



AMENIA
Little League
Opening
Day A5



MILLBROOK
Stonewood
Farm's new
staffers B3



COMPASS
Painting
Mystery
Uncovered;
And More B1-2

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Town Board talks focus on new wastewater district

By **EMILY EDELMAN**
emilye@millertonnews.com

MILLERTON — At the Thursday, Feb. 9, meeting of the North East Town Board, discussion centered around forming a wastewater district.

The system would be owned and operated by the Village of Millerton, which would create a sewer

district and is where the sewer plant would be. Separately, the Town would create a wastewater district.

The Town has been working with engineering consulting firm Tighe & Bond, which has also been working with the Village and has created a plan for how the Town will form its district. The Town's district would be the boulevard (Route 44), made up of 27 com-

mercial properties.

Town Supervisor Chris Kennan said the sewer district will be "a daunting project. This is not for the faint of heart, but it is really essential to the economic future of our town."

According to Town attorney Warren Replansky, there are two

See **TOWN BOARD**, A6

Boy drowns after fall through ice

By **JOHN COSTON**
editor@millertonnews.com

MILLERTON — A Webutuck High School senior drowned on Friday, Feb. 10, at the Iron Mine Pond area off Shagroy Road in Taconic State Park after he and a friend fell through the ice, according to the Dutchess County Sheriff's Office.

Noah Thompson, 17, of Amenia, was at the pond with a friend, according to his mother, Dayna

Cook of Amenia.

The incident occurred at approximately 2:50 p.m.

According to the Sheriff's Office, the two teenagers had walked approximately 20-30 feet from the grassy shore onto the ice when the ice broke, sending them both into the water.

The girl, Emily Moustakas, 17, of LaGrange, who is a senior at Arlington High School, said

See **DROWNING**, A6



PHOTO PROVIDED

Noah Thompson



PHOTO BY T. CRAIG MORTON

Reaching for it

No. 33, senior John Bopp of the Pine Plains Bombers at the Bombers' Feb. 7 home game against the Onteora Eagles, which was followed by a recognition of the team's senior class members. For more photos and information, go to page A5.

Jovial group maps Millerton business moves

By **DEBORAH MAIER**
Special to The Millerton News

MILLERTON — Witticisms and inside jokes bounced off the walls of Millerton Inn's breakfast room during a fast-paced meeting of the Millerton Business Alliance on Wednesday, Feb. 8. The 20 or so attendees met to appoint incoming board members and thank outgoing ones, and to lay out their concerns and projects for 2023.

Dana Rohn of Montage An-

See **BUSINESS ALLIANCE**, A6

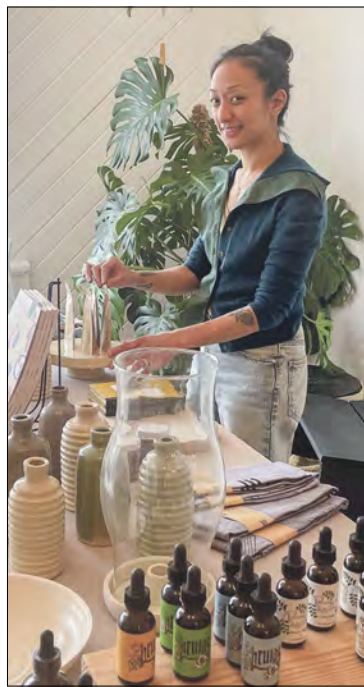


PHOTO BY DEBORAH MAIER

Erica Recto, recently appointed secretary of the Millerton Business Alliance, in her Main Street store, BES (a Tagalish word for 'best friends').

SSH holds roundtable on Sharon Hospital's ICU plans

By **JOHN COSTON**
editor@millertonnews.com

MILLERTON — Save Sharon Hospital (SSH) held a community roundtable on Wednesday, Feb. 8, to present its case against Sharon Hospital's plan to eliminate its Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and replace it with a Progressive Care Unit (PCU).

Nine residents attended the hour-long discussion at the North-East-Millerton Library's Annex on Century Boulevard to hear Dr. David Kurish and Nicholas Moore, president of SSH, present arguments against the hospital's plan.

Nuvance Health, the parent of Sharon Hospital, has filed with the Connecticut Office of Health

"It's aging and young people... They count on it so much."

Nicholas Moore,
president of SSH

Strategy (OHS) to replace the ICU with a PCU, a request that follows a Nuvance application pending before the OHS to close labor and delivery services at the hospital.

The requested closure of labor and delivery has been the focus of a yearlong battle that has pitted residents and local politicians against the regional hospital system's executives and board members, who state that the changes are needed to achieve financial health.

On Wednesday, Feb. 15, Nu-

vance's bid to transform the ICU will be the subject of a state public hearing that will be held via Zoom.

Christopher Kennan, supervisor of the Town of North East, said he plans to testify at the Feb. 15 hearing against the hospital's plan, also noting that the town adopted a formal resolution opposing the plan to shutter labor and delivery, and will expand it to include opposition to plans to change the ICU into a PCU.

"We've had a lot of younger people who've moved up here over the past few years and who come to us and talk about Sharon Hospital. They're interested in having a hospital with an ICU unit nearby."

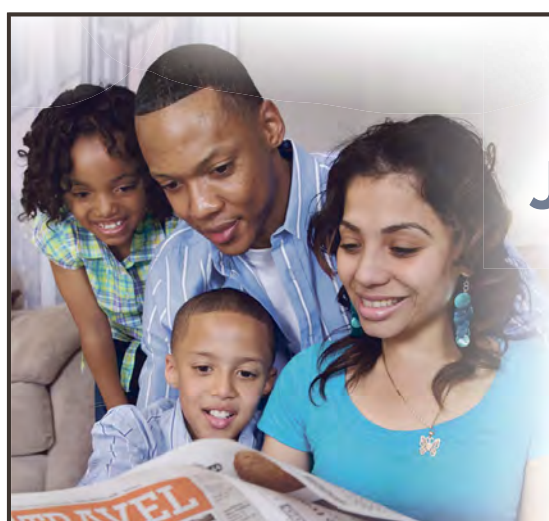
See **SSH ROUNDTABLE**, A6



CONTACT
The Millerton News
editor@millertonnews.com
860-435-9873, ext. 608

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OUR TOWNS



PHOTO BY JUDITH O'HARA BALFE

Troutbeck owner Anthony Champalimaud discussed the project at the meeting of the Amenia Planning Board on Wednesday, Feb. 8.

Troutbeck expansion receives mixed views at third public hearing

By JUDITH O'HARA BALFE
judithb@millertonnews.com

AMENIA — Troutbeck owners presented a scaled-down version of their planned changes at the Wednesday, Feb. 8, Planning Board meeting, which was attended by a larger than usual audience.

The Feb. 8 meeting, held in the Town Hall auditorium, was the third meeting to air the estate hotel's plans and the meeting drew mixed comments that were similar to views expressed at the first two hearings in November and January.

At the January meeting, most of the comments seemed to be positive about allowing major changes like adding cottages, a ballroom, and other additions.

But at the Feb. 8 meeting, while there were some positive comments, the majority of those who spoke were in opposition to the changes.

Troutbeck owner Anthony Champalimaud attended the meeting, discussing cutbacks on the planned renovations and expansions. The proposed changes were shown on a large screen. The changes include a smaller gate house, more expansive landscaping to hide parking areas, and one fewer cottage.

Many in the audience, especially those from nearby farms, appeared unimpressed.

Speaking in favor of the changes, Andre Wlodar, of Millerton and New York City, said that Troutbeck was part of a community, and that it had been generous in helping him and his wife, Kim, in their efforts to raise money to support Ukraine.

Former Troutbeck owner Jim Flaherty also had positive comments about the effort, saying he applauded the planning that has gone into the additions as well as then scaling back. He also noted that there

were about 20 weddings per year during his ownership and that Troutbeck now allows only 12 per year.

A neighbor said that when her property had been vandalized and she was not on the premises, once notified by the police, she phoned Troutbeck. She said Troutbeck sent someone to her home to secure the broken window and to wait for authorities. She feels that Troutbeck is concerned about the neighborhood and the neighbors.

A Troutbeck employee noted that Troutbeck offered some unique career opportunities. Troutbeck also is planning on having living quarters for employees.

Others who live near Troutbeck, including farmers and other property owners, opposed Troutbeck's plans.

Concerns were expressed about the water table, and

about whether pollution would be a threat to the Ten-mile River that begins at the confluence of the Webatuck and the Wassaic Creeks. Others at the Feb. 8 hearing said they feared that locals would eventually be "priced out" of the area.

The meeting finished with remarks from Paul Van Cott, the Planning Board attorney, and John Andrews, Planning Board engineer. They noted that Troutbeck had submitted plans and documentation, which can be found on the Town website: ameniany.gov/planning-board-agendas-and-resolutions/

The Planning Board closed the public hearing on Troutbeck. The next Planning Board meeting is planned for Wednesday, Feb. 22; it is expected that there will be a vote on Troutbeck's application.

Legislators aim to increase property tax exemptions

POUGHKEEPSIE — A proposed local law introduced by Republican members of the Dutchess County Legislature would raise the income limits on property tax exemptions for older adults as well as people with disabilities.

Gov. Kathy Hochul signed legislation in August 2022 allowing those over 65 as well as those with disabilities to qualify for the County Property Tax Exemption with a larger maximum income.

In an interview with The Millerton News, Legislature Chair Gregg Pulver said, "We feel that we haven't looked at this exemption in quite some time, and it was time to bring it up with inflation and everything to make it a little bit easier for our seniors to hopefully afford to stay in their homes."

In order to receive the Senior Citizens Exemption or the Persons With Disabilities Exemption, County Law currently states that maximum annual income

Housing expo aims to convince that affordable housing pays

By ELIAS SORICH
elias@millertonnews.com

MILLERTON — If you've got a moment to spare for the future of Millerton and North East, drop by the NorthEast-Millerton Library Annex, 28 Century Blvd., on Saturday, Feb. 18, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.. There, with refreshments included, the members of the North East/Millerton Working Group of the Tri-Town Housing Coalition will be hosting an exhibition on the potential ways to tackle the region's affordable housing crisis.

Titled Expo 23, the opening will feature photos, building plans, documentary screenings and other various materials intended to provide real, implementable housing options for town leaders, developers and interested community members to use in planning the future of the region's housing.

To Tom Parrett, a co-chair of the group, the event will also be an opportunity to dispel some of the myths and negative press that have attached themselves to the concept of affordable housing. "One purpose is to show townspeople the tremendous range of options for affordable housing. We want to dispel some myths about it, and we want to point out that it can be integrated into a community."

"Any vital community needs to have a tremendous mix of people in it. We need housing for teachers, volunteer fire people, for people who are just starting out in life, where their first job is probably going to be pretty low-income. . . . That's really

the deep-rooted source of this: to make sure that Millerton as a community can continue to thrive. To do so, it's going to need the right kind of housing."

That an affordable housing crisis is plaguing nearly all counties in the Hudson Valley region, including eastern Dutchess County, is well documented. Since 2016, regional nonprofit Pattern for Progress has released a yearly report titled "Out of Reach" that lays bare the housing challenges to the region. Sam Busselle, also a co-chair of the working group, spoke to these sort of findings as a driving reason behind the working group's advocacy.

"The definition of affordable housing is that if you're paying more than 30% of your gross income for housing, you're cost burdened. Pattern for Progress estimated that, out of the 1,100 homes, and out of the population of both Millerton and North East, that about 35% of them are cost burdened — so, unable to either get enough food or housing or pay the rent or what have you."

According to Pattern for Progress' 2022 "Out of Reach" report, in Dutchess County, the average renter makes \$17.47 per hour — in order to afford the average price for a one-bedroom or two-bedroom unit, hourly earnings would need to be \$21.29 and \$27.15 per hour respectively. This means that the average renter in Dutchess County is unable to pay for rent without making sacrifices to other cost-of-living expenses like

food, gas, medical bills, taxes or social well-being.

Funded by a grant from the Foundation for Community Health, the working group spent four months researching the housing options that will be on display at the Library Annex. And while building homes that people can afford is a huge piece of the pie, Busselle hopes to provide inspiration for and influence a more holistic approach to housing in the community.

"[For instance,] the zoning is killing us in the town. Because of the fact that housing is zoned for 3-5 acres. You can't afford the acres, let alone a house to put on them, if you're in low- and middle-income slots."

As for next steps after Saturday's opening, Busselle and Parrett plan to bring their exhibition to others spaces in the region, and to begin the process of scaling up their operation. To Parrett, that means both an exciting and involved path ahead.

"What we'd really like to do is start building. Acquire property, and get interest from developers who want to build affordable housing as opposed to luxury housing. And, you know, start building some units. But we need to grow our organization. We need to figure out how we can attract not only developers but funding and then begin to organize. Building something is pretty complicated!"

Expo 23 will be open to the public Saturday, Feb. 18, through Monday, Feb. 20, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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The Salisbury Housing Trust is currently renovating 70 E Main St in Salisbury for affordable housing. This would not be possible without the generosity of our community in supporting this effort with donations. Additionally, the following businesses and contractors are helping to make this happen: EJ Home (ejhome.com), Ed Harrington Inc. (harringtons.com), Decker and Beebe Inc (deckerandbeebe.com) and of course Will Bassett for heating and air conditioning (413-329-3668). For more information on the Housing Trust, please go to www.salisburyhousing.org and thank you for your support!

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Pancake breakfasts resume

AMENIA — The Amenia Fire Company will resume its monthly pancake breakfast schedule after a three-year hiatus Sunday, Feb. 19, from 7:30 to 11 a.m. at the firehouse, 36 Mechanic St. The cost of \$10 for adults and \$9 for older adults and youth under age 12 includes an all-you-can-eat menu of pancakes, eggs, toast, bacon, sausage, coffee and juice. For more information, call 845-373-8352.

Does the housing crisis have a solution?
Yes – at least 50 of them.

Housing Expo 23

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February 18 to 20
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North East / Millerton Library Annex
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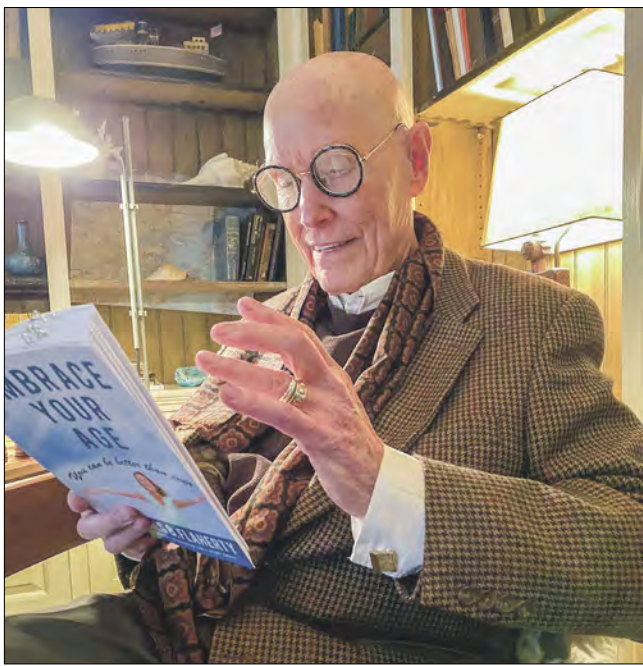


PHOTO BY LEILA HAWKEN

A profound believer in the joys of senior life and its attendant rewards, Jim Flaherty returned to Troutbeck in Amenia, the scene of one of his life's greatest projects, to read from his newly published book, "Embrace Your Age: You can be better than ever."

Flaherty talks of new book at Troutbeck

By LEILA HAWKEN
Special to the Millerton News

AMENIA — No matter chronological age, who doesn't want to be better than ever?

For advice on how to do that, fans of Jim Flaherty will want to read, "Embrace Your Age: You can be better than ever." A number of those fans crowded into the lodge living room at Troutbeck on Wednesday, Jan. 18, to hear Flaherty read excerpts that were nothing short of a pep talk for seniors.

Flaherty describes himself on the book's cover as "an optimistic octogenarian with a bright future," and for those who know him, at 87, that's about right. His career path peaked when Flaherty was a top advertising executive managing worldwide accounts. That career pivoted when he came upon the historic ruins of a hotel and conference center in Amenia known as Troutbeck that begged to be returned to life, and so it was, and is now a thriving destination for corporate events and special occasions. He and partner Bob Skibsted made that happen.

It was clear throughout his successful career by any standards that Flaherty knew how to write, a talent that developed early in life and continued to serve in many capacities.

The afternoon program was replete with anecdotes, amusing and serious, and wisdom about publishing and about living. The snippets came from the book's chapters where titles ask jarring questions of the reader, done with intention by Flaherty.

"Would you want to be your friend?" is one such probing question. Flaherty suggests that everyone should work at being a friend to others.

"It's very strange for me to be sitting here," Flaherty began, gesturing around the familiar building reclaimed from messy resident raccoons in years past.

His first two books had been fiction before he switched to writing non-fiction, Flaherty said. "The problem in writing is to have an idea," he added.

"I am concerned and annoyed when I see people in their 60s and 70s retreating from life," Flaherty said, recommending that everyone should wake up each day with a goal in mind.

"Keep working on yourself; it leads to a better life," he advised, adding, "It's all up to you."

Once asked to describe his life's meaning in six words, Flaherty said he wrote, "I am present: living, giving, loving."

"Embrace Your Age" can be ordered from Oblong Books in Millerton or directly from Amazon.

DEC public comment hearing puts pressure on Iroquois Gas

By JUDITH O'HARA BALFE
judithb@millertonnews.com

DOVER — The state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) recently held a public hearing on the Iroquois Enhancement by Compression (ExC) Project for the Dover compressor station on Dover Furnace Road in Dover Plains and the Athens, New York, compressor station.

Held online on Jan. 31, the meeting was conducted by Richard Sherman, DEC administrative law judge, and allowed preregistered participants to voice comments. Sherman mentioned that an extension was filed for comments, and they may now be made in writing until Wednesday, Feb. 22.

Dover Town Supervisor Richard Yeno, said that he wants answers to some of the questions that were posed as well, because whatever concerns Dover concerns him. He added that this proposal will be put through a process and

that a project can be pushed by the federal and state governments, and can be supported by the Public Service Commission. When all the steps are completed, the process gone through, the planning and zoning boards have their say, and a vote is taken.

Several speakers were students at SUNY New Paltz, some pursuing degrees in environmental studies. Brianna Rodriguez said, "I am tired of seeing people in my community be subjected to the horrid effects of climate crisis that gas pipelines and substations have greatly contributed to, harmful substances like nitrogen, oxide and methane."

Some noted they were grandparents, concerned about their grandchildren's futures. Nevo Rivedo asked that the permit be denied because he wants his grandchild to inherit a livable world, adding that these compressor stations would place more burden on an already disadvantaged community such as Dover.

Eric Wood of New York

Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) wanted the permit denied on the basis that New York state has a history of harming low-income communities of color throughout the state and claimed they are disproportionately burdened by pipelines, power plants and substations.

Laura Shindel, senior New York organizer for Food and Water Watch, felt that temperatures are hitting record highs in New York while having the longest period without snowfall in 50 years. Noting the floods in California, she added that these crisis spots impact people who have had very little to do with climate impact, and are mostly low-income people of color. She also stated that the compressor station in Dover is located immediately adjacent to a recognized disadvantaged community, "and we all know that pollution does not stay on one side of an imaginary line."

Stancy Duhamel, who is affiliated with Ducks Unlimited and the Appalachian Trail

Conservancy, felt the monitoring should not come from the Dutchess County Airport in Poughkeepsie, because it has nothing to do with the topography of Dover or the area. Duhamel also asserted that, "We're a disadvantaged community, as far as I am concerned, the entire Town of Dover is an environmental justice area because students from all over town are required to attend the middle school and the high school less than half a mile away."

A public hearing will be held by the Dover Town Board at Dover Town Hall, 126 East Duncan Hill Road, Dover Plains, on Wednesday, Feb. 22, at 6:30 p.m. to seek public comment on a proposed local law to impose a temporary 180-day moratorium on the approval and installation of certain public utility infrastructure and facility installations.

Comments may be made until Thursday, Feb. 23, to Karen Gaidasz at DEPenergy@dec.ny.gov

Rec Commission seeks input to enhance Wassaic Park

AMENIA — The Amenia Recreation Commission will host a meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 21, at 7 p.m. in the auditorium at Amenia Town Hall, 4988 Route 22, to discuss the five-year plan for improving Wassaic Park. Community input is sought and residents are invited to the meeting.

The discussion will revolve around an initial rough draft of the Commis-

sion's master plan concerning Wassaic Park, which will first involve moving the Town highway garage to allow for a proper parking area to access the park, as well as public bathrooms and a pedestrian bridge to access Wassaic Creek.

According to Commission Chair Paul Winters, "The Commission is working towards using recreation to

drive economic opportunities for the community." The Commission has determined that residents want more of the park to be opened up for fishing, and Robert Adams of the Department of Environmental Conservation, Claire Wagh of the Housatonic Valley Association and Pat Crisci of Mid Hudson Trout Unlimited will be present at the meeting to discuss that aspect. Asa Beckham of Missouri-based American

Ramp Company will attend via Zoom in order to discuss a possible BMX pump track for the park.

Also attending the meeting will be landscape architect Jane Didona, Assemblyman Anil Bephan Jr. (R, C-East Fishkill) and Danielle Mollica of the Amenia-Wassaic Community Organization/Silo Ridge Community Foundation. Members of the Wassaic Project and the Amenia Town Board will also participate.

Stained-glass restoration talk to focus on Grace Church window

MILLBROOK — The Millbrook Historical Society will present the program "Resurrection Window at Grace Church: A Memorial to Mr. & Mrs. John D. Wing" on Thursday, Feb. 16, from 7 to 8 p.m. at the Millbrook Library, 3 Friendly Lane. Presented by Rev. Matthew Calkins of Grace Church and stained-glass expert Brianne Van Vorst, the talk will focus on how the window came to be installed at the church as well as why and how it will be restored.

The society received a grant that allowed it to acquire new technology: a tablet with which to display archival pho-

tos, a credit-card reader, and a new projector and screen. "We hope to debut these items at our February talk, but you know how fickle technology can be," said society President Robert McHugh, "so no promises that this will work smoothly by then. We thank the county and specifically County Historian Will Tatum for his support through the grant process."

For more information, contact millbrookhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

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BAD GRASS

2023

Be part of a fresh series of stand-alone conversations in NW CT that will encourage you to think differently about the land you live on and empower you to make choices that support biodiversity.

BAD GRASS SOLD OUT
Mike Nadeau, in conversation with Jeb Breece, provides a history of lawns and shares insights from over 40 years of experience transforming turf grass into native meadows. *Proceeds and awareness to benefit The Salisbury Association Land Trust.*

FOR THE BIRDS March 2, 5:30 pm | The White Hart
Acclaimed garden designers, Page Dickey & Deb Munson, share their secrets for using native plants to design gardens that are a feast for the eyes...and the birds, bees, and butterflies. And, explain why that matters. *Proceeds and awareness to benefit Sharon Audubon Center.*

IN SEARCH OF PERFECT March 31, 5:30 pm | The White Hart
Toshi Yano shares the story of his time as Director of Horticulture at Wethersfield Estate & Garden and why he gave up a dream job to go to Perfect Earth Project. *Proceeds and awareness to benefit Perfect Earth Project.*

A WALK IN THE WOODS April 29, 2 pm | Great Mountain Forest
Starling Childs reminisces about a lifetime spent practicing and promoting sustainable forestry followed by a walk in the Great Mountain Forest. *Proceeds and awareness to benefit Great Mountain Forest.*

PURCHASE TICKETS @ SILVAETPRATUM.NET

OBITUARIES

Noah Michael Thompson

AMENIA – Noah Michael Thompson, 17, a lifelong area resident, died Friday, Feb. 10, 2023, at Sharon Hospital following a tragic accident that occurred in Millerton. Noah was a High School Student at Webutuck Central School District in Amenia, and was expecting to graduate with the Senior Class of 2023.



Thompson of Poughkeepsie and his step-father, Jeffrey Cook of Canaan; his grandmother, Judy Thompson of Wassaic, and his grandparents, Jeffrey and Sharon Kain of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina; his step-grandparents, Mary and Charles Thomas of Dover Plains; three uncles, Matthew Kain and his wife Gina of Torrington, Michael Kain and his wife Karen of Lehigh Acres, Florida, and Curtis Kain of Amenia; two aunts, Jennifer Thompson of Wassaic and Stephanie Thompson of Champlain, New York; fifteen cousins and many close friends. Noah was predeceased by his grandfather, Kenneth Thompson.

Born July 20, 2005, in Sharon, he was the son of Terry Lee Thompson of Poughkeepsie, and Dayna Marie (Kain) Cook of Amenia. Noah played baseball throughout his life beginning with the Webutuck Little League and progressing to Varsity Baseball at Webutuck High School. He also played baseball for the Town of Amenia and for the Town of Dover. Noah was an avid weight lifter and enjoyed spending many hours at the gym. He loved music especially by rapper and record producer Mac Miller. His greatest joy was spending time with his beloved family and many friends. Noah will forever be remembered for living life on his own terms and for his amazing smile and infectious laughter and giving the biggest hugs. He loved everyone and his love continued after his untimely passing by selflessly donating his organs to those in need. He will be dearly missed and forever remembered by all.

In addition to his Mom and Dad, Noah is survived by four siblings, Emily Thompson, Caleb Cook, Logan Thompson and Sadie Thompson; his step-mother, Jennifer

Calling hours will be held on Thursday, Feb. 16, from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Scott D. Conklin Funeral Home, 37 Park Ave., Millerton, NY 12546. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Friday, Feb. 17 at 10 a.m. at Immaculate Conception Church, 4 Lavelle Road/Route 22 Amenia, NY. Rev. R. Kent Wilson will officiate. A reception will take place at the Amenia Fish & Game Association, 4623 Route 22, Wassaic, NY immediately following the funeral mass. All other services will be private.

Memorial contributions may be made to a local fire department or rescue squad of your choice or to Webutuck Little League. To send an online condolence to the family, please visit www.conklinfuneralhome.com

Camille Viafore Dennett

LAKEVILLE — It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Camille Viafore Dennett of Lady Lake, Florida, formerly of Lakeville.

Our sister passed away on Feb. 2, 2023. Camille was born in 1935 in Yonkers, New York, and was the oldest daughter of the late Alexander J. Viafore and Sophie Siwek Viafore.

She grew up in Yonkers and attended Yonkers Public Schools graduating from Roosevelt High School.

Camille worked for the old Bell Telephone company before moving to Lakeville in 1969 with her husband, John Dennett, who predeceased her.

Camille worked at the Wagner MacNeil Insurance Company for many years until her retirement when she then worked for Noble Horizons in Salisbury.

She and John had a small catering company as she also worked in several restaurants in the area.

Camille is survived by her sister, Patricia Mazzola of

Venice, Florida, her brothers, Alexander Viafore (Marcia) of Tuckahoe, New York; Kenneth Viafore of Maynard, Massachusetts and Ronald Viafore (Joyce) of Providence, Rhode Island. She also leaves behind many nieces and nephews, especially her nephews Patrick and his family and Jimmy.

She was predeceased by her brother Vincent Viafore and her sister, Valerie Viafore.

Camille was active as a volunteer in the Lady Lake area and she often took care of pets as she was an avid caregiver for pets. She also loved to travel and lend support and care for others.

All services for Camille are private at the convenience of the family.

If you wish you make a donation in Camille's name, we honor your wishes for your favorite charity or your local Hospice organization.

OUR TOWNS

Fountains artists featured in calendar

By JUDITH O'HARA BALFE
judithb@millertonnews.com

MILLBROOK — The Fountains at Millbrook has again been honored with one of its artists featured in the Expressions calendar — published annually by parent company Watermark Retirement Communities — chosen from among hundreds of submissions from more than 70 communities across the country. Len Weiss has had his art appear in the calendar previously; he paints, sculpts, and carves wood. Weiss has been at the facility for 10 years with his wife, Terry Sawall, who also paints. Weiss' submission was a wood carving, featured for October, a whimsical creation with tiny lights and fairy tale-like buildings.

The 2023 Expressions calendar, featuring the work in color of 12 artists, also gives honorable mentions to many more artists. Other Millbrook Fountains artists mentioned were Shirley Fernekes, Ed Schurig and Roger Sweeney. Fernekes and Schurig both submitted painted works, and Sweeney created a life-like hawk, which is pictured in the calendar.

Joked Weiss: "The construction might not be up to safety codes, but it just made sense to me in the moment. I suppose it's funny to create something like this, but when I sit down to work on a piece, it's as if the whole world could end and I wouldn't notice until I felt satisfied enough to put it down."



PHOTO BY JUDITH O'HARA BALFE

Weiss has created almost 400 pieces in his time at the Fountains. He has worked with oils, charcoal and other mediums besides wood-carving. He also writes.

His love of art began early. "When I was young, about 13, I was in a body cast for about nine months and I couldn't even walk up and down the stairs," he said. "So to entertain myself, I started doing table photography by creating dioramas of lighthouses or sculpted clay figures to take pictures of." When the cast was removed, so, too, was his interest in delving into art.

When coming to the Fountains, he rediscovered his early love of art, even though it was close to 60 years later. The art studio at the Fountains, the company of like-minded artists, and the guidance of teacher Ellen Metzger O'Shea brought all that inspiration back to

him, and he has joyfully been creating art ever since.

While enjoying the art classes, Weiss worked with Millbrook instructor Dave Carrier, who is also president of the Hudson Valley Wood Carvers Association. Pho-

Len Weiss, a resident of The Fountains at Millbrook, shows off his wood sculpture, featured in the Watermark Retirement Community 2023 Expressions calendar for the month of October.

tographer Lori Adams documents the artworks through her photography and submits the photos to the calendar.

Weiss also acknowledges Executive Director Deborah Slocum's support.

Weiss' artwork as well as that of fellow artists Fernekes, Schurig and Sweeney are displayed in the calendar and can be seen at www.watermarkcommunities.com/why-watermark/expressions-calendar/. Copies of the calendar can be found for free throughout Watermark communities and can be downloaded.



Worship Services

Week of February 19, 2023

Call ahead or visit websites for updates on remote or in-person services.

The Congregational Church of Salisbury, U.C.C.
30 Main Street, Salisbury, CT
Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!
Online worship, Sundays at 10:00 a.m.
www.salisburyucc.org
Sharing God's shalom: Wholeness, harmony, justice, and joy!
(860) 435-2442

St. John's Episcopal Church
12 Main Street, Salisbury, CT
Rev. Paul Christopherson
SUNDAY SERVICE
10:00 a.m. Eucharist with music (Rite II)
In-Person and on You-Tube
www.stjohnssalisbury.org
860-435-9290

North Canaan Congregational Church, UCC
Joyfully opening our hearts and doors to all God's people
172 Lower Rd./Rt. 44, East Canaan CT
Worship services Sundays at 10 am
www.facebook.com/northcanaancongregational
860-824-7232

FISHES & LOAVES FOOD PANTRY, A MISSION OF OUR CHURCH
is at Pilgrim House, 30 Granite Ave., Canaan
Tuesday 4-6 pm & Thursday 12-2 pm
www.fishesandloavesnorthcanaan.org

The Lakeville United Methodist Church
519 Main St., Lakeville, CT 06039
9:30 a.m. Worship Service
9:30 a.m. Sunday School
"Open Hearts - Open Minds - Open Doors"
Pastor Joy Veronesi
860-435-9496
Lakevillemethodist@snet.net

The Sharon United Methodist Church
112 Upper Main Street, North End of Sharon Green
Touching Lives - Lifting Spirits
10 a.m. Worship Service, Nursery Care
No Sunday School in Summer
Pastor Sun Yong Lee
860-364-5634
sharonumc5634@att.net

Promised Land Baptist Church
29 Granite Ave., Canaan, CT
Where you will find: A Warm Welcome! Helpful Bible Messages, A Place to Grow!
Sunday School - 10am
Sunday Worship - 11am
Wednesday Bible Study and Prayer Meeting - 7PM
(860) 824-5685
VISITORS WELCOME!
www.promisedlandbaptist.org

Falls Village Congregational Church
16 Beebe Hill Road, Falls Village
10:00 a.m. Family Worship
Coffee Hour
A Friendly Church with a warm welcome to all!!
860-824-0194

The Smithfield Presbyterian Church
656 Smithfield Valley Rd. Route 83, Amenia, NY
Services every Sunday 10 a.m.
www.thesmithfieldchurch.org
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Canaan United Methodist Church
2 Church St., Rte 44, Canaan, CT
11 a.m. Worship Service
"Open Hearts - Open Minds - Open Doors"
Rev. Lee Gangaware
860-824-5534
canaanct-umc.com
canaanctumc@gmail.com
We hope you will join us!

All Saints of America Orthodox Christian Church
313 Twin Lakes Rd., Salisbury, CT
Vespers Saturday at 5:00 P.M.
Divine Liturgy Sunday at 9:30 A.M.
Rev. John Kreta
860-824-1340 | allsaintsofamerica.us

Millerton United Methodist Church
6 Dutchess Avenue, P.O. Box 812
Millerton, NY 12546
Services on the 1st & 3rd Sunday of each month at 10:00 A.M.
518-789-3138

Christ Church Episcopal in Sharon
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Sunday Holy Eucharist at 9:00 A.M.
Transitioning through prayer
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www.christchurchsharon.org

St. Thomas Episcopal Church
40 Leedsville Road
Amenia Union, NY
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845-373-9161
www.stthomasamenia.com
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Trinity Episcopal Church
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Livestream at 10:30 on
www.trinitylimerock.org
The Rev. Heidi Truax
trinity@trinitylimerock.org
(860) 435-2627

Unitarian Fellowship of NW CT
Cobble Living Room, Noble Horizons
The next meeting will be Sunday, March 12 at 10:30 a.m.
For information, contact Jo Loi at jokialoi@gmail.com
All are Welcome

ST. MARTIN OF TOURS PARISH
Immaculate Conception, 4 North Street, Norfolk
St. Joseph, 4 Main Street, Canaan
St. Mary, 76 Sharon Road, Lakeville
MASS SCHEDULE
Saturday Vigil 5 pm, St. Joseph Church
Sunday 9 am, Church of St. Mary
Sunday 11 a.m., Immaculate Conception Church
DAILY MASS SCHEDULE
Wednesday 6pm
St. Joseph Chapel or Church
Thursday 8am
Immaculate Conception Church
Friday 8am
Church of St. Mary
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Visit our website sharoncongregationalchurch.org for current online Bible studies and Sunday services
Contact us at 860-364-5002 or info@sharoncongregationalchurch.org

SAINT KATERI TEKAKWITHA PARISH
860-927-3003
Rev. Robert Landback
The Churches of Sacred Heart, Kent St. Bernard, Sharon
St. Bridget, Cornwall Bridge
MASS SCHEDULE
SATURDAY VIGIL
4 PM - St. Bridget
SUNDAY MASSES
8 AM - St. Bernard
10 AM - Sacred Heart
WEEKDAY MASSES
Monday & Friday
9 AM - Sacred Heart
Tuesday
9 AM - St. Bernard

The Chapel of All Saints, Cornwall
Join our intimate Episcopal service via Zoom Sundays at 9:00 a.m.
Email Rev. Mary Gates at: mngates125@gmail.com for an invitation to the Zoom service
If you don't have a computer you can participate via phone.

Stephen John Gradowski

SHARON — Stephen John Gradowski, 78, of Cornwall Bridge Road, passed away Feb. 3, 2023, at home. He was the loving partner of Eileen Tedesco.



Stephen was born on Dec. 25, 1944, in Torrington, the son of the late Joseph and Catherine Gradowski. Stephen graduated from Torrington High School and the University of Connecticut with a degree in geography.

He retired as Vice President of WHYCHO Chromium, Thomaston.

He led an impressive life which included a love of dogs, especially his Border Terriers, and UCONN basketball, and was author of several patents.

In addition to his partner, he leaves brothers Joseph, Ed and wife Carol, nephew Michael Gradowski, nieces Ka-

tie Jankowski, JoEllen Sessa, Karen Lewis, and Karla Todd.

He was predeceased by his brother Alex and sister Barbara Jankowski.

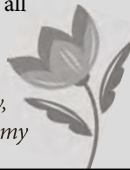
A grave-side service was held at the new Saint Francis Cemetery in Torrington, Feb. 10 at 11:00 a.m.

Memorial contributions may be made to The Sharon Fire Department Ambulance Squad, P.O. Box 357, Sharon, CT. 06069. The Kenny Funeral Home has care of arrangements.

In Loving Memory of Our Mom
Lois G. Shaffer
2/19/1926-4/28/2007

Dear Mom,
Thinking of you on what would have been your 97th birthday.
Happy birthday in Heaven.
Miss you with all our hearts.

Love,
Bubbles, Kathy,
Tammi & Timmy



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With thanks to those who serve.



PHOTOS BY T. CRAIG MORTON

Senior players recognized

No. 2 Thomas Westpfal, above, and No. 12 Matt Magnarella, below, at the Feb. 7 Pines Plains Bombers home game against the Onteora Eagles. Westpfal and Magnarella, both seniors, participated in the team's senior recognition night after the game, which the Bombers won 48-45.



Play Ball!

Webutuck Little League sets opening day April 15

By JOHN COSTON
editor@millertonnews.com

AMENIA — The Webutuck Little League board met Thursday, Feb. 9, to plan for the upcoming baseball season and set April 15 as opening day.

The meeting, held at the Amenia Town Hall, was attended by approximately 20 members of the league's organization.

Plans call for opening day to be held in Amenia's Beekman Park. The league had hoped to kick off the season with games at Eddie Collins Memorial Park, but President D.J. Reilly explained that the field in Millerton could not be ready in time.

"The field hasn't been used in a few years and it needs work," Reilly said.

Player registration for this season has started. To date, 29 players have been registered in the Tee Ball, Minor and Major enrollment categories.

Sign-up will remain open until March 9, but a late fee



PHOTO BY JOHN COSTON

Officers Aimee Duncan, center, and D.J. Reilly, at left, with Jenn Duncan, far right, conducted a Webutuck Little League organizational meeting Thursday, Feb. 9, at Amenia Town Hall.

will be imposed after March 1.

Registration for players and volunteers can be found at leagues.blue-sombrero.com/Default.aspx?tabid=1305306

The league plans to hold tryout and practice sessions in March.

Aimee Duncan, treasurer,

made a plea for volunteers and for anyone interested in coaching.

The league also would like to start a practice softball team for girls.

League members at the meeting also discussed fund-raising ideas, including finding four or five business sponsorships for teams and

whether or not it would be feasible to hold a fundraising event such as a spaghetti dinner or car wash.

A new logo was approved that will be featured on player uniforms this year.

Duncan also discussed the need for the organization to plan for applying for grant funding. The Webutuck Little League received a grant from Dutchess County last year as part of the first group of awards under the county's "Learn, Play, Create" program to be used for uniforms and equipment and to offset registration costs, among other items.

This year the Webutuck Little League has become affiliated with Little League Baseball, the international nonprofit organization that organizes local youth baseball and softball leagues throughout the United States and the world.

The next meeting is set for Thursday, Feb. 23, at 7 p.m. at the American Legion Post 178, 155 US-44 in Millerton.

Medical Closet can loan equipment to residents

By CAROL KNEELAND
Special to The Millerton News

MILLERTON — Wintertime sometimes brings with it illnesses or slips and falls that could result in a few weeks on crutches or a need for some sort of other medical device. If that's the case, rather than adding to the pain by paying for what is needed, the North East Community Center (NECC) is there to lend a helping hand by way of its Medical Closet, which has a number

of items which can be borrowed.

According to NECC marketing and outreach coordinator Griffin Cooper, available equipment includes "canes, crutches, walkers, wheel chairs, reach and grab tools, a hospital bed and a range of sizes in disposable adult diapers." Cooper also is a correspondent for The Millerton News.

No medical referral is needed for the free service, which is open to any North

East resident with no time limit on the loan. Although everything is cleaned before it is loaned, sanitizing by way of a wipe down with bleach or another such agent is requested before items are returned.

Following a call to Jessica Raymond of the Center's Family Program at 518-789-4259 (English: ext. 105; Spanish: ext. 116), most items are available for pickup Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. either at NECC's garage at

43 S. Center St. or the main building at 51 S. Center St. Special arrangements may also be available.

With many of the items coming from the now-closed Presbyterian Church, NECC is hoping to receive additional donations, which must be pre-approved before drop-off. The center is also seeking volunteer drivers who can aid in the future with pickups or delivery, as well as volunteers to help with walk-in food pantry service on Thursdays.



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TOWN BOARD *Continued from Page A1*

ways of forming a district under town law. The first is a petition method, which would require “the signatures of the owners of at least one half of the aggregate assessed value of the taxable property within the proposed district.” In the second method, the Town would start the process of its own volition. Public information meetings will be offered regardless of which method is chosen, followed by a public hearing and an eventual vote to form the district. Board members will review the map plan and decide which method to proceed with by the Board’s March 9 meeting.

Kennan appointed Meg Winkler to replace former Councilman Griffin Cooper, who resigned from the Board in January following his move to Connecticut. A seven-year resident of the Town, Winkler owns a textile and garment business and has worked with the Town’s newsletter as well

as assisting the Board in procuring the software that allows it to livestream public meetings. Winkler’s appointment runs through the end of the year.

In welcoming Winkler to the Board, Kennan said, “We are delighted to have you join the Town Board. So many people know you from your tireless voter registration efforts at the farmers market, and we on the Town Board know you for your tireless advocacy for actions to create more affordable housing. We know you as a worker, somebody who rolls up her sleeves and gets to work, and I promise you we will have plenty of work ahead.”

Kennan also raised the question of whether or not the town should have an ordinance regulating short-term rental properties.

Kennan brought up the Town’s bicycling and walking master plan prepared

last year by the Climate Smart Task Force, which he distributed to the Board and invited comments about, specifically whether or not the plan should encourage people to bicycle on Route 22, which is on the state’s list of bicycling routes. “Route 22 is a high-speed road with a lot of big trucks,” said Kennan. “We don’t lack for beautiful, scenic roads that are much safer than [Route] 22.”

Said Councilman Ralph Fedele: “In this area, with topography being the way it is, you really can’t use your bike to commute. . . . As far as walking is concerned, the Village has done a remarkable job in upgrading all of the sidewalks.”

“This is aspirational; it is not an enforcement plan,” said Kennan. “A lot of work went into this by people who volunteered their time to think about it, and it is certainly something I want to

bring back to the Board” at its March 9 meeting after the councilmembers have had time for more consideration.

Public comments included whether or not short-term rentals could be used for people who need housing, and also whether they take potential rental properties off the market. Planning Board member Bill Kish said he thinks “it would be good to try to limit [short-term rentals] when there’s such a need here for permanent housing.”

On the subject of the bicycling/walking plan, Kish said, “If we’re going to have a vibrant boulevard district and we’re going to encourage people to walk there, we’re going to need sidewalks. . . . We could create a sidewalk district to put sidewalks in. . . . It would help fulfill this need for a more walkable town at the same time as it would be required infrastructure for the boulevard district.”

DROWNING *Continued from Page A1*

they heard a loud crack while walking on the ice and then Noah fell in. Emily said she reached for him, but then fell in herself.

After she managed to clamber back on the ice and after some time holding onto to Noah, trying to keep him elevated, Noah ended up holding onto her leg. But after a while he let go of her.

“He was brave, and just couldn’t hold on,” Cook said.

“It took all she had left to get out and back onto the top of the ice, running for her life to reach the cell phone,” the girl’s mother, Danielle Moustakas, said. “She is a hero and a brave one at that.”

Cook said she heard about the tragedy when a friend called after hearing all the fire calls.

“Is Noah at home?” her friend asked.

“That was his spot,” Cook said, knowing that he went up there a lot in the summertime.

Jason Watson, chief of the Northeast Fire District and

Millerton Fire Company, said that the Millerton Fire Company was the first on the scene, arriving within five

minutes, and requested additional resources. More than 100 firefighters and emergency personnel from numerous agencies in New York and Connecticut responded and were on the scene for more than three hours.

The pond is located in Taconic State Park about a five-minute trail walk from Shagroy Road, which is off Rudd Pond Road. There is no road access to the site, requiring rescue personnel to walk in. The pond is a popular draw for area residents because of its remote, quiet setting. A sign posted on a tree on the way to the pond states “Keep Off the Ice.”

Stephanie Thompson, Noah’s aunt, of Champlain, and her sister, Jennifer Thompson of Wassaic, were visiting the site of the drowning on Saturday morning.

“We wanted to see where it happened,” Stephanie said. “To see if there was still some of his spirit here.”

His aunts and his mother described Noah as someone with a gift to easily make people smile.

“He’s got a smile that’s in-

fectious,” his mother said.

“He had the biggest, biggest heart,” Stephanie said. “And he was not just a kid who fell through the ice. He was a brother and a son and a grandson.”

Noah was a baseball player who played in school leagues and in farm leagues, she said.

His dream was to be an entrepreneur, his mother said.

On Saturday, Feb. 11, approximately 50 Webutuck High School students received counseling at the school.

On Monday, it was “all hands are on deck” for all the students, said Superintendent of Schools Raymond Castellani.

“It’s going to be a tough few days,” he said.

Upon the arrival of DIVE Team and rescue personnel from numerous agencies, the victim was recovered and transported to Sharon Hospital in Connecticut, where he was later pronounced dead, according to the Sheriff’s Office.

“They worked on him for three hours at Sharon Hospital,” Stephanie Thompson said. “But he had been underwater too long.”

Among agencies assisting the Sheriff’s Office were: the Dutchess County Department of Emergency Response; New York State Police; New York State Parks Police; New York State Parks; and numerous fire departments from Dutchess County, Columbia County, and Connecticut. Fire department units on the scene, besides those from Millerton, included: Town of North East Medic I; Amenia; Wassaic; Pine Plains; Stamford; Millbrook; Union Vale; Dover; Copake; Ancram; Hillsdale; Craryville; Sharon; Lakeville; Canaan; and Sheffield, Massachusetts.

In addition, DIVE Teams from the Sheriff’s Office and Goshen (Connecticut) Fire Department responded, as well as the Sheriff’s Office’s Patrol Bureau, Marine Patrol, Unmanned Aerial Systems Unit (drones), and Detective Bureau.

The Sheriff’s Office announcement reminded everyone to always use extreme caution when walking onto ice, especially during periods of fluctuating temperatures.

SHH ROUNDTABLE *Continued from Page A1*

Kurish began the meeting in the Annex with a brief history of Sharon Hospital, which today sees about 100 visitors daily — approximately two-thirds come from the New York side of the border.

Citing a steady decline in patient count, laboratory service revenue and surgical and radiology usage, Kurish pointed to an overall decline in patient income under Nuvance’s management. Kurish, who has been practicing for 44 years, also noted a decline in the nursing population at the hospital.

Besides citing a higher ratio of nurses to patients in a PCU, compared to an ICU, Kurish also said ICU nurses have a higher level of training. “It’s one nurse for every two patients,” he said.

A general theme of SSH’s argument against closing labor and delivery and altering the ICU operation is that Nuvance’s intent is to turn the hospital into a transfer point.

Kurish asserted that ambulance services are aware of the incidence of transfer to other Nuvance Health hospitals in the region and don’t deliver



PHOTO BY JOHN COSTON

Dr. David Kurish, standing, and Nicholas Moore, seated at right, representing Save Sharon Hospital, held a roundtable on Wednesday, Feb. 8, at the NorthEast-Millerton Library’s Annex.

patients there if they are going to have to be transferred again.

Addressing the revenue shortfall that Sharon Hospital claims in its application to Connecticut state officials, Kurish said SSH believes the hospital “doesn’t get credit for money that end up transferred elsewhere in the system.”

Kurish and Moore compared ICU operations with those at a PCU, saying that besides the difference in the number of patients per nurse,

there also is less in terms of equipment such as monitors, and that the layout of the floor with separate patient rooms is ill-suited to caring for patients who need intensive care.

Christina McCulloch, Sharon Hospital president, said in an interview with The Lakeville Journal on Feb. 6 that currently the medical-surgical unit is on the second floor and has 28 beds with an average of 10 patients. The ICU on the first floor has nine beds with an average of between three

and four patients.

What Nuvance wants to do, she said, is move the ICU upstairs and combine the two units into one Progressive Care Unit.

Questions were raised at the Annex meeting about the wisdom of closing labor and delivery just as the region is seeing a pickup of new families that would need such a service. In addition, those in attendance were puzzled that a region with a large aging population would lose an ICU.

“It’s aging and young people,” said Moore. “I’ve talked to parents and young people. And they’re going to take their kids and move away if the labor and delivery closes.”

The application before the quasi-public OHS regulators to close labor and delivery services was the subject of a marathon public hearing in December 2022. No decision has been made on that request. To watch the Feb. 15 hearing, the Zoom meeting ID is 828 7732 3149, and the password is 347949. To reach the meeting by phone, the number is 1 646-876-9923.

To comment, log onto Zoom at 2 p.m. to sign up. Public comments begin at 3 p.m. To submit written comment, email CONComment@ct.gov and refer to docket number 22-32504-CON by Feb. 14.

BUSINESS ALLIANCE *Continued from Page A1*

tiques called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. In her last session as the group’s leader, she presided over a vote to approve new officers.

Dana Scarpa of Designer Finds and Jeremy Boviard, general manager of the Moviehouse, were unanimously approved as new co-chairs; Katja Schultz, formerly of the Dig, and Jonathan Bee of Hunter Bee as co-treasurers; and Erica Recto, artist and owner of BES, as secretary. It was noted that more members could be added to committees if needed.

Notable news, following introductions by Claire Goodman and Chris Virtuoso of the Climate Smart Communities task force, is the MBA’s plans for partnering with CSC on its Earth Day festivities on Saturday, April 22. Current CSC plans call for activities centered around the farmers market/Village Green/Millerton Inn area, but MBA would like to expand involvement to businesses further down Main Street.

How the two groups could dovetail on the day’s plans was the subject of much discussion around pre-event marketing in area businesses, possible electric vehicle tours, and specials that could be offered at local eateries, all focused on sustainability and

the effort to enhance Millerton/North East’s standing as a green village/town.

Also discussed but not confirmed was a summer bike event; and following the success of last year’s Black Friday and Festival of Lights events, those will certainly be part of the late-autumn slate. Jonathan Bee floated a “Village of the Future” concept involving students from all area schools that will doubtless receive much discussion in future meetings.

As to the longer term, Jeanne Vanecko brought good news on the ongoing efforts toward a sewer system. The Village, she noted, has passed all its sewer district motions, while the Town of North East must now delineate its district. She urged all residents to attend meetings and otherwise weigh in: “Vocal, positive support is important!”

The original timeline of initial completion in 2026 is being targeted for 2025 instead, to align with both the opening of the Eddie Collins Park pool and the 150-year anniversary of the founding of Millerton. Planning for the latter will start later this year.

Noting that anyone can attend meetings with or without a business, Rohn and others pointed to the advantages of paid membership: updated

listings on the Millerton Village website, inclusion in local advertising and in Village-wide events and promotions.

The group’s financial report showed an opening balance of \$6,578.73, much of it stemming from membership fees. Outgoing treasurer Dick Hermans, who was not present, will meet with the two new co-treasurers to ensure a smooth transition.

Most members are active on one or more committees in other Village and town organizations. For the MBA, new committee members were named: Lisa Erdner, Dana Scarpa and Dana Rohn to the events committee; Katja Schultz and Dana Scarpa to the advertising and marketing committee; Dana Scarpa, Jeremy Boviard and Erica Recto to the communications committee; and Katja Schultz, Jonathan Bee, Claire Goodman and Cathy Fenn to the Membership Committee.

Currently, out of the 150-plus businesses in Millerton, there are 75 paid members. Ideas for increasing membership numbers wove through the meeting’s agenda: simplifying dues collection and personally approaching business owners were two suggestions.

MBA’s next meeting is set for Wednesday, March 8, at 5:15 p.m., at the Millerton Inn.

Email news and photos to editor@millertonnews.com

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BOOKS: LEILA HAWKEN

Richard Haass Demands Citizens to Engage

Those who suspect that they are living today in an endangered democracy would do well to read Richard Haass' latest best-selling book, "The Bill of Obligations: The Ten Habits of Good Citizens."

Locals from the region arrived early at trendy Tent New York

in Amenia, N.Y., where Haass was expected to sign copies of his book while attendees enjoyed the conviviality of a concurrent wine tasting provided by Le Caviste of Stanfordville, a draw for wine lovers since 2021. The event was sponsored and promoted by Oblong Books of Millerton, N.Y.

Assessing that the

setting was conducive to a deeper conversation, however, Haass pleased the crowd by launching into an impromptu book-based talk about the current state of our democratic form of government, pressures from forces foreign and domestic, and importantly what citizens can do about it.

That conversation was at once informative and provocative, with Haass promising to stay as long as anyone had comments or questions.

"That people came is a tribute to the subject," Tent owner Darren Henault said to introduce Haass.

"This is a book about Democracy," Haass said, recalling that the book was two years in the making with many hours spent walking in Central Park and many hours during the pandemic in Stanfordville, N.Y.'s Wilcox Memorial Park to further the thought process.

In a later conversation, Haass' wife, Susan Mercandetti, indicated that they bought a home in Stanfordville about five years ago and remained there nearly full-time during the pandemic years.

Haass urged attention to the founding of the country and the Bill of Rights. "Rights are central," Haass said, while also reflecting on Abraham Lincoln's often quoted phrase "the unfinished work of America," as a call to committed participation in our democracy.

"Democracy has gotten into trouble," he said, adding that the question is how to fix it. "These are things that you ought to do," he said, speaking



PHOTO BY LEILA HAWKEN

Richard Haass at Tent New York

of the obligations of a good citizen.

"We need a serious conversation about how to get democracy back on track," he said.

Someone asked, "Am I the only one who is terrified?"

"You're not alone," Haass replied, "There is a sense that America is off the rails. My real concern is that democracy will not last. The bottom line is to not be sanguine but to be energized. What can ordinary people do?"

The principle of national service and its value were described by Haass as an antidote to present-day divided America. He would in-

centivize such a service to make it attractive to young people, possibly through student loan forgiveness or other lures. "I'm a reformer, not a revolutionary," Haass explained, looking to find workable solutions to problems.

"We are not teaching our narrative in this country," Haass said, noting that Civics classes are no longer being taught routinely. He said that there is widespread frustration with the government. Broadcasting has devolved to become narrowcasting to appeal to population segments. "What people think is valid information is often not," Haass warned.

"Why can't religious authorities take a stand

on promoting civility?" he asked.

Asked whether there is hope, Haass said, "Nothing is inevitable; people make choices and decisions. Sure, I feel hope. The potential is there for us to get it right."

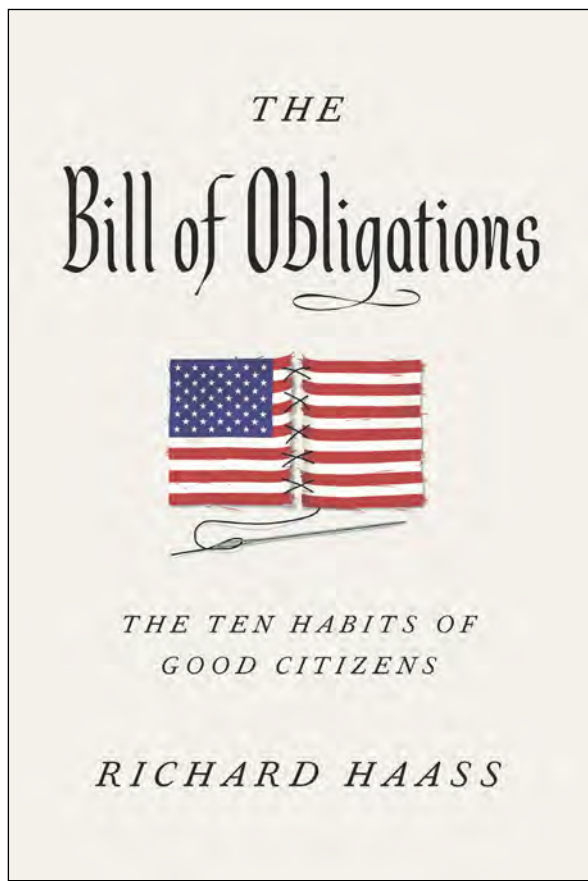
Political funding is a problem, Haass noted. About money and politics, an attendee said, "Money doesn't talk; it screams," particularly citing the Supreme Court ruling that corporate money is a form of political speech.

Haass said that there is the opportunity for greater transparency in political donations. He is also meeting regularly with corporations to advocate for democracy, noting that a few are developing good citizen programs for their employees. More should.

Haass said that he is asking corporations to reform their use of funding. He said that he has found that corporations respond to pressure, as do politicians.

"Gerrymandering is pernicious," Haass said, in response to concerns about local politics.

Responding to a question about how to promote the study of



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Continued on next page

ART: ALEXANDER WILBURN

Mystery Uncovered in 19th Century Painting

As the adage goes, history is written by the victors — and in art, portraiture is the visual history told to us by the financial victors, the wealthiest and most influential who sought to immortalize their faces. Art can tell stories, but it can also obscure them. At Salisbury School, a private boys preparatory school in Salisbury, Conn., history teacher Rhonan Mokriski has been leading his students to uncover the hidden stories in local history in a course called “Coloring Our Past.” Students are challenged to investigate lesser-known accounts of Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic history in Northwestern Connecticut and The Berkshires. This month, some of Mokriski’s students have shared their research with the public over Zoom presentations, including a report shared through Scoville Memorial Library by Salisbury junior Joseph Chiarenza on The Winslow Mystery.

The mystery surrounds a once seemingly innocuous pre-Civil War era portrait by Edwin White.

Originally from Hampshire County, Mass., White studied in Paris under François Edouard Picot at the Academie des Beaux-Arts and later at The Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, a German fine arts academy and was employed as an instructor at The National Academy of Design in New York City. He is perhaps best known for his dramatic American historical renderings — “The Signing of the Compact in the Cabin of the Mayflower” or “Washington Resigning His Commission” — but in 1844 he was commissioned to paint Maria Birch Coffing, the second wife of John Churchill

Coffing, as well as a portrait of Mr. Coffing himself. In the collection of The Salisbury Association, the historical society writes that “John Churchill Coffing formed a partnership with John Milton Holley in 1810, Holley & Coffing, the leading iron masters in the region. In 1818, it became the Salisbury Iron Co.”

Both portraits were restored between 2010 and 2012 by Berkshires-based oil painting specialist Valentine Michalski, whose thorough cleaning revealed much more than just a depiction of the seated Mrs. Coffing. Michalski writes of the extensive erosion the painting had incurred, “When it arrived, the painting had been damaged by several ill-advised and unsuccessful attempts at cleaning, leaving the varnish with opaque white streaks over most of the surface. Misguided efforts to hide the results of these ministrations by overpainting with some sort of tarry substance failed to effect an improvement.” Behind the varnish was a second figure, peering behind a door, the youthful Black face of Jane Winslow.

Winslow, born circa 1825, was a free woman of color who lived and possibly worked in the Coffing home in Salisbury, although the exact nature of her place within the family remains ambiguous. She outlived Maria Coffing and later married a formerly enslaved man from Georgia who became a reverend at The Clinton African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in Great Barrington, Mass., the first Black church in Berkshire County. Today, the



COURTESY OF SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

Maria Coffing and Jane Winslow by Edwin White

Zion Church is the home of The W.E.B. Du Bois Center for Freedom and Democracy.

Much remains unknown about the life of Jane Winslow and her full experience with the Coffing family in Salisbury. Edwin White’s painting provokes many questions simply by how unusual it is for the time — Jane Winslow’s prominence in the painting alone implies she played a large role in Mrs. Coffing’s life, even if the partially obscured background placement does not radiate with equality. The painting entices but does not fully explain. In some regards, it is Salisbury’s version of David Martin’s 18th-century portrait of Dido Elizabeth Belle and Lady Elizabeth Murray, two cousins, one Black, one White, which for centuries has inspired speculations, even as the real-life details of Dido Belle’s societal role remain murky.

Martin’s 1779 painting remains a rarity in the Western historical record of fine art, depicting the two women of different

racess as equals — as opposed to White’s depiction of Winslow, who despite her visibility, is nevertheless painted in a somewhat servile position. In 2021, The United Kingdom made the rare discovery of an even earlier 1650s painting by an anonymous artist depicting two women, one Black and one White, side by side as companions in similar dresses. Currently being researched, its significance highlights that the study of Black history remains an act of looking for what has



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN

Edwin White, 1848



COURTESY THE COLLECTION OF SCONE PALACE, SCOTLAND

Portrait of Dido Elizabeth Belle Lindsay and Lady Elizabeth Murray by David Martin

been hidden from view.

Both the portraits of John Churchill Coffing and Jane Winslow with Maria Coffing remain

in the collection of The Salisbury Association and are on display at The Academy Building exhibit space.

FILM: JANNA SILLER

'Making Black America' documentary discussion group

In honor of Black History Month, The Falls Village Equity Project (FVEP) will host a film discussion on Zoom on Thursday, Feb. 23.

The subject will be Professor Henry Louis Gates Jr.’s, “Making Black America,” a PBS documentary series about the richness and resilience of Black culture despite the oppression faced by Black Americans.

The FVEP is a collaborative group of residents in Falls Village, Conn., who organize projects and gatherings with the goal of advancing a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion. It is one of four project areas of the Falls Village Community Development Corporation.

Each month, group members watch a chosen documentary about

equity and justice-related topics and gather to discuss. Some of the selections have included “Race: the Power of an Illusion,” “Delores,” and “Just Mercy.”

Last year, the group worked with local artist Rika Laser to design and install a crosswalk at the intersection of Main Street and Beebe Hill Road. The artwork represents themes of equity and place that were generated through a community brainstorming process.

FVEP received grant funding from the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation to invite the Connecticut Center for Nonviolence to bring a two-part MLK day educational program to Lee H. Kellogg middle schoolers.

“These film discus-

sions have been the missing piece in my efforts to re-educate myself. It’s one thing to watch a movie at home by yourself — sure, you’ll learn something. But the discussions have allowed me to further process and cement what I’ve learned in a supportive, non judgmental space,” says group member and Falls Village resident Maria Grusauskas.

Kyle Wilkinson, another group member and Falls Village resident calls the discussions “insightful and enriching, exposing me to a series of great documentary films celebrating unsung heroes like Pauli Murray and Dolores Huerta.”

Participants can pre-watch the series and RSVP to the discussion by contacting fvequitygroup@gmail.com.

...Richard Haass

Continued from previous page

civics and even to kindle a desire in young people to acquire knowledge, Haass suggested that classes be mandatory, not elective. He noted that in the coming year at Stanford University, every entering freshman will be required to take Civics. And New Jersey schools are moving toward initiating a required course in critical thinking, how to evaluate

the quality and intent of information as it reaches them.

Haass reports that the organization he heads in New York, the Council on Foreign Relations, has an educational program titled “World 101” that provides materials free of charge to educators, making learning about the world engaging and interesting. To learn more about that pro-

gram, go to www.cfr.org.

“Politics and wine: they go hand in hand,” said Leah Papeika of Le Caviste, who joined her husband, Maurice, in dispensing the wine throughout the event.

Henault noted that said that the Haass appearance was probably the fifth book event held at Tent since its opening. There will be more to come, he promised.

TRI-CORNER CALENDAR

Sharon Playhouse Open Auditions

The Sharon Playhouse in Sharon, Conn. will hold auditions for its 2023 summer/fall season on Sunday, March 19. Roles are available for musicals “Something Rotten” and “Oliver!”

and plays “Our Town” by Thornton Wilder and “The Lifespan Of A Fact” by Jeremy Kareken and David Murrell and Gordon Farrell. Actors of all ethnicities and gender identities are

encouraged to audition. To register go to www.sharonplayhouse.org to submit a resume. Actors should prepare the “Our Town” monologue provided and 16 bars of a musical theater song.

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OUR TOWNS

Stonewood Farm welcomes new staff members

By JUDITH O'HARA BALFE
judithb@millertonnews.com

MILLBROOK — At Stonewood Farm, with stark buildings against gray skies, there seems to be a promise of spring, greenery and growth. Some trees are wrapped against the cold in burlap, and one hydroponic greenhouse is currently growing spinach and other vegetables.

Ken Holzberg and Tom Kopfensteiner purchased the farm in 2000, and it is 100% organic. While they do have chickens that lay eggs, the concentration is on fruits, vegetables, and an array of greenery and flowers.

Stonewood Farm hired Paul Stermer as advancement director just over a month ago. He is responsible for securing funding, both private and public, to further the programs at Stonewood Farm. This is to support the many volunteers, donors and others, and to act as liaison to the board of directors.

Having grown up in Michigan on a small livestock farm, Stermer graduated from the University of Michigan, earning a degree in creative writing. He began working as a journalist, editor and author. He concentrated on food justice in his endeavors in working for nonprofits, and has been instrumental in creating farmer's markets in underserved neighborhoods. He has brought about a commercial kitchen/incubator for low-income women, and has helped to bring food security and affordable housing to thousands in New York, as well as seeking to improve the food in public schools and to bring about changes in food policies in schools.

Stermer also aided in starting a citywide community garden program, provided business support to fledgling farmers across the Northeast, and has helped to develop many anti-racism initiatives. His family in Michigan is now into its third

generation of farming.

In January, Stermer and Stonewood Farm announced the hiring of new farm managers Samantha Kronyak and Jeremy LeClair. They will be overseeing the production of herbs, flowers and fruits from planting to harvest. They served as managers for the past few years on Eliot Coleman's Four Season Farm in Harborside, Maine, so they are not new to farming. In fact, LeClair grew up on a farm, and they met in college at Rhode Island University.

Kronyak and LeClair, who live on the farm, will also be responsible for managing the wholesale and retail sales of the produce. Their responsibilities also include ensuring soil health through organic and sustainable practices.

Kronyak was once part of the farm crew of the Casey Farm in Saunderstown, Rhode Island, and served as a pesticide researcher for the Audubon Society of Rhode Island. Earning a

degree in wildlife conservation, she was a park ranger for the National Park Service in Medora, North Dakota.

LeClair worked for Talaria, a hydroponic grower in Providence, Rhode Island, as well as Farming Turtles, an organic microgreens farm in Exeter, Rhode Island. In West Kingston, Rhode Island, he was lead mushroom grower for the Rhode Island Mushroom Company, having earned his degree in plant sciences/sustainable crop production.

These three longtime farmers, in a recent tour of the farm, were quick to point out that they use natural products; approved manure, compost, and methods such as crop rotation. They cover the crops, and use animal and plant materials to enrich the soil to build a healthy soil base and prevent weeds, pests and disease. They reuse their own products — leaves from the previous season, wood chips from Stonewood's own trees — to mulch the beds. They never use herbicides, pesticides, synthetic chemicals or fossil fuel-derived fertilizers.

Some future plans include the hiring of a culinary chef,



PHOTO BY JUDITH O'HARA BALFE

From left: Stonewood Farm advancement director Paul Stermer and resident farmers Samantha Kronyak and Jeremy LeClair stand outside a greenhouse.

who will teach the art of organic cooking, arrange for fundraising dinners, and possibly provide meals to visitors to the farm. There will also be a plant sale around Mother's Day in May.

Located at 110 Bangall Road,

Stonewood is certified organic by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Real Organic Project. For more information about the farm, go to stonewooddny.org, or call 845-677-6972.

Whalen discusses Bennett Park at Village Board meeting

By JUDITH O'HARA BALFE
judithb@millertonnews.com

MILLBROOK — At the Wednesday, Feb. 8, meeting of the Village of Millbrook Board of Trustees, the main topic was the work on the former Bennett College property to make way for the new Bennett Park.

George Whalen III was invited to talk about the work being accomplished on the renovation of the Bennett property to the new Bennett Park. Phase I was the demolition of the old buildings that could not be saved, including the abatement of asbestos issues. One-hundred seventy thousand square feet of building was removed. At this point, underground wiring is replacing the old aboveground wiring; the grounds are being graded and seeded, and walkways are being graded and installed.

Going forward, lights, trash bins and paths will be installed. The old Greek Theater will be restored for use in small productions. The preservation of an old chimney from Halcyon Hall will be done, and a great lawn will be created, with a path going around it. The expected date for the opening of the first phase is late summer/early fall of 2023.

The second phase will be the renovation of Exmore as a Bennett College museum. There will be public restrooms, parking areas, a new bandshell, and possibly overnight accommodations, with potentially a stone tower built from the stones from Halcyon Hall. Paths to the Village will be extended.

There will be three phases in all, with the site opening to the public as the progression takes place. Sergeant Jared Witt asked about vehicle access to the inner park; there will be a need for a way for emergency vehicles to have access. Trustee Vicki Contino asked about a dog park. No thought has been given to that yet, as there are insurance considerations that would need to be resolved. The mayor and the Board thanked Whalen for his commitment to the project and the people of Millbrook.

County Legislator Deirdre Houston spoke of the tax benefit being proposed for volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers. There are restrictions that would need to be adhered to, but it is a good tool for recruitment and for retention in those departments. This was also brought up by the mayor and the fire department heads. A resolution was made to open

a public hearing for discussion on this issue on March 8.

Sgt. Jared Witt of the Millbrook Police Department discussed a two-week traffic study on Franklin Avenue. There was a 12% rate of speed violators. As the machine used did not identify specific vehicles, some going over 75 mph could have been emergency vehicles going to a call. In other police matters, Witt is still looking for a replacement for an officer who resigned.

A discussion was had by the Trustees as well as other Village staff about parking, speed and other signs, and some of the requests made by the Millbrook Business Association (MBA) concerning parking for businesses. A resolution was made to have a public hearing on these matters on March 8.

VRI's Scott Osborn discussed the new pump being put in at Bennett Commons, which will be gated and locked. He is looking for bids. There was also a discussion on a water non-compliance fee. The request for

a proposal for Smith & Loveless Pump Station Purchase and a bid notice: request for proposal for an emergency generator purchase were both approved.

Trustee Peter Doro has been researching short-term rental properties for the Village, mentioning that he has particularly liked those rules and regulations set forth by the Village of Rhinebeck, with some exceptions. Numbers of guests, days of operations and many other items need to be refined and will be further studied. It was suggested that conversations might be held with some people who are already operating these facilities; also mentioned was the possibility of using a lottery system for establishing some of the guests-to-days ratio.

The next Village Board meeting is on Wednesday, March 8, at 6 p.m., at the Millbrook Fire House. Meetings are livestreamed when possible; YouTube video can be found within a few days of the actual meeting on the Village website villageofmillbrookny.com.

Tick Task Force offers 'Be Tick Free!' media contest

POUGHKEEPSIE — The Dutchess County Legislature's Tick Task Force and the Department of Behavioral and Community Health are holding a "Be Tick Free!" media contest open to middle- and high-school students through Friday, April 28.

The contest urges students to learn how to prevent tick-borne diseases and then use their digital media skills to create a 30- to 60-second public service announcement to share that knowledge with others.

Awards and prizes totaling

\$500 per division will be presented to contest winners at the June meeting of the Dutchess County Legislature by the Tick Task Force. To learn more about the contest, visit www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/County-Legislature/Be-Tick-Free-Media-Contest.htm

LEGAL NOTICES

TOWN OF PINE PLAINS DUTCHESS COUNTY NEW YORK NOTICE OF WORKSHOP MEETING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a public workshop meeting of the planning board will be held the 11th day of March, 2023, at 10:30 AM at the community room located at the Pine Plains Library, 7775 South Main Street, Pine Plains, New York, for the purpose of discussing a special use permit, site plan, and lotline adjustment for a proposed solar photovoltaic project submitted by Carson-Power, LLC on the premises located at 454 Bean River Road, Town of Pine Plains, Dutchess County, State of New York, Tax Map No. #7071-00-250960-0000 and 7071-00-084941.

By order of:
Town of Pine Plains
Planning Board
02-16-23

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a public hearing will be held before the Planning Board of the Town of North East on Wednesday,

February 22, 2023 at the North East Town Hall, 19 N. Maple Ave., Millerton, NY at 7:40 PM or as soon thereafter as possible on the application of Suburban Propane LP for a Lot Line Adjustment on Tax Parcel #7272-00-063335 located at Route 22, Millerton, NY in the A5A Zoning District of the Town of North East and Parcel #7272-00-057307 located at 6180 Route 22, Millerton, NY in the A5A Zoning District of the Town of North East.

The above application is open for inspection at the Town Hall or via email. Please request a copy by emailing the Planning Board office at pb@townofnortheastny.gov or calling 518-789-3300, Ext. 608. The application is also available on the Town website for inspection.

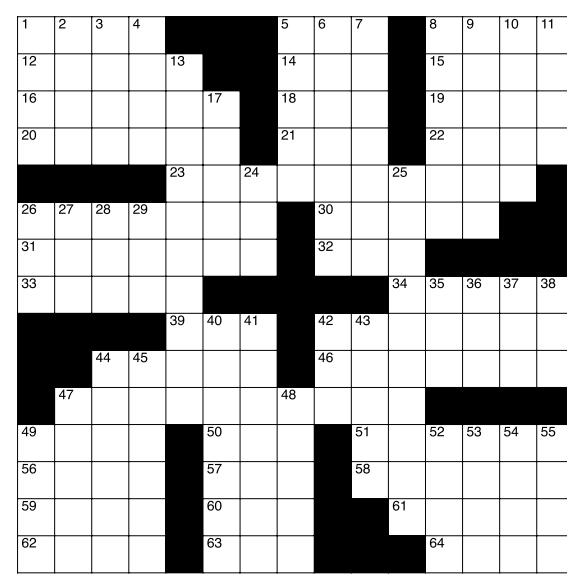
Persons wishing to appear at such hearing may do so in person or by attorney or other representative. Communications in writing relating thereto may be filed with the Board at such hearing. Dated: February 9, 2023.

Dale Culver
Chairman
Planning Board
02-16-23

Brain Teasers

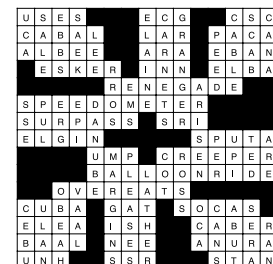
CLUES ACROSS

1. River in Tuscany
5. A way to represent
8. Rocker's guitar
12. Civil Rights group
14. Brew
15. Scratch
16. W. Asian country
18. The Eye Network
19. Clarified butter
20. Part of the Cascade Range
21. Downwind
22. A way to steer
23. Loop
26. Not ingested
30. Swampy coniferous forest
31. Musician
32. Signing
33. Containing iron
34. Part of a theorem or proof
39. Veterans battleground (slang)
42. Of enormous proportions
44. Italian city
46. Come before
47. Balm
49. Undergarments
50. Male parent
51. Ropes
56. Ear part
57. Investment vehicle
58. Dictator
59. Cain and ___
60. A type of code
61. Border river along India and Nepal
62. It's what's for dinner
63. Consume
64. Christian ___, designer

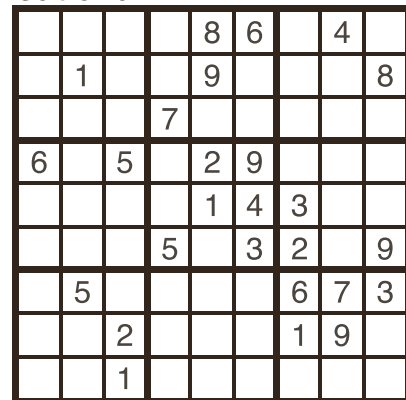


9. Goddess of wisdom
10. Part of a play
11. Get rid of
13. Applicant
17. Bowling alleys have many
24. Explosive
25. "The Say Hey Kid"
26. Ultrahigh frequency
27. No (Scottish)
28. Make a mistake
29. Credit card term
35. Keyboard key
36. Woman (French)
37. In the middle of
38. Score perfectly
40. Coat a metal with an oxide coat
41. Deadly disease
42. A place to dock a boat (abbr.)
43. Belch
44. Member of U.S. Navy
45. "In ___": separate from others
47. Examine extensively
48. Adjust
49. Tattle
52. Actor Pitt
53. Gulls
54. Within
55. Exceptionally talented performer

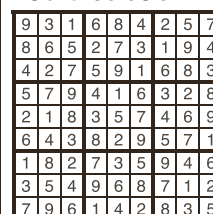
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Feb. 9 Solution



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EDITORIAL

Handing over the torch

This is the week that I trade places with our new publisher and CEO, Susan Hassler. If readers saw the donor page last week in this publication, they will be aware that their support for their local newspaper has meant everything to its survival. The general health of the company and the publications is good, much better than it was in 2019, and much better than it was in 1998.

In the 25 years since I started at The Lakeville Journal Company, first as associate publisher, then publisher and editor in chief, there were multiple times that it seemed the publications would not make it through. So it was never a given that this moment would come, when the next management group could take over for a new generation of readers. The fact that the two newspapers are still publishing weekly and finding committed and steady readership is a testament to the skills of our staff in all departments, as well as to the power of solid local journalism.

Each department and each newspaper has dedicated and knowledgeable staff. They will all continue to be the backbone of the company as it moves forward, along with any new staff coming on. We have been fortunate in having great people join our group in a region where a small population can make hiring new people challenging, and keeping employees equally so.

Our readers want us here, they have made that clear, and that says it all. They support us so loyally, and definitely make their voices heard as to what they want to see or not see in our publications. All those at the newspapers will keep listening, and keep these publications at the high quality they are now, always striving for even better quality.

I am confident that this group will do that, but if there are any concerns you have about your local community weekly newspaper, by all means contact your editors or publisher.

Thank you all for being willing to read and support local journalism.

— Janet Manko

Troutbeck expansion is just too much

In "The Story of Troutbeck," Lewis Mumford says, "Almost two centuries from now, one hopes, there will still be fields and woods where there are now fields and woods...."

The plan of Troutbeck Holdings Inc. to build two hotels, four cabins, an event center and gatehouse will destroy this hope in less than a century. What are our values? Is making money more important than preserving the fields and woods?

You may be thinking Mumford was an impractical intellectual and that, of course, making money is more important. But to exploit Troutbeck, the epitome of the unsullied natural environment, proves we care about nothing but making money.

If we allow this expansion, we destroy the Troutbeck described in Myron Benton's poetry. In Benton's "Songs of the Webutuck" there is a poem called "Haying" in which a mower takes a holiday on a crucial mowing day to go into the woods and enjoy its wonders. Perhaps we can't understand today the gamble this mower took in a time when long term weather forecasting didn't exist.

In "Soul's Return" Benton imagines that after he has died, he would want his soul to return to Troutbeck:

"There is one spot for which my soul will yearn,

....
If I have leave; that sheltered valley farm;

its climbing woods, its spring, the meadow gold;

The creek-path, dearest to my boyhood's feet:--

Oh, God! Is there another world so sweet?"

Mercifully for Mr. Benton, his soul will be turned away at the new gatehouse and won't be able to see that his meadow gold has become a parking lot.

George Bistransin
Amenia

Work on view for Hudson River artist

In reference to the recent article in the Compass concerning painters in the Hudson River School of Art, I might add that my great-great grandfather, Jasper Cropsey, was one the original founders of that school. A museum,



Santos is to Republicans, as Medicare Advantage is to American health care

If you had any doubts about the monetization of our health care system you need only to follow the money in the development of Medicare Advantage — the cheap, for-profit health care insurance offered as a Medicare option (sic) on TV. Yes, the one that offers you no cost or even money back into your Social Security account upon your enrollment. They get to continue enrolling year-round while regular, government-based Medicare is restricted to enrollment yearly periods.

Yep, that's the one that has the awful, old, and familiar person yelling to sell you "Medicare Advantage" in an over long and incessantly playing ad. With 50% of elder Americans now enrolled in Medicare Advantage, despite Biden's HHS discovery of their fraudulent practices, they are continuing to restrict service delivery areas, providers and coverage.

Targeting the same elderly and largely under-informed enrollees, CVS (+Walgreens and Amazon) — three of our distribution giants — now have expanded to offer full primary care practices and homecare through their insurance holdings. This is an explicit and expected vertical integration of the American health care continuum of services from insurance, docs, drugs and homecare in one powerful corporate owner.

"CVS Health shocked many in late 2017 when it announced it would acquire Aetna in a nearly \$70 billion deal. At the time, the companies stated the deal would 'remake the consumer healthcare experience' by combining CVS' local clinic presence and Aetna's analytics." (Vertical Integration Will Test Health Systems Vulnerabilities, Health Association of New York, Hany.org, 2019).

Insurance, with doctors clinics, wheelchairs and home health care, all designed to cut costs, especially hospital charges. Each practicing primary care, prescribing and filling your pharmacy needs. These are all legal for-profit expansions under Medicare Advantage. This industrial buy-up will tend to our aged as each patient meets the same owner's cost-savings for all of their health care needs all the way to the Big Pharma Wall Street cluster.

"Make no mistake, vertical integration is testing and exposing providers' vulnerabilities. While the payer and retail pharmacy vertical deals have a lot to do with owning more of the U.S. drug supply chain, they will also erode providers' margins by impacting their referrals and top-of-funnel strategies. In reality, insurers would prefer people not visit the hospital, so these deals seek to prevent high-cost, unnecessary hospital admissions." (HANY.org)AL

Can anything be more predatory than a billion-dollar profit-driven health care industry disguised as a government safety net program for our most vulnerable populations? Yes, we have stooped that low in our national will to care.

Peter Cropsey Smith
Taconic
Nancy F. McKenzie
Amenia

with most of his works, is located in Hastings-on-Hudson, adjacent to Cropsey's studio/home.

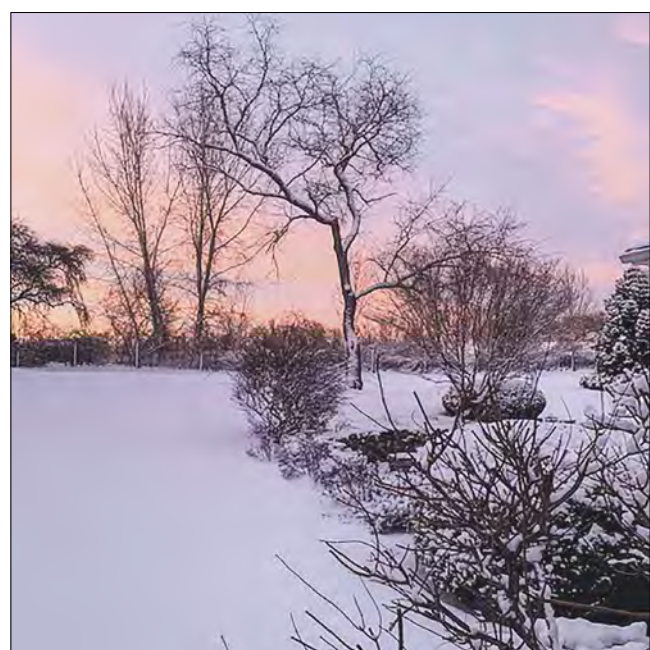


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Salmon skies

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Winsted Phoenix was not short-lived

In your article "Nader backs new Winsted papers" published on Feb. 1, the writer, Terry Cowgill, wrote:

"The Winsted Phoenix, a mostly online venture led by former Winsted Journal editor Shaw Israel Izikson, was short-lived."

It was not lead by me. I was the editor, but it was lead by the board heading

its 501(c)(3) organization.

Furthermore, the newspaper lasted from 2019 to 2021 and was both in print and online. I have the printed issues for proof of this. So it didn't seem short-lived to me.

Please take this as correcting those statements.

Shaw Israel Izikson
Winsted

Act now to keep Sharon Hospital ICU open

What will happen if Nuvance is allowed to close the Sharon Hospital Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and replace it with a Progressive Care Unit (PCU)? Nuvance falsely claims in its public outreach that a PCU will provide our community with the same level of critical care that it currently provides.

This claim is contradicted in Nuvance's official filings with the CT Office of Health Strategy (OHS), in which it states:

- Its proposed PCU is akin to an "intermediate care unit" and, therefore, not equivalent to an ICU that treats acutely ill patients.

- Patients with clinical conditions requiring ICU level nursing care cannot be admitted to the proposed PCU; instead, they must be transferred to another facility that has an ICU.

- 10% of the patients currently treated in the ICU will no longer qualify to be admitted to Sharon Hospital and will have to be transferred to another hospital.

What would this change mean for our community? While the Sharon Hospital Emergency Department would receive and stabilize ICU level patients, Sharon Hospital would not admit them. Instead, patients will be transferred to another hospital, up to an hour away (weather permitting).

The sickest patients could no longer be treated at Sha-

ron Hospital, and families of those patients will have to travel significant distances to be with them. Consider what the inter-hospital transfer of patients would involve — long wait times for transport, reliance on third-party paid services (for which patients get billed), and the physical issues that arise when transferring a patient (moving a very ill patient from a hospital bed to a stretcher, detaching all monitors and reattaching them to mobile equipment, getting the patient into an advanced life support ambulance for transport of an hour or more, moving the patient out of the ambulance, transferring the patient into the new hospital and then into a room, moving the patient again from the stretcher to the hospital bed, reattaching all the monitors.)

Yes, this will all happen if the downgrade to PCU is approved by OHS. And, ironically, Nuvance admits in its filings with OHS that its plan will cause Sharon Hospital to lose more money.

It's not too late for you to help. You can oppose Nuvance's application to close the ICU and replace it with a PCU by providing written public comment to OHS by February 22. Just email a letter to CONComment@ct.gov and reference docket #22-32504-CON. Thank you for your support.

David C. Singer
Salisbury

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Letters to the editor deadline is 10 a.m. Monday for that week's publication. No more than 500 words. Send to editor@millertonnews.com. Please include a phone number for confirmation.

Another letter appears on page B5.

OUR TOWNS

Town of Washington passes resolutions, seeks bids

By JUDITH O'HARA BALFE
juthib@millertonnews.com

WASHINGTON — There were several issues brought up at the Thursday, Feb 9, Town Board meeting, first regarding the much-studied and long-awaited amendment to the Comprehensive Plan circa 2015 and the study

of hospitality. Jeff Battistoni, attorney for the Town, advised that the amendment, as presented at the public hearing on Thursday, Jan. 12, was 295 pages while the original Comprehensive Plan was only 60 pages. He recommended that appendices A, B and C be omitted (available on the website version, however) and along with the environ-

mental assessment signed by Supervisor Gary Ciferri, be submitted to the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development for the purpose of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA). The county then has 30 days to comment, or to ask that changes be made. If it doesn't comment or ask for changes, the amendment

could be adopted at the March meeting. This was voted on and approved.

Highway Superintendent Joe Spagnola reported that he had spent about \$30,000 replenishing salt reserves. There have been 11 winter events so far. He also reported on the new truck, much smaller than the department has been using, being bought at half the

cost of the larger trucks and better for the type of roads that the town needs to maintain.

Spagnola's report was merged with the report from Councilman Joe Rochfort on the Killlearn Road study. The Colliers engineering firm had suggested there should be a bidding process for the right of way and topographic study of the road. The Town voted to advertise for bids for the 3.25-mile area of the Killlearn Road and Chestnut Ridge intersection. The bidding will be initiated, but the traffic survey and further site visits have to wait until after the spring thaw in order for the cable to be laid for the traffic study and for the roads to be in a condition as to be fairly and accurately assessed for the repair study.

Bookkeeper Lois Petrone reported that the new software she is using is effective; it will take time to move everything over. She asked for budget amendments including federal aid revenue of \$96,267.60 to Highway Equipment Expense for the 2022 highway truck.

Assessor Lisa Evangelista proposed increasing the amount of the tax exemption for persons with disabilities and limited incomes pursuant to a Local Law No. 1 of 2019. The amount of \$29,000 is changed and increased to \$37,400. A second item, a new exemption for volunteer firefighters and emergency workers, is not a local law and can be passed through a resolution after a public hearing is held. For this purpose, a special

meeting will be held on Thursday, Feb. 23, at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

Building inspector and zoning administrator James Finley reported 47 building inspections in January, three fire inspections, 17 building permits issued, plus two investigations and 10 expired permits.

Recreation director Danielle Szalewicz asked for and received authorization to advertise for an RFP for an engineer to design a new well for the Town Park.

A report from Town Clerk Mary Alex said that tax collection is underway; an addendum will be posted regarding the Comprehensive Plan, and there is a discussion ensuing about the cost of mailing (ZBA and Planning Board) to neighbors and who should assume that cost.

Councilman Michael Murphy said that Judge Betsy Shequine is stepping down from the Ethics Committee, and it has been established that there can be five members where currently there have been three, which means the Ethics Committee is seeking three new members. Murphy also said that short-term rentals are in fact favored, but with restrictions.

Councilwoman Leslie Heaney reported that the Planning Board had three new applications, as well as a report on the CAC meeting.

The supervisor closed the meeting at 7:18 p.m.; the next regular meeting is on Thursday, March 9. All meetings are posted on the town website washingtonny.org

LETTER TO THE EDITOR *More letters appear on page B4.*

Troutbeck's proposed expansion may pose threat to shared Amenia/Sharon aquifer

I write this letter to ensure that Connecticut residents (people in the town of Sharon in particular) are aware that the proposed expansion of the Troutbeck Hotel and Conference Center near the border of Amenia and Sharon could seriously impact on the aquifer that is shared by portions of both towns. The fact that this aquifer is shared by both states makes this a Connecticut environmental/water usage issue as well as New York.

In the public hearing at the recent Town of Amenia planning board meeting, it was made clear that no actual hydrology study on the potential impact to the affected aquifer has been done. The newest version of Troutbeck's proposed expansion will use, by Troutbeck's own estimation, approximately 7,500,000 gallons of water annually, to be drawn from this shared aquifer. As a homeowner

near Troutbeck, (on property that borders Sharon) I can attest to the fact that last year's drought adversely affected the gallons/minute of our own well. The pressure on this aquifer, if Troutbeck were to use 7.5 million gallons/year, may cause serious water problems for households in both New York and Connecticut, especially during times of drought.

I voiced my concerns to the Amenia Planning Board about this water usage issue in that hearing, and none of the planning board members or Troutbeck representatives seemed to know what the present water usage at Troutbeck is, to compare with the proposed 7.5 million gallons of estimated annual usage. The town of Sharon, Conn., the N.Y. and Connecticut depts. of Environmental Protection and Conservation, legislators and any other

agencies concerned should be made aware of the potential threat posed to this shared aquifer, and need to ensure all required impact studies are completed before approval be given to Troutbeck to proceed with the expansion.

I implored the planning board in a letter submitted to the town of Amenia to delay any final decision on approval or disapproval of the Troutbeck plan until all potentially affected parties are satisfied that all applicable environmental impact studies have been completed. I also voiced concerns publicly that the changes at Troutbeck could adversely affect the quality of water in the Webutuck River that flows through the property.

This river is in the Housatonic River watershed, and the Housatonic's designation as a Federal Wild and Scenic river could warrant that

further studies be completed before the Amenia board acts. A Connecticut Environmental Quality study may also need to be conducted. The Housatonic River Council, River Keepers, and other river protection organizations should be aware of this situation to help clarify any potential impact on the Webutuck River, and therefore the Housatonic River as well.

With the serious concerns shared by neighbors of the Troutbeck property, I feel the Amenia Planning Board should reconsider their decision to end all public hearings on this matter. It would seem prudent that another public hearing might be necessary to dispel any doubt that all environmental impact problems posed by further Troutbeck development have been addressed.

James Paton

Amenia

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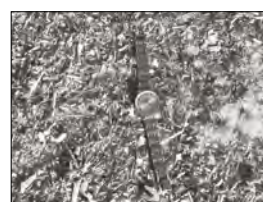
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