



# Jim Crifo of East Fishkill at 100: POW and World War II hero

continued from cover

specialist, Crifo was in the first echelon, the first guys to land. He jumped into the dark that night and, once on the ground, went to work. One of his colleagues ended up hanging from the top of the church in the center of the village, others ended up in trees or flooded fields where a number drowned. It was a long night for the men of the 101st - fighting for their lives, waiting for the dawn and trusting that the landings on the beach would soon bring them relief. Their actions that night are the stuff of legends. Jim Crifo played his part bravely.

France never forgot. In 2015 on July 3rd, Crifo was taken to New York City to be honored by the French Government with that country's highest military or civilian honor, the "Légion d'honneur."

After D-Day, the war was hardly over for Crifo or the men of the 101st. He transferred to glider assault. Though still in the 101st, he would arrive at the scene of the battle in a glider that also carried equipment, sometimes a jeep, sometimes a trailer of equipment or other material. The gliders that were used were built by Waco aviation of mostly wood and fabric. They were towed behind a C-47 or other transport plane and cut loose near to the target area. The glider pilot then flew the craft to the ground and more or less crash landed it in what they hoped would be a big enough farmer's field to keep the landing survivable. The gliders were nicknamed "flying coffins" for just this reason. It was one-way ticket to the battle and the pilot only had one chance to land it safely. With no engine, there was no chance to go around again and look for a better spot.

In September of 1944, Crifo and his division were assigned to take part in a major offensive to capture a large part of occupied Netherlands and to secure a sig-

nificant bridge across the Rhine River and open a route for the invasion of Germany. It was called "Operation Market Garden." The operation was later immortalized in the movie "A Bridge Too Far." That bridge was a British goal and it was not taken.

Crifo's glider carried a pilot, six soldiers, and a trailer of communications equipment. When they made their crash landing, there were Germans nearby. Crifo and his colleagues exited the glider and quickly came under fire. He and two others returned fire while the other four managed to escape into the woods. Crifo was captured and the two with him were killed. The Germans might have killed him on the spot, but took him prisoner, "likely for information. I was the only one left. They interviewed me. I didn't tell them anything," he recalls.

During his period as a prisoner, he was moved a couple of times, ending up in a work camp. When asked what he thought about in that period, he says, "It took a lot out of me ... the way you think changes. You feel a little hope that you'll get home someday." Late in his captivity, Crifo got sick and was transferred to a German hospital. It was there he was liberated in May of 1945. His biggest regret? "I put my mom through so much. First she heard I was missing in action and then, later, that I was a POW. That's my only regret, that I put my mom through so much."

Crifo was honored by the Town of East Fishkill this spring on the occasion of his 100th birthday. The whole town celebrated this local hero. Asked what advice he might offer, he noted "Just be grateful that you're alive and able to do the things you want ... and to do them well ... and be good to people when you can."



During the D-Day operation, Jim Crifo and his colleagues parachuted behind Utah Beach. One of Crifo's fellow soldiers ended up hanging from the top of the church in the center of the village of Sainte-Mere Eglise, France. The mannequin above is a current display in Sainte-Mere Eglise, a reminder of when soldiers in the 101st Airborne dropped in after midnight on D-Day. Photo by Jim Donick

## Memorial Day Parades in the area

*Editor's note: Check page 6 of our Memorial Day special section (inside this paper) for additional Memorial Day events taking place throughout the county.*

### HYDE PARK

Information provided by Morgan Sacerdote, Town of Hyde Park Recreation Leader

Monday, May 25: This year the parade will kick off promptly at 10 a.m. We ask all participants with large vehicles to arrive at 8:30 a.m. and those that are walking to arrive at 9 a.m. The parade will begin at the Hyde Park Drive in and continue north to the Hyde Park Town Hall.

At the conclusion of the parade there will be a Memorial Day ceremony at Hyde Park Town Hall, held by Michael Athenas and the Hyde Park American Legion Post 1303. There will be various speakers including the Hyde Park Town Supervisor Al Torreggiani and Deputy Supervisor Don Prusakowski, Hyde Park's Fourth Ward Councilman.

All community members are encouraged to join us.

Confirmed participants include Hyde Park Town Board, American Legion Post 1303, American Legion Post 1466, New York State Troopers-Rhinebeck, DC Sheriff's Office, 150th New York State Volunteer Infantry, Hyde Park Knights of Columbus, Hyde Park Fire Department, Roosevelt Fire Department, Fairview Fire Department, Cub Scout Pack 153, Scout Troop 37 Hyde Park United Soccer League, HP Little League, iheart Radio, JG Dance, Dance Works Too, HV

Horrors Roller Derby, Santinis Landscape, DS Home Services, and various other local business.

### MILLBROOK

Monday, May 25: Franklin Avenue, Millbrook. Parade Lineup: 10:30 a.m. Parade Begins: 11 a.m.

Following the parade, a memorial ceremony will be held at the Tribute Gardens to honor our fallen service members.

This year's event will also feature: a military flyover, Smokey the Bear, The Warrior Wagon and special America 250 Commemoration activities. Residents, families, and visitors are invited to line Franklin Avenue for this meaningful community tradition to remember and pay tribute to those who served our nation. Expect temporary traffic delays and limited parking in the parade area during the event.

### RED HOOK

Monday, May 25: Parade Assemble at Red Hook High School Parking Lot, beginning at 9:15 a.m. Parade Kick Off at 10 a.m.

Route: Up Route 199 to center of town, left at traffic light to Memorial Park. Memorial Park Ceremony begins at 10:45 a.m.

Public is invited back to the Red Hook VFW Post 7765, 30 Elizabeth St., Red Hook for refreshments following the Ceremony. More information: (845) 758-6212 or VFW7765.COM.

# Problem-solver Bob Balkind prepares for his next challenge

County Public Works Commissioner set to leave role on May 22

By Curtis Schmidt

In his 20-plus years with the Dutchess County Department of Public Works – 13 as Commissioner – Bob Balkind has never fixed a pothole or driven a snow-plow truck. He hasn't driven a bus or repaired a Sheriff's Office vehicle. He hasn't flown or repaired a plane at the Hudson Valley Regional Airport. He hasn't handled tools and equipment in building maintenance or the construction of road and bridge projects on county roads. And though he loves to spend time in County parks, he hasn't taught courses or maintained property at the parks.

However, what Balkind has done has affected the lives of hundreds of thousands of Dutchess County residents every day and empowered the directors of all of the eight divisions of the Department of Public Works to continually improve and make a positive difference in the community.

And after 20-plus years of coordinating and problem-solving on the county level, Balkind is retiring –with his last day being this Friday, May 22.

"I'm very proud of the work we do and I've been blessed to be able to work with people who are so committed to helping others," he said. "I have always realized true satisfaction in knowing that we make a positive difference in our communities every day."

And that hasn't always been easy. When you lead a department that is tasked with overseeing the design, construction and maintenance of 1.2 million square feet of office space, 181 county bridges and is responsible for maintaining the county's 395 centerline miles of roads, including during all kinds of storms, opportunities for failure always exist. And, to be clear, buildings and highways encompass only two of the divisions of the Public Works

Department. Others include Public Transit, Parks, Aviation, Engineering, an Auto Service Center and Finance.

Balkind said his goal has always been "to create opportunities to make our leadership team – and everyone under them – feel value, to give them the responsibility and authority they deserve. My primary job is to facilitate the success of everyone and to give them the (mental) tools to make better decisions."

That's called "empowering others, leading by example and putting your ego aside." Balkind further breaks it down into coordination, collaboration and, most importantly, listening.

"I try to see every person I encounter as an opportunity to learn from," he said. "I learned a long time ago that I don't learn when I speak. So, I try to do a lot of listening."

Balkind, who has a bachelors degree in civil engineering and is a licensed Professional Engineer in NY, MA and NJ, and has been working at the trade he loves for 38-plus years, notes that he used to run engineering and highway divisions.

"Those two I could handle, but not the others," he said of his overall role. "My managers are much better at what they do. I don't try to pretend and they know that. I trust them and am here to help. I'm not a 'my way or the highway' guy."

He said he and his directors "use mistakes as teaching moments, and luckily, we make a lot of mistakes and learn from them. The public depends on us to 'get it right' every time and we try to do our absolute best every day."

And, to be clear again, the job of the Public Works Department is 24/7/365. Storms and ensuing crises know no boundaries.

"I always tell people – this is not a job where you show up in the morning and go home in the afternoon," said Balkind. "Whether it's a 2 a.m. fire at one of our facilities, a tree in the road or a huge snowstorm – when the need arises – we have to be there. These situations can't wait 'til the morning after. There have been many days when we spend every minute of every hour handling all aspects



Dutchess County Department of Public Works Commissioner Bob Balkind is pictured with a track excavator in the Public Works garage. Photo by Curtis Schmidt

of a difficult situation" – and everything else takes a temporary back seat.

The department has emergency plans, along with a full set of emergency procedures and processes in place to follow. But then, no two situations are totally the same. After each emergency, Balkind said, "We always go back and revisit each situation with questions like 'How did we react? What did we do wrong? What did we get right? What could we have done better?' We depend on our feedback and the feedback of everyone – including residents – to always get better at what we do."

As he looks back over his "very grati-

fyng career," Balkind said he chose civil engineering because he has always enjoyed the role of a problem-solver. Even as a child he said he liked solving jigsaw puzzles, Sudoku and others.

"Finding solutions is what drives me, and my career has been a natural outgrowth of problem-solving," he said. "I like to be challenged."

And his next challenge? Finding his next career.

"Initially, I want to see what it's like to not go to work every day," he said. "But after that, I have a lot of choices."

We can safely imagine Bob Balkind will stay quite active.

## 988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE IS LIVE

The first nationwide three-digit mental health crisis hotline is up and running. It is designed to be as easy to remember as 911, but when you dial 988, a dispatcher will connect callers with trained mental health counselors.

Dialing 988:

- Is a direct connection to compassionate, accessible support for anyone experiencing mental health related distress.
- Provides support: People may dial 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.
- Help for VETERANS: Veterans can press "1" after dialing 988 and be connected directly to the Veterans Crisis Lifeline.

## Clinton Library to host lecture on Hudson Valley titans of industry

Alex Prizgintas will present a lecture on "Riverside Moguls" at the Clinton Community Library on Thursday, May 28, at noon. The event is part of the library's Lunch and Learn series.

The lecture is the second in Prizgintas' historical series on titans of industry, which focuses on industrialists tied to themes of the Gilded Age beyond railroads, including oil and real estate. Featured in this segment are John D. Rockefeller's Kykuit Estate, the villas of Robert Wilson Goelet's Glenmere Estate, Charles E. Rushmore's Canmore Estate, Pierre Lorillard IV's Tuxedo Park, Col. Oliver Hazard Payne's West Park Estate, and the Livingston Legacy of Staatsburgh.

A graduate of Marist College with degrees in Hudson River Valley history and public administration, Prizgintas has published articles in the Hudson River Valley Review, New York Archives Magazine, and Orange County Historical Society Journal on topics that include Hudson River railroad history, Orange County's dairy farming history, and the region's early settlers. He is the town historian for Woodbury, NY, and president of Orange County's Woodbury Historical Society. Further information about Prizgintas and his schedule of upcoming programs is available at <https://alexprizgintas.com>.

## Banking should feel personal – because it is.

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Gutting of Voting Rights Act, gerrymandering  
seek to destroy our Republic, values

To the editor:

As we head into this Memorial Day weekend, where we rightly honor those who have given all in defense of our Republic and the values we profess, let us recall the holiday's founding shortly after the end of the Civil War. It was established by its traumatized survivors to recognize the hundreds of thousands who died as a result of that conflict (which was) fought over the extension of America's promise that all men are created equal.

It took decades more to extend that promise to women, and one hundred years to the 1960s before the descendants of those freed from slavery could vote without fear, but for the last 60 years, we've had a government for this land which more resembles the makeup of its people than it ever had before.

More than 150 years after that first Memorial Day, although the Union won that war, it looks as if the Confederacy holds the cards. Two weeks ago, the U.S. Supreme Court gutted what had remained of the Voting Rights Act, and within hours, the states of the Old South moved to gerrymander out of existence the districts held by African Americans with obvious aim of extending Republican control of the House of Representatives in these mid-term elections, thereby dodging the wrath of the American people.

Intense gerrymandering enabled Victor Orban – with the assistance of a subservient legislature and complicit courts – to legally disassemble Hungary's Republic to hold power for 16 years until his rule was finally overturned a month ago in a massive green-white-red wave united in rejection of his blatant corruption and subservience to Putin.

In 2021, Democrats in Congress proposed a bill to end nationwide redistricting, but it was opposed by every Republican. If a party cannot succeed by the power of its ideas, force of values, and commitment to our Republic, it does not deserve to lead, but that is not where we are heading. Republicans have championed Orban and his tactics for more than a decade, and we are already far down the path toward one-party dominance largely enabled by a combination of the undemocratic nature of the Senate, the Electoral College, and partisan gerrymandering.

In 2026, our Republic is on life support, and on this Memorial Day, as we gather around war memorials in nearly every village and town of Dutchess County, I urge each and every one of its citizens to commit to its defense.

Mark Lagus  
Town of Northeast

Legislature Chair announces launch of AI Oversight Committee

continued from cover

Committee, added, "County workers are too important to functional government to be replaced by AI for the sake of claimed efficiency. When it comes to using County services, residents want to interact with people, not chatbots. Forming this committee will protect our workforce and keep County government accessible

to residents."

"I applaud Legislator Munn for moving swiftly to address this urgent issue," said Chair Valdés Smith. "AI isn't coming; it's already here, and the government needs to know the right questions to ask and how to distinguish facts from fear-mongering. The diversity of our caucus

means each of us brings different experiences and expertise to the Chamber. As someone who has spent his career working in tech, Legislator Munn and the legislature's new oversight committee will ensure that AI usage serves the best interests of Dutchess County residents – and not the other way around."

**NOTICE OF EARLY DEADLINE**

Due to a holiday press schedule for Memorial Day, the May 27 issue of Northern Dutchess News will have early deadlines for all departments. Editorial and calendar submissions must be received by Thursday, May 21, at noon. Advertising must be received by Thursday, May 21, at 5 p.m. Contact [cschmidt@sdutchessnews.com](mailto:cschmidt@sdutchessnews.com) for more information.

Spring Antiques at Fairgrounds set May 23-24

continued from cover



Furniture and paintings will be among the many elements featured at the Spring Antiques at Rhinebeck Show this coming weekend at the Dutchess County Fairgrounds. *Courtesy photos*

Visitors can expect an extraordinary range of offerings including:

- Oriental rugs
- Fine, designer, and costume jewelry
- American and Continental furniture
- Fine porcelain and ceramics
- Fine and decorative prints
- Mid-century and modern design
- Books and ephemera
- Asian arts
- Military and nautical antiques
- Fine art and folk art
- Textiles, samplers, and quilts
- Stoneware and redware pottery
- Native American jewelry and artifacts

- Shaker furniture and accessories
- Art pottery and art glass
- Silver and watches
- Graphic posters and advertising
- Folk signs and early toys
- Vintage décor and much more

In addition to world-class shopping, guests can enjoy free parking, a specialty food vendor offering a delicious variety of menu options, and the charm of nearby Historic Rhinebeck Village, making the weekend a perfect destination for collectors and families alike.

Show Hours are 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. on Saturday and 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Sunday. No pets please.

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# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

## Rev 250 event set May 24 in Milan

The Rededication of the Rowe Church Cemetery to honor local Revolutionary War veterans will take place on Sunday May 24, following the Milan Memorial Day parade at noon. The church is at 1376 Route 199, Milan. Ice cream to follow.

## Staatsburg Memorial Day Ceremony

A Memorial Day Ceremony will take place in the hamlet of Staatsburg on Monday, May 25, at 8 a.m. It will be held at the veterans' honor roll monument near the flagpole in Dinsmore Park on Old Post Road. The long-standing event is sponsored by volunteers from the community. The public is invited to help us remember those who have died in service to our country. In case of rain, the ceremony may be held inside the Dinsmore firehouse. For more information, contact Mary Alden mlaeas@comcast.net or (609) 468-0165.

## Bingo in Rhinecliff May 27

The Rhinecliff Volunteer Fire Company will host Bingo on Wednesday, May 27, at the Rhinecliff Firehouse, 17 Shatzell Avenue, Rhinecliff. Doors open at 5:15 p.m., with Bingo from 6 to 8:30 p.m. To benefit the Rhinecliff Vol. Fire Company

Eight games, top prize \$250. Single card \$5, 3 pack \$10, 8 pack \$25. Limit 75 people. No admission without purchase. Must be 18+ to play.

Concessions will be available for purchase. No outside food. Arrive early to find parking. For more information, call (646) 537-5968.

## Stanford Rec Day set May 30

Stanford Rec Day, a collaborative event hosted by Stanford Recreation and the Stanford Recreation Campaign, will be held on Saturday, May 30, from 1 to 3 p.m., at Stanford Rec Park, 40 Creamery Road. Fundraising for the next phase of park improvements will kick off at the event.

Activities will include the Kids Fun Run, game stations hosted by local businesses and organizations, food, music and more.

The Kids Fun Run is for ages 2-12. It includes a 100-yard dash, 0.3 mile lap and 0.6 mile lap. The course will be set within Rec Park. Check-in begins at 12:45 p.m. Registration is required at stanfordny.myrec.com.

## Blessing of the Animals

The Blessing of the Animals theme for 2026 is "The Year of the Humane Child." This year's event will be held at the Third Lutheran Evangelical Church, 31 Livingston Street, Rhinebeck on Saturday, May 30 from noon - 4 p.m. Rain Date, Sunday May 31, 1-5 p.m. The goal of the event is to promote kindness as a habit in our homes and in our lives. Kindness costs nothing and is truly a superpower since all living things depend on each other. Come mingle with or without a pet. Enjoy this connection with nature, neighbors and numerous local animal charities.

## Brookmeade Golf Classic set June 1

The Brookmeade Community Foundation is hosting The 9th Annual Brookmeade Golf Classic. Golf Classic will be held on June 1 at the Red Hook Golf Club starting at 8 a.m. Breakfast, lunch and golf shirts provided. Raffles throughout the day, and top team awards. Hole-in-one contest and more. Player cost: \$175 per person. Proceeds to benefits the programs for senior citizens living in the Brookmeade Community. To sign up, contact us at info@brookmeadecommunity.org. Sponsorship opportunities also available.

## Rev250 Summer Open House set June 6 at Elmendorph Inn

Historic Red Hook will host a Rev250 Summer Open House on Saturday, June 6, from noon to 3 p.m. at the Elmendorph Inn, 7562 N. Broadway, Red Hook (rain date June 7). Mark America's 250th anniversary and explore an exhibit about the Revolutionary War's impact on Dutchess County, enjoy ice cream on the lawn, play lawn games, try family art activities, and explore the inside of the historic tavern building. Learn more at www.historicredhook.org/rev250

## Stanford Lions Club Flea Market set June 6

The Stanford Lions Club is sponsoring a Flea Market on Saturday, June 6, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., on Route 82 on the Town Hall Lawn. Rain date: Sunday, June 7. Free admission and parking. For more information, call (845) 868-1988 or (845) 868-1387.

## Celebrate Stanford Pride on June 6

Celebrate Stanford Pride with music, food and community on Saturday, June 6, from 1 to 4 p.m., at Bangallworks, 97 Hunns Lake Road, Bangall. Visit stanfordnypride.com for more information.

## Help A Horse Day set June 6 in Clinton Corners

13 Hands Equine Rescue will hold Help A Horse Day fundraiser on Saturday, June 6, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., rain or shine. Meet the animals and enjoy a fun-filled day for the whole family, including live music, food trucks, demos, local artisans and vendors, NYS Trooper demos, kids activities and more. Admission is a \$20 donation; free for age 10 and younger. 13 Hands Equine Rescue is at 50 Tuscan Way, Clinton Corners. Visit www.13handsequine.org or email events@13handsequine.org to purchase tickets and for more information.

## Film screening in Kingston on June 7

On Sunday, June 7, from 2 to 5 p.m., at the Old Dutch Church, 272 Wall St., Kingston, there will be a screening of "Samidoun," a film about the strength and resilience of Palestinian women living under military occupation and patriarchy. Free admission and community reflection/discussion after the film. Cosponsored by: Middle East Crisis Response mideastcrisis.org, African Roots Community Center, Columbia County for Palestine, JVP Hudson Valley, Mid Hudson Valley DSA, Muslims4Muslims International, New Paltz Quaker Meeting, Peace Education Center, Rally

Middletown, Veterans For Peace, and Women In Black - New Paltz. Contact: mecr@mideastcrisis.org or 845 876-7906

## Hyde Park Chamber's Breakfast set June 11

The next Hyde Park Chamber Breakfast is set Thursday, June 11, from 7:30 to 9 a.m., at the Eveready Diner, Rte. 9, Hyde Park. The speaker will be the Hyde Park Police Chief Bob Benson. The cost is \$25 per member, \$30 per non-member. For tickets and more information, visit www.hydeparkchamber.org.

## Stanford Fire Company golf tourney set June 12

The Stanford Fire Company will hold its 7th Annual Golf Tournament on Friday June 12, at James Baird State Park. There will be a Shotgun Start at 9 a.m. (registration begins at 8 a.m.). The outing includes 18 holes golf with cart, hole in one prize, prizes for top three teams, long drive men and women, closest to the pin, lunch/beer on course, raffle prizes, silent auction, dinner following tournament.

## Aim for Gold Jamboree set June 13

The USA Archery Foundation will hold the Aim for Gold Jamboree, a fundraising event, on Saturday, June 13, from noon to 4 p.m., at Mashomack Preserve Club in Pine Plains. There will be a barbecue and the event includes archery lessons, 3-D targets, trick shooters, Kid Zone, and special guest coach Joel Turner.

Visit usaarcheryfoundation.org/aimforgold for tickets and more information.

## Stanford Fire Company to host Blood Drive June 17

The Stanford Fire Company will hold a Blood Drive on Wednesday, June 17, from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m. The Fire House is at 6096 Route 82, Stanfordville. For an appointment, visit RedCrossBlood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). Walk-ins welcome.

## 'Hyde Park in Bloom' Garden Tour set June 20

The Hyde Park Visual Environment Committee will hold its bi-annual "Hyde Park in Bloom" Garden Tour, taking place on Saturday, June 20, rain or shine. This event invites residents and visitors to explore a stunning array of local gardens, each showcasing the unique creativity and dedication of community neighbors. From vibrant pollinator-friendly native plantings

and a scenic meadow on a former farm, to tranquil oases nestled within residential neighborhoods, every garden reflects the passion and hard work of its proud owners.

The event kicks off with check-in from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. at Regina Coeli Church, Albany Post Road, Hyde Park. Self-guided garden tours will run from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased online or by mailing payment to Hyde Park Visual Environment Committee, P.O. Box 125, Hyde Park, NY. For more information and ticket purchase options, visit www.hydeparkvec.org or send email to hpvecboard@gmail.com.

## Rev250 July 4th celebration set in Stanford

Stanford will celebrate the 250th anniversary of America's independence with an event organized by the Stanford Fire Company, in coordination with the Town of Stanford and Stanford Grange #808. The celebration will take place at the Stanford Recreation Center (40 Creamery Road). The Festivity Tent opens at 5 p.m. with a reading of the Declaration of Independence by Stanford Grange #808 Secretary Ryan Orton. A Chicken BBQ Dinner (includes half chicken, salads, and dessert) begins at 6 p.m. There will be fireworks at dusk (approximately 8-8:30 p.m.)

Prices for the BBQ Dinner are \$12 for adults, \$8 kids (ages 6-16) and free for children under 5.

Tickets must be purchased by Monday, June 22. A limited number of tickets will be available the day of for \$15.

Tickets available by calling (845) 868-7320 (Kathie) or (914) 456-9846 (Doreen) or by asking a Fire Company member you may know.

Please note: As this event is held on Town property, alcohol will not be permitted.

## NORTHERN DUTCHESS NEWS

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## Hyde Park Vintage Emporium named 'Business of the Year' for 2026



The members of the Hyde Park Chamber of Commerce recently honored the Hyde Park Vintage Emporium and Antiques Center as the "Business of the Year" for 2026. In the photo, from left, are Hyde Park Chamber President John Coppola, co-owners of the Hyde Park Vintage Emporium Anthony Vesnaver and Matt Smith, Mary Elwell, Matthew Vesnaver, Marcia O'Neil, Georgia Vesnaver, Jennifer and Mike Daversa and Bob Elwell. *Courtesy photo*



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## Fun with fans at the ballpark



Fan participation is a key element in the fun at Hudson Valley Renegades games at Heritage Financial Park. Above, children interact with the Renegades mascots. A young fan runs around the bases between innings. And a canine fan watches from the bleachers during "Retriever Night" at the ballpark. *Photos by Dave Janosz*

### League Standings

SOUTH ATLANTIC LEAGUE NORTH		W	L	PCT	GB	L10	STRK
	Frederick BAL	25	13	.658	-	9-1	W7
	Greensboro PIT	25	14	.641	0.5	7-3	W1
	Wilmington WSH	19	19	.500	6.0	3-7	L4
	Hudson Valley NYY	18	20	.474	7.0	3-7	L6
	Jersey Shore PHI	17	21	.447	8.0	3-7	L1
	Brooklyn NYM	10	28	.263	15.0	3-7	L2
SOUTH ATLANTIC LEAGUE SOUTH		W	L	PCT	GB	L10	STRK
	Bowling Green TB	27	12	.692	-	8-2	L1
	Winston-Salem CWS	23	16	.590	4.0	6-4	W4
	Rome ATL	22	17	.564	5.0	7-3	W2
	Hub City TEX	21	17	.553	5.5	7-3	W2
	Greenville BOS	15	24	.385	12.0	2-8	W1
	Asheville HOU	9	30	.231	18.0	2-8	L2



May			
05/26/26	vs. Bowling Green	06:05 PM	Women in Sports Night WMCHHealth Club Lounge Tickets
05/27/26	vs. Bowling Green	11:05 AM	Education Day presented by Heritage Financial Credit Union WMCHHealth Club Lounge Tickets
05/28/26	vs. Bowling Green	06:35 PM	Beach Night WMCHHealth Club Lounge Tickets
05/29/26	vs. Bowling Green	07:05 PM	Star Wars Night WMCHHealth Club Lounge Tickets
05/30/26	vs. Bowling Green	05:05 PM	2026 Renegades Team Card Set presented by Dutchess Tire Center WMCHHealth Club Lounge Tickets
05/31/26	vs. Bowling Green	02:05 PM	Halloween in May WMCHHealth Club Lounge Tickets
June			
06/09/26	vs. Jersey Shore	06:35 PM	Petting Zoo Night WMCHHealth Club Lounge Tickets
06/10/26	vs. Jersey Shore	06:35 PM	Pride Night WMCHHealth Club Lounge Tickets
06/11/26	vs. Jersey Shore	06:35 PM	Soccer Night WMCHHealth Club Lounge Tickets
06/12/26	vs. Jersey Shore	07:05 PM	Superhero & Villains Night WMCHHealth Club Lounge Tickets
06/13/26	vs. Jersey Shore	05:05 PM	Seinfeld Night: A Game About Nothing WMCHHealth Club Lounge Tickets
06/14/26	vs. Jersey Shore	02:05 PM	Copa de la Diversión™ presented by Cafe Con Leche: Puerto Rican Day Celebration WMCHHealth Club Lounge Tickets





# Renegades Extra!



**IMPACT**  
PR & Communications

**Alexandra Downey Thomas Joins  
Feldman, Kleidman, Collins & Sappe LLP**



See story  
page 8



**IMPACT**  
PR & Communications

## RENEGADES ROUNDUP

# Sad sweep as Renegades drop six straight to Frederick Keys

By Morgan E. Maier

The Hudson Valley Renegades hosted the Frederick Keys for the first time in team history on May 12-17. It was a week most forgettable, as the hosts dropped six straight games, swept for the first time this season and stand at 18-20 on the season. One of four teams with a 3-7 record in their last 10 games (as of May 17), the slumping Renegades suffered a range of wire-to-wire and long-stinging losses against Frederick.

**K, bye** - The Renegades entered the week with a 50/50 home record and fell below .500 at the close of the weekend. As of May 17, Hudson Valley holds the second-highest home strikeout count in the South Atlantic League (215), as Frederick fanned 10 or more Renegades in 5 of 6 games this series. Though the Keys struck out a series-high 17 times on May 17, they completed the sweep with a

second straight 6-3 victory.

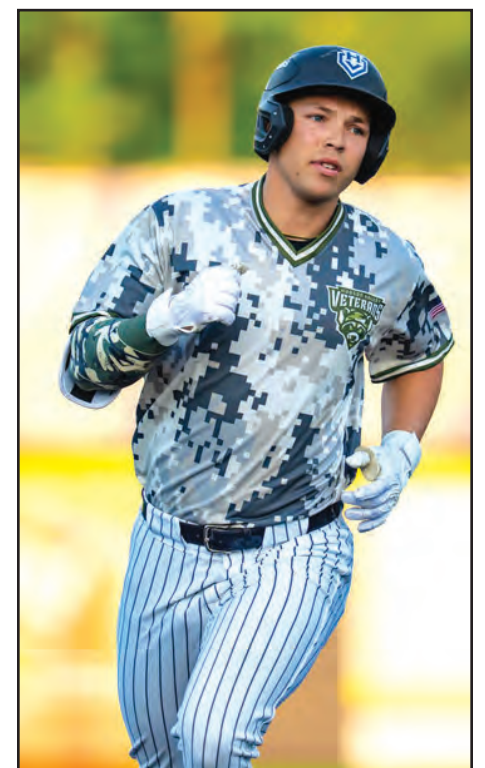
**Bullpen Bulletin** - Plenty of Renegades relievers did their job this week, particularly in the finale. After Frederick scored six runs over the first three innings, Hudson Valley held them scoreless the rest of the way. It took five guys to go the distance, and though the Renegades offense strung together half of the needed runs, the rallying hit never came. Hudson Valley had another 6-3 loss the night before, though 4/5 relievers taking the mound offered a scoreless outing.

**One-run bummers** - The Renegades lost twice to Frederick on a one-run decision. The May 13 midday matinee saw a ninth-inning visitors' comeback, as the Keys scored three times before Hudson Valley could record its final three outs. The Renegades would drop the contest 5-4 after leading from the first through the ninth innings. On May 14, Wilson Rodriguez drove in a first-inning RBI to

get the 'Reegades started, but the Keys quickly equalized on a home run before taking a third-inning lead. Both teams were held scoreless past the fifth, as Frederick would hang on for the 4-3 lead. Starter Rory Fox went six innings, as Brandon Decker, Hansel Rincon, and Andrew Landry each contributed a scoreless frame.

The surging Keys hold a half-game lead of the South Atlantic League, while the sub-.500 Renegades look to right their woes on the road against the last-place Brooklyn Cyclones.

Kyle West of the Renegades rounds the bases after hitting a home run during Veterans Appreciation Day. *Photo by Dave Janosz*



# Renegades' Liñan named SAL Pitcher of the Week

Minor League Baseball (MiLB) has announced that Hudson Valley Renegades RHP Sean Paul Liñan has been named the South Atlantic League Pitcher of the Week for the week of May 4-10. Liñan is ranked by MLB Pipeline as the Yankees' #22 prospect.

Liñan, 21, threw 6.0 hitless innings on Saturday, May 9, against the Winston-Salem Dash, allowing just one walk while striking out seven batters. The right-hander set down the first 13 batters he faced in the start before a one-out walk in the fifth inning to Boston Smith.

In addition to his season-high 6.0 innings, Liñan needed only 69 pitches to tie his season-high in strikeouts. All seven strikeouts came on Liñan's change-up, which is called one of the best in Minor League Baseball by MLB Pipeline.

He is the second Renegades player to win a weekly award in 2026, joining Luis Serna, who was named SAL Pitcher of the Week on April 13. Liñan was acquired by the Yankees in a trade with the Washington Nationals on March 22, 2026 in exchange for INF Jorbit Vivas.

This is the second weekly award in Liñan's career, as he was previously named California League Pitcher of the Week on 4/20/2025 while pitching for Rancho Cucamonga in the Dodgers organization. He was also named California League Pitcher of the Month for April 2025.

Sean Paul Liñan of the Renegades threw 6.0 hitless innings on Saturday, May 9, against the Winston-Salem Dash, allowing just one walk while striking out seven batters. *Photo by Dave Janosz*



# Alexandra Downey Thomas joins Feldman, Kleidman, Collins & Sappe LLP

Feldman, Kleidman, Collins & Sappe LLP (FKC&S), a Hudson Valley-based law firm concentrating in personal injury and medical malpractice defense, has announced that Alexandra Downey Thomas, Esq., of Poughkeepsie has joined the firm. For more than four decades, FKC&S has represented clients in complex litigation across state and federal courts throughout the Hudson Valley and Capital Region.

"Alexandra brings nearly a decade of hands-on litigation experience and a well-rounded background across multiple practice areas," said Jeffrey M. Feldman, founding partner of FKC&S. "Her ability to manage matters from inception through trial and appeal, combined with her strong advocacy skills, will be a strong asset to this team and will strengthen client outcomes."

In her role as of counsel at FKC&S, Thomas will focus on medical malpractice defense, representing insurers and insured clients, including hospitals, physicians and other health care professionals. In addition, she will assist in the defense of general liability matters and manage cases through all phases of litigation, from initial claim evaluation and discovery to motion practice and trial preparation.

Prior to joining FKC&S, Thomas was a partner at a Pleasant Valley-based law firm, where she represented individuals, businesses and property owners in a wide range of civil litigation matters. Her experience includes commercial litigation, real estate and construction disputes,

personal injury claims and trusts and estates matters. She has handled cases through trial and appeal and has argued before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court of the State of New York.

Thomas earned her Juris Doctor from Brooklyn Law School and holds a Bachelor of Arts in political science from Rhodes College in Memphis, TN. She played Division III basketball in college, where her team advanced to the second round of the NCAA tournament during her senior year. During law school, she interned for the Honorable James D. Pagonis, an acting Supreme Court justice and Surrogate of Dutchess County at the time.

Originally from Cold Spring, Thomas is admitted to practice in New York State as well as the U.S. District Courts for the Eastern, Southern and Northern Districts of New York. She is an active member of several professional organizations, including the American Bar Association, New York State Bar Association, Dutchess County Bar Association and Mid-Hudson Women's Bar Association.

Aside from her legal work, Thomas is a volunteer with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's (AFSP) Hudson Valley/Westchester chapter and has participated in advocacy efforts in Washington, D.C., supporting the organization's mission to save lives and bring hope to those affected by suicide. She lives in Poughkeepsie with her husband, a U.S. Navy veteran and firefighter, and their two children.



Alexandra Downey Thomas, Esq. *Courtesy photo*

## NORTHERN DUTCHESS NEWS

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## Red Hook Library to host Dolly Parton Imagination Library Kickoff May 22

Join the United Way of the Dutchess-Orange Region, the Town of Red Hook, and your Red Hook Public Library for the official launch party of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library on Friday, May 22, from 4 to 5 p.m., in the Children's Section of the Red Hook Public Library, 7444 South Broadway, Red Hook.

Families are invited to stop by the library to register eligible children (younger than age 5) for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, a program that mails

free books directly to children's homes each month to help build a lifelong love of reading and kindergarten readiness.

Enjoy photo opportunities with a Dolly Parton cutout, free books, snacks, and learn more about how this incredible program supports early literacy in the community.

Those who can't make the event can sign up their child at <https://imaginationlibrary.com/check-availability/>

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<p style="text-align: center;">--HELD OVER--</p> <p>Obsession (R) Mortal Kombat II (R) The Sheep Detectives (PG) The Devil Wears Prada 2 (PG13) Michael (PG13)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">--HELD OVER--</p> <p>Obsession (R) The Sheep Detectives (PG) The Devil Wears Prada 2 (PG13) Michael (PG13) Project Hail Mary (PG13)</p>
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# Creative Living

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## NDSO's Beckmann to retire following season finale

Kathleen Beckmann, music director and conductor of the Northern Dutchess Symphony Orchestra (NDSO) since its inception in 2006, recently announced her retirement from the organization. The orchestra's June 20 concert, "The Beatles, Elvis and Beyond," will be her last concert as music director for the orchestra.

Twenty years ago, the idea of a new professional orchestra in Dutchess County was the topic of conversation for Beckmann and a group of friends around a kitchen table. Under her leadership, the organization has grown from two small concerts to a season of six evening concerts and additionally two student concerts with third- and fourth-graders bused in from eight area school districts.

In reflecting on her two decades with the NDSO, Beckmann said, "I'm struck by how attendance by people of all ages has grown and how the programming has evolved to be less traditional with more variety of repertoire and musical styles."

During Beckmann's tenure as music director, audiences have had the opportunity to hear the orchestra performing opera, symphonic works, Broadway, film music, jazz and dance music. She has collaborated with videographers to create visuals to accompany the music and themes for NDSO concerts. In addition to a wide array of vocal soloists over the years, the orchestra has worked with tal-

ented soloists performing on the piano, violin, violoncello, flute and clarinet as well as more unique instruments including the koto, theater organ, and harmonica.

Beckmann was the orchestra Director at FDR High School and taught music in the Hyde Park District for 20 years starting in 1990. Upon retirement from Hyde Park, she began traveling to international venues in Eastern Europe for guest conducting opportunities in addition to conducting NDSO concerts. Her career teaching orchestral instruments began in 1975 in Monticello, N.Y., after graduating from the Crane School of Music.

Before coming to Hyde Park in 1990, Beckmann also taught in the Wappingers school district and had three children. She is now called Nana and has five grandchildren.

Beckmann's passion for music education has led to one of her proudest accomplishments with NDSO. Over the last three years, 2,500 students have visited the Culinary Institute of America during school day to attend a unique student-centered concert introducing the instruments, in preparation for their opportunity to study an instrument in their school programs. Brief videos with musicians demonstrating their instruments, student artwork illustrating the music and audience participation are hallmarks of a symphonic program that has received

rave reviews from attendees. Many of the school districts have returned to the concerts every year with a new group of enthusiastic students.

As Beckmann gets ready for her final performance, she expressed thanks "... to the orchestra, the audience and everyone who has made NDSO such a successful and joyful part of the Hudson Valley music community. And best wishes and success to the new music director William Stevens! I know you have enjoyed his work conducting the holiday programs and under his leadership NDSO will certainly continue to flourish."

NDSO's new season will begin in October 2026 and will be announced late August. Learn more and sign-up for email updates at [www.ndsorchestra.org](http://www.ndsorchestra.org).



Northern Dutchess Symphony Orchestra's Kathleen Beckmann will retire after the end of this season. *Courtesy photo*

we're on the web!  
[www.sdutchessnews.com](http://www.sdutchessnews.com)

### DOT-TO-DOT PUZZLE

See page 17 for finished puzzle (no peeking!)

**Sets**  
Stop your line after completing each set, then skip to the next set and start your line again.

- • 1 thru 5
- • 6 thru 12
- • 13 thru 21
- • 22 thru 29
- • 30 thru 38
- • 39 thru 53
- • 54 thru 68
- • 69 thru 93

By David Kalvitis © 2007 Monkeying Around



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## EXHIBITIONS

**Artists' Collective Gallery of Hyde Park (ACHP)**, 4338 Albany Post Rd., Hyde Park. **Through May:** "Ernesto Pedrosa: Convergence," a series of abstract paintings exploring the nature of Afro-Cuban religious imagery where the blending of African markings, Catholic and Santería symbolism converge with earthly forms into a single circular field of meaning. (845) 366-6856, [artistscollectiveofhydepark.com](http://artistscollectiveofhydepark.com)

**Arts Mid-Hudson Gallery**, 696 Dutchess Turnpike, Suite F, Poughkeepsie. **Through June 12.** Dutchess Handmade Spring Pop-Up Shop, seasonal marketplace showcases the work of more than 60 talented artists and makers from across the Hudson Valley, including glass, jewelry, greeting cards, textiles, ceramics, woodwork, prints, paintings, home décor, and more. [www.artsmidhudson.org](http://www.artsmidhudson.org) or (845) 454-3222

**Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center**, 9 & 12 Vassar St., Poughkeepsie. **Through June:** Featured in the Victorian Gallery at 9 Vassar St. will be photographer Joel Mason. At 12 Vassar St., Julian Allen will present his paintings in the Reception Gallery and Monika Kalra will display her multi-media work in the Hancock Gallery. The Victorian Gallery is open Mon.-Fri., 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The Hancock Gallery and Reception Gallery are open Mon.-Fri., 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. but visitors should stop by 9 Vassar St. first or call the Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center Office at (845) 486-4571 for access. The 12 Vassar Street Galleries are also open during events at the VBI Theatre. More info about the artists at [cunneen-hackett.org](http://cunneen-hackett.org).

**Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center**, Vassar College, 124 Raymond Ave., Poughkeepsie. **Through June 7:** "Bunmei Kaika: Political Landscape in Early Modern and Modern Japan," the exhibition examines the drastic shift in Japan's national identity during the 19th and early 20th centuries. While this was a time of major political and social upheaval for the nation, it was also a time of expansion and modernization. Many artists responded to the shifting political and physical landscape by depicting it in woodblock prints and works on paper. (845) 437-5632 or <https://www.vassar.edu/theloeb>

**Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library & Museum**, William J. vanden Heuvel Gallery, 4097 Albany Post Rd. (Rte. 9), Hyde Park. **Through July 7:** Special exhibition, "Signature Moments: Letters from the Famous, the Infamous, and Everyday Americans," During their extraordinary public careers, the Roosevelts interacted with a "who's who" of the 20th century. "Signature Moments" opens the FDR Library's archives and museum for an insider's view of the remarkable – and sometimes surprising – variety of personal exchanges with an amazing array of famous (and a few infamous) people, including golden age movie stars, queens and kings, scientists, and legendary military heroes. Visitors will see signatures of literary giants, celebrated artists, world leaders, and, of course, prominent politicians and political activists – including seven American presidents. Regular Library and Museum admission applies to view the exhibit. [www.fdrlibrary.org](http://www.fdrlibrary.org)

**Millbrook Library**, 3 Friendly Lane, Millbrook. **Through June 28:** "UN-REAL," works by Fern Apfel, Monica Link, Kevin Mosca, Laura Von Rosk & Daniel Walworth. Upstate Arts Weekend Reception: Sat., June 27, 5-7 p.m. [www.millbrooklibrary.org](http://www.millbrooklibrary.org)

*Pictured: "Iceberg (d)," 2025, watercolor on paper. Image courtesy of Daniel Walworth,*



**Millbrook Vineyards & Winery**, 26 Wing Rd., Millbrook. **Through Nov. 15:** Arts Mid-Hudson and Millbrook Vineyards & Winery Present 2026 Art in the Loft, a juried exhibition and sale of fine art featuring 16 AMH member artists. Wine Label Competition: Visitors are invited to vote for their favorite piece to be featured on an exclusive wine label. [www.artsmidhudson.org/art-in-the-loft](http://www.artsmidhudson.org/art-in-the-loft)

**Morton Memorial Library**, 82 Kelly St., Rhinecliff. **Through May 21:** Morton's MakerSpace Paper Mache Projects Show. **Through May 22:** "The Collection," photography by Paul Elfenbein. **Art Auction:** Fri., May 22, 7 p.m. (845) 876-2903

**Starr Library**, 68 W. Market St., Rhinebeck. **Through May:** The 20th Annual Rhinebeck Central School District Art Show. Students from grades K through 12 will present a body of 2-D and 3-D work containing a variety of media used in their academic classes. The show highlights the work of art by students studying with Fawn Johnson (CLS), Jennifer Famiglietti (BMS), and Kathryn Giles and Shannon Harris (RHS). (845) 876-4030 or [www.starrlibrary.org](http://www.starrlibrary.org)

**Thomas Cole National Historic Site**, 218 Spring St., Catskill. **In the 1846 New Studio, Through May 24:** "Hudson Talbott: Shining Objects, A Career Retrospective," the exhibition will celebrate the work of the late, award-winning artist Hudson Talbott, whose talents have inspired audiences for decades through his children's picture books. Presenting more than 75 of Talbott's works, the exhibition will include a selection of his original paintings and sketches, his painting table, examples of his more than 30 books for young readers, and a selection of his early commercial work. **Through December:** "Emily Cole & Valerie Hegarty: LIFE CYCLES" presents a visual dialogue of two craft-based women artists across three centuries: 19th-century artist Emily Cole, daughter of Thomas Cole, and 21st-century artist Valerie Hegarty. The spotlight exhibition juxtaposes more than 30 works of painted porcelain and works on paper by Emily Cole (1843-1913) with a mixed-media installation by Hegarty. The work by Valerie Hegarty was made specifically for the Thomas Cole Site in 2025 and explores the connection between Thomas Cole and Emily Cole and their fascination with cycles of life, while considering Hegarty's own relationship with her mother. [www.thomascole.org](http://www.thomascole.org)

**Tivoli Artists Gallery**, 60 Broadway, Tivoli. **Through May 24:** "Sculpture, 3-D, and Relief," the artwork encompasses aspects of space, shape, texture and color in a variety of materials. From the realistic to the abstract, freestanding and relief, unique and exciting sculptural forms will be on display. Highlights will include an exploration of forms from clay, wax, wood, stone, glass, fabric, metal or found objects. (845) 757-2667 or [www.tivoliartistsgallery.com](http://www.tivoliartistsgallery.com)

**WomensWork.art**, 12 Vassar St., 3rd Floor, Poughkeepsie. **Through June 28:** "Version/Vision," a national group exhibition celebrating LGBTQ artists. Artists' Talk: Sun., June 14, 1-3 p.m. [www.womenswork.art](http://www.womenswork.art)



# High-tech bird feeders

A newfangled way to enjoy a perennial pastime

Melissa Schlichting saw eleven different species of birds the day she installed her bird buddy solar-powered bird feeder, equipped with a camera, AI-assisted identification and a free two-week video trial, plus a tabulator that keeps track of how many times each bird visits:

- House Finch 41 visits
- Rose Breasted Grosbeak 29
- Chipping Sparrow 47
- Black Capped Chickadee 6
- White Breasted Nuthatch 9
- House Sparrow 92
- Tufted Titmouse 10
- Brown Headed Cowbird 15
- Red Bellied Woodpecker 13
- Blue Jay 3
- Carolina Chickadee 3

All on the first day. I stopped by after Jesse Eldrid installed the high-tech feeder on a five foot pole and filled it with Kaytee Wild Bird Food Paradise Blend, a mixture of sunflower, peanut, corn and other seeds. Melissa's son Dylan happened to be back from a visit to his great grandmother near Lake George, and we all sat on the patio staring

at the phone as birds came and went.

Hey, wait a minute! Staring at the phone instead of watching the actual birds? Seems bizarre, to say the least. Reminds me of watching MTV back in the day instead of going out to concerts. But those photos and videos on the phone are pretty cool. You can see for yourself by accessing r/birds on Reddit.

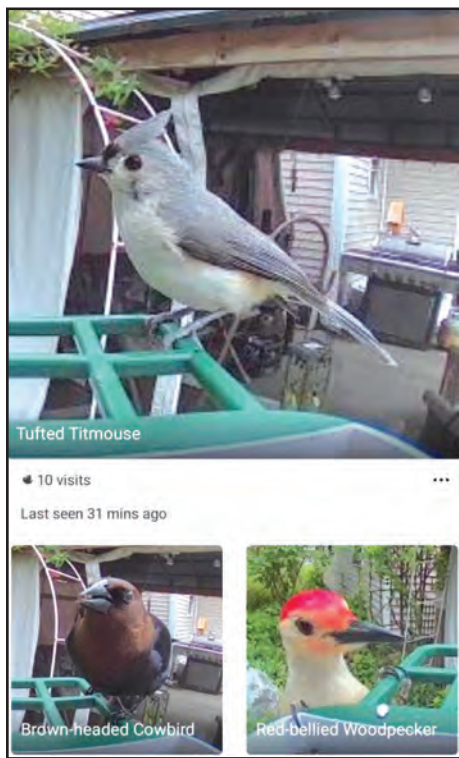
And the I.D. feature is not guaranteed to be correct, of course. The Carolina Chickadee rarely visits north of New Jersey. Is it extending its range, or was it misidentified?

I wonder what "real" birders – members of the Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club, for example – would say about these newfangled bird feeders? For that matter, what would they say about any bird feeders? (Because of the deadline for this article, I couldn't get a hold of them). After a little online investigation, I see that hardcore birders who keep life lists, visiting remote corners of the earth to observe a Stresemann's Bristlefoot, wouldn't be caught dead looking at a screen shot. I ran into a few of these people in Tortuguero, Costa Rica, along with Roger Tory Peterson. They were in search of a Harpy Eagle. We all had a rousing evening at Tortuga Lodge, even though Sue, Becky and I weren't on the tour. They were a fun group. They had cameras, of course, but only to take photos of birds they actually encountered. Some birders keep a separate list of birds they "saw" on their trail cameras, or, now, on their bird feeder cameras.

And bird feeders themselves can be controversial (along with everything else in the world). Birds clustered at feeders can spread disease. Birds become dependent, losing their ability to forage in the wild. They become sitting ducks (or sitting sparrows) for stray cats. They get in fights with squirrels. Cats kill around two million birds every year – squirrels around zero.

Sue's sister Margaret Minard has seven bird feeders in her yard, which has been designated as a National Wildlife Federation Habitat. She has no cats, and a dog that chases away any stray cats. Margaret tells me that different types of feeders attract different species of birds.

*continued on page 14*



These bird images were taken with a high-tech camera installed at a bird feeder. *Courtesy photos*



From left: Dylan Schlichting, Melissa Schlichting, and Jesse Eldrid with bird feeder and house. *Photo by Mark Adams*



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# Road trip!

A new twist on a treasured tradition

I don't know how it can be May already, but here we are and it's the start of a season made for living outdoors and taking trips. One of my favorite things to do is going to flea markets, and for many years that's just what my mother, sister and I did for our annual girls' weekend this time of year. We'd journey to Brimfield, Massachusetts for the oldest and largest flea in the country, stay in a hotel and go to a lovely dinner. We'd hit the market again in the morning for a few hours before heading back home. Lots of fun, lots of treasures and lots of treasured memories to count among my many blessings.

But while the thrill of the hunt was the focus of the trip, it was always our time together that was the most priceless treasure of all. It may sound trite, but it's so true. We would set out early in the morning and stop for coffee to drink on the way. Once there we would get right to shopping, walking the many, many fields full of vendors and their wares, sometimes with something specific in mind, other times just knowing it when we saw it, but always having the best time. If you've never been, you can't understand the enormity of Brimfield. Antiques, collectables, old and new, acre after acre of everything and anything you could imag-



Memories from earlier road trips: From left, Vicki, mom Elaine and sister Robin having fun at the renowned flea market in Brimfield, Mass. Left: Vicki is known for whipping up a charcuterie board and cocktails before the gang heads out to dinner after a day of shopping. Photos courtesy of Vicki Frank Day



ine or ever want. There's so incredibly much to see.

But our trips weren't just a feast for the eyes. Food played a big part, as well. We would usually get lunch at one of the many vendors (the last year we went I made sandwiches for us), not just welcome because we were hungry, but because by then we needed to sit a spell. Our tradition was to end our first flea market day by late afternoon, head back to the hotel and relax with charcuterie and martinis on the balcony of our room. We might go for a swim before getting dressed for dinner at a nice restaurant in town. Blissful.

This was just what we did our very first trip there together, but it has become legendary. The hotel where we were staying had an adjacent restaurant on the same property. We walked to it and stood on line a long while before being seated. A really long while. We later found out the restaurant had just been taken over by new management a week or so before, and they clearly hadn't worked the bugs

out yet. They certainly hadn't prepared themselves for the onslaught of people in town for the flea market. It didn't help that it was also prom weekend and teens in their finest were everywhere getting their pictures taken by the lake that backed the hotel. It was pretty chaotic.

We were finally led to our table, making our way through the crowded dining room to a screened-in porch area in back, which gave us a great view of the posing prom goers and their paparazzi parents. We were pretty hungry at this point, a tad frustrated, though we were amused and understanding in equal measure, and very much wanting cocktails. We ordered a round of dirty martinis and a running joke was born.

A quick note here as an ex-server. The staff, while a bit blind-sided, was clearly doing their best, and I appreciate the stress they had to have felt at being overwhelmed. I think that's why, instead of getting angry, we chose to find the humor in the situation. Remember how I said

*continued on page 17*

**Blessing of the Animals**

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**@ 12PM**

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			8		3			
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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

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3	4				
		2			
5				2	
		4			

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

## THEME: GRADUATION

### ACROSS

1. "\_\_\_ Louise"
5. Unsolicited email
9. Parentheses, e.g.
13. Not mainstream, as in art
15. Heap
16. Chesterfield, e.g.
17. Not sharp
18. Katy Perry's hit
19. Grammy of sports
20. \*Bachelor of Arts, e.g.
23. Autumn mo.
24. Opposite of outs
25. Muslim ruler, respectfully
28. Retirement safety net (2 words)
31. Completely isolate (2 words)
33. "That feels good!" exclamation
34. Programmer's bane
35. Mozart's "L' \_\_\_ del Cairo"
36. \*Same as #11 Down
40. #me \_\_\_
42. Paleozoic or Victorian, e.g.
43. Yoda: "Do or do not. There is no \_\_\_"
44. River port in Belgium
47. Not figurative
51. Wavelike patterned silk
52. "For \_\_\_ a jolly..."
53. Bass product
54. \*Student speaker at graduation, usually
59. Regrettably, exclamation
61. Immanuel \_\_\_, German philosopher
62. Fortune teller's props
63. Welcome \_\_\_, pl.
64. "Cogito \_\_\_ sum"
65. Subdivision of an act
66. Olden day "you"
67. Whitetail, e.g.
68. Late actor Kristofferson

### DOWN

1. Type of ape
2. Twist together
3. Not products, in chemistry
4. Dietary mineral
5. Spring, \_\_\_, sprung
6. Devoutly religious
7. Winglike
8. F te des M res honoree
9. Industrial plastic
10. Luxury furniture wood
11. \*Part of graduation regalia
12. Slovenly abode
14. Pilot's estimate, acr.
21. Fire starter
22. Santa \_\_\_ winds
26. Half of NFL
27. \*BA alternative
29. Same as Dao
30. "Friends, Romans..., lend me your \_\_\_," sing.
31. \*Stand-in teacher
32. Self-centered one
34. Undergarment
36. \*What guest graduation speaker is supposed to do
37. Dadaist Jean \_\_\_
38. \*A in #27 Down
39. Marbled toast
40. \*#36 Across for PhD recipient
41. Lennon's widow
45. Fish family
46. Sushi restaurant staple
47. \*Professor, technically
48. Faultfinder and scoffer
49. \*Former students
50. Part of eyeglasses, pl.
52. Door holder
55. Barely got by
56. Foolhardy challenge
57. Roman goddess of fertility
58. Nordstorm's outlet
59. Invoice qty.
60. Note that follows soh

## CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	
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59	60					61				62				
63						64				65				
66						67						68		



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The solutions to both the Sudoku & Crossword puzzles can be found on page 17



# DECODING DUTCHESS PAST

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# 250 years of local voices diverge on US relationship with Britain

By Bill Jeffway

As part of our country's celebration of 250 years of independence from Britain, King Charles, III, recently addressed the U.S. Congress. His comments reflect the challenge of describing the 250-year-old US/British relationship. Was the US "born of" Britain such that we can directly trace back our values and laws? Or was the US born in opposition to, and distinct from British foundational values? Do we have more in common with France, for example, a country that also topped a King, that has a constitution inspired by ours, and was essential to our independence 250 years ago?

On April 26, 2026 King Charles mentioned the most frequently cited evidence in support of the case of a close evolution from England. The June 15, 1215 Magna Carta was signed by King John. It recognized that the King and government were not above laws, and went further, defining specific rights that sound familiar today, including due process, and separation of powers.

King Charles referred to the "Great Charter" this way, "[Your founding fathers] carried with them, and carried forward, the great inheritance of the British Enlightenment – as well as the ideals which had an even deeper history in English common law and Magna Carta. The U.S. Supreme Court Historical Society has calculated that Magna Carta is cited in at least 160 Supreme Court cases since 1789."

A century ago in the 1920s, the once mighty British Empire was finding it increasingly difficult to keep a grip on countries that sought their own independence. At the same time, the United States was expanding as a global power.

How we describe our historic ties to Britain became a subject of debate in the

public sphere, in particular public holidays and public school teachings.

The free public school movement gained traction in the 1820s and 1830s. There were calls for American public education to be distinct and free from British traditions. Nowhere was this more clearly articulated than through the voice of a Poughkeepsie author and publisher, Jesse Torrey. Torrey argued in the 1830s and 1840s that American children were still being educated with British textbooks that carried pernicious British assumptions and values.

He announced in 1849 that Poughkeepsie would be the base for publishing "Torrey's American School Library," a national resource to make more American books accessible to all through public schools. In the launch of a series of such books in 1828, his "Mental Museum for the Rising Generation" established the principle of including in the appendix the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and bylaws that could be used to create local free libraries. He felt it was imperative to lay out this "throughline" to create a uniquely American education.

The idea of a strong and independent country grew as the United States expanded its global footprint (and role) through the 1898 Spanish American War. The emergence of World War One in 1914 was putting unprecedented pressure on the British Empire. Britain was feeling a need to flex its muscles on the world stage in terms of "soft power," the idea that it was the source of values and laws. On June 15, 1915, with the war raging, proposals for a celebration of Magna Carta Day emerged in England and "all English speaking countries" as they claimed the document had forever remained "the greatest and noblest decla-



Above left: Poughkeepsie School Superintendent Sylvester Shear was an advocate for the annual celebration of Magna Carta day in public schools. On Memorial Day of 1916 he promised, "Magna Carta shall be written larger and broader and in better terms as a guide for all civilizations." Above right: DCHS founder, and Irish Catholic political leader John Mylod (shown with Eleanor Roosevelt) was a leader in the Knights of Columbus, a group that actively pushed back on what it saw as the growing "pro-British" orientation of history through Magna Carta Day and new schoolbooks. *Courtesy photos*

ration of popular rights."

That same day, June 15, 1915, New York State school commissioner Albert Finley ordered all schools to mark the day with ceremonies. At the Memorial Day crowd of 1916 at Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery, Poughkeepsie School Superintendent Sylvester Shear said, "I feel that the time is not far distant when the Magna Carta shall be written larger and broader and in better terms as a guide for all civilizations." In 1918 he said, "In all our six wars we have fought for the extension of the principles of Magna Carta and the Declaration of Independence."

The International Magna Carta Day Association argued, "Whatever the race or origin of the people of the United States today they acknowledge fully and freely that their history is a continuation of British history, and that the principles of Magna Carta and other great instruments of British Freedom have come directly down the stream of time as the common Heritage of the Anglo-Saxon race."

But by 1923, a growing revolt against not only the celebration of Magna Carta Day, but an accusation that there had been a pernicious corruption of school textbooks, got headlines. The accusations were reminiscent of those of Joseph Torrey a century earlier.

The June 4, 1923 New York Times reported that New York City's Commissioner of Accounts, David Hirschfield, recommended that eight American History schoolbooks be banned from public schools as too

"pro-British and anti-American."

Other leading dissenting voices were Catholic organizations like the Knights of Columbus. Irish Catholics, in particular, would have had a hard time endorsing the idea that Britain was the source of world freedom, given Britain's treatment of what eventually became the Irish Republic.

A highly regarded local leader of Catholics and Irish Catholics was John Mylod, who helped found the local Knights of Columbus. As a founder of the Dutchess County Historical Society, Mylod may have been influential in the only instance of its kind I can find, where the board of the Dutchess County Historical Society in 1923 endorsed a resolution urging that history be taught "with fairness, open-mindedness, and resistance to political interference" – an obvious pushback on what was seen as emerging pro-British advocates.

Although there were some scattered and lesser attempts to create a Magna Carta Day annual celebration after the 1920s, the idea never took hold in the U.S. or British Commonwealth. Debates about schoolbook content obviously remain, but are less likely to be about foreign influence and more about what part of American history to emphasize.

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



Above: DCHS Collections is full of items with Royal insignia and references in documents prior to 1776. To what degree was the new United States of America an extension of, or a rebuttal to, the United Kingdom? *Courtesy photos*

## Get Growing!

continued from page 11

For example, her dozens of goldfinches swarm around the thistle feeder with its tiny openings, suited to the finch's pointed beak. This could explain why Melissa saw no goldfinches among the 268 visits to her feeder, which sports an open tray filled with bird food.

Melissa also bought a bird house with a camera inside that will monitor the nest construction and baby birds. Jesse hasn't put it up yet, so I'll have to let you know

how that works out. Meanwhile, I'm monitoring three nests that have been built in various locations around my greenhouse, including one on the ground amidst a bed of hostas. Good thing I don't have any cats. I wonder if woodchucks kill birds.

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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**May 21: Author Event,** Oblong Rhinebeck, 6422 Montgomery St., Rhinebeck. Eliza Swann, "The Alchemical Imagination: Creativity As A Catalyst For Radical Transformation," 6 p.m. Free. Registration requested. (845) 876-0500 or oblongbooks.com

**May 21-24: Music at the Towne Crier Cafe,** 379 Main St., Beacon. May 21: Latin Dance with Beacon Dance Beat, 7 p.m. All seats \$20. May 22: Kelli Baker Band & Murali Coryell, 8:30 p.m. Tickets \$30 advance, \$35 door. May 23: Ladies Who Rocked the 80's!, 8:30 p.m. Tickets \$30 advance, \$35 door. May 24: Last Minute Soulmates Celebrate Bob Dylan's Birthday, 7 p.m. No cover, but there is a \$20 minimum purchase of food/drink required. (845) 855-1300 or www.townecrier.com

**May 22: Walkway Connections (For Kids!): Native Seed Bombs,** Walkway Over the Hudson State Park, Ulster Welcome Center, Highland. Join Friends of the Walkway Environmental Educator Clara Lima as they introduce participants to the importance of native plants and their role in supporting healthy local ecosystems, 7-8 p.m. Through a hands-on seed bomb activity, kids will learn how native seeds can help restore habitats and provide food and shelter for pollinators and wildlife. Free to attend and appropriate for all ages.

**May 22: Walkway At Night,** Walkway Over the Hudson State Park. Experience the Walkway when the sun sets and the Hudson Valley begins to glow, 8:30-10 p.m. From 212 feet above the river, take in breathtaking views as the moon rises overhead and the lights of Poughkeepsie and Highland shimmer in the distance. Tickets \$5 in advance or at the gate. Children 12 & under are free. Advance registration is encouraged to shorten your wait at the gate. Reservations: walkway.org/walkwayatnight.

**May 22: "What You See and What You Don't See,"** the grounds of Staatsburgh's State Historic Site, Old Post Rd., Staatsburgh. Guided walk through the estate's grounds that explores how the landscape was designed to reflect the luxurious lifestyle of Staatsburgh's owners, while deliberately hiding the turn-of-the-century technology and labor that made the estate run, 10 a.m. Free. Reservations required: <https://Bookeo.com/StaatsburghSHS>

**May 22-24: "She Kills Monsters: Young Adventurers Edition,"** The Center for Performing Arts at Rhinebeck, 661 Rte. 308, Rhinebeck. Teens on Stage presents a play about high schooler Agnes Evans, who is dealing with the death of her younger sister, Tilly. When Agnes stumbles upon Tilly's Dungeons & Dragons notebook, she finds herself catapulted into a journey of discovery and action-packed adventure in the imaginary world that was

her sister's refuge. In this high-octane dramatic comedy laden with homicidal fairies, nasty ogres, and '90s pop culture, acclaimed playwright Qui Nguyen offers a heart-pounding homage to the geek and warrior within us all. Performances: Fri., 7:30 p.m.; Sat., 2:30 & 7:30 p.m.; Sun., 2:30 p.m. Tickets \$19. (845) 876-3080 or www.centerforperformingarts.org

**May 23: "Digging Deeper: Alice Livingston and the Making of Clermont's Historic Gardens,"** Clermont State Historic Site, 1 Clermont Ave., Germantown. During her time in Italy, Alice Delafield Clarkson Livingston (1872-1964) fell in love with the beauty of classical garden design. When she returned home to Clermont, she blended those Italian influences with the charm and natural grace of English-style gardens. In the 1930s, Alice created the Walled, Wilderness, and Cutting Gardens, each with its own character and story to tell. This tour explores how her creativity shaped the timeless landscape we enjoy today., 10 a.m.-noon. Comfortable footwear recommended, as the tour will take place outdoors on grassy and uneven surfaces. Tickets \$40. [www.friendsofclermont.org](http://www.friendsofclermont.org)

**May 23: Historic Toys and Games,** Staatsburgh State Historic Site, Old Post Rd., Staatsburgh. Providing a delightful experience of bygone times, Dawn Elliott's historic toys and games have been a highlight of events at many historic sites and museums. Everyone is invited to experience a variety of lawn games, board games, or simply play with toys, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Reservations recommended: <https://www.Bookeo.com/StaatsburghSHS>

**May 23: Movies in the Park,** Taconic State Park (near the Ore Pit), 253 Rte. 344, Copake Falls. Free movie night in the park, 8:30 p.m. Bring family and friends, a blanket or lawn chairs, and snacks to join the Movie Nights at Taconic State Park. We'll be showing some of our favorite movies throughout the season in the open air on the lawn at Copake Falls. Movie choices will be announced via our social media and in the Park's Office. General info: (518) 329-3993

**May 23: Northeast Dutchess Spring Community Day,** Innisfree Garden, 362 Tyrrel Rd., Millbrook. Free admission to residents of participating Northeast Dutchess County communities (Amenia, Clinton Corners, Dover Plains, Millbrook, Millerton, North East, Pine Plains, Pleasant Valley, Stanford, Washington, Wassaic, Wingdale, and their hamlets), along with free and discounted special programs throughout the day, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Proof of residency is required upon arrival. Advance registration recommended for special programs. More info: [www.innisfreegarden.org/events/spring-community-day-2026](http://www.innisfreegarden.org/events/spring-community-day-2026)

**May 23 & 29: Murder Cafe, "The Last Laugh."** New interactive dinner-theater show set in the Chuckle Shack, a comedy club that is hosting the Tournament of Champions. Four comics will be competing for the gold water bottle, but the night will take a deadly turn when the club favorite collapses mid-performance. What was meant to be a night of laughter turns into a chilling whodunit, with the host, comics, and audience members all suspects. Mike Magoon is the stressed-out house manager and The Chuckle Shack's emcee. He plays favorites, knows everyone's secrets and is no stranger to blackmail. He's got a motive for murder and an attachment to the gold water bottle. What about you? You have comedy chops? Mike will invite you to take the microphone between acts. If you have five minutes of hilarity, the spotlight will be yours. And maybe the gold bottle! Performances: May 23: Curry Estate, Hopewell Junction. May 29: The Kartrite Resort, Monticello. [www.murdercafe.net](http://www.murdercafe.net)

**May 23-25: Guided Tours of Copake Iron Works,** Taconic State Park, 253 Rte. 344, Copake Falls. Visit the Copake Iron Works for guided tours and the Pomeroy Family Railroad for a ride on the train to learn about the history of the Iron Works, 2-4 p.m. General info: (518) 329-3993

**May 24: American Ballet Theatre Studio Company,** Kaatsbaan Cultural Park, Black Box Theater, Studio Complex, 120 Broadway, Tivoli. Experience the next generation of ballet stars performing a dynamic program of both classical and contemporary works, 2 p.m. Tickets \$45 GA, \$25 students w/ID. [www.kaatsbaan.org](http://www.kaatsbaan.org)

**May 24: Tour, "Gilded Age Scandals!"** Staatsburgh State Historic Site, Old Post Rd., Staatsburgh. Ruth and Ogden Mills were paragons of respectability, but some of their Gilded Age peers were not! Learn about the scandalous behavior and intrigues of the very rich at the turn-of-the-century while touring the mansion with a costumed guide, 2 p.m. Cost: \$12/adults, \$10/seniors & students. This tour is not recommended for children. Reservations required: <https://Bookeo.com/StaatsburghSHS>

**May 24: Guided Hike: History Hidden in the Woods,** Staatsburgh State Historic Site, Old Post Rd., Staatsburgh. This 90-minute guided hike will lead visitors through the park, exploring the history of three historic estates: from Staatsburgh's founding as a gentleman's farm in the 1700s to the development of The Point and Stonehurst estates in the 19th century. The hike is approximately 1.5 miles of uneven terrain, requiring study footwear. Free. Reservations required: <https://Bookeo.com/StaatsburghSHS>

**May 24 & 31: "Tales of the Titanic: Themed Mansion Tour,** Staatsburgh State Historic Site, Old Post Rd., Staatsburgh. Mark the 114th anniversary of the sinking by touring the home of Titanic ticket holders, Ogden and Ruth Mills, 11 a.m. This 90-minute themed mansion tour, led by a costumed guide, focuses on the legacy of the Titanic, offering tales of bravery and tragedy in a setting remarkably similar to first class on the Titanic. Cost: \$12/Adults, \$10/Seniors & Students, Children 12 & under are free. Reservations required: <https://Bookeo.com/StaatsburghSHS>

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**Save the Date:**  
**May 30, 2026**

— for the Grand Re-Opening of —  
**Senate House State Historic Site**

After being closed for an important restoration project in 2025, Senate House will re-open with the debut of two brand-new permanent exhibits, as well as a day of community celebration!

**Join us for:**

- Ribbon-cutting ceremony at 10:00 a.m.
- Open-house style tours of Senate House
- Food trucks
- Colonial music from Carla and Keyes
- Reenactors from the 1st and 3rd Ulster Militias
- Take-home crafts
- *Revisit the Revolution* traveling exhibit

**Saturday, May 30, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

Senate House State Historic Site  
296 Fair Street, Kingston, NY 12401



Scan the QR code to learn more and save the event to your calendar

## Hyde Park historic sites set Memorial Day Weekend activities

To commemorate Memorial Day Weekend, on Saturday, May 23 and Sunday, May 24, 2026, the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum, Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site, and The Duffie Bag (of Patterson, N.Y.) will present a weekend of historic military displays and a World War II encampment on the Library's Great Lawn. Re-enactors in battle dress will be on hand to share their love of history with the visiting public. Collections of military uniforms, weapons, insignia from 1917 to the present day, and military vehicles – including an M4A4 Sherman Tank – will be on display. This is a free, public event.

**ON DISPLAY: M4A4 Sherman Tank**

The tank to be displayed is a model M4A4 Sherman tank – a World War II combat veteran – assembled by Chrysler at the Detroit Tank Arsenal in December 1942. It was part of President Roosevelt's "lend-lease" program, crewed by and under the command of Great Britain's armed forces during the war. Display of the tank is courtesy of the Fourth

Armored Division Historical Preservation Group.

**The 240th Military Police Battalion Display**

Inside the Wallace Visitor Center over Memorial Day Weekend, the National Park Service will display many original and period authentic items that tell the story of the 240th Military Police Battalion. President Roosevelt loved coming back to his beloved home in Hyde Park, whether for pleasure or politics. With the backdrop of his country property far removed from the security of Washington D.C., it became essential to protect FDR – and the world leaders who visited him – throughout the duration of World War II. Thus, the 240th Military Police Battalion was tasked with protecting him and his 1,600-acre property in Hyde Park.

Regular admission will be charged to tour the FDR Library and Museum, and National Park Service Historic Sites. Contact Cliff Laube, at the Roosevelt Library, at (845) 486-7745 with questions.



# OBITUARIES

## Lawrence Colkin

MILLBROOK – Lawrence Colkin passed away peacefully on Monday, May 11, at Vassar Brothers Medical Center in Poughkeepsie, NY. Larry was born on February 28, 1945, in The Bronx, NY, to Evelyn (Harrington) and Lawrence Colkin, Sr. He was the youngest of four, with 3 older sisters, Patricia (McBride), Ursula (Quinn), and Virginia (McKee).

In 1969, Larry married the love of his life, Elizabeth Ann Farrell, and they lived the greatest love story of our time, until her death in January of 2026. Theirs was a life of singing, dancing, and laughter. They moved to Millerton in 1972, where they raised their 4 children. Family and friends meant everything to them. Larry is predeceased by Betty Ann and their daughter, Nancy (Tsoubris). He is survived by his children Eileen Cuneo (Colin), Jerry Colkin (Rose-Ann), and Elizabeth Clarke (Edward). His fondest affections were reserved for his 11 grandchildren: Teddy, Elizabeth, Liam, Emma, Ciara, Grace, Kathleen, Patrick, Nora, Ryan, and James.

Larry was a proud graduate of Fordham Preparatory School, Class of 1963, and Fordham University, Class of 1967. He received a Masters in Education from SUNY New Paltz. He taught high school English at Arlington High School for over 30 years, building lifelong friendships with cherished colleagues, especially his best friend of 56 years, Fred Nye. His greatest joys as a teacher came from knowing his students would always spell a lot as 2 different words, and cherishing the moment they first experienced Scout saying "Hey, boo", in To Kill A Mockingbird. Over the years his continued dedication to education was demonstrated by his service on the Board of

Education for Webutuck Central School District, teaching Latin and English at Dutchess Community College, and co-teaching Confirmation Classes with Betty at St. Patrick's Parish in Millerton. In 2007 they relocated to Millbrook, where they built a new community at St. Joseph's Church and meeting with their morning crew at the Millbrook Diner, especially Grace Caddell and Mary and Pat Flanagan.

Larry will be dearly missed by those who survive him, Virginia and Jack McKee, Gene and Doris Farrell, Lolie Farrell (John), Ann Farrell (Jerry). He will be met at heaven's doors by those who went before him: Lawrence and Evelyn Colkin, Patricia McBride, Ursula and Tom Quinn, Rosemary and Bob Steiner, Eileen and Patrick Frawley, and Jerry, John and Bobby Farrell. Visitation for Larry was held at Allen Funeral Home, Millbrook, on Friday, May 15, followed by a funeral mass at St. Joseph's Church. Please visit [www.hudsonvalleyfuneralhomes.com](http://www.hudsonvalleyfuneralhomes.com) for directions and condolences.

## Ella Mae Flanagan

FORMERLY OF HYDE PARK – Ella Mae Flanagan passed away at the age of 88 in Bismarck, North Dakota on May 10, 2026.

Born May 16, 1937, to James Powell and Catherine Bateman Powell, Ella Mae grew up in a large family, surrounded by her many brothers and sisters. She developed a strong sense of compassion and service that, along with her Catholic faith, guided her throughout her life.

Ella Mae married Richard Wolfe in 1961 and together they raised six children: Mary Koppinger, Margaret Ridgeway, Richard Flanagan, Thomas Wolfe, Daniel Flanagan, and Matthew Flanagan. After her husband passed away, Ella Mae married James Flanagan in 1972. They added Julia Flanagan-Schmidt and James W. Flanagan to their family.

She made family the center of her life, and nothing gave her more pride than celebrating the lives and accomplishments of her many children and grandchildren.

A lifelong learner and dedicated professional, Ella Mae graduated from Catholic Central High School in 1955 before pursuing her calling in nursing at St. Mary's Hospital Nursing School, where she became a Registered Nurse. She went on to serve her community with skill and compassion at Samaritan Hospital in Troy, NY, and later at Hudson River State Psychiatric Hospital in Poughkeepsie, NY.

Committed to advancing her education, Ella Mae spent time at the University of New Mexico

and later returned to school as an adult (while continuing to work full time!) and earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the State University of New York at New Paltz. She subsequently completed her Master's degree in Nursing at Pace University. Her career reflected not only her intelligence and determination, but also her deep care for others. Her patients benefited from her tireless and unwavering advocacy, as well as her warmth and kindness.

In retirement, she traveled widely, including trips to Ghana, Rome, Lourdes, Ireland, and a river cruise through Germany and Hungary.

Ella Mae will be remembered for her strength, warmth, and continual dedication to both her family and her profession. She overcame very difficult challenges with a simple and clear focus: the people she loved were the only thing that mattered. Her legacy lives on through the many lives she touched.

Ella Mae was predeceased by both of her husbands, her son Thomas Wolfe, her daughter Margaret Ridgeway, and her granddaughters Danielle Flanagan and Kimberly Koppinger. She is survived by two of her brothers, William Powell and Daniel Powell, six children, as well as eleven grandchildren.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held at Regina Coeli Church, Hyde Park on Monday, May 18, 2026. Inurnment will follow in Our Lady of the Holy Souls Mausoleum at St. Peter's Cemetery, Poughkeepsie.

Local arrangements by Sweet's Funeral Home, Hyde Park. To send an online condolence, please visit Ella Mae's obituary page at [www.sweetsfuneralhome.com](http://www.sweetsfuneralhome.com).

## Margaret L. Mason

RED HOOK – Margaret L. Mason, 88, of Red Hook, passed away on Monday, May 11, 2026. She was born on July 13, 1937, in Bronx, NY, and was the daughter of the late Alfred and Gertrude (Andreas) Dill.

On September 29, 1956, Margaret married William F. Mason III and shared 61 years of marriage. William predeceased her in 2018.

Margaret's first job was as a bank teller in the Bronx; she was only held up once. She took time from work to raise her children and take care of the household. She later worked as a cafeteria worker for the Wappingers and Red Hook Central Schools.

A woman of many words, Margaret had many phrases that she used in her parenting role when it came to raising her children. Some of her famous phrases were: "Eigen lob stinkt" (self-praise stinks), "Buxtehude" - used to tell us our destination when asked "where are we going?", "Botch-a-galooop," "Affu-yafti," "Slob-ahanis-do," "Fumba-lacka-chumba." We were not sure what they meant, but we understood them as "we better listen, behave, and do as we are told."

Margaret was a prize-winning baker in her youth that stayed with her in her adult years. As a youth, Margaret was a 4-H member. When she was 12, she had her first try in the baking competition at the Dutchess County Fair, which earned her 1st prize for a sponge cake. Her passion and competitiveness led her to win many competitions. She had a wall full of ribbons that displayed her culinary accomplishments. Her husband, Bill, had many stories about her baking and cooking. He said the first cake she made, after they were married "you could have shingled a roof with it, and don't drop it on your foot, it was heavy." He complained that she used too much salt in the meals she prepared. He threw out the saltshakers and said, "then she became a good cook." Margaret was well known for her Sauerbraten and German Potato Dumplings (Kartoffelklosse). Yummy!

At 54 years old, Margaret retired to Boyton Beach FL, after spending much of her life in New York, between the Bronx, Hopewell Jct., Red Hook, and Athens.

Margaret is survived by her daughters, Carol (Jim) Ransford of Red Hook, NY, and Donna (Steve) Cahenzli of South Cairo, NY; her brother, Richard (Bette) Dill of Red Hook, NY; her sister-in-law Irene Ashworth-Keenan and family; her brother-in-law, Edward (Joyce) Mason and family; her grandchildren, William (Jesse) Mason of Grapeville, PA, Jordyn Ransford of Red Hook, NY, Matthew (Samantha) Cahenzli

of Cincinnati, OH, and Ashley (Jeremy) Allen of Mechanicville, NY; her five great-grandchildren, Destanie, Brandon Jr., Aubrie, Justin, and Clara; as well as numerous nieces, nephews, and extended family, also survive Margaret.

In addition to her husband, William, Margaret is predeceased by her brothers, Alfred and Walter Dill, her son, William Mason IV, and her grandsons, Christopher Ransford and Brandon Mason.

A Memorial Service was held on Saturday May 16, 2026, at Christ Church, Red Hook, NY. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made in Margaret's memory to Hudson Valley Hospice ([vhospice.org](http://vhospice.org)). Arrangements have been entrusted to Burnett & White Funeral Homes, Red Hook, NY.

## Thomas McGrath

PLEASANT VALLEY – Thomas V. McGrath, Jr., 78, of Pleasant Valley, NY passed away peacefully on May 1, 2026 surrounded by his loving family.

Tom was born on April 15, 1948 in Poughkeepsie, NY to Thomas V. McGrath, Sr. and Loretta Steuer McGrath Galas.

A lifelong resident of the area he attended Poughkeepsie and Arlington schools. In 1965 he enlisted in the Marines. He was a true patriot for his country and fellow Jarheads. He also had a great respect for our veterans and took pride in volunteering at various events to support them.

After his honorable discharge from the Marines he joined the workforce at IBM. In 1968 he started his masonry business which highlighted his trade craftsmanship.

On December 2, 1967 he married Rose (Rusti) Baldwin of NJ at Holy Trinity Church in Poughkeepsie, NY.

Tom was also a lifetime member of the Poughkeepsie Elks Lodge #275 and a member of the American Legion. He enjoyed holding office at the Elks and the meetings were never dull and volunteering, often in the kitchen keeping everyone on their toes.

Left behind to cherish his memory are his soulmate of 58 years, Rusti, his son Thomas III and his wife Christina (aka daughter II) of Hyde Park, NY, daughter Heather of Pleasant Valley, NY, grandsons Mark, Zachary and John Thomas, his brother Gary and wife Colleen of Poughkeepsie, NY, sister Colleen of Poughkeepsie, NY and his cousins, nieces and nephews.

In addition to his parents, Tom was predeceased by his sister Nancy, brother Michael and several aunts, uncles and cousins.

Tom was a loving and caring son, brother, husband, father, grandpa and friend. He was always there for his family through both the good and bad times. He was the rock for all of them. May his love remain in our hearts and the memories live on.

Visitation was held Tuesday, May 12, 2026 at Timothy P. Doyle Funeral Home, Poughkeepsie, NY. Funeral services followed.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to your veteran organization of choice.

## Gerald Miracle

PLEASANT VALLEY – Gerald Miracle passed away peacefully at his home in Pleasant Valley on May 12, with his loving wife of 50 years, Peggy, by his side. He was the son of Otis and Neureul Miracle.

Gerald was born December 25, 1941, in Berea, Kentucky, and grew up in Mt. Vernon, Kentucky. He attended the University of Kentucky, where he earned a degree in Electrical Engineering. Kentucky was always considered home, and he enjoyed returning often to spend time with family and friends.

Upon graduating in 1965, Gerald moved to Wappingers Falls, NY, and began his career with IBM. He thoroughly enjoyed his work and had the opportunity to travel the world throughout his career. On May 8, 1976, he married his loving and devoted wife, Peggy, and together they made their home in Pleasant Valley.

Gerald was a member of the New Hackensack Flying Club, the IBM Quarter Century Club, and the First Baptist Church of Poughkeepsie. He had always dreamed of flying and fulfilled that dream by earning his private

pilot's license. He took great pride in flying friends and family and especially cherished flying his family to Kentucky so his cousins could experience flying with him. Though he had no siblings, his cousins filled that space in his life, and he loved spending time with them.

Among his many hobbies and interests, Gerald especially loved spending time in his garage tinkering with his cherished machines, cars, and beloved Harley-Davidson motorcycle. His passion for learning and his ability to repair almost anything were qualities he proudly passed on to his two sons and two stepsons. Through his patience and guidance, they shared countless meaningful moments working and learning alongside him.

Gerald and Peggy shared a love of travel and explored the world together, visiting every continent. A lifelong learner, Gerald seemed to know something about everything and loved sharing his knowledge and love of travel with his children and grandchildren. Affectionately known as "Papa" and "Grandpa," he treasured every opportunity to celebrate life's special moments with his family.

Gerald is survived by his loving wife, Peggy; his two sons, Jay (Phuong) and Michael; his two stepsons, Peter (Deborah) and Craig (Alexis); eleven grandchildren; and twelve great-grandchildren.

He was predeceased by his parents, Otis and Neureul Miracle, and by his cousins Winston Holt, Gwen, Doris, and Jack.

The family would like to extend a special thank you to his caregivers, Wanda, Angela, and Lucia, for the exceptional care and compassion they provided over the past two years. They would also like to thank Hudson Valley Hospice for their kindness, support, and compassionate care.

Calling hours were held Monday, May, 18th at Allen Funeral Home in Pleasant Valley. Burial will be private and at the convince of the family. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Gerald's memory to Hudson Valley Hospice or The First Baptist Church of Poughkeepsie.

## Renee Peyrat

POUGHQUAG – Renee Peyrat, 89, died peacefully at home on May 11, 2026. She previously lived in New York City, Westchester, and Putnam County.

Born on November 12, 1936 in France, Renee was the daughter of the late Joseph and Anne (Bacque) Andreu. In 1957, she immigrated to the United States, while always maintaining a close connection to her roots in France. Over the years, she treasured visits to her village and remained deeply connected to her family there. On June 29, 1959, in New York City, Renee married Eugene Peyrat, the love of her life. Together, they shared 40 wonderful years of marriage while raising their three children before his passing in 1999.

She enjoyed knitting and gardening. Renee loved life and was full of joy and happiness, lighting up every room she entered. She was deeply devoted to her faith in God. Above all, her family was everything to her, and she especially cherished family gatherings and the time she spent with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

She is survived by her children, Pierre Peyrat, Joelle Stufano (Thomas), and Martine Connell (Kevin); her grandchildren, Brittany Raiti (Joseph), TJ Stufano (Gessica), Joshua Stufano (Madison), Ryan Connell, Kyle Connell, and Alyssa Connell; her great-grandchildren, Julia, Dominick, Lilliana, Alivia, Luke, Thomas, Violet, Nico, and Siena; her sister, Josette LaPorte; and her extended family in France. Renee was looking forward to meeting another great-granddaughter in July.

In addition to her husband and parents, Renee was also predeceased by her brother, Francois Andreu; and her sister, Irma Dougnac.

Calling hours were held on Thursday, May 14, at the McHoul Funeral Home, Inc., Hopewell Junction. A Mass of Christian Burial was offered on Friday, May 15th at St. Denis Church, Hopewell Junction followed by burial at St. Denis Cemetery.

Please visit Renee's Book of Memories at [www.mchoulfuneralhome.com](http://www.mchoulfuneralhome.com).

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**PUBLIC NOTICE OF HEARING BEFORE THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

**Town of Pleasant Valley, Dutchess County, NY**

Please take note that the Zoning Board of Appeals of the Town of Pleasant Valley, NY, will hold a public hearing on the following proposition:

**Rock Cut Lane, Pleasant Valley/Route 44, Pleasant Valley Appeal #1088 Grid# 6363-04-606341**

Area Variances Request: The applicant is requesting area variances in regards to a proposed single-family residence on a vacant lot on the corner of Rock Cut Lane and Route 44, with the driveway coming off of Rock Cut Lane. The required side yard setback for HDR zoning is

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15' and their proposed residence is only 10' from the property line, so they are requesting a 5' variance from the left side property line. They also require a 20' rear setback in HDR zoning, but have proposed a 15' rear setback. Thus, they also require a 5' variance from the rear property line.

**SAID Meeting** will take place on May 27, 2026 at the Pleasant Valley Town Hall, 1903 Main Street, Pleasant Valley, NY 12569, and begins at 7:00 p.m.

**NOTICE PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that sealed bids will be received by the Board of Fire Commissioners of the East Clinton Fire District, County of Dutchess, New York on June 24, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at the Fire District Offices lo-

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cated at 9 Firehouse Lane, Clinton Corners, New York 12514 for building of a new firehouse to be located adjacent to the existing firehouse with the access point being on the Salt Point Turnpike. Specifications and drawing may be obtained by contacting Keith Scofield at Liscum, McCormack & VanVoorhis, 845-452-2268 or [kscfield@lmvarchitects.com](mailto:kscfield@lmvarchitects.com) beginning on May 20, 2026. Proposals must be sealed in an envelope on which it is clearly stated "Bid for New Firehouse Build" and shall be addressed to Carol Mackin, Secretary, East Clinton Fire District, and received by her by mail at P.O. Box 181, Clinton Corners, New York 12514, prior to 4:00 p.m. on June 23, 2026. Bids will be publicly opened and

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read on June 24, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. at the Fire District Offices located 9 Firehouse Lane, Clinton Corners, New York 12514.

The award of bid pursuant to this notice is subject to appropriation of funds for this purpose in accordance with the applicable provisions of the General Municipal Law. All bids must meet the requirements of the General Municipal Law of the State of New York and all other applicable statutes and have attached a statement of non-collusion. All documents submitted in connection with this bid will become the property of the Fire District and the Fire District will not return bids or bid documents. The most qualified bidder, as defined by the General Municipal Law

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and the Purchasing Policy of the East Clinton Fire District meeting the specifications will be awarded the bid. The Board of Fire Commissioners reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to readvertise for same.

**CAROL MACKIN, SECRETARY EAST CLINTON FIRE DISTRICT**

**Legal Notice Resolution 2026088 May 15, 2026**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that a public hearing will be held by the County Attorney of Dutchess County in the County Office Building, County Attorney's Conference Room, 5th Floor, 22 Market Street, Poughkeepsie, New York, on the 27th day of May 2026 at 10:00 a.m. on the following Local Law: **ALOCALLAW REQUIRING FOOD SERVICE ESTABLISHMENTS TO PROVIDE SINGLE-USE FOODWARE AND**

**Legal Notices**

**CONDIMENT PACKETS ONLY UPON REQUEST.**

At said time and place, all parties interested will be heard.

Dated: May 15, 2026 Poughkeepsie, NY Susan Serino Dutchess County Executive

**Legal Notice Resolution 2026088 May 15, 2026**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that a public hearing will be held by the County Attorney of Dutchess County in the County Office Building, County Attorney's Conference Room, 5th Floor, 22 Market Street, Poughkeepsie, New York, on the 27th day of May 2026 at 10:30 a.m. on the following Local Law: **ALOCALLAW AMENDING LOCAL LAW NO. 2 OF 2024 REGULATING HAZARDOUS POLLUTION SOURCES IN PROXIMITY TO PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY SOURCES, AQUIFERS AND WETLANDS.** At said time and place, all parties interested will be heard.

**Legal Notices**

Dated: May 13, 2026 Poughkeepsie, NY Susan Serino Dutchess County Executive

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NOTICE**

The Purchasing Agent, County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of proposals for: Bid #RFP-DCP-53-26

Independent Accountants Report (CFR-iiA) for NYS Consolidated Fiscal Reports. Proposals must be submitted electronically through the Empire State Purchasing Group's Regional Bid Notification System (BidNetDirect) Portal on or before 2:00 p.m., June 11, 2026. Specifications, proposal forms and submittal instructions may be obtained by visiting our website <http://www.dutchessny.gov>, selecting "Government", then selecting "Bidding and RFP Opportunities". For additional information, call 845-486-3613.

**Love to Cook**

*continued from page 12*

they weren't prepared? They had run out of clean glasses. And, apparently, also olives. Our martinis finally came after a really long time. In clear plastic Solo cups. With mismatched olives they'd scrounged from the neighboring hotel bar. How do we know all this? They told us! We were hysterical, picturing the servers desperately looking under bar mats for any stray olives that may have escaped their containers (not what happened, but a funny visual). (At least I don't THINK that happened...) They actually had someone literally run next door for our olives. Priceless!

With that memory firmly planted in our hearts and minds, there was only one thing to do: find clear glass "Solo" cups to take on subsequent trips to carry on the tradition. And find them I did, although the only ones available looked like cups crushed in the middle, which was even better! They became our official girls' trip martini glasses, a fun reminder of our first

time at our beloved Brimfield, like a postcard commemorating the first of many special trips to come.

Those trips also helped me hone my charcuterie skills. There's nothing like traveling to make you really plan ahead. The first year I may have packed too much and was too fussy for having to set everything up in a hotel room. By the time I finished setting up it was almost time to go to dinner! After that I narrowed it down to a just a few things – the right amount to complement the cocktails while whetting our appetites for the dinners to come. And what lovely dinners they were! After that first year we sought the area's best seafood restaurants, which were a real treat for us and seemed perfect for a short New England holiday. I will never tire of or fail to appreciate going out to dinner. It's a decadence I savor, especially with my girls! For me at least, food is a huge part of any vacation and everything I have, from food I pack for the trip



Martinis in plastic cups are a humorous tradition born from a chaotic restaurant visit. *Photo by Vicki Frank Day*

to dining out, adds to the experience and the memories.

This week my sister and I will be in Brimfield for the whole run of the market, but this time as vendors. Mama will be with us in spirit – a week is just too long for her to be away. We're not sure what to expect, but we know we'll have a great time and that it will be an adventure. That is why I wasn't able to share a recipe with you this time - I've been prepping and packing and organizing - but when I get back, I'll be heading to the kitchen. Who knows? Maybe I'll be inspired by some-

thing I'll order when we go to one of those seafood restaurants to treat ourselves, which we certainly will! And along with the food, I'll be savoring quality time and many happy memories. I hope you have some adventures too.

*Vicki Frank Day's background includes over two decades in various aspects of the food service industry. She believes cooking should be a fun adventure, that food should be an experience and that every day can be a special occasion. Email her at [vickiloves2cook@gmail.com](mailto:vickiloves2cook@gmail.com).*

**Answers to this week's diversions**  
(puzzles on page 13)

**Suguru solution**

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

**SUDOKU**  
This week's answer

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

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

**Answer to this week's Dot to Dot (puzzle on page 9)**

**Sets**  
Stop your line after completing each set, then skip to the next set and start your line again.  
 □ • 1 thru 5  
 □ ▲ 6 thru 12  
 □ ■ 13 thru 21  
 □ ♦ 22 thru 29  
 □ ● 30 thru 38  
 □ ▲ 39 thru 53  
 □ ■ 54 thru 68  
 □ ♦ 69 thru 93

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145 Adult Care  
150 Announcements  
151 Adoption  
152 Novenas  
154 Lost & Found  
155 Personal  
200 Services

201 Home Improvement  
202 Cleaning Services  
203 Lawn Services  
221 Professional Services  
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720 Vendors Wanted  
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### Announcement

NOTICE OF EARLY DEADLINES: HOLIDAY PRESS SCHEDULE ISSUE.

Southern/Northern Dutchess News and Beacon Free Press will have an early deadline for the May 27th ISSUE. Advertising must be received by: May 20th

CALL: 845-297-3723 for more information.

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- Southern Dutchess News
- Beacon Free Press
- Northern Dutchess News

# Classified

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Deadline Friday at 3 p.m • Publication Wednesday

Fax your ad today! 297-6810

## 401 Apartments for Rent

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TWO (2) bedroom apartment AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE OCCUPANCY, rent is \$2,150.00 per month and one month security deposit. Tenant is responsible for electric, cable, phone and internet service. Included in rent is heat, hot water, water, sewer and trash collection. Credit/Criminal Background Check is required. Property is SMOKE-FREE. Income restrictions apply. Please call (845) 297-2004 for an application.



### MEADOW RIDGE II SENIOR RESIDENCE, Beacon, NY

One (1) bedroom apartment AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE OCCUPANCY, rent is \$1,507.00 per month or join SHORT WAIT LIST for Two (2) bedroom apartment, current rent is \$1,575.00. One month security deposit is required. Tenant is responsible for electric for lights, cooking and air conditioning (wall-thru air conditioners provided) as well as cable, phone and internet service. Included in rent is heat, hot water, water, sewer and trash collection. All household members must be 62 years or older. Credit/Criminal Background Check is required. Property is SMOKE-FREE. Income restrictions apply. Please call (845) 297-2004 for an application.



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### HIGHLAND MEADOWS SENIOR RESIDENCE, Beacon, NY

AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE OCCUPANCY, One (1) bedroom apartment, rent is \$1,247.00 per month and Two (2) bedroom apartment, rent is \$1,561.00. One month security deposit required. Tenant is responsible for cable, phone and internet service. Included in rent is electric, heat, hot water, water, sewer and trash collection. All household members must be 62 years or older. Credit/Criminal Background Check is required. Property is SMOKE-FREE. Income restrictions apply. Please call (845) 297-2004 for an application.



## HOMES FOR SALE

## NOTICE OF EARLY DEADLINES:

Due to a Memorial Day Press Schedule Southern & Northern Dutchess News and the Beacon Free Press have the following early deadlines for Classified Display Ads:

May 27th Issue Deadline is as follows:  
May 20th deadline before noon.

Email: roxannesdn@aol.com or Call: 845-297-3723 Ext. 1003 for more information.



### MEADOW RIDGE FAMILY COMPLEX, Beacon, NY

THREE (3) bedroom apartment AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE OCCUPANCY, rent is \$1,764.00 per month or join SHORT WAIT LIST for Two (2) bedroom apartment, current rent is \$1,540.00. One month security deposit is required. Tenant is responsible for electric for lights, cooking air conditioning (wall-thru air conditioners provided) as well as cable, phone and internet service. Included in rent is heat, hot water, water, sewer and trash collection. Credit/Criminal Background Check is required. Property is SMOKE-FREE. Income restrictions apply. Please call (845) 297-2004 for an application.



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# GOLDEN LIVING

## SOCIAL SECURITY AND OFA OFFER GUIDANCE FOR THE WIDOWED

One of the most gratifying experiences for us at the Office for the Aging is when we're able to connect a widowed older adult with benefits to which they were entitled but unaware of. Now, an April 2026 report from the Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General (SSA-OIG) confirms what we at OFA long suspected: that many widowed people who collect Social Security benefits are not receiving the full amount available to them under Social Security rules.

The SSA-OIG audit, which covered late 2024 through early 2026, took a specific look at two populations of widowed Social Security beneficiaries:

- those who did not have benefits adjusted when their spouses died before age 62, and
- those who became dually entitled to both widow(er) and retirement benefits in the same month.

The money "left on the table" among 8,618 widowed beneficiaries in the first group above came to \$50.4 million. That's over \$5,800 per beneficiary. The audit found that this shortfall had been caused in part by SSA employees not consistently informing these beneficiaries of their options.

## OFA VOLUNTEERS COME THROUGH IN THE CLUTCH

OFA's Social Security success story started early in our "Friendly Calls" program when we paired up two widows, a volunteer and a participant. The participant in our program just recently lost her husband. She was matched with a Friendly Calls volunteer who was also a widow. During their conversations, the volunteer asked if the recent widow if she

was receiving the Social Security benefits left from her late husband. The participant had no idea she was entitled to benefits. Her volunteer helped her connect with Social Security to obtain all the information she needed to receive all her benefits. Within weeks, she was receiving the benefits, including retroactive payments.

Conversations like this matter, often more than we know at the time. Sometimes they result in clear-cut improvements to an older adult's financial situation, as in this case. Other times, older adults who had been hesitant about asking for assistance agreed to reach out to OFA for essential help.

To learn more about "Friendly Calls," reach out to program manager Linda Edgar at (845) 486-2548.

## CONTRACTING SCAMMERS COME OUT IN SPRING

Home improvement scams are consistently among New Yorkers' top five consumer complaints, and springtime is when scammers re-style themselves as contractors. Their scams can cost homeowners thousands of dollars, and can leave homes in worse condition than before the fraudulent repairs.

All you know is that your home needs work, and you don't want to be ripped off. The New York Department of State's Division of Consumer Protection offers these tips:

**Shop around:** Get at least three estimates that include detailed information about materials, services to be provided and a projected timeline.

**Know who you hire:** Ask friends and neighbors to recommend contractors they have worked with.

**Check the references provided by the contractors.** Look into local home builder

associations that may recommend reputable contractors and provide support if there is a dispute.

Check your local government licensing requirements: New York State does not license home improvement contractors. Check with your town, city, and/or village government as to what licensing and permits may be required in your home community, and be sure the contractor has proper licensure and has insurance. Just because a contractor has a business card and a Facebook page doesn't make them legitimate.

Get it in writing and be sure the contract includes:

The contractor's name, address, and phone number;

Estimated timeline with start and finish date;

Detailed description of the work to be done; and

Detailed pricing that includes a list of supplies and labor costs.

**Know your rights:** You have three days to cancel after signing a contract for home improvements. All cancellations must be in writing.

**Never pay full price up front:** Establish a payment schedule tied to completing specific jobs. Don't pay with cash or wire transfer. Withhold final payment until the entire project is completed to your satisfaction.

## BEWARE THESE SCAMMERS' TRICKS

Scammers will knock on your door suggesting improvements they can help you with like new windows, a new driveway, or the latest solar panels. Some may claim to be in the area and to have materials left over from a previous job.

Scammers will pressure you for an immediate decision.

Scammers will recommend a lender they know to help pay for the job. Don't finance through your contractor.

Running into a problem? First, speak with the contractor and try to reach a resolution. If a resolution is not possible, complainys can be filed with the New York State Division of Consumer Protection (800-697-1220, weekdays 8:30a-4:30p) or the New York State Attorney General (Poughkeepsie office: 845-485-3900).

## OFA SUMMER HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Making plans for the summer? Keep in mind that the Office for the Aging main office and OFA Friendship Centers are closed in observance of the following national holidays:

Monday, May 25th – Memorial Day

Friday, June 19th – Juneteenth

Friday, July 3rd – Independence Day

Monday, September 7th – Labor Day

Clients of OFA's Home Delivered Meals program receive shelf-stable meals in advance of all holidays.

## VOLUNTEER EXERCISE INSTRUCTORS WANTED

OFA's Senior Exercise Program ([www.dutchessny.gov/seniorexercise](http://www.dutchessny.gov/seniorexercise)) is looking for volunteer exercise instructors. No experience is necessary. OFA provides all training. If you'd like to combine volunteering with meeting your own goals of staying physically active, reach out to us at [ofa@dutchessny.gov](mailto:ofa@dutchessny.gov), or (845) 486-2555 during business hours.

Visit [www.dutchessny.gov/ofavolunteer](http://www.dutchessny.gov/ofavolunteer) for a look at all our volunteering options. We work with whatever time you have available.

## OFA AMBASSADOR HOURS FOR MAY-AUGUST (Check back for updates)

We're moving into the (even more) busy time of year at OFA. Here's the May-August list of OFA Ambassador Mary Reedy's mobile office hours ... thus far. There'll be more such office hours scheduled, where you can get your aging services questions answered from a location closer to home.

To book your half-hour spot, call OFA during business hours at (845) 486-2555:

Tuesday, June 23, noon-1:30 p.m. – Clinton Library, 1215 Centre Rd., Rhinebeck

Thursday, June 25, noon-3 p.m. – Amenia Library, 3309 NY 343, Amenia

Tuesday, June 30, 10 a.m.-noon – Millbrook Library, 3 Friendly Ln., Millbrook

Tuesday, July 28, 1-3 p.m. – Millbrook Library

Thursday, August 27, noon-3 p.m. – Amenia Library

## Bad Joke!

If I had a dollar for every time somebody told me I was bad at math, I'd have 84 cents.

**NOTICE OF EARLY DEADLINE:** Due to a holiday press schedule for Memorial Day, the May 27 issue of Northern Dutchess News will have early deadlines for all departments. Editorial and calendar submissions must be received by Thursday, May 21, at noon. Advertising must be received by Thursday, May 21, at 5 p.m. Contact [cschmidt@sutchessnews.com](mailto:cschmidt@sutchessnews.com) for more information.

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