THE TRI-STATE AREA’S PREMIERE LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR

Stone Masonry • Landscape Development
Landscape & Garden Maintenance
Snow & Ice Services • 3D Renderings & Designs

(860) 397 5267 • Info@KindredLandscapes.com • www.KindredLandscapes.com
We’re here to insure your entire world.

With three offices in Copake, Valatie, and Chatham we are here to help you with any of your insurance needs. Contact us today for a quote on your home, auto, business, health insurance or life insurance. We are the Kneller Agency and we’re here to insure your world.

Kneller Insurance Agency

179 Cty Rte 7A
Copake, N.Y. 12516
P. 518.329.3131

6 Church Street
Chatham, N.Y. 12037
P. 518.392.9311

3030 Main Street
Valatie, NY 12184
P. 518.610.8164

Auto • Home • Farm • Business & Commercial • Life, Health & Long Term Care

CROWN ENERGY CORP.

It’s great time to schedule annual tune-ups and propane cleanings!
Give us a call today

SERVICES:
Propane • Heating Oil • Diesel Fuel • Gasoline
Kerosene • Heating Systems • Service Installations • 24 Hour Service

(518) 789 3014 • (845) 635 2400
3 Century Blvd., Millerton, NY 12546
www.crownenergycorp.com
THINK EARTH FRIENDLY

For the past few years we have dedicated our April issue to the Earth. We here at Main Street are as passionate about our Earth and its preservation, as anyone can be I suppose. Besides using this platform to raise awareness and tie into Earth Day, we like to celebrate all through the month of April, starting with this issue and continuing through Earth Day and beyond. After this issue comes out, I encourage you to check us out on social media and on our website for other stories related to the topic, as well as just a ton of other types of articles too. If you sign up for our e-newsletter (sign up right on our website) you won’t miss a thing!

I had so much fun putting this issue together. My writers came up with such interesting stories relating to the environment and more. We are highlighting a number of local organizations that are awesome and are doing important work as well as some wider subjects that not only impact us locally, but also have global reach. Of course we also have our standard stories, including the artist profile and real estate feature.

We had some fun with a few of the pieces you’ll find on the following pages, like Jesse’s conspiracy theory article. You read that right: conspiracy theories. He and I were discussing the ridiculous conspiracy theories we’d heard as of late way back in January, and then that turned into me saying, “Hey! You wanna write an article about some of these?” We weren’t sure how it’d come out or how it’d be received – but we’d figure it out. I told him to go ahead and have some fun with it. The premise is that some of the theories that one might hear are just completely out of this world ridiculous while others are highly probable – and everything in between. So when you read his article, please keep in mind the humor of it all, and we hope that you find some good old-fashioned entertainment in that piece, because we sure did. And if you are so inclined, feel free to email Jesse your own theories. He’ll have a field day with them.

We want to wish you a happy Earth Day and a happy 4/20 too. We implore everyone to do their part – for the Earth that is. Do what you like for 4/20. ;) Even if you are so inclined, feel free to email Jesse your own theories. He’ll have a field day with them.

We wish you all a happy Earth Day! We hope that you find some good

 contenst

| 6 | THE MANY PLANETS, artist profile |
| 11 | FRIENDLY FACES |
| 13 | THE BUSINESS OF A FAMILY FARM entrepreneurs |
| 17 | JALAPENO AND CHEDDAR CHEESE BUTTERMILK BISCUIT BREAKFAST SANDWICH food |
| 19 | THE GREENEST TOWN IN CT real estate |
| 23 | GO SMALL AND GO HOMEGROWN homegrown national park |
| 27 | RAIN GARDENS IN DOVER |
| 29 | MUSK’S SATELLITE OFFERS HOPE FOR ENVIRONMENT to keep pace with climate uncertainties |
| 33 | FOOD WASTE |
| 35 | THRIFT 2 FIGHT |
| 41 | IF WISHES WERE HORSES, at large |
| 43 | IMPORTANT LESSONS FOR THE GROWING SEASON |
| 47 | BERKSHIRE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION TEAM |
| 51 | ECO-ANXIETY |
| 55 | ORGANIC GARDENING 101 |
| 59 | SAY WAAAAAT? conspiracy theories |
| 62 | BUSINESS SNAPSHOTs full circus farm paley's farm market matri farm moreish |

PUBLISHER, EDITOR, WRITER, & DESIGNER: Thorunn Kristjansdottir

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:
Abby Audenino | CB Wismar | Christine Bates | Dominique De Vito | Ian Strever | Jesse DeGroodt | Leora Armstrong | Mary B. O’Neill | Olivia Valentine & Caroline Markonic | Regina Molaro | Pom Shillingford | Whitney Joseph

COPY EDITOR: Viveca Gardiner
PHOTOGRAPHERS: Lazlo Gyorsok & Olivia Valentine

ADVERTISING
Ashley Kristjansson & Abby Audenino 518 592 1135 or info@mainstreetmag.com

CONTACT
Office 135 Rt. 44, Millerton, NY 12546 • Mailing address PO Box 165, Ancramdale, NY 12503 Phone 518 592 1135 • Email info@mainstreetmag.com • Website mainstreetmag.com

PRINT, LEGAL, ACCOUNTING, & INSURANCE
Printed by Snyder Printer, Inc. • Legally represented by Downey, Haab & Murphy PLLC Accounting services by Zulch Tax Consultants • Insured by Kneller Insurance Agency

Main Street Magazine is a monthly publication, coming out on or around the first of each month. It is published by Main Street Magazine, LLC. Main Street Magazine is not responsible for advertising errors. All ads receive that approval by the advertiser. Advertisers are legally responsible for the content and claims that are in their ads. Main Street Magazine reserves the right to refuse advertising for any reason. The entire contents of Main Street Magazine are copyrighted and may not be reproduced without permission. All rights reserved. The views expressed in the articles herein reflect the authors’ opinions and are not necessarily the views of the publisher/editor.
The Very Best in Country Living

CONNECTICUT • NEW YORK • MASSACHUSETTS
WE ARE THE COMMUNITY CONNECTION FOR OVER 35 YEARS

DEER RUN
2,714 SQ. FT. • 28 ACRES • 3 BEDS • 4 BATHS
EH#5278 • Salisbury, CT • Listed @ $4,595,000

STATELY & GRACIOUS IN-TOWN
3,102 SQ. FT. • 75 ACRES • 5 BEDS • 3 1/2 BATHS
EH#5305 • Salisbury, CT • Listed @ $1,745,000

CHARM MEETS MODERN COMFORT
2,942 SQ. FT. • .46 ACRES • 4 BEDS • 3 1/2 BATHS
EH#5208 • Salisbury, CT • Listed @ $1,095,000

SALISBURY INVESTMENT PROPERTY
2,944 SQ. FT. • .25 ACRES • 3 BEDS • 3 BATHS
EH#5242 • Salisbury, CT • Listed @ $450,000

Elyse Harney Real Estate
SALISBURY, CT  860.435.2200  WWW.HARNEYREALESTATE.COM  MILLERTON, NY  518.789.8800

Elyse Harney Real Estate LLC, Elyse Harney, Principal Broker, Licensed in CT NY MA Precept office 91 E. Main St. Salisbury, CT 06078

MAIN STREET MAGAZINE  5
Stepping into the red barn where Lothar Osterberg and his wife, Elizabeth Brown, live feels otherworldly; one has the sense of a journey’s beginning. After migrating from Brooklyn, they rebuilt their home and studios into this hand-hewn building – a shared collaboration of space, life, and creativity. Elizabeth is an extraordinary musician, composer, and teacher, while Lothar works on his visual and collaborative practice when not teaching at Bard College.

One is hard-pressed not to feel enveloped by their spirit of work. Amid nooks for reading and spaces filled with artwork, one’s eye continually wanders. While standing on an upper landing, Osterberg’s precisely made model planets circle overhead; these planets of the geographer reflect his emigration from Germany to the United States.

Early life
Lothar Osterberg grew up in Braunschweig, Germany, where he fulfilled his civil service and ignited an early passion for printmaking and filmmaking. Rejecting an offer from Berlin Art Academy, both disappointed with a neglected printmaking department buried in the basement and unappalled by the doctrine of German expressionists, he studied free art and painting at the Braunschweig University of Art under Malte Sartorius, an open-minded mentor whose focus on realism unatched another doorway.

Feeling at odds with an overwhelming claustrophobic small town, Osterberg leaped at a student-exchange opportunity for San Francisco State University. In these studies, he worked with Ernest De Soto’s workshop and at Graphic Studio, ultimately landing at the experimental workshop Crownpoint Press, where he stayed for four years. Here, Osterberg collaborated with Christian Bolanski on a portfolio of 24 photogravure copperplate photographs. This 19th-century photographic intaglio process, with its continuous tone, intrigued him. “I used the process of photography as a sketchbook, working around the camera, taking photos of whatever interested me; however, the photographs’ manufactured surface held no interest. Intaglio has a tactile surface; its essence and shadows are deeply etched into the plate, and through the highlights, the underlying paper shines with subtle transparency.”

The next chapters
Leaving Crown Press in the early 1990s, Osterberg established his first print shop shortly after the markets collapsed, later migrating to
New York, where he leased a studio space amongst the West 26th Street warehouses. Today, when Osterberg is not teaching at Bard, he continues collaborating with artists as a master printer in intaglio and as a plate-maker, working in the 19th-century process of dust grain copperplate photogravure.

I was able to sit down with Lothar to learn more about his work and process.

**What is your work for?**

“My art practice has been building objects and arranging them for my photogravure photographs rather than going out with a camera. I construct each piece as I would build a composition of a drawing or a painting. Preferring not to make investment objects, I strive to delight people, trigger something in people’s minds, and create stories of a place. I reduce the narrative to such an essence that viewers can create their own story. The emotional memory, more than the specific memory, is the appeal, a feeling more than the actual place.”

Osterberg’s work transports the viewer intimately into his minute to large-scale sculptures. When peering closely through a photographic lens, the images appear life sized, in authentic places, assembled with incredible precision and delicate handling of found objects and repurposed materials. His delight in attention to detail is infectious. When he showed me minute tubes of paint set on the artist’s bench, splattered with decades of paint, it felt all too familiar.

Viewing his work is potent. Through these tiny camera orbs, whole worlds appear, encouraging the viewer to reimagine and review the narratives within the small space. I question, “Are they real?” of his *Library of Books*, etched out of different soaps. Osterberg utilizes materiality to an extraordinary extent. Delightedly, I see a rust-covered metal model boat, which has spent a few winters outside after an unexpected flood, rediscovered under the culvert across the road, to be repurposed into his next project.

This collaboration of reusing and recycling resonates strongly in his practice. His *Tower of Babel 2015* is created from a multiplicity of languages, torn from pages of discarded foreign books, narratives conversing as one, touching on the diversity of place and unification through language.

“Showing at the Re Institute Gallery, owner Henry Klimowicz kindly offered that I use the crawlspace behind the gallery walls, beneath the tilted roofline. It is fascinating to make work this way, observing the scenes through a tiny camera lens embedded into the wall, excluding everything except the experience of the scene behind the wall. Writers do the same thing, creating absurd and fictional worlds that become believable when immersed in the moment.”

**What motivates your practice?**

“One significant motivating factor is always having a show coming up, which gives me permission to prioritize my work. Secondly, I am constantly considering the memory of places, specifically memories that impart powerful emotional impressions. I work through those memories, filtering them through time. So instead of remembering all the superfluous details, I idealize the image in my mind. Our memory is different from what we think, and sometimes parts are omitted when creating the work. Nevertheless, we still recognize the image and see no fault.”

Showing a perfect sculpture of the Flatiron building, he points out, smiling, that the top floor is different in reality; I wonder how easily we forget details. Travel in all forms permeates Continued on next page...
his studio, notably including an image of Shackleton's boat held in the ice, like an insect in amber. Without suffering through a winter in the Arctic, Osterberg re-staged Shackleton's adventure in an iced parking lot at the McDowell colony in New Hampshire.

“There are stories I love, but I have more of an emotional reaction to places than an exact record of being there. It is interesting to visit these places in one’s mind.”

Lothar and Elizabeth met at a McDowell Colony residency, where they started their long life of collaboration together. They have explored the world of making sound and film images through multiple residencies. This collaboration threads its way through their daily interactions as Elizabeth’s music rehearsal seeped into our conversation whilst we talked.

Can you touch on the collaboration between the visual and the sound and the sound into the visual?

“Elizabeth and I collaborated on Bookmobile for Dreamers, 2012, a multimedia chamber opera for theremin, electronic sound, and video, inspired by the joy of browsing and celebrating the imagination as triggered by the printed word and filmed on Isle Royale National Park in Lake Superior, where Elizabeth had a residency. I built little boats and used a digital video camera to film them floating on Lake Superior’s waves. Another video collaboration shows the Tower of Babel, 2016, celebrating New York’s constant influx of immigrants, the source of its life, beauty, and diverse culture. The soundscape features Elizabeth’s recordings of Emma Lazarus’ poem from the Statue of Liberty read in numerous accents, while The Babel sculpture is embedded with pages in countless languages from books that had been abandoned on the streets of Brooklyn.”

What advice would you give artists today?

“Through failure, we artists create more work. Here we find our promises; discovery is where we are heading through ‘happy’ accidents. Sometimes, I leave a ‘log’ in the way, so I trip. Otherwise, work becomes too slick and bland; never get too comfortable in your space.

“Growing up pre-Internet and pre-iPhone, I cannot imagine those distractions; they can numb curiosity. Make mistakes and learn to pivot when the roads lead to a dead end.”

So, how did you end up here after embedding in city life?

“It is a typical New York story: When rents became inflated for a studio in the old American Factory in Brooklyn, we elected for more open spaces. I had bookmarked this barn on my computer. However, Elizabeth never wanted to leave the city, so moving here was a secret dream. But, one day, she said, ‘I don’t have much work in New York; I can compose anywhere, if I can have a great garden I would go anywhere with you.’ Two years later, we converted this barn into a livable workspace. Now we are both the happiest clams up here.”

As we talk, the elongated shadows from minute-leaning telegraph polls next to a railway fall across the wall behind us. On opposing walls, shadows of the airplane wings and a zeppelin, brought to life with a faint breeze, fly across the ceiling; one can faintly hear a hum. It feels as if you are inside one of Lothar’s works. It is just us in this giant sculpture as he continues to shape the world around him. However, we can create our narratives entering his world; the minute filing cabinets in Cabinet of Wonders 2021 are filled with his dreams but could also be a reservoir for yours.

Where can people see your work?

“One April 13, 2024, I have a solo show at Pamela Salisbury in Hudson, NY, which will show some older work as well as new pieces. I am also delighted to be showing at Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum, Braunschweig, Germany, one of the oldest public museums in Europe, holding a fantastic print collection. After an eight-year dialogue, this will happen in the spring of 2026.”

To learn more about Lothar, you can visit lotharosterburgphotogravure.com or email him at lotharosterburg@gmail.com. Find him on Instagram @lotharosterburg. To find about his upcoming show, visit PamelaSalisbury.com.
At Meadowscapes, our focus is on highlighting the natural beauty of your property and reintroducing native biodiversity. We create landscapes that will have a positive environmental impact while bringing you peace of mind in your own backyard sanctuary.

We provide all forms of landscaping. Our work focuses on invasive plant removal, restoring your landscape’s natural habitats, and creating beautiful native meadows, gardens, and outdoor living spaces. We invite nature in and reclaim your property’s natural beauty while remembering that we are providing space for humans and wildlife alike. We design our meadows with custom seed mixes that are curated for your land’s specific conditions. Welcome home to your ecological paradise.

Right now is the perfect time to start your landscaping project!
POOCHINI’S
Pet Salon

DAWN GARDINA
Providing grooming & boarding services
46 Robin Road • Craryville, NY
518.325.4150 • 518.821.3999
poochinipetsalon@gmail.com
Follow us on Facebook!

Lindell Fuels, Inc.
Fuel Oil • Propane • Heating
Air Conditioning
CT Registration # HOD.0000095
CT License # HTG.0690604-S1 | CT License # PLM.0281220-P1
P.O. Box 609 | 59 Church Street
Canaan, CT 06018
860 824 5444
860 824 7829 fax

The Motorworks
Foreign, Domestic & Vintage Service
NY State Inspection Station
518.789.7800
23 South Center Street, Millerton, NY
www.TheMotorworks.biz

WHAT CAN WE FRAME FOR YOU?

GILDED MOON FRAMING
518.789.3428
www.gmframing.com
17 John Street • Millerton, NY

COPAKE LAKE REALTY Corp.


Owl Hollow - It’s A Hoot
Two-bedroom, two bathroom mid-century home updated with a country flair. Newer appliances, floors, windows, wood-burning heat stove and more. Sited on three acres with a seasonal stream and room to explore. At night listen to the owls hooting back and forth. Owls are considered a symbol of wealth, prosperity, wisdom, good luck, and fortune. Maybe they’re saying what a great location this is to live? Near Copake Lake. Asking $425,000
2602 Route 23, Hillsdale, NY | (518) 325-3921
290 Birch Hill Road, Craryville, NY | (518) 325-9741
Lindsay LeBrecht, Real Estate Broker | www.CopakeLakeRealty.com

We have tables outside for dining and for your enjoyment!

OAKHURST DINER
234 West Main Street • Millerton, NY
518-924-1313 • oakhurst-diner.com
Like us on Facebook and Instagram @oakhurstdiner
Open 8am-8pm Thurs-Mon

Motorworks
23 South Center Street, Millerton, NY
518.789.7800
www.TheMotorworks.biz

Lindell Fuels, Inc.
Fuel Oil • Propane • Heating
Air Conditioning
CT Registration # HOD.0000095
CT License # HTG.0690604-S1 | CT License # PLM.0281220-P1
P.O. Box 609 | 59 Church Street
Canaan, CT 06018
860 824 5444
860 824 7829 fax

Motorworks
23 South Center Street, Millerton, NY
518.789.7800
www.TheMotorworks.biz

POOCHINI’S
Pet Salon

DAWN GARDINA
Providing grooming & boarding services
46 Robin Road • Craryville, NY
518.325.4150 • 518.821.3999
poochinipetsalon@gmail.com
Follow us on Facebook!

Lindell Fuels, Inc.
Fuel Oil • Propane • Heating
Air Conditioning
CT Registration # HOD.0000095
CT License # HTG.0690604-S1 | CT License # PLM.0281220-P1
P.O. Box 609 | 59 Church Street
Canaan, CT 06018
860 824 5444
860 824 7829 fax

The Motorworks
Foreign, Domestic & Vintage Service
NY State Inspection Station
518.789.7800
23 South Center Street, Millerton, NY
www.TheMotorworks.biz

WHAT CAN WE FRAME FOR YOU?

GILDED MOON FRAMING
518.789.3428
www.gmframing.com
17 John Street • Millerton, NY

COPAKE LAKE REALTY Corp.


Owl Hollow - It’s A Hoot
Two-bedroom, two bathroom mid-century home updated with a country flair. Newer appliances, floors, windows, wood-burning heat stove and more. Sited on three acres with a seasonal stream and room to explore. At night listen to the owls hooting back and forth. Owls are considered a symbol of wealth, prosperity, wisdom, good luck, and fortune. Maybe they’re saying what a great location this is to live? Near Copake Lake. Asking $425,000
2602 Route 23, Hillsdale, NY | (518) 325-3921
290 Birch Hill Road, Craryville, NY | (518) 325-9741
Lindsay LeBrecht, Real Estate Broker | www.CopakeLakeRealty.com
friendly faces: meet our neighbors, visitors, and friends

John Allee is an architect and owner of Allee Architecture + Design. Allee has offices in Millerton, NY, Essex, CT, and Chilmark, MA, and will be celebrating its 22nd year in business this summer. For John, “seeing something we created for a client and the joy that it brings them is so gratifying.” He enjoys spending time with his three boys, family, and friends. He grew up in the city, but he spent summers and weekends in the Northwest corner. “I have always considered this area my home. I would dread going back to the city on Sunday night and would start counting down the days until I could head back up!” John also has “Ruby, the most adorable dog on the planet.” You may spot John and Ruby on the Rail Trail on their daily walks!

Nicole Clanahan owns the Rural Center Refillery in Pine Plains, NY, with her husband, Corey. Her favorite part about the job is “meeting community members of all different backgrounds – locals and weekenders, young parents, transplants, and senior citizens – they all bring something unique!” Nicole enjoys playing guitar, recording and writing music, and making charcoal portraits. Her favorite part of small-town living is seeing familiar faces when she’s out and about. Nicole also wanted to share, “our little refillery is growing every day. If you haven’t come by in a while, check it out! We’re evolving constantly and want to share our growth with our neighbors.”

Renée Shea is the secretary at Cold Spring Early Learning Center. “Being a building secretary allows you to wear many hats. Oh, and there are the occasional shoes to tie, too.” Renée has been at Cold Spring for eight years and her favorite part is the people she gets to see and work with daily. “The kids, the staff, and my boss, who is simply the best. She allows me to create, be involved, and organize in my own way.” Outside of work, Renée spends a lot of her time driving her kids around for their social and sports schedules. “I know I will blink and they will be grown up and not need me anymore. It’s the time I spend with them that I value most.” She also enjoys cooking and playing and coaching basketball. “Go Bombers!”

Paul Amash is the manager of The Hillsdale General Store in Hillsdale, NY. At the general store, Paul sells antiques, vintage items, and useful and beautiful things for country life. Paul has been with the general store for 13 years. His favorite part of his job is “working alongside my mentor and boss, the people I work with, and of course, my customers.” Outside of work, he enjoys watching movies, antiquing, and spending time with his family. “I love to model in photoshoots when the opportunity comes a-knockin’!” Paul has lived in Hillsdale for over 30 years and loves the scenery, the people, and the places. “Really, there is no other place I’d rather be! My life is my wife, my kids, my family, my customers, my coworkers, and of course, my home away from home, The Hillsdale General Store. Stop on in!”

Beth Romaker designs, plans, and implements ecological landscapes with the help of her amazing team at Meadowscapes. “We use native plants and environmentally friendly practices!” She’s been working in this role for two years, and her favorite part about the job is knowing that she’s contributing positively to the world. Outside of work, Beth loves gardening, hiking, live music, and spending time with her partner and dog. She’s not originally from the area – she was born in central Massachusetts – but she loves the community and the stunning natural landscapes. “Happy spring! We’re still booking native meadow and garden projects for the season. 2024 is going to be a great year!”

Rosemary Wessel is the program director for No Fracked Gas in Mass, a program of Berkshire Environmental Action Team. She has been working with BEAT since the program began ten years ago. “I like that we get to make a difference and find new solutions!” Outside of work, Rosemary loves to garden, “I try to grow as much of our own food as possible and grow herbs, too. We keep some rabbits for manure – natural fertilizer.” She’s originally from Cummington, MA, and loves living “at the edge of wild spaces and in a very accepting, mutually supportive community.” Rosemary says that if you’re worried about the climate crisis, don’t despair – take action! “Personal environmental actions count, but look for ways to plug into changing the big energy and political systems.”

Paul is the secretary at Cold Spring Early Learning Center. “Being a building secretary allows you to wear many hats. Oh, and there are the occasional shoes to tie, too.” Renée has been at Cold Spring for eight years and her favorite part is the people she gets to see and work with daily. “The kids, the staff, and my boss, who is simply the best. She allows me to create, be involved, and organize in my own way.” Outside of work, Renée spends a lot of her time driving her kids around for their social and sports schedules. “I know I will blink and they will be grown up and not need me anymore. It’s the time I spend with them that I value most.” She also enjoys cooking and playing and coaching basketball. “Go Bombers!”

John Allee is an architect and owner of Allee Architecture + Design. Allee has offices in Millerton, NY, Essex, CT, and Chilmark, MA, and will be celebrating its 22nd year in business this summer. For John, “seeing something we created for a client and the joy that it brings them is so gratifying.” He enjoys spending time with his three boys, family, and friends. He grew up in the city, but he spent summers and weekends in the Northwest corner. “I have always considered this area my home. I would dread going back to the city on Sunday night and would start counting down the days until I could head back up!” John also has “Ruby, the most adorable dog on the planet.” You may spot John and Ruby on the Rail Trail on their daily walks!

Nicole Clanahan owns the Rural Center Refillery in Pine Plains, NY, with her husband, Corey. Her favorite part about the job is “meeting community members of all different backgrounds – locals and weekenders, young parents, transplants, and senior citizens – they all bring something unique!” Nicole enjoys playing guitar, recording and writing music, and making charcoal portraits. Her favorite part of small-town living is seeing familiar faces when she’s out and about. Nicole also wanted to share, “our little refillery is growing every day. If you haven’t come by in a while, check it out! We’re evolving constantly and want to share our growth with our neighbors.”

Renée Shea is the secretary at Cold Spring Early Learning Center. “Being a building secretary allows you to wear many hats. Oh, and there are the occasional shoes to tie, too.” Renée has been at Cold Spring for eight years and her favorite part is the people she gets to see and work with daily. “The kids, the staff, and my boss, who is simply the best. She allows me to create, be involved, and organize in my own way.” Outside of work, Renée spends a lot of her time driving her kids around for their social and sports schedules. “I know I will blink and they will be grown up and not need me anymore. It’s the time I spend with them that I value most.” She also enjoys cooking and playing and coaching basketball. “Go Bombers!”

Rosemary Wessel is the program director for No Fracked Gas in Mass, a program of Berkshire Environmental Action Team. She has been working with BEAT since the program began ten years ago. “I like that we get to make a difference and find new solutions!” Outside of work, Rosemary loves to garden, “I try to grow as much of our own food as possible and grow herbs, too. We keep some rabbits for manure – natural fertilizer.” She’s originally from Cummington, MA, and loves living “at the edge of wild spaces and in a very accepting, mutually supportive community.” Rosemary says that if you’re worried about the climate crisis, don’t despair – take action! “Personal environmental actions count, but look for ways to plug into changing the big energy and political systems.”

Paul is the secretary at Cold Spring Early Learning Center. “Being a building secretary allows you to wear many hats. Oh, and there are the occasional shoes to tie, too.” Renée has been at Cold Spring for eight years and her favorite part is the people she gets to see and work with daily. “The kids, the staff, and my boss, who is simply the best. She allows me to create, be involved, and organize in my own way.” Outside of work, Renée spends a lot of her time driving her kids around for their social and sports schedules. “I know I will blink and they will be grown up and not need me anymore. It’s the time I spend with them that I value most.” She also enjoys cooking and playing and coaching basketball. “Go Bombers!”

John Allee is an architect and owner of Allee Architecture + Design. Allee has offices in Millerton, NY, Essex, CT, and Chilmark, MA, and will be celebrating its 22nd year in business this summer. For John, “seeing something we created for a client and the joy that it brings them is so gratifying.” He enjoys spending time with his three boys, family, and friends. He grew up in the city, but he spent summers and weekends in the Northwest corner. “I have always considered this area my home. I would dread going back to the city on Sunday night and would start counting down the days until I could head back up!” John also has “Ruby, the most adorable dog on the planet.” You may spot John and Ruby on the Rail Trail on their daily walks!

Nicole Clanahan owns the Rural Center Refillery in Pine Plains, NY, with her husband, Corey. Her favorite part about the job is “meeting community members of all different backgrounds – locals and weekenders, young parents, transplants, and senior citizens – they all bring something unique!” Nicole enjoys playing guitar, recording and writing music, and making charcoal portraits. Her favorite part of small-town living is seeing familiar faces when she’s out and about. Nicole also wanted to share, “our little refillery is growing every day. If you haven’t come by in a while, check it out! We’re evolving constantly and want to share our growth with our neighbors.”

Renée Shea is the secretary at Cold Spring Early Learning Center. “Being a building secretary allows you to wear many hats. Oh, and there are the occasional shoes to tie, too.” Renée has been at Cold Spring for eight years and her favorite part is the people she gets to see and work with daily. “The kids, the staff, and my boss, who is simply the best. She allows me to create, be involved, and organize in my own way.” Outside of work, Renée spends a lot of her time driving her kids around for their social and sports schedules. “I know I will blink and they will be grown up and not need me anymore. It’s the time I spend with them that I value most.” She also enjoys cooking and playing and coaching basketball. “Go Bombers!”

Rosemary Wessel is the program director for No Fracked Gas in Mass, a program of Berkshire Environmental Action Team. She has been working with BEAT since the program began ten years ago. “I like that we get to make a difference and find new solutions!” Outside of work, Rosemary loves to garden, “I try to grow as much of our own food as possible and grow herbs, too. We keep some rabbits for manure – natural fertilizer.” She’s originally from Cummington, MA, and loves living “at the edge of wild spaces and in a very accepting, mutually supportive community.” Rosemary says that if you’re worried about the climate crisis, don’t despair – take action! “Personal environmental actions count, but look for ways to plug into changing the big energy and political systems.”
UPCOMING EVENTS

April 27
A Free Community Earth Day Event

April 6
+ Q&A with Director Keith Boynton

April 16 & 21
Directed by David Bickerstaff

April 16 & 21
Directed by David Bickerstaff

May 4 + Q&A with Director, Ralph Arlyck

May 7 & 12

Herrington Fuels
It's all about comfort.

Servicing Taconic Hills Area
(518) 325-6700
herringtonfuels.com
9018 State Route 22 • Hillsdale
By Christine Bates
info@mainstreetmag.com

Being a farmer is hard work. It requires long hours and deep dedication. But the rewards of cultivating the earth and feeding people can’t be quantified. We were able to catch up with Gordon Ridgway of Ridgway Farms in West Cornwall, CT, to learn about his journey to becoming a farmer, how he contributes and gives back to his community, and how he’s passed on his farming passion and knowledge to his children.

How did you decide the farming life was for you?

I grew up in Cornwall, went to elementary school here and then Salisbury School before going to St. Lawrence University in northern New York State. As a kid I had always helped out on farms, and I decided that farming was a way to return home to Cornwall and make a life.

In 1980, after I graduated college, my father, Bruce Ridgway, and I turned the land he had purchased relatively cheaply years before into a productive, organic farm. The very first year we started selling vegetables from our farm stand. We built farm buildings ourselves and added cattle, pigs, and chickens. We started making maple syrup and growing flowers. My wife Jayne and then our children Elizabeth, Ian, and Rebecca play an important role in growing the farm into a sustainable family endeavor and giving it a future.

What heritage techniques do you use?

Our farm was one of the first certified organic farms in Connecticut. Instead of fertilizer we use composted manure and cover crops to improve our soil.

We plant heirloom varieties of vegetables that grow well in our climate. Our 15 varieties of heirloom tomatoes are a great example. And right now, we are grafting 350 apple scions of many heritage varieties to create a cider orchard.

My son Ian is growing young apple trees from scion wood he has collected from old Cornwall orchards to preserve local genetic history. These heritage varieties include Esopus Spitzenberg apples named in honor of the Catskill indigenous tribe, they were propagated in the eighteenth century for making cider, reportedly a favorite variety of Thomas Jefferson.

Is it difficult to be a farmer in Cornwall?

We don’t have the greatest soil here. Dig a hole anywhere and you’ll find a rock. Weather is always every farmer’s biggest problem, and climate change has only made it worse. We have to prepare for drought by improving our irrigation systems and for extreme temperatures by building more greenhouses, all while worrying about flooding and drainage.

The late spring frost last year decimated the peach and apple crops, and the warm winters halved Canada’s maple syrup production. Heavy rains and cloudy weather keep customers away from farm stands and farmer’s markets.

What are your most profitable items?

Tomatoes, lettuce, and maple syrup are our biggest products. Meat and eggs aren’t as important, but cattle and hens produce valuable manure for the fields. We ship maple syrup all over the world and can sell it all year long.

Continued on next page…
Where do you sell your products? We have our “Get Fresh” farm stand on Town Street that is open 24/7 functioning on the honors system. On Saturday mornings in season, we join other farmers selling their products at the Coop Farm Market on the green and also in Kent. Shares of our CSA are available by contacting us at theridgwayfarm@gmail.com. Our new crop of maple syrup is available at many area stores and farm stands: The Local in West Cornwall, the Cornwall Market in Cornwall Bridge, and LaBonne’s in Salisbury all have good displays. We manage to sell everything we produce.

Before COVID, our wholesale business to stores and restaurants was important, but it disappeared during the pandemic. Now it’s coming back. You have to adjust. For twenty years we have been supplying food pantries. Recently we received a grant to supply fresh produce for the food pantries in Lakeville and Cornwall. 90% of our sales are made within 15 miles of our farm.

Who are your competitors? In Cornwall there is a farming community. Hurlburt’s farm (cattle), Calf and Clover Creamery (great yogurt), horse and hay farms, llama ranches, the Dolan’s at Maple Hill Farm, Birdseye (grass-fed lamb and beef), and Tanner Brooks farm. There are at least 12 full-time farm operations in town. Locally we cooperate with other farmers and often trade farming techniques. Our common competitor is the grocery store, and our common enemy is the weather.

Has inflation affected your pricing? Well, I can say that it has certainly affected everything we buy, but our prices at the farm stand have increased very little.

Where do you buy your seeds? Most of our seeds comes from Fedco and Johnny’s Seeds in Maine and Hart Seeds in Wethersfield, CT.

Do you ever ask yourself if becoming a farmer was a mistake? I have no regrets. It’s not incredibly profitable, and you work very hard, but you make lots of friends and have the freedom to make your own decisions, to see things grow, and have flexibility with your family life.

Sometimes the hours are very long. This week we got up at 5 am for sugaring and went to bed at 1 am. At the same time, it makes you appreciate your time off. The satisfaction you feel is passed along to your children.

What are your plans for the farm’s future? You always have to be flexible and adjust to the market. We might plant some pumpkins this year. Our son Ian plans on opening a cider-tasting barn on the property where people can gather and enjoy soft and hard cider made from our farm’s organic heirloom apples. Our farm stand will be expanded into a farm store where we can sell more products.

Your whole family is an integral part of the Cornwall community. That’s true. Jayne is a lieutenant in the Cornwall Fire Department, Rebecca is an EMT, Ian is a fire captain, and Elizabeth is the ambulance captain. I’ve been elected first selectman in Cornwall 17 times – that’s 34 years.

Ridgway Farm is located at 142 Town St, West Cornwall, CT. You can call them at (860) 672-0279 or visit them online at ridgwayfarm.com.

Stalking the Ridgway family, L-R Rebecca, Rhudha an Australian shepherd, Jayne, Ian, Elizabeth, and Gordon. Everyone pitches in at the farm.
We know how hard it is to resist driving your sports car the way it's meant to be driven.

BUT YOU DON’T HAVE TO

The Drivers Club at Lime Rock Park offers a place where you can enjoy your high performance car to the fullest in a convivial environment among like-minded enthusiasts.

Schedule a Track Day to experience what The Drivers Club has to offer.

Learn more at LIMEROCKCLUB.com
We at Noble Horizons love our surrounding environment. Our campus boasts over 110 sprawling acres that include walking and biking trails, views of the surrounding mountains, and our dining hall overlooks the pond that is home to our resident geese. Many of our residents lead active lifestyles and we offer many clubs and activities that are enjoyed on our scenic setting. The residents and staff here at Noble strive to protect and support all of our wild and furry friends.
It’s time to elevate your BEC! Caroline is a spicy food fan. I am not, but this egg sandwich had me at first bite! The aioli and the biscuit both have just the right amount of heat where you aren’t sweating as you chow down. However, if you want more heat, and enjoy the beads of sweat that form on your forehead, add more jalapeño to the biscuit, use a spicy jack cheese, spicy sausage instead of bacon, or add more sriracha and some cayenne pepper to your aioli. As always, make it how you like it.

Breakfast is a meal we rarely skip. As we’ve previously mentioned, we love sweet breakfasts like pancakes, French toast, crépes, and waffles. However, savory breakfasts hold an equal place in our hearts, and they prepare you for the day a little bit better. Savory breakfasts have protein that most sweet ones are lacking. Eggs and bacon or sausage leave you feeling satiated, satisfied, and ready to take on the day. We hope that you have a fantastic day whether you make our egg sandwich or not!

Instructions
Preheat oven to 425° and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Sift flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt into a bowl. Cut in shortening with a pastry blender, two forks, two knives, or even your hands until the mixture resembles cornmeal. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture and pour in the buttermilk. Mix lightly. Add the chopped jalapeño and the cheese. Combine until the dough leaves the side of the bowl. Turn on a lightly floured surface. Fold the dough 7-10 times to create layers. Lightly roll from the center in all directions, being sure to lift the rolling pin at the edges. Roll to ½-¾” thickness. Cut with a biscuit cutter. If you don’t have a biscuit cutter you can use the rim of a mason jar. Just make sure you lightly flour the rim of the jar first. Gather remaining dough and roll out again and repeat the cutting process. Brush tops of biscuits with melted butter and sprinkle with a little sea salt (optional). Bake for 8-10 minutes.

JALAPEÑO & CHEDDAR CHEESE BREAKFAST SANDWICH

By Olivia Valentine with Caroline Markonic
info@mainstreetmag.com

It’s time to elevate your BEC! Caroline is a spicy food fan. I am not, but this egg sandwich had me at first bite! The aioli and the biscuit both have just the right amount of heat where you aren’t sweating as you chow down. However, if you want more heat, and enjoy the beads of sweat that form on your forehead, add more jalapeño to the biscuit, use a spicy jack cheese, spicy sausage instead of bacon, or add more sriracha and some cayenne pepper to your aioli. As always, make it how you like it.

Breakfast is a meal we rarely skip. As we’ve previously mentioned, we love sweet breakfasts like pancakes, French toast, crépes, and waffles. However, savory breakfasts hold an equal place in our hearts, and they prepare you for the day a little bit better. Savory breakfasts have protein that most sweet ones are lacking. Eggs and bacon or sausage leave you feeling satiated, satisfied, and ready to take on the day. We hope that you have a fantastic day whether you make our egg sandwich or not!

Biscuit ingredients
2 cups flour
2 ¼ tsp baking powder
¼ tsp baking soda
1 tsp salt
½ cup + 2 tsp shortening
¾ cup buttermilk*
½ cup sharp cheddar cheese

1 jalapeño seeded and chopped fine
1 tbs melted butter
Sea salt (optional)

*If you don’t have buttermilk, you can make your own. Pour 2 tbs of vinegar or lemon juice into a measuring container and fill with milk until you reach the 2 cup line. Stir and then let sit for 5-10 minutes.

Spicy aioli ingredients
1/2 cup mayo
2 tbs sriracha (or to taste)
1 tbs lime juice
Dash of sea salt
Dash of garlic powder

Assembling the egg sandwich
Slice warm biscuits in half; fry or scramble your eggs; add cooked bacon, ham, or sausage; top with cheddar cheese (or cheese of your choice), sliced avocado, and the spicy aioli. Serve immediately.

This recipe yields about 8-10 biscuits. Freeze any leftover biscuits. •

Olivia and Caroline are enthusiastic foodies and bakers who are constantly in the kitchen, as well as explorers who create their own adventures in our area – and did we mention they are mother and daughter? Follow Olivia on Instagram to see her many creations at @oliviawvalentine.
The hilly, rocky rural Town of Cornwall and its five Cornwallian hamlets – Cornwall Bridge, Cornwall, West Cornwall, East Cornwall and Cornwall Hollow – are described as quirky, different, bohemian, artistic, intellectual, remote, private, and outdoorsy. East of Kent and Sharon in Litchfield County, Cornwall is lightly populated with only 1,379* residents spread out over 46 square miles.

In 2016, the Town of Cornwall was proclaimed the greenest town in Connecticut, which itself is among the ten greenest states based on environmental quality, eco-friendly behavior, climate change mitigation, water quality, and low energy consumption according to research conducted by Movato, a digital real estate player. The study determined that the Town of Cornwall is the greenest in Connecticut based on people per square mile, pounds of trash per person, recycling, and residential energy efficiency programs. The study failed to mention that 26% of the town is covered by state forests and another 20% to 25% protected from development by conservation easements according to Gordon Ridgway, long-time Cornwall first selectman.

What makes Cornwall Cornwall
Cornwall’s character is also distinctive. It’s a place where families dating back to the 1700s like the Dibbles and the Popples mix easily with generations of second-home owners and newcomers. Residents value community involvement in parades and events like the Cornwall Women’s Society rummage sale, farmers markets, the volunteer fire department, and the many town committees addressing local issues from solar panels and affordable housing to economic development. The informative, colorful town website pulls everything together and lists artists and local businesses.

Education is important in Cornwall, which has a higher percentage of residents with graduate degrees than Kent, Sharon, or Salisbury.* Everyone is proud of the small Cornwall Consolidated School from K to 8th grade, which sends most of its graduates on to Housatonic Valley High School.

Housing in Cornwall
Like the terrain, Cornwall has a very up and down real estate market for many reasons. First there just aren’t that many houses to sell in Cornwall. There are only 1,000 housing units in the entire town compared to 2,600 in Salisbury.* On a twelve-month rolling basis, the number of Cornwall home sales is, not surprisingly, one third of Salisbury’s average monthly sales. Another reason for the low number of sales is the infrequent turnover of properties. In the last five years in Cornwall there were 124 sales of residential homes, but during the same period only seven properties were resold. Four of these resold homes fetched more than a million dollars while three were under a half million. The most expensive resale was 40 Cobble Hill Road with 187 acres, which was purchased in February of 2022 for $4,650,000 and resold two years later for $6,250,000.

Also contributing to the range of sale prices is the presence of large estates, and even a castle, as well as affordably priced homes. Ivan Lendl’s real estate sales and purchases alone account for high average prices in Cornwall. In February 2024, after years on the market, his 18,000-square-foot estate with 446 acres was sold for $12,000,000 – the highest price for a residential property in Cornwall.
in Litchfield County.

Elyse Harney Morris of Elyse Harney Realty, the agent responsible for the sale, told The Lakeville Journal, “I am still pinching myself. Very rarely do you see this much acreage in Litchfield County, although you could go over the border to New York and see it all day long. That’s what creates the privacy and the ability to say that you have that much acreage. That is a big deal.”

Cornwall has had its share of celebrity buyers from Michel J. Fox to Whoopi Goldberg and rumors are swirling that Ryan Reynolds was the purchaser of Lendl’s estate. Since Cornwall is about privacy, no one actually knows.

Cornwall’s high-end home prices are driven by privacy, acreage, and views. Diane Bisselle, a top agent with William Pitt Sotheby’s International Real Estate, commented that Cornwall’s views rival those in the Adirondacks and Maine. One long-term resident who purchased a home up a long, gravel driveway explained the town’s continuing allure, “We looked at over 40 houses in Connecticut. I kept saying I wanted a view, and then I found it on top of Warren Hill with 52 acres. Finally.”

Cornwall sales patterns
Since 2003 Cornwall has generally seen median prices below its NW corner neighboring towns of Salisbury, Kent, and Sharon with peaks far above theirs in April 2003 of $629,000, and $850,000 in December 2008 on a rolling twelve-month calculation. On the same basis Cornwall hit the lowest median price (of $190,000) of any of the four towns in the last twenty years in December 2015. This pattern changed with COVID when Cornwall median prices rose above Sharon and Kent. Median prices are now readjusting in Cornwall and currently at $514,000.

In the last five years, 47% of Cornwall homes sold for less than $500,000. It is a town where you can find a moderately priced home or a castle. Full-time residents enjoy the community life, year-round recreation, excellent schools, and affordable property taxes while second home owners, even movie stars, cherish the views and the privacy.

On the market now
As spring selling season approaches, only five houses are for sale in Cornwall, all above $700,000. Three properties are in the process of closing, and all of those have list prices over $900,000.

With warmer weather will less expensive properties become available for eager buyers interested in the life that Cornwall offers? •

* Cornwall demographic information sourced from 2023 State of Connecticut Town Profile. All residential sales information is on a 12-month rolling average from Infosparks database on the Connecticut Multiple Listing service.

Christine Bates is a registered real-estate agent in New York and Connecticut with William Pitt Sotheby’s. She has written about real estate and business since Main Street Magazine’s first issue in 2013.
Spring is here, is your outdoor space ready?

Hours: Tuesday - Saturday 10 - 5 • 5938 North Elm Ave. • Millerton, NY 12546
t: 518.789.3848 • f: 518.789.0234 • www.northelmhome.com
34 Main St
Millerton, NY 12546
info@geary.nyc
@gearycontemporary

Columbia County Real Estate Specialists
LICENSED REAL ESTATE BROKER SERVING BUYERS & SELLERS IN COLUMBIA COUNTY, NY

Come discover all the special features at 638 Fog Hill Rd., Austerlitz, NY. Numerous substantial updates include a totally remodeled kitchen, new furnace, new hot-water heater, updated electrical system, new interior doors and new reverse-osmosis water filtration system. The parcel is 1.3 acres in size and bordered on two sides by State Forest. The property has enjoyed a successful history of generating income on Airbnb and being rented on an annual basis. There really is something here for everyone. $495,000

(518) 567-4404 • JOHNAAVENIA@GMAIL.COM • WWW.REALESTATECOLUMBIACOUNTY.COM

Paley’s MARKET and GARDEN CENTER

It’s Time To Start Your Growing Season!

Seeds • Pansies • Native Perennials & Shrubs
Trees • Fertilizer • Grass Seed

Annuals, Perennials, Herb & Vegetable Starts, Nursery Stock, Large selection of Seeds, Garden Pottery & Decor Tools, Supplies & Accessories, Gifts for Garden & Home

230 Amenia Road
(Rt. 343), Sharon, CT
T: 860-364-0674
Join our E-Club for news

www.Paley’sMarket.com

R&R Servicenter, LLC

Steve J Mosher
914.474.5206
randrservicecenter.net

Specializing in: Ponds, Landsculpting, Riding Arenas, & Roads

tristate antique restoration

SPECIALIZING IN ANTIQUE FURNITURE RESTORATION

CONALL HALDANE | proprietor
191 wiltie bridge road | ancramdale, ny 12503
518 329 0411 | www.tristateantiquerestoration.com

SPECIALIZING IN ANTIQUE FURNITURE RESTORATION

(518) 567-4404  •  johnaavenia@gmail.com  •  www.realestatecolumbiavounty.com

Columbia County Real Estate Specialists
LICENSED REAL ESTATE BROKER SERVING BUYERS & SELLERS IN COLUMBIA COUNTY, NY

Come discover all the special features at 638 Fog Hill Rd., Austerlitz, NY. Numerous substantial updates include a totally remodeled kitchen, new furnace, new hot-water heater, updated electrical system, new interior doors and new reverse-osmosis water filtration system. The parcel is 1.3 acres in size and bordered on two sides by State Forest. The property has enjoyed a successful history of generating income on Airbnb and being rented on an annual basis. There really is something here for everyone. $495,000

(518) 567-4404 • JOHNAAVENIA@GMAIL.COM • WWW.REALESTATECOLUMBIACOUNTY.COM

Paley’s MARKET and GARDEN CENTER

It’s Time To Start Your Growing Season!

Seeds • Pansies • Native Perennials & Shrubs
Trees • Fertilizer • Grass Seed

Annuals, Perennials, Herb & Vegetable Starts, Nursery Stock, Large selection of Seeds, Garden Pottery & Decor Tools, Supplies & Accessories, Gifts for Garden & Home

230 Amenia Road
(Rt. 343), Sharon, CT
T: 860-364-0674
Join our E-Club for news

www.Paley’sMarket.com

“When it comes to quality antiquing in a warm and welcoming environment all roads lead to the Millerton Antiques Center.”

Fodor Travel

MILLERTON ANTIQUES CENTER
MAIN STREET

More than 35 dealers.
Open 7 Days a Week.

518-789-6004
Homegrown National Park

**GO SMALL AND GO HOME GROWN**

By Mary B. O’Neill, PhD
mary@mainstreetmoxie.press

Homegrown National Park is determined to save biodiversity one privately owned land at a time. Seventy-eight percent—that’s 1.3 billion acres—of all land in the lower 48 states of the US is privately owned. That’s a lot of land we have direct control over, and Homegrown National Park empowers all of us to make a difference in one planting container, one square foot, one acre at a time.

HNP’s goal is to arrest and reverse the 800,000 acres of habitat lost each year in the US, in order to help address the loss of bird, animal, and insect species that occupy those habitats. HNP reframes the complex issue of biodiversity and habitat preservation, which can be mired in large numbers and staggering statistics, and make it simple.

This information can help you make intentional choices about what to do with your land to encourage species and regeneration. Whether it’s planting a container on your deck with plants that attract pollinators, creating a small native garden, planting a single tree, or converting acres to meadow, it all counts. You can scale your efforts based on what is manageable for you, and no effort is too small.

**Positivity and the human mind**

The philosophy of HNP is grounded in how the human mind works. Positivity and small steps lead to sustainable and lasting behavior change. Large numbers that outline a crisis and appeal to logic are paralyzing. Specific examples in literally our own yard that work on our emotions are galvanizing. Ask any fundraiser what’s more compelling—a table with statistics or a solitary tear rolling down the cheek of one person you can save.

**Bitten by the biodiversity bug**

HNP co-founders Doug Tallamy and Michelle Alfandari came together from different worlds. Tallamy is a well-respected entomologist, wildlife ecologist, professor at the University of Delaware, and New York Times best-selling author of several books exploring how regular people like you and me can interact with the natural world in a way that preserves and builds biodiversity. Alfandari is a beach-loving city dweller, entrepreneur, and marketing and licensing strategist who now lives full time in rural Sharon, CT, surrounded by plants, trees, insects, and animals that were a mystery to her—one she was not all that keen to solve.

Tallamy’s talk at the Salisbury Forum in 2017 served as their call-to-action matchmaker. Tallamy described how each of us can contribute to protecting and creating biodiversity and habitat. Alfandari was a reluctant audience member, cajoled into attending by neighbors and natural landscape practitioners Robin Zitter and Michael Nadeau.

Something clicked for Alfandari during that lecture. She began to see how she could make a difference in saving the natural world through choices for her property. Her branding and marketing brain reactivated, and she started to think about how Tallamy could infuse emotion and scalability into his message of how many people taking small actions can significantly impact biodiversity.

Continued on next page...
Crash course in biodiversity and branding

The two began a conversation about how to bring their professional strengths together. He educated her in biodiversity science, and she gave him a crash course on how to appeal to people in a way that mobilizes emotion into action.

The result is Homegrown National Park, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to making increased biodiversity part of what it means to be a private landowner, whether individual, group, non-profit, or corporate. It’s not political or legislative. It’s good personal stewardship of the land we have control over. By focusing on our own slice of heaven, we can create a needed paradise for native species.

Much of Tallamy’s research supports habitat preservation and restoration so native plants, animals, and insect species can thrive. When they thrive we benefit from their ecosystem services. These include producing oxygen and clean water, enabling pollination of plants and trees, controlling pests, and storing carbon.

Tallamy writes, “Our national parks, no matter how grand in scale, are too small and separated from one another to preserve species on the level needed by each and every human on earth. Thus, the concept for the Homegrown National Park, a bottom-up call to action to restore habitat where we live, work, play, pray, learn, farm, and graze, effectively extending our national parks to our communities.”

The Map

At the heart of Homegrown National Park is the Biodiversity Map or “The Map.” Alfandari explains that the first-of-its kind interactive map uses a citizen-science model that allows individuals to log their efforts to see how their native planting, clearing of invasives, and reducing the use of chemicals can add to the similar efforts of others. Every native plant in the ground or invasive cleared is a drop in the biodiversity bucket. Over time, those drops add up.

Individuals can register their property on the map and keep track of their incremental efforts. They can also see what is happening near them to build momentum for local biodiversity. Alfandari states, “The Map amplifies and consolidates individual and group actions and creates a dynamic visual representation, pinpointing where actions are thriving and where they are desperately needed.”

Since The Map launched in 2021, it has documented over 100,000 acres of concrete efforts to restore and conserve native habitats.

Alfandari knows that guilt is not a motivator that calls people to action. She explains that “finding an emotional access point, creating personal empowerment, and connecting to others doing the same is an antidote to despair.” Biodiversity is global, but it’s also deeply personal. She states, “If you breathe, you need biodiversity.” HNP is truly a grassroots effort for her, and The Map is the nexus of collective local efforts.

Resources to educate and find help

Tallamy and Alfandari did their due diligence before spending four years getting Homegrown National Park to the place it is today – a non-profit with an executive director and global team. They did not want to replicate the work of others but rather become a hub of biodiversity efforts and resources to help landowners maximize their property’s biodiversity. This includes a robust list of resources that range from educating yourself through Tallamy’s substantial and accessible research to finding a native plant nursery and ecological landscapers in your area. For Alfandari, “If someone else is doing it, we refer people to them and provide links to those resources on our website.”

Fireflies lighting the way

Tallamy and Alfandari selected the firefly as their beacon of hope. These insects symbolize the threat of habitat destruction and the hope of Homegrown National Park’s work.

The Firefly Specialist Group of the International Union for Conservation of Nature has identified 18 species in North America “at risk of extinction.” This is borne out by looking for fireflies on our property – they’re hard to find. Remember back to your childhood and the nightly summer-time ritual of chasing fireflies in the dusk? They were everywhere and can be again through what we choose to do in our yards.

HNP wants you to focus on those decisions. We can impact the firefly’s survival by reducing outdoor lights, eschewing pesticides and chemical fertilizers, planting native grasses, shrubs, and trees, incorporating water gardens, and providing areas where our leaves are unraked.

The firefly exemplifies what Homegrown National Park is all about: acknowledging the large and complex threats; refusing to be paralyzed by them; and joining with others to take small, empowering, and impactful steps.

By doing this, we address the threats to the natural world and ourselves by embracing our own biodiversity locus of control – our backyard.

For more information about Homegrown National Park, to join the Biodiversity Map, and to contribute to its important work, visit homegrownnationalpark.org.
“The personal touch from Bank of Millbrook really made a big impression on us, as our business was built by being on the front line.” — John Stefanopoulos

Over fifty years ago, four Stefanopoulous brothers arrived from Greece with a dream of success and together they built a dynasty of Four Brother’s Pizza Inns. The next generation of the Stefanopoulous family followed in their footsteps and realized their own dream of creating a Drive In theater in Amenia, which has become a true destination. When you’ve been in business as long as the Stefanopoulous family, you understand the value of relationships with people you know and trust.

Whether you have been in business for 50 years or are just starting out, the Bank of Millbrook is here to support your goals. Stop by one of our branches and tell us how we can help your business grow!

BANK OF MILLBROOK
The Strength of Relationships

(845) 677-5321  BANKOFMILLBROOK.COM
Gina’s K-9 Bed & Breakfast

- Boarding, daycare & play dates
- Dogs participate in family lifestyle
- 1/2 acre fenced in exercise yard
- A creek to swim in!
- Quality care pet sitting • Vet recommended
- 25 years experience • No cages or kennels

518-329-4675
Fully insured & member of NAPPS
(National Association of Professional Pet Sitters)

Celebrating winning Best of Columbia County 2 years in a row!

Our OWN Smokehouse Specialty Meats & Sausages
Wide Variety of CRAFT BEERS!
ITALIAN SPECIALTIES:
Cheeses, Pastas, Olive Oil, Vinegars
Also LOCAL Breads, Vegetables, Honey, Jams, Grains & more!

IN A FARM Setting
Since 1800

ROARING OAKS FLORIST

Flowers make any occasion extra special!

(860) 364-5380
349A Main St., Lakeville, CT
www.roaringoaksflorist.com

QUATTRO’S POULTRY FARM & MARKET

FRESH FROM OUR FARM
Chickens, Pheasants, Ducks, Geese, Turkeys & Venison
IT’S BBQ SEASON - GET THE GRILL OUT AND HAVE A PARTY!
Steaks • Chops • Ribs • Fresh Ground Beef • Bacon Burgers • Fresh Sausages
Our own Smokehouse Specialty Meats & Sausages
QUATTRO’S ICE CREAM BAR IS NOW OPEN!
Wide variety of CRAFT BEER!
ITALIAN SPECIALTIES: Cheeses, Pastas, Olive Oil, Vinegars
Also LOCAL Breads, Vegetables, Honey, Jams, Grains & more!

QUIV WALLS & EVENTS

11111111111111111

11111111111111111

THE IDEAL VENUE & LOCATION FOR YOUR PERFECT DAY

CatskillView Weddings & Events
Call 518 592 1135 • CatskillViewWeddings.com

NATIONAL REGISTER 1760 DONNELLY HOUSE
This important example of early New England Salt Box architecture sits on nine acres with far reaching valley views extending to the Berkshires. The early house, with an impressive center chimney housing three fireplaces, and wide board floors and beamed ceilings, has been updated for modern living while retaining original details. With two early barns, a lovely stream, and beautiful trees and plantings, there’s ample room for agriculture, an orchard, gardens or a pool. Updates include a new cedar shake roof, upgraded electric, and efficient heat pump. Sixteen acres of adjacent vacant land are also available for purchase… $745,000

Amelina / Millerton
Earth Day 2024
Saturday, April 20
NOON – 4:00 PM
Amenia Town Hall

Climate Smart Task Force
TOWN OF AMENIA
est. 1788

C3Millerton.org
The Housatonic Valley Association recently installed two rain gardens on the McDonald’s property in Dover Plains, NY. The purpose of the rain gardens is to protect streams from pollution coming from Route 22 and filter the stormwater that is collected from the McDonald’s roof and parking lot.

“This is incredibly progressive landscaping on the cutting edge of how people are starting to think about landscaping for climate change,” said Claire Wegh, the Ten Mile River Watershed manager for the Housatonic Valley Association.

The Housatonic Valley Association is a conservation organization that works to protect the natural character and environmental health of the Housatonic River Valley, from the Berkshires, eastern New York, and western Connecticut to the Long Island Sound.

The installation of the gardens was a collaboration between the Housatonic Valley Association, McDonald’s, J.C. Wong Management, Rennia Engineering, and Earth Tones Landscape Design. Funding for the project was provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Long Island Sound Futures Fund.

**What is a watershed, and why is it important?**

Per the US Geological Survey, “a watershed is an area of land that drains all of the streams and rainfall to a common outlet such as the outflow of a reservoir, mouth of a bay, or any point along a stream channel.”

McDonald’s in Dover is encased by two streams: Wells Brook, which is occasionally referred to as Seven Wells Brook, and Stone Church Brook. Each of these streams flows into the Ten Mile River, then to the Housatonic River, and on a larger scale, into the Long Island Sound and Atlantic Ocean.

“Watershed is kind of a misnomer,” said Claire. “Right now, we’re standing in the Wells Brook watershed. If a raindrop fell right here, it would end up in Well Brooks. We’re also in the Ten Mile watershed, and the Housatonic watershed, and the Long Island Sound watershed, and so on. It’s a scalable way of talking about bodies of water and how water flows.”

**What is a rain garden?**

Rain gardens are shallow, sunken areas of plantings that collect stormwater runoff from roofs, streets, and sidewalks. They’re designed to mimic the natural ways that water flows over and absorbs into land to reduce stormwater pollution.

Stormwater is water from rain or melting snow that doesn’t soak into the ground, but instead, runs off of surfaces and into waterways. Without being filtered, stormwater collects and transports pollutants into streams and rivers — e.g., oil from roads, salt, chemicals, and even litter. These pollutants threaten the health of waterways; worsen the quality of drinking water; and can damage fish, plant, and animal habitats.

Rain gardens are designed to collect stormwater and filter it through a combination of soil, sand, and gravel. “The filtered stormwater soaks into the ground, provides water to plants, and can help recharge the local groundwater supply. Rain gardens can help prevent flooding, remove pollution, and offer food and habitat to pollinating insects and wildlife.”

“This project was one of the top priority projects identified as part of our watershed planning process,” Claire said. “Impervious surfaces like lawns and parking lots are a big factor in flooding and there are more and more of them in the Ten Mile in the last 15 years or so as storms are getting more extreme. Rain gardens are a really cool way of mitigating flooding and preventing road runoff from entering the waterways.”

The McDonald’s parking lot has three storm drains. Prior to the installation of the rain gardens, a lot of water came through the pipes and dumped into Wells Brook through a culvert. “Now, instead of dumping right into the stream, it gets collected and filtered through here first. You can see that it’s really working. All of that goop-y stuff is sediment, which we’re also trying to prevent from entering the streams,” Claire said.

“People don’t think about it as something that’s as bad as salt from the roadways, but sediment depletes the dissolved oxygen in the stream, which is what the aquatic wildlife needs in order to live and breathe.”

Additionally, Wells Brook is an ideal home for native Eastern Brook Trout and other cold-water loving animals. Cold water feeds into Wells Brook from the bedrock beneath the stream, which makes the brook colder than the Ten Mile River, even in the summer. As a result, trout and other cold-water fish migrate to Wells Brook to live and reproduce.

“If we had rain gardens everywhere that stormwater entered bodies of water, then the Long Island Sound probably wouldn’t be as polluted as it is,” Claire said. “Every little thing actually does make a difference, and you can quantify it.”

The rain gardens at Wells Brook also include native plants and pollinators that thrive in water, such as silky dogwood, swamp milkweed, and blue flag iris. “These plants are also salt resistant, so they’re going to absorb the salt from the road and prevent it from entering the streams.”

“Wells Brook is really an amazing little stream. We’ve spent a lot of time, money, and energy to make sure that it stays as healthy as it is,” Claire said.

**Ribbon-cutting ceremony**

The Housatonic Valley Association will be hosting a ribbon-cutting event for the rain gardens on May 10 from 1-3 pm at McDonald’s. Claire is also working on interpretive signage, both in English and Spanish, to display outside of the rain gardens so people know what they’re looking at and why it’s important.

“A lot of people are feeling anxious about the state of the world and climate change,” Claire said. “All they’re hearing is stories of large-scale catastrophes that are very doom and gloom. One thing that HVA does well is show people how they can make a difference on a small patch of grass, or in this case, in a McDonald’s parking lot.”

To learn more about the Housatonic Valley Association and the rain gardens, visit its website at hvatoday.org or follow it on Instagram at instagram.com/hvatoday.
Planning a party? No problem 💖 Our dishes can be made to feed a crowd...

Jam has you covered with sandwiches, soups, salads, entrees, & much more!

There is only one Jam, located in Sharon, CT. Come experience the real thing inside the Sharon Farm Market!
(860) 364 2004 • www.jamfoodshop.com
In an age where AI is rapidly overtaking man’s ability to solve the world’s problems, Elon Musk – the brains behind Tesla, PayPal, X (formerly Twitter), and so many other successful endeavors – is working feverishly to help solve one of mankind’s greatest dilemmas through another of his masterminds, SpaceX. The challenge he’s hoping to help NASA solve: climate change.

On February 8, Musk bankrolled the $948 million launch of NASA’s Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud, ocean Ecosystem satellite mission from the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, FL.

With a three-year design life and ten years of propellant, the data collected from PACE is expected to share how carbon dioxide is exchanged between the ocean and the atmosphere. Scientists hope PACE will show how aerosols fuel the growth of phytoplankton in the surface ocean.

The local connection
PhD Kathleen Weathers is a distinguished senior scientist at the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies in Millbrook, NY. She’s been affiliated with the Cary ever since she received her master’s degree. Weathers said her roles at the elite environmental research center have “metamorphosed about three times” during her 40-year tenure. She explained the importance of understanding aerosols for the lay people reading this article (as well as for the one writing it), and the critical role aerosols play in global warming:

“Aerosols and clouds play very important roles in modulating the energy balance,” she explained. “They can absorb, reflect, or scatter radiation – functionally, they can exacerbate [cause more warming – act as a sweater] or offset [cause more cooling through reflectance – act as an umbrella] global warming. But we do not have good measures of cloud and aerosol cover [spatial extent], and their characteristics [thick, thin, particle size, etc.], and thus we cannot build these very important processes into our models of how the energy balance on earth is changing. As such, one of the biggest sources of uncertainty in climate models is the absence of cloud and aerosol data.”

PACE is expected to reveal key data about phytoplankton. “We can talk more about this but in a phrase: Phytoplankton are life,” said Weathers. “They are photosynthesizing aquatic organisms that take in carbon dioxide and release oxygen. They are like green plants and trees on land. They are the base of the food web in the ocean. It is essential that we understand where they are and what they are doing [sequestering carbon, serving as the base of the food web, etc.] in the ocean. Satellite technology can help us get a picture of where [and who – there are many species] they are.”

That’s exactly what NASA scientists and the global scientific community hope to learn from PACE, according to NASA’s director of Earth Sciences Division Karen St. Germain, cited on pace.oceansciences.org. “Novel uses of PACE data will benefit our economy and society,” she said. “For example, it will help identify the extent and duration of harmful algal blooms. PACE will extend and expand NASA’s long-term observations of our living planet. By doing so, it will take Earth’s pulse in new ways for decades to come.”

A quantum leap forward
Lamont research professor Ajit Subramaniam, an oceanographer at the Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory at Columbia University in New York City, said he was “tremendously” excited when he first learned of the PACE mission. As an ocean researcher, he works directly with the PACE mission.

“This is really a quantum leap forward in terms of the information we can get regarding ocean and biology chemistry of oceans,” said Subramaniam, who’s studying the Amazon River. “I do not go up the Amazon; I look at the fresh water coming out of the Amazon into the ocean. I know big river people don’t appreciate fresh water coming out the Amazon.”

Yet he said perhaps they should, as 20% of all freshwater from the world’s rivers comes from the Amazon River, which is 16 times larger than the next largest river. It’s also the length of the main stem of two Mississippi Rivers – Subramaniam said he’s studied the Amazon for so long he could recite such facts into perpetuity.

The Amazon’s freshwater lens, he added, spreads over the Atlantic Ocean and covers an area that’s greater than one million square kilometers. “Think of it as a plume of freshwater,” said Subramaniam. “It’s like a couple of Texases.”

The lens, or plume, is the part of the river that enters the ocean or a body of saltwater, and form a surface layer on it. That layer is known as the lens or plume; it’s roughly 30-feet deep (with freshwater below and a layer of saltwater above).

“I study large rivers of the world in terms of how they affect oceans,” said Subramaniam. “Until now, we only knew how much phytoplankton there was in total. Now we can see who it is, not just how much but who as a species… knowing who it is is really critical,” in terms of the food chain, so scientists can figure out who eats...
where, as well as any changes in food quality, as plankton changes will affect the water system as much as climate change. "We need to understand these things. PACE is a game changer. We're all very anxious to get our hands on the data."

Transparency and free flow of information
According to Subramaniam, PACE is currently in its "shakedown" phase with NASA examining the raw data. The data flow should be shared with the international scientific community within a month or so.

That free flow of information is hugely beneficial, according to Subramaniam, who said NASA's open-door policy when it comes to accessing data only requires scientists to register. Subramaniam said only once did he encounter an instance when data was held back by a nation, which benefited no one.

"There's no gatekeeping issue," he said of NASA. "It's critical [to share data]. One country made it very difficult to get data, and their quality of data never improved. The approach NASA takes is we're sharing not just so everybody gets data, but so that the global community can improve data. Algorithms, mathematical models, and entirely new applications are coming in all the time so we can come up with new ideas about what to use the information for, which is what makes open sharing so exciting."

Weathers forecasted PACE will inform scientists "primarily about the atmosphere [clouds, aerosols, etc.] and the ocean," emphasizing "the area that it samples is big – one kilometer by one kilometer."

She said that its large collection grid and the types of instruments it carries gear PACE for specific missions, like collecting data in the ocean versus data ecosystems like those in our region. Here in the Hudson Valley, the Northwest corner, and the Berkshire foothills, there tend to be more freshwater streams, rivers, and forests – all of which are too small to be studied by the PACE satellite. It's sample size of one km by one km can't hone in on finer details. Our region would be better served by more targeted, precise satellites, like the Landstat satellite developed in the 1970s.

Analyzing data on land
"Other satellites are more suited to capturing data from smaller freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems," said Weathers. She referred to a March 14 webinar from SUNY's forestry program discussing the use of Landstat to map New York's forests. "He was talking about forests of New York, and those data can be scaled down to forests of this region as well. Already we have some of those data. What will be added in future missions are some of the finer scale hyperspectral radiation data and finer spatial scale [maybe <5 meters] data that we need to understand what's happening in tributaries and on land in the Hudson region. If the satellite can only gather data kilometer by kilometer, it misses the action in little pixels. The tools for remote sensing have been and are being used with older Landstat satellites and are completely appropriate with the trees and land that don't change on a daily basis [whereas PACE is appropriate for larger scale missions like studying the oceans]."

Our oceans cover 70% of Earth's surface, yet "are one of the least well-understood parts of the Earth's system," stated St. Germain. Understandably, NASA was over the moon about the launch of PACE and is starry-eyed about future such satellites.

Way understudied
According to Weathers, "The oceans are understudied because, historically, we can only sample, in the traditional sense (for example collecting samples during research vessel cruises), a minute portion of the ocean, both horizontally and vertically. With satellite technology we can sample across the entire Earth, at least for the surface of the Earth [sampling at depth is still a problem]. There is much, much more to say about the importance of oceans, but briefly the oceans play a huge role in controlling climate, in Earth's oxygen production, in carbon sequestration [absorbing carbon dioxide], and as a source of food and biodiversity."

When looking for answers that address our local environmental issues, Weathers said, "I think that PACE is a good example of new satellite technology that can be used to address pressing questions. As someone who works on smaller lakes, air, and watersheds, I am looking forward to other, new missions that will provide game-changing data. The upcoming NASA surface, biology, and geochemistry mission will be used at the spatial scale of our local region."

She noted PACE's data "will be collected at a remarkably fine scale in terms of the radiation measurements – fine scale wavelengths, which will make possible ground-breaking analyses and understanding, across the globe [the atmosphere and ocean] – that range from who [which phytoplankton or cyanobacteria or other aquatic organisms] are there, where they are located on the planet, and what they are doing as well as what the nature, extent, and properties of the atmosphere are and how they affect radiation in and out of Earth."

In terms of whether PACE will teach humans how to protect planet Earth moving forward, Weathers said that these data are crucial for understanding "who's there and where in terms of biology and biodiversity and "what they do" like absorbing carbon, polluting, or emitting energy. We can't know how and what to protect well if we don't first know who's where and what they do."

Satellites are "tools to help us understand ecological patterns [e.g., the distribution of phytoplankton in the ocean] as well as processes [e.g., photosynthesis or carbon uptake] over time," said Weathers. "Those tools have to be linked to actual measurements on the ground and in the water to make them most useful."

So as more satellites are launched and more data are collected and assessed, are there any guarantees that planet Earth will be habitable for our children and our children's children? Weathers replied thusly: "Species will adapt," she said, "but which species and whether it's a world that we want to inhabit is a different question. And, it's our challenge and opportunity to make sure that planet Earth will be habitable with the best possible knowledge and data in hand to help guide us toward a bright future."

To learn more about the Cary Institute, please visit caryinstitute.org. To learn more about PACE, visit pace.gsfc.nasa.gov.
4 Seasons
Family owned & operated

Custom Swimming Pool Builder
Construction • Renovation • Maintenance

Licensed and Insured | (518) 789-0591
Follow us on Instagram: 4Seasonsswimmingpool
SARAH LANGAN in conversation with HILARIE BURTON MORGAN

Sunday, April 14, 11:00 AM
The CENTER for Performing Arts, Rhinebeck

TICKETS $30
Includes a copy of A BETTER WORLD.

A percentage of ticket & book sales proceeds will benefit The CENTER.

OBLONG BOOKS
SARAH LANGAN
in conversation with HILARIE BURTON MORGAN

Sunday, April 14, 11:00 AM
The CENTER for Performing Arts, Rhinebeck

TICKETS $30
Includes a copy of A BETTER WORLD.

A percentage of ticket & book sales proceeds will benefit The CENTER.

Millerton & Rhinebeck
OBLONGBOOKS.COM

RONSANI BROTHERS PAVING
• Residential & Commercial Paving
• Specializing in Home Driveways, Private Roadways, Parking Lots
• Stone, as well as Oil & Stone finishes
• Fully insured

(518) 429-1797
ronsanibrotherspaving.com

Lakeville Interiors
4 Old Middle St, Goshen, CT. 860-435-9597. lakevilleinteriors.com
Food Waste

Ever paid any attention to how much and how food goes to waste in your household over the course of a week? No matter whether it’s a family of one or of 13, it’s going to happen. The question is, to what extent? And what are the impacts on your household finances and the global environment?

Let’s take this right from the top, with a United States Department of Agriculture statement on food loss and waste: “In the United States, over one-third of all available food goes uneaten through loss or waste. When food is tossed aside, so too are opportunities for improved food security, economic growth, and environmental prosperity.”

How to look at it

There are – at least – two ways of looking at this. One, with “an estimated 17 percent of total global food production wasted in households, in the food service and in retail all together,” according to the United Nations, globally “between 691 and 783 million people faced hunger in 2022.”

Two, food waste that has entered the waste stream unleashes its own set of problems, according to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, which estimates that Americans waste approximately 25 percent of the food they purchase “by not preparing food before it goes bad and by not eating all the food we do prepare.”

The consequences are numerous, including adding to landfills, where food waste ultimately generates methane gas through the anaerobic decomposition process. In turn, methane, known as a greenhouse gas, contributes to climate change. Further, the wasting of food contributes to the wasting of resources, as growing, packaging, transporting, and refrigerating food uses labor, water, and energy.

In terms we can all understand, that of dollars and cents, Total and Per Capita Value of Food Loss in the United States by Jean C. Buzby and Jeffrey Hyman estimates the value of uneaten food per household in the United States at around $1,000 per year.

Why it’s wasted

The Boston-based Conservation Law Foundation posits a number of reasons for all the food waste. Let’s try these on for size: confusing labels, oversized servings, the quest for perfect produce, and overstocked shelves. The T.H. Chan School of Public Health at Harvard digs in a little deeper, fingerling factors all along the spectrum from farm to consumer, such as losses from mold, pests, or inadequate climate control; losses from cooking; and intentional food waste.

Broken down, the Chan School states that “food ‘loss’ occurs before the food reaches the consumer as a result of issues in the production, storage, processing, and distribution phases; and food ‘waste’ refers to food that is fit for consumption but consciously discarded at the retail or consumption phases.” Among its recommendations: the recycling of food waste to feed animals or to create compost, bioenergy, and natural fertilizers.

On the local level

The Columbia County government saw fit in 2023 to introduce a Rube Goldberg-like contraption – an EcoRich Elite II aerobic composter/digester – into its waste management operation. In time, this type of program is likely to be mandated across the state, whether it’s through an EcoRich system or other means, in the effort to put a serious dent in the food waste component of the waste stream.

The EcoRich composter is a fully automated way to convert food waste into a nutrient-rich soil amendment that can, for instance, be added to landscaping and other plantings.
Native Habitat Restoration
Returning Balance to Nature
Invasive Plant Control • Field Clearing
Forestry Mowing • Wetland Restoration
(413) 358-7400 • nativerestoration.m.cloud.com
Licensed with over 40 years of experience

HUDSON VALLEY OVERHEAD
DOORS & OPERATORS
Sales
Consultation
Free Estimates
Installation
Repairs
Broken Springs
Damaged Sections
Preventative
Maintenance
845-876-2772 • hudsonvalleydoors.com • Rhinebeck

DOWNEY, HAAB & MURPHY, PLLC
Attorneys At Law
info@millertonlawyer.com
(518) 789-4442 • 87 Main Street • Millerton NY 12546

Matt’s Landscaping
• Lawn & Landscape Installations
  • Patios & Walkways
  • Land Clearing
  • Lawn Maintenance
• Invasive Plant Management
• Excavation Services
• & More!
Call to schedule your free quote!
(860) 824-1188
www.mattslandscapingct.com
office@mattslandscapingct.com

Church Street
DELI & PIZZERIA
Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner
Salads • Sandwiches • Subs •
Wraps • Burgers & Dogs •
Pizza • & more!
(518) 329-4551
1677 County Rd. 7A, Copake

FREE ADMISSION • OPEN TO PUBLIC
FIVE POINTS ARTS CENTER:
855 UNIVERSITY DR, TORRINGTON, CT
MEDIA SPONSOR:
Connecticut Magazine
STOCKYARD
FIVE POINTS ARTS
PRINT FESTIVAL
SAT & SUN 10AM–4PM
JUNE 1 & 2
FIVE POINTS ARTS
PRINT FESTIVAL
• Artists creating on BIG INK’s legendary press
• Juried Print Exhibition
• Prints and Poetry
• Interactive Print Activities for All Ages
• Print Demonstrations: Wood Cut to Digital
• “Give A Hoot, Don’t Pollute” Scavenger Hunt
• Festival Gift Shop
• Music, Food Trucks, Beer

FIVEPOINTSArts.ORG/PRINT-FESTIVAL
featuring BIG INK

FIVE POINTS ARTS CENTER:
855 UNIVERSITY DR, TORRINGTON, CT
MEDIA SPONSOR:
Connecticut Magazine
STOCKYARD
FIVE POINTS ARTS
PRINT FESTIVAL
SAT & SUN 10AM–4PM
JUNE 1 & 2
FIVE POINTS ARTS
PRINT FESTIVAL
• Artists creating on BIG INK’s legendary press
• Juried Print Exhibition
• Prints and Poetry
• Interactive Print Activities for All Ages
• Print Demonstrations: Wood Cut to Digital
• “Give A Hoot, Don’t Pollute” Scavenger Hunt
• Festival Gift Shop
• Music, Food Trucks, Beer

FIVEPOINTSArts.ORG/PRINT-FESTIVAL
featuring BIG INK

MEDIA SPONSOR:
Connecticut Magazine
STOCKYARD
FIVE POINTS ARTS
PRINT FESTIVAL
SAT & SUN 10AM–4PM
JUNE 1 & 2
FIVE POINTS ARTS
PRINT FESTIVAL
• Artists creating on BIG INK’s legendary press
• Juried Print Exhibition
• Prints and Poetry
• Interactive Print Activities for All Ages
• Print Demonstrations: Wood Cut to Digital
• “Give A Hoot, Don’t Pollute” Scavenger Hunt
• Festival Gift Shop
• Music, Food Trucks, Beer

FIVEPOINTSArts.ORG/PRINT-FESTIVAL
featuring BIG INK
Thrift 2 Fight founders Jillian Reed (she/her) and Masha Zabara (they/them) were at very different points in their lives when they first started organizing pop-up thrift sales in 2020. Jillian was still a student at Bard College, where she was in the dual-degree program studying flute in the conservatory and human rights in the college. Masha had just lost their job due to the pandemic and found themselves learning a lot about social justice in the United States.

Masha, who grew up in Belarus, moved to the United States and was in the dual-degree program at Bard College, studying cello and film. While Masha was no stranger to activism in their own country, they were less familiar with the history of the United States and the protests that were taking place en masse in 2020.

“I knew what they were fighting for,” Masha said. “I was going through a time of opening up my world and my knowledge base. There was a month of really intense learning for me when we first started our pop-up sales because I got the chance to talk to so many different people about what was going on. I learned a lot from them.”

Studying human rights, Jillian was also no stranger to activism. However, she found herself struggling to translate the theory that she was learning in her classes to the community around her.

“I wasn’t alone in experiencing living in a small community like the one at Bard and knowing all of these things intellectually, but not knowing how to translate them to daily life,” she said. “I didn’t know about organizations in this area that have been fighting for various causes for a long time. Being a student and having one perspective and area of insight, and then starting these Thrift 2 Fight pop-up sales, my whole world just opened up.”

After hosting a variety of pop-up sales around the Hudson Valley, Masha and Jillian began to consider what it would look like if they opened a storefront. “We had been relying on the generosity of others who were letting us use their space,” Masha said. “We came to realize how important it is to have a place where people could come together and talk, donate clothes, connect, and gather.”

Fast forward to January 2022, and Thrift 2 Fight officially opened its doors in the village of Tivoli, NY.

Overconsumption and overabundance
Part of the creation of Thrift 2 Fight stemmed from Jillian and Masha realizing that they had far too many clothes in their closets. “I never used lots of fast-fashion websites like Shein, but I still had so many clothes in my closet,” Masha said. “It was interesting for us to discover that it wasn’t just us who had an overabundance of clothing, but it was everyone else, too.”

Jillian noted that they’re not selling the “forgotten items of the Hudson Valley” at Thrift 2 Fight, but more often they receive clothing that is in excellent shape and just simply doesn’t fit someone’s style or identity anymore.

“It’s so funny because people will come in and gingerly put a shirt on the counter and tell us a story about this shirt that they wore maybe twice, but once was for a special occasion or event, so it has meaning for them,” Masha said. “That tells us that they’re thinking about the lifespan of the item of clothing, both before it came to them and after it’s out of their hands and into ours.”

Jillian said that the rate of consumption in today’s day and age doesn’t often lend itself to taking time to reflect on the lifespan of an item. “It’s tunnel vision in the moment of purchase, not thinking about, ‘will I wear this at least a dozen times?’ and ‘where will it go after that?’”

Additionally, Masha and Jillian have worked to create a warm, welcoming space at Thrift 2 Fight to erase the stigma of shopping at a second-hand store. “People aren’t just looking for affordable clothing, but they also want to feel respected and be in a nice space,” Masha said. “A lot of second-hand stores make an emphasis on the

Continued on page 37...
Cheers to warmer weather and a Happy Easter!

Offering a wide variety of wines and spirits from around the globe in varying sizes • A full wall of sparkling wines and champagne • Many local wines and spirits • Miscellaneous chilled whites, roses and bubbly • Our everyday 3/$20 sale section where you can mix & match 3 wines for $20 • Tons of Rose – Rose all Day! • Check out our Facebook page for specials and updates

Hours: Sunday 12 to 5pm • Monday 12 to 6 Tuesday through Thursday 10 to 6pm • Friday and Saturday 10-6pm Curbside pick-up available!

518.325.4010
8 Anthony Street in Hillsdale, NY behind the IGA Supermarket

HOP ON BY TO SAVE ON EASTER HAM AND MORE!

- Order your meats: beef, chicken, ham, and fish
- Choose from an array of local dairy products
- Mouth-watering steaks, hamburgers, and chicken
- We always have a wide variety of fresh fish
- Fresh seasonal produce
- We carry a great selection of cheeses, produce, deli, bakery and all your grocery needs!

For home delivery information, please visit us on the web. Curbside pickup available, too!

Hours:
Sunday – Thursday 7am – 6pm
Friday 7am – 7pm
Saturday 7am – 6pm

518-325-4341
2628 Route 23, Hillsdale, NY
www.hillsdalesupermarket.com
hillsdalesupermarket@gmail.com
Financially within reach

Speaking of affordability, Masha and Jillian work hard to keep the items at Thrift 2 Fight within reach of everyone. “We’re a store in a 1,000-person village. Everyone in the village and the neighboring areas can afford to get clothes here,” Jillian said. “That feels like such an important continuation of what we’ve been doing since 2020. It’s never been about relying on wealthy customers from out of town, or waiting for a rich savior to come in and fund us. It’s about figuring out how to engage with as many local people as possible.”

“We exist because the people in our village can afford to shop here,” Masha added. “Our neighbors can come in 100% of the time and get something within their budget.”

Thrift 2 Fight also has a free bin that is refilled daily, an $8 room where everything is $8 or below, and a Mitzvah Wall, where people can create anonymous gifts for other Thrift 2 Fight visitors. Some examples of the gifts on the Thrift 2 Fight wall include, “$5 for a queer kid,” “$1 for a hockey goalie mom,” “$8 for a BIPOC student,” and “$3 for someone who’s accidentally over-caffeinated.”

Social justice funding

Thrift 2 Fight funds social justice organizations that work at the intersection of racial, disability, and queer justice. It donates 10% of its total revenue, and the rest pays for rent, bills, and employees’ time. To date, Thrift 2 Fight has raised and donated more than $80,000 to various organizations.

Through its sales and donations, Thrift 2 Fight has been exposed to powerhouse organizations and individuals that work in the Hudson Valley area including Release Aging People in Prisons, the Ulster Immigration Defense Network, the Trans Closet, and numerous free food fridges.

“We wanted to be able to support local grassroots organizations and basically say, ‘we see and appreciate what you’re doing in our community, and we trust you to keep working towards this shared goal that we all have,’” Jillian said.

They also said that many community members come into the shop to ask about local organizations that they can support and fund. For many, it’s been a valuable way to get information about local initiatives.

“It’s also important to mention that we don’t start and stop with non-profits,” Masha said. “Some people and groups have been doing smaller initiatives and local aid without bothering to certify.”

Masha also said that a lot of folks from a very wide income range come in to donate items that are incredibly valuable. “They could go somewhere else to get the tax-deductible receipt, but for them, the worth is in the work that we’re doing, so they donate their items to us. It reminds me that business and money are the only things that are driving people to do good.”

So how does an organization receive funds from Thrift 2 Fight?

The general criteria is that the organization has to be working at the intersections of queer, disability, and racial justice, and Jillian and Masha prefer if the organization is on the smaller, more scrappy and grassroots side.

“We started Thrift 2 Fight with very little money,” Jillian said. “We quickly learned how far $1,000 can go when you’re doing a grassroots initiative, so we like donating to organizations that are working on that level because we know that money is going to go really far.”

Donations to local organizations have created a web of connection for Jillian and Masha. Many of the organizations work closely together, so they’ve been able to know more activists and organization leaders in the area through word of mouth. “People tell us about their initiatives, and it’s just been a perpetual web of information to tap into,” Masha said.

“The beauty of being so accountable to our community is that people can not only share who they think we should be funding, but they also feel a sense of place and ownership in the process of Thrift 2 Fight,” Jillian added.

In February, Thrift 2 Fight funded Millions of Butterflies, an organization that has recently established a free food fridge in the Valley Hall in New Paltz to provide free food to the surrounding area.

In March, April, and May Thrift 2 Fight is funding the Ulster Immigrant Defense Network. “It’s especially relevant to mention that many of the refugee families they help have immigrated here due to famine and poverty linked to climate change,” Masha said. “Since 2022, the number of families they serve has increased by 24%. They need to expand their food budget by $15,000 to be able to feed hundreds of families every week.”

Balancing the thrifting with the fighting

Jillian and Masha sustain a constant balance between the daily maintenance of running a thrift store where they’re getting donations regularly and making sure that people are getting what they need, while also staying grounded in why they started the store in the first place.

“It’s hard to balance the thrifting and the fighting,” Masha said. “We go through times where the fighting is more important and we’re constantly worrying about things like, ‘How can we support this? How can we make sure this protest is well-attended? How can we help our community have more conversations?’ and then we come into the store and there’s donations that need sorting. That’s the reality check for us.”

Continued on next page...
But even the repetitive physical work can be helpful. “There’s an upside to always having something to do!” Jillian adds. “The space meets you where you are. Sometimes, I don’t have the brain power to focus on the heavier parts of our organization, so I go into the sorting room and fold and sort a bag of clothes.”

Masha also said that they’re reminded of how important it is for Thrift 2 Fight to contribute to community awareness in small ways. “Maybe someone comes in for a pair of Levi’s, but they leave with a card of information about the organization that we’re funding that month. They get engaged in our space, and that’s really important and exciting.”

**Education partnerships**

In addition to all of the other work it does, Thrift 2 Fight also partners with schools, colleges, and other organizations to organize workshops on fundraising and sustainable fashion, among other topics. It partnered with Bard College for a variety of pop-up sales and with Buffalo State University to organize a Thrift 2 Fight chapter sale and their runway show.

On a weekly basis, it also partners with Ramapo for Children, which is an organization based in Rhinebeck that works with young adults who are on the spectrum, neurodivergent, or disabled. Per the Ramapo website, it offers a “year-round, residential transition-to-independence program that helps young adults develop social, vocation, and life skills, preparing them for next steps including college and employment.”

“A group of people from Ramapo help out in the store every week with a range of important tasks: making tags, sorting clothing donations, and tagging items. These are mutually beneficial relationships, we learn a lot from each other. And as a bonus, we’ve also recently learned a lot about Power Rangers!”

Thrift 2 Fight also recently partnered with the Red Hook Community Center, which has a program where the community center pays teens to work at local businesses to gain life skills and learn how to be employees.

Additionally, if Thrift 2 Fight has an overabundance of one item, jeans for example, it donate them to the Red Hook Community Center. In the event that it gets items that are ripped, stained, or otherwise unusable, it brings that item to a fabric-recycling HELPSY bin. “We don’t throw anything away. With big thrifting chains, a lot of clothing goes to waste or isn’t even looked into because those stores have an overabundance or they don’t have the staff to deal with it,” Masha said.

**Looking ahead**

In the medium term, Jillian and Masha hope to help other people create their own pop-up and Thrift 2 Fight chapter sales. “People know where money is needed in their communities. After three years of trial and error, we know how to facilitate a clothing drive and organize a sale. So if someone else loves thrifting and knows of a cause they want to support in their own community, we can give them the tools to throw a successful fundraiser,” Jillian said.

Gillian and Masha would particularly like to see Thrift 2 Fight chapters on college campuses, where there is often an overabundance of clothing.

In the future, they are also open to opening more Thrift 2 Fight locations, but they stress that any growth would come from the need of that particular community and not from their desire to expand “willy-nilly.”

“With these different chapters and community connections that we have right now, we’re getting a clearer sense of where other Thrift 2 Fight locations may be needed,” Masha said.

“Expansion for expansion’s sake is not our goal,” Jillian added. “But there’s definitely a need for more funding for initiatives beyond the Hudson Valley.”

For Jillian and Masha, it’s been an “enormous honor and a sad reminder” to see how many people come into their store to feel safe because they don’t feel safe in other places in their communities. “We need to continue to create places that feel safe for everyone,” Jillian said.

Masha agreed. “Here at Thrift 2 Fight, we’re not trying to reinvent activism. We’re trying to support organizations that have been doing this for years. We’re harnessing excess resources and amplifying the voices around us.”

Thrift 2 Fight is open every day except Tuesdays at 48 Broadway, Tivoli, NY. To learn more about Thrift 2 Fight, visit their website thrift2fight.com.
Walls Do Talk

Riverview was built in 1730, but this gorgeous room was not the original kitchen. It often takes a close examination of the basement and attic to discover original space usage. WALLS DO TALK. We listen! The marks and grooves in the beams, paneling and floors left by skilled craftsmen hundreds of years ago tell their own stories. Old homes were always altered as the originals were quite small. Interior spaces were re-purposed over generations multiple times as families grew and shrank, adding to the richness of its history. Becoming a steward of a historic home will be rewarding but good council is critical. We’ve been advising and educating about historic buildings for decades. This home is currently for sale for $1,250,000.
Pelvic Health Physical Therapy
Board Certified Pelvic Health Specialist
Dr. Sabina Busby, DPT, WCS, OCS, NCPT
& Dr. Bente Dahl-Busby, PT, DPT, NCPT

101 Gay Street (Rte 41), Sharon, CT 860.397.5363
danicacenter.com • info@danicacenter.com

Hylton Hundt
518.789.9390
Route 44 East | Millerton

CHAIR WEAVING
Shaker Tape Caning Rush
at
Avalon Antiques Restoration and Furniture Repair

Contact us at:
(860)-453-4191
derylgodshall@gmail.com
IF WISHES WERE HORSES...

By CB Wismar
info@mainstreetmag.com

If it had happened once, it likely would have simply been an anomaly—an odd moment in the universe when reasoning got temporarily suspended. It was, however, the third time in less than two weeks that a similar moment had presented itself.

“That’ll be six dollars.”

The total of two “senior citizen” admissions to the local high school basketball game would be six dollars. We handed over a ten and a one, hoping for a five dollar bill in return rather than depleting what appeared to be a limited number of one dollar bills in the cash drawer on the table.

The world stopped, caught in a moment of suspended animation that froze the cashier, leaving them breathless. The companion at the entrance table was able to tear off two red paper tickets and hand them across with a pleasant “Enjoy the game,” but the person holding the eleven dollars could not move.

“That should be five dollars back,” we offered, trying to break the spell. “A five-dollar bill.”

They were not breathing. We were suddenly fearful that the heart had stopped and the relatively benign Friday night entertainment experience was about to be marred by sirens and flashing red lights as the local EMT crew appeared to try and resuscitate the cashier.

Fortunately for all concerned, the ticket taker reached in, took the offered eleven dollars, placed the two bills in the appropriate bins, withdrew a five-dollar bill, and handed it over. With polite thanks we retreated into the gym to find seats and wonder, out loud we admit, “How can you be in high school and not know how to make change?”

In the world of fully automated cash registers and sales that are rarely conducted in cash, the need to be able to subtract 6 from 11 on one’s head seems to have become a lost art. Granted, many of us were not able to breeze through long division, and with humble honesty, algebra was like a foreign language when we tip-toed through high school back in the day. But 11 minus 6?

The daily laugh
My dear friend Nat offers up a daily dose of humor that gives a momentary assist in the otherwise challenging hours of the day. Although an excellent writer, he does not need to draw on his comedic skills. He merely sends along photos of signs and newspaper clippings that announce just how far we’ve come as a literate society.

“Weather forces Holmes County Spelling Bee to be moved to Tuesday” (Wooster Daily Record). “Yellow Bananas, Boneless $0.59” “Permissions $1.39 each” (produce signs in grocery stores). “Due to unforeseen circumstances the dining room will be closed tonight” (sign on a restaurant door).

It usually takes a few moments to stop laughing, only to be followed by the bewildering feeling of wondering what has happened to basic intelligence in our world. How have we failed? Why can’t we do a better job of educating the next generations? Isn’t ours the last generation that can add, subtract, spell, and reason?

Reality check
Will the world be a worse place because someone can’t do simple arithmetic or spell persimmons or circumstances? Of course not. But will our once-vaunted society begin to fray at the edges as ignorance is deemed satisfactory and bad behavior is applauded? Taunting, name calling, shaming, and marginalizing certainly seem to be the “coin of the realm” in politics and commentary. We seem to have stepped on the (boneless) banana peel of reason and are in mid-air, anticipating a less-than-graceful arrival on the pavement.

Wishing things were different will not make them so. My grandfather, a classically educated, frankly brilliant mind, would likely have been a winning contestant on Jeopardy. He seemed to remember everything, including aphorisms that were an odd product of the mind of a multiple linguist with a Columbia PhD. “If wishes were horses, then beggars would ride” he reminded me on several occasions. He also affirmed that, “You can’t tell the depth of the well by the length of the handle on the pump.”

Allowing the lessons of the past to wash over the experiences of the present, it may be time to be a bit less judgmental and a touch more concerned that when given the opportunity to build and encourage in our interactions with strangers, we do so. Even a moment so fleeting as the exchange of a few dollars at the entrance of a high school gymnasium can be viewed with sensitivity and as an opportunity not to pull one more thread from the fraying society.

A profound Chinese proverb seems to sum it up quite nicely: “The flapping of the wings of a butterfly can be felt on the other side of the world.”

And, if we can be so bold, adding a smile to the transaction might be a good idea, as well.
Dave's TV

Stop in to see our selection of NEW Sony 4K TV sets. ALL ON SALE!!

• TV Sales
• Service Installation
• Outside HD Antenna Installation
• WiFi Enhancements

REPAIRS on all: TV’s, Stereos, Vintage Electronics

**We’ve Moved!**
279 Smithfield Road, Millerton NY 12546
Call for appointment 518-789-3881

https://www.alrci.com

ASSOCIATED LIGHTNING
Rod Company, Inc

Lightning Protection!

www.alrci.com
518-789-4603
845-373-8309

SHeldon Masonry & Concrete LLC
“All Phases Of Masonry Construction”

- Stonework
- Brickwork
- Blockwork
- Poured concrete foundations & slabs
- Insured | Free Estimates

Matt Sheldon | Lakeville, Salisbury, Millerton & beyond
sheldonmasonry.com | 860.387.9417 | sheldonmasonryconcretellc@gmail.com

SHARON AUTO BODY

Jim Young
OWNER
jim@sharonautobody.com

28 Amenia Road | PO Box 686 | Sharon, CT 06069
T: 860 364 0128 | F: 860 364 0041
sharonautobody.com

CARLSON PROpane, HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

Complete design, installation & service • An independent Lennox dealer
Specializing in: Gas warm air systems and central air conditioning

PROpane:
Sales • Service • Installation • Residential • Commercial
Competitive pricing • Automatic route deliveries • Heat • Hot water • Cooking
Tank monitoring System • Budget payment plan • Winter contract pricing

Prompt professional service.
Carlson for customers who insist on safety & quality.

Serving South Berkshire co. & Northwest Corner CT since 1979 • 79 Pike Rd., Sheffield, MA
800-542-2422 • www.carlsonpropane.com

Complete design, installation & service • An independent Lennox dealer
Specializing in: Gas warm air systems and central air conditioning

PROpane:
Sales • Service • Installation • Residential • Commercial
Competitive pricing • Automatic route deliveries • Heat • Hot water • Cooking
Tank monitoring System • Budget payment plan • Winter contract pricing

Prompt professional service.
Carlson for customers who insist on safety & quality.

Serving South Berkshire co. & Northwest Corner CT since 1979 • 79 Pike Rd., Sheffield, MA
800-542-2422 • www.carlsonpropane.com

CT Lic. 302776 • CT Lic. 279010 • CT Lic. 1113 • CT HOD #1002 • MA Lic. 023709 • MA Lic. 30167 • MA Lic. 912
I love the April environment edition of Main Street Magazine. For it means I get to shout my mantra as the headline and not have to bury it subtly in the text! Readers, flowers are meant to symbolize love, sympathy, joy, and celebration, not be the poster child for massive carbon footprints, with a sideline in social injustice. Yes, you imported flowers, grown in artificial conditions, doused in chemicals for growth and storage, refrigerated and flown, I'm talking about you!

Pom's soapbox
Nobody loves a flower more than I do, but none of us should kid ourselves that just because it's fragile and beautiful, it might not come with a huge environmental cost. An estimated 80% of the flowers sold in the US are imported from abroad. In 2022 that added up to $2 billion of cut flowers alone and over $1.1 billion is carnations, chrysanthemums, and lilies. Why? Because we import only the flowers that can easily be grown in artificial conditions, easily harvested, easily stored for long periods of time, and easily transported out of water. Not the real beauties that dance in the vase, that smell insane, and whose fleeting ethereal charms make them completely cost-ineffective for mass production.

Awareness and change
The good news is that, like the gradual understanding of the evils of the single-use plastic grocery bag, there is now a growing awareness of not just the ecological costs of imported flowers but also the exponential joy and beauty of locally grown ones. Just as with farm-to-table food, we are re-learning what our grandparents always knew. Seasonal, local produce — be it food or floral — always grows, looks, smells, lasts, and tastes better than its out-of-season, artificially produced rival.

There has been a groundswell of local flower growers offering their blooms for sale. It's never been easier to source these with farmers' markets, local flower subscriptions, and enterprising businesses seeing the cross-pollination benefits of supporting local flower farmers' blooms alongside their own merchandise and services.

Do you know another way to experience the joy of having these dance on your home? Grow them yourself! Growing flowers does not require a PhD in horticulture. With a few nuggets of knowledge, a jug of beautiful homegrown joy-busting flowers on our tables is within all of our reaches.

The holy trinity
Before you start, think about where you are going to grow. Giving your plants the most favorable conditions will make this whole process so much more rewarding. Plants need three things: soil, sun, and water. Soil is...
crucial, sun is key, and water non-negotiable. Don’t worry about anything else. Just have these in place before you start.

Flowers can be grown in borders, raised beds, pots, or old trash cans and on gravel paths or window sills. Don’t imagine because your growing space doesn’t look like other people’s on Instagram, you too can’t grow beautiful flowers.

Perennials and annuals
The plants we are going to be planting this spring for flowers this year fall into two categories: perennials and annuals. How you plant and care for these two types of plants is very different. Not in the least bit hard, just different. Both can give you beautiful cut flowers.

Consider perennials to be the guests that move in and never leave. Once in the ground, these plants will come back year after year. They are more expensive to buy but a great long-term investment. Examples include peonies, roses, and irises.

Annuals are your “just popping in and then I’ll be off again” friends. In our growing zone, sown from seeds in late winter/early spring, they will be the life and soul of the party all summer and then say farewell once Jack Frost arrives and knocks them out in the fall. Think poppies, sweet peas, nigella, and cosmos.

I like to think of perennials as the elegant prima ballerinas of the garden while annuals are my crazy summer disco queens. An easy way to tell them apart at the garden center or nursery is perennials are generally found outside in larger pots while annuals, which have just been grown this year, are found in seedling flats and trays in the protective warmth of a greenhouse or a hoop house.

Perennials are several years old and are, by nature, happy living outside all year round. They can be planted out as soon as your ground is workable. Annuals should not be left out uncovered overnight if there is any danger of frost. Here in Salisbury, CT, our last frost date is Memorial Day weekend.

Decide if you’re sowing from seed or buying seedlings
If you are growing annuals, you have a choice: sow your own or buy seedlings. There are pros and cons of each.

Pros of buying seedlings: for novice gardeners this may be the way to go in your early cut-flower career. It certainly was for me. It allows you to catch the bug of growing without the beginner’s stress of self-sown seedlings. The extra expense of buying someone else’s seedlings also has the advantage of avoiding the curse of many gardeners and a fast-track to failure — overexuberant, overplanting overwhelm!

Pros of sowing your own: the mind-blowing choice in varieties available. Cons: disappearing down a seed catalogue rabbit hole and ending up with a stress-inducing seedling NICU on constant triage, followed by the above-mentioned overwhelm. If sowing is the route you chose, please remember one thing and one thing only: start small, grow strong. You do not have to sow the whole packet!

Pinching, deadheading, and cut and come again
A couple of key gardening tricks will vastly increase the number of flowers you have available to cut. They may seem a little — or a lot — counterintuitive and may be slightly torturous to bring yourself to do but trust me here.

A lot of annuals will benefit from what is known as pinching. This is literally removing the top of the leading stem and upper leaves of a seedling when it gets to a certain height (usually between 8 and 12 inches). Sacrifice it may seem but it actually tells your seedling to send out lots more side shoots, all of which will turn into lovely extra flower stems perfect for cutting later.

The same theory can be applied to perennials and is known as the Chelsea chop. (The time to do this is in late May around the time of the world-famous Chelsea Flower Show in London — hence the name.) Same thing: give them a slightly painful haircut now and they will turn into lovely bushy plants, rather than skinny leaning/collapsing towers of Pisa later in the season.

The second trick is keep cutting! Many annuals are actually known as “cut and come again” varieties. The more you cut, the more flowers your plants will keep giving. Cutting stops the plants setting seed, which is the process that sends a message to the plants that it’s time to shut up shop for the year. The longer we can stave that off, the longer the plant will keep sending out blooms.

The same applies to deadheading, which is removing just the spent flower heads to prevent the seed setting process. So, keep cutting and deadheading, and your flowers will keep coming as long as the frost stays away, which can often be as late as November.

The most important lesson
One final tip: Do not lose the happiness in this. Learn to love the mess-ups, even — perhaps especially — the tray of dead seedlings! See them as an opportunity to learn more. The best thing about gardening is it always gives us second chances. There will always be next year to try again. So, just remember, there are no real mistakes — just opportunities to learn to be kind, both to yourself and the planet. Happy growing!
Growing your business with ideas and action

The first step in growing a business is the idea. The second step is action. We help with both! Could your business benefit from a new brand or a new website, or perhaps it needs supporting materials like a brochure, or maybe it needs help in the marketing and PR department? No matter the need, how small or large, we’re here to help.

Services:
- Graphic design
- Branding
- Identity systems
- Advertising
- Annual reports
- Brochures
- Book and print design
- Promotional graphics
- Websites
- Hosting & SEO
- Apparel
- Environmental graphics
- Photography
- Business consultation
- Social media
- Marketing and PR
- Copy writing
- and more!

518.592.1135 | thorunn@thorunndesigns.com
thorunndesigns.com | 135 Rt. 44, Millerton, NY
Psychotherapy • Dream Analysis
Couples Work

RICHARD JOHN MACK, LCSW
Private Practice - Zoom appointments available.
646-284-5962 • Sharon, CT
richardjohnmack@gmail.com

MANGO LASSI

Michael D. Lynch
ATTORNEY AT LAW

106 Upper Main Street • P.O. Box 1776 • Sharon, Connecticut 06069
(860) 364-5505 • MLynch@MichaelLynchLaw.com
www.MichaelLynchLaw.com
* Also admitted in New York State

MADSSEN OVERHEAD DOORS
Fast, friendly service since 1954

Madsen Overhead Doors offers numerous door options to fit any budget!
Residential, Commercial & Industrial Doors, Electric Operators,
Radio Controls, Sales & Service.

673 Route 203, Spencertown, NY 12165
Phone (518) 392-3883 | Fax (518) 392-3887
info@madsenoverheaddoors.com
www.MadsenOverheadDoors.com

Factoy Lane Auto Repair
(518) 398-5360 | 3 Factory Lane | Pine Plains, NY

DIALOGUE: Art in Conversation
Nathaniel (Tate) Klacsmann and Valerie Hammond

April 2 – June 2, 2024
Reception: Sat. Apr. 6, 4 – 6 p.m.; Artist talk: Thu. Apr. 11, 7 p.m.
11 Interlaken Road, Lakeville, CT | www.hotchkiss.org/arts

Tremaine Art Gallery
Berkshire Environmental Action Team CONNECTS COMMUNITY & NATURE IN THE BERKSHIRES

By Abby Audenino
abby@mainstreetmag.com

Berkshire Environmental Action Team is a non-profit environmental justice organization based in Pittsfield, MA. BEAT began back in 2002 when founding executive director Jane Winn joined with a group of concerned citizens to protest the poorly sited building of a soccer field at Berkshire Community College. “The environmental faculty at Berkshire Community College said ‘this is great, we can show you how it can be done right,’ and the administration at the time denied their help and proceeded to violate the wetlands protection act while building the soccer field,” Jane said.

Frustrated with this turn of events, the group began learning more about environmental law and in turn, formed BEAT.

BEAT Initiatives
BEAT focuses on three areas of environmental protection: stewardship, which has to do with protecting the land and water connectivity throughout New England; education and outreach; and watchdogging.

“Watchdogging is one of our most prevalent areas of work,” said BEAT deputy director, Brittany Ebeling. “People call us up and say, ‘I see this problem. How can we help?’”

In 2023, BEAT received a federal grant from the Environmental Protection Agency that has allowed it to expand its work to study air quality. The organization has previously done work on shutting down highly polluting industrial plants in Massachusetts (including shutting down two peaker plants), but this grant allowed it to expand that work heartily.

“The EPA grant is really wrapped up in what we see as one new angle that we can take,” Jane said. “In our hyperlocal community here in Pittsfield, there are neighborhoods that have been red-lined throughout history. A study came out recently that outlined the legacy of red-lining and the disproportionate effects it has on Black and brown communities,” Brittany explained. “I believe the study stated that there is a 12-year life expectancy difference in these communities in comparison to other wealthier, whiter ones in Pittsfield,” Brittany added.

Jane and Brittany believe that air pollution and how it’s affecting people’s lives in the Northeast is a compelling piece of the story to be told. “It brings up the issues of environmental racism, life expectancy, environmental justice, and social justice, among others. We’re trying to stop these sources of pollution in our community and produce a hopeful vision of environmental justice in Pittsfield,” Brittany explained.

Partnerships
BEAT partners with other environmental organizations on the Berkshire Wildlife Linkage initiative, which is part of the Staying Connected Initiative. This project focuses on making it so that wildlife can safely move through the Hudson Highlands and the Berkshires and to the Green Mountains. Roads are a significant barrier to wildlife movement and migration, and according to BEAT, they also intersect streams and rivers frequently, forcing undersized pipes and culverts to be installed, which in turn, cause significant negative impacts on ecosystems.

One of BEAT’s biggest successes in regards to wildlife tracking is the restoration of a bridge over the Churchill Brook. With partners, BEAT replaced the undersized culverts with bridges that restored the aquatic connectivity and allowed for wildlife passage under the roads. “So much infrastructure is built for cars. Migrations in the Southwest, for example, are disrupted because you have these animals pacing back and forth along a road that has eight lanes of traffic,” Brittany said. “We’re dealing with a different ecological landscape up here obviously, but we’re still working towards how to build an ecosystem that’s safe for both humans and wildlife.”

BEAT is also part of the Berkshire Clean, Cold, and Connected partnership, which is organized by the Housatonic Valley Association. “Those descriptor terms are what we aspire to have our river ecosystems in this area be in order to support wildlife, native plants, and all other indicators of river health,” Brittany said.

This initiative includes pushing for the safe removal of dams, because they can cause ecological harm to wildlife. One of the most recent projects is the removal of the Bel Air Dam in Pittsfield. “The neighboring community will be affected by this change to the river,” Brittany said. “We’re focused on engaging in deep conversation with community members that are going to be affected and amplifying...
their concerns,” Brittany said. “A lot of what we do is translate complicated technical information into a language and format that the average person in our communities can understand and engage with.”

**No frack. No kiwi.**

BEAT also works closely with Rosemary Wessel, the program director for No Fracked Gas in Mass, a program that fights fossil fuel infrastructure.

“We’re working on forming a community solar project that is owned by community members,” Jane explained. “We want an equitable transition to clean energy that allows us to engage with the community in ways that are free, accessible, and geared towards creating sustainable change.”

Additionally, each week, BEAT members head to Burbank Park in Pittsfield to remove invasive hardy kiwi. What was once planted as an ornamental vine has now become invasive and is having a negative impact on trees in Berkshire County. Hardy kiwi grows up and over other plants, creating a mat of vines several feet thick that blocks sunlight from reaching the forest floor. From there, the vines grow to the tops of trees and create a curtain of sorts, which then pulls trees to the forest floor and causes gaps in the canopy.

“We have a commitment to not using pesticides, and we selected this project because we believe that we can make a difference by simply cutting the kiwi down,” Jane explained.

**Community outreach and engagement**

BEAT is committed to creating strong relations with the community and educating neighbors on the environmental happenings in the Berkshires and the surrounding areas.

“BEAT hosts river clean ups, a monthly speaker series, and an annual kids-in-kayaks program, which teaches young people about how rivers work, what organisms can be found in the Housatonic River, and how to safely navigate the river.

“A big piece of what we do is engaging with the community in accessible ways,” Brittany said.

At its new location on Chapel Street in Pittsfield, BEAT is looking to create an educational leadership center and make it accessible to all community members. The goal is for the entire building to be net zero energy, have solar infrastructure and battery storage, and host an education exhibit hall and a lab where it can conduct research on the river.

**Avoiding environmental and personal burnout**

Sometimes trying to make serious environmental and social change can get very overwhelming. “The general challenge is that BEAT is trying to create social change and change people’s behaviors to try and get us off of the disastrous course that we’re on, and that’s an upstream battle,”

Brittany said.

While BEAT has been able to make community connections that have allowed it to make meaningful ecological progress, it acknowledges the challenge is difficult. “For me, it helps to focus on something I know I can control and change,” Jane said. “Many people look at the climate disruption and feel overwhelmed. Doing this work is actually my relief from that. By tackling little pieces, I can really make a difference.”

Brittany said that it’s important to be aware at what entry point you can be effective. “I feel that frustration a lot, and I get motivated by it,” she said. “I express my frustration to Jane, but I don’t let that be the stopping point. It’s all about being the change that we want to see and not being defeated when one pathway isn’t effective.”

BEAT also stresses the importance of campaigning at a local level and enacting change from the ground up. “Back in 2013 and 2014, a huge gas pipeline was supposed to be put in across Massachusetts. When we went to the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, they told us it was a done deal,” Jane said. “It was not a done deal. We did presentation after presentation across the state and grassroots protests rose up everywhere we went. We’ve won fights where people said we’d be defeated. It’s important that we understand that not everything is a done deal just because someone says it is.”

Beyond the physical rewards of stopping pipelines and shutting down polluting power plants, Brittany and Jane find it rewarding to know that they can make a difference. “One of the biggest rewards is knowing that I as an ordinary person without a law degree or a big fancy title in the government can join with other ordinary people in the community to make an environmentally just future and stop what’s ailing our community,” Brittany said. “It gives me hope in a way that’s not sappy or cheesy but powerful.”

**Next steps**

Going forward, BEAT’s long-term goals include getting fossil fuels out of the Northeast completely. It also aspires to see land protected and treated as sacred, as well as to keep the air clean to ensure an equitable environment for everyone. BEAT also hopes to continue organizing and facilitating community connections to get as many people involved and informed as possible.

“We want environmentally just communities where there aren’t health disparities based on where you live,”

Brittany said.

To learn more about the Berkshire Environmental Action Team, visit thebeatnews.org. To sign up for its newsletter to remain informed about environmental news or volunteer and job opportunities in the area, visit thebeatnews.org/BEATTEAM/weekly-newsletter-archive.
STONE + WOOD = THE PERFECT COMBO

CUSTOM MILLWORK • FLOORING • KILN DRIED SOFTWOODS, HARDWOODS & EXOTICS • MULCH & WOOD CHIPS • PANELING • RECLAIMED WOOD • ROUGH CUT PINE & HEMLOCK • SIDING • STONES • TABLETOPS & GLUE-UPS • TRUSSES

(518) 828-5684 • 1262 RTE 66, GHENT, NY
WWW.GHENTWOODPRODUCTS.COM
Embrace Spring with Antiques and Sustainable Design

860-485-3887 25 Main Street, Millerton, NY
WWW.MONTAGEANTIQUES.COM  @MONTAGEANTIQUES

Berkshire PROSTHETIC & RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY
Dr. Michael Mohr  |  Dr. Joshua Kleederman

- State-of-the-art techniques and technology
- Comprehensive dental rehabilitation, crowns, veneers, fixed bridges, dentures, implant dentistry

Individualized care in a respectful, positive, and comfortable environment

172 Adams Road, Williamstown  |  413-458-8102
info@bprdentistry.com  |  bprdentistry.com

NorthEastFordMillerton.com

SEE LANN TODAY!

Lann Rubin

All Makes, Models, or Mileage

See Lann Today!

NorthEastFordMillerton.com

Precision Auto Storage

Your ultimate car storage awaits!

6050 Route 22 in Millerton, NY
dan@precisionautostorage.com  •  www.precisionautostorage.com
On the most romantic day of the year, February 14, *The New York Times* published a love letter to me. It moved me, pulled at my heartstrings, and set flight to butterflies in my stomach. The title of it was, “A Collapse of the Amazon Could Be Coming Faster Than We Thought.”

Awe, *Times*. You shouldn’t have.

On a daily basis, the *Times* leaves me these thoughtful rosettes alongside my morning coffee. After digesting its account of the previous day’s apocalypse in Washington, DC, there is always some little memento of the more ominous cataclysm that is devouring our entire planet, day by day, and “faster than we thought.”

**Refilling to the rescue**

In the face of creeping doom, I turn to Dr. Bronner.

I take inordinate pride in one bottle of his magical soap in my bathroom. It is vintage Dr. Bronner’s, dating from at least 2016, although I have no record of when I actually bought it. Last year, it shed its flip-top closure, leaving it susceptible to the vicissitudes of droplets from the shower and the potential for watering down the soap within. It was time to retire her. Long stained with lime deposits, I had managed to reuse the bottle for nigh seven years, filling up a repurposed glass growler at the Berkshire Co-Op with a fresh supply of Dr. B’s whenever she ran low. I carefully tilted the glass jug over the old plastic receptacle until the honey-gold resupply reached the neck of the bottle, at which point I could screw on the cap, content in the knowledge that I had saved yet another bottle from the recycling bin.

My mania for refilling receptacles has been inconvenient at best. My collection of repurposed peanut butter and Ball jars requires a certain amount of maintenance, and I often get to the co-op, only to realize that I left that one, last, critical jar on the counter at home, now half an hour in arrears. It is one more thing to think about, to remember, and, to an extent, worry about in my routine. It’s kind of a pain in the butt.

The difference it makes to the environment is modest – negligible, really – yet it also provides a reassuring sense of agency: I am doing something. As my unbagged coffee beans percolate on a Sunday morning, I can read stories of California floods or Canadian wildfires blotting out the New York City sun and know that in the face of all of these environmental disasters, I (pausing to flip back my cape) pulled back one single bag from the landfill – the possible tipping point that could have led us headlong into the apocalypse.

Admittedly, it’s kind of absurd. But I am doing something to stem the ever-rising tide. And if you and your family were to sign on to a reuse/recycle credo, there would be a few more of us. When I go to the co-op, my fellow shoppers are a band of brothers and sisters committed to a common goal. That is the very definition of community.

**Enviro-anxiety**

Finding points of connection is a strategy endorsed by the American Psychological Association for handling environmental anxiety, which it has defined as “the chronic fear of environmental cataclysm that comes from observing the seemingly irrevocable impact of climate change and the associated concern for one’s future and...”
that of next generations.” That pretty much sums it up for me.

Environmental anxiety is not a diagnosable disorder à la the DSM 5, but the state of our environment can directly and indirectly affect our mental health. The question at hand is whether or not one’s concern amounts to a “chronic fear” that persists over time. Ultimately, a strain of uncertainty drives the anxiety, and any number of causes can fuel a fear of the unknown: absent parenting, whimsical governance, or unpredictable forecasts.

Will it rain tomorrow? Will it ever stop raining? What if it never stops raining? What if the Housatonic permanently swells until it reaches my doorstep?

Environmental anxiety can take on that kind of snowball effect (for those of us who remember what a snowball is). Small, persistent thoughts of how one small change in our environment could lead to catastrophe – can become a kind of pre-traumatic stress disorder that threatens to pervade our thoughts and actions. One can detail this train of thought with small actions like refilling a plastic soap bottle.

### A bigger impact

Some of us are truly more directly impacted by environmental change than others. Native populations such as the Inuit face an existential crisis when their world collapses around them. This is not only a matter of material well-being but also of identity and self-worth.

As explained in the APA’s 2017 report, *Mental Health and Our Changing Climate*, researchers “reviewed case studies of several Inuit communities and reported weakening social networks, increased levels of conflict, and significant stress associated with relocation or even thinking about relocation. In evocative language, Inuit community members interviewed by Durkalec et al. (2015) reported that an inability to go out on the sea ice (due to a changing climate) would make them feel like they ‘have no health’ and ‘can’t breathe,’ and they would ‘be very sad,’ ‘be lost,’ or ‘go crazy.’”

### And for you, locally

While this might read as the isolated concern of a marginal community – and that should be reason enough for us to care about it – one can also read it as a stand-in for all of those who make their living off the earth. Our neighbors in farming rely on terroir for their living, and while annual meteorological shifts are part of the gig, persistent environmental changes in our climate can spell an existential threat. Farms in our area have been literally washed out by excessive rainfall in the past year, and a 2010 report by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection listed maple syrup, dairy, warm-weather crops, and shellfish among the top five agricultural products that will be most impacted by our changing environment.

The antidote to uncertainty is control, or at least the illusion of it. With these threats also come opportunities. Farms are already adapting to the change by planting crops such as grapes and hops, two vine-grown products that can take years to cultivate but that produce lucrative environmental products. Perhaps such adaptation will allow farmers to stay in the agricultural game longer, but there is no guarantee that our climate will stabilize long enough to make the transformation profitable.

And with an aging population of farmers, why would they even try? But perhaps I am projecting my own anxiety onto others. The APA recommends fostering one’s own sense of self-efficacy and optimism to combat the effects of climate change, and my bottle-filling, while modest in scale, is a meaningful response to that threat. Rather than pathologizing one’s response to this real existential threat, the more we can validate it in the service of collective action, the greater our impact will be. Just one more reason why the time to act on climate change is now. •
Proprietor, Stone Scasso
107 Rt. 44, Millerton NY
(845) 392-0404

SHEDS, TINY HOUSES, Pergolas
Chicken Coops, Trellis & More!

Larson Architecture Works PLLC

501 Fifth Avenue, 2108
New York, NY 10017
2 Route 8
Acarandale, NY 12503
646.809.5009
As spring arrives, many of us are anticipating warm weather gatherings in our outdoor spaces. Eager to plant colorful flowers and shrubs and tend to our lawns, we head to our local nurseries or farm stands and rehire our landscapers, some of who employ traditional practices like using fertilizer and planting species that aren’t native to our area.

What we may not realize are the ways in which these choices can be detrimental to the environment, cause land destruction, and endanger our wildlife. Luckily, in recent years there’s been an uptick of interest in using organic landscaping practices rather than traditional methods. One of the major marks of distinction between the two comes down to plant choice.

Local efforts
Falls Village, CT, is home to Meadowscapes, an organic landscaping company that is working to create the change that it wants to see in the region. Founded in 2022, it is the ecological division of Matt’s Landscaping, a full-service outdoor construction and maintenance provider helmed by Matt Schwaikert. The company evolved into the organic landscaping sector after a chance encounter between Schwaikert and ecological landscape practitioner, Michael Nadeau.

The Meadowscapes team believes they can foster change on a local level. “We can be a haven for biodiversity and land stewardship. When we plant native plants, we allow the natural world to function properly,” said Beth Romaker, project manager and landscape designer at Meadowscapes.

A quick biology lesson explains why gardeners should consider ecological practices. Many insects have host-specific relationships with plants. Their species can only reproduce on one specific plant. Romaker pointed to genera like the oak (Quercus), which support more than 4,000 species of insects and animals. By using these plants, we can ensure the survival of biodiversity.

Native plants also thrive in native soils. They’re easier to maintain, less expensive, and don’t require amendments that change soil structure, annual mulching, irrigation, or fertilizer. Some examples include foxglove beardtongue (Penstemon digitalis); New England aster (Symphyotrichum novae-angliae); and eastern star sedge (Carex radiata).

Romaker believes that ecological landscaping companies like Meadowscapes are gaining in popularity. She credits Doug Tallamy, an entomologist, ecologist, and conservationist, who has contributed to the current shift.

Ecologically driven
Ecologically conscious practices and decision making guide Romaker’s work. After graduating from the University of Vermont with a BS in forestry and a minor in ecological agriculture, Romaker studied landscape architecture and permaculture.

Then she worked as an ecological forest health technician, on a native plant and nut tree farm in the Hudson Valley, and as a forester for the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, Romaker now dedicates her time to creating change – one meadow or garden at a time.

Meadowscapes works with local ecosystems to restore biodiversity, soil health, and human connection with nature in an aesthetic and meaningful way. “This takes a deep knowledge of ecological systems and native flora and fauna. We identify patterns on the landscape and utilize them to transform a property into a visually stunning and ecologically functional space that will require less long-term maintenance than a traditional landscape,” said Romaker.

Future focused
When we look at the state of the natural world, the need for native landscapes and ecological practices becomes evident. According to a 2023 report issued by the Center for Biological Diversity, 40% of animals, 34% of plants, and 40% of ecosystems nationwide are at risk. Wetlands and grasslands have been particularly suppressed and hayfields are mowed during nesting season.

“We owe our lives to the stability of ecosystems that serve us by controlling floods, pollinating crops, purifying drinking water, and providing renewable energy, among many other things. That stability depends on biodiversity,” said Romaker.

Unfortunately, more forests are also being impacted by invasive species. Green spaces are losing mature trees due to over-harvesting and the rampant spread of new diseases and non-native insects. Development causes habitat fragmentation and lowers the species richness of an ecosystem. If we don’t swap traditional landscaping practices with ecological ones, this trend will only be exacerbated explains Romaker.

When we don’t look at how we can co-exist with the plants and animals that have lived on this land for millennia, we risk losing them. Grassland birds in the area, including the Eastern meadowlark, bobolink, and grasshopper sparrow, are disappearing rapidly as natural fire regimes are suppressed and hayfields are mowed during nesting season.

“We owe our lives to the stability of ecosystems that serve us by controlling floods, pollinating crops, purifying drinking water, and providing renewable energy, among many other things. That stability depends on biodiversity,” said Romaker.

Continued on next page...
Spreading the seeds
Unlike highly cultivated ornamental flowers, native species produce viable seeds that will propagate themselves not only in the garden, but also in the surrounding environment.

“This aspect of spreading into the wider world is a huge benefit of native gardens. It’s also why we chose eco-typic native plants whose genetic origins are from our own local ecosystem whenever we can. These are often very hard to find at nurseries, which is why we are now growing them ourselves,” said Romaker.

“In my opinion, part of the joy of native gardening is taking part in the natural dynamics at play in your yard. For example, a cardinal flower is a short-lived perennial. Its continued presence in a garden relies on light soil disturbance to promote seed germination. Cardinal flowers are an excellent late-season source of rich nectar for ruby-throated hummingbirds, and they have a lot to offer in return for the gardener’s efforts,” said Romaker.

Although private residences have been its focus, Meadowscapes has set its sights on doing more work in the public and commercial landscape sector. In addition to working with local land trusts, it is involved with the Forge Project, a “Native-led organization with a mandate to cultivate and advance Indigenous leadership in the arts and culture. It operates on a logical division of Matt’s Landscaping, which is called “biomimicry,” can dramatically increase the health and productivity of your gardens. Here’s what Romaker suggests:

• Use ground cover plants such as purple poppy mallow (Callirhoe involucrata) or heath aster (Symphyotrichum ericoides) to eliminate the need for annual mulching and to suppress weeds. Choose plants that stay below 12 inches high and spread by rhizomes, which are shallow roots that creep through the soil and create new stems. Many rhizomatic woodland species, like Meehan’s mint (Meehania cordata), are great choices because they bloom in the spring and then receive shelter from the hot sun as summer dominant plants grow over them.

• Cut weeds, don’t pull! It isn’t nearly as satisfying, but every time a plant is pulled, new weed seeds are brought up and germinate in their stead.

• When gardening in a small space, it can be hard to achieve a season-long blooming scheme because plant diversity is naturally low. Choose plants like threadleaf bluestar (Amsonia hubrechtii) and black cohosh (Actaea racemosa), which have a good architectural form, textured foliage, and/or fall color that provide seasonal interest even when not in bloom.

• As long as they haven’t gone to seed, save your weeds in a five-gallon bucket. Fill it with chlorine-free water, loosely cover, and allow it to sit for a day or two. You can use this as an organic fertilizer in your veggie garden or orchard. Just make sure it doesn’t go anaerobic because it can breed negative microbes like root-feeding nematodes.

• Do not mix soil layers when you’re planting, and similarly, do not amend native soil with compost unless the soil is highly disturbed (no visible soil horizons, severe compaction, etc.). Mixing is a very common practice when planting fruit trees, but the division between native soil and amended soil will reduce nutrient exchange capacity and inhibit root growth. Top dressing with compost is the way to go.

• Planting with plugs (which are small, deeply rooted plants) will save you a lot of money. They are less than half the price of larger one-gallon plants, so you can double the size of your garden!

• Instead of putting seeds out in a bird feeder, which can be expensive and attract bears, plant a bird garden with native plants that yield nutritious berries and seeds. Utilizing native plants like asters, goldenrods, and switchgrass that host a large diversity of insects is great for birds, too – 95% of baby birds depend on caterpillars. Use shrubs like Ilex verticillate, so that birds feel comfortable – they don’t like to be out in the open with no cover.

• Don’t forget to prune! Pruning encourages plant health and vigor by increasing airflow, reducing weight, and increasing blooms. Pruning is best done at the end of winter when fresh cuts have less of a chance to dry out in cold winter temperatures.

Happy gardening!

To learn more about Meadowscapes, an ecological division of Matt’s Landscaping, which is located in Fullil Village, CT, please call the office at (860) 824-1188 or email meadowows@mattslandscapingct.com. You can also visit online at nativemeadowscapes.com.
DID YOU KNOW WE DO PLUMBING TOO?

CALL US TODAY FOR ALL OF YOUR PLUMBING NEEDS.

If you have a leaky faucet or if your toilet isn’t working, give us a call and we’ll have it fixed in no time!

1-800-553-2234
www.GMTaylorOil.com • "Like" us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/TaylorOilInc
Taylor Oil, Inc. is a family owned and operated local business, serving the local communities for over 95 years. Offices in Dover Plains, Pawling, Millerton, Pine Plains, Millbrook. "We’re here to serve you!"
Valentine Monument Works
Since 1875
Cemetery Monuments • On-Site Lettering • Bronze Veterans’ Plaques
Pet Markers • Cleaning & Repairs
Bruce Valentine, owner • Tel: 518-789-9497
ValentineMonument@hotmail.com • Park Avenue & Main Street, Millerton

Over Mountain Builders, LLC.
30 years and still passionate! Quality craftsmanship delivered on time & within budget.
John Crawford
P: 518-789-6173 | C: 860-671-0054
john@overmountainbuilders.com
www.overmountainbuilders.com

North East Muffler Inc.
Custom Bending up to 3 inches
Open Mon.–Fri. 8 to 5; Sat. 8 to 1
John & Cindy Heck
Route 22, Millerton, NY
(518) 789-3669

The Hair Lounge
A color and hair design studio
Eyebrow tinting & lamination
Loren Whiteley • Tarah Kennedy • Amy Carol
Joe Musso • Hailey Cookingham
143 Route 44 • Millerton, NY • (518) 592 • 1167

Hammertown
INSPIRING IDEAS FOR LIFE AT HOME

Pine Plains • Rhinebeck • Great Barrington
hammertown.com @hammertownbarn

OVER MOUNTAIN BUILDERS, LLC.
30 years and still passionate! Quality craftsmanship delivered on time & within budget.
John Crawford
P: 518-789-6173 | C: 860-671-0054
john@overmountainbuilders.com
www.overmountainbuilders.com
By Jesse DeGroodt
info@mainstreetmag.com

We here at the Main Street headquarters had a good chuckle with this one. We hope you will too. Jesse and yours truly (this magazine’s editor) had an entertaining conversation about conspiracy theories some time ago that then resulted in Jesse taking pen to paper, err, fingers to keyboard rather. There are so many theories out there. Some are just beyond entertaining while others are absolutely ridiculous! A few will make you question what you think you know and go “hmm” while doing a thorough Google search while others are just so far out in left field. That all said, before you deep dive into Jesse’s words here, take it all with a grain of salt and some good old-fashioned humor. But feel free to reach out to Jesse with your own theories, and he might have to write a part two… just sayin’.

Silencio! I’m sitting here watching and listening to Elvis Presley and Paul McCartney conjure up a new tune together, and I don’t want to miss a single note. What did you think they were doing? After all, they need something to do all day rather than sit around eating doughnuts, smoking cigarettes, and staring at the boob tube.

Elvis is dead, you say? Well, duh, of course he’s not dead, although most observers seem to think Paul is doing a better job of resembling an animated human being. But it was an ingenious career move to get everyone believing it, was it not? Now everyone is off their backs and, golly gee, look at how well sales have done ever since their respective… ahem… demises.


Okay, then who was that if not Elvis depicted in a horizontal state in a casket on the cover of a supermarket tabloid following his alleged demise in 1977? Oh, come on. That was his body double, of course, of which there were several, one of whom grew up in Hopewell Junction and later attended nearby Marist College, I have on good authority.

**Code name Zephyr**

I’ll admit it right up front. I am a product of a conspiracy my parents concocted, and now I am a living, breathing psyop all my own. I kid you not. Back in the day, in my post as a reporter for a small upstate New York newspaper, the Psyop Conscription Crew from the great land of Zzy-wyrtzzzz3 approached, offering a king’s ransom that would make a PGA Tour golfer being lured by the LIV Tour blanch if I would join their endeavor. Bazillions, I say!

My mission? To perpetuate what the world has been convinced are conspiracy theories by making things seem at least conceivable. My code name? Zephyr. And, they issued me my very own velociraptor, which has really come in handy.

Oh, crud. Hang on. I need to change the battery for the tracking chip implanted when I received my first COVID-19 vaccine. What a nuisance. Maybe it’ve been smarter to simply catch the damn virus and croak, rather than deal with this aggravation every six months or so.

Sometimes even my “handlers” surprise me. How did they know that, in all good time, Taylor (also known in the underground as “Zephyr”) Swift would spring forth and take the music world by storm? Did Mr. and Mrs. Swift even know? How about the parents of her current squeeze, Kansas City Chiefs player Travis Kelce? But they knew, and that’s all I have to know.

**Illuminati secret meetings**

Let’s work this one backwards. Following my psyop co-option, it was time for a vacation. At the time, I couldn’t think of a much better place to touch down than the Denver International Airport, where, as any dimwit knows, the Illuminati regularly conduct secret meetings hundreds of stories below ground in their ongoing effort to keep the world running as they see fit.

Okay, some might ask, in particular myself, why would anyone want to undertake such a project? But for the Illuminati, this is important, and I’m not prepared to return my bazillions.

After checking in with the Illuminati, I left Denver International in a black helicopter, a Bell 206 B3 Jetranger, for those keeping score at home. Seems it was time for some football! Where to? Why, Kansas City, naturally, where we can check in

Continued on next page...
on the progress the aforementioned secret agent Taylor Swift has made with wrecking the National Football League since she began dating Chiefs’ tight end Travis Kelce.

**Agent Swift and the NFL**

I willingly confess to being completely in the dark with the logic here. Either the popular musician has utterly failed at her assigned task, or someone in the corner office made a major miscalculation, but instead of razing the place, it appears TV ratings have skyrocketed since Swift appeared on the scene as she, according to most reports, drags an entire contingent of female fans who previously could not have cared less about football onto the scene. Next thing you know, Kelce’s divorced mom, Donna Kelce, now catapulted to a position of distinction, will be dating quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo, who will promptly take full ownership of the Las Vegas strip and lead his Raiders to five straight Super Bowl championships before eventually becoming the President of Everywhere.

This whole pro-football-as-farce thing, as it’s become, I’ve personally observed. In the early ’90s, bro-in-law and I got ourselves New England Patriots season tickets. This was in the day when the NFL still seemed to espouse athletic competition. By 2015, I’d eliminated what I now refer to as the NFWWE (at least the WWE has the decency to admit it’s scripted) from my life because it’s crookeder than a stick in water and nothing but an entertainment vehicle. I haven’t watched a single down since, but I have maintained a fervent desire to see the whole thing crater.

There’s no question in my mind of the NFL’s orchestration abilities. In 2002, we were selected in the ticket lottery to attend the 2002 Super Bowl in N’Awlins between the Patriots and the Rams. While sitting in the stands that day watching a “game” inexplicably won by the Patriots, it was difficult to ignore the growing sensation in my gut that things weren’t quite right on the field, a sensation that had begun to develop several years earlier. It would take a few more years to fully convince me of the ongoing shenanigans.

**The ruler of all**

From its exalted perch as America’s national religion, football now momentarily gives way to the country’s primary preoccupation and ruler of all: $$$ Time to jump off the chopper and climb aboard a boat, where we will uncover the mystery of how American fat cat and White Star Lines owner John Piermont Morgan managed to get the Titanic to steer into the iceberg that maimed it, ultimately leading to the deaths of fellow riches/rivals Jacob Astor, Isidor Straus, and Benjamin Guggenheim.

Why was this action necessary? Astor, Straus, and Guggenheim were opposed to the formation of a central bank in the United States, which would become what is known as the Federal Reserve, while ol’ J.P. Morgan thought it one mighty fine idea, to the extent that he canceled his spot on the Titanic’s ill-fated voyage and set about finding himself a worthy iceberg and single-handedly pushing it off into the direction of his shiny new boat on its maiden voyage. Done. We are able to look upon this as a conspiracy because moneybags surely needed a little help with the iceberg end of things, for one, considering he was no spring chicken by that time.

**The theory thing**

Which brings us to the whole “conspiracy theory thing.” What, according to Merriam-Webster, is a conspiracy theory? “Noun: a theory that explains an event or set of circumstances as the result of a secret plot by usually powerful conspirators.” A theory is “a plausible or scientifically acceptable general principle or body of principles offered to explain phenomena.”

I’ll be hornswoggled. Nowhere in there do I detect the notion that an idea, which may indeed be the truth but that may otherwise seem out of the mainstream pattern of thought, automatically makes one a wild-eyed, bonkers-in-the-head conspiracy theorist, two words designed to instantly disqualify from consideration as a member of the human race anyone who might have possessed the audacity necessary to even conceive of it, all of this perpetuated by what we consider the mainstream media. Let’s try this. Let’s cast an inquiring eye on those doing the perpetuating. •
“We’re talking ‘bout some moxie!”
Season 3 is here!

LISTEN EVERYWHERE YOU LISTEN TO PODCASTS
www.mainstreetmoxie.press
**Full Circus Farm**

27 Mils Path, Pine Plains, NY. fullcircusfarm@gmail.com fullcircusfarm.wordpress.com

Full Circus Farm was started by Mark Stonehill and Miriam Goler in 2014 on leased land found through the Columbia Land Conservancy. “We got a family dairy cow, two Haflinger draft horses, and horse-drawn equipment. Miriam loves working with Sandy and Sunshine, our draft horses, for plowing and cultivating our veggies and tree nursery,” Mark said. Since experiencing a devastating flood last summer, they have shifted their focus toward the nursery. They offer two- to five-year-old bare-root apple trees, as well as pear, Asian pear, and potted fig trees. “We also grow other perennials and annual vegetable and flower seedlings. We offer fruit tree pruning and garden consultation and still grow some veggies!” What sets Full Circus apart from other farms? Well, not too many farms are still using draft horses. “We also take a lot of time to build relationships, communicate the realities of farming, and connect folks with the land they live on. We want to empower everyone to grow more of their own food – there is nothing more delicious!” The most rewarding part about being in the business for Mark and Miriam is the community connections and seeing how the community showed up for them after their flood. Full Circus is in a big transition phase right now, and going forward, they’re looking to buy their own piece of land. “This will allow our business to continue to grow and evolve without such a high risk of flooding.”

**Paley’s Farm Market**

230 Amenia Road (Route 343), Sharon CT. paleysfarm@gmail.com paleysmarket.com

Paley’s Farm Market in Sharon, CT, is going into their 42nd year in business this season. Offering a variety of fresh produce, hundreds of hanging baskets, planters, window boxes, and more in the greenhouse, and a vast selection of perennials, shrubs, and trees in the nursery, Paley’s has everything you need for your garden. “90% of the annuals that we sell are grown here on the farm. That makes a difference in the quality, and it also allows us to offer some different things from what you would find at a typical garden center that just buys their product from a big supplier,” said Sarah Coon. Paley’s was originally opened by Morris Paley, before being taken over by his son, Charlie, and finally, by his daughter Sarah Coon, who has been running Paley’s since 2019 with her husband, Chris. Sarah shared, “When customers come in the spring, it feels like a family reunion,” she said. “Our employees are pretty awesome, too. Renee has worked at Paley’s for over 25 years! Thanks to our amazing team and some other family volunteers, we were able to attend our daughter’s college graduation on Mother’s Day weekend … our busiest weekend of the year!” Paley’s Farm Market reopened for the season on March 23. They’re open seven days a week.

**Maitri Farm**

143 Amenia Union Rd., Amenia, NY. info@maitriny.com maitriny.com

Maitri Farm is a vegetable and flower farm located on the NY/CT border along the Wèbatuck Creek in Amenia, NY. Maitri is named after the first of the four sublime states taught by the Buddha; the name has roots in the word “mitra,” which means “friend.” Maitri’s vegetables are certified organic by the Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York. Maitri Farm offers both vegetable and flower CSAs. Vegetable CSAs are available for a full share of sixteen weeks, a half share of eight weeks, and a six-week fall share. There are four flower CSAs available; the tulip share in early spring, the spring flower share, the summer flower share, and the dahlia share. Maitri Farm prides itself on its connections and involvement with the local community. “We want to develop the farm community here and get more people out to the farm to enjoy how beautiful it is,” said Jenn Djambazov, Maitri’s farm manager. Going forward, Maitri also hopes to continue addressing the issues that face small communities – the food desert, employment, and housing – while also working with neighbors to see how it can be an effective resource for the community.

**Moreish**

288 Main Street, Beacon, NY. @moreishnewyork

Moreish is a new restaurant serving British classics located in the Hudson Valley Food Hall in Beacon, NY. The term ‘moreish’ in regards to food is defined as ‘having a very pleasant taste and making you want to eat more.’ The restaurant, which is the brain-child of English chef Michael Johnson, officially opened on Saturday, March 7. When Michael, who is originally from Brighton, found himself missing his favorite dishes from home, he decided that there was a niche that needed to be filled in the food market. “It was missing from this area. I said, ‘well, let’s just create our own place and fill that gap,’” Michael said. “We’re doing classic British fare and putting our own spin on it. Doing the basics, but doing them really well.” The menu is chock-full of British classics including bangers and mash, full English breakfast, sausage rolls, scones, crumpets, and much more. Moreish is open on Wednesday, Thursday, and Sunday from 10am to 6pm and Friday and Saturday from 10am to 8pm.

Want to be featured here? Scan the QR code!
SHARON LAWN & LANDSCAPE

COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL
Licensed | Insured | Credit Cards Accepted
(860) 672-5260 | Sharonlawnandlandscape@yahoo.com
PAY OFF YOUR HOME FASTER.

Introducing our **23 in ’24 Mortgage:**
Get a shorter term and a fixed rate, only available in 2024.

Want to learn more?
Scan to see how NBT Bank can get you moving!

Apply today at [www.nbtbank.com/mortgage](http://www.nbtbank.com/mortgage)