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OPENING DAY



2026 Trout Fishing Season in upstate New York officially opened on April 1, and here's Ron Kutkiewicz of Roxbury with his "opening day" Brown Trout.

This 20 inch beauty hit on his second cast of the fishing season.

Ron and his wife moved up from Eastern Long Island 20 years ago and he has never missed an opening day since.

"It's a very exciting day for me. I start counting down the days at Thanksgiving to the official start of the season and this one looks to be a good one," Ron says, and there is nowhere he'd rather be than in the Catskills on Opening Day.

Wet a Line

"New York's season opener is a welcome sign of spring for trout anglers," DEC Commissioner Amanda Lefton said. "I encourage anglers to introduce someone new to recreational fishing this year and enjoy Getting Offline and Getting Outside to experience some of the greatest freshwater fishing opportunities in the nation."

The NYS DEC is stocking over 1.7 million brook, brown, and rainbow trout across the state, though our early spring weather can lead to challenging, high-water conditions.

Key Information for Anglers

General season runs

April 1 – Oct 15

Daily limit is five fish (total), with no more than two longer than 12 inches.

A valid NYS fishing license is mandatory.

Check the NYS DEC website for specific county schedules.

Use the HuntFishNY mobile app for real-time regulations and to view your license.

Many anglers target traditional spots like Limestone, Butternut, and Ninemile Creek in Central New York, but stocked fish can be found in streams statewide.

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HSM announces cast of "Voices from the Delaware Frontier"

The Historical Society of the Town of Middletown will bring to life soldiers, spies and ordinary citizens trying to make sense of a changing world when it presents "Voices from the Delaware Frontier," a living history program to mark the 250th anniversary of the Revolutionary War.

The performance, to be held at The Open Eye Theater, Margaretville July 11 and 12, will feature eight local actors in period costume describing how their lives were upended by the rupture with Great Britain in 1776. Middletown was part of Ulster County at the time, and the area along the East Branch of the Delaware River was considered the "frontier" between Indian territory to the west and the more heavily populated and strategically important Hudson Valley.

"Voices" will introduce audiences to survivors of battles and prisons, to local Loyalists who sided with Britain, to area settlers kidnapped, murdered and burned out of their homes. There is even a doomed love story in the mix!

"Voices" players include Gary Falk as Valley Forge veteran Elijah Parker; Burr Hubbell as Issachar Robinson who survived six months in the infamous Sugar House prison in New York City; Michael Fairbairn as militia man Jacob VanBenschoten, and Amy Taylor



as tavern keeper Catherine VanWaggonen who comforted the dying Harmonus Dumond, shot in a case of mistaken identity.

John Bernhardt and Steven Hitt will portray wealthy Patriot George Sands and his Tory son Abel Sands. Rebecca Newman will appear as Mary "Polly" Yapple Avery recounting her teenage tryst with the Native known as Teunis.

The youngest member of the cast, Casey Eminowicz, 15, a freshman at Kingston High School, will describe the trials of Benjamin Burgher who was kidnapped and taken on a 300-mile journey by foot and canoe to Fort Niagara.

Directors of this living history presentation are Joyce St. George and Frank Canavan.

The themed program, presented as a series of monologues, replaces for this year the Living History Cemetery Tour for which HSM has become famous. The tour (both armchair and on-site versions) will return in 2027.

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Ideas for nurturing—or rediscovering!—your **INNER CHILD**

As you get older, it can become harder to maintain a sense of wonder or approach life with a lighthearted attitude. Worrying about what others think about you or the fear of appearing “unserious” can hold you back. Is it still possible to let your inner child shine? Here are a few ideas to explore.

SPEND TIME OUTDOORS

Hiking in the mountains or walking in the park are excellent ways to refocus on the present moment. A connection with nature allows you to engage your senses the way you did as a child. Take a moment to smell the flowers, listen to the birds singing and touch the bark of a tree. You’re sure to feel younger.

INDULGE IN A SWEET TREAT

Children love sweets, and for good reason. These foods activate the brain’s reward system. If your health allows, go ahead and indulge. Does a particular treat remind you of family outings or friends from school? Savour it fully to relive those wonderful memories.

REVISIT AN OLD HOBBY

Remember how you loved to sketch and doodle when you were younger? Were you quite skilled at playing the guitar or piano? Set aside a few moments throughout the week to explore an activity you’ve left behind over the years. It will boost your mood



and help nurture your creative side, two essentials for keeping your mind sharp.

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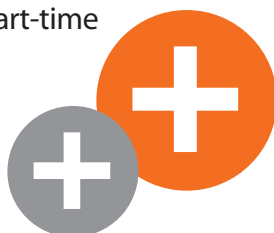
but mostly

FOR THE FUN!

If you've recently retired—or even if it's been a few years—you may still miss the satisfaction of a productive day. Even with financial security, a part-time job can add structure, purpose and extra income. Many retirees say the “fun” factor is a big reason they return to work.

Sharing projects, joking with coworkers, and chatting with customers can boost your mood and keep you socially engaged. Today's employers also offer flexible hours and welcoming environments.

If you're looking to feel useful, stay connected and enjoy your days, consider updating your resume and exploring part-time opportunities.

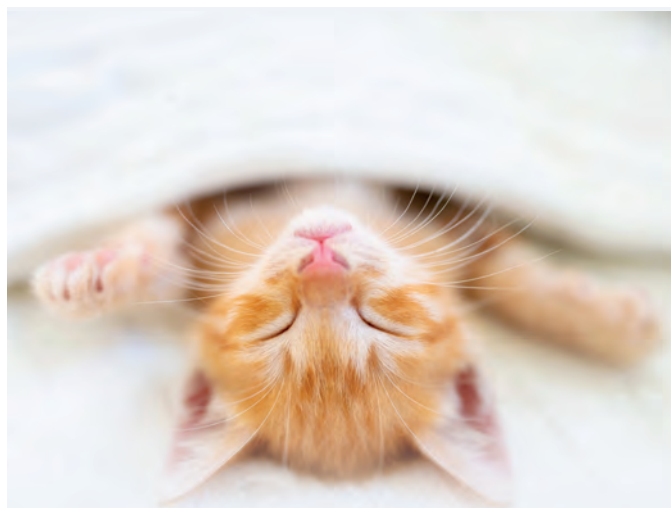


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**A TIME
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Spring Cleaning: Three key items to deep clean

Cleaning your home this spring? Don't neglect these three things.

1. CURTAINS

If your curtains are made of a lightweight, washable material, all you have to do is run them through the washing machine. For heavier fabrics, or those that need to be hand washed, a steam cleaner with an upholstery attachment will do the job while your curtains are still hanging.

2. CARPETS

Whether they're starting to smell, they're stained or you just plain can't remember the last time you washed them, don't put off cleaning your carpets. The best and easiest way is to hire a professional carpet cleaner. They'll have the right equipment and products to make your carpet look as good as new.

3. OVEN

Your oven's self-cleaning function fills your kitchen with smoke, and chemical oven cleaning

products are enough to make anyone woozy. Here's a more natural way to make your oven shine like new: remove the racks from the oven, make a paste of baking soda and water and spread it on all of your oven's surfaces except the heating elements. Let the solution sit for 12 hours (wash the oven racks while you wait) and then scrape off. Wipe with vinegar and water a few times until it sparkles.

Once your curtains, carpet and oven are clean, make their upkeep a part of your regular routine to avoid needing to deep clean every spring.



Five fun and affordable ways to revitalize your home

Does your home need an update? If a full renovation isn't in the cards this spring, here are five fun and inexpensive makeover tips for reinvigorating your home.

1. NEW ACCESSORIES

Inexpensive upgrades such as new throw pillows on the couch, a fresh tablecloth in the dining room or a chic frame for a painting or photo will help revitalize your home.



2. REARRANGE YOUR FURNITURE

Sometimes changing the layout of a room is all you need to do to make it come alive again. Move your bed to the other side of the room or switch the living room furniture around.

3. UPDATE YOUR BATHROOM

Replacing accessories like the soap dish, shower curtain and hand towels can make your bathroom feel brand new.

4. SWITCH UP YOUR LIGHTING

A lamp for your bedroom or a new fixture in the dining room will shed new light on a room that's lost its sparkle.

5. DIY UPGRADES

If you want new cabinets in your kitchen, try painting the ones you have for a cost-effective alternative. Consider a DIY approach to other desired upgrades for your home.

These simple and affordable changes can make you fall in love with your home all over again. So which ones will you undertake this spring?



HERE'S A TIP

Here's a great trick to rinse your quinoa without losing half of it to the holes in your colander: Use a French press coffeemaker. The fine mesh and pouring spout make rinsing a breeze.

To halve a lot of cherry tomatoes, try sandwiching them between two plastic lids. Press down lightly and slice through the opening to make short work of them.

Keep your crisper drawer clean by lining with fresh newspaper. It will absorb smells and liquid, and can be replaced easily.

"Candle nubs -- the little bit left when the candle has burned down all the way -- can be easily removed from a candleholder by setting the whole thing in the freezer for 10-15 minutes. The wax surface hardens and shrinks, making it easier to chip out. Same goes for linens that have wax drips: freeze and chip away, then use a degreasing spot cleaner." -- Y.G. in Arkansas

Easily thread a needle with hairspray. Spritz the end of your thread with a little high-hold hairspray and pull taut. It will be much easier to thread this way.

Need a quick measure? A paper bill (U.S. currency) is exactly 6 inches long.

"I have an old cedar chest from my grandmother that had lost its smell. My husband sanded the interior with superfine grit sandpaper. It is restored and smells wonderful now." -- J.K. in Iowa

"To remove residue left over from price tags, you can use hairspray. Remove as much paper as possible, then give a good squirt. Use a plastic scraper to lightly scrape off the adhesive." -- L.P. in Ohio

Got bread ends? Store in a bag in the freezer until you need breadcrumbs for a recipe. Pulse frozen chunks in a chopper or blender for instantly usable crumbs.

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 1800 Pembroke Dr., Suite 300, Orlando, FL 32810

Pet Me Please!



Heart of the Catskills
Humane Society

by Laura Wright



Popular Spring Plants Can Be Toxic For Pets

Spring is here! Isn't it glorious to think of the lush greenery and colorful flowers that will be blooming and making the world beautiful very soon?

Soon we will be able to walk and hike with our pets and enjoy gardening again. With that in mind, let's talk about common spring outdoor plants and flowers that are toxic for pets and some plants that are safe for our furry friends

A highly toxic spring plant is the lily- all types- including Easter lilies, Tiger lilies, Day lilies, and Asiatic lilies. Lilies are especially dangerous to cats. Even small amounts of any part of a lily may cause acute and fatal kidney failure if ingested by your cat.

Other spring plants toxic to pets include Tulips, Hyacinths, Daffodils, Azaleas, Rhododendrons, and Crocuses (particularly the Autumn Crocus).

Common symptoms of poisoning to watch out for are gastrointestinal issues such as vomiting and diarrhea, hypersalivation (excessive drooling), lethargy, weakness, unsteadiness, and loss of appetite. More

severe symptoms include difficulty breathing, seizures, tremors, or collapse.

Awareness is the key. These plants are common in gardens, yards, and fields, and they can also be kept indoors as plants or cut flowers. If you have pets, be aware of the presence of these plants in your home or on walks and steer clear of them.

If you are concerned that your pet has ingested a toxic plant, watch for the symptoms listed above and immediately call your veterinarian or the ASPCA poison control hotline at (888)-426-4435.

If you prefer to have a worry-free yard and garden, some favorite flowers and plants safe for pets are Sunflowers, Roses, Orchids, Snapdragons, Gerbera Daisies, Sword Ferns, Zinnias, Marigolds, and Petunias.

Just as flowers color our world with joy and beauty, our fur babies color our world with laughter and love. With a little attention and knowledge, we can enjoy the beauty of nature and keep our pets safe. Happy Spring all!

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DO

Twenty-Three Artists Explore Memory and Voice in “The Things I Never Said”

Through May 23, 2026

Roxbury Arts Center

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‘The Things I Never Said’ explores themes of memory, truth, and the power of the human voice. It seeks to bring into the light what has been concealed, to map the blurry line between remembrance and reliving. Altogether the included works highlight the incredible ability of art to speak when words fail, and in the process, reclaim an inner clarity and power.

This exhibition will feature a wide variety of mediums including collage, cold wax, photography, painting, textile, sculpture, ceramic, video and projected works. The participating artists include: Fern Apfel, Emma Backer, Alexandra E. Bingham, Lori Anne Boocks, Wendy Brackman, Robert Brune, Luciano Capello, Ally DeRusso, Eddie Donoghue, Evelyn Gardiner, Tabitha Gilmore-Barnes, Annie Hayes, Keiko M. Howard, Cheryl Kass, Scott Keidong, Christina Kelly, Laura Sue King, Katherine LaMere-Fortman, Joanne Lentner, Cena Pohl Crane, Alan Wayne Powell, Lesley A. Powell, Ellie Stover, and Fileve Tlaloc.

Roxbury Arts Group exhibition programs are generously supported by the Roxbury Bottle Shop. All programs offered are supported by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the NYS Legislature, the A. Lindsay and Olive B. O’Connor Foundation, the Robinson Broadhurst Foundation, The Community Foundation for South Central New York, the Tianaderrah Foundation, The Delaware National Bank of Delhi, and individual supporters.



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BUCOLIC VALLEY

A new Psych Rock Festival coming to the Western Catskills in August

The West Kortright Center is set to host an intimate one-day music festival focused on psychedelic rock featuring touring and local bands, food and art vendors, and colorful light installations.

Set to take place on Saturday, August 22, 2026, the event will feature a full day of music, colorful psychedelic visuals, and offerings from various hand-picked local vendors and is co-organized by the West Kortright Center with Diana McShane and Chris McShane.

The Mystery Lights, known for playing incredible live shows, will headline the festival, and they're joined on the preliminary lineup by Windows, Kid Bess and the Magic Ring, Gracie Gray, uncleshake, Pleasure Dome, and Dүүл Suns. Additional bands will be announced as they are added to the lineup.

Passes to the festival will go on sale at www.westkc.org/bucolicvalley.org on Monday, March 9, and discounted pricing will be available to West Kortright Center members.

Performances will take place on both the scenic outdoor stage with stunning views from a valley in the western Catskills and the historic indoor stage known for both its great acoustics and its stained glass windows.

ABOUT THE MYSTERY LIGHTS

The Mystery Lights story began in 2004 in the small town of Salinas, California when friends Michael Brandon and Luis Alfonso — whose shared fondness for groups like The MC5, Velvet Underground, Dead Moon, and The Fall (to name a few) — joined forces to craft their

“Vintage hit-writing techniques, power house performances.”
- *Pitchfork*



PHOTO CREDIT: DAPTONE RECORDS

The Mystery Lights are: Mike Brandon (lead vocals/guitar), LASolano (lead guitar), Alex Amini (bass), Lily Rogers (keys), and Zach Butler (drums).

“The Mystery Lights are as good as it gets, one of New York’s finest garage rock bands.”
- *NME*

own brand of unhinged rock and roll. From there they spent the better part of 10 years touring relentlessly before migrating to Queens, New York in 2014.

With a live show known for its visceral energy and relentless assault—leaving little to no stoppage between songs — they barreled through countless NYC haunts and DIY venues, quickly amassing a fervent local following. The buzz soon caught the attention of Daptone Records execs who were in the beginning stages of launching a new rock-centric imprint, Wick Records. Impressed by the groups’ groove, endless supply of energy, and understanding of musical history, The Mystery Lights were quickly signed to

continued...

Wick. Though a rock band at heart, the parallels to what Daptone Records had traditionally looked for in their soul artists was undeniable.

ABOUT WINDOWS

Windows is a Los Angeles–based country-psych band founded in 2018 by Matteo Arias, former bassist of Golden Animals. Blending classic California country, surf rock, and West Coast psychedelia through a distinct Mexican-American lens, their music reflects a rich fusion of heritage and place. They debuted in 2019 with *The Ballad of Whiskey Pete* and continued releasing music through the pandemic. In 2024, they released their debut EP *Raindrops on the Open Road*, and in 2025 they dropped new singles “*That’s When*” and “*Light in the Dark*”. The band made their debut on Los Angeles radio at KCRW and are currently recording their next full-length with producer Tyler Fogerty.

ABOUT THE WEST KORTRIGHT CENTER



Set in a bucolic valley in East Meredith, New York, the West Kortright Center is a dynamic non-profit cultural institution dedicated to building community through extraordinary cultural and educational experiences.

2026 West Kortright Center arts and community programs are funded in part by our members, by contributors to the 2026 Program Fund Drive, by the Bert Santora Trust, the Tianaderrah Foundation, and by grants from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature, from the A. Lindsay & Olive B. O’Connor Foundation and the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation. Special thanks to Catskill Country Living for sponsoring our 2026 season.

Those who are interested in sponsoring the Bucolic Valley festival and the non-profit WKC should reach out to info@westkc.org for details, as the event is actively seeking sponsors.

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FRANKLIN
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Celebrating 30 Years of Admission-Free Theater in an Historic Catskills Venue

Franklin Stage Company (FSC), a beloved cultural institution in New York State's Southern Tier, proudly celebrates its 30th anniversary in 2026, marking three decades of producing professional, admission-free theater for the community and visitors alike.

Founded in 1997, Franklin Stage Company was created with a simple but powerful mission: to make theater accessible to everyone, regardless of income or background. For the past 30 years, the company has presented over 70 productions ranging from classic plays to contemporary works and has presented visiting artists working in a variety of disciplines including dance, music, puppetry and solo work, all offered free of charge to audiences in the region.

The company's home, Chapel Hall, is itself a vital part of local history. The building was formerly one of the campus buildings of the Delaware Literary Institute, an important 19th-century center for education and cultural life in the Catskills. FSC's founders, Eugene and Carol Marner, and Thomas Butts, purchased Chapel Hall for \$1 from a local Masonic chapter who owned the building in the late 1990s with a promise to keep the building in the public sphere, rather than allow an interested developer to purchase the edifice and turn the building into condos. Although in some disrepair at the time, FSC has performed repairs, upgrades, and restoration of nearly half a million dollars on the building since then; today Chapel Hall continues the legacy of serving as a gathering place for creativity, storytelling, and community through live performance.

"Thirty years of admission free theater is an extraordinary milestone," said Patricia Buckley, Executive Artistic Director of Franklin Stage Company. "Performing in a building with such deep historical roots reminds us that the arts have



Franklin Stage Company, housed in Chapel Hall in Franklin, celebrates its 30th Anniversary in 2026.

always mattered here. We're proud to continue that tradition and to ensure our performances remain open and accessible to all."

To commemorate the anniversary, Franklin Stage Company will present events (to be announced), honoring the company's history while looking ahead to its future. Anniversary programming will include special performances, talkbacks, and community celebrations.

Franklin Stage Company remains committed to its founding vision: fostering artistic excellence, strengthening community connections, and ensuring that cost is never a barrier to experiencing live theater in the Catskills.

For more information about the 30th anniversary season or ways to support Franklin Stage Company's mission, visit www.franklinstagecompany.org or follow the company on social media.

A Café with Heart— and a Whole Lot More

by Suzanne M Walsh ©2026



PHOTO CREDIT: SUZANNE M WALSH ©2026

The Carriage House Cafe and General Store as it appears today as a successful demolition survivor of Cobleskill's Victorian past on the SUNY Cobleskill campus, extends its invitation to locals, visitors and tourists alike.

"Come in for the coffee and go home with some *really, really great* groceries!" The italics added are mine, but this enthusiastic, welcoming invitation to the public is straight from Debra Bechtold, General Manager overseeing operations at the Carriage House Café & General Store, one of Cobleskill's most charming and best-kept secrets located just off the western end of Main Street at the entrance of SUNY Cobleskill campus.

"A lot of people don't realize that this place is not just for college students and personnel," Bechtold explains, "we're here for everybody,"

As the energetic driving force behind Café operations, Bechtold knows what she's talking about, being also the Marketing Director of Cobleskill Auxiliary Services (CAS), the non-profit agency making life on campus as specially comfortable as possible as a home away from home.

The Carriage House Café really is special. Housed in the ambiance of an authentic carriage house, renovated for café reuse after a notable

history of being saved from demolition by a group of dedicated townspeople, the Café is now a handsome relic replicating some of Cobleskill's interesting and colorful Victorian past.

In its location today, you can enjoy 360 degrees of environmental beauty. The views, whether seen from inside the upstairs dining space (the Carriage House loft) or enjoyed outside at the picnic tables or lounging patio out front, all create a panoramic experience representative of the beautiful rural landscapes typical of Schoharie County. The relaxing sounds of the nearby Cobleskill Creek add to this peaceful ambiance.

The Carriage House Café and General Store is also special because of the distinctive honor of being selected as a "Taste NY" retail location, one of only a little over 80 sites throughout the whole of New York State capable of fulfilling the necessary requirements. Not only does the café offer products both made or grown in New York,
continued...

but the café menu also offers some of the freshest local ingredients possible in our locale.

Tomatoes? The tomatoes in your sandwich choices are from the greenhouses right behind the Carriage House building, grown by the supervised agricultural students who care for and do the harvesting as part of their coursework. These ag students also deliver the vine-ripened freshly grown produce directly to the café where many of the smiling salespersons waiting on you from behind the counter might be the very same students earning their lab hours for credit required for their business and retail courses.

Many of the ingredients for the healthy farm fresh salads are also grown right on campus and are often assembled by students in the Culinary Arts Department's "Farm to Table" classes. Incidentally, once a week these same Culinary students also prepare a lunch-dining service open to the public on

another part of the campus (check out their menu and schedule on the SUNY Cobleskill Culinary Arts Facebook page—you'll typically find the programs featuring student-prepared, locally sourced meals as part of their hands-on curriculum).

"I love my job here--" says charismatic Tanya Davis, while stocking the store's coolers one day. Davis is the onsite manager of the café and store. "I love the students and being able to help them interface their studies with the hands-on operation of the café—" Davis says.

"See this milk?" Davis asks, pausing to hold up an immaculately clean bright-looking glass quart labeled, "Coby Creamline Milk". "The students collect, pasteurize and bottle this milk right here in the Coby Milk Processing Plant on campus, and from there it goes directly into our coolers, and into the hands of our customers."

continued...



PHOTO CREDITS: SUZANNE M WALSH ©2026

TOP RIGHT: Student Alexi takes a break from working behind the counter and relaxes in the dining area of the Carriage House Cafe. Sandwiches and food served at the cafe are crafted with the freshest locally-sourced ingredients possible, with greens and tomatoes grown on campus and hand-picked by students



Beaming a big smile she adds, "This is as fresh as it gets!"

The milk is very fresh... and deliciously creamy too, I've happily come to learn first-hand. "Coby Milk" (short for "SUNY Cobleskill Milk") also comes in a chocolate version that knocks the yumminess factor right out of the ballpark.

Coming and going, there are always a lot of hugs and smiles being exchanged in the café, and when I hear Davis being addressed as "mom" I just have to ask, "Are all these kids yours?"

"No..." she laughs, then turns serious. "But they know I try to be here for all of them—as I am for our regular local customers from the town. I try my best to support and help however I can in my work..." Davis, a single mom of three of her own—now grown—kids, pauses before adding, "The students just sometimes seem to want to regard me as their mom away from home—and that's something I actually feel honored by..." The sincerity of her statement adds even more warmth and appreciation for this place that seems to radiate these feelings outwards.

For a long time, town locals in the know have quietly been regularly enjoying what the Carriage House Café has to offer as a favorite under-the-radar breakfast and lunch destination. Though this place has been one of Cobleskill's best kept secrets, it may not be for much longer. Word is getting around, and

continued...

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STRANGE BUT TRUE

by Lucie Winborne

The Beast from "Beauty and the Beast" is a combination of several different animals, with a lion's mane, buffalo's head and beard, gorilla's brow, tusks of a wild boar, bear's body, legs and tail of a wolf ... and eyes of a human.

Sweden is so efficient at waste disposal that only 1% of its garbage goes to landfills.

Viking burials included board games.

When making badminton shuttlecocks, the most prized feathers are said to come from a goose's left wing.

The 1967 Outer Space Treaty prohibits any nation from trying to own the moon.

A young man from Arizona saved a woman's life by using CPR he'd learned from watching an episode of "The Office."

In parts of Europe, folks believe that if you light a cigarette from a candle, a sailor will die.

Spiders recycle webs by eating them.

The term mortician was invented as part of a public relations campaign by the funeral industry, which considered it more customer friendly than undertaker.

Beethoven was notably particular about his coffee, ensuring that his morning brew was made with precisely 60 beans per cup.

A study has shown that dunking an Oreo in milk for three seconds renders the optimal balance between soggy and structural integrity.

Sloths may be the only animals that don't fart.

"Family Feud" host Richard Dawson met his second wife, Gretchen Johnson, when she was a contestant on the show -- and yes, he kissed her.

Polar ice cap temperatures can plunge to a bone-chilling -189.67 degrees Fahrenheit.

TV's classic "Jeopardy" theme was composed by Merv Griffin as a lullaby for his son.

its popularity is understandably growing.

"The Carriage House Café and General Store is a non-profit organization, and every net penny goes back into the till toward making the students' lives here more healthy, safe and fun, too." says Marketing Director Bechtold. This explains why everybody does their best here and seems to enjoy their work so much. It's catching, too—the customers in turn seem to value being able to support such a healthy two-way mission ethic.

Finally, when asked what message she would most like to get out to the public, Bechtold responds unhesitatingly by saying, "We're here for everyone! And we want everybody to experience and enjoy the very special uniqueness we have to offer!"

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PRESENTS

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Have you ever met a travel writer and thought, "I wish I could do that"? Well, you can. In this course we'll read a variety of travel pieces and talk about what makes them good (or not so good). We will look at different kinds of travel writing—roundups, essays, hotel/spa reviews. Then we will write a couple of travel pieces—one that features something where you live (you don't have to travel to do good travel writing) and another about some place you have visited. These pieces will be read, discussed, and critiqued by the class. Let your mind wander!

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THE QUIET CRISIS IN THE CATSKILLS:

Why Bees Are Disappearing— and How You Can Help



On a warm spring morning in the Catskills, the gentle hum of bees drifting from wildflowers and backyard gardens has long been part of the region's natural soundtrack. But in recent years, that familiar sound has been fading.

Bees—both native species and managed honeybees—are in decline across the United States, and the Catskills are no exception. This isn't just a concern for beekeepers. It's a growing issue that affects our food supply, local ecosystems, and the beauty of our landscapes.

WHY BEES MATTER MORE THAN YOU THINK

Bees are among the most important pollinators on Earth. Roughly one-third of the food we eat depends on pollination, a process essential to crops like apples, blueberries, squash, and almonds. Here in New York, that includes beloved regional staples like apples and berries grown throughout the Hudson Valley and Catskills.

Without bees, these crops would struggle to produce fruit—or disappear entirely.

But beyond agriculture, bees play a vital role in maintaining biodiversity. They help wild plants reproduce, which supports birds, mammals, and the entire food web that makes the Catskills such a rich and vibrant environment.

WHAT'S CAUSING THE DECLINE?

The drop in bee populations isn't due to a single cause. Instead, it's a combination of pressures:

- Habitat Loss
- Development and manicured landscapes reduce the wild spaces bees depend on for food and nesting.
- Pesticides and Herbicides
- Chemicals designed to kill pests can harm bees directly or contaminate the plants they rely on.
- Climate Change
- Shifting weather patterns can disrupt the timing between when flowers bloom and when bees are active.
- Disease and Parasites
- Managed honeybee colonies, in particular, face threats from mites and viruses.
- Loss of Native Plant Diversity
- Fewer native plants mean fewer reliable food sources for native bee species.

THE CATSKILLS ADVANTAGE

The good news? The Catskills region is uniquely positioned to help.

With its mix of forests, meadows, farms, and small communities, this area still offers the kind of habitat bees need—if we choose to protect and enhance it.

continued...

Even small changes by homeowners, gardeners, and local businesses can make a meaningful difference.

WHAT YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW

Helping bees doesn't require a large farm or a complete lifestyle overhaul. Simple, intentional steps can have a big impact.

1. Plant for Pollinators

Focus on native plants that bloom at different times from early spring through late fall. This ensures bees have a steady food supply.

Great choices for the Catskills include:

Bee balm (Monarda)

Black-eyed Susans

Goldenrod

Milkweed

Wild asters

Aim for clusters of the same plant—bees prefer patches they can forage efficiently.

2. Skip the Chemicals

Avoid or limit pesticides and herbicides, especially during blooming periods. If you must use them, apply in the evening when bees are less active.

3. Let It Grow (A Little)

Consider leaving part of your yard a bit wild. Clover, dandelions, and native grasses provide valuable food sources—especially early in the season when little else is blooming.

4. Provide Water

A shallow dish with water and a few stones (so bees can land safely) can make a difference during hot, dry spells.

5. Support Local Beekeepers

Buying local honey and beeswax products supports those actively maintaining bee populations in the region—and keeps pollination services thriving.

6. Create Nesting Spaces

Not all bees live in hives. Many native bees nest in the ground or in hollow stems. Leaving some stems standing through winter or installing a simple "bee hotel" can help.

A COMMUNITY EFFORT

The future of bees in the Catskills doesn't depend on any one person—it depends on all of us making small, thoughtful choices.



*Unlike many of the other species of bees, the *Bombus bimaculatus* on our cover is not on the decline, but instead is very stable. They are abundant pollinators that forage at a variety of plants here in the Catskills.*

Whether you're tending a large garden, managing a few containers on a porch, or simply choosing what to plant along a walkway, your decisions matter. Collectively, these efforts can restore the hum of pollinators across the region.

BRINGING BACK THE BUZZ

The decline of bees is a serious issue—but it's also one where individuals can truly make a difference.

With a few changes, the Catskills can remain not just a beautiful place to live and visit, but a thriving habitat for the pollinators that keep it alive.

And with a little effort, that familiar sound—the soft, steady buzz of bees—can once again be part of every Catskills spring.

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FAIRVIEW PUBLIC LIBRARY MONTHLY NEWS & UPDATES

New in APRIL

Too Close to Home by Seraphina Nova Glass

The Summer House Murder by Ava Roberts

A Deadly Episode by Anthony Horowitz

The Ending Writes Itself by Evelyn Clarke

A Cruise to Die For by Heather Graham

Shadow Strike by Brad Taylor

The Mountains We Call Home by

Kim Michele Richardson

The Girls Trip by Ally Condie

The Patchwork Players by Jennifer Chiaverini

Mad Mabel by Sally Hepworth

American Fantasy by Emma Straub

Revenge Prey by John Sandford

Hope Rises by David Baldacci

NON-FICTION

The New Perimenopause by Mary C. Haver MD

What Ever Happened to Eddy Crane by

Kate Carne

All About Allergies by Zachary Rubin MD

LARGE PRINT

Hope Rises by David Baldacci

Mother Daughter Book Club by Susan Patterson

Shadow Strike by Brad Taylor

APRIL Events

KOI PAINTING!

Thursday, April 16, at 3:30pm

Painting for the whole family. Create beautiful koi art at the library on. Please sign up by calling the library at 845- 586- 3791 or email at director@fairviewlibrary.org.

FIBER ARTS CLUB

Saturday April 25 from 10 to 12pm

Work on your own fiber arts (knit, crochet, embroider, sew, etc) and meet other makers. All are welcome - beginner to expert. No formal instruction but we will help if we can.

FPL BOOK CLUB Next meeting

Thursday April 16 at 2pm via Zoom

The book will be *Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguro. Contact the library director at 845-586- 3791 or email director@fairviewlibrary.org for the Zoom link.

MAH JONGG every Friday 1 to 4pm

What is a bookshelf
other than a
treasure chest for
a curious mind?

Crafts with Miss Cherie

Video instructions will be posted on Facebook on the dates indicated below. Craft components available in the library at least 48 hours before the demo.

TO GO CRAFT:

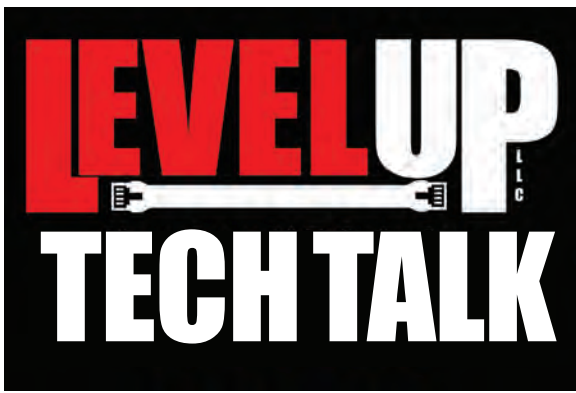
Available April 2 - Color Your Own Puzzle

Simple crafts will always available in the children's room. These can be done any time during open hours using the directions and sample provided. Adult supervision is required.

SELF-GUIDED CHILDREN'S CRAFT

April 10 - 3D Butterfly Bookmark

April 24 - Watercolor Painting



by CJ Karcher

Owner & Systems Administrator

Level Up Tech Support

Big Value, Little Cost to You? Think Again.

QVC, shopping networks, “As Seen on TV,” and now endless online ads—we’ve all seen them. These deals aren’t new, but are they worth it or just hype? Here’s my take after years of working with customers who bought into them.

I get it—I’ve impulse-bought things too. It’s easy when you’re sitting on the couch or scrolling your phone and see what looks like the perfect deal: a \$1,300 laptop for just \$331.99, plus “extras.” Sounds amazing, right? More often than not, it ends up being a bag of headaches instead.

Recently, a customer brought in a brand-new laptop purchased from a shopping channel. They were struggling just to get it set up. While some of the frustration comes from increasingly complex systems like Microsoft Windows, the bigger issue was the product itself. They bought it for the “\$1,300 value” in included software. What they actually got was a low-end machine loaded with trial versions and unnecessary programs.

One key piece of software they wanted required a phone call to the manufacturer—only to discover it was just a branded version of features already built into Windows and Google Chrome. Most of those “free” programs were simply trial offers requiring credit card information upfront, then charging later. In the end, they paid full price for a weak system and software they didn’t need.

I’ve seen similar issues with phones. A couple once purchased two “great deals” through QVC.

They were told it would be as simple as turning them on and transferring their numbers. In reality, it took days. One carrier had to release the numbers before the other could activate them, which can take up to 48 hours—and one line never transferred properly at all.

Then there’s the software hype. You’ve probably seen ads claiming you can plug a drive into your old computer and magically transfer everything—including programs—to your new one. That’s not how it works, especially on Windows systems. Most programs must be reinstalled using their original installers, and licenses must be re-entered. Files like documents and photos usually transfer fine, but programs do not.

You may also have heard of “PC magic” tools—flash drives that supposedly make your computer run like new. While they can help by cleaning up files or running basic maintenance, these are tasks you can do yourself. And they only go so far. A professional can dig deeper, optimize the system properly, and check for hardware issues.

Bottom line: if a deal sounds too good to be true, it probably is. If you’re not tech-savvy, it’s worth consulting a professional. You might spend a little more upfront, but you’ll save time, frustration, and money in the long run.

At Level Up Tech Support, we take the guesswork out of the equation and help you find the right solution for your needs.

FELDENKRAIS

What Is It? And How Can It Help You?

by Iris Mead

The Feldenkrais Method (FM) is an educational movement therapy developed by Israeli physicist and mechanical engineer Moshe Feldenkrais as a result of a chronic knee injury. His extensive scientific knowledge as well as his studies of neurology, psychology and anatomy enabled him to heal himself, and in the process develop the Feldenkrais Method. It is a somatic, sensory-based method which teaches you a non-corrective way to listen and pay attention to your body and fine-tune it as you would a musical instrument.

FM is different from other types of “exercise” as its focus is to constantly reduce effort—do less—make the movement smaller, slower and smoother-- in order to feel more. It is not about the “movement” itself but about “how” you do the movement, and in the process rewire the neurological patterns in the brain.

Students learn how the different parts of the body—spine, hip joints, shoulder blades, ankles—are connected to each other and how to move in a more coordinated and functional way. The Awareness Through Movement (ATM) lessons (there are over 2,000) help you become aware of unconscious and often unhelpful postural habits and discover new pain-free movement options.

Suzanne Ausnit, a certified Feldenkrais instructor from Bovina, came to Feldenkrais while taking an anatomy training that was renting space at the Feldenkrais Institute in New York City. Originally from Hoboken, NJ, she was a journalist for 30 years and taught yoga for 25 years. By chance, she participated in a free “Learn about Feldenkrais” day at the Institute and experienced a “hands-on” demonstration, which relieved her stiff neck and improved her ability to rotate. Amazed that such profound changes could take place in an hour, she soon joined a four-year training program to become a Certified Feldenkrais Practitioner. After graduating, she started working at the Institute and opened a private practice in Hoboken.



After Covid hit in 2020, Suzanne and her husband John purchased property outside Bovina where she continued teaching online and in private session at her home studio. Both she and John became active in the community. About three years ago, she started a weekly Feldenkrais class in the newly-renovated basement of the Bovina Library. The class is free but donations to benefit the library are gratefully accepted.

Suzanne’s hope is that the class will provide a safe space where people from different towns in Delaware County can meet and practice the FM method. “My hope is that after a FM class, students will feel taller, more coordinated in their movements—walking, sitting, standing. Many experience more flexibility, and significantly less discomfort,” she says.

As a student of the FM myself, I can vouch for the relief I get from the classes. “To benefit from FM, all you need is the ability to pay attention to yourself and be curious,” explains Suzanne. Unfortunately, using our brain to help relieve pain is not in the mainstream of today’s healing methods.

continued...

Common Indoor Air Pollutants



OPERATION CLEAN AIR: Get rid of indoor air pollution

Spring cleaning may make you think of washing windows and laundering curtains, but what about the air inside your home? In some residences, the air indoors can be more polluted than the air outside. And unfortunately, dust and dirt can make respiratory issues like asthma worse. Here are five strategies to help you breathe easier.

KEEP YOUR FLOORS CLEAN: Make sure people take their shoes off at the door and vacuum with a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter. This way, you'll reduce allergens and harmful chemicals that can get into your home.

DON'T LET IT GET TOO HUMID: Excess humidity attracts mold, dust mites and other allergens. Use a dehumidifier or the AC to keep humidity levels low.

GET SOME HOUSEPLANTS: Not only do plants help filter the air in your home, they can also boost your mood. Peace lilies and rubber plants make great air purifiers and are easy to take care of.

HAVE YOUR DUCTS CLEANED: Think of air ducts as the lungs of your home; all the air from your heating and cooling systems flow through them. If you can't remember the last time you had them professionally cleaned, now's the time.

CHANGE YOUR FILTERS: Your air conditioner, furnace, dryer and range hood all have filters that should be changed regularly to keep them working efficiently and the air in your home clean.

This spring, breath easier by adding the above five items to your cleaning routine.

The Feldenkrais Method is taught worldwide. Dancers, actors and people of all ages and occupations have come to learn how to heal themselves and improve their abilities through this method.

It is not about the "movement" itself but about "how" you do the movement, and in the process rewire the neurological patterns in the brain.

Suzanne's class is open to anyone who is interested in "experiential" learning, but RSVPs are requested as space is limited. The class is held at the Bovina Library, on Saturdays at 10:30 AM. She also offers private sessions at her home studio.

Want to know more? Check library archives for an article on Moshe Feldenkrais and FM in the January 1981 issue of the Smithsonian magazine.

Suzanne Ausni

Certified
Feldenkrais instructor
973- 204-0929
suzanneausnit@gmail.com
www.move2livenow.com



Peter Pan in the Catskills

Hot off the press, Purple Mountain Press to be exact, *Peter Pan In The Catskills— And Other Historical Essays*, just debuted in March so if you are a local history enthusiast like me, there is a missing space on your bookshelf where this belongs.

The book is formatted in an intriguingly unusual way: 33 essays extracted from a now discontinued yet beloved publication, *Catskill Tri-County Historical Views*, by the Gilboa Historical Society. It advertises 33 essays accompanied with illustrations and photographs, but really there are 34 because the gorgeous introduction by the editor Bill Birns, who is also a contributing essayist, should not be skipped.

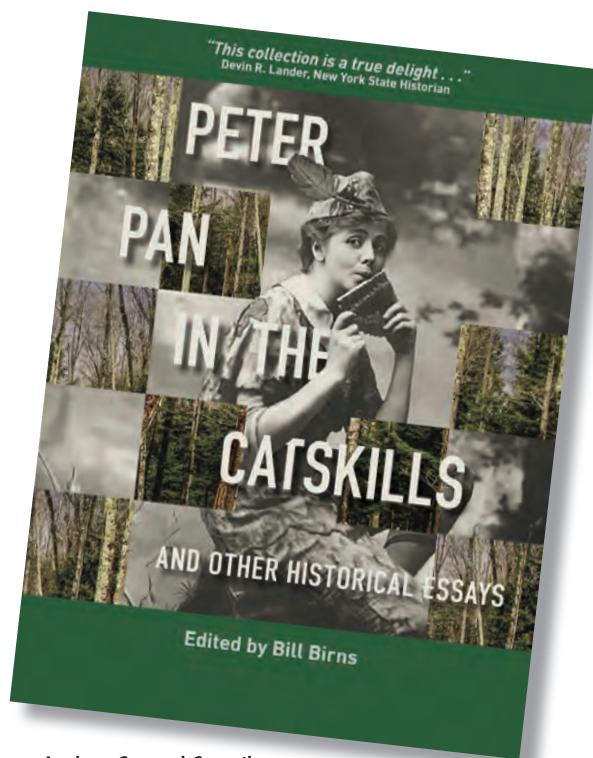
Even though the stories are stand-alone essays, the book follows a logical pattern where one story seems to lead to the next. I always love the part where I find out why a book has a particular title and wow, this title fits. The Catskills have a connection to Neverland.

Twenty-seven writers who are so impressive that I wish space permitted me to name them all, some of whom I recognize as authors of other works I have had the pleasure of reviewing, each having passionately researched their topic, reignited my love and pride of my chosen home, the Catskill Mountains.

"I think this book is haunted." I told my daughter, while reading.

"Why?" she asked, surprised.

"I keep getting goosebumps while reading it, goosebumps upon goosebumps with every story," I told her.



Author: Several Contributors
Editor: Bill Birns
Publisher: Purple Mountain Press

If a book on my bookshelf is haunted, it's this one, but not in a scary way; more like an enchanted portal to the past, where geographical formations, famous and infamous characters, inventions, ways of life, and even some of the writers are departed, yet still have an enduring story to tell.

From Rip Van Winkle, ancient pottery, paintings, children's literature, politics, theater, sports and more, we are lucky to have had it all and can still have it all, thanks to the writers who immortalize the past to influence the future for us.

In Elizabeth Henry's title story, *Peter Pan In The Catskills*, she quotes the actress who played Peter, Maude Adams, a Catskills resident, "If I am to be remembered for anything, let it be for pure joy." Like Adams, the story and the book are pure joy, an ode to our way of life in the Catskills.

Available for order at: <https://www.nysbooks.com/product/peter-pan-in-the-catskills-and-other-historical-essays/>.

Or: At an in-person presentation and book signing by author Dr. Bill Birns, Saturday, April 18 @ 2pm, Delaware County Historical Association, 46549 State Highway 10 in Delhi.

Air Fryer Chicken Parmesan

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 large eggs
- 1 tsp. granulated garlic
- Kosher salt and pepper
- 2 cups panko
- 1/3 cup plus 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese, divided
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil, plus more for brushing
- 2 8-ounce boneless, skinless chicken breasts, trimmed and halved laterally into cutlets
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 cup marinara sauce, divided
- 1/4 cup basil leaves, roughly chopped, divided, plus more for topping
- 6 oz. low-moisture mozzarella cheese (do not use fresh), coarsely grated



DIRECTIONS

1. Place flour in shallow bowl or baking dish. In a second shallow container, beat eggs, garlic, 2 tablespoons water and 3/4 teaspoon salt. In third shallow container, combine panko with 1/3 cup Parmesan and toss with oil.
2. Pound each cutlet to an even thickness. (If two cutlets are too large for your air fryer basket, fry one at a time.) In large bowl, toss with lemon juice to coat. Dip each cutlet in flour, then in egg mixture (allow excess to drip off), then in panko mixture, patting to adhere. Transfer to parchment-lined plate.
3. Pre-heat air fryer to 360°F. Brush air fryer basket liberally with oil and add cutlets. Air-fry until beginning to turn golden brown, about 6 minutes. Using tongs, flip and air-fry until golden brown and cooked through (165°F on instant-read thermometer), 7 to 9 minutes more. Transfer to another plate. Repeat with remaining cutlets.
4. Return cooked cutlets to basket and top each with 4 tablespoons marinara, 1 tablespoon basil, then with mozzarella and Parmesan. Heat air fryer to 400°F. Air-fry until cheese begins to brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Repeat with remaining cutlets, marinara, basil, mozzarella, and Parmesan. Sprinkle with additional basil if desired. Serve with your favorite pasta and marinara sauce.

*Have you tried one of the recipes published in A Time and A Place?
We'd love to hear about it! Why not post a photo on our Facebook page?*



CLICK HERE
to visit our
Facebook page

History of Our Hamlets

Photos and recollections courtesy of Diane Galusha,
Historical Society of the Town of Middletown

April, the month of daffodils, spring rains and BASEBALL!

Don Fenton kept the record of the Margaretville baseball team's 1924 roster and scores on the back of this photo. They played 29 games and won 24 of them that year, playing teams from as far away as Oneonta, Kingston, Middleburgh, Roscoe and Saugerties. Noting the shut out of the Andes team following an earlier defeat by them, Fenton wrote "JOY."



Pictured are (l. to r. front, we assume): Walter 'Pete' Rickard, right field; Ruthven 'Robbie' Robertson, pitcher and third base; Russell 'Pete' Winnie, shortstop; Howard 'Cy' Etts, centerfield and Captain; C. C. 'Doc' Fairbairn, manager; Billy Griffin, catcher; Joe Scanlon, pitcher; (back) Dick Burnham, Don Stewart, Cecil Polly, second base, Floyd 'Ora' More, first base. This image is from the Fenton Collection at DCHA.

History of Our Hamlets is sponsored by



Top: The kids in the new Kennedy Heights neighborhood of Margaretville gathered for a game of street ball.



Middle: Gordie Proskine stretches out while waiting his turn to take the field for Roxbury Central.



Left: A ready bunch of sluggers and their coaches posed for this undated photo, believed in the Margaretville area.

Right: New Kingston baseball team at Arena, 1913. Why they posed on the railroad tracks is a mystery.





Green living

Tips for an eco-friendlier home

Want to reduce your environmental impact at home? Small, everyday actions can make a big difference. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

Start with your electricity use. Turn off extra lights and unplug appliances like toasters, blenders and printers when you're not using them. Replace traditional light bulbs with energy-efficient LED models. Choose ENERGY STAR® certified appliances and consider installing smart thermostats.

Next, think about your drinking water. Repair leaky faucets as soon as possible and turn off the water while lathering up in the shower or brushing your teeth. Installing water-saving fixtures, such as low-flow showerheads and efficient toilets, is also a good idea.

Finally, rethink your household cleaning products. Many conventional cleaners contain polluting ingredients. Instead, choose eco-friendly alternatives or make your own using simple ingredients like vinegar, lemon juice and baking soda.



Thought for the Day

"If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich."

-- John F. Kennedy

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