

# MAINstreet

MAGAZINE





# KINDRED

PROPERTY CARE

THE TRI-STATE AREA'S PREMIERE LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR

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



(860) 397 5267 • Info@KindredLandscapes.com • www.KindredLandscapes.com

# We're here to insure your *entire* world

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



**Kneller Insurance  
Agency**

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

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

3030 Main Street  
Valatie, NY 12184  
P. 518.610.8164

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



***It's time to spring into action!  
Give us a call today to plan  
your upgrades and tune-ups.  
Beat the rush and get your  
project scheduled this month!***

  
***CROWN***

**ENERGY CORP.**

***SERVICES:***

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

***(518) 789 3014 • (845) 635 2400***

3 Century Blvd., Millerton, NY 12546  
[www.crownenergycorp.com](http://www.crownenergycorp.com)

## IT'S ALL FARMS & ANIMALS

Welcome to our eleventh "Animals & Farming" issue! That's right, way back when, all the way back in 2015, our first "Animals & Farming" issue hit newsstands, and I've looked forward to it every year since. Our region is filled with a deep history and connection to farming and agriculture. I for one grew up on a farm and have always loved animals. In fact, I love animals so much that for quite a while I was seriously considering becoming an equine veterinarian.

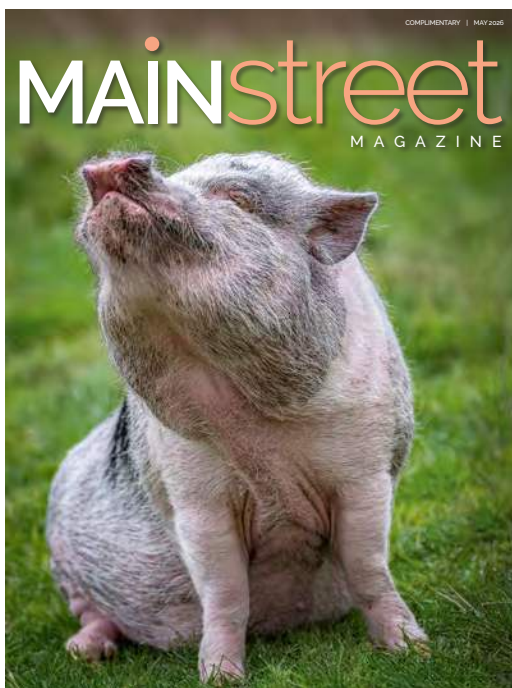
My idea of dedicating an entire issue to our local farms and various animals was in part due to my personal connections to both, but more so it was driven by the fact that I felt both deserved to be singled out and highlighted in their own issue. And for the past 11 years we've had the distinct pleasure of doing just that.

This year, oh my gosh! The stories you're going to find here have blown my socks off and had tears streaming down my face. And may I just take a moment to say that I am so lucky to work with such wonderful writers? Because I feel that my writers are truly sharing their gift and talent not just with me but with all of our readers like you. When I was reading, proofing, and laying out their submissions for this issue, they all just completely blew me away with the purely amazing stories that they crafted for this issue. Truly! I hope as you flip through this issue and read some (or all) of the pieces here, that you too will be as impressed and moved as I was.

I truly wish that I could print triple the number of articles that we have in this issue, because there are so many deserving stories. And in that vein, it was really hard to narrow down the pieces that would go into this issue. But as I put this eleventh "Animals & Farming" issue together, oh my goodness, it came together so beautifully! The stories shared on the following pages are so moving and heartfelt. I send a very special shout-out and gratitude to all of my writers as well as to the subjects of these stories. I am inspired by every single one of them and always learn something new. I hope you too feel that way as you dive in.

I also want to take a moment to thank all of our advertising supporters. Without them, we simply would not be able to produce this publication. So THANK YOU to every single advertiser. And if you're a reader, please support our advertisers by hiring them for a service or buying their products. A rising tide floats all boats, and together we all prosper.

- Thorunn Kristjansdottir



MAY 2026

Please meet Willa. She resides in Millerton, NY, has a restaurant named after her (Willa, the restaurant not the pig, is located at 52 Main Street in Millerton), and her human is Alanna, whom you can meet at the restaurant (the human, not the pig). Willa is such an inspiration that Alanna has dreams of opening a pig sanctuary in Willa's honor. Alanna is currently working on that endeavor having formed a 501(c)(3) non-profit and has dreams of purchasing land in the near future. Willa also has a brother, Milo, who joined their family last year. Oink oink.

Photo by  
Olivia Valentine

## CONTENTS

- |    |   |    |   |
|----|---|----|---|
| 6  | SOMETHING TO CROW ABOUT<br>artist profile                                   | 31 | HEART TO HEART TO HEART<br>after one year, three tries, and countless prayers, cattle farmer phil trowbridge has a new ticker |
| 11 | MAY MUSTS   | 35 | DREAMING BIG FOR 90 YEARS<br>and counting   |
| 13 | CANINE WELLNESS: KRISTEN PANZER<br>business                                 | 39 | SOME OF THE PEOPLE, SOME OF THE TIME<br>at large  |
| 17 | BANANA DATE SMOOTHIE<br>food  | 40 | HOW JULIA FINLEY MOSCA'S<br>story-telling journey brought her from pine plains to hollywood and beyond                        |
| 19 | THE NEW GREEN PASTURES<br>real estate                                       | 45 | CLOVER BROOKE FARM<br>llama yoga, goat walks, weaving classes - a lot of irons in the fire                                    |
| 23 | BRUNO FARMS CUSTOM FEEDS<br>local farms                                     | 49 | ALL ABOUT ANXIETY<br>health   |
| 27 | FARM & BOTTLE<br>is a one-stop shop for locally sourced, farm-fresh goodies |    |   |

**PUBLISHER, EDITOR, WRITER, & DESIGNER:** Thorunn Kristjansdottir

### CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:

Abby Audenino | Barbara Peduzzi | CB Wismar | Christine Bates | Dominique De Vito | Ian Strever | Jesse DeGroot | Jim Calvin | Leora Armstrong | Olivia Valentine & Caroline Markonic | Regina Molaro | Whitney Joseph

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

**ADVERTISING** Ashley Kristjansson, 518 592 1135 or info@mainstreetmag.com

### CONTACT

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

### PRINT, LEGAL, ACCOUNTING, & INSURANCE

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

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

# The Finest in Country Properties

CONNECTICUT • NEW YORK • MASSACHUSETTS

DEEPLY ROOTED • THOUGHTFULLY CONNECTED • CURATING COUNTRY LIVING SINCE 1987



\$6,475,000

EH#5743

## Zen-Inspired Contemporary

9 BEDS • 7/4 BATHS • S/F 12,968 • 119 ACRES

GREAT BARRINGTON, MA • RIVER FRONTAGE & MOUNTAIN VIEWS



\$1,995,000

EH#5715

## Contemporary Lakeville Home

2 BEDS • 2/1 BATHS • S/F 2,318 • 1.28 ACRES

SALISBURY, CT • GUEST APARTMENT & LAKE VIEWS



\$1,050,000

EH#5742

## Charming Vintage Home

4 BEDS • 2/1 BATHS • S/F 1,926 • .21 ACRES

SALISBURY, CT • MOVE-IN READY NEAR LAKEVILLE LAKE



\$459,900

EH#5693

## Peaceful One-Level Living

2 BEDS • 1 BATH • S/F 936 • 2 ACRES

SALISBURY, CT • ABUTTING SALISBURY FOREST LAND



*Your Local Ambassadors to the Tri-State Region*

# Elyse Harney Real Estate

SALISBURY, CT 860.435.2200 • HARNEYRE.COM • MILLERTON, NY 518.789.8800

Elyse Harney Real Estate LLC | Elyse Harney, Principal Broker | Licensed in CT, NY & MA | Principal Office: 11 E. Main St., Salisbury, CT 06068.





# SOMETHING TO GROW ABOUT

## DANIELLE MAILER

By Leora Armstrong  
[info@mainstreetmag.com](mailto:info@mainstreetmag.com)

*I caught up with multidisciplinary artist, sculptor, and teacher Danielle Mailer in her studio near Goshen, marked from the road by exuberant hanging sculptures, easy to spot as you drive by. An explosion of color and energy greets you at the barn door. Inside, every wall is alive with pieces: concepts and works old and new, beckoning the eye to roam. Works in progress silhouette against jars of pigment and a wall of family photos – a reminder that family is the cornerstone here. Mailer is a powerhouse, walking me through decades of work, each series more intricate and complex while continuing to sew a continual thread through the work. A new piece, fresh off the press, leans against the wall. We head upstairs to talk in her second studio, a more gallery-like space for open studios, where finished two-dimensional and sculptural works immerse you in her practice.*

**What prompted you to start painting?**

Creativity wasn't just encouraged in my big family; it was the highest form of currency. My mother was an artist who swept us all under her spell, so those art muscles started early. Making has always been part of me,

something I must do. I feel I have no choice but to create. She studied with Hans Hofmann and was always painting large, abstract work; our home smelled of turpentine and paint, and I'm deeply influenced by my South American roots. My father was a writer and filmmaker, and recognizing my passion, he encouraged my artistic side enormously, taking me to museums, talking about art, and helping me push open those creative doors. I'm at my best when I'm making. I draw constantly on trains, while waiting – always creating.

**You studied art at Bowdoin College, the New York Studio School, and School of Visual Arts. What lessons stayed with you regarding your drawing and painting?**

I wanted to go to RISD, but my writer father insisted I also learn to write. I went to Bowdoin and took a more academic path, one I'm now grateful for. My mentors were deeply encouraging, and I experienced real freedom, painting large, Matisse-like canvases.

At the New York Studio School, the experience was quite different. We were pushed to paint like Cézanne, and I felt flattened by these restrictions. Even studying with George McNeil and Mercedes Matter, I still left discouraged, my desire to paint nearly gone.

So to earn some income, I worked as a waitress and began reinventing myself, heading to the School of Visual Arts to study graphic design and illustration. There, under the legendary Skip Sorvino, I honed my skills, landed commissions and book projects, and built a career as a graphic designer. That's when my patterns arrived on the surface.

**I can see that influence in your work. What drew you to this area and prompted the move from New York City?**

By the early 1980s, I was married to juggler Michael Moschen and we had a young daughter. However, New York felt too harsh, with relentless grind, often stepping over derelicts, it was not easy for raising a child. I suggested we move upstate, and we discovered Cornwall. We lived there for about 10 years. I loved the rural pace, even though I was far from my family, and it gave me room to raise our daughter while keeping a finger on my artistic pulse. It was hard, during that all-consuming family time, to focus fully on my work, but I kept at it every day.

Eventually, I found my way to Goshen with my second husband, Peter McEachern, and we've shared this barn for 30 years. It's home to Litchfield Performing Arts, which runs the Goshen Jazz Festival and Jazz Camp, where Peter is a teaching artist. It's also where I've truly come into my own.

**What motivates your practice today?**

I have no choice; it is simply a constant desire to make and create. I cannot stop; it feeds my soul. When I am away from my studio for too long, I feel an imbalance, so it is not really an option for me. I have continually wanted to make work, and it is also a joy to have the privilege of doing something I love. It is not easy by any stretch, but the challenge is always there. I am always trying to catch the spirit of the work. My practice has now expanded to embrace large-scale and public works. I was also fortunate to receive a retrospective at the Mattituck Museum in 2009, with over 40 works.

**Can you talk about your sculptural practice?**

Eventually my figures stepped out of the paintings and became free-standing silhouettes, and after much experimentation I settled on metal as a substrate. We grew up with a menagerie of animals, my mother often rescued cats and dogs who shared our apartment with us. They were so comforting and embedded into our daily life, cats walking through our easels and paints. So, it felt natural that they started to literally walk through my studio and into my work. Crows often find their way into the work as well. A couple of crows come to our house for treats. They are amazing and highly intelligent birds arriving promptly each day.



"Entangled." 2026. Acrylic on canvas. 4x4 feet.

**I also grew up with crows. We called them rooks, and my father could call one in. How did you balance teaching with your work?**

I'm a morning person. I often arrive at the studio around 6:30am, especially in spring when the light opens up, and work for a couple of hours before teaching, or I stay on and work straight through. That quiet time is essential; it grounds me and sets the tone for the day. Balancing the two was tough when I taught full time, so I'd take work to school and steal time between classes. Now that I'm part time, I can work here daily. The work also spills into our home, onto the furniture and walls.

**I love the way you're completely immersed in your work. What's your approach to teaching, and what advice would you give an artist today?**

I've taught throughout my career, starting at a Montessori school with young children, then at Indian Mountain School with middle schoolers, and now, in my final year, with seniors at Salisbury School, where I've worked for the past 10 years. Each setting has been its own journey, but I truly enjoy working with the boys. With every student, I want to reassure them that their self-expression isn't being judged. I grade on effort where I believe in the energy students put into their work. I want art to feel genuinely joyful, something they can carry throughout their lives, and I want them to feel successful in what they make, encouraging confidence.

As for advice to artists: work with integrity, find the joy and the pleasure, learn to draw and hone your skills as a foundation. Open your eyes to what is around you. Believe in your own voice and run with it.

I also think of my late father, who always said with certainty: "If you thwart a plan to create, you are cheat-



Above: Danielle Mailer in her studio, 2026.

Opposite page: Left: "Bantam Arts Factory Mural Project, 2025" Bantam CT. Installation Commissioned by Litchfield Arts Council. Acrylic on Diebond. 10x32 feet.

Middle: Danielle Mailer in her studio, 2026.

Right: "Dance from Life, 2025" installation commissioned by Nutmeg ballet. 22x5 feet acrylic on die bond (plastic coated aluminum) and hung on the side exterior facade on the Nutmeg Conservatory in Torrington CT.

ing the cosmos." And my mother, echoing her mentor Hans Hofmann, would remind me that it all goes back to the figure. Draw from the model, draw from life, even if you choose an abstract path. If it's a passion, show up. Don't dilute your experience; go in with both feet.

**Yes, to jumping in, so who were your influences, and if you could beg, borrow or steal a piece of work to live with, what would it be?**

There are so many to choose from, but to narrow it down: Miriam Schapiro, William Morris, Frida Kahlo, Gustav Klimt, Henri Matisse, Paul Klee, Remedios Varo, Leonora Carrington (the British-born Mexican surrealist whose dreamlike, mythological worlds feel utterly alive), and also Carl Jung, who wrote and illustrated *The Red Book*, filled with extraordinary drawings. I find quilting fascinating too, all those patterns of found fabrics stitched together into something whole. And El Anatsui's hanging pieces are simply fabulous.

As for a work to live with, it is so hard to choose. If I could have anything, I would take Remedios Varo's *Creación de las Aves (Creation of the Birds)*, 1957, a world unto itself. If that were out of reach, I could happily live with a Klimt.

Continued on next page ...

**I can see those artists through your work. How did you come to work in public art?**

Entering a public art competition for a garage façade gave me my first taste of proposal-making. It took four months and was all-consuming. I didn't get the commission, but it whetted my appetite and taught me the necessary skills. Then I spotted an empty wall on a Staples store in Torrington that seemed to be calling out for art, and I went for it. I approached the building's owners, the mayor, the city planner, and the selectmen, working my way through the permissions process. About six months later, I got the green light, partnering with a sign company to bring the concept to life.

What began as a solo vision became a community project. I raised the funding myself through grants, and it was installed as *Project Fishtails*; a 180-foot-long mural on the side of Staples, facing the Naugatuck River.

More mural work followed, leading to my second-largest piece: a 30-foot vertical installation in Bantam. That project opened the door to sculptural commissions, including a nine-foot dog and a five-foot cat for Our Companions, an animal sanctuary and rehabilitation center in Ashford, CT.

Most recently, I installed a ballerina, *Dancing Muse*, for the Nutmeg Conservatory Ballet. She was so large I could only see her fully by leaning over a balcony from above; scaling up from a small drawing can be formidable. Works at this scale typically take about two years from concept to completion, and it takes a team to build forms, paint and seal them, and install the pieces. Taking a concept from small to larger than life is thrill-

ing. Collaboration is fulfilling, there's something special about working alongside another creative mind. I also worked on a collaborative project with a needlepoint artist through the Washington Art Association, which was a wonderful change of pace.

**You're prolific in both scale and ambition. Is there a project you're most proud of and what is your dream project?**

In my public work, the Bantam mural stands out. It's more figurative, which made it the most challenging and it's among my largest.

My dream project is a museum show. I have this fantasy of creating a full environment with standing cut-outs, disco balls spinning, the whole space alive with movement and color. I'm going after it with enormous energy; it's in conversation now, and I'm actively pitching ideas, with hopes for 2028. I also love the idea of setting a defined task each year, one focused project to pour into. That sense of intention keeps the work moving forward. •

*Seek out Mailer's permanent public works if you haven't already passed them while driving through Connecticut's Northwest Corner, often they tower overhead or greet you at an unexpected turn. Meanwhile, she has more projects up her sleeve, including costumes for Nutmeg Conservatory Ballet Theatre based on a short production titled El Colibrí, with concept sketches due in mid-May.*

*Here are a few upcoming opportunities to see her work in person:*

*May 23–24: Kent Community House Art and Design Exhibit, Kent, CT.*

*July 3–5: Berkshire Arts Festival, Great Barrington, MA.*

*September 19–Oct. 23: Falls Village Library solo show (opening reception September 19), Falls Village, CT.*

*To learn more, find Danielle Mailor on Instagram @daniellemailer, email her at danielle@daniellemailer.com, visit her website at daniellemailer.com, or visit Berta Walker Gallery at bertawalker.com.*



Top: 'Night Bird.' 2024. Acrylic on canvas. 4x5 feet.

Above: 'Fox Tales.' 2024. Acrylic on aluminum. 36x24 inches.

Below, left: 'Fish Tales' on the wall. 'Crow Tales' and 'Flower Power.' Acrylic on die bond on the table.



# BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPES START HERE

Elevate your curb appeal with the perfect finish!

From premium mulch and Nutri-Peat to quality stone and topsoil, we provide the essential natural materials for every residential and commercial landscape.



## Harlem Valley

SAND & GRAVEL Inc.

845-373-8200

138 Kent Road, Wassaic, NY

Open weekdays 7am - 3pm



We have tables outside for dining  
and for your enjoyment!



518-592-1313 • oakhurst-diner.com  
Like us on Facebook and Instagram  
@oakhurstdiner  
Open 8am-8pm Thurs-Mon

PRIVATE CHEF SERVICES, RETREATS AND BUSINESS  
CATERING, CELEBRATION OF LIFE AND INTIMATE  
WEDDING CATERING, HORS D'OEUVRE  
PARTIES, WEEKLY DINNER CLUB



P.O. Box 425, Salisbury CT 06068 | mannacateringco.com



## THE RE INSTITUTE

AN ALTERNATIVE ART GALLERY

1395 Boston Corners Rd.  
Millerton, NY  
518-567-5359  
www.TheReInstitute.com



Open Fri, Sat, Sun, 1 pm to 4 pm

Catering to the needs of the  
well-loved pet since 1993



**Petpourri**  
We love your pets.

SUPER PREMIUM PET FOODS • RAW DIETS • QUALITY TOYS,  
TREATS & ACCESSORIES FOR YOUR DOG & CAT  
— MANY MADE IN USA

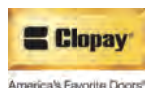
Hours: Monday-Friday 9-5:30, Saturday 9-4  
333 Main Street, Lakeville, CT • Phone: 860-435-8833

## = MADSEN = OVERHEAD DOORS

Fast, friendly service since 1954



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



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

## WHAT CAN WE FRAME FOR YOU?



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

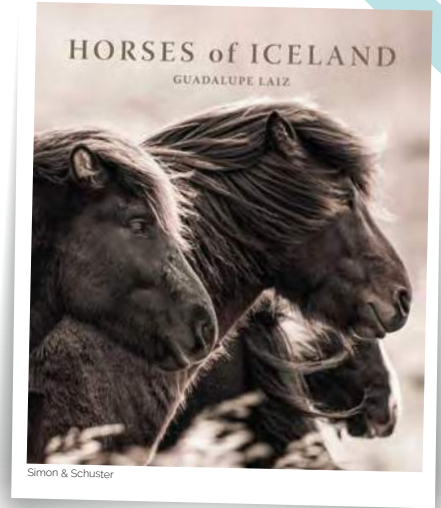
**GILDED MOON  
FRAMING**

# MAY MUSTS

## to eat



**The Lantern Inn.** For those who've discovered The Lantern Inn, or as we like to call it The Wassaic Lantern, you've had an experience. The Lantern is totally unique in its vibe and in its offerings from wood fired pizzas with names such as Heart Throb, Norma Jean, and Dazed & Confused. Their menu also boasts "not pizza" offerings and they too are indeed something to write home about. Their drinks? Delicious! On our last dinner out there I tried a beer from a New York brewery and it's the best beer I've had in a long time. Did I mention that The Lantern is obsessed with all things local? And that they're super family friendly? They offer seating inside at the bar as well as dining room, or (in the warmer months) their outside area is amazing. But it is first-come-first-serve for seating and they can get super busy on certain nights, but their service is fantastic and the food comes out quickly. So if you're looking for not just great food, but an experience, you should check out The Lantern.



## GO WATCH

**Secret of the Bees.** I hope you have a Disney+ or Hulu subscription because I encourage you to watch National Geographic's *Secrets of the Bees*. With more than 20,000 bee species, National Geographic Explorer, Bertie Gregory spent over three years with special cameras, documenting a rare look into a single honeybee hive revealing a hidden world we might not otherwise be aware of. Over the span of two episodes, we get to watch the life of a single honeybee as her family races the clock to prepare for winter. Along the way you'll learn more incredible bee facts, witness the sheer intelligence bees have, details about their unique architecture, and incredible ways to communicate with each other all while looking out for each other in poor weather conditions and potential predators. It's an understatement that bees are among the most important animals to our planet.



## TO READ

**Horses of Iceland by Guadalupe Laiz.** As a native Icelander who's literally grown up in the Icelandic horse business and flipped through just about every book on the horse (in multiple languages), I was super curious when I came across this book by an Argentinian. But once I flipped through the pages and saw Guadalupe's beautiful photos, I realized that she was able to capture the essence of the horse that I love. The book is not only a large-format book but it is tri-lingual (as a lot of Icelandic horse books are). The book's description states, "Guadalupe captures the beauty, strength, and gentleness of the Icelandic horses in a compelling pictorial journey. Guadalupe's sensitive photographs – taken over a period of five years – showcase the inherent nature of the horses in intimate portraits and against Iceland's dramatic landscapes. The magnificent color and black-and-white images present the horses in fine detail, bringing the majestic animals to life."

## To do

**Volunteer, donate, foster and/or adopt.** So here's something a little different for our "to do" this month: consider helping out local animals in need. There are multiple local animal organizations that are always in need of volunteers, donors as well as people willing to foster and/or adopt. AnimalKind of Hudson, NY, recently posted that they are in need of people to foster pregnant moms, kittens of all ages that may need bottle or syringe feeding, moms who were found with kittens, the elderly, cats who simply need a break from shelter life, the behaviorally challenged and "misunderstood," and for hospice cats who need a loving and comfortable last stop. To learn more, directly reach out to AnimalKind. The Columbia-Greene Humane Society, also of Hudson, is always looking for dog walkers and dog socializers/enrichment, as well as cat socializers/enrichment. Likewise they are always looking for help in the kennel and cattery as well as help grooming and in their office. Reach out directly for further info. As for donations, all of our local animal shelters can always use dry and wet food for cats and dogs, treats, blankets and beds, toys, cleaning supplies, monetary support, and more. Consider helping out your local shelter and animals in need this month.



# Sharon Electric, LLC.

[www.sharonelectriccompany.kohlergeneratordealer.com](http://www.sharonelectriccompany.kohlergeneratordealer.com)



GENERATORS  
**KOHLER**  
**GENERAC**

860-435-9683

Call to schedule your generator maintenance before you get left in the dark.

Electrical Contractor | Sales | Service | Installations  
[sharonelectric86@gmail.com](mailto:sharonelectric86@gmail.com) | Salisbury, CT

# NORTH EAST MUFFLER INC.

*Custom Bending up to 3 inches*

Open Mon.–Fri. 8 to 5; Sat. 8 to 1

*John & Cindy Heck*  
Route 22, Millerton, NY  
(518) 789-3669



P 518.272.8881 • E [info@snyderprinter.com](mailto:info@snyderprinter.com) • 691 River Street, Troy, NY



# SNYDER PRINTER

[www.snyderprinter.com](http://www.snyderprinter.com)

# DOWNEY, HAAB & MURPHY, PLLC



Attorneys At Law



[info@millertonlawyer.com](mailto:info@millertonlawyer.com)  
(518) 789-4442 / 3613 • 87 Main Street • Millerton NY 12546



# RONSANI BROTHERS PAVING

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

(518) 429-1797  
[ronsanibrotherspaving.com](http://ronsanibrotherspaving.com)

# COPAKE LAKE REALTY Corp.



*Home is where...*



*...your fur babies are!*

**Community Based. Independently Owned.**

*Representing Buyers and Sellers For Residential, Land, Multi-Family, Commercial, Rentals, and Farms in NY & MA.*



[www.CopakeLakeRealty.com](http://www.CopakeLakeRealty.com)  
290 Birch Hill Road, Craryville, NY | (518) 325-9741  
2602 Route 23, Hillsdale, NY | (518) 325-3921  
Lindsay LeBrecht, Real Estate Broker | Copake Lake Realty Corp.

# Canine Wellness

KRISTEN PANZER OF KP'S GOOD BABY DOG SPA, MILLERTON, NY

By Christine Bates  
info@mainstreetmag.com

Main Street's *business interviews* have included conversations with CEOs of multi-million-dollar global enterprises and owners of sole proprietor businesses run from home, like this month's visit to Kristen Panzer's Millerton dog spa. Here we discovered the latest technology and techniques in caring for our most beloved animal friends.

**You've had many careers and raised four children. Why did you decide to become a dog groomer?**

I left my office job as an executive assistant to an entrepreneur-investor because I wanted to do something hands-on, and creative with personal autonomy. It's the most rewarding thing I have ever done.

I have a master's degree in human development and was a lactation consultant for a number of years. Oddly working with dogs is a similar, very personal, experience. You start with consent, and like babies, you make dogs feel safe.

**How did you become a dog groomer?**

I began by shadowing a dog groomer in Florida for a month or so. I was hooked and learned enough to be really, really scared. Dogs don't like groomers; they're afraid, and they can bite. Then I took an online course in dog bathing, which is how you begin in this industry, and I went to work in a groom shop, but I knew something was missing.

The dogs were scared and resistant. I wanted to make them feel safe and truly offer a spa experience. But the course didn't teach you anything about dogs being anxious or resisting grooming. Fortunately for me, I found a grooming school in Portsmouth, NH, the Whole Pet Grooming Academy, where I learned how to create an environment and experience that honored the dog and made it feel safe. They had a different approach, and I learned how to keep dogs and myself safe and calm. The course required 150 hours of hands-

on, in-person learning plus additional in classroom instruction. It was not about bullying and overpowering dogs so you could get paid and move onto the next dog which is typical of grooming facilities in large pet stores.

I also attended grooming conferences and learned about the Japanese Thera-Clean Microbubble System technology, which was a game-changer for me. This spa technology is based on the concept of water as cleansing and restorative rebirth. It's just arriving in the States now. The machine I own makes billions of bubbles that go down into the skin's pores and follicles and removes dead skin, germs, dirt, allergens, and even ticks. This method also works for de-skunking and other odors. Yesterday I counted 14 nymph ticks that were removed from one dog. The bubbles clean gently without detergent and penetrate biofilm, allowing topical medications to work. The same process can be used on the teeth and gum line as well. All the debris is lifted and floats away. A microbubble soak is one of the spa services I offer.

Dogs enjoy my approach so much that, in most cases, they happily climb up into the water tub for a treatment, which is adjustable for small and large dogs. The other day I had a 120-pound Great Pyrenees here, and he was happy to hop right in.

**Could you describe a typical spa treatment?**

Treatment depends entirely on the dog and its coat, but all dogs like a calm, confident, and quiet approach. I pay careful attention to the dog's responses and adjust the environment, like water temperature and pressure, to their comfort. Nothing is rushed. I shampoo them, microbubble them, and condition their coats. Most appointments begin with a bubble shampoo where the water temperature and pressure are gradually increased – usually I play music. Nothing is rushed.

Next is the drying process. I start with warm towels and allow the dog



Kristen Panzer with two Westies, West Highland Terriers, in her home-based dog spa in Millerton. Photo courtesy of Kristen Panzer.

to get accustomed to the noise of my high-velocity dryer while it warms up. When we are ready to go, dogs get ear protection and so do I. I also wear an N95 mask because dander and hair fly all over.

Dogs understand body language, so it's important to move slowly and predictably. Done effectively, the high-velocity dryer can almost eliminate the need for brushing, which is great because dogs tend to hate being brushed. Except when I do it! We finish with a pain free, gentle brush out and coat polish – nails, ears, and teeth brushing included.

In the case of harsh-coated or wire-coated dogs where the hair follicles are deep, the hair must be removed by a process called hand stripping before the bath. I use chalk powder to help grip the hairs and then I pluck away. Dogs really enjoy it and lean right in. It can take an hour or an hour and a half to hand strip a dog like an Airedale before giving it a bath. After the bath, dogs may need a trim or a full haircut, and I also clip the nails.

**How much does treatment cost?**

Before the first appointment a dog and pet parent comes here for a free "Meet and Treat." The clients, dog

Continued on next page ..

and owner, have a chance to talk to me and look around and see if they feel comfortable. All the prices are on my website [kpsgoodbabydogspa.com](http://kpsgoodbabydogspa.com). We start at \$80 for a bath, pain free brush-out, coat polish, nails, ears, and teeth brushing included. A full clip would add another \$40 for a small dog. About 50 percent of dogs stay for a haircut and trim after a bath treatment.

**How often should a dog visit your spa?**

I recommend every four to six weeks to maintain a healthy coat. Once a coat gets matted you have to get under the matting to cut it off, which is very unpleasant.

**What is your investment in this business?**

The equipment itself cost around \$15,000. I spent another small fortune on my education. The cost of running the business from equipment maintenance to utilities, insurance, supplies, continuing education, cleaning help, etc. is far more significant. I'm also limited in the number of appointments I can handle. Four in a day is ideal.

**Is dog grooming regulated?**

There are no state or federal regulations or requirements as far as I know. The Village of Millerton allows home-based businesses with up to one employee. I'm fully registered as a business, carry liability insurance, pay income taxes, and continue to hone

my skills. Although it's not required, I am constantly learning more about groom shop safety and skin and coat care.

**What's the best part of your business?**

Bonding with dogs and building trust with their owner makes me feel joyful. It's an honor and huge responsibility to care for someone's most precious creature.

**Greatest challenge?**

The clean-up! Grooming is exhausting, and at the end of a busy day, clean-up is such a chore, but it is essential. Some people have a difficult time understanding why our services are more expensive than at Pets.com where groomers are paid a minimal wage. There's never a line here, and dogs are never put in cages. Our grooming is about wellness, and we take our time. Our comfortable home environment is part of the experience.

**How do you find customers?**

It's pretty much word of mouth. Customers come from all over. I always have postcards with me and hand them out. I take cookies to vets and pet shops to let them know where to find me. Somehow, it's worked.

**Are certain breeds easier to work with?**

I have absolutely no breed prejudice. My own dog Poppy is a rescue Chihuahua terrier mix from Mississippi. But some dogs do require more atten-



Above: Three dachshund brothers at the KP Good Baby Dog Spa. Photo courtesy of Kristen Panzer. Below: Dogs and clients enjoy a comfortable, home atmosphere at Kristen Panzer's dog spa in Millerton. Photo by Christine Bates.

tion to their coat than others, and it's very important to understand the basic coat types. Groomers should never shear a dog in an inappropriate way. Double-coated dogs, like a golden retriever for example, should never be shaved down, as that ruins their coat forever. For example, you mentioned a La Gotta Romagnolo, which is a very ancient Italian breed with a rustic coat. That requires a special approach. They get their haircut before the bath and then are allowed to air dry. You're not even supposed to towel dry their coats! There are over 200 recognized breeds, each with an official breed standard haircut.

**Is Millerton a good place for your business?**

Being in the village is wonderful. Clients can drop off their dog, have coffee at Irving Farm, shop at FEED, or look at antiques. There's so much to do here. And for me it's great to get away from the house, walk over to Willa, and meet friends after

work. Like almost every business in the village, January and February are very slow months and weekends and holidays are the busiest.

**Do you educate your clients?**

Yes, I really enjoy that, and it may be a way to expand my business. I view myself as a partner in the care of their dog. My focus is on skin and coat care and the bond we share with our pets.

**What have you learned in this career change?**

I've learned how to eliminate distractions, overcome anxiety, quiet myself, and be in the moment both through my work with dogs and through meditation. In the beginning I was a little embarrassed about what people were going to think, but I've found courage and peace and give honor to myself. I love what I do. I am very grateful. •

*To learn more and to contact Kristen, visit her website, [kpsgoodbabydogspa.com](http://kpsgoodbabydogspa.com).*





# A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR SHARON HOSPITAL

RAISE  
HEALTH

Northwell is committed to strengthening the vital care your community relies on.

This includes providing high-quality services, like labor & delivery—so families can continue to welcome their newest members with confidence. It's all part of our commitment to bringing a new chapter of care to Connecticut. To Litchfield County. To you.

Learn more at [Northwell.edu/Sharon](https://Northwell.edu/Sharon)





**LAKEVILLE  
BOOKS  
& STATIONERY**



**GREAT BARRINGTON  
LOCATION NOW  
OPEN!**

Lakeville Books & Stationery offers a huge selection of books in all categories as well as beautiful stationery, journals, pens, jigsaw puzzles, and creative supplies.

329 Main St, Lakeville, CT | (860) 596-4500  
63 State Rd, Great Barrington MA | (413) 645-3256  
lakevillebooks.com

**MONTAGE  
ANTIQUES**  
The Montage Brocante



**Saturday May 9<sup>th</sup> 9-5 & Sunday May 10<sup>th</sup> 12-5**  
At the Montage Annex,  
15 Academy Street, Salisbury, CT

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

**DREAM DESIGN BUILD**



**PALLONE KARCHESKI**

www.pkbuilding.com



In the 1767  
Dutch House  
Claverack, NY

**Peggy Lampman**  
REAL ESTATE

**518-851-2277**  
www.peggylampman.com



**CHARMING STONE COTTAGE IN THE COUNTRY**

Delightful three-bedroom country home in a quiet setting, but a quick drive to Hudson. Expansive living room has vaulted ceiling and wonderful light on three sides and shares views of the Catskills and dramatic sunsets with primary suite, kitchen, and porch. Second floor has finished open space with studio potential. On an acre with natural landscaping, flowering shrubs, and stone walls... \$595,000

# Banana

## DATE SMOOTHIE

By Olivia Valentine with  
Caroline Markonic  
info@mainstreetmag.com

I can honestly say that this smoothie is my absolute favorite smoothie to date, pun intended. It makes me so happy when I drink it, and with each sip I say, “Wow, this is soooooo delicious!” It’s like a vanilla milkshake but minus the ice cream. It is my go-to breakfast when I’m rushing in the morning. Heck, I have been known to drink this for lunch and on rare occasions even dinner. It is also a cure for my sweet tooth when my cravings hit. It just satisfies me on so many levels. I really am seriously in LOVE with this drink!

### The stars of the show

The star of this smoothie is the Medjool dates. They are soft and sweet, with a rich caramel flavor. They are often referred to as “nature’s candy.” They are a good source of fiber, potassium, and natural energy.

The other two stars of this smoothie are the bananas and peanut butter. Both are rich in potassium, magnesium, and fiber. However, I’m no dietician, so do your own research for nutrition facts!

Of course to elevate this even further, a scoop of vanilla protein powder is a must! It’s a nutritional boost to an already nutrient-rich smoothie. It also gives it a more milkshake-like consistency.

After last month’s Ruby fun fact, I feel like I should add another, one where I’m not thoroughly ticked off at her! Remember, last month she ate a huge chunk of the Daffodil cake right before I was about to photograph it?

Ruby can be completely out cold, like snoring asleep and totally gone on the living room couch, but the second I start peeling a banana she just appears in the kitchen – no hesitation, no waking up slowly, just rounding the corner at warp speed. She’s at my feet within seconds, waiting for that piece of perfectly ripened banana. And honestly, she knows what’s coming next. The banana isn’t even the main event, it’s just the appetizer to the heaping spoonful of peanut butter she’s about to gobble down.

I guess this smoothie is also dog-recommended!

### Ingredients

Makes two 16-ounce smoothies

- 2 pitted Medjool dates
- 1 ½ frozen bananas\*
- 2 cups milk of choice
- 2 tbs peanut butter or nut butter of your choice
- 1 tsp vanilla
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- 2 handfuls of ice cubes
- 1 extra large scoop vanilla protein powder



\*Please use very ripe bananas. If you use non-ripened bananas, the smoothie will not be as delicious as I have made it out to be. Trust me!

### Instructions

Place all ingredients in the blender and blend until smooth.

As always, enjoy!•

*Olivia and Caroline are enthusiastic foodies and bakers who are constantly in the kitchen, as well as explorers who create their own adventures in our area – and did we mention they are mother and daughter? Follow Olivia on Instagram to see her many creations at @oliviawvalentine.*

Stop in and check out the new Scag mowers and Milwaukee hand tools!



**Sales – Service – Parts**

Sales: Rich Crane | richie@cranesope.com  
 Service: Todd MacNeil | todd@cranesope.com

337 Ashley Falls Rd (Route 7), Canaan CT 06018  
 860-824-7276 | Fax 860-824-7759 | WWW.CRANESOPE.COM



**Show of paws if you like to save money...**  
 Get the biggest bang for your buck & advertise with us for as low as \$51 a month!



**MAIN street**  
 MAGAZINE

518-592-1135  
 info@mainstreetmag.com

**QUATTRO'S POULTRY FARM & MARKET**

**FRESH FROM OUR FARM**  
 Chickens, Pheasants, Ducks, Geese, Turkeys & Venison

**Celebrate MOM with something delicious for the grill!**  
 FILET MIGNON • Chops • Ribs • Fresh Ground Beef • Fresh Sausages  
 Our own Smokehouse Specialty Meats & Sausages  
**QUATTRO'S ICE CREAM BAR IS NOW OPEN!**



Wide variety of CRAFT BEER!  
 ITALIAN SPECIALTIES: Cheeses, Pastas, Olive Oil, Vinegars  
 Also LOCAL Breads, Vegetables, Honey, Jams, Grains & more!

**VISIT OUR FARM STORE**  
 RT. 44 PLEASANT VALLEY NY 12569  
 (845) 635-2018 • quattrosfarm.com  
 Instagram: @quattrosfarm



Above the rest • Fine detail work guaranteed • Lawn Mowing • Garden Maintenance  
 Mulching & Topsoil • Gutter Cleaning • Power Washing • Planting & Pruning  
 Spring & Fall Cleanups • Organic Vegetable Gardens • Deer Protection  
 Over 32 years experience • Serving Columbia County & beyond



**Mountain Valley Gardening**

**FREE ESTIMATES. CALL (518) 965-9982**



**WOODLUXE®**

**The Ultimate Protection for Outdoor Beauty**

This premium-quality all-weather exterior stain helps protect and beautify siding, decks, porches, fences, and furniture. Years of technological innovation and research have yielded an exterior stain that seals wood with luxurious results.

Visit us to learn more.



**Benjamin Moore®**

**HERRINGTON'S®**  
 LUMBER • MILLWORK • BUILDING SUPPLIES

We share your passion®

Hillsdale, NY: 518.325.3131 • Lakeville, CT: 860.435.2561 • Millerton, NY: 518.789.3611  
 Hudson, NY: 518.828.9431 • Chatham, NY: 518.392.9201 • Sheffield, MA: 413.229.8777

herringtons.com • 800.453.1311 • OUR PEOPLE MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

©2025 Benjamin Moore & Co. Benjamin Moore, the triangle "M" symbol, and Woodlux are registered trademarks licensed to Benjamin Moore & Co. All other marks are the property of their respective owner. 8/25

The Little Guild's  
**GREAT COUNTRY MUTT SHOW**

**SUNDAY, JUNE 7**  
 11:00 am – 2:30 pm  
 Lime Rock Park in Lakeville, CT

**ALL DOGS WELCOME!**

**FREE ADMISSION • RAIN OR SHINE**  
**FOOD TRUCKS!**

BEN & JERRY'S, BURNING PEEL PIZZA,  
 COFFEEOLOGY, GREENHOUSE TAVERN,  
 HIGH FIVE PIES, TACO N MADRE & MORE!



**CELEBRITY HOSTS**  
 Scot Haney,  
 Richard Schlesinger,  
 & Bill Berloni

**PLUS LIVE MUSIC BY THE JOINT CHIEFS!**

**Learn more at [www.littleguild.org](http://www.littleguild.org)!**

# Agricultural real estate in America and the Tri-State countryside

# The new Green Pastures

By Christine Bates  
info@mainstreetmag.com

Across the United States, agricultural land values have climbed to record highs, driven by forces that have little to do with corn prices, milk yields, or farming. And in the rural fields of Dutchess and Columbia Counties in New York, the Litchfield Hills in Connecticut, and the Berkshires in Massachusetts, the change is even greater.

## Farm prices are increasing nationally

Ten years ago, a farm was a way of life for the family that owned the land. Today, it is also an asset class. According to the United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service, the combined value of all land and buildings on farms averaged \$4,350 per acre in 2025, up 4.3% from 2024. This follows a 5% increase the year before, marking the fifth consecutive year of gains. To put that in perspective, in 2016, the national average stood at approximately \$3,010 per acre – a gain of roughly 45% over nine years.

The last decade can be divided into two periods. From 2014 through 2020, values were relatively flat as the market was catching up after the commodity boom years of 2011–2013. Then came 2021 when commodity prices surged while COVID and remote work untethered buyers from office jobs in cities. Low interest rates made borrowing cheap. Suddenly, farmland, once the quiet cornerstone of the rural economy, became an investment, and dot.com millionaires and creatives moved to the country. Cropland values climbed fastest, reaching \$5,830 per acre nationally in 2025, while pastureland values rose to \$1,920 per acre.

The gains, however, are far from uniform. Farm real estate in the corn belt of Iowa, Illinois, and Indiana has remained among the nation's most productive and commands values nearly twice the national average.

Iowa cropland, for instance, has

long traded above \$10,000 per acre in its most fertile counties. Mountain and Pacific states show dramatic extremes. Arid rangelands pull the averages down, but California's vineyards and irrigated specialty crop land push prices to extraordinary heights; Pacific region cropland reached \$9,830 per acre in 2025. Federal disaster assistance and ad-hoc subsidy programs have also provided a price floor in agricultural states, sustaining values even as commodity prices softened in 2024 and 2025.

The Northeast has been the most surprising, specifically New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts, where farm real estate now commands some of the highest per-acre prices in the nation. The USDA reported that state-wide, Massachusetts recorded the highest average farm real estate values in the country in 2025, at \$14,900 per acre. Connecticut came in close behind at \$14,400 per acre. These are not Midwestern row-crop counties. These are small states where the definition of a "farm" increasingly includes horse barns, hay fields, or a heritage-breed livestock operation with a renovated farmhouse and a swimming pool. The forces driving national farmland prices upward include strong interest by institutional investors, including Warren Buffet, who notice that farmland has outperformed the S&P 500 over the long term on a risk-adjusted basis. In 2020, a new type of buyer, the urban immigrant, arrived on the scene seeking a pastoral life within two hours of a major city.

## In the Oblong Valley and the Litchfield Hills, farms are becoming estates

Drive north from New York City along Route 22 in New York or Route 7 in Connecticut beyond the creeping exurban sprawl where farms offer pumpkin picking in October, fields are dotted with hay bales, and cows graze. The corridor of Dutchess



High Meadow in Copake offers 61.54 agricultural acres with panoramic views overlooking protected farmland for \$1,495,000 or \$24,293 an acre. Photo by Brian Wilcox courtesy of John Panzer of Elyse Harney Real Estate.

and Columbia counties, Litchfield County, and Berkshire County, is still a patchwork of historic farmland that is two hours north of New York City and has become one of the most competitive rural land markets in the United States. As recently as 2010, much of this land traded quietly among farmers, conservationists, and weekend-home buyers. But the pandemic transformed what had been a steady creep of New York City weekenders into a full-scale land rush.

## Dutchess County

Dutchess and Columbia Counties are the western border of this corridor for buyers driving north on the Taconic or traveling on the Metro-North train line to Wassaic. In 2016, a working 100-acre farm in Dutchess County might have traded for \$800,000 to \$1.2 million, perhaps \$8,000 to \$12,000 per acre. Today, the median price per acre for rural land listings in Dutchess County hovers around \$17,000 to \$20,000 per acre, with prime open parcels with views routinely asking and achieving \$25,000 to \$35,000 per acre or more.

Despite these high average results, prices and activity can vary enormously, year to year, and town to town. There is no average farm in size

or price. An example is the Town of Washington, aka Millbrook, where over 2,000 acres of land classified as agricultural has been sold since 2018. Price per acre has varied from \$35,312 in 2018 to \$10,980 in 2024 with an eight-year average of \$21,347.

In the Town of Amenia, farmland reached a high in 2022 of \$30,884 an acre with an average of \$17,436 for the period. "We need to refocus on our land," according to Mark Doyle of Amenia, "particularly because of the threat of subdivision and development on the Culver/Keane Stud land that is so famously part of the identity of Amenia,"

Listing prices for farm properties on the market keep rising. For example, 228 acres of vacant agricultural land on Skunks Misery Road in the Town of North East is asking \$15,721 an acre, higher than the town's \$13,097 average over the last seven years.

Buyers in Dutchess County are not primarily farmers. They are entrepreneurs who may want to grow heirloom vegetables, keep horses, or build private estates. They are investors who see land as inflation protection. And increasingly, they are buyers from

Continued on next page ...

**AGRICULTURAL REAL ESTATE IN NORTH EAST DUTCHESS AND ANCRAM, NY**

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	8 year \$ per acre
<b>AMENIA</b>									
# of transactions	2	0	1	0	3	2	4	5	
Average price per acre	\$9,197		\$11,520		\$30,884	\$13,282	\$12,831	\$27,824	<b>\$17,436</b>
Annual acreage	524.61		321.17		458.39	312.45	264.48	207.55	
<b>ANCRAM</b>									
# of transactions	0	3	4	2	5	0	5	0	
Average price per acre		\$5,505	\$9,404	\$60,976	\$9,570		\$29,596		<b>\$11,637</b>
Annual acreage		275.36	313.65	9.84	365.74		142.52		
<b>NORTH EAST</b>									
# of transactions	1	1	0	4	4	0	3	0	
Average price per acre	\$9,000	\$10,185		\$9,180	\$11,344		\$24,703		<b>\$13,096</b>
Annual acreage	276.06			423.52	297.93		140.67		
<b>PINE PLAINS</b>									
# of transactions	1	3	2	6	0	2	0	2	
Average price per acre	\$9,283	\$16,001	\$11,605	\$13,736		\$10,848		\$20,346	<b>\$10,267</b>
Annual acreage	339.94	177.96	196.04	252.47		76.314		105.67	
<b>WASHINGTON</b>									
# of transactions	2	2	3	2	2	1	4	0	
Average price per acre	\$35,312	\$15,606	\$13,467	\$33,226	\$31,365	\$63,107	\$10,980		<b>\$21,347</b>
Annual acreage	162.27	140.14	650.43	83.97	444.88	20.6	568.77		

Data from New York State Sales Web record of sales of properties categorized as agricultural at time of sale.

neighboring Westchester and Putnam counties, priced out of those already-expensive markets and moving north.

**Columbia County**

North of Dutchess County, Columbia County has undergone one of the Hudson Valley’s most dramatic reinventions. The city of Hudson, which was a depressed river town as recently as the 1990s, is now lined with design shops, farm-to-table restaurants, and art galleries, and its allure has pushed rural land prices across the county to new levels.

In 2016, large farm parcels in Columbia County with a 200-acre mix of open land, woods, and an old farmstead in a town like Ancram, Gallatin, or Hillsdale could be had for \$5,000 to \$8,000 per acre. Today, similar properties are trading at \$10,000 to \$18,000 per acre, and exceptional parcels with long views are well beyond that. One of the highest-priced properties in the four-county area is 2,150-acre Mill Farm in Ancramdale, currently listed for \$80,000,000 or \$37,192 an acre, which includes historic homes, cottages, and barn structures. (See *Main Street’s* November 2025 article.)

The county’s southern tier, bordering Dutchess, draws buyers from New York City, and its eastern fringe pulls buyers from Boston, Berkshire County, and the Litchfield Hills.

Conservation easements, which restrict development in exchange for tax benefits and appeal to conservation-minded buyers, have played an outsized role in Columbia County, especially in Ancram and Gallatin. The Columbia Land Conservancy has protected thousands of agricultural acres from development. Preserving farmland has driven higher prices for unprotected land like Mill Farm as the supply of developable or unrestricted farmland shrinks further with every easement. These conservation easements make farming possible according to Doyle. “There are different points of view for sure, but the key is that the productive resource is being preserved, and at the point that there is sufficient demand for the productive use of that land, farmers will most likely be able to lease it.”

**Litchfield County**

Litchfield County is Connecticut’s largest county by area and the least densely populated. It’s a rural landscape of rolling hills, horse farms, and historic hamlets, which has attracted wealthy second-home buyers for decades. The pandemic accelerated what was already a strong trend.

The USDA reported that Connecticut farm real estate values averaged \$14,400 per acre statewide in 2025, among the highest in the nation. Within Litchfield County, the median price per acre for rural land listings runs around \$26,000 to \$40,000 for farmland specifically.

Between 2017 and 2022 alone, the USDA found that the average estimated market value of Litchfield County farm land and buildings rose 28%. Since 2022, further appreciation has continued. A 118-acre parcel in Salisbury with a four-acre pond and long ridgeline views recently listed at over \$2 million. In the towns of Sharon, Salisbury, Kent, Cornwall, and Washington in the heart of the Litchfield Hills, this is not unusual, while land prices in more remote towns like Norfolk and Colebrook are much lower.

“I was fortunate to purchase my land before the crazy COVID inflation hit,” said Kelley Babbin, a third-generation farmer and owner and operator of Howling Flats Farm in North Canaan, CT, speaking to *The Lakeville Journal*. “These prices make

it unattainable to purchase additional pasture or hay ground.”

Farming itself is under severe pressure as a consequence. “Connecticut is a densely populated state, and farmland is in high demand from both farmers and non-farmers,” the state’s Department of Agriculture has noted. Farmers who want to grow their operations find themselves competing against buyers for whom land is a lifestyle purchase, not a production input.

**Berkshire County**

The westernmost county in Massachusetts, Berkshire County is simultaneously one of New England’s great cultural destinations (summer theater, Mass MoCA, the Clark Art Institute) and a working rural landscape of hayfields, small dairy operations, and forests. In 2016, farmland here could be found for \$6,000 to \$10,000 per acre in most towns, with exceptional scenic parcels reaching higher. Today, the price of farm-specific property in Berkshire County averages closer to \$15,000 to \$25,000 per acre, one of the highest prices in the country for working agricultural properties according to the USDA.

The county’s tourism economy, which draws hundreds of thousands of visitors for summer music, dance, and theater, has directly inflated land prices. Buyers purchasing a farm with a restored barn and a meadow are not merely buying farmland; they are

buying proximity to Tanglewood, to hiking trails, and to the sophisticated small-town life of Lenox or Stockbridge.

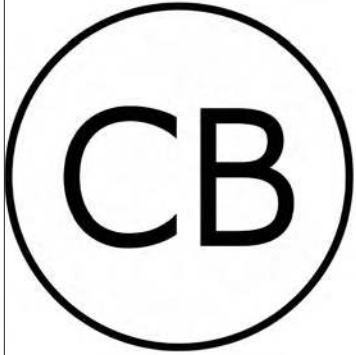
**What comes next**

Taken together, these four counties represent a microcosm of broader forces transforming American farm real estate. Nationally, analysts project modest continued growth of under 3% in 2026 as interest rates remain elevated and commodity prices soften.

In the Northeast corridor, supply constraints and persistent urban migration pressure suggest that prices will remain firm, even if the extraordinary acceleration of 2021–2023 is behind us.

For the working farmer, the picture is uncertain. The land they steward has never been worth more. But for the next generation hoping to buy in, the arithmetic is brutal – \$20,000 per acre means a 100-acre farm costs \$2 million before a tractor is purchased, a barn roof is replaced, or a seed planted. The question that will define farm real estate in this corner of the country over the next decade is not whether the land will be valuable, but who will be allowed to call it home. ●

*Christine Bates is a registered real-estate agent in New York and Connecticut with William Pitt Sotheby’s. She has written about real estate and business since Main Street Magazine’s first issue in 2013.*



## Design/Build

Custom Homes  
Passive House  
Remodels

cbdesignbuild.us

518.755.0329



Berkshire  
Columbia  
Dutchess  
Litchfield

# HERE for our farmers

business assistance | flexible loans | resources

### Who is Berkshire Agricultural Ventures?

We're a community nonprofit helping farmers grow and thrive. Together, we're supporting a stronger, more resilient food system.

[berkshireagventures.org](http://berkshireagventures.org)

# Stop ignoring your vehicle and the environment!

Your check engine light or exhaust leak could be harming your vehicle and polluting the Earth more than you realize. Let us help you!



**Factory Lane Auto Repair**

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

WARREN, CT



**\$5,495,000**

Rare Lake Waramaug Direct Waterfront Double Lot. 5 Bedrooms. 3 Fireplaces. Gazebo. Pergola. Terrace. Deepwater Dock. Unobstructed Views. 2.02± Acres. **Peter Klemm. 860.868.7313.**

SHARON, CT



**\$2,495,000**

72.48± Acres. Hilltop Estate Site. Panoramic Catskill Views. Abuts Protected Land. No Easements. Quiet & Private. Minutes to Village. **Graham Klemm. 860.868.7313.**

LITCHFIELD, CT



**\$895,000**

Restored & Updated Farmhouse. 4 Bedrooms. 2.5 Baths. 3 Fireplaces. Vintage Details. Studio/Workshop. 2-Bay Garage. Barn. Paddock. 9.1± Acres. **Maria Taylor. 860.868.7313. Claudine McHugh. 203.263.4040.**

TORRINGTON, CT



**\$439,900**

Single-level Living. 3 Bedrooms. 2 Baths. Fireplace. Open Floor Plan. Private Deck. 2-car Attached Garage. Expansion Possibilities! 0.46± Acres. **Sindy Butkus. 203.263.4040.**

**KLEMM REAL ESTATE** Inc  
LITCHFIELD COUNTY'S PREMIER BROKERS

#1 Boutique Firm in Connecticut

Lakeville/Salisbury 860.435.6789 > Litchfield 860.567.5060 > New Preston 860.868.0505 > Roxbury 860.354.3263 > Sharon 860.364.5993 > Washington Depot 860.868.7313 > Woodbury 203.263.4040

Source: SmartMLS, CC & DCMLS, MHMLS and Klemm Private Sales 1/1/93 - 12/31/25



[klemmrealestate.com](http://klemmrealestate.com)





Dream Analysis • Psychotherapy  
Couples Work

## RICHARD JOHN MACK, LCSW

Private Practice - Zoom appointments available.

646-284-5962 • Sharon, CT  
richardjohnmack@gmail.com

# The Motorworks

Foreign, Domestic & Vintage Service  
NY State Inspection Station

**518-789-7800**

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



## Hylton Hundt salon

HAIR STYLING & COLOR  
COLOR CORRECTING SERVICE  
CUSTOM COLOR  
BRAZILIAN BLOWDRY  
EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTOR OF  
AVEDA HAIR PRODUCTS

We are also still carrying these favorite hair & skincare products



WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU!  
To book an appointment give us a call or email us at  
(518) 789-9390 • hyltonhundtsalon@gmail.com

real people...  
real style

**We don't horse around when it comes to competitive & affordable ad rates...**

Get the biggest bang for your buck & advertise with us for as low as \$51 a month!

**MAIN street**  
MAGAZINE

518-592-1135  
info@mainstreetmag.com



## LET'S GET STARTED ON THOSE SPRING PROJECTS!



Now is the perfect time to plan all of your spring projects.  
Give us a call to get a quote!

- Lawn & Landscape Installations • Patios & Walkways • Land Clearing
- Invasive Plant Management • Excavation Services • & More!



(860) 824-1188 • office@mattslandscapingct.com • mattslandscapingct.com



Sales, Service, and Performance Since 1984

### SALES

40 Car Showroom  
.....  
Buy/Sell  
.....  
Consignments  
.....  
Insurance Available  
.....  
Financing Available

### SERVICE & PERFORMANCE

Factory-Level Services for  
Specialty Vehicles  
European & Exotics  
Performance Tuning  
.....  
Porsche Club of America Tech Center

### STORAGE

Climate-Controlled Storage for  
Antique Cars,  
Classic Cars,  
Sports Cars,  
Race Cars,  
and Exotics

lomotionauto.com | 845.471.5705  
224 Overocker Road (Rte. 44), Poughkeepsie, NY

55 mins from NYC | 40 mins from Lime Rock Park  
10 mins from Poughkeepsie Train Station and Taconic State Parkway



# BRUNO FARMS CUSTOM FEEDS

Upon my first visit to the Bruno Farms Custom Feeds operation in Ghent, NY, it didn't take long for the realization to dawn that this was a science project gone full bloom. As it turns out, creating solid nutritional support for animals is also a bit of an art.

By Jesse DeGroot  
[info@mainstreetmag.com](mailto:info@mainstreetmag.com)

## In the beginning...

From 1960 to “the night we sold our cows in November 1994,” said Lois Bruno, she and her husband, Vince, operated an 85-head dairy farm, initially in East Chatham prior to moving to Ghent in 1966. Once the cows were out of the picture, however, the couple “really had no idea what to do next.”

But there was a bridge to the Brunos' future growing right outside the front door in their fields. “For the previous ten years we had grown a lot of high-moisture corn for the cows, and we would sell what we grew beyond what we needed for our own use to Blue Seal as a cash crop,” said Steve, Lois and Vincent's son. “When the cows went, we said let's see if we can sell corn directly to consumers instead of selling to a manufacturer. We can grind corn and sell it directly to other farms, which became, ‘Can you make this?’ or ‘Can you make that?’”

## Time out. High-moisture corn?

Explained Steve, “If I store corn now it has to be below fifteen percent moisture, or it'll split. But if you put wet corn in wetter in a sealed environment, you get anaerobic fermentation, making basically chunky-style bour-

bon. What you're left with is of higher protein and better flavor.”

“What we found when we very first started,” said Lois, “was we grew a lot of corn for the cows. And then we found out, okay, Vince went out to plant corn and somebody called for feed, but you couldn't do two things at one time. One or the other had to go and the grain business was picking up, so as it picked up, the planting went down.”

## The conundrum: grow or buy?

At one time, the Brunos grew 500-600 acres of corn, and “in essence it would take the entire month of May” to get it planted, Steve added. “That doesn't leave you time to make feed and deliver feed, too. We had to make a decision. If what you're making money with is grinding and delivering feed, you can't tell them, wait 'til next month. The other reality was, weather is fickle, and you can do everything right and plant all the corn, but if it's can be too wet or too dry, the yield stinks. Many years it was cheaper to buy corn than to grow it.”

Another advantage to purchasing the corn, he noted, is that you can call a supplier and place an order, knowing exactly what it is going to cost. “I can spend all the money on planting crops, but you don't really know what it's going to cost you for the corn until you see what you actually get as a yield at the end of the year. Everything's a crapshoot. This year, for instance, we're watching the price of fertilizer go through the roof.”

## Be the best at what you do

Let's pause for a word on the patriarch of this operation, Vincent Bruno, poached from his obituary following his January 10, 2021 death: “Vincent lived his life with the motto ‘if you are going to do something – be the best at it.’ His dairy farm was perennially ranked one of the top in the state, and at one point his cows produced the third-highest herd average in the nation. The farm was converted to Bruno Farms Custom Feeds in 1995; his son Stephen and grandchildren worked by his side. Vincent always greeted friends and customers alike with quick wit, a hearty laugh, and a twinkle in his eye. Vincent was blessed to wake up every day to work at something he loved.”

## What they produce and sell

Steve emphasized that these days, Bruno Farms Custom Feeds “only grows corn. What we manufacture is pretty much a full line of standard agricultural feeds.” That would include whole or cracked corn, corn meal, whole oats, whole soybean meal, calf feeds, beef feeds, layer mash, broiler mash, chick starter, turkey feed, scratch feed, and more. What they do not manufacture is pet feed.

Over the course of time, said Steve, the list has “changed and developed. You make some products that sell really well for a while and then go out of

Continued on next page ...

Left: Bruno Farms Custom Feed is located just north of Hudson, NY and makes nutritionally-rich feed.

Right: Lois and Steve Bruno.

favor. Markets change, things change, then you get to the point where you don't sell enough to warrant making it."

Bruno Farms Custom Feeds delivers much of what it makes, but "we also deliver custom mixes," said Lois. In fact, Steve added, "anything we deliver bulk is made to order, a custom blend. We don't have any complete feeds sitting around."

When the COVID-19 pandemic insinuated its way into our lives in March 2020, and "everybody thought they couldn't go to the grocery store," Lois said, "everybody figured they better have a chicken. Then we sold more layer mash than anything." But even now, Bruno Custom Feeds continues to sell "around eight tons of layer mash in a week."

**A cow isn't a pig; a pig isn't a chicken; a chicken isn't a horse.**

"To do this job, you have to be knowledgeable in everything," said Steve, a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America. "I don't have a degree in nutrition, but I had to take a bunch of nutrition classes. You have to be constantly aware of it – I get people all the time asking for 'one feed that'll feed everything.' But a cow isn't a pig, a pig isn't a chicken, and a chicken isn't a horse. They don't eat the same. They don't have the same dietary needs. You've got a bird; a horse, which is a genetic anomaly because their gut is too small for the size of the animal, so they need loads of fiber; you've got a pig, which is an entirely different thing; and then you

have a cow or a sheep, which has four stomachs. How do you think you can give one feed to four animals?"

**You are what you eat**

"You are what you eat, and that's just as true for the animal," Steve said. "An example. Every single year, people buy piglets, and they think, 'I'm just going to feed it table scraps and garbage, leftover cake, extras from my garden,' and they go to the butcher. Because there wasn't a lot of protein, there's not a lot of meat but there's a lot of fat. Every year, I get customers coming and saying they raised a pig last year, but it was really pretty lousy and if they're going to do it again, they plan to come buy from me this time."

"You have to be aware there are some significant incompatibilities, as in, with horses you put extra copper in their diets, but copper is extremely bad for sheep, so you can't make sheep feed after you make horse feed and instead make a couple batches of something else before making sheep feed. There are some medicated feeds we make that contain an ingredient that is extremely toxic to horses. Again, if I make any of these, I have to make several batches of something else first to make sure there's no residue left because I don't want to get somebody's horses sick."

**Food safety**

When the Food Safety Modernization Act was signed into law in 2011, with its goal of ensuring the safety of the United States' food supply by shifting the focus to preventing its contamination, the law applied to human food as well as to animal food, up to and including pets. Steve would subsequently attend a weeklong session at Cornell to become certified.

"Then," said Lois, "someone came to inspect us. We'd never had that before. I was nervous, but we passed with flying colors. The guy documented everything. He couldn't get over how clean it was."

Because of FMSA, Steve noted that they now keep records of every single load of feed they make: "If it goes in a truck, it's which truck, what day,

whether it was medicated, where it went, what it was. Every single bag of feed is recorded with the date, what time of day we bagged it, whether it was medicated."

FMSA, according to both Steve and Lois, has been useful. When a question might arise over a certain feed, said Steve, "I can look back in my records and say, this is what I made before it and what I made after it. The other thing is, we're meticulous about mycotoxins. We send a sample of every single load to Cornell to get tested. That protects the customers, and it protects me."

It's no longer cows, and now it's grain, but the groundwork laid by Vincent Bruno 60-plus years ago has lived on into the next generation, transformed into a first-class business that benefits agricultural animals all around us. •

*Bruno Farms Custom Feeds is located at 217 Gilligan Rd. in Hudson, NY. Call (518) 828-5807 or find them on Facebook.*

Above: Vince Bruno featured in a Blue Seal Feeds ad of the late 1970s.

Left: A local horse farm's stack of high quality horse feed bags from Bruno Farms. Photo by Thorunn Kristjansdottir.



*Flowers make any occasion extra special!*



**ROARING OAKS**  
  
**FLORIST**

*Unique designs created with personal attention.*

(860) 364-5380

WWW.ROARINGOAKSFLORIST.COM

349A MAIN STREET, LAKEVILLE, CT



**MEADOWSCAPES**

ECOLOGICAL DIVISION OF MATT'S LANDSCAPING

(860) 824-1188 | FALLS VILLAGE, CT  
NATIVEMEADOWSCAPES.COM

*Dare to landscape differently*

Now is the time to plan for spring and summer! Our focus is highlighting the natural beauty of your property and reintroducing native biodiversity with invasive plant removal; restoring your landscape's natural habitats; and creating beautiful native meadows, gardens, and outdoor living spaces. We design our meadows with custom seed mixes that are curated for your land's specific conditions. Welcome home to your ecological paradise.

Copake Hillsdale  
**FARMERS  
MARKET**



**Opening Day**

Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup> 9am-1pm

**shop, eat, & support local**

We participate in SNAP, FMNP, and Market Match

[copakehillsidefarmersmarket.com](http://copakehillsidefarmersmarket.com)



[SalisburyArtisans.com](http://SalisburyArtisans.com)

# Native Habitat Restoration

Returning Balance to Nature

Invasive Plant Control • Field Clearing  
Forestry Mowing • Wetland Restoration

**(413) 358-7400**

[nativehabitatrestoration@gmail.com](mailto:nativehabitatrestoration@gmail.com)  
[NativeHabitatRestoration.weebly.com](http://NativeHabitatRestoration.weebly.com)

Licensed in MA, CT, NY, VT – Over 40 Years of Experience

*The Hair Lounge*

*A color and hair design studio  
Eyebrow tinting, stain & lamination*

*Loren Whiteley • Tarah Kennedy • Amy Carol  
Joe Musso • Hailey Cookingham*

*143 Route 44 • Millerton, NY • (518) 592-1167*

**SHARON**  
PACKAGE STORE

SINCE 1941.

1 Gay Street  
Sharon, CT  
(860) 364-5760



## The Blue Olive

*An Extraordinary Tasting Experience*

The Blue Olive is a premium olive oil and vinegar tasting room and specialty gourmet store located in Pawling, Cold Spring, and now at Eastdale Village in Poughkeepsie, New York. We feature many infused and premium varietal extra virgin olive oils. We also feature specialty wine and balsamic vinegars, homemade bread, cake, and pizza kits, olives and tapenades, pasta and risotto, gift baskets and wedding favors, a variety of sea salts, local-based jams, herbs, honey and maple syrup, as well as home-made olive oil soaps and beauty items, and much more!



**TheBlueOliveShop.com**

Pawling, Cold Spring, & Eastdale Village in Poughkeepsie, NY

# FAIRM & BOTTLE

*is a one-stop shop for locally sourced, farm-fresh goodies*



By Abby Audenino  
info@mainstreetmag.com

Farm & Bottle, located off of Route 9 in Red Hook, NY, is the latest project from Cooper's Daughter Spirits, the Claverack, NY-based distillery known for its seasonal, small-batch spirits. Farm & Bottle officially opened its doors in July of 2025 in the location of a formerly long-abandoned farm stand.

"The inspiration behind Farm & Bottle came from a love of the Hudson Valley and the farms and businesses that make up the local economy here. From the beginning, we wanted a place where we could highlight our own products alongside things made by nearby farms and makers," says owner Sophie Newsome, half of Cooper's Daughter, who founded the business with her father, Stuart Newsome – otherwise known as the cooper. Sophie's husband, Rory Tice, serves as head distiller of the operation.

## Resurrecting the farm stand

When Sophie, Rory, and Stuart found the property in Red Hook, they immediately were drawn to the old farm stand. "We lovingly nicknamed it 'the birdhouse,' because it was filled with

nesting birds," Sophie laughs. "But despite being in poor shape, we immediately saw the potential. It felt like the perfect place to renovate and turn into a shop that could showcase the things being grown and produced in this region – especially with the location being on the main road."

Red Hook was the right fit for Farm & Bottle for multiple reasons – partially because Sophie and Rory fell in love with the property and partially because of the surrounding area. "We had already been spending a lot of time here, so it just felt like the right place," she said. "There's also a really strong connection between farms, customers, and small businesses in this area, and that's exactly the kind of community we want to be part of."

Opening Farm & Bottle was quite the undertaking. The building had seen better days and required a complete renovation from top to bottom. They replaced the roof; rebuilt the walls inside and out; installed new insulation, doors, floors, and windows; and redid the electrical and HVAC systems.

"At times, it honestly felt like it might have been easier to build a new building from scratch," Sophie mused. "The farm stand was pretty close to being torn down and paved

over. Instead, we were able to restore it and give it a new purpose. It's nice knowing that a building with so many memories for people in Red Hook will now be around for decades to come. Almost everyone we talk to seems to have a story about visiting that farm stand at some point."

Sophie and Rory also have plans to build a small home on the back portion of the same parcel where Farm & Bottle sits. "We think it will be a wonderful place for our two young children to grow up, especially being around the orchard on the property."

## Stocking goods that represent the Hudson Valley

Beyond the physical renovations, Sophie and Rory also had to build the store itself by sourcing products and stocking the shelves. "That was the fun part," she said. They spent a lot of time connecting with local farms, makers, and small businesses to source products that they loved and that represented the region well.

Farm & Bottle stocks a wide range of local goods, including fresh and frozen foods, flowers, produce, sauces,

Continued on next page ...



All images courtesy of Farm & Bottle

and jams. Of course, you can also find Cooper's Daughter Spirits products, alongside other locally crafted natural wine, beer, and hard cider.

One part of the store that visitors have really taken a liking to is the English section, where they've imported a variety of products from the United Kingdom that you don't typically see locally. Sophie has dual citizenship – her dad is from England – so it was important that they source and feature some of the products that she grew up with and loves.

"The process of sourcing products is very personal and intentional," Sophie shared. "Nothing in the store was purchased just to fill shelf space. Everything has been tested or used in some way, whether that means tasting a food product or trying out a cocktail tool behind the bar. We've personally tried everything that's in the store, and it's been a really fun journey discovering all of these products along the way."

Sourcing locally has always been central to what they do at Cooper's Daughter Spirits and now at Farm & Bottle, too. It stems from Sophie and Rory's deep respect from local farms and desire to support local farms and makers whenever possible.

"Local farms play a huge role in maintaining a healthy and vibrant food system, and they do incredible work feeding the communities around us," she said. "We also just love where

we live. There are so many talented producers, farmers, and creators right here in the Hudson Valley. When you have that kind of talent in your own backyard, it makes sense to work with and support the people who are part of the same community."

### Learning along the way

Farm & Bottle isn't modeled after any other roadside shop, which is what makes it so special. Instead, the store is a collection of the things that Sophie, Stuart, and Rory personally love and want to share with others.

On the shelves, you'll find everything from Cooper's Daughter Spirits products and cocktail ingredients to ready-to-make dinners, seeds and succulents, and of course, treats from England. "It's a mix of goods that reflects our interests and the things we enjoy, and we hope it creates a shopping experience that feels a little different from what people might expect."

Now just shy of a full year of being open, there are a few things that have changed since Farm & Bottle first opened its doors. While Sophie and Rory have vast experience operating the distillery, they didn't have much experience with a more traditional retail experience, so they weren't sure what to expect.

"We started with things we personally liked and believed in and have been learning as we go," she says. "Since opening less than a year ago, we've tried to stay flexible and open-minded. We assumed there would be things people really gravitated toward and other items that might not resonate as much. That's definitely been true."

For example, fresh flowers have been incredibly popular, and they've also sold far more of their hand-carved wooden gnomes and mushrooms for gardens than they anticipated. "We joke that we've ended up doing a lot of business with the gnome crowd," Sophie laughs. "Overall, it's been important for us to listen to what the community responds to and let that help guide the direction of the shop."

### Looking ahead

Farm & Bottle also regularly partners with other local makers – including

wineries, breweries, and bakeries – to host tastings in the shop. These makers also frequently come by the shop on weekends to set up and offer samples of their products. These tastings provide the opportunity for visitors to meet the people behind the products and learn more about what they're making and how they make it. It also provides these makers and small businesses a chance to connect directly with consumers to share their stories.

"In a lot of ways, the store is really just an extension of our lived experience as local foodies who happen to also be in the beverage business."

Never one to shy away from a project, one of the most prominent items on the to-do list for Sophie and Rory is reviving the apple orchard on the property. The orchard, which hasn't been cared for properly in approximately twenty years, will require lots of pruning and ongoing care to bring the trees back to optimal health.

"That's going to be a slow process, something that we tackle a little bit at a time, but it's something we're really excited about," Sophie says. "In the long term, we'd love to grow apples and other produce that we can sell in the farm shop and potentially even use in spirits at our distillery in Claverack. The idea of becoming a farm ourselves is a really exciting direction for us that will bring it full circle." ●

*Farm & Bottle is located at 7961 Albany Post Road, Red Hook, NY, and Cooper's Daughter Spirits is located at 284 State Route 23, Claverack, NY. For more information about Farm & Bottle or Cooper's Daughter Spirits, visit their website [coopersdaughter.com](http://coopersdaughter.com) or follow them on Instagram @farmandbottle or @coopersdaughterspirits.*





## REACH HIGHER WITH AN **ELEVATED BANKING EXPERIENCE.**

You've worked hard to build the life you have today - which is why it makes sense to choose a banking experience that's built just for you. NBT Private Bank delivers the personalized, high-touch relationship that you deserve, with access to member-exclusive programs and specialized products designed around your unique needs and goals.

**Let us help you realize your financial vision. Connect today.**



**Darilyn Woods**  
Senior Private Banking  
Relationship Manager  
Darilyn.Woods@nbtbank.com  
860.672.5379



Scan here to learn more or visit  
[www.nbtbank.com/privatebank](http://www.nbtbank.com/privatebank)  
to get started.



Deposit products offered through NBT Bank, N.A. Member FDIC. | Equal Housing Lender

Investment and insurance products:

Are Not Bank Deposits | Are Not FDIC Insured | Are Not Bank Guaranteed | Are Not FDIC Insured by Any Other Government Agency | May Lose Value

◆ Church Street ◆  
**DELI & PIZZERIA**

BREAKFAST • LUNCH • DINNER  
 SALADS • SANDWICHES • SUBS •  
 WRAPS • BURGERS & DOGS •  
 PIZZA • & MORE!

**(518) 329-4551**

1677 COUNTY RT. 7A, COPAKE



Skylar & Freya after a day guarding the business.

**Claverack**  
**WELL & PUMP**  
 SERVICE

**(518) 325-4679**

HILLSDALE, NY • info@claverackpump.com  
 www.claverackpumpservice.com

Mass. Lic. #Mass. 971, 1016, 1017, 1018 • NY. Lic. #10351 • Conn. Lic. #373

**Michael D. Lynch**\*

ATTORNEY AT LAW

106 Upper Main Street • PO Box 1776 • Sharon, Connecticut 06069  
 (860) 364-5505 • Mlynch@MichaelLynchLaw.com  
 www.MichaelLynchLaw.com

\* Also admitted in New York State



HUDSON VALLEY  
**OVERHEAD**  
 DOORS & OPERATORS



Model 6580L  
 1 HP Belt Drive  
 Wi-Fi® Battery  
 Backup Garage  
 Door Opener

*Amarr*



**LiftMaster**

POWERED BY **TYT Q**



Long panel  
 glazed true white  
 steel double  
 garage door

**Sales:** Consultations, Free Estimates, Installation

**Repairs:** Broken Springs, Damaged Sections, Preventative Maintenance

**845-876-2772 ♦ hudsonvalleydoors.com ♦ Rhinebeck**

**CARLSON**

PROPANE, HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING



**HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING:**

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

**PROPANE:**

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

*Prompt professional service.*

*Carlson for customers who insist on safety & quality.*

Serving South Berkshire co. & Northwest Corner CT since 1979 • 79 Pike Rd., Sheffield, MA

**800-542-2422 • www.carlsonpropane.com**

CT Lic. 302776 • CT Lic. 278010 • CT Lic. 1113 • CT HOD #1002 • MA Lic. 023709 • MA Lic. 30167 • MA Lic. 912



**We Grow the Legacy of Your Trees**

All Phases of Tree Care

Tick Spraying • Lightning Protection  
 Traditional & Organic Insect and Disease Management  
 Consultation with Landscape Architects  
 Management Plans • Altumnats Dealer

**CALL 860-868-1930 TODAY!**

Bill Pollock, Licensed Arborist #62352 • Certified Arborist #NE-0387AT • DEEP License #B-1172

**ArborCT.com**



# HEART TO HEART TO HEART

AFTER ONE YEAR, THREE TRIES, AND COUNTLESS PRAYERS, CATTLE FARMER PHIL TROWBRIDGE HAS A NEW TICKER

By Jim Calvin  
info@mainstreetmag.com

Clambering off a year-long roller coaster of wires and tubes, hope and dread, progress and setbacks, Phil Trowbridge arrived home in Ghent, Columbia County, NY on April 1 with a brand new heart.

A gentle giant with a baritone rasp and a twinkle in his eye, the fifth-generation Angus cattle rancher lost 60 pounds in the ordeal, but gained a renewed appreciation for his devoted family, skilled doctors, and nurses, and the miracle of organ donation. Accustomed to being “outdoors all day, every day,” Trowbridge never imagined he’d be cooped up in a hospital for 50 weeks while specialists combed the country for a Phil-sized, O-positive heart to transplant into his chest.

## How it all started

It all began Saturday, April 19, 2025 – five days after his 69th birthday. “I was feeding cows and I just didn’t feel right,” Phil recalls. “I called my son and told him I was going to urgent care in Valatie. I got out of the truck and had a hard time getting across the parking lot. The receptionist must have seen me comin’ because, before I knew it, I was in an ambulance headed for Albany Med.”

It was congestive heart failure. “The EMT asked me if I could take a shock. I said sure,” Phil related. “They paddled me, and that’s the last thing I remembered for eight days. I was placed on a breathing machine and sedated. They later med-flighted me to Westchester Medical Center.”

Phil’s wife Annie – a registered nurse and former clinical coordinator at Columbia Memorial Hospital in Hudson – knew what questions to ask. But it was the doctors’ facial expressions that conveyed how tenuous the situation was. “For a month and a half, he was sick enough that it

could have gone either way,” Annie confided.

Cardiologist Dr. Alan Gass and heart surgeon Dr. Junichi Shimamura determined Phil was transplant-eligible, and the family embraced that choice. Little did they know the path would be so precarious, or that the wait would stretch through Father’s Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

## A savage grace

Phil was kept alive by a device known as an Impella, touted by its manufacturer as providing “temporary mechanical circulatory support, allowing the heart to rest and recover ... by drawing blood from the left (or right) ventricle and expelling it into the aorta.” Or, as his daughter Amy simplified, “a saving grace machine that pumped his heart for him.” In fact, Phil set what was believed to be a global record of 277 days attached to an Impella.

His heart was not the only concern. Phil’s kidneys had shut down for lack of blood supply. Since Day One, he has undergone dialysis treatments two or three times a week. “At one point, I was on dialysis 24 hours a day for two weeks straight,” Phil shared. They don’t know yet whether he’ll need a kidney transplant.

## Attended the Chatham Fair from his hospital bed

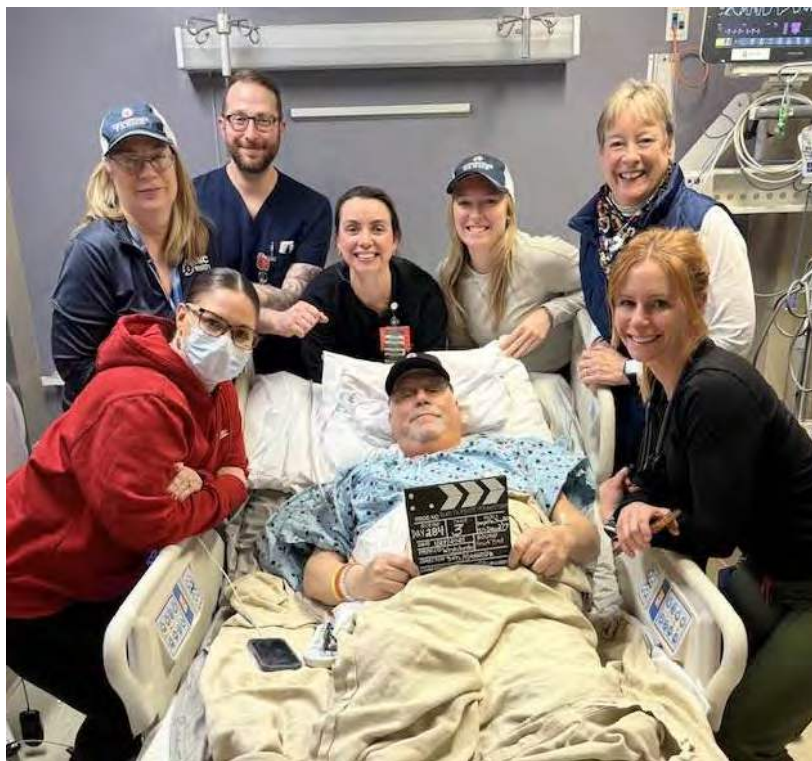
Labor Day weekend 2025 marked the first Columbia County Fair that Phil had ever missed. But his faithful following of 4-Hers used a smart phone to enable him, from his hospital bed, to remotely witness the calf sale, cattle judging, and other agricultural exhibits that he had always enjoyed.

It was Phil, as a long-time board member of the Columbia County



Phil Trowbridge, left, and son PJ.

Continued on next page ...



Above: With a movie-set clapperboard reading "Take 3," Phil Trowbridge prepares for his heart transplant at Westchester Medical Center on January 27th surrounded by supportive family and nursing staff; left to right, Phil's daughter Amy; nurses Kathleen, Steven, Catarina, and Erin; Phil's wife Annie; and nurse Amanda. Two previous transplant attempts were aborted prior to surgery, but the third time was the charm.

Right: Phil Trowbridge is interviewed by a radio personality at the 2024 Columbia County Fair in Chatham, NY.

Agricultural Society, who 15 years ago hatched the idea of replacing the century-old livestock barns in the "ag corner" of the Chatham fairgrounds – not just improved space for farm animals, but also a distinctive venue for agricultural education.

Phil credits the fair's general manager, Eric Barnes, and project manager, Brian Lossow, with working tirelessly to give life to his dream. Drawings are complete, fund-raising is under way, and the Ag Society plans to break ground this September. The project committee cleverly named it the Columbia Agricultural Learning Facility – "CALF" for short.

### What real family looks like

Phil Trowbridge was born in Corfu, NY into an Angus cattle breeding family. He came to Columbia County as a herdsman for Gallagher's Angus Farm in Ghent in May 1976 – one day after graduating from Alfred State College, where he and Annie had met (they wed the following March).

Their daughter Amy Alix is an operating room nurse at the Albany Bone & Joint Center. Amy, her husband Michael, and their children Taylor and Tucker live in East Greenbush. Phil and Annie's son PJ; his wife Miranda; and their daughters Daisy, Lily, Rosie, and Violet live next to the farm.

Throughout Phil's hospitalization, family and friends showered him with caring. Annie and/or Amy were bedside virtually every day, with help from Phil's daughter-in-law

Miranda, brother Patrick, and friend Laura Aloisio. Grandkids joined in on weekends and holidays. Acquaintances visited from as far away as Kentucky, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Oregon. "It was inspiring how they all came together, there by his side every single day, never complaining," said Aloisio, a graphic designer from Stephentown. "That is love like I have never seen. That is real family."

"Changing his routine and perspective to endure all the pokes and prods, day and night, never getting fresh air, and seldom seeing daylight, was a feat in itself," she continued. "How Phil kept his composure and stayed hopeful was a testament to his strength on a whole different level."

Son PJ has been an unsung hero, bearing the weight of managing Trowbridge Angus Farm's 300-head cattle herd and 1,200 acres without his dad available to share the load. PJ and herdsman Logan Ransford have toiled sunup to sundown to maintain the farm and pull off its two major annual events – the bull sale in May and the female sale in September.

### The transplant journey

At last, on October 28, 2025 – Day 193, according to Amy's detailed journal – the doctors found a heart. As Phil waited on the operating table, bad news arrived. The transplant was canceled because the potential donor did not pass away within the 30-minute harvest window following withdrawal of life support. "Heartbroken, sure, but thankful and appreciative? Absolutely," wrote Amy.

A second attempt, on January 24, 2026, yielded further disappointment. Just before the scheduled harvest, the potential donor experienced a cardiac event, leaving the heart no longer viable for transplant. Such are the harsh realities of organ procurement.

The nationwide United Network for Organ Sharing uses a seven-step hierarchy for ranking the need of transplant candidates. Until now, Phil had been Status 2 – "urgent but not emergent," Annie says. But after the second setback, Dr. Gass, citing Phil's protracted wait and deteriorating heart perfusion numbers, convinced UNOS to elevate him to Status 1 – top priority.

It worked. On January 27, Annie was getting in her car at 7am for the daily journey to Westchester when her phone rang. "Annie," she recalls Dr. Gass declaring, "we think we've found the perfect heart."

Ten hours later, an emotionally jumbled scene of anticipation, anxiety, and hope swirled around Phil's bedside. As he wheeled toward the surgical suite, with Annie and Amy alongside, staff of the CCU lined the hallway – clapping, waving, and weeping. His own eyes swollen with tears of gratitude, Phil turned a corner and received more applause from the cardiothoracic unit team.

The third time, as they say, was the charm.

Finally arriving home two months later – greeted by lights and sirens from two Columbia County sheriff's patrols, balloons tied to fence posts, and cheering family, friends, and neighbors – was a major milestone.

But Phil's recovery is just beginning. Dialysis three times a week in Kingston. Intensive cardio rehab in Albany. Follow-ups with specialists in Westchester. Periodic biopsies to detect any inkling of organ rejection. This is going to take a while.

Annie hopes sharing Phil's story will encourage organ donation. When her 16-year-old granddaughter Taylor – Amy's daughter – recently got her driver's license, she checked the organ donor box as a tribute to Grampa. "It's been quite an experience," Phil says. "I don't recommend this kind of vacation for everybody, but this is the better option of the two." •

*To learn how to become an organ donor, visit [organdonor.gov](http://organdonor.gov).*

*Jim Calvin is a former managing editor of the Hudson Register-Star and principal of Calvin Communications.*



Everything you need for the road ahead.

Drive **RUGE'S**, Drive Happy!



*Serving Rhinebeck  
Since 1935!*

**rugessauto.com**



**CELEBRATING 40 YEARS  
OF MAKING EVERY  
OCCASION BEAUTIFUL!**

## *Country Gardeners Florist*

WE WORK WITH ALL LOCAL VENUES:  
LIONROCK FARM, INTERLAKEN INN, OLD  
DROVERS INN, WHITE HART, TROUTBECK,  
COPAKE COUNTRY CLUB, AND MANY MORE!

www.countrygardenersflorist.com  
(518) 789-6440 • Railroad Plaza • Millerton, NY  
Weddings • Anniversaries • Theme parties  
Funerals • Fresh cut flowers • Dried flowers  
Potted plants • Pottery



Open for lunch Saturday 12-3!



# Willia

TUESDAY - SATURDAY

CALL FOR A RESERVATION 518.789.0252

WILLAHVNY.COM | 52 MAIN STREET MILLERTON | @WILLA.HV.NY

Lightning Protection!



# ASSOCIATED LIGHTNING

Rod Company, Inc

[www.alrci.com](http://www.alrci.com)

518-789-4603  
845-373-8309



## \$2 OFF

33OZ KEFIR

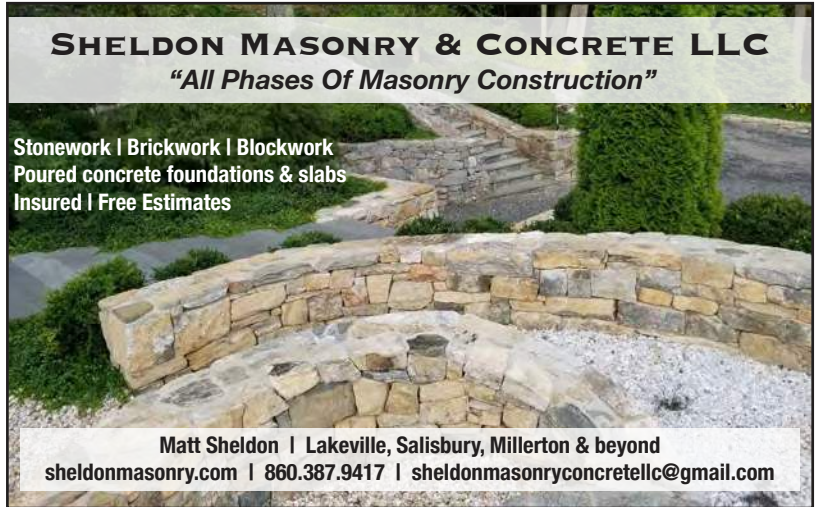
MAY 1-31  
ONLY VALID AT  
RONNYBROOK FARM STORE



### SHELDON MASONRY & CONCRETE LLC

"All Phases Of Masonry Construction"

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



Matt Sheldon | Lakeville, Salisbury, Millerton & beyond  
[sheldonmasonry.com](http://sheldonmasonry.com) | 860.387.9417 | [sheldonmasonryconcretellc@gmail.com](mailto:sheldonmasonryconcretellc@gmail.com)



ALBANY MED Health System  
COLUMBIA MEMORIAL HEALTH

## Your **FIRST CHOICE** for advanced care.

Urologist **Paul Pietrow, MD** has joined CMH from Premier Medical Group in Poughkeepsie. He sees patients in Hudson for conditions such as urinary tract infections, kidney stones, BPH or enlarged prostate, overactive bladder, urinary incontinence, and erectile dysfunction.

Call **518-822-0746** for an appointment.

**Columbia Memorial Surgical Associates**  
71 Prospect Ave., Suite 190  
Hudson, NY 12534

[columbiamemorialhealth.org](http://columbiamemorialhealth.org)



# Dreaming big for 90 years

## *and counting*

By Dominique DeVito  
info@mainstreetmag.com

For anyone who has owned a business, reaching the milestone of 90 years extending to four generations isn't just a "that's nice" accomplishment, it's a "wow, that's amazing" feat. And for Birch Hill Catering, while honoring its past, the focus is on the present – with no desire to slow down in the future.

How do you celebrate this occasion? With a big party, of course. A really big party. And if anyone can make it happen, it's the team at Birch Hill. They're hosting a special wedding show and community celebration on their properties in Schodack, and neighboring Castleton-on-Hudson, NY on Saturday, May 9. Couples seeking to make their wedding dreams come true will be treated to over 25 local wedding vendors, food and beverage stations, a mimosa bar, interactive chef stations, and guided tours of the venue. (Head to birchhillcatering.com for more info!)

What's extra special about this event, and this milestone for Birch Hill, is that family makes it happen. Safe to say that hospitality is in their blood, and this extends to overseeing with care and passion details as small as the way a napkin is folded to as big as guaranteeing that every serving at a large wedding is perfect and every part of the grounds and every moment of a guest's time at their venue is magical (phew!).

### "The Man"

Steven Feldman is the current owner and president of Birch Hill. He grew up in the Capital Region, spending time with his father, Matthew Erwin Feldman, and grandfather, Harry Feldman, at their multiple restaurants, which included the flagship operation, Herbert's, which opened in 1936. Herbert's was a destination in Albany, starting as a deli and evolving into a very popular restaurant. Albert Einstein even brought a group to dine there in 1940. A fire destroyed the original Madison Avenue location, and Steven helped with its relocation

to Washington Avenue. The restaurant expanded to include a catering business, which is at the heart of what is now Birch Hill Catering.

The Feldman family also owned and operated the Albany establishments Daddy-O's, Mall Mart, Daddy-O's Party Place, Snack Shack, and Albany Business College Food Services, and Steven's maternal grandfather Benjamin Hammer even operated several restaurants in Manhattan back in the 1930s and 40s. Sadly, when he returned from the war there was nothing left of his businesses.

"I grew up with Russian dressing in my veins," Steven quips. He was never bored, and never without guidance and inspiration for what is required in the restaurant business. "The first day I was able to carry two ice buckets all the way to the bar just like Louie, the cook's assistant at Herbert's, was a big day for me," Steven says. His restaurant and hospitality work experience when he was young included stints at Burger King and the Albany Ramada Inn Silo, where he advanced from room service to banquets and catering. "I was hooked," he says.

He opened his first restaurant, Daddy-O's North in Lake George, just after graduating from high school. Wanting to up his culinary game, Steven attended and graduated from the Culinary Institute of America, and then "came home to my family's businesses," he says, "to work hard." His first big event? A function for Amtrak with 55,000 guests!

In 1987, he acquired and renovated the 110-acre property in Schodack that is now the site of Birch Hill Catering. Back then it was an abandoned rest area along what is now I-90. His father was involved in this acquisition and shared his vision of its potential. The property is forever a work-in-progress where, as Steven describes it, they're "constantly building and adding on new ballrooms and pavilions at Birch Hill and developing the facilities at Stablegate Barn and Vineyards. No time to slow down now," he quips, "it's a big tiger to hold by the tail, but the fourth generation is moving in."



Blake, Serena, Val, and Steven Feldman.

### Carrying the torch

Valerie Feldman is Steven's eldest daughter, and while she helps across all the properties and functions of Birch Hill, she is the head of Stable Gate Winery in nearby Castleton-on-Hudson, which opened to the public in 2018. Stable Gate features an old barn that serves as a wedding venue and event space in addition to the winery's tasting room.

Val graduated from Endicott College, near Boston, with a bachelor's degree in hospitality. Graduation took her to the west coast, first to San Francisco and the restaurant business, and next to Napa to study winemaking. Val is a certified sommelier, and her talents could have taken her to the finest restaurants in the world's biggest cities. In 2014, however, she "answered the call" to return to the family business. "I always felt it was inevitable," Val says, "and I'm grateful every day."

Val describes growing up at Birch Hill as "a dream," adding, "the wedding shows, the events, having bounce houses set up and food everywhere, seeing my dad in the kitchen, my grandma doing the gardening, and my aunt – who was my dad's right-hand person and a visionary like my dad – doing sales and so much more, all of it is part of me, then and now."

At Stable Gate, Val oversees a vineyard and winemaking facility in addition to helping coordinate and stage the events that take place there. Val's wines are rooted in her philosophy of low intervention, yielding bright fruit flavors. She is also crafting meads with the honey made from Stable

Gate's bees, and she recently launched a Vermouth (Dionese's) that Wine Spectator called "exuberant."

### Bringing the fun back

Serena Feldman's first official title at Birch Hill was "Activities Participant" because she could always be found assisting in the bounce houses and climbing rock walls that were part of activities for kids at Birch Hill functions. "I loved doing that," she says. "And it taught me a lot about how bringing the 'fun' aspect to events can make things so memorable" – part of the skill set she now uses on a daily basis. An animal lover, Serena pursued a degree in veterinary science and spent some time in Florida until she, too, heeded the call that was always in her and returned to the family business at the end of COVID. She waited tables at first, filling in the gaps due to COVID staffing struggles and everchanging regulations and moved up through operations and into sales.

Today, Serena is Birch Hill's special events sales manager, assisting everyone from nervous brides and their families to heads of corporations planning retreats or special events with the details that will make their days extra special. She credits a lot of her personal success to an operations background, where she learned the ins and outs of the business, and mastered each component, bringing a different perspective to coordinating a variety of events.

Continued on next page ...



An aerial view of Birch Hill's stunning event space (top left), and a view from inside decked out for a wedding (bottom left). Val gives a vineyard tour at Stable Gate (bottom right), a property whose barn is another site for parties of all kinds. All photos courtesy of Birch Hill Catering.

One of Serena's motivating influences? "Bringing back the fun things." She feels weddings and parties of all kinds are transitioning from more formal affairs to occasions that express who a couple or family or company is. "The carnival station is a great example," she says, "of how people want to have fun at their wedding." It includes cotton candy, fried dough, popcorn, and caramel apples. "We offer 100% customization along with our set packages," Serena says, reflecting Birch Hill's slogan, 'Catering to All Your Tastes.' "We've done weddings and other events centered around cultural themes, from African to Kosher to Indian and beyond. We have a large team in place that can accommodate every piece of a wedding or event."

Serena is proud of the hard work and dedication she knows Birch Hill was built on, and credits her aunt and grandma in addition to her father for the examples they provided. "The weddings we do have always been beautiful," she says, "but I'm excited about the trends for today's couples. We've had magicians at weddings; one couple did a first joust instead of a traditional first dance," she shares. "Really fun."

Working with people to coordinate the event of their dreams takes a special kind of someone. "I like being the rock for my clients," Serena says. "The calming presence." She also "loves the challenge of doing an event in the middle of nowhere," which is another part of what Birch Hill offers. Their

catering and event planning are for off-site locations, too.

Blake Feldman, Steven's son, shares his siblings' idyllic childhood memories, having grown up at Birch Hill and being able to attend many of the carnival-type events that were held there. "I remember a trade show where the many vendors left all kinds of things behind. My dad gathered me and a bunch of friends for a 'sorting' party, and we got to go through it all, keeping some of the stuff we wanted," he says. "It was fun."

Blake's role at Birch Hill is as an advisor on any and all things technical, which can range from water supply issues to Internet connectivity between sites to helping generate sales leads. Like his siblings, having grown up there gives him an amazing perspective on how everything works together. Blake earned a dual engineering and management degree at Clarkson, which further supports his contributions to Birch Hill.

When asked about this special anniversary year, Blake reflects, "I think any family wants to leave something better for future generations, and I feel we at Birch Hill have done and are doing a wonderful job of that. It's a fixture in the community," he continues, "we employ a lot of people from the community, and I feel really lucky to have grown up with this kind of example in my life. It has given me the perspective to want to succeed in other roles, and I'm hopeful that it will offer this to many more generations."

### Then there's the conductor

With over 50 years of service in the business, Steven recognized a few years ago that it was time for him to retire. His children were established in their areas of expertise, but he knew he needed someone to oversee all the moving parts. Steven turned to another shining star of his team, who is "essentially family," they all agree, and in 2021 named William (Will) Patterson operations manager.

Will is from Port Jervis, NY, originally, but grew up in Kinderhook and went to Ichabod Crane, where he and Blake Feldman became friends in first grade. As close friends, Will inevitably spent a lot of time at Birch Hill and progressed from playing on the grounds to pitching in as he and Blake got older. "I was here just about every weekend in high school," he says, "helping out and learning." Hospitality resonated with him as it did for the Feldmans, and he was soon serving elegant dinners in the formal dining rooms. This experience took him to Yono's in Albany, a restaurant renowned for its standards.

Will graduated college with a degree in business administration and worked for a local financing firm through COVID. Always, he was in touch with Blake and the Feldmans, and like the others, felt himself heeding the call to be a part of the Birch Hill team. With the example and coaching of Steven, who Will admires for his "persistence and resilience" as a "make it work" kind of guy, Will knows that, for himself, "finding how to continue the legacy" is a big but exciting challenge.

He says, "Steven has always dreamed bigger," and he considers it his role and job to build on that. "As a team," he says, "we all understand how it's supposed to work; we have the institutional knowledge, and we are all committed to making any celebration the very best it can be. We aren't building a set or check list," he continues, "we're 'composing' the event by bringing all the different parts together in harmony and beauty. I love being the conductor."

Will knows he has big shoes to fill, but through his involvement over the years and with Steven's coaching even now, he knows he can dream big, too. "I like looking forward and building a plan for the continued growth of

Birch Hill," he says. "I want to see the legacies of Birch Hill continue: the big events, the varied events, and the community gatherings.

"What's wonderful is when we work with people who came here for their prom, for example, and now they want to have their wedding here," Will continues. "Or the parents of people getting married here who connect to the history of Birch Hill. So many families through the decades. It's wonderful on every level that we help provide milestones in so many peoples' lives." Steven's mother is 94 and "sharp as a tack," he says. How wonderful for her to be able to celebrate her son's and family's achievements through the years.

### Then & now & next

I asked Steven what he thinks Louie from Herbert's would say now if he could see all that Steven and his team have built. "I think he'd be pretty amazed," he says. "And I'm sure he'd be proud. I know my grandfather and father would be, too," he shares.

The 100th Anniversary isn't far away, really. I ask Steven if he has a vision for Birch Hill when that one comes along. "I hope it won't change too terribly much," he muses. "I'm taking my foot off the gas, but my children are involved, and Will is committed to its growth. It's an opportunity for me to continue to see what I've worked to grow continue to blossom and prosper."

We all know that even the smallest garden needs lots of TLC to reach its potential, much less flourish. Steven has been successful in business – the hospitality business, no less – for all these years. His advice to other entrepreneurs? "Be prepared to work really hard all the time. Unexpected twists and turns happen, and they happen in a heartbeat.

"What kept me going was laying the groundwork of all of this with the hope that my kids would follow me into it," he shares, "and I know they saw how hard I worked. How hard we all worked."

A toast to the Feldmans, to Will Patterson, to the extended Birch Hill team – past, present, and future. Happy 90th Anniversary. And many more. ●

*You can find out more at [birchhillcatering.com](http://birchhillcatering.com).*



# WHITETAIL LANDSCAPING & EXCAVATION



**Landscaping | Hardscapes | Excavation | Gardening  
Property Management | Snow & Ice Removal**

*Serving the NW Corner of CT and the Southern Berkshires, MA.*

959-227-9004 | [WHITETAILCT.COM](http://WHITETAILCT.COM) | [OFFICE@WHITETAILCT.COM](mailto:OFFICE@WHITETAILCT.COM)



# jam food shop



**This Memorial Day, you handle the party, we'll handle the food.  
We have everything from mains to sides to dessert – our dishes are made to feed a crowd.**

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

**There is only one Jam, located in Sharon, CT.**  
Come experience the real thing inside the Sharon Farm Market!  
(860) 364 2004 • [www.jamfoodshop.com](http://www.jamfoodshop.com)

VULNERABLE EARTH  
GROUP EXHIBITION

APR 21 - JUN 14, 2026

**HOTCHKISS**

Tremaine Art Gallery

11 Interlaken Road, Lakeville, CT  
www.hotchkiss.org/arts



**R&R**  
Servicenter, LLC

Steve J Mosher  
914.474.5206  
randrservicecenter.net

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



**Lindell Fuels, Inc.**

Fuel Oil • Propane • Heating  
Air Conditioning

CT Registration # HOD.0000095  
CT License # HTG.0690604-S1 | CT License # PLM.0281220-P1



P.O. Box 609 | 59 Church Street  
Canaan, CT 06018  
860 824 5444  
860 824 7829 fax

**The Wish House**  
West Cornwall CT  
wishhouse.com

Gifts  
Clothing  
Home Accents  
Gallery

Open  
Tu-Su 11-5  
Farm Market opens May 9, 10-1

Experience the *Art of Healing*

For over 50 years, Noble Horizons has been dedicated to caring for our senior population, offering a holistic approach to skilled nursing, senior living and rehabilitation. Noble Horizons is a continuing care retirement community located on a 110-acre wooded and manicured campus where it offers community-based educational and cultural programs, live events, local excursions, exceptional dining, wellness programs, pet, music and art therapy in addition to its top-notch health and medical services that are dedicated to wellness.



We love our animals here at Noble and are proud to have several Pet Therapy Programs that come to visit us from lamas, pigs, horses to chickens courtesy of Le Petite Ranch in MA.



(860) 435-9851  
www.noblehorizons.org  
17 Cobble Road, Salisbury, CT

**A continuing care retirement community that offers:**  
Community-based educational and cultural programs  
Live events • Local excursions • Exceptional dining  
Wellness programs • Pet, music & art therapy

# SOME OF THE PEOPLE, SOME OF THE TIME

By CB Wismar  
info@mainstreetmag.com

The barrage of wild and, at times, flagrant pronouncements that now seem to make up what has come to be considered “news” is quite alarming. One can recall that time, seemingly eons ago, when Walter Cronkite would calmly and directly report what had happened during the day. There were no histrionics, no inflammatory sound bites, no table pounding in those reports: just the news.

How times have changed.

It seems that no news cycle – holidays and weekends included – can be complete without some outrageous spewing.

There are times when we find some kind of moderate solace in the wisdom offered up by those who came before us and, it would appear, went through similar troubling times.

## Honest Abe ... no fooling

Although historians seem to be divided on the accuracy of the quote, the majority seem to side with the notion that Abraham Lincoln, in a campaign address, offered up the often-cited pronouncement – “You can fool some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the time, but you can’t fool all of the people all of the time.”

In a kind of “pretzel logic” twist and turn, this may be the answer to a cry that found its way into an almost 3,000-year-old poem. You can find Psalm 13 in the family Bible ... or online, if you don’t want to spend the time trying to find where you put it. “How long, O Lord. How long am I to feel anxious in my soul?”

The implication is that there’s an answer to this dislocation of facts and moral integrity. After the darkest night, after all, we are treated to a new dawn.

## The opening door

So, where does this ramble through the Berkshire Hills of memory lead us? To the calendar.

It is 2026. It’s May. Tax time has passed, the yearning for spring that encompasses us all is poking green shoots around stone walls, and the lawn needs its “spring clean-up.” And, it’s midterm season.

Every two years, as citizens of this country, we are offered the right to vote. We are informed of the procedures and processes: how to register, when votes can be recorded, where to go if voting in person is your choice.

Our responsibility, if we choose to accept it (old *Mission Impossible* trigger line for those of a certain age) is to exercise that right and be part of the process that determines who leads, shapes, and manages our democracy for the next two years. Presidential election years get a great deal of justified focus. Midterms need to be elevated to that level. Every seat in the House of Representatives is in play. One third of the Senate is in play.

## AI ... and AT

Certainly it’s a sign of advancing years, but the prospect of our lives being taken over by various iterations of artificial intelligence is daunting. Perhaps previous generations felt the same way about such now-commonplace things that we take for granted in our current lives as automobiles, telephones, indoor plumbing, air travel, more than three, then four channels of television, computers, cell phones, the Internet ... the list can be numbing. As Westbrook Van Voorhis would intone with stentorian power in serialized theatrical documentaries of long ago, we are merely trudging along in “The March of Time.”

We wonder if, more than AI, we need to be fearful of AT – Artificial Truth. The preponderance of lies that go unchallenged and, with rhythmic repetition, seem to become accepted truth is staggering. Beyond simple denial, the fabrication of “facts” and the braggadocio that has become the common undercurrent of seemingly

all political discourse are, at the very least, numbing. The signs of our reaction are quite telling.

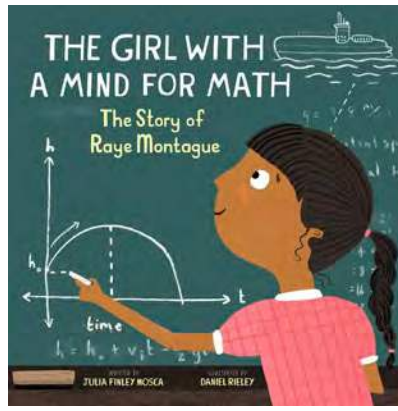
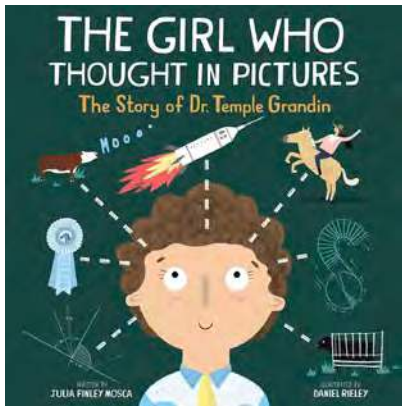
First, there’s selective reading and viewing; some only watch the channels that reinforce their deep-seated beliefs. Second, some engage in hours of painful wailing with like-minded, mostly faceless individuals on various forms of social media. The third circle of descent has some refusing to watch anything that is purportedly “news.” The isolation that indicates having descended to the final level can be both socially and intellectually crippling. We hunger for the truth. We are ravenous when offered the chance to sample unvarnished facts.

And, did we mention it ... it’s the beginning of midterms.

## A casual pact

Let’s make a pact. Let’s “pinky swear” that we’re going to try our very hardest to listen carefully, to read with keen interest, and to make decisions in up-coming elections that will range from choosing members of school boards and planning commissions to members of the United States Senate. Let’s work very hard to see if there might be a grain of truth in what is said ... and a sliver of hope in what might happen.

It was Mark Twain, that witty, insightful, and often-acerbic commentator on American life who noted that in campaigns for public office, “If you tell the truth, you don’t have to remember anything.” ●



# How Julia Finley Mosca's story-telling journey brought her from Pine Plains to Hollywood and beyond



By Thorunn Kristjansdottir  
[info@mainstreetmag.com](mailto:info@mainstreetmag.com)

*If you've ever had those "whatever happened to so-and-so from elementary school" moments and wondered how that person was doing or if they ever achieved their Hollywood dreams, well, wonder no more about Julia Finley Mosca who hailed from Pine Plains, NY. We recently caught up with Julia from where she now resides with her family in Ohio, and she shared with us her whirlwind life story, from her early and informative days in Pine Plains to how her dreams ultimately took her to Hollywood. The surprising twist is how her life took the best and most unexpected turns. One of those turns is a full-circle moment when her alma mater, Seymour Smith, recently celebrated her achievements.*

**How does it feel to know that your alma mater, Seymour Smith, devoted a whole week to you and every grade read your books?**

It definitely feels like a full-circle moment. As a kid in Pine Plains, I used to sit on the front porch of our old Victorian house for hours and day-dream about moving to Hollywood. I had never even been to California, but I loved television and movies and was always focused on that one goal – it was a quiet fire that fueled me through many tumultuous years.

Now that I'm older and actually got to live out that dream, I find myself seeking out the peace of the country a lot more. I love visiting the beautiful Hudson Valley as often as I can, and I love how much more culture and opportunity there is in the small upstate towns – opportunities that were

harder to access when I was a kid. Visiting the area always centers me and brings me back to the quiet mindset that encouraged my imagination to wander in the first place. When I see the students at Seymour Smith studying my books, I'm reminded of myself as a kid in that tiny town – a kid who once allowed myself to dream big and envision something so far away. Elementary kids are just at the beginning of their lives, and I'm honored to be one small part of the many Pine Plains alumni stories that show them all the thousands of different paths that are possible.

**Can you tell us about your path from Pine Plains to Hollywood? And about becoming an author.**

It might take a novel to explain what led to my life today as an author, but I think what it boils down to is that I was always interested in storytelling. As a kid in the 80s, my siblings and I used to hit the streets of Pine Plains with our Fisher Price camcorder and interview all our neighbors on the news of the day. We'd also film movies at the Seymour Smith playground and host premieres for all our friends. My parents recognized these interests and did their best to find outlets for our creative ambition, which wasn't always the easiest in a rural agricultural town at that time. We were very involved in school and local theater productions, which was an influence on my choice of a theater minor in college. But I think one of the biggest elements that influenced my career path was the summer between eighth and ninth grade. I attended a broadcast journalism camp for kids at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, NY. We spent two

weeks using the television studio to make a real news broadcast. By the end, I knew that I wanted to be a TV reporter or weather forecaster, even though no one in my family was part of that industry. Until that point, I was set on being a teacher like my parents. There's really so much truth to that old saying, "You have to see it to be it." I needed that hands-on camp to illuminate a new path.

Eventually, that path led to a broadcast journalism master's program at Syracuse University (Newhouse School of Public Communications), and then my first job as a reporter for an ABC news affiliate in upstate New York near the Canadian border. Still, I always had my sights set on California. In 2002, I quit my job and headed west without a plan (something only a 25-year-old might try!). My younger brother, who was just out of college and doing some acting at the time, decided to make the move with me. We were small-town Pine Plains kids at heart and really had no clue what we were in for. Like a scene out of a movie, we were even robbed in Las Vegas on the way there. They stole our car and took everything we had, even social security cards and birth certificates. So, we arrived in Los Angeles with literally nothing but the clothes on our backs and a zillion hopes and dreams. I still believe those first few years shaped the person I am today. It took everything we had just to stay and survive in a city that loves to chew up and spit out young hopefuls.

Ultimately, I was able to network and meet some television executives, and I wound up posing as a college intern on the Paramount Studios lot.

Top: Four of Julia's books.

Above: Julia Finley Mosca.

All images with this article courtesy of Julia Finley Mosca.

(In my defense, the executives were the ones who suggested it!) Even though I'd previously worked as a professional reporter, I began doing a lot of free grunt work in the *Entertainment Tonight* newsroom for quite a few months while working night shifts at a restaurant to make ends meet. When the head writer of *Breaking Celebrity News* had to take family leave, they asked me to fill in for her. Long story short, I ended up with the position permanently, and that was the start of some of the most stressful and exciting years of my life.

I used to wave at my parents back in Pine Plains some nights during the show's "Live from the Newsroom" segments. It was really another one of those full-circle moments – the kid who used to sit on her porch and dream of Hollywood was now waving back to that house from the most famous movie lot in the world.

Eventually, as many journalists know, the daily grind of the news business – even celebrity news – takes a toll. I was ready for a break, and maybe even a change of career. I took a job with the greeting card company American Greetings, and I ended up staying for almost a decade. I got to do a lot of fun copywriting during that time, and it was there that I met my husband, an artist and creative director originally from Cleveland, OH. After we had our daughter, I left the full-time corporate world and started doing a lot of freelance writing for some major brands – many of them related to children's products. That's when my publisher, The Innovation Press in Seattle, came across my writing portfolio and reached out with an idea about a cool new children's book series. Fast forward to where I am today: an author, runner, and mom living in my husband's hometown of Cleveland – still eternally grateful and amazed at how things have all panned out. Life has really led me down a winding road, but again, at the heart of the journey has always been that unwavering love of words and storytelling.

**Talk to us about your books: What is the significance of the age group that your books are meant for as well as the subject matter?**

The *Amazing Scientists* series is a fun and educational collection of biographies for kids. Each book details the life of an inspiring American female pioneer in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). What makes our series unique is that we specifically chose innovators who overcame significant personal obstacles in their journey to bring groundbreaking contributions to the world.

The first book in the series, and the bestselling by far, tells the story of Dr. Temple Grandin, who was diagnosed with autism at a young age. Doctors told her mother that Temple would never speak and should be institutionalized. But Temple persevered. With dedication and a great support network, she used her unique mind to invent devices and systems that revolutionized the slaughterhouse industry, making it more compassionate for animals. Today, despite those early predictions, she travels the globe as a renowned speaker and advocate for autistic people. Some of the other phenomenal scientists in the series are Dr. Patricia Bath, who founded the American Institute for the Prevention of Blindness, Raye Montague, an engineer known as one of the US Navy's "Hidden Figures," and Dr. Ellen Ochoa, the world's first Latina astronaut.

The books are written in rhyme, so they're fun read-alouds for smaller children, but they also contain extensive biographies and backmatter at the end for those who want to dig deeper. To put it simply, they're stories of badass women we all should have learned about, but probably didn't – women of many different backgrounds who broke down barriers and accomplished amazing things.

I clearly wrote them to inspire little girls, but I've been quick to correct a lot of parents who think this series is only for girls. It's just as important (or even more important) for boys to see and celebrate accomplished women. We wouldn't think twice about buying a book about Albert Einstein or Benjamin Franklin for a girl, so why should the mindset be any different when it comes to boys reading books about female pioneers? I've also had lots of adults tell me they enjoyed the



A little then and now with how it started for Julia as a news reporter in upstate New York, to now being a published children's book author.



book as much as their kids did and loved learning about these heroes they hadn't known.

Writing this series was a natural fit for me as a journalist. While I do enjoy writing fiction, nonfiction is easier, simply because of my former career. In television news, you're basically writing a short story for the air every day. You have a very limited period of time to hit the high points and convey the information in a compelling way. You also want to carefully choose the best images/video that support your story. All of this is the same in picture books, so in a way I had years of practice before finally getting my lucky break as an author.

#### **How did it feel to publish your first book, and then consequent books?**

It felt beyond my wildest dreams. I think one of the most pinch-me moments of my life was when a friend stumbled upon my first book displayed in Barnes & Noble at The Grove LA, a famous Los Angeles shopping district. As a young "starving artist" in my twenties, I spent so many afternoons sipping coffee and filling out job applications in that very store. But my dream was always to be a news reporter or to work in television. Writing books was not something I ever expected or sought out, at least not children's books. If anything, I always hoped I might write a novel one day. So, this whole children's book author part of my journey is an unexpected side act that ended up taking center stage. That's why it's difficult to give people helpful advice

when they ask about the path to being published. It wasn't a path I purposely pursued.

When I was pregnant with my daughter and working as a copywriter for a brand and show called *StoryBots*, I wrote a lot of the copy in rhyme – copy that taught kids about different science topics in a fun way. My publisher, The Innovation Press, happened to be looking to publish a new children's book series about women in STEM. They were a fan of *The StoryBots* style and reached out to me through my LinkedIn portfolio. I liked their idea and wrote some sample stanzas for them. They must have liked them, because they ended up offering me a two-book contract with a real advance (money paid to the author upfront).

The whole thing was so exciting, because I knew nothing about the publishing world. I would also learn later that this was not how the publishing world usually works at all! In fact, my husband wasn't sure I should sign the initial deal, because he said, "This sounds pretty shady. Publishers don't look for authors; it's the other way around." We now joke that it's a good thing I didn't listen to his skepticism, or I'd probably be unpublished to this day.

At the time, I figured writing these books would be a really fun passion project, and it would be cool to have something printed – a real book that I could give my family for Christmas.

Continued on next page ...

That's truly as far as I imagined it would go. But then, the first book about Temple Grandin was released, and it sold 10,000 copies in its first month. I was completely shocked. I thought, "Oh my God... okay ... maybe this really is something." Four years after that, The Innovation Press was named a Publisher's Weekly "Fastest Growing Small Press" and my Amazing Scientists series had sold approximately half a million copies.

Today, we've reached roughly double that number, with translations in over a dozen languages and distribution deals with educational giants like Scholastic Book Clubs, National Geographic, and Follett. The books have been awarded and recognized by prominent groups and associations including The National Science Teachers Association, *School Library Journal*, PBS, *HuffPost*, A Mighty Girl, and the New York and Chicago Public Libraries and have won state awards including "The Grand Canyon Reader Award" (Arizona) and the Connecticut Governor's "Summer reading Challenge". Knock on wood, the books continue to get press (especially during Women's History Month), which every author will warn you is something you should never count on. I know that there will come a day when we make our final print run and the books are no longer relevant in the marketplace. In the meantime, I feel privileged and lucky every single day that I've been able to continue to make a steady income and be a stay-at-home parent for my daughter. That is truly winning the lottery in the world of writing, and I don't take it for granted. I also can't take much

credit for it. If anything, my publisher deserves that, since I believe the success of this series is in big part due to timing.

These books were some of the first in the big wave of girl power biographies that flooded the market around 2017. We caught that wave at precisely the right moment. It's something even the industry can't predict. At the end of the day, the only thing I will accept credit for is staying dedicated to my craft. While this story of being discovered by a publisher is rare, it wasn't random either. I spent almost two decades writing all kinds of copy for pennies (and rarely a by-line). Even when I was working nights as a restaurant hostess at a celebrity hotspot, Morton's Steakhouse in Burbank, where Jay Leno's *Tonight Show* guests would dine after the show, I turned that into an opportunity to write. I started a restaurant newsletter about the stars that had dined there that week, and I interviewed the servers and bussers (most of whom were aspiring actors themselves). I found a way to bring writing into every single job I ever held. And so, when my publisher came across my extensive writing portfolio online and offered me a book deal, that was the culmination of all that writing and honing my skills.

My advice to young people is that you never know which way your path might turn. A job that seems menial, or unaligned with your ultimate goals, could actually turn out to be a stepping stone to reaching them ... or it could be the thing that launches you into a whole new unexpected and even better universe!

**Can you talk about the illustrations in the books?**

Daniel Rieley, a freelance illustrator based in Europe, was the perfect artist for this series. Since science can sometimes be so abstract, it's often difficult for little kids to conceptualize certain concepts (I'll even admit that science was my worst subject in school!). Good illustrations are key. There are times in these stories that I wasn't able to explain things in depth with words, so I relied on Daniel's talent to convey those aspects through art. For example, in the story of Temple Gran-



Above: Julia speaking and presenting her books. Below: Julia with her husband and daughter.



din, he did a wonderful job illustrating many of the ways she made farms more compassionate for animals. I also love his use of color and youthful, exaggerated images. One thing people always find interesting is that he and I have never spoken or met in person – even though I would love to! Our publisher coordinated everything, which is pretty common.

**What is your favorite book that you've published?**

All of them! A parent can't choose a favorite.

**Do you have any literary heroes or authors/books that inspired you?**

I have too many favorites to count. Wally Lamb is probably number one. John Irving (who I was star-struck to meet in Los Angeles once) and Jeanette Walls are another two lifetime favorites. Some newer authors I love are Helen Oyeyemi, and I'm currently reading the memoir *Solito* by Javier Zamora with my 11-year-old. Our favorite middle-grade author is Sharon Draper who wrote the book *Out of My Mind*, and we also loved *Fish in A Tree* by Lynda Mullaly Hunt, about a child with dyslexia. My daughter is like me: we are drawn to darker books with a major main character struggle or trauma of some sort. Nothing like a little light reading!

But seriously, I just love reading. I was the kid who wouldn't put down a

book, and if there weren't any books around, I read whatever was in sight, cereal boxes (which I'm sure helped me in later life as a copywriter), insurance pamphlets on the kitchen counter – it didn't matter, I was just drawn to words. As an adult, I don't read as much as I used to, but I'm an unreliable member of multiple book clubs and have gotten pretty good at speed reading. Book clubs are fun, because I like the pressure to explore and discuss a book that I probably wouldn't have chosen myself.

**What does the future hold?**

These days I'm spending the majority of my time running, as I train for the Cleveland and Chicago Marathons. But I'm always working on a few projects. One is an adult novel (so that could be years away!), and I'm finalizing a manuscript for an annual children's book contest I like to enter every spring. It's another STEM biography – this time about an inspiring woman in the automotive world. The subject matter was actually brought to me by a fellow Pine Plains classmate! So, we'll see how it's received, and maybe I'll have some news on that one in the future. Fingers crossed! •

*To learn more about Julia Finley Mosca and her books, find her on Instagram and Facebook @JuliaFinleyMosca, and to learn more about the book series visit [amazingscientists.com](http://amazingscientists.com).*

# Growing your business with ideas and action

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

Services:

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



*Thorunn*  
 designs

518.592.1135 | [thorunn@thorunn designs.com](mailto:thorunn@thorunn designs.com)  
[www.thorunn designs.com](http://www.thorunn designs.com) | 135 Rt. 44, Millerton, NY



## PALEY'S MARKET and GARDEN CENTER

### The Gardeners' Paradise

Our Greenhouse & Nursery are filled with:  
 Annuals, Perennials and Nursery Stock  
 Herb & Vegetable Starts • Many Tomatoes  
 Tropicals and Succulents • Hanging Baskets  
 Planted Containers & Window Boxes  
 Vegetable and Flower Seeds for Planting  
 Pottery & Decor • Gifts for Garden & Home  
 Garden Tools, Supplies & Accessories

*- and in our market beginning in mid-May -*  
 Fresh Produce • Local Cheeses & Dairy  
 Fresh Baked Goods • Specialty Foods

230 Amenia Rd (Rt. 343) • Sharon, CT 06069  
 860-364-0674 • Open 7 days a week  
 Open daily 9-5

See our Holiday hours on our website.

**PaleyMarket.com**

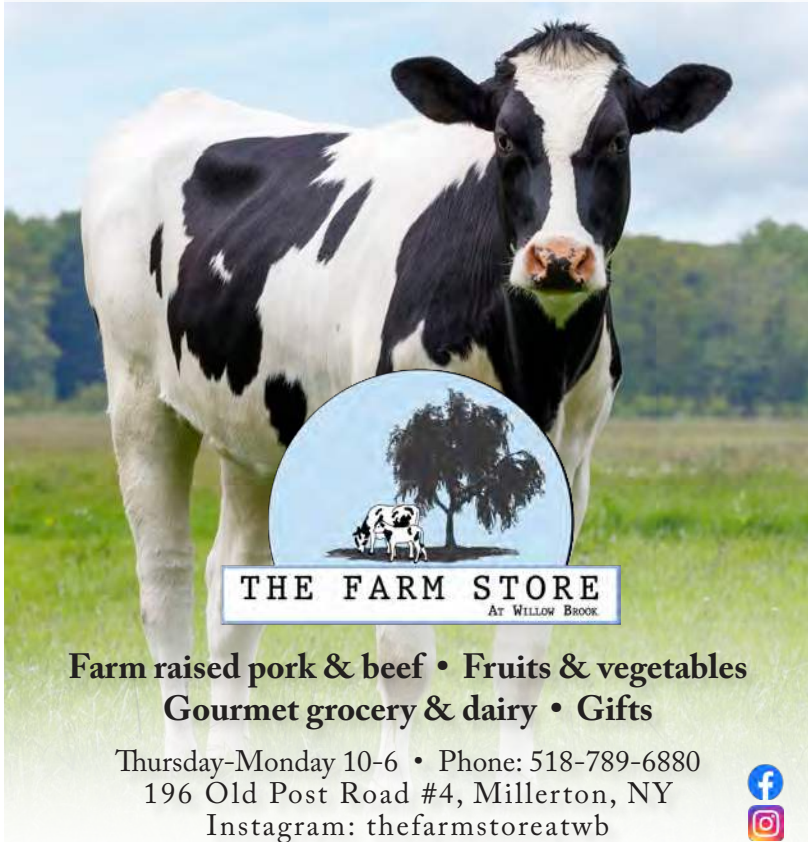


Join our E-list to receive news and special offers.



*Opening for the season May 9th!*


*Mother's Day gifts & hanging baskets available.*



**THE FARM STORE**  
AT WILLOW BROOK

Farm raised pork & beef • Fruits & vegetables  
Gourmet grocery & dairy • Gifts

Thursday-Monday 10-6 • Phone: 518-789-6880  
196 Old Post Road #4, Millerton, NY  
Instagram: thefarmstoreatwb



# HILLSDALE FINE WINE & SPIRITS

*Cheers to the beginning of summer!*

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

Hours: Sun and Mon 12 to 5pm  
Tuesday - Saturday 10-6pm  
Curbside pick-up available!

**518.325.4010**

8 Anthony Street in Hillsdale, NY  
behind Freshtown Marketplace



**Only For You and Only at...**



**Service Your Cars, SUVs, Trucks & Commercial Vehicles With The Pro's For Less Than You'd Expect!**



182 Route 44, Millerton  
**(518)789-4477 • NorthEastFord.com**

*The ideal venue & location for your perfect day*

## CatskillView weddings & events



Call 518 592 1135 • [CatskillViewWeddings.com](http://CatskillViewWeddings.com)



*Llama yoga, goat walks, weaving classes – a lot of irons in the fire at*  
**CLOVER BROOKE FARM**

By Barbara Peduzzi  
[info@mainstreetmag.com](mailto:info@mainstreetmag.com)

“After retirement, I was just gonna sit back and knit, with a few animals,” Andrea Parent-Tibbetts laughed. Well, she does knit, and over 100 animals could be called a few, right? But she’s definitely not just sitting back, and those ‘few’ animals have led to a host of things happening with them at the family’s Clover Brooke Farm near Hyde Park, NY.

Llamas and alpacas share pastures with several types of sheep and goats, all chosen for their fiber coats, which go into her knitting. More than just providing the many varieties of wool, though, the animals earn their grass and hay by starring in hikes and yoga, and educating people about their history and care.

**Education, fiber and hands-on therapy**

“I liked the idea of developing and working on things with our own product, taking it from A to B – no, from A to Z,” Parent-Tibbetts said. With her 30 years of experience in school administration, “I was always focused on education. I had as much fiber as I ever wanted,” so it was only natural that she developed classes on working with it. Fiber art has really grown in the past decade, she

explained, “It’s a nice outlet to learn and teach. There’s a lot of hands-on therapy.”

**How it started and how it’s going**

The Clover Brooke name came about when daughter Brooke needed a farm name when she joined 4-H. She put her own and her first goat’s, Clover, together. It moved with the family when they purchased the 1850 former dairy farm in 2016. Today’s enterprise started as a hobby farm; they had dairy goats from 2008 to 2023. Along the way, wanting to do something different, they added llamas and alpacas, and then sheep, creating what Parent-Tibbetts now considers basically a fiber farm.

Their animals have always been pets, and the number of them kept growing. During COVID, she told her daughter Kathryn, “There are way too many goats. If you can find a way to make money with them, you can keep them.”

The younger Tibbetts came back with, “Offer goat walks,” and a new business began, which she structured and runs.

“The walks are amazing,” her mother said, “Goats with collars and leashes are like badly behaved dogs.”

The llamas and alpacas were added to the walks, and then, “We inherited two miniature donkeys, so we do

donkey walks, too.” They have always been hands-on with the animals, which makes them better behaved for their hikes and other interactions.

The fiber classes started in 2019, and moved into a renovated barn in 2024. More classes are slowly being added, along with bringing in guest artists. Education is foremost, both about the animals and with the classes.

**Llamas and alpacas, the new guard dogs?**

The llama and alpaca hikes are the most popular farm offerings, being unique, unusual, and “not traditional.” Parent-Tibbetts said, “They’re cute, fluffy, and large and have always been interesting. People like their personality.” She added that their competition for the hikes is “cow-cuddling,” done with Highland cows and not one of their offerings.

The major aim is to get people onto the farm and make them aware that what they eat and use, “doesn’t just show up in the grocery store. A lot goes into getting it there.”

“The real reason we got llamas was that we had dairy goats and were hesitant to get guardian dogs to protect them against predators. A friend said ‘how about llamas?’ We found a rescue and got them.”

Before taking on any animals,

Parent-Tibbetts considers: “What will their job be? They can’t be on the farm without a purpose.” For most, the primary use is contributing to the fiber business. The hikes with animals are an added attraction, to bring people to the farm.

**Fiber quality**

She very much values diversity in the fibers produced and said the sheep wool is a very important additive in developing skeins of yarn. Blending and expanding offerings depends upon markets. The yarns are colored by eco-dyeing, with plant-based materials. The children’s summer camp Color Chromatic teaches this.

For the hikes, safety is paramount, so there is a guide for each experience, instructing hikers on how to act around the animals. During the walk, they also give information on the animals and species.

**The animals and their welfare**

Among the collection are two miniature donkeys which were rehomed to Clover Brooke. “Mini donkeys can live 40 to 50 years. We got them in their teens; they’ll be in my will,” she laughed. Their job is to go on walks with people.

Continued on next page ...



Top, L-R: ‘C’mon, c’mon,’ Andrea Parent-Tibbetts entices two of the sheep to stop grazing a few moments to be petted. Miniature donkeys Jay (brown) and Lee (grey) were ‘inherited’ and earn their keep giving donkey walks. Above, L-R: Alpacas check out two-legged interlopers in their pasture. Smaller than llamas, they can be told apart by the shape of their nose and hairline. Caps and gloves, hand-knit from fibers harvested off Clover Brooke Farm llamas, alpacas, sheep and goats are available in the store. Below, right: Andrea Parent-Tibbetts snuggles a Pygora goat, kept for the mohair fiber they produce as well as taking walks with people. All images by Barbara Peduzzi. Previous page: Any day could be a beautiful one for a hike with a llama or alpaca, or a walk with miniature donkeys or Pygora goats at Clover Brooke Farm. Photo courtesy of Clover Brooke.

About 80% of the animals are rescued or rehomed, “People got them and then changed their mind,” she said, shaking her head.

Asked about favorites, Parent-Tibbetts said, “Llamas are my number one love. People like alpacas, but they really love goats.” Personalities are very different, she explained, “Sheep will run, but goats are curious.”

“Advocacy for my animals is key,” she vowed, saying that the Internet too often leads people to say the worst, especially about llamas spitting. “If acclimated and handled correctly, they won’t.” She has seen postings showing people unfortunately teasing the animals to the point where they do spit.

“People are surprised by how personable they are. They enjoy being stroked and walked quietly beside,” she defended her animals. “People usually leave with a new appreciation of llamas, alpacas, and the farm.” The animals, she added, seem to really enjoy their limited time with people.

Asked about having any special moments with the animals, she responded, “What I find special among some of them is the crossover with maternal care to other species. When a guard

animal of another species beds down to take care of them, it’s an extra level of protection.”

She recalled having baby goats and having trouble getting past the guard llama to care for them.

#### A family farm that continues to grow and evolve

She says it is important for people to know they are a family farm, “Our experiences are small. We’re focused on mental health, with small group settings.”

Youth development is also a main focus. More and more schools are coming to the farm from New York City, looking for a day experience. They work with an education program for students, bringing them for one day out of the city.

“We have a lot of irons in the fire,” she stated. “Most important to me, we have ‘women power’ to manage things.”

Parent-Tibbetts considers the farm a part of agri-tourism. They are not a 501(c)(3), and are looking into scholarships for the camps, which cost below the average.

Acres of open pastures were overgrown when they bought the farm. Regenerative use clearing helped amend the soil and now the animals grazing, especially moving the goat

‘ground crew’ around, helps keep invasive growth down. “We wanted to bring back the land to be truly useful.”

Llamas and alpacas are ruminants, members of the camelid family, with llamas usually being larger by 100 or so pounds. Parent-Tibbetts can tell individuals apart by hairlines and nose shapes. One issue they face is that veterinarians are not familiar with the species, so many who raise them must rely on each other when one is ill. “Llamas are very stoic and won’t show pain, so you have to pick up on nuances.”

The renovated barn has a comfortable sitting area, kitchen, and counter and an open room with a large work table and windows overlooking the pastures. Weavings on the wall and models of native animals decorate the space, souvenirs of a fiber tour to Peru which she described as, “impressive. Their weaving is unbelievable.”

The Clover Brooke website shows more about their many offerings. Among those are farm tours for children and adults, focusing on education on the significance and history of their animals, how people and animals co-exist, and the best ways to interact with animals.

#### “Llamatse” yoga, Fearless Farmer, and so much more

Yoga practitioners who want something beyond going through the moves with goats or puppies can sign up for “llamatse” yoga. Classes for weaving, soap and lotion making, and needle felting are also available.

Fearless Farmer children’s camps teach farming in connection with ecosystems and the environment, the importance and care of the different farm animals, and creative eco-crafts such as dye making with natural plant colors.

The upcoming Tea Time and Llama and Alpacas on May 23 will benefit John Jay FFA and 4-H Spitters Youth Clubs, both of which focus on agriculture.

The website also reveals an Airbnb, beer brewing, loofah and fiber bowl making, and more. As Parent-Tibbetts said, there are indeed a lot of irons in the fire.

And, just in case there’s not enough

going on at this farm, a “short way down the road” is a new space being turned into the Hudson Valley Equine Center. Along with boarding horses, they plan to offer ground-based therapy, with no actual riding. Veterans will get first consideration for that. She explained they are making connections, networking, and holding meetings to see how they can best support organizations and individuals. A meeting with Congressman Pat Ryan showed him the importance of the center to veterans and to all those needing the therapy. Their instructor is a veteran and former high school teacher who has dealt with PTSD; “She used her horses as a therapy tool and learned a lot on how to use them for others.”

“People come here and leave with a new appreciation; they recognize the time and effort that goes into the farm. And, they enjoy their time with the animals chosen,” Parent-Tibbetts mused. “It’s about people coming who have something in their life and need quiet time. What we take for granted, they don’t have. They can re-center, have it be restorative, and find mindfulness.”

As we finished talking, she headed across the road to re-center with two neighbors already having a mailbox conversation, saying, “This is what I like so much about living in the country.” Sit back and knit? Just a few animals? Maybe someday, but not yet at Clover Brooke Farm. •

You can visit Clover Brooke Farm at 175 Ruskey Ln, Hyde Park, NY, or find out more online at [cloverbrookefarm.com](http://cloverbrookefarm.com).



# MAINSTREET moxie

THE PODCAST

**“We’re talking ‘bout some moxie!”**

**Our guests come from all walks of life and are an inspiration.  
They share their stories and give our listeners advice on  
how they too can cultivate their own moxie.**

**DON'T MISS A THING! CLICK "SUBSCRIBE" AND LISTEN EVERYWHERE  
YOU LISTEN TO PODCASTS: APPLE PODCAST, SPOTIFY, AMAZON MUSIC,  
YOUTUBE, IHEARTRADIO, PODCHASER, POCKET CASTS,  
AND MORE! OR LISTEN ON OUR WEBSITE**

**Follow us on social media or  
visit our website [mainstreetmoxie.press](http://mainstreetmoxie.press)**



# Get into the comfort zone.

with Herrington Fuels cooling services.



**Herrington Fuels**  
It's all about comfort.

- A/C maintenance and repair
- Installation of Central Air and Mini-Split Systems

(518) 325-6700 [herringtonfuels.com](http://herringtonfuels.com)



**HARNEY & SONS**  
MASTER TEA BLENDERS  
EST. 1983

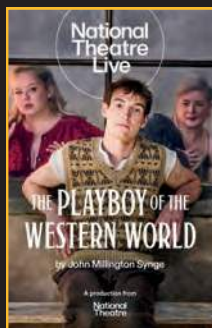
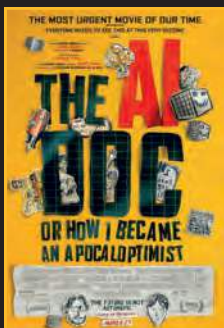
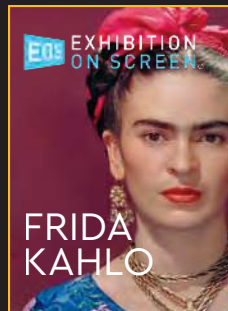
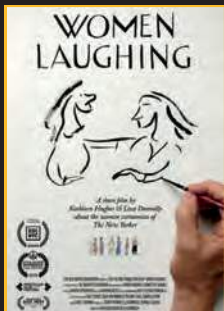
Make Tea Your  
Everyday Luxury

Find your next favorite blend  
at [www.harney.com](http://www.harney.com).



**The Moviehouse**  
WHERE FILM MATTERS. Since 1978.

**MAY**



MET LIVE: EUGENE ONEGIN | WOMEN LAUGHING + Q&A

HOLLYWOOD'S MERMAID / BATHING BEAUTY + Q&A

EXHIBITION ON SCREEN: FRIDA KAHLO

THE A.I. DOC + Q&A | NT LIVE: PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD

MET LIVE: EL ÚLTIMO SUEÑO DE FRIDA Y DIEGO

48 Main St. Millerton, NY

[themoviehouse.net](http://themoviehouse.net)



*Gifts for Him, Her, & Home*

CREED, BIGELOW, FILSON, TOAST,  
FARROW & BALL AND MORE...

[www.dutchesstradingco.com](http://www.dutchesstradingco.com)

42 Main Street | Millerton, NY 12546

Hours: Friday - Sunday 11am - 5pm

# All About Anxiety

By Regina Molaro  
info@mainstreetmag.com



It's May! Beyond Mother's Day, National Nurses Day, Armed Forces Day, and Memorial Day weekend, May also marks Mental Health Awareness Month. Observed since 1949, its mission is to reduce stigma, boost awareness, and support mental wellness.

Led by organizations such as Mental Health America and National Alliance on Mental Illness, Mental Health Awareness Month is recognized with community events and offers education and other resources to support all who are impacted.

## Anxiety 101

So, let's talk about anxiety. Within the last decade, there's been a surge in anxiety due to a perfect storm of factors – from the pandemic, the political divide, and inflation to the around-the-clock news cycle delivered via social media and the Internet.

The Anxiety & Depression Association of America states that everyone experiences stress and anxiety at one time or another. It's just a matter of how much stress and if it impacts daily life. The difference between stress and anxiety is that stress is a response to a threat in a situation and anxiety is a reaction to stress.

## Common signs and symptoms

According to the Mayo Clinic, common signs and symptoms of anxiety include feeling nervous, restless, or tense; having a sense of impending danger, panic, or doom; having an increased heart rate; or breathing rapidly (hyperventilation). Other symptoms and signs: sweating, trembling, feeling weak or tired, having trouble concentrating, or not being able to think about anything other than the present worry. There's more. They include having difficulty sleeping, having an upset stomach or other problems with digestion, having difficulty controlling worry, or having the urge to avoid things that trigger anxiety. That's a lot.

Whether in good times or bad, most people say that stress interferes at least moderately with their lives. It's important to note that chronic stress

can impact a person's health, causing headaches, high blood pressure, chest pain, heart palpitations, skin rashes, and loss of sleep.

## Ways to reduce stress

Luckily, there are ways to manage symptoms. Physical activity is a proven way to reduce stress. Regular participation in aerobic exercise has been shown to decrease overall levels of tension, elevate and stabilize mood, and improve sleep and self-esteem. Other effective methods include mind-body practices of breathing exercises, yoga, and meditation.

## Anxiety disorders

There's a difference between occasionally feeling anxious and having an anxiety disorder. According to the Mayo Clinic, people with anxiety disorders frequently have intense, excessive, and persistent worry and fear about everyday situations. Often, anxiety disorders involve repeated episodes of sudden feelings of intense anxiety and fear or terror that reach a peak within minutes; those are panic attacks.

These feelings of anxiety and panic interfere with daily activities, are difficult to control, are out of proportion to actual danger, and can last a long time. People who experience this may avoid places or situations to prevent these feelings. Symptoms may start during childhood or the teen years and continue into adulthood.

According to the Anxiety & Depression Association of America, anxiety disorders develop from a complex set of risk factors, including genetics, brain chemistry, personality, and life events. The most common mental illness in the US, anxiety disorders affect 40 million adults (19.1% of the population) age 18 and up, every year. Although highly treatable, only one in four people in need (27.6%)

Continued on next page ...

receives treatment. It's not uncommon for someone with an anxiety disorder to also suffer from depression or vice versa. Nearly one-half of those diagnosed with depression are also diagnosed with an anxiety disorder.

### Types of anxiety disorders

It's important to note that a person can have more than one anxiety disorder. Sometimes anxiety results from a medical condition that needs treatment. Whatever form of anxiety a person has, treatment can certainly help. Here are a few anxiety disorders.

**Generalized anxiety disorder** is persistent and excessive anxiety and worry about activities or events, even ordinary, routine issues. The worry is out of proportion to the actual circumstance, is difficult to control, and affects how you feel physically. It often occurs along with other anxiety disorders or depression. Women are twice as likely to be affected as men.

There's also **social anxiety disorder**, which involves high levels of anxiety, fear, and avoidance of social situations due to feelings of embarrassment, self-consciousness, and concern about being judged or viewed negatively by others. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, social anxiety disorder is equally common among men and women and typically begins around age 13. According to a 2007 Anxiety & Depression Association of America survey, 36% of people with social anxiety disorder report experiencing symptoms for 10 or more years before seeking help.

Specific phobias are characterized by major anxiety when someone is exposed to a specific object or situation and a desire to avoid it. In some people, phobias provoke panic attacks.

Finally, there's anxiety disorder, which is due to a medical condition. It includes symptoms of intense anxiety or panic that is directly caused by a physical health problem. Of course, there are other types of disorders.

For more information, explore the websites of the Anxiety & Depression Association of America, Mental Health America, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the National Institute of Mental Health, or the Mayo

Clinic. Also, speak to a mental health professional about getting help.

### Stay calm

For those who don't have intense, excessive, and persistent worry and fear about everyday situations, *Main Street* addresses that general, uncomfortable feeling of being anxious and provides some tips on how we can calm our nervous systems within minutes. Luckily, there are lots of ways to de-stress while soothing our minds and bodies.

The Mayo Clinic cites the benefits of mindfulness. A state of being mindful and aware of the present moment, mindfulness is a type of meditation in which a person focuses on their thoughts, feelings, body, and surroundings. It is done without judgment. There's only awareness of the moment as it is. Research has shown that mindfulness can support both mental and physical well-being. Almost anyone can benefit from this practice.

Mindful.org highlights meditation as a means of lowering stress levels, improving focus, and being kinder to ourselves. The website defines meditation as "a practice that involves focusing attention (often via the breath) to cultivate mindfulness, calm, and clarity." Benefits include reducing stress, boosting emotional health, deepening self-awareness, enhancing sleep quality, strengthening immunity, and building mental resilience.

Beginners who are interested in practicing meditation can find a quiet, comfortable place to sit. Set a short time limit of 5 to 10 minutes. During that time, focus on the breath and notice bodily sensations. When distractions occur (because they will), gently return your focus to your breath. End with a moment of kindness and self-reflection.

### Regulating the nervous system

Dr. Nicole LaPera, renowned as "the Holistic Psychologist," is a leader in holistic psychology and has a global community of more than 12 mil-

lion people. Her work fuses clinical psychology with holistic principles and empowers people to become their own healers.

On her Instagram (@the.holistic.psychologist), Dr. LaPera has posted about how when a person rushes, their nervous system automatically goes into fight or flight. She advises her followers to bring a sense of calm by moving slower through their tasks. She also suggests slowing down the breath to calm down and walking, which helps the brain make sense of what's happening. She said: "Walk after a fight. Walk when your mind is spinning. Walk when you need to remember who you are."

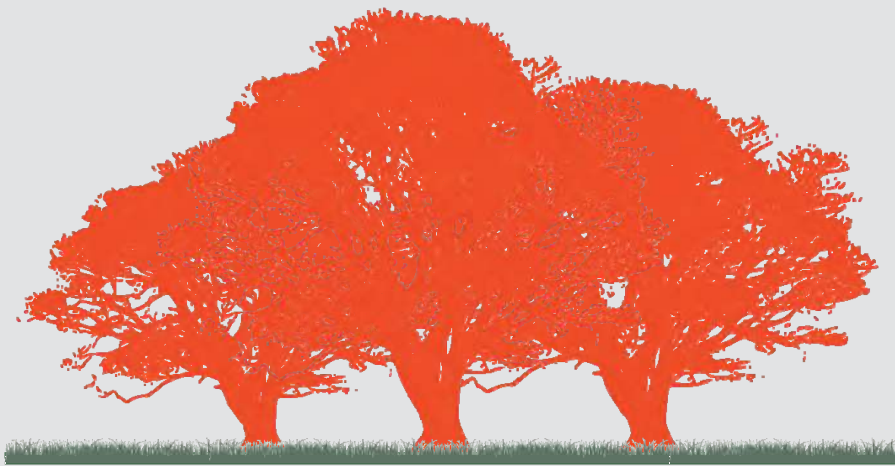
Dr. LaPera says that irritability is the first sign that your nervous system is dysregulated. She suggests eating something high in protein or fat to stabilize blood sugar. Then take a brisk

walk. This will help your body move into a regulated state.

There are lots of ways to keep calm and carry on, so try some of these tactics the next time you're feeling anxious. Through frequent practice, you'll start to see results and feel empowered that you have the tools to get through stressful situations. Just start by taking a deep breath. •

*\*Disclaimer: All medical claims made in this article are based on the organizations cited and information provided by the cited sources. The information is general in nature and not specifically meant for any particular individual. You should always seek out medical assistance from a medical professional based on your individual needs and circumstances.*





# SHARON LAWN & LANDSCAPE



## LANDSCAPING

Terrace and Walk Installation  
Tree and Shrub Supply and Planting  
Lawn Installation  
Retaining Walls



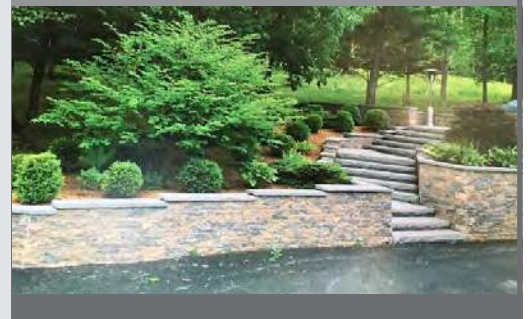
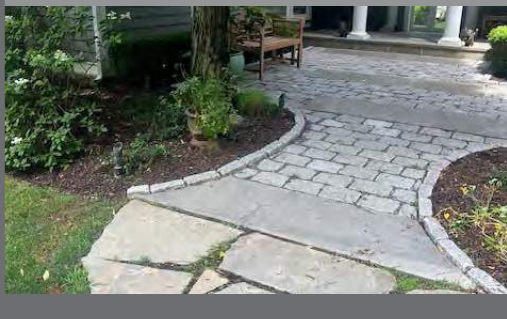
## EXCAVATION

Full-Service Site Prep  
Land clearing / Tree Takedowns  
Driveway Repair and Installation  
Electric and Water Line Excavation



## GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

Edging and Mulching  
Bed Maintenance  
Lawn Care  
Lawn Treatment Programs  
Spring and Fall Clean-ups  
Winter Maintenance



## Commercial & Residential

Licensed | Insured | Credit Cards Accepted

**(860) 672-5260 | [Sharonlawnandlandscape@yahoo.com](mailto:Sharonlawnandlandscape@yahoo.com)**



Aimee Filosidis  
Millerton Branch Manager

## Banking is better when it's local.

Aimee Filosidis, manager of our Millerton branch, will tell you that at Bank of Millbrook, local isn't just a word – it's who we are. With deep roots in the communities we serve, we combine personalized service with the financial expertise you expect. It's how we do business every day, helping our customers benefit from:

- Competitive rates
- Decisions made quickly, right here at home
- Flexible solutions for both individuals and businesses

At Bank of Millbrook, we're proud to be part of the communities we serve.

**BANK OF MILLBROOK**

*The Strength of Relationships*



(845) 677-5321 [BANKOFMILLBROOK.COM](http://BANKOFMILLBROOK.COM)