

New York City at the holidays: A short ride to magical adventures

By Jim Donick

For many folks in the Hudson Valley, New York City beckons loud at this time of year. Kids are off from school and can be excited at the possibility of going on an expedition. New York, with its various activities and decorations, promises a magical holiday adventure that renews itself every year. A little snow doesn't hurt, but the possibilities, even without snow, are nearly endless. Travel from Poughkeepsie via MetroNorth is reasonably priced and even more reasonably reliable. Arrival at Grand Central Terminal means that the traveler is literally in the heart of Manhattan. Walking is a preferred means of travel there. It is perfect for simply soaking in the magic.

And there is lots to do. The streets are alive with color and with lights. A walk up Fifth Avenue to Rockefeller Center brings one to what is arguably the most famous Christmas tree in the world.

The Rockefeller Christmas Tree tradition began in 1931 during the Great Depression, when construction workers at Rockefeller Center pooled their money to buy a modest 20-foot balsam fir tree, decorating it with handmade garlands, tin cans, and cranberries.

In 1933 the first official tree lighting ceremony was held, and that tradition began to become an annual event.

This year's tree is a lot bigger than that first 20-foot fir. The 2025 Rockefeller Center Christmas tree came to Manhattan from East Greenbush, N.Y., which is up near Albany. It's a 75-foot Norway Spruce.

Today, rather than being decorated with garlands, tin cans, and cranberries like that first one, it will be adorned with more than 50,000 multicolored LED lights spread across approximately 5



Radio City Music Hall's famed precision dancers, the Rockettes, are back on stage for the annual Christmas Spectacular. They'll be delivering holiday cheer and high kicks through Jan. 5, 2026. This year marks the 92nd Christmas Spectacular and the 100th anniversary of the Rockettes. Photo by Jim Donick

miles of string lights. Atop the tree sits a spectacular Swarovski crystal star, measuring 9 feet 4 inches, weighing around 900 pounds, and featuring 3 million crystals.

This year's lighting of the tree took place on December 3rd. The daily lighting of the tree will continue through mid-January. For even more magic, a visit in

the early evening gives the opportunity to see the lights just after dark. Ice skating on the ice rink at the foot of the tree is open to the public. Rental skates are available for those so inclined.

Directly across Fifth Avenue is the iconic Saks Fifth Avenue. Saks offers its own addition to New York's holiday magic. Once upon a time their windows

were decorated to tell a story that continued from window to window as one walked along. Now the attraction is a sound and light show. This year's spectacle will feature a synchronized light and music display on the store facade, directly across from Rockefeller Center. Shows will run nightly, repeating every 10

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Lourdes to name gym in honor of legendary coach Brian Giorgis

By Morgan E. Maier

Before Brian Giorgis led Marist University to its first Sweet Sixteen in program history, he was a trailblazing basketball coach at Our Lady of Lourdes High School. Now, the school where he led 19 league championship teams to school history will be dedicating its gymnasium in his honor.

On Sunday, Dec. 14, at 1:30 p.m., the school will officially unveil the gym bearing Giorgis' name with a ceremony at the Our Lady of Lourdes Arts & Athletic Center at the school, located at 131

Boardman Road in Poughkeepsie. A reception with light refreshments will follow.

The plans for the coming event began with a call from Mike Krieger, director of alumni relations at Lourdes. Krieger shared with Giorgis the school's wish to do "something" to honor him. The nine-time state champion coach thought he'd be clearing shelf space for a plaque, then learned the scope of the honor.

"That floored me," said Giorgis. Giorgis was inducted into the New York State Basketball Coaches Hall of

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Brian Giorgis was inducted into the New York State Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame in 2010. He also led Lourdes' softball, baseball, and volleyball teams, and is New York's only coach to reach the state Final Four in four different sports. *Courtesy photo*



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Meals On Wheels of Greater Hyde Park receives grant from Field Hall Foundation



Volunteer drivers with Meals On Wheels of Greater Hyde Park sport new waterproof ponchos that were purchased with grant money from the Field Hall Foundation. The ponchos are just one of several ways the grant will assist the organization. *Courtesy photo*

This year, Meals On Wheels of Greater Hyde Park (MOW of HP) was the recipient of a generous grant from the Field Hall Foundation (FHF). FHF is a private foundation whose primary mission is to improve the lives of older adults and their care givers. The foundation funds programs in Putnam, Dutchess and Westchester counties. When applying for the grant, our organization sought to address how best to support our clients and the volunteers who serve them.

MOW of HP delivers meals to the elderly and disabled in the Hyde Park School District and the Village of Rhinebeck five days a week. Currently its clients number between 55 and 60 sen-

iors. The organization receives no government funding and is dependent on donations and grants to offset the costs of salaries and food. The FHF grant received is being used in several area including keeping the costs down for MOW of HP clients, improving community outreach, and supporting volunteers through the purchase of new coolers for food delivery and waterproof ponchos for its drivers.

MOW of HP is currently accepting new clients and is always looking for volunteers to pack meals or deliver. For more information, visit Mealsonwheel sofhp.org or call (845) 229-5896.

NOTICE OF EARLY DEADLINE

Due to the Christmas holiday, the deadline for the Dec. 24 issue of Northern Dutchess News is Thursday, Dec. 18. E-mail cschmidt@sdutchessnews.com for more information.

Lourdes to name gym in honor of legendary coach Brian Giorgis

continued from cover

Fame in 2010. He also led Lourdes' softball, baseball, and volleyball teams, and is New York's only coach to reach the state Final Four in four different sports, according to the school.

Giorgis taught health and biology, and some physical education classes at Lourdes from 1989-1999, impacting an entire generation of student lives, inside and out of the baselines. Teaching not only from the textbooks, but leading by example, Giorgis offered student-athletes the skills for success.

"Coach Brian Giorgis didn't just win state championships, he inspired generations of young men and women, teaching them the meaning of discipline, teamwork, and excellence - all hallmarks of a Lourdes graduate," said Lourdes principal Meghan Vilardo in a press release. "We are honored to dedicate this gymnasium in recognition of his unparalleled career accomplishments. For decades, he poured his heart and soul into our students, pushing them to achieve things

they never thought possible. This dedication is a small way for us to thank him for his incredible contributions to Our Lady of Lourdes."

Without the staff, players, and the athletes who went on to win titles themselves as coaches, this moment would not be possible. Neither would the 451-44 record amassed in his Lourdes basketball career.

"It's not one person who does it all. It takes a lot of people for a team to have success," said Giorgis.

Many of those instrumental to Giorgis' success will be in attendance to celebrate him alongside the Lourdes community. That will include former players, assistants, and faces the coach hasn't seen in years. And he'll be just as happy to reconnect with every one again. Seeing the former players, Warriors and Red Foxes alike, who attended his final Marist game in 2023 was, to Giorgis, "just as good as going to the Sweet 16 and winning state titles."

Menorah Lightings and other Chanukah events set

Menorah lightings are open to one and all, and no reservation is required.

Community Party - First Night of Chanukah
Sunday Dec. 14, 4-6 p.m.
Rhinebeck Jewish Center (RJC), 102 Montgomery St., Rhinebeck
Full dinner, crafts, donuts, latkes and Chanukah gelt.
No charge; donations and RSVP appreciated.

Menorah Lighting
Red Hook Information Booth
Monday Dec. 15, 5 p.m.
Donuts, latkes and Chanukah gelt.

Menorah Lighting
Village of Tivoli
Tuesday Dec. 16, 5 p.m.
In front of Four Seasons Sotheby's, 58 Broadway

Menorah Lighting
Town of Stanford
Tuesday Dec. 16, 7 p.m.
In front of Town Hall, 26 Town Hall Road
Donuts, latkes and Chanukah gelt.

Menorah Lighting
Saturday Dec 20, 7 p.m.
Rhinebeck Village Municipal Lot
East Market St.
Celebrate and enjoy latkes and jelly donuts.

Menorah Lighting
Village of Millbrook
Sunday Dec 21, 4 p.m.
In front of The Thorne Building
at the top of Franklin Avenue
The menorah lighting will be followed by event at Babbette's Kitchen.

Call (845) 876-7666 or email RSVP@RhinebeckJewishCenter.com for more information.

send us your news cschmidt@sdutchessnews.com

Four non-profit youth sports organizations awarded \$85,295

Funding still available;
submit application
by Dec. 23

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino announced on Dec. 2 that \$85,295 has been awarded to four non-profit youth team sports organizations offering free team sports programs for underserved children under the age of 18 through New York State's Youth Team Sports (YTS) grant program. Additional funding is still available for eligible organizations.

Serino said, "Dutchess County is dedicated to making sure all kids, no matter their background, can take part in activities that support their physical, mental and emotional health. These Youth Sports Teams grants give young people valuable opportunities to not just to play sports, but to gain important skills that will help them succeed as they grow."

These grants, ranging from \$16,805 to \$25,000, create opportunities for young people in need to take part in sports programs that help them grow physically, mentally, emotionally and socially. Team sport activities can lower stress, anxiety and depression; strengthen social skills and teamwork; and reduce the likelihood of substance use or other risky behaviors.

Projects funded through the 2026 Youth Team Sports Program include:

Dover Little League (Dover Plains), Batters Up for a Brighter Future, \$25,000 - Providing competitive baseball and softball program in Dover, which offers all players with a safe, supportive place to build key skills, to players at no cost.

Northern Dutchess Aquatic Club (Red Hook), Long Course and Dryland Training, \$16,805 - Offering a free, eight-week long session at Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson for swimmers, ages 6-13, and free dryland training for swimmers, ages 14-18.

NY FLIGHT 845, Inc. (City of Poughkeepsie), Youth Team Sports, \$18,490 - Provide free, year-round, after-school, open-gym basketball training at the Family Partnership Center in the City of Poughkeepsie that builds basic skills for middle- and high-school students, while also continuing the Kingdom Classic Tournament for fourth-graders and rising seventh-graders.

YMCA of Kingston (Kingston), Youth Basketball League 2026, \$25,000 - Dutchess County youth, ages 7-15, can take part in a free, six-week summer basketball league at Greenvale Park in the Town of Poughkeepsie, designed to boost fitness, improve skills and help develop teamwork and good sportsmanship.

There is still funding available through the YTS grant program, for the program year Jan. 1, 2026, to Sept. 30, 2026, for local youth-serving organizations that provide free team sports opportunities to young people under age 18. This funding opportunity defines a "team sport" as an organized physical activity in which groups of two or more individuals compete with two or more opposing individuals.

Eligible applicants should be either a 501(c)(3) nonprofit or other community-based organization with a federal identification number, operating in Dutchess County with the ability to meet the County's insurance requirements. All funding requests must be for a program that provides free, direct services to all youth.

Applications must be submitted by 1 p.m. on Dec. 23 to the Division of Youth Services through the online grant portal, available at <https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=dc>. Please visit the Division's NYS Office of Children and Family Services (NYS OCFS) Grant Funding webpage for more comprehensive information regarding this program and how to apply.

Survivors tell stories of inspiration at sold-out Go Red for Women luncheon

Two years ago, Cindi Mannese of Milton had open-heart surgery to repair a valve. When surgeons found an aortic aneurysm, Mannese’s surgery took seven hours.

Mannese shared her story at the Hudson Valley Go Red for Women Luncheon on Dec. 4 in Poughkeepsie. Go Red for Women is a campaign of the American Heart Association, a relentless force changing the future of health for everyone everywhere.

“Survivorship isn’t about what I went through, it’s about what I get to do now,” Mannese said. “I’ll never forget hearing my doctors talk about the ‘rest of my life.’ That kind of joy stays with you. And now, I get to take that gift and hopefully help thousands of others feel less alone.”

Two hundred women attended the sold-out event, which raises awareness that cardiovascular disease is a leading health threat for women.

“We know that women are underrepresented in research, and that their symptoms are often ignored,” said Brenda Swatek, vice president of people and culture at IBM, who chaired the 2025 Hudson Valley Go Red for Women Luncheon. “Today, we made a difference for the women in our community. We provided education and information and celebrated the way women can come

together to change the way the world is.”

There were Hands-Only CPR demonstrations at the event; a silent auction; a photo booth; and health information. During the lunch program, Mannese shared her story, and participants in the Woman of Impact campaign shared their success in raising \$54,000. Christine Pellegrino of Pellegrino Healing was the winning Woman of Impact, raising more than \$30,000.

Four experts discussed “The Mind-Body Connection and Heart Health,” providing concrete tips for audience members to use in their daily lives – and to share with friends and family.

Pellegrino moderated the panel, whose participants were:

- Lauren Grimshaw, LMHC, CDPHP
- Sheri Harrison, M.D., Nuvance Health, now part of Northwell
- Roufia Payman, Northern Dutchess Hospital, Nuvance Health, now part of Northwell
- Mark S. Hahn, M.D., Ellenville Regional Hospital

“Since 2004, Go Red for Women has met the evolving health needs of women and addressed the awareness and clinical care gaps when it comes to cardiovascular disease,” said John Strawbridge, director of development at Vassar



Attendees cheer during the annual Hudson Valley Go Red for Women Luncheon on Dec. 4 in Poughkeepsie. *Courtesy photo*

Brothers Medical Center/Nuvance Health, now part of Northwell, and chair of the board of directors of the American Heart Association in the Hudson Valley. “Today’s event was a testament to the strength of women coming together for a common cause.”

The event concluded with the announcement that Steph Raymond, president and CEO of Central Hudson Gas and Electric, will chair the 2026

Hudson Valley Go Red for Women Luncheon.

Sponsors include Central Hudson Gas & Electric; CDPHP; Greencastle Consulting; Nuvance Health, now part of Northwell; Q92.1; Hudson Valley Living; the Southern Dutchess News; the Northern Dutchess News; and the Beacon Free Press. For information, visit www.heart.org/goredhv.

Anderson Foundation for Autism lists recipients of grant awards

The leadership team and trustees of Anderson Foundation for Autism announced last week the names of grantees for the Foundation’s recent grant-making cycle.

Grant award recipients are as follows: Autism Society Greater Hudson Region (\$5,000 grant award), Arcadia University (\$5,000 grant award), Backyard Sports (\$10,000 grant award), BluePath Service Dogs (\$5,000 grant award), and Beautiful People (\$5,000 grant award).

Kevin Kollar, Chair of Anderson Foundation for Autism’s Board of Trustees said, “It is deeply gratifying to know that Anderson Foundation for Autism is able to ‘pay it forward’ to these visionary grantees. Each of these organizations shares a commitment to our cause, and we look forward to watching them continue to make valuable contributions to our field as time goes on.”

Susan Brune, Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees and Chair of the Grants Committee, said, “These grantees all presented initiatives that are very much aligned with Anderson’s mission of optimizing the quality of life for individuals with autism. Beautiful People, for example, will use the grant funds to provide athletes with more inclusive opportunities, by purchasing adaptive equipment to enhance safety and accessibility. Autism Society Greater Hudson Region has been given some of the funds needed to help deliver the BRIGHT (Brave, Resilient, Inspiring Girls Happening Together) program, which creates a safe, fun, and affirming space where autistic and neurodiverse girls can build meaningful peer connections, strengthen self-esteem, and develop essential social-emotional and soft skills. And our other award recipients are likewise doing meaningful work; it is an honor to help them advance their efforts.”

Brune added that all recipients will be required to report on outcomes, and that the Foundation reserved up to \$50,000 in

total for its 2025 grant-making cycle.

According to Patrick Paul, CEO/Executive Director of Anderson Center for Autism, “Anderson Foundation for Autism was initially launched to help bridge gaps between financial needs and resources for Anderson Center for Autism, but the success of Foundation fundraising has far exceeded every expectation. Now, we’re well-positioned to support the work of other nonprofits too, and we look forward to building on our grantmaking program in the years to come.”

Eliza Bozenski, Chief Development Officer at Anderson Foundation for Autism, added: “The collective generosity of philanthropists, businesses, families, trustees, and community members is what drives our success; it has been awe-inspiring to see the outpouring of support for our work. We are deeply thankful to everyone who has made Anderson Foundation as strong as it is today, and all who continue to pave the way for a successful future. Each donor is giving to something much larger than our agency; every gift really supports a broader humanitarian movement.”

Anderson Center for Autism (ACA), founded in 1924, which also receives funds from Anderson Foundation for Autism, offers evidence-based educational, vocational, residential, and consulting/training programs, drawing students and residents from all over the United States to experience its school and residential offerings. Its affiliate, Anderson Center International (ACI), hosts scholars from countries throughout the world for a 12-18 month training program at Anderson’s Staatsburg campus.

Anderson also runs Early Learning Academy programs (in Pine Plains, NY, Mount Marion, NY, and Latham, NY) and The Anderson Center Clinic (Latham, NY).

Anderson Foundation for Autism’s 2026 grant cycle will open in January.

Home Energy Assistance Program now open for Central Hudson customers

Applications are now being accepted for the federally funded Home Energy Assistance Program, or HEAP.

HEAP’s benefits help income-qualified utility customers who heat their homes with electricity, natural gas, oil, coal, propane, wood/wood pellets, kerosene, and corn. Eligibility and benefits are based on income, household size, the primary heating source, and the presence of a household member who is under age 6, age 60 or older or permanently disabled. For this year’s benefits, households of four who heat their home with natural gas with a maximum annual income of \$80,160 are eligible for a \$400 grant.

“Enrolling in HEAP is one of the most important steps customers can take to ensure they stay safe and comfortable during the winter months. These benefits provide critical assistance for managing energy costs, and we encourage all eligible households to apply as soon as possible,” Lauren Preston, Chief Customer Services Officer at Central Hudson said. “Affordability is top of

mind for our customers, and we’re committed to helping them access the resources they need to keep their homes warm and their energy bills manageable.”

Customers who are eligible for HEAP and other qualifying programs are also eligible for Central Hudson’s Energy Affordability Program (EAP) Bill Discount . If your account receives a HEAP credit, you will automatically be enrolled in the EAP Bill Discount.

Residents may apply online by visiting <http://www.mybenefits.ny.gov/>, or through their local Department of Social and other community service organizations. Your local district HEAP contact offices listed by county can be found via www.dutchessny.gov.

For more information on HEAP eligibility requirements and benefits, visit www.CentralHudson.com/HEAP or <http://otda.ny.gov/programs/heap/program.asp>; and for more on Central Hudson’s assistance and billing programs, visit www.CentralHudson.com, and click on “My Account.”



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

Commending Veterans for standing up to Trump

To the editor:
At 95, there are not many things I can do for our country, other than vote and speak out against Trump destroying our country and society. Watching the TV newscasts with President Trump speaking and going to the various fact-finding sources reminds me of the childhood taunt “Liar, liar, pants on fire, wash your face in dirty water.”
The latest example comes from his response to the video made by Congressional representatives (all with military/intelligence backgrounds) Mark Kelly, Chrissy Houlahan, Chris Deluzio, Maggie Goodlander, Jason Crow and Elissa Slotkin, that urged service members to stand up to the Trump Administration if they receive “illegal orders” that violate our Constitution.
Trump’s response was to call it an act of sedition and call them traitors and that they should all be executed. I commend these six individuals for courageously standing up to Trump’s actions. Trump hates opposition to his dictatorial rule and thinks our citizens are stupid. Some may have short-term memories, but some have better consciences. They should look back at the Nuremburg trials, where Hitler’s followers defended killing millions [as] “just following orders”; or possibly America’s own Vietnam My Lai massacre, where between 347 and 504 unarmed women, children, and old men were killed on orders from our Army officer (Lt. William Calley).
Now we have our forces very accurately shooting supposed drug dealer boats without any proof and, if there are survivors, giving them a second shot - because “dead men tell no tales.” We apparently have very active surveillance and could intercept and board these boats to prove the point and bring it into a court of justice - but that is not the intention of our leaders.
At the bottom of this is the jealousy that people like Trump and Hegseth have of really courageous people like John McCain and Mark Kelly and, like all bullies, have to threaten and denigrate individuals to make themselves feel bigger and stronger.
David F. Queen
Red Hook

OUR POLICY ON LETTERS

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

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.

Nine new recipients of Fly Car Grant Awards announced

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino has announced \$134,303 in funding awards to nine recipients of the County’s second round of Fly Car Grant Awards. These grants provide critical funding for life-saving equipment to fire departments, rescue squads, and ambulance corps.
Serino said, “Fly Cars continue to be a vital tool for our local first responders, allowing them to provide fast, critical support to patients in life-threatening situations. This grant program is helping raise awareness about EMS in our community, especially how rewarding careers saving lives can be. We are proud to support our local agencies as they continue to build their response capabilities to best protect the health and safety of our communities.”
The following organizations have been awarded grant funding for life-saving equipment, such as automatic chest compression devices, carbon monoxide poisoning detectors, trauma bag supplies, and automated external defibrillators (AEDs):
• Beacon Volunteer Ambulance Corp - \$16,310
• City of Beacon Fire Department - \$16,579
• City of Poughkeepsie Fire Department - \$8,235
• J. H. Ketcham Hose Co., Inc. - \$17,150
• LaGrange Fire District - \$19,858
• New Hamburg Fire District - \$11,100
• Rombout Fire District - \$5,124
• Roosevelt Fire District - \$20,000
• Tivoli Fire and Rescue - \$19,947
As part of the program, the agencies’ fly cars or other support vehicles display

branded, unified recruitment messaging promoting career and volunteer opportunities in EMS, including a link to the County’s website, dutchessny.gov/EMS. Since the graphics have started appearing on local agencies’ vehicles, the website has seen hundreds of page views per month.
Jeff Scala, Chief of Roosevelt Fire District in Hyde Park, said, “This grant helps us grow our capacity to respond, both by adding necessary, life-saving equipment, and helping boost our ongoing volunteer recruitment efforts. We are grateful to County Executive Sue Serino for helping tackle the challenges local departments are facing with EMS and are excited to continue this partnership.”
This initiative is part of Dutchess County’s investment in addressing the EMS crisis through innovative programs and partnerships. County Executive Serino has continued support of the County’s Supplemental Ambulance Service and EMS in Dutchess County in the 2026 Executive Budget. As part of ongoing efforts to build awareness of the challenges facing EMS, the County has launched a multi-pronged public awareness campaign, EMS Matters. The campaign has focused not only on recruitment for EMTs and paramedics, but also on how to recognize the signs of a true emergency that needs EMS versus heading to an urgent care facility, safety and prevention tips, and more.
The Dutchess County Legislature was scheduled to vote on the 2026 Budget at its Board Meeting on Monday, December 8, with the full 2026 County Budget process to be completed by December 17, with the adoption of the tax levy.

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State DOT announces state-of-the-art maintenance facility in East Fishkill

New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Commissioner Marie Therese Dominguez and Office of General Services Commissioner Jeanette Moy announced on Thursday, Dec. 4, the opening of a new, state-of-the-art maintenance facility that will bolster snow removal and road maintenance activities along key highways in the Hudson Valley. According to officials, the new, 18,427-square-foot building at NYSDOT's Lime Kiln Yard in the Town of East Fishkill, will help speed repairs to plow trucks and other vital pieces of equipment, allowing them to stay on the road longer and facilitating a more efficient response to incidents of severe weather and other highway emergencies. The new facility also features the latest technology and clean energy initiatives to help safeguard the environment and better serve travelers.

"The Department of Transportation has one of the finest snow fighting forces in the nation and we are committed to giving them the resources and equipment they need to keep travelers safe," Dominguez said. "This state-of-the-art facility will ensure that our dedicated crews have the facilities, materials and equipment they need to maintain and operate our state roadway network as well as making sure our plows and emergency response vehicles are ready to go when New Yorkers need them the most - during emergencies and extreme weather events."

East Fishkill Supervisor Nicholas D'Alessandro said, "The opening of this new NYSDOT residency is great news for our community. With a modern, centrally located hub right here in Hopewell Junction, residents will benefit from quicker response times, improved road conditions, and enhanced winter storm readiness." He thanked Commissioner Dominguez and all partners who are involved in making this "long-planned

project a reality." D'Alessandro noted Region 8 is the best region in the state.

Moy said, "OGS is proud to build, rehabilitate, and upgrade DOT spaces in all corners of New York. This new 20,000-square-foot facility in Dutchess County is a result of our longstanding partnership and will serve as a hub for their teams, who work around the clock to keep our roads reliable and safe no matter the season."

The new maintenance facility is capable of garaging 14 large dump trucks and features office space, exterior and interior LED lighting, plug in stations for DOT's electric vehicles, and a high efficiency heating system, it was stated. Additionally, an indoor wash bay was installed to ensure vehicle cleanliness to improve vehicle visibility, protect critical parts and reduce long-term maintenance. Construction of the new building began in 2022.

Visible from Interstate 84, the Lime Kiln Yard provides a centrally located hub for NYSDOT operations in Dutchess and Putnam counties. The 26 workers based at this yard are responsible for maintaining approximately 230 lane miles of state roads. In addition to storm response, they also perform such tasks as filling potholes, guiderail repairs and drainage repairs. Areas in this jurisdiction include:

- Interstate 84 between the Newburgh Beacon Bridge and the Connecticut state line
- Taconic State Parkway from U.S. Route 6 to State Route 55
- State Route 376 between State Route 52 and State Route 113

The Department of Transportation is still accepting job applications to join the highway maintenance workers/snowplow operators, mechanics, engineers, and office staff. A candidate must be at least 18 years old and pass a physical and drug test. Qualified candidates interested in a rewarding career, keeping our communi-



NYS DOT's new state-of-the-art maintenance facility in East Fishkill. Courtesy photo

ties safe, can stop by a local DOT residency, a Regional Fleet shop, or find more information on NYSDOT's website at ny.gov/dotjobs.

State Senator Rob Rolison said, "The Hudson Valley thrives when our roads are safe, reliable, and well cared for. This new residency ensures that our region will be better served — not just during storms or emergencies, but every single day. By giving NYSDOT teams a modern, centrally located home base, we're strengthening the backbone of our transportation network and supporting the communities that rely on it."

Assemblymember Anil Beephan said, "This modern facility will strengthen our ability to maintain local highways, respond quickly to snow and ice events, and ensure safer travel for our residents who rely on these corridors every day. I appreciate the dedicated workforce who will operate this facility, and I look for-

ward to seeing the positive impact this investment will have on our community."

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino said, "This new location will be an important asset in keeping the vital state roadways in the southern Dutchess area, including I-84 corridor, Taconic State Parkway and U.S. Route 376, in good repair and safe during snow and ice weather events. State roadways, including I-84 corridor, Taconic State Parkway and U.S. Route 376, are critical to commerce, emergency services and everyday travel."

To ensure the safety of the traveling public and snowplow operators during storms, motorists are reminded "Don't Crowd The Plow" - slow down and stay safely behind snowplow trucks to give them plenty of room on the road. Plows travel at approximately 35 miles per hour and should never be passed.

Miles of Hope sets dates for 2026 fundraisers

The Miles of Hope Breast Cancer Foundation recently announced the dates for its 2026 fundraising events. These annual gatherings play a crucial role in raising funds and awareness for breast cancer support services and research across the region.

Key Event Dates

- Marist Women's Basketball Pink Game

Saturday, Feb. 7, 2026

Miles of Hope and Marist Women's Basketball honor breast cancer survivors and their inspiring journeys during half-time. The game will begin at 2 p.m.

- Spring Brunch & Silent Auction

Saturday, May 3, 2026

Miles of Hope will award scholarship recipients, salute event honorees, offer raffle prizes, and outline the latest breast cancer treatment and research.

- Goals for Hope

August 2026

Join a team or form your own in an annual friendly soccer tournament honoring Miles of Hope. Women's and Men's divisions available.

• Sponsorship includes social media posts and e-blasts. For sponsorship information: info@milesofhope.org

- 23rd Annual Community Walk for Breast Cancer

Saturday, Oct. 3, 2026

At Miles of Hope's Community Walk, the organization honors survivors and empowers all those who have been affected by breast cancer to join the fight.

- Miles of Hope Day

Oct. 23, 2026

Sports teams, schools and businesses are encouraged to celebrate Breast Cancer Awareness Month on Miles of Hope Day by hosting their own fundraiser. Miles of Hope will set up a fundraiser page and send materials and pink items to

give away at your event.

Each event offers an opportunity for supporters, survivors, and community members to come together, celebrate progress in breast cancer research, and generate vital resources for those affected by the disease. Proceeds from all events

directly fund local programs, patient support, and educational initiatives.

Registration for the 2026 events are open. Individuals and organizations interested in participating or sponsoring are encouraged to visit the Miles of Hope Breast Cancer Foundation website for details and updates. Milesofhope.org

Now accepting students for the upcoming spring semester!

Giving back through life-changing experiences!

The Ridge School is a New York State Board of Regents Accredited School, Not-for-profit organization located in Dutchess County, New York dedicated to the creation of a rich and positive setting for students who are not succeeding in their current educational placements. The Ridge School is a day school for students who are diagnosed with High Functioning Autism.

845-505-5483

845-266-4283

The Ridge School

www.ridgeschool.org



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NYSOFA and DMV share tips and resources for older drivers

The New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) and New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) offer tips and resources for older drivers, their families and caregivers. Being proactive about safe driving skills is critical for drivers of all ages, but particularly for older adults so that they can maintain their independence and stay engaged in their community.

In New York, according to the Institute for Traffic Safety Management and Research (ITSMR), drivers age 65 and over account for 21 percent of all New York licensed drivers but are involved in only 11 percent of the fatal and personal injury crashes. Older drivers are also less likely to engage in reckless driving behaviors, according to ITSMR crash data. Despite fewer total fatal crashes, older drivers who are involved in crashes are more likely to be killed or suffer severe injuries when compared to younger drivers, and nationally, the rate of fatal crashes involving older drivers is on the rise, according to the National Highway Transportation Safety Board (NHTSA).

New York State Office for the Aging Director Greg Olsen said, “NYSOFA’s goal is for older adults to be as active and engaged in their communities for as long as possible, and one way to ensure that is by maintaining safe driving skills. If you’re a family member or caregiver of an older adult driver, encourage them to keep up with their driving skills and to learn about new traffic patterns, vehicle features, and traffic laws. Lastly, help maintain safe driving skills by taking a point and insurance reduction driver improvement course like AAA’s RoadWise driver program.”

“We want everyone, regardless of age, to be safe on the roads,” said Mark J.F. Schroeder, Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles and Chair of the Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee. “For older drivers, being aware of their health and addressing any potential issues that could impact their safety and the safety of others is paramount. We want people to keep their license for as long as it’s safe to do so. We are happy to partner with the Office for the Aging to help raise awareness of this important topic.”

Decisions about ability to drive should never be based on age alone. Instead, it is

important to accurately assess age-related changes so that the driver can adjust driving habits to remain safe on the road or choose other kinds of transportation.

Tips for adjusting driving habits

- Exercise regularly to increase your strength and flexibility.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medications – both prescription and over-the-counter medications – for any potential effects on your ability to drive safely.
- Have your vision checked every year.
- Drive during daylight and in good weather.
- Find the safest routes with well-lit streets.
- Plan your route before you drive.
- Leave a large following distance behind the car in front of you.
- Avoid distractions in your car, such as listening to a loud radio, texting or talking on the phone.
- Consider potential alternatives to driving, such as riding with a friend or using public transportation to get around.

CarFit

CarFit events offer older adults the opportunity to check how well their personal vehicles “fit” them. CarFit is an educational program developed by AAA, AARP, and the American Occupational Therapy Association, with the goal of providing drivers with information and resources to enhance their safety in the driver’s seat. At a CarFit event, trained experts show drivers how to enhance comfort, safety and fit within their vehicle. Find more information on free CarFit events.

Offices for the Aging and their community partners are also a resource to help older drivers, including safety assistance or alternative transportation options. Area Agencies on Aging provide about 1.7 million rides annually to older adults in the community. To expand capacity, the aging network, through NYSOFA, has also partnered with GoGoGrandparent’s ride-share network to provide an additional 24,000 rides in participating counties since the beginning of the partnership, according to an announcement this summer. To reach local assistance, call the NY Connects helpline at 1-800-342-9871.

Public can comment on ‘Moving Dutchess Forward’

The Dutchess County Transportation Council (DCTC) is updating its county-wide transportation plan, Moving Dutchess Forward. This plan is the guiding vision for improving transportation in Dutchess County over the next 25 years; and the DCTC invites the public to learn more during engagement opportunities, including a virtual public meeting on Wednesday, Dec. 17, outreach events, and a public survey.

Work on Moving Dutchess Forward will unfold over the next eight months in four steps: Learn, Assess, Advocate, and Invest. The Learn step – which reviews trends in the county’s population, economy, housing, freight, technology, climate and travel behavior – is now available online for public review and comment at MovingDutchessForward.com. Public involvement is critical to the planning process, ensuring Dutchess County’s transportation priorities reflect the needs of residents, workers, and visitors. The DCTC will hold several upcoming opportunities for the public to help shape the new plan:

- The DCTC will host a virtual public meeting on Dec. 17 from noon to 1 p.m. This virtual meeting will provide an overview of Moving Dutchess Forward and gather public feedback on transportation challenges and priorities. To register for the virtual meeting, please visit: tinyurl.com/MDFzoom1.

• DCTC representatives will attend the Beacon Farmer’s Market (233 Main Street, Beacon) on Dec. 14 between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., and the Millerton Farmer’s Market (51 S. Center Street, Millerton) on Dec. 20 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., where residents can meet the DCTC team, ask questions and provide feedback on the County’s transportation system.

• An online survey has been launched to gather feedback regarding transportation challenges and priorities. The survey, available in English and Spanish, is open through Dec. 31, 2025. The survey can be accessed at <https://arcg.is/1qDmOy3>, and three respondents will be randomly selected to win a \$25 Visa gift card.

All community members are encouraged to participate in one or more of these engagement opportunities.

Those who require any assistive technologies, language translation, American Sign Language interpretation and/or adaptive strategies to attend and engage during the virtual meeting can contact Liz Podowski King with Highland Planning at 585-649-1210 or liz@highland-planning.com by Dec. 12.

More information about Moving Dutchess Forward can be found at MovingDutchessForward.com. The website provides draft content, information on upcoming events, an interactive map viewer and online comment form.

we’re on the web!
www.sdutchessnews.com

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Volunteer for Wreaths across America events Dec. 13

Wreaths across America is set Saturday, Dec. 13, at Stanford Cemetery and St. Mary’s Bangall. Help place wreaths on the graves of Veterans starting 10:30 a.m. at both locations. Ceremonies will take place at both locations at noon. Call (845) 868-7320 to volunteer.

Rhinebeck American Legion seeks funds to rebuild after fire

Commander John Imperato of American Legion Post 429 in Rhinebeck recently sent out a call for support following what he called a “devastating fire” in the post’s building. A GoFundMe campaign is under way, with a goal of \$25,000. The immediate goal is to reopen the canteen and ballroom so the post can begin generating revenue and covering ongoing expenses, Imperato said. Phase 2 involves completing the repairs that would allow the post to fully restore the building. To donate, visit GoFundMe.com and search for “Join Us In Rebuilding Rhinebeck American Legion After Fire.”

Rhinecliff Grange Soup Sales set Dec. 18

Rhinebeck Grange #896 will sponsor the final Rhinecliff Soup Sales of the season on Thursday, Dec. 18. Soup is \$10, sold by the quart. Take-out only. Pick-up location at Morton Library between 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 4:30-6:30 p.m. Email: JoBaer2@gmail.com to get the soup choices for each month and pre-order on-line.

Ray Joyce Memorial Blood Drive set Dec. 29

The Clinton Alliance Church will hold its 5th Annual Ray Joyce Memorial Blood Drive on Monday, Dec. 29, from 3 to 7:30 p.m., at the church’s Youth Center, located at 1192 Centre Road Rhinebeck. For questions, contact event Chair Bob Holden at (914) 475-0217.

ONGOING

Parkinson’s Support Group - at Starr Library

Community Room, third Monday of the month, noon-1:30 p.m. The monthly Parkinson’s Support Group is a gathering place for those with Parkinson’s and their loved ones to create community and share information. The group will meet each month to offer a space for everyone to discuss their challenges and successes, share stories, connect with others who are navigating similar issues, and sift through medical information and the latest news about available treatments. Refreshments and resources provided. Register via the online calendar at www.starlibrary.org. The library is at 68 West Market St., Rhinebeck.

Chess: First & third Mondays, 7 p.m., at Clinton Town Hall, 1215 Centre Road, Rhinebeck.

Men’s fellowship and Bible study: Tuesday nights, 7-9 p.m., in the home of David Mahoney, 21 Mountain View Road, Staatsburg. Call (845) 797-4805 for more information.

PV Garden Club meets first Thursday of the month. Want to learn more about gardening while helping your neighbors? Join Pleasant Valley Community Gardens for its monthly meetings at 6 p.m. the first Thursday of every month at the Pleasant Valley Library. No experience necessary. Pleasant Valley Community Gardens are volunteers learning as they grow vegetables and flowers in Helen Aldrich Park on Route 115. Everything we grow is to benefit local food pantries. See our Facebook page and web site at www.pleasantvalleycommunitygardens.com.

Meals on Wheels of Hyde Park and the Village of Rhinebeck is seeking volunteer drivers during the hours of 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Drivers are needed Monday-Friday. You can drive one or more days each week or substitute as needed. All drivers work in teams so couples or friends are encouraged to volunteer together. For more information visit www.mealsonwheelsofhp.org or, contact Andrea Tkazyik at (845) 229-5896.



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Eight Ketcham baseball players sign collegiate letters of intent

By Morgan E. Maier

To kick off Thanksgiving break, Roy C. Ketcham High School held a signing day for eight student-athletes committed to playing collegiate baseball. The milestone matches a program-high in commitments for a single class, as seven northeast schools will be thankful to welcome the Storm next fall.

Decked in their respective school gear, Tyler Durkin, Josiah Figuereo, Shane Finnigan, Giancarlo Henry, Chris Lupo, Christian Maltais, Nick Mondesando, and Ensley Perez celebrated their college commitments on November 25. Friends, family, coaches, and Ketcham baseball alumni were in attendance to support the reigning Section 1 champions and last year's state finalists.

"This is an incredible group of young men who have put so much time into their craft, and this day recognized that," said Ketcham head coach Pat Mealy.

The Storm's postseason tear caught eyes across the Empire State, with dominant pitching and defense pairing nicely with the devastating offense. The success symbolizes an ongoing legacy of Ketcham baseball, one that each class instills in the next. The Class of 2026's resume is rife with individual and team accolades. And there are still months to go before taking the diamond together one last time.

"When players come into the program, they see the players that came before them and have no choice but to work to the highest level, or they will not be here long. This group of seniors now had an incredible group of seniors with the last few classes to really emulate - and they have carried the torch remarkably well," said Mealy, who has led this program since 2001.



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

One player is set to reunite with a few former teammates at the next level - Mondesando, the major power-hitting pickup for Monmouth University. Mondesando is a state-ranked outfielder (#2 by Prep Baseball Report) who garnered All-Region honors in his junior season. He will reunite with 2023 state champion Ryan Mealy and 2024 alum Riley Weatherwax on the Hawks squad.

Perez, the Storm's anchor at the backstop, will continue his career behind the plate at SUNY Cortland. He joins an illustrious Dragons program, the reigning State University of New York Athletic

Conference (SUNYAC) champions. Maltais brings his infield talents and speed on the basepaths to Endicott College in Massachusetts.

Ketcham's talented trio of right-handers will scatter across the tri-state. Lupo joins a Mountain Valley Conference powerhouse at Herkimer, a program that went to the NJCAA Division-III Final Four in 2025. Durkin, equal parts offensive prowess and pitch control, will hurl at St. Peter's, a Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference rival of the Marist Red Foxes. Finnigan will take the mound at Manhattanville, backed up by Henry in

the infield. Figuereo will continue developing as a dual force on the mound and behind it, an asset to the Fairleigh Dickinson Knights as both pitcher and shortstop.

"With this signing comes great responsibility in them to sharpen their tools even more and prepare for this upcoming spring like college baseball players. The program that we run here prepares our boys for college baseball and we will continue to do that," added Mealy. "We take great pride in leaving no stone unturned."

Pleasant Valley National Guard soldier receives new rank, new responsibilities

LATHAM, NY - Major General Ray Shields, the adjutant general for the state of New York, announces the recent promotion of members of the New York Army National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

Glenn Stoll from Pleasant Valley, assigned to the Company C, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry Regiment, received a promotion Sept. 27, 2025 to the rank of specialist.

Army National Guard promotions are based on a soldier's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development poten-

tial. These promotions recognize the best qualified soldiers for a career in the New York Army National Guard.

Army National Guard Citizen Soldiers who serve our state and nation are eligible for monthly pay, educational benefits (from the state and federal government), travel across the globe, technical and leadership training, health and dental insurance and contributions towards retirement programs similar to a 401(k).

For more information about the New York Army National Guard, visit www.dmna.ny.gov or www.1800goguard.com.

Red Hook Community Center gains \$310K through NY BRICKS program

The Red Hook Community Center has been awarded a grant in the amount of \$310,000 through the New York State Building Recreational Infrastructure for Communities, Kids and Seniors (NY BRICKS) capital grant program.

Governor Kathy Hochul announced 30 awards from the program last week totaling \$100 million. The grants will support municipalities and nonprofit organizations across New York State in building or renovating community centers that promote physical health, mental well-being, and community connections for youth and older adults. The awards,

which will benefit nearly 400,000 New Yorkers across the State, are funded from the \$100 million NY BRICKS program, which Governor Hochul secured in the FY 2026 Enacted Budget.

"Today, we're delivering on our commitment to build stronger, healthier communities in every corner of New York State," Hochul said. "NY BRICKS grants will create affordable and accessible spaces where kids can play, families can connect, and seniors can stay active and engaged. I'm proud to see this funding reach 30 communities, and I look forward to seeing these centers come to life."

Poughquag National Guard airman receives new rank, new responsibilities

LATHAM, NY - Air Force Major General Michael Bank, the commander of the New York Air National Guard, announces the recent promotion of members of the New York Air National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

Thomas Sullivan from Poughquag, assigned to the 105th Airlift Wing, received a promotion Sept. 1, 2025 to the rank of technical sergeant.

Air National Guard promotions are based on an airman's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development

potential. These promotions recognize the best qualified airmen for a career in the New York Air National Guard.

Air National Guard Citizen Airmen who serve our state and nation are eligible for monthly pay, educational benefits (from the state and federal government), travel across the globe, technical and leadership training, health and dental insurance and contributions towards retirement programs similar to a 401(k).

For more information about the New York Air National Guard or contact a recruiter, visit <https://dmna.ny.gov/ang/>.

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Rhinecliff celebrates the season Dec. 13

The hamlet of Rhinecliff will hold its Festival of Lights on Saturday, Dec. 13. Start the day by joining the Rhinebeck Grange and Morton Memorial Library to make a giant wreath for the community to be displayed in the center of Rhinecliff. Meet at the Rhinecliff monument at 10 a.m. Dress warmly, bring gloves and prepare to have fun.

At 3 p.m. at Morton Library, Driftwood will perform a concert featuring Georgian, Balkan, Serbian and Roma songs, and more. There is a \$15 suggested donation, \$25 per family (or give what you can). Proceeds will benefit the library.

The Rhinecliff Festival of Lights begins at 5 p.m. Shine some literal and figurative light on the hamlet! Pick up luminaria kits at the library and then line the streets with candles. That evening, enjoy the sights by walking and visiting with neighbors while enjoying a complimentary hot beverage from the Epicurean and a holiday cookie at Kips Tavern. You can also stop and have your picture taken in front of the Rhinebeck Grange wreath.

Luminaria kits (\$20 donation per kit) are available at Morton for pick up. The money will go to Red Hook Responds. Email sandy@mortonrhinecliff.org for more information.

Arts Mid-Hudson awarded \$236,511 NYSCA grant

Arts Mid-Hudson recently announced grant awards totaling \$236,511 from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) to support the arts and culture sector. Through New York State's continued investment in arts and culture, NYSCA has awarded \$80.9 million in FY 2026 to arts and culture nonprofits across all 10 regions and a historic number of artists.

"New York's arts and culture sector is a cornerstone of the state's identity, and we're making bold investments to ensure it remains strong," Governor Hochul said. "These grants will lift up artists and organizations in every region, fueling local economies and expanding access to the arts. Congratulations to all the grantees – your talent and dedication help power New York's future."

New York State Council on the Arts Executive Director Erika Mallin said, "During these challenging times, the New York State Council on the Arts has been a stalwart and innovative funder. These grants will serve artists and organizations in every region and county, fueling our economy and serving our communities. We know this support isn't just an investment in the arts; it's an invest-

ment in New York's future. Congratulations to Arts Mid-Hudson and thank you for your perseverance, your creativity, and your tireless service to New York State.

New York State Council on the Arts Chair Patrick Willingham said, "With the unwavering support of Governor Hochul and our Legislature, the Council is proud to congratulate this year's grantees, whose collective efforts strengthen and benefit us all. I also want to recognize the work of NYSCA's panelists, staff, and the entire Council, whose dedication has ensured that this critical support will reach every corner of New York State."

Arts Mid-Hudson's Executive Director Melissa Dvozenja-Thomas said, "Support from the New York State Council on the Arts—through both General Operating Support and the Statewide Community Re-grants services—strengthens Arts Mid-Hudson's mission to expand access to the arts and invest in the creative voices of our region. We are grateful to partner with NYSCA in ensuring that artists, cultural organizations, and communities across the Hudson Valley continue to thrive."

Grace Church of Millbrook sets Bazaar and fine crafts Dec. 13



Grace Church of Millbrook's St. Nicholas Bazaar features two floors of exhibitors showcasing fine crafts for sale, door prizes, festivities, and homemade holiday cookies. Pictured: Among the many offerings for sale include fruit jellies and Brunetti earrings. *Courtesy photos*

Grace Church of Millbrook will host their annual St. Nicholas Bazaar, a Fine Craft, Confections, and Holiday Cookie Sale on Saturday, Dec. 13 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The event features two floors of exhibitors showcasing fine crafts for sale, door prizes, festivities, and homemade holiday cookies. The cookies are boxed to stay fresh and will be sold @ \$15 per pound. Each package contains an assortment of homemade festive cookies and candies from the traditional to the decadent. Pre-orders are recommended, but not required. Call 845-677-5174. In addition to the cookies will be chocolates, and candy gifts.

Local artisans and crafters will be selling their hand-crafted items including woven baskets, pottery, craft maple products, jam gift baskets, sugar scrubs, jewelry, leather items, hand dyed yarn, colorful felted gifts, crocheted clothing, quilts and dolls, aromatherapy oils and balms, glass ornaments, hand-painted clothing, embroidered bags, crossbody bags and

totes, greeting cards, embroidered personalized gift bags, soy candles, goat milk soaps and creams, and pet bandannas. You are certain to find gifts for everyone on your holiday list.

Artists include: Katy Shellkowitz, Kim Carver, Donna Michaels Turner, Jessica Anderson, Maria Karpf, Debbie Tenore, Patricia Creswell, Joyce Tompkins, Donna Lenhart, Debbie West, Pat Alexander, Debbie Hutchinson, William and Shelly Bedford, Julie and Susan Estabrooke, Live Rojas, Robin Capers, Kathy Rampata, Erik Hasler, Luciene Brunetti, Lisa Babb, Susan Patnode, Kathy Glebatis, Ashley Thomas, Fran Uhl, Donna Parise, Kathy Isop.

There will also be a selection of gently used Christmas decorations and items for purchase.

Grace Church is located at 3328 Franklin Avenue, Millbrook. Admission is free. The church is handicap accessible. Say Grilled Cheese Food truck will be on site for breakfast and lunch.

Hinchey, Paulin blast move to weaken newborn Hepatitis B protections, renew call for passage of the Vaccine Integrity Act

ALBANY, NY – Senator Michelle Hinchey and Assemblywoman Amy Paulin, Chair of the Assembly Health Committee, recently issued the following statements in response to the federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP) vote to abandon its long-standing recommendation that all newborns receive a hepatitis B vaccine within 24 hours of birth if their mothers test negative for the virus. The decision came from the RFK Jr.-appointed panel, despite decades of scientific evidence demonstrating the safety and necessity of the birth dose.

Hinchey said, "Abandoning newborn protections against Hepatitis B is indefensible and elevates conspiracy over science, which is exactly what the Trump administration is counting on. For 30 years, the hepatitis B birth dose has safeguarded newborns from lifelong infections that can lead to liver cancer or death. If today's actions by the federal ACIP have made one thing clear, it's that New York needs the Vaccine Integrity Act to ensure that we can protect the health of New Yorkers through proven science."

"This is precisely the kind of scientifically unsupported disruption that New York must be prepared to guard against," said Assemblywoman Amy Paulin. "The data is clear: the hepatitis B birth dose is safe, effective, and critical to preventing lifelong illness in infants. To see a feder-

al advisory panel disregard established evidence puts newborns at risk and underscores why New York can no longer rely solely on federal decision-making for vaccine access and coverage. The Vaccine Integrity Act would ensure that New Yorkers are protected from these abrupt federal reversals, maintaining access to vaccines backed by science and longstanding public-health expertise."

The Vaccine Integrity Act (S.8496/A.9060) would allow New York to follow vaccine recommendations issued by the New York State Immunization Advisory Council (IAC), the 21st Century Workgroup for Disease Elimination and Reduction (WDER), and regional public health bodies, not just ACIP. The bill would also require insurance coverage for vaccines recommended by these entities, protecting New Yorkers from gaps in access that could arise from unexpected federal policy shifts, like today's.

Paulin and Hinchey emphasized that the hepatitis B birth dose has been recommended since 1991 because newborns who contract hepatitis B face a 90% chance of lifelong chronic infection, often leading to cirrhosis, liver cancer, and early death. Major medical associations, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, have already come out in strong opposition to ACIP's change.

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8 NORTHERN DUTCHESS NEWS & Creative Living - December 10-16, 2025



A widely observed & celebrated holiday deserves a special ornament

December 25, 2025 is the winter solstice. That day will have the shortest period of daylight and longest night of the year; the Sun will reach its lowest daily maximum elevation in the sky. December sees nary a celebratory ornament. This undeniable situation (as evidenced in any grocery or department store, or on the internet) can be easily rectified. Correct the scant seasonal décor this December with an homage to the solstice: orange pomanders.

Pomanders are historic

Even if you don't believe my claim about the dearth of holiday trimmings during the month of December, you can trust these true facts: A pomander is a ball made for perfumes. They were used in the late Middle Ages through the 17th century to perfume the air in the immediate vicinity. Carriers of pomanders found it more tolerable to walk streets where filth and disease reigned. Some people wore them as a necklace or ring.

Those wealthy enough could afford silver or gold pomanders, which were globular cages for holding fragrant herbs or scents. Later, in colonial homes, pomander balls could be found in baskets, cupboards, or carried in a traveler's handkerchief to sniff when they encountered nasty odors on the road. By the Victorian era, pomander balls were a staple in many American homes.

Science & history: Having faith in the return of the sun

Before more accurate understandings of the solar system, gravity, and axial tilt, the ancients told stories to explain winter's darkness and provide reassurance. Those living in the northern hemisphere experienced winter's shorter, darker and colder days.

Winter-time agriculture was limited, or nonexistent. Proper management of the previous season's harvest was vital. If the community's food supply was inade-

quate, the group might not survive.

But celebrations were still an integral part of the end-of-year festivities. Rituals kept peoples' hopes up. Greenery was brought into homes for its enduring and, therefore, symbolic value. Fires and candles provided warmth, and extended an invitation for the return of the sun. With the re-emergence of spring, the ancients drew comfort in the effectiveness of their rituals.

This play between light and darkness features into celebratory traditions today. The lighting of the menorah during Hanukkah symbolizes overcoming politically darker days of oppression, while Diwali, the Hindu Festival, signifies the victory of light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance. Shab-e Yalda is a Persian festival that celebrates the winter solstice and the rebirth of the sun. Christmas traditions, including the multi-colored ornamentation of evergreen trees, celebrate light and hope during the darkest time of the year.

Clove and Orange Pomander

Pomanders are great for gifts and decorations. They provide a fabulous fragrance for the holidays. Any citrus fruit, studded with whole dried cloves, scents the air and is festive. But I think oranges are more symbolic of the sun than limes.

Toothpicks or skewers can be used to make impressions in the fruit. The cloves may then be inserted into them. Designs can be pre-drawn by pen or marker. Alternately, a citrus zester or channel knife can be used to draw a design at the same time as create an impression for the cloves.

Pomanders will dehydrate if baked on a wire rack at 200°F for about 12-24 hours. They are ready when they feel light and sound hollow when tapped. You can also display pomanders without preserving them. But, if you choose to do that, you'll want to place them in the



Make your own pomander using citrus, cloves, channel knife and toothpicks. *Photo by Francine Wizner*

refrigerator at night to prolong their freshness. Run a piece of wire through the pomander to hang it, or string several together.

This could be used as a lesson in a science, geography, history, or economics class to highlight the celebration of the winter solstice across cultures. It might even be used for a Science Fair! Here is the activity: <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/DECEMBER-WINTER-SOLSTICE-ACTIVITY-MAKE-AN-ORANGE-POMANDER-ENRICHMENT-7595190>

Here is a video showing how to make the pomanders: [https://www.youtu](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3333333333)

be.com/watch?v=_IEKPPxnzpk
Happy Winter Solstice!!

Francine Wizner is a native of the Hudson Valley. She grew up in the Catskills of Greene County and spent over 3 decades teaching in Ulster County. She creates science-themed instructional materials and books, as well as being a Citizen Scientist in the management of her current home in an enchanted woodland of Dutchess County. Find her at <https://medium.com/@wiznerf>, <https://substack.com/@gkatzchronicle>, and <https://www.pleasantvalleymaplelodging.com>.

DOT-TO-DOT PUZZLE

See page 17 for finished puzzle (no peeking!)



HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS
starting on page 13

Sensory-friendly performance of 'The Nutcracker' set Dec. 12 at Bardavon

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino invites residents of all abilities and their families to mark the 10th anniversary of the County's "ThinkDIFFERENTLY" initiative with a sensory-friendly showing of the cherished holiday ballet, "The Nutcracker." Performed by the New Paltz Ballet Theatre, this holiday classic takes place at the historic Bardavon 1869 Opera House in Poughkeepsie on Friday, Dec. 12, at 6 p.m. Admission is free, but seating is limited and registration is required at dutchessny.gov/nutcracker.

This relaxed, hour-long “no-hush” performance is designed to create a supportive and flexible environment where audience members are free to engage with the show in ways that feel comfortable to them. Adjustments to lighting and sound will be made to accommodate those with sensory sensitivities, including individuals on the autism spectrum. Doors will open at 5 p.m., and outside food and beverages are not allowed inside the venue.

For more information, residents can view the event flyer online via www.dutchessny.gov. Prior to the performance, at 5:30 p.m. in the Bardavon's lobby, Dutchess County will host a brief event marking the 10th anniversary of "ThinkDIFFERENTLY," a community-wide initiative that promotes inclusion, accessibility and respect for residents and visitors of all abilities. Since its inception in 2015, "ThinkDIFFERENTLY" has been warmly embraced by more than 100 communities throughout New York State, setting an unparalleled standard for acceptance by encouraging communities, businesses and organizations to embrace a more inclusive approach toward those with disabilities.

To learn more about “ThinkDIFFERENTLY” and explore a calendar of upcoming inclusive events, visit thinkdifferently.net.

New York City at the holidays: A short ride to magical adventures

continued from cover



minutes, with the best viewing spot being the Channel Gardens at Rockefeller Center.

From Rockefeller Center one can continue up Fifth Avenue toward Central Park and take in the displays of imagination in the windows of other major stores. Some will have a tree inside the door visible from the street. Others offer a more traditional collection of enchanting window displays. Possibly the best of these are the displays at Bergdorf Goodman's iconic presence just a block south of the park. They are not to be missed.

As long as one has gotten to the foot of the park one can add to the romance of the adventure by taking a horse-drawn carriage on a tour of the park. The carriage will have lap blankets if it's cold. The driver will be pleasant and the roads of Central Park offer a constantly changing landscape of trees, statues, fields and paths with other holiday strollers. If the carriage seems a bit much, then a walk, hand in hand, through the park at twilight with the lamp posts casting a gentle glow is as romantic as any couple could imagine.

From Bergdorf's, a short walk up Fifth Avenue alongside the park takes one past

"Museum Mile" and right to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The Met continues a long-standing holiday tradition with the presentation of its Christmas tree. The magnificently lit, 20-foot blue spruce looms over a vivid 18th-century Neapolitan Nativity scene, surrounded by an abundant array of life-like figures with silk-robed angels hovering above. It is claimed that the scenes laid out under the tree reflect the Mediterranean harbor town's multicultural population. Others will imagine it as the world of the Middle East at the time of the nativity. We don't recall too many Neapolitan camels, but there were lots of them in the Middle East. Whether the tree has a genuine theme or offers simply a collection of scenes and models of people from much of the then known world, they are unrivaled.

The installation is set in front of the 18th-century Spanish choir screen in the Museum's Medieval Sculpture Hall. The Medieval Sculpture Hall provides the perfect atmosphere for visiting the tree. The tree's various vignettes can absorb one's imagination for a most pleasant period.

continued on page 11





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New York City at the holidays: A short ride to magical adventures

continued from page 10

The Met also has a number of options for food and drink scattered throughout the building. One may grab lunch or a snack before continuing the holiday adventures.

The Theater Season in New York is in full swing by the Christmas holidays, and there should be something there to satisfy any taste. One can likely find a performance of Handel's "Messiah" at any number of venues.

Possibly the most iconic of New York City's magical musical events, though, is Radio City's Christmas Spectacular, complete with high-kicking Rockettes.

Radio City Music Hall's famed precision dancers are back on stage for the

annual "Christmas Spectacular Starring the Radio City Rockettes." They will be delivering holiday cheer and high kicks through January 4, 2026 this season. This year marks the 92nd Christmas Spectacular, but, even more important, 2025 is also the 100th anniversary of the Rockettes! With such an anniversary the dancers are said to have pulled out all the stops. They promise to make this year's spectacular the most memorable of their century of creating Christmas magic for New York City, which, at the holidays, is quite possibly the "capital of the world."

All of this - and it's only a short train ride away.



Opposite page, clockwise from left: The tree at Rockefeller Center is adorned with more than 50,000 multicolored LED lights spread across approximately 5 miles of string lights. This lion is one of the two stone lions in front of the Public Library on Fifth Avenue. His name is "Fortitude." His partner to the south is "Patience." They were named at the height of the Depression by Mayor LaGuardia. Decorated storefronts are a popular New York City sight at the holidays. A horse-drawn carriage travels through Central Park. This page, left: A whimsical scene in one of Bergdorf Goodman's windows. Right: The tree at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Photos by Jim Donick





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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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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: HAPPY HOLIDAYS

ACROSS

1. Shapeless form

5. Hot springs resort

8. Not square

11. Private theater box

12. Relating to ear

13. Rome's Colosseum, e.g.

15. I ____ you so!

16. *The opposite of a store the day before Christmas?

17. *"Auld Lang Syne" poet

18. *Partridge's perch (2 words)

20. Vegas numbers

21. New Zealand's indigenous people

22. Fuss

23. Tabby's favorite herb

26. More so than swell

30. Big-headedness

31. Resembling an ape

34. John Wayne Gacy's ____ the Clown

35. Photographer Dorothea of "Migrant Mother" fame

37. Type or kind

38. Like a sheep after a haircut

39. D'Artagnan's weapon of choice

40. Superlative of #33 Down

42. U.S. central bank

43. Wilma and Fred's hometown

45. *Latke's main ingredient

47. Word of possibility

48. Turning token taker

50. Exclamation of sorrow

52. *____ Odbody of "It's a Wonderful Life"

55. Raspberry drupelets

56. Saintly glow

57. Letter opener

59. Hunts for food

60. Banana leftover

61. Guesstimate phrase

62. *Color on a Kwanzaa flag

63. Not divisible by two

64. Scholarship criterion

DOWN

1. Deli acronym

2. Chicago's central district, with The

3. Gawk at

4. Wish harm upon, arch.

5. One of The Beatles

6. Pileus, pl.

7. "The Road Runner" corporation

8. Group of cows

9. Bed-and-breakfast alternative, pl.

10. *"The Nutcracker" step

12. Certain cephalopod, pl.

13. It's sometimes humble

14. *Chuck Berry's "Run, ____, Run"

19. Reason to strike

22. Grass bristle

23. Famous one, slangily

24. Open-mouthed

25. Like a well-defined muscle

26. Hot alcoholic beverage

27. Washing sponge

28. Type of heron

29. Rondeau, alt. sp.

32. *Santa's beverage of choice

33. Not well

36. *Original home of Christmas tan-nenbaum

38. Fur shawl

40. Extremely unfriendly

41. Plane trick

44. Reprieve in a desert

46. Muscle to bone connector

48. Skidded

49. Weighed

50. 4,840 square yards

51. Told an untruth

52. Head of family

53. Wrap in waxy cloth

54. Comfort

55. Financing acronym

58. Stewart of "Maggie May" fame

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

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HOLIDAY



HAPPENINGS

COMMUNITY FESTIVITIES

Dec. 13: Holiday Carol Crawl, Village of Rhinebeck. Bring your holiday cheer and join the Rhinebeck Area Chamber of Commerce for a merry good time in the heart of the Hudson Valley. Professional holiday carolers will provide festive music from 3 to 5 p.m., visiting shops and boutiques throughout the Village. The full Shop Crawl experience continues until 6:00 p.m. (or until participating shops close). The Carol Crawl will kick off at Foster's Coach House, before continuing to a lineup of cherished local businesses including Land of Oz Toys, Rhinebeck Mercantile, Winter Sun, Summer Moon, Montgomery Row, and newcomer Twin Tides Tattoo. Shoppers are invited to enjoy the performances & explore local stores. The event will culminate in a Fireside Finale at the historic Beekman Arms, at approximately 4:30 p.m. www.rhinebeckchamber.com

Dec. 13: Holiday Open House, Copake Grange 628 Empire Rd., Copake. Festivities include music, great gifts by local artisans, refreshments, and plenty of delicious cookies to eat and to take home, 3-5 p.m. Bring your neighbors, meet new people, find out more about the Grange, and relax at our warm, inviting holiday gathering. All are welcome. Free; donations encouraged to the Roe Jan Food Pantry & the Taconic Hills School District Care Closet. Details at copakegrange.org/events.

Dec. 13-14: Morton/Rhinecliff Holiday Weekend, hamlet of Rhinecliff. **Dec. 13:** Join the Rhinebeck Grange & Morton Library to help make a giant wreath for the community to be displayed in the center of Rhinecliff. Meet at the Rhinecliff monument at 10 a.m. Dress warmly, bring gloves and prepare to have fun. **Dec. 13:** Concert by Driftwood, Morton Memorial Library, 82 Kelly St., 3 p.m., featuring Georgian, Balkan, Serbian and Roma songs, and more. **Dec. 13:** Rhinecliff Festival of Lights, 5 p.m. Shine some literal and figurative light on the hamlet! Pick up luminaria kits at the library and then line the streets with candles. That evening, enjoy the sights by walking and visiting with neighbors while enjoying a complimentary hot beverage from the Epicurean and a holiday cookie at Kips Tavern. You can also stop and have your picture taken in front of the Rhinebeck Grange wreath. Luminaria kits (\$20 donation per kit) are available at Morton for pick up. The money will go to Red Hook Responds. More info: sandy@mortonrhinecliff.org. **Dec. 14:** Holiday Cookie Swap, Morton Memorial Library, 82 Kelly St., 2 p.m. Bring 3 dozen cookies and plan to swap. Join us as we taste, socialize, and drink hot cocoa. (845) 876-2903

Dec. 14: Ornament Hunt, Friend's Park, Clinton Corners. Sponsored by the Clinton Volunteer Fire Department, 2 p.m. Santa, refreshments. More info: (845) 266-5485

Dec. 16: Menorah Lighting, near the Municipal Parking Lot, Village of Red Hook. Join the Rhinebeck Jewish Center and Rabbi Hecht for the lighting of a Menorah to mark the beginning of Chanukah, 5 p.m.

Dec. 17: Menorah Lighting, Town Hall Hill, Stanfordville. Chanukah Service at 5:30 p.m.

Dec. 19: Holiday Family Trivia Night, Stanford Grange Hall, 6043 Rte. 82, Stanfordville. Stanford Grange #808 welcomes teams of any size and ages to participate, 6-8 p.m. The donation per team regardless of size is \$5 to enter (to help cover costs of heat and electric for the Grange Hall). Advanced sign ups are helpful, but not required. There will be prizes for the top 3 teams. Refreshments of snack foods, homemade baked goods, and drinks (soda, water, coffee, hot chocolate) will be available for sale. To sign up or to request more information, contact Grange Secretary Ryan Orton at (845) 868-7869 or rorton808@yahoo.com.

Dec. 20: Community Christmas in the Village, The Hall, 30 Elizabeth St., Red Hook. For ages 0-14. Sponsored by VFW & Auxiliary 7765 & American Cruisers MC, noon-3 p.m. Hot chocolate & treats, crafts by Ulster Savings, visit from Santa.

COOKIE SWAPS & DECORATING WORKSHOPS

Dec. 13: Holiday Cookie Swap Party, Pleasant Valley Library, 1584 Main St., Pleasant Valley. Share the sweetness of the holiday season at our first Holiday Cookie Swap, 12:30-2 p.m. Visit the website for details. pleasantvalleylibrary.org

Dec. 14: Holiday Cookie Swap, Morton Memorial Library, 82 Kelly St., Rhinecliff. Bring 3 dozen cookies and plan to swap, 2 p.m. Join us as we taste, socialize, and drink hot cocoa. Call 845-876-2903 for details.

Dec. 18: Cookie Decorating Workshop, Hyde Park Library Annex, 2 Main St., Hyde Park. Decorate your own sugar cookie with step-by-step instruction from culinary artist Theresa Corrigan, 6-8 p.m. Registration required. www.hydeparklibrary.org/events

HISTORIC HOLIDAYS

Through Dec. 19: Holiday Tours, Mount Gulian Historic Site, 145 Sterling St., Beacon. The Dutch Colonial home of the Verplanck family invites the public for a close-to-home, relaxing time of good cheer and good company this holiday season. The site's historic rooms will be beautifully decorated in different styles: opulent Victorian style décor adorning the dining room; charming, rustic decor in the study; contemporary holiday displays embellishing the home's main room. Adding to the twinkle of holiday decorations, the museum's collection of fine decorative pieces will contribute to the home's comfort

Free holiday films, food drive set Dec. 13 at Roosevelt Cinemas

Hyde Park Roosevelt Cinemas, I Heart Media and the Mid Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union are joining forces to host free Christmas movies and a food drive on Saturday, Dec. 13, for children and their families.

"The Polar Express," rated G, starring Tom Hanks, is a Christmas classic based on the book by Chris Van Allsburg.

"Red One," rated PG13, stars Dwayne Johnson and Chris Evans. When Santa gets kidnapped from the North Pole, an E.L.F. operative and the world's best tracker set off on an adventure to find him and save Christmas.

"Miracle on 34th Street," rated PG, is the 1947 story of 6-year-old Susan who has doubts about Santa Claus. After meeting a special department store Santa she is convinced he's the real thing and she is

given the best gift of all—something to believe in.

The doors will be open at 9:30 a.m., when Santa will be on hand to visit with children. All three films will begin at 10:15 a.m.

Admission is free, but tickets must be obtained in advance from the Mid Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union on Burnett Blvd. in Poughkeepsie, NY or at the theater.

Everyone who attends the movie is asked to please bring non-perishable food items for distribution through a local food pantry. The need is greater this year and food pantries are stressed.

Food donations may also be dropped off at Roosevelt Cinemas, 4060 Albany Post Road, Hyde Park, any time after 3:30 p.m. any day before Dec. 13.

HOLIDAY CONCERT SET DEC. 17 AT LAGRANGE LIBRARY



Comprised of seasonal, Christmas, and Hanukkah selections, there is a little bit of something for everyone in local musician Alex Prizgintas's holiday concert on his electric cello. With jazz, rock, klezmer, and traditional styles, this program offers a wide palette for the discerning listener. From the "Most Wonderful Time of the Year" and "The First Noel" to "Ma'oz Tzur" and "Hava Nagila," all are welcome to attend this program at the LaGrange Association Library on Wednesday, Dec. 17, at 6 p.m. (please register on the library's website, laglib.org).

"I tend to have two audiences; those who know me as a cellist and those who know me through my lectures on topics of regional history," said Prizgintas. "My bifurcated interests certainly keep me busy developing new stories to share about our Hudson River Valley as well as expanding my concert programs that strive to keep audiences engaged, enlightened and hope-fully entertained."

To learn more and see other video samples of Priagintas' music and lectures, visit alexprizgintas.com.

- Courtesy photo

and cheer. Holiday Tours will be given on Wed., Dec. 10-Sun., Dec. 14; and Wed., Dec. 17-Fri., Dec. 19. Tours at noon, 1 & 2 p.m. Reservations are preferred but walk-ins will be welcomed if space allows. Reservations: (845) 831-8172 or info@mountgulian.org. Payment may be made day of tour. Admission \$15 adult; \$12 senior; \$8 youngsters (6-18 years of age). Children under 6 and Mount Gulian members are free. www.mountgulian.org

Through Dec. 28: Holiday Tours, Wilderstein Historic Site, 330 Morton Rd., Rhinebeck. Wilderstein is open for guided tours this holiday season. Come and enjoy festive Yuletide decor showcased through the mansion. Tours: Fri.-Sun., at noon, 1, 2 & 3 p.m. Tour includes the history of the family, landscape, exterior design of the mansion, first and second floors, and video (there are multiple steps, not ADA accessible). Admission \$20 per person; purchase tickets upon arrival. Suggested arrival 15 minutes early. (845) 876-4818 or www.wilderstein.org

Through Dec. 30: "A Gilded Age Christmas," Staatsburgh State Historic Site, Old Post Rd., Staatsburg. Guests can reserve a timed-entry stroll through two floors of the mansion at their own pace to enjoy the festive decorations. Docents will be stationed in the rooms to answer questions about the house and its residents, the Mills family. Special holiday programs include "Evening Hours" on Dec. 12 & 19, an evening of live music surrounded by the brilliant lights, seasonal displays and costumed guides in each room; and "Holiday Whodunit" (check website for dates), when children become detectives to solve a "history mystery" by interviewing costumed interpreters portraying Gilded Age houseguests and servants. Open for timed entry, by reservation only, on Thursdays-Sundays (closed Christmas Eve, Christmas Day & New Year's Eve). Payment is at the door. Make reservations via <https://millsfriends.org/visit/>.

Dec. 13: Free Holiday Events, FDR Library and Museum & the Home of FDR National Historic Site, Albany Post Rd., Hyde Park. The Museum will be open to visitors free of charge from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Home of FDR (Springwood) will have self-guided tours available from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be holiday decorations, refreshments and special activities - including the Holiday Book Fair (1:30-4 p.m.), Fala Impersonator "Dickens" and free photo time with Santa - beginning at noon in the Henry A. Wallace Center. Visit www.fdrlibrary.org for details. Questions: Cliff Laube, Roosevelt Library, (845) 486-7745; or Franceska Macsali Urbin, National Park Service, (845) 489-8513.

Dec. 13: Holiday Storytime, Wilderstein Historic Site, 330 Morton Rd., Rhinebeck. Festive event for families that features the reading of "A Christmas Carol," hot chocolate and seasonal refreshments, 10-11:30 a.m., followed by the opportunity to experience the beautifully decorated Wilderstein mansion. Recommended for ages 5-10. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Tickets \$12 (admits 1 child and 1 adult). Register online or call the Wilderstein Office at (845) 876-4818. www.wilderstein.org

Dec. 20: Winter Solstice Celebration, Olana State Historic Site, 5720 Rte. 9G, Hudson. The Olana Partnership and New York State Parks invite the community to join in celebrating the changing season, 1-5 p.m., and experience the Hudson Valley's beautiful winter landscape through free indoor and outdoor activities and events. Includes free access to the historic interiors, a bonfire, seasonal storytelling for families, a winter choir performance by Catskill High School musicians, refreshments for purchase from Citiot in Catskill, a special visit from Hank the miniature donkey, and much more. olana.org/solstice.

Dec. 22: Children's Holiday Tea, Mount Gulian Historic Site, 145 Sterling St., Beacon. Always sold-out in advance, the Holiday Tea welcomes children and adults to an event that combines fun, good manners, and education about a bygone era, in an authentic location where social teas were once standard fare, noon-2 p.m. The Children's Holiday Tea will be held in Mount Gulian's two main museum rooms, beautifully decorated for the holidays with fresh greens and tables set with fine linens and china. Admission \$20 children, and \$30 adults. **Prepaid reservations required by Dec. 15.** For reservations & more information: (845) 831-8172 or info@mountgulian.org

continued on page 14



HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

continued from page 13

HOLIDAY AUCTIONS, BAZAARS, CRAFT FAIRS & MARKETS

Dec. 13: Holiday Penny Social, Stanford Grange Hall, 6043 Rte. 82, Stanfordville. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and calling begins at 7 p.m. Holiday items will be featured. There will be penny prizes, homemade baked goods, \$1 table, door prizes, 50/50 raffle, and theme baskets. Refreshments will be available for purchase. For more information, call Grange Secretary Ryan Orton at (845) 868-7869.

Dec. 13: St. Nicholas Bazaar Fine Craft and Holiday Cookie Sale, Grace Church, 3328 Franklin Ave., Millbrook. Shop from a variety of handmade crafts, confections, and decorated homemade cookies, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Two floors filled with gifts for your four-legged friends, your fashion-conscious family members and co-workers, and people with a sweet tooth. The cookies will be pre-boxed and will contain an assortment of festive cookies from the traditional to the decadent. The cost is \$15 per pound. To order cookies in advance (not required) call (914) 456-1097 or email lboissey@aol.com. Handicap accessible. Free entry. www.gracemillbrook.org/st-nicholas-bazaar.html or (845) 677-3064

Dec. 20: Christmas Cookie Sale, Christ Episcopal Church, 7423 S. Broadway, Red Hook. 10 a.m. while supplies last. Snow date: Dec. 21, noon-2 p.m. A portion of proceeds will be donated to local food pantries.

HOLIDAY DRIVES

Through Dec. 12: Holiday Giving Drive. NYS Sen. Michelle Hinchey's office is collecting the following items for families and pets in need across the 41st Senate District: unwrapped gifts for kids 1-17; unwrapped cat and dog toys; wet and dry food for cats and dogs. Drop-off locations: Sen. Hinchey's Kingston Office, 721 Broadway, Suite 150, Kingston, Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sen. Hinchey's Columbia Office, 160 Fairview Ave., Suite 92, Hudson, Wed., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. For questions, call Senator Hinchey's office at (845) 331-3810.

Through Dec. 12: Toy Drive in the Town of Clinton. Drop off your donation of new, unwrapped toys to the Supervisor's Office, 1215 Centre Red., Rhinebeck, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. daily. Toys for older youth are greatly needed. Part of the U.S. Marine Corps' Reserve Toys for Tots drive.

Olana's Winter Solstice Celebration set Dec. 20



Olana's Winter Solstice Celebration on Dec. 20 will offer a variety of free indoor and outdoor activities, including a visit from Hank the miniature donkey. *Courtesy photo*

The Olana Partnership and New York State Parks invite the community to join in celebrating the changing season during its annual Winter Solstice Celebration at Olana State Historic Site. Visit the site on Saturday, Dec. 20, from 1 to 5 p.m., to experience the Hudson Valley's beautiful winter landscape through free indoor and outdoor activities and events.

The Winter Solstice Celebration will include free access to the historic interiors, a bonfire, seasonal storytelling for families, a winter choir performance by Catskill High School musicians, refreshments for purchase from Citiot in Catskill, a special visit from everyone's favorite miniature donkey, Hank (back by popular demand), and much more. Special events will take place throughout the afternoon at both the Frederic Church Center for Art & Landscape and the East Lawn near the Historic House.

Nature Sarah will lead family-friendly, drop-in nature walks along Olana's historic carriage roads. She will also lead hands-on activities designed to give audiences of all ages an understanding of the science of snow and ice and a deeper appreciation for winter weather.

The Olana Partnership's educators will be facilitating winter-themed art activities throughout the day in the Wagon House Education Center. The educators will also gather around the bonfire for a special book reading focusing on how cultures from around the world celebrate the winter solstice. This story hour will be provided in English and Spanish.

The Catskill café Citiot will be on site providing seasonal refreshments like hot cocoa, coffee and delicious baked goods to get visitors in the winter spirit. Nine Pin Ciders, also based in Catskill, will be providing full and half pours of everyone's favorite Hudson Valley hard cider. Non-alcoholic sparkling cider will be available as well.

Discover the global treasures of Olana's Main House interior in your own time for free throughout this special community event. Enjoy free access to Olana's historic interiors during this self-guided opportunity. House entry will be available on a first come, first served basis.

Olana is at 5720 Route 9G in Hudson. To learn more, visit olana.org/solstice.



HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE EVENTS SET DEC. 13 AT FDR LIBRARY & HOME

On Saturday, Dec. 13, the FDR Library & Home in Hyde Park will host a variety of Open House events from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. At the Wallace Center, there will be music, photo time with Santa from 1 to 3 p.m., and holiday card-making for sailors on the USS Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt beginning at noon. The Holiday Book Fair begins at 1:30 p.m. Featured authors will be available to sign copies of their books (available for purchase in the New Deal Store). Refreshments in the visitor center will be served throughout the afternoon. The Home and Library – decorated for holidays – will be free of charge. The Home will be open from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Visit www.fdrlibrary.org for more information. *Courtesy photos*



Through Dec. 19: Donations of pet food, supplies, treats, etc., are requested for the Stanford Grange Pet Pantry & the Dutchess County SPCA. Please drop off donations of food, toys, collars & leashes, clean blankets and towels at the Bangall Post Office (105 Hunns Lake Road, Bangall) Stanford Town Hall (26 Town Hall Road, Stanfordville), and Stanford Library (6035 Route 82 Stanfordville).

Through Dec. 22: Food Drive, Red Hook Firehouse, Firehouse Lane, Red Hook. Red Hook Fire Co. Ladies Auxiliary is holding a food drive. Bring your non-perishable, non-expired food donations to support St. Christopher's Food Pantry. Let's fill the bins and share the holiday spirit with families in need. Larger donations can be dropped off on Mondays from 7 to 8 p.m.

Through December: Food Drive to support Willow Roots, bring non-perishable goods to Stanford Free Library in the months of November and December. Collected items will benefit families in the Pine Plains Central School District. Stanford Free Library is at 6035 Route 82 Stanfordville. Visit www.stanfordlibrary.org or call (845) 868-1341. Direct donations to Willow Roots (www.willowroots.org) can be left anytime on the porch at 23 North Main St., Pine Plains.

Autumn Food Drive for Clinton Food Pantry: The Town of Clinton is holding an Autumn Food Drive to benefit Clinton's Food Pantry. Suggested items include: condiments, spices, cooking oil, shelf-stable milk or powdered milk, boxed cake and cookie mixes, sugar, flour, coffee, tea bags, hygiene products, kitchen utensils, plastic containers for food storage, can openers, cleaning supplies, sponges, paper towels, and liquid soap. Other donations welcome also. Drop items off at the Clinton Town Clerk's Office Mondays-Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

Through Dec. 20: "A Christmas Carol" Interactive Dinner Theater, various locations. Murder Cafe presents its 26th annual dinner theater production of the Charles Dickens' holiday classic. Picture yourself whisked away to the charming streets of Victorian England, where the air is filled with the sweet melodies of carolers singing merry tunes, and the sight of actors clad in magnificent costumes brings the era to life. As you savor a delightful meal alongside the Cratchit family and the endearing Tiny Tim, you'll find yourself fully immersed in this captivating tale, witnessing the awe-inspiring Ghosts of Christmas and the heartwarming transformation of Scrooge right before your eyes. Performances: Sat., Dec. 13, Historic Hotel Broadalbin, Broadalbin, 6 p.m. Sun., Dec. 14, Curry Estate, Hopewell Junction, 4 p.m. Sat., Dec. 20, Soyuzivka Heritage Center, Kerhonkson, 1 p.m. Sat., Dec. 20, Hudson House Distillery, West Park, 7 p.m. www.murdercafe.net

Through Dec. 21: "A Christmas Story," The Center for Performing Arts at Rhinebeck, 661 Rte. 308, Rhinebeck. CENTERstage Production presents the play adaptation of "A Christmas Story" by Philip Grecian. Based on the motion picture of the same name, written by Jean Shepherd, Leigh Brown and Bob Clark; and on the book, "In God We Trust, All Others Pay Cash," by Jean Shepherd. Directed by Rik Lopes. Humorist Jean Shepherd's memoir of growing up in the Midwest in the 1940s follows 9-year-old Ralphie Parker in his quest to get a genuine Red Ryder BB gun under the tree for Christmas. Performances: Fri., & Sat., 8 p.m.; matinees on Dec. 6 & 20, 3 p.m.; Sun., 3 p.m. Tickets \$25. www.centerforperformingarts.org or (845) 876-3080

Through Dec. 28: Wonderland of Lights, Dutchess County Fairgrounds, Rte. 9, Rhinebeck. Drive-through experience featuring hundreds of dazzling displays to delight the entire family. Hours: Thurs. & Sun., 5-9 p.m.; Fri. & Sat., 5-9:30 p.m. Tickets are available online or at the gate. www.thewonderlandoflights.com

Through Jan. 3: "Winter Glow," Heritage Financial Park, 1500 Rte. 9D, Wappingers Falls. Mile-long drive-thru journey of dazzling holiday light displays is perfectly synced to festive music. Open daily, 5-9 p.m. (except Christmas Day). Tickets & more info: <https://winterglowexperience.com/wappinger/>.

Dec. 12-31: Holiday Performances, Towne Crier Cafe, 379 Main St., Beacon. Dec. 12: Spending Christmas with Alicia Witt, 8 p.m. Dec. 20: Slambovian Circus of Dreams: "A Very Slambovian Christmas," 8 p.m. Dec. 21: The Costellos Annual Christmas Show with special guests, 5:30 p.m. Dec. 31: New Year's Eve Celebration featuring Kelli Baker

continued on page 15

Alicia Witt brings Christmas show to Towne Crier Dec. 12

Award winning actor, Billboard Top 30 charting singer-songwriter and author Alicia Witt will perform at the Towne Crier Cafe in Beacon on Friday, Dec. 12, at 8 p.m.

Witt has played her piano-driven pop-rock all over the world, including at the Grand Ole Opry. She is familiar to holiday movie audiences for her 10 Christmas movies, many of which feature her original music.

Her self-produced album, "I Think I'm Spending Christmas with You," came out in November 2024. A classically trained

competitive pianist, Alicia's music has been described as "sharply personal, boldly melodic pop originals in the Carole King/Billy Joel vein" (Philadelphia Inquirer). Witt's four decades-long career as a TV/film actor began with David Lynch's "Dune" at age 7. She has more than 100 acting credits; and her first book, "Small Changes" (Harper Horizons), was published in 2021. Visit www.townecrier.com for tickets and more information.

- Courtesy photo



The Two Of Us Productions sets auditions for 2026 productions

The Two Of Us Productions, the award-winning theatrical company based in Columbia County, announces auditions for its first two mainstage productions of 2026.

"Ms. Holmes and Ms. Watson – Apt. 2B," by Kate Hamill. Performances are March 20-29, 2026, at the Copake Grange, 628 Empire Road in Copake.

"The Minutes," by Tracy Letts. Performances are June 12-21, 2026, at the Claverack Free Library, 9 Route 9H, Claverack.

Auditions will be held on: Wednesday, Dec. 10, starting at 7 p.m.; Friday, Dec. 12, starting at 7 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 13, starting at 10 a.m. Callbacks will be held if necessary on Tuesday, Dec. 16, at 7 p.m. All auditions and callbacks will be held in the Fellowship Hall of the Dutch Reformed Church, 88 Route 9H in Claverack. All roles are available. Stipends will be provided to all cast members.

Sides will be provided. To obtain an advance copy of sides, or for additional information, please contact the director at StephenSanbornPhD@gmail.com.

Lyceum in Red Hook to host free holiday movies, food drive

Lyceum Cinemas and Mid- Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union along with local merchants of Red Hook are once again sponsoring free Christmas movies for children and their families on Saturday, Dec. 20, in conjunction with a food drive to aid needy families in the area. Now in the 34th year of hosting this annual event, the Lyceum has decided to offer three films for attendees to choose from.

"The Polar Express," rated G, starring Tom Hanks, has become a Christmas classic based on the book by Chris Van Allsburg.

"Home Alone," rated PG, stars Macaulay Culkin, Joe Pesci, Daniel Stern and Catherine O'Hara. This is the story of 8-year-old Kevin McCallister who accidentally gets left home alone while his family goes on vacation. He soon realizes that two con men are trying to rob his home, and it is his job to protect it.

"It's a Wonderful Life," rated PG, stars Jimmy Stewart and Donna Reed and is the 1946 movie about the life of George Bailey. When he is at his lowest point he ends up rescuing his guardian angel, Clarence, who then shows him what his town would have looked like if it hadn't

been for all his good deeds over the years.

The films will be offered at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 20; and upon entry everyone may choose which film they prefer to see.

Admission is free, but tickets must be obtained in advance from any of the following local merchants: MHVFCU, Red hook branch, Minuteman Press, Subway, Red Hook T's, Village Pizza III, Savona's Restaurant, Red Hook, Historic Village Diner, Ben & Gracies, and The Red Hook Diner.

Santa will be on hand at the Lyceum when the doors open at 9:30 a.m. to talk

to the children.

Everyone who attends the movie is asked to please bring a non-perishable food item for collection by the Dutchess County Community Action Agency office in Red Hook for distribution to needy families in the area. Now more than ever many families are struggling this holiday season due to the high cost of everything. If you can, please help.

Those who do not plan to attend a movie, but might wish to donate food items, may do so any day between now and Dec. 20. The Lyceum Cinemas are at 15 Old Farm Lane, Red Hook.

H LIDAY H APPENINGS

continued from page 14

Band, Gabe Stillman Band & Boom Kat, 9:30 p.m. Tickets & info at www.townecrier.com

Dec. 12-13: Everett Bradley's "Holidelic," Kaatsbaan Cultural Park, Black Box Theater, Studio Complex, 120 Broadway, Tivoli. Sensational holiday-themed funk band featuring Everett Bradley. Known for his work with Bruce Springsteen and Bon Jovi, Bradley takes on the role of Papadelic, Funk's Father Christmas, an amalgamation of Funkadelic's George Clinton and Santa Claus. Performances at 8 p.m. both days. Tickets \$45 GA. www.kaatsbaan.org

Dec. 13-14: Saturday Morning Family Series, The Center for Performing Arts at Rhinebeck, 661 Rte. 308, Rhinebeck. Kids on Stage presents "A Christmas Carol," a musical version of the holiday classic, written by Lou Trapani and inspired by the story by Charles Dickens. Performed by The Center's Kids on Stage workshop participants. Performances: Dec. 13, 11 a.m. & 2 p.m.; Dec. 14, 11 a.m. All seats \$10. www.centerforperformingarts.org or (845) 876-3080

Dec. 14: 10th Annual Holiday Concert, The First United Presbyterian Church of Pine Plains, 3039 Church St. (Rte. 199), Pine Plains. The concert will feature many local musicians and festive organ music, 3 p.m. A free will offering will be taken for the continued maintenance of the Church's historic 1926 Estey Pipe Organ. Refreshments will be offered after the concert. For more information, call the Church at (518) 398-7117.

Dec. 15: "Polar Express" Book Reading, Historic Hyde Park Railroad Station, 34 River Rd., Hyde Park. The non-profit Hudson Valley Railroad Society (HVRRS) will host its annual holiday season-themed event for families and kids of all ages, 6:30-8 p.m., including hot cocoa and cookies, a holiday sing along, and a visit from Santa. Several model railroad layouts will be running, including ones with hands-on operating features such as Thomas The Tank Engine ©. Admission and refreshments are free. www.hydeparkstation.com

Dec. 19-21: "Nut/Cracked," Kaatsbaan Cultural Park, Black Box Theater, Studio

Complex, 120 Broadway, Tivoli. "Nut/Cracked" is The Bang Group's beloved, witty response to "The Nutcracker." Choreographer David Parker draws inspiration from across the dance spectrum, blending tap, ballet, disco, and even bubble wrap to create a unique performance that reimagines Tchaikovsky's iconic score. With renditions ranging from Duke Ellington to Glenn Miller, Nut/Cracked transforms the familiar into something delightfully unexpected. Performances: Fri. & Sat., 7 p.m.; Sun., 2 p.m. Tickets \$45 GA, ?\$30 students with ID. www.kaatsbaan.org

Dec. 22: Holiday Film Screening, "It's a Wonderful Life," Wallace Center, FDR Library & Home, Rte. 9, Hyde Park. Screening of this 1946 classic is at 2 p.m. What would Bedford Falls be without George Bailey? His guardian angel Clarence is going to show him just how big a difference he's made in this holiday classic starring Jimmy Stewart and Donna Reed and directed by Frank Capra. This event is free to attend but registration is required via www.fdrlibrary.org

Dec. 22: Winter Holidays on the Cello with Alex Prizgintas, Pleasant Valley Library, 1584 Main St., Pleasant Valley. Alex Prizgintas for a special holiday concert of seasonal, Christmas, and Hanukkah selections on his electric cello, 6-7:30 p.m. With jazz, rock, klezmer, and traditional styles, from "The Most Wonderful Time of the Year" and "The First Noel" to "Ma'oz Tzur" and "Hava Nagila," this program offers a wide palette for every listener. Accompanied with a narration that reveals some of the back stories of his selections, he immerses his audience in a journey through musical history. Free; registration required. pleasantvalleylibrary.org

Dec. 31: Ars Choralis "A Quilt of Courage," Old Dutch Church, 272 Wall St., Kingston. Free New Year's Eve concert in partnership with the City of Kingston and Old Dutch Church, 6 p.m. Inspired by the lives of Hudson Valley people who changed the course of history in this country, Ars Choralis celebrates their selfless dedication to improving the lives of others. Cash donations accepted to benefit People's Place of Kingston. ArsChoralis.org.



The matches

Luigi takes a harrowing journey in search of a light for Pop.

Growing up in an Italian house with both parents from the old country, we were not allowed to speak English. All we spoke at home was Italian. As such, my parents’ English didn’t develop as well as other Italian immigrants. There were times that English and Italian were mixed together in a sort of new dialect that we understood, but our relatives overseas did not. This didn’t work out very well when we would visit Italy and we would try to hold conversations.

My father and his two uncles would take turns going to Italy to visit their mother. So every three years we would pack up and go stay in my father’s home town of Monte di Procida at the house he grew up in. I remember when I was 7 years old, we went to Italy for the summer.

Monte di Procida as I remember was a small town with narrow cobblestone streets and stone building with a view of the Mediterranean no matter where you were. Driving in Italy was, and probably still is, an adventure. My father is not the best driver here in the States, so you can imagine what he was like in Italy. So, when he rented a car for our time in Italy, let’s just say, Pop got the extra insurance. We scraped many stone walls, and as such our rental car looked like it had just gone through Afghanistan instead of our little town of Monte di Procida.

On most days, when not visiting relatives, we would go to the beach, usually Miliscola, then have a late lunch around 4 p.m., because everything in town would shut down for siesta between 1 and 3 p.m.

On one such occasion, we were eating at a small open-air café near the beach. As

was custom after dinner, my father would light a cigarette. Unfortunately, he didn’t have any matches, so he sent me to get some. I went to front desk and asked for “matchediels,” which unbeknownst to me is not an Italian word at all. It’s not even the Italian dialect of our hometown. It is a hybrid word made of the word “matches” with an Italian ending to it, which I would find out later in life was fairly common for Italian Americans. The correct word is fiammiferi, which is a word that I had never heard of.

Anyway, the maître d’ yelled at me, told me to get lost, cursed me out and kicked me in the butt, not knowing that I was eating there with my family. So I wandered out of the restaurant and spied a little store across the street. Now drivers in Italy are notorious for running down people, so I had to kind of jump and weave my way across the street of death, defying the devil himself. Out of breath after a few near misses, I made it across. I went in the store that I had spied and asked for “matchediels.” He kicked me out of the store, cursed me out, and kicked me in the butt.

Now I was determined. I was on a quest. I went down to another store and asked for “matchediels.” Once again I was kicked out of the store, cursed out, and kicked in the butt.

Now I’m noticing a pattern. I may have been 7 years old and naïve, but every kick in the butt I received was starting to wear on me; and I realized what I was saying was not being understood. The next store I entered I didn’t speak. I instead chose to point and grunt. This didn’t work either because they thought

there was something wrong with me and they kicked me out anyway, again with the customary cursing and the ever-present kick in the butt. You see, I didn’t realize it at the time, but apparently there was a problem with gypsies using kids to scam store owners, so they just assumed I was one of them.

My butt was getting sore from getting kicked so many times, and my spirits were low from being cursed out so many times, so I decided to go back to restaurant with my tail between my legs and no matches. Once again I had to cross the street of death and dodging traffic, laughing at the devil himself, in order to get back across the road.

When I went into the café, I had to sneak back in. If you remember, the maître d’ kicked me out the first time I asked for “matchediels” and I wanted to avoid getting another cursing and another boot in the butt. After I snuck by the front desk, as I was walking back to our table, I spied a large bowl in the shape of an elephant with ... books of matches. I grabbed one and went back to the table, albeit a half-hour later.

When my father saw me, he asked where I was, so I told him the whole story complete with my harrowing cross of the street of death. He was horrified, but proud that his son refused to give up before returning with a book of matches. There was a plate of hazelnut biscotti on the table with a small pot of espresso and a bottle of anisette. Pop handed me a biscotti and put his arm around me, as I sat next to him, and he lit a cigarette. Well, at least I knew I wasn’t going to get kicked in the butt again.

HAZELNUT BISCOTTI

Ingredients

6 whole eggs

4 cups all-purpose flour

2 cups white sugar

2 teaspoons baking powder

4 tablespoons Amaretto

3 teaspoons vanilla extract

2 cups chopped hazelnuts

Method

Mix dry ingredients in a large bowl.

Mix the eggs and liquids in a separate bowl. Add liquids to the dry ingredients gradually, mixing until dough is stiff. Do not overmix.

Shape dough into two rectangles 4 inches wide by 12 inches long. Place on greased cookie sheet. Bake for 20 minutes at 350 degrees.

Remove baked rectangles from oven and let stand until cool.

Using a sharp knife, slice the large cookie into 3/4-inch slices. Place them back on the cookie sheet, on their side, and bake again for 15 minutes or until they are golden brown.

Serve with espresso and, of course, a bottle of Anisette.

Luigi Coppola is one of five brothers born to Francesca and Antonio Coppola. The Coppola family came to America from Naples, Italy in 1954. Antonio and his brothers opened their first restaurant in Poughkeepsie in 1961. Luigi and his brothers Nick, John, Antonio and Vincent have carried on the family tradition in the way their parents taught them, using classic recipes taught to them at their apron strings. Visit their website at www.coppolas.net.

A & E CALENDAR

Dec. 12-13: Live Music at the Towne Crier Cafe, 379 Main St., Beacon. Dec. 12: Spending Christmas with Alicia Witt; guest Alice Wallace, 8 p.m. Tickets \$30 advance, \$35 door. Dec. 13: Powderfinger – Music from Abbey Road, 8 p.m. Tickets \$20 advance, \$25 door. (845) 855-1300 or www.townecrier.com

Dec. 13: Da Odd Couple, VBI Theatre of Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center, 12 Vassar St., Poughkeepsie. Elysium Furnace Works closes out its 2025 season with a project comprising two of the most renowned, accomplished turntablist legends, DJs Rob Swift and Mista Sinasta. Sets at 8 & 11 p.m. . Tickets for the 8 p.m. set are \$20 advance, \$30 door, on sale at <https://odd.eventbrite.com>. For their 11 p.m. set, Da Odd Couple will perform up the street from the VBI at Reason & Ruckus, 305 Main St., Poughkeepsie.

Sliding admission of \$10-20 will be requested at the door. Opening acts for for Da Odd Couple's late set at R&R are TBA. <https://cunneen-hackett.org/>

Dec. 13: Hudson Valley Pizza & Italian Fest, MJN Convention Center, 14 Civic Center Plaza, Poughkeepsie. Unlimited Pizza Sampling with your taste the best, the cheesiest, the freshest creations from top pizza makers across the region, 1 p.m. Tickets at www.MJNCenter.org

Dec. 14: Reading of “Almost, Maine,” Village Hall, 86 Broadway, Tivoli. Tangent Theatre Company presents a reading of John Cariani’s beloved contemporary play, 7:30 p.m. It’s a cold winter night in a small?, mythical town called Almost. A field of stars twinkle against a northern lights sky. Love comes ... and goes. RSVP to info@tangent-arts.org.

Dec. 17: America250 Film Series, “Drums Along the Mohawk,” Wallace Center, FDR Library & Home, Rte. 9, Hyde Park. Screening at 2 p.m. Following the onset of the American Revolutionary War, newlyweds Gilbert (Henry Fonda) and Lana Martin (Claudette Colbert) find their quiet life in the Mohawk Valley interrupted as the fighting comes to their doorstep. This event is free to attend but registration is required via www.fdrlibrary.org

Dec. 17: Author Event, Starr Library, 68 W. Market St., Rhinebeck. “Queen of

Bohemia Predicts Own Death: On Gilded Age Journalist Zoe Anderson Norris,” 7-8 p.m. ?Join NY Times contributors Eve M. Kahn and Julie Lasky in a discussion that will reveal the little-known story of the trail-blazing journalist who took on New York’s Gilded Age. From exposing slumlords and corrupt politicians to advocating for impoverished immigrants, she captured the injustices of her era with a wit and tenacity that still resonates today. Registration required. (845) 876-4030 or www.starlribrary.org

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REQUEST FOR BIDS NOTICE
The Purchasing Agent, County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of sealed bids for: Bid #RFCO-DCP-01-26
EISEP & NFCSP
In-Home Respite Services
Bids will be received until 2:00 p.m. on the 6th day of January 2026 at the Dutchess County Division of Central Services, 378 Violet Avenue, Suite 2, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601. Specifications and bid forms may be obtained by visiting our website <http://www.dutchessny.gov>, selecting "Government", then selecting "Bidding and RFP Opportunities". For additional information, call 845-486-3613.

REQUEST FOR BIDS NOTICE

Legal Notices

The Purchasing Agent, County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of sealed bids for: Bid #RFB-DCP-65-25
CAM Superline Trailer
Bids will be received until 2:00 p.m. on the 17th day of December 2025 at the Dutchess County Division of Central Services, 378 Violet Avenue, Suite 2, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601. Specifications and bid forms may be obtained by visiting our website <http://www.dutchessny.gov>, selecting "Government", then selecting "Bidding and RFP Opportunities". For additional information, call 845-486-3613.

TOWN OF PLEASANT VALLEY
Request for Proposals:

Legal Notices

TOWN HALL - MOVING SERVICES
Dated: November 20, 2025
SECTION I - INTRODUCTION AND INTENT OF RFP:
The Town of Pleasant Valley is soliciting proposals from qualified vendors to pack furniture and other items in the Current Town Hall (1554 Main St, Pleasant Valley, NY) and Recreation Office (27 Hibernia Rd, Salt Point, NY) and move them to the New Town Hall (1903 Route 44, Pleasant Valley, NY). Copies of the RFP are available at the Town Clerk's Office, 1554 Main Street, Pleasant Valley, NY 12569 and on the town's website at: www.pleasantvalley-ny.gov.

Legal Notices

valley-ny.gov.
Sealed proposals will be accepted until **December 11, 2025** at 12:00 noon at the Town Clerk's Office, 1554 Main Street, Pleasant Valley, NY 12569.
Prospective bidders must attend a mandatory walk-through on **December 3, 2025** at 9:00AM starting at the Current Town Hall, 1554 Main St, Pleasant Valley, NY. The walk-through will include the Current Town Hall, Recreation Office and New Town Hall.
Proposals shall be submitted on the attached form furnished by the Town. Proposals shall include the names of three clients

Legal Notices

the Town can contact as references.
Proposals shall be submitted in a sealed envelope identifying the Contractor's name, the RFP title, and the RFP due date on the face of the envelope.
Submission of a proposal signifies the Contractor's agreement that its proposal and the content thereof are valid, and all pricing submitted with the proposal shall remain in effect for the contract period.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NOTICE
The Purchasing Agent, County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of proposals

Legal Notices

for: Bid #RFP-DCP-10-26
Substance Abuse Assessment, Referral & Treatment Monitoring Services for Applicants and Recipients of Public Assistance
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., January 2, 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.

REQUEST FOR BIDS NOTICE
The Purchasing Agent,

Legal Notices

County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of sealed bids for: Bid #RFB-DCP-59-25
Qualified Elevator Inspection (QEI) Services
Bids will be received until 2:00 p.m. on the 30th day of December 2025 at the Dutchess County Division of Central Services, 378 Violet Avenue, Suite 2, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601. Specifications and bid forms may be obtained by visiting our website <http://www.dutchessny.gov>, selecting "Government", then selecting "Bidding and RFP Opportunities". For additional information, call 845-486-3613.

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

OBITUARIES

Ryan Nichols

Ryan Edward Nichols, 25, a lifelong area resident, passed away on November 28, 2025 from injuries sustained in an automobile accident.
Born in Poughkeepsie on April 28, 2000, he was the cherished son of Russell Edward Nichols and Lynn Scoralick Nichols. Ryan was a 2018 graduate of Arlington High School where he played football and lacrosse. His football career continued at Buffalo State University and Western Connecticut State University. Ryan was a founding member and technician of Alpha Laundry Repair, LLC in Wallkill and worked alongside his brother-in-law Ryan Widrick.
Ryan loved life, his family, and was a true friend to many. His life was rich with friendships. He was most happy in and around water, whether it be oceans, lakes, ponds, rivers or waterfalls. He was an avid fisherman and boater enjoying many trips on the Hudson River, from Lake Champlain to the Long Island Sound, the Connecticut River, Jersey Shore and most recently the Delaware River. Ryan was very patriotic; he loved boating to the New York Harbor to see the Statue of Liberty and Liberty Landing. He loved animals and enjoyed training his beloved Rottweilers. He loved horses thanks to the inspiration of his sister, Victoria Nichols Widrick. He also enjoyed side-

by-siding, snowmobiling, skiing and snowboarding. Ryan was a lifelong member of the Freedom Plains Presbyterian Church where he was baptized and confirmed. Even at a young age, Ryan always enjoyed helping others and giving back to the community. He was a Boy Scout and enjoyed participating in a church mission trip to help rebuild areas of West Virginia following a flood. Ryan was looking forward to joining the Beekman Fire Department.
Ryan is survived by his parents, Russell and Lynn; his sister, Victoria and her husband Ryan Widrick; his grandparents, Barbara Scoralick and Robert Nichols; his uncle, Brian Scoralick and his wife Kim, and their children, Sidney, Brendan and his wife Anna, Tabby and Hailey; his father's cousin, Christopher Jack Case and his wife Jennifer, and Chris' children Jack and Katie; his aunt Chrissy Nichols and her daughter Rebecca; many other extended cousins; and many beloved friends. Ryan was predeceased by his grandfather, Sheriff Fred Scoralick, his grandmother Gail Nichols; and his uncle, Scott Nichols.
Calling hours were held on Thursday, December 4 at the McHoul Funeral Home, Inc., Hopewell Junction. There was a celebration of Ryan's life on Friday, December 5 at the funeral home, followed by a reception at the Beekman

Firehouse.
Memorial donations may be made in Ryan's name to a football scholarship that is being established at Arlington High School in his memory to: Arlington Education Foundation -Scholarship Fund, 144 Todd Hill Rd, Lagrangeville, NY 12540. Link: <https://tinyurl.com/Ryan-E-Nichols>
Paul Sneddon
Paul Kenneth Sneddon passed away on Saturday, November 29, 2025, in Millbrook, NY. He was born on December 30, 1957, in Poughkeepsie, NY. He was a proud veteran of the United States Navy where he served for eight years.
Paul was a beloved brother to sisters Kathryn Galli (Paul) of Millbrook, NY; Lisa Blank (Joe) of Clearwater, FL; Annette Kramer of Warrensburg, NY, and one brother Grant Sneddon. He also leaves behind one niece, Janine Galli of Millbrook, NY; and nephews Justin Galli (Nancy); and Matthew Blank (Courtney)

of Denver, CO. He was preceded in death by his parents, William and Janet Sneddon; his brother William Sneddon Jr.; and his sister Janine Sneddon.
Paul's quick wit and sense of humor will be greatly missed at family gatherings. His smile and presence left an impression on all who knew him. A big fan of motor sports, Paul loved to watch the races at Lime Rock Park. For many years, Paul drove for A1 Empire Transportation where he was treated like family. Some of his most joyful moments were spent at his great-nephew's football and baseball games and playfully teasing his great-nieces, whom he affectionately called "Baby" and "Lucy."
Visitation was held on Saturday, December 6 at Allen Funeral Home, Millbrook. A funeral service took place at the funeral home with interment with military honors following in Nine Partners Cemetery, Millbrook. For condolences, please visit www.hudsonvalleyfuneralhomes.com.

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

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SUDOKU

This week's answer

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

(puzzles on page 12)

The ‘Oh, I Don’t Need Anything’ question

Maybe you like to give gifts far more than you prefer to receive them. You’re not all about chasing this year’s popular gift - and maybe you already have everything you need as it is.

You can see how conflict could arise between two people who prefer giving to receiving, but let’s stop and think. Aren’t there plenty of ways to give gifts that don’t involve physical objects? Of course there are. And you don’t have to figure out how to wrap anything, or where you put the ribbon and the tape last December.

Your time is your most valuable gift

Imagine this scenario: Your older neighbor needs to pick up some groceries but the weather’s a bit iffy for them. They need the porch shoveled but there aren’t any teenagers in the neighborhood who’d like to make a few bucks.

Grab the shovel. You’re giving your neighbor a gift of service, assuming you’re in good enough shoveling condition yourself. And you needed to go on a

grocery run anyway.

We didn’t want to mention it right away, but a gift-giver could consider volunteering for the Office for the Aging, in the name of someone who is unable to volunteer. Email ofa@dutchessny.gov or call 845-486-2555 to learn more.

Gifts, if you feel absolutely compelled

It’s common to accumulate “stuff” over the decades. By the time we’ve reached our 60s and beyond, there can be too much of everything and nowhere left to put it. Our first goal, then, will be not to add to the clutter, no matter how good our intentions may be. With that in mind, here are a few suitable starter ideas:

- If they have a “bucket list,” help them complete an item on it.
- Are there gardeners in your life? A packet of seeds fits inside a card.
- Car wash certificates and subscriptions are especially helpful in the winter.
- Tickets to a special event or destination.
- A “date” with their favorite people.
- A week of freezer meals.

- Instead of another mug, cup or water bottle, try specialty beverages, coffees or teas. Make sure it’s a consumable they’ll like. Keep it simple: A big fancy hamper full of food is likely to be too much of a good thing.

- A prepaid subscription renewal to a service they already use and like.
- A replacement for something they already use but have worn out.
- Still at a loss? Gift cards and certificates are a solid fallback - but be sure they’re for a destination the recipient will visit.
- Everyone loves fruitcake, right?
- Cash is among the simplest options.

If you want to dress it up a bit, the internet is full of tutorials on making origami with U.S. currency.

We were kidding about the fruitcake.

A MESSAGE FROM OFA DIRECTOR TODD TANCREDI

Dutchess County winters can be hard on drivers of any age, but even more so for older drivers. That’s why we keep our advice simple: When in doubt, don’t go out.

The day before an expected winter weather event tends to draw heavier-than-usual traffic, especially around grocery stores. Get that shopping run done two or more days earlier, and avoid the last-minute crush.

Curb the milk-and-eggs enthusiasm. You got to the store ahead of the crowds, and brought your list? Well done. Every winter storm comes with the possibility of power outages, so there’s no need to pick up more perishables than are necessary. Instead, make sure you’ve got plenty of shelf-stable food on hand in case of an extended outage. OFA Home Delivered Meals clients receive shelf-stable meals in anticipation of weather affecting delivery schedules.

Drive like a “townie.” Know your community’s alternate routes, for when main roads are clogged. Remember that there are still some cellular “dead zones” in Dutchess County, so your mobile device’s navigation features might not be available.

Even sunny days can be tricky. Have your sunglasses handy. Not only are sunrise and sunset driving challenging, there’s also the matter of glare from sunlight reflected off snow to consider. Take care!

‘HEAP’ FUNDS RELEASED FOR WINTER ’25-’26

The Regular Benefit component of the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) is open for the 2025-26 season. HEAP offers financial assistance to eligible households, helping them to heat their homes safely. One regular HEAP benefit is available per year. The Regular HEAP benefit is scheduled to operate through April 7, 2026, or until funding is exhausted, whichever occurs first.

Regular HEAP benefits for households who pay directly for heat based on actual usage are paid directly to the vendor that supplies the household’s primary source of heat.

An emergency HEAP benefit is scheduled to become available on January 2nd, 2026.

If you’ve already applied for HEAP and been approved: You don’t need to do anything else. Your HEAP allotment will soon be paid to your heating vendor.

If you’ve never heard of HEAP: Contact OFA at 845-486-2555 if you’re a Dutchess County resident over 60 who’s not already benefiting from HEAP, especially if you’re already qualified for other benefit programs like SNAP. Eligibility and benefits are based on income, household size, the primary heating source, and whether or not the household has a member who is under age 6, over age 60, or permanently disabled.

There’s also EAP – similar acronym, different program

New York State’s Energy Affordability Program (EAP) provides up to \$500 in annual discounts on energy bills. State officials estimate that 1.5 million households are eligible for the discount but have yet to apply. Contact OFA for details or visit www.ny.gov/EAP.

‘SUPPORT OUR SENIORS’ HOLIDAY GIVING PROGRAM

End-of-year holidays can be less than joyful for Dutchess County’s homebound, low-income older residents, who find it difficult to join friends and family at holiday gatherings. Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino and Office for the Aging want to be sure these older adults are remembered this season, through our new “Support Our Seniors” giving program.

We’re looking for donations of new, unwrapped gifts:

- non-slip socks
- blankets and throws
- gloves and mittens
- Sudoku, word-search and crossword books
- Puzzles
- Slippers
- Scarves

Gifts can be dropped off until Monday, December 15th, at the OFA main office at 114 Delafield St. in Poughkeepsie, weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Gifts can also be dropped off until December 15th at any OFA Friendship Center. Operating dates and hours are listed below:

Beacon: 1 Forrestal Heights, Mon-Fri, 10a-2p

East Fishkill: East Fishkill Community Center, 890 NY 82, Hopewell Junction, Mon-Fri, 10a-2p

Millerton: North East-Millerton Library Annex, 28 Century Blvd., Millerton, Mon-Thu, 10a-2p

Pawling: Town Hall Annex, 154 Charles Colman Blvd. (lower level), Tue-Thu, 10a-2p

Red Hook: 59 Fisk St. (Red Hook Community Center), Mon-Fri, 10a-2p

South Amenia: First Presbyterian Church, 229 South Amenia Rd., Wassaic, Mon-Thu, 10a-2p

Tri-Town: First Presbyterian Church, 1576 Main St., (US 44), Pleasant Valley, Mon-Thu, 10a-2p

For additional information, contact OFA Outreach Coordinator Linda Edgar at ledgar@dutchessny.gov or 845-486-2548.

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NOTICE OF EARLY DEADLINE

Due to the Christmas holiday, the deadline for the Dec. 24 issue of Northern Dutchess News is Thursday, Dec. 18. E-mail cschmidt@s DutchessNews.com for more information.

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