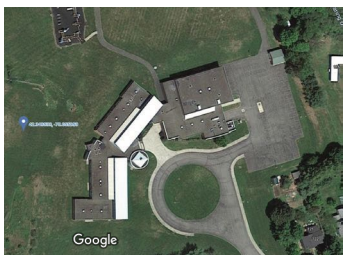


## SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL REDUX PART II

By Brian Brock

The Treadwell School District was unable to access most of the bequest from native son A.L. Kellogg until 43 years after his death. Some of these funds were used to design and build the new school at 138 Church Street. Only a dozen years after it opened,



Aerial photo of Treadwell School

the school closed in 2007, and the building was eventually sold to local businessmen. After attempts to lease it to Delaware County for health clinics and then to sell it to Watershed Agricultural Council for their headquarters, the partners

sold the building to America Ginseng Pharma Center LLC in 2016. The company processed Catskill ginseng in the kitchen and grew cordyceps fungi in a classroom.

American Ginseng Pharma had a few good years, employing several local residents for processing and growing in the building and tending ginseng plants on properties it owned or leased in Delaware and Greene counties.

Their business plan was derailed by President Trump's trade war on Chinese steel. In response, China raised its tariffs on 128 American agricultural products, with tariffs on ginseng rising from 7.5 to 41.5 percent, more than a five-fold increase. Both of their products are thought by the Chinese to be medicinal and were sold in China before prices rose. Then the business imploded with the death of the owner. Ameri-

See SCANDAL, continued on Pg. 11

## SIDNEY CENTER: BETTER TOGETHER

By Carol Ohman Behan with Michael Sellitti

As it enters its 20<sup>th</sup> year, the Sidney Center Improvement Group is undergoing a re-organization. After lengthy deliberation over the winter months, the Board of Directors has adopted a new name and is adjusting the group's focus to better meet changing needs of the people and community we serve. We are now *The Uplift Collective, Inc. – Better Together*. The revised mission statement offers an overview of our renewed and expanded purposes:

“The Uplift Collective's primary focus is on improv-



ing the lives of children and families in the Western Catskills and Southern Tier Regions of Upstate NY. The Collective's mission builds on almost 20 years of providing healthy, community-focused events, programming, and projects. Additionally, the Collective's objective is to bring

See UPLIFT, con't on Pg. 10



Antoinette King has a smile for everyone

## NEW FACE IN TOWN

By Carla Nordstrom

I stopped by King's on a recent Saturday afternoon to interview Antoinette King, the proprietor of Franklin's newest business. Luckily, the store was empty as we sat down to chat, but then two women from Walton showed up, introduced themselves, and sat down. Antoinette went off to make

them coffee and we gabbed about this and that.

A while later, two more people showed up, sat down and joined in the conversation. We sat in the seating area in the front room of the store and lickety-split, we were talking about all sorts of things. Turned out we had many common interests and the conversation was lively.

Even later, more people

showed up and joined in the merriment. Needless to say, we had to postpone the interview, but this showed me why King's is a terrific addition to our community. By the way, everybody who showed up shook my hand and introduced themselves, whether I was acquainted with them or not. It was like being a guest at a party in someone's home. Exactly the atmosphere Antoinette envisioned when she opened King's on December 14<sup>th</sup>.

Antoinette, a New York City transplant who lives in Walton, remembers the first time she passed through Franklin. She stopped in at Bea's sandwich shop and Bea insisted that she take her phone number in case Antoinette needed anything. After she

See KING'S, con't on Pg. 10



Mayor Hanna VanDeusen recognizes Fire Chief Tom Worden and EMS Squad member Joanna Banks for the Fire Department's service to the community.

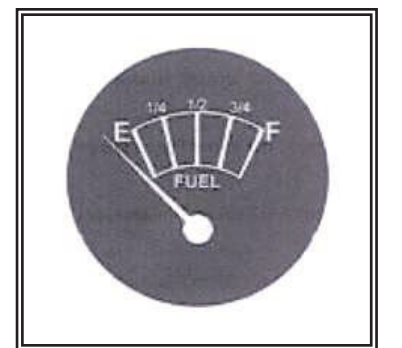
## THANKYOU, FRANKLIN FIRE DEPARTMENT!

By Connie Martin

On January 2, 2025, the Franklin Fire Department acted quickly to extinguish a fire at 41 Maple Street in the village. The occupant and his dog were rescued, and the fire was brought under control. The owner is in temporary accommodations and the building is currently unoccupied.

Mayor Johanna (Hanna) Van Deusen presented a certificate of recognition and appreciation to Fire Chief Tom Worden on Monday, February 24<sup>th</sup> to thank him and his crew for their timely response.

“Under winter conditions, our firefighters' fast action prevented a potentially dangerous situation that could well have impacted additional homes in the area,” Mayor VanDeusen noted. She added, “Our Fire Department and EMS personnel are all volunteers, our unsung heroes who are dedicated to keeping our village and town residents and the surrounding area safe.”



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# COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD



## BURN BAN IS ON!

Staff Report

Residential brush burning is banned statewide. The ban runs from March 16<sup>th</sup> through May 14<sup>th</sup>.

Small cooking fires, campfires, and bonfires are allowed, but these fires must be attended to at all times. Before going away, you must completely extinguish them, leaving them cold and wet.

Spring is wildfire season in New York State, after the snows of winter have melted and dead grasses have dried out but before new grasses have grown up.

Open burning is the single largest cause of

wildfires in our state. Since this ban was introduced in 2009, it has reduced wildfires by almost half. Wildfires endanger life and property and add needlessly to the work of our fire departments.

For the rest of the year, the burning of brush and unpainted wood is allowed, but garbage fires and burning of treated wood are not. At any time of the year, dry and windy weather could make open burning risky.

The Department of Environmental Conservation posts a map of fire danger ratings at:

<https://dec.ny.gov/environmental-protection/wildfires/fire-danger-map>.



## Franklin Springtime Festivities

Sunday April 13th

### • Pancake Breakfast

- 8 a.m. to noon
- Fire dept. garages
- Appearance by Easter Bunny
- By donation
- Sponsor: Animal Adventures Park Harpursville NY

### • Egg Hunt

- Begins at noon
- Village park
- Kids of all ages
- Candy eggs
- Easter Bunny presiding
- Sponsors
  - Karen Kemp, Annadale Farms Photography
  - Johanna VanDusen, Village Mayor

## FREE RABIES VACCINATIONS

Staff Report

The annual rabies clinic in Franklin will be held Tuesday, June 10<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Franklin Fire Hall, 351 Main Street. This free clinic is run by the Delaware County Department of Public Health. Pre-registration is recommended at: <http://health.ny.gov/go2clinic>

Pet owners are legally required to vaccinate against rabies all of their dogs, cats, and domesticated ferrets within four months of birth and again within a year after that, under Chapter 45 Public Health Law, Article 21, Title 4. In addition, the law requires periodic booster shots every one or three years, depending on the vaccine. You must bring a record of any previous vaccinations to show that your pet is eligible for follow-up injections.

Failure to vaccinate may result in a \$200 fine. Should your unvaccinated pet bite a person or animal, then it must be confined for observation for ten days. Boarding is required at the owner's expense. Should your unvaccinated pet itself be bitten, then it must be either euthanized or quarantined for six months.

By contrast, a vaccinated pet requires only a booster shot within five days of the attack and confinement at home. Once symptoms show, rabies is almost always fatal. Therefore, symptomatic animals are euthanized.

At the Franklin clinic, dogs must be on a leash and kept under control. Cats and ferrets should be in a carrying case. Of course, you are responsible for cleaning up after your pets. If you cannot make the Franklin clinic, there are clinics in neighboring towns during the summer: <https://www.delcony.us/ph/disease-control/rabies/> For more information: 607-832-5200



## PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS 2025

Staff Report

The tentative assessment roll of the Town of Franklin for 2025 is available for review in person at the office of the town clerk, 554 Main Street in the village, or online at the website of the town assessor: <https://assessorsoffice.org>.

Landowners who feel their assessment is incorrect may discuss it with our assessor. Mr. Basile will post his office hours adjacent to the town garages at 12480 County Highway 21.

Should an agreement (aka stipulation) not be reached, the landowner can appeal to the Board of Assessment Review on Grievance Day. Typically, the board will meet on the fourth Wednesday in May, this year the 28<sup>th</sup>, beginning

at 4 p.m. Beforehand, landowners must fill-out a RP-524 form Complaint on Real Property Assessment, which runs four pages, and file it with the town: [https://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current\\_forms/orpts/rp524\\_fill\\_in.pdf](https://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current_forms/orpts/rp524_fill_in.pdf).

At the meeting, three residents of our town will review evidence presented by the landowner or his representative and by the town assessor. Then they will vote either to reduce the assessment or maintain it, never to increase it. The board will notify the landowner of their decision.

The final assessment roll will be filed by Mr. Basile on or before July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Further judicial appeal is possible through Small Claims Assessment Review or through a tax certiorari proceeding. An appeal must be initiated within 30 days of the filing of the final assessment roll or notice of such filing.



## FRANKLIN FARMERS' MARKET

Our 19th Year

SAVE THE DATE  
Opening Day  
May 25<sup>th</sup>



Music by Bill Steely

Sundays  
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Rain or Shine



On the Lawn at  
Chapel Hall  
Institute Street  
Village of Franklin



NEW  
VENDORS  
WELCOME



The New Franklin Register

NFR page:

<https://franklinlocal.org/nfr-all/>

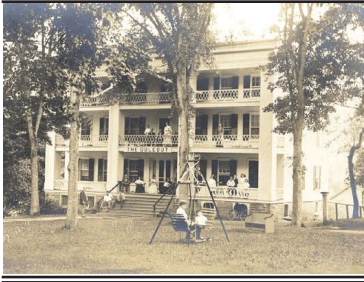


Franklin Local

Franklin Local homepage:

<https://franklinlocal.org>

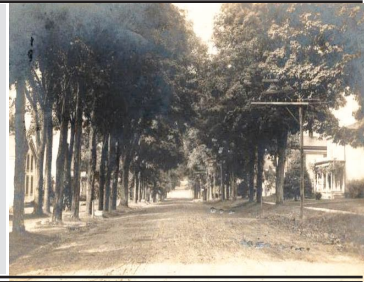




# FRANKLIN LOCAL

Local News  
Local Events

Local Issues  
Local Concerns



## VILLAGE BOARD BEAT

By Connie Martin, Village Board Trustee

### Closing out 2024 on a High Note:

Many residents of Franklin and surrounding communities came out to enjoy our holiday festivities on the second Saturday in December, including the Firehouse Holiday Market, the Christmas Stroll House Tour, visits from Santa and Mrs. Claus at the Franklin Free Library and the Firehouse, festive lighted trees from Franklin Rotary, and happenings at our local churches. Thanks to all who made these events happen, and everyone who supported them to make them successful!

### Important Reminder about Snow and Ice Removal:

We are approaching the tail end of a tough, cold, and icy winter, but it's not over yet. Bouts of freezing weather with snow and ice can still happen in our area well into spring. Village of Franklin property owners and businesses are required to remove snow and ice promptly. The snow removal law 2024-2 is on the village website [villageoffranklinny.us/local-laws/](http://villageoffranklinny.us/local-laws/). We further recommend using ice melt, sand, or cat litter to keep village sidewalks safe. Property owners face liability if someone falls and is injured on their premises.

### Thank You, John Wilson!

We thank Deputy Mayor and Trustee John Wilson for his outstanding and dedicated service to the village for eight years. John is moving on to expand his already considerable work on other community activities, effective in April after our March 18 election to fill his position. John will continue to serve as a volunteer with the village Board on Recreation Commission fundraising, gardening around our community pool and other village activities.

### Recreation Commission:

The mayor and board met with Field Sports Director Kendall Beadle and Pool Director Joanna Banks on February 10. Open Gym began at Franklin Central School on February 16. Planning is underway for Franklin children's field sports and nature activities, and pool activities for all residents in 2025. The Recreation Commission meets most months on the second Monday of the month at 6:00 pm at the Village Hall.

### Field Sports – Coaches and Volunteers Wanted:

The goal is to assemble a Franklin team to play T-Ball and Soccer in Franklin and participate in sports offered at Unatego. Franklin children can sign up with the Unatego Youth League for their activities. Adults are needed to assist with coaching the children and volunteering as helpers at events from spring through September 2025. If you are interested, please contact Mayor Hanna VanDeusen at [Mayor@villageoffranklinny.us](mailto:Mayor@villageoffranklinny.us) or Kendall Beadle at [See VILLAGE, continued on Page 5](mailto:See VILLAGE, continued on Page 5)

KENNETH L.  
BENNETT  
FUNERAL HOME

425 MAIN STREET  
FRANKLIN, NY 13776

607-829-2272



New sign: All persuasions welcome

## OPEN DOORS ADVANCES

By Frances Ruth Harris

The adventure and excitement at Open Doors Church continue with these future plans:

Live streaming of all church services will begin soon after their tech person returns to the area in the next few weeks. Currently, a cell phone is used so those who cannot make it to participate in person can join from afar.

Rev. Betsy Ott, Tom Briggs, and Don Hebbard meet regularly to consider how the church sanctuary and other areas can be utilized. The kitchen design will be upgraded so the church can serve the community as a multi-use building with spaces that could be rented out.

A handicap ramp needs

to be built to access the three classrooms on the lower level, Hebbard said. A handicapped accessible bathroom is a possibility as an extension to the building.

A major church cleanup outside brought removal of old shrubs and overgrown thickets. A new welcome sign was added.

Seventy people attended Christmas services, while Messy Church, which allows children to color and draw and play games, continues for toddlers up through the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> grades. The 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades meet twice a month for movies. "Young adults are the future of our church," Briggs said. "We actively recruit these young people."

Bible Study continues. Ott wants to divide the class into two groups: one for long-time Bible

readers, and one for new people learning about the Bible for the first time.

Grants are available from the district church conference office, Ott said. Several grants have been received and are being saved for future improvements.

Members from the Upper New York Conference office will worship and video on Palm Sunday, followed by a brunch. "The conference attendees are interested to learn our methods and how a new faith community grows and develops," Ott said. Church officials keep their eyes focused on not-for-profit grants to help them achieve their goals.

If you would like to donate to the Open Doors Church, please contact Rev. Ott, Tom Briggs, or Don Hebbard.



Don Hebbard, Rev. Betsy Ott, and Tom Briggs (left to right) are working with an architect, a contractor, and an electrician to determine possibilities for multi-use areas of Open Doors.

## GET THE LEAD OUT!

By Brian Brock

Lead has been used for thousands of years for pipes to supply water. Our word for plumbing comes from the Latin word for lead: *plumbum*. It is a soft metal which is easily worked.

However, lead in water is toxic regardless of how dilute. Lead is a heavy-metal poison that accumulates in the body. The brains and nervous systems of infants and children are especially at risk because they are developing. In adults, lead can affect kidneys, cardiovascular, and reproductive systems. The only salvation is that often lead oxide, which is insoluble, forms on interior surfaces of pipes. Unfortunately, disturbing the pipes can break this brittle coating, and changes in water chemistry can dissolve it.

Under the federal Lead and Copper Rule Revision (2021), state governments are required to identify all lead service lines. To that end, New York has mandated that all water districts inventory their service lines annually. The first round of re-

ports was due in mid-October 2024.

The village of Franklin with 183 service lines found no lead lines, although 32 lines are yet to be checked. In 2013, new water mains were installed throughout the village, and lead lines that were found then were replaced.

Results in the hamlet of Treadwell were not as good. Of the 75 lines, 12 are lead, with five yet to be checked. By contrast, no other hamlet in Delaware County has reported a single lead line, although some systems have yet to do their inventory.

The town board is ultimately responsible for providing enough safe and potable water. Nevertheless, it was not given a copy of the survey done by the Treadwell Water Commission. Earlier this year, the board learned of the results from a summary of the survey posted online by the New York Department of Health and provided to the board by this newspaper.

In the fall of 2023, our town board belatedly appropriated \$80,000 of State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds from ARPA to the Treadwell Water District. This money was to replace three lead service lines

See LEAD, continued on Page 17



## ALMOND BISCOTTI

Right before the December holidays, a doctor told me that I would feel better if I stopped eating so much chocolate. As a sugar freak who got my fix through chocolate, this was bad news. Of course, I couldn't give up chocolate during the holidays with truffles and cookies to make. So, instead of my intake decreasing, it increased. By mid-January, I calculated how much chocolate I was consuming on a daily basis and was appalled. I went cold turkey but needed to replace it with something sweet. I don't usually eat sweets that don't contain chocolate, and was at a loss for what to do about my mid-morning snack or nightly dessert craving. I love ice cream and did buy a quart of coffee ice cream, but that kept me up at night, so I had to finish it for breakfast. Did you know that the first Saturday in February is celebrated as Ice Cream for Breakfast Day?



# kitchen basics

with  
**Carla Nordstrom**

I finally came up with a solution that satisfies my sweet tooth and is easy to make. I started baking biscotti which are Italian twice baked cookies that are not too sweet but satisfy my craving for sugar.

### Almond Biscotti

(This recipe is based on <https://allourway.com/biscotti-six-tempting-flavors/>)

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees.

Add **1 cup whole almonds** to a food processor and pulse 10 times.

Add **1 ¾ cup all-purpose flour, 2 tsp. baking powder, and 1 tsp. anise seeds**, and pulse 10 more times.

Pour dry ingredients into a separate bowl.

Melt **¼ cup or ½ stick of unsalted butter** and let it cool.

Add **2 eggs and 1 cup sugar** to the same food processor bowl and run the motor for 3 minutes. Add the melted butter, **½ tsp. vanilla, and 1 ½ tsp. almond extract**.

Process until combined.

Add the wet mixture to the dry mixture and

combine well.

Divide the dough into two long mounds on a baking sheet lined with either a silicon baking mat or parchment paper. This dough is very sticky, so it helps if you use a piece of cling wrap about the length of the mound to form it. Shape the dough into two long rolls and flatten the tops using the cling wrap.

Bake for 35 minutes until slightly browned. Remove from the oven and let cool on a rack for 25 minutes. Using a bread knife and a cutting board, slice the dough *on the diagonal* into thin slices. Lay them on their sides on the baking sheet and return to the oven to bake for 30 minutes until crisp.

This recipe yields approximately 30 cookies. A nice thing about this recipe is you can make different variations by replacing the almonds with hazelnuts or add cocoa powder and chips for a chocolate variation. Biscotti go well with coffee or tea and dipping will soften them.

By the way, I have been feeling a lot better since I gave up chocolate.

*Photo by Andy Bobrow*



## A MASSIVE QUESTION MARK

Each time I write this column, I look for real estate trends in our area to share with you. This time? Anyone telling you they see a trend other than uncertainty is seeing something I don't.

As of this writing, a slew of executive orders have created uncertainty among many buyers. The "shock and awe" tactics of the American president have left the housing market in an increasingly destabilized position. We all knew that housing was overpriced, and that housing stock for middle and lower income buyers was woefully inadequate. But the local market was shored up by a continual flow of downstate and out of state buyers. That wasn't good news for buyers, but it certainly benefited sellers in our area.

What now?

No one knows.

So instead, here are a couple of things I can tell you with confidence.

One – If you are a potential buyer, it is vitally important that you shop around for a mortgage.

In the past few months, I have encountered wildly

## INSIDE LOCAL REAL ESTATE

with

## SUSAN BARNETT

different terms for buyers from different banks. Some local banks are offering slightly higher rates in return for no closing costs. Other banks in our area approve buyers quickly, but when the house is anything but a new build, they demand money up front to be held until the fixes they demand are made. They're not using local appraisers, in some cases, so the valuations don't reflect an understanding of the local market or the local area.

Some banks offer good terms but won't finance an investment home – so if you're hoping to buy a place for some passive income, they won't do it. Then there are the big national banks that advertise speedy service and great rates. Maybe. But I've had clients working with most of them, and the results have been mixed at best.

I always recommend working with a local lender if you can. They, at least, know the market.

Second, if you want to sell, you **must** make an effort to stage your home.

Today's buyers want a house that is move-in ready. It's not unreasonable – they are already paying top dollar, and contractors are overbooked and pricey.

I have seen houses with "good bones" sit on the market for months, dropping their prices steadily, because of how they look - or smell. Some simple preparations can ensure they are impressed with your home.

Take the sniff test. If the smell of dog, cat, damp, any kind of smoke, as well as heavy air fresheners, is what hits a buyer when they walk in the door, they're going to turn around and walk out. Before you put your house on the market, ask your agent for honest feedback. And if they tell you they smell anything other than clean air, fix it before you show it.

Declutter. You've heard it a million times. But you like your stuff. And it's still your house. That's true. But if you want it to be someone

else's house, pack your stuff up and put it neatly away. An open space looks bigger. Less furniture allows buyers to imagine their furniture there. No matter how tasteful your clutter is, it's not going to be to everyone's taste – and you're looking to appeal to the widest variety of people.

Lighten up. You don't have to paint everything white (in fact, please don't), but you need to remove heavy curtains and make your rooms look as bright and open as you can.

Fix things. You know the minor fixes you need to do, so do them. An inspection is going to find every one of them, and buyers are going to try to get you to reduce the price because of them. So get it done before you list. And by the way, getting a pre-inspection done before you list is smart, and will help you head off any inspection surprises.

Meanwhile, real estate commissions and pricing

are all over the place now. For instance, if a seller insists that a buyer pay their own agent, the buyer might pass on that house. And overpriced houses still sit, unsold, long after well priced houses have been snapped up.

And here, I'd like to take a moment to mention the loss of a local real estate attorney. Harland "Sam" Dye had an office on Main Street in Delhi and I worked with him many, many times. Like many people in our area, I considered him a friend. He was a young guy with a lot of ideals, integrity, and humor. He died in a car accident this past winter and the world got just a bit darker.

If you knew him, you know. I miss him.

*Susan Barnett is Principal Broker and owner of Upstate Country Realty*

# The Mountain Eagle

and The **SCHOHARIE NEWS**

**Serving Delaware County and Its Residents**

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## SO MANY PRIMROSES, SO LITTLE TIME

I am mad about the genus of *Primula*. You may know these plants as primroses. A friend gave me my first plants over twenty years ago.

Since then, I have often participated in the American Primrose Society (APS) seed exchange to grow more varieties. The ones I choose are hardy, easy to grow from seed, and appreciative of the



*Primula polyanthus*

cool, damp conditions in my spring garden. Most of the varieties below are four to six inches tall, with exceptions as noted.

Here are some of my favorites, listed in the order in which they will bloom. The bloom times are approximate, given the changes in our climate, but they will still bloom in this order.

***Primula elatior*** is known in England as the oxlip. Its nodding pale yellow flowers are the earliest primrose blooms, usually

appearing in late April. *P. elatior* likes shade and average soil moisture. It is very hardy; late freezes don't affect it. It reseeds enthusiastically, but is easy to thin out. Its blooms last for several weeks.

***Primula denticulata***, or the drumstick primrose, is the next to bloom, in early May. Its showy round flower heads of white, lilac, magenta or purple are about a foot tall. It prefers some shade and rich soils with normal to wet mois-

ture. The drumstick flowers are sensitive to freezing, although the plant itself is fully hardy. I sometimes put Christmas tree branches over their bed in winter, in an attempt to delay their emergence until after the worst of our spring frosts.

***Primula veris***, known as the English cowslip, also blooms in early May. Its stalks of nodding flowers are commonly found in lemon yellow but the 'Sunset Shades' and 'Corona-

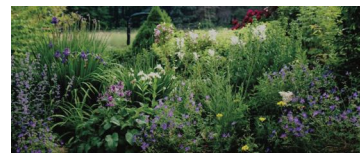
tion' cultivars are rimmed with red or orange. It prefers shade and is long-lived and not in need of moist soil. Another tough plant with long-lasting blooms.

***Primula polyanthus*** has open-faced flowers that are held on upright stems. They are available in every possible color, often with a center ('eye') of a different color. You sometimes find these for sale in the grocery, grown as hothouse plants. They bloom in early to mid-May and like shade, fertile soil, and average moisture. These primroses will bloom for weeks. The clumps increase in size over time and can be lifted for division.

***Primula kiosana*** is an Asian primrose species with soft felted leaves and small stature. The mid-May blooms of bright pink or white rise above the leaves on three to four-inch stems. It needs shade, but is not fussy about moisture. This is the only primrose I grow that sends out runners to start new plants nearby. It is not aggressive and is easy to relocate if needed.

***Primula sieboldii*** is an Asian species for shade with mid to late May flowers held on short stems above pleated leaves. There is great variation in the flower shapes and coloring. Some flowers are deeply cut and fringed like snowflakes; others may have split and rounded lobes. It is an ephemeral species, going dormant in mid-summer.

# GREENBANKS GARDENING



With  
**Deborah Banks**

***Primula japonica*** was my first love. It is a candelabra type of primrose, with three or four tiers of blooms on stalks rising a foot or more above the leaves. The early to mid-June flowers range in color from white through all shades of pink into a deep pink called "red" in primrose circles. It is a hardy wetland species that prefers some shade but will take mostly sun if it is in a wet location. This species is a prolific and energetic self-seeder; I deadhead to avoid the thousands of seedlings.

***Primula x bulleesiana*** is another candelabra style of primrose that needs moisture to thrive. The foot tall blooms range in color from gold and orange to apricot. It begins blooming as *P. japonica* is finishing in mid to late June. They look lovely planted together along a swale or pond edge.

There are other primrose species that prefer dryer gardens and more sun. If that describes your garden, you may be interested in *Primula auricula* and other alpine species.

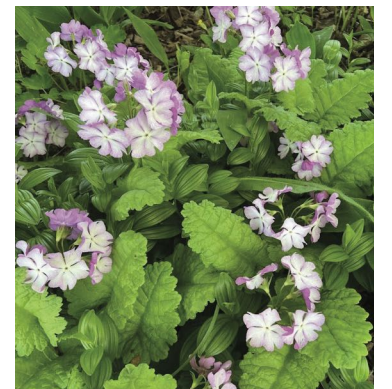
Whatever your conditions, there are primrose

species that are right for you.

Check out the [AmericanPrimroseSociety.org](http://AmericanPrimroseSociety.org) website for information on the growing of different primrose varieties and a pictorial reference.

The APS seed exchange always carries a good selection of seed provided by APS members as well as seed purchased from the Barnhaven primrose nursery in England. The seed exchange is open to members starting in early January, and then opens to the general public in March. There are always plenty of seeds left for ordering in March, but it is best to specify several alternatives for your choices, as quantities are limited by then.

I hope you will join me in my love of *Primula*!



*Primula sieboldii*

**VILLAGE, con't from Pg. 1**  
607-353-9988. We will have a sign-up night sometime in April and are also planning a candy fundraiser -

watch for details at Franklin Central School and on Facebook.

### Franklin Pool Plans:

The pool will open

on July 1, hours TBA. We are seeking qualified lifeguards to ensure pool safety. Please contact Pool Director Joanna Banks at [jbanksrec@gmail.com](mailto:jbanksrec@gmail.com) if you are interested or can recommend a candidate. We plan to continue the popular swimming lessons for kids and adults and water aerobics classes.

The pool is available to plan a summer party for the kiddos at a reasonable cost of \$100 for 2 hours or \$150 for 3 hours, with up to 20 children participating.

### Picnic in the Park:

What better way for Village residents to enjoy our beautiful park and get together with friends and neighbors? Discussions are underway for a potluck picnic in the summer.

### New and Ongoing:

We are working with the State Department of Transportation to add a crosswalk to Main Street, which is a state highway.

Sidewalk repairs will

continue.

This spring, we will install a security fence in appropriate areas to keep our new water storage tower and tank safe and secure.

Lower Water Street will be repaired and regraded due to water runoff. Work should begin this spring.

We are researching funding options to update the water main on Main Street and update water meters to more efficient models.

### Other Key Dates:

**No Overnight Parking on Village Streets ends April 1<sup>st</sup>.** When there is significant snowfall, please avoid parking on streets to enable full plowing of streets.

**Annual Franklin Firehouse Pancake Breakfast and Easter Egg Hunt is Sunday, April 13.** Breakfast is from 8:00 am to noon at the Firehouse on 351 Main Street. The Easter Egg Hunt begins at noon in the park on Main Street, across from the Firehouse.

**Mowing and Shrub Control Season is May 1 through October 15.** The high grass, weed and overgrown shrub control law is on the website: [villageoffranklinny.us/local-laws/](http://villageoffranklinny.us/local-laws/).

**Village Board Meetings occur on the second Monday of each month** at 7:00 p.m. at Village Hall, 141 Water Street.

**Mayor's Office Hours, Tuesdays from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Village Hall.** Alternative meetings can be arranged if village residents have a concern.

Online payment of water or tax bills is available on the village website: [villageoffranklinny.us](http://villageoffranklinny.us)

### Contact Us:


**Mayor:** Johanna (Hanna) VanDeusen 607-287-4986 [mayor@villageoffranklinny.us](mailto:mayor@villageoffranklinny.us)

**Clerk:** Paula Niebanck 607-829-6776 [clerk@villageoffranklinny.us](mailto:clerk@villageoffranklinny.us)

### Trustees:

John Wilson [trusteeA@villageoffranklinny.us](mailto:trusteeA@villageoffranklinny.us)

Constance Martin [trusteeB@villageoffranklinny.us](mailto:trusteeB@villageoffranklinny.us)



## Heathen Hill Yoga

Weekly community class - Sundays 3:00PM-4:15PM

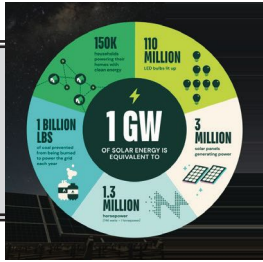
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# FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY

## AUDUBON TEACHES ECOLOGICAL LANDSCAPING

By Deborah Banks

The journal *Science* reported in 2019 that the population of all North American birds has declined by almost 30% since 1970. That is more than one in four birds. The population of grassland birds has been hit especially hard with a drop of 53%. The total loss is 2.9 billion birds, a staggering quantity.

The population of insects is also crashing. In our lifetime, we have lost almost a third of all our birds and almost half of our insects, primarily because of habitat loss, environmental degradation, and weather events made more extreme by climate change.

The loss of our birds and insects should be of great concern to all of us. If you believe that we will not survive as a species without birds and other wildlife, this news should be an urgent call to action. But what can any of us do to reverse this trend?

The Audubon Society has some answers. They are trying to rapidly increase the amount of good habitat available for birds and other species. Not by raising money to buy a thousand-acre nature preserve or two, but by hoping to convince all of us to convert our own yards into functional habitat. Doug Tallamy, an ecologist and scientist at the University of Delaware, calls this the “Homegrown National Park.”

Like Tallamy, Audubon advocates the planting of native trees, shrubs, and other plants in our yards to support native songbirds and other wildlife. They have developed programs to teach ecologically sound landscaping principles. Ecological principles include providing animals with food, water, shelter, and the ele-

ments they need to raise the next generation, as well as not using pesticides and herbicides (harmful to birds and other animals) and avoiding chemical fertilizers (which harm the soil and pollute the water).

Audubon’s first focus has been to provide a continuing education program for landscape professionals. This program is called HELP, or Habitat and Ecosystems Land Pro. By teaching landscapers to follow ecologically sound practices, Audubon hopes to rapidly increase the amount of habitat available for wildlife, as each landscaper may work on twenty to fifty projects per year.

In our area, the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society provided the three-day HELP program to a class of twenty in mid-March at Hartwick’s Pine Lake Environmental Campus. The facilitator, Joy Cirigliano from the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary & Audubon Center, taught ecological reclamation concepts, including the use of native plants that fit the site conditions, reduction of lawn area, creation of wildlife corridors, stormwater retention, ecological lighting considerations, eco-friendly pavement options, weed management, and best management practices for “pests.” This can all be implemented while also creating a garden that is aesthetically pleasing.

Cirigliano also provided resources for determining the local geological area and ecoregion. Knowing the ecoregion helps to determine what plants existed historically in the area alongside the local wildlife. Online resources are available for creating lists of these native trees, shrubs, perennials, vines, and annuals. The class also discussed the impact that climate change is having on these plant communities. As the climate warms, plant and wildlife communities are shifting northward. We may want to consider sourcing some plants from areas to the south of us, to create habitat that is more resilient to these changes.

The Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society (DOAS) is also planning to offer a class this

fall that is geared specifically for homeowners. The class is called Habitats and Ecosystems for Any Landscape (HEAL). This three-hour training will teach you how to create a rich habitat in your yard that supports birds, insects, and other wildlife. You can indicate your interest now by adding your name to the class waiting list at the following DOAS website page: <https://doas.us/heal-program-waiting-list/> They will notify you when registration opens for the class.

Meanwhile, you can get started by reading Doug Tallamy’s book *Bringing Nature Home*, which details ways in which native plants support wildlife, and lists desirable native plants by region in an appendix. Also, visit the nurseries in our region that sell primarily native plants. They include the following:

**Catskill Native Nursery**

607 Samsonville Rd, Kerhonkson, NY  
845-626-2758 [catskillnativenursery.com](http://catskillnativenursery.com)

**The Plantsmen Nursery**

482 Peruville Road, Groton NY  
607-533-7193 [plantsmen.com](http://plantsmen.com)

**Go Native Perennials**

3130 East Lake Rd, Skaneateles, NY  
240-626 5209 [docelumefarm.com](http://docelumefarm.com)

In addition, the following organizations have an annual sale of tree and shrub seedlings. Plan to put in your 2026 order early next January for the best selection.

Delaware Co. Soil and Water Conservation, 44 West St, Suite 1, Walton, NY

[dcswcd.org](http://dcswcd.org) (order from Jan – March 3)

DEC Saratoga Tree Nursery [dec.ny.gov/nature/forests-trees/Saratoga-tree-nursery](http://dec.ny.gov/nature/forests-trees/Saratoga-tree-nursery) (order from Jan – May 14)

When we grow native plants and create a habitat for our native birds and insects, we benefit also, by receiving pollination for our food, pest control, carbon storage, clean air and water, and flood control.

Let’s get started!

## ZOMBIE PIPELINE

By Brian Brock

During a press briefing on February 14<sup>th</sup>, President Trump discussed an executive order to create the National Energy Dominance Council and said that the Constitution Pipeline project should be revived. A rare example of Trump supporting the Constitution.

The president blasted New York for holding up a pipeline to New England and threatened to overrule state permitting power if necessary. He claimed that Con-

stitution would reduce gas prices 50 to 70 percent. Fact check: the project was to move methane from the drilling fields of northeastern Pennsylvania to eastern Canada via reversing the flow in the Iroquois Pipeline. Additionally, Trump posted (incorrectly) on his social media on March 13<sup>th</sup> that the pipeline was “from New York State, whose people all want it.”

The CEO of Williams Companies expressed interest in the proposal. (What executive is willing to cross this president?) However, the company wrote off over \$350 million when it cancelled the Con-

stitution Pipeline project in 2020. In a press conference on March 12<sup>th</sup>, Armstrong stated that the company would remain on the sideline until governors of Pennsylvania and New York grant all permits, express their support, and remove bans on uses of methane. “We have so much more demand for gas to the south – so many more projects – that we’re not gonna stick our neck out” to try to invest in the northeast, he said.

This pipeline would cross 10 miles of Franklin along the ridge of the hills between Ouleout Creek and Susquehanna River. A compressor station would likely be built in Franklin. For a similar project, Northeast Energy Direct, plans were to build a compressor and chemical treatment facility on the hill north of the village. It would pay some property taxes to county, town, school district, fire district, and library.

Williams still controls all easements under contract. However, those obtained through eminent domain have been vacated. Before work could begin there, easements would have to be obtained one way or another.

Trump’s failure to force through the Constitution in his previous administration is probably one of his many grievances. On March 14<sup>th</sup>, Trump met with Hochul again to discuss several topics, including reviving the Constitution Pipeline project. Last year, the Hochul administration approved increasing the capacity of Iroquois Pipeline to move gas from Canada to downstate.

From the federal government, Governor Hochul wants a few things for New York; prominent are the continuation of congestion pricing, and the permitting and financing for a new Penn Station. One of her few bargaining chips is the Constitution Pipeline project, although it would conflict with the goals of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. Their meeting ended amicably and was referred to as productive by the governor’s office. However, no agreement was announced.

Regardless of the politics, Williams would have to demonstrate that a Constitution Pipeline project is economically viable.





## LOVELY DOMINICA

By Manette Berlinger

Photos by the author

During the icy cold of February, my husband and I celebrated our birthdays by flying to Dominica, a small “nature island” in the eastern Caribbean. Located between the popular French islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique, Dominica is an independent, English-speaking nation within the British Commonwealth that reflects the influence of both France and England which fought each other for it during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. England eventually won and ruled Dominica until 1978 when it gained independence.

For many years, Dominica had the distinction of being the least visited island in the Caribbean despite its abundant natural wonders. It lacked beautiful, swimmable beaches and until this February, was inaccessible by direct flight. Moreover, during the last decade, two major hurricanes devastated most of its structures. So why go there? Lonely Planet adventurers rave about its beautiful mountains, lush rainforests, towering waterfalls, invigorating hot springs, dramatic canyons, and hundreds of rivers. It has two hospitals, a bus system, a low crime rate, no poisonous snakes, and lots of water - so much water that it was once ex-

ported, and may be again.

Although February is in Dominica’s driest season, it poured for two weeks before we arrived and for five of the seven days we were there. Surprisingly, this was not such a problem because of breaks in the rainfall, though we worried about possible mudslides or rockslides as we drove the narrow, potholed, switchbacked roads, intent on avoiding the ditches on both sides that carry the rain to the sea. And in Dominica, you drive on the right side of the car and on the left side of the road, the English way.

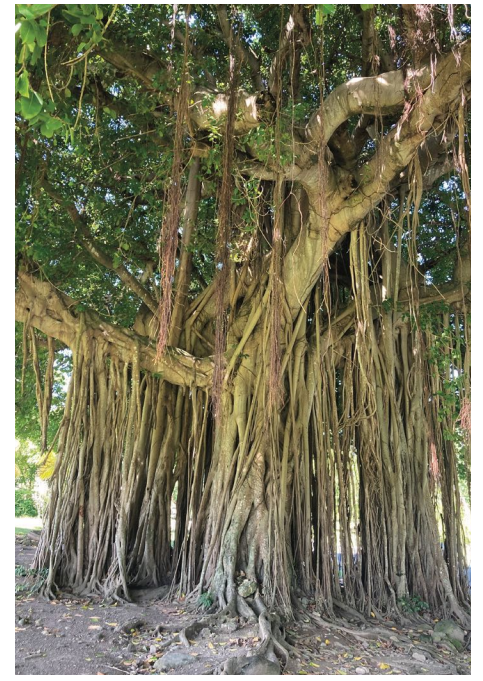
We stayed in a rustic cottage on a mountain in the rainforest. It was filled with colorful local art, and the covered kitchen was open to the



outdoors. Amazingly, our only animal and insect guests were birds who came to share our breakfast and a small lizard who ventured up the beams of the deck. Eating in restaurants by the sea or communally with other travelers, we met reserved but friendly Dominicans and intrepid visitors who came to hike, climb, scuba dive, and “canyon,” that is, being harnessed and lowered into crevices in the mountains to explore hidden caves and warm pools.

Despite the rain, we drove to sights near the capital city of Roseau: stunning waterfalls, soothing hot springs and Champagne Beach, a small, stony beach where the water is warmed and bubbled by steam rising from volcanic vents in the sea floor. We walked the streets of Roseau, more crowded than usual during Carnival time which precedes Lent. We visited the history museum that recounts the island’s colonization. A sign near the entrance declares: “Columbus’s greatest achievement was getting back to Spain.” Because of the rain and the daunting roads, we didn’t reach Dominica’s stunning national parks or the north and east of the island where descendants of the indigenous Caribs who survived colonization still ply their traditional arts.

Dominica’s pride in being the Caribbean’s eco and nature island is palpable, but its status as the



least visited is changing. Dominica is on the cusp of development. Chinese investment is extensive, welcomed for the economic growth it is fostering, but also viewed with concern. China has invested in Dominica’s hospitals, is building an international airport and pursuing other projects. Posters announce: “Dominica’s and China’s shared future.” Cruise ships now dock for several days, and hotels, restaurants and other tourist accommodations will soon follow. Hopefully, Dominica’s government will regulate growth to preserve its natural beauty, for as Fodor’s travel guide states, “to experience Dominica is really to know the earth as it was created.”



Rendering of rebuilt power line, west of Rt. 21

## JENNISON TRANSMISSION SOLUTION

By Brian Brock

Late last year, NYSEG proposed another upgrade, one to the existing 115 KW transmission lines 734, 946, and 949. They run 47.5 miles from the East Norwich Substation outside of Norwich, Chenango Co. by way of the Jennison Substation in Bainbridge to Frasier Substation outside of Delhi, Delaware Co. Two new substations would be built in Chenango Co., in the towns of Guilford (North Pond) and Bainbridge (Jennison).

In Franklin, the right of way (ROW) of Line 949 goes south of Franklin Depot and Merrickville, north of Plymouth Church, and by the intersection of Dunk Hill and Fish Hollow roads. It runs between line mile markers 16 and 22, a distance of about six miles.

From company’s application to PSC: “The Project includes replacement of all of the existing lines’ conductor, insulators, and existing structures.” There are 42 supports in Franklin, numbers 116 to 157, and one support will be added immediately west of Rt. 21, number 138.5. These will be steel monopoles, alone or in combination with “new transmission structures to support the proposed lines with single structures, two and three-pole structures, and custom single pole structures.” The poles are about 120’ or 135’ tall, and average spacing is

about 700’ between. Foundations would either embed the base of pole in crushed stone or bolt the base plate to a concrete pillar. Poles would self-weather, that is, rust.

In some places, the contractor would have to build temporary lines using mostly wood poles to maintain transmission during installation of new monopoles and lines.

The existing transmission network of the NYSEG Oneonta Division in central New York has several weaknesses, raising the possibility of voltage collapse. Part of the existing Jamison Substation is in a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area, and the original equipment was installed in the 1940s. Existing Lines 946 and 949 are in poor condition.

The project would mitigate existing limits on this transmission system while providing for future renewable generation facilities to connect to the power grid in furtherance of the goals of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA). The North Pond Substation will be connected to a utility-scale wind-power project by Northland Power of Toronto. This High Bridge Wind Farm will have 25 turbines with a capacity of 100 MW.

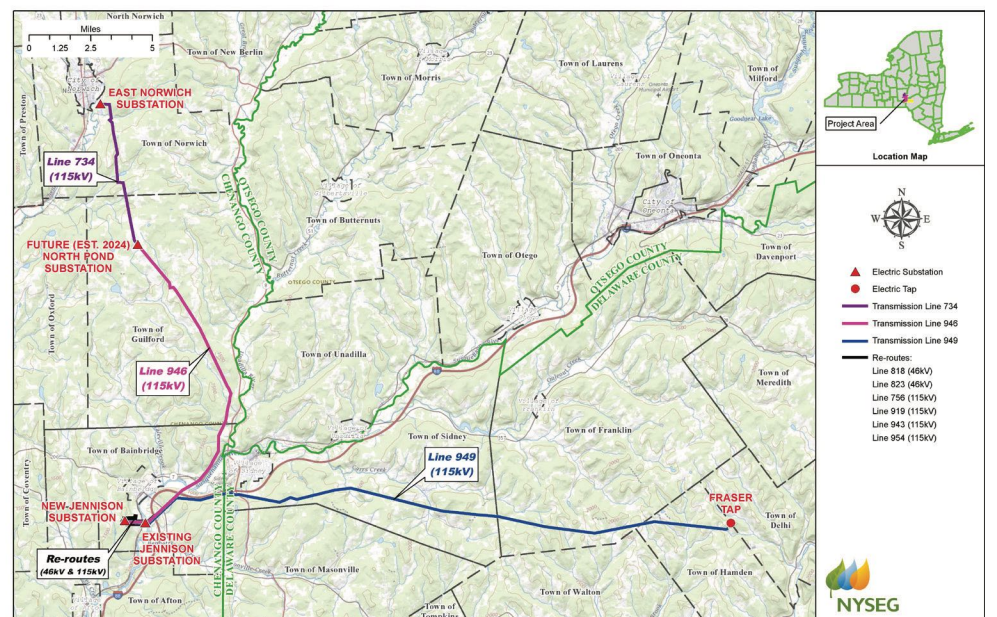
Initial survey work started in late 2022, and NYSEG expects the project to be online by March 2030. Once started, maybe in spring of 2027, construction should take 30 to 36 months, including building two substations. Replacing Line 949 in Franklin would likely be

completed in one season.

In November, notices were published in local newspapers. In December, this project was submitted to the NYS Public Service Commission (PSC) and assigned Case No. 24-T-0677. Additional permits are required, including from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Federal Aviation Administration, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, and NYS Department of Transportation. NYSEG expects to host public information meetings.

Documents are available online at <https://jennisontransmissionsolution.com>. However, the maps are awkward to view online, particularly without a fiber-optic connection. Printed documents are available at the Franklin Free Library.

Franklin needs a road use agreement with NYSEG. The other power line project through Franklin, North Oneonta Reliability Project (aka Marcy South II), has been suspended until further notice. During the permitting process, the PSC found that this project would not support CLCPA’s goals with sufficient additional capacity.







**ROTARY: GET INVOLVED!**  
By Connie Martin

Last month, I was surprised and honored to be recognized at Franklin Rotary's annual New Year dinner as the Club's 2024 Paul Harris Fellow for my contributions to Rotary and the Franklin community.

The Paul Harris Fellow recognition acknowledges individuals who contribute, or who have contributions made in their name, of \$1,000 to The Rotary Foundation. Rotarians have a tradition of supporting the Foundation by honoring others.

Several of my fellow Franklin Rotarians have received this recognition, and I am honored to join them. Being part of Rotary means helping to make a difference and improve the quality of life for families, friends and neighbors in our community and beyond. To me, that's priceless.

Our Rotary Club members come from all walks: farmers, business owners, builders, social services and medical professionals, members of the military, a minister, artisans, corporate executives – you name it. Some members are born and raised in the area, while others are from "the city" or another state. There is camaraderie and good fellowship at our meetings. The club offers something for everyone, no matter your expertise, talent, or inclination. Here's how to get involved:

**Engaging in Rotary Youth Programs.** We offers a Rotary Youth Exchange (RYE) program

and Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA).

Franklin Rotary and local host families have enabled two exchange students to enjoy the "Franklin experience": Fede Rama from northern Italy attended Franklin Central School as a senior last year, and Tien-Jui Huang (Terry) from Taiwan is this year's exchange student. Our own Griffin Leddy spent a school year in Denmark under the Youth Exchange Program three years ago. Our club also participates in RYLA each year, interviewing high school students at Franklin Central School and selecting and paying for one to two students to attend a three-day retreat to develop leadership and life skills.

These students come to Rotary meetings to talk about their experiences and nothing is more gratifying than to see them grow in confidence, outlook, and joy in a new learning experience.

**Supporting Franklin Community Education Foundation, Franklin Central School and Franklin Free Library.** Rotary has contributed funds to FCEF and Franklin Central School's backpack program, supplying breakfast and lunch to students in need. We have also sponsored reading programs with our library.

**Working to Nurture and Improve the Environment.** You may have seen Rotarians planting trees in Franklin or helping maintain the village park on Main Street. Our club conducts two highway cleanups a year (watch for the neon yellow vests!) and supports Earth Day. Rotarians visited the county recycling facility in Delhi to better understand the process and how individuals and the community can help.

**Volunteering, Donating and Joining in Seasonal Festivities.** Rotarians volunteer and make donations to help other community and

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charitable organizations. They sell refreshments to raise money and create goodwill at bake sales and Franklin Stage Company performances, support and participate in Old Franklin Day, and install and decorate the festive lighted trees on Main Street for Franklin's holiday festivities.

**Ready to Help Make a Difference?** Rotary meetings happen on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 6:30 pm at the Open Doors Methodist Church at 475 Main Street. We invite you to join us as our guest to find out more of what Rotary is about!



Connie Martin was recognized as Franklin Rotary Club's 2024 Paul Harris Fellow



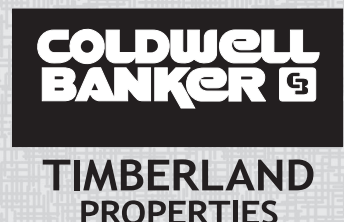
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## FOUR RETIREES AT FIVE STAR

By Carol Ohmart Behan

*You'll be arriving at this story sometime in the Spring, the cold and snow of winter a receding memory. Those long and frigid weeks of January and February made for many a car issue for lots of us. Read on to find out how mine had a delightful and warm outcome.*

*This originally appeared on my Substack page which can be found here: <https://carolohmartbehan.substack.com/>*

Here in my corner of the Catskills... the northwest corner...the long weeks of cold and snowy weather since Thanksgiving have made it feel like an old-fashioned winter, so termed by many who live *hereabouts*, especially us born-and-raised, as we like to say (okay—brag). Snowy beauty aside, there have been challenges. The prolonged deep freeze resulted in lots of car issues, including for Scarlett Juniper (Scarlett for short), my still-new-to-me cherry red 2019 Subaru Impreza.

On a zero-degree morning one Tuesday, a trip to the nearby Sidney Center post office became a challenging drive home, the motor inexplicably revving alarmingly and all sorts of warning lights flashing. Uttering a prayer to the Car Angels, I managed the two miles home, reversed into the driveway, turned off the engine, and went inside for a second cup of coffee, immensely relieved not to have been stranded on the bright but bitter cold morning.

The next day, my always dependable mechanics diagnosed the problem but lacked the necessary gizmos to address the issue. Off to the local Subaru folks in Oneonta for remedy, where I found my way from Five Star's service desk to the customer lounge. It was a clean and spacious enough space, reasonably comfortable chairs, a kids' corner with push toys neatly lined up on a rug and a supply of children's books, a Keurig and coffee/tea assortment handy. Prepared to pass the predicted hour's wait time, I had a new book packed along, *The Lost Van Gogh*.

Another customer was already there. We nodded and said hello. The ubiquitous flat screen, wall-mounted, was tuned to a cooking channel, the signal intermittent, kitchen drama ("Yes, Chef!") blaring and subsiding.

"No need to have that on for me," the man said, noting my book.

So I gladly grabbed the remote and turned it off. We shared our car problems and otherwise mutual appreciation of Subarus. (Since connecting with Scarlett, I'd found that Subaru owners are a congenial tribe.) We talked for a bit. He was a retired truck driver and I, a retired English teacher. Passing the time with a book rather than a cell phone perhaps served to underscore this.

I supplied myself with a cup of coffee and settled into some reading. While the reason to be in Five Star's customer lounge



was not the best (What *will* this repair work cost me??), having nothing to do but read for pleasure for a while isn't entirely a hardship. Soon another man arrived—a retiree in appearance—also carrying a book. We three shared greetings and the usual *Where are you from?* It's a friendly inquiry among strangers in places like this and I enjoy the commonalities that show up. Nice to be reminded that it's really a small world after all.

We became a quartet when a pleasant-looking woman came in, coffee in hand, and a fresh round of friendly conversation began. She was a retired nurse from nearby Worcester. Noting our books in hand, she said she was an avid reader too and talked of the weekly used-book sale at her town's library. This sparked a lively exchange around books, suggestions of good used bookstores in the area, and the pleasures of reading in general.

By the time one of the Subaru fellas appeared to let the woman know her car was ready, a delightful half hour had passed. As she made her goodbye, I said although we'd all showed up for car repair work, it had turned out to be a book club meeting as well. We all laughed and agreed.

The four of us retirees/Subaru owners soon went off in our separate directions. My two and a half hour wait ended with welcome news of a surprisingly low charge and a sparkling clean Scarlett, thanks to the courtesy car wash she'd received. I drove home considerably lighter in spirit at both these outcomes, but I was buoyed as much by the impromptu book club meet-up. It was a balmy day by then... nearing 30...the midday sun a-dazzle in the bright blue sky. A glistening Courier & Ives winter landscape greeted me at every curve along the back roads which I prefer to the interstate.

In the present rough and tumble times we are living through, here's some advice: seek out Islands of Sanity for needed reprieves and a chance to take some deep breaths. I'm fortunate in the Island of my women's group that meets Monday nights on Zoom. Arriving at Five Star Subaru that January morning, appreciative of the repair work to set Scarlett right, what a sweet bonus to arrive on an Island of Sanity cleverly disguised as the Customer Lounge.

In the coming months of this still-new year, I hope you find such special Islands often.

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The Bainbridge Lions visited the Northeast Car Museum in Norwich on March 8th during a social outing.

This museum is the largest car museum in the Northeast, with more than 200 vehicles on display and 25 plus motorcycles.



Photo by PDG Dave Hubman

Back Row L-R: Pete Taggart, Greg Holdrege, Ken Barton, Bob Evans, Brendan Evans, Gary Richman, Roy Nabinger, George Gifford, Dave Worden

Front Row L-R: Jaidyn Evans, Connie Evans, Charleen Sastri, Barb Crouch, Cliff Crouch, Drew Brendel, Pat McCann, Ethan Mazzarella, Maisie Mazzarella, Pam Barton, Jen Lambrecht, Paul Cliffe

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**KING'S, continued from Page 1**

left, she realized that she needed some eggs. Antoinette stopped by the Tulip and the Rose and asked if there was any place where she could pick up eggs. They told her that Mirabito's has eggs but they could sell her some of their farm fresh eggs. She walked down Maple Street and admired the garden at Botanical Treasures. Diana invited her on a tour of the property. When the small building on Main Street came on the market, Antoinette jumped at the chance to start the business of her dreams.

She wanted to create a place where people can gather, relax, and build community. She said she hoped that, "King's would serve as a launching pad to get out and learn about our community."

Antoinette serves coffee, tea, and locally sourced

pastries from places like Five Kids' Bakehouse in Gilbertsville. In addition to the seating in the front room, a table with chairs is set up in the back room. The arrangement is flexible so it can accommodate people in different conversation groupings.

King's also sells quality home goods. Basically, everything in the store is for sale, including the furniture. Ceramics, soaps, linens such as cloth napkins, books, pet toys, planters, and clothing are also available. Everything is displayed in an appealing manner, playing off the light that filters through the many windows.

Antoinette is in the process of planning events that complement other events going on in Franklin. She recently had a Happy Hour before the Saturday night

Film Forum movie at the library. From 6:15 until movie time, people could stop by for a glass of wine and cheese from Good Taste Food Emporium. I asked how she is able to serve wine, and she mentioned three ways to do it. She can provide it without charge, people can bring their own wine and there will be a corkage fee, or it can be done collaboratively with other businesses. She plans to work with Bitter Sweet Farm Brewery, another relatively new business in Franklin. They have a brew bus that can serve beer at different locations.

If you check out the King's calendar (<https://www.kings375.com>), at the bottom of the page you'll

find other events she's planning. Four times a year, beginning in March, King's will host Cocktails for Creatives, "A casual meet-up for local artists to connect, collaborate, and inspire one another." King's will also showcase local performers with small concerts.

Opening a new business during the winter in Franklin might sound risky, but our community has already benefited from the slow start. Being next to the Fire House, Antoinette noticed all of the work that our local volunteer fire and EMS workers do as they go out on emergency calls. She was deeply impressed with their dedication. She spoke with other

local business owners and coordinated a raffle made up of donations from local businesses to benefit the Fire Department. They put together a gift basket valued at over \$200 and raffled it off. The raffle raised \$500 for the Franklin Fire Department.

If you are walking around Franklin, need a gift for a friend or a cup of coffee or a place to meet a friend, King's is a perfect place to stop by. You never know who you'll meet there.

**King's**  
375 Main Street,  
Franklin, NY 13775  
**Winter hours:**  
**Thursday through Sunday**  
**10 a.m. to 4p.m.**

Photos by Andy Bobrow

**UPLIFT, continued from Page 1**

joy, comfort, and *positive experiences to children and families of children who are facing or have faced a significant health crisis. The Uplift Collective will also advocate for and act in support of a healthy environment relating to clean water, air, and food.*

The Uplift Collective's President, Mike Sellitti, offers these thoughts:

"For almost 20 years, the Sidney Center Improvement Group (SCIG) and its volunteer members have been focused on and dedicated to improving the quality of life for residents in and around the hamlet of Sidney Center.

"In that time SCIG has worked on water quality and flood mitigation issues, safety concerns such as speeding, improved the curb appeal of the hamlet with flowers, decorations

and new entrance signs, as well as initiated popular events like the Tractor Parade, Holidays in the Hamlet, and the Down Home Fall Fest. The most ambitious project was revamping the park and playground with new equipment and features for children and adults of all ages.

"SCIG has gifted the improvements and new features at the park to the Town of Sidney. Historical aspects of what the Group has achieved over the years will be handed over to the Maywood Historical Group to live on indefinitely. The Improvement Group and its dedicated members are proud of these accomplishments and our time serving Sidney Center.

"On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank the volunteers over the years who worked tire-

lessly to keep the vision and mission of the Improvement Group alive.

"It took the selfless actions of many to bring our goals to fruition. It also took building relationships in the community, working with other like-minded organizations and individuals to achieve real and meaningful results. For this, we are grateful and will take this with us as we pursue the next chapter of our great community non-profit organization."

The Uplift Collective's public meetings will be quarterly rather than monthly and are open to everyone. They will continue to be held at the Sidney Center Fire Hall starting at 6:30 p.m. The Spring meeting will be May 12<sup>th</sup>, followed by meetings on August 11<sup>th</sup> and November 10<sup>th</sup>. Reminders will be posted on the group's Facebook page and via community public service outlets. Minutes of these meetings will be made available on-line.

Our popular community events of the Down Home Fall Fest and Holidays in the Hamlet will be continuing in 2025 with October 5<sup>th</sup> and December

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6<sup>th</sup> as the respective dates. Our annual Spring Bake Sale will be May 4<sup>th</sup> at the four corners coinciding with the Fire Department's first chicken BBQ of the season. It is hoped that at least two Movie Nights will happen at the Baker Street Park during the summer months. Watch for updates!

Shifting our people-power and funds, we will conclude our beautification projects for the most part, other than at the Baker Street Park. Primarily this has been the flower barrels

along Main Street, Route 23. We will be seeking volunteers to maintain the barrels still in reasonable condition.

Further details will be available at our May meeting. If interested in helping out, contact us through our Facebook page or an email to [meadowmuse7@yahoo.com](mailto:meadowmuse7@yahoo.com).

We look forward to you joining us at upcoming meetings and especially at this year's community events and celebrations!



**SCANDAL continued from Pg. 1**  
can Ginseng filed for bankruptcy in 2020.

In 2021, the holder of the mortgage, Excelsior Growth Fund obtained a judgement against Pharma for the \$92 thousand that it was owed. NYBDC Local Development Corporation does business as Excelsior Growth Fund.

The following year, Excelsior requested that the Delaware County sheriff levy and sell the property to satisfy this judgement.

In April of 2023, pursuant to the judgement, an auction was held at the Delaware County Public Safety Building in Delhi. This property with an assessed market value of \$1.26 million, was auctioned by one of his employees (name withheld) for \$380 to local businessman Jonah Shaw. A representative of Excelsior, VP Zachary Lajunesse, and other bidders at the April auction thought that the gavel fell at \$380 thousand. Sheriff DuMond insisted that "There is not a typo or clerical error. The sale was made for \$380." In other words, he claims that the auction of a million-dollar property was bid in increments of ten dollars. Additionally, he said, "Please know our attorneys review every civil transaction prior to me signing any deed to ensure legitimacy, legality, etc."

The following month, Excelsior sued the sheriff's office and Shaw to be made whole for its judgement against American Ginseng of \$92 thousand. This lawsuit was filed May 2023 in Delaware County

Supreme Court, requesting that Shaw pay the full sale price of \$380,000 or that this sale be set aside for "fraud, collusion, mistake, misconduct, casting suspicion on the fairness of the sale or because the price is so inadequate it should shock the court's conscience." Sale for only hundreds of dollars was "a mistake, or if not a mistake, the product of possible fraud, collusion, misconduct, exploitive overreaching because the winning bid was \$380,000."

American Ginseng, through CEO John Tseng, joined the lawsuit also asking that the sale be set aside. Tseng has also requested that the company be compensated for the personal property sold or disposed of by Shaw. Personal property includes any equipment that is not built in.

On behalf of Sheriff DuMond, Assistant County Attorney Jeremy Rase answered the lawsuit stating that the county sheriff, "acted in good faith," that the "plaintiff was negligent in the transfer," and that the plaintiff is responsible and at fault for the errors, not the sheriff. Also, Shaw filed a response to the suit, relying on denials by Delaware County, asking that the lawsuit be thrown out and that he be able to retain the property for the recorded sale price.

Early in 2024, the county's insurance compensated EGF. Delaware County lost out on almost \$290,000 of revenue - expected earnings minus money due EGF. Previously, the county paid more than \$28,000 in

back taxes to Town of Franklin and Delaware Academy CSD, resulting in additional loss to county taxpayers. Judge Burns ordered discontinuation of the action without prejudice or cost to either party on January 29<sup>th</sup> 2024. Thereby, we taxpayers were deprived of a public sorting of fact from fiction. What is more, part of the settlement was the signing of NDAs, non-disclosure agreements.

Last June, the Franklin planning board accepted an application by Shaw to convert the school kitchen and cafeteria for processing of smoked meats and cannabis. The public hearing was held in July and continued in September. His Catskill Food Company LLC received a license from the NYS Office of Cannabis Management on August 19<sup>th</sup>. Shaw received a special-use permit at the September meeting.

The board considered a second permit to convert 16 rooms into a motel and the remaining spaces into an event venue as 138 Church Street LLC. Public hearing was held before their September meeting. With previous applications for a campground and a pet care facility also being considered, the meeting ran late. Therefore, further discussion of that permit was tabled until their next meeting.

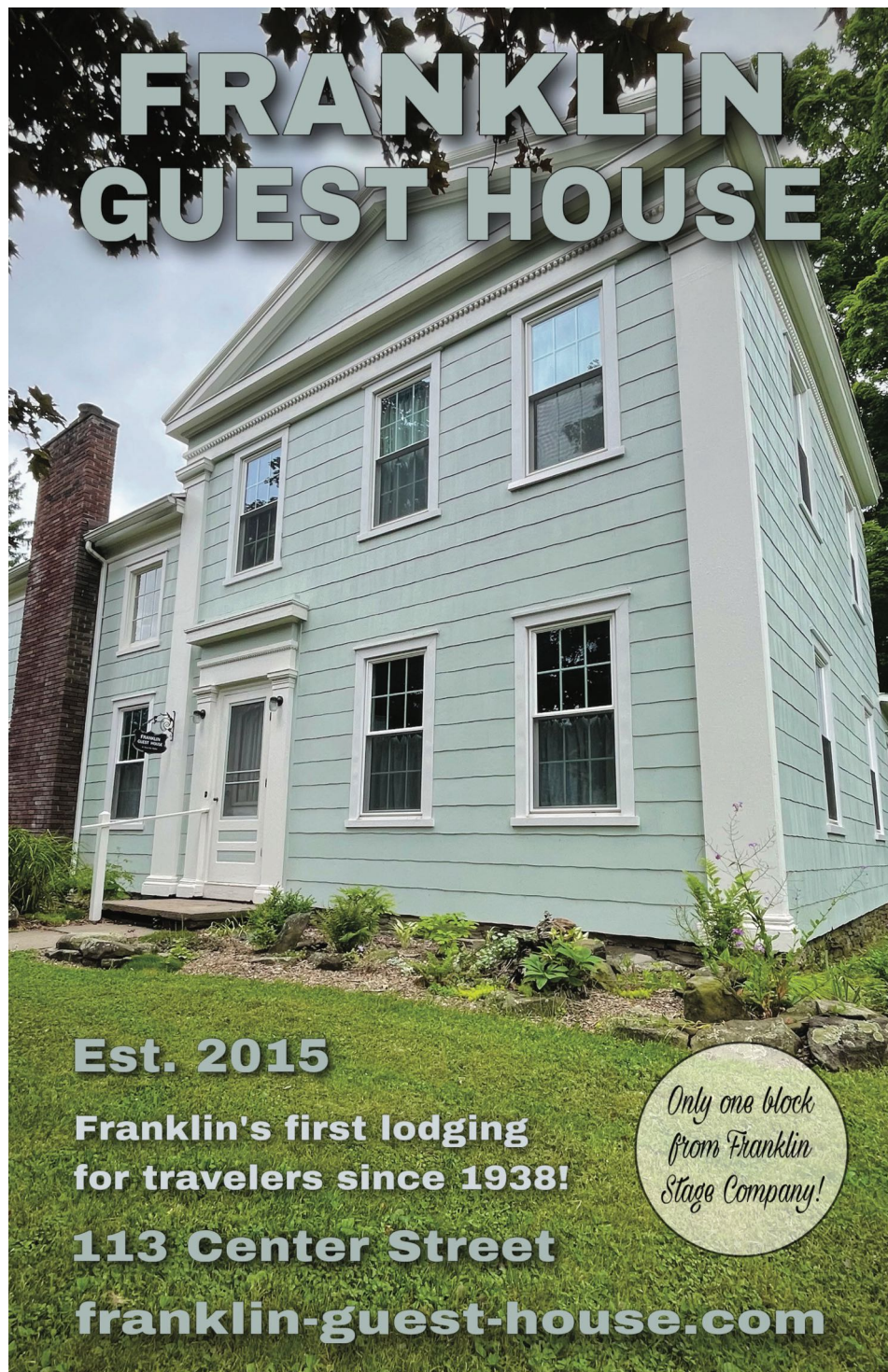
Mr. Shaw met with the board concerning his plans for rentals in October, November, January, and February. (He was away on business in early December.) Several thorny issues required resolution. Maximum capacities for stays and events had to be set based on

available space, water supply, sewer capacity, and size of parking lot. Regulatory approvals were needed from multiple state agencies. Also, possible impacts had to be mitigated for neighbors and users of the park. The recent problems with the Treadwell water system raised the question of contingencies for an interruption of supply. In February, our planning board issued Shaw's 138 Church Street LLC a special use permit with a long list of conditions.

Shortly afterwards, this newspaper uncovered additional information that Shaw intends a different use of the school building than he represented to the planning board. Instead, it is to be a regional hub for cannabis processors (see below) which he had not mentioned, let alone applied for a permit.

Local businessmen have profited handsomely from the A.L.Kellogg bequest. OSP Capital LLC sold the school building for \$825,000 more than they paid for it only four years earlier. A dozen years later, Jonah Shaw obtained the \$1,260,000 building for next to nothing. In contrast, taxpayers got the short end of the stick. The Treadwell school district spent \$3,650,000 to build the school and at least another \$770,000 in renovations before it was sold for \$150,000. Delaware county lost hundreds of thousands of dollars on the auction to Shaw.

*Part I of School for Scandal Redux was published in the Fall 2024 issue of The New Franklin Register.*



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**Catskill WeedWorks**

For half a year or more, Shaw and his business partner Donny Moskovic have promoted Catskill WeedWorks nationally. This company would lease some or all of space in his Treadwell building as a hub for multiple cannabis processors.

The former A.L. Kellogg Elementary School has a commercial kitchen and 13 classrooms with plumbing, aka suites. Catskill Weed Works LLC was organized in October 2024 and has a website: <https://catskillweedworks.com/>

In addition to leases, the website offers "top-tier manufacturing services." Shaw's company is "actively seeking strategic partnerships for co-packing, white labeling, and licensing agreements." On his LinkedIn post, Shaw offers Management Service Agreements

and proposes to host research and development. Leases are offered to Type 1 processors which are permitted to do extraction of THC, something Shaw said during permitting would not be done in the building.

The partners claim that this cannabis campus was fully municipally approved and has access to municipal water. However, plans for these light-industrial leases were not even presented to our planning board, nor were estimates of their demand on the Treadwell water system. Also, the increase in weekday traffic flow on Church Street was presented as coming from only one small processor, Shaw's Catskill Food Company

If WeedWorks is new to you, then perhaps this is because last fall the required public notice of the company's organization was placed in the Press-Republican newspaper of Plattsburgh NY.



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## AT THE LIBRARY BOOK REVIEWS WITH ALEXIS GREENE



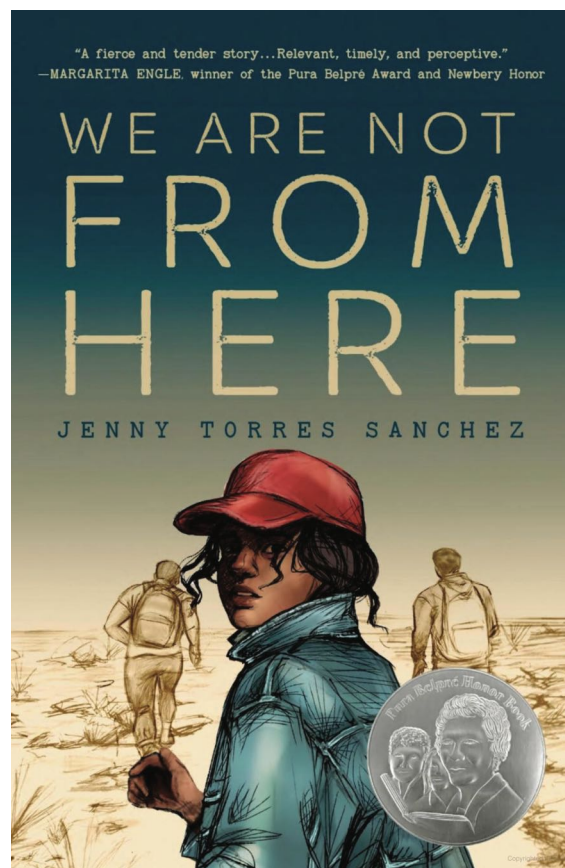
### WE ARE NOT FROM HERE

By Jenny Torres Sanchez

“Fiction Is the Lie That Tells the Truth Truer.”

Such was the smart headline for an article in a recent issue of *Writer’s Digest*, an invaluable American magazine, to which many of us writers subscribe. And it seemed to me to be the perfect description of the novel *We Are Not from Here*, by Jenny Torres Sanchez.

This extraordinary young adult novel was published in 2020, but its vivid portrayal of the dangers encountered by three teenagers fleeing from Guatemala to the Mexico-U.S. border feels exceptionally timely. As current news coverage has



revealed, our present U.S. government is uninterested in providing a safe home for those who, like the teens in the Sanchez novel, are trying to escape rapists, murderers, and murderous gangs, and seek safety and comfort in the United States of America.

Sanchez herself was born in the U.S.—in Brooklyn, New York, in fact. But like the

fearful but determined teens in her book, Sanchez’s mother is from Puerto Barios, Guatemala; her father is from El Salvador.

The three teenagers’ story is told by two of them. One is Pequeña, who, at the novel’s start, is giving birth to a baby conceived by what was essentially rape. The other narrator, Pulga, witnesses a horrendous crime in Puerto Barios with his best friend Chico. This puts both boys in danger of being murdered.

These teens are not without a few loving relatives and friends. But they feel that the local threats are too deadly to survive, so it would be best for them “to run.”

The journey to the Mexico-U.S. border, most of which takes place on a train system that people call “La Bestia,” is indeed beastly. The three teens carry their few belongings in backpacks and usually have to leap onto a moving train, crawl onto the top of a train car and cling to it all day and all night. Occasionally, when their train stops in a town, they leap off and seek a shelter, where they are fed for free and perhaps spend part of a night...until the next train arrives, and they once again desperately clamber on.

Pequeña’s and Pulga’s narratives are visceral descriptions of their emotional distress, their physical pain, the dirt they must live with for weeks and weeks, and their determination to survive. “We are dirty, dusty,” Pequeña tell us. “We look like insects that burrow deep in the earth for years, before finally emerging.” The teens encounter additional challenges when they reach the Mexico-U.S. border and have to cross a desert. Author Sanchez gives the teens lively voices and graphic descriptions of both the natural and unnatural worlds they encounter.

Given the current federal thrust to deport millions of immigrants who have traveled to the U.S. and tried to make it their home, *We Are Not from Here* is revelatory. These men and women may not be from here, but they have encountered and overcome severe hardships to get here, where they hope to find safety.

### HOW DO I LOVE THEE (Sonnet 43)

By Elizabeth Barrett Browning

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.  
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height  
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight  
For the ends of being and ideal grace.  
I love thee to the level of every day’s  
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.  
I love thee freely, as men strive for right.  
I love thee purely, as they turn from praise.  
I love thee with the passion put to use  
In my old griefs, and with my childhood’s faith.  
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose  
With my lost saints. I love thee with the breath,  
Smiles, tears, of all my life; and, if God choose,  
I shall but love thee better after death.



The English poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning was born March 6, 1806, in Kelloe, UK. She died June 29, 1861. Browning was married to the poet Robert Browning.

A highly prolific poet, she was influenced by Dante Alighieri, George Sand, and others. Her poetry influenced Emily Dickinson. “How Do I Love Thee” is well known and well loved.

The Poet’s Corner is curated by Bertha Rogers



“GUARDIAN”  
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# CATSKILL CATS

## MUSIC NOTES BY JOHN O'CONNOR

### A COMPLETE UNSEEN *Some Thoughts on Dylan after Newport 1965*



The way I see it, folk music in America became rivulets into the river of popular music around the dawning of the first commercial recordings. The birth of what we call country music today can be traced back to three days in 1927 when the Carter Family and Jimmie Rogers recorded their songs for Victor Records. These recording sessions were part of a project that took place in several cities across the country. Ralph Peer recorded southern string bands, gospel singers, and blues and ballad singers. One could consider this a historical turning point much like the day Bob Dylan brought an electric band to the Newport Folk Festival.

Now you might think I am about to launch into a review of the movie, *A Complete Unknown*. I'm not. I haven't seen the movie and I don't intend to any time

soon. If I didn't already have an aversion to biopics, this movie has firmly implanted one. My first thought upon hearing about it was, "Couldn't they at least wait until the guy is dead?"

If you want good cinema about musical artists, you must turn to documentary films, of which there is an ample supply. For instance, I just watched *What Happened, Miss Simone*, about the incomparable Nina Simone, which was brilliantly made and truthful. As for Dylan, there is *No Direction Home* and *Don't Look Back*.

To be honest, while contemplating what I might write about for this issue, the editor of NFR suggested I write a review of *A Complete Unknown*. Hmm, I thought. Perhaps I should swashbuckle my way through my aversion to these sorts of films and get up to Oneonta to watch the movie. But by the time

I checked for showtimes, the movie was no longer playing.

But since the subject of Bob Dylan is, with the release of this movie, flying around like debris in a tornado, a few observations about Dylan's legacy don't require seeing the film. It's reportedly based on Elijah Wald's book, *Dylan Goes Electric*, which focuses on that moment at Newport and Dylan's opportunistic melding of the folk oriented Greenwich Village songwriting scene with rock and roll of the sixties.

Dylan is a bundle of contradictions; a talented performer who has a history of putting on poor performances; a genius songwriter who has written some horrible songs and recorded them without shame; an artist whose reputation began as a voice of conscience for a generation and who quickly became an amoral personality.

The focal point of the film is the 1965 Newport Festival and his performance of *Ain't Gonna Work on Maggie's Farm No More*, a song with traditional origins. It featured Dylan's change of approach to songwriting, from straight forward topical ballads to

his signature freewheeling unanchored metaphorical lyrics. The argument made by Wald and others is hard to debate: that Dylan's change, not just of his electric rock approach but of his lyrical approach, had an undeniable influence on the music of the latter sixties. Iconic groups like the Beatles and the Rolling Stones lend testimony to his influence. But the move to electric music was essentially opportunistic. Dylan desired great fame, by his own testimony, and that level of notoriety was limited in the folk world.

It should be noted that others broke away from the Greenwich Village ballad and folk based scene and influenced the next generations in ways Dylan did not. Joni Mitchell, Leonard Cohen, Fred Neil, and others created highly stylistic and original motifs which

others borrowed from. One result is today's singer-songwriter scene, to which celebrity singers such as Taylor Swift owe a great deal. The great majority of those singers, I would argue, have produced a dull storm of mediocrity. The algorithms of streaming platforms like Spotify have contributed to this blandness. But the best songwriters of today are often below the radar of popular music consumers. Finding the best music requires research, whereas the popular music of Dylan's revolution was brightly displayed at the top of the charts for several years.

The remarkable thing and what gives me great hope for the world at this moment is the under-the-radar revival of traditional music practitioners around the world. It is, blessedly, **See DYLAN, con't on Pg. 17**

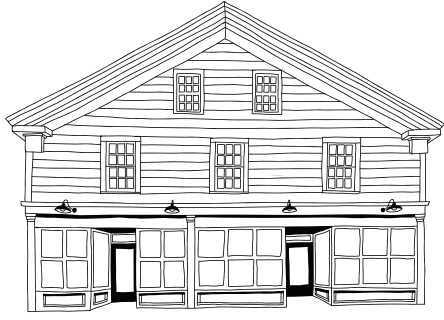
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## FSC AWARDED NEW COMMISSION GRANT

Staff Report

The Franklin Stage Company (FSC), Delaware County's renowned professional summer theater, has been awarded a Support for Artists Grant for the commission of a new play titled *The Civilities*, written by Kyle Bass. Mr. Bass is the author of *Possessing Harriet*, which FSC produced during their 2019 summer season and *Toliver & Wakeman*, produced by FSC in 2022.

"We're thrilled to have the opportunity to work with Kyle Bass again," said Artistic Director Patricia Buckley, "*Possessing Harriet* and *Toliver & Wakeman* were two of our audience's favorite shows, and we're very excited about this new piece, which is another exploration of life and history in upstate NY."

The commission is funded by the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA). Because NYSCA's Support for Artists grant requires a NY State non-profit arts organiza-



From "Wakeman & Toliver" by Kyle Bass  
Photo by Russ Roland



# FRANKLIN STAGE COMPANY

tion to sponsor an individual artist, the Franklin Stage Company will act as a sponsor for the play. The final component of the grant is a public offering such as a reading, presentation, or performance of the work in progress.

Set in a small town near Ithaca, NY in 1936 (the 75th anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War), *The Civilities* introduces Blessah Hart, a dynamic young Black graduate student of History and Anthropology at Cornell University, and M. Silas Jackson, an elderly white poet and Confederate army veteran who has resided in the North for 60 years. Conducting research for her graduate thesis on the narratives of surviving Confederates living in the North, Blessah reaches out to "son of the South" Jackson, whose poetry critiques and romanticizes Old Dixie.

As researcher and subject, Blessah and Silas form an unlikely connection, but their relationship is tested when Blessah's perceptive nature leads her to "read between the lines" of Silas's work, prompting questions that strain his patience. When Blessah travels

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missioning organization."

For more information, visit [www.franklinstagecompany.org](http://www.franklinstagecompany.org).

Programming at the Franklin Stage Company is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature.

Franklin Stage Company's dual mission is to produce professional, admission-free theatre that brings together audiences and artists to create community and celebrate the enduring power of stories, and to ensure the preservation of Chapel Hall, our historic home, as both an architectural treasure and a center of community activity.

Franklin Stage Company is a professional Actors Equity, not-for-profit theater founded in 1997 in Franklin, NY. FSC is dedicated to producing classic and new plays that stimulate thought and provoke discussion to illuminate as well as entertain. The company was founded on the principle that great theater should be accessible to all.



From "Possessing Harriet" by Kyle Bass  
Photo by Russ Roland

to Silas's hometown in the South to uncover the missing pieces of his story, neither historian nor poet is prepared for the revelation her research uncovers: a discovery linking them to a history of bondage, birthright, and bloodshed that compels a reckoning with the past and the wrongs of the present.

*The Civilities* explores profound questions about heritage, race, civility, and the tension between history and literature as two means of conveying truth.

"We'll be sharing more news this spring about staged readings that we'll produce at FSC later in the year," said Buckley. "Info will be available via our website and social media accounts."

NYSCA's guidelines state that the Support for Artists grant seeks to "Enhance the vibrant and diverse artistic voices of New York State-based art makers, invest in projects that represent significant growth in the artistic development of individual artists, and strengthen the relationships between individual artists and the artistic goals and mission of the sponsoring or com-



# TAXING THE TOWNSPEOPLE

By Brian Brock

Townspeople complain that we are paying too much in taxes. Adding together the taxes on your property going to county, town, school district, and fire district, we pay at the second highest rate in the county. Landowners in the village or hamlet pay even more.

## County

In 2024, Delaware County levied a tax on property in the 19 towns totaling \$35.8 million. To collect this, the full-value tax rate was 0.43% of the assessed market value of property. Of the 57 counties in New York, that was the 36<sup>th</sup> highest. (Not included are the five boroughs of New York City.) Rates in our neighboring counties ranged widely, with Chenango (0.87%) having twice the rate as we do, and our having twice that of Otsego (0.24%). Delaware County was better than average, with a rate well below the median. Typically, those taxing at a lower rate are the more urban counties with more valuable real estate to tax, aka a larger tax base. However, our tax rate was below that of richer Broome (0.58%) and Sullivan (0.55%). The Delaware County Board of Supervisors is doing a comparatively good job of keeping our property tax low. County tax is collected on the town bills.

## Town

The rate for Franklin township was higher than most. Last year, the town board levied a tax of \$1.39 million on 2,207 parcels of which 2,104 were taxable.

Looking at the 19 towns in Delaware County, almost all had full-

value property taxes between 0.28 and 0.47%. The outliers were Colchester at 0.23% and Masonville at 0.56%. Franklin had a full-value tax rate of 0.45%, which is the 4<sup>th</sup> highest in the county after Masonville, Hamden, and Harpersfield. Colchester's rate was about half that of Franklin's. Even Sidney's was a third less than ours. Also, two neighboring towns in Otsego had a lower rate, with Unadilla at 0.34% and Otego at 0.42%.

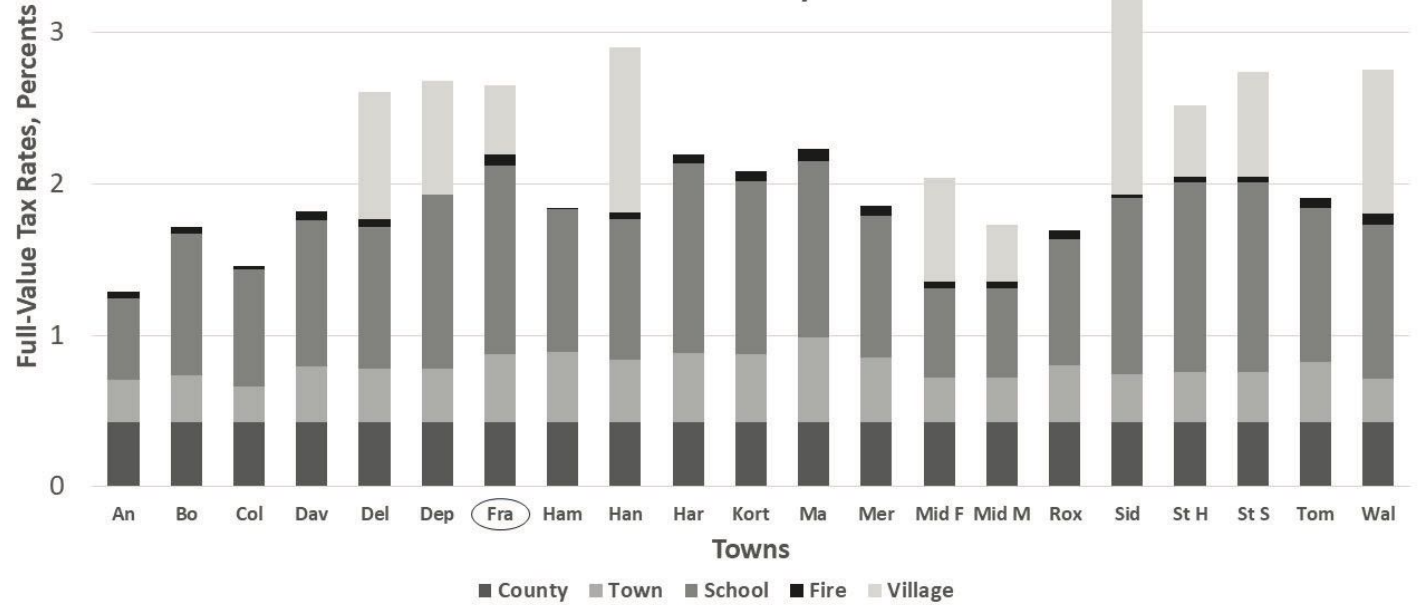
## School District

Last year, Franklin Central School district collected more than

There are 66 separate school/town rate combinations in the county. Here we look at just the rate that applies to most of each town.

Of the dozen school districts in Delaware County, Andes had the lowest tax rate at 0.53% and Stamford the highest at just over 1.25%. Landowners in the Franklin school district paid the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest at slightly less than 1.25%. Those in the town of Franklin but in the district of Delaware Academy received a significant break at 0.94%, a third less. Smaller areas of our town are in the school districts with lower rates:

Property Taxes by Town  
Delaware County NY 2024



twice as much taxes as the town at \$3.15 million.

A comparison throughout the county is not practical because school districts cross town boundaries. Smaller districts such as Deposit and Hancock cover three towns, whereas the largest, Margaretville, sprawls across eight towns. Enrollment in the Franklin Central School district includes about 16% of students from Davenport, Meredith, Otego, Sidney, and Walton.

Sidney (1.16%) or Walton (1.02%).

This high rate is not due to the high levy - FCS district had the second smallest in the county, almost tied with lowest, Andes, at \$3.12 million. The problem is that our district has such a small tax base at \$253M, the smallest in Delaware County by far. It is about half the size of the two next smallest school districts of Hancock (\$450M) and South Kortright (\$452M).

Landowners of Franklin paid \$3.6 million in property taxes to all the school districts. Almost \$0.73M (20%) of that goes to Delaware Academy. (A quarter of the Town of Franklin is in the DA school district, but it contributes only 7% of that district's enrollment.) Franklinites paid smaller amounts to Walton district (5%) and Sidney (1%). The lion's share goes to Franklin district at \$2.6M (72%).

Flipping the script, the tax levy made up \$3.15M (40%) of the budget for the Franklin School District in 2024. Contributions to this were from residents of town of Davenport \$0.18M (6%), Franklin \$2.64M (84%), Meredith \$0.15M (5%), Otego \$0.02M (1%), Sidney \$0.11M (3%), and Walton 0.05M (1%).

Looking at the nets, FCS gained \$0.51M from landowners in other towns, whereas other school districts were paid \$0.96M from landowners in the Town of Franklin.

## Fire District

Low by comparison to other demands, the fire district taxed Franklin landowners only \$0.24 million or \$236 thousand.

The tax levy for fire departments make a smaller contribution to our overall tax burden. In Franklin, it is about a sixth the size of the county or town levies and a

sixteenth the size of the school's. Nevertheless, as with the school rate, the Franklin fire rate was the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in the county at 0.076%. (In a few towns, fire departments receive some or all money directly from the town budget: Colchester, Deposit, Hamden, Harpersfield, and Sidney.) Franklin levy pays for two departments.

Fire department tax is collected on the town bills.

For a total burden of property taxes from county, town, school, and fire, town of Franklin outside of the village had the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest

rate at 2.20%. This was just below that of the much smaller Masonville, by only 0.03%. That town has the smallest tax base in the county, half the size of ours. In contrast, the lowest total rate was Andes at 1.29%. Those Franklin landowners in the Delaware Academy school district got a considerable break with a total rate of 1.89%.

## Village and Special Districts

The tax rates for the ten villages in Delaware County ranged widely from 0.38% for Margaretville to 1.33% for Sidney. The village of Franklin had the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest rate at 0.45%. Because of its small size and small business district, the village tax base is the smallest in our county at \$22.3 million. The village budget was financed with \$0.10 million (\$101 thousand) in property taxes.

Many towns have special tax districts that collect a tax levy from only those landowners within that district. For example, in Delaware County there are 21 hamlets with water districts. Treadwell Water District collected \$12 thousand. Also, half the school districts have a small levy for the library, which for the Franklin Free Library was \$41 thousand.

Water district tax is collected on the town bills, whereas library tax is collected on the school bills.

The less prosperous towns tend to be the ones with the higher tax rates because they finance their budgets from a smaller tax base. While the more prosperous towns do more, there are basic services that all towns must provide. Franklinites have to pay for a large road system, to draw from a small school district, and to finance two fire departments.

# TOWN OF FRANKLIN PUBLIC MEETINGS 2025

## FRANKLIN TOWN BOARD:

7 <sup>th</sup> January	2:00 p.m.	Franklin Town Hall
4 <sup>th</sup> February	6:00 p.m.	Franklin Town Hall
4 <sup>th</sup> March	6:00 p.m.	Treadwell Fire Hall
1 <sup>st</sup> April	7:30 p.m.	Franklin Town Hall
6 <sup>th</sup> May	7:30 p.m.	Franklin Town Hall
3 <sup>rd</sup> June	7:30 p.m.	Treadwell Fire Hall
1 <sup>st</sup> July	7:30 p.m.	Franklin Town Hall
5 <sup>th</sup> August	7:30 p.m.	Franklin Town Hall
2 <sup>nd</sup> September	7:30 p.m.	Treadwell Fire Hall
7 <sup>th</sup> October	7:30 p.m.	Franklin Town Hall
		<i>Budget Workshop</i>
5 <sup>th</sup> November*	6:00 p.m.	Franklin Town Hall
		<i>Budget Hearing</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> December	6:00 p.m.	Treadwell Fire Hall

Meetings are on Tuesday evenings except on Wednesday as noted (\*).

## FRANKLIN PLANNING BOARD:

Meetings will be held at 6:00 p.m. on the first Thursday of the month at the Franklin Town Hall.

At any time, a monthly meeting can be rescheduled or a special meeting or public hearing scheduled. Always check with the town clerk, 607-230-0900 ex. 4, the town website: <https://franklin-delco-ny.gov/council>, or legal notices in the official newspaper *The Reporter*





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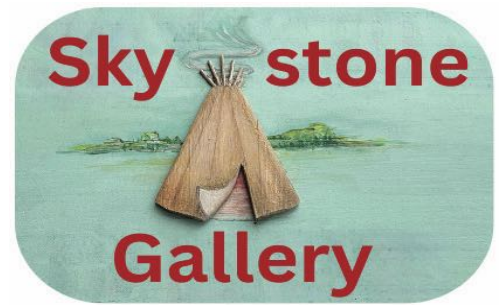
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## FUN-A-DAY AT THE FFL

By Carla Nordstrom

Photos by Adam Brody

As the doom and gloom of winter approached, Adam Brody suggested to Xina Sheehan, librarian at the Franklin Free Library, that the library sponsor a Fun-A-Day project. He had done a similar program in Philadelphia.

Participants of all ages were asked to give some part of each day from January 15 to February 15 to work on their project. People could do something different each day or spend the month on a single project. The culmination was an exhibit of all the submitted projects on Saturday, March 8, at the library.

There were drawings, portraits with exotic hats, an illustrated coloring book, knitting and crochet projects, a mask, and haikus. A few Franklin kids did daily drawings of dragons and tigers. Artists mentioned how calming it was to set aside some time each day to work on their projects. The library held a reception with delicious homemade snacks.

Pictured: a selection of the work.



### DYLAN, continued from Page 13

evidence that there will always be talented musicians and composers who reject the commercial dumbing down of music. I just returned from the annual Folk Alliance International Conference, this year held in Montreal. The conference was admittedly dominated by the routine singer-songwriter milieu. But there were many examples of hugely talented musicians and bands plying their craft with gems mined from the depths of multinational traditions. Fusions of Latin, Acadian, Irish, American blues and ragtime, and eastern European modes were showcased. It was exhilarating and unexpectedly refreshing.

Do you have to go to the Folk Alliance to find this stuff? No. But you might have to do some spelunking to turn it up from under our popular music topsoil. You might have to go to the city and do some searching. Or, as I have mentioned before in this column, there are places not far from here where one can begin digging. Venues like **Music on the Delaware** in Walton and the **West Kortright Center** have done some of the research for you. Support them with your presence at their concerts and you will be rewarded with invaluable returns.

### LEAD, continued from Page 3

under County Highway 14 as well as the inadequate and rusting chlorinator, and to evaluate the whole system and make recommendations. But other than \$30,000 paid to Cedarwood Engineering & Environmental Services PLLC of Oneonta for the study, the money remains unspent.

The following June, the report *Treadwell Water District Improvements Project* was completed. Nine months later, this report has yet to be posted on the town website. It took until February for this newspaper to obtain a copy. As of then, most board members

had yet to see it.

In Delaware County, there are 31 municipal water systems, 10 in villages and 21 in hamlets. Because hamlets are unincorporated, their water systems are owned by their towns. These systems are managed by the town boards, which appoint a system operator and a clerk. Treadwell is an exception where the system is managed by a commission of three self-selected residents, and employees lack appointments. It is a vestige from the last century when the Croton Water System was privately owned.

In the early 1990s, the town bonded for construction of the chlorination facility. But in recent decades, the town board has neglected its responsibility to the Treadwell Water District.

A couple of years ago, this newspaper reminded them that at one time the Town of Franklin took charge, establishing the water district in 1960, and buying the water system in 1961.

Now as then, the system needs renewed attention and considerable repair work.



# THE WINNING TICKET

By Alicia Pagano  
Photos by the author

Aug 28, 2017

From the moment I see it taxiing down the small Sidney airport's side road toward us, my heart starts to flutter. Here we stand, Jody, Andrea, and myself, our white corsages pinned near our hearts and our minds imagining our pending ride on this delicate, yet trustworthy 172 Cessna.

Our pilot, Bernie, pulls up beside us and shuts off the engine. Jody climbs up first, then Andrea. After they are tucked in, it's my turn. I look down at the tiny footrest attached to one of the slender structures of the plane and gauge the lift of my foot to match its height. Up she goes! I pull myself into the co-pilot's seat. Bernie checks our seat belts, walks around and climbs into the pilot's seat.

"Wanna drive a little?" He points to the steering equipment in front of me.

"Thanks, but no thanks," I respond. "I just want to see it all from here...maybe take a few pics."

"Well, here we go!" He turns the key in the ignition. The engine purrs, the propellor rotates, and in moments we are taxiing toward take-off. Driving a plane on the ground always



Pilot Bernie (at left) and Alicia in the cockpit Gilbertsville."

seems strange to me. I can only imagine it flying. But even big planes have to be driven like a clumsy car as they maneuver into take-off position.

Now we are poised for departure. The wheels roll down the runway, picking up speed. I remember how my granddaughter Cody always pinches my hand at the moment of take-off when we fly together. I pinch my leg as I feel the wheels lift off Terra Firma.

Our route will take us over local land. Over the Susquehanna. Over the forest of trees, over the bumps called hills, respectfully called "mountains" locally. Over the farmlands and fields, and over Gilbertsville, home of my grandparents and their parents before them, the town where my parents met, where I was conceived, where my father rests in the Presbyterian Cemetery.

Jody shouts over the engine sounds, "Alicia, there's

"Yes!" I'm concentrating on picking out Main Street, nestled among the trees. Holding my attention in the moment to keep my memories from crowding out the excitement of the present.

We circle the village, head toward Lobdell Road and perhaps Chicken Farm Road, and on over to Butter-nuts Road that drops down into Unadilla. So beautifully strange to view these contours from above.

"There's Unadilla," Bernie says.

I hold my camera close. I want to see it, save it all. My hometown. My Unadilla. Yes, I see Main Street, the church steeples, the school buildings, and maybe my home, five houses before the school. So many trees, it's difficult to find the buildings. The Susquehanna flowing alongside the town. My body holds the tremor of my youth.

Too soon we are climb-

ing up the slopes of the Ontio, the mountain I loved to climb on foot. I see Crane Hill Road. We are flying toward Sidney Center and Jody's home. The expansiveness of the trees grabs my thoughts. These "mountains!" The Catskill Mountains are just the Rockies masquerading as forests. Beneath their greenery, they are solid stone.

Now I search for land markers. We are flying over the former school in Sidney Center. Soon we'll be near Jody's.

"There it is!" She shouts with enthusiasm. "There it is! My home!"

Her big barn with her paintings, the pond with its yoga dock, where we'd picked cat tails from the pond's edge this very morning. The garden that carries the fragrance of my grandmother's land.

I see it all and take several photos. I know they are good ones.

Now we are moving toward County Highway 23. Is that Crane Hill Road? Is that Route 23? I'm too excited, wanting to see my own house, my mother's home with the 1969 arial photo on the refrigerator. I want the new photo.

"Alicia! There it is!"

See TICKET, continued next page



## RECENT REAL PROPERTY SALES IN THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN

DATE	LOCATION	ACRES	TYPE	ASSESS.	SALE	SELLER	BUYER
09/19/24	10348 State Hwy 357	0.50	1 Family Res	80,000	152,700	Winkler, Anthony F	Sperry, Adrianna
09/20/24	Bookhout Rd	6.03	Rural Vac<10	18,000	17,000	Giannakos, George	Sokol, Jacob
09/24/24	1861 Gay Brook Rd	0.37	1 Family Res	Part		Heaney, Alison (R)	Heaney, Cynthia M
10/09/24	243 Main St	0.40	1 Family Res	112,000	135,000	Thies, Carolyn J (R)	Winfield-Thies, Caitlyn
10/11/24	8 Herklotz Rd	3.50	Rural Res	150,000	105,000	Herman Herklotz Estate	Osmanli Properties LLC
10/11/24	657 Grange Hall Rd	14.20	Rural Res	92,000	65,000	Braun, Raymond	Grange Hall Rd LLC
10/22/24	734 County Hwy 14	1.30	1 Family Res	45,000	85,000	Lee, Margery P	Herrere, Eva Cordova
10/30/24	7859 County Hwy 16	15.17	Rural Res	160,000	389,500	Sutherland, Hugh R	Bracci, James R
10/31/24	Snake Hill Rd	15.00	Rural Vac>10	32,000	45,000	Whiteman, Ronald G	Kublbock, Edwin M Jr
11/05/24	54 Center St	0.13	1 Family Res	95,000	220,000	Cawley, Earnest	Allen, Marcie
11/06/24	Pomeroy Rd	57.70	Rural Vac>10	81,000	68,000	Osterhoudt, Tammy	Pomeroy Jones Farm LLC
11/07/24	375 Main St	0.08	Office Bldg.	62,000	100,000	Lonely House Guild LLC	AAHUGH LLC
11/25/24	1064 Blue School Rd	4.40	1 Family Res	114,000	232,000	Alice Ogborn, Estate	Woodard, Mathew
11/26/24	Round Top Rd	5.51	1 Family Res	New		Cronauer, Joan S (R)	Brower Schmitz, Amy
11/30/24	455 E Handsome Bk Rd	2.20	1 Family Res	100,000	1,000	Scott, Kevin M (R)	Scott-Treacy, Lauren
12/23/24	656 Grange Hall Rd	7.67	Res w/Com	140,000	240,000	Donaghy, Peter	Beadle, Braedon M
12/30/24	846 Post Rd	28.28	1 Family Res	256,000	350,000	Hunce, Joseph G, Estate	Gavaris, Tom
12/30/24	East Brook Rd	6.00	Rural Vac<10	19,000	33,000	Lamorte, Vincent	Curiale, Salvatore
01/03/25	2930 Blue School Rd	22.23	Rural Res	136,000	105,000	Conrow, Earl M	D'Antonio, Nicholas J
01/06/25	Sanly Rd	103.40	Vacant Rural	89,000	179,000	Oritam Rod & Gun Club,	Zaiser, William W
01/09/25	Merrickville Rd	15.25	Vacant Rural	Part		Taggart, Joshua M (R)	Taggart, Patricia
01/09/25	Merrickville Rd	61.00	Vacant Rural	104,000	100,000	Taggart, Patricia (R)	Taggart, Scott A II
01/24/25	3415 County Hwy 14	111.50	Rural Res&Ag	270,000	400,000	Trifari, Sandra	Vaccarella, Rosario
01/24/25	7338 State Hwy 357	10.70	Rural Res	200,000	250,000	Abedh, Basel	Hickman, James Bryan
02/04/25	2563 Freer Hollow Rd	63.70	Rural Res	272,600	215,000	Yarnes, Richard C (R)	Hotaling, Roseann

(R) Relative



TICKET, continued from Page 18

Down there." Jody pokes me awake. I snap, snap, snap. It went by so fast and I was dreaming my way along, caught somewhere between the last century and this moment.

"Relax," I tell myself. Enjoy the ride. Appreciate the beauty of the day from this view. The blue of sky, the green of trees, the amber of cornfields, the tiny houses. The drop-offs as we fly over hilly mounds and valleys. The contours of the land move within my body. I am the earth, I feel its shape within my body.

We fly over the Susquehanna, follow its winding path toward Sidney. How wiggly it is! I know its S shapes, but didn't realize there were so many. It's a beautiful river. My Susquehanna. The meeting place of Indians before our time. I relax and savor these last few moments as we return to the Sidney Municipal Airport.

Bernie drops the plane slowly with the same assurance that took us across those many hills and valleys of the area. No bumpy ride with him. He knows the terrain,

he knows his plane. Our wheels touch the runway and I pinch my leg in recognition. We taxi back to the hangar. He turns the engine off, turns towards us and smiles. We smile in return.

"Thanks, Bernie. Thank you so much. It was beautiful! Stunning! Beyond imagination!" We sound like the Hallelujah Chorus.

He opens the door. Again, I carefully place my foot on that tiny step, jump down to the firm ground. Jody and Andrea follow. We take pictures, say our goodbyes and more thank-yous, so happy that Steve held the winning ticket at the Sidney Center Festival. Happier yet that he gave his plane ride prize to Jody and she invited Andrea and me to share it with her. Still high on the heights of the plane, we drive back to my house and to my sunny back yard where Jody pops the cork on a bottle of champagne to top our afternoon together.

We cheer the day, the bounty of the day, the bounty of the land, the beauty of our lives, the blessings of our friendship. We give thanks for all. A perfect day.

*Presented at the Air Club, Sidney, NY*

## 96 ACRES CONSERVED!

Otsego Land Trust Staff Report

On December 27th, Anne and Robert Stack, along with Otsego Land Trust Staff, gathered to complete final paperwork and place a conservation easement on their private 96-acre property in Davenport. In a recent interview with OLT's Land Protection Program Manager May Leinhart, Anne Stack detailed her reasons for working with the land trust to conserve their property.

"We are putting our 96 acres of woods and fields, wetlands and stream into a conservation easement for many reasons. The primary one is that we want to preserve this beautiful land for the enjoyment of generations to come as well as the benefit of the diverse wildlife whose habitat is continuously threatened by development and the resulting destruction of the natural world."

Anne and Robert purchased their property several decades ago while living in New Jersey as part of a larger family project to find property in upstate NY. Anne's brother owns the neighboring farm, and the family has spent many years recreating on these adjoining lands. Anne and Robert feel very strongly about protecting this land for future generations and hope that if they complete a conservation easement, neighbors will be inspired to conserve their land as well.



*A view of the Stack property*

Their property is a beautiful mix of woodlands, boulders, and rocky outcroppings, as well as intermittent springs and wet areas. Along with the woods, the Stack property boasts 42 acres of prime agricultural soils and upland tributaries that feed into the upper Ouleout Creek.

The Trust's professional staff work with the property owners to conserve their land in perpetuity. OLT staff work with the property owners to identify the key conservation values and draft a legally binding easement that expresses their vision for the land.



*The papers are signed!*

*Left to right: LPPM May Leinhart, Robert Stack, Anne Stack, OLT Exec. Director Gregory Farmer*



The Newsletter of Franklin Local

Editorial Board

Ellen Curtis      Helen McLean  
Eugene Marner      Manette Berlinger  
Associate Editor: Brian Brock

Editor  
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### HAVE AN OPINION? WRITE TO US!

At: The New Franklin Register

P.O. Box 258

Franklin, NY 13775

or by email: [nfr@franklinlocal.org](mailto:nfr@franklinlocal.org)

### What are we about?

Franklin Local Ltd, the parent organization for The New Franklin Register and of the Franklin Farmers' Market, is a not-for-profit corporation made up of Franklin residents.

Our mission statement: to work to preserve the rural character of Franklin, to build the local economy, to encourage volunteerism, and to raise awareness of economic and social challenges that may result from climate change and the transition from fossil fuels to sustainable energy.

All are welcome, to offer questions and help us answer them, to share thoughts and ideas, to make things happen.

We have a number of projects that we hope to move from idea to action:

- Local food production network
- Skills and services exchange
- Goods exchange
- Ride sharing bulletin board and/or website
- Farm to School Program for school lunches
- Community Greenhouses
- Community Energy Production
- Community Health Network

Together, let us imagine a more energy efficient, healthier habit of living, and put it to work here in Franklin, for a brighter, more sustainable future.

### PLEASE JOIN US!

**For meeting times, location and directions, as well as lots of other information about our town, check our website:**

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

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