

THE FUTURE IS NOW

From Elementary School to College, Unconventional Education Opportunities Are Expanding

ROBOTS DO BATTLE AT SUNY-SULLIVAN

by Eli Ruiz

Catskill VEX-U's collegiate robotics competition made its SUNY Sullivan debut at Kaplan Hall on Saturday February 18, bringing with it several teams from up and down the East Coast.

Also making its debut was SUNY-Sullivan's first ever robotics team, "Functional Decomposition," who also participated in the event. Led by team captain, Nicholas Clark, the Functional Decomposition squad had a tough go of it Saturday, as their single robot had some performance issues and had to be repaired on two occasions.

Mr. Clark, who will graduate in May with two AAS degrees, in Computer Programming, and Simulation and Game Development, says he has been using computers since he was two years old.

"Every step along the way, I learned something more about technology and engineering," he says. "Careers fields related to technology and mathematics are more than numerous, and there are even more specializations for them. It's a big world to get lost in, but it's also a great way to open yourself up to things that you may enjoy."

Robotics seemed a natural extension of his longtime interests.

Teammate Nathaniel Martin, a Simulation and Game Development major at Sullivan, said he was disappointed the team didn't fare better, but cited the experience as invaluable.

"It was tough, but we were just excited to be able to be a part of it," he said. "It's less Robot Wars and more a kind of motor skills competition."

Sponsored by VEX Robotics Corporation, out of Ontario, Canada, and spearheaded by event partner and SUNY-Sullivan computer science professor, Dr. Cynthia Marcello, the event pitted teams from Rutgers University (NJ), New Jersey Institute of Technology, Fairmont State University (WV), Old Dominion



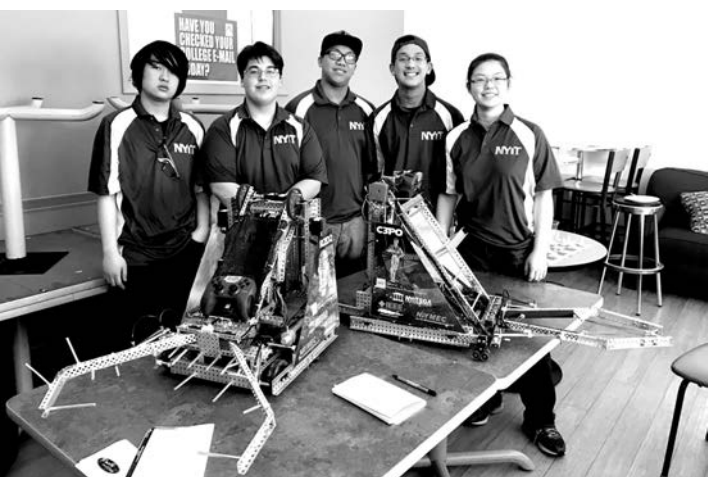
Nick Passaretti, with the New York Institute of Technology, does some finishing touches on his team's robot, Larry, in the practice ring at the February 18 Catskills VEX-U Robotics Competition at SUNY Sullivan's Kaplan Hall. Looking on is teammate, Yichago Zhang.

University (VA), New York Institute of Technology, and SUNY-Sullivan against each other in skill events. In an unfortunate sign of the times, the so-called Scarborough Chinese Robotics Team out of University of Toronto was unable to cross into the U.S. due to visa issues and missed the competition.

This wasn't the first such event to have Dr. Marcello's name attached to it; she also acted as event partner for the December 6, 2016 VRC robotics competition held in conjunction with the Fallsburg Central School District.

"Last summer, I signed up as an event partner with REC Foundation because I saw it as a great opportunity to support a variety of educational partners like middle schools, high schools and universities in reaching a diverse population of students for the purposes of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education," offered Dr. Marcello. "I believe that it is essential for educators to ready students to be well prepared for a 21st century workforce."

As for the actual robots, the androids are built from scratch from kits purchased at the VEX Robotics website. Prices vary depending on the complexity, size and functionality of the robots, and can cost upwards of a thousand dollars.



Several college robotics teams from around the country went head-to-head at Saturday's Catskills VEX U Robotics Competition at SUNY Sullivan. Pictured is the squad representing New York Institute of Technology. Left to right: Yichago Zahng, Nick Passaretti, Renzo Rillas, Alex Duong and Kayla Ho.

THE EDUCATION OF AN ASPIRING JOURNALIST



Gabriela Almonte, 8, is an aspiring journalist and photographer. Here the third grader interviews performers at the Sullivan County Dramatic Workshop Valentine's Cabaret.

by Amanda Loviza

You may have noticed that The Hurleyville Sentinel has an up-and-coming star on its culture beat. The event was emceed by none other than Hurleyville DJ Corey Gips of Partymaster Entertainment, who also got into the "robot" act with the local company's robotic, 360° camera, which fed its high definition signal into a massive 80-inch monitor, also courtesy of Party Master.

"It's an incredible camera which not only feeds into the large monitor, but also to a smaller monitor at the judges' table," explained Mr. Gips. "It not only shows the audience what's going on, it also allows the judges to keep a close eye on the action and can even allow for slow motion replays, possibly changing a result." As for those results, awards were handed out in three categories: Excellence; Design; and a Judges' Award.

Rutgers University's "Screw'd" team took the day's top honor, the Excellence Award. The Design Award went to Old Dominion, while Fairmont State garnered the Judges' Award. In winning the Excellence Award, Rutgers qualified for the World Championships. As for future such events, Dr. Marcello is optimistic.

"This is our first VEX-U event and we certainly look forward to hosting more events in the upcoming season," she said. "Unfortunately, and still in this day and age, many students in underrepresented groups do not get opportunities to explore science, technology, engineering and math in an applied, hands-on manner. Robotics is useful in reaching students who perhaps struggle with math concepts due to a level of abstraction." To learn more about robotics competition, visit www.roboticseducation.org.

To purchase your own robotics kit, visit www.vexrobotics.com.

ter interviewing workshop members Jim Schmidt, Leon Hilfstein, Teri Hall, Mekayla Perneszi, Ellen Pavloff, Heather Strauss and Shawn Bailey, Ms. Almonte had rave reviews for the performers and the show.

"They are fabulous singers and great actresses and I love their personalities," Ms. Almonte wrote. "It's amazing how they do it."

The Valentine's Cabaret left her "feeling happy," Ms. Almonte said. Readers will be able to read more of Ms. Almonte's coverage in future editions of the Sentinel, as well as see her photos. She asked Santa for a professional camera, so that she can continue to bring the hamlet of Hurleyville to life on the pages of the Sentinel.



Mekayla Perneszi



Three of the many performers at the SCDW Valentine's Cabaret.

WELCOME ABOARD!

The Hurleyville Sentinel welcomes three new writers beginning with this edition, and we expect that each of them will help us continue to improve the product we deliver to our readers each month. Amanda Loviza brings more than six years of award winning professional experience to her new role as assistant editor, lead reporter and photographer. Eli Ruiz is an acclaimed community journalist with deep roots in Sullivan County. And Eve Springwood Minson is a seasoned writer on agricultural topics, and her "From the Farm" column is a great addition to our paper, made even more so by the role farming has played in the development of Hurleyville historically. We are confident that each of these new faces will be of immeasurable help in our mission of keeping you up to date on all that is happening in "the liveliest little hamlet in The Mountains!"



Benjamin Cosor Elementary School teacher Leah Exner (center) leads a group of fifth graders on snowshoes along the BCES Trail on Feb. 15. Snowshoeing is the newest way students are using the trail to connect with nature and learn wellness.

BCES students embrace nature on snowshoes

by Amanda Loviza

The moment their snowshoes were strapped on, a dozen Benjamin Cosor Elementary School (BCES) fifth graders took off running across 12 inches of fresh powder, laughing and scooping up snowballs.

Snowshoeing is the latest activity that has been introduced to the BCES Trail extended day group. With the help of a Sullivan Renaissance grant, and a Cornell Cooperative Extension donation, trail coordinators Ms. Leah Exner and Mr. Mark Spina were able to get snowshoes for 16 children and two adults from Morgan Outdoors, a Livingston Manor shop owned by Lisa Lyons. The fifth grade extended day group got their first snowshoe lesson on Feb. 1, and they have not stopped smiling.

"The kids are absolutely thrilled about this experience," Ms. Exner said.

None of the students in the group had ever snowshoed before, Ms. Exner said, and some of them didn't even own boots or winter accessories. Some of the Renaissance grant money was used to buy boots, gloves and hats, to ensure every child could participate.

The decade-old BCES Trail had not been used in several years when Ms. Exner decided to resurrect it last year. Fourth graders during the fall extended day session used pedometers to track their steps and learn about healthy living, and after winter the next group will use the trail in a different way. "We brought it back to life," Ms. Exner said.

As the children stomped through the woods in their snowshoes on a Wednesday afternoon in mid-February, they also used binoculars to look for birds, and practiced tree and animal track identification. They even got an impromptu lesson on the circle of life when a dead deer was found frozen in the snow.

Ms. Lyons, an avid snowshoer and outdoorswoman, said she has always wanted to see snowshoeing at schools. There is so much to see in a winter landscape, Ms. Lyons said, and the fifth graders have shown a genuine interest in everything she has taught them during their snowshoe outings.

"They seem to really catch fire when they get just a little bit of information," Ms. Lyons said.

The trail has already opened up so many possibilities for teachers and students, Ms. Exner said. One class built birdhouses and another class is building acknowledgment boards to thank those who have contributed to the trail. Rails are being painted to line the trail, and Ms. Exner expects every student in the school to participate in painting. Mr. Aaron Tremper, a teacher and artist who assists with the extended day program, wants to teach the students to draw what they see on the trail, and physical education teacher Kate Santoianini is going to teach orienteering skills.

"The more hands in, the more it becomes everyone's trail," Ms. Exner said.

When retired teacher Lee Smassanow built the trail 10 years ago, Ms. Exner said, he created a hands-on opportunity for students to learn about the world around them, and now the trail will continue to teach those lessons of nature and wellness to future students.

"It's a lot more than I ever thought it would be," Ms. Exner said.



Lisa Lyons (right), owner of Morgan Outdoors in Livingston Manor, helps Benjamin Cosor Elementary School fifth grader Geovanna identify a tree along the BCES Trail on Feb. 15, while the fifth grade extended day program learns snowshoeing.

The Inquiring Photographer

by Amanda Loviza



Q: In honor of Women's History Month, who is a woman you admire, and why does she inspire you?



"sb" Mckenna

"CeCe McDonald. She's a black transgender woman who was convicted for defending herself against someone who wanted to kill her." [McDonald was 23 when she and several of her friends were confronted on the street by a group making comments about their sexuality and race, and the ensuing fight resulted in McDonald getting stitches for a facial wound and a man being killed. McDonald had to serve her partial prison sentence in a men's prison, and she has become an advocate for women of color, LGBTQ rights and prison reform.] "She's just an incredible activist and educator."

Louise Bourgeois, a French-American artist who lived to be 98. "She did art that was very intuitive and very individualistic. She really just did her own thing... I like to think that I'm going to live a really long time, and when I'm in my 90s, I'll be doing art."



Melinda Wallach



Erin Gluck

"My mom and my grandmother. They're both positive and loving and supportive and beautiful. Seriously, beautiful inside and out... I can talk to them about anything and everything. They know my whole life. I've always lived to make them proud. It makes me happy to see them proud."



Nancy Lopez



David Lawrence

"My mom. She's always there for me and my family and even our friends. And it's been a long time, but she's done it by herself and she's always been happy and upbeat about it. She's never let it get to her... She's the mom that even 20 years later, our friends stop by to see if she's OK."

Hamlet Happenings

by Kathleen Sullivan



The members of Hurleyville-Sullivan First are getting ready for spring. Volunteers are needed to help prepare gardens, planters and barrels. Work dates will be announced soon.

- Renovation of St. Mary's Church for use as a community center
- Hurleyville Firemen's Park
- Community Gateway
- Community gardens
- Planters at entrances to Hurleyville

The group has applied for a Sullivan Renaissance Maintenance Grant that will be used to support the projects that volunteers continue to work on:

Hurleyville-Sullivan First meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM at the Hurleyville Firehouse. The meetings are open to everyone who shares the group's dedication to the revitalization and beautification of Hurleyville.

For more information about Hurleyville and Hurleyville-Sullivan First, please visit www.hurleyville.com. Sullivan County BOCES will sponsor a special art exhibit at the Sullivan County Museum. Artwork created by students from elementary schools throughout Sullivan County will be displayed. The exhibit will open with a reception on March 3. The artwork will be on display until the end of March.

The Sullivan County Historical Society is collecting yearbooks from Sullivan County high schools and Sullivan County Community College.

"Yearbooks are an excellent source of information about people from Sullivan

County," said Suzanne Cecil, SCHS President. "All donations will be appreciated."

Among the gaps in the collection are yearbooks from the Fallsburg High School for the years before 1947 and for the years 1951, 1954, 1955, 1957, 1958, 1965, 1968, 1972, 1973, 1980, 1983, and for the years after 1987.

Fred Fries, SCHS board member and volunteer, has created the exhibit "A History of Sullivan County Farms". The exhibit showcases farm artifacts and photographs donated by Fred. The barn siding serving as the background for the exhibit is from a barn on Fred's property.

Other exhibits at the museum include "The Military Room" honoring Sullivan County veterans from the Civil War through Desert Storm, "Early Sullivan County" depicting life in period settings, and "The Borscht Belt" chronicling this unique era in the Catskills. A prototype of the bagel making machine invented and patented by Hurleyville inventor Lebel Wichinsky is also on display at the museum.

The museum, located at 265 Main Street in Hur-

leyville, is open on Sunday from 1:00 PM to 4:30 PM and from Tuesday to Saturday from 10:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

Please visit www.scnyhistory.org for more information on the Sullivan County Historical Society and the Sullivan County Museum.

The Hurleyville United Methodist Church will host its annual (and delicious) Corned Beef Dinner on Saturday, March 11.

The Bread of Life Food Pantry at the church provides food for at least 40 families each week. The food pantry is open each Thursday (except the first Thursday of each month) from 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM. The volunteers at the food pantry also provide free clothing for families in need on the last Thursday of each month.

Volunteers at the church host the Community Lunch Program. Free soup and sandwiches will be served on the following Saturdays from 12:00 noon - 2:00 PM: March 4, March 18 and April 1.

Young people are invited to participate in the Youth Group hosted by the church. They can participate in a variety of activities including board games, trivia, movie nights, arts and crafts while making new friends. The group will meet on the following Fridays at 7:00 PM: March 3 and March 17. More dates will be announced soon.

The church also hosts a Bible study group, which meets every Tuesday at 7:00 PM.

Please call Katrina at 845-436-7942 for more information, or if you can help with any of these activities. You can also visit the church on Facebook.



Hurleyville Sullivan First volunteers are responsible for the attractive plantings at the Firehouse.

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The Scene

Music and Entertainment in and around Hurleyville

by Jane Harrison



There's been so much happening that it's hard to know where to begin.

In the middle of winter, one of the things you really do not want to hear is the reason your car won't start is "the motor is shot." Big shout out to Catskill Towing in Monticello and Sherman's in Loch Sheldrake for making a truly painful situation a little less painful.

February was friend-filled so I'm going to share some of that with you.

I had a chance to chat with Sara Hulse when she performed at the Pickled Owl early last month. This talented singer/songwriter was living in Loch Sheldrake when we first crossed paths, and after moving more west, has found a comfortable niche for her music in the Pennsylvania venues. For her fans, and those of Campfire Jones (love that fiddle!), we hope they'll come back more often.

I ran into another good friend and former Hurleyville resident, Johnny Jules, last month. Johnny has been a staple of the music scene in this area for decades, embodying the Rock and Roll of the original Woodstock. Together now with Nicky Redd on drums, Bobby D on Dobro and Dave D'Arcy on bass, the Johnny Jules Band has been active in a big way with a series of private parties being their primary gigs over this winter. Check out the website and their sound at johnnyjulesband.com.

I've mentioned Hurleyville resident Al Defino in previous

columns, but I have to say, he never ceases to surprise me. Ever the gentleman, he called me a few weeks back to thank me for doing so. And then he lets me know he now has a website. Want to know why he is so revered amongst guitarists? Check out aldefino.home.kg and listen for yourself. And after that, hear him live with Larry Ravdin, who is equally accomplished with the sax and flute at Sorrella's (Fridays & Saturdays)

Also at the Pickled Owl last month, I stopped in to see Debbie Fisher and who do you think she had with her? Lee Karasik on vocals (and kazoo) and Lynne Porter with her wonderful harmonica!! David Rosenberg and Mike Jung each stepped up when Debbie took a break, so it was an evening of nonstop music. Debbie has some really interesting festivals coming up for the summer, but more on those as the dates get closer.

The night I attended the Valentine Cabaret it was bitterly cold but the house was full. I am pleased to add to this schedule the upcoming Sullivan County Dramatic Workshop performances at the Rivoli Theatre in the month they happen.

FOR MARCH
Every Friday:
Sorrella; AL DEFINO AND LARRY RAVDIN, 6pm-9, 3562 State Rte 55, Kauneonga Lake
Saturdays
March 4th:
HOME GROWN: host Kevin McDaniel, WJFF 90.5FM, 12-1 PM

The Pickled Owl: 6 PM start, 218 Main St, Hurleyville

March 4:
CHRISSEY & JOHNNY (acoustic variety)

March 11:
CATHY PATY & COMPANY (acoustic variety)

March 18:
SHAKESPEARE'S CURSE (eclectic jam band)

March 25:
KAT & RANDY (acoustic duo)

Every Saturday:
Sorrella; AL DEFINO AND LARRY RAVDIN, 6 PM-9 PM, 3562 State Rte 55, Kauneonga Lake

Sundays
March 5: The Dancing Cat: AL DEFINO AND LARRY RAVDIN, 2037 State Rte 17B, Bethel

Every Sunday:
MUSIC WHERE YOU LEAST EXPECT IT; 11 AM-1:30ish, DeFillipis Bakery, 506 Broadway, Monticello

Every Monday:
DUTCH'S OPEN MIC, 7 PM, 205 Rock Hill Dr., Rock Hill

Tuesdays
March 14 & March 28:
ANOTHER ODD TUESDAY WITH THE GREATER SULLIVAN SEARCH AND RESCUE ORCHESTRA, 6 PM-9 PM, The Brew, 280 Rock Hill Drive, Rock Hill

Thursday
March 10:
OPEN MIC at the High Falls Café, 12 Stone Dock Rd, High Falls
Until next time....

FROM THE FARM

by Eve Springwood Minson



IT'S THAT SEED-STARTING TIME OF YEAR!

The long, cold nights of winter are a great time to pour a cup of tea and begin your 2017 garden plan. Seed catalogs abound with every kind of plant imaginable and you will fall in love with what is offered. Here's a way to manage your seed cravings:

MAKE A LIST of the plants you love, and some new things you'd like to try. If you are a beginner, try things that are easier to grow so you can be successful and feel good about your gardening efforts!

LEARN. Seed catalogs and gardening websites are loaded with information about growing conditions, flavor, yields, disease resistance, and more, so take time and make a list. Do the plants prefer cool weather or warm? How long do the seeds take to germinate? Should they be started ahead of time indoors on a warm sunny window,

or can you plant the seeds directly into the garden once it's warm outside? Before you plant know what sort of conditions the seeds need to thrive.

SKETCH IT OUT. Even if you have a tiny plot or just a few containers, sketch things out before you start planting. You can find online garden planners to help you with this fun activity. You might also consider keeping a garden journal that will help for next year.

PLAN WELL. Remember that our first approximate frost-free date is May 15th, according to Cornell Coop-

erative Extension. Garden centers have plants available long before they should be put in the ground, so hold them over in a protected place until it warms up. Often you can plant warm-season crops a week or two earlier, if you are willing to protect seedlings from threat of frost. You don't want to lose your tender babies.

HAVE FUN!! Cornell Coop Extension, websites, books, garden centers and fellow gardeners are your "go-tos" for gardening success! Most importantly, enjoy your journey bringing Spring a few steps closer!

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CASTING CALL FOR SCDW ONE ACT FESTIVAL

The Sullivan County Dramatic Workshop is holding arena style auditions for its upcoming One Act Festival at the Sullivan County Museum, 265 Main Street in Hurleyville on Saturday and Sunday, March 4 and 5 from 1 to 4 PM.

Prospective participants should come prepared to do a cold reading. If you have a prepared monologue, you can bring that as well. Production dates for the One Act Festival are May 12 through 14 and 19 through 21 at the Rivoli Theatre in South Fallsburg.

Several short plays are on tap, and actors may audition for more than one production. A description of each and breakdown of actors needed follows. For additional information or to schedule an alternate audition time, phone the director at the number provided. In addition to the actors, behind-the-scenes stage managers and crew members are needed.

"Aunt Maggity's Dark and Stormy Night" by Edith Weiss (directed by Dawn Perneszi) is a light-hearted romp of a mystery that has a little bit of everything, from secrets and suspense to comedic chaos. Actors needed include four men, six women and two roles that could be either. Dawn can be reached at (845) 796-8399.

"Bette and Me" by Wendy Wasserstein (directed

by Fran Schiff) is a one act comedy that chronicles how acclaimed author Wendy Wasserstein met and interviewed the legendary singer and actress, Bette Midler. Actors needed include two women, aged 40-60 (some singing is required), and additional smaller parts for a number of men and women, playing counter people, Rockettes, etc. Fran can be reached at (845) 701-9336.

"Bottle of Joy" by Charles E. Bright (directed by Bunny Woloszczak) is a delightful children's play that takes place in the far off land of the Kingdom of Happy where... well, everybody's happy! The show is loaded with puns and plenty of witty verbal banter to entertain all ages. Actors needed include nine children, boys and girls, ages 7 to 14, flexible casting. Bunny can be reached at (845) 866-3206.

"Confessor" written and directed by Shawn Bailey is about an earnest young parish priest looking for a sign from above as he wrestles with the cost of his commitment until one series of confessions that may lead him to an answer or end his need for answers, permanently. Actors needed are: Father Sanford McClure (male, mid 20's - 30) - a young Roman Catholic priest, El-

len Harriman (female, late 20's - mid 30's) - pretty,



but in a natural 'plain' way - not ostentatious or flirty looking. Monsignor Horton Endwell (male, 60+) - a veteran priest, full cassock, sort of old school. Head pastor of the church. Nicholas Downs (male, late 20's - early 40's) - a youngish man. A small, nervous man, preferably with a unique voice. Shawn can be reached at (845) 887-4327.

"DMV Tyrant" by Christopher Durang (directed by Amber Schmidt) - a

man goes to the DMV to renew his license. Naturally, the experience is infuriating. Actors needed: One male, mid 20's. Amber can be reached at (845) 798-1000.

"How Blue is My Crocodile" by Arthur M. Jolly (directed by Harold Tighe) - two young girls play games that explore and reveal their concerns, while waiting for their father who is returning wounded from a tour of duty. Actors needed include two fe-

males - elementary to middle school age (or older performers playing younger). Harold can be reached at (845) 807-7212.

"Lifesaver" written and directed by Mekayla Perneszi - Sam feels guilty about his past with his friends. While playing Sam's favorite board game, the truth about their past is revealed. Actors needed include two men, age 16 to 25, one woman, 16 to 25, one man, 30, and one woman, 20. Mekayla

can be reached at (845) 434-6152.

"Linger a While" written and directed by Sally Gladden is an original, absurd "comedy" that takes place in a retirement home and deals with how we treat oldsters in our society with a poignant theme. Actors needed include one man, 30-plus, one woman, 40ish "Peg Bundy" type, and two extras to play oldsters, no lines (could be male or female). Sally can be reached at (845) 434-0209.

"Nights Thinking of Paris" by Laura Lonshein Ludwig (directed by Constance Slater) is a current day detective story about a woman who is rescued from a deceptive man who is stealing her money and jewels while attempting to convince her of the security and love he will offer her in marriage. Actors needed are Ann (female, 50) - an attractive woman who is being conned; Peter (male, 50) - the charming con man; James (male, 50's), the private detective. Three additional women of any age, and one additional man (50's) are needed for smaller roles. Constance can be reached at (845) 436-6309.

"Trapped" is a mystery in one act by Ben H. Winters (directed by Lori Schneider) in which a theatre company is rehearsing Ira Levin's "Deathtrap" and the show's producer is found murdered. Enter a

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"Trapped" is a mystery in one act by Ben H. Winters (directed by Lori Schneider) in which a theatre company is rehearsing Ira Levin's "Deathtrap" and the show's producer is found murdered. Enter a

NYC homicide detective to interview the cast and crew. She is no-nonsense, in sharp contrast to the nonsense that abounds all around her. Actors needed: Stage Manager (male 40's +) - a combination of administrative prowess and social awkwardness. Director (female, young 20's) - she is young and smart - constantly evaluating and feeling she needs to direct everything. Lewis Canon (male, 50-something) - the actor playing Sidney Bruhl has the pompous self-regard befitting a star much

bigger than himself. Marcus Vowell (male, young 20's) the actor playing young playwright, Clifford Anderson - he's theatrical, even for a theatre person, good looking and butch with a high camp affect. Detective (female 30's +) - this role is written for a Chinese actress but if we are unable to cast it as such, the playwright would like the role to be played by another woman of color. A no-nonsense NYPD detective, working homicide. Lori can be reached at (845) 701-0142.

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Artist and Arborist...Hurleyville's Charlie Blume

by Elaine Corrington

If you see a man walking through Hurleyville or on the Rail Trail with two REALLY big dogs on leashes (perhaps pulling his tangled arms in two different directions at the same time), it is a pretty good guess that man is Charlie Blume.

Charlie lives just off Main Street, and loves getting Mush (a rescue Bull Mastiff), and Earl (a coonhound with a "howl that people compare to Elvis") out and about. Charlie and his girlfriend Sarah (a music therapist who also can be seen careening around with the dogs at times) have now celebrated three Christmases in the hamlet. He has

children-Asia (34, a teacher at Boys and Girls Club of Queens), Chris (26, a biologist in a veterinary office in Pennsylvania), Johanna (23, an athlete with a Masters in media communication), and the two youngest-Olivia, 10, and William, 7, who share his love of cartooning.

Charlie is a tree man-but that is just the start of his idiosyncratic list of interests. Climbing trees was the great joy in his youth and right out of high school he started making a living at it.

"It is what I DID, and I knew it was what I wanted to do for a living," he says. "I am still doing it 53 years later. If I stood still, I would drown!"

He is a New York State

Certified Arborist.

It was someone who shared another passion of Charlie's who prompted him to apply for a job at The Center for Discovery- artist Richard Rulli.

They met at a coffee shop and ended up having a long conversation about art. At the end of that conversation, Richard told Charlie about The Center (where there are LOTS of trees), and told Charlie he should apply there- which he did. He does tree work for The Center, and has added other skills and tasks along the way when there are no trees that need immediate work-concrete work, building projects, grounds maintenance, snow clearance, and salting sidewalks- many of which you might also spy Charlie doing around Hurleyville.

Trees and art? Yes- many kinds of art. As a kid Charlie loved penny candies, comic books, newspaper comics, television cartoons, and animated cartoons and movies. "I wanted to emulate every comic book superhero I could," he recalls. "My favorite was Popeye- everyone forgets about him. Historically, he depicted good qualities of early America. So did Bugs Bunny, but Popeye was closer to home for me because my Dad was basically Popeye! He is 93 now, and just last year he joined Joe Rausch and Peter Dollard in the Maker's Lab to show them how to repair a vintage machine they had acquired.

"Of course, I also watched Gigantor, Speed Racer, cartoons from the 1940s through the '70s. The '70s



Charlie Blume walks the Rail Trail in Hurleyville, talking about his work clearing the trees to make the rail bed an accessible trail. As a local resident, it is now a place he enjoys walking his two dogs.

cartoons I considered 'my cartoons.' I started drawing penciled comic books and cartoons, and they were published in local town papers in Long Island- seven of them weekly! Ned Haybaler's Farm Report was a favorite. I am a member of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators in Manhattan. Once I started doing pen and ink drawings, I also drew old houses and barns (I love old architecture). I do painting (although black and white is my best- color kind of eludes me). And I do sculpture. I am a certified welder and have several pieces of welded art that are among my personal favorites of my art- especially a really creepy scarecrow, which was featured on an album cover."

The welding also fits in with another hobby- building and racing cars. Charlie is a hot-rodder, and last summer tried out his latest, which he has been working on for several years, on a 1/4 mile dragstrip. He has also taken time to teach cartooning to some of the people who live at The Center for Discovery, which he enjoys very much- as do they.

Charlie loves living in Hurleyville ("... A real town."), which was closer to his work. He finds it a beautiful town and loves all of the different architecture.

"Every day here is a new surprise," he says. "What surprised me most was the historical aspect of the old houses and buildings on Main Street. Fifteen years ago I was called by a private

client to do tree work in Hurleyville. Driving through, it looked like a dead town, and I didn't notice the historical points. The turnaround has been dramatic."

He was active with Sullivan County Historian John Conway's historical timeline project of soils and agriculture, and loves listening to Sullivan County history on his radio program. He has a lot of ideas- as does just about everybody- about what kinds of businesses could help to sustain this turnaround.

Although he loves Hurleyville, Charlie is taking steps to build an A-frame house in Grahamsville that will be as off-grid as possible. It doesn't seem like he has to worry about standing still in the near future!



Cartooning has always been one of Charlie Blume's passions. Many of his drawings, like this one, feature animals and rural scenes.

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From the Firehouse

By Jack Halchak, Past Chief H.F.D.



The Hurleyville Fire Department is always looking for new recruits, whether it is to drag hose and fight the flames of a fire, or to help in the background. We even provide free training and gear. Stop by the firehouse any Monday night to see what we are all about and see how you can help us.



Hurleyville Firemen John Jaycox (left) and Mike Spinelli (right) with Pete Bertholf (center) from Livingston Manor FD holding some of the nice crappie caught during the 29th Annual Ice Fishing Contest on Morningside Lake.

The Hurleyville Fire Department and the Town of Fallsburg Youth Commission recently held their 29th Annual Ice Fishing Contest on Morningside Lake on Brickman Road in Hurleyville. The day started clear, with temperatures in the mid-twenties. As I approached the lake at the early hour of 4:30 AM, I could see lights and fires on the backside of the lake already. As the day progressed, the temperatures rose into the mid-30s, with no wind and the sun peeking out every once in a while for a great day on the lake.

first time in a number of years there were a lot of crappies caught. There were about a dozen that weighed in at over a pound.

Most of the fish were released back into the lake. Of course a few perch were taken home for a fish fry. (Good eatin'!)

- In the youth division:
- Pan fish
 - 1st Isaiah Hannold
 - 2nd Connor Gorr
 - 3rd Cheyenne Torres
 - Perch
 - 1st Averie Conklin
 - 2nd Chase Beseth
 - 3rd Skylar Henebery
 - Pickeral
 - 1st Emma Curry, 2.22

- lbs. 20.50 inches
- 2nd Cheyenne Torres, 1.49 lbs., 18.00 inches
- 3rd Aiden Rausch, 1.44 lbs., 18.00 inches
- In the adult division:
- Bullhead
- 1st Ed Schneider
- 2nd Andy Cook
- 3rd Shelia Stocker
- Panfish
- 1st Frank Lehockey
- 2nd Keven Riley
- 3rd Todd Angus
- Perch
- 1st Ryan Brockner
- 2nd Darrell Horton
- 3rd William Hall
- Pickeral
- 1st Eric Ivan, 2.40 lbs., 21.25 inches
- 2nd William Hall, 2.39 lbs., 20.50 inches

3rd Derek Holmes, 1.88 lbs., 19.50 inches

There was one walleye caught, by Nick Price, 16 inches long and it weighed 1.49 lbs.

In the firemen's contest the defending champion Tappan Fire Department came in third with 4.43 total pounds. The winner of the contest was the Neversink Fire Department with 6.11 pounds of fish, followed by the Kerhonkson Fire Department in second place with 5.11 pounds.

On the fire side of my job, I responded to a couple of structure fires since my last article. It is suspected that some of these fires were started by heating units. Once again, I cannot stress enough to maintain your heating equipment.

Right now with snow on the ground we should be OK for brush fire season. But, as I write this article the snow is melting and melting fast. Before you know it we will be in brush fire season.

A reminder that the burn ban goes into effect from March 15 thru May 15. That means NO open burning. More on this in my next article.

Be safe.

From the files of..

THE HURLEYVILLE SENTINEL.

The Only Newspaper Published in the Town of Fallsburg

Compiled by Sullivan County Historian John Conway

MARCH 12, 1937

Fire in South Fallsburg Causes Heavy Loss

A fire in South Fallsburg which resulted in the injury of a member of the village fire department and in property damage estimated at from \$15,000 to \$18,000 ruined the upper floor of the Stein Building Monday. Mrs. Zira Resnick, who occupies an apartment on the second floor of the building, which is situated in the center of So. Fallsburg, smelled smoke shortly after three o'clock Monday morning and screamed the alarm from her window. Her cries awakened her son, Harry Resnick, who lives across the street. He telephoned the fire department. When the firemen arrived, they had considerable difficulty in finding the source of the blaze in the many rooms on the top floor of the building which was filled with smoke. When the fire burned through the roof a few minutes later it provided a starting point for their operations. For three hours they directed streams of water on the building until they were certain that the last spark was definitely out. Several firemen suffered smoke inhalation, but none was seriously injured by it. The fireman injured was Nat Steingart, who was struck in the eye by a hose nozzle.



For many years, the Hurleyville post office was located in a Main Street building owned by W.D. LaBagh. It is currently home to Gallery 222.

"Nothing But The Truth," was presented to a large and enthusiastic audience at the school auditorium on last Thursday evening, March 18th. The play, given for the benefit of the Senior Class, netted over one hundred dollars profit. Joseph Willis, as the young stock broker who bet \$10,000 that he could tell the absolute truth for twenty-four hours, was the hit of the show.

Entire School Faculty To Return Here Next Year

By unanimous approval of the school board at a meeting held on Tuesday evening, all the members of the school faculty here were awarded contracts for the ensuing year. The teachers, headed by Principal Joseph Willis, include Miss Ruth Horne, 1st and 2nd grades and music; Mrs. Howard Wood, 3rd and 4th grades; Mrs. Peter LaBagh, 5th and 6th grades; Mrs. George Bertholoff, 7th and 8th grades; Miss Lois Hussong, English; Miss Rose Wizwer, Mathematics; Miss Katherine Easling, French and Latin; Mr. Thomas Stewart, History and Physical Training; Mr. Leonard Welter, Commercial subjects. In addition to his duties as principal, Mr. Willis also teaches Science.

Plane Shuttle is Considered

An airline operating company has shown interest in the proposed Sullivan County airport, it has been learned, with a view to establishment of a daily shuttle service between Sullivan County and the metropolitan area.

Leon S. Miroff, who operates a ticket brokerage business in Monticello, said he had received inquiries from one of the three major airlines which he represents, regarding prospects for construction of the field. This company, according to Mr. Miroff, is prepared to institute a daily plane service between New York City and the Swan Lake field.

It has been pointed out that such a passenger service would yield considerable revenue to the County. In other counties where such publicly owned fields are used by commercial operators, revenue is based either on a fee for each passenger handled or a fee for each plane landed.

Airline representatives expressed approval of the site, selected a year ago by members of the County Board of Supervisors.

Faculty Play to be Given Next Week

"Nothing But The Truth," the three act comedy in rehearsal now, will be presented by the faculty of the Hurleyville High School Thursday evening, March 18th.

This faculty play will be the last of the affairs sponsored by the Senior Class for the purpose of raising money for the annual trip to the national capitol during Easter holidays. Two other entertainments have been presented this season with great success and we hope this last one will be even more successful.

MARCH 26, 1937

"Nothing But The Truth" Scores A Record Hit

Acclaimed one of the best plays ever given here, the Hurleyville faculty play,

There are a number of specified changes and alterations to be made to the building, which is owned by W.D. LaBagh of Hurleyville.

APRIL 2, 1937

Funds Sought For Triplets

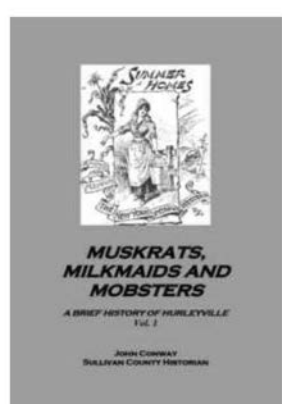
Although they are perhaps the only triplets ever born in Sullivan County, the AAAA triplets ushered into the world several weeks ago at Matmonides Hospital do not seem to have attracted the same acclaim- nor even three-fifths as much- as the world famous Dionne quintuplets of Canada. While the parents of the five Dionne sisters watch the six figure bank balances of the youngsters mount steadily under movie and picture royalties, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Henry of Ferndale, parents of the triplets, face the problem of keeping their two sons and daughter in the hospital for additional care.

The triplets now weigh nine pounds more collectively than at birth, hospital authorities said. Albert, the first born, tips the scales at eight pounds, two-and-a-half ounces. His brother, Arthur, the huskiest, weighs 8-1/2. Alice, the smallest of the three, weighs six pounds, two ounces. All three are entirely normal and growing daily.

P.O. Site Here Leased For Next Ten Years

The lease for the present post office site in Hurleyville has been renewed by the government for a ten year period.

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FROM THE FALLSBURG LIBRARY

by Kelly Wells and Amanda Letohic



The Fallsburg Library is just one of 47 libraries that make up the Ramapo Catskill Library System (RCLS). Your Fallsburg Library card is good to use at any one of the 47 libraries throughout Sullivan, Orange, and Rockland Counties, as well as at four Ulster County libraries. You can also order items from any one of those libraries to have them delivered to Fallsburg for you to pick up with your library card.

If you aren't sure how to access the online content on your device, call or stop by the library and ask for Amanda or Kelly; we'll be happy to help!

Don't have a library card yet? No problem! Just stop by the library with valid photo ID and proof of address to show you live in the Fallsburg Central School District and we'll set you up with a library card for FREE! While you're at it, check out just some of the great programs we have coming up in the month of March!

On Wednesday March

8 at 7 PM, come in for our Family Night and plant your own shamrock seeds to take home. On Wednesday March 29 at 7 PM, we'll be having another Family Night where we'll make bird seed ornaments to help welcome back our spring birds! Teen Night will be on Wednesday, March 22 at 7 PM, when teens can come in to make a glass bead candle holder. As always, we have our regular weekly Story Time for preschoolers on Tuesdays at 10 AM and 6 PM, and our Children's Craft Night on Mondays at 6:30 PM.

Want to be "in the know" about our programs every month? Sign up for our program emails so you can stay up to date on our ongoing program schedule. You can sign up by calling 845-436-6067 and speaking to Amanda or Kelly or by emailing fbr@rcls.org. You can also stay up to date by following us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram and by checking out our website, www.fallsburglibrary.org.

We look forward to seeing you in the library soon!

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POSSESSED

First time skier Deke Temple and his girlfriend, Janice Pearson are in the finals of the Luzon Cup ski race at the Columbia Hotel in Hurleyville. Deke has come to realize that there is something entirely peculiar, in fact otherworldly, about the skis he has rented from Mike, the odd little manager of the hotel ski shop, but he can't explain how they have made him such a successful skier. He has not allowed himself to think too much about what has happened to him, but he can't help but wonder if his good fortune can continue long enough for him and Janice to win the Luzon Cup. Here is the conclusion of our story...

with your runs. You have already lost," he heard himself say. "C'est sans espoir."

Deke was stunned. He hadn't even allowed himself to think along those lines, let alone say anything like that. And he most certainly did not speak French, which he recognized from the inflection was the language of the last phrase he had blurted out, though he had no idea what it meant.

What was happening to him? He started to apologize, but could not seem to get the words out of his mouth before he found himself at the starting gate.

He was determined to follow the same strategy as before, allowing himself to become merely a passenger, and felt the seemingly possessed skis make their way along the course without a hint of effort on his part. The results were again crowd pleasing, as his run was even more acrobatic and his time actually eclipsing his earlier record.

The first heats completed, Deke and Janice were in the lead. His second amazing run won him a long, warm embrace and passionate kiss from Janice that nearly melted the snow beneath his ski boots.

"You are amazing!" she told him once she let go. "I always knew you were a great skier, but I never suspected you were this... this... unbelievable!"

She turned away, leaving him standing there, blushing. Lisa again turned in her best time, though, and so did Fred, in spite of the continued decline in the quality of the course. Janice made another flawless run, though her time over the sloppy course was the slowest of the finals, keeping the aggregates close. It now all came down to Deke, and the final run of the day.

He once again pushed off with all his strength, attempting to propel himself to the best possible start. He was more than half way down the course, knowing he was skiing even faster than before, when he hit a small mound that had built up from the other skiers and went unexpectedly airborne.

Instinctively, he forgot his vow to relax and surrender and tried to regain his balance. The skis didn't respond, but



Regaining his balance with great difficulty, Deke continued racing down the course on one ski, distinctly aware that something had changed drastically.

for a moment became tangled, and he landed awkwardly, the front end of his left ski somehow ending up outside his right leg, and angling back with great force as his weight came down, the dense hickory smashing down awkwardly. He felt a sharp pain in his left leg as muscles and tendons and ligaments were strained, and even worse, he realized an instant later, the ski had snapped in two.

Suddenly, he was aware of a totally new sensation, a loneliness, a vulnerability he had not felt since he had first stepped on the hill. And what was left of his skis felt different, too. Lighter, to be sure, but also kind of cumbersome in a way he had not experienced before.

Somehow Deke had landed upright, and using all of his bodily strength while ignoring the pain in his leg as best he could, he centered himself over the single ski, determined to finish the race.

He knew it was important not to miss the remaining gate,

and he struggled to direct himself through, painfully aware of his tremendous loss of speed, as well as the loss of the guiding force he had become used to. He was obviously going to have to close this out on his own.

The remaining few seconds seemed like an eternity, but finally he coasted across the finish line, shakily and precariously balanced on the single ski. The crowd had gone from stunned silence upon his tumble to loud applause at his obvious determination to complete the race, but he knew they were cheering his spirit and not his time.

The adrenaline from the race fading, he became acutely aware of the severe pain in his left leg, and realized that it could not support his weight. Stretched out awkwardly on the ground, it was with great difficulty that he removed his skis, the good right one and the broken left one, becoming immediately aware of how much lighter they seemed than just a

few minutes earlier. That just added to his confusion.

For a few moments, he was in dread that the impossible had happened. He had only needed to turn in a modest time for Janice and him to win, but now he wondered if the accident might have derailed that almost certain outcome. Was his time on the broken ski fast enough?

It seemed as if every spectator on the hill that afternoon converged on him as he propped himself up in a sitting position. Janice was soon kneeling next to him, a worried look on her face. Was she concerned about his injury, he found himself thinking, or just about whether they had won?

Finally, after what seemed like an eternity, the public address system came to life. In the closest result ever in the short history of the Luzon Cup races, the announcer said dramatically, the winners were... Deke Temple and Janice Pearson!

Deke couldn't believe the impact the announcement had on

him. Drained of every ounce of strength in his body, he leaned back, wearily lowering his head to the snowy ground, and closed his eyes.

He actually felt as if he had fallen asleep for a second and awoke to see not Janice, but Mike, the ski shop manager leaning over him. Within a few seconds he realized he was not outside, lying in the snow, but inside in a darkened room. And he became painfully aware of not just of the agony in his left leg, but a severe throbbing above his right eye.

"There you are, grand gailard," Mike was saying. "There you are. You're back with me now. Are you all right?"

Deke was so confused he couldn't answer right away. "I told you to watch your head," Mike was saying. "You

really took a coup dur."

Deke looked around. He was lying on the floor of the back room Mike had taken him to looking for skis to rent.

"I was telling you all about my early days of teaching skiing in France," Mike said, "And about my prize pupil, Henri Oreiller, who became an Olympic champion, and I heard a thud and a crash. Turning around, I see you lying in a tangled mess on the floor."

"I hurt my leg," Deke managed. "I don't think I can stand."

"You shouldn't try to stand," Mike said. "You were unconscious, and you likely have a commotion cerebrale, a, a, a concussion. Mary is calling an ambulance."

"How long was I out?" Deke asked.

"Long enough for me to start to worry about you," Mike said. "I kept talking to you, trying to get through, hoping you could hear me."

"Talking to me?" "Yes, I just kept talking, telling stories about Oreiller, mostly, I guess."

Deke shook his head, trying to comprehend. "Oh, yes," Mike added. "And I told you I found some skis I thought would fit, but I guess you won't be needing them now."

"Possessed" is a work of fiction, and any resemblance to actual persons or events is strictly coincidental, except when it is not. Watch for another original short story in the next edition of The Hurleyville Sentinel.

EMS Beat

by Albee Bockman, AEMT-P



HOW TO CALL AN AMBULANCE

We are fortunate to live in a county that has 911. So calling for help is easy!

When calling for help, although the situation may be stressful, it is so important that you speak CALMLY and CLEARLY. The Dispatcher at the Sullivan County 911 Center will immediately ask, "What is the emergency?" Be precise as you give the nature of the problem, your address, and your phone number. It is very important not to hang up the phone until the dispatcher tells you to. They may need additional information or need to give you instructions.

In the last issue of the Sentinel, I listed which kind of emergency should be treated by your doctor OR a hospital. It is critical that you distinguish between a minor sickness and a true emergency. As parents and mature adults, we have seen our share of injuries and catastrophes over the years, and we have become familiar enough with the symptoms of common illnesses and other ailments to know whether an ambulance is truly required. But whatever you do, if you are not sure, do not hesitate to call 911 for assistance. Trust your instincts! Life has given us the ability to

recognize unusual behavior or other symptoms that indicate an "emergency."

Here are several questions to ask yourself whether you need an ambulance as opposed to other means of transportation:

1. Is the victim's condition life-threatening?
2. Could the victim's condition worsen and become life-threatening on the way to the hospital?
3. Could moving the victim cause further injury?
4. Does the victim need the skills or equipment of Paramedics?
5. Would distance or traffic conditions cause a delay in getting the victim to the hospital?

If the answer to any of these questions is "yes," or if you

are not sure, than it's best to call 911 for an ambulance. This is true even though you can sometimes get to the hospital faster by driving yourself. BUT . . . Paramedics communicate with the Emergency Room Physician and receive orders for intravenous therapy, EKG monitoring, medication and other advanced skills on the way to the hospital. Driving a loved one in your car during a stressful period is looking for trouble! We are so fortunate to have highly skilled Paramedics and Mobile Intensive Care Ambulances in Sullivan County. I hope these hints are helpful. For any further information or tips, do not hesitate contacting me at my office. Stay well and be safe, Hurleyville!!!

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SPOTLIGHT ON A HURLEYVILLE TREASURE

by Kathleen Sullivan



William "Bill" Cole

"BILL COLE"
William Fred Cole and his fraternal twin brother, Robert, were born on June 18, 1940, at home in Divine Corners to William and Alice (Geer) Cole.

The Cole family, which also included older brother Arthur, eventually moved to Main Street in Hurleyville.

Bill's aunt, Carrie, was married to Seth Eltz. Many houses on Main Street from the four corners at Morningside to the little bridge were owned by the Cole and Eltz families. In fact, the little bridge is still owned by Arthur Cole.

Bill married Ada Hayes in 1964. Bill and Ada broke from the "Main Street tradition" in 1973. They moved to a larger home on Mitteer Road to accommodate their growing family: son, William, and daughters, Colleen and Dana.

An active community volunteer, Bill was a member of the Hurleyville Fire Department for 45 years, earning the distinction of "Life Member."

cure a position in civil service due to his height. Bill was described by his family as "larger than life" by working hard to provide for his family. He worked for Schrade Cutlery in Ellenville and 3D Block in Bridgeville. He also mowed the Hurleyville Cemetery.

Bill was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1974.



Bill Cole (fireman on the left wheeling the apparatus) was a longtime member of the Hurleyville Fire Department.

He was confounded by the debilitating effects of the illness which would affect his ability to provide for his family. There was very little information available on what the long-term effects of MS were. Bill was determined to continue to walk. He never complained about the difficulties he experienced.

In an effort to get around more easily, Bill moved from his beloved Hurleyville to Smithfield, North Carolina. He lived near cousins and was able to use a walker. A fan of well-made vehicles, Bill also used a mobile chair which he described as a "fast car with hand controls." Weather conditions did not prevent him from getting "out and about."

In September 2015 Bill moved to his son's home in Gansevoort, New York, where he was cared for by his family and hospice. Bill's whole family, including his four beloved grandchildren, was able to be with Bill for Christmas in 2015. Surrounded by his loving family, Bill passed away on Jan. 10, 2016.

Described by his family as "always being there for them," Bill displayed great strength and determination. He's fondly remembered for his sense of humor and his ability to "keep his cool."

Bill is one of Hurleyville's many wonderful treasures.

Please visit www.hurleyvilley.com to find more treasures in Hurleyville.

Learn Irish Step Dance
Saturday March 18th, 2017

Learn about Irish culture through dance! Come join certified Irish Step Dance instructor Brigid Robine, TCRG, at the Hurleyville Arts Centre.

All ages are welcome, no prior experience necessary!

Classes one hour each:

- A. 3 p.m. - Children under 12 with no prior experience.
- B. 4 p.m. - Adults and children 12 years of age and over with no prior experience.
- C. 5 p.m. - Adults and children with prior experience.

\$15 per session.
Some sections may be combined due to age, level and number of registrants.

Registration made available through the Kenny Cavanaugh School of Irish Dance website from February 27th-March 16th.
Visit www.kennycavanaughirishdance.webs.com

Register and learn more about our guest instructor and her school. You can also follow the dance school on Instagram @kennycavanaughirish and both the dance school and Hurleyville Arts Centre on Facebook.

We look forward to seeing everyone at this great cultural event!

HURLEYVILLEARTSCENTRE

SENTINEL SPORTS

Angelee Santillo, Sports Editor



IS DANCE A SPORT?

We asked our Hurleyville experts, Main Street Dance, to weigh in.

By Bridge Morris

Hurleyville isn't exactly a sports destination. The long winter makes the new basketball and pickleball courts unplayable, and Fallsburg High School, though proudly our home team, is a bit more than a stone's throw away. But a townspeople recently pointed out to our sports editor that there are athletes right down the street, practicing and conditioning every single week in Hurleyville.

Main Street Dance, the company housed at the Hurleyville Arts Centre, is comprised of male and female dancers of all ages, from toddlers to teenagers. Each week, parents bring their children to the state-of-the-art facility, watching through the glass as ballet, tap, jazz, hip-hop and lyrical styles are taught by owner/operator Ms. Sherma

Williams and her staff. Many of Ms. Williams' instructors are former students themselves who continued with their love of dance after their formative years and now pay it forward by teaching the youth of Sullivan County. An arts school in its own right, Main Street Dance has been tremendously successful since its move from Liberty to Hurleyville in fostering a love of dance in the hearts of young people, but it's the teenagers that are taking it to a whole new level.

People had been buzzing about an upcoming Tri-Valley girls' basketball game at SUNY Sullivan on Feb. 4, not only to see the Lady Bears dominate the team from Chester, but because Main Street Dance, in collaboration with some of Monticello High School's dancers, would be putting on a show-stopping halftime

performance.

It surely was a spectacular show. An astonishing 24 dancers, all teen and college-aged, took the court to perform a highly energized and skilled hip-hop routine inspired by The Royal Family, a world-renowned dance crew with a routine that went viral. Main Street Dance performed it flawlessly, and the crowd at SUNY Sullivan went wild as they exited the floor, each dancer beaming with pride and adrenaline.

Watching the crew perform, it was obvious that a level of athleticism certainly went into pulling off such a physically demanding performance, but we thought it best to ask the dancers themselves the controversial question - is dance a sport?

Ms. Julia Leland of Tri-Valley has been dancing with Main Street since she was 4 years old and considers her

fellow dancers to be some of her best friends. When talking about dance as a sport, she admitted that she's had arguments with people in school who dismissed the idea, but the comparisons are obvious.

"You're competing the same way athletes do," Ms. Leland said. "Dance is just like any sport where you need to keep training to get better, and you're a part of a team where if one person messes up, it affects the whole group."

Ms. Jahda Williams, one of the leaders at Main Street Dance and daughter of owner Ms. Sherma Williams, gave her take on the question and provided some background on the big dance.

"We work just as hard as athletes do, and it takes physical ability to be able to dance for long periods of time," Ms. Jahda Williams said. "This dance alone took six practices to pull off, and it wasn't easy to learn, but we did it."

The idea for the small dance company to attempt such a difficult and well-known routine came at the suggestion of Ms. Ashley Imperato, a longtime member and now choreographer at Main Street Dance.

"Ashley had this idea to try The Royal Family's routine because of how good our

dancers are, and she choreographed the whole thing in four days," said Ms. Kristie Wallgren, another choreographer for Main Street Dance who has been with the company for 20 years. "The group learned it in just six practices, and it turned out amazing."

Ms. Wallgren, one of Main Street's veteran dancers, also offered her much-valued opinion on dance as a sport.

"It is similar to a sport to the fullest extent," she said, passionate as she looked around at her younger dancers with pride. "No one understands the cardio that goes into it and the bruises you end up with from working your body so hard. It works your arms, legs and abs, and you need rhythm to be able to keep up and perform properly."

Ms. Kyaza Turane, a senior at Monticello High who has been dancing with Main Street since she was three years old, expanded on Ms. Wallgren's sentiments.

"It's even more difficult than other sports at times because in ensembles, we don't get one star player who can save the performance," Ms. Turane said. "We all have to perform at the highest level for it to work."

Ms. Turane shared that she suffers from severe asthma and that at times she's had to work harder than other girls

because of it, but she said that dancers never let their audiences see them sweat, so to speak.

"People think dance isn't a sport or that difficult because after they see our routines, they say it looks easy," she added. "They don't understand that's the point. If we make the routine look easy as dancers, then we've done our job correctly."

When speaking to the mastermind behind the incredible performance, Ms. Imperato, she was very modest in her achievement at successfully choreographing a full crew of 24 dancers in such a hard routine. She began her training with Ms. Williams at age 4 and has stayed with Main Street Dance ever since, eventually student teaching and now choreographing and teaching classes of her own. Her passion for dance is tangible, but she admitted that coming from Fallsburg High School, dance wasn't always easily accepted and understood.

"When I tried to get dance into Fallsburg a few years ago, we were looked down upon by a lot of people," Ms. Imperato said. "They didn't take dance seriously."

Luckily, that attitude is changing little by little, and it's likely because people are starting to realize the level of



The dancers performed a highly energized and skilled hip-hop routine inspired by The Royal Family, a world-renowned dance crew.

athleticism and dedication that goes into dance, especially routines like the one Ms. Imperato choreographed.

"It's something that hadn't been done by many non-professional dance crews before, but I believed in our dancers and wanted to see if we could do it," Ms. Imperato said, still beaming with the satisfaction of having pulled it off. "We've never done something so big before in such a short period of time, and the fact that we nailed it means we can do anything."

But when asked the age-old question, is dance a sport, the veteran dancer gave quite a unique perspective on the topic.

"I don't think dance is a sport, actually," she said. "Dance is an art, and that should never be mistaken, but I do believe dancers are athletes."

Although no definitive answer came from the group,

the fact remains that dancers are athletes in all definitions of the word, and that they should be respected as such for their physical abilities and dedication to their work. But one way dance is more like a sport than anything else is in the teamwork and sense of camaraderie that's involved, something each girl went out of her way to mention.

"More than anything, Main Street Dance is a family to me," said Ms. Rachel Col-lura, a junior at Fallsburg and dancer since age 5. "I am closer to these girls than anyone else, and I'd dance with them anywhere."

Main Street Dance hopes to perform its stunning hip-hop routine at more pep rallies across the county and at its annual recital in June. Check them out at any time practicing at the Hurleyville Arts Centre!



Main Street Dancers performed at halftime of a recent basketball game between Tri-Valley and Chester Academy at the Paul Gerry Fieldhouse at SUNY-Sullivan.

SUNY-SULLIVAN BASKETBALL ROUND-UP

by Eli Ruiz

It was all about the sophomores on February 23 at SUNY-Sullivan's Paul Gerry Fieldhouse - a/k/a "The Pit" - as both the women's and men's basketball teams celebrated the talent, and the many contributions, of the respective squads' departing athletes to the storied NJCAA basketball program's legacy. And the games weren't bad either.

SUNY-Sullivan Athletic Director Chris DePew called it the saddest day of the year, as the school bid farewell to a contingent of players—both men and women—which has shined on and off the court.

"We are so proud of their accomplishments both in the classroom and on the court, and I feel good knowing that my amazing coaching staff has laid a solid foundation for them to be successful in the future and whatever they choose to do," Mr. DePew said. We will certainly remember the time, effort, and dedication they put in to their respective teams."

Following the "Sophomore Day" mid-court ceremony, presided over by Generals' announcer, the Honorable Mike McGuire, the Lady Generals took to the floor to face off against the Caimans of Hostos Community College for the finale to the 2016-2017 regular

season.

With the Region XV tournament looming, Coach Danny Lang's Sullivan squad came into the game ranked as the #5 NJCAA women's program in the nation. A near lock for a post-season number one seed, a sloppy first half, coupled with a disaster of a 3rd quarter by the Lady Generals (22-5), conspired to relegate the team to the Region XV tournament's 2-seed, and with a fourth loss in its last five contests - an 85-80 double overtime thriller, Lang has to be asking himself what's the problem, right?

Wrong. "There is no problem," Mr. Lang said confidently after the game, adding, "We have dealt with some injuries to key players, we had a tough schedule, as we played a Division 2 and Division 1 school back to back while we were shorthanded, too."

"If we grab a rebound or two, and make a couple more free throws, we would have put ourselves in a better position to win. We ended the regular season 22-5 despite everything, which I'm sure there are a ton of programs who wouldn't mind having our record. We will be fine."

Similarly, if you thought Mr. Lang was wallowing in disappointment about the Lady Generals' Region tournament seeding, you'd be wrong again. "Everyone would love

to be the #1 seed," he said. "But at the end of the day, when you start the playoffs, everyone's record is 0-0. The semifinals and finals are held at a neutral site. It comes down to execution, being poised, and doing all of the little things that will help your team win, we're gonna be just fine."

Not one for excuses, Lang reflected on his team's lackluster performance through most of its final regular season matchup, explaining that "sometimes the kids get caught up in the moment of a big game with a crazy atmosphere... it tends to take us out of our element and performing how we usually would. I feel players on both teams had that date circled for quite some time, and it resulted in everyone trying to do a little too much, too fast at the onset."

"We also have some players who haven't played in that type of atmosphere before," he said. "The importance of such a significant game... along with the tournament looming, it can really overwhelm some younger players."

The evening, though, belonged to the departing sophomores, and Mr. Lang has high hopes for each of them.

"I will miss them all," he said. "Every last one of these young ladies means so much to me in their own way, and what they have done for the

team, it just goes without saying.

"Kyla Given, who is an All-American, is obviously a tremendous player, but also a great teammate, leader, and young lady. She represents everything you want in a student athlete for your program. Ashley McDonald has done more than she has been asked to do, time and time again, giving everything she has every second she is on the floor, and is an extension of me on the court, which you want in your point-guard, while guarding the other teams' best player. Amal Mahmoud is another kid who leaves it all out on the floor, for being undersized and underrated, she goes above and beyond to help us be successful. Jennifer Bronson and Shadae Jordan are 2 kids who so many players can learn from, they always come prepared to work, never give up, and ready when their number is called. Both have stepped up and played major minutes as changes have been made to our team (Shadae starting). I will miss them all because of they are unique in their own way and have all impacted our program for the better."

Clearly a "players coach," Mr. Lang now must navigate his team, a team that has been struggling of late, through the Region XV tournament, and beyond. Following the disap-



The SUNY-Sullivan Lady Generals suffered a rare defeat at the hands of Hostos on Sophomore Night at the Paul Gerry Fieldhouse.

pointing Lady Generals' loss, Coach Brent Wilson's men's team took to the court against Hostos. Ranked #10 among Division III schools nationally and #2 in Region XV behind Nassau Community College, the Generals got 21 points and 12 assists from Romero Collier and 19 points and 12 rebounds from Scott Artis enroute to an 88-71 victory.

The game wasn't as close as the score might indicate, as the Generals enjoyed a 51-24 halftime lead, and Mr. Wilson pulled his starters with 10 minutes left.

Mr. Collier and Mr. Artis were both playing their final games at Sullivan, as were teammates Nysir Williams, Michael Robinson and Nasheed Dixon. The group, responsible for more than 45 victories over the two sea-

sons they played, took part in the ceremony prior to the games.

The Generals will start the Region XV tournament as the #2 seed.

Honored for Sophomore Night before the contest were the following:

- Women
- #24: Amal Mahmoud, Guard
- #10: Ashley McDonald, Guard
- #3: Kyla Givens, Guard/Forward
- #4: Shadae Jordan, Guard
- #1: Jennifer Bronson, Guard
- Men
- #3: Jordan Riullano, Guard
- #4: Romero Collier, Guard
- #5: Nasheed Dixon, Forward
- #14: Nysir Williams, Guard/Forward
- #42: Scott Artis, Forward

Fallsburg's Basketball Season Comes to a Close

by Julia Batista

During Fallsburg's basketball game against the Liberty Indians on February 15, the school and the community jointly celebrated the Lady Comets' last home game of the season. Otherwise known as Senior Night, the Fallsburg community congratulated the team's senior players on their last season as Comets. This year, only two seniors graduated from the girls' basketball team, Mya Grey and Diavian Smith.

Just like many of their teammates, Ms. Grey and Ms. Smith were longtime members of the girls' basketball team. They both began the program at a very young age and have grown up on and off of the court with many of the other girls.

"I feel happy and sad at the same time, said Ms. Grey, a power forward. "I've been with most of these girls since I first started basketball, and to know that high school basketball is over is kind of saddening. On the bright side, I'm very proud to say that we've accomplished a lot together as a team. I believe that after I graduate, these girls have so many more great things coming their way."

"I remember when I was a freshman trying out for the varsity team," added Ms. Smith,

also a power forward. "It feels so unreal now, I can't believe that I'm actually graduating and this will be my last year of high school basketball."

Although only Ms. Smith will continue to play basketball after high school, both girls hope that the younger players will continue to grow and accomplish more than they already have.

According to Ms. Grey, she would like "to see them accomplish way more than just sectionals every year. And I hope to see more than just one

person reach one thousand points." As for Ms. Smith, she hopes that they will make it farther than her own experience on the team, accomplishing every goal they target.

Both senior girls agreed that the team should continue to keep up the good work.

Winning their Senior Night game against the Liberty Indians by a score of 63-39, the Lady Comets have already successfully qualified for the Section 9 title for their seventh year in a row, with the date of the game and their opponent still to be determined.

Nonetheless, we wish them great luck competing for a title that they've worked so hard to achieve all season!

