipus' successor

29. *Baby sheep

31. * ____ rotation

32. Acrylic fiber

33. Bridal veil fabric

34. With a jagged margin

36. Gulf War missile

38. *Pasture-raised chicken's morsel

42. Vanish without this?

45. Lamentation

49. Japanese capital

51. Rh in Rh disease

54. Indiana Jones' find, e.g.

56. Not a minor

57. For boys and girls

58. Popular fairy-tale beginning

59. Stephen King's "The Green ____"

60. *Male pig

61. Abe Lincoln's hat material

62. Tatted cloth

63. Done

64. Seaside bird

67. UN labor grp.

CROSSWORD

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The solutions to both the Sudoku & Crossword puzzles can be found on page 19

12 NORTHERN DUTCHESS NEWS & Creative Living - January 14-20, 2026

1776: The launch of journeys of the working class

By Bill Jeffway

The July 4, 1776 Declaration of Independence announced the creation of a nation based on a radical premise at the time: that all men are created equal and possess unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. This stood in stark contrast to the European world most colonists had come from—a world of an inherited monarchy (and inherited poverty) with its fixed economic and social ranks.

The promise of equality was heard by many as including economic fairness and equal economic opportunity. They challenged the new nation to dismantle the old systems that kept wealth, land, and power in the hands of a few, and started to remove the barriers that made poverty permanent.

Yet long before 1776, those old systems were deeply rooted locally.

With the 1706 creation of the Little Nine Partners Patent to the north, just over a dozen wealthy men owned and controlled virtually all the land in what was or would become Dutchess County. This is just less than a century after the 1609 arrival of Henry Hudson on behalf of the Dutch.

Four years later, in 1710, more than twelve hundred impoverished German Palatine immigrants—the largest single migration to the colonies up to that time—settled at what is now Germantown, on Livingston Manor, then making up northernmost Dutchess County. They arrived with hopes of economic fairness and opportunity. Instead, they found the same European feudal system.

Under this system, a great landowner held full title to the land and leased farms to tenants in exchange for annual rents, often paid in wheat or fowl. The tenant could improve the farm buildings and land, but never own them. Because voting rights were tied to property ownership, this system excluded most working class and farmers from political power. Without ownership, there was little chance to build lasting wealth.

On top of this, the Palatine settlement's original economic purpose—producing tar and turpentine from pine trees

for the British Navy—failed immediately because the local pines were the wrong species.

Grievances and uprisings

Violent tenant uprisings in the 18th century in the Philipse Patent in what was then southern Dutchess (today's Putnam County), and in both the 18th and 19th centuries at Livingston Manor, reveal just how deep and persistent these grievances were. Although the American Revolution swept away the legal titles of lords and manors, it did not immediately eliminate the landlord-tenant system itself.

In Dutchess County, the last major remnant of this structure survived until 1889, when 28 farms totaling 4,000 acres in the Little Nine Partners Patent were finally sold off at auction. Many tenant farmers could not afford to buy the farms their families had been on for generations.

Still, by the time the Declaration of Independence was published, expectations of fairness and opportunity were already in the air. In this period, the term “mechanics” was used broadly to describe the entire working class: artisans, laborers, and tradesmen.

On May 29, 1776, just weeks before the Declaration of Independence, Lewis Thibou, chairman of the General Committee of Mechanics of New York City, presented what became known as the “Mechanics’ Declaration of Independence,” demanding justice from those “whose dominions have been made rich by our commerce.” The country’s founding documents were being literally adopted and used to advance working class rights.

Progress came slowly and unevenly. In New York State, property requirements for white male voters were finally eliminated with the 1822 constitution, but were retained for Black citizens until the 1870 adoption of the 15th US Constitutional Amendment made them illegal.

Imprisonment for debt was abolished in 1831. Child labor laws requiring three months education of children emerged in 1836.

Ideas from reformers

Early reformers included radical voices, such as Frances Wright. She argued that inherited wealth itself should be abolished. In her vision, every person would begin life with equal resources. Children would be educated uniformly, even removed from their families, to prevent inequality from reproducing itself. These ideas were too extreme for most Americans—but they reveal how deeply some people believed the social order itself needed to be rebuilt.

A local man, Rhinebeck’s Nathan Darling (1802–1866), cast an important vote in 1830 in the burgeoning labor movement in New York City to push the effort to a more moderate middle ground. Born into deep poverty, Darling moved to New York City and worked as a house painter. In 1830, he became a delegate in the organized mechanics’ labor movement at a critical moment. When the movement was at risk of being defined by proposals that were too radical to win broad support, Darling cast a pivotal vote that helped shift the program toward achievable political and economic reforms. That moderation allowed the workingmen’s movement to grow rather

than fracture. Darling later went on to a successful military and political career and built the 1858 home that still stands today.

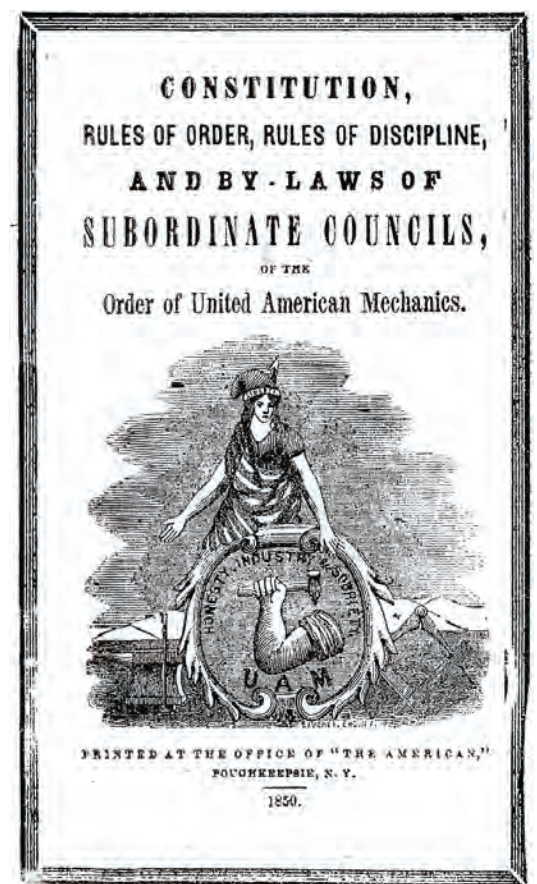
The Working Man’s Advocate of October 19, 1844 reported on a meeting in the town of Clinton at Salt Point. Labor advocates argued at the gathering that Dutchess County contained “7,000 landless slaves,” explaining that in Dutchess County for every one landowner, there are seven who are landless.

The moral urgency behind the movement remained unmistakable. In 1845, the Working Man’s Advocate declared: “The right of an oppressed and down-trodden man to labor and enjoy what it produces, must finally triumph!” The article asked, in anguish, why “these savage hovels” stood beside “vast and gorgeous palaces,” and why ignorance persisted amid supposed provisions for education. The writer was standing at a place overlooking what was Livingston Manor and northern Dutchess County.

Education itself became one of the great battlegrounds. The long struggle to establish free public education culminated in a statewide system by the 1860s. This was preceded by efforts to create free circulating libraries and reading rooms to make knowledge accessible to all.

In 1849, Jesse Torrey Jr. announced that Poughkeepsie would serve as the base for his American School Library, a national effort to push away the dominant use of British schoolbooks for American children. It is most revealing that the appendix to his 1828 book, “Mental Museum for the Rising Generation,” includes the Declaration of Independence, the US Constitution, and his own plans for free circulating libraries—clearly seeing them as parts of the same democratic project.

By the time of the American centennial, progress had been made. But the emerging industrial age was bringing a



In 1850, Dutchess County had a disproportionately high concentration of councils of the Order of United American Mechanics with groups organized in Poughkeepsie, Rhinebeck, Hyde Park, Fishkill Landing, Schultsville (Clinton), and Pine Plains.

whole new set of workplace challenges. Meaningful child labor laws were still a generation away. But the journeys to working class equality and economic fairness have clear roots in the 1776 American Revolution’s promise.

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



This image is from the Poughkeepsie Journal Building, built in the 1940s. Founding father Benjamin Franklin was frequently invoked by the 19th century mechanics movement as the ideal of the working man, in this case, a printer. The movement argued that through virtue, sobriety and frugality, any man can rise to leadership positions in the nation. Images courtesy of DCHS Collections

LOOK FOR THAT'S ITALIAN!
IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE
Luigi Coppola shares stories and recipes.



Local author & historian to speak at Morton Library Jan. 15

On Thursday, Jan. 15, award-winning author and historian Jack Kelly will speak at Morton Memorial Library in Rhinecliff about his latest book, “Tom Paine’s War.” Oblong Books and Morton Library are partnering on this event, featuring Kelly in conversation with Oblong’s Dick Hermans from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Tickets are required. Admission with book is \$36 (includes one hardcover copy of “Tom Paine’s War” and sales tax). Admission only is \$10 (plus processing fee). Register at <https://morton.rhinecliff.lib.ny.us/>.

“These are the times that try men’s souls...” - Thomas Paine

In 1776, one man’s words – and the determination of American patriots –

allowed our nation to survive its first crisis.

A tribute to the Revolution’s 250th anniversary, “Tom Paine’s War” is a riveting exploration of our nation’s birth. This is a story of the power of words – and the power of belief – and how both speak as well to America’s current crisis.

Kelly’s books include “Band of Giants,” which received the DAR History Medal, and “God Save Benedict Arnold,” a Finalist for the New England Book Awards. He has published five novels, and is a New York Foundation for the Arts fellow in Nonfiction Literature. Kelly has appeared on The History Channel, National Public Radio, and C-Span. He lives in the Hudson Valley.

Applications open for Rhinebeck Writers Retreat’s 2026 summer residencies for musical theater writers

Musical theater writers can apply now for Rhinebeck Writers Retreat’s 2026 Summer Residencies, which will support nine musical theater writing teams with week-long retreats in the Hudson Valley from June 14 to Aug. 16.

Founded in 2011, Rhinebeck Writers Retreat (RWR) addresses a critical need faced by musical theatre writers: dedicated, uninterrupted time and resources to create new work together. Nine writing teams will be selected to receive a week-long residency in a private home, with all expenses covered including travel, meals, stipends, and writing supplies such as pianos and recording equipment. Each team will also receive a \$1,000 Kathy

Evans Writers’ Choice Grant, named in honor of RWR’s Founder, and mentorship from a member of RWR’s Sounding Board, which includes artists such as John Weidman and industry leaders such as Mara Isaacs and Maria Manuela Goyanes.

“RWR has long been a quiet but powerful industry pipeline,” said Executive Director Erica Rotstein. “I’m thrilled to invite the next cohort of writers into a space designed around their process and care.”

There is no fee for submissions received by Feb. 2 at 6 p.m. EST. Late applications will be accepted through Feb. 9 at 6 p.m. EST with a fee of \$30. Full details and the online application are

available at www.rhinebeckwriters.org.

These summer residencies are made possible thanks to the generosity of RWR’s supporters, which include the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature, The Howard Ashman Trust for Theater Arts, The Noël Coward Foundation in honor of Geoffrey Johnson, The ASCAP Foundation Bart Howard Fund, The National Foundation for Musical Theatre, Concord Theatricals, Music Theatre International, and hundreds of individual donors, including major gifts from Liz Armstrong, Steve and Paula Reynolds, Gloria Catinchi, Deborah Landesman,

Molly McEneny, Liz and Bill Mills, Damon Suden, Steve and Sondra Beninati, and Gavin Berger.

Over the past 15 summers, Rhinebeck Writers Retreat has supported over 250 writers developing 130 musicals, which have subsequently had productions at The Public Theater, Barrington Stage, Paper Mill Playhouse, La Jolla Playhouse, Playwrights Horizons, on the West End, and on Broadway. Current and upcoming alumni projects include Operation Mincemeat (Broadway, West End), Night Side Songs by The Lazours (LCT3), and Starstruck by Beth Malone, Mary Ann Stratton, and Emily Saliers (Bucks County Playhouse).

Morton Library opens call for talent, visual art

Morton Memorial Library seeks participants for its annual Community Talent Show and accompanying Art Exhibition.

The Talent Show Art Exhibition will open on Friday, Feb. 27, at 6 p.m., and will be up for a week prior to the Talent Show itself, which will take place on Friday, March 6, at 6:30 p.m. The exhibition will remain up for the month of March.

Contact sandy@mortonrhinecliff.org by Feb. 7 if you are interested in participating. Works must be delivered to Morton by Saturday, Feb. 21. Contact Sandy if you have questions.

This year marks Morton’s 17th annual

Talent Show: an evening of jokes, bands, storytelling, guitar playing, dance, opera and much more. Use your imaginations and share your immense variety of talents with the community. This show and Morton’s community are all about enjoyment and camaraderie, never judgment.

Contact sandy@mortonrhinecliff.org if you are interested in participating.

The plan is to do the Talent Show in person this year. But, if you don't live in the area or would prefer, you can record your performance and send it in.

Richard Kopyscianski has again agreed to emcee the event.

Key of Q singers celebrate 10th anniversary with concerts

Key of Q, an auditioned group of LGBTQ+ and allied a cappella singers, celebrates a decade of harmony, pride and community with a series of concerts titled “It’s About Time.” Set Jan. 16-18 at venues in Beacon, New Paltz and Kingston, the chorus explores the many ways we experience the elasticity of time - how we spend it, save it, waste it, and watch it fly - through inventive vocal arrangements and storytelling.

Formed at the beginning of 2016, Key of Q focuses on mostly-modern secular music in four-part harmony. Common themes within selected music include

equality, love and celebration of identity in its many forms.

The first concert is set Friday, Jan. 16, from 7 to 8 p.m., at the Howland Cultural Center, 477 Main St., Beacon. The next, on Saturday, Jan. 17, from 7 to 8 p.m., will be held at The Hudson Valley LGBTQ+ Community Center, 300 Wall Street, Kingston. The third performance will take place on Sunday, Jan. 18, from 2 to 3 p.m., at Redeemer Lutheran Church, 90 Route 32 South, New Paltz.

Admission is \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door (suggested donation). Tickets are available at <https://keyofq.org/tickets/>.

A & E CALENDAR

Through Feb. 1: “Mary Poppins,” The Center for Performing Arts at Rhinebeck, 661 Rte. 308, Rhinebeck. CENTERstage Productions presents a musical is based on the stories of P.L. Travers and the Walt Disney Film; with original music and lyrics by Richard M. Sherman and Robert B. Sherman, book by Julian Fellowes, plus new songs and additional music and lyrics by George Stiles and Anthony Drewe. The jack-of-all trades, Bert, introduces us to England in 1910 and the troubled Banks family. Young Jane and Michael have sent many a nanny packing before Mary Poppins arrives on their doorstep. Using a combination of magic and common sense, she must teach the family members how to value each other again. Mary Poppins takes the children on many magical and memorable adventures, but Jane and Michael aren't the only ones upon whom she has a profound effect. Performances: Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat. & Sun., 3 p.m. Tickets \$29. www.centerforperformingarts.org or (845) 876-3080

Jan. 15: Author Talk, Morton Memorial Library, 82 Kelly St., Rhinecliff. Award-winning author and historian Jack Kelly will speak at about his latest book, “Tom Paine’s War.” Oblong Books and Morton Library are partnering on this event, featuring Kelly in conversation with Oblong’s Dick Hermans from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Tickets are required. Admission with book

is \$36 (includes one hardcover copy of “Tom Paine’s War” and sales tax). Admission only is \$10 (plus processing fee). Register at <https://morton.rhinecliff.lib.ny.us/>.

Jan. 15: Book Talk, Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, Lovejoy Auditorium, 2801 Sharon Turnpike (Rte. 44) Millbrook. “The Nature of Oaks: The Rich Ecology of Our Most Essential Native Trees,” presented by ecologist and New York Times best-selling author Doug Tallamy. Using the months of the year as a backdrop, Tallamy showcases the myriad of life that depends on oaks, from caterpillars and other insects – and the birds that feed on them – to a cast of acorn-eaters. He also details the many ecosystem services that oaks provide. These long-lived trees are champions at storing carbon, and their enormous root systems help stabilize soils and buffer floods. However, oaks are in decline due to the combined stress of climate change, drought and pests and pathogens. Free event; registration required. Attend in-person or view live-stream online. Book signing on site after the talk; Merritt Bookstore will offer copies of “The Nature of Oaks” for sale in the lobby. <https://www.caryinstitute.org/>

Jan. 16-18: Live Music at the Towne Crier Cafe, 379 Main St., Beacon. Jan. 16: StrangeMagicNY, ELO tribute, 8 p.m. Tickets \$30 advance, \$35 door. Jan. 17:

Old Blind Dogs from Scotland, 8 p.m. Tickets \$35 advance, \$40 door. (845) 855-1300 or www.townecrier.com

Jan. 17: Movies With Spirit, “Carmen,” Congregation Emanuel, 243 Albany Ave., Kingston. A woman’s quiet church life bursts with new purpose when she’s mistaken for a priest, 7 p.m. Inspired by true events, this comedy drama set in a picturesque Mediterranean village in Malta, follows Carmen (Natascha McElhone), who has spent her life since age 16 caring for her brother (Henry Zammit Cordina), the local priest. After his sudden death three decades later, a twist of fate leads villagers to mistake her for the new priest. Embracing the opportunity, Carmen challenges patriarchal norms, offers unconventional (and surprisingly effective) advice in the confessional and brings color to the village while discovering her own independence. The 2021 film, in English and Maltese with English subtitles runs 1 hour 28 minutes and is not rated. Screening followed by discussion. Refreshments served. Suggested donation: \$10 (ages 13 and up). More info: tinyurl.com/Carmen-Facebook-MoviesWSpirit, or email germyharrington@mindspring.com.

Jan. 17: Virtual Live-Staged Readings. The Two Of Us Productions opens its 2026 with a new pair of chilling Suspense Theater radio dramas, 7 p.m. via Zoom. In “Return Trip,” a routine visitor’s bus

departs a psychiatric hospital on a winter night, winding its way through the mountains as snow begins to fall. The passengers are strangers – nervous, quiet and eager to get home. They don't know that the driver is dead. Escaping confinement, a dangerous patient has taken the driver's place, disguising himself among the terrified travelers. As the storm worsens and an avalanche traps the bus on the road, fear turns inward. In “Cabin B-13,” Ann boards the ship with her new husband, but within hours, her husband is gone. Crew members insist he never existed. Passenger lists show no record. Even their stateroom, Cabin B-13, is said not to exist. As the ship cuts silently through the night, Ann is trapped between truth and madness, pursued by a conspiracy designed to erase her reality. Free; donations accepted. R.S.V.P to www.TheTwoOfUsProductions.org

Jan. 20: “Ice Yachting in the Hudson River Valley,” Morton Memorial Library, 82 Kelly St., Rhinecliff. Join Robert Wills, Commodore of the Hudson River Ice Yacht Club, for a look at the history, beauty, and excitement of ice sailing, an activity originally brought to the Hudson River Valley by the Dutch in the 1600s, and turned into the very popular sport of ice yachting in the 1800’s by the estate owners who lived along the River, 6:30 p.m. Free and open to the public. (845) 876-2903

SEND US YOUR EVENTS

creativeliving@sutchessnews.com

Deadline: Thursday at noon the week before publication

Calendar runs Thursday to Wednesday

Accidental ‘priest’ finds her voice in ‘Carmen’; screening Jan. 17 at Congregation Emanuel

A woman’s quiet church life bursts with new purpose when she’s mistaken for a priest in “Carmen,” screening at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 17, at Congregation Emanuel, 243 Albany Avenue, Kingston. The screening is part of the Movies With Spirit community film series, now in its 20th anniversary season.

Inspired by true events, this comedy drama, set in a picturesque Mediterranean village in Malta, follows Carmen (Natascha McElhone), who has spent her life since age 16 caring for her brother (Henry Zammit Cordina), the local priest. After his sudden death three decades later, a twist of fate leads villagers to mistake her for the new priest.

Embracing the opportunity, Carmen challenges patriarchal norms, offers unconventional (and surprisingly effective) advice in the confessional and brings color to the village while discovering her own independence.

The 2021 film, in English and Maltese with English subtitles, earned three film festival awards. It runs 1 hour 28

minutes and is not rated. View the trailer on YouTube: tinyurl.com/Carmen-MoviesWithSpirit. The screening will be followed by a discussion. Refreshments will be served. Suggested donation: \$10 (ages 13 and up).

Movies With Spirit is a monthly film series, organized by Gerry Harrington of Kingston, featuring stories that explore connection, compassion and the search for meaning. It respects all cultures and beliefs but isn’t bound by any single one, pointing instead to universal themes that connect us all.

Screenings take place in diverse places of worship and culture in Ulster County generally on the third Saturday of every month. Movies With Spirit has no religious affiliation.

For more information, visit tinyurl.com/Carmen-Facebook-MoviesWSpirit, call Harrington at (845) 389-9201 or email gerryharrington@mindspring.com. Learn more on the Movies With Spirit Facebook page at tinyurl.com/MoviesWithSpiritFacebookPage.



Natascha McElhone, right, with Steven Love in “Carmen,” a comedy drama about a woman whose quiet church life bursts with new purpose when she’s mistaken for a priest. The award-winning film will be screened at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 17, at Congregation Emanuel in Kingston, as part of the Movies With Spirit community film series. *Photo courtesy of Good Deed Entertainment*

EXHIBITIONS

Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center, 9 &12 Vassar St., Poughkeepsie. **Through February:** The Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center kicks off its 2026 Art Exhibition Season with 13 artists in three Visual Art Galleries. Featured in the Victorian Gallery at 9 Vassar St. in Poughkeepsie will be Kelly Stohr, presenting her solo exhibition, “Shadow Map.” At 12 Vassar St., WomensWork.Art brings together 12 artists for their group show, “Something About the Women,” in the Hancock and Reception Galleries. Visitors must call the Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center Office at (845) 486-4571 for access. More info: cunneen-hackett.org

Curio Cabinet of the Hudson Valley, 300 Main St., Poughkeepsie. **Through February:** “Curio - Curioso” a solo exhibition by noted multidisciplinary artist Franc Palaia. www.curiocabinetHV.com

Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, Vassar College, 124 Raymond Ave., Poughkeepsie. **Through Feb. 1:** “Chronostasia: Select Acquisitions 2020–2025,” an exhibition that brings together more than 600 works acquired over the past five years. (845) 437-5632 or <https://www.vassar.edu/theloeb>

Howland Cultural Center, 477 Main St., Beacon. **Through April 12:** “Bannerman Island and the Mighty Hudson River Exhibition,” the Second Annual Collaborative Hudson Valley Landscape Fine Art Show, featuring unique fine art paintings, watercolors, prints, photography and mixed media works in a variety of genres - from traditional and representational works to abstract masterpiece. (845) 831-4988 or www.howlandculturalcenter.org

Millbrook Library, 3 Friendly Lane, Millbrook. **Through February:** The Millbrook Arts Project presents “The Color of Growth,” bringing together four artists - Irja Bodén, JoAnne Lobotsky, Patrick Neal, and Colin O’Con - whose work re-imagines nature and landscape

as dynamic sites of transformation. **Artist Talk with Irja Bodén and JoAnne Lobotsky:** Sat., Feb. 21, at 2 p.m. www.millbrooklibrary.org

Tivoli Artists Gallery, 60 Broadway, Tivoli. **Through Feb. 8:** “The Language of Black & White,” an exploration of light, shadow, texture, and emotion through the timeless world of black and white art. (845) 757-2667 or www.tivoliartistsgallery.com

ATTENTION ART GALLERIES

E-mail exhibition listings to:
creativeliving@sdutchessnews.com

Funding available for arts and cultural activities

Arts Mid-Hudson (AMH) and the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) announce the Statewide Community Re-grants Program, a funding program with over \$170,000 in NYSCA funds to support the arts in Dutchess, Orange and Ulster counties. This funding is available to individual artists to create new work in 2026, and to nonprofit organizations, Tribal Nations, individual artists, libraries, and municipalities for arts and cultural activities in 2026. Eligible projects may include, but are not limited to: exhibits, performances, concerts, festivals, in-school and community workshops, screenings, readings, cultural programming, and the creation of new work. Grant awards are determined by a peer-review panel composed of community members. This program was previously called the Decentralization Program.

The deadline to apply is Thursday, Feb. 26, 2026 at 11:59 p.m.

Complete information available at <https://www.artsmidhudson.org/statewide-e-community-regrants>

Three distinct grant programs

Community Arts Grants provide project support for arts and cultural activities open to the general public. Nonprofit organizations, Tribal Nations, unincorporated groups, and individuals located in Dutchess, Orange, or Ulster Counties are eligible and encouraged to submit a grant proposal.

Individual Artist Commission supports the creation of new work by an artist. The

project must engage a segment of the community through a small-scale public presentation of the work or through community involvement during the artist’s creative process. Presentations and community involvement may be conducted in person or virtually.

Arts Learning Grants support sequential, skill-based workshop series focused on the arts and artistic process. Projects can take place in-school during the school day and/or in after-school and community-based settings for youth and/or senior learners.

Comprehensive technical assistance available

A recording of an information session held on Jan. 13 via Zoom is available.

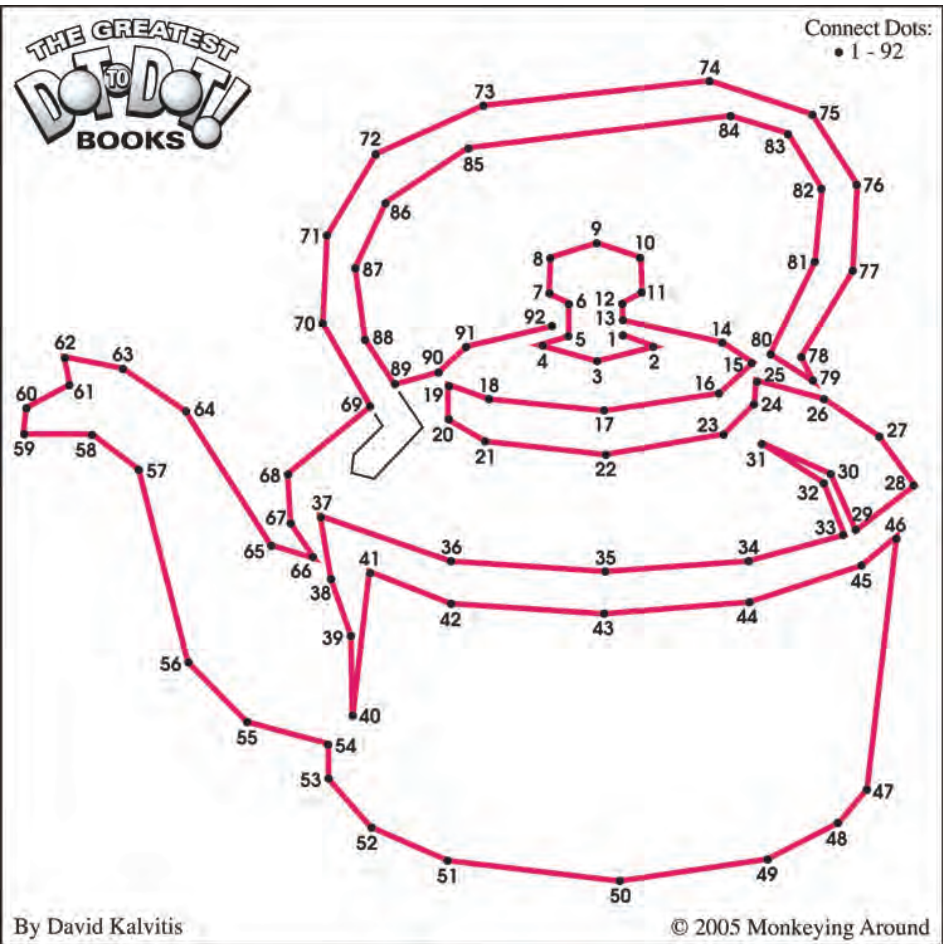
Drop-in Q&A Sessions will be held on Zoom and in-person to assist applicants with the process.

View the Q&A Schedule and RSVP at <https://wl.donorperfect.net/weblink/WebLink.aspx?name=E231621&id=552>

Contact AMH with accommodation requests. AMH provides free in-depth support, including informational videos, resources, one-on-one appointments, and draft review.

If you are unable to attend any of the sessions and still wish to apply, reach out to the AMH Grants Team for individual assistance well in advance of the deadline at (845) 454-3222, ext. 11, or grants@artsmidhudson.org.

Answer to this week’s Dot to Dot (puzzle on page 10)



OBITUARIES

Nancy E. Aierstok

Nancy E. Aierstok, 86, of Red Hook, NY, passed away peacefully surrounded by her loving family on December 31, 2025, at Northern Dutchess Hospital in Rhinebeck.

Nancy was born on July 14, 1939, in Somers Point, NJ, to the late Melvin and Jessie (Fry) Lewis. She earned her Bachelor’s degree from Bloomfield College in Bloomfield, NJ. It was there that she captured the attention of her future husband of 64 years, Dr. William M. Aierstok, Jr when he infamously told her his name was George Jones and, as a team cheerleader, she went on to introduce him at a basketball game by that name. The two were married on July 1, 1961, at Fewsmith Memorial Presbyterian Church in Belleville, NJ.

That was only the beginning of the adventure. Nancy followed Bill to medical school in Pavia, Italy where they explored the country and Nancy taught elementary students. Later, they would return to the United States where they would adopt their daughter, Debbie, and son, Mark. Nancy lovingly told the story of knowing they were hers from the moment she held them in her arms. Later, Bill and Nancy made their home in Rhinebeck in 1974 where they added two more children, David and Kevin, to their family.

A woman of deep faith and purpose, Nancy was successful in all that she pursued. In 1981, her faith and passion for education led her to found Northern Dutchess Christian School, where she served with dedication as both an administrator and teacher until the school’s closing in 2008. Her leadership and commitment left a lasting impact on generations of students and families. Nancy was a passionate teacher who loved history, leading her students on field trips (her favorite was Philadelphia), and modeling a life of unconditional love, faith, and service to the students who needed it most. In over 30 years of teaching, Nancy touched the lives of hundreds of students at almost every grade level.

Nancy and her husband were respected pillars of the community and deeply philanthropic. In recognition of their service and generosity, they were honored as Dutchess County Senior Citizen Couple of the Year in 2016.

Faith guided every aspect of Nancy’s life. She was a devoted member of First Baptist Church in Rhinebeck, where her commitment and quiet strength were well known. On a personal level, Nancy started each day with a Bible study which she shared with her 12 grandchildren through a daily text. For her family, she was an example of faith, and she shared her inspiring testimony as a model of a life well lived.

In her leisure time, Nancy cherished summers at Lake Sacandaga, where she and Bill spent more than 40 years creating treasured memories with their friends, Ed and Marion, and their family. She also enjoyed scrapbooking, admiring birds and lighthouses, and taking in the peaceful views from her windows. Above all else, Nancy loved her family and friends deeply and wholeheartedly. Nancy was lovingly known as “Nanny” to her 12 grandchildren who were the light of her life. Nanny was famous for her big hugs, her “Nanny grilled cheeses,” her scrapbooking and passion for family history, and her Christmas gift bags full of wonderful surprises.

In addition to her loving husband Dr. William M. Aierstok of Red Hook, NY, Nancy is survived by her children Deb Aierstok Hunter (Joe) of Elizaville, NY, Mark Aierstok (Elaina) of Rhinebeck, NY, David Aierstok of Germantown, NY, and Kevin Aierstok (Emily) of Greenwich, NY; her brother Billy Smith of Brigantine, NJ; as well as her twelve grandchildren: Deb and Joe’s children Kelly Hunter-Ryan (Mike), Kevin and Kyle Hunter; Mark and Elaina’s children Aiden, Reagan, Alexander and Tobias Aierstok; David and Jennifer’s children Bryce and Brooke Aierstok; and Kevin’s and Emily’s children Ava, Max, and Camden Aierstok.

Nancy was preceded in death by her daughter-in-law Jennifer Ruggiero Aierstok (David).

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to organizations close to Nancy’s heart: Brookmeade Community (Baptist Home), Northern Dutchess Hospital, or First Baptist Church of Rhinebeck.

A Celebration of Life service was held on Saturday, January 10, 2026, at the First Baptist Church of Rhinebeck. A luncheon

followed in the church hall.

Funeral arrangements entrusted to Burnett & White Funeral Homes, Red Hook.

Bruce A. Benham

Bruce Benham, 64, passed away unexpectedly but peacefully in his sleep on January 7th, 2026. He was born in Poughkeepsie, NY and was raised in Verbank, until age 11. He spent the rest of his adolescence in Hamilton, Texas where he tended to the family farm.

He returned to New York in the early 1980’s where he met his wife, Catherine, and began his multiple successful businesses, including pool maintenance, property management, and the trading card shop. Together they had two kids, who he always said were his greatest accomplishment.

Those that knew Bruce knew he was a selfless man. He was always looking out for the underdog and cared for those who were less fortunate than himself. He had a strong work ethic that stemmed from his time on the farm and summers working with his dad. He enjoyed sports of all kinds, especially college football because “the players still love the game”. Bruce also loved rock music, and had fun watching old recordings of concerts on YouTube after a long day of work.

He is survived by his wife, Catherine Benham; son, Travis Benham and his fiancé Sierra; daughter, Hannah Linnane and her husband Garrett; sister, Melanie Benham and her partner Dave; along with many adoring nieces, nephews, and in-laws. He was also awaiting the arrival of his first grandson, who he was so excited for.

Bruce is predeceased by his mother, Arlene Anderson; father, Sidney Benham; and nephew, Anthony Campanella.

There will be private services for family at a later date. Arrangements have been entrusted to Peck & Peck Funeral Homes, Pine Plains. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to Cardinal Hayes Home for Children in Millbrook, New York. Please send a check to P.O. box C H Millbrook NY 12545 or call (845) 677-6363. To share a favorite memory or to offer a message of condolence please visit www.peckandpeck.net

Marion Bennett

Marion Johnson Bennett was born on July 11, 1926, in Poughkeepsie, New York, to Hazel J. Powell and Roland Johnson. The eldest of three siblings, Marion spent her formative years on her grandparents’ farm in Stanfordville, New York—a place that held some of her fondest childhood memories and helped shape her strong work ethic and love for family and community. A gifted student, Marion consistently excelled academically. She graduated a year early from Millbrook High School, where she was the salutatorian of her class in 1943. In 1948, Marion married the love of her life, Preston L. Bennett, in a beautiful ceremony held at the family farmhouse. Together, they built a life rooted in love, faith, and service, raising four children: Sharon, Judith, Jon, and Timothy. Marion was a woman of determination and strength. She brought excellence to every role she held, no matter how big or small—beginning her working life cleaning homes and serving in restaurants. Committed to growth and learning, she later returned to school to earn a secretarial certification, which led to a long and respected career with Alpha Laval in Poughkeepsie, New York. Guided by her deep faith and sense of justice, Marion also took part in the historic March on Washington in 1963—standing alongside thousands in peaceful advocacy for equality and civil rights. Even after a brief retirement, Marion continued to share her wisdom and talents with others. Her love of reading and learning led her to work for many years at the Millbrook Library. Deeply devoted to her faith, she served her church in multiple leadership roles and faithfully stepped in wherever help was needed. Marion was also an active and beloved presence in her community. She was a member of the Millbrook Historical Society, the Burbonettes, and the TWINKS. She served on the Boards of the Millbrook School System and Lyall Memorial Community Church, volunteered at The Barn Thrift Shop, assisted at local voting polls, and proudly led an exercise class for seniors—encouraging others to stay active and connected. On Christmas Eve, December 24, 2025, Marion was peacefully called home to be with the Lord.

She was preceded in death by her beloved

husband, Preston Bennett; her daughter, Sharon Bennett; her siblings, Virginia Duncan and Roland Johnson; her parents, Hazel and Roland; and her cherished stepfather, Howard “Pete” Powell. Marion leaves to cherish her memory her daughter Judith Coleman (Aubrey); her sons Jon Bennett (Debbie) and Timothy Bennett (Karen); six grandchildren; a host of great-grandchildren; and many loving nieces, nephews, relatives, and dear friends. A true matriarch and pillar of her community, Marion deeply loved her family and found joy in bringing them together. She was compassionate, generous, and always willing to help those in need. An avid reader and lifelong learner, she remained active well into her 90s—taking daily walks and exercising regularly. Marion’s legacy of faith, service, and love lives on through the many lives she touched and the family she so beautifully nurtured.

Visitation was held on Saturday, Jan. 10, at Lyall Memorial Federated Church, Millbrook. Funeral services followed from the church. Interment followed in Nine Partners Cemetery, Millbrook. Arrangements have been entrusted to Allen Funeral Home, Millbrook. For condolences, please visit www.hudsonvalleyfuneralhomes.com.

Donna Collins

Donna Ann Collins, age 65, of Red Hook, passed away on New Year’s Day at home, surrounded by her family, after a long and courageous battle with cancer.

Born on January 20, 1960, in Beacon, NY, Donna was the daughter of the late William Maher and Eleanor (Purdy) Maher.

On July 21, 1984, in Beacon, NY, Donna married the love of her life, Gary Collins, who survives her. Donna was a devoted member of United Methodist Church of Hyde Park, where her faith guided her life and her service to others.

Donna cherished life’s simple pleasures. She especially enjoyed spending time at her camp in the Adirondacks with her husband, her children, her grandchildren, and her beloved dogs. She treasured laughter shared with her close girlfriends and expressed her creativity through sewing, gardening, and crafting. Above all, Donna deeply loved her family and found her greatest joy in time spent together. She was a friend to all who knew her—a genuinely kind person who always saw the good in others and was willing to help anyone in need. To her family, she was a constant source of strength and love; she was the strongest person they knew.

After surviving cancer, Donna returned to work, first at Cardinal Hayes Children’s Home and later at Downstate Correctional Facility. She took great pride in her calling as a nurse and firmly believed she was exactly where God wanted her to be—shining His light in a dark place while caring for those in need.

Donna is survived by her loving husband, Gary Collins; her children, Ryan Collins and his wife Tamara, Ashley Schlageter and her husband Andrew, and Chynna Collins; her cherished grandchildren, Lillian, Riley, Ember, and Leim; and her brother, Gary Mendez. She is also survived by those she considered family in every way, Alice Frederick (Nana) and Sherry Balough (sister).

She was predeceased by her siblings, Mary Ellen Maher, William Maher, and Steven Maher.

A memorial service will be held at Hyde Park United Methodist Church, 1 Church Street, Hyde Park, New York. The service date and time will be announced at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family respectfully requests memorial donations be made to the American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 6704, Hagerstown, MD 21741-6704, or to the United Methodist Church of Hyde Park, 1 Church Street, Hyde Park, NY 12538.

Arrangements are under the direction of Sweet’s Funeral Home, Inc., Route 9, Hyde Park. To send an online condolence or for directions, please visit www.sweetsfuneralhome.com.

Alan Donegan

Alan Donegan passed away unexpectedly on January 3, 2026, in Pleasant Valley, NY. Born on September 3, 1956, he was the son of the late John and Carole Donegan.

Alan was also predeceased by his sister, Janice Gover, and his grandparents. He is survived by his brothers Bruce Donegan, John Donegan, and Shawne Donegan; and his

sisters Deborah Mosher, Linda Meyer, Patty Traver, Wendy Donegan, Donna Gruntler, Theresa Wenzel, and Kathleen Rosa, along with their spouses and partners. He is also remembered by numerous nieces and nephews and their children.

A lifelong resident of Pleasant Valley, Alan was a familiar presence in the community. He was often seen riding his bike through town and stopping at Cady Park to visit with friends. Known for his fishing skills, he spent countless hours along Wappingers Creek and was proud to have caught nearly every type of fish there—even eels.

Alan was a talented carpenter and handyman whose work touched many homes in the area. His dedication to his craft and willingness to lend a hand made him a valued member of the community. Above all, he cherished time with his family, especially his nieces and nephews.

A memorial to celebrate Alan’s life will be held later this year.

May his memory bring comfort to those who knew him.

Anthony A. ‘Tony’ Hamel

Anthony A. “Tony” Hamel, 89, of Poughkeepsie, NY passed away on January 5, 2026, at Northern Dutchess Hospital, Rhinebeck, NY. He was born on April 23, 1936, in Glens Falls, NY, the son of Alzor & Helene Miller Hamel.

Tony married Josephine A. “Jo” Longbard on September 3, 1961, in Holy Trinity Church Poughkeepsie, NY. She predeceased him on Mother’s Day, May 14, 2000. They are now finally reunited after 25 years and dancing in heaven.

A proud U.S. Navy veteran, Tony served during the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

Tony owned and operated Longbard’s Exxon Station on Hooker Ave in the city of Poughkeepsie, NY for over 40 years. In addition, he worked as vocational instructor at the Rainbow Car Wash at the former Mid-Hudson Psychiatric Center in the town of Poughkeepsie, NY.

Survivors include his sons: Kevin A. (Lisa M.) Hamel of Poughkeepsie, NY; Christopher P. (Karen L.) Hamel, of Fuquay Varina, NC and Jason J. (Diana) Hamel of West Palm Beach, Florida. Grandchildren include Kaitlyn M., Mikayla E., Jack A. (fiancée Morgan Matthews), Dominic A., Jessica J., (Damion R.), and a great-grandson Christopher L.

Tony was and will always be proud of his children, grandchildren and great-grandchild.

Visitation was held January 9th, 2026, at the Wm. G. Miller & Son Funeral Home Inc., Poughkeepsie, NY. A Mass of Christian Burial was held at St. Martin de Porres Church, Poughkeepsie, NY on Jan. 10, 2026. Entombment with Military Honors followed in Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery.

Memorial Donations may be made to: Hospice of Dutchess County or Northern Dutchess Hospital Daisy Program in lieu of flowers. To send an online condolence, please visit www.wmgmillerfuneralhome.com

John Gilbert Keene

Dr. John G. “Jack” Keene died unexpectedly at his home in Rhinebeck on March 21, 2025, from an exercise-associated cardiac dysrhythmia. He was 76.

Born Dec. 3, 1948, in southern Illinois, Jack is survived by his wife, Dr. Mary (Mimi) Dunne; their daughter, Catharine; his brother, Dr. James Keene; and many extended family members.

A respected emergency medicine leader, Jack began his career at the University of Chicago, where he served as emergency medical services director for Chicago’s South Side, working on the region’s first medical transport helicopter. He later co-founded Emergency Treatment Associates Inc., pioneering best practices in emergency care across New York’s Hudson Valley. A national expert in emergency department administration, he taught for the American College of Emergency Physicians and published widely.

In 2016, Jack turned his focus to palliative care, supporting patients and families at the end of life, and served on the board of directors of Hudson Valley Hospice. He and Mimi were 2019 Fellows of Stanford University’s Distinguished Careers Institute. Jack served as a visiting scholar in Stanford Medicine’s Department of Genetics from 2023 to 2025.

An Eagle Scout and lifelong learner, Jack

continued on page 20

Legal Notices

NOTICE OF TAX COLLECTION 2026 TOWN OF PLEASANT VALLEY, NEW YORK
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that I, Mary Beth Muir, the under- signed Collector of Taxes of the Town of Pleasant Valley, County of Dutchess and State of New York, have duly received the tax roll and warrant for the collection of taxes within the Town of Pleasant Valley for the year 2026, and that I will attend at Town Hall, 1554 Main Street, in the said Town of Pleasant Val- ley from today to March 2, 2026 at 9:00 o'clock in the forenoon to 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon on **MONDAY, TUES- DAY, WEDNESDAY** and **THURSDAY. FRIDAY** collection hours will be 9:00 o'-

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clock in the forenoon to 1:00 o'clock in the afternoon. **MARCH, APRIL** and **MAY** col- lection hours will be 9 o'clock in the forenoon to 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon with the ex- ception of **FRIDAY** collection hours will be 9:00 o'clock in the forenoon to 1:00 o'- clock in the after- noon, except **SAT- URDAYS, SUNDAYS** and **LEGAL HOLI- DAYS** for the purpose of collecting the taxes listed on the said roll. **PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE**, that taxes may be paid on or before March 2, 2026 without charge or interest. On all taxes received after such date, there shall be a 2 percent added interest if paid on or be- fore March 31, 2026 and an additional 1 percent for each addi- tional month or frac-

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tion thereof thereafter until such taxes are paid or until the return of unpaid taxes to the county treasurer pur- suant to law. **TAKE FURTHER NOTICE**, that pur- suant to the provisions of law the tax roll of the Town of Pleasant Val- ley will be returned to the Dutchess County Commissioner of Fi- nance on the 2nd day of June, 2026. **PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE**, a reminder of unpaid taxes will be sent on or before May 01, 2026. A fee of \$2.00 will be added to your tax bill during the full month of May. **DATED:** January 1, 2026 Mary Beth Muir Tax Collector Town of Pleasant Valley

Legal Notices

TOWN OF PLEASANT VALLEY TOWN BOARD TOWN BOARD RESOLUTION NO.: 101/2026 RE: ESTABLISHMENT OF TOWN BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2026
BE IT RESOLVED, that subject to the schedule set forth below the regular meetings of the Pleasant Valley Town Board will take place on the third (3rd) Monday of each month for the year 2026 at 7:00 PM in the main meeting room of the Town Hall, 1554 Main Street, Pleasant Valley, New York; and **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that subject to the schedule set forth below the Town Board Workshops will take place on the first (1st) Monday of each month for the year 2026, at 7:00 PM in main meeting room, and that special meetings will be scheduled and advertised by posting the announcement on the front door entrance of the Town Hall, with notification to the press (time permitting); and **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the 2026 meeting dates are as listed below:

January 5	Re-Organizational Meeting
January 21 (Wed)	Regular Meeting
February 2	Workshop Meeting
February 18 (Wed)	Regular Meeting
March 2	Workshop Meeting
March 16	Regular Meeting
April 6	Workshop Meeting
April 20	Regular Meeting
May 4	Workshop Meeting
May 18	Regular Meeting
June 1	Workshop Meeting
June 15	Regular Meeting
July 6	Workshop Meeting
July 20	Regular Meeting
August 3	Workshop Meeting
August 17	Regular Meeting
September 9 (Wed)	Workshop Meeting
September 21	Regular Meeting
October 5	Workshop Meeting
October 19	Regular Meeting
November 2	Workshop Meeting
November 16	Regular Meeting
December 7	Workshop Meeting
December 21	Regular Meeting

And;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any changes to the above-mentioned schedules will be posted at the Town Hall entrance as necessary, with notification to the press.

MOTION: Councilman Rifenburgh
SECOND: Councilwoman Chapman

DATED: January 5, 2026
ROLL CALL:

Councilwoman Borland	<u>X</u>	_____
Council woman Chapman	<u>X</u>	_____
Councilman Degan	<u>X</u>	_____
Councilman Rifenburgh	<u>X</u>	_____
Supervisor Albrecht	<u>X</u>	_____
Carried.		

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REQUEST FOR BIDS NOTICE
The Purchasing Agent, County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of sealed bids for: Bid #RFB-DCP-05-26
Fast Trac Cargo Trailers
Bids will be received un- til 2:00 p.m. on the 22th day of January 2026 at the Dutchess County Di- vision of Central Ser- vices, 378 Violet Av- enue, Suite 2, Pough- keepsie, New York 12601. Specifications and bid forms may be ob- tained by visiting our website [http://www. dutchessny.gov](http://www.dutchessny.gov), select- ing "Government", then selecting "Bidding and RFP Opportunities". For additional information,

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TOWN OF PLEASANT VALLEY TOWN BOARD TOWN BOARD RESOLUTION NO.: 102/2026 RE: ESTABLISHMENT OF TOWN HALL HOURS FOR 2026
BE IT RESOLVED, the regular hours for Town Hall and the following offices for the Town of Pleasant Valley for the year 2026 shall be:
Town Clerks Office & Town Supervisor's Office: Monday through Thursday, from 9:00AM to 4:00PM & Friday from 9:00AM to 1:00PM
Assessor's Office: Assessor; Monday & Wednesday 9:00AM to 4:00PM
Assessor Clerk; Monday through Thursday 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, Friday 9:00AM to 1:00PM
Building, Planning & Zoning: Monday through Thursday 9:00AM to 4:00PM & Friday from 9:00AM to 4:00PM
Recreation Department: Monday through Friday, from 9:00AM to 4:00 PM
Justice Court: Monday through Thursday 9:00AM to 4:00 PM
Closed on Fridays
MOTION: Councilman Rifenburgh
SECOND: Councilwoman Chapman

DATED: January 5, 2026

ROLL CALL:	AYE	NAY
Councilwoman Borland	<u>X</u>	_____
Councilwoman Chapman	<u>X</u>	_____
Councilman Degan	<u>X</u>	_____
Councilman Rifenburgh	<u>X</u>	_____
Supervisor Albrecht	<u>X</u>	_____
Carried.		

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TOWN OF PLEASANT VALLEY TOWN BOARD TOWN BOARD RESOLUTION NO.: 103/2026 RE: 2026 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE
WHEREAS, the Town Board of the Town of Pleasant Valley annually establishes the paid holidays for those employed by the Town in accordance with Section 801 of the Town of Pleasant Valley Employee Handbook; now, therefore, be it **RESOLVED**, that the paid holiday schedule for 2026 is as follows:

New Year's Day	Thursday, January 1st
Martin Luther King Day	Monday, January 19th
Presidents' Day	Monday, February 16th
Good Friday	Friday, April 3rd
Memorial Day	Monday, May 25th
Juneteenth	Friday, June 19th
Independence Day	Friday, July 3rd
Labor Day	Monday, September 7th
Columbus Day	Monday, October 12th
Veterans' Day	Wednesday, November 11th
Thanksgiving Day	Thursday, November 26th
Day after Thanksgiving	Friday, November 27th
Christmas	Friday, December 25th
Floating Holiday	Add On

MOTION: Councilman Rifenburgh
SECOND: Councilwoman Chapman

DATED: January 5, 2026

ROLL CALL:	AYE	NAY
Councilwoman Borland	<u>X</u>	_____
Councilwoman Chapman	<u>X</u>	_____
Councilman Degan	<u>X</u>	_____
Councilman Rifenburgh	<u>X</u>	_____
Supervisor Albrecht	<u>X</u>	_____
Carried.		

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call 845-486-3613.
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NOTICE
The Purchasing Agent, County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of proposals for: Bid #RFP-DCP-16-26
Aging Health Promotion and Development Con- tractor
Proposals must be sub- mitted electronically through the Empire State Purchasing Group's Regional Bid Notification System (BidNet Direct) Portal on or before 2:00 p.m., Jan- uary 26, 2026. Specifi- cations, proposal forms and submittal instruc- tions may be obtained by visiting our website

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[http://www.dutchessny. gov](http://www.dutchessny.gov), selecting "Govern- ment", then selecting "Bidding and RFP Op- portunities". For addi- tional information, call 845-486-3613.
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NOTICE
The Purchasing Agent, County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of proposals for: Bid #RFP-DCP-08-26
Implementation and Fa- cilitation of the Sequential Intercept Model (SIM) Framework
Proposals must be sub- mitted electronically through the Empire State Purchasing Group's Regional Bid

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Notification System (BidNet Direct) Portal on or before 2:00 p.m., Feb- ruary 3, 2026. Specifica- tions, proposal forms and submittal instruc- tions may be obtained by visiting our website [http://www.dutchessny. gov](http://www.dutchessny.gov), selecting "Govern- ment", then selecting "Bidding and RFP Op- portunities". For addi- tional information, call 845-486-3613.

PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE
Notice is hereby given the Legis- lature of Dutchess County will be holding public committee meet- ings for the following committees on January 15, 2026 at 5:30pm: **Public Safety, Budget, finance and Personnel and Family and Human Services.** The meeting agenda can be found at: [h t t p s : / / w w w . dutchessny.gov / Departments/County- Legislature/County- Legislature-Meeting- Agenda.htm](https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/County-Legislature/County-Legislature-Meeting-Agenda.htm)
The public has the right to attend the meeting at the Dutchess County Legislative Chambers located at 22 Market Street, 6th floor, Pough- keepsie, NY 12601. Greg Totino Deputy Clerk Dutchess County Legis- lature

PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE
Notice is hereby given the Legislature of Dutchess County will be holding a public meeting of the whole on January 20, 2026 at 6:30pm. The meeting agenda can be found at: [https://www. dutchessny.gov/ Departments/County- Legislature/County- Legislature-Meeting- Agenda.htm](https://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/County-Legislature/County-Legislature-Meeting-Agenda.htm)
The public has the right to attend the meeting at the Dutchess County Legislative Chambers located at 22 Market Street, 6th floor, Pough- keepsie, NY 12601. Greg Totino Deputy Clerk Dutchess County Legislature

The deadline for 12/24/25 Legals is Thursday 12/18/25 at noon for a Wednesday 12/24/25 Publication*

Board of Health to meet on Jan. 15

The Dutchess County Board of Health will be holding the regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, Jan. 15, at 4 p.m. at the Dutchess County Department of Health, at 85 Civic Center Plaza, Suite

106, in the City of Poughkeepsie. One may participate via Microsoft Teams by calling 1-516-268-4602 and entering the Conference ID number: 933 903 82#.

State of Rhinebeck set Jan. 22 at Beekman Arms

The Rhinebeck Area Chamber of Commerce will hold its annual State of Rhinebeck event on Thursday, Jan. 22, at The Beekman Arms.

Mayor Gary Bassett, Assistant County Executive Ron L. Hicks, Jr., and a panel of local business owners and officials will share what's on the horizon for housing

and the Rhinebeck economy in 2026.

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SUDOKU

This week's answer

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

Answers to this
week's diversions

(puzzles on page 12)

loved cycling, travel, museums and spirited games of Boggle. He will be remembered for his kindness, curiosity and generous spirit.

Donations in his memory may be made to the Hudson Valley Hospice Foundation or the Snyder Lab at Stanford University. A private Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in Rhinebeck in March, followed by a remembrance gathering at Stanford University Memorial Church in October.

Andrew McPeck

Andrew James McPeck of Millbrook, NY passed away peacefully on January 1, 2026. He was 91 years old.

Andrew was born on November 18, 1934 in Poughkeepsie, NY to Patrick McPeck and Florence (Galloway) McPeck. He attended Poughkeepsie High School, served in the United States Navy and retired from a career at IBM. Thereafter, he enjoyed a second career at Marist College Security.

In June of 1956, he married Barbara Curran at Mount Carmel Church in Poughkeepsie, NY. Together they raised nine children. He was a longtime parishioner of St. Joseph's Church in Poughkeepsie and most recently of St. Joseph's Church in Millbrook.

Andrew is survived by his wife of 69 years and his children; Andrew McPeck, Jr. and his wife Petrina of Poughkeepsie, NY; Allen McPeck of Wassaic, NY; Aaron McPeck and his wife Jennifer of Lagrangeville, NY; Mary Moran and her husband Kevin of Lagrangeville, NY; Kelly Murphy and her husband William of Millbrook, NY; Therese Cox and her husband Edward of Millbrook, NY. He was predeceased by his daughters, Tracy McPeck, Patricia Powers and Barbara Clum. Additionally, he is survived by sons-in-law Edward Powers of Stormville, NY and Jeff Clum of Lagrangeville, NY, 17 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Tuesday, January 6, 2026 at St. Joseph's Church, Millbrook, NY. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to St. Joseph-Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, PO Box 439, Millbrook, NY 12545 or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 262 Danny Thomas Place, Memphis, TN 38105. Arrangements have been entrusted to Allen Funeral Home, Millbrook. Please visit www.hudsonvalleyfuneralhomes.com for condolences.

Dorothy Torregrossa Poscich

Dorothy Torregrossa Poscich, 92, a resident of the Town of LaGrange, died peacefully at her home on January 4, 2026. She was a devoted mother of 8, grandmother of 10, great-grandmother of 10 and stepmother of 2.

Born on September 17, 1933 in Manhattan, she was the daughter of the late Edward and Dorothy (Squazzo) Williams. Dorothy graduated from School of Industrial Arts and had been employed as a graphic artist for IBM. Following her retirement, she enjoyed traveling to Hawaii and Arizona.

Dorothy truly loved her entire family. She dedicated her life to caring for her special needs son, Louis. She took great pride in her home that she designed, remodeled and decorated with Joe. She enjoyed reading, the color teal, Barbara Streisand's music, anything Tom Selleck, Blue Bloods, and hosting family and friends.

Dorothy was predeceased by her first husband, Louis Torregrossa Sr., in 1980; her second husband, Joseph Poscich whom she was married to for 44 years, in 2024; and her son, Louis Torregrossa Jr., in 2022.

Dorothy is survived by her children and their spouses, Ed and Sandra Torregrossa, Dorothy "Dodie" White, Lenore and Wayne Bailey, Terri and Mike Maphis, Mary and

George Burkett, Stacey and Joe Angelo, Scott and Lori Torregrossa; her stepchildren and their spouses, Suzanne and Liam Glynn, Barbara and Robin Krulikowski; her sister, Jean DiPietro; her brother, Ed Williams; 10 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

The family would like to thank the dedicated staff of Hudson Valley Hospice and the wonderful private care aides who provided loving care and support to Dorothy in her final days.

Calling hours were held on Monday January 12, 2026 at the McHoul Funeral Home, Inc., Hopewell Junction. The Funeral Service was held on Tuesday January 13, 2026 at the funeral home followed by interment in St. Denis Cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to Hudson Valley Hospice or the Dutchess County Office for the Aging.

Linda Wing

Linda Ann Cutts Wing, a devoted wife and fiercely loving mother, passed away peacefully on December 29, 2025, at her home in Charleston, SC; she was 77 years old. Linda was born on February 21, 1948, in Waterbury CT. Linda lived a life defined by love, grit, and unwavering devotion to the people she cared for. For nearly 52 years, Linda was the supportive and loving wife to her husband, Pat Wing, and the proud mother of four children. In truth, she mothered everyone. Her first grandchild, Kayla, was always lovingly referred to as her "fifth child," along with countless other kids she "mothered" along the way. She believed deeply in family and made sure we knew it. One of her proudest declarations was, "If I've done nothing else right, my kids are all close." And we are. Tight.

Linda did it all. She stood through freezing

football and hockey games, chaperoned field trips, and soothed skinned knees. She was the fixer of everything—cop calls and car wrecks, missed flights and broken hearts, hospital stays, and moments when life felt too heavy. She was a fierce protector of her children and reveled in motherhood. It wasn't just something she did—it was who she was. Linda did so much for so many, but she would do anything for her children, and everyone knew it.

Linda worked tirelessly to support her family, carrying a hustle that never faded. After years in restaurants, Linda spent nearly two decades working at LaGrange Dental. After moving to Charleston, she enjoyed working at the downtown market, where she made many friends she considered family. Though she never attended medical school, she always dreamed of working in medicine—especially after advocating for her husband through his illnesses. She had answers for everything. "Just ask Linda," Pat would say.

Linda passed with her daughter and granddaughter by her side, surrounded by love—exactly as she asked. Linda was predeceased by her son Christopher and her husband, Patrick. She is survived by her son, Patrick Wing (Jen) of Averill Park; her daughters, Amy Wing of Charleston and Lauren Wing of Seattle; 11 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren as well as her siblings, Crawford Cutts and Jennifer Abbott. We are a family bound tightly together by her example and endless love. She will be missed beyond measure and carried forward in all we do.

Visitation will be held Jan. 9 at Allen Funeral Home, Millbrook. Graveside services followed in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Millbrook. Please visit www.hudsonvalleyfuneralhomes.com for condolences and directions.

NYS announces \$25 million available to help farmers protect water quality

Project proposals due on April 20

New York State Agriculture Commissioner Richard A. Ball has announced that \$25 million is available for projects that will help New York's farmers to support agricultural water quality conservation projects.

This is the second year of record level funding being offered through the State's Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution Abatement and Control (Ag Nonpoint) Program, which is being provided through the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) and the Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act. Applications for the program can be found at agriculture.ny.gov/funding-opportunities.

Ball said, "For over three decades, our Ag Nonpoint program has seen tremendous success, helping farmers implement best practices to protect our waterways. We're excited to see even more funding dedicated to this program for the second year in a row through the Bond Act, helping us to continue investing in projects that will not only ensure the health of our environment but also help ensure farms can remain competitive, profitable, and sustainable."

The Ag Nonpoint Program provides funding to projects that focus on either environmental planning or the implementation of best management practice systems to protect New York's watersheds. Projects include but are not limited to conservation measures, such as nutrient management through manure storage,

vegetative buffers along streams, and conservation cover crops.

Through this latest round of the program, Round 31, a total of \$25 million is being made available to the State's County Soil and Water Conservation Districts, who will apply on behalf of New York farmers: \$14 million is from the Environmental Protection Fund and \$11 million is from the Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act of 2022. Last year, the program celebrated its 30th anniversary, and so far, through 30 rounds of funding, over \$275 million has been awarded to on-farm projects. Round 30 awarded funding to 109 participating farms and 25 county Soil and Water Conservation Districts, with awarded projects including plans for over 12,000 acres of cover crops, 31 agricultural waste storage systems, and 25 forested buffers.

The application for the program and additional information are available on the Department of Agriculture and Markets' website at agriculture.ny.gov/funding-opportunities.

Project proposals are due on April 20, 2026.

Senator Michelle Hinchey said, "New York farmers are the leading stewards of our natural resources, and everything we can do as a state to support them in that work is essential. These grants mark a second year of record investment in the Ag Nonpoint program, and we're thrilled to provide this support to help New York farmers implement projects that protect our lands and waters while making their operations more resilient."

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