

The MILLERTON NEWS

Covering Northeastern Dutchess County and its Environs

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Special, Inside



PHOTO BY ALY MORRISSEY

Caroline Farr-Killmer wears her hunting bibs after being inducted into the historic Rounders' Hunting Club in November 2025, becoming the first woman to join the club since it was founded by World War II veterans in 1954.

Rounders camp inducts first woman in club's history

By ALY MORRISSEY
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MILLERTON — A lot has changed for Caroline Farr-Killmer over the last two decades, but the smell of campfire smoke and the familiar bark of an old blue alarm clock have stood the test of time

at the hunting grounds of the historic Rounders club, a place that has served as a second home for her family for generations.

In November 2025, Farr-Killmer, 25, became the first adult woman to be unanimously voted into the hunting club, a group that's known as much for

its camaraderie and history as its dedication to safety, respect and the outdoors.

Founded in 1954 by WWII veterans, the group — originally named the Rounders of Riga — began as six men who wanted to step

See ROUNDERS, A6

Vitsky Bakery turns local surplus into seasonal pastries

By JOSEPH BRENNAN
Special to the Millerton News

WASSAIC — Ariel Yotive has a motto, "Work with what you've got." Her unique Vitsky Bakery in Wassaic has the fruits of that motivation flying off the shelves.

Literally, during apricot season, one of her neighboring farm orchards may be harvesting fresh-off-the-tree fruit that is transformed into danishes. Local hives supply honey for sweet toppings or chunks of honeycomb for a delicious and rustic garnish. "I use what is around," said the baker.

At Vitsky Bakery, Yotive's approach has become a defining philosophy. Working closely with nearby farms, beekeepers and gardeners, she creates a constantly shifting menu shaped by the season, surplus and chance, turning overlooked or fleeting ingredients into something special.

See BAKERY, A6



Ariel Yotive portions dough for baked goods to be sold at Vitsky Bakery in Wassaic. Yotive has been baking since childhood, first helping in her father's Illinois-based Quality Bakery.

PHOTO BY LANDON SPEERS

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OUR TOWNS



PHOTO BY NATHAN MILLER

The North East Community Center's Early Learning Program shuttered abruptly last December after non-profit leadership announced that significant financial strain required the program's termination. NECC Executive Director Christine Sergent said the organization remains open to reconsidering childcare in the future.

Dutchess County among three selected for state childcare pilot

By ALY MORRISSEY
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Dutchess County is one of three counties selected to receive significant state funding as part of a new childcare pilot program announced by Gov. Kathy Hochul last week — an initiative that could expand childcare options in rural communities like Millerton.

The announcement follows Hochul's State of the State address in which she proposed a landmark \$4.5 billion investment toward universal childcare in New York. Hochul visited a childcare center in Queens on Thursday, Jan. 15, to outline her vision for the rollout of the pilot program, which would include a total of \$60 million in state funding, along with additional funding from each of the three counties — Dutchess, Monroe and Broome — with a particular focus on serving newborns to three-year-olds.

"When we invest in our kids, we're investing not just in their future, but the future of our state," Hochul said. She called her plan aggressive, bold and ambitious with a focus on access and cost.

While the proposal must still be approved by the State Legislature as part of the 2026 budget process, Dutchess County's Department of Community and Family Services is expected to work with the state on developing ideas to address Dutchess-specific needs. The state budget is due April 1.

Filling a local gap

The pilot would support community-based programming, a move that could fill the gap left in Millerton by the recent abrupt closure of North East Community Center's Early Learning Program (ELP).

NECC officially closed the program on Dec. 19, 2025, after determining that the financial burden of operating a daycare had become unsustainable. The decision followed months of quiet internal deliberation and came as a shock to families and staff. NECC leadership cited rising operating costs, declining

enrollment and the loss of grant funding as driving factors in the closure.

Christine Sergent, Executive Director of NECC, said the organization remains open to reconsidering childcare in the future, though no timeline has been announced.

"We are monitoring the governor's actions as they clearly relate to the needs of the people we serve," Sergent said. She added that she is hopeful that potential state resources could eventually bring more childcare options back to Millerton and surrounding communities, whether before or after NECC moves to a new facility.

Dutchess County Legislator Chris Drago, D-District-19, said the closure of the ELP has intensified the childcare challenges in the region. Drago, who had been working to raise awareness about the issue even before the pilot program was announced, said cuts to federal funding will be felt in rural Dutchess County.

"Childcare is a must-have," Drago said. "Families need childcare if they're going to work, and this is something we need to be fighting for."

While he said Hochul's proposal is a step in the right direction, Drago described the funding as a "drop in the bucket." He hopes to organize a public forum to discuss the issue and better inform state representatives about the urgent childcare needs in northern Dutchess County.

Still, the news signals hope for local parents like Kim Yarnell, whose family was affected by the ELP closure.

"As a parent, I have struggled for years trying to source reliable and affordable care for my kids just so I could go to work," Yarnell said, adding that she is thrilled about the pilot program.

Yarnell said it will be crucial that those overseeing the pilot rollout involve parent advocates upfront as part of the process to ensure that funding and support are allocated to not just county-run childcare facilities, but also private and in-home care — especially in rural communities like Millerton.

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There is an interesting article in the CT Mirror which forecasts the effects of the Big Beautiful Bill recently passed by Congress on Connecticut residents. As you might imagine, it will be the upper income levels that will benefit the most and this comes on the backs of the lower income households. I had no idea that Connecticut ranked 4th in the nation for wealth inequality, which is not where we want to be! My sense is that this inequity will be compounded by cuts in SNAP and social support programs such as mental illness prevention. So what can we do here in the NW Corner? My thought is to be aware of this issue and increase our support for programs like our local food banks and our social service support offices found in each town. Please visit the following link for more information: ctmirror.org/2026/01/16/how-will-the-big-beautiful-bill-impact-your-ct-town/

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Salisbury prepares for launch of 100th Jumpfest

By MIA BARNES
Special to the Millerton News

SALISBURY, Conn. — Salisbury's longstanding tradition of ski jumping is reaching new heights this year with the 100th annual Jumpfest, scheduled for Feb. 6–8 at Satre Hill.

The weekend-long celebration opens with a community night on Friday, Feb. 6, followed by youth ski jumping competitions and the Salisbury Invitational on Saturday. The event concludes Sunday with the Eastern U.S. Ski Jumping Championships.

While spectators look skyward to watch the high-flying athletes, Jumpfest will also invite the community to look back on Salisbury's deep-rooted ski jumping history.

Ski jumping originated in Norway in the 19th century and is a tradition familiar to most Nordic children. That was the case for the five Satre brothers — John, Magnus, Ottar, Sverre and Olaf — who grew up competing in ski jumping and cross-country skiing.

When John Satre moved to Salisbury in 1923 to work as a chauffeur, he brought the tradition with him. The rolling hills and heavy winterers of the Northwest Corner resembled those of Norway, allowing John to seamlessly integrate his passion into his new community.

Within a year, his brothers followed him to Salisbury.

In 1926, John Satre captivated roughly 200 spectators by skiing off a snow-covered barn roof.

The brothers soon formed the Salisbury Outing Club — now known as the Salisbury Winter Sports Association (SWSA) — and began construction of a permanent ski jump in the same location it sits today: Satre Hill.

By 1933, the Satre brothers had won numerous championships and helped popularize the sport across the United States. Salisbury hosted the U.S. Olympic Trials in 1932, and the following year hosted the National Championships.

Tragically in 1934, at the

Dine Out for History' kick-off rescheduled

Because of inclement weather last Sunday, the North East Historical Society and The Millerton Inn agreed to reschedule the historical society's Dine Our For History event.

The event will now be held Sunday, Jan. 25, begin-



PHOTO PROVIDED

The Satre brothers, of Norway, brought ski jumping to Salisbury in the 1920s. Clockwise starting at lower left John, Olaf, Ottar and Magnus Satre pose alongside their large collection of trophies earned for accomplishments as ski jumpers.

age of 40, John Satre was killed in a car accident. The New York Times hailed him as a pioneer in U.S. skiing and his legacy is carried on in the winter sports culture that is nurtured in Salisbury today.

During this time, local children were introduced to the sport, creating makeshift jumps in their backyards out of crates and hay bales. One of these children was Richard Parsons, who became the first Salisbury resident to earn recognition for cross country skills. He earned a spot for the 1932 Lake Placid Winter Olympic Games and in 1936 competed in the Winter Olympics in Garmisch, Germany, where he was the leading American-born cross-country skier.

During World War II, young athletes who would have normally been jumping were enlisted in the service, causing a lull in the sport and deterioration of the jump itself. After the war, however, community members eagerly worked to rebuild the jump, and another Salisbury athlete emerged.

Roy Sherwood was first introduced to ski jumping when his father built him and his brother their own

ski jump in their backyard. Sherwood quickly gained ground, earning himself the title of "hometown hero." By 1954, Sherwood was offered a spot on the U.S. Olympic Team for the 1956 games in Cortina, Italy.

Sherwood's path to the Olympics was far from easy. A year before the Games, he was diagnosed with polio, threatening his ability to compete. He recovered enough to travel to Italy, only to hit an icy patch during a practice run.

Sherwood rebounded and competed the next day, placing 36th out of 51 — the second-highest finish by an American — and was later inducted into the U.S. Ski & Snowboard Hall of Fame.

Today, four jumps line Satre Hill — K10, K20, K30, and K65. The 65-meter jump is used for competitions, and the smaller jumps are used to teach local youth during winter camps.

Islay Sheil, a Housatonic Valley Regional High School student and Lakeville resident, is the current SWSA athlete on the rise in ski jumping today. Her passion for the sport emerged during one of the SWSA winter camps, and last March earned gold in the Junior National Championships. The next Junior National Championships will be hosted in Salisbury in 2027.

While Salisbury celebrates the 100th anniversary of its own ski jump this year, the

Olympic Games will be held in Milan and Cortina, Italy, the same place that Sherwood gained global recognition.

To honor the town's remarkable history and tradition of ski jumping, Jumpfest will begin early with a Winter Warmer on Jan. 31 between 5:30 to 8 p.m. It will be at the home of Salisbury First Selectman Curtis Rand. Small plates and drinks will be served. Limited tickets are available for \$50 and more details can be found at Jumpfest.org/100years/

On Feb. 1, a double feature screening of *On the Hill* and *Downhill Racer* will be held at The Moviehouse in Millerton, followed by a panel discussion on winter sports and SWSA's role in Salisbury's history. There will also be a raffle and SWSA merchandise for sale.

Tickets for the showing are \$16 and details can be found at Jumpfest.org/100years/.

On Friday, Feb. 6, Jumpfest will host community night at Satre Hill. SWSA will offer free admission for the night. Gates open at 6 p.m. and "Target Jumping Under the Lights" will begin at 7 p.m. There will be fireworks sponsored by NBT Bank, bonfires, and food and drinks available for purchase. The Human Dogsled Race is set for 8:30 p.m. Teams of five can register at Jumpfest.org.

On Saturday, Feb. 7, the Junior Competition on K20 jump will begin at 9 a.m. The Salisbury Invitational Ski Jumping Competition will practice from 11 a.m. to noon and compete at 1 p.m. Community members are invited to the Snow Ball at the Lakeville Town Grove at 8 p.m. Dancers will be accompanied by live music from the Steve Dunn Band. Entrance to the Ball is \$20 with children 12 and under free of charge.

On Sunday, Feb. 8, Satre Hill will hold the Eastern U.S. Ski Jumping Championships. Athletes will practice between 11 a.m. to noon and compete at 1 p.m.

Willie Hallahan of SWSA explained that the length of time and number of people involved on an emotional level has made the sport "iconic to Salisbury."

Hallahan recounted in the PBS documentary "The Jump" that the ski jumps are "like a family member to a lot of people."

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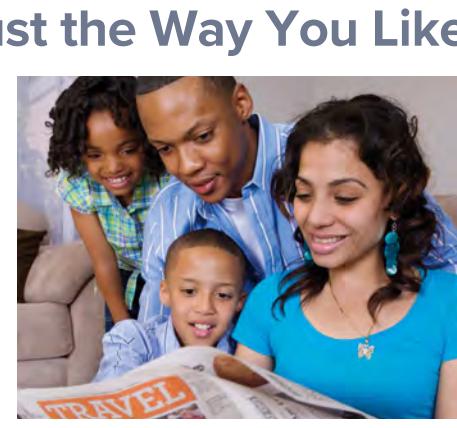
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Stissing Storage operator proposes farm stand and self-storage business expansion

By NATHAN MILLER
nathanm@millertonnews.com

PINE PLAINS — A new farm stand could be coming to Pine Plains soon.

Steve Hobson, of Milan, met with the Planning Board on Wednesday, Jan. 14, to lay out preliminary plans for a retail farm stand at 2812 and 2814 Church St., two residential lots across from Stissing Mountain High School.

Hobson is proposing demolishing the residence on 2814 Church St. and constructing several structures. The plans include an expansion of Hobson's self-storage facility on the neighboring 2818 Church St. lot.

Hobson said the house on the property was in too poor condition to be renovated or sold. "It needs a ton of work," he said. "It's going to be difficult to implement any further on the site without removal of that house that's there."

The proposed farm stand would be available to farmers on a seasonal

basis, Hobson said.

Planning Board members met the proposal with optimism, although they made a few suggestions pertaining to the aesthetics of the storage facilities.

"I think it's doable," Planning Board Chair Michael Stabile said.

Planning Board members suggested Hobson should plan screening to reduce the visibility of the planned storage units. They also asked if Hobson had identified any potential tenants for the farm stand, to which he said no.

"It's certainly going to be a roll of the dice on my part," Hobson said.

Planning Board Chair Michael Stabile recommended Hobson begin the search.

"I think part of the application you try to get somebody interested in it," Stabile said.

The board wrapped up the meeting after about half an hour of deliberation by giving Hobson the greenlight for an official application.

Amenia residents comment on Cascade Creek subdivision plan

By LEILA HAWKEN
leilah@millertonnews.com

AMENIA — Residents filled the Town Hall meeting room to capacity for the Planning Board meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 14, to provide comments about the Cascade Creek workforce housing application submitted by Hudson River Housing.

For several months, the non-profit developer has been engaged in preparing environmental impact analyses for the property, including utility plans, as well as potential effects on wildlife or watercourses with plans for mitigation of stormwater runoff.

Once the environmental impact report phase is complete, the actual site plan drawings will be considered as part of the application's next phase. Public hearings will continue.

Senior planner Peter Sander of Rennia Engineering, speaking on behalf of the Cascade Creek project, reviewed conservation plans for the 24.13 acres that would comprise the development. Of the total acreage, 59% would be conserved, and 28 house lots would be drawn, each lot encumbered by conservation easements. Also planned is a rectangular space for a community garden. Sewer and water utilities would be on-site.

Since the Planning Board's November meeting, Sander reported, the developer has met with local fire officials, leading to an agreement to provide a buried large-reservoir water tank to combat



PHOTO BY NATHAN MILLER
The proposed site of Hudson River Housing's Cascade Creek workforce housing subdivision on Route 44.

fires and the use of fire-resistant building materials in each home.

Planning Board Engineer John Andrews reminded residents that the meeting was an opportunity for public comment, an informal public hearing, and that future public hearings would be held on the project.

Summarizing the comments heard at the meeting, Planning Board member Jamie Vitiello enumerated topics that would lie within the purview of the board and the required environmental analysis, currently being considered.

Topics identified by Vitiello included the fire department's concerns about an adequate water supply in case of fire, Webutuck School enrollment growth, the effect on community character, and increased traffic.

Newly seated Planning Board attorney Victoria Polidoro of Rodenhausen Chale and Polidoro, LLP, with offices in Rhinebeck, suggested that she would be interested in information about marketing plans for the Cascade Creek subdivision.

Vitiello suggested that some aspects are not within

the purview of the planning board, but Andrews said that getting more information into the public record is within the purview.

Several residents offered comments at the meeting, including former Town Supervisor Victoria Perotti who expressed concern about the effect on the aquifer and area homeowners' wells, particularly in times of drought. Bog

turtles are not present on-site, but they do inhabit wetlands surrounding the site, along with other forms of familiar wildlife. Perotti also said that the proposed on-site sewage system does not adequately meet state standards.

Resident George Bistransin submitted a petition carrying 204 signatures of residents who oppose the project.

Another resident said that he was generally in favor of workforce housing and understood the local need for it, but he was concerned about the project's business model, including the financial responsibilities of the homeowners and whether those homeowners would default on mortgage payments. He sought evidence that the project is financially viable.

Resident Ken Merritt ex-

pressed concern about the effect on ground water levels in the area, indicating his opposition to the project.

"Who will pay to have area wells redrilled," asked resident Kim Travis, also expressing concern about rainwater runoff and the diminishment of the rural character of the area.

Questioning the traffic study conducted as part of the application, resident Judy Moran noted the study was done when schools were not in session.

Former Town Supervisor Leo Blackman spoke, noting his prior years of service on the town's Housing Board.

"There is definitely a problem with a lack of affordable housing," Blackman said. "The community could become economically segregated," he warned.

About concerns over higher density housing, Blackman described the high incidence of small house lots already existing within the community.

"We need affordable housing; we need to do something," resident Gaye Parisi said. Parisi currently serves on the Housing Board.

Planning Board Secretary Judy Westfall read two letters into the record. The first, from the local fire department, noted no access to a municipal water supply, that the natural water sources are unreliable, the need for monitoring of the buried tank, adequate turn-around room for fire apparatus, and plans for snow removal.

The second letter was from resident Daniel Donnelly who favored the application and urged its approval.

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OBITUARIES

Marjorie A. Vreeland

SALISBURY — Marjorie A. Vreeland, 98, passed away peacefully at Noble Horizons, on Jan. 10, 2026. She was surrounded by her two loving children, Richard and Nancy. She was born in Bronxville, New York, on Aug. 9, 1927, to Alice (Meyer) and Joseph Casey, both of whom were deceased by the time she was 14. She attended public schools in the area and graduated from Eastchester High School in Tuckahoe and, in 1946 she graduated from The Wood School of Business in New York City.

At 19 years old, she married Everett W. Vreeland of White Plains, New York and for a few years they lived in Ithaca, New York, where Everett was studying to become a veterinarian at Cornell. After a short stint in Coos Bay, Oregon (Mike couldn't stand the cloudy, rainy weather!) they moved back east to Middletown, Connecticut for three years where Dr. Vreeland worked for Dr. Pieper's veterinary practice. In Aug. of 1955, Dr. and Mrs. Vreeland moved to North Kent, Connecticut with their children and started Dr. Vreeland's Veterinary practice. In Sept. of 1968 Marjorie, or "Mike" as she wished to be called, took a "part-time job" at the South Kent School. She retired from South Kent 23 years later on Sept. 1, 1991. Aside from office help and bookkeeping she was secretary to the Headmaster and also taught Public Speaking and Typing. In other times she worked as

an assistant to the Town Clerk in Kent, an office worker and receptionist at Ewald Instruments Corp. and as a volunteer at the Kent Library.

"Mike" loved the sun, sand and water and spent many summers at Westport Point, Massachusetts with the kids and their best friends, the Bauers. She was the consummate hostess, and a wonderful cook. She also appeared in several plays with The Sherman Players and also a show or two on special occasions at The Kent Community House. She took enjoyment from working outdoors doing chores around her home in North Kent. She lived in that house until she sold it and bought a condominium on North Main Street in Kent in May of 2003. She lived in the condo until 2018 after which her light began to fade and her last 8 years were spent comfortably at Noble Horizons.

"Mike" leaves behind her children, Richard (Susan) of Lakeville, her daughter Nancy Rutledge (Jim) of Salisbury; two grandchildren, Chandra Gerrard (Sean) of Litchfield, Matthew (Larissa) of Lakeville; three great grandchildren, Addison, Emilia and Everett, all of Lakeville.

She was predeceased by her beloved granddaughter Caroline in 2020.

All services are private. The Ryan Funeral Home, 255 Main St., Lakeville, is in charge of arrangements.

To offer an online condolence, please visit ryanfhct.com

TACONIC — Edward Aparo passed away peacefully at his home on Jan. 7, 2026, surrounded by his loving family.

Edward was born on May 10, 1936, in New Britain, Connecticut. He was the beloved son of the late Anthony and Rose Valenti Aparo and attended New Britain schools. On April 7, 1958 Edward married his school sweetheart, Jean Ackerman beginning a devoted marriage that spanned 67 years. Together they built a life rooted in family, hard work and love.

Edward began his career working in the family business, Aparo's Electric Motor Service Inc. where he learned

the trade alongside his father.

Following his father's passing, Edward became the owner of the business, carrying on the family legacy with dedication and pride.

Edward is survived by his loving wife, Jean Ackerman Aparo, his sons Stephen Aparo and his wife Marie of New Britain, Connecticut, and Craig Aparo and his wife Valerie of Naples, Florida; his sister Arlene Aparo St.Germain and husband Joseph of Hobe Sound, Florida, and his cherished grandchildren; Danny Aparo and wife Nicole, Tyler Aparo and Morgan Wilson and Jared Aparo all of New Britain.

Services will be private.

Roger D. Ovitt

TORRINGTON — Roger D. Ovitt, 91, of 35 Berry St. Torrington, died peacefully at his home surrounded by his loving family. He was the husband of Barbara (Webb) Ovitt of Torrington. Roger was born June 28, 1934 in Amenia, New York, son of the late Ronald and Edna Lucy (King) Ovitt.

Roger had worked for 36 years as a crusher operator for the former Pfizer Corporation in Canaan. After retiring from Pfizer in 1992, Roger joined his brother, Brian, and began a new career as a house painter. Roger enjoyed this venture with his brother. He was an avid fisherman. Roger also loved to garden. He took great pride in the flowers and vegetables that he raised.

In addition to his wife, Roger is survived by his children; Donald Ovitt and his wife Alissa of Clarksville, Tennessee, Jennifer Godburn and her husband Stephen of Sarasota, Florida, Valerie Bachman and her husband Paul of Torrington, Connecticut, Stephanie Follett of Ashley Falls, Massachusetts, and Nelson Roddy and his wife Mary of Lakeville, Connecticut.

Roger is also survived by his sister, Eleanor Hineyman of Connecticut, and his three brothers; Robert Ovitt of Southfield, Massachusetts, Brian Ovitt and his wife Alice of Sheffield, Massachusetts, and Gary Ovitt and his wife Cheryl of Sheffield, Massachusetts; his brother-in-law Charlton Webb of Winsted, Connecticut; 12 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.

Roger was predeceased by his daughter, Penny Fallon, sister Joy Eichstedt, brothers Ronald, Carlton, Jerry, Wayne, and Raymond Ovitt, his grandson Shawn Bachman, his great-grandson Eli Green, and his step-father Edwin Mansir.

A Celebration of Roger's Life will be held on Saturday Jan. 24, 2026, at 11 a.m. in the Newkirk-Palmer Funeral Home 118 Main St. North Canaan, CT 06018.

Calling hours will be held at the funeral home on Saturday from 10 a.m. until the service begins at 11 a.m.

Memorial donations in Roger's memory may be made to Connecticut Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association 10 Executive Drive Suite 202 Farmington, CT 06032.

Send obituaries to obituaries@lakevillejournal.com

In Loving Memory of Peter C. Roosa

October 12, 1950 to January 11, 2019

Time slips by and life goes on
But from our hearts you're never gone.
We think about you always, we talk about
you too, we have so many memories but we
wish we still had you.

You are deeply loved:
Phyllis, Jamie, Nonnie,
The Petkovich and Roosa Family



Robin Lee Roy

FALLS VILLAGE — Robin Lee Roy, 62, of Zephyrhills, Florida, passed away Jan. 14, 2026.

She was a long-time CNA, serving others with compassion for more than 20 years before retiring from Heartland in Florida.



Robin loved the beach, sunshine, and gardening, and was known for her strength, hu-

mor, and unwavering support of those she loved.

She is survived by her daughter, Sierra R. Zinke, and brothers, Darren Roy and Todd Roy.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Sharon Thomkins Roy and Robert Roy, and her brother Nevin Roy.

No services will be held at this time.

Rafael A. Porro

SALISBURY — Rafael A. Porro, 88, of 4 Undermountain Road, passed away Jan. 6, 2026, at Sharon Hospital. Rafael was born on April 19, 1937 in Camaguey, Cuba the son of Jose Rafael Porro and Clemencia Molina de Porro.

He graduated from the Englewood School for Boys in Englewood, New Jersey and attended Columbia University School of General Studies. Rafael retired as a law library clerk from the law firm of Curtis, Mallet Prevost in 2002 and came to live in Salisbury to be nearer to his sister, Chany Wells.

Rafael is survived by

his sister, Chany Wells, his nephew Conrad Wells (Gillian), and by numerous cousins in North Carolina, Florida, Wyoming, Arizona, Cuba and Canada. He was the eldest of the cousins and acknowledged family historian. He will be greatly missed.

A memorial service will be held at St. John's Episcopal Church in June. Memorial contributions may be made to Salisbury Volunteer Ambulance Service, St. John's Episcopal Church in Salisbury and Scoville Memorial Library.

The Kenny Funeral Home has care of arrangements.

Worship Services

Week of January 25, 2026



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Sunday 9 a.m., Church of St. Mary
Sunday 11 a.m.,

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Sunday 9 a.m., Church of St. Mary
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We hope you will join us!

In Loving Memory of Jeffery Jay Petkovich

May 12, 1968 to January 20, 1990

May the wings of Heaven blow softly
and whisper in your ear
How much we Love and Miss you and
Wish that you were here.

You are loved deeply:
Mom, Jamie, Nonnie



THE MILLERTON NEWS

EDITORIAL PAGE A7

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2026

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

A New Chapter for Sharon Hospital: Our Commitment to the Northwest Corner

At Northwell Health, we are incredibly excited and deeply committed to our new hospitals in Connecticut, including the future of Sharon Hospital. We understand that Sharon Hospital is more than just a building; it is a cornerstone of this community, a place of healing, comfort, and trust built over generations.

We hear the concerns about healthcare access in rural areas – the challenges of a “health care desert,” the distances, and the need for reliable, local services. That’s precisely why our commitment to Sharon Hospital includes being a community partner, listening intently to community needs and ensuring you have reliable local care.

That commitment includes the preservation and advancement of vital services, including comprehensive women’s health services. We understand that the availability of obstetrics is profoundly important, and we are committed to maintaining these services at Sharon Hospital. Our goal is to ensure that future generations can continue to be safely born and compassionately cared for right here in Sharon.

As Attorney General William Tong rightly emphasized, “miles and minutes matter when it comes to labor and delivery,” and we believe every family deserves access to safe, local maternity care. At Northwell Health, we don’t believe in a “hub-and-spoke” model of care where patients requiring most specialized services are referred into only the most advanced facilities. We’ve always believed in care being provided as locally as possible, so long as local expertise can provide such care safely. We believe that obstetrical care at Sharon is evidence of this commitment.

But our commitment extends far beyond that. We will maintain Sharon Hospital as a full-service community hospital, ensuring 24/7 surgical capabilities and a robust, full-service emergency department. Our plan isn’t just about maintain-

ing; it’s about improving services and enhancing access in the community. Northwell is incredibly committed to ambulatory network development – we are today a network of 28 hospitals and 1,050 ambulatory practices. While enhancing care for the community will always be viewed through the lens of capabilities at Sharon Hospital, ensuring the right care is being provided in the right setting is also a part of our commitment.

At Northwell, nearly 80 percent of our patient encounters take place outside of a hospital, with a focus on providing services in the most efficient and patient-centric environment possible.

This acquisition is backed by significant investment. Northwell has committed to injecting at least \$1 billion across Nuvance hospitals in Connecticut and New York over the next five years, a process that we’ve already begun, ensuring capital, expertise, and support for long-term fiscal stability and critical growth investments at places like Sharon. We’re also integrating advanced systems, like a unified electronic records management system, to enhance care coordination.

Our partnership with the Connecticut and New York Attorneys General, as well as the Connecticut Office of Health Strategy, reflects our shared goal: to safeguard the interests of Connecticut patients and providers, ensuring accessible, quality healthcare for this community for years to come.

Northwell Health is honored to become an even greater part of this community, and we are grateful for the community’s engagement and partnership. We are confident that, together, we will not only secure Sharon Hospital’s future but elevate its capacity to serve, providing the essential, high-quality care this vibrant community deserves.

John D’Angelo, MD, is president and CEO and Kevin Beiner is chief operating officer at Northwell Health.

Millerton, snowmobiles, homes, businesses

The following excerpts from The Millerton News were compiled by Kathleen Spahn and Rhianon Leo-Jameson of the North East-Millerton Library.

January 24, 1935

About Millerton

Mayor and Mrs. William J. Brewer and Mr. and Mrs. Miles Jenks left on Monday for a month’s vacation in Florida.

Mr. Roy Ganung and daughter, Jane, spent Tuesday afternoon in Poughkeepsie.

Jean Silvernale is confined to home by illness.

Miss Blanche Bates is spending several weeks at the home of her brother, Edward Bates, at Pittsfield, Mass.

George Wooding of Thornewood spent Sunday at the home of his sister, Mrs. Harry Card.

Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Decker and family moved to Lakeville on Sunday.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Millerton News

January 22, 1976
Snowmobiles
Trespassing[sic],
Officer Says

Trespassing and riding on public roads are the major offenses committed by area snowmobilers this winter, New York State Conservation Officer Harry Wheeler said this week.

He asserted that a number of snowmobile riders have been sighted traveling on public roads and soaring across private property without permission, both illegal acts.

January 18, 2001
Local Homes Added to Historic Register
COLEMAN STATION



Gen Z is facing hard times despite a growing economy

THE RETIRED INVESTOR

Bill Schmick

Gen Zers report experiencing symptoms of stress and anxiety.

While Wall Street opened the year celebrating the promise of a bright future, thanks to AI. Opinion leaders predict that artificial intelligence, robots, and space, among other technological breakthroughs, will dramatically reshape the way the world works. For college grads, all they see is a no-fire, no-hire labor market where unemployment among workers ages 20 to 24 continues to rise. It is now to 5.3% and even worse for those younger than that.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers predict the entry-level hiring crisis will worsen this year, rating job prospects as poor or at best fair. At a recent gathering of employers at the Yale School of Management, 66% admitted they planned to cut jobs or freeze hiring.

With an economy that is expected to grow by 3% in 2026, one would have expected the opposite reaction, but then you would not be reckoning with the impact of artificial intelligence on the job market. Potential employers are concerned and uncertain about how AI might reshape the workforce over the next few years, and rightfully so.

After removing several partitions and installing new lights, the basement store looks entirely new. Ms. Flood is pleased with the space, which offers more room in which to showcase her wares. She is also taking advantage of the additional area by creating a separate reupholstery room and a section to display in-stock fabrics.

Millerton Sees Some Business Changes; Shops Move, Expand

MILLERTON - Two stores on Main Street in Millerton have interior changes in the works.

Leslie Hoss Flood has recently relocated her Amenia-based store to the basement of the Millerton Antiques Center. Ms. Flood’s shop had been in Amenia for about 15

years, where, in addition to selling used and antique furniture, Ms. Flood also ran an upholstery shop.

The Oliver Barrett House, the Dakin-Coleman Farm and the Thomas Wheeler Farm, all located in the Coleman Station area, were selected by the New York state Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to be listed individually on the register, though the entire Coleman Station Valley was considered for the recognition in 1993.

Pasta-At-Large Expands

After acquiring the empty space, owner Sofia Okolowicz has expanded her business to provide “a little more elbow room inside.”

The front portion has been open since late November and, in recent days, Ms. Okolowicz has removed a wall and had electricity installed in the new area.

The views expressed here are not necessarily those of The Millerton News and the News does not support or oppose candidates for public office.

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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@millerton-news.com. Include town and phone number for confirmation.

investment in personal tools and equipment, and serious wear and tear on the body.

As I write this, in the next room, a 65-year-old builder I’ll call Scott, who is going in for his second knee replacement next month, is building another room in our condo. Assisting him is a young GenZer. There is a constant stream of chatter as Scott talks through his drywalling process. His helper listens intently. They seem eager to learn and ask questions as they work. He did the same when he placed the struts and erected the wall.

For several years, Scott has been involved in a local high school program that teaches vocational school grads his business, while they gain on-the-job experience and a paycheck. Scott and others like him are providing a solution one day at a time. He is one answer to the dilemma facing this struggling generation. This country needs more Scotts to hire and teach a young workforce in need.

Next week, I will highlight one area where many Gen Xers have found an alternative to home ownership. It holds risks but doesn’t cost an arm and a leg to get involved.

Bill Schmick is a founding partner of Onota Partners, Inc., in the Berkshires. Bill’s forecasts and opinions are purely his own and do not necessarily represent the views of Onota Partners, Inc. (OPI).

THE MILLERTON NEWS

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Thursday, January 22, 2026

Mission Statement

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Our goal is to report the news of our communities accurately and fairly, and to foster the free flow of information and opinion.

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ROUNDERS *Continued from Page A1*

away from civilian life and gather around a shared love of hunting. Longtime member Larry Conklin has referred to the group as the "real-deal Band of Brothers," which has expanded to include vetted family members and friends over time. Farr-Killmer is its newest member.

Today, the Rounders club is comprised of 10 adult members, along with several junior members.

Though she is defying gender stereotypes, Farr-Killmer approaches the milestone with gratitude, viewing it as a chance to learn from a community that has always felt like home.

During hunting season, which takes place between November and early winter, members take turns doing chores, which can include constructing the 16 x 32 military tent or preparing meals like venison tacos.

"I am grateful and excited," Farr-Killmer said, adding that she appreciates the vote of confidence from the Rounders. "I think it will be fun to bring a female presence into the hunting world, especially as it is such a male-dominated sport."

Caroline Farr-Killmer

"I think it will be fun to bring a female presence into the hunting world, especially as it is such a male-dominated sport."

—Caroline Farr-Killmer

Bryant Killmer, was the first family member to join the Rounders in the 1990s and remained an active member until his death in 2020.

"As a kid, I would look forward to all the stories from the older gentlemen who had lived such interesting lives — many of whom were veterans," Farr-Killmer said.

Today, she carries on her family's legacy with her brother, a junior member, and her father.

"My family is excited, but especially my dad, Ray," she said.

Ray Killmer — who taught her the culture, tactics and lifestyle — said he is proud of her.

"I look forward to the legacy being carried on," he said.

When she received the official welcome into the club, Farr-Killmer said she was "ecstatic." Though she has been attending camp since childhood for its social traditions, she has only been hunting for several years.

Induction into the Rounders marks another achievement for Farr-Killmer, who has been heading up the demolition and reconstruction of Millerton's water department building since a fire destroyed it and all the equipment inside last year.

"I want to send the message that you can do what you set your mind to," she said. "I think it is great that times have evolved and this sport has become one that is much more inclusive."

FLORIST *Continued from Page A1*

Nov. 29, at the 8 Old North Road plaza, Deneen said business has been steady, with a strong showing during the holiday season.

"It's going to evolve," Deneen said of the young enterprise.

The flower bar includes a wheeled, multi-shelf display of fresh-cut flowers. Deneen said the portable setup can be brought to hospitals, businesses or private events, where people can select individual stems to create their own arrangements or purchase flowers to go, making it an interactive and visually engaging feature.

Adding to the shop's charm is a curated selection of affordable gifts, ranging from photo frames and wine glasses to themed trays for milestone occasions, as well as items for sports fans and holidays.

"Valentine's Day is coming up next," Deneen noted.

Flowers are offered by the stem, and arrangements can either be made for customers or created by customers themselves. Flower selections change weekly based on the season and availability from local gardens. During the winter months, flowers are sourced from area wholesalers.

"Carnations will always be on the bar," Deneen said, "because most importantly they were my grandmother's favorite, but also for their quiet beauty and long-lasting charm."

Deneen grew up in Millerton and purchased her grandmother's home following her death in 2021. Her grandmother had lived there

since 1962, and her grandfather grew up on Belgo Road.

Before opening The Little Flower Bar, Deneen spent her career in the auto racing industry.

"I worked in the car racing industry my entire adult life. I started right here at Skip Barber Racing School when I was 21. In 2013, I moved to Indianapolis to work for Andretti Autosport. I spent the next 12 years in the IndyCar paddock," summarizing her connections to the auto racing world and her experience in large-scale event planning.

Five years ago, she started working from home in Millerton, traveling to the races. That was when she nourished her love for flowers, purchasing flowers just to play with arranging.

"We have the best flower farmers right here in the Northwest Corner," Deneen said.

"Every flower has a personality that can speak for you when words fall short," Deneen said.

"This is so lovely, and that's a man saying that," said customer Walter Irvine of Millbrook on Thursday, Jan. 8, as he stopped in for a made-to-order custom floral arrangement. Irvine recalled that he and Deneen have known each other since the 1960s, having a common interest in the auto racing industry.

The Little Flower Bar is open Thursday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The phone is 845-231-6341. For more information go to www.thelittleflowerbar.com. Or on Facebook: The Little Flower Bar. Or Instagram @thelittleflowerbarny.

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ZBA *Continued from Page A1*

telling the board that the prolonged dispute has caused significant turmoil for her family and their neighbors. Vitiello claimed the two outstanding items stemming from the 2005 decision — issues related to her driveway and drainage — have been "substantially completed." ZBA member Jeff Stark pressed Vitiello with sharp questions before the board voted unanimously not to move forward with reconsideration.

The zoning issue

Town Attorney Warren Replansky said during the meeting that the building permit never should have been issued, explaining that the structure was approved as a shed but built as a single-family residence without the required frontage. Replansky characterized the original paperwork submitted to the building inspector as a "false application."

Under the town's zoning code, a residential lot must abut a public street for at least 40 feet in order to be legally permitted. While the Vitiellos' driveway provides access from Cooper Road to the home and is approximately 10 feet wide, the lot itself does not meet the frontage requirement because it does not directly abut the roadway as required by zoning.

Family impact

Vitiello said that her son, daughter-in-law, and two young grandchildren live to-

gether in the home.

"We have been part of the community for 30 years," she said. "My children literally grew up here, and we've done everything possible to try to resolve any issues."

She described the home as well maintained and said the driveway is safe and fully functional, adding that meeting the town's sight-distance requirements is impossible because the driveway is curved.

"I've tried it all," Vitiello said. "Twenty years is a long time to still be dealing with this. I just want to move on and continue minding my own business — like we always have."

Public criticism

The request for reconsideration follows renewed public criticism from Cooper Road residents, including comments at recent town meetings calling for stronger zoning enforcement related to the property.

North East resident Tyler Graham recently created a group called "Save Millerton" that he hopes will call attention to gaps in town zoning enforcement and demand greater transparency, among other things.

The group's focus grew out of the long-running dispute on Cooper Road, where Graham and several neighbors allege that the Vitiello property has gone unenforced for years and caused tension in the neigh-

borhood. Graham was not present at the Thursday night meeting.

Ed Covert, whose property is adjacent to the Vitiellos', has also expressed frustration with the lack of zoning enforcement. He maintains that the driveway is actually not a driveway, but a "right of way" that passes over his property that he said is being "destroyed" by widening the path, changing angles and laying down peastone without permission. Covert said he was pleased with the decision of the ZBA.

Strong questioning from ZBA's Jeff Stark

ZBA member Jeff Stark was the first to question Vitiello, referencing the long history of litigation tied to the property.

"In the past 20 years, the Vitiellos have sued everyone and everyone has sued the Vitiellos over this property," Stark said, before asking why the Highway Supervisor and the Building Inspector were the only officials not involved in past lawsuits.

Stark asked, "Are you aware that if a building inspector refuses to grant the building permit and abuses his discretion, that a judge has the power and the duty to require him to issue them?"

In response, a confused Vitiello asked, "You're questioning why I'm not suing one of your departments? I find that a little rough, but if I can't get

it resolved in this manner then I guess that's going to have to be the next step."

Changing course, Stark said he was not suggesting any specific course of action. He framed his comments as questions about jurisdictions, asking why Vitiello believed the issue fell under the ZBA's jurisdiction and not the highway department.

Under town law, the ZBA does not have authority to determine whether a driveway meets safety or highway standards, which fall under the jurisdiction of the highway supervisor.

"Everyone keeps pointing to everyone else," Vitiello said. "I'm here to tell you that I've tried it all."

Internal conflict among ZBA

In the lead-up to the vote, tensions surfaced among board members during a procedural discussion involving Town Attorney Warren Replansky, who attended the meeting in person at the request of ZBA Chair Edie Greenwood. Replansky said reconsideration would require a unanimous vote and that a motion to reconsider would first need to be made, though such a motion would not constitute a vote in favor of the homeowner.

Stark pushed back sharply.

"I don't believe that," he said. "In fact, I don't believe much of what our attorney just said."

BAKERY *Continued from Page A1*

ents into inventive pastries that have made her Wassaic bakery a destination for locals and weekend visitors alike.

Yotive wanted to be a baker since she was five and has a video of her vowing to do it way back when. Alongside her grandfather, she learned to make bread — and still has his recipes and notes — but got started out in the food trade roasting whole animals and cooking everything in a resort camp in Patagonia.

After a stint at Bard College from 2006 to 2010, she worked at Troutbeck in Amenia and fell in love with the Oblong Valley, where today she has created a warm, sun-splashed mecca for baked goods of all sorts.

Vitsky Bakery is located at the south end of Wassaic's Main Street, nestled in front of the Metro-North railroad, which flies by behind the counter, and an atmospheric creek that burbles along with its otters and snapping turtles.

There are chairs outside and picnic tables to sip coffee and tea, and even on a brisk, snowy day, a family munched pretzel croissants and traditional hot cross buns. Yotive is still working on getting a cafe inside.

Yotive's workday starts at



A selection of baked goods behind the counter at Vitsky Bakery in Wassaic.

1:30 a.m., baking bread and proofing yeast. Dozens of muffins take three to four hours, and some mornings in the winter she has to shovel snow. She opens at 8:30 a.m. every Friday, which includes a challah bread special, and on Saturday and Sunday, which feature the big hits: cardamom buns and bialys.

The baker describes her style as rustic with "Frankenstein" touches — meaning she puts together unlikely components. One morning she made croissants that didn't work out. Rather than trash them, she repurposed them as her famous and madly popular Walnut Croissants, cut in

half and rebaked after being filled with walnut frangipane. "I bake what I want and what is local," she said, avoiding ingredients like lemons which don't grow in these parts. "I've learned to let go of expectations."

Yotive's partnership with local organic farms and neighbor-sourced ingredients has created a network of local businesses that help support one another. Part of her philosophy is to be part of the community and bring people together. Yet long hours and driving from farm to farm to collect ingredients takes its toll. "It's hard to have a social life and a family when you work from the middle of the night to late afternoon, instead of 9 to 5," Yotive said.

Using fresh also requires long hours preserving and freezing the fruit or vegetables of the moment. Tomatoes later become Focaccia Slices and fruits become bottled jams.

Yotive also has regular bakery items like chocolate croissants, cookie boxes, sunflower bread, babka, honey-oat rye and even some gluten-free options.

Yotive said she tries to allow her brain to combine what is immediately available

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Your Guide to Tri-State Arts, Entertainment & Lifestyle

PERFORMANCE: RICHARD FEINER AND ANNETTE STOVER

Stissing Center announces expansive 2026 season

There's something for everyone at the Stissing Center for Arts & Culture, the welcoming nonprofit performing arts space in the heart of Pine Plains, New York. The center's adventurous 2026 season is designed to appeal to all audiences, with a curated mix of local and visiting artists working across a range of disciplines, from bluegrass to Beethoven, from Bollywood to burlesque.

The season opens Saturday, Jan. 31, with Spark!, a multimedia concert that will also preview the center's fifth year of presenting performances that inspire, entertain and connect the community. Spark! features Grammy Award-winning Rosanne Cash, one of the country's preeminent singer-songwriters, whose artistry bridges country, folk and rock with a distinctly literary strain of American songwriting.

According to Patrick Trettenero, executive director of the Stissing Center, "This year's programming is inspired by our commitment to bring people together through the shared experience of arts and culture. It's a lively mix of musical styles — from roots, classical, world, rock and jazz — to our always-popular singer-songwriter series, with more than 50 music events to choose from."

In addition to music, the season includes theater and dance. Highlights include the Hudson Valley Puppet Slam and the Roundtop Burlesque Revue, along with dance performances ranging from flamenco to Irish step. A film series will showcase the indie comedy favorite *Hundreds of Beavers* and a live-score screening of the beloved silent Charlie Chaplin classic *The Kid*. The season also includes free programs for children all summer, along with community events and family-friendly fare.

The 2026 season also marks the launch of The Grace Note, an intimate venue located downstairs at the Stissing Center that will serve as an inviting and informal entry point to mainstage shows. The Grace Note will be open every Friday night and will feature singer-songwriters, stand-up comedy, jazz



PHOTO BY VIVIAN WANG

The opening of the 2026 season at The Stissing Center on Jan. 31 will feature Grammy winner Rosanne Cash (pictured with John Leventhal).

quartets, play readings, storytelling and more.

The venue is part of the center's commitment to offering a place for locals and visitors alike to gather and discover new work, hear familiar voices in new ways and enjoy a great night out in the neighborhood. The Grace Note opens Feb. 13 with a performance by local singer-songwriter Natalia Zukerman, who is also the Lakeville Journal and Millerton News' arts, lifestyle and engagement editor. Her masterful musicianship and storytelling blend folk, blues and Americana with wry humor and emotional clarity, creating an experience that feels both personal



PHOTO BY SARAH BLODGETT

Natalia Zukerman will open the series at The Grace Note, the new space at The Stissing Center on Feb. 13.

and expansive. Zukerman said, "I'm honored to be opening the season in this beautiful new room at The Stissing Center. The Grace Note opens up lots of creative opportunities for the Center, for performers and for our community. It's thrilling."

"We are very intentional about this season and the launch of The Grace Note," Trettenero added. "Our goal is simple: to make the Stissing Center a place for people of all backgrounds and

perspectives to come for great arts experiences, to support outstanding artists and to offer a place for connection and shared humanity through the arts."

The full season schedule and tickets for all events are available at thestissingcenter.org or by calling 518-771-3339.

HOUSATONIC CAMERA CLUB
2026 EXHIBIT
JAN 16-FEB 15

HCC is a group who collectively share their love of photography and want to share it with you. Attend our opening night on January 16 from 4-6 in the Learning Center and get acquainted with these local image-makers. Exhibit will stay open for viewing on weekends 11-4 until Feb 15.

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ART: DEBRA A. ALEKSINAS

American Mural Project names new executive director

When Jennifer Chrein first stepped inside the cavernous mill building on Whiting Street in Winsted and looked up at the towering figures of the American Mural Project, she had no idea what she was walking into.

"I had been invited by a friend to attend an event in May 2024," Chrein recalled. That friend, she said, had a ticket they couldn't use and thought she'd enjoy it. "I didn't know anything about AMP. I didn't Google it — nothing."

What followed was immediate and visceral.

"I was just — wow!" she said. "I was awed. So excited to see something like this in this area. There isn't anything else like it."

That first encounter would eventually lead Chrein to her new role as executive director of the American Mural Project, where she joins founder and artistic director Ellen Griesedieck in guiding the organization into its next chapter.

Announced earlier this month, Chrein's appointment follows the departure of Amy Wynn, who stepped down Oct. 31 after seven years as the nonprofit organization's first executive director.

Chrein praised

Wynn for her leadership in establishing the organization's solid roots and foundation, including its children's programming, events and talented staff.

At the heart of AMP is what is widely regarded as the world's largest indoor collaborative work of art: a five-story, 120-foot-long, three-dimensional mural depicting American workers across trades, industries and eras.

Created by Griesedieck with the help of hundreds of community volunteers, the mural fills the former mill building with life-sized and larger-than-life figures at work, transforming the space into an immersive environment that blurs the line between art, history and lived experience.

"The first time I saw the mural, I was awed by its scale — Ellen's artistry, and what it says about the central role of work in our lives," said Chrein. "I was immediately captivated and felt the need to share the space, the mission, and the live performances and educational programs with as many people as possible."

At the time, she said, AMP was still in an early phase of its development.

"They were still

Continued on next page



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PHOTO PROVIDED

Author Karen Belove and her horse, Sally, the inspiration for the titular character of her debut children's book.

BOOKS: NATHAN MILLER

Stanfordville author debuts children's book inspired by real-life horse

Karen Belove, of Stanfordville, said her first children's book wrote itself one day after more than a decade of thinking about it.

Belove's debut book, "Cotton Candy Sally Finds a Home," is a heartfelt tale about the trials of youth and horse training. It follows Cotton Candy Sally, a horse born in Iowa and later sold to a facility in New York City, and a young girl named Kara as she navigates adolescence and the death of a parent.

The book was inspired by the real-life story of Belove's first horse, a quarter horse from Iowa also named Cotton Candy Sally, that ended up at a facility in Queens, New York, after its owners sold it.

That horse set Belove down a lifelong path deeper into the equestrian world.

"I really loved the horses," Belove said. "It was slowly taking over my life, though I didn't realize it."

While horses were becoming an increasingly central part of her life, Belove cut her teeth at advertising agencies in New York City. She wrote ad copy every day, an occupation she said both helped and hurt her while writing her first book.

"It was a little bit of a detriment because it's such a different kind of writing," Belove said. "I had to forget about the exclamation marks."

Even so, Belove said

she paid special attention to the book's prose. Children, especially those in their preteen years, are complex, and she wanted to honor that complexity in both the content and the composition.

Continued on next page

Jennifer Chrein is the new executive director of the American Mural Project

Continued from previous page

building its foundation. They had only been open about a year," she said. "I wasn't part of their immediate vision, so I stayed a friend."

Chrein said her hope and vision for AMP, along with its board and Griesedieck, "is to expand awareness not only around Winsted and surrounding areas, but regionally, statewide and ultimately nationally."

"AMP's reach, awareness and impact should be as great as the mural itself," she said. "I am energized to be coming on board at the same time as our nation's 250th anniversary. The timing could not be better to celebrate, acknowledge and support our American workforce."

Chrein brings more than 30 years of experience in children's educational programming and global media development to the role, a background she sees as a natural fit for the mural project's mission. Her career has focused on the intersection of education, entertainment and social impact, including senior leadership roles at Sesame Workshop and Common Sense Networks, as well as founding JBMW Media and partnering in Storynauts Entertainment, where she has developed purpose-driven programming for



PHOTO PROVIDED

Jennifer Chrein is the new executive director of the American Mural Project.

families, including the preschool animated series "Powerbirds."

She said that experience — balancing creativity, partnerships and long-term sustainability — translates directly to nonprofit leadership.

On a personal level, Chrein's path to northwest Connecticut has been gradual. Now a Simsbury resident, she previously lived in Sandisfield, Massachusetts, and spent much of her life in New York City, where she worked at Sesame Workshop and traveled frequently. After shifting into consulting, she and her family put down roots in Simsbury, drawn to the town for its

excellent school system.

As executive director, Chrein is clear-eyed about both AMP's potential and its challenges — particularly visibility.

"The big issue with AMP is how to get people to come here," she said. "How do we get people to recognize Winsted as a destination?"

One goal is to introduce new elements and spaces that would provide a "happy place" for the community to gather, study, hold corporate meetings, host family events and celebrate milestones.

For Griesedieck, that

evolution feels like a natural next step.

"I couldn't be more excited that she has joined us as our new executive director and will bring some of these terrific ideas to life," said Griesedieck.

Chrein said she is stepping into the role with urgency and humility, guided by the same sense of awe she felt on her first visit. Her aim, she said, is to make sure more people discover the space, share their stories and feel the same sense of connection she did when she first looked up at the mural.

At The Movies

SHOWTIMES & TICKETS ►		
FRI 01/23 > THU 01/29	(518) 789-0022	themoviehouse.net
THE TESTAMENT OF ANN LEE + Q&A on Friday 1/23 after the 7PM show.		Great Art on Screen PAINTING THE SOUL OF THE 20TH CENTURY: Pellizza Da Volpedo Sat. 1/24 @ 1PM
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PHOTO BY NATALIA ZUKERMAN

'Conversant' opens at Troutbeck

Visitors gathered at Troutbeck in Amenia for the opening of "Conversant" on Friday, Jan. 16, a solo exhibition by multidisciplinary artist E.E. Kono, presented in collaboration with the Wassaic Project. Kono, an alumna of the Wassaic Project's Winter Residency program, created a series of luminous egg tempera paintings inspired by Troutbeck's landscape, history and legacy as a site of social and intellectual exchange. The works incorporate silverpoint, locally sourced pigments and recurring clematis motifs, referencing the estate's history as a gathering place for artists, thinkers and social reformers. The exhibition will end with an artist talk on April 19.

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FOOD: SALLY HAVER

Café Gourmet Bakery and Catering brings high-quality dining to Canaan

Café Gourmet Bakery and Catering opened in Canaan in November 2024, bringing a high-quality yet approachable dining experience to East Main Street. The restaurant is co-owned by Andrew Thielemann, general manager, and Nicholas Policastro, executive chef, who met two years ago while working in similar roles at another establishment and decided to strike out on their own.

Currently, the restaurant is open five days a week — Thursday through Monday, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. — serving breakfast and lunch. Dinner service is planned for later this winter.

"Before the end of winter, we will be offering dinner service," Thielemann said. "Initially, we'll open softly for a couple of nights — Fridays and Saturdays — then expand dinner service fully Thursday through Monday by the beginning of summer."

The phased rollout



PHOTO BY BOB ELLWOOD

will allow the owners to gather feedback and iron out any wrinkles while serving a carefully curated menu designed to give customers the quality food and service they have already experienced as breakfast-and-lunch diners.

"Then we'll move forward on expanding menu offerings based

on what we've learned," Thielemann said.

Thielemann has spent three decades in the hospitality industry.

"From dishwashing to running entire operations as a general manager," Thielemann said. "Mine has been an experience-driven career," he added. "Locally, I spent a few years at Troutbeck

in Amenia, then went to Community Table in New Preston. What I bring to the enterprise is my ability to manage multiple stakeholders in venues ranging from casual dining operations to high-end country clubs, and at Wheatleigh in Lenox, Massachusetts, where he perfected his upscale French cooking.

Policastro earned his culinary arts business management degree at SUNY Delhi, where he won multiple awards

Co-owners
Nicholas
Policastro, left,
and Andrew
Thielemann of
Café Gourmet.

a variety of fresh salads, and a "Shareable" section featuring items such as truffle fries and chocolate sourdough with ricotta.

Online reviews reflect the experience:

• "WOW!! This place is incredible! The food was absolutely delicious... Andrew, the co-owner, was friendly and made us feel so welcome."

• "The most charming spot around with an unpretentious atmosphere and genuinely great food. High-quality ingredients, thoughtfully made dishes, and very fairly priced."

• "The wait staff asks right away when you sit down about your dietary needs, like gluten- and dairy-free, or allergies. So welcome and proactive!"

• "I intend to become a regular customer; this restaurant, this wonderful food — well worth the trip."

Café Gourmet — Bakery & Catering is located at 18 E. Main Street in Canaan. Phone: (959) 227-9021. Reservations are not required at this time. Once dinner service begins, reservations will be recommended.

...Karen Belove *Continued from previous page*

Her book is character-driven, Belove said, because those were the narratives she remembers resonating with her most as a young reader. A favorite was Beverly Cleary's "Beezus and Ramona."

"I told my mother then, 'When I grow up, I'm going to write stories like "Beezus and Ramona,'" Belove said.

She credits her parents' support for her career in writing. Though they were not artists themselves, they encouraged Belove and her sister to pursue creative interests. That encouragement, Belove said, led her to become a writer and her sister a painter.

"I can still remember the first thing I ever

wrote," Belove said. "It was a poem about my cat."

Her childhood cat had escaped from the family's home in suburban Westchester County. To process the loss, Belove wrote a poem and showed it to her mother, who insisted she bring it to school the next day to show her teacher.

"My mother kept it," Belove said. "I still have it."

Belove was close with her parents, so the sudden death of her father at age 56 sent her on a search for joy that eventually led her to Cotton Candy Sally, an experience she said is reflected

in her book.

These real-life experiences are meant to give young readers an engaging, empowering and educational narrative, Belove said, because the complexities of real life are unavoidable.

"Life enables me to write the kind of book I want to write," Belove said. "Children are complex. They're really trying to navigate a world they have no experience navigating."

Belove self-published "Cotton Candy Sally Finds a Home." More information about purchasing the book is available at sallyhornerchronicles.com.

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Here's what your neighbors are saying about why they value The Millerton News

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KATHY CHOW,
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"Simply put, The Millerton News is one of the most important public services we have. It does more than report the news, it weaves the fabric of our community. It tells our stories, celebrates our successes, and ensures everyone knows what's happening right here at home. When trusted information is accessible to everyone, our community is stronger."

JENN NAJDEK, MILLERTON

"The Millerton News is an essential part of my weekly routine. Its in-depth local coverage helps keep the fabric of our community strong."

RUTH HARLOW, MILLERTON

"Building community and connection is of great importance to me, and thus I'm consistently impressed by the way The Millerton News is telling stories that honor these attributes — highlighting the good, the hopeful, unfolding for our neighbors and within our towns."

SARAH RICANO,
MILLERTON

"I feel my sense of community expanding when I read The Millerton News. The letters to the editor, the stories from our neighboring towns — Amenia and Millbrook — keep me connected to our region. We are all dealing with similar issues...albeit in different ways. There is nothing else like our paper and I'm so grateful to have it."

JENNIFER DOWLEY, NORTH EAST

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COMPASS**TRI-CORNER CALENDAR**Items are printed as space permits. Submit calendar items to editor@lakevillejournal.com**JANUARY 22****Ski Jumping in the Northeast with Author Ariel Picton Kobayashi**David M. Hunt Library, 63 Main St., Falls Village, Conn. huntlibrary.orgAt 6 p.m., the David M. Hunt Library will host a virtual program with Ariel Picton Kobayashi author of "Ski Jumping in the Northeast: Small Towns and Big Dreams." Register for the program at huntlibrary.org/events**OWLS OF THE HUDSON VALLEY**

Online.

From 1 to 2:30 p.m., join local scientist, natural historian, and writer-photographer Dr. Loren Merrill for a fascinating exploration of the owls that call the Hudson Valley home and learn about the remarkable adaptations that make these mysterious nighttime hunters so captivating. Online only. Register: [www.innisfreegarden.org/events/owls-2026](http://innisfreegarden.org/events/owls-2026)**Genealogy Workshop: Trace Salisbury's Roots to the Revolution**Scoville Memorial Library, 38 Main St., Salisbury, Conn. scovillelibrary.org

Thursdays, Jan. 22 & 29

On two Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., learn the basics of genealogy in this fun, two-part, hands-on, exploratory workshop with genealogist Jane Sellery. Use online ancestry tools and accessible public information to uncover past lives and create a profile for a real Salisbury resident who lived during the Revolutionary War era.

Registration is required at scovillelibrary.org**JANUARY 23****Black Comedy**

Ghent Playhouse, 6 Town Hall Place, Ghent, N.Y.

Jan. 23 to 25 and Jan. 30 to Feb. 1

The Ghent Playhouse opens the new year with Peter Shaffer's fast-paced farce "Black Comedy," directed by Ed Dignum ("Lend Me a Tenor"). Set in swinging 1960s London, the play follows a young sculptor whose scheme to impress a collector and future in-laws unravels during a sudden blackout, triggering a night of slapstick chaos.

Tickets and showtimes: GhentPlayhouse.org**Lunch and Learn**Hotchkiss Library of Sharon, 10 Upper Main St., Sharon, Conn. hotchkisslibraryofsharon.orgLunch and Learn at Hotchkiss Library of Sharon returns from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 23, with "Winter Wellness with Dr. Elizabeth Wing, ND." Learn naturopathic strategies to boost your immunity and stay well in the season of colds and flu. Registration is required hotchkisslibrary.libcal.com.**Happy Hour Piano Series: Christopher Casey**

American Mural Project, 90 Whiting St., Winsted, Conn.

5 to 7 p.m., \$8

Jazz pianist and composer Christopher Casey performs as part of AMP's Happy Hour Piano Series, featuring live music and libations in a distinctive art space. Tickets may be reserved in advance at americanmuralproject.org/teen-art-workshops.**JANUARY 24****New Art Nest Opening at Wassaic Project**

Wassaic Project, 37 Furnace Bank Road, Wassaic, N.Y.

Wassaic Project announces the reopening of the Art Nest, its free, drop-in artmaking space for families, now in a fully ADA-accessible, renovated ground-floor location at Maxon Mills. The refreshed space features expanded seating, new amenities and year-round Saturday drop-in hours, with a reopening celebration on Jan. 24 from noon to 5 p.m., including a ribbon cutting at 1 p.m.

Blacklight Dance!

Dewey Hall, 91 Main St., Sheffield, Mass.

Sheffield Contra presents an evening of contra dancing at Dewey Hall with music from The Star Charters. There will be a lesson from 6:30 to 7 p.m. and the dancing will be 7 to 10 p.m. with caller Will Mentor. No partner necessary. Tickets and more info at sheffieldcontra.com**Heroes & Villains in Your Backyard: The Native vs. Invasive Plant Conundrum**

Sharon Town Hall, 63 Main St., Sharon, Conn.

A free three-part workshop series hosted by the Sharon Energy & Environmental Commission, the Sharon Audubon Center and the Sharon Land Trust.

Jan. 24: Understanding Native & Invasive Plants in our Local Landscape.

Feb. 21: Practical Strategies for Managing Invasive Plants at Home & On Your Land

March 28: Choosing, Planting & Supporting Native Plants for Healthier Landscapes

Teen Art Workshop: Game On!

American Mural Project, 90 Whiting St., Winsted, Conn.

10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Suggested donation \$10

Artist and educator Gerald Moore leads an interactive workshop using 3D acrylic shapes to build worlds, characters and storylines through collaborative play. Open to teens of all skill levels. Advance registration recommended at americanmuralproject.org/teen-art-workshops.**JANUARY 25****Master Wildlife Conservationist Ginny Apple at the Hotchkiss Library of Sharon**Hotchkiss Library of Sharon, 10 Upper Main St., Sharon, Conn. hotchkisslibraryofsharon.org

Jan. 25, 4 p.m.: Black Bears in Connecticut — Learn about bear habitat, diet, behavior, reproduction, current research, and practical tips for coexisting with Connecticut's black bear population.

Free and open to all. Registration required at hotchkisslibrary.libcal.com.**Village Gardeners Book Club**David M. Hunt Library, 63 Main St., Falls Village, Conn. huntlibrary.org

The David M. Hunt Library and the Village Gardeners will partner to offer a book club at the library. All meetings will take place on Sunday afternoons at 3:30 p.m. On Jan. 25 the group will be discussing "Seed to Dust" by Marc Hamer. Books for each discussion will be available to check out at the library. This program is free and open to the public.

Last week's WotW

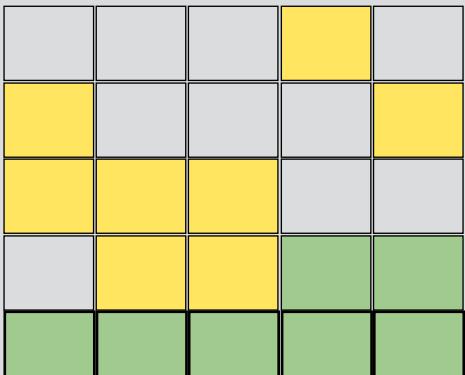
F	U	Z	Z	Y
O	F	T	E	N
S	T	I	F	F
S	W	I	F	T

Word of the Week

Hints relate to adjacent five-letter words. Solve to reveal correct letters. Green tiles indicate correctly placed letters in the Word of the Week.

Yellow tiles indicate a correct letter in the wrong place.

Uncolored tiles indicate letters that do not appear in the WotW.



1. Fully grown human
2. Plastic used to make records
3. A bar that pivots on a fulcrum
4. To work out an answer
5. Winter hand covering

REVOLUTION SONG
Book Discussion with Peter VermilyeaScoville Memorial Library, 38 Main St., Salisbury, Conn. scovillelibrary.orgJoin us from 4 to 5:30 p.m. to discuss this year's Salisbury READS book, "Revolution Song," by Russell Shorto, an acclaimed nonfiction narrative of the American Revolution, seen through the eyes of six diverse historical individuals. Author and award-winning HVRHS educator Peter Vermilyea will lead the discussion, connecting Shorto's themes and characters with our own local Revolutionary War history. Registration is required at scovillelibrary.org**JANUARY 29****Dine Out for History**

Various locations

Jan. 18 to March 23, 2026. Seven Millerton restaurants will host Dine Out for History evenings benefiting the North East Historical Society, with 10% of proceeds donated on designated nights. Participating restaurants include The Millerton Inn (Jan. 18), Taro's (Jan. 29), Willa (Feb. 12), Oakhurst Diner (Feb. 22), Pasture Kitchen (March 5), Golden Wok (March 15, takeout only) and Round III (March 23). Mention Dine Out for History when ordering.

JANUARY 31**Bats of the Hudson Valley**Online.
1 to 2:30 p.m.

Though rarely seen by daytime visitors, Innisfree's varied landscape provides habitat for a remarkable diversity of bats—up to nine species native to New York may forage, roost, or pass through the garden during the warmer months.

Join Hudsonia biologist and educator Dr. Amanda Bevan Zientek for an engaging exploration of the behaviors, adaptations, and ecological importance of these misunderstood animals. Register: www.innisfreegarden.org/events/bats-2026event featuring four time Grammy winner Rosanne Cash, acclaimed singer-songwriter, author and cultural voice. Hailed by Rolling Stone as one of her generation's most ambitious and literary artists. 7 p.m. Tickets at: thetissingcenter.org**FEBRUARY 1****A Year in the Books: Reflecting on What We Read in 2025**

Homegrown Cafe, 5 Railroad St. North Canaan, Conn. Whistle Pig Books invites you to join us at Homegrown Cafe on Sunday, Feb. 1, at 3:30 p.m. for thoughtful conversations about the books you read in 2025—the ones you loved, didn't love, and couldn't stop thinking about.

Traitor or True Defender? Loyalists and the American RevolutionScoville Memorial Library, 38 Main St., Salisbury, Conn. scovillelibrary.org

Who remained loyal to the Crown? Join us 4 to 5:30 p.m., and travel back in time with Tom Key to 1830 to hear the other side of history as told by a historical loyalist, Ezra Curruthers, who fought under Lord Cornwallis. We'll explore the complex political, economic, theological, and personal reasons why so many Americans risked everything to remain British.

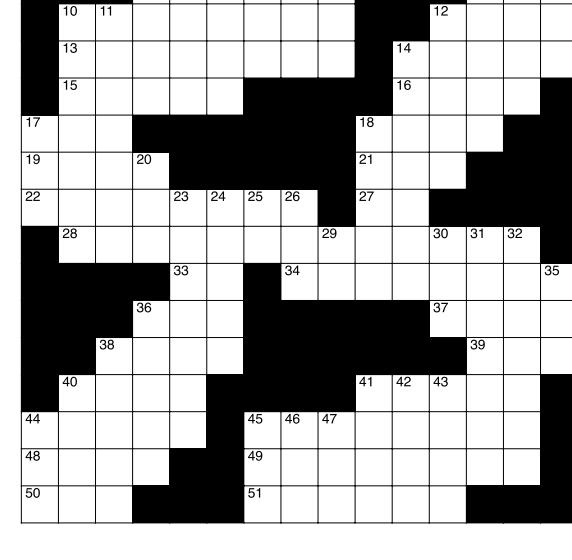
Spark! Season Launch
Event featuring Rosanne Cash

Stissing Center, 2950 Church St., Pine Plains, N.Y.

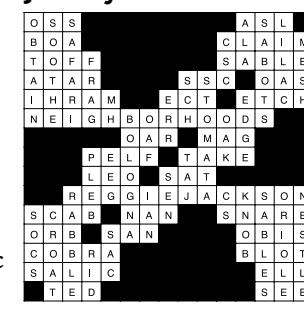
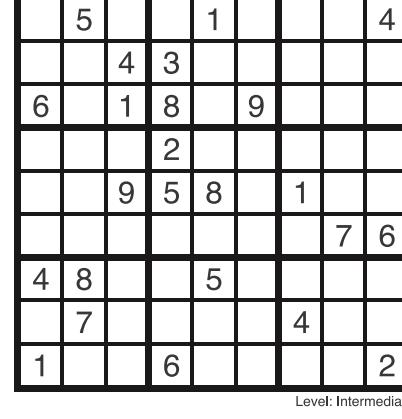
Celebrate the opening of Stissing Center's season with a launch

Brain Teasers**CLUES ACROSS**

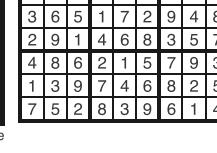
1. Mechanical lever
7. Rocky peak
10. Leave a country
12. Discount
13. D.C. ballplayer
14. Partner to "oohed"
15. Engine sound
16. Japanese ornamental box
17. Fido is one
18. Amounts of time
19. DiFranco and Phylo are two
21. Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
22. Make secret plans
27. "Tiny Bubbles" singer
28. "His Airness"
33. Morning
34. Perfected
36. Winger guitarist Beach
37. Abba __, Israeli politician
38. Self-immolation by fire ritual
39. A way to save money
40. Pulpit
41. Make ecstatically happy
44. Once more
45. Works on
48. Nocturnal S.
49. American rodent
50. Expression of disappointment
51. Type of door

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Yugoslavian communist leader
2. Exchange rate
3. High school dance
4. Peter's last name
5. When you anticipate arriving
6. Israeli city __ Aviv
7. Goat-like mammals
8. Margarine
9. End-of-the-spectrum color
10. Make poisonous
11. Popular beverage
12. Actress Lathan
14. Where planes land and depart
17. Political fundraising entity
18. The distinctive spirit of a people or an era
20. Buffer used in microbiology
23. Light, open carriage
24. Metrical feet
25. Email subject line feature
26. A street with lots of nightmares
29. Rapper Rule
30. River in Scotland
31. One who settles a dispute
32. Most chummy
35. We all have our own
36. Arab tribe
38. Slap
40. Ottoman military commanders
41. Scottish or Irish Gaelic language
42. Emit coherent radiation
43. Sun or solar disk (Egyptian mythology)
44. Inclined to
45. Olfactory reference syndrome
46. Chest muscle (slang)
47. Body part

January 15 Solution**Sudoku**

Level: Intermediate



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