

# New Year's Eve Millbrook is back

The Millbrook Rotary Club, Millbrook Arts Group, Millbrook Library and the Village of Millbrook announce the return of New Year's Eve Millbrook on Wednesday, Dec. 31, from 4 to 7 p.m., in the Village of Millbrook. This long-standing community tradition invites families, neighbors, and visitors to welcome the new year with an evening of live music, interactive performances, local food, children's activities, and village-wide celebration.

## Live music

Music will fill both Grace Church and Lyall Community Church throughout the evening. This year's lineup features The Hammerhead Horns, Miss Paula and the Twangbusters, and Nite Train. These three dynamic groups bring ragtime, swing, gospel, rockin blues, and juke joint energy that is sure to get audiences dancing.

## Family and children's programming

The beloved Grumbling Gryphons return with an interactive and family friendly performance of "Anansi, the Trickster Spider: A West African Folktale." Grace Church Parish Hall will host additional children's offerings, including the Cain Magic Show, Button Down Balloons and Beyond Twisting Balloons, and more activities throughout the event.

## Food and local treats

Guests can enjoy delicious sweet crepes from Crepe Royale and hand-crafted espresso and hot beverages from Spark Coffees, a local family owned mobile coffee truck.

## Admission buttons

Event buttons serve as each attendee's ticket. The suggested donation is \$5 per button. This year's winning button design was created by Millbrook High School student Lydia Kascsak.

Buttons can be purchased at Reardon Briggs Hardware, Merritt Bookstore, Hunt & Harvest, and the Millbrook Antiques Center. Buttons will also be available on the night of the event at the check-in table outside The Thorne Center.

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# Dr. George E. Verrilli – noted physician, community supporter and auto enthusiast

A tribute by Jim Donick  
and Curtis Schmidt

It would likely be impossible to overstate the effect that Dr. George Verrilli had on his community over a long and generous life. George was a family man, a doctor, a generous supporter of his community, a camp ground proprietor in Nova Scotia, a world-class international racing driver, a car guys's car guy, and who knows what else. He packed all of this into 96 years of life.

With a physician father, George Verrilli was raised in a medical family in Westchester County. As many little boys do, George fell in love with cars at a very early age. This love would continue throughout his life. More on that anon as motorcars were always a presence in his life.

After graduating from Georgetown University in 1951, he opted to study medicine in Europe. The American medical schools were pretty full of World War II veterans going there on the GI Bill, so Verrilli ended up in the Medical College of the oldest university in Italy, the University of Padua. His command of the Italian language meant that life and education in Italy were pleasant enough and he was excelling at his studies. It seemed, though, that he missed having a car like he always did back in the States. A trip to the MG dealer in Paris, France solved that problem. He took a train up there and purchased a brand new MG-TD Midget and drove it back to Italy. He owned that car until he died.

The MG was a sporty little number and pretty quick for its size, so Verrilli found himself entering a few competitive events, mostly hillclimbs. His success in the MG caught the attention of a well known Italian racing team owner, who quickly signed the young American medical student to spend some weekends racing significantly more exotic cars than the MG. Success ensued. Before his European racing had concluded, George Verrilli had driven in many of the most important events imaginable, the most famous of which was the fabled Mille Miglia. The Mille Miglia was the most arduous of the European Road Races in the 1950s. It ran a thousand miles from Brescia to Rome and back to Brescia over public roads at racing speeds. The Italians are notorious for their collective love of fast cars and the annual Mille Miglia, until it was discontinued as too dangerous, was the "ne plus ultra" manifestation of that enthusiasm. George Verrilli took part in it on three separate occasions. The only European road race that was said to be more dangerous than the Mille Miglia was a run through the mountains of Sicily. It was called the "Targa Florio." He drove in that one too.



Dr. George E. Verrilli passed away on Dec. 5 at the age of 96. In the photos above, he is pictured speaking at the opening of the Neugarten Family Birth Center at Northern Dutchess Hospital in July of 1985. He relives his auto racing days in Italy as he sits in his office at Eastgate Motors in 2016. He is at the wheel of a Maserati in the 1988 re-enactment of the fabled Mille Miglia race - a thousand miles around Italy on public roads. For the re-enactment of the race, Verrilli, as a former competitor and finisher, was treated like a returning son. Photo by Jim Donick and courtesy photos

The racing was all great fun, but the young man never forgot why he was in Europe in the first place. He was there to learn to be a doctor. When that was accomplished, he returned home for residency and then to begin a practice.

After about a year in Westchester County, where his father practiced, he moved north, arriving in Rhinebeck in 1961. Even then, the Northern Dutchess Hospital was developing an outstanding reputation as a community- and patient-centered establishment. They recruited Verrilli to come up as a specialist in Obstetrics and Gynecology. The relationship with Northern Dutchess proved to be a match made in heaven.

He focused on patients as people and provided innovations and support to the community that continue to this day. Denise George, when she was President of Northern Dutchess Hospital, was one of his colleagues, as well as one his fans. She commented, "The revered obstetrician paved the way for a less-invasive and safer approach to labor and delivery practices, which are now mainstream. As

a founder of the hospital's Neugarten Family Birth Center more than 30 years ago (now 40 years ago), he assured the center grew and was successful thanks to his reputation for great care and his bedside manner."

That birth center approach is now standard procedure at many hospitals around the country, and it was pioneered in Northern Dutchess County. She continued, "Dr. Verrilli's energy and love of life came through in everything he did for Northern Dutchess Hospital, from delivering more than 15,000 babies during his career to serving as a board member since 1969."

Not one to inflate his accomplishments, Dr. Verrilli only claimed to have assisted at the birthing of 14,129 human beings over his career. It should be noted, though, that the number is pretty close to one and a half times the entire population of Pleasant Valley.

Oddly enough, George Verrilli might have died in his med school years. One of

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# Postal Service seeks help keeping access to mailboxes clear of snow

ALBANY, NY — The Postal Service is reaching out to communities throughout Upstate New York to raise public awareness on the importance of keeping walkways, sidewalks, and approaches to mailboxes clear from snow and ice so carriers can provide safe mail delivery.

Any amount of snow can cause a dangerous situation for mail carriers and others. Keeping a clear path to and around mailboxes will help mail carriers continue consistent delivery as well as keep them safe from potential slipping and/or injuries.

The Postal Service is issuing the following snow removal tips:

- Clear enough snow from curbside boxes to allow mail trucks to approach

the box, deliver mail, and to drive away without the need for backing or departing the vehicle.

- Walkways should be cleared of snow and ice, allowing enough traction to avoid slips, trips or falls.

- Steps and handrails should be kept clear of ice and snow and in good repair to avoid injury to letter carriers or others.

- Overhangs should be free of snow and ice as well to reduce the risk of falling debris.

Customers with questions or comments about their mail service can contact the Postal Service at 1-800-ASK-USPS (1-800-275-8777) or by clicking on Contact Us at the bottom of the Postal Service's USPS.com homepage.



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## Dr. George E. Verrilli – noted physician, community supporter and auto enthusiast

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six survivors who came through a massive air crash coming into New York City from Rome on December 18, 1954, he was essentially uninjured. He had changed seats when the plane stopped in Boston. Otherwise he wouldn't have survived. An experience like that can change a life. In Verrilli's case, it seems to have galvanized his commitment to making the world a better place.

George Verrilli didn't just focus on one other sphere of interest. His passion appears to be making the whole world a better place starting in his own community. He may have learned a little of that during his student days in Italy.

"One of the things I love about the Italians," he mused, "is that they don't spend a lot of time worrying about the government or even about the pope. They keep their eyes on their families and their business."

Verrilli's words are another way of suggesting that charity begins at home. If it worked that way for everyone, then the intersecting circles of all of those people would result in stronger communities, states, nations, and maybe even the world. The northern Dutchess communities of Rhinebeck and Red Hook can attest easily to the benefits of this philosophy.

Aside from investing his life in the community, he also invested much of his treasure. The growth of the hospital is proof enough, but there have been other parts of the community to experience his commitment.

He bought the remains of Red Hook's old Chocolate Factory in 1995. It had been all but abandoned since the early 1980s, but was an important part of the town's economic history. It had gotten pretty run down. Verrilli renovated it and put it back to work for the community.

Part of the facility became the base for



Dr. George Verrilli, seated front left, is pictured with staff members at the Neugarten Family Birth Center at Northern Dutchess Hospital in the 1980s. *Courtesy photo*

his automotive interest, Eastgate Motors. His office there was a veritable Aladdin's cave of interesting cars, but that is to be expected. A closer examination of the premises turns up models and photographs, some old enough to be fading, of races and racing cars from as far back as 60 or 70 years ago.

He made sure that even that space is available to local enthusiasts who could use some help getting a beloved vintage motorcar back on the road. Peter Charlap is the former Chair of the Vassar College Art Department. He's also a dyed in the wool car guy with a very rare Bugatti automobile that he drives all over the Northeast. He did most of the restoration work himself and much of it under the tutelage of George Verrilli.

"George had this most wonderful twinkle in his eye that reflected his love of life," says Charlap. "He was also a delight to work with. My Bugatti wouldn't be on the road today if it wasn't for his help. Hearing of his loss hit me pretty hard."

Verrilli turned the rest of the space into a nursery bed of sorts for artisans and boutique business ideas. People can rent space, a studio of sorts or more space as needed and can develop their business or creative idea with a nearby village center location and a limited investment.

Aside from being a great place to indulge his love of motor cars, The Chocolate Factory was and continues to be an investment in the economic future of Red Hook.

One of Verrilli's later projects was to turn the failing school of the Northern Dutchess Christian Church into a community center for Red Hook. He acquired the building and donated it to the community.

"We needed a place like that in Red Hook," he said.

Denise George of NDH summed the story up well. "Northern Dutchess Hospital and the greater community were lucky to have him as 'our' advocate," she said.

One suspects that the 14,129 people he helped bring into this world would agree.

### Community memories

**Margaret Lovell**, former Director of Patient Care Services for the Neugarten Family Birth Center

"Dr. Verrilli was an obstetrician whose passion for natural childbirth and family-

centered care shaped not only the Birth Center, but all who worked beside him. He truly believed in the strength of women, the importance of families being present, and the beauty of the natural birthing process.

"He had a clear vision for the Birth Center and dedicated his talents to creating a culture rooted in compassion, respect and trust. Nurses and colleagues admired him deeply—for his clinical skill, his calm leadership and the genuine respect he showed the entire care team.

"His influence lives on in the Birth Center he helped build, in the families he supported, and in the values he instilled in all of us. We are grateful for his dedication, his heart for birth and the legacy of compassionate care he leaves behind."

**Robert Selkowitz**, artist and creator of Historic Automobile Endurance Runs, (a series of Catskill focused motoring tours throughout the season)

"I first met George in early 1978. My wife was seven months pregnant with our first child and we weren't comfortable with the medical support she was receiving in Kingston. We went to Northern Dutchess and George Verrilli was willing to take on the case even so late in her pregnancy. He and I also discovered at the time that we shared an interest in sporting cars. He simply made us both feel welcome and secure. I'll never forget the 13th of March, 1978. It was dawn or maybe still the false dawn, when I was crossing the Kingston-Rhinecliff Bridge in an old Jaguar, knowing that Dr. Verrilli was already at the hospital and waiting for our arrival. Our daughter came into this world and into his talented hands. We became friends for life. We found a shared love of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton and visited him there a few times over the summers. Over the years we've shared art, travel and Nova Scotia. I'll miss him."

**Lew Ruge of Ruge's Auto Group:** Lew Ruge has served on the Board of Directors of Northern Dutchess Hospital (NDH) for over 50 years. He met Dr. Verrilli in the way that most did – after the birth of two of his daughters.

He said, "Dr. Verrilli held the torch leading NDH into a new century of healthcare in the 1960s.

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## New Year's Eve Millbrook is back

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### Community support

New Year's Eve Millbrook comes to life thanks to the event's incredible volunteers, generous sponsors, the Millbrook Police Department and the unwavering support of the Millbrook community. Special thanks to Bonnie Kozek Fine Art, Hunt & Harvest, Bank of Millbrook, Millbrook Antiques Center, Stewart's Shops and many more, for helping make this night possible.

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## Dr. George E. Verrilli – noted physician, community supporter and auto enthusiast

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“He was very sharp and knowledgeable –but also witty, opinionated and straight forward – you always knew right where he stood on most any issue.”

Ruge worked with Dr. Verrilli on many fundraising campaigns for the expansion of NDH.

“George was always very helpful, benevolent himself and was willing to make contacts with individuals who could provide further financial assistance. Along with former CEO Michael Mazzarella, George was the driving force in the founding of the Neugarten Family Birth Center. Both of them were very forward thinking individuals and their main interest was in providing a better hospital for the community and surrounding area.”

Ruge said Dr. Verrilli was always “very professional, upbeat and humorous. He had a way about him – he would make fun of you, but in a nice way, he was blunt in a nice way. He never panicked, was always looking for solutions. He looked beyond the panic.”

He said Dr. Verrilli was definitely “into antique and specialty cars. He was always tinkering with the cars and he lived for the thrill of racing those cars.”

Ruge remembers one time when he and Dr. Verrilli were attending a local gathering.

“I was an Oldsmobile dealer at the time and had new models,” he said. “One was kind of a hot rod and Dr. Verrilli obviously wanted to try it out. So we hopped in the car and he drove to Rhinecliff and back. I was hanging on for dear life and he was smiling and cool as cucumber all the way.”

He said Dr. Verrilli’s favorite car was a brown Maserati convertible.

“He was talking about cars all the



Dr. George Verrilli cuts the ribbon at the grand opening of the Red Hook Community Center. He acquired the Northern Dutchess Christian Church building and donated it to the community. The Center opened in 2017 and continues to serve the community today. *Courtesy photo*

time. Our interest in cars was the key to our friendship. He was also a jokester and got a kick out of saying ‘Hey Luigi’ whenever he saw me.”

Ruge said Dr. Verrilli was not just a storyteller – “He actually did all of those crazy things.”

“I’m honored to be able to call him a great friend.”

**Sara Ugolini, Director of the Red Hook Community Center:** “As many of you know, George was the visionary who imagined the Red Hook Community Center into existence. It was, in no small part, his tenacity and determination that has made the Center into the bustling community hub it is today. As he would say, he was a ‘people-oriented person’

who believed deeply in the power of connection, and always worked to help provide support and opportunity for every member of our community. Here at the Center, we will miss George’s good company each day, his joy and excitement for life, and his ever-present generosity of spirit. Moreover, we will be forever grateful for this beautiful dream of his that is now our reality.”

**Diane Post, former Clinical Nurse Coordinator for Maternity, Northern Dutchess Hospital:** “Dr. Verrilli believed in the beauty of childbirth and the importance of providing a safe and trusted environment during a woman’s pregnancy, labor and delivery. He achieved that safe and trusting environment by providing

continuity of care for women by employing his nurses to not only work in the office, but to also provide early pregnancy classes, teach childbirth education and then be the woman’s labor nurse when they came to the birth center to give birth.

“This care provided not only the physical care, but also the education and emotional support women needed to learn to trust their own bodies and believe in the childbirth process. Dr. Verrilli’s devotion to the beauty of childbirth and importance of a family-integrated birth center continues to echo through the halls of the Neugarten Family Birth Center and it is the responsibility of the present team at the Birth Center to carry on Dr. Verrilli’s legacy.”

# Verrilli and Van De Carr: Racing thrills and tempting fate

*By Curtis Schmidt*

Mark Van De Carr of M&M Automotive in Rhinebeck knows all too well that his life “would have been sorely different” if he had not met Dr. George Verrilli, who passed away at age 96 on Dec. 5.

He could write a book about their interest in antique cars and auto racing escapades where they “tempted fate all the time” and “had so much fun.”

Van De Carr recalls that during one race when they were driving “way over the speed limit” Dr. Verrilli told him that he was a believer in fate. He replied, “That’s nice for you, but suppose I don’t believe in fate.” And Dr. Verrilli said, “That’s because you’ve never had a life-

changing experience.”

Dr. Verrilli was referring to the time when he was one of only six survivors on a plane that crashed into Jamaica Bay near what was then Idlewild Airport in New York City in 1954.

“He told me that ever since he survived the crash, he saw every day as a gift,” said Van De Carr.

The two met in 1982, walking through a parking lot at Northern Dutchess Hospital at around 3 a.m. after Dr. Verrilli aided in the birth of Van De Carr’s daughter, Amber.

“He asked me what I did for a living and I told him I was an auto mechanic and was trying to open my own business.” Dr. Verrilli told him “I always have a piece of junk that’s broke. I could keep

you busy.” The next day he found an Alfa Romeo in his lot with a note saying “fix the brakes and I’ll pay you.” He also repaired a wiring issue with a window on Dr. Verrilli’s Jaguar XJ12C and a starting problem on his Ferrari 512.

“He was duly impressed and kept bringing in cars that needed work,” said Van De Carr. “And, this being a small town, word spread fast that he liked my work and that was a boon to my business.”

Later, Dr. Verrilli even helped Van De Carr to purchase the property on which his shop still sits today.

### One Lap of America

One day the two “got talking” and decided that it would be fun to race in the One Lap of America with teams driving

hundreds of miles daily between timed events, challenging cars and drivers across various courses.

“It’s like 6,800 miles in eight days and every day you get to run two time trials at famous race tracks,” said Van De Carr. They took part in the annual event in successive years – 1999 in his 1970 Lotus Elan, hitting 130 mph; and in 2000 in Dr. Verrilli’s Ferrari, which would get up to speeds of 200 mph.

“I remember in the second race we were driving across Pennsylvania, I woke up and George was passing cars really fast. I looked over at the speedometer and he was calmly driving 150 mph,” said Van De Carr. “I said, ‘Hey George, 30

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# Verrilli and Van De Carr: Racing thrills and tempting fate

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miles per hour over the speed limit is considered reckless endangerment. The cops could haul us off to jail.’ He said, ‘Ah that’s not going to happen. I’m not going to hit anybody.’ “What about a deer,” I said. “And George says, ‘Oh yeah, deer might be a problem.’”

During that same event, Van De Carr was driving the Ferrari in time trials at Sebring International Raceway, Fla.

“The track has long straightaways and goes into sharp S curves. You can get up to 90 mph on the straightaways and slow to 50-60 on the curves,” he said. “On the final lap, I really stepped on it and picked up a lot of speed. When I came to the braking point for the curves, I hit the brakes and nothing happened. It was like black ice. I knew enough to hit the brakes and clutch at the same time to cut off as much speed as possible. I went off the track did two 360-degree spins, but didn’t hit anything.

“Then I go back to the pits and George says, ‘I can’t believe you did this to me. I have my video camera on for three straight laps, so I figure I have enough, so I put the camera down. I am so pissed. I could have gotten a great video of my Ferrari spinning.’”

### Newfoundland rally

Another time the two discovered a Pro Racing Rally in Newfoundland.

“George says ‘We should do that. Here’s the deal, you supply the car and do the driving and I will co-drive, read the map and rate the corners (1-8 with 8 being most difficult),’” recalls Van De Carr.

They prepared his Spitfire as it would hit speeds of 145 mph and was still “street legal.” It was also an opportunity

to visit Dr. Verrilli’s property in Nova Scotia on the way.

The Spitfire would tow an equipment trailer for the trip. Van De Carr takes it from here.

“We’re on the Mass Pike, George is driving and I’m sleeping. I wake up and look over and George is doing 95 mph – towing the trailer with a race car. I’m just amazed that the car is not overheating. Anyway, we get to about two hours from his place in Nova Scotia and the car cuts out and something falls off on the road. It’s night and we pull over, get the flash-light out and find that the fuel injector came loose and was all bent up.”

They were able to do the repair and, with a little help from bolts from a boat they found in Dr. Verrilli’s shop, they made it just in time to catch the ferry to Newfoundland.

Van De Carr continues, “At one point in the rally, we miscalculated a corner, spun around and went backwards at about 70 mph, hit the guard rail and straightened out again. But that was nothing. These roads also had hills where you could not see over the horizon and they had a storm on the way, so it was pretty windy. We hit this one at about 90 mph and went into the air. The wind picks up and blows us sideways. Usually when this happens, the car hits the ground and rolls. We hit the ground and fishtailed three times and I hit the gas pedal and straightened the car.

“And that was the first time George actually gave me a compliment on my driving. He said ‘Nice save.’”

He added, “George just loved the thrill and the fun. He was my buddy. What a sense of humor.”



Mark Van De Carr of Rhinebeck holds a T-shirt displaying the names of race tracks on the 1999 One Lap of America rally, one of his many racing escapades with Dr. George Verrilli. Photo by Curtis Schmidt



## MEALS ON WHEELS OF GREATER HYDE PARK THANKS RUGE’S

Meals on Wheels of Greater Hyde Park volunteers recently visited Ruge’s Subaru (<https://www.facebook.com/RugesSubaru>) in the Village of Rhinebeck as part of the Subaru Share the Love Campaign. Treats were delivered to thank Ruge’s for their continued support. In the photo, from left, are Carol Gershowitz (MOW), Jordan Palmiter (Ruge’s), Victor Britton, Nola Weit, and Melinda Heady from MOW. Photo by Patrick Downes, Ruge’s

## Christmas Services



## Join Us

12/19 @ 6pm Blue Christmas Service  
12/24 @ 7pm Lessons, Carols & Candlelight

All are welcome!

Pleasant Plains Presbyterian Church  
2 Fiddlers Bridge Road, Staatsburg NY  
845-889-4019



## Rowe United Methodist Church



Christmas Eve Candlelight  
Service  
December 24 at 3:00pm  
Special Music  
~ All Are Welcome ~

(845) 758-8084  
1376 Route 199, Milan

# Democratic legislators voice opposition as 2026 County budget passes, 15-9

At the full board meeting of the Dutchess County Legislature on Dec. 8, the 25-member Dutchess County Legislature passed the \$653,619,277 budget for 2026 by a margin of 15-9, along party lines. Several amendments were also presented.

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino said, “The annual budget process is always challenging and difficult choices must be made. The budget plan I presented maintained and enhanced the programs and services our neighbors depend on, while ensuring fiscal stability for what is ahead – including increasing state mandates, declining federal support and economic uncertainty. The legislative amendments made to the 2026 budget, while certainly worthy, added new and ongoing expenses while further drawing down our fund balance, creating a very large budget gap that will be even more difficult to close for the 2027 budget. Using millions more dollars from the fund balance, while adding new, ongoing costs, is unsustainable and jeopardizes the County’s long-term fiscal health. I am carefully reviewing each of the amendments with the Budget Office team, committed to making the best decisions for our neighbors and taxpayers before returning the final budget to the Legislature.”

Minority Leader Yvette Valdés Smith (D-Fishkill) doubled the county’s contribution to the Housing Trust Fund, used to incentivize construction and help mitigate the effects of the housing crisis. And, was a “No” vote on the budget, stating, “The County Executive’s budget does not adequately address the affordability crisis that our residents are facing. While Democrats in our caucus passed meaningful amendments to help residents, the overall County Executive’s budget is lacking and we must do better.”

Will Truitt, Chair of the Legislature, said “The 2026 Dutchess County Budget is both responsible and forward-thinking, delivering an eleventh consecutive property tax rate reduction for our residents while strengthening investments in law enforcement and public safety. Over my ten years of service to Dutchess County, I have made it a priority to crack down on crime, remove drugs from our streets, and ensure that vulnerable residents receive the support they need - and this budget advances all of those goals. I am disappointed that my Democratic colleagues chose not to support this budget, and I challenge them to elaborate on their claims that it ‘fails to adequately address affordability,’ especially in light of the fact that it is their party leaders in Albany who have made New York State so brutally unaffordable for families. Our residents deserve more than bullcrap political rhetoric - they deserve real solutions, and that is exactly what this budget delivers.”

“We are tired of temporary fixes when what our county needs is long-term investment,” Legislator Barrington Atkins (D-Poughkeepsie) said. “The games being played at budget time come at the expense of families who are simply trying to survive.”

An amendment from Legislator Kristofer Munn (D-Red Hook) created a new grant program for municipalities seeking to create or supplement initiatives surrounding the issue of homelessness.

“This new program will allow municipalities to apply for grants up to \$25,000 to help people in their own communities rather than having to move them to the City of Poughkeepsie,” said Munn. “This is a first step toward a scatter-site solution to supporting those in need.”

Other amendments to the budget included additional funding added for

Rev250 programming celebrating the 250th anniversary of 1776, restoring positions to the DA’s office including three assistant district attorneys, funds to support Sheriff’s Department, and \$750K for grants to improve security and safety in municipal buildings.

An amendment proposed by Legislator Chris Drago (D-Town of Stanford) to increase funding for EMS planning and support was voted down along party lines.

Legislator Craig Brendli (D-Town/City of Poughkeepsie), said, “My concern is ensuring that our county departments and local municipalities receive the support and funding necessary to effectively serve the people of our county. I look forward to the work ahead next year and the opportunity to deliver for our residents.”

Drago said, “We cannot continue to ignore an EMS system that is failing communities across Dutchess County. My amendment would have given towns the tools they need to expand ambulance service and would have finally started the work of creating a coordinated county-wide EMS plan - something our own studies, the State Comptroller, and our municipal leaders have repeatedly called

for. It also recognized that we must begin taking the profit motive out of saving lives by strengthening municipal ambulance services instead of deepening our dependence on a single private provider. The Republican Caucus’ unanimous rejection shows a refusal to confront the crisis we are in. While they voted to maintain a system everyone knows is broken, our caucus will continue fighting for the reforms needed to protect public safety.”

Brennan Kearney (D-Rhinebeck), said, “My no vote reflects my commitment to the residents of Dutchess County to demand a budget that addresses the pressing needs of all our community members - many of whom are struggling to make ends meet in the current climate of financial insecurity. The County Executive’s budget fails to chart a clear path forward to protect our neighbors shouldering the burden of economic uncertainty and I cannot support it.”

The budget will now go to the county executive who can sign or veto the budget and/or individual amendments.

The Budget Override meeting and the Adoption of the Tax Levy meeting will take place Dec. 17 at the Dutchess County Legislative chambers at 22 Market St., Poughkeepsie.

send us your news [cschmidt@s Dutchessnews.com](mailto:cschmidt@s Dutchessnews.com)



## CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

**Sunday, December 21**

5pm Candlelight Service, Lessons & Carols

**Wednesday, December 24**

5pm Christmas Eve Family Service with  
Children’s Christmas Pageant

8:45pm Christmas Eve Service with  
Music & Carols led by James Ruff and the Choir

**Thursday, December 25**

Christmas Day  
10 am Service

Grace Church, 3330 Franklin Ave, Millbrook, NY  
[www.gracemillbrook.org](http://www.gracemillbrook.org) (845) 677-3064

**Christmas Services**

**Dec. 21 at 10:30am**  
**Blue Christmas**

**Dec. 24 at 7pm**  
**Christmas Eve**

**Westminster Presbyterian Church**  
1872 Salt Point Tpke, Salt Point

All Are Welcome

Maintaining its position as an award-winning agency, KDD Marketing is ending the year with a series of honors, including the agency's first Davey Award win and seventh consecutive year of accolades from the American Graphic Design Awards. These achievements bolster the marketing team's recent recognition as Ulster County's 2025 Small Business of the Year.

The Davey Awards, which are sanctioned and reviewed by the Academy of Interactive & Visual Arts, recognize the work of small agencies, independent creators and in-house teams. As part of the 2025 award cycle, KDD Marketing received a Silver Award for Website Redesign for its team's work with The Emerson, a Catskills-based resort and spa.

branding, print design, packaging, web and app design, social media campaigns and more. KDD Marketing was recognized for designing websites for both the Kingston Local Development Corporation and Anne Waxman. Additionally, the agency received an award for its traditional ad campaign on behalf of The Emerson.

“Seeing our work recognized by industry-leading organizations is a strong testament to our team’s commitment to client success,” said Katy Dwyer, founder and creative director of KDD Marketing. “We are incredibly grateful for these awards, and as we look ahead to 2026, we’re planning for another year of making waves for our clients and within the design industry at large.”

**CORRECTION:**

Red Hook VFW Post 7765 shared a Pearl Harbor Remembrance and Luncheon with many local supporters on Sunday, Dec. 7 – the 84th anniversary of the attack that brought the United States into World War II.

With the goal of engaging the community with more in depth information about "The Day of Infamy," community awareness committee chairman and post Trustee Frank Bottego rallied his committee (Bill & Johanna Moore, Bryan Cranna and Richard Wambach) to prepare and present a memorable presentation and luncheon devoted to "Remembering Pearl Harbor."

events, gave stirring accounts of Japanese strategy and American reactions to events leading up to and including the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec 7, 1941 to a receptive audience of approximately 120 youth and adults.

A man in a dark military uniform with a colorful rank insignia on his lapel is speaking at a podium. He is wearing glasses and has his right hand raised in a gesture. A microphone is positioned in front of him. To his left, an American flag is visible. On the podium, there is a framed poster titled "Korea PEOPLE'S WAR" and a book titled "Korea".

A photograph of two men cutting a large rectangular cake. The man on the right, wearing a dark suit and glasses, is smiling and holding a knife. The man on the left, wearing a grey vest over a white shirt, is also smiling. The cake is white with a blue and white illustration on top and the text "Remembrance Day 2014" written in cursive. The background shows a reception area with a bar and a whiteboard.

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>AVATAR: FIRE AND ASH</b> PG-13                               |
| <b>THE SPONGEBOB MOVIE:</b><br><b>SEARCH FOR SQUAREPANTS</b> PG |
| <b>THE HOUSEMAID</b> R                                          |
| <b>DAVID</b> PG                                                 |

**--HELD OVER--**

|                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>FIVE NIGHTS AT FREDDY'S 2</b> PG-13                           |
| <b>WICKED: FOR GOOD</b> PG Ella McCay PG-13 <b>ZOOTOPIA 2</b> PG |

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# Dalton Physical Therapy holds grand opening in Stanfordville

Dalton Physical Therapy opened its doors to the community on Saturday, Dec. 13, to celebrate the opening of its Stanfordville location at 6089 Route 82, which began operations on Oct. 6 of this year. Clinic owner Ryan Dalton, PT, DPT, OCS, and Clinic Manager Mariel Mustello, PT, DPT, welcomed community members to tour the clinic, learn about their individualized treatment approach, and view the brand-new, state-of-the-art equipment.

Dr. Dalton opened his first location in Shrub Oak approximately three years ago. When the opportunity arose to open a second location in the Hudson Valley—where both Dr. Dalton and Dr. Mustello grew up—the pair decided to move forward together. Drs. Dalton and Mustello share a similar treatment philosophy centered on one-on-one, individualized, and compassionate care. They take great pride in getting to know their clients and dedicating substantial time to each patient, an approach that has become increasingly rare in today’s healthcare landscape.

When not in use for physical therapy, the facility hosts personal training sessions and group fitness classes in the evenings with Kyle Gillis, allowing the clinic to maximize the space while expanding wellness offerings to the community.

Dalton Physical Therapy accepts most major insurance plans and can be reached at (845) 868-6467 or by visiting [www.daltonpt.com](http://www.daltonpt.com).



Dr. Ryan Dalton and Clinic Manager Mariel Mustello cut the ribbon for the grand opening of Dalton Physical Therapy in Stanfordville on Saturday, Dec. 13. Photo by Curtis Schmidt

## Hockey is back! HV Reapers capture excitement of fans

By Morgan E. Maier

Hudson Valley hockey is back in Poughkeepsie, where truck horns are engineered into blaring goal celebrations, and snare drums and stick taps echo every rink corner. Jeers and cheers of Hudson Valley Reapers fans swirl inside opposing players’ helmets, as cotton candy sticks to smaller clapping hands in the stands. This is Poughkeepsie’s semi-professional revolution on ice, revived inside MJN Convention Center Ice Arena by tricorn-capped phantoms.

The Reapers arrive from the icy underbelly of Hudson Valley history, right in time for America’s 250th birthday. Bridging colonial inspiration with fast-paced hockey fetes, the Reapers began this season on a 5-0 roll. The team leads the Power Play Senior Hockey League (PPSHL) in every tracked statistic: goals, assists, points per game, shorthanded goals, and hockey fans’ favorite, penalty minutes.

The Reapers hunted Sasquatch in Salem, marked Mallards in Massachusetts. They crumpled Papermen at MJN to start a six-game homestand, a 10-8 onslaught that marked the Reapers’ highest scoring performance of the undefeated season. Opponents will count their days in “The Graveyard” with chattering teeth.

Formerly the Hudson Valley Vipers, Poughkeepsie’s new-look club is back on top in the PPSHL. The inaugural Vipers were champions of the American Premier Hockey League in 2023-2024 before ownership shifts and a lack of home rink dulled the championship offseason. The Vipers called off the 2024-25 season with a promise to return soon.

“After everything that happened, the

team coming together and the community, I couldn’t see it die there,” said Joey Bonitatibus, the Reapers owner/coach who took the reins after the Vipers’ hibernation.

Bonitatibus assembled the squad, navigating the new-owner waters of contracts and lawyers. He unearthed players and PA announcer Bill Winters to restart the movement, finding many in local men’s leagues. The built-in audience, formerly named “Fang Gang,” was waiting for the moment.

A New Jersey Devils fan, Kim Tesoriero rediscovered her love of hockey when she moved to the Hudson Valley. The Vipers offered a fun, die-hard hockey community, from the players who become like brothers, to the hockey family that texts each other on holidays.

“The hockey is great, the winning is great, but the whole atmosphere is what makes it. From Bill (Winters) as the announcer, to the guys being engaged with the fans, to everyone who volunteers and helps out. You look forward to going because you know it’s going to be a positive experience,” said Tesoriero.

Tesoriero and fellow fan Bradley Delmar spearheaded the “Sport Local Hockey 845” movement. The Facebook community connects Hudson Valley hockey fans, coordinates road trip car-pools, sharing pictures and stories, and spotlighting local fundraisers. The community endured until the Reapers rose again.

The once-serpentine faces emerged not with fangs, but a scythe-sharp identity inspired by Hudson Valley’s history. Shoutout number 28, Gino Santaguida, graphic designer by day and a stalwart defenseman by night. He created the

*continued on page 12*



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# PLEASANT VALLEY LIONS MEMORY TREE 2025



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Germiller: Barbara Herles; Giovanni A. Giannattone: Mlyod Family; Keith Gilmour: Karen Gilmour; Jimmy Gleason: Debbie & Butch Roe; John Gleason: Debbie & Butch Roe; Stephen Gleason: Debbie & Butch Roe; Aunt Gloria: Pam Highbridge; James Glynn: Debby & Fred Glynn; John Glynn: Debby & Fred Glynn; Patrick Glynn: Debby & Fred Glynn; Burt Gold: Betsy & Ed Kinkade; Ben Goldstein: Betty Renner; Clara Goldstein: Betty Renner; William Goldstein: The Lang Family; Richard Good: Linda McReynolds; Malcolm Gordon: Carrie DePaola; Pippa Gore: Susan Feather-Gannon; Gavin John Grant: The Boyce Family; Gene Gumickny: Jane Austin; Gun Violence Victims: James Gundell; Alice Gundelfinger: James Gundell; Ernest Gundelfinger: James Gundell; Susan Gundelfinger: James Gundell; Werner Gundelfinger: James Gundell; Peter Gundell: James Gundell; Vicki Gundell: James Gundell; Veronica M. Guynup: Gary Aber; Barbara Jean Haight: Ginny Johnson; Florence Haight: Jayne & John Murphy; Harry Haight: Jayne & John Murphy; Harry & Hazel Haight: Barb Haight; Harry "Ab" Haight: Jayne & John Murphy; Hazel Haight: Jayne & John Murphy; Sheila Halsted: The Kessler Family; Jean Hamm: The Kaminsky Family; Anna S. Hampe: Mary Handburgh; Frank Hampe: Eddie Hanaburgh; Mary Handburgh; Thomas Hanaburgh: Mary Handburgh; Ed Harden: Jeff Daley & Family; Ginda Harden: Brenda Daley; Ginda Harden: Jeff Daley & Family; Ginda Pink Harden: Reno & Marcia Valdatta; Carmel Hart: Children & Grandchildren; Raymond Hart: Children & Grandchildren; Emma Havens: The Havens Family; Lawrence Havens: Children & Grandchildren; Uncle Mark "Sparky" Havens: Nieces & Nephews; Mark Havens: The Hart Family; Mary S. Havens: Children & Grandchildren; Tim Havens: The Hart Family; James Havranek: Helen Havranek; Marge Heasley: Bob & JoAnn Maucher; Marge Heasley: Anne, Joe & Pat DePalma & Alicia McAllister; Beatrice Heatherly: Gary Aber; David Heffner: Diana B. Gaetano; Thomas Heffner: Diana B. Gaetano; Rita Heil: Tim, Jen, Emily, Kaitly, and Tyler; Phil Heiler: Charlie & Fran Traver; Albert Heima: Dana & Ray Newsum; Annie Heima: Dana & Ray Newsum; Lucy Herbst: David Surico; Anthony Herles (3 bulls): Barbara Herles; Tony Herles: Reno & Marcia Valdatta; Joe Herles: Barbara Herles; Jeff Herles: Barbara Herles; Ruth Herles: Barbara Herles; Bill Herman: Jane Austin; Bill Herman: Fred & Maria DeWald; Bill Herman: Betsy & Ed Kinkade; Annette Herr: Pauline & Wayne Herr; The Herr Family: Pauline & Wayne Herr; Walter E. Herr: Pauline & Wayne Herr; Clyde Herriman, Sr.: James Gundell; Johanna P. Hessler: Hilde McQuillan; Paul Hessler: Hilde McQuillan; Connie K. Hewlett: Charlie & Fran Traver; Gertrude Hewlett: Bud, April, Sean & Maritka Hubbard; Howard Hewlett: Charlie & Fran Traver; Robert Hewlett: Bud, April, Sean & Maritka Hubbard; Karen Hickey: James Gundell; Donald Hickman: Jeff & Kathy Hickman; Dorothy Hirsch: James Gundell; Ralph Hodges: Doug Malone; Teddy Hoe: Patricia & Mike Prunty; Mary & Jack Hoey: Schollmeyer Family; Sara & Matthew Hoey: Schollmeyer Family; Lowell Hofmann: Janet Hoffmann; Mary Ann DePalma Hogg: Anne, Joe & Pat DePalma & Alicia McAllister; Bill Holland: Michael Bernie; Gladys T. Horne: Diana S. Ritchie; Barry Horowitz: Ida Wacker; Vera Howard: Phillip and Anna Johnson; Donny Howe: Jayne & John Murphy; Dorothy Huneke: Barbara E. Huneke; Henry Huneke: Barbara E. Huneke; Henry Huneke, Sr.: Barbara E. Huneke; Del Hunter: Pauline Herr; Durward "Curly" Hutchings: Karen Castella; Lorraine Hutchings: Barry & Jacqueline Hutchings; Ruth Hutchings: Karen Castella; William Hutchings: Barry & Jacqueline Hutchings; Patricia Ireland: Bud, April, Sean & Maritka Hubbard; Les Irvin: Sue McGarvey; Ruth Irvin: Sue McGarvey; Andrew Jackson: The Kaminsky Family; Mary Jackson: The Kaminsky Family; Mary Jacobini: George Sealey; Tom Jago: The Recktenwald Family; Kirk Jensen: Phillip and Anna Johnson; Norman Jensen: Phillip and Anna Johnson; Patricia Dean Jensen: Phillip and Anna Johnson; Bob Johnson: Ginny Johnson; Lisa Johnson: Phillip and Anna Johnson; Victor Johnson: Phillip and Anna Johnson; Jon W. Mr & Mrs L. Braghuja; Aunt Julie: Pam Highbridge; Dr. James F. Kaminsky: The Kaminsky Family; Dr. Bert Kanwit: Dana & Ray Newsum; Janet Kanwit:

The Pleasant Valley Lions Teresa Albrecht, Cathie Arpino, Jane Austin, Mark Carroll, Fred DeWald, Susan Feather-Gannon, Catherine Geerlings, Wayne Herr, Pam Highbridge, MaryBeth Kaminsky, Kim Kenyon, Mike Kessler, Betsy & Ed Kinkade, Doug Malone, Monica Metty, Merry Meyer, Jim Reed, Janis & Lewis Saperstein, Ingrid & Don Shortell, Fred Schaeffer, Patrica Smith, Debbie & William Spencer, Fran & Charlie Traver, Lex Van Loon, Lee & Rob Vrablik



# PLEASANT VALLEY LIONS MEMORY TREE 2025



*Dana & Ray  
Newsom; Barbara  
Kanya; Barbara & Charles  
Shapley; John Kanya; Barbara & Charles  
Shapley; Louie Keck; Paul Keck; Kathy  
Keegan; Jean & Mike Davies; Patricia Keene; Patricia  
& Mike Prunty; Millie Kelly; Sue McGarvey; Harold  
Kenyon; Kim, Kyra, Austin; Joyce Kerzner; The Kaminsky  
Family; Elouise Kessler; The Kessler Family; Jessica Keto; Joe & Valerie  
Keto; James A. Keyes; Gary Aber; Joyce M. Keyes; Gary Aber; Kathleen  
Killea; Susan Feather-Gannon; Bill  
Kinkade; Betsy & Ed Kinkade; Elmer  
Kinkade; Betsy & Ed Kinkade; Eva Kinkade; Betsy &  
Ed Kinkade; Bill Kirchner; Marilyn Kirchner; Clara  
Kirchner; Marilyn Kirchner; Pat Kish; Joyce Quattrociochi; Karen  
Lee Knapp; Ken & Joan Knapp; Karl Knapp; Arthur Dreeses; Harold  
Knox; Mr. & Mrs. Michael Knox; Nancy Knox; Mr. & Mrs. Michael  
Knox; Jonathan Kormondy; Janine Kormondy; Wheeler; Nancy Kunzer; Sandra  
Polotay; Ladder 101 FDNY; Brian McShane; Robert J. Lama ; Susan, Michele and  
Jill; Eileen Landers; Susan Feather-Gannon; Cathleen Lang; The Lang Family; Gloria Lang; The  
Lang Family; Harry Lang; The Lang Family; Louis Lang; The Lang Family; David Larson; The Kessler  
Family; Al Lemberger; Pauline & Wayne Herr; Al Lemberger; Jane Austin; Al Lemberger; Betsy & Ed  
Kinkade; Al Lemberger; Charlie & Fran Traver; Alan Lemberger; Fred & Maria DeWald; Alan Lemberger; Barbara  
Lemberger; Kurt Lemberger; Barbara Lemberger; Lisa Lemberger; Barbara Lemberger; Sal Leonetti; Mark  
Poplawski; Robert Lester; Bob & JoAnn Maucher; Emma Levine; Tim, Jen, Emily, Kathy, and Tyler; Adam Levy; James  
Gundell; Victims of Violence against LGBTQ Community; James Gundell; Harold Lilienfield; The  
Daversa Family; Josephine Lilienfield; The Daversa Family; Tom Lipp; Sue Lipp; Harry Little; Stefanie  
Little; Paul Long; Betsy & Ed Kinkade; Eddie Longbard; Kathy Longbard; Greg Lubert; Marie Romano; Ginny  
Lucas; Mike & Ida Mikala; Virginia Lucas; Joyce Brower; Lawrence Allen Lundgren; Alana M. Wassung; Jen Ming Luo (5  
bulbs); Cheng-Tin Luo; Catherine Lyons; D.M. Rottkamp; Eleanor L. MacIsaac (Mom); Janet & Wayne Mac Isaac; Martin MacIsaac  
(Dad); Janet & Wayne Mac Isaac; Bernice MacIsaac; Barbara Herles; John E. Mack III; Pat Cianci; Bertha Mackay; Kay & Bill  
Mackay; Patricia Mackay; Tom & Barbara Mackay; William Mackay, Sr.; Kay & Bill Mackay; Frank Magennis; Roger & Pat Mastri; Marguerite  
Magennis; Roger & Pat Mastri; Frank Maher; Barbara Herles; Pasquale Maisto; Fred & Maria DeWald; Ursula Maisto; Fred & Maria DeWald; Maisto  
Family; Fred & Maria DeWald; Betty Major; Jayne & John Murphy; Jack Major; Jayne & John Murphy; Ann Malone; Doug Malone; Frank Malone; Doug  
Malone; Jan Malone; Pauline & Wayne Herr; Jan Malone; Doug Malone; Jan Malone; Kathi & Gary Kreig; Jan Malone; Anne, Joe & Pat DePalma & Alicia McAllister; Kathy  
Malone; Doug Malone; Gail Maloney; Lois & Fred Apers; Louise Mancuso; Joyce Quattrociochi; Sally Mancuso; Samuel Mancuso; Joyce Quattrociochi; Helen  
Mann; Barbara Lemberger; Hillard Mann; Barbara Lemberger; Hope Mann; Barbara Lemberger; Jean Mann; Terri Crank; John Mann; D.M. Rottkamp; John Mann; Terri Crank; Louis  
Mann; Barbara Lemberger; Ruth Mann; D.M. Rottkamp; Suzanne van Zutphen; Terri Crank; Connie Manna; Joyce Quattrociochi; Tommy  
Manna; Joyce Quattrociochi; Tom Manning; Anne, Joe & Pat DePalma & Alicia McAllister; Michael Mansfield, ;Shannen Rodriguez; Robin Mansfield,  
;Shannen Rodriguez; Marty B.; Mr. & Mrs. L. Brajiha; Howard Martin; Tom & Barbara Mackay; Michael Martin; Tom & Barbara Mackay; Tim Martin; Tom &  
Barbara Mackay; Melissa Martucci; Joyce Quattrociochi; Ellen Mascia; Phillip and Anna Johnson; Henry Mascia; Phillip and Anna Johnson; Eugene C. Masker, Jr.; Anne  
P. Masker; Eugene C. Masker, Sr.; Anne P. Masker; The Massaro Family; Pauline & Wayne Herr; Frances Massaro; Pauline & Wayne Herr; Carmella Mastri; Roger & Pat  
Mastri; Joseph Mastri; Roger & Pat Mastri; Manuel Mastri; Roger & Pat Mastri; Dorathea Matvichuk; D.M. Rottkamp; Walter H. Matvichuk; D.M. Rottkamp; Arthur S.  
May; Pauline & Wayne Herr; Nicola Mazzerali (2 bulbs); Richard Fishwick; Rhoda McArthur; Candy Olson; Ed McCarthy; Vicki Snitzler; Elsie McCarthy; Vicki Snitzler; Flo McDermott; Jeff  
& Kathy Hickman; Henry McDermott; Jeff & Kathy Hickman; Marcia McKenna; Anne, Joe & Pat DePalma & Alicia McAllister; Nancy McKenna; Joan Eisenhut; Bill McQuillan; Hilde  
McQuillan; Mary A. McQuillan; Hilde McQuillan; William J. McQuillan Sr.; Hilde McQuillan; Terence McShane FDNY; Brian McShane; J. Howard McSorley; Mrs Thomas A. Reed; Jerry  
McSorley; Mrs Thomas A. Reed; Margaret McSorley; Mrs Thomas A. Reed; Tony McSorley; Mrs Thomas A. Reed; Ann McTighe; Pat Cianci; Thomas B. McTighe, Jr.; Pat Cianci; June Meeker; John & Barbara  
Donegan; Robert Meeker; John & Barbara Donegan; Troy Meyer; Bud, April, Sean & Martika Hubbard; Angelo Migliorelli; Joyce Quattrociochi; Benita Migliorelli; Joyce Quattrociochi; Concetta Migliorelli; Joyce  
Quattrociochi; Frank Migliorelli, Sr.; Joyce Quattrociochi; Rocco Migliorelli; Joyce Quattrociochi; Henry Mikolajski, Sr.; Henry Mikolajski, Jr.; Jeannette Mikolajski; Henry Mikolajski, Jr.; Christopher Miller; Sharon &  
Bob Niznik; George Miller; Sharon & Bob Niznik; Jonathan Miller; Sharon & Bob Niznik; Shirley Miller; Candy Olson; Harold Mills; Jayne & John Murphy; The Miritello Family; Pauline & Wayne Herr; Great Lolo; Fiona &  
Mila; Gene Miritello; Pauline & Wayne Herr; Mom 2011; Pam Highbridge; John Montross; Phillip and Anna Johnson; Turk Morel; Barbara Lemberger; Bernice Morris; Richard & Gail Rau; Michael Morris; Doug Malone; Patrick  
Morris; Richard & Gail Rau; Richard Mristol; Barbara Herles; Ann Mueller; Anne, Joe & Pat DePalma & Alicia McAllister; Jodie Murphy; Jayne & John Murphy; Nancy Murphy; Jayne & John Murphy; Robert E. Murphy; Jayne & John  
Murphy; Joseph Muscari; Chris and Annamari Muscari; Mary Muscari; Chris and Annamari Muscari; Ernest Naylor; Diana B. Gaetano; Thelma Naylor; Diana B. Gaetano; Cathy Nervegna; Tim, Jen, Emily, Kathy, and Tyler; David Newsom; Dana &  
Ray Newsom; Sheryl Newsom; Dana & Ray Newsom; Barbara Nolan; Pauline & Wayne Herr; Sam North; Phillip and Anna Johnson; Gladys Nothdurft; Sandra Polotay; Robert Nothdurft; Sandra Polotay; Barbara  
O'Dea; Rachel; John O'Shea; Stefanie Little; Florence Oakley; Barry & Jaqueline Hutchings; John C. Oakley; Barry & Jaqueline Hutchings; John C. Oakley Jr.; Barry & Jaqueline Hutchings; Sean O'Keefe; Stefanie Little; Anna Olah; Glen Coutant; Daniel  
Olson; Candy Olson; Marion Ong; Terri Crank; Ernie Opitz; Paul Keck; Ossie; Susan Feather-Gannon; Our Friends & Deceased Military ; Kay & Bill Mackay; Tim Pabst; Lois & Fred Apers; Ron Paglia; Kim, Kyra, Austin; Panama; Susan Feather-Gannon; Raymond A.  
Pantaleo; George Nolen, Jr.; Ceil Paolini; Tim, Jen, Emily, Kathy, and Tyler; Jacqueline Pape; Louis & Gloria Caviglia; Nicholas Pape; Louis & Gloria Caviglia; Anthony Pappalardo; The Boyce Family; Nancy Parise; Mrs Thomas A. Reed; Paula M.; Mr. & Mrs. L. Brajiha; Gladys P.  
Paulson; Gary Aber; William T. Paulson; Gary Aber; Jim Peelor; Jane Austin; Lewis Perrotti; Marion & Michael Morris; Sheryl Perrotti; Marion & Michael Morris; John Perry; Debby & Fred Glynn; Kenneth Petersen; Joyce Quattrociochi; Marina Petersen; Joyce  
Quattrociochi; Dominick J. Petrolino, Jr. ; Anne P. Masker; Roberta E. Petrolino; Anne P. Masker; Chet Pfeiffer; Diana B. Gaetano; Ruth Pfeiffer; Diana B. Gaetano; Carol Pickett; Rachel; Fred Pickett; Rachel; Susan K. Pickett; Rachel; Andrew Pink; Brenda Daley; Andy Pink; Jeff Daley &  
Family; Eleanor Pink; Brenda Daley; Eleanor Pink; Jeff Daley & Family; Victor M. Pisanelli, Jr.; Stefanie Little; Mary L. Pizzuto; Don Pizzuto; Victor R. Pizzuto; Don Pizzuto; Anna Place; Terri Lennie; Kathy and Joanne; Corky Plummer; Tim, Jen, Emily, Kathy, and Tyler; Anthony Polidoro; Chris and  
Annamari Muscari; Henry Polley; James Gundell; Bob Polotay; Sandra Polotay; Judy Polotay; Sandra Polotay; Lewis Polotay; Sandra Polotay; George Pomponio; Rob Vrablik; Grace Pomponio; Rob Vrablik; Alexander Poplawski; Mark Poplawski; Halina  
Poplawski; Mark Poplawski; Joseph Poplawski; Mark Poplawski; Stanley Poplawski; Mark Poplawski; Dan Potter; Lois & Fred Apers; Mickey Prisco; Barbara Herles; Patrick Prunty; Patricia & Mike Prunty; Alexander Prusi; Jola Prusi; Pugh  
Family; D.M. Rottkamp; Bill Pulver; Stefanie Little; Jack Pulver; Stefanie Little; Jean Pulver; Stefanie Little; Donald W. Puppe; Gary Aber; Loretta M. Puppe; Gary Aber; Anne Purdy; Mike & Ida Mikala; Anne Purdy; Joyce Brower; Edward Purdy; Mike &  
Ida Mikala; Edward Purdy, Sr.; Joyce Brower; Carmella Quattrociochi; Joyce Quattrociochi; Frank L. Quattrociochi, Jr.; Joyce Quattrociochi; Jessica V. Quinn; Diana S. Ritchie; James Rabar; Bob &  
JoAnn Maucher; James Rabar; The Recktenwald Family; James Rabar; Anne, Joe & Pat DePalma & Alicia McAllister; Linda Rabar; The Recktenwald Family; Joe Racz; Barbara Herles; Mary Jane Racz; Beth Van Fleet; Mary Jane Racz; Barbara  
Herles; Olympia Rau; Richard & Gail Rau; Ozzie Rau; Richard & Gail Rau; Doraine Reed; Jennifer Carneccchia; Doraine Reed; Jim Reed; Elizabeth Reed; Lawrence M. Reed; Emily Reed; Jim Reed; Evelyn Reed; Jennifer Carneccchia; Helen A. Reed; Mrs Thomas  
A. Reed; John A. Reed; Mrs Thomas A. Reed; John & Helen Reed ; Jim Reed; Kristi Reed; Lawrence M. Reed; Mary Reed; Jim Reed; Michael Reed; Jennifer Carneccchia; Michael E. Reed; Lawrence M. Reed; Mike Reed; Jim Reed; Nellie Reed; Jim Reed; Tom  
Reed; Fred & Maria DeWald; Thomas A. Reed; Jennifer Carneccchia; Tom Reed; Mrs Thomas A. Reed; Jeffrey Renner; Betty Renner; Mary Jane Reppy; Sileno Family; Mary Rice; Brenda Daley; Alberta Riley; Glenn  
Coutant; John C. Ritchie; Diana S. Ritchie; Melissa D. Ritchie; Diana S. Ritchie; Virginia A. Ritchie; Diana S. Ritchie; Walter C. Ritchie; Diana S. Ritchie; Kent Robeg; Anne, Joe & Pat DePalma & Alicia McAllister; Archie Roe; Debbie & Butch Roe; Chip Roe; Debbie &  
Butch Roe; Kathy Roe; Debbie & Butch Roe; Linda Rothmann; David Surico; The Rouse Family; Kay & Bill Mackay; Paula Rozelle; Pauline Herr; ;Gigi Rudy; The Kaminsky Family; Uncle Jim Rudy; The Kaminsky Family; Ricky Ruffio; Dana M. Biagetti; Gilman  
Russell; Lucan Turner; Mary Russell; Lucan Turner; Gen Rycheik; Tim Rycheik; Joe Rycheik; Tim Rycheik; Irving Saperstein; Janis & Lewis Saperstein; Shirley Saperstein; Janis & Lewis Saperstein; Bartlett L. Sargent; Linda McReynolds; Ben Sargent; Linda  
McReynolds; Gerald F. Sargent; Linda McReynolds; Marjorie A. Sargent; Linda McReynolds; Harry Sauer; Wayne & Missy Sauer; Irene Sauer; Wayne & Missy Sauer; Jennie Scalzi; Joan Eisenhut; John Scalzi; Joan Eisenhut; Alice Schaeffer; Fred Schaeffer; Frank  
Schaeffer; Fred Schaeffer; Ben Schamberg; Sandra Polotay; Catherine Schamberg; Sandra Polotay; Caryl Scharfenberg; Doug Malone; Don Scharfenberg; Doug Malone; Cora Schlimmer; Joe & Valerie Keto; Gene Schlimmer; Joe & Valerie Keto; Wayne Schmidt; Jane  
Austin; Margaret Schofield; Jean & Mike Davies; Mike Schofield; Jean & Mike Davies; Theresa & William Schollmeyer; Schollmeyer Family; Sealey Family; George Sealey; Marie Seifert ;Shannen Rodriguez; Janina Semczyszyn; Mark Poplawski; Serdo B.; Mr. & Mrs. L.  
Brajiha; Edwin J. Shackelton; Darlene L. Moorhead; Margo J. Shackelton; Darlene L. Moorhead; Kerri Shaneberger; Jane Austin; Elmira C. Shapley; Barbara & Charles Shapley; Kenneth C. Shapley; Barbara & Charles Shapley; Kenneth M. Shapley; Barbara & Charles  
Shapley; Bernetta Sheedy; The Havers Family; Frank Sheedy; The Havers Family; Robert Sheedy; The Hart Family; Robert J. Sheedy; The Hart Family; Barbara Sheehan; James Gundell; Edward Sheehan Sr.; Ed & Cheryl Sheehan; Kathleen A. Sheehan; Ed & Cheryl  
Sheehan; Wanda Sheehan; Ed & Cheryl Sheehan; Louise Mylod Sherry; Mylod Family; William Sherry; Mylod Family; Anne Sherwood; The Lang Family; Arthur Sherwood; The Lang Family; Albert Shostack; Betty Renner; Laura Shostack; Betty Renner; Sam Shostack; Betty  
Renner; Brad Siddons; Wayne & Missy Sauer; Bud Sievert; Tom & Barbara Mackey; Tom Siewert; Tom & Barbara Mackey; Tony "Papa" Sileno; Sileno Family; Lawrence M. Reed; Barry Smith; Jane Austin; Jack Smith; Marion & Michael Morris; Joan  
Smith; Marion & Michael Morris; Fred Snitzler; Vicki Snitzler; Jackie Snitzler; John Soychak; Jean & Mike Davies; Lois Soychak; Jean & Mike Davies; Betty Speno; Laura Speno; Adele Spiro; James Gundell; Gary St.onge; Pauline & Wayne Herr; Gary St.onge (20 bulbs); Cheng-  
Tin Luo; Gary St.onge; Anne, Joe & Pat DePalma & Alicia McAllister; Solange St.onge (5 bulbs); Cheng-Tin Luo; Bedell Stanford; Gully Stanford; Dorothy Stanford; Gully Stanford; Sofreda Steele; Tom & Barbara Mackey; Chris Stirling; Shannen Rodriguez; Henry Studer; Alta Conklin; Mabel  
Studer; Alta Conklin; Roy Studer; Alta Conklin; Frank Surico; David Surico; Lucille Surico; David Surico; Don Teal; Jane Austin; Don Teal; Betsy & Ed Kinkade; Bill Tandy; Michael Bernie; Rhea Terhune; Stefanie Little; Rose Terry; Jane Austin; Rose Terry; Kim, Kyra, Austin; Rose Marie Terry; Deidre,  
Peter, Kaitlyn and Samantha; Lee W. Terwilliger; Dana M. Biagetti; Marie E.R. Terwilliger; Dana M. Biagetti; Bonnie Thayer; Joan Eisenhut; John Tice; Karen Tice; Anna & George Tlach; Schollmeyer Family; Patricia & Joseph Tlach; Schollmeyer Family; Anna Mae Tlazayic; Remo & Marcia  
Valdatta; William E. Tompkins Sr.; Tompkins Family; Susan Tooker; Patricia & Mike Prunty; Donna Touthey; The Lang Family; Pat Tozzi; Anne, Joe & Pat DePalma & Alicia McAllister; Theresa Tozzi; Anne, Joe & Pat DePalma & Alicia McAllister; Alden Traver; Charlie & Fran Traver; Dorothy  
Traver; Charlie & Fran Traver; James Traver; Donald F. Traver; Launa Traver; Donald F. Traver; Luann Turner; Cathann Van Kleec; Cathann Van Kleec; Anne, Joe & Pat DePalma & Alicia McAllister; Kenneth Van Fleet; Beth Van Fleet; Lee Wilcox; Vicki Snitzler; Lee Wilcox; Vicki Snitzler; Lorraine Wilkenson; Bud, April, Sean &  
Martika Hubbard; Florence Williamson; Candy Olson; Howard Williamson; Candy Olson; Prinz Williamson; Candy Olson; Betty Wohlfarth; Candy Olson; WTC Victims; James Gundell; Russell Yerger III; Lawrence M. Reed; Karma Yeshi; James Gundell; Ruth Young; Debbie & Butch Roe; Sheila Young; Stefanie  
Little; Lisa Zanetelle; Jola Prusi; Rosa Zanetelle; Jola Prusi;*



# Holidays can be rough times for veterans

As we head into the final week before Christmas, when the crowds get larger, the pressure gets heavier and emotions run a little closer to the surface, I find myself thinking even more about the veterans in our community who struggle this time of year.

For many people, these days are filled with excitement: last-minute shopping, family gatherings, kids counting down the hours. For a lot of veterans, though, especially those living with post-traumatic stress (PTSD), this week can be one of the toughest of the entire year. The noise, the expectations, the changes in routine and the memories that tend to bubble up can all make the holiday season feel far more overwhelming than festive.

I say that because I've lived it. As a Marine, I learned to keep my feelings locked down tight and push through anything. The holiday season, however, often has a way of stirring up the past, especially for those of us who've served. You can stand in a room full of people you love and still feel a world apart; and if the holiday cheer around you doesn't match what you're feeling inside, it can make the distance feel even wider.

That's why I'm asking, from one neighbor to another: Please check in on the veterans in your life this week.

A simple "Thinking of you," an invita-

tion to lunch or a seat at your holiday table are small gestures that hit more deeply than you might ever realize. The days leading up to the holidays can be isolating for veterans carrying unseen burdens. Your kind actions and words can be exactly what steadies them.

To my fellow veterans reading this: If this season feels heavy, please know you don't have to shoulder that weight alone. Dutchess County is filled with people who care and places where you can find support, togetherness and a sense of belonging.

Our American Legion and VFW posts are especially active right now, hosting holiday meals, gatherings and community events. These posts are spaces where you're understood without needing to explain anything, places where you can laugh, talk or just sit quietly among people who have been where you've been, seen what you've seen and understand. They get it. If you've been feeling disconnected, walking through those doors might be the lift you didn't know you needed.

At our office inside MHA's Dutchess County Veterans One Stop in Pleasant Valley, we're here through the holidays for any veteran who needs help, whether it's assistance navigating benefits, connecting to mental-health support or sim-

ply finding a supportive someone with whom you can talk. The holiday season can bring old wounds to the surface, but it can also be a chance to reach for the help you deserve.

One of the most valuable resources available right now is our office's GoGo Veterans program. Now that it's colder and holiday errands ramp up, transportation can become a real barrier, especially for veterans who don't drive or don't have reliable transportation. GoGo Veterans offers free rides for eligible veterans anywhere in Dutchess County, whether it's getting to a VA appointment, the pharmacy or picking up groceries.

This free program can make a huge difference. Just call my office at (845) 486-2060, and we'll get you registered; this is the perfect time to utilize this service. Getting out, breaking up the isolation and being around people can change the tone of the whole season.

Even with all these programs, the most powerful support still comes from people. That support can be neighbors looking out for one another, friends checking in or families remaining loving and patient when someone withdraws or doesn't seem, well ... right. The holidays can stir up feelings that veterans sometimes struggle to explain, and it's the kindness of others – even strangers – that can keep

them grounded.

During the holidays, amid the rush and the excitement, I hope we'll all make time to remember the veterans among us. They often served away from their families so the rest of us could celebrate safely with ours. A little compassion goes further this week than you might imagine.

To any veteran reading this: Please know you matter. Deeply. Your presence is a gift to Dutchess County. If you're struggling, please reach out. Call me at (845) 453-5842; swing by the MHA Veterans One Stop (1335 Route 44 in Pleasant Valley); reach out to a fellow veteran, loved one or someone you trust. These aren't the old days; there's no weakness in asking for support. Seeking connection is actually the strongest thing you do during this season.

My wish, as both a Marine veteran and your Director of Veterans Affairs, is that this season brings you moments of connection, comfort and true peace. I also hope the holidays, no matter how you celebrate them, bring a little light back into places that might have felt dark.

From my staff to you and your families, I wish you hope, warmth and the knowledge that Dutchess County's veterans are never alone – not during the holidays, not ever. We are here for you.

## Hockey is back! HV Reapers capture excitement of fans

continued from page 9

brand that the Reapers – and their fans – have quickly assumed.

The "Mad House on Mill Street" is for the Reapers' fanatics. Right outside the Zamboni gates, the bustling section sets the tone. From the undulating cowbells to the resident Reaper himself, down to the face paint and snare drum. Postgame get-togethers keep the Reaps close to their fans, making real connections that travel as far as New Hampshire, Massachusetts, when the Reaps' faithful accompany the road trip.

The homestand schedule is teeming with community celebrations, including youth hockey team nights. Through Jan. 17, Saturdays are for the Reaps, offering

affordable family fun for all ages, snack bar and beverages, plus all the drama of a fight-friendly sport. It's Madison Square Garden on a budget, and there is no shortage of New York Rangers gear. Winters, the voice of Marist on ice from 1990-2000, sees the "labor of love" that is this grassroots hockey revolution.

On Dec. 13, the Reapers rolled to a 4-2 win over Boston Gold Kings. They will return to play on Jan. 3.

"There's something for everybody. If you're a hockey fan, you get to watch hockey. If you don't know much about hockey, you get the entertainment value. If you're a little bit of both, you get the best of both worlds," said Winters. "Plus,

it's a cheap night out, and you don't have to go that far."

Here, the sport is not one's day job. With 9-5s ranging from IT to sales, finance, and phlebotomy, Reapers players and personnel built hockey careers on the love of the game. They'll toss shirts in the crowd, sign pucks, and hang out postgame with families and fans. The engagement is a favorite of the players, according to Bonitatibus, who are always happy to take photos, sign autographs for kids, and go the "extra mile" for the fans.

Sal Safonte delivers fights in seven seconds or less, guaranteed to delight fans. Marist fan favorite Max Henry

returns to Red Fox home as the Reapers captain. Hailing from Wappingers Falls, John Jay alum Robert Clerc shows out for the hometown crowd alongside Highland native Jarret Distasi. Brett Jackson's league-leading 12 goals (as of Dec 6) have electrified arenas across the Northeast.

"You just feel welcome here. Anybody who is coming feels like this is their team at the end of the day. It's something we can be proud of that belongs to Poughkeepsie," added Delmar.

Hudson Valley hockey is for all, whether they've loved the game for 30 years or three periods.

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# HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

## COMMUNITY FESTIVITIES

**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 DECORATING WORKSHOPS

**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](http://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 and cheer. Holiday Tours will be given on 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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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. 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. 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](http://olana.org/solstice).

## HOLIDAY AUCTIONS, BAZAARS, CRAFT FAIRS & MARKETS

**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. 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](http://www.stanfordlibrary.org) or call (845) 868-1341. Direct donations to Willow Roots ([www.willowroots.org](http://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.

*continued on page 15*

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## ‘Dances with the Polar Bear’ to offer a glimmer of Sinterklaas Dec. 20



One of the most beloved characters of the Sinterklaas festival in the Village of Rhinebeck was the dancing Polar Bear. Although the festival was canceled indefinitely due to financial reasons, a group of volunteers is bringing back some of the event's magic on Saturday, Dec. 20, with “Dances with the Polar Bear” in Foster’s Coach House parking lot. *Courtesy photo*

By Kate Goldsmith

The magic of the Sinterklaas festival will continue, albeit on a smaller scale, this Saturday, Dec. 20, in the Village of Rhinebeck. “Dances with the Polar Bear” will take place (weather permitting) from 2 to 4 p.m. in the parking lot of Foster’s Coach House on Montgomery Street (Route 9). Along with the beloved Polar Bear, there will be special appearances by the Grumpuses, The Pocket Lady and a Carol Sing led by Eva Salina, an interpreter of Balkan Romani (gypsy) songs, according to her website.

The event is dedicated to “all those who love the Polar Bear” and “all those who loved Sinterklaas,” said organizers — who are reacting to an outpouring of social media posts, phone calls, texts and emails from the community expressing their feelings about the festival, which was canceled indefinitely due to financial reasons.

“As Sinterklaas day approached this year we were all feeling terribly sad ... trying to find another way to put meaning into a day that has meant so much to us and to many in the community now that it is gone,” the organizers said in an email

promoting the Dec. 20 event. “Hundreds of folks wrote to us expressing their sadness and telling us how much they missed Sinterklaas. We drove through town on Sinterklaas evening and it was quiet and dark ... except for the bright lights at Foster’s Coach House.

“And then suddenly, the tenor of the calls, emails, posts and texts changed ... it was not just sadness but it was folks loudly begging us to shed some light on the season, to bring something to a darkened Rhinebeck for the holidays.

“The many calls, posts, emails and texts, finally became one huge CALL TO ACTION!”

Sinterklaas has always been, first and foremost, about the children. Organizers recalled that the Polar Bear delighted the young ones more than anything.

“The kids loved him ... so we called him first. He said ‘yes’ and then ... so did everyone! Within hours, the crew was assembled! Stage managers, musicians, singers, dancers, grumpy old men, choreographers, bell ringers...” the email stated.

Anyone who has a Sinter Star from past years is encouraged to bring it along on Dec. 20.

what’s happening? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ [creativeliving@s Dutchessnews.com](mailto:creativeliving@s Dutchessnews.com)



# HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS



continued from page 13

## HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

**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](http://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](http://www.thewonderlandoflights.com)

**Through Dec. 31: Holiday Performances,** Towne Crier Cafe, 379 Main St., Beacon. 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 Band, Gabe Stillman Band & Boom Kat, 9:30 p.m. Tickets & info at [www.townecrier.com](http://www.townecrier.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. 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](http://www.kaatsbaan.org)

**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. 20, Soyuzivka Heritage Center, Kerhonkson, 1 p.m. Sat., Dec. 20, Hudson House Distillery, West Park, 7 p.m. [www.murdercafe.net](http://www.murdercafe.net)

**Dec. 20: Free Holiday Films,** Lyceum Cinemas, 15 Old Farm Lane, Red Hook. Free Christmas movies for children and their families in conjunction with a food drive to aid needy families in the area. Attendees will choose one of three films to view: "The Polar Express," rated G, starring Tom Hanks; "Home Alone," rated PG, stars Macaulay Culkin, Joe Pesci, Daniel Stern and Catherine O'Hara; or "It's a Wonderful Life," rated PG, stars Jimmy Stewart and Donna Reed. Films at 10:30 a.m. Santa will be on hand at the Lyceum when the doors open at 9:30 a.m. to talk to the children. 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.

**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](http://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](http://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](http://ArsChoralis.org)

## RELIGIOUS EVENTS/SERVICES

See pages 2, 6 and 7 for some local Christmas services



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# Symbolic snacking

The wreath and tree inspire holiday nibbles.

For winter’s holidays, decorating with wreaths, garland and trees is a tradition. We use fragrant evergreen, holly, pine cones and mistletoe as well as other natural elements and somehow that makes it all the more cozy, the warmth and earthy beauty they add to our homes making them as peaceful and magical as the first snow.

Bringing the outdoors in is certainly nothing new. Early Pagans worshiped trees. Celtic Druids ceremoniously gathered the mistletoe that grew on the oak trees they revered. Ancient Romans, Pagans and even Egyptians brought evergreen boughs into their homes as symbols of renewal, hope and for protection from evil. The meaning became even more pronounced when fashioned into wreaths, either to be worn or as decoration, the never-ending circles representing everlasting love and devotion. Early Christians, who borrowed many Pagan traditions and made them their own, interpreted evergreen symbolism as a promise of life returning after the dead of winter and eternal life in Heaven.

Although Queen Victoria and (German-born) Prince Albert are largely credited with making the Christmas tree popular, it was already a long-standing tradition in Germany (and likely other countries). Protestant reformer Martin Luther is widely believed to be the first to add lit candles to his tree in 16th-century Germany. Not surprisingly, it was German immigrants who brought the

Christmas tree tradition to America in the early 1800s, although it wouldn’t catch on nationwide for a while. Tree decorations throughout history included paper roses (symbolizing the Virgin Mary), beads, nuts, fruits, cookies, popcorn and candles. It’s hard to imagine now when we see brightly colored lights everywhere, but how magical it must have been to see a tree adorned with candles brightening a room in the dead of winter.

You can find trees and wreaths as time-honored traditional symbols of Christmas even in the holiday foods we celebrate with. Festively shaped cookies, candy, breads and cheeses can be found in many stores. It’s easy and festive to use these motifs in your own presentations. For example, this year I’m making a crudité/antipasto wreath and cheese-filled rolls baked in the shape of a tree which, when served by the fire, will be fun and festive to nibble on all day.

If you want to make an edible wreath, the sky’s the limit. Arrange cherry tomatoes, olives, cheese, stuffed peppadews, mushrooms, fresh herbs and/or salami in a circle on a cutting board or platter. Similarly, you can arrange caprese skewers – cherry tomato, mozzarella ball and a basil leaf – which can be easier for guests to pick up. For a crudité wreath I like to stick with a red-green-white theme (tomatoes, cucumbers, mushrooms, cauliflower and broccoli florets, snap peas, radishes) and place a bowl of dip in the center. Doesn’t get much easier than that!



### PULL-APART CHRISTMAS TREE ROLLS

I’ve made versions of this over the years with crescent rolls and puff pastry, but my favorite is with pizza dough as in this recipe. If you want to make your own dough, good for you! But because I’m all about making things easier during busy times, using store-bought is just fine. I’ve also used fresh mozzarella for the filling, but mozzarella sticks are easier to cut into pieces and give you wonderful stretchy-cheesy results. You will need parchment paper for this so the rolls don’t stick to the pan and for easier



An edible wreath and Pull-Apart Christmas Tree Rolls pay tribute to traditional symbols of the holiday season. *Photos by Vicki Frank Day*

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## 18 NORTHERN DUTCHESS NEWS &amp; Creative Living - December 17-23, 2025

# ‘Waitress: The Musical’ live stage recording brings Broadway joy to New Paltz Dec. 20



From left, Charity Angél Dawson, Sara Bareilles and Caitlin Houlahan release a cloud of baking flour in the hit Broadway show “Waitress: The Musical.” A film of that evening’s performance will be screened at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 20, at New Connexions United Methodist Church, 1 Grove St. in New Paltz, as part of the Movies With Spirit community film series. Photo credit: Bleecker Street

A hit Broadway musical about friendship, courage and the healing power of baking comes to the screen in “Waitress: The Musical,” showing at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 20, at New Connexions United Methodist Church, 1 Grove St. in New Paltz.

The screening at New Connexions, formerly known as New Paltz United Methodist Church, is part of the Movies With Spirit community film series, now in its 20th anniversary season.

A live stage recording of “Waitress: The Musical” follows Jenna Hunterson (Sara Bareilles), a gifted pie maker and waitress longing for a way forward. Trapped in a marriage that has worn her down, she sees a spark of hope when a county baking contest offers a rare chance to change her life.

Her unexpected pregnancy makes her search for a new beginning all the more urgent.

With the support of her fellow waitresses and an unexpected romance, Jenna begins to reclaim the part of herself she thought was gone for good.

“The perfect treat this holiday season,” Tania Hussain writes in Collider.

“Captures the energy previously only experienced by theatergoers in person,” writes United Press International’s

Fred Topel.

“And now I am hungry for pie,” adds Frank J. Avella of Edge Media Network.

The 2023 film runs 2 hours 24 minutes and is not rated.

The film’s trailer can be seen on YouTube: [tinyurl.com/Waitress-Musical-MoviesWSpirit](https://tinyurl.com/Waitress-Musical-MoviesWSpirit).

The screening, which will include subtitles, will be followed by a discussion. Refreshments will be served. Suggested donation: \$10 (ages 13 and up).

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

Screenings take place in diverse places of worship and culture in Ulster County at 7 p.m. generally on the third Saturday of every month. Movies With Spirit has no religious affiliation.

For more information, visit [tinyurl.com/Waitress-MoviesWithSpirit](https://tinyurl.com/Waitress-MoviesWithSpirit); or call Harrington at (845) 389-9201 or email [gerryharrington@mindspring.com](mailto:gerryharrington@mindspring.com). Learn more on the Movies With Spirit Facebook page, [tinyurl.com/MoviesWithSpiritFacebookPage](https://tinyurl.com/MoviesWithSpiritFacebookPage).

## EXHIBITIONS

**Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center**, 9 & 12 Vassar St., Poughkeepsie. **Through December:** Featured in the Victorian Gallery at 9 Vassar St. is accomplished landscape painter Arianne Wack. At 12 Vassar St., internationally known artist Elise Pittelman presents her collection of paintings in the Hancock Gallery, and in the Reception Gallery two artists share the space - award-winning documentary photographer Alfons Rodriguez presenting his exhibit “The Melting Age” and painter Maria Krasnopolsky whose plein air series, “Renditions,” is showcased. Visitors must call the Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center Office at (845) 486-4571 for access. More info: [cunneen-hackett.org](https://cunneen-hackett.org)

**Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center**, Vassar College, 124 Raymond Ave., Poughkeepsie. **Through Feb. 1, 2026:** “Chronostasia: Select Acquisitions 2020–2025,” an exhibition that brings together more than 600 works acquired over the past five years. Closing Program: Thurs., Jan. 29, 5:30 p.m., in Taylor 102, artist talk with Cecilia Vicuña. (845) 437-5632 or <https://www.vassar.edu/theloeb>

**Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library & Museum**, William J. vanden Heuvel Gallery, 4097 Albany Post Rd. (Rte. 9), Hyde Park. **Through July 7, 2026:** Special exhibition, “Signature Moments: Letters from the Famous, the Infamous, and Everyday Americans,” During their extraordinary public careers, the Roosevelts interacted with a “who’s who” of the 20th century. “Signature Moments” opens the FDR Library’s archives and museum for an insider’s view of the remarkable – and sometimes surprising – variety of personal exchanges with an amazing array of famous (and a few infamous) people, including golden age movie stars, queens and kings, scientists, and legendary military heroes. Visitors will see signatures of literary giants, celebrated artists, world leaders, and, of course, prominent politicians and political activists – including seven American presidents. Regular Library and Museum admission applies to view the exhibit. [www.fdrlibrary.org](https://www.fdrlibrary.org)

**Henry A. Wallace Center**, FDR Library & Museum, 4097 Albany Post Rd. (Rte. 9), Hyde Park. **Through Jan. 4, 2026:** “Hudson Valley Ice Yachts,” display of authentic Hudson Valley Ice Yachts, presented by the Hudson River Ice Yacht Preservation Trust and Hudson River Ice Yacht Club. The boats will be on display -- with full rigging -- in the Henry A. Wallace Visitor and Education Center, during regular operating hours (usually 9 a.m.-5 p.m.) Free public event. [www.fdrlibrary.org](https://www.fdrlibrary.org)

**The Inn at Bellefield**, 25 Old Vineyard Place, Hyde Park. **Through January 2026:** Arts Mid-Hudson presents an exhibition of alcohol ink paintings by Linda Lavin. Her semi-abstract images often echo impressionistic landscapes, alive with flow and movement. Working without brushes, she embraces the fluid, unpredictable techniques of alcohol ink on impervious surfaces such as tile, glass, and yupo paper, creating works that are both dynamic and distinctive. More info at [artsmidhudson.org/art-at-the-bellefield](https://artsmidhudson.org/art-at-the-bellefield).

**LAND Gallery**, 30 Charles Colman Blvd., Pawling. **Through December:** “Journeys: Chasing Light in the Catskills,” photographs by Jane Haslam. (845) 490-2281 or [www.landgalleryonline.com](https://www.landgalleryonline.com)

**Morton Memorial Library**, 82 Kelly St., Rhinecliff. **Through Dec. 30:** Floral Fantasy & Junk Art: Collage Art for Holiday Gifts. (845) 876-2903

**Tivoli Artists Gallery**, 60 Broadway, Tivoli. **Through Dec. 21:** Annual Holiday Gift Show, featuring work by gallery members and other local artisans, featuring a wide variety of affordable products, suitable for gift-giving and holiday decorating. (845) 757-2667 or [www.tivoliartistsgallery.com](https://www.tivoliartistsgallery.com)

**WomensWork.art**, 12 Vassar St., 3rd Floor, Poughkeepsie. **Through Dec. 21:** “The Longest Night,” this group exhibition explores Night not only as a time of shadow and stillness, but also as a space for reflection, transformation and renewal. Through painting, sculpture, photography, and mixed media, artists interpret the many faces of night — from its quiet solitude and celestial wonders to its dreamlike realms and hidden fears. (845) 293-3660 or [info@womenswork.art](mailto:info@womenswork.art)

## A & E CALENDAR

**Dec. 18-21: Live Entertainment at the Towne Crier Cafe**, 379 Main St., Beacon. Dec. 18: Latin Dance with Beacon Dance Beat, 7 p.m. All seats \$15. Dec. 19: LOTUS Santana Tribute, 8 p.m. Tickets \$25 advance, \$30 door. Dec. 20: Slambovian Circus of Dreams: “A Very Slambovian Christmas,” 8 p.m. Tickets \$35 advance, \$40 door. Dec. 21: The Costellos Annual Christmas Show with special guests, 5:30 p.m. Tickets \$20 advance, \$25 door. (845) 855-1300 or [www.townecrier.com](https://www.townecrier.com)

**Dec. 19: Richard’s Rhinecliff Acoustic Show**, Morton Memorial Library, 82 Kelly St., Rhinecliff. Featuring: Pat Lamanna, Paul Clarke, Klezmer Berl’s Hotsie Totsie Orkster, 8 p.m. Donations to benefit Morton are suggested. (845) 876-7007

**Dec. 20: Movies With Spirit, “Waitress: The Musical,”** New Connexions United Methodist Church, 1 Grove St., New Paltz. A hit Broadway musical about friendship, courage and the healing power of baking comes to the screen, 7 p.m. A live stage recording of “Waitress: The Musical” fol-

lows Jenna Hunterson (Sara Bareilles), a gifted pie maker and waitress longing for a way forward. Trapped in a marriage that has worn her down, she sees a spark of hope when a county baking contest offers a rare chance to change her life. Her unexpected pregnancy makes her search for a new beginning all the more urgent. With the support of her fellow waitresses and an unexpected romance, Jenna begins to reclaim the part of herself she thought was gone for good. The 2023 film runs 2 hours 24 minutes and is not rated. The screening – which will include subtitles – will be followed by a discussion. Refreshments will be served. Suggested donation: \$10 (ages 13 and up). More info at the Movies With Spirit Facebook page, [tinyurl.com/MoviesWithSpiritFacebookPage](https://tinyurl.com/MoviesWithSpiritFacebookPage).

**Dec. 21: Jammin’ at the Grange**, Copake Grange 628 Empire Rd., Copake. Everyone’s welcome for an afternoon of creative music making, 4-5:30 p.m. Just for fun... join the jam. Free; donations welcomed. More info: [lennybarham@gmail.com](mailto:lennybarham@gmail.com) and [copakegrange.org/events](https://copakegrange.org/events)

### DOT-TO-DOT PUZZLE

See page 25 for finished puzzle (no peeking!)

By David Kalvitis © 2005 Monkeying Around

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# Art Effect exhibition showcases teen artists from across the Hudson Valley

Five Hudson Valley teens are debuting an impressive body of work at The Art Effect's Senior Project Exhibition, running through Jan. 10, 2026 in the Carole J. Wolf Gallery, 45 Pershing Avenue, Poughkeepsie. Featured artists in this year's show represent five different Hudson Valley communities. Phoenix Barra-Greenmyer of Middletown, Kenny Gray of Holmes, Sadie Pomerantz of Rhinebeck, Chanel Reed of Poughkeepsie, and Virginia Zengen of Stanfordville will each show off a cohesive body of work in this exhibition.

Senior Project, one of the only programs like this in the Hudson Valley, is a culmination of 12 weeks of intense individual development, including a collaborative studio environment, offering time to work both in the studio and at home, that prepares the students for college-level arts programs and careers in the arts.

The exhibition features innovative and diverse works created by advanced students enrolled in The Art Effect's Senior Project course. Discover the stories behind the art as these young artists share their unique experiences and practices. Explore the motivations driving their self-expression and delve into the techniques and media that have brought their visions to life.

In 2024, Art Institute students earned more than \$1.2 million in scholarships, and the Senior Project cohort went on to study at Syracuse University, UMass Dartmouth, and Eastern Connecticut University and more.

Exhibiting artists like Chanel Reed worked for more than 240 hours on their body of work. They not only created an

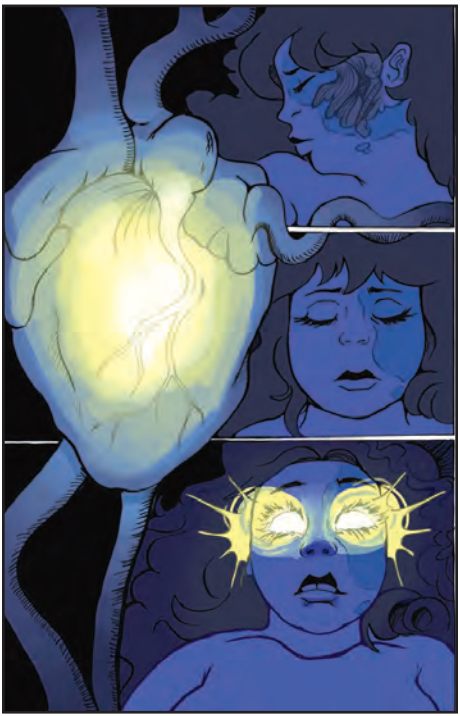
impressive exhibition but also worked as professional artists, developing a portfolio, participating in critiques, and writing artist statements.

"My time in the Senior Project refreshed my artistic skills and development." Says Chanel. "I struggled with finding a constant in my art-making in the past, but working on a new series that includes a personal narrative and an exploration of mixed-media materials has gradually given me clarity towards my personal art practice. Working on this series has taught me to trust the slow layering of my own voice."

The Art Effect's Director of Artistic Advancement and teacher of the Senior Project course, Hanna Rose DeMarco states, "This group of artists' dedication to their practices and their bodies of work makes me excited for the future of contemporary art. Each one of them has shown dedication to the mastery of their craft and their visions that have not only paid off, but have made me immensely proud. They brought their unique ideas to life, and I believe viewers will be amazed by the work they've created."

Alumni of this program have gone on to be professional freelance artists, illustrators, game designers, college educators, fashion designers, cartoonists, architects, and more. Proceeds from the sale of artwork will go towards the artist's creative futures.

Viewings can be scheduled by appointment, Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information on the Senior Project Exhibition, visit [thearteffect.org/senior-project](http://thearteffect.org/senior-project) or call (845) 471-7477.



Teen artists showing works in the Art Effect's Senior Project Exhibition include (from top of page) Chanel Reed, Phoenix Barra-Greenmyer, Sadie Pomerantz, Kenny Gray, (above, right) and Virginia Zengen. (above, left) Courtesy images



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# Remembrances of Christmas Past!

## Traveling down a garland-lined Memory Lane

“Today I got a telescope, a pocket radio, 50 cactus seeds, a chess set, an electric football game, a book bag, a shirt, pajamas, two insect books, a Mattel shootin’ shell gun, a stocking full of stuff, a barrel cactus, a Spanish dictionary.” That’s what a 10-year-old boy got for Christmas in 1959.

That little boy was me.  
I also wrote in my diary, “We went to Church before we saw the tree.”

My dad insisted on that, every year. Back then, Adams Fairacre Farms was just a farm, a year before the Poughkeepsie store was built. So our extended family get-together happened on Thanksgiving, and Christmas was more relaxing than it is nowadays. Still, over the years, I can remember a few good stories:

• **Pain in the butter** – I was a such a fussy eater, I would never eat margarine. My mom wrapped up a pound of butter and put it under the Christmas tree.

• **Charlie Brown tree** – When Adams started selling Christmas trees, my dad, Ralph, would bring the very last tree into the house on Christmas eve. He was the same way with apples, and all the vegetables we sold at the store. We’d get the bruised and misshapen ones. They still tasted great, and the tree looked great once it was covered with tinsel.

• **Christmas at the library** – You know those coffee table books you get for Christmas – “Famous Paintings from the Louvre,” “25 Great Vacation Spots,” “Mansions of the World,” “Birds of North America in Glorious Color.” Everybody oohs and ahs over them on Christmas day, and then they go on a shelf, never to be seen again. Well, I checked out a bunch of those books from the library, wrapped them and gave them to my parents, brother and sisters for Christmas. Two weeks later, I took them back to the library, and nobody noticed.

• **Fish sticks** – On our first Christmas together, Sue was so proud of the feast she put together for the whole family, all crammed together in our new home at Ridgefield Apartments. Except she bought a fresh ham, thinking it was pre-cooked. When she took it out of the oven, it was still raw. So we had to eat fish sticks. I told her that one day she’d look back at this and laugh. After 50 years she still hasn’t.

• **Car parts** – When Becky’s first car (our old 1994 Toyota Corolla) broke down, I bought her a new intake manifold, wrapped it up, all 40 pounds of it, and put it under the tree. The next day, we installed it together. Of course, she still has the car.

• **Bad Santa** – When kids ask Santa for a particular toy, he’s supposed to say something like “I’ll see what I can do, the elves are pretty busy.” Back in 1983, four-year-old Becky came to me in a panic, at 4 p.m. on Christmas Eve. “Dad, I haven’t seen Santa yet! I won’t get any presents!” It so happened that Santa was at Herman’s Nursery, so we hurried over there. Well, Santa recognized me, so when Becky told him she wanted a Rainbow Brite Gas Station (yes, it was a thing), he declared, while looking me right in the eye, “Of course I’ll bring you one!” I dropped Becky off at the house and hightailed it down to Bradlee’s in the Poughkeepsie Plaza Mall, and grabbed the last Rainbow Brite gas station just as they were closing the doors. Turned out I was the only busy elf that day.

• **I googled “Mattel shootin’ shell gun,”** one of my 1959 Christmas presents. Turns out it’s now worth \$25,000. By the way, I never did learn how to play Chess.

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



Mark and Sue's daughter Becky visits Santa in 1983. Photo courtesy Mark Adams

## Love to Cook

continued from page 16

transfer once they’re baked. Sometimes I add a little pizza sauce or pesto to these before rolling them into balls, but it isn’t necessary since you’ll serve dipping sauce on the side. You can assemble this a day ahead and bake when ready to serve.

### INGREDIENTS

Pizza dough (usually found in 1lb pieces), room temperature (easier to roll)  
Mozzarella cheese sticks, cut into 4 or 5 equal pieces  
Salt, pepper, garlic powder and dried oregano  
1 egg  
1 tablespoon warm water  
2 tablespoons butter, melted  
Freshly grated Parmesan cheese  
Fresh basil and/or Italian parsley, chopped  
Sauce for dipping (marinara, pesto or pizza sauce)

### METHOD

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

Roll pizza dough out on a lightly floured surface (to about ¼-inch thickness). Cut into 2-inch squares. You can get about 32 pieces. Place a mozzarella piece in the center of each square and sprinkle with seasonings. Fold dough edges around the cheese, pinch to seal and roll into balls.

Place balls onto prepared baking sheet in the shape of a Christmas tree. (If you have extra rolls, place them on the sheet off to the side). Whisk the egg with the water and brush on top. Bake until golden-brown, 16-18 minutes.

Remove from oven, allow to cool slightly and carefully transfer to a cutting board or platter. Brush with melted butter. Sprinkle with Parmesan and fresh herbs. Serve immediately with a side of sauce.

I love serving special food for the holidays and I certainly don’t mind fussing to do so. But sometimes you can put something together quickly and easily, presented in a festive way, that only looks like you fussed and there’s no harm in that! The best part of the holidays, after

all, is spending time with the ones we love and limiting the time spent in the kitchen is a great way to do that. Think of it as a gift you don’t need to wrap. So deck those halls and your table, let the warmth of the season fill you up as you gather with those you love and savor the comfort and joy of it all. Merry Christmas!

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

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# Partners for Climate Action announces new pollinator partnerships with Hudson Valley farms and towns

HUDSON, NY - Partners for Climate Action (PCA) recently announce 13 new partnerships with Hudson Valley farms and municipalities for the creation of pollinator habitat. With up to 60 percent of New York native pollinators facing extinction due to habitat loss, pesticide use and other forms of environmental degradation, these new native plant installations will provide a critical resource to dwindling pollinator populations while engaging local communities in hands-on ecological repair.

PCA's PollinateHV initiative (PollinateHV.org) is a 2025 recipient of a \$247,000 award from the New York Pollinator Conservation Fund. The grant supports the installation of large-scale pollinator meadows and native tree plantings on working farms; and small "pocket park" gardens on municipal parks and grounds.

Municipal partners are:

- Village of Catskill (Greene County): Two gardens, at the Catskill Fire House and Elliot Park
- Town of Kinderhook (Columbia County): Two gardens, at the Valatie Town Hall and Kinderhook Library
- Town of New Paltz (Ulster County): Two gardens, both at the Field of Dreams community park

- Town of Red Hook (Dutchess County): Two gardens, both at the Red Hook Recreational Park
- Village of Rhinebeck (Dutchess County): One garden, near the entrance to the Rhinebeck Farmers' Market

"We're so grateful to be able to host a shared space that welcomes native plants, and their pollinators, to our park," said Laurie Husted, Chair of the Town of Red Hook Conservation Advisory Council. "We hope these micro gardens will help create a buzz around the wondrous relationships among people, plants and pollinators and the critical role we all can play in habitat conservation, even in small spaces."

Farm partners are:

- Hearty Roots Farm (Red Hook, Dutchess County)
- Hudson Valley Seed Company (Accord, Ulster County)
- Mead Orchard (Tivoli, Dutchess County)
- Prospect Hill Orchard (Milton, Ulster County)
- Samascott Orchard (Kinderhook, Columbia County)
- Chester Agricultural Center (Chester, Orange County)
- Glynwood Center for Regional Food

and Farming (Cold Spring, Putnam County)

- Hudson Valley Research Laboratory (Highland, Ulster County)

Farm partners will install native wildflower meadows in fall 2026, totaling over five acres of meadow. Three farms will also install native tree and shrub hedgerows, while the Hudson Valley Research Lab will install three species of pollinator-friendly shrubs in a new native orchard at their Highland experimental farm.

"This project is a great example of the intersection of agroecosystems and environmental conservation, and something that we've been wanting to invest in for a long time," said Anna Wallis, Cornell Integrated Pest Management's Fruit IPM Coordinator, who's leading the project at the Hudson Valley Research Lab. "Farmers and orchardists in our region have long been invested in supporting pollinators, and this funding and expert support will enable them to follow through. Installing plantings at our research station allows us to ground-truth concepts before growers invest in them, while providing space for us to demonstrate this work to the public."

Farm and municipal plantings will

include interpretive signage and online documentation at PollinateHV.org. New planting designs, plant lists, budgets, and instructions will be available in spring 2026 to help Hudson Valley residents support pollinators in their own yards, parks, fields, and farms. Projects will incorporate free training events and volunteer workdays covering pollinator habitat needs, locally native plants for garden and farm settings, site preparation, planting, management, and more. Those interested in participating should join the PCA mailing list at [climateactionhv.org](mailto:climateactionhv.org).

"We need all hands on deck to address the ongoing crisis of pollinator collapse and native biodiversity loss," said Avalon Bunge, PCA's Ecological Projects Manager and grant project lead. "These partnerships represent our biggest opportunity yet to spread the word and engage Hudson Valley communities in direct ecological action while installing native plantings at a scale that can really make a difference."

All projects are made possible through generous funding from the New York Community Trust, the Office of the New York State Attorney General, and the New York Pollinator Conservation Fund.

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**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](https://www.gofundme.com) and search for "Join Us In Rebuilding Rhinebeck American Legion After Fire."

**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.

**Hyde Park Repair Cafe set Jan. 3**

Climate Smart Hyde Park will present a Hyde Park Repair Café and Recycling Event on Saturday, Jan 3, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Bring in your beloved but broken items for free repairs and advice. Now includes recycling of batteries, air conditioners and mini-refrigerators. NEW for this event: recycling of Christmas light strings. The event will be held at the United Methodist Church, 1 Church St., Hyde Park. For more information, visit [www.ClimateSmartHydePark.org](http://www.ClimateSmartHydePark.org).

**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.starrlibrary.org](http://www.starrlibrary.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](http://www.pleasantvalleycommunitygardens.com).

## Dutchess participates in STOP-DWI Holiday Crackdown

High-visibility enforcement campaign runs through Jan. 1

Various law-enforcement agencies throughout Dutchess County are out en masse to stop impaired driving during the holiday season, during a focused effort currently underway which runs through Thursday, Jan. 1, 2026. Departments are stepping up their patrols as part of a coordinated effort to reduce alcohol-related crashes, injuries and deaths during this period.

Dutchess County Executive Sue Serino said, "Let's all do our part to keep everyone safe on the roads this joyous holiday season. If you plan to celebrate with friends and loved ones, please make sure you have a safe way to get home. As always, I thank our hard-working, law-enforcement officers who protect our roads throughout the year."

The campaign is part of STOP-DWI's

broader "High Visibility Enforcement" initiative, supported by the New York Governor's Traffic Safety Committee, and involves agencies across the state working together to reduce alcohol- and drug-related crashes during peak times.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, from 2019 to 2023, nearly 5,000 people nationwide were killed during the month of December in alcohol-impaired crashes.

The statewide STOP-DWI High Visibility Enforcement initiative also targets other peak travel periods throughout the year, including Super Bowl weekend, St. Patrick's Day, Memorial Day weekend, July 4th, Labor Day weekend and Halloween.

Impaired driving is both illegal and preventable. Residents are encouraged to download the STOP-DWI "Have a Plan" mobile app or arrange alternative transportation before drinking.



See our **HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS** on pages 13 & 15 for more events in your community



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# 1776 & Beyond: The Ongoing Revolution

By Bill Jeffway

This is the second part of a two-part series telling the story of Dutchess County's unique and important role in the American Revolutionary war through a six-panel traveling exhibition. The lens of local history allows us to see, in very personal terms, the effect of the war at the time, and the many journeys launched in the name of freedom and equality.

Supported with a 2025 grant from Dutchess County government they are published by DCHS. Two sets can be loaned depending on availability. They can be reserved through DCHS by email Bill Jeffway at [bill.jeffway@dchsn.org](mailto:bill.jeffway@dchsn.org) and viewed online at [www.dchsn.org/rev250-banners](http://www.dchsn.org/rev250-banners). This outlines the narrative of the fourth, fifth and sixth banners.

### Sustaining the Revolution

Dutchess County played a pivotal role in supplying the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. The county's position at the Crossroads of the American Revolution, between the New England and Middle colonies, placed it in a unique position to materially contribute to the war effort. Vital resources like ore, wood, and food were produced throughout Dutchess. These raw materials were an integral part of military supply networks that fueled the revolutionary cause. Industrial and logistical centers, another important part of these supply lines, transformed raw materials into weapons, munitions, and vessels. Sites like the Fishkill Supply Depot and the Poughkeepsie shipyards gave the Continental Army access to goods produced and stored in Dutchess County.

### Revolution on the Home Front

While the stories of major battles of the American Revolution are best known, the struggle for American Independence was equally important on the home front, in the lives of everyday people. Throughout Dutchess County, citizens became active participants in, and were personally affected by, the political and social Revolution. News spread through word of mouth and printed material, while local governing bodies monitored and enforced Patriot requirements.

The Revolution pitted neighbors against each other. Various committees, like the Committees of Safety and Correspondence, served as local arms of the Revolutionary government. They represented the general interests of the Continental Congress, offering direct social and material control in towns and the county. Backed by local militias,

committees enforced Revolutionary policies among the people. They were tasked with furnishing supplies for the war, often through the impressment of property, including enslaved persons, especially against Loyalists. During the war nearly 120,000 acres of land was taken in Dutchess County alone. At the end of the war, around 60,000 Loyalists relocated to Canada in an effort to forge new lives.

These seizures could also include items like livestock, food, and clothing that could be sent to the Army. One local example comes from the Town of Northeast where, in 1778, the Committee of Safety ordered citizens to deliver sleighs and horses to Albany. One such individual who failed to do this, Mathias Rowe, was found "guilty of Disobedience of Orders and Contempt of Orders of the Senate and Assembly." They fined him eight pounds.

### A million journeys to freedom

The July 4, 1776 Declaration of Independence announced a new country and radical premise: that all men are created equal. Those who felt disadvantaged by their economic status, gender, race, or faith saw this as their opportunity. The journeys began. Progress came from a combination of winning over hearts and minds and profound legal change through amendments to the US and State Constitutions and laws.

### Workingclass rights

Rhinebeck's Nathan Darling (1802-1866) was born in poverty. While a house painter in New York City in 1830, he cast a vote moderating the goals of an emerging labor rights organization, helping it become the broader, successful Mechanics movement. In 1858 he built a house that stands today reflecting his successful military and political career. Among labor achievements: 1826: Property ownership requirement to vote removed (for White men only). 1831: Abolition of imprisonment for debt. 1867: Free public school for all.

### Women's equality

Lucretia Coffin Mott (1793-1880) was a student and teacher at the Quaker school in today's Millbrook before becoming an advocate on the world stage. Vassar College's Laura Wylie (1833-1932) led local organizations to obtain the right to vote, and to help women vote effectively. Landmarks: 1848: Seneca Falls Convention, where 4 out of 5 organizers were Quaker. 1861: Vassar Female College opens. 1880: Voting in school elections allowed. 1918: Right to vote in NY State. 1920: Right to vote nationally.



The banners have begun to travel and were recently at a student engagement at Vassar College. Oval insets: Starting top then clockwise, local men and women who are profiled for their specific journeys – Lucretia Mott, Laura Wylie, imagined portraits of Nathan Darling and Andrew Frazier, the Fishkill memorial to Daniel Nimham. *Courtesy image*

### Religious freedom

By abandoning the idea of a single official state religion, diverse faiths emerged. Clinton's Amanda Halstead Deyo (1838-1917) was born a Quaker. As that faith declined after an 1827 split, she became one of the earliest female ordained ministers in the Universalist Church. Among the movement's achievements: 1777: No religious preference law. 1777: Military service exemption for Quakers. 1806: Catholics allowed in public office.

### Race, African heritage

Pine Plains and Milan's Andrew Frazier (ca. 1742-1846) was likely born enslaved but earned his freedom after serving in the Revolutionary War. He and his local descendants led by example, having served in every major war including World War 2. His great-granddaughter became the first woman of color allowed to teach White students in NYC in 1895. Landmarks: 1865 to 1870: 13th, 14th, 15th US Constitutional Amendments eliminate slavery, ensure citizenship, and guarantee equal protection. 1948: Racially integrated US military.

### Race, indigenous peoples

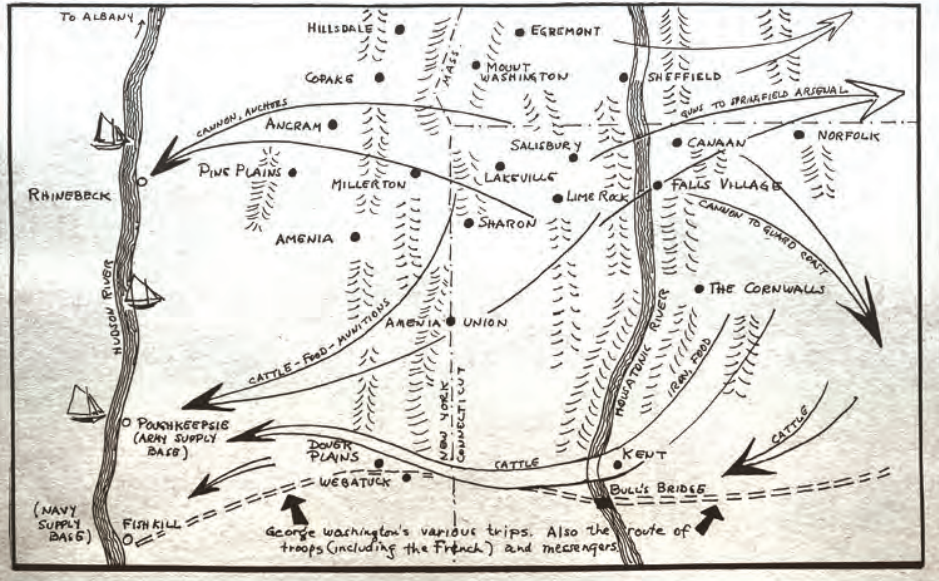
Daniel Nimham (ca. 1726-1778) fought for the American cause believing he would have greater success in getting land disputes settled after failing to do so with the British that included a trip to England. He was killed in action. Forced relocation and disease greatly reduced the local population, but descendants today

are active in maintaining their culture. Landmarks: 1778: First treaty between US and a Tribe. 1830: Indian Removal Act. 1924: US Grants Citizenship.

**Clarification relating to Part One:** This does not relate to the text in the banners but relates to the published text of Part One of this series. When describing the location of the Fishkill Supply Depot as opposite Washington's Newburgh Headquarters, while true in a general sense looking at any contemporary map, we did not mean to communicate that they were created simultaneously. For the clarification we turn to one of the most studied historians of southern Dutchess County, particularly for the period of the Revolutionary War, Steve Lynch.

Lynch explains, "Washington's headquarters in Newburgh wasn't established until Nov. 1781 after the battle of Yorktown, Virginia. When the Fishkill Supply Depot was established in Nov. 1776, General Israel Putnam came to the Van Wyck Homestead [which stands beautifully maintained today] located on the Albany Post Road in Fishkill, and commandeered the house as Officers' Headquarters."

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



Map from "The Arsenal of the Revolution," published by the Lakeville Journal, described seventeen towns in three states as often overlooked but essential iron and foraging areas during the Revolution. *Courtesy image*

LOOK FOR THAT'S ITALIAN!  
IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

Luigi Coppola shares stories and recipes.



# OBITUARIES

## Dr. George E. Verrilli

Dr. George Emil Verrilli, 96, a longtime resident of Rhinebeck and Red Hook, passed away on December 5, 2025 at Vassar Brothers Medical Center. A devoted physician, husband, father, grandfather, and community leader, George will be remembered for his spirited humor, vivacity, compassion, and love of family and community. Through his philanthropy, volunteerism, and an over 50-year career as an obstetrician and gynecologist, George touched the lives of many and leaves a legacy of lasting impact on families and communities in the Hudson Valley.

Born on July 20, 1929 in Port Chester, NY, George was the son of the late Emil Verrilli, a second-generation Italian immigrant from Westchester, and Maude (Beaton) Verrilli, a native of Springfield, Nova Scotia. In his youth in Mamaroneck, NY, he enjoyed horseback riding, sailing, and automobiles. He developed a passion for tennis that grew in his later years, as he challenged opponents significantly his junior (including his children).

George graduated from Georgetown University in 1951 and received his medical degree from the University of Padua in Italy in 1955, where he remarkably became fluent in Italian quickly enough to pursue his studies in the language. In 1954, in what is a dramatic illustration of the tenacity and lust for life that helped sustain him to his 96 years, George survived a devastating plane crash when returning home for Christmas from Italy. After escaping the sinking tail of the aircraft, which crash-landed in the frigid waters near Idlewild Airport (now JFK Airport), and assisting fellow passengers out of the wreckage, George emerged unscathed as one of only six survivors.

After his medical residency in Brooklyn at Methodist Hospital, George moved to Rhinebeck, NY where he practiced obstetrics and gynecology for over 50 years. A devoted physician, he cared deeply for the patients and families he served, assisting mothers with expertise and compassion in the delivery of well over ten thousand babies during his career. George played an instrumental role in a successful public campaign to prevent a 1970s state effort to phase out maternity services at Northern Dutchess Hospital in Rhinebeck, where he went on to be a key player in the founding of the Neugarten Family Birth Center. Groundbreaking for its time, the birth center has provided a warm, family-centered environment for childbirth that has served generations of Hudson Valley families. Beyond the delivery room, George made a significant contribution to prenatal education through his writing, co-authoring the book *While Waiting*, which became a trusted guide for expectant parents, offering clear, reassuring advice about pregnancy, labor, and delivery, and helping demystify the process of childbirth for millions. George's commitment to compassionate maternity care will remain one of his most enduring professional legacies.

George's dedication to the well-being of others extended far beyond his medical practice. As the founder of the Red Hook Community Center, he helped create what has become a vibrant local resource that supports, uplifts, and connects local residents of all ages. The Red Hook Community Center stands as a testament to George's commitment and dedication to building and supporting community through service and compassion and is an institution George hoped would continue to serve his community well beyond his lifetime.

Among his many other areas of community involvement, George was the first physician to be elected to the board of Northern Dutchess Hospital, on which he served for many decades, and was a long-time member of the Rhinebeck Rotary Club. George also served on the Town of Red Hook's Economic Development Committee and was active in local real estate, taking on new construction and rehabilitation projects that included medical office buildings in Rhinebeck and Hyde Park, the Germantown Cold Storage building, the Chocolate Factory in Red Hook, and most recently the establishment of the Classic Car Corral, a collector car storage facility in Milan, NY.

Outside of his professional and civic contributions, George was well known for his lifelong passion for automobiles, which began with his acquisition of a Model A Ford at the

age of 13 in Mamaroneck and led to his first appearances in traffic court by the age of 16. During his medical studies in Italy in the '50s, George found a more receptive environment in which to pursue his automotive passion, racing alongside the likes of Sterling Moss in the famed Mille Miglia road race. George's ever-evolving collection of antique, classic, and modern automobiles was a cause célèbre, in no small part due to the appearances of his cars in local parades, his generosity in freely lending them out (be it Maserati or Model T), and his continual support of his fellow car enthusiasts.

George lived by the Italian adage "la famiglia è tutto" (family is everything). Over the years he reveled in seeing his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren grow, always encouraging and inspiring them to excel through his example. He delighted in the years of family dinners, held regularly on Sundays, where he would take his place as the "capotàvola" to hear and tell stories, make his opinions known, crack jokes, and demand that elbows were off the table! More seats were added to the Sunday dinner table as friends, spouses, and grandchildren came along, always with a warm welcome from George.

George had a deep attachment to his mother's native land of Nova Scotia, Canada and to his Maritime family and friends. Every year George religiously spent the month of July in his beloved Nova Scotia. A non-negotiable when he was a practicing physician, he would secure coverage so he could spend the month with his family in the Maritimes. In retirement, George would spend from May to October in Nova Scotia, running his cherished Gulf Shore Camping Park, an operating campground he purchased in the 1970s. Continuing through this past summer, his regular activities at the camping park involved hours of mowing the grounds, towing campers out of ditches, chasing bears out of dumpsters, fixing the steep steps to the beach, and greeting campers who came from all over the world to enjoy the beauty of the Maritimes. George felt equally comfortable in the seat of his 90-horsepower New Holland, his backhoe front-end loader, and his beloved Gravely lawn mower—sulky version, as he did in a 12-cylinder Ferrari or Jaguar. To those who knew him, it was no surprise that to George retirement meant "head north," which despite the ubiquitous Scottish golfing tradition, was in line with a personal motto he repeated throughout his life: "no golf, no Florida, no German cars."

Nova Scotia was undoubtedly George's happy place. His extended community of family and friends looked forward to his annual visit and to his birthday party where he held court, carefully reading aloud his birthday cards and anticipating the buttering of his nose upon blowing out the candles on his birthday cake—a Maritime tradition. George instilled in his children his love of the Maritimes, taking them to spend their summers on the shore, just as his parents had done with their children. George loved the close-knit nature of his Maritime community, admiring how residents went out of their way to help each other. During his off-season time at the camping park, George benefited from regular visitors, rides to church, invitations to brunch, and homemade dinners delivered to his doorstep from caring friends and community members who looked out for George until his wife, Christine, arrived for the summer. His undying loyalty to Nova Scotia and to family, friends, and community there saw the Gulf Shore Camping Park and the "Doc from New York" become local institutions.

George is survived by his beloved wife, Christine Verrilli; his children Colin (Cathy Farmer), Stewart (Jane Brien), Matthew (Betsey McCall), Bianca (Dominic Capaccio), Ariana (Thomas Heckel), and Gregory Verrilli (Kait Spyhalsky); his grandchildren Danielle, Marianne, Alberto, Gianmarco, Graham, Emersyn, Imogen, and Ferris; his great-grandchildren Clara and Anna; his sister Patricia Riedel; his brother Donald Verrilli, and many more loving relatives and friends, both in the U.S. and in Nova Scotia. He was predeceased by his parents, Emil and Maude, his first wife Kay Tremper Verrilli, his daughter Mary Virginia, and his brother Richard Verrilli.

Friends and family were received for calling hours at Burnett & White Funeral Homes

in Red Hook on Thursday, December 11.

A Mass of Christian Burial took place at St. Christopher's Church in Red Hook, NY on Friday, December 12. A community celebration of George's life will take place in spring 2026.

In lieu of flowers, donations in George's memory can be made to the Red Hook Community Center or to the Neugarten Family Birth Center at Northern Dutchess Hospital.

## Carolyn Albrecht

Carolyn Nichols Albrecht, 94, passed away peacefully at her home on December 10, 2025 surrounded by her daughters and devoted caregiver.

She was born on August 29, 1931, in Glens Falls, NY, the daughter of Edgar and Gladys (Wood) Nichols. Carolyn enjoyed being in the mountains and on the lakes in the Adirondacks. She was active in her youthful years skiing, boating, fishing, dancing, swimming, playing softball and golf. Carolyn was a key punch operator for Glens Falls Insurance Company and then for the New York State Executive Division in the Department of Parole in Albany, NY.

On March 27, 1965, Carolyn married the love of her life, Robert Stanley Albrecht. They met at a dance in Lake George and had 60 happy years together in their Pleasant Valley home. Mom enjoyed country living as a dairy farmer's wife, growing vegetables, mowing the lawn, canning tomatoes, decorating cakes, and planting flowers in her magnificent rock garden.

Mom was a quiet and genuine caregiver, often reaching out to those sick or elderly with a helping hand, running errands, providing home-cooked meals and nurturing visits.

Mom enjoyed family vacations camping, renting cabins on lakes and spending time by the seashore. She especially loved her small fluffy dogs—Cindy, Lucy and Missy who will be greeting her on the rainbow bridge.

Carolyn was predeceased by her parents, husband, brother Edgar, and son-in-law Peter Smith. She is survived by her daughter Lori Albrecht Johnson and stepdaughter Barbara Smith Komondorea (Dean) and son-in-law Kurt Johnson; grandchildren, Christine Henry (Michael), Nicole Johnson, Michael Smith, Krystal Drumm (Harold), Matthew Smith; and great-grandchildren Grace Drumm and Avery Cabrera; and several nieces and nephews.

A special thank you to Teo, Mom's caregiver, and Hospice for their amazing home-care.

Donations can be made in her memory to Hudson Valley Hospice, 374 Violet Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 or Lyall Community Church (Meals on Wheels Program), 30 Maple Avenue, Millbrook, NY 12545.

Calling hours were held on Friday, December 12, 2025 at Allen Funeral Home, Pleasant Valley, NY. A Funeral Service was held on Saturday, December 13, 2025 from Lyall Community Church, Millbrook, NY. Interment followed in Nine Partners Cemetery, Millbrook. For condolences and directions, please [www.hudsonvalleyfuneralhomes.com](http://www.hudsonvalleyfuneralhomes.com)

## Christine K. Brand

Christine K. "Chris" Brand, devoted daughter, sister, and friend, was called home to her Lord and Savior on November 18, 2025, at the age of 62. Born on July 1, 1963, in Burlington, VT, Chris was a devout Christian woman who acted with a deep love for her community, country, and the many charitable causes she championed. She passed peacefully in her sleep doing what she loved: traveling to visit national parks, state capitols, and friends.

Chris is survived by her father, Ronald P. Brand; her brother, Terrance A. Brand, and his wife, Trina; her nephew, Thaddeus; and many close friends who became family. She was preceded in death by her mother, Suzanne (Weber) Brand, who passed in June 2024.

Chris was a proud graduate of FDR High School in Hyde Park, NY, Dutchess Community College, and Marist College with a major in accounting. She later earned her MBA from Long Island University, reflecting a lifelong dedication to learning and personal excellence. She was an accomplished musician having mastered multiple instruments, and enjoyed performing in, and leading, many local groups.

Her professional life as an accountant was marked by commitment and integrity. Chris spent 20 years with Texaco, where she enjoyed temporary assignments in China, the Middle East, and Europe, and 17 years with IBM. Even after retiring in September 2024, her spirit of service continued as she shared her expertise as a financial advisor and book-keeper at the Pellegrino Healing Center in Hyde Park.

Chris's Christian faith was the foundation of her life. A devoted 50-year member of the United Methodist Church of Hyde Park, she lived out her beliefs through steady service and heartfelt leadership. Baptized and confirmed at age 12, she remained deeply rooted in her faith, contributing joyfully to the worship band and serving with the Mid-Hudson Tres Dias and Vida Nueva ministries.

A lover of classic Disney, chocolate, and the wonders of God's creation, Chris embraced life with vibrant enthusiasm. She pursued her dream of visiting every U.S. National Park site, having explored an extraordinary 349 parks—with only 82 remaining. An expert trip planner, she inspired many to see the beauty she saw so clearly in the world. Her friendships, spanning countless places, stand as lasting testaments to her generous spirit.

Chris believed in living with strength, humility, and Godly character. Whether tending lovingly to her homestead, encouraging excellence in others, or caring fiercely for those she loved, her life consistently reflected her deepest values.

To call Chris loving, kind, and faith-filled only begins to describe the remarkable woman she was. Her legacy of love, service, and unwavering devotion to God lives on in every life she touched. As we say farewell, we rejoice in knowing that Chris Brand now sings with the angels, her spirit forever at home in the beauty of heaven she cherished so deeply.

Cremation has taken place as she had requested. A Celebration of Life will be held Saturday, May 2, 2026, at United Methodist Church of Hyde Park. Her ashes will be interred in the family plot at Lakeview Cemetery, Burlington, VT at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the National Parks Conservation Association, Attn: Membership Dept., 777 6th St., NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20001 ([www.npca.org](http://www.npca.org)) or the United Methodist Church of Hyde Park Memorial Fund, 1 Church St., Hyde Park, NY 12538 ([www.umchp.com](http://www.umchp.com)). Chris would be honored by you baking some cupcakes with the young people in your life and sharing them with loved ones.

To send an online condolence or for directions, please visit Christine Brand's obituary page at [www.sweetsfuneralhome.com](http://www.sweetsfuneralhome.com).

## John Carroll

John Carroll, 94, a lifelong resident of Amenia, NY, passed away on Monday, December 8, 2025 at Noble Horizons in Salisbury, CT. Mr. Carroll was the business account manager at Audia Motor Sales in Millbrook, NY for 41 years retiring in 2016.

Born on October 1, 1931 in Sharon, CT he was the son of the late John J. and Florence (Brunese) Carroll. He was a graduate of Amenia High School class of 1950. Mr. Carroll later graduated from the GM Service Technical College in New York, NY.

Mr. Carroll was a former Vice President and President of the Parish Council at Immaculate Conception Church in Amenia and St. Bernard's Church in Sharon and a former member of the finance council at St. Charles Borromeo Church in Dover Plains. He was a lifelong parishioner of Immaculate Conception Church in Amenia.

Mr. Carroll is survived by a brother, Philip T. Carroll of Amenia, NY and several nieces and nephews. Besides his parents, he was predeceased by five brothers, Joseph, Richard J., Thomas, Alan and William Carroll and two sisters, Marion Ursula Robertson and Jean Leggett.

Calling hours were held on Thursday, December 11, 2025 at the Hufcut Funeral Home, Dover Plains, NY. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Friday, December 12, 2025 at Immaculate Conception Church, Amenia, NY with Rev. Andrew O'Connor officiating. Burial followed at St. Patrick's Cemetery in Millerton, NY. Contributions in

*continued on page 25*

Legal Notices

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NOTICE  
The Purchasing Agent, County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of proposals for: Bid #RFP-DCP-30-25  
Dutchess County Sheriff's Office Corrections Division  
Incarcerated Individual Commissary Services and Food Service for Incarcerated Individuals  
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., December 23, 2025. 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.

TOWN OF PLEASANT VALLEY REORGANIZATION/WORKSHOP TOWN BOARD MEETING  
JANUARY 5, 2026 7:00PM

Legal Notices

The Pleasant Valley Town Board will hold their ReOrganization/Workshop meeting on Monday, January 5, 2026 at 7:00PM at Town Hall  
1554 Main Street  
Pleasant Valley, NY 12569.  
Please join us at 6:00PM for the swearing-in ceremony of the newly elected officials.

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-57-25  
Cummins Engine Repair and Replacement Service  
Bids will be received until 2:00 p.m. on the 29th 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.

Legal Notices

selecting "Bidding and RFP Opportunities". For additional information, call 845-486-3613.

LEGAL NOTICE  
Resolution 2025207  
December 8, 2025  
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a public hearing will be held by the County Attorney of Dutchess County in the County Office Building, County Attorney's Conference Room, 5th Floor, 22 Market Street, Poughkeepsie, New York, on the 23rd day of December 2025 at 10:00AM, on the following local law:  
A LOCAL LAW TO EXTEND THE YOUTH

Legal Notices

DEERHUNTINGPILOT PROGRAM-RESOLUTION 2025207.  
At said time and place, all parties interested will be heard.  
Dated:  
December 11, 2025  
Susan Serino  
Poughkeepsie, New York  
Dutchess County Executive

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NOTICE  
The Purchasing Agent, County of Dutchess, Poughkeepsie, New York, hereby invites the submission of sealed proposals for: Bid #RFP-DCP-04-26  
On-Call Professional

Legal Notices

Land Surveying Services  
Proposals will be received until 2:00 p.m. on the 16th day of January 2026 at the Dutchess County Division of Central Services, 378 Violet Avenue, Suite 2, New York 12601. Specifications and proposal 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 12/24/25 Legals is Thursday 12/18/25 at noon for a Wednesday 12/24/25 Publication"

# OBITUARIES

continued from page 24

memory of Mr. Carroll should be made to the Immaculate Conception Church, 4 Lavelle Road, Amenia, NY 12501. For directions or to send the family a condolence, please visit [www.hufcutfuneralhome.com](http://www.hufcutfuneralhome.com)

### Arthur John Heck

Village of Millerton – Arthur John Heck, 89, a lifelong area resident died Sunday, December 7, 2025 at Sharon Center for Health and Rehabilitation in Sharon, CT. Mr. Heck worked in the Maintenance Department and drove school bus at Webutuck Central School District in Amenia, NY, for over thirty-years, prior to his retirement on January 31, 1998.

Born September 3, 1936 in the Bronx, NY, he was the only son of the late Arthur K. and Dorothy (Deusenberry) Heck. Art graduated in 1954 with the last class at Millerton High School in Millerton. He served our country in the United States Naval Reserves from 1955 to 1962 when he received his honorable discharge as a "SR"/Seaman Recruit. On April 10, 1999 in Millerton, NY, he married Donna Duncan. Mrs. Heck survives at home in Millerton. In his spare time, he was an avid train enthusiast and collector. In his younger years he was a parishioner of the North East Baptist Church. He will be dearly missed by his loving family and many friends.

In addition to his wife of nearly twenty-seven years, he is also survived by two sons, John Heck and his wife Cindy of Millerton and Wayne Heck and his wife Debbie of Hudson, NY; two step-daughters, Tammy Nadeau of Winsted, CT, and Rebecca Korot of Torrington, CT; six grandchildren and three great grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

A private graveside service and burial with standard United States Naval Honors took place on Thursday, December 11, 2025 at Irondale Cemetery in Millerton, NY. Pastor William Mayhew officiated. Arrangements have been entrusted to the Scott D. Conklin Funeral Home, 37 Park Avenue, Millerton, NY 12546. To send an online condolence to the family or to plant a tree in Art's memory, please visit [www.conklinfuneralhome.com](http://www.conklinfuneralhome.com)

### Phyllis A. Palumbo

Phyllis Anne Palumbo, 87, passed away on November 21, 2025, in Fort Myers, FL.

Born on October 24, 1938, in Yonkers, NY, Phyllis was the daughter of Stephen and Anne (Roycik) Grubiak. She was raised in Westchester County and spent most of her life there before moving to Red Hook in the early 2000s.

A devoted mother of six, Phyllis returned to college while raising her children, earning her associate degree before beginning her career as a Therapeutic Dietitian. She worked for the Silver Hill Foundation and Northern Westchester Hospital, retiring in 1997. Earlier in life, she and her husband Rocco spent a year in Washington, D.C., while he served in the

military.

In 1964, Phyllis converted to Catholicism and remained a devoted member of the faith throughout her life. She exemplified this faith for her entire life and it was the truest and most precious gift to her children. She was a long-time parishioner of Holy Rosary Church in Hawthorne, NY and later an active member of St. Christopher's Parish in Red Hook. After settling in Red Hook, she discovered a warm community on Fairway Lane, where she enjoyed many social gatherings and earned her affectionate nickname, "Dilly." She loved reading, traveling, and spending time with her large and loving family and friends; some of whom she considered her "besties!" Thank you for walking along side of us and surrounding her with love, laughter and cocktails.

Phyllis was predeceased by her parents, Anne and Stephen Grubiak, and by her beloved husband, Galizio Rocco Palumbo.

She is survived by her six loving children: Rocco (Veronica) Palumbo of Bedford, NY; LeeAnne (Joseph) Minai of Fairfax, VA; Christopher Palumbo of Richfield Springs, NY; Daniel (Jackie) Palumbo of Yorktown, NY; Adrienne (Michael) Bautista of Red Hook, NY; and Laura Pulsifer of Rhode Island. She also leaves behind her sisters, Nancy Bruder of Yonkers and Clovey Shocker of Bronxville; as well as 17 cherished grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren, and many many extended family members and friends who will miss her dearly.

Friends and family called on Saturday, December 13th at Burnett & White Funeral Homes, Red Hook. Mass of Christian Burial immediately followed at St. Christopher's Church in Red Hook. Burial was private.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to the Red Hook Community Center, a place Phyllis enjoyed and felt connected to in the months before her passing. It gave her a sense of belonging where she honed her gin rummy skills. Funeral arrangements were entrusted to Burnett & White Funeral Homes, Red Hook, NY.

### Bryan Keith Roe

Bryan Keith Roe, 35, of Salt Point, NY, passed away peacefully on December 10, 2025, in the comfort and care of the Hospice House in Hyde Park, NY, surrounded by family and friends. He fought a strong 7 years after his dirtbike collision in 2018. He is finally at peace.

Born on March 9, 1990, in Poughkeepsie, NY, at Vassar Hospital to his mother, Patricia Abhervé, and father, Keith Roe.

Bryan always had a kind soul. His family found comfort in knowing that he created endless memories and touched so many people's lives with his one-of-a-kind personality.

I think it is safe to say that Bryan was not the biggest fan of school... but he received his GED from FDR High School in 2008. If you

ever asked him about it, he'd tell you "they'll have to cut me a check if they want me to go to school". Bryan had an incredible work ethic and worked for the Local Union #669, as a Sprinkler Fire Fitter. He had lots of handy skills and was always eager to help out with all sorts of projects around the house and yard.

Bryan had a love of racing from the early age of 5 which transformed into a lifelong passion of his. He began racing go karts and stacking up trophies quickly when he was young. As he grew older he also loved to ride dirtbikes, go snowmobiling and pretty much anything else with wheels & that goes "braaapp".

Bryan had a vibrant energy, sweet eyes and a contagious smile. His presence simply couldn't be ignored. He enjoyed life to the fullest and loved to have a good time. He always knew how to make people laugh and cheer them up, no matter what life threw at them. He was bold and never afraid to speak his mind. He stood up for the ones he loved. Bryan loved his family and had a special bond with his "little" sister. He loved a good adventure, spending time with close friends and family, roller blading, cooking, watching races, just talking about life and listening to

music- especially country.

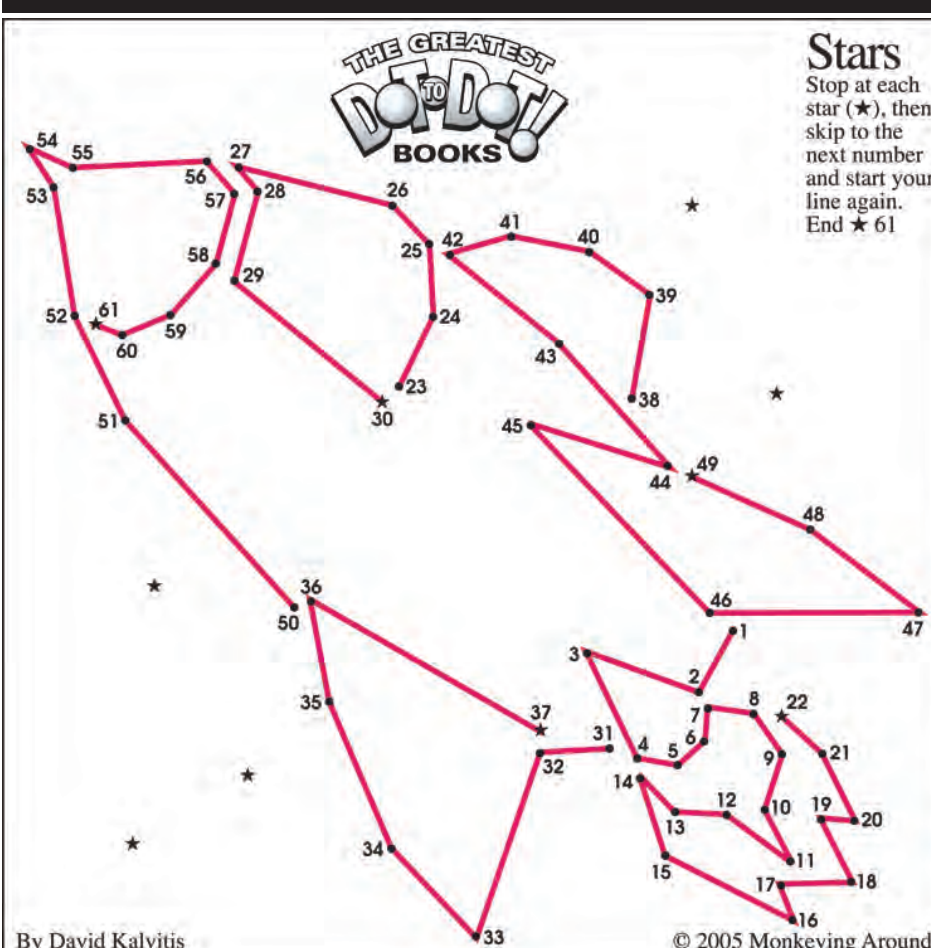
In addition to his parents, he is survived by his loving sister Megan Roe, his cherished grandmother Pierrette, grandfather, Robert Roe. Aunts Sylvie Morin, Leanne Roe Fleck, Cristin Roe. Uncle Phil (Stacey) Abhervé and children Devin and Abigail Muncey, cousins and little cousins Jessica Morin (son Jayden Perez), Ricky (Lacey) Morin and children Leila & Asher, Victoria Abhervé (daughter Amaryllis), Lacey (Gary) Lucarini and children Noah, Aria & Sophie, Emme and PJ (Miranda) Magliato, and great-aunt Karen (Jim)Courtright.

Bryan was predeceased by his grandmother Barbara Roe, grandfather Michel Abhervé, and great grandparents William Van Nordstrand, Florence Van Nordstrand and Cynthia Roe.

Relatives and friends called on Sunday December 14th at Sweet's Funeral Home, Hyde Park, NY. Interment was in the family plot at Union Cemetery, Route 9G, on Monday December 15, 2025. Donations can be made to Hudson Valley Hospice Foundation, 80 Washington Street, Suite 204, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 or [www.hvhospice.org](http://www.hvhospice.org).

Answer to this week's Dot to Dot (puzzle on page 19)

THE GREATEST DOT TO DOT BOOKS



Stars  
Stop at each star (★), then skip to the next number and start your line again.  
End ★ 61

By David Kalvitis © 2005 Monkeying Around

Decmeber 17-23, 2025 - NORTHERN DUTCHESS NEWS & Creative Living 25

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

201 Home Improvement  
202 Cleaning Services  
203 Lawn Services  
221 Professional Services  
222 Tax Experts  
223 Beauty Services  
225 Business Services  
226 Travel & Services  
227 Bridal Services  
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901 Vans/SUV's  
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## NOTICE OF EARLY DEADLINES: HOLIDAY PRESS SCHEDULE ISSUE.

Southern/Northern Dutchess News and Beacon Free Press will have an early deadline for the Dec. 24th ISSUE. Advertising must be received by: Dec. 17th before noon. CALL: 845-297-3723 Ext. 1003 for more information.

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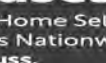
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**NOTICE OF EARLY DEADLINES:**

**Christmas schedule: Southern & Northern Dutchess News and the Beacon Free Press have the following early deadlines for Classified Display Ads:**

**Dec. 24th issue: Ad's must be received by NOON on Wednesday, Dec. 17th.**

**(845) 297-3723 Ext. 301 for more information**

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# SUDOKU

This week's answer

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*Answers to this  
week's diversions*

(puzzles on page 18)

OFA HOLIDAY HOURS

The Office for the Aging and OFA Friendship Centers will be closed for Christmas Day on Thursday, Dec. 25. Friendship Centers will also be closed on Friday, Dec. 26. The Office for the Aging office in Poughkeepsie will be open for regular weekday hours on the 26th.

The Office for the Aging and OFA Friendship Centers will be closed for New Year's Day on Thursday, Jan. 1, 2026.

All OFA facilities return to regular weekday schedules on Friday, Jan. 2.

AGEISM AMONG FAMILY & FRIENDS

Now wait just a minute here. I may be 80, but I'm still the parent and they're still the child, and who said it was okay to reverse the roles?

As a parent of adult children, has that thought ever crossed your mind? If you're the adult child, have you well-meaningly crossed a boundary with a parent when they weren't ready for it?

Racism and sexism are no longer acceptable in society, but ageism somehow remains acceptable in many ways. Just look through the greeting card section of any store for all the wisecracks about getting older. There remains a healthy worldwide market for "anti-aging" products that try to hide the aging process, while not slowing it in the least.

We don't deny that the aging process exists, but ageism gets it all wrong. It's true that the risk for certain chronic diseases and dementia does increase with age; but the health and cognitive function of the overall aging population can remain steady over many years, especially when we practice good nutrition and stay physically and mentally active. A narrative of relentless decline with no positives isn't just false - it's dangerous to all of us.

The truth? Older adults are as likely to offer support as to need it. One look at OFA's hundreds of older volunteers is all you'd need to know. We've had volunteer instructors in our Senior Exercise program in their 90s, and volunteer Home Delivered Meals drivers well into their 80s. Learn more about volunteering with OFA by contacting us at 845-486-2555 or ofa@dutchessny.gov.

Avoiding 'Elderspeak'

We could easily have been guilty of this form of ageism. Elderspeak implies that the older person being spoken to, often by someone who has good intentions but doesn't know the older person well, needs to be spoken to in childlike tones because the speaker incorrectly assumes the older person is unable to comprehend typical conversation.

Example: "Good morning, sweetie. Are we ready for some breakfast?"

Skip it. What's more, elderspeak doesn't work for older adults with dementia. One 2009 observational study of nursing care for individuals with dementia found that elderspeak by nursing staff could trigger unwanted behaviors like aggression, withdrawal, vocal outbursts, and wandering. For those who don't cross paths with older adults as often as they could, OFA offers this tip: Normal conversation is fine. Chances are the older person you're talking to isn't all that different from you. They had more candles on their birthday cake, but that's about it.

For our younger readers (or anybody, really)

Instead of getting to know an older person by what they're able or unable to do, get to know them for who they are.

- Address people by their preferred name
- Use a normal tone at a normal pace
- Speak to other adults as people you're building relationships with
- Ask questions to get to know others more deeply

Sound familiar? They're some of the building blocks of our "Friendly Calls" program. If you'd like to receive "Friendly Calls," or be a volunteer caller, or both, contact us at 845-486-2555 or visit [dutchessny.gov/friendlycalls](http://dutchessny.gov/friendlycalls) to learn more.

PUT YOUR OLDER ADULT SKILLS TO USE, WITH OFA

One thing we learned from the massive turnout at Dutchess County's first Older Adult Skills Fair this past July: There are hundreds of older adults in Dutchess County looking for an enriching part-time opportunity that comes with a much-needed financial boost.

The Office for the Aging is looking for candidates for a Substitute Site Manager position at our eight OFA Friendship Centers, with locations in Poughkeepsie, Beacon, Hopewell Junction, Millerton, Pawling, Pleasant Valley, Red Hook, and Wassaic (South Amenia). A typical day for a substitute site manager covers any weekday, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and includes coordinating with OFA's nutrition coordinator, senior site manager, friendship center staff and volunteers. A background check is required.

Interested? Send an email, with an attached résumé, if possible, to [ofa@dutchessny.com](mailto:ofa@dutchessny.com); or contact Janet Nuccilli at OFA, during business hours at

845-486-2555.

For more information on OFA's Home Delivered Meals and Friendship Center services, visit [www.dutchessny.gov/ofanutrition](http://www.dutchessny.gov/ofanutrition).

'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 Jan. 2, 2026.

For more information, visit [dutchessny.gov/ofaheap](http://dutchessny.gov/ofaheap).

**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 benefitting 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](http://www.ny.gov/EAP).

*Golden Living is prepared by the Dutchess County Office for the Aging, 114 Delafield St., Poughkeepsie, New York 12601, telephone 845-486-2555, email: [ofa@dutchessny.gov](mailto:ofa@dutchessny.gov) website: [www.dutchessny.gov/aging](http://www.dutchessny.gov/aging) Social media: [www.facebook.com/DutchessCountyOFA](http://www.facebook.com/DutchessCountyOFA)*

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