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LET'S ALL GIVE THANKS

Before we really get into the thick of the holiday season, I wanted to take a quiet moment to just ... stop and think about what we're thankful for. Yes, yes, I know. November is the month of Thanksgiving, when we all show our gratitude and give thanks. But instead of thinking of what we're grateful for at the end of the month, I thought why not start the month off with gratitude?

For me, this time of year is incredibly stressful and hectic. Last year my eye twitched for about two months straight. I'm hoping that the stress level will be slightly lower this year. In order to help with that, I wanted to approach this holiday season with a gratitude mindset where I focus on what is important and also on what I am grateful for. I feel when I focus on the positive instead of on superficial and materialistic things (along with trying to coordinate everyone's schedules), it quiets the chaos. It also helps to hyper focus on what is actually important in this life of ours.

So that said, instead of just giving a few moment's focus while we sit around the Thanksgiving table at the end of the month to reflect on the things we want to thank the universe and those around us for, why not do it all month? And then take it a step further: thank the people in your life who you are appreciative of. Help those less fortunate by donating items or volunteering. You can also donate to charitable organizations. Perhaps you want to collaborate with other individuals, businesses, or organizations on something that gives back to your community. There are so many ways to show your gratitude and to give back.

Personally, I'm going to try to implement this all month long. What exactly am I going to do? I'm working on that as I write this, but telling those around me how much I appreciate and am thankful for them is a very easy thing to do all month long. Further, we'll be sharing some content on our website and socials all month long about local organizations who make a huge difference in our communities. I'll also be donating clothing and food. But we can always do more.

Please feel free to reach out to us and share some of the things that you are grateful for and the ways you plan on giving back. We'd be so happy to hear your ideas; send us an email or DM. We're always grateful to hear from our readers. I hope you take a moment or two this month to reflect and give your own thanks, because I appreciate you.

– Thorunn Kristjansdottir



NOVEMBER 2025

Fall is the perfect season for gathering. The crisp air, vibrant colors, and harvest bounty make it ideal for connecting with friends and loved ones. Whether it's around a table like this one, or enjoying nature's beauty, fall offers a warm, cozy atmosphere for creating memories and celebrating together.

Photo by
Olivia Valentine

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PEERING BEYOND THE FRAME

- COLLEEN MCGUIRE

By Leora Armstrong
info@mainstreetmag.com

When I visited Colleen McGuire in her Sharon, CT, studio, our conversation turned to the practice of plein-air painting and how it informs her broader artistic vision. McGuire's work carries the sensibility of film stills – fragments of a larger story frozen in time. Each painting suggests that something has just happened, or is about to happen, just beyond the frame.

Her imagery invites a sense of cinematic suspense. Doors are left ajar. Curtains half conceal what lies behind them. A viewer feels as though someone has just stepped out of the scene – or is about to enter. This deliberate openness keeps the work alive, urging us to ask questions: What's in the cupboard? Who's behind the curtain? What lies beyond that doorway?

McGuire offers not only a view, but also the thrill of the unseen. By withholding just enough, she creates a tension that stirs curiosity and wonder. The result is a body of work that doesn't merely depict a scene but conjures the lingering atmosphere of a story in motion.

What pulled you to this area?

Originally, I am from Windsor, Ontario, Canada. My husband and I were living in Long Island, where he was completing a medical residency. There was a job opening at Sharon Hospital, so we moved up here. That

was 27 years ago. I hadn't really envisioned myself living in a rural setting because I was more of a city person, but I've developed an appreciation for the peacefulness of Sharon. Had we lived in the city, we'd be in a much smaller living space than we are now.

Have you always painted?

I always loved to draw and paint. My mom was a writer, but also a Sunday painter. I dabbled with her paints, so art was essential to me. Yet she would never have suggested heading to art school, even though it was evident that I loved art. Initially, I majored in sociology in college, but I dropped out after my first year. After a period of living in Toronto for four years and running a vintage clothing store, I moved to Westchester, NY, where I started attending art school at SUNY Purchase. I knew immediately that art was my vocation, and I haven't looked back.

So, what does art mean to you?

That's a loaded question. My life revolves around painting, drawing, and looking at art. For me, it's about observing the world around me and capturing it in painterly terms. As an educator, I often think in formal terms, such as composition, color, and value. It's a balance between painting intuitively and thinking critically. I love to paint the outside world, but lately I've been painting the inte-

rior spaces of my house, as a way to document my surroundings, but also to explore the idea of interiority. In psychology, the house can be seen as representing the self, and I see my interior spaces as a reflection of who I am.

I've always been drawn to the work of Edward Hopper and Edouard Vuillard, who were both painters of interiors.

This reminds me of Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space*, which was one of my favorite books.

It's so dense, it is a pick-up, put-down book. In my own work, I also think about the structure of poetry, or creative writing, and also perhaps filmmaking. I think about how I can create a painting that resonates with me, but also with the viewer. I like this idea of capturing a moment in time before it's gone and capturing a sense of place. I think about the way that a director might set the stage.

My paintings are not all staged, but when I work on a still life or an interior, especially, it's different from a landscape. With the landscape, you have to deal with the elements. If it's cold or dark, I'll paint in my car, sometimes with a flashlight illuminating my painting. My husband calls it the *paint mobile*, a studio on wheels.

Observation is key. I once relied on photographs but abandoned them to preserve the immediacy of the painting experience. Being in that moment is really important to me. It's about capturing the subtleties of light.

Color and light are my constant challenges and companions. For example, I liked the structure of a painting that I made two years ago; however, the color was driving me crazy. Only yesterday was I able to finally resolve it. A painting might take a day to complete or a year.

I want my paintings to appear spontaneous, but the process is not necessarily always that way. The night scenes demand a pared-down palette, while daylight requires expansiveness – careful balancing of warm and cool tones to evoke not just form, but atmosphere. It is this pursuit of harmony between color, light, and sensation that animates the work and keeps me searching for the moment when everything finally coheres. I often work on panels, savoring the luminous quality that comes when thin layers of paint allow the white ground to shine through. I am pretty economical with paint; however, these bedroom paintings are an exception: layered and dense but attempting a vibrancy that resists heaviness.

What motivates your practice?

Painting begins with a fleeting moment – a shadow cast on a wall, the way steam fogs a mirror, or the light shifting across a room I have known for decades. Having lived in the same house for 27 years, I have grown deeply attuned to its rhythms, witnessing how light changes daily and seasonally. I'll see a shadow on a wall and want to capture the sensation of light as well as the geometry of the shapes. I love how everything changes.

What motivates me is this interplay of light, space, and the sheer act of painting. Sometimes it emerges in unexpected ways: stepping from the shower into a steamy room, smearing the mirror, and finding delight in the playful abstraction created. Though I do not consider myself an abstract painter, moments like these allow a nod toward abstract expressionism while staying rooted in observation. Our rambling old house is a studio in itself. The messy intimacy of a closet becomes a study in atmosphere and perspective. The bathroom, with its



Above: *Tiretracks*. Oil on panel, 18x24".

Below: Colleen McGuire plein air painting 2025.

Opposite page: Left: *Porchlight*. Oil on panel, 24x16".

Right: *Late Afternoon*. Oil on panel, 18x24".

luminous light, has inspired multiple paintings. Even my beloved curtains, once destined to be discarded, found new life on the canvas when I realized I had to paint them before I got rid of them. The excitement lies in mark-making: the immediacy, the energy, the way a gesture can capture the spirit of a moment.

Through these intimate acts of attention, the domestic spaces become portals of memory and painterly discovery. Which painters or writers do you follow?

I love Henri Matisse, Pierre Bonnard, Édouard Vuillard, and Fairfield Porter, who balance intimacy, freshness, and light. Their work resonates with sensitivity to color and atmosphere. I draw inspiration from Lois Dodd for the way she distills a moment into visual poetry. I also love Scottish painter Richard Walker for the immediacy of his brushwork, and his experimentation with lighting. I grew up loving comics, so painters like Philip Guston and Richard Bosman appeal to me for their sense of playfulness.

Sometimes I ask myself, why am I doing this? Yet the answer is always the same: the drive to create is something within me, an impulse that cannot be ignored. I graduated from art school at the age of thirty, then earned my master's degree two decades later, from Western Connecticut State University, which was an excellent education, it deepened my practice and perspective.

Like many artists, I experience the tension between solitude and community. I tend to stay in my own little

Continued on next page ..





Left: *Mirror*. Oil on panel, 22x20".

Middle: *Closet Light*. Oil on panel, 16x13".

Right: *Toile Curtains*. Oil on panel, 20 x16".

All images with this article are courtesy of Colleen McGuire.



bubble; however, I try to get out to attend more openings and visit galleries. Living close to New York is essential because I spend a lot of time visiting the galleries and museums there.

As an artist, I tend to be more introverted. That balance between the private world of painting and the public world of exhibition remains an ongoing negotiation as an artist.

If you could beg, borrow, or steal a piece of work anywhere in the world, what would it be?

Oh, so many options to work with. I really like Deborah Zlotsy's work. I would love a Richard Walker, the Scottish painter I mentioned, but I would really love to live with a Bonnard interior if that was possible!

Do you have a favorite time of day for working and navigating your practice whilst teaching?

When I'm not teaching, I work in the morning, and at night too. I paint, draw, or read, trying to make it a daily practice. Sometimes I stay awake at night so I can paint. It's great now that the days are getting shorter, because I can paint at 7pm, which isn't so late.

When I completed my master's degree at Western Connecticut State University in Danbury, they offered me a position teaching foundational art courses, so I travel there twice a week. I also taught art at Hotchkiss for five years which I loved, but I

retired so that I could have more time to paint. For me teaching and painting are intertwined: each sustains the other, enriching my practice.

What was the best advice you were given regarding your practice that you can share?

I think the essence of painting lies not in innate talent but in persistence. The late artist Paula Rego said: "Every idea should include four paintings – the first two are practice, the third is when you find your rhythm, and the fourth may already push too far." I have taken this to heart. One of the best things I've learned is to keep going and not be discouraged by your first painting, she says. "Your first painting could be a warm-up. If something fails, don't give up. Keep going."

Likewise, Jasper Johns's mantra: "Do something, then do it again." Repetition builds not only skill but also insight. It's perseverance over everything. I am passionate about sweat equity, and I often share a quote by Thomas Edison with my students, "Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration."

Humility is also part of being an artist. Even when I am not painting or drawing, I am immersed in art – reading or visiting exhibitions. It is my whole life. Finally, I learned that paintings have their own internal logic and that the subject matter is the entry point into a painting, but the way the artist arranges the space, the colors they choose, and the way they apply the paint all contribute to the meaning of the painting.

Do you have a project or series you're most proud of?

I really enjoy the interiors; that is where my heart is currently. An interior feels more personal and more like a stage. I've always loved architecture and the idea that when you paint a space, the viewer can sense if they could occupy that space. I'm also getting back into larger paintings. When you view a larger work, sometimes it feels more like you could step into that painted space.

McGuire's work pulls daily life to the forefront, allowing us to rejoice in the simplicity of both place and home. Her harmonious palettes capture light from both internal and external views and pause the moment. She often repeats a scene. Each image is slightly different, but viewing them together brings multiple subtleties to the variations. ●

McGuire's work has been shown at Pamela Salisbury Gallery in Hudson, NY; Standard Space in Sharon, CT; and Western CT State University as well as with Armature Projects, the Hillstead Museum in Farmington, CT, and Blue Mountain Gallery in New York. Her upcoming show, *Wish You Were Here at Tremaine Gallery at Hotchkiss School*, will be presented alongside work from Kinderhook-based artist Fern Apfel. Show dates: November 4-January 25. Opening reception: November 15, 4-6pm. Artist talk: November 13, 7-7:45pm at The Hotchkiss School.

For further information on McGuire's work, please visit her website: cmcguireart.com or Instagram: [@colleenmcguire_art](https://www.instagram.com/colleenmcguire_art)



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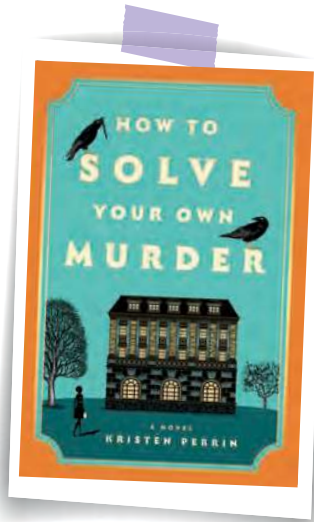


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NOVEMBER MUSTS

to read



***How to Solve Your Own Murder* by Kristen Perrin.** I was looking for a nice cozy fall read and came across *How to Solve Your Own Murder* by Kristen Perrin in a Substack article. This novel, which is Perrin's adult fiction debut, is an inventive whodunnit, a la Agatha Christie. The story centers around the murder of Frances Adams, who at 16 years old in 1965, receives a bone-chilling fortune that predicts that one day, she will be murdered. Thus, she spends her life trying to solve a crime that hasn't yet happened. Nearly sixty years later, Annie Adams is summoned to the estate of great-aunt Frances, but by the time she arrives, Frances is found murdered just as her fortune has predicted she would be. Annie is tasked with catching the killer, and thanks to Frances' paranoia, she has many leads to follow. This novel flips back and forth from Frances' life in 1965 to present day in which Annie is trying to solve her murder. It's witty and interesting, with an ending that you won't see coming. I devoured this book in three days flat.



TO LISTEN

***The Life of a Showgirl* by Taylor Swift.** Some may say Taylor Swift is overrated, but I'm sorry: I disagree. No matter what era you're personally sifting through in life, there is always a T-Swift song or album that helps get you through. Her newest album, *The Life of a Showgirl*, was highly anticipated and finally released October 3. Although it seems a little predictable, I think it might be one of my favorite T-Swift albums to date (as someone who's always liked her music in a non-obsessive "Swiftie" way). It has many upbeat bangers and bright sounds that are too catchy not to bop along with. Taylor always has purpose with her lyrics, and this album is no different. To paraphrase Taylor, track three, "Opalite," is a man-made crystal, which she interpreted as self-created happiness. Preach, sister! I love this song and the album.

GO WATCH

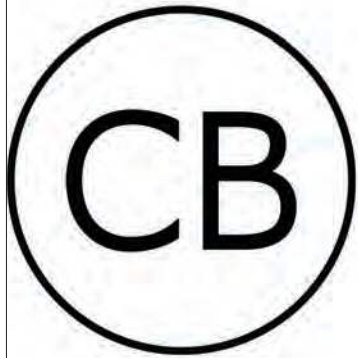
***Wicked: For Good*.** Looking for something wicked good to watch? (See what I did there?) To refresh our memories, the beloved musical came to the big screen last November in what we now know as the first installment of a two-part film. It showcases Ariana Grande in her leading role as Glinda, and Cynthia Erivo as Elphaba. From seeing a glimpse of their origin – understanding that polar opposites can become unexpected besties – their bond seemed unbreakable. That is, until the bucket of popcorn was empty and Oz did the unimaginable. As we all assume our movie theater seats in anticipation for how the story will end, *Wicked: For Good* is scheduled to premiere in theaters Friday, November 21. With a divide in their friendship, Glinda returns to live in Emerald City. She shows off the perks of fame and popularity, really leaning into her "Good Witch" role. Meanwhile, will we find out if Elphaba, the Wicked Witch of the West, is really wicked? Your guess is as good as mine at this point, but one thing is certain: with continued musical numbers, combined with powerhouse vocals, an incredibly talented cast, and unbelievable graphics, it will be an adventure!



To Do: Beacon Bonfire Music + Art + Film Festival

Beacon Bonfire Music + Art + Film Festival will take place from November 5 to 9 along Beacon's Main Street. Beacon Bonfire was conceptualized during the pandemic, when 100 members of Beacon's creative community gathered together to share warmth, music, and hope. By 2023, Beacon Bonfire welcomed more than 4,000 festival-goers from across the Hudson Valley, New York City, and beyond. Today, Beacon Bonfire has become an annual gathering to celebrate art, music, film, and community. This year's celebration will feature more than 400 performers across 20 venues and galleries located in Beacon. To learn more about Beacon Bonfire and purchase tickets, visit their website beaconbonfire.com. Photo by Daniel Rowan.





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Finding comfort in family, community, and home heating: **HERRINGTON FUELS INC. CONTINUES A LEGACY**

By Thorunn Kristjansdottir
info@mainstreetmag.com

I recently caught up with Heather Canetto of Herrington Fuels Inc., which is located just south of Hillsdale, NY, by the old Roe Jan School. Talking with Heather I learned not only about the ins and outs of her business but also about the family legacy that she's continuing in the greater Hillsdale area. Heather spoke of the importance of their entire staff and the community that they service, along with the ever-evolving industry and how that has shaped their business.

When was Herrington Fuels founded and what were the circumstances surrounding that?

In the 1860s, my great-grandfather Edmond Herrington, along with his father and brother-in-law, started Bullock and Sons in the Hillsdale railyard, where Ed Herrington Inc. is located today. At the time, everything was brought in by train: lumber, feed, farm supplies, and coal. As the times and needs changed, Bullock and Sons became Ed Herrington Inc., and home heating transformed from coal heat to fuel oil and diesel for trucks.

Fast forward to 1972, my grandfather Richard Herrington, who had two children, split the business into two businesses. My father, Ed Herrington, took over and ran Ed Herrington Inc., while his sister Mary Herrington Kuhn and her husband, Casey Kuhn, took over Herrington Fuels Inc. and ran that business. My aunt and her husband ran the business successfully until 1998 when they sold it to Fredrick and John Canetto.

Fred and John kept the Herrington's name, and with amazing foresight they added a service department. They continued and grew the Herrington Fuels legacy of keeping the homes within the Taconic Hills School district fueled and heating systems up and running.

So Herrington Fuels is no longer owned by the Herrington family?

If you thought that to be true, you'd be wrong. One good marriage put the business back into the Herrington family. In 2002, I married John, and once our kids were in school, it was time for me to go back to work. Fred and John gave me the opportunity to come to work for the business, putting the fourth generation of Herringtons back in the mix at Herrington Fuels Inc.

How has the business grown?

The growth of the business has been organic. It has grown in parallel with the needs of our community as they called for the continuation of fuel delivery with consistent service, maintenance, and installation of new heating and cooling systems. From 1998 through 2011, Herrington Fuels Inc. added more office staff and a larger service crew. In 2011, we identified the need to stay competitive with new home heating systems, so we added propane to our fuel mix. Our service technicians all underwent hours of training while we purchased new propane and delivery trucks.



Tell us about your products and services.

Our product mix is constantly evolving and becoming not only more efficient but also cleaner. We now deliver biofuel and renewables, and we have added heat pumps and mini-split installations to our HVAC mix with service for those too of course.

Despite all of the changes that have taken place in the past 20 years, we've remained small. John is adamant that if a customer is out of heat, especially in the dead of winter, our service technicians need to promptly be at that customer's house. Our service territory is a fairly small radius, about 25-30 miles that encompass Chatham to Millerton (north to south) and Sheffield, MA, to Claverack, NY (east to west).

Four generations of the Herrington family have been taking care of the home heating and cooling needs of the Taconic Hills School district community for over four generations. Heather Canetto and her Herrington Fuels Inc. family continue that legacy today.



Continued on next page ..

What about your staff?

None of this would be possible without the Herrington Fuels Inc. family. We have been so fortunate with all of our amazing employees – from our current ones to everyone who's been with us over the years. We truly have a dedicated, hard-working, and loyal crew.

Our office staff are there to answer the phones – and yes, you actually get a real-live person who answers the phone when you call our office! Those same personnel are the faces that greet you when you stop by our office, and they also answer all of the emails and text messages that come in. It is a non-stop day that starts at 7:30am. The ladies in the office keep us all on task.

Our drivers, both full- and part-time, are busy year-round with our fuel and propane dispatchers. Degree days are calculated, trucks are filled, and fuel is delivered, whether it be bringing on-road and off-road diesel to fuel the fleets of local businesses as well as the tractors of local farmers or delivering biofuels and propane to local homes. Newer dispatching software and tank-monitor technologies have made us more consistent and efficient. Both our drivers and dispatchers also know how to maintain our fleet of trucks.

To round off our “village,” which is 15 in all, we also have a staff of technicians in our service department. They are constantly busy keeping up with the ever-evolving technology and education on how to install and

service a very long and diverse list of products.

What's on that list?

We install and maintain everything from boilers, furnaces, water heaters, and pool heaters to fireplaces and fire pits. We also install propane piping, tanks, heat pumps, mini splits, and air conditioning and do duct work. When it comes to servicing our customers, we offer both heating system and air conditioning cleanings. To round it off, we offer 24-hour service.

You called it a village, what do you mean?

In the true sense of the word, it takes a village – and our business is no different. I am filled with so much gratitude and awe over how committed our crew is to the business and the services that we offer. Not only is this bunch committed to the work that they do here, but they are also an asset to our community. We have past service members, current fire fighters and auxiliary members, church consistory members, and my favorite, dedicated mothers, fathers, aunts, uncles, grandmas, and grandpas.

What does the future hold for Herrington Fuels Inc.?

We will continue to evolve as well as stay true to our strengths. We solve problems, find solutions and serve up comfort. Our industry is full of competition with companies that offer the same products and services. Being a problem-solving resource for our



Above: Heather Canetto shared that Herrington Fuels Inc. takes a village to run. Depicted here is their crew, the heart of their village.

Below: Herrington Fuels Inc. offers both home heating and cooling solutions along with service and maintenance.

community and customers has always been what makes us successful.

Moving forward, the biggest and most immediate challenge as an industry is not from direct competition, however. The biggest challenge is actually the approach that New York State is currently taking regarding climate action. We are hopeful that New York State pauses the “all-electrification” efforts and sees the value that a combination of biofuels, renewable gases, geothermal, and heat pumps can collectively achieve in their environmental goals. And doing this while maintaining and growing an essential industry that keeps New York State warm, safe, and affordable. As I recently heard someone say, “Let’s plan, not ban.”

Our main short-term goal is to stick to what has proven to be successful: provide reliable, quality service for both heating and cooling months. During the heating season we continue to offer heating system maintenance and cleanings while also being there if an emergency arises in the middle of a freezing cold night. We always offer prompt deliveries of fuel and/or propane so you can stay warm and comfortable. As winter cycles to summer, we are always there to upgrade and install new HVAC systems or maintain existing air conditioning and heat pump systems to keep our customers cool on those 90-degree days.

For John and me, it has been a blessing to run this business with the Herrington Fuels Inc. crew, for the customers that we serve and in the community where we both grew up. It’s all about comfort. ●

Herrington Fuels Inc. is located at 9018 NY-22, Hillsdale, NY 12529. You can reach them at (518) 325-6700 or online at herringtonfuels.com.





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The Kingston Trio, rose to fame in 1957 with their rich harmonies and storytelling that helped spark a folk revival. Today's lineup—Mike Marvin, Tim Gorelanton, and Buddy Woodward—carries on the tradition with deep personal ties to the original group and heartfelt performances that honor its legacy.

Together, they bring the Trio's timeless sound to new audiences, celebrating the enduring spirit of folk music.

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CHOCOLATE CREAM *S'more* PIE

By Olivia Valentine with
Caroline Markonic
info@mainstreetmag.com

It's that wonderful time of year when our ovens are in full swing baking mode! For me, the holidays are all about the desserts. I'm a sucker for holiday pies and cookies. Although, I'm also a huge fan of stuffing with a generous pour of gravy. Ahhhh ... I can smell and taste the holidays as I type this.

This chocolate cream s'more pie is rich! Each layer, from the buttery graham cracker crust to the silky chocolate filling and the billowy toasted meringue, brings its own kind of pure joy. It takes a bit of time to prepare, but every bite is worth the effort. It's creamy and sweet, with that hint of summer. And, who wouldn't mind inviting a bit of summer back into their homes right about now. I for one am missing the light and the warmth of summer. But, I'm a summer baby, and summer will always be my favorite time of the year.

We strongly urge you to add this pie to your holiday dessert table. It could be a real showstopper if you drizzle melted chocolate over the top, crown it with a few toasted marshmallows (large, small, or both), or add chocolate shavings for an elegant finish. This is a pie that invites creativity ... and a little indulgence.

I am dedicating this pie to my late step-father. He loved a good chocolate cream pie, and I know he would have gone gaga over this one! As always, enjoy.

Crust

12 graham crackers
¼ cup sugar
6 tbsps melted butter

Combine graham crackers and sugar in a food processor and pulse until fine crumbs form. Add melted butter and pulse until combined.

Press mixture firmly into a pie plate. I use the bottom of a glass to really push the crumbs into the pie plate. Bake at 350°F for 12 minutes. Set aside to cool.

Chocolate filling

1 cup milk
½ cup heavy cream
1.5 oz good-quality bittersweet chocolate
¾ cup sugar
3 tbsps flour
1 tbsp cornstarch
¼ tsp salt
3 egg yolks, slightly beaten (save the whites)
1 tbsp butter
1 tbsp vanilla

In a double boiler,* melt the chocolate in the milk. Transfer to a bowl and let cool slightly. Wash the double boiler. In the clean double



boiler, whisk together the sugar, flour, cornstarch, and salt.

Gradually add the heavy cream and the chocolate-milk mixture, stirring until smooth.

Slowly whisk in the egg yolks. Cook the mixture in the double boiler, stirring constantly, until thickened and smooth, about 5-7 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in the butter and vanilla. Pour into the prepared crust.

Marshmallow meringue

24 marshmallows
2 tbsps milk
Pinch of salt
3 egg whites
½ cup sugar

In a double boiler, melt 20 marshmallows with the milk until smooth. Leave in the double boiler until ready to use.

In a clean bowl, beat the egg whites with a pinch of salt until frothy. You can use a handheld or stand mixer.

Gradually add the sugar, and con-

tinue beating until stiff peaks form.

Gently fold the melted marshmallow mixture into the meringue. Spread the topping evenly over the pie.

Toast under the broiler for 2-3 minutes until golden, or use a kitchen torch. Cool completely in the refrigerator before serving. •

**If you do not have a double boiler, you can easily make one by using a saucepan and a heatproof glass or metal bowl. You don't want the water touching the bowl. You want to leave space in between. You also don't want to cook your ingredients. The goal is to provide gentle indirect steam heat to melt your chocolate.*

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 @oliviavalentine.

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By the numbers: *Three-County real estate market in the first half of 2025*

By Christine Bates
info@mainstreetmag.com

The residential real estate market in the first six months of the year for the three counties where *Main Street Magazine* is circulated, Dutchess and Columbia in New York and Litchfield in Connecticut, posted mixed results in a year to year 2025 to 2024 comparison. Twelve-month median prices at the end of June 2025 were unchanged in Litchfield county but increased 14% in Columbia County and declined 3% in Dutchess.

Plenty of buyers are still looking and competing for homes although bidding wars are becoming less common except for HDTV-perfect homes in great locations. “It’s still very much a seller’s market,” according to Paul Breunich, the CEO of William Pitt and Julia B. Fee Sotheby’s International Realty. “Our markets are defying the national cooling trends.”

The outlook for our regional real estate markets in this turbulent time remains uncertain. The stock market has reached new highs, but falling consumer confidence and rising unemployment and inflation may affect demand, while a reduction in mortgage rates could make homes more affordable. Realtors consulted agreed that homes above \$2 million take longer to sell but that the overall real estate market remains active with properties selling quickly close to listing prices.

Dutchess County

Dutchess County with its historic Hudson River towns, working farms, and estates with horse fences had a

12-month median selling price of \$489,000, a decrease of 3% compared to 2024. The average price of \$568,178 remained stable, reflecting greater relative strength at the higher end of the market. However, there were sizable differences between towns. Rhinebeck was the priciest at \$750,000, a median price increase of 20% compared to last year, and Washington, aka Millbrook, was a close second at \$728,000, up 48% over last year. Despite the success of the Silo Ridge development, the town of Amenia had the lowest median price in Dutchess County at \$320,000, a 21% decrease in price compared to last year – also the largest decrease in value among all Dutchess towns. (Note that these numbers do not include the multi-million-dollar sales at Silo Ridge, which are not listed publicly.) But Amenia also had the highest sale in the first half of the year – the Greek Revival-style home of noted traditionalist architect Gil Schafer on Route 83 on 45 acres, which closed at \$6,180,000, well over its listing price of \$3,500,000.

In addition to Amenia, the median purchase price decreased in only four other towns – Clinton, Dover, Pine Plains, and Red Hook. Not surprisingly the highest number of homes were sold in Poughkeepsie, where the median price rose 10% to \$419,000, well below the county’s median of \$489,000.

Columbia County

A longer drive from New York City, less densely populated Columbia County with Hudson as its only city, saw a 14% increase in 12-month median selling price to \$546,000, higher than Dutchess County with 24% fewer houses sold. The average price for the same period was \$748,829, a hefty increase of 24% due to sales of more expensive homes, often on large pieces of land.

Thin markets with single-digit sales create wide swings in median closed



With 497 feet of lake frontage, this Morgan Lane home in Twin Lakes, Salisbury, was the highest sale in Litchfield County in the first half of 2025. It sold for its list price of \$5,250,000. Photo by KG Visuals, courtesy of Lenore Mallett of William Pitt Sotheby’s International Realty.

sales prices year to year. For example, the 107% median price increase in New Lebanon from \$329,000 to \$680,000 in June of 2025 included only five sales in two years. Clermont, on the southwest edge of Dutchess County with Hudson River views, had the highest median price in the county in each of the last two years – \$749,00 in 2024 and \$972,000 in 2025, but this is based on only four sales in two years! Kinderhook had the highest number of sales and a median price of \$456,000. Consistently in the last two years the towns of Greenport, Livingston, and Stockport also have recorded below median price levels. The sale of an over 8,000-square-foot home on 133 acres in Copake for \$5,600,000 in May was one of the high sales in Columbia County.

Litchfield County

Litchfield County, recently dubbed “the in-the-know alternative to the Hamptons” by the *London Times*, has a real estate market that is four times the size of Columbia County’s, with a median 12-month selling point of \$500,000, the same as a year ago. Homes in three towns sold for a median price over \$1,000,000 with Salisbury rising 26% to join the traditionally primo towns of Washington and Roxbury. What drives these

high prices? Elyse Harney Morris of Elyse Harney Real Estate explained Salisbury’s increasing appeal as “a combination of Salisbury’s natural beauty, vibrant four-season lifestyle, an outstanding school system, and the unmatched character of our community. Buyers are drawn to the balance Salisbury offers – peaceful country living paired with cultural and recreational opportunities that make life here so rich.”

Very low property taxes may also play a role in many buyers’ decision to purchase in Salisbury. Lenore Mallett, an agent with William Pitt Sotheby’s International Realty pointed out another un-Hamptons reason for Litchfield County’s increasing popularity: “People are craving quiet, peace, and solitude, making Litchfield County the premiere destination for the wealthy to privately retreat. They can stay in their garden clothes and go to lunch, and the paparazzi can’t be bothered to make the drive-up Route 22.” Lakefront properties in both Washington and Salisbury are in high demand and drive prices at the upper end. The highest sale in the first half of the year in Litchfield County was a classic lakefront property in the Twin Lakes area of Salisbury for \$5,250,000. ●



This over-8,000-square-foot Copake lodge with six bedrooms and seven bathrooms on 133 acres sold for \$5,600,000 in May. Photo courtesy of Jennifer Capala, William Pitt Sotheby’s International Realty.



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Sharon Pharmacy: *It's a family affair*



"

his is it!" The car had rolled through the sleepy town of Sharon, CT, in 1960. Just a family on an outing, exploring parts of the state that were remote from their home in Norwich. They were thinking of relocating. There was a house available on Calkinstown Road. There was an open retail space in the new shopping center in the middle of town perfect for a new pharmacy. The Heacox family had arrived.

64 years on, family owned and operated Sharon Pharmacy continues to be a magnet, drawing loyal customers from around the area and continuing to attract a loyal following as new families appear and the town continues to thrive.

*By CB Wismar
info@mainstreetmag.com*

You see, it's in the blood

Echoing Sly and the Family Stone's 1971 hit, venturing into the store is being invited into the family. Chris Heacox, the welcoming face at the front counter of the pharmacy, is one of five family members who continue the tradition begun by his parents, Edward and Kathryn, who planted their roots in the community and quickly understood the importance of not just selling, but serving. While Ed ran the pharmacy, Karen, Mary and Ed, Jr. grew up, as did Chris, working in the family business. Brother Dave

is in the store occasionally, but he's focused on taking care of mom. It's in the blood.

Edward Sr. had worked in a pharmacy in his hometown of New Hartford from the time he was a young man. His first job was steering a broom across the floor to make sure things were tidy, but he knew, instinctively, that he would be a pharmacist. With time spent in the Navy, a degree from UConn and a young family, the move to Sharon set a course that has endured through pandemics, recessions, and business challenges.

"They made sure they were open every day for the first three years," recalls Chris. "Dad had a cot in the back room and put a bell on the front door. When it rang, he'd be up to take care of emergencies, no matter what the hour." They took on memberships in local organizations and positions on community boards to make sure residents knew there was a full-service pharmacy in town, and there was family.

"Mom was the bookkeeper and handled the card section. The whole family simply grew up in the store."

More space, more service

When the bookstore left and the adjoining retail space became available, Sharon Pharmacy expanded,

moving the pharmacy counter to the back of the store and adding a retail section that catered to the interest of the community. After all, the business community in Sharon was quite compact and family items like toys and soaps and greeting cards and lotions and school supplies – even some basic clothing essentials – were miles away. Need a balloon for that birthday or anniversary celebration? Turn left when you enter the store and survey the assortment available for immediate inflation. Party completed.

Turning on a dime ... and giving change

The lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the country continues to be a discussion point, a mile marker that changed the way companies operated, the way businesses succeeded (or failed), and the way families struggled to keep healthy. It would fall to pharmacies to be at the forefront of adapting and fighting the ravages of the disease. "We were buying hand sanitizer 12 gallons at a time, buying vitamins in multiples of our usual orders, and making every effort to maintain a safe environment," Chris

Continued on next page ...

recalls. “What seemed to some so basic – wearing masks when in the store – became a challenge for a few folks who objected, but it was essential.”

Competition from “big box” retail pharmacy chains, online pharmacies, and giant online retailers that offer literally millions of items that overlap the non-prescription items offered at Sharon Pharmacy cannot be ignored. The business has changed since Edward and Kathryn began their Sharon adventure. Through it all, the Heacox family has endured and their commitment to the broader community has never wavered.

Murgit's side hustle

Carefully positioned on the checkout counter at the pharmacy is a book display featuring *The Chudderdudders: Bogee Learns a Valuable Lesson*. Clearly, it's a children's book and comfortably in line with the array of toys and games for sale nearby. It takes a moment, however, to check out the name of the author: Christopher J. Heacox.

“I'm not sure why,” offers Chris Heacox with a bit of a shrug, “but my dad called me ‘Murgit’ when I was a kid. The nickname stayed with him, and when he started raising children of his own, the experiences of childhood wonder merged with connections to the past, and a story took shape, populated with names and characters with family ties.

By his own estimate, it took 30 years for Bogee and his friends to morph from being a whisper of an

idea to being a published book. But, as the cliché goes, “the juice was worth the squeeze.” Now available in places as distant as Japan, Sweden, Germany and India *The Chudderdudders of Murgitville* has carried the Heacox name to a global audience.

And, make no mistake, the “Murgit Mart” at the center of the story bears a striking resemblance to ... wait for it ... the Sharon Pharmacy. One can purchase a copy online at Amazon or Barnes & Noble's websites or better yet, pick up one on your next visit to the Sharon Pharmacy and get Chris to autograph it just for you.

Eyes on the past ... face forward ... adjust quickly

At the end of each calendar year, ads created by credit card companies urge patrons to “Buy Local” or “Shop Small.” It's an attempt to bolster the sales of card-accepting shops that look to the holiday sales cycle to meet bottom line projections. Inherent in the marketing effort is the notion of keeping small town stores alive and well in the wake of an online tsunami.

An unwritten theme that runs through the effort is the unique ability for local retail to adjust – and do so with impressive speed. Sharon Pharmacy does not have to operate within “inventory guidelines” passed down from corporate headquarters that dictate the number, placement, and brand of bottles of shampoo or packages of aspirin.

“We have terrific suppliers,” says Chris with deep conviction. “They al-



low us to respond to trends and health challenges, to find the right products to meet our customers' requirements, and to stay competitive on pricing.”

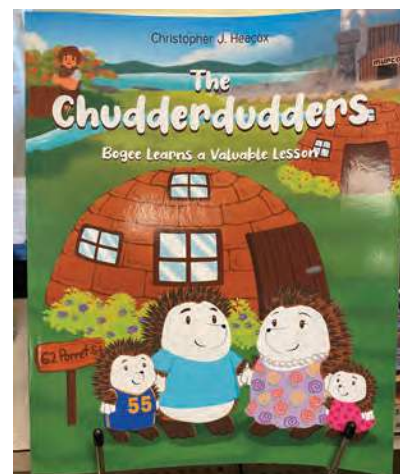
As has too often been opined, “nothing is constant other than change.” That can be especially true in the world of neighborhood retail. As each morning brightens Sharon and surrounding towns, the pharmacy doors open and the faithful wander in to pick up their morning *New York Times*, share a word or two with Chris Heacox, and head off to face the day.

“Invaluable,” offered Nat Benchley, a morning regular who stops by to pick up his *Times* and gather the local intelligence from Chris and his family. “The morning klatsch at the front desk is a great way for neighbors to catch up on news, trivia, and other important information. It's our modern town square.”

After all, you know you're always welcome because, to riff again on Sly Stone's chant:

*You see it's in the blood,
It's a family affair •*

Sharon Pharmacy is located at 8 Gay Street in Sharon, CT. Call (860) 364-5272 or find them on Facebook.



Top: Chris Heacox. Above: The cover for Chris's children's book 'The Chudderdudders' which you can purchase at The Sharon Pharmacy!



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WHEN WINE SPEAKS TO MORE THAN GRAPES



By Dominique DeVito
info@mainstreetmag.com

There's a reason the phrase *In Vino Veritas* has endured since its attribution to the Greek historian, Herodotus, in the fifth century BC. About 600 years later, it's credited to the Roman philosopher and naturalist Pliny the Elder, who used the exact phrase in Book 14 of his tome, *Naturalis Historia*. What does it mean?

In Wine, There Is Truth.

And there it is, the immutable acknowledgement that from the beginnings of human interactions on earth, alcohol, but wine in particular, loosens the tongue and reveals the hidden self.

And there we were, my friend and I, participating in this most delectable of human conditions on a dazzling sunny September Saturday afternoon in Hudson, NY. The occasion? A tasting of Neverstill wines in the winery's Hudson Valley home at the top of Warren Street. Truth be told? The tasting room is a very special place, and the wines are wonderful.

Neverstill is the creation of its owner and president, Christy Counts, an Oklahoma girl who fell in love with California wines, moved to New York state with her family, became a convert to what was happening with wine in the Finger Lakes, and was also smitten with the vibe of Hudson. Her passions, palate, and perseverance – and acute senses of style and setting – led to the purchase of a vineyard, the creation of a line of wines, and the establishment of a showcase location for the wines. And if you think that's impressive, wait til you try the wines!

Bitten by the wine bug

All wine enthusiasts have an “aha” moment when interest shifts from simple enjoyment to wanting to understand more about what it is you're enjoying so much. For Christy that happened in Napa after talking to John Williams about his Frog's Leap Winery wines. It was the seed that led her to take a deeper dive into the world of wine, one that took root even while

she led the Oklahoma Humane Society (which she founded in 2007), a seriously full-time job! Christy was president and executive director of OK Humane until 2014, when she and her family made the move to Bedford, NY.

A winery wasn't at the top of the list when they arrived here, either. Christy became the executive vice president of the Arnall Family Foundation, where she developed the Right Horse Initiative, a national collaboration to support horses in (ownership) transition. California still reigned as a dream spot for wine and wineries for Christy, but travels to the Finger Lakes changed her perspective about what's possible right here in New York. When she learned of a vineyard plot that was coming up for sale in what she considered a dream location on the left bank of Seneca Lake, she couldn't resist.

She purchased the nine-acre property that is now Hidden View Vineyard. It was planted with varieties that are well established in the Finger Lakes – Riesling and Cabernet Franc – but there was also Chardonnay there, and a less commonly planted grape, Chenin Blanc. She understood the potential for the wines that could come from these vines. The winery dream was well underway.

With a vineyard, a winery

What would she call her winery? She arrived at the word “neverstill” after learning that the Mohicans called the Hudson River “Mahicannituck,” which translates to “the river that flows both ways,” or “waters that are never still.”

“I like the name not only for its reference to the Hudson River,” Christy says, “but also because I remember being a child and being told to ‘sit still,’ and

Continued on next page ..

the reluctance all of us have to just sit still. Wine,” she adds, “is like humans that way. It is ever evolving. It is never still.”

The name is apt for Christy in several ways. It helps tell the story of her wines, yes, and, *in vino veritas*, it tells her story. It’s the rare person who can orchestrate a winery based on a vineyard and winemaking team in the Finger Lakes with the establishment and operation of a tasting room in a funky town in the Hudson Valley. Christy is a champion of it all. “Hudson is fascinating,” she says, explaining why she chose the town as the location for her tasting room. “The people are wildly interesting. The conversations and connections that happen in Hudson are why we’re there.”

A place to taste

The tasting room opened just over a year ago. It was designed by Amy Ilias with a focus on experience. It’s a place where the wines take center stage, but every detail helps set that stage. When you walk in, you feel welcomed. You feel special. You feel cared for and comfortable. You feel like you want to settle in and stay a while.

When we came to the tasting room for our experience, Warren greeted us with his winning smile, introducing us to the space and the concept as “a kiss to New York.” How great is that? When I mentioned that to Christy, she was delighted. “Yes,” she said, “that’s a good way to look at it. It’s important to work with people who are passionate about the wines and who are excited to work for a small brand.”

Warren and Jaime, who conducted our tasting for us, were all of that.

Warren became interested in wine during COVID, and has gone on to earn his WSET III (Wine & Spirit Education Trust). Level III is quite challenging, and it’s really fun to hear Warren talk about flavor profiles of grapes and how the Neverstill wines are crafted to best express them.

Jaime grew up in Napa, where the wine world was unavoidable. Her career in tech brought her from San Francisco to New York, but her connection to wine – and the experience of it, was always there. After meeting Christy to learn more about the winery, she knew Neverstill was a place she wanted to be part of. She is a champion of the line, and also of the locally sourced nibbles that are offered to accompany the tasting there.

Let’s get to the wines

Neverstill currently offers six wines. They are a PetNat made with Cayuga White, a Chenin Blanc, two Rieslings, a Rosé, and a Cabernet Franc that was just recently released.

We tried all of them during our time at the tasting room, and they were all, *in vino veritas*, exceptional. Truly. Expressive, bright, clean, unique, delightful. All are made with estate-grown fruit except the PetNat, though the wine itself was made by Neverstill’s winemaking team.

For those unfamiliar with it, the increasingly popular PetNat style is considered a natural wine style. PetNat is short for the French term *pétillant naturel*, which translates to “naturally sparkling.” It’s a method of bottling wine before the first fermentation is complete so that it finishes in the bottle. This yields a soft bubble in the wine, and because it is unfiltered and unfined, there’s often a cloudy appearance. “I attended a convention where PetNats were tasted,” Christy says, “and their light, fresh qualities really appealed to me.”

Asking a winery owner which wine is a favorite is like asking a parent which child is a favorite. Impossible! But everyone asks, so I did too. And while Christy sang the praises of each of the wines, when we got to the Rieslings, her tone changed a tad. Neverstill crafts two Rieslings, a “classic” and a “reserve.” What differentiates the reserve is the clone of the grape (Clone 239), additional skin contact at the start of fermentation, the use of a “wild” indigenous yeast from Hidden View vineyard, and some



Top, L-R: Christy and the author enjoying Neverstill’s new release of Cabernet Franc. The delicious PetNat. Above, L-R: Enjoying a late-summer wine tasting on the beautiful patio. Warren and Jaime, part of the Neverstill team in Hudson, were as exceptional as the wines!

post-fermentation time “sur lie” (on the yeast cells). All provide distinctive depth and character.

“Riesling is a most magical varietal,” Christy explains. “It has the ability to show nuances. It’s a heavy lifter; I just love it!” she continues, adding, with a hint of sarcasm, “I’m drawn to heavy lifters.”

Beyond the wines

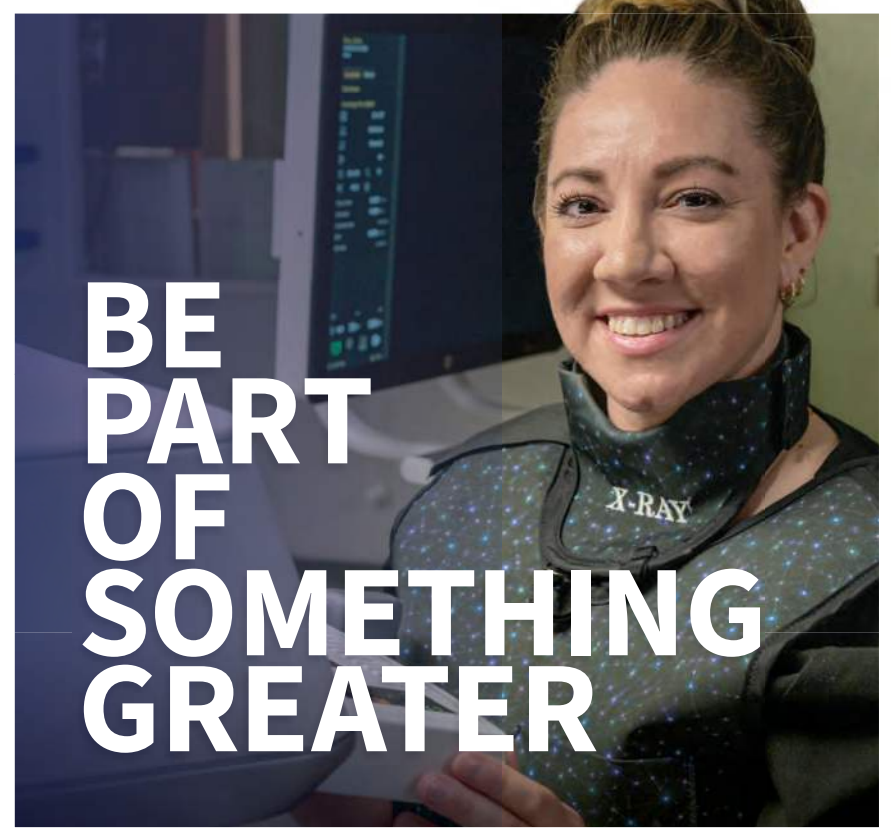
It’s easy and pleasing to sink into conversation about the wines themselves, and there’s a lot there. If you’re a wine enthusiast, you will be at home at Neverstill, and you’ll want to keep going back. For the wines, yes. But maybe even more so for all that Neverstill is about.

“Wine is a constant journey,” Christy says. “It’s about connection. It’s about sharing. It’s about experiencing something that represents who you are – who we all are,” she explains as we chat about wine’s propensity for revelation. “It’s a different experience from beer or spirits. People are looking for styles that connect with their ethos. Natural wines. Local influences. For myself,” she shares, “I’m leaning lighter and lighter. I’m interested in wine and wellness and that ‘connection’ effect.”

Back in the tasting room, as my friend and I are leaving, we’re going away with so much more than amazing wines to share with our friends and our meals and our lives. We made new and meaningful connections through the wines with Warren, Jaime, and the other guests who did tastings that afternoon.

Christy embraces all conversations about and around wine and life. She has led and hosted discussions on emerging wine regions, farming, and wellness – all ways to enhance enjoyment. Her curiosity is contagious, and her commitment is inspiring. •

The Neverstill Winery tasting room is located at 739 Warren Street in Hudson, NY. Hours are Wednesday thru Sunday, 1 to 8pm. Find Neverstill online at neverstillwines.com and stay in touch via Instagram and Facebook. Cheers!



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History is being made in the Hudson Valley: **Mill Farm is for sale for \$90 million**

History is taking place in the heart of Ancramdale, which straddles the southern border of Columbia County in New York. For the first time ever, a 2,150-acre farm, Mill Farm to be precise, is being offered for sale for the historic price of \$90 million. The farm includes a pristine and historic Revolutionary era grist mill, over 10 residential houses, over 15 barns and other structures, almost 20 miles of the most incredible riding trails in all of New York State, and hundreds of acres of working farmland, surrounded almost entirely by conservation lands. This unique farm is steeped in history as it continues to make history.

By Thorunn Kristjansdottir
 info@mainstreetmag.com

For the sake of full disclosure, I must begin by sharing that I grew up on Mill Farm. As a child in 1989, I moved to the rural farm in southern Columbia County with my family, and to say that there was a night-and-day difference between it and my home country of Iceland would be an understatement. But I quickly adjusted to my new home and before long, playing in the Punch Brook stream with my brother, weedwhacking the fenceposts around fields that seemingly went on for miles, fishing from the pond above the waterfall, riding Icelandic horses on the miles of trails, stacking hay in the Dutch barn on hot summer days, mucking the 24 horse stalls every weekend, ice skating on one of the small ponds, and cutting burdock when we were bringing fields back ... this all became the stuff of my childhood.

It's been almost 20 years now since I left Mill Farm, but its name still summons that flood of childhood memories. I also think back to what had been an

ongoing expansion of the farm that took place over a 20+ year period. And so when I learned this past summer that owner, Dan Slott, was listing the entire farm for sale ... well, it took me a moment to wrap my head around that because it felt like it was truly the end of an era.

I have a unique ability to share Mill Farm's story and legacy, more so than perhaps most other media outlets, because of my deep connection and understanding of what the farm was as well as its significance to the Hudson Valley and beyond. In that spirit, Dan and I spoke about Mill Farm's 43-year history under his ownership. We spoke of its historical significance, growth, and environmental impact, as well as its record-setting and historic real estate listing, and its ongoing legacy.

Let's start at the very beginning: when did you buy the farm and what was it about it that spoke to you?

I bought Mill Farm in 1982 for \$250,000 to become my second home, a sanctuary away from Manhattan. It sat on 160 acres, which included the mill, barns, and a few other buildings. I was very enchanted by the 18th century mill structure, which is special because early Colonial craftsmen built it all by hand. I grew up on an 18th century farm in New Jersey, so I had a lot of nostalgia about that type of architecture and building.

I had been looking for a farm, and Mill Farm also had a working dairy operation with really nice barns on one side of Route 3 and the milling operation on the other side of the road. I immediately had a very strong reaction to the water and wanted to

be close to it. I refer to it as "living with water" because the mill house sits only ten feet from the waterfall, which is a constant source of beauty, energy, and negative electrons along with the sound of falling water and smell. It kind of feels like you're near the ocean when you're in this tight environment with the water.

The water that flows over the dam is part of a New York State tributary and trout stream, the Punch Brook. It flows from behind Route 8A in Dutchess County into Columbia County, parallel to Route 8 into the back of Ancramdale. It then flows from Ancramdale, running somewhat parallel to Route 3, where it feeds into the body of water behind the mill, falling over the waterfall forming a stream that then flows past the barns and into the Drowned Lands Swamp, ultimately flowing into the Roe Jan and then into the Hudson River.

The mill in many ways is the focal point of the farm, and it is not only an impressive and beautiful structure, but quite historic to the area. What was the state of the mill when you bought the property, what had been its function through the years, and what was your process to make it into your home?

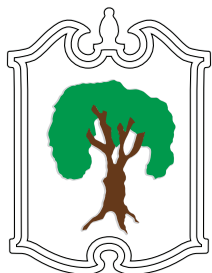
It took ten years to make the mill what it is today, a 5,500-square foot four-bedroom home. When I bought the farm, the mill wasn't in great shape. The frame, however, was in remarkably good condition because the building had a tin roof, which

A drone photo showing the mill next to the pond that the Punch Brook flows into, then falling over the waterfall (left), the quarantine barn (in the foreground on the right), with Mill Farm's barnyard in the distance along with the lay of the land.

Continued on page 31 ...

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protected the mill's frame. The rest of the building was in very rough shape, which included the siding and anything else associated with it. But the interior frame structure was in excellent condition; it was dry and stable. I romanticized the frame quite a lot. But it was obviously a commercial 18th century building; there were no frills about it. It was strictly utilitarian with dirt floors on the first floor and single plank wood flooring on the second story. They had been running a factory there that was quite jerryrigged to turn a lot of the wheels, which were pretty primitive.

Historically, they had processed wheat and other foodstuffs largely from the local area. Part of the mill had also been a cider mill, while the third part of it was a saw mill. So it was a three-part mill. There was also a forge with a small service operation of some kind. As a result, the mill had become a community center of sorts, because people stayed while they were waiting on processing.

The mill had ceased operations in 1944. From 1853 up until the 1960s, it had been owned and run by the Card family. They sold it in the 1960s to a New Yorker who didn't do anything to the mill or mill keeper's house. That new owner lived in the owner's house, a Victorian structure that sat right on Route 3. When I purchased the property, that structure was too far gone, and I couldn't save it. Carpenter ants had destroyed it and it was falling down. I had the Victorian torn down but saved what I could.

When I began the restoration of the mill, I first laid out the floor plan. I worked with two very talented carpenters from Connecticut, a father and son team who were restoration carpenters. The mill became the father's last project. As the project progressed, we subbed out some of the work and sometimes had a third carpenter as well. But overall, we moved very slowly using 18th and 19th century materials, hardware, wood, bricks, and whatever else we could. We also, of course, incorporated a lot of modern aspects as well. This was a slow process, taking ten years. Everything was uneven, from the materials that they were working with to the building itself. The carpenters restored it very carefully and with period methods using a lot of pegs, and they even used old nails. We really tried to conform it to the time period.

In the back of the mill, on the northeast gable end, was an original water wheel. A flume had fed water off the top of the dam to the wheel, but that went out around 1890 or so. They replaced it when they installed a Westinghouse turbine, which operated until 1944. In my renovation of the mill, I resurrected a smaller and more compact turbine system, which produces some of the electricity for the house. I did this primarily to keep the old system going.

Who owned the property before the Cards, who had built the mill?

The mill is a Revolutionary era Grist mill "Defiance". It was built by the Livingstons for the war effort in 1775.



The mill house as it is seen from the front (top) and back (above), which consists mostly of windows to look out at the water.

Left: A drone photo showcasing more of Mill Farm's over 2,000 acres.

All photos with this article are courtesy of James Augustine and Compass. All still photos are by Joel Petra of DDREPS. All drone images are by Bailey Roubos of Drone Hub Media.

The story goes that there was even a battle fought on the front lawn of the mill. The loyalists wanted to burn the mill down, as well as every other Colonial outpost. The very colonists who built the mill fought in the war. It is quite interesting to be in the very same mill now.

Some of the water from the waterfall runs underneath the mill through to where the turbine is, but you obviously had to renovate all of that. What was the state of the waterfall itself when you bought the property?

We needed to repair the dam, and we also needed to increase its capacity. What they did was perfect the existing sluiceways and put in a brand new sluiceway, forming a second waterfall that we can open or close. We redid some of the stone as well as enhance and refortify the entire dam. We essentially fixed all around it and every aspect of it. We also did a lot of aesthetic stone work on the front piece of the dam and the spillway.

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The mill's interior. Top, L-r: The entryway and the kitchen. Above, L-R: The master bedroom takes up the entire third floor of the mill, while the dining room is on the first floor and looks out at the waterfall.

Right: Mill Farm's barns as seen from a drone. In the forefront, right on Route 3, is the old main English barn, with what used to be the calving barn to the right. The Dutch barn stands in front of the machine barn that is in the back of the barnyard. Also visible here are the corrals and fenced-in fields connected to the barns. The Blue Grass hill can be seen in the far distance.

What about my old house, the yellow house overlooking the barnyard, and the mill keeper's house, when were they built?

The yellow house was built in the 1940s. The Cards built it in order to move out of the Victorian house so that they could live more comfortably with appropriate services. The mill keeper's house, however, was built five years after the mill was built, in 1780. It is a very cool, original structure that is quite special. I've converted it into a home theater.

There are four barns in the barnyard today, and one on the opposite side of Route 3, as well as others around the farm. Tell me more about the barn structures on this 2,150-acre farm.

When I purchased Mill Farm, there were two barns: the main barn, which is the big red barn that is visible right off of Route 3, and then what you and I know as the stallion barn, which had originally been the calving barn. Both of the barns needed work. They were stable, but I went in and had them overbuilt and fixed up. I had them brought up to a level that was very pleasing to be around. The main barn was a typical English barn built in 1800, originally about 30'x40' in size.

By 1985 I needed another space, so I purchased a Dutch barn in Amsterdam, NY. I had it disassembled, transported, and reassembled here. In doing so I was able to save and conserve the structure. That barn had sat on the banks of the Mohawk River, which like the Punch Brook,

feeds into the Hudson River. I've always had a fascination with Dutch barns and loved their architecture, and with our location here in the Hudson Valley, we are very close to Dutch settlements so it felt fitting.

Behind the Dutch barn is the machine barn, which I added around 1987. It is an oak post-and-beam construction. It's a pretty special barn with the way it was put together, and it has a lot of details.

Later I bought an English 18th century barn from Cambridge and had it reassembled on the mill side of Route 3. The intention of that barn was to use it as a quarantine barn.

Today, in total, there are about 15 barns on the farm. Not included in that number are the many run-in sheds and a few other smaller structures. There's no real historical significance to the other barns like there is to the main barns and Dutch barn.

There are numerous corrals connected to many of the barns, as well as field structures with run-in sheds. The farm has been used as a horse farm under Dan's ownership. In 1985, he was introduced to the Icelandic horse, and since then the farm has been home to many Icelandic horses, even becoming a hub for the breed at one point. Today, Dan has four horses on the property.

I think that the Crest Lane farm deserves to be specifically discussed. Tell me about that transaction and renovation.

I bought the Crest Lane farm in 1998. Its 436 acres included a house and

quite a number of barn structures — at least ten — as well as silos and a lot of junk. The structures were all in very bad condition though, and were in a serious decline. I took all but two barns down, salvaged the parts that I could from those buildings, and brought them across the street to remake the main house. The two barns that remained were the big dairy barn and a second barn. Both were extensively restored, beautified, and fortified. We made them into solid barns.

When I bought the Crest Lane farm, the main house was an original 1810 eyebrow Colonial that had a lot of add-ons. The building itself was relatively small though. We tore off the additions and took the house down to its original state, to the frame and its core building, which was in good shape. We then redid everything, including adding another post-and-beam section, which added about two-thirds more space, giving it a total of 3,500 square feet. It took four years, but we did the same thing that I had done with the mill: everything was wood, and we had to make everything fit just so. The concept became just like it had been with the mill where we built an envelope around the frame, so that we could live with the frame. The frame is the most important and most beautiful part of the structure. In both cases, I hadn't wanted to do a conventional structure, and I didn't want to hide it.

Continued on page 35 ...



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The farm has evolved quite a bit under your ownership. Walk us through how you went from a 160-acre farm to 2,150 acres.

We went through a total of 30 transactions over the years to make the farm what it is today. But in terms of actual farms, there were four separate farms that I bought and added to Mill Farm; those farms were located on or around East Ancram Road, Route 3, and Crest Lane. I also purchased the area that we refer to as Trilakes from the Quakers who, at the time, were raising money and therefore sold that parcel to me. I also had a number of separate transactions for different parcels as well as houses through the years, ultimately resulting in those 30 separate transactions that have made the farm totally contiguous.

I'd estimate that between 300 and 400 acres are wooded areas and swamps. The vast majority of the property is largely open land. That said, most of the fields are surrounded by some form of trees.

Why did you keep adding to the farm?

Partly I wanted to live in the majesty of the land and all of its diversity. The whole farming aspect appealed to me as well as being part of nature.

The other part was that I was somewhat paranoid in the beginning. There was a lot of uncertainty of what was

going to happen around Mill Farm because, at the time, Columbia County seemed to be in an evolving state of the dying out of the dairy industry. So there were a lot of unknowns as to what might happen with the farm land that was on the market in those years. I purchased most of the properties with the intention of protecting Mill Farm in the very beginning. It was very seductive. I had a love for the land and wanted to see it protected.

Ancramdale used to be known as Hot Town, or so I was told when I was a child. It had been a hub because a few railways converge there. At least one of those rail lines ran through your property. You also had quite an extensive trail system built.

Yes, about 18 miles of trails criss-cross and run throughout the property. The rail bed itself is nearly three miles of that; it runs from what was the Rothvoss farm on East Ancram Road all the way to the Crest Lane farm. The 18 miles of trail system has created a sort of private interior passageway throughout the farm that is quite unique to have in this day and age.

Due to the fact that the property is all contiguous, and with how the trail system has been built, one can walk or ride on horseback, in an ATV, or in a car just about anywhere on the farm without having to get on a road.



Above: The farm at Crest Lane today looks nothing like it did in the late 1990s when it was added to Mill Farm's acreage. Depicted are the large dairy barn and Crest Lane house along with its rolling corn fields.

Left: The Crest Lane house's exterior as well as interior was totally renovated. It took over four years.

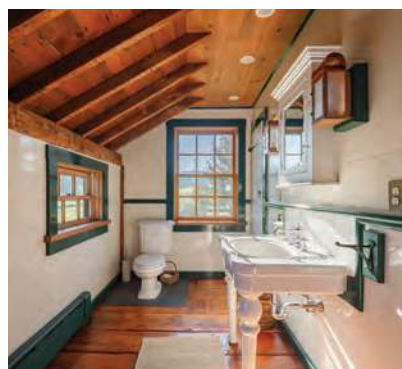
What role does conservation play at Mill Farm, both for the land as well as for the animals that call it home?

One of the most unique points about the farm is that 90% of adjacent land is either in conservation or is an actual conservation area. So anyone buying the farm doesn't have to worry about what's going to happen around them, and on a big piece of property like this, that's critical.

To bring up the importance of the water again; the mill pond is very important in terms of living at the mill, which is a real wonder in terms of its beauty and how light hits it. It is always clean with the brook constantly running. But the wildlife that is around that body of water is tremendous. I've seen everything from mink to otters to amazing bird and fish life. It's a very special place, and I truly view the entire property as a sanctuary.

There are so many living, breathing parts to this farm. There are three lakes, ponds of various sizes, and a number of tributaries that run through the property as well. Some of those tributaries are designated trout streams.

The diversity of the land is also important, because it has excellent farm land, elevations, and water. The area known as Blue Grass is elevated, and about a mile of its eastern border abuts a 2,000-acre bird sanctuary. That part of the property is right there with the bird park in terms of it being a natural wildlife frontier area. Further, the view from the Blue Grass area is really something special in and of itself.



Continued on next page ...

Speaking of animals and conservation, what's this about a bobcat study?

I had been watching a television program that interviewed Thomas Kaplan, who is the head of an organization called Panthera.org. He was discussing his obsession to protect big cats. He started this organization to protect the habitats of the seven big cats of the world. Panthera means “a cat that roars”, and only seven of the big cats roar. They’re now also working on protecting the 33 small wild cats of the world, and that is what inspired me.

I’ve always been interested in cats, especially tigers. So I wrote Thomas a letter to offer the farm as a place to study the bobcats in the Northeast. Surprisingly, they responded and welcomed the idea. As a result, they started a whole study program over three-and-a-half years ago. It is run by a Columbia professor who is part of the environmental studies division of the school. Different programs were set up: cats were collared and studied, DNA samples were taken and studied, and the bobcats’ behavior was also studied. It is probably the largest bobcat study ever conducted. Very little had been written on the topic. Over 250 different trail cameras were spread out over 15 square miles of the farm to study the cats. The study is still going on, and students come up to learn and study the cats. The bulk of the study is probably over, but research and observations continue.

All of this said, I can’t predict what will happen with the property and its sale – what its future will hold. But

the property has been like this for so long now where I’ve been the person managing it. I would love to see the property continue to be largely conserved and to also be utilized as a farm and as a natural center to work on environmental causes as I have done with the bobcat study. Having an open space like this is a great luxury of our time, and if it can remain like this, I believe it is great overall not just aesthetically but also for the overall health of the environment and community.

In addition to Dan, I also spoke with James Augustine of Compass, who is the real estate agent representing the property. James helped shed light on the significance of the property listing from a real estate perspective. Here’s part of our conversation.

Is this the largest farm to ever be offered for sale in this area?

Yes. It is the most expensive property to be listed in either Dutchess or Columbia counties. The most expensive property sold to date was a 290-acre Dutchess County estate that sold for \$18.5 million in 2022. Historically the Northeast and our region is the most undervalued in the country. We have the exact same access to the city as the Hamptons do, but our prices have been modest. We have started to see a change in the profile of our buyers coming up though; people are drawn to the privacy that is found here as well as the lack of density. As cities and other areas get bigger and more crowded, people have gotten more drawn to places where they can



Top, L-R: Mill Farm’s two original barns (in red), while the Dutch barn is visible in the background. The mill keeper’s house. Above, L-R: The quarantine barn that is on the same side of Route 3 as the mill. The Dutch barn has a huge hay loft along with ten horse stalls.

be more private, and Mill Farm is an excellent example of that.

That said, there is one other property that is similar in size that is also currently on the market. The Hitchcock Estate in Millbrook is also over 2,000 acres and is listed for \$65 million. There are numerous major differences between the two properties, which also helped determine the listing price difference. The main differences between the properties include that one is open while the other is wooded, the diversity of the landscape, and that Mill Farm is almost entirely surrounded by land in conservation.

There are also a few aspects of Dan’s property that truly make it one of a kind. I think that the market has responded very positively so far to the listing. My sense is that it could take some time to find the right buyer, it won’t happen overnight. But we are seeing people make huge investments in properties, including around Dan’s farm, investing \$10-20 million on significantly smaller farms.

They’re also not “making more land anymore”. You’ll probably never again in our lifetime find a property like this.

I agree. You’ll probably never find a property in our area that is this large and surrounded by conservation. Columbia County has robust conservation and that is evident all around Mill Farm. An example is the 2,000-acre bird sanctuary on the farm’s

east side. We also have to highlight Mill Farm’s ecological and recreation resources including over 18 miles of perfected riding trails ... you’ll just never be able to find this again.

It’s a real changing landscape since COVID. Many people are being drawn to Dutchess and Columbia counties, and we’ve seen a real increase in the investment from those folks because they love the lifestyle here. It is hard to find this type of lifestyle with such easy access to New York City, which is only two hours away.

This is the first time that we’ve had two properties on the market that are over 2,000 acres. Unequivocally, everyone’s hope is that the buyer will value the conservation of the land and keep the property in a similar fashion to where it has been under Dan’s ownership for the past 43 years.

And you’re right, they’re not making more land anymore. In fact, more properties are being chopped up into smaller parcels and sold in pieces. So having this as a whole is unique. Our hope and wish is that we will find someone who will really appreciate the land as Dan has. ●

To learn more about Mill Farm, please contact James Augustine by calling (917) 846-6297 or emailing him at james.augustine@compass.com. The listing can also be found at https://www.compass.com/homedetails/281-County-Route-3-Ancramdale-NY-12503/1948611880325442089_lid?agent_id=60c0e775897cf1000124779f.



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Celebrating simple, elevated home cooking with the launch of THE KING COOKBOOK

By Abby Audenino
abby@mainstreetmag.com

One of autumn's most anticipated cookbooks, *The King Cookbook*, by Annie Shi, Clare de Boer, and Jess Shadbolt will be released on November 4. Annie, Clare, and Jess are the women behind New York City's beloved restaurants King and Jupiter, the newly opened wine bar Lei in Chinatown, and Stissing House in Pine Plains, NY.

Annie Shi is co-owner of King and Jupiter, and owner of Lei. Annie leads the beverage programs, translating the kitchens' seasonal and ingredient-driven philosophies into exceptional wine and cocktail offerings. A *Forbes* 30 Under 30 honoree, Annie has also been featured in many publications.

Clare de Boer, a five-time James Beard-nominated chef and writer, is the owner of Stissing House and co-owner of King. However, she can most often be found in her home kitchen cooking for her husband and four sons. Clare writes about food for *The New York Times* and *Vogue*, and has a bi-monthly recipe newsletter, *The Best Bit*.

Jess Shadbolt joined The River Cafe in London as an assistant, and after a stint at Ballymaloe Cookery school in Ireland, she returned to The River Cafe as a chef. In 2016, she moved home to New York City, where she is now the co-owner and chef of King.

The King Cookbook is more than just a collection of recipes – it is a deeply personal reflection of how Annie, Clare, and Jess cook at home, at King, and together. The chapters of *The King Cookbook* mirror how the chefs train new cooks at King: starting with pantry staples, building foundational skills, and guiding readers toward intuitive cooking on their own. Inside are over 200 recipes that tell the chef's stories of their journeys from London to New York and beyond.

The culinary trio will be celebrating the launch of the cookbook with a signing event at Oblong Books in Millerton, NY, on Saturday, November 8 from 2-3pm. Ahead of the event, I caught up with the authors to

discuss the new cookbook, how they curated recipes, and key techniques for cooking.

Tell me about your educational and career experiences that led you to the culinary field.

Annie: I grew up with my mother cooking dinner every single night, after she came home from working a full-time job. It was the moment our family came together around a dinner table, and where every important conversation happened. I love being that dinner table for our guests.

Clare: A good dinner is motivating. The ability to cook it yourself is freeing.

Jess: I arrived in the kitchen by way of a brief stint in PR at L'Oreal. That soon led me to London's The River Cafe where I worked for five years as the assistant to chefs Ruth Rogers and the late Rose Grey. It was an incredible way to witness the restaurant from within and to see these two women lead the business and the kitchen – I was hooked. It wasn't long before I took a brief hiatus to attend Ballymaloe in Ireland before returning to the RC as a chef. Working now on the other side of the pass, I knew I had finally found my place behind the stove.

What motivated you to write *The King Cookbook*? How did you choose what recipes and approaches to include?

Annie: The food of King is uniquely suited for an eager home cook: there's no crazy equipment or gadgets in our kitchen, no tweezers to be found. We make the same simple, delicious home cooking found in the kitchens of grandmothers and nonnas all across France and Italy. We really believe that with some key pantry ingredients and core techniques, you could cook the way we do at King.

Clare: We started out with a list of about a thousand dishes, pulled from leafing through two years worth of menus ... then the culling began.

Jess: Our menu changes daily so we had plenty of recipes to choose from. Our cooking is simple, seasonally led

and very accessible. We were excited to share this with the home cook.

What is your collaborative writing process like?

Jess: Before we wrote the cookbook there were no recipes at King, so writing the book was very informative! We had to cook the recipes – for four to six portions, not the usual 30 – and take notes, before actually writing the recipes and finally getting them tested. So it was rather elongated process but meant that we were able to fine-tune them at every stage.

Annie: Since we didn't start with any recipes, *The King Cookbook* will be very useful for future generations of cooks at King! We took a lot of measurements, did a lot of conversions on Google, and then double and triple checked to make sure that they would be accurate at home.

How did you encapsulate the warm and welcoming vibe of King in this cookbook?

Annie: We each wanted to write and contribute because we feel like our individual voice is what makes the cookbook feel like King. We also wanted to incorporate a lot of R.F. Alvarez's drawings and doodles because his artwork is so synonymous with King.

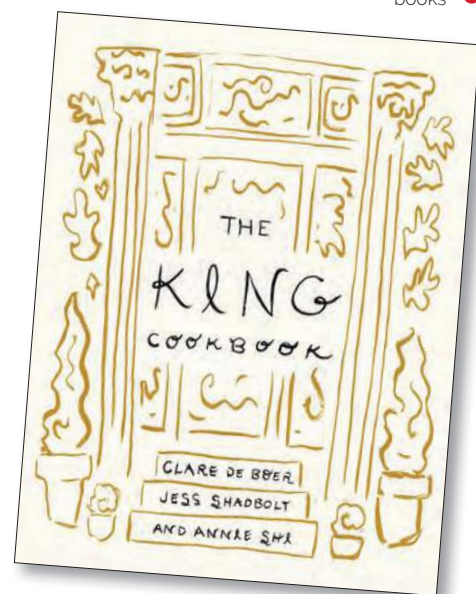
Jess: We approached the cookbook the same way we approach the teaching of a new cook in our kitchen. First they must understand the produce and the pantry, and next they learn the foundations of the kitchen – key techniques that we use every day. Blanching greens, cooking beans, braising, making sauces, how to grill proteins – the book follows the same rhythm.

What were the main takeaways?

Annie: So much work goes into every cookbook! It makes me appreciate them all the more.

Clare: I second that!

Jess: It's wonderful to see the growth in the food at King over the past ten years. It's an amazing chronicle to have of our time at the stove



and rewarding to now finally have recipes! If anything, the writing of the book only cements our sentiment that delicious food can be simple – not easy. And that with the right tools and with an understanding of the basics and good ingredients, homecooks can achieve the same results.

What is most rewarding about working and educating within the culinary industry?

Annie: I love the immediate and tactile gratification of cooking, whether roasting, boiling, mixing. In the world of AI, nothing can replace cooking and serving food, ideally to the people you love!

Clare: Feeding people.

Jess: Bringing people together – whether it's for a table of two or 22, I love to gather people around a table.

What are you most excited for readers to discover about the culinary world?

Clare: We'd love people to spend time with the pantry chapter, and try a few of the sauces. They appear repeatedly through the cookbook and can make simple grilled fish, beef, or carta di musica, exciting. The pantry and sauces are the core of the cooking at King.

Jess: A good pair of tongs and a bottle of olive oil can take you very far. •

Annie, Clare, and Jess will be celebrating the launch of The King Cookbook at Oblong Books in Millerton, NY, on Saturday, November 8. Advance registration is encouraged. For more information and to register for the event, visit Oblong Books' website at oblongbooks.com/events/calendar. For more information about The King Cookbook, visit kingrestaurant.nyc/book.

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DECK THE WALLS

From time to time, we can all use some inspiration. Sometimes we need to let go and embrace change. One way to do that is by switching up the artwork in our homes. A work of art – whether it's a photograph or a painting – offers a new perspective and a window into another time, place, or even a feeling or mood.

Bringing artwork into a dwelling is a great way to switch up a home's color palette, too. Whether you enjoy realism or abstraction, photography or watercolor, loose brush strokes or tight, or architectural renderings, there's plenty of affordable artwork available right here in the Hudson Valley.

Rather than buying art at mass retailers, go gallery hopping and explore the collection at a local space. Local artists often draw inspiration from the region's landscapes, cityscapes, and overall vibe. Beyond supporting a local artist, purchasing from a gallery means you'll own an original work of art rather than something generic and mass produced. There are so many perks.

Shop local

One destination worth visiting is Art Gallery 71, which takes its name from its location at 71 East Market Street in Rhinebeck. It was founded in 2019 by

local artists Wendy Sheasby, Richard Chianella, and Trevor Hunter along with Evelyn LaStella and Alix Travis, who remain the two LLC partners today.

Their mission is to offer an outlet for local artists to showcase and sell their work. While doing so, the gallery also fortifies Rhinebeck's reputation as an art destination and does its fair share in making original art accessible to a much wider audience.

Art Gallery 71 operates as an artist cooperative, with 23 artist members currently signed on, including Travis and LaStella, who are members as well as being the LLC partners. All sales are commission-free. All working members perform jobs such as scheduling gallery sitters (who greet visitors and answer the phone or inquiries about the collection), coordinating rehanging, maintaining the email distribution list, updating the website, and hosting gallery events. Some serve on a steering committee that focuses on problem solving and continued improvement, along with LaStella who acts as general manager.

Before immersing herself in the art industry, LaStella served as executive director of product development and project management for a major bank. Now she says, "I am grateful to be focusing full time on painting and managing the gallery."

A librarian and mom, Travis was involved in several artistic endeavors

before getting involved in Art Gallery 71. She helped initiate the AMR Open Studio Tour, a grass-roots collective that spanned three Delaware County towns. It is still in operation.

The details

The roster of artists at Art Gallery 71 includes Alix Travis, Evelyn LaStella, Wendy Sheasby, Richard Chianella, Mary Belliveau, Ted Braggins, John Franco, Silvana Tagliaferri, Yoram Gelman, Vera Kaplan, Elisabeth Barnett, Jenny Stroh, Heather Schwegler, Joanne Cuttler, Julia Van Develder, Bill Jacobs, David Giroux, Mark Grimaldi, Emily Marchesiello, Susan Spivak, Scot Benn, Kevin Palfreyman, and Mike Jacobs.

The visionaries behind the gallery strive to retain a diverse collection of artworks in terms of styles and media. Visitors will find photography, oil paintings, watercolor paintings, acrylic paintings, and mosaics. Styles range from realism to abstraction.

"The main thing that differentiates Art Gallery 71 from other galleries, besides our great artists, is that we do not impose commissions. This allows our artists to offer their work to buyers at lower prices," said LaStella. At the gallery, there's also a broad range

Continued on next page ...

Left: *See Through Forest*, 30" x 35" oil on linen, \$800.

Middle: *Flame Drop Cat* by Emily Marchesiello, 12" x 12" acrylic pen on gesso board, \$450.

Right: *Pot Hole Crew*, 22" x 24" oil on linen, \$600.

of sizes and price points. Affordable art can be snapped up for as little as \$25.

Although selection and inventory vary, the gallery offers unframed originals as well as high-quality prints. Framed original pieces can range from \$85 to approximately \$2,000 for larger pieces. Most work is in the mid-range of \$150 to \$600.

“Many people think they can’t afford good original art but are pleasantly surprised when they see our pricing. It can be a double-edged sword because some people think that good art must have a high price tag. They may be put off by the lower prices, but once they realize the same art pieces would be twice as much at a gallery imposing a 50% commission, they understand how our pricing is possible,” said LaStella.

Show time!

Although all member artists always have their work on display, every month one artist is selected, and their collection is highlighted.

November’s featured artist is John Franco, a retired construction inspector, who started painting when he was nine years old.

“After the experience of keeping my work to myself for most of my life, I don’t believe in turning myself into a commodity. I work with whatever I want to create images – photos, ideas, my drawings, jokes, whatever. I’ve painted a flag girl in the street, still life compositions, and outdoor concerts, as well as abstract constructions based on closed shapes, open shapes, straight lines, and color,” said Franco. An opening reception will be held on Saturday, November 8 from 4 to 6pm.

The public is welcome to attend the soiree.

Last month’s featured artist was Evelyn LaStella who exhibited her collection, “The Fine Line Between Fact and Fiction.” This series of abstracted floral oil paintings celebrates exaggerated color and scale, features shapes within shapes, and emphasizes line work.

“At Art Gallery 71, each member artist can be featured every two years. The featured artist is allocated extra wall space and the front window in addition to their normally allocated space. After working on a new series of paintings for a year or more, it is very satisfying to have the space to display them together, as a body of work. The featured artist show is like the end of a well-loved chapter of art making that frees me to start something completely new. It is also wonderful to welcome friends and visitors to a reception and thank them for their encouragement and for just being art lovers,” said LaStella.

Art Gallery 71 is a participant in Rhinebeck Arts Walk, which runs on the third Saturday of every month from May through October. Via the event, art enthusiasts and community members are welcome to visit all the art venues in Rhinebeck Village. They’re invited to join Art Gallery 71 for a wine reception, held from 4 to 6pm.

Beyond the monthly receptions, Art Gallery 71 hosts occasional artist demonstrations and other events. Interested parties are invited to visit Art Gallery 71’s website to sign up for the email distribution list, which sends out notifications of gallery events.



Revelry by Evelyn LaStella, 24" x 48" oil on latex on canvas, \$1,300.



Tin Pan Alley by Joanne Cuttler, 11" x 14" watercolor, \$450.

More info ...

Although the gallery is structured as an LLC, it operates as a not-for-profit organization. “The LLC partners do not pull money out of the gallery. All fee income is reinvested into the gallery so we can maintain and improve its operation,” said LaStella. In this way, it is a labor of love for the LLC partners.

The gallery is currently at full capacity. Depending on artist turnover, once or twice annually, membership opportunities tend to open-up. The gallery maintains a waiting list of artists who have expressed interest in joining.

When an opportunity arises, wait-listed artists are contacted via email and the “Call for Artists” application and jury process begins. Any artists who are interested in becoming members can contact Art Gallery 71 through its website.

Although the gallery has capacity for 23 member artists, it permits up

to four of them to pay a premium monthly fee so that they don’t have to gallery sit or perform gallery jobs. Regular working members pay \$125 per month. Non-working members pay \$200 per month. In both cases, the member pays no commission on sold work.

Since member fees must cover the gallery’s rent and other expenses, Art Gallery 71 doesn’t have the budget for paid staff. “We think this serves as a benefit because it means that visitors will always come into contact with a local artist when they come in,” said LaStella.

Go in and see for yourself. The gallery is open every Friday and Saturday from noon to 6pm. On Sundays and holiday Mondays, it is open from 10am to 4pm. •

To learn more about Art Gallery 71, visit them in person at 71 East Market Street in Rhinebeck, NY. Call (845) 516-4878 or go online artgallery71.com.

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Stissing Center for Arts & Culture brings local filmmakers to the big screen with

PINE PLAINS FESTIVAL OF SHORTS



By Abby Audenino
abby@mainstreetmag.com

On Saturday, November 1, and Sunday, November 2, Stissing Center for Arts & Culture in Pine Plains, NY, will be hosting the inaugural Pine Plains Festival of Shorts, a curated, non-competitive showcase of short films created by filmmakers from Pine Plains and other nearby localities.

The festival will serve as a fundraiser to upgrade Stissing Center with professional-grade film screening equipment, ensuring that film can again become a regular part of the center's programming.

Stissing Center is a non-profit arts space located in the heart of Pine Plains that hosts a range of performances and events in music, theater, and other arts that reflect the character of the Hudson Valley and greater northeast region. The center's focus is on offering programs that are welcoming, thought-provoking, and accessible, ergo supporting creativity, inspiration, and connection for people of all ages in the Hudson Valley.

Bringing film back to Pine Plains

"As many of you know, our building once housed The Plains Theater, Pine Plains' local movie house from the 1930s through the 1960s," explains Patrick Trettenero, executive director of Stissing Center. "We are delighted to honor that history while showcasing the incredible creativity of local filmmakers. This festival is about bringing movies back to Pine

Plains, and just as importantly, about celebrating the talent in our own backyard."

In fact, this history is what inspired the concept for the short film festival to begin with. With so many gifted, award-winning filmmakers living in Pine Plains and the surrounding towns, Patrick says it only felt natural to bring movies back to Stissing Center's stage and celebrate the incredible creative talent that calls this region home.

"Stissing Center exists to connect and reflect our community. Showcasing local filmmakers reminds us that extraordinary creativity can be found right in our own backyard," Patrick says. "Many of these artists have built remarkable careers and now share their talents here, where they live. By featuring their work, we not only celebrate their artistry, but also inspire others to tell their own stories. It's about pride of place – and about building a shared creative culture rooted in our town and region."

What to expect from the film festival

The two evenings will feature an array of films, including documentary, animation, comedy, and drama. Following the screenings, there will be live Q&A sessions with the filmmakers.

Some highlights include "Memories/Dreams" and "Our Farms, Our Farmers," by Keith Reamer and Murphy Birdsall of Pine Plains; "Rosey's," by Britt Ko; Brian Gersten's "Hollywood's Mermaid: The Esther Williams

Story"; "Into the Artist's Mind: A Conversation with John Greene," by Forge Media and the Art Effect; and Matt Bartolomeo's "Pete's Jeeps."

"We curated a diverse lineup – documentary, animation, drama, and comedy – featuring filmmakers who live in or near Pine Plains," Patrick explains. "Each film was chosen for its originality, craftsmanship, and heart. Together, they reflect the range and richness of storytelling happening in our corner of the Hudson Valley."

With four to six short films shown each evening and discussions moderated by community members, the festival is designed not as a competition, but rather as a celebration of creativity and connection.

More than anything, Patrick says that audiences can look forward to two evenings of inspired storytelling and community connection. "This festival serves a purpose beyond celebration – it's a fundraiser to help Stissing Center purchase professional-grade film screening equipment, the next step toward creating an ongoing film program," he says. "These filmmakers have come together to support that vision, helping us ensure that cinema once again becomes a part of life in Pine Plains." ●

Tickets are available now at thestissingcenter.org or by calling (518) 771-3339. Stissing Center for Arts & Culture is located at 2950 Church Street, Pine Plains, NY.



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Dutchess County Historical

By Jesse DeGroodt
info@mainstreetmag.com

In 1909, a gentleman by the name of Frank Hasbrouck edited the 1,000+-page *The History of Dutchess County, New York*, for which he kicked off the preface with this: “The year of the tercentennial celebration of the Hudson River seems an eminently fit time for the publication of one of the most important counties whose shores are washed by its waters.” And off we go!

To yours truly, a near-lifelong Columbia County resident, the opportunity to do a little poking into the not-so-recent history of my neighbor to the south didn't seem like a bad deal at all. As I rummaged along through Mr. Hasbrouck's tome, certain items stuck out that demanded to be let back out into the light of day.

What follows, then, is hardly what one might call a fair and balanced approach, but rather, what shiny, sparkly things stood out and grabbed my attention, with the intent being to weave some continuity into the proceedings, and with the hope that something along the way also seizes the readers' attention. Let's keep in mind that, as Sidney Greenstreet's character, Casper Gutman, in *The Maltese Falcon*, would inform Humphrey Bogart's Sam Spade, “These are facts, historical facts, not schoolbook

history, not Mr. Wells' history, but history nevertheless.”

Northeast, Oblong, and no hogs shall roam free

Out of the work's XXXIX chapters, my rapier-like, eagled-eyed, resolute scrutiny ultimately settled around V of those chapters, including “The Aboriginal People,” “Pioneer Settlements and Early Inhabitants,” “The Revolutionary War – Local Events,” “Dutchess County in the Rebellion,” and the “Town of Northeast” (North East, these days), in which the Village of Millerton is located.

Let's commence at the end of that list and look in on the first town meeting of Northeast on April 1, 1823, from an account written by Philip H. Smith: “The first town meeting in Northeast as at present constituted was held at Northeast Center. The following is the earliest record: Pursuant to an act of the Legislature of the State of New York, passed March 26, 1823, for dividing the towns of Amenia and Northeast in the County of Dutchess, and erecting a new town therefrom by the name of Northeast, and directing the first town meeting to be held at the house of Alexander Neely in said town.”

Among the regulations, or town laws, passed for the town of Northeast at this meeting, was one formed from a vote in favor that “no hogs shall be suffered to roam in the highways after three months old without a ring in their nose.”

Smith would note, “The earliest settlements in Northeast were made in the Oblong tract. One reason for this was that better titles could be given to the property, which were guaranteed by the state; and, being contiguous to New England where most of the early settlers came from, these probably



located at the first desirable place they came to; the iron mines were another and perhaps stronger attraction. Spencers Corners or ‘Clearing’ was among the oldest settled parts of the Oblong.”

The Aboriginal People

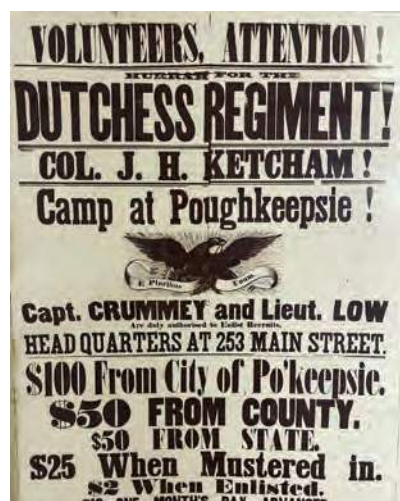
Now let's back up a few steps and return to “The Aboriginal People,” where we find: “The territory of the Wappingers, a tribal division of the Mohicans, covered the major portion of Dutchess County. Their government scarcely differed from that of the Delawares. Each tribe had its sachem and counsellors who made their own laws, treaties, etc. These, says Loskiel, ‘were either experienced warriors or aged and respectable fathers of families.’ Likewise each had its specific device or totem denoting original consanguinity. Although the prevailing totem of all the Hudson River

Above, left: 150th Infantry Monument is located on Culp's Hill, Gettysburg Battlefield. Courtesy of NYS Military Museum and Veterans Research Center.

Above, right: 150th Captain Robert C. Tripp, Company B.

Left: 150th Poster.

Images for the Captain and poster are courtesy of angelfire.com.



Continued on next page ...

cantons was the wolf, borne alike by Minsis, Wappingers and Mohicans, the particular symbol of the Wappingers was the opossum, tattooed on the person of the Indian, and often rudely painted on the gable-end of his cabin."

Let's take a second here to reflect on that. As difficult as it might be to wrap one's head around the fact that, let's say, woolly mammoths and mastodons once strode this area, it's equally bizarre to contemplate that less a few short centuries ago Native Americans lived, worked, and played where we now do exactly the same. Of course, that raises the question, what will things look like around here in 500 years?

The early settlers

On to "Pioneer Settlements and Early Inhabitants" we go. And for that: "Inasmuch as Dutchess county was for some years provisionally attached to Ulster, on account of the paucity of its inhabitants, a detached census was not made until 1714. The total number of souls was four hundred and forty-five of whom twenty-nine were slaves. The list of sixty-seven heads of families then resident in the county contains the following names:

"Abrahams Beuys, John Beuys, Roger Brett, John Breines, Hendrick Bretsiert, Andreis Daivedes, Peter De Boyes, John De Grave, Frans De Langen, Peck De Wit, Roelif Duijtser, Johanis Dyckman Sienjer, Johannis Dyckman Junjor, Aenderis Gerdener, Isaac Hendricks, Bartolomus Hoogenboom, Jacob Hoghtelingh, Jacob Hoghtelingh, James Husey, Jacob Kip, John Kip, Harmen Knickerbacker, Louwerens Knickerbacker, Cellitie Kool, Catrine Lasink Wedo, Peter Lasink, Frans Le Roy, Lenar Le Roy, Lenard Lewis, Aret Masten, Gysbert Oosterhout, Whilliam Ostrander, Lowrans Ostrout, John Ostrow, [and] William Outen.

"Also, Maghell Pallmatir, Peter Palmater, Hendrick Pells, Tunis Piet-
erse, Jakob Plowgh, Harmen Rind-

ers, Thomas Sanders, Willem Schot, -----ey Scouten, Henderck Sissum, Matieis Slejt, Johannis Spoor, Mellen Springsteen, Jeurey Springsten, Johnes Terbots, William Tetsort, Adaam Van Alsted, Elias Van Bunchoten, Elena Van De Bogart, Henry Van Der Burgh, Abraham Van Dusen, Balthus Van Kleck, Johanes Van Kleck, Garatt Van Vleit, Evert Van Wagenen, Swart Van Wagenen, Abraham Vosburgh, Jacob Vosburgh, Peter Vely, Dirck Wesselse, [and] Willem Wijt."

Recognize anyone?

The Revolutionary War and the Hudson Valley

We now leave those early settlers behind and head off to "The Revolutionary War – Local Events" and this: "Although Dutchess County was not invaded by the British, it nevertheless became of paramount importance during the Revolution. In population and taxable wealth it exceeded other counties of the State. In addition to the large number of troops as evidenced by the lengthy muster rolls of Dutchess regiments, it furnished a very large proportion of army provisions.

"Early in the spring of 1776 materials arrived at Poughkeepsie for the construction of the frigates Congress and Montgomery for the Continental navy. They were staunch vessels of good model, the former of twenty-eight and the latter of twenty-four guns. The fate of these frigates is contained in a letter dated October 9th, 1777, from Gov. Clinton to Gen. Washington which reads:

"I have to add that by some fatality the two Continental frigates were lost, they having been ordered down by General Putnam to the defence of the chain; but being badly manned, they could not be got off in time, although I ordered the ship Congress to proceed to Fort Constitution (opposite West Point) the day before the attack; and the ship Montgomery, which lay near the chain, having neither anchor nor cables to secure her ... Captain Hodge was constrained to set her on fire from falling into the hands of the enemy. The Congress, unfortunately getting aground on the flat near Fort Constitution, shared the same fate."



A 1887 map of Millerton, NY. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

The Rebellion

Last but not least, it's time to check in on "Dutchess County in the Rebellion," otherwise known as the American Civil War, when, "In all the larger towns meetings were held immediately upon the fall of Fort Sumter. Men and money were freely tendered for the defense of the Union. Enlistments commenced forthwith, and the action of the citizens was everywhere prompt and enthusiastic."

After initially joining with Columbia County to form the 11th District, for which Tivoli was designated the regimental camp, in 1862 the camp was moved to Hudson, to be known as Camp Kelly, where more than a thousand men organized. Ultimately, "The 128th was mustered out in Savannah, July 12, 1865, and sent to Albany to be paid off. The regiment went out with 993 men and returned with only five hundred."

Later, in August 1862, the county board of supervisors "adopted measures for the raising of a Dutchess County Regiment, so that the county's full quota of troops could be raised without a draft. After obtaining the required permission from the Governor, the war committee on the 26th of August, selected Hon. John H. Ketcham for Colonel of this regiment, Alfred B. Smith for Major, George R. Gaylord for Quartermaster and William Thompson for Adjutant.

"The regiment was designated the 150th, and recruiting offices were opened by Joseph H. Cogswell, Robert McConnell, Henry A. Gild-

ersleeve, William R. Woodin, Andrus Brant, John Green, Edward Wickes, Edward Crummey, Benjamin S. Broas and John S. Schofield. As soon as eighty men were enrolled by any one of these gentlemen, he went to Albany and received his commission as Captain. ... The regimental camp was located at Poughkeepsie, just north of the old Alms House farm, and was named Camp Dutchess." From this camp, on Saturday, October 11, 1862, the 150th was mustered into service.

The following summer, the 150th found itself in Gettysburg, arriving "between 4 and 5 o'clock on the morning of July 2nd, 1863, and was assigned to the 2nd brigade, first division, of the 12th corps. It was held in reserve until the afternoon of that day.... The 150th returned during the night to the position of the 12th corps, on the extreme right of the National line, at the barb of the hook formed by Cemetery Ridge, on the crest of which from Culp's Hill to Round Top, Meade's army was posted."

"While the contest for the possession of Little Round Top was in progress," the 150th made "a vigorous attack" at Culp's Hill. "This was the first actual fighting in which the 150th regiment engaged. Its casualties were 8 killed and 23 wounded. Some 200 of the rebels surrendered to it." ●

For the record, a downloadable pdf of The History of Dutchess County, New York is available at archive.org.



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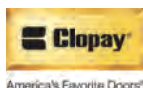
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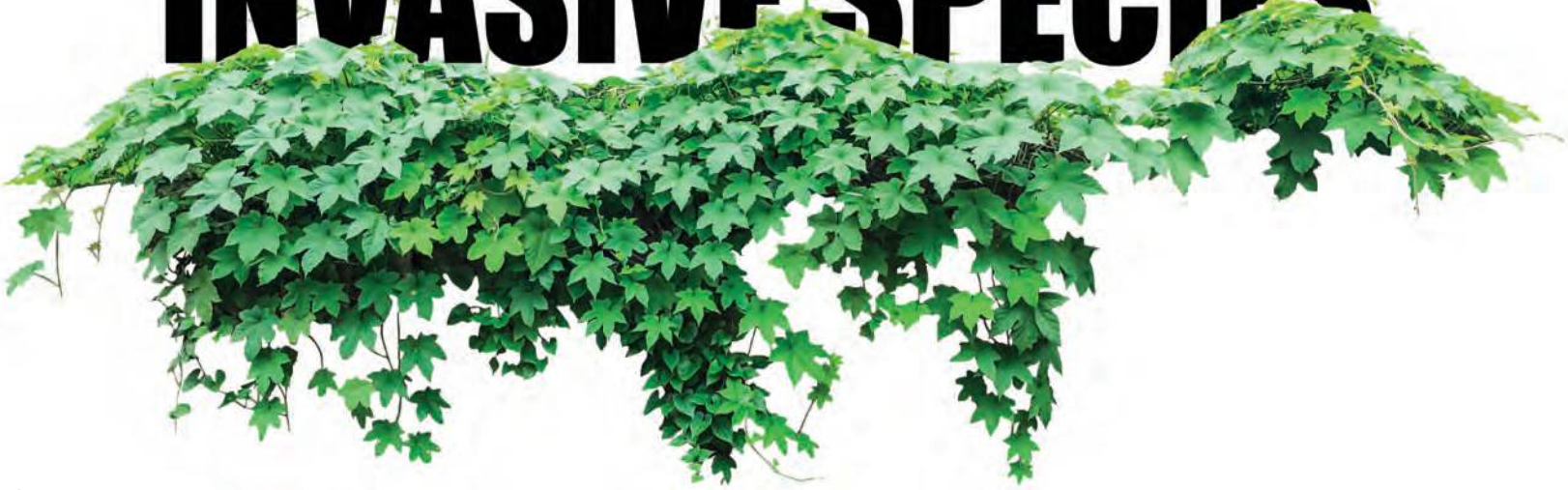


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INVASIVE SPECIES



By CB Wismar
info@mainstreetmag.com

There was a time when much of the family property had reverted to wildness. Vines snarled around trees, and the undergrowth was so thick that trying to walk was only accomplished with a high kick step and a search for hand holds on saplings. Odd plants that had names we never quite remembered had taken over, and to reclaim a portion of the property, we had to enlist the services of a land-clearing firm that arrived with a monster machine that chewed up the intruders and spit them out as twigs.

We seem to have a penchant to push back nature. The first settlers who braved these hills worked with picks and hoes and sledges pulled by oxen to carve out fields large enough to pasture goats and cows or plant corn. The winding string of stone walls that still punctuate the landscape bear witness to their seemingly unending efforts to do battle with the inevitable. Without constant effort to the contrary, nature wins.

We never tried to hand clear a field. We never tried to build a stone wall. Our gardening efforts have become legendary ... disasters.

The game has changed

Latter-day battles with invasive species have moved from the physical to the ethereal ... from acreage to the Internet. We seem to be battling every day to fight off the encroaching vines of unwanted ads, bizarre offers of assured fortune, and politically charged misrepresentations.

Like so many, we easily slipped into the pattern of ordering items online. COVID-19 only strengthened the hold of online marketers as we hid indoors, put on masks wherever we went, and found it so much easier to acquire books, shoes (free returns!), and toilet tissue with expected delivery this afternoon or next week – whichever comes first.

Having overcome the natural fear of dropping a credit card number and our home address into a strange website, we relied on the assurances of privacy, secrecy, and security. What we didn't account for was that every purchase or even merely inquiry made was the international signal for seemingly every adjacent online retailer to shower our in-box with tangentially related products. *Buy now! Get one free! Inventory limited! Just for you!*

Why won't LeafFilter leave me alone? What is Vego Garden, anyway ... and why does it intrusively crash my inbox every morning? I ordered a wallet online, and within five minutes had 13 ads for wallets. Hey, AI. I just ordered one. I don't need another one. Rubbish.

We seem to have become numb to this intrusion, this flood of invasive species that make walking through the forest of the Internet a study in high-kicked steps and being oh, so careful along the way. It can be genuinely frightening, making us unsure whether even receiving some of these digital missives will infect our computers and render us helpless, susceptible to identity theft and truly evil scams.

Click here. We'll miss you.

Merely hitting "delete" to counteract this cyber-attack is not always the reliable solution. Artificial intelligence is thinking three steps ahead of us, and the digital vines quickly find another way to impede our progress.

"Click to unsubscribe" may take us away from one bothersome, uninvited newsletter, but the trolls squirming at the edges of our communication instantly find another way to intrude, insult, and enrage. With no warning, the screen lights up with offers and intrusions which are, at times, in languages unrecognizable.

Delete. Delete. Delete.

Lifelines

In the wake of World War II, some enterprising souls returned from combat theaters and realized that there was a surplus of equipment that had been manufactured for the war effort. We had warehouses filled with boots and belts and canteens and all of the gear needed to equip our troops, many of whom had been deployed to sub-tropical locations where hacking their way through jungles was a daily effort.

The local "army surplus store" was a wonderland for young, would-be adventurers. We recall wandering aisles filled with items that evoked heroic fantasies until there they were – canteens that hooked onto wide belts and machetes used to attack jungle vines. These were the latter-day swords wielded by knights in khaki and steel helmets. Fighting the multiflora rose

and the bittersweet in the back field required that we arm ourselves.

Would it be that a machete would be useful in combatting the vines snarling our gmail account.

Any storm in a port

Countless witticisms describe how difficult it is for men to ask for directions. It's a reasonable bet that there are a few women who also find it difficult to reach out for guidance, but stubborn rendering of "I'll do it myself" seems to be a masculine trait. For those of the male persuasion, and empathetic women, we offer this act of brotherly love: Three suggestions with no pressure, no judgement, and no hidden agenda. Get some help to get rid of invasive species.

1. If the issue is vines and brambles, call a service with those monster machines and stop stumbling and swearing your way through the overgrown expanses. What are a few twigs among friends?

2. For challenges of the online variety, engage a service for a few dollars a month that will screen would-be assaults on your Internet privacy and actually report back every month so you can itemize the times you might have stumbled. Money well spent – and not sent to skilled scam artists.

3. A brief visit to a local store focused on computer sales, service, and therapy can put you face-to-face with folks who have used their virtual machete and cut a path for you.

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Good food, good wine, good friends

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By Barbara Peduzzi
info@mainstreetmag.com

The holidays are coming, the holidays are coming! Gifts, parties, dinners, family gatherings, and OMG, we need the right wine for all those. But, what to choose? There are so many options, from local vintners with one-of-a-kind specialties to vast world-wide assortments.

Enter Dylan Baker at Sharon Pack-age Store, Hillsdale Fine Wine and Spirits manager Wendy Walton, and Tom Morrison of South Egremont Spirit Shoppe with their expert advice.

Their unanimous opinion echoes Morrison's statement, "The first rule of thumb is to drink what you like."

Baker worded it, "It's up to your palette, what you like to eat, but be open to trying."

"It's really a personal preference, what people like," was Walton's comment. That said, they went on to add their suggestions.

More wines than oceans

Baker laughed while saying, "There are more wines than oceans," pointing out that the wine should match the intensity of the food flavors. "Typically, with turkey, you can be a bit more aggressive because it has a lot of flavor to cut through. Maybe a Sauvignon blanc, with body and a little bit of fruit. Personally, I go with a French noir or Sancerre."

Reds such as a traditional Beaujolais French Gamay are lighter bodied but have a vibrant fruit to them, "They're very welcoming to, like, a cranberry sauce, and also pair well with ham." Another choice is a wine

with higher acidity, which "invigorates our palette to welcome more food flavors."

Walton finds that for Thanksgiving and Christmas, people tend to like a heavier Sauvignon or pinot noir. She pointed out, "We also carry a good variety of kosher wines."

"The softballs such as pinot noir, chardonnay, and zinfandel are what most people gravitate towards. We like to have alternatives to those," Morrison informed. With so many flavors, spices, and textures on the Thanksgiving and Christmas tables, "We believe a wine with less complexity goes further; we love a reisling or rosé as alternatives." Morrison also admitted a strong affinity towards Italian wines, "Most of which will fit the bill."

Besides the holiday dinners, there are parties large and small. And gifts, also large and small. There's a wine for that. For something very traditional, and very easy, the Hillsdale shop holds tastings for a local pre-mixed mulled wine they stock, "Just put it into a small crock pot to serve, the fruits and spices are already in it." It could make a gift, or select one of their boxed sets, such as wine with glasses.

Solid advice

For a party, Baker mused, "Sooooo, you wanna go with crowd pleasers, not too one way or the other, fruit or dry." On the other hand, for a gift, "I'd always welcome one I didn't know." For either, he suggests, "Find the same characteristics with the food as with the wines, for example, choco-

late and raspberries with a really nice zinfandel."

Advice from Morrison is the same, "Crowd pleasing wines are definitely in order." He recommends serving varied styles, but not too many. For giving, "Bubbles always make a good gift. They're always very celebratory. You hear the cork pop, 'Now the party starts'." Bubbles also are a great food wine, he feels, "Wine is about enhancing the food experience."

As far as serving the wines, Walton reiterated the classic, "White is usually served chilled, red at room temperature." Baker refined that, "Don't overchill white wines, especially if pairing with food. Sitting out 10 to 15 minutes changes the wine tremendously." Morrison concurred, "Don't serve whites too cold, it shuts down the flavor;" he also suggested chilling reds, "A slight bit."

His customer favorites follow a broad spectrum, Baker said, with natural, organic brands big and growing. "There's a spike in orange wines," which, he explained, are not made from oranges, but rather given that color shade, and more body, by letting wine sit on the skins it has been pressed from.

Walton said Hillsdale Fine Wine and Spirits carries wines from all different regions, accounting for about half their overall sales. In summer, individual sized plastic bottles and cartons of wine are popular, especially with people going places such as Tanglewood where glass is not permitted.

"Where wine is enjoyed most is with food," Morrison noted, so when tasting new wines to stock, they ask how it will affect a meal. Their customers like different things, "With a lot of people looking for organically made wines," which South Egremont Spirit Shoppe has many choices of.

A gathering place

The Sharon store's liquor license is one of the longest held in the state, having obtained it, "Very soon after Prohibition ended," Baker boasted. When he and his wife took over ten years ago, it was a gathering spot for the community, a tradition they are carrying on, while "also ever-adapting with change of the market."

The Hillsdale shop opened in 2015, with the motto, "Where local flavors meet imported adventure." They specialize in "Supporting local makers." Walton said their specialty might be the very large selection of bourbons for the size of the store, "Millennials have discovered bourbon, and makers can't keep up supplies."

South Egremont Spirit Shoppe has been open for eight years, but the owners Tom Morrison, Dan Thomas, and Alison Berlin combined have "Seventy-five years in the wine industry," to select vintages to stock. "We specialize in wines," Morrison said, "We're 'wine-centric.' Wine is our passion, our focus. We feel winemakers are the 'good stewards of the earth.'"

And there you have it. Pick your favorites, and enjoy your holidays! ●





Hyalite Builders

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Matt Soleau founded Hyalite Builders in 2022. Recognizing a need for disciplined, design-focused construction management in the Hudson Valley, he launched the firm to bring his expertise, rigorous process, and personalized service to high-end regional projects. Hyalite Builders provides full construction management and general contracting services. From pre-construction planning to final completion, they oversee every phase with precision, integrating building science, sustainability, and wellness-driven design. “We united world-class expertise with local commitment,” Soleau shares. “We emphasize flawless execution and holistic delivery – balancing structure, envelope, systems, and finishes. Our projects embody longevity and soul, transforming spaces into narratives. Collaboration with architects and designers ensures results that endure – setting Hyalite Builders apart as a trusted regional builder.” They are focused on disciplined, intentional growth – expanding their presence in the Hudson Valley and beyond, while maintaining uncompromising quality. “The most rewarding part is transforming vision into reality – guiding clients from concept to completion, and seeing their excitement with a finished space. Building trust and relationships is equally meaningful. Every project becomes a collaboration that leaves a lasting imprint on both the community and the people we serve.”



Photos by Marlena

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Marlena Aakjar has been in love with photography for her entire life. However, she didn’t start out pursuing photography as a career. She photographed her first wedding 17 years ago and hasn’t stopped. “I photograph people and everything they do, as well as their connections to one another,” Marlena says. She photographs families, couples, babies and children, weddings, parties and events, amongst others. “I am very community-based and love capturing the goings-on in my town of Sharon. I like to stay local when choosing locations for shoots, too,” she shares. “Every year, I do mini sessions with Santa at the Sharon Firehouse and all proceeds go to the Sharon Volunteer Fire Department.” Marlena is a natural light photographer and loves outdoor sessions, particularly during autumn. “I am a firm believer that everyone should have beautiful images of their life, and I don’t know how I got lucky enough to be able to provide that for so many,” she says. “It makes my heart happy when people come back to me again and again.” Going forward, Marlena hopes to continue bringing joy to people who have chosen her to capture the beauty in their lives. “I want people to keep reaching out and thanking me for making them smile.”



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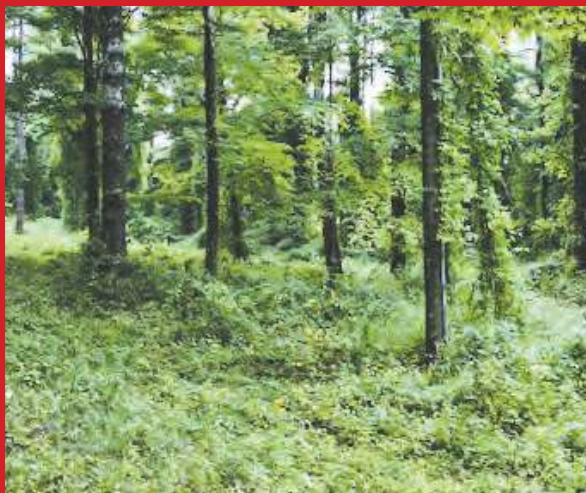
Driven by a passion for craftsmanship and design, Chris Verrone founded Elevare Exteriors in 1989. Over the years, Elevare Exteriors has evolved into a leader in complete exterior building restoration and preservation. Specializing in historic restoration, Elevare Exteriors provides complete exterior building restoration and preservation, including roofing, siding and painting, masonry, and architectural metalwork and copper work. Elevare Exteriors’ vertical integration allows every step – from fabrication to installation – to be done in-house, ensuring precision and quality at scale. “Our legacy is built on the art of historic restoration and preservation, guided by our core principles and the skilled hands of our teams – our craftsmen,” Verrone says. “Unlike others, our vertically-integrated structure ensures every detail is meticulously handled by in-house specialists, each a master of their specific trade.” For Verrone, the most rewarding part of his work is restoring homes and bringing historic properties and timeless architecture back to life. “Seeing the transformation and knowing our work will last for generations makes every project meaningful,” he shares. “Our goal is to keep elevating the standard for exterior restoration and inspire pride in craftsmanship for years to come.”



Chatham's Yoga Center

3 Railroad Ave., Chatham, NY. (917) 981-9867. emailrachelwood@gmail.com. chathamyogacenter.com

Rachel Wood opened Chatham Yoga Center in September of 2024. She had been teaching independently for the last eight years in this area and was thrilled at the prospect of opening up her own studio. Chatham Yoga Center offers a wide range of yoga classes including gentle yoga, vinyasa flow, ashtanga yoga, viniyoga, restorative yoga, beginner yoga, and mat Pilates. Chatham Yoga Center currently has ten teachers who work as part of their team. “We are a yoga studio rooted in the traditional branches of yoga. We come from a place of honoring the lineage and tradition of yoga, which includes chanting, pranayama, and a focus on breathing in all our classes. We are a yoga studio dedicated to self-realization,” Rachel says. The most rewarding part about opening and running Chatham Yoga Center for Rachel is that she is finally rooted in one place. For years, she rented space here, there, and everywhere. “I used to have students text me to ask, ‘Where will class be today?’ I’m so grateful to have a home base for all my students in a place that feels safe and welcoming.” Going forward, Rachel sees stability and growth for Chatham Yoga Center. “We are planning on being around for a long time, so for me, it’s all about relationships with students and growing the studio. I also offer private sessions and online classes to meet my students where they are.”



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