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some see agriculture's transformation — or its ruin

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The Hill Country Observer is published 10 times per year (monthly except Jan., March) by Observer Publishing Inc.

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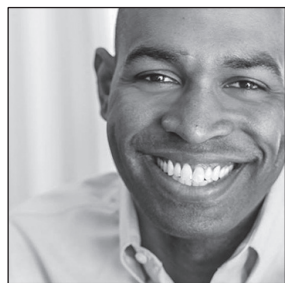
FEBRUARY - MARCH 2022

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### In New York's new farm overtime rules, progress or ruin?

Labor and social justice activists are calling it a huge step forward for the lives of farm workers in New York. But many farmers and their advocates say they fear the change could deliver a mortal blow to agricultural businesses across the state. On Jan. 28, the state's Farm Laborer Wage Board voted to lower the threshold at which farm laborers become eligible for overtime pay to 40 hours -- the standard that's been applied to hourly workers in nearly every other economic sector for decades. .... Page 4



### Delgado-Molinaro race draws national attention, dollars

The Hudson Valley congressional race taking shape between U.S. Rep. Antonio Delgado and challenger Marcus Molinaro could wind up being among the key contests nationally that determine control of the U.S. House of Representatives for the next two years, political experts say. Delgado, D-Rhinebeck, is seeking a third term in November amid a political climate in which Democrats are struggling nationally. Molinaro, the Dutchess County executive for the past decade, is considered a potentially formidable challenger who gained a statewide profile as the Republican candidate for governor in 2018. .... Page 7



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Cover photo by Joan K. Lentini: Stewart Ziehm tends to the cows at Tiashoke Farms, a dairy operation near Buskirk, N.Y., on a cold winter day.

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# Big hearts for big ears

## Pet rabbits find sanctuary at new Saratoga-area shelter

By **STACEY MORRIS**  
Contributing writer

WILTON, N.Y.

Shelby Wimet-Himelrick doesn't just love rabbits. She advocates for them.

At first that may sound strange. But when she recounts her evolution from being a 4-H Club leader to founding a rabbit sanctuary, it makes perfect sense.

Several years ago, after Wimet-Himelrick started running a domestic rabbit club at the Saratoga County 4-H, she began receiving phone calls from people who had rabbits as pets and no longer wanted them.

"I'd get a call every 10 days on the average," she recalled. "I realized I needed to do something more and began a nonprofit to help rabbits in need of a home."

The result was Hop on Home Rabbit Sanctuary, which Wimet-Himelrick said is the first of its kind in Saratoga County.

The sanctuary, which serves all of New York state, officially began operations in January 2020 after Wimet-Himelrick secured its status as a tax-exempt charitable organization. She sees the sanctuary, which she serves as president and chief executive, as the best and most compassionate solution to the dilemma of displaced rabbits.

"It's definitely a problem," Wimet-Himelrick said. "Rabbits are the third most abandoned pet behind cats and dogs. Most likely you know someone who had one and ended up not keeping it for the longevity of its life."

Although rabbits are undeniably cute and relatively easy to care for, Wimet-Himelrick said many rabbit owners dive into the relationship, seduced by the animal's storybook appeal, without knowing all the pertinent facts about having a rabbit as a pet.

"I like to tell people that rabbits are actually very social, like a dog," she explained. "Rabbits want and need interaction with people, and sometimes there's the assumption that you can just keep them in a cage."

On the other hand, rabbits also have the self-sufficiency of cats in terms of being litter-



Joan K. Lentini photo

Rabbit "foster mom" Brandy Caro, yoga instructor Jamie Lemnotis and yoga student Stephanie Lyons enjoy a moment with the rabbits after a Bunny Yoga class at Hop on Home, a rabbit rescue and adoption organization, at its space at Wilton Mall in Saratoga County.

trainable and self-grooming.

Wimet-Himelrick said she most often encounters families wanting to give rabbits up because they don't anticipate the physical interaction they require. Or the rabbits acquired on a whim for the kids at Easter gives way to the reality that a family has signed on to a decade-long commitment to care for these pets.

"Over time, the idea of a pet rabbit has evolved," she said. "Thirty or 40 years ago, pet rabbits were something you saw in a hutch out in yard. They really don't want to live in cages and like to roam around the house, much like a cat or dog. Once they know where the litter box is, a rabbit will use it."

And like dogs, she added, rabbits both enjoy and need a ready supply of chew toys to help manage their ever-growing teeth.

**Domesticated vs. wild**

Wimet-Himelrick said there are more than 50

recognized domestic rabbit breeds within the United States, and these vary in size, color and physical characteristics.

"Some have big floppy ears, and others have erect ears," she said. "And their weight can range from under 4 pounds to up to 15 pounds, which is important to consider when housing and feeding them."

Wimet-Himelrick said a big part of Hop on Home's outreach involves education — most importantly, teaching the difference between a domestic rabbit and a wild one.

"The biggest mistake we see is when people decide they no longer want their rabbit and think it's OK to release it into the wild," she said. "That's a death sentence for a domestic rabbit. With a domestic rabbit, the part of their brain that registers fight or flight is smaller. Wild rab-

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# Wages of change

In New York's new overtime rules, some see agriculture's transformation—or its ruin

By EVAN LAWRENCE  
Contributing writer

CAMBRIDGE, N.Y.

Labor and social justice activists are calling it a huge step forward for the lives of farm workers in New York.

But many farmers and their advocates say they fear the change could deliver a mortal blow to agricultural businesses across the state.

On Jan. 28, the state's Farm Laborer Wage Board voted to lower the weekly threshold at which farm laborers become eligible for overtime pay to 40 hours — the same standard that's applied to hourly workers in nearly every other economic sector for decades.

If the state labor commissioner signs off on the board's plan, the change from the current overtime threshold of 60 hours per week for farm workers would take place in a series of increments over the next decade. The first step, effective in two years, would require overtime pay after 56 hours of work.

Farmers who've opposed the change say the unique pressures of agriculture — including perishable crops, the threats posed by severe weather and the demands of caring for livestock — deserve a more flexible standard.

In addition, after struggling for years to recruit and retain agricultural workers, many farmers in the region have come to rely increasingly on foreign laborers who live at the farm and want to log as many hours as possible. Now farmers fear they could lose those workers if they have to cap their weekly hours to hold down labor costs.

Stuart Ziehm, a partner at Tiashoke Farms near the hamlet of Buskirk, said a 40-hour overtime threshold "would be extremely challenging." The 1,000-cow family dairy farm has 24 hired staff, half of them from the local area and half from Guatemala.

"Labor is the second largest cost on a dairy farm, after feed for the cows," Ziehm said in an interview before the wage board's decision.

If the state switches to a 40-hour threshold for overtime, the farm would lose what's now a very small margin of profit, he said. Workers who are eager to work 55 to 65 hours a week



Joan K. Lentini photo

Stewart Ziehm of Tiashoke Farms says some of the 1,000-cow dairy operation's 24 employees would leave if he has to curb their hours because of New York's new overtime pay rules, but having to pay them all a time-and-a-half rate after 40 hours could wipe out the farm's profit margin.

would go to other states where there's no limit on their hours, he predicted, and the farm would be unable to invest in itself and its community.

"We'd lose the ability to evolve," Ziehm said. "Banks don't want to invest in businesses that can't be profitable."

But labor leaders and worker advocates who pushed for the change say farm workers should be treated the same as everyone else.

"The bottom line is: This is a matter of equality," said Emma Kreyche, director of advocacy outreach and education at the Worker Justice Center of New York. "In 2022, we still have second-class workers."

#### Decades-old exemption

The federal Fair Labor Standards Act established the right to time-and-a-half pay after 40 hours per week for most U.S. workers in 1938. Left out were farm and domestic workers, who in the South were primarily African-American. Southern senators refused to support the bill unless it excluded those groups; they wanted to keep Black workers from parity with white workers.

Three years ago, New York redressed some of that exclusion by passing the Farm Laborers Fair Labor Practices Act. The new state law, which took effect at the beginning of 2020, gave farm workers the right, among other things, to one day of rest per week, the right to organize, unemployment insurance — and overtime pay after 60 hours per week.

The law also directed the state Department of Labor to set up the Farm Laborer Wage Board, which was tasked with determining whether the overtime threshold should be lowered to 40 hours or some intermediate number.

Four other states — California, Hawaii, Maryland and Minnesota — require overtime pay for farm workers, with thresholds ranging from 40 to 60 hours.

In New York, the new wage board began holding hearings on the issue in February 2020, but the process was interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The board was supposed to issue a recommendation in December but instead scheduled three more virtual hearings in January.

All three hearings ran for more than three



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hours, and a fourth was added on Jan. 28 to accommodate dozens of people who hadn't yet been able to speak. After the conclusion of that hearing, the board voted 2-1 to lower the overtime threshold in a series of steps, reaching 40 hours by 2032.

**Farming's special needs**

Only 27 percent of New York's farms have hired labor, but those farms account for 90 percent of the state's net farm income, according to state statistics. All but 2 percent of the state's farms are family owned.

Farmers say they have special needs when it comes to labor. Harvest windows for fruit and vegetables may be measured in hours, especially if bad weather is coming. The few weeks of harvest may bring in almost all the farm's profit for the year.

Farm emergencies — storms, equipment breakdowns, livestock in distress — can happen at any time. In these situations, work must continue until the job is done, no matter how matter long it takes. Farm families take it for granted that, when needed, they might have to put in 80 hours or more of work in a week.

And in contrast to many other businesses, farmers say they are often unable to pass higher costs on to customers. In the case of dairy farmers, the price they're paid for milk is set by complex federal regulations.

"We're paid at just above or just below the cost of production," Ziehm said.

Making more milk isn't a solution, as nearly all dairy farms sell to processing cooperatives that will only buy a set amount.

"The co-ops don't allow overproduction," Ziehm said. "They're flush with milk."

For produce growers, labor typically is the biggest expense. Dale-Ila Riggs, co-owner of The Berry Patch in Stephentown, told the labor board she can't possibly match the prices of the California berries sold at her local big-box supermarket. Riggs said she got rid of her raspberries, plowed under her strawberries and lost 40 percent of her blueberries to rot last summer because she couldn't afford the labor needed to pick them.

Many farmers say their ability to pay workers is constrained by market prices for their products — prices that in many cases have been in decline.

Sarah Dressel Nikles, a fruit grower in New Paltz and member of the New York Apple Association board, said that if she received the equivalent in today's dollars of the \$3.75 per box her grandfather received in 1953, she'd be getting \$37.22 for a box of apples. Instead, her average price last year was \$18.

At the board's hearings, farmers also stressed that many of their workers want to log as many hours as possible and don't want to lose out because of a state limit.

Ziehm said about half of Tiashoke Farms' workers want to work 55 to 65 hours per week.

"They sacrifice a lot to be here, and they're motivated by grabbing as many hours as they safely can," he explained.

The farm's other workers tend to log 50 to 55 hours a week, except at harvest time, he said.

"Of course all workers would appreciate overtime," Ziehm said. "But they appreciate that we need to be sustainable and profitable."

Farms with hired labor often provide no-cost housing for their employees. For foreign workers hired through the federal

H-2A program, employer-provided housing is required. Farms may also arrange for workers' transportation and provide some food.

**Would workers leave?**

In a state-commissioned report released in November, Cornell University researchers interviewed H-2A workers about pay thresholds. Of those interviewed, 72 percent said they would be less likely to take a job with a 40-hour overtime threshold if it meant that they would receive no more than 40 hours a week of work, and 70 percent said they'd go to another state with no cap on their hours.

But Kreyche, at the Worker Justice Center, said talk of limiting workers' hours because of the overtime threshold is something of a misrepresentation.

"The state isn't limiting how many hours workers can be assigned," Kreyche said, although she added that employers might be giving their workers that impression. "It's saying that employers have to pay overtime after 60."

Kreyche said she couldn't speak for all farm workers, who come from many backgrounds, are working in different situations, and have different goals. But last year, her organization's staff talked to about 2,500 workers at more than 250 farm worker housing sites around the state, and "this is what I've seen," she said.

Kreyche questioned whether H-2A workers, most of whom are coming from the Caribbean and Central America, would really go to other states if New York lowered the overtime threshold.

"H-2A workers may only be here for six to eight weeks, and they want to earn as much as possible in that time," she said. "But they're a

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small minority of the state's total agricultural workers," who are estimated to number 55,000 to 60,000.

"There won't be a shortage of H-2A workers," Kreyche said. "The workers know that ... there are a dozen people behind them in their home countries waiting to come. The growers are relying more and more on that work force."

Under the program's rules, workers are required to stay with the employer who brought them to the United States.

"They can't shop around" for a better job, she said.

There's also the question of where workers would go if they bypassed New York. H-2A workers' minimum wages are based on the minimum wage in each state. New York has one of the highest minimum wages in the country, at \$13.20 this year for upstate, and it will eventually increase to \$15. Only California (\$14), Washington state (\$13.69), and Massachusetts (\$13.50) are higher, according to an October report from Farm Credit East, and California already requires overtime after 45 hours.

In contrast, Vermont's minimum wage is \$11.75, and Pennsylvania follows the federal minimum of \$7.25. Agricultural workers in New York may have fewer hours if employers choose not to assign overtime, but they'd still be ahead of workers in many other states.

"New York's pay is a pretty big incentive for retention," Kreyche said.

**Dairy farms' long hours**

The situation for dairy farm workers is different, Kreyche said. Big dairy farms run 24



Joan K. Lentini photo

**A baby cow is part of the next generation of milk producers at Tiashoke Farms in the town of Cambridge.**

hours a day, seven days a week, year-round.

"This is where we see workers with the longest hours and most hazardous conditions with the least regulation," she said.

Before the state's 2019 law established a mandatory weekly day of rest, it wasn't uncommon for dairy laborers to work seven days a week for weeks on end, she said.

"We see 12-hour shifts, six days a week, in dairy," Kreyche said. "The pay differential in overtime after 60 hours versus overtime after 40 is significant."

Unlike H-2A workers, who are mostly single men, many dairy farm workers have their families with them.

"They may be earning \$50,000 a year, but

they're working 72 hours a week," Kreyche said. "That's not a life."

Historically one of the justifications for overtime pay was to discourage employers from overworking their employees, and worker safety was a key factor cited by supporters when the benefit was extended to New York farm workers two years ago. Farming overall ranks in the top 10 of most dangerous occupations, and dairy farming is particularly hazardous.

"People who work this hard labor are much more likely to be injured," Kreyche said.

Workers may push themselves to the point of physical disability but often don't have access to health care, especially if they're undocumented.

"No one wants to work 60, 70, 80 hours of difficult manual labor without overtime," Kreyche said.

Ziehm acknowledged that safety becomes a concern for those working particularly long hours.

"Eighty-hour work weeks aren't a great idea," he said. "We're very well aware of the safety risks with extended hours."

Tiashoke Farms works with a state program for agricultural health and medicine for safety training, he said.

Kreyche said finding dairy farm workers is challenging because there's no federal guest worker program for year-round agricultural operations.

But David Kallich of the Immigrant Research Institute, who spoke at the Jan. 20 hearing, said higher pay should help to increase the pool of available workers.

"Better wages don't lead to fewer job

*continued on page 27*

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# NEWS & ISSUES

## Local House race could be bellwether

### National parties eye Delgado's seat in battle for Congress

By MAURY THOMPSON  
Contributing writer

The Hudson Valley congressional race taking shape between U.S. Rep. Antonio Delgado and challenger Marcus Molinaro could wind up among the key contests nationally that determine control of the House of Representatives for the next two years, political experts say.

Delgado, D-Rhinebeck, is seeking a third term in November amid a political climate in which Democrats are struggling nationally. President Biden's job approval has been lagging in the polls, and historically the party of an incumbent president often loses congressional seats in midterm elections.

"Incumbent Democrats are certainly more vulnerable this election cycle," said Hank Sheinkopf, a Democratic strategist in New York City. "It's going to be a hard race."

Molinaro, who has been the Dutchess County executive for the past decade, is considered a potentially formidable challenger who gained a statewide profile as the Republican candidate for governor in 2018.

"Both will be well-known campaigners," said former Rep. John Faso, R-Kinderhook, whom Delgado unseated in 2018. "It's definitely going to be a race to watch."

New York's 19th Congressional District, which stretches from Rensselaer and Columbia counties southwest to the Pennsylvania border, has been one of the most competitive in the state over the past decade. In the 2020 presidential race, for example, Biden carried the district by about one-half of a percentage point, the narrowest margin in New York, according to an analysis by the liberal online forum Daily Kos.

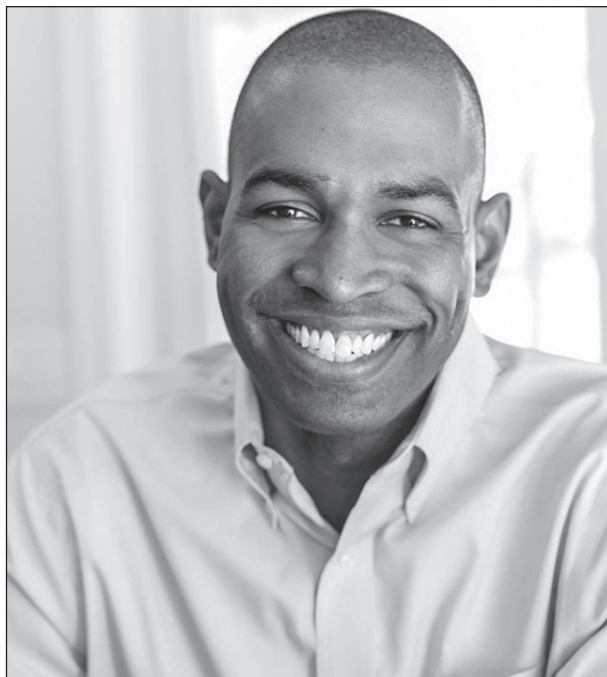
Under a reapportionment plan that emerged at the end of January and appeared headed for swift passage in the Democratic-controlled Legislature, the district would be extended farther west to encompass the cities of Binghamton and Utica. One early analysis estimated that the addition of these Democratic-leaning cities as well as the city of Rensselaer would boost the district's narrow overall Democratic enrollment advantage by several percentage points.

These changes benefit Delgado, but the district's political balance might still be close enough for it to remain a swing district in some years. In addition, the incumbent will have to introduce himself to new voters in communities that are largely unfamiliar with his record.

#### Clash of two moderates

Although this year's fight for control of Congress is being cast in many places as an ideological battle between progressive Democrats and conservative Republicans loyal to former President Donald Trump, both Delgado and Molinaro have reputations as moderates within their respective parties.

And in their public comments, both



U.S. Rep. Antonio Delgado, left, faces a potentially strong challenge from Dutchess County Executive Marcus Molinaro, right, as he seeks a third term in New York's 19th Congressional District.

candidates tend to steer clear of controversy and instead stress their interest in serving constituents and the needs of the district.

In an interview last month, Molinaro said the race isn't about personalities but about bringing functionality to federal government.

"I have no ill will toward Antonio Delgado," he said.

Molinaro, 46, was born in Yonkers and earned an associate's degree at Dutchess Community College. He first made political headlines in 1995, when he was elected village mayor in Tivoli at the age of 19, making him the youngest mayor in the nation at the time. He was re-elected mayor five times and later served as a state assemblyman for five years before winning his first term as county executive in 2011.

"I've spent every day of my adult life making government function for the good of people," he said.

In a similar vein, Delgado, in a telephone town hall on Jan. 18, described how 10 bills he had sponsored were signed into law in 2019 and 2020, while Trump was president, along with eight bills in 2021 after Biden took office.

"The focus is always on delivering for communities at home," he said.

Delgado's campaign said he had a busy schedule and was not available over a five-day period in January to be interviewed for this report. A subsequent request to speak with a campaign spokesman was not returned.

Delgado, 45, is a native of Schenectady who completed his bachelor's degree at Colgate

University, then earned a Rhodes scholarship to Oxford and a law degree at Harvard. He made his first bid for elective office in 2018, when he prevailed in a seven-candidate Democratic primary for the right to challenge Faso.

He defeated Faso with 51 percent of the vote after a campaign that focused in part on Faso's support for repealing the Affordable Care Act. In winning that race, Delgado became the first person of African-American or Hispanic descent to be elected as a member of Congress from upstate New York. Two years ago, he won a second term with about 55 percent of the vote against Kyle Van De Water, a Millbrook lawyer who had served eight years in the Army in Afghanistan.

Molinaro won 53 percent of the district's vote in his 2018 race for governor, although he lost to incumbent Andrew Cuomo by more than 20 percentage points statewide.

#### Assessing a record

Perhaps not surprisingly, partisans on both sides describe their candidate as the true moderate in the race — and cast the opposition as more extreme.

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"I really wouldn't characterize Marcus Molinaro as a moderate," said Anne Hart, the Sullivan County Democratic chairwoman.

She said Delgado has been successful in dealing with issues that have bipartisan appeal, such as expanding broadband service and sustaining local agriculture.

"He has a great deal of compassion and an ability to listen," Hart said.

In contrast, Faso, who is now a consultant to the state Conservative Party, described Delgado as "a very dedicated liberal who keeps his views quiet."

He said Molinaro has been widely known as an advocate for the disabled, dating back to when he served in the Assembly.

"He's a center-right Republican," Faso said.

Asked if he considered himself a moderate, Molinaro responded, "I'm pragmatic."

In rankings compiled by various interest groups, Delgado has tended to vote with his fellow Democrats on labor and environmental issues but has sometimes parted ways with his party on matters of business and commerce.

He received a 71 percent grade on the U.S. Chamber of Commerce scorecard for his first term, based 80 percent on his voting record, 10 percent on bills he sponsored and 10 percent on bipartisan engagement. By comparison, the group gave a 50 percent score to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and 96 percent to House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy.

Delgado's score from the U.S. Chamber

of Commerce was the eighth highest of any Democrat in the House and the second highest score of any Democrat in New York, three percentage points behind Kathleen Rice of Nassau County.

He also received a 100 percent grade on the AFL-CIO scorecard for his votes on labor issues for his first term, as well as a 100 percent score on the League of Conservation Voters scorecard.

Delgado received a score of zero for his first three years in office, as did all other House Democrats, on the latest scorecard of Heritage Action for America, a conservative political action and education organization.

GovTrack.us, a government information tracking website, ranks Delgado as one of the most moderate house members based on his sponsorship of legislation.

As of Jan. 24, 16 of the 22 bills Delgado personally sponsored so far this session had bipartisan co-sponsors, according to the Library of Congress government information website.

"I try to create a lane where I do have the opportunity to engage, in good faith, with all of my colleagues," Delgado said at the Jan. 18 town hall.

Molinaro said co-sponsoring legislation with colleagues of the other party is not enough — and that a House member needs to be vocal about issues, even if it means criticism of one's own party.

"This isn't a time for low-profile, sort of get-along politics," he said.

As an example, Molinaro said, Delgado recently spoke about supporting broadband legislation at a time when some funding still hasn't been spent from a broadband program set up in the Obama administration. Delgado should be speaking out about the slow pace of bureaucracy, Molinaro said.

**Attention, donations flow**

Former U.S. Rep. Bill Owens, D-Plattsburgh, predicted this year's race could be Delgado's most challenging campaign so far.

"I think that's going to be a difficult race," Owens said. "Those are two well-known candidates. I'm hopeful that he will prevail."

As of mid-January, before the new district lines were revealed, the race in the 19th district was the only one in New York that the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee had targeted as a priority. The National Republican Congressional Campaign Committee also targeted it as a priority race.

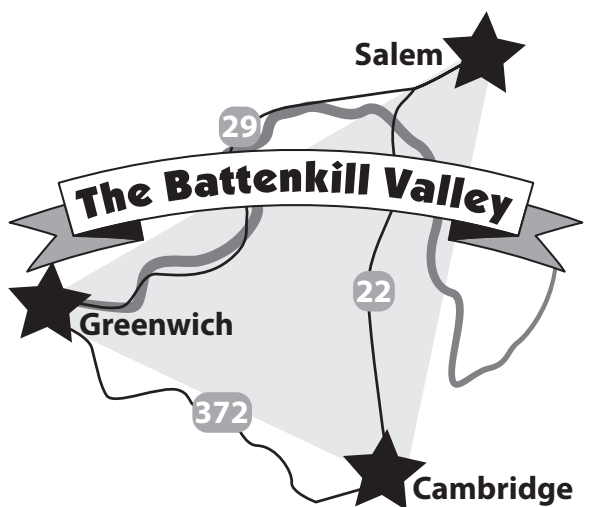
Owens said the outcome could turn in large part on how closely Molinaro aligns himself with former President Trump.

But Molinaro insisted voters are more concerned about issues such as the cost of living, education and public safety than they are about Trump.

"If Antonio wants to make it a race about anything else, I suggest he does that at his own peril," he said.

Molinaro said he would not refuse an

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endorsement from Trump.

“Certainly, if the president wants to endorse me, the president can endorse me,” he said.

Over the past decade, voters in the 19th district have tended to reward moderate candidates of both parties, except for the two years that Faso was in office. Chris Gibson, a moderate Republican, held the seat for three terms until 2016, when he retired from politics in favor of academia. Faso defeated progressive Democrat Zephyr Teachout in an open-seat race

that year before losing to Delgado two years later.

Sheinkopf, the Democratic strategist, said it’s no surprise Delgado has worked to cultivate a moderate record on which he can campaign for re-election this year.

Both Delgado and Molinaro have been raking in campaign cash.

Delgado’s campaign announced Jan. 11 that it had raised \$700,000 in the fourth quarter of 2021 and had \$5.4 million cash on hand as of

Dec. 31.

Molinaro’s campaign reported \$347,988 cash on hand as of Sept. 30, the date of its most recent filing with the Federal Election Commission. In an interview on Jan. 19, Molinaro would not say how much his campaign raised in the fourth quarter, although the campaign was due to report that total to the FEC by Jan. 31.

He said his fund-raising effort is “going very well,” though he criticized the campaign finance process in general.

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# A MONTH IN THE HILLS

## Spa City's new leaders push police accountability

In a case of elections having consequences, a newly sworn-in City Council moved swiftly at its first meeting of the year to pursue two longtime goals of police reform advocates in Saratoga Springs.

The new council scheduled a Feb. 1 public hearing to start the process of creating a new Civilian Review Board that would be empowered to investigate cases of police misconduct. The review board was one of the key recommendations of a city task force on police reform, set up after the racial justice protests of 2020, but the previous City Council had blocked action on the proposal.

The new council, fresh from an election that brought new members to four of its five seats, also voted unanimously to ask for a noncriminal grand jury investigation into the death of Darryl Mount Jr., a young biracial man who was mortally injured in an encounter with city police in 2013.

Questions about the circumstances of Mount's death helped to spur the formation of a local Black Lives Matter movement, and newly elected Public Safety Commissioner James Montagnino has said concerns about the city's handling of the case prompted him to run for his seat on the council.

The *Times Union* of Albany reported that Montagnino expressed support for a Civilian Review Board that mostly would follow the model proposed last year by the city's Police Reform Task Force.

"The Civilian Review Board they proposed is well thought out," he said.

Montagnino's predecessor had instead proposed creating a "community review board" with more limited powers that critics said would amount to a toothless watchdog.

At Montagnino's urging, the City Council voted to ask Saratoga County District Attorney Karen Heggen to convene a grand jury to

investigate the details of Mount's death. Montagnino explained that the district attorney is the only official empowered to grant immunity to witnesses who might have information about police actions in the handling Mount's case.

If Heggen declines the request, Montagnino said the city would then appeal to Gov. Kathy Hochul, who could order an investigation by the state attorney general.

Mount was 21 when he was injured while being chased by police in the early morning hours of Aug. 31, 2013. City police said officers approached him on Caroline Street downtown and intended to question him about a domestic violence incident when he fled on foot into an alley where a construction project was under way. He was found unresponsive at the base of a 19-foot-tall scaffold and died nine months later without ever fully regaining consciousness.

The city's police chief at the time, Gregory Veitch, told reporters that his department was conducting an internal investigation into the incident, and he later claimed that the investigation had found no misconduct by city officers. But five years later, in a sworn deposition he gave in a civil suit brought by Mount's family, Veitch admitted there had been no investigation. Veitch retired in 2019.

Although city police have said Mount's injuries were caused by a fall from the scaffold, the *Times Union* reported in 2018 that a forensic pathologist hired by Mount's family described the injuries, mainly severe wounds to one side of his head, as "trauma sustained by a direct assault." The pathologist noted an absence of arm or hand injuries that would be expected in an accidental fall.

Montagnino, a retiree whose legal career included service as a prosecutor and criminal defense lawyer in the Bronx and Westchester County, told the weekly newspaper *Saratoga*

*Today* in December that he decided to run for his seat in large part because of "the Darryl Mount case and how it was treated – how nobody in authority did anything that you would have hoped."

In other news from around the region in December and January:

### Reports detail Williamstown police misconduct

A pair of investigations commissioned last year by town officials in Williamstown, Mass., largely confirmed a former town police sergeant's claims of racially and sexually "offensive comments and conduct" within the local police department.

But the reports, released Jan. 21 with redactions after the online news site iBerkshires.com submitted a public records request for them, also concluded that the officer who acted as a whistleblower in the case had in fact "initiated, participated in and tolerated" some of the misconduct.

The problems at the Williamstown Police Department broke into public view in August 2020 after Sgt. Thomas McGowan filed a federal lawsuit alleging he and others in the department were subjected for years to a hostile work environment that included racist behavior, demeaning remarks and unwanted sexual touching.

Both Police Chief Kyle Johnson and Town Manager Jason Hoch, who were named as defendants in the suit, resigned in the months that followed.

In court papers, and in an earlier complaint he filed with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, McGowan cited incidents dating back to 2007 in which he claimed Johnson openly harassed a black officer and engaged in unwanted sexual touching with both male and female officers. The sergeant claimed Hoch was made aware of

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the misconduct but did not investigate.

McGowan withdrew his lawsuit on the day Johnson resigned in December 2020. The sergeant, who had been on paid administrative leave, agreed to retire late last year.

Although the town has denied some of McGowan's allegations, the Select Board acknowledged early on that some of the incidents he described did occur. The board hired Boston lawyer Judy Levenson in February 2021 to investigate McGowan's claims in detail.

Levenson recommended a private investigator, Paul L'Italien, whom the town hired to look into certain claims about McGowan's conduct and background. Those claims were raised in a letter the town received from all of its other full-time police officers, who contended the sergeant's past personal behavior and legal problems made him unfit to continue serving in the department.

Both Levenson and L'Italien submitted reports to the town in August, though the documents were not publicly released until last month. The two reports together total

more than 70 pages and provide details of the evidence and interviews the investigators gathered on specific claims made by both McGowan and the other Williamstown officers.

In a summary section, Levenson concluded that both Johnson and McGowan "initiated, participated in and tolerated" racially and sexually offensive comments and conduct within the department. She said the factual record did not support McGowan's claims that Johnson or Hoch had retaliated against him.

L'Italien's report cited failures of management and inadequate policies at the department and concluded that Williamstown police had failed to live up to their responsibilities in handling cases involving McGowan's off-duty behavior in the late 1990s and early 2000s. For example, after McGowan was charged with driving while intoxicated in Pownal, Vt., in 2009, which resulted in his license being suspended for 30 days in Vermont, McGowan received what L'Italien described as the inappropriately lax discipline of a one-day suspension, after which

he was allowed to resume full duty. L'Italien's report also explored earlier incidents in which McGowan was charged in a domestic assault in North Adams, was taken into custody by state police after an altercation at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, and was found driving on the lawn at Williams College with "in the company of a minor female who possessed alcohol."

The *Berkshire Eagle* reported that David Russcol, a lawyer for McGowan, issued a statement that characterized the reports' focus on the sergeant's past as a kind of punishment for his effort to expose misconduct in the department.

"It is no secret that many in the department did not appreciate the focus on these issues as a result of Sgt. McGowan's whistleblowing activity, and that made Sgt. McGowan a target for character assassination," Russcol wrote, later adding, "The town's investigations were not fair or impartial."

- compiled by Fred Daley

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# EDITORIAL

## To save democracy, curb the gerrymander

It's a dispiriting time for those who dream of revitalizing New York's sclerotic democracy.

In November, voters rejected a pair of no-brainer ballot propositions that would have made it easier to take part in future elections – by allowing no-excuse absentee voting and by letting new voters register closer to Election Day.

The defeat of these proposals likely means New York will continue to lag well behind most other states in voter participation. (In contrast, Vermont, which allows voting by mail and same-day voter registration, usually ranks near the top.)

Over the past few months, New Yorkers also have borne witness to the spectacular failure of the state's new Independent Redistricting Commission. The commission's supposed purpose was to take the politics out of the once-a-decade task of redrawing congressional and legislative district maps; instead, it deadlocked amid a whirlwind of partisan bickering.

With the independent commission safely out of the way, the Legislature got busy in January doing things the old-fashioned way, with the help of a staff that has long experience in the dark art of gerrymandering.

What's different this year is that, for the first time in at least the past five decades, Democrats, by virtue of their lopsided majorities in both the Assembly and state Senate, are firmly in control of the map-making process – and are apparently willing to gerrymander to maximum advantage.

As this issue heads to press on Feb. 2, the Legislature has just voted to adopt a new map of congressional districts that likely would leave Republicans in control of just four of the state's 26 U.S. House seats, compared with eight out of 27 seats currently. (In typical Albany fashion, the new map became public only three days before the vote.)

State Republican leaders have vowed to challenge the map in court. But the party has used gerrymandering to similar effect in states such as Texas and Florida where the GOP controls the governorship and both legislative chambers.

In North Carolina, for example, Republican lawmakers put forth a new congressional map that would give the party firm control over 10 of the state's 14 U.S. House seats, even though the two major parties are often within a few percentage points of each other in statewide races.

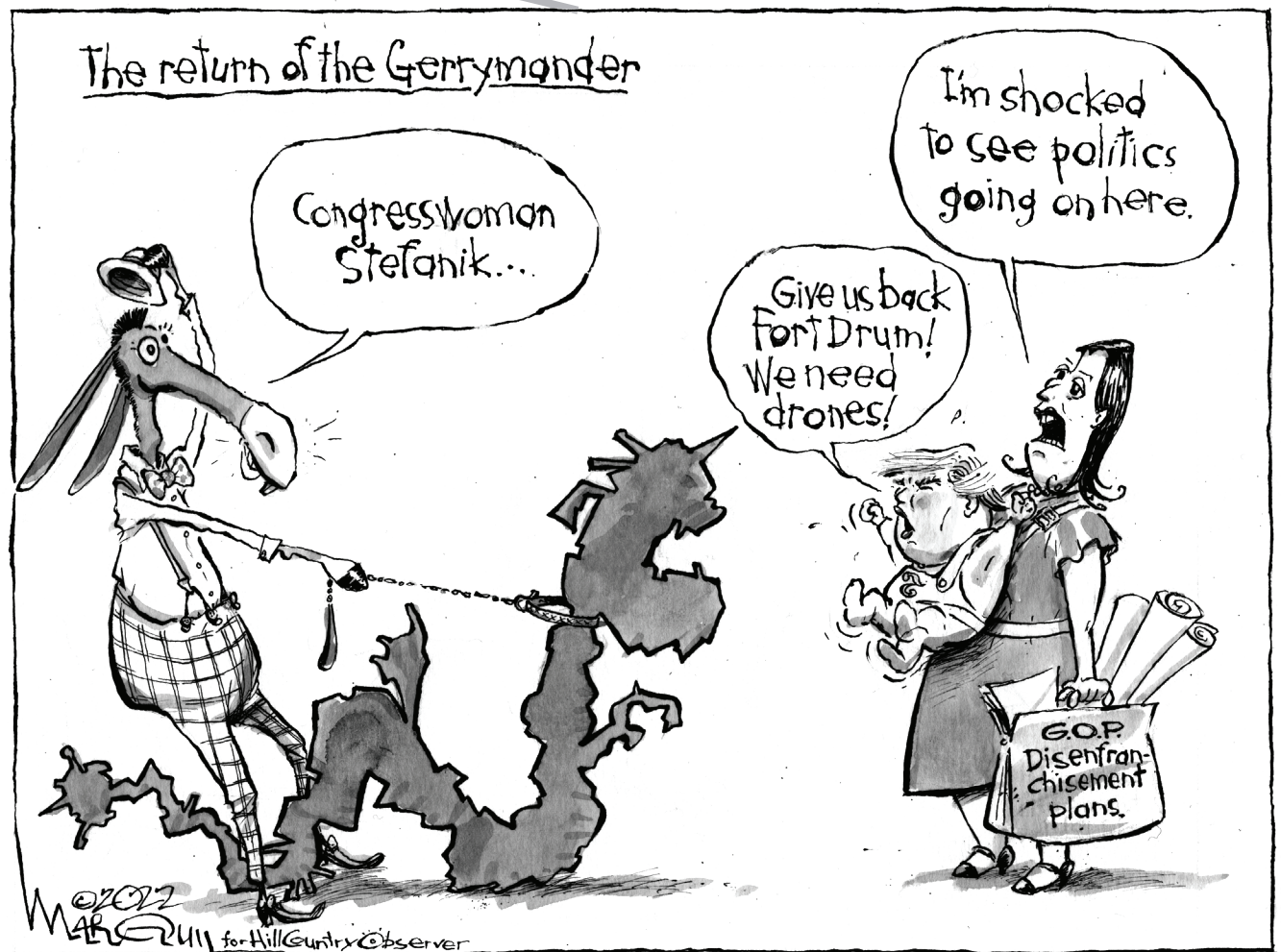
New York's new congressional map would likely give Democrats control of 85 percent of the state's U.S. House seats, although the party's voter enrollment advantage is only about 7-to-3.

In this new era of bare-knuckled politics, there are doubtless many Democratic voters in New York who are just fine with the party's aggressive use of gerrymandering if it counters Republican advantages in other states.

But the real travesty of gerrymandering is that it's so often used to protect incumbents by making it impossible for challengers to compete. Consider that of the 435 U.S. House seats, only a few dozen see competitive races in any given year.

In New York, only four or five of the state's 27 House districts have had races that were decided by fewer than 10 percentage points in recent years. Under the state's new map, the number of competitive House seats could be trimmed to two.

If we want to keep our democracy healthy, we need to remove barriers that discourage voters from participating. But what will be the point of participating if most of us no longer have meaningful choices on our ballots?



## Letters to the editor

### Offset loss of dairy contracts by selling milk to schools

To the editor:

I read with great sadness the story about Horizon Organic taking 28 Vermont organic dairy farms and 46 upstate New York ones off its buy list because of transportation costs ["Farmers reel as organic dairy giant dumps them," November issue].

In a functional society, local tax extracting entities (don't call them governments) would pool their money to construct a local processing plant for sale of the milk to public school lunch programs, which have millions of dollars in their budgets for making such purchases.

Odds of this happening? Near zero.

What we can count on are unlimited funds for Covid hysteria (which we could save by learning some basic pre-2020 medical science and practice) and climate hysteria (which we could stop by spending 30 minutes acquainting ourselves with a scientific discipline called paleoclimatology.)

Our farmers may have to close down, and our kids may have to drink pesticide- and bovine-growth-formula-laden milk, but by God they'll be living in a world where all the politically correct boxes are duly checked,

which is apparently all that matters these days.

Ken McCarthy  
Tivoli, N.Y.

### Wearing masks is good for health and for business

To the editor:

To wear a mask or not to wear a mask, that is the question. Yes, and I say thank you very much to all the people who care enough about me and others, as well as themselves, and wear a mask when indoors around others.

We all know the stores where masks are worn and the stores where not enough people have them on. When these businesses figure out that wearing masks is good for business, then we'll see it happen. In the meantime, we're going to stores where masks are worn.

Thank you to these stores who care about our health.

Thomas W. King  
Shaftsbury, Vt.

*continued on page 15*

### Your letters

The *Observer* welcomes letters from readers. To be considered for publication, letters to the editor must be signed and must include the writer's address and phone number for verification purposes. We reserve the

right to edit letters for length so as to allow presentation of a wider range of viewpoints. Send your letters by mail to Hill Country Observer, P.O. Box 158, Cambridge, NY 12816. Fax them to 518-677-8898. Or e-mail them to [fdaley@hill-countryobserver.com](mailto:fdaley@hill-countryobserver.com).

# A candidate tests his party's appetite for reform

Before Glens Falls native Charles Evans Hughes entered the race for New York governor in 1906, Republicans from Warren and Washington counties were lining up behind an early candidate from Saratoga County: state Sen. Edgar Truman Brackett.

"Senator Brackett would make an ideal candidate for governor," said Addison B. Colvin, a former state treasurer who was a newspaper publisher, businessman and GOP power broker in Glens Falls, according to a report in *The Argus* of Albany on Jan. 30, 1906.

Colvin said Brackett was a reformer cut from the same cloth as Gov. Joseph "Holy Joe" Wingate Folk of Missouri, Mayor John Weaver of Philadelphia and Robert "Fighting Bob" La Follette, who became a leader of the Progressive movement as Wisconsin's governor and U.S. senator.

"In a recent campaign speech by a prominent Democrat labor leader, he declared that Senator Brackett was the best real friend that the cause of labor ever had in the Legislature," Colvin said. "He has courageously fought the domination of boss rule."

Brackett's "boom" for governor had been ignited the previous evening at a dinner at the Glens Falls Club, an exclusive social club that was on the upper floors of the building at the intersection of Glen and Ridge streets, where Northeastern Fine Jewelers now occupies the ground floor.

Brackett was scheduled to respond to a toast, "Politics as a Pastime," which turned out

to be a campaign endorsement.

*The Argus* reported on Jan. 31: "Senator Edgar T. Brackett, who has been accused of having designs on the fat type which will decorate the head of the next Republican state ticket, sat back in his chair at the Glens Falls Club held in that village on Monday night and listened with what appeared to be satisfaction to the echo of the boom for governor, which was started by the toastmaster, Edward M. Angell," a Glens Falls area lawyer.

Brackett's prospective campaign gained momentum as the dinner continued, with "about 200 pair of lungs" touting Brackett for governor as the boom "left the foothills of the Adirondacks," headed for Albany, New York City and the western part of the state.

Brackett picked up more regional support when Isaac V. Baker, a prominent Washington County Republican, endorsed his candidacy, *The Argus* reported on March 13.

Brackett formally launched his campaign for governor in Saratoga Springs on the afternoon of March 19.

"He was commended to the state as the Moses to lead the Republican Party out of the wilderness of graft in which it finds itself," *The Argus* reported the next morning.

On the evening of March 19, Brackett, looking to bolster his reputation as a reformer and gain support from some 25,000 barbers across the state, pushed legislation through the Senate to abolish the state Board of Barber Examiners, a reportedly corrupt bureaucratic

agency.

The GOP "Moses" at this point discounted the potential candidacy of reformer "Charles the Baptist," as Hughes would later be called.

"In some quarters we note a sentiment that Mr. Charles E. Hughes, over and above his considerable legal fees which the state owes him for his patriotic services as counsel, has acquired a vested right to the governorship, such as it will be quite useless to contest," *The Argus* wrote on March 21. "Senator Brackett's constituents, full of spring water, enthusiasm and buoyancy, repudiate the Hughes proscriptive claim."

The comment about Hughes' legal fees referred to his service as the lead lawyer in 1905 and 1906 in the state's investigations of corruption in the utility and life insurance industries.

## Anti-corruption campaign

Brackett, a lawyer and businessman, was born in Wilton in 1853, and spent many of his childhood and teen years in Iowa. He returned to Saratoga County in 1872 to open a law practice in Saratoga Springs. He founded Adirondack Trust Co. in 1901 and served in the state Senate from 1896 to 1906.

"In his early manhood he shared an aptitude for politics, and his ability as a politician soon brought him to the front ranks of the Republican Party in Saratoga County and the state," the *Ballston Spa Journal* reported on Feb. 28, 1924, the day after Brackett's death.

Brackett had a reputation as a long-winded

*continued on next page*

## Maury Thompson

### News that's slow-brewed for a high-speed age

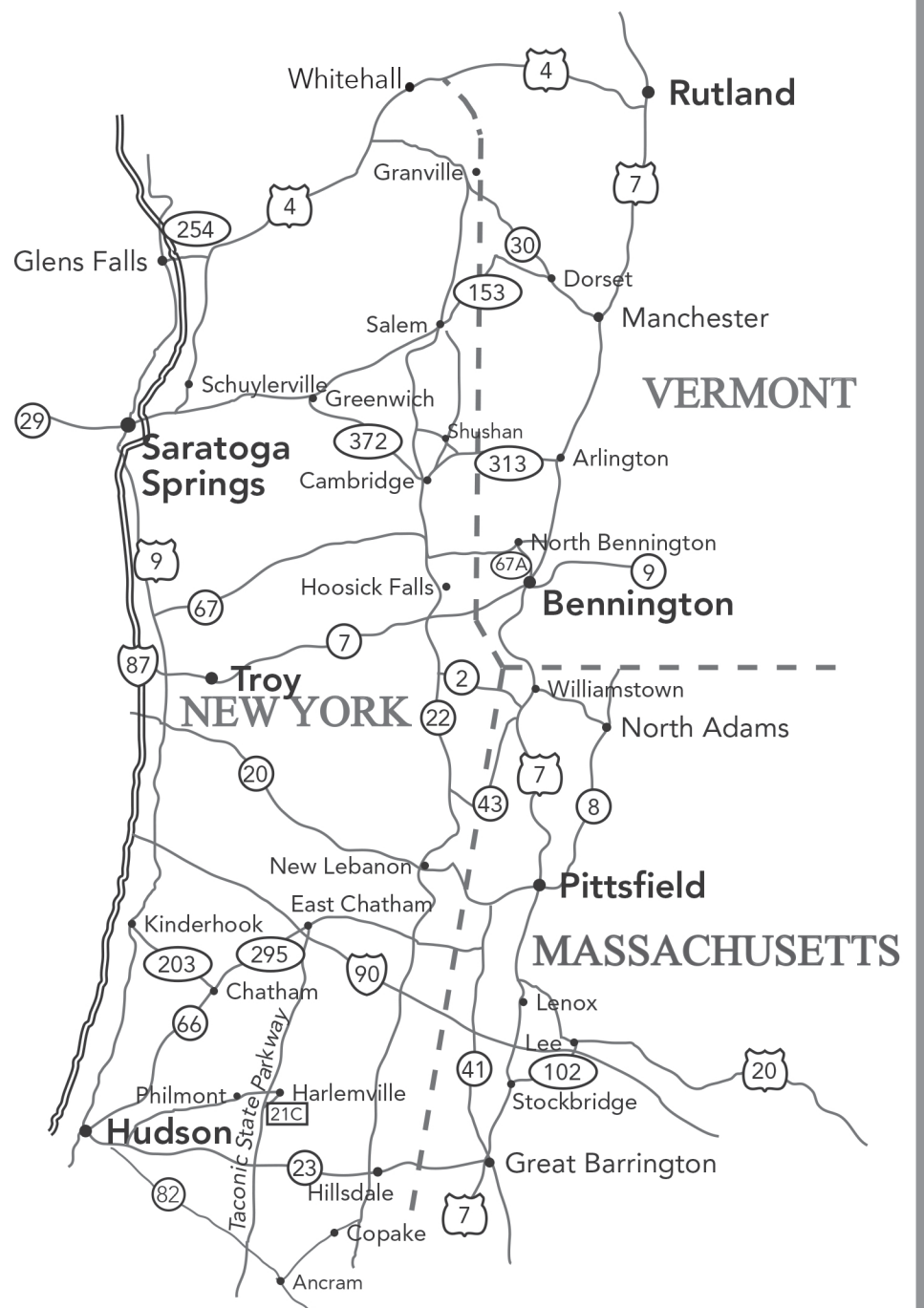
We're told we live in an information age, yet the traditional gathering of news is in decline.

Conventional news organizations are scaling back their efforts to ferret out the facts, even as they spread each factoid ever more widely via 24-hour broadcasts and the Internet. Is this the best way to keep you informed?

At the *Hill Country Observer*, we still take time to connect the dots, to put the news and issues of our region into a broader perspective. We only publish once a month, but we shine a light on stories and trends that aren't getting much attention elsewhere.

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**observer**



but compelling speaker with boundless energy.

“He was perhaps more largely quoted in the newspapers for years than any other public man,” *The Glens Falls Times* reported after his death.

His tendency to speak at length was noted in the 1906 campaign.

“It would be interesting to know how many hundred thousand words Senator Edward J. Brackett uttered yesterday,” *The Argus* wrote on March 8 of that year. “Not only did he deliver a long speech in the Senate on the bank inquiry, when most senators were sparring for wind and the majority leader was dozing at a hearing before the Judiciary Committee, the Saratogian was making an argument before the Court of Appeals.”

Brackett had just one problem: His reform efforts did not exclude the Republican Party.

Because of this, even before he entered the race for governor, some predicted that although he would have strong popular support, “it would be impossible for him to secure a sufficient number of delegates at the convention next fall to secure his nomination,” *The Argus* explained on Jan. 30.

In that era, party leaders controlled the nomination process. Nominees were chosen at a state party convention, rather than through a primary election.

Just weeks before his gubernatorial campaign began to take shape, Brackett had alienated Republican bosses when he introduced a resolution calling for U.S. Sen. Chauncey M. Depew to resign after the Hughes life insurance industry investigation revealed that Depew had held a business interest in the Equitable Life Insurance Co. for years.

Brackett claimed Depew was guilty of “legislative corruption.”

But a state Senate resolution urging Depew to resign failed by a vote of 34 to 1, with Brackett casting the only vote in favor. Fourteen Democrats abstained from voting, asserting that it was the Republican majority that had elected Depew and that it was up to them to decide his fate. (At the time, U.S. senators were elected by the legislative bodies of their respective states, rather than by a direct vote of the public.)

“Senator Brackett alone spoke for the resolution, and his speech, which lasted almost an hour and a half, was listened to by one of the largest audiences that has yet thronged the Senate chamber,” *The Argus* reported on Jan. 17.

“The action of the Saratogian was revolutionary,” *The Glens Falls Times* recalled in 1924 in a piece about Brackett. “It was customary in those days to treat very lightly the sins of those who held high office.”

Brackett still held aspirations for governor, but when the state Republican Party convention opened in September, President Theodore Roosevelt, working behind the scenes, prevented Brackett’s name from even being placed in nomination, *The Glens Falls Times* reported in 1924.

The party machine then turned its attention to removing Brackett from the state Senate.

At the Senate district Republican nominating convention on Oct. 3, delegates from Schenectady County, after being deadlocked on multiple ballots, convinced two Saratoga County delegates to switch to their side and prevent Brackett from being nominated for re-election.

“It was charged at the time [that] orders to defeat Senator Brackett came direct from the state organization,” *The Glens Falls Times* reported.

In 1908, Brackett, seemingly back in favor with the party machine, or at least forgiven, received the Republican nomination and returned to the state Senate for two more two-year terms before he chose not to seek re-election in 1912.

*Maury Thompson was a reporter for The Post-Star of Glens Falls for 21 years before retiring in 2017. He now is a freelance writer focusing on the history of politics, labor and media in the region.*

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Letters *continued from page 12*

**Beware the second coming of fascism's 'rough beast'**

To the editor:  
William Butler Yeats' famous poem "The Second Coming" describes Europe's atmosphere in 1919. He could feel something bad coming:  
*And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,  
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?*

The "rough beast" turned out to be fascism, and everybody paid the price — including the fascists.

Are we again at that moment of birth here in America? It certainly looks like it from where I sit. Almost a year after a failed attempt to overturn a presidential election, the chief thief is hard at work around the country — Arizona, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, elsewhere — ensuring that he cannot lose the next time. Election laws are being changed and nonpartisan election officials replaced with hyper-partisans.

The efforts take place in public, abetted by "respected" elected officials as well as by extremists who recognize that they can now leave the dark fringes and enter the main stage. U.S. Rep. Matt Gaetz and Steve Bannon openly discuss "shock troops" ready to take over the

government "when President Trump wins in 2024 — or before."

The populace remains largely disengaged from these labor pains, displaying no urgency to prevent this horrible birth, while the midwives work feverishly to ensure the birth of the fascist beast and set it on its slouching way.

In Yeats' words:  
*The best lack all conviction, while the worst  
Are full of passionate intensity.*

Everybody will eventually pay the price, including the fascists.

Lodiza LePore  
Bennington, Vt.

**Will American democracy fade out with a whimper?**

To the editor:

At this point it seems likely that Republicans will regain control of the House and Senate in the upcoming midterm elections. Not because of their policies: Just as in 2020, when fealty to Trump took the place of a party platform, they have no stated public policy goals.

What would Republican control mean for the country? Certainly they will shut down all congressional investigations of Trump and of

Jan. 6 and start their own committees to look into "voter fraud" and Hunter Biden. There is increasing talk that they would try to impeach the president.

I expect Democrats will refuse to comply with subpoenas and stonewall these investigations as the Republicans have done. There will be no more talk of spending packages for the poor or fighting climate change. Congress will grind to a halt, setting the stage for a tumultuous 2024 presidential campaign.

Republicans will continue pursuing their dream: Indefinite power achieved by never losing another election. They want what Vladimir Putin has in Russia, where he has ruled for 21 years, and what Xi Jinping has in China, where he is now "president for life." Putin and Xi answer to no legislative committees or media. Republicans may soon not have to either.

That's the reason for constantly demonizing and delegitimizing the media, while conducting an all-out campaign to convince people that any election that doesn't go their way is corrupt and fraudulent. They know if they can make some progress on every front — gerrymandering districts, frustrating absentee voters, putting fewer polling places in cities, etc. — enough voters will give up or be shut out to put Republicans back in and keep them in.

*continued on page 27*



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## Rabbits *continued from page 3*

bits are more skittish and have a larger fight-or-flight mechanism. Domestic rabbits don't have the survival skills for outdoors."

Wimet-Himelrick said the lifespan of a domestic rabbit is 8 to 10 years, which is comparable to the short end of the lifespan of some large dog breeds. And though rabbits do love interaction, they also need their own space for occasional quiet time.

"They like to have a little hut for themselves, whether it's a cardboard box or a pop-up nylon house," she said.

Domestic rabbits can live out their lives happily indoors, she added. They can be taken for walks outdoors, but for their safety and comfort, rabbits should be walked with an appropriate vest harness.

### Pet adoption, foster care

Part of Hop on Home's protocol involves a pre-adoption phase in which rabbits are placed in foster homes to help with litter training and socialization.

"We have foster homes all over the Capital Region," Wimet-Himelrick said.

Jennifer Burkey, who lives in Warren County, began volunteering for Hop on Home as a foster parent and ended up adopting.

"It was early on in the pandemic, and I was working from home, so I thought it would be a nice opportunity to work with animals," she recalled.

Burkey initially was hesitant to take in a rabbit, because she already had a dog and a cat.



Joan K. Lentini photo

A rabbit relaxes at a Bunny Yoga class.

But shelter officials told her that with proper supervision, such an arrangement can work — depending on the temperament of the dog and cat.

Over the past two years, Burkey has provided foster care to more than 20 rabbits, three of which she has kept as pets.

"Bunnies all have their individual personalities and can be so much fun," she said. "My bulldog loves them and dotes on them. They do make excellent pets, but it's important to do your research on what's involved and talk it over as a family."

If rabbits can't be placed in foster homes, they live at the sanctuary until they're adopted.

The sanctuary adheres to a strict screening process for adoption, which includes providing photos of the home where the rabbit will live, providing personal references who aren't relatives, and identifying a veterinarian who'll care for the pet.

"We also check public records to make sure the person has not been arrested for any crimes against animals," Wimet-Himelrick said. "While people can suggest which bunny they like, we are looking to make forever matches, so we take the person's lifestyle and the rabbit's compatibility qualities into account and make suggestions that best fit their needs."

### Bunny Yoga

Hop on Home is in the process of building a 3,000-square-foot permanent shelter near Gansevoort that will house up to 50 rabbits. The facility is scheduled for completion in June.

The organization Hop on Home also has a satellite location at Wilton Mall where rabbit lovers and prospective owners can mingle with the sanctuary's residents.

Though the rabbits love visitors, Wimet-Himelrick said the animals' health and safety is her group's No. 1 priority. So when the RHVD2 virus began making its way across the coun-

try late last year, Hop on Home had to curtail customer interaction until all of the rabbits were properly vaccinated.

"It's a very deadly disease to rabbits and can be transmitted through shoes, so we had to be careful," she explained.

Wimet-Himelrick said most rabbits that had been vaccinated at the shelter were able to mingle with visitors again by mid-January, although some newer arrivals were not expected to be visitor-ready until after Feb. 6.

To help spread awareness of the sanctuary and its mission, and to provide its resident rabbits with the interaction they crave, Hop on Home offers monthly Bunny Yoga classes, with youth and adult programs, at Wilton Mall.

"The rabbits love to hop around from mat to mat during the yoga, and students will hold them during the meditation portion," Wimet-Himelrick said. "Holding a rabbit is relaxing, and it helps the yoga students control their breathing better. ... Rabbits respond to us."

As Hop on Home heads into its second full year of operation, Wimet-Himelrick said she's happy with all that the organization has accomplished so far.

"We've helped 160 rabbits find homes last year," she said.

The nonprofit is entirely run by volunteers and has an all-female board. Its funding comes from monetary and in-kind donations as well as quarterly fund-raising events such as a 5K walk, an online auction and its Brooks BBQ and Pasta Sale. Hop on Home also participates in the General Electric employee match program and has obtained some grant money.

Wimet-Himelrick still retains her role leading the local 4-H Club's domestic rabbit club. Along with the rising success of Hop on Home, it means she's busier than ever.

"I'm proud to say we have taken on an issue that was not being addressed, and not only made a difference for our local community but the entire state," she said. "To be as large as we are and making a difference in the outcome of rabbits' lives, and humans as well, is amazing and humbling."

Wimet-Himelrick is quick to point out that it takes a village of rabbit-lovers for the sanctuary to succeed.

"While I am a founder and president of the organization, Hop on Home would not be where it is without all of our volunteers and the hours they put in to care for rabbits in need," she said. "The work is nonstop but rewarding."

Visit [www.hoponhome.org](http://www.hoponhome.org) for more information about adopting a rabbit or volunteering for Hop on Home, or to make a donation.

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# ARTS & CULTURE



Collection of NCCU Art Museum, North Carolina Central University

Robert Blackburn’s “Refugees” (also known as “People in a Boat”) was completed about 1938, when he was still a teenager, and nearly a decade before he opened the printmaking workshop that would reshape his own art and the works of many others. He discovered lithography in his early teens through programs at the Harlem Community Art Center.

## An artist who changed views of printmaking

Show at Hyde celebrates master printer Blackburn and those he inspired

By **KATE ABBOTT**  
Contributing writer

GLENS FALLS, N.Y.

On a winter night, a man in a wool sweater, knitted hat and glasses applies ink in a film of color.

He is adapting easily to its thickened texture in the cold. Artists and printmakers are standing around a limestone block, and sheets of paper are hung carefully on the walls and spread out to dry.

In an etching, a collage of boys’ faces overlies beams and bolts and a tunnel arch. The background is highlighted in red and yellow, rubbed like old paint on cement.

In a lithograph, two women are holding each other as though they’re dancing, lean and muscled in loose orange and saffron dresses. Light on their dark skin seems to show the strength in their arms. One looks out wearing sunglasses.

In 1947, on West 17th Street in New York, Robert Blackburn founded the oldest artist-operated and directed printmaking workshop

in the country, in the words of Cherokee artist Kay Walkingstick, who introduced a Blackburn exhibit at the Bronx River Arts Center and the Hillwood Art Museum in 1992.

Blackburn’s workshop was an open and experimental place, where he could grow his own art — and a community of artists in New York City and around the world.

It was an upstairs loft where young painters could find equipment they otherwise wouldn’t have access to. A nationally known artist like Romare Bearden might spend a Saturday there, working on an etching like “The Train.” South African filmmaker Dumile Feni, who had created a monumental 40-foot work at the United Nations and represented his country at the Sao Paulo Biennale, pulled prints for “Dedication, Ruth First, Lilian Ngoyi.”

In that congenial room, Blackburn developed lithography and printing as an art form, said Jonathan Canning, curator at The Hyde Collection in Glens Falls. Blackburn ran the workshop for nearly 60 years in his lifetime, and he made sure it is still running

nearly 20 years after his death.

Now the Hyde is welcoming his work and his story in “Robert Blackburn and Modern American Printmaking.” The exhibition, curated by Deborah Cullen-Morales and

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organized by the Smithsonian, opened Jan. 29 and runs through April 24.

"He's an artist in his own right," Canning said, "He's very influential as a teacher and organizer of a printmaking studio in which he works alongside and brings on artists."

Some of those artists are very well known, he added. And they might not have worked in the print medium without Blackburn's influence — and without the workshop he started when he was 27.

#### A revolution in print

Lithography begins with a smooth limestone block. Draw with grease crayons or a thick dark liquid, dampen the surface and then roll printer's ink over the stone. The ink will only stick to the greasy surface. Set damp paper on top and run it through a press, and the ink will print to the paper.

Blackburn first discovered lithography through programs at the Harlem Community Arts Center.

"Romare Bearden would drop by ... and Richard Wright ... Jake Lawrence, Sarah Morell, Norman Lewis used to come up and have rap sessions. As a matter of fact, it was a real center of the visual arts," he recalled in a 1972 conversation with artist Camille Billops and Jim Hatch that is preserved on the website of the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop.

In the 1930s, at the height of the Harlem Renaissance, the community arts center drew artists, writers and dancers working with the Works Progress Administration, the Depression-era infrastructure agency. Blackburn was 13 when he first came there, he said, and he was the youngest. He knew one or two young teens there, and he mixed with artists and writers like sculptor Selma Burke and Langston Hughes and Claude McKay.

"He was in high school when he was meeting these WPA artists," Canning said. "And I think one of the earliest works in the exhibition, he's about 19, and that's just extraordinary."

As the Depression and World War II shook the country, Blackburn took art classes after school and work and won a scholarship to study at the Arts Students League. His early prints show the influences of Mexican muralists like Diego Rivera, and of social realism, Canning said.

Blackburn imagined clear scenes, showing people involved in physical energy and hard moments in their lives. In "Refugees (aka People in a Boat)," created about 1938, people hold close together in a wooden dinghy low in the water. Blackburn's parents had met on a boat coming from Jamaica.

By the time he opened the print shop in 1947, he was moving into still lifes with exaggerated or shortened surfaces, broad strokes and vivid color.

"We see him move away from representation and the sort of social commentary images he depicts in some of his earlier prints — laborers, the unavailability of work, daily life," Canning explained. "Then he moves into abstraction, ... color and form and space."

But even when his work could seem to offer less commentary on daily lived experience, Blackburn was working with artists who were very much exploring contemporary themes, Canning said.

"In 1974, the workshop produces a series called 'Impressions of Our World,' and Blackburn contributes imagery there," he said.

Blackburn was holding those conversations as he was pushing the boundaries and technical abilities of the print process.

"We see him growing as an artist," Canning said. "He was a highly skilled lithographer. ... He starts trying different print techniques."

Blackburn's creativity powered him "through a long career and an incredible span there, from the 1930s and the Harlem Renaissance right through the Black Power Movement," he added.

Along with generations of lithographs, the show includes his experiments in watercolors and woodcuts, viscosity intaglios, monoprints and etchings.

In his 1950 print "Girl in Red," a woman stands with her back to a window, looking clearly into the room. She is comfortable and confident, at the center in her own space. He invokes her in abstract broad planes of color, and the sunlight warms her forehead and her shoulder.

#### Founding a workshop

It can be a challenge for an artist to find the time and space needed to sustain their work. And in the early 1940s, Canning said, Blackburn was working full time.

For a few years out of school, Blackburn

held odd jobs and had no access to a press. And in the 1940s, there were few grant programs to which Black artists could apply, explained Cullen, the show's curator, in a talk at El Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes in Havana organized by The Bronx Museum of the Arts. (Cullen also spoke virtually as the local show opened Jan. 28 at the Hyde.)

So Blackburn made his own way. By late October 1947, he got his own press and moved into the loft of West 17th Street with four other artists.

"That's the traditional artists area," Canning said. "That's where John Slade had his workshop and his studio in the '20s and '30s."

Cullen said Blackburn continued working to support his art.

"After work, he would work from 5 pm. to 2 a.m. on his own litho press," Cullen said. "Over time, the others moved out and he kept the space."

She shared a memory from Tom Laidman, one of the founding members of the workshop, who worked with Blackburn until his death in 2003.

"When I came there in 1950, the shop was on West 17th Street in a four-story red brick building," Laidman recalled. "There was no elevator, and everything in the place went up on our backs, including the presses, stones, lumber for building, coal for the stove in the middle of the shop."

"We froze in the winter, roasted in the heat in summer, and the heat didn't make the printing any easier. We went through all kinds of maneuvers to keep the images in the stones from filling in."

Blackburn welcomed in artists, friends, and friends of friends. The community grew until it became an informal cooperative and then, in 1971, a nonprofit.

"The structure of it changes over time," Canning said.

"The atmosphere was friendly and intimate," Laidman recalled. "There was an open arrangement where ... students and artists had unlimited access. There were three or four litho presses, and we'd all fight for press time. Bob was a dynamo of energy."

#### Powering a community

Cullen knew that energy herself. As an intern for Blackburn, she worked with him at his workshop, and later she served as curator

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of the print collection at the nonprofit he helped to form to keep the workshop alive past his own lifetime.

Not many collective spaces existed in the 1940s, Canning said. It was rare for artists to have a place like this, where they could come together. They could find the tools and inks they needed and work with printers who knew what the tools could do. They could learn and teach — and talk with each other.

“There must be so much sharing and discussion going on between artists,” Canning said. “It becomes such an influential place for ultimately an international crew of artists to work, to share ideas and to experiment in different print techniques and media.”

Blackburn taught other artists, and he worked with artists as teachers. The Indian artist Krishna Reddy, a master printmaker and voice for abstract art in India, led workshops in viscosity — etching a metal plate at different depths and then printing with inks of different thicknesses. In the 1970s, when he was creating the etching in this show, Reddy was a professor at New York University.

Here he shows four boys — or are they the same boy in different times and places? — sitting on what might be sand at the tideline, in a space that feels limitless and divided into invisible rooms, with a sky like water or the grain of wood.

Blackburn made two prints in this show the same way, and he learned from many of his friends. From 1974 to 1983, Romare Bearden taught monotyping at the workshop

and worked with Blackburn on his own monotypes. Together they made more than 100 prints, often on Saturdays.

Blackburn himself taught in New York and across the country. Alongside his workshop, he served for years as professor to the printmaking workshop at the Cooper Union and taught at Columbia University and the Pratt Institute, and he held lectureships across the country, from Rutgers to the University of California at Santa Cruz, according to the catalog to “Through a Master Printer: Robert Blackburn and the Printmaking Workshop,” an exhibit at the Columbia Museum in 1985.

“Blackburn welcomed many Caribbean and Latino artists,” Cullen said in her Havana talk, “and many Puerto Rican artists worked in his shop, including Nestor Otero, Juan Sánchez, Nitza Tufino.”

Cuban artists came there too, she said, including Eduardo Roca ‘Choca’ Salazar, who had earned international recognition and shown his work from Bulgaria to Galicia to the International Engraving Triennial Exhibition in Japan.

As Blackburn’s influence spread, over the years the artists who came through his workshop would form their own communities. The result was that Blackburn inspired new print shops in many places. In 1978, he traveled to Asilah in Morocco to found a print workshop there.

“It’s interesting to think how international modern art was,” Canning said, marveling.

“The idea of setting up an international print workshop in Morocco in the 1970s seems extraordinary.”

**Changing ideas**

From his workshop in the Chelsea neighborhood of Manhattan, Blackburn was influencing the way artists across the country were thinking about printmaking, Canning said. He became a leader and a catalyst in a national movement toward prints in the 1960s and ‘70s.

For Blackburn, printing was an art form in itself — tangible, messy, changeable and organic. He made lithography and many forms of printing possible, and in introducing them to well-known artists, he made them newly legitimate, Canning said.

Lithography had become a technique for illustrating books. Artists more often worked with woodcuts, etching and engraving. Blackburn showed them that they could use lithography for their own ends and take it back from commercial presses and newsrooms.

Many artists have turned to printmaking for freedom in the way the work is made and put out into the world, Canning said, just as Japanese woodblock prints (shown at the Hyde in 2018, and showing this winter at the Southern Vermont Arts Center and Williams College Museum of Art) gave artists a way to show their work and gave many people a way to see it.

Artists would come to Blackburn thinking

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- from Williamstown 1 hour, 15 minutes

See map on page 13

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of lithography as a way to make a perfect copy of an image, a drawing or a painting, Cullen said. He knew lithography as a creative process and a way to experiment. And he shared his knowledge widely.

From 1957 to 1963, Blackburn worked as master printer for another new print shop, Universal Limited Art Editions on Long Island, and there he met some of the most widely recognized artists of the time. In those five years, he printed ULAE's first 79 editions, including work for Helen Frankenthaler, Grace Hardigan, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg and Larry Rivers. Many of them had never worked in print until they met him.

Blackburn had been "thinking in print for more than 20 years," Cullen explained. His experience influenced these artists when they began working with the stone, and he taught them what was possible.

"He defied the idea of lithography as faithfully reproducing a rigidly identical print edition," she said.

And he turned perspective on its side: An easel is a vertical surface; a press, a stone, is horizontal.

In one powerful moment, Rauschenberg and Blackburn were working together when the stone cracked – and Rauschenberg put the fragmented prints together, and made them something new.

"I hope this show will be a real eye-opener for us," Canning said, "and it will open our understanding of 20th century art."

The show is introducing Blackburn and the Hyde to many artists new to them, he said. Looking ahead to the museum's summer exhibit on the Mexican artist Jose Guadalupe Posada, Canning said he thinks of the Mexican muralists like Diego Rivera who inspired Blackburn as a boy. As he sees the prints for this show for the first time, he imagines new connections they can make in the future.

"I think this show could seed a lot of future exhibitions," he said.



Peter Sumner Walton Bellamy photo, courtesy Smithsonian Institution and The Hyde Collection

The artist Robert Blackburn is seen in 1987, 40 years after he founded what became the oldest artist-run printmaking workshop in the nation. The workshop still operates nearly two decades after his death in 2003.





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# Arts & Culture

## AREA EXHIBITIONS

SOME VENUES ARE CLOSED AND/OR HAVE RESTRICTIONS. CHECK ONLINE BEFORE YOU GO

**ArtOmi.org** • 518-392-4747 • Sculpture & Architecture Park • outdoor, self-guided tour, at website  
• Mar. 19-Jun. 12: Raven Halfmoon at the Newmark Gallery

**ArtistBkFoundation.org** • 1327 MASS MoCA Way, Bldg. 13, 2nd Floor, North Adams, MA  
• through Mar. 31: Don Gummer: Wall Reliefs, Drawings, and Sculpture

**Arts Center Gallery at Saratoga Arts** • 518-584-4132 • www.saratoga-arts.org  
• through Feb. 5: High School All Stars  
• through Feb. 28: Art in Public Places: Shannon Hartman at Saratoga Springs Public Library; David Dew Bruner at Saratoga Springs Visitor's Center; Ally DeRusso at Clifton Park-Halfmoon Library; Bryn Reynolds at Saratoga Springs Train Station; Maria DeAngelo at Uncommon Grounds – Clifton Park; Matthew Wierzbowski at Uncommon Grounds – Albany

**BenningtonMuseum.org** • 75 Main St., Bennington, VT • 802-447-1571 • Closed through April • Extensive online collections available

**BerkshireMuseum.org** • 39 South St., Pittsfield, MA • 413-443-7171  
Permanent collections: "Objects and Their Stories," "Voyage to the Deep," "Animals of the World in Miniature," "The Berkshire Museum Aquarium," "Berkshire Backyard," "Feigenbaum Hall of Innovation," "The Rocks and Minerals Gallery"

**BerkshireBotanicalGarden.org** • 5 West Stockbridge Rd., Stockbridge, MA • 413-298-3926  
• through Feb. 25: Madeline Schwartzman: Face Nature

(Saratoga County Historical Society at)  
**BrooksideMuseum.org** • 6 Charlton St., Ballston Spa, NY • Sat. & Sun., 10 am - 4 pm • Free  
• Feb. 6: "Black Experiences in Saratoga County, 1750-1950"

**CarrieHaddadGallery.com** • 622 Warren St., Hudson, NY • 518-828-1915  
• Feb. 9-Apr. 3: "Figure and Form" feat. Mark Beard, Chad Kleitsch, Bruce Murphy, and James O'Shea

**ChaffeeArtCenter.org** • 16 S. Main St., Rutland, VT • 802-558-8845  
• through Feb. 25: Baby It's Cold Outside  
• Mar. 4-Apr. 8: Annual Student Exhibit "Art Connects Us"

**ChapmanMuseum.org** • 348 Glens St., Glens Falls, NY • 518-793-2826  
• Ongoing: "Hands-On History: Experiences of Hometown Life"  
• through Feb. 28: "S.R. Stoddard Mini Exhibit: Adirondack Peaks"  
• through Mar. 31: "From Nickelodeons to Drive-Ins"

**ClarkArt.edu** • 225 South St., Williamstown, MA • 413-458-2303 • Masks & vax proof REQ'D

• through Mar. 6: "Hue & Cry: French Printmaking and the Debate Over Colors"  
• Jan. 29-Jan. 2, 2023: Tom El-Saieh: Imaginary City

**ClavarackLibrary.org** • Intersection of NY Rtes. 9H and 23B • 518-851-7120  
• Jan. 29-Mar. 12: Meier2 and Friends (Nellie and Matthew Meier, Cynthia Tassinary, and Samuel Reilly) in pencil, watercolor and more

**CollarWorks.org** • 621 River St., Troy, NY • 518-285-0765  
• through Aug.: "Flat Files," curated by Kate Mothes (feat. small 2-D works by over 50 artists)  
• through Aug.: "Object Lounge," curated by Madison LaVallee & YiyiMendoza (feat. small-scale three-dimensional objects by 14 artists)

**Columbia County Historical Society** • Rural Properties (c. 1850 Ichabod Crane Schoolhouse & 1737 Luykas Van Alen House), 2589 NY-9H, Kinderhook, NY • Open dawn to dusk  
• Early Heritage: A Cultural Legacy in Columbia County, New York • Permanent outdoor exhibit  
• Dutch Farming Heritage Trail • 1.7 mi. footpath to Lindenwald

**Courthouse Gallery** • 1 Amherst St., Lake George, NY • 518-668-2616 • www.lakegeorgearts.org • Masks REQ'D  
• through Feb. 26: Kingsley Parker "Living in Harm's Way"  
• Mar. 16-Apr. 16: Fern Apfel

**DarcySimpsonArtworks.com** • 409 Warren St., Hudson, NY • ellen@darcysimpsonartworks.com  
• Feb. 12-Mar. 6: "Looking Up: Jeremy Bullis & Michael Larry Simpson"

**CrandallLibrary.org/Folklife Center** • 251 Glen St., Glens Falls, NY • 518-792-6508  
2d Floor Atrium Gallery:  
• through Jun. 30: "Life Through Bloomer's Lens Portraits from the Richard M. Bloomer Glass Plate Negative Collection"  
• through Jun. 30: "Shutter Squad Fall 2021 Photography Show"

**HancockShakerVillage.org** • 413-443-0188 •  
• through Oct. 30: James Turrell & Nicholas Mosse: "Lapsed Quaker Ware"

**HartCluett.org** • 57 2nd St., Troy, NY • 518-272-7232  
• Permanent Collection: "By Water & By Land;" "South End Tavern;" "Uncle Sam;" & "Stoves of Troy"

**HudsonHall.org** • 327 Warren Street, Hudson, NY • 518-822-1438  
• Feb. 10-Apr. 10: "Look Again" feat. Kirby Crone, Scott Keightley, Marisol Martinez, Catalina Viejo Lopez de Roda, Louise Smith (Hudson Jazz Festival 2022)

**HydeCollection.org** • Adv. REG., Masks & Distance REQ'D • 518-792-1761  
• through Apr. 24: Robert Blackburn & Modern American Printmaking

• through May 1: Georgia O'Keeffe: Pattern of Leaves

**Image Photos Gallery** • 413-298-5500  
• photography of Clemens Kalischer

**MASSMoCA.org** • North Adams, MA  
• through May 2022: Wendy Red Star's "Apsalooke: Children of the Large-Beaked Bird"  
• through May 2023: Yto Barrada: "Ways to Baffle the Wind"

**MuseumOfTheCreativeProcess.com** • 257 Wilburton Dr., Manchester Village, VT • 802-368-1278 • Guided tours Sat. & Sun. • Five permanent exhibits introducing the creative process as a scientific conflict-resolution mechanism

**Norman Rockwell Museum** • 9 Glendale Rd, Stockbridge, MA • nrm.org • 413-298-4100 • Masks REQ'D indoors  
• through Mar. 6: Jan Brett: Stories Near and Far  
• Mar. 12-Jun. 5: Permanent Collection Highlight Exhibition: Bascome (master printmaker, illustrator, painter & collagist)

**NorthCountryArts.org**  
--The Shirt Factory • Suite 120, 71 Lawrence St., Glens Falls, NY  
• through Feb. 26: "The Sweetheart Deal"  
--The 2nd Floor Gallery • City Hall, 42 Ridge St., Glens Falls, NY  
• Feb. 21-Apr. 1: Glens Falls Senior Art Students

**PamelaSalisburyGallery.com** • 362 1/2 Warren St., Hudson, NY  
• Jan. 29-Feb. 27: Hans Hofmann – Ink Drawings from the 1930s  
• Jan. 29-Feb. 27: Ying Li

**SchantzGalleries.com** • @schantz\_galleries • 413-298-3044 • Online or by appointment only

**The Sembrich** • 4800 Lake Shore Dr., Bolton Landing, NY • 518-605-8965 • thesembrich.org  
• Online: "The Hawaiian Nightingale: Studies with Mme. Sembrich, Exploring the Life and Career of Hawaiian Soprano Ululani Robertson"  
• On-going: "On the Wings of Song" • The Thatcher Photos (Online)

**ShakerMuseum.us | Mount Lebanon** • 17 Main St., Chatham, NY • Past exhibits online  
• "Fringe Selects: An Exhibition of Shaker Objects Curated by Katie Stout"

**Southern Vermont Arts Center** • 930 SVAC Dr., Manchester • 802-362-1405 • www.svac.org  
• through Feb. 27: "Hiroshige and the Changing Japanese Landscape" (Japanese woodblock)  
• through Mar. 27: "The World Between the Block and the Paper" (A Mokuhanga Exhibition)

**StoneValleyArts.org Center** • 145 E. Main St., Poultney, VT  
• Virtual tour of "Painters Choose Painters" at https://vimeo.com/480725058  
• Online Artist Member Gallery and Gift Shop

# Arts & Culture

## THE CALENDAR FEBRUARY 2022

Sun

Mon

Tues

Wed

### 'Fun Home' musical opens March 25 in Ghent

**GHENT, N.Y.**  
The Ghent Playhouse will present the Capital District Community Theatre premiere of musical "Fun Home" on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from March 25 through April 10.

The winner of five 2015 Tony Awards, including Best Musical, "Fun Home" is based on Alison Bechdel's best-selling graphic memoir.


This groundbreaking production introduces us to Alison at three different ages, revealing memories of her uniquely dysfunctional family who connect with her in surprising new ways. Moving between past and present, she relives her childhood playing at the family's funeral home, her growing understanding of her own sexuality,

and the looming, unanswerable questions about her father's hidden desires.

Real-life mother and daughter Helen Annelly and Rosalyn Annelly play Adult Alison and Young Alison; Noah Fey Hamm is college-age Alison. Amy Fiebke plays Alison's mother; Jeffrey Jene is Alison's father.

Friday and Saturday performances begin at 7:30 p.m., while Sunday matinees begin at 2:00 p.m. Tickets are available online only at [GhentPlayhouse.org](http://GhentPlayhouse.org) and cost \$23 for members, \$28 for non-members, and \$12 for students, with no additional processing fees. The theater is at 6 Town Hall Place in Ghent. For more information, visit [GhentPlayhouse.org](http://GhentPlayhouse.org) or call 518-392-6264.


6

 **CaffeLena.org** • Tom Rush: Early & Late Shows • 4-5:30 pm & 7-8:30 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

 See Theater Listings

• Ghent

 **Imagescinema.org** • See Feb. 4

 **CaffeLena.org** • Playwright's Jam • 1-3 pm • Vax proof REQ'D


misc.

**ClarkArt.edu** • First Sundays Free


**Kaatsbaan.org** • Sunday Morning Writing Session (All levels) w/Molly Prentiss • 10 am-12 pm • Vax proof & masks req'd • \$35

**Moreau Lake State Park** • Family Hike • 2 pm • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174

7

 **CaffeLena.org** • Open mic Night • 7-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

 **Imagescinema.org** • See Feb. 4


 **Northshire.com** from home • Julia May Jonas ("Vladimir") • 6 pm

misc.


**TamarackHollow.com** • W. African & Caribbean Drum & Song Class • 5:30 beg./6:30 adv. • Masks & reg. REQ'D aimee@gaiaroots.com • Zoom if inclement weather

13

 **Imagescinema.org** • See Feb. 4

 See Theater Listings

• Ghent

 **SaratogaJewishCulturalFestival.org** • "One Night in Miami" virtual film discussion • 7 pm • Pre-watch on Prime or Apple • [SaratogaSinai.org](http://SaratogaSinai.org) • Pre-reg. REQ'D: [sjca.sjcf@gmail.com](mailto:sjca.sjcf@gmail.com)


misc.


**Kaatsbaan.org** • Sunday Morning Writing Session (All levels) w/Molly Prentiss •

10 am-12 pm • Vax proof & masks req'd • \$35

**Moreau Lake State Park** • Family Hike • 2 pm • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174

14

 **CaffeLena.org** • Open Mic Night • 7-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

 **Imagescinema.org** • See Feb. 4


**Mahaiwe.org** • "Roman Holiday" (1953) • 7 pm


misc.


**Moreau Lake State Park** • Growing Greens Indoors • 10 am • \$10 • Masks & reg. req'd 518-917-2174

**TamarackHollow.com** • W. African & Caribbean Drum & Song Class • 5:30 beg./6:30 adv. • Masks & reg. REQ'D aimee@gaiaroots.com • Zoom if inclement weather

1

 **CaffeLena.org** • Storytelling Open Mic • 7-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

 **ImagesCinema.org** • "Flee" (ends Feb. 3) • 5 & 7:30 pm


 **CaffeLena.org** • Art of Community: Lois Celeste • 4-5 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

misc.

**Cornell.edu Online**  
--Who's That Bird? • 6-7 pm • Reg. req'd at <https://bit.ly/3nk0liw>  
--Be Prepared for Shearing Season • 7-8:30 pm • Reg. req'd at <https://tinyurl.com> or 607-391-2664

2

 **Imagescinema.org** • See Feb. 1

 **BerkshireBotanical.org** Online • Iconic Birds of Massachusetts & their Habitat • 6:30-7:30 pm • Reg. REQ'D


**CaffeLena.org** • Poetry Open Mic feat. Lale Davidson • 7-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D


misc.


**Cornell.edu** on Zoom • Eating Healthy on a Budget • 11 am-12 pm or 6-7 pm •

**Moreau Lake State Park** • New Moon Viewing • 6-8 pm • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174

8

 **CaffeLena.org** • Jazz: Chuck Lamb Trio feat. Dave Stryker • 7-9 pm

 **Imagescinema.org** • See Feb. 4


 **SandLakeHistory.org** • "Abel Brown: Pastor, Abolitionist, Radical" by SLHS Trustee Peter Finn • 7 pm • 518-527-9926

**Northshire.com** from home • Tara Westover ("Educated") • 8 pm

misc.

**Moreau Lake State Park** • Lake Bonita Hike • 1-3 pm • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174

9

 **Imagescinema.org** • See Feb. 4

 **Northshire.com** from home • Kekla Magoon ("Revolution in Our Time") • 6 pm

**BerkshireBotanical.org** Online • Ecology Lecture Series: Building Healthy Soil in Harmony • 6:30-7:30 pm • Reg. REQ'D

**WMHT.org** • AHA! A House For Arts, feat. Cambridge, NY, artist Adriano Manocchia • 7:30 pm Live on WMHT and Facebook • Stream thereafter on website


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**Moreau Lake State Park** • Family Hike • 10 am • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174

15

 **CaffeLena.org** • Rochmon Record Club: Grateful Dead "American Duty" • 7-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

 **Imagescinema.org** • See Feb. 4

 **Northshire.com** from home • Rob Osler ("Devil's Chew Toy") • 6 pm


misc.

**Moreau Lake State Park** • Beaver Lodge Walk & Talk • 10 am • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174

16

 **CaffeLena.org** • Bluegrass Jam w/Red Spruce • 7-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

 **Imagescinema.org** • See Feb. 4

 **BerkshireBotanical.org** Online • Pre-reg. REQ'D --Dahlia for Days • 4-5:30 pm --Ecology Lecture Series: Invasive and Non-Native Plants • 6:30-7:30 pm

**HubbardHall.org** • Listening to the Field: Artists & Art Leaders Discuss Artists and Organizations • 7 pm • Pre-reg. REQ'D

misc.

**Cornell.edu** • Tips for Losing Weight & Keeping it Off! • 11 am-12 pm OR 6-7 pm • Reg. req'd. <https://cornell.zoom.us>

**Moreau Lake State Park** • Full Moon Hike (3 mi., flat) • 5:30-7:30 pm • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174

# Arts & Culture


## THE CALENDAR FEBRUARY 2022

Thurs


Fri

Sat

3

 **CaffeLena.org** • Mamma's Marmalade • 7-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D


 **Imagescinema.org** • See Feb. 1

 **Olana.org** • "History 'Gone Viral': Negotiating the Past through the Present" • 6 pm • Reg. for Zoom link

**Northshire.com** from home  
• David Chernikow ("Life, Part Two") • 6 pm  
• Lindsey Vonn ("Rise") • 7:30 pm

**ScovilleLibrary.org** • Certified Konmari Consultant Shannon Huneycutt • 7-8 pm • Zoom reg. req'd

10

 **CaffeLena.org** • Della Mae • 7:30-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

 **Imagescinema.org** • See Feb. 4


 **FriendsofChamberMusic.org** • Performance in Context • Zoom • 7 pm

misc.

**Moreau Lake State Park** • Ridge Run Hike (4-5 mi.) • 10 am-1:30 pm • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174

**Cornell.edu** Online • Cooking for the Love of the Planet • 6:30-7:30 pm • Reg. req'd <https://cornell.zoom.us> • Questions to kem18@cornell.edu or 518-765-3552

17

 **DeweyHall.org** • Berkshire Strings Jam Session • 3-5 pm • Vax proof, ID & masks REQ'D


**CaffeLena.org** • Jacob Jolliff Band • 7-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

**UniversalPreservationHall.org** • The King's Singers • 7:30 pm • Masks & vax proof REQ'D • Saratoga Springs, NY

 **Imagescinema.org** • See Feb. 4


 **Northshire.com** from home • Susannah B. Mintz ("Love Affair in the Garde of Milton") • 6 pm

4

 **CaffeLena.org** • Kat Wright Trio • 8-10 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

 See Theater Listings

• Ghent

 **Imagescinema.org** • "Licorice Pizza" (ends Feb. 17) • 4:15 & 7:30 pm

11

 **MusicFromSalem.org** • Heart of Winter Party • 6-9 pm • 103 Main St., Greenwich, NY • RSVP: [info@musicfromsalem.org](mailto:info@musicfromsalem.org) • 518-232-2347


**TheFoundryWS.org** • Black Lake w/Li and the Little Idea • 7-10 pm • Masks & vax proof req'd

**HudsonHall.org** • Hudson Jazz Festival: The Baylor Project • 7 pm • Digital-only now available • Free, res. req'd

**BerkshireTheatreGroup.org** • Misty Blues "One Louder" CD Release Concert, w/ The Diego Mongue Band • 7:30 pm • Masks & vax proof REQ'D • Colonial Theatre, Pittsfield, MA

**CaffeLena.org** • Mike Block Trio • 8-10 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

18


 **FoxHollowCafe@gmail.com** • "Horseycow" • 6:30 pm • 71 Min St., Peterborough, NY

**HudsonHall.org** • Hudson Jazz Festival: Warren Wolf Group • 7 pm • Digital-only now available • Free, res. req'd

misc.

**MassAudubon.org**/pleasantvalleyprograms • Starlight Owl & Wildlife Prowl • 6:30-8 pm • Canoe Meadows Wildlife Sanctuary, Pittsfield, MA • Pre-reg. REQ'D

5

 **DeweyHall.org** • Berkshire Strings Jam Session • 3-5 pm • Vax proof, ID & masks REQ'D

**UniversalPreservationHall.org** • Bakithi Kumalo & the Graceland Experience • 7:30 pm • Masks & vax proof REQ'D • Saratoga Springs, NY

**BerkshireTheatreGroup.org** • The Machine Performs Pink Floyd • 8 pm • Masks & vax proof REQ'D • Colonial Theatre, Pittsfield, MA

**CaffeLena.org** • Mary Fahl • 8 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

 See Theater Listings  
• Ghent

12

 **FriendsofChamberMusic.org** • Mayumi Seiler, violin, & Colin Carr, cello • Pre-concert Q&A, 6:30 pm • Live Concert, 7:30 pm • Page Hall, 135 Western Ave., Albany, NY


**TheFoundryWS.org** • Gothic Valentines Cabaret (The Fremonts & the Dust Bowl Faeries) • 7-9 pm • Masks & vax proof req'd

**HudsonHall.org** • Hudson Jazz Festival: Alexis Morrast • 7 pm • Digital-only now available • Free, res. req'd

**BerkshireTheatreGroup.org** • The Guthrie Brothers - Scarborough Fair • 7:30 pm • Masks & vax proof REQ'D • Colonial Theatre, Pittsfield, MA


**UniversalPreservationHall.org** • Howard Jones Acoustic Trio • 7:30 pm •

19

 **DeweyHall.org** • Vax proof, ID & masks REQ'D • Young at Heart: Hey Kids! Unlock Your Rock! • 11 am • Berkshire Strings Jam Session • 3 pm

**HudsonHall.org** • Hudson Jazz Festival: Jazzmeia Horn • 7 pm • Digital-only now available • Free, res. req'd

**CaffeLena.org** • Tinsley Ellis Album Release • 8-10 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

 **Mahaiwe.org** • "Remember the Titans" (2000) • 7 pm

 **ImagesCinema.org** • See Dec. 10

**ParamountVT.org** • Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival • "Storm Lake" (1 pm) and "The Ants and The Grasshopper" (4 pm) • Vax proof or neg. test & masks REQ'D


**Imagescinema.org** • See Feb. 4

 **GildedAge.org** • Cornelia Brooke Gilder: "Forgotten Trailblazing Woman of Lenox's Gilded Age" • 3:30 pm • Live (Reg., vax, ID & masks REQ'D) or Zoom • 413-637-3206

**Northshire.com** from home • Chris Bohjalian ("The Hour of the Witch") • 6 pm


Masks & vax proof REQ'D • Saratoga Springs, NY


**CaffeLena.org** • Nora Brown • 8-10 pm • Vax proof REQ'D


 See Theater Listings  
• Ghent

**Mahaiwe.org** • Met Opera in HD: Fire Shut Up in My Bones • 1 pm

**FortSalem.com** • Cabaret: "Getting" Over That Rainbow" w/Janelle Farias Sando • 7:30 pm •

 **Imagescinema.org** • See Feb. 4

 **GildedAge.org** • Ghost Tour at Ventfort Hall • 7 pm • Vax proof, ID, masks & reg.

 **BerkshireBotanical.org** Online • Winter Lecture: Eye of the Beholder: Is it Messy or an Acquired Taste? • 10-11 am • Reg. REQ'D

**CCHSNY.org** • "Life Along the Hudson," with Pieter Estersohn • 4:30 pm • Zoom link after payment

**TheFoundryWS.org** • Wisdom Lodge Fundraiser Comedy Night • 7-9 pm • Masks & vax proof req'd

misc.

**Audubon West Rutland Marsh Monitoring Walk** (3.7 mi loop) • 8 am • Info: [birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org](mailto:birding@rutlandcountyaudubon.org)

misc.

**Moreau Lake State Park** • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174  
--Eagle Watch • 9:30-11:30 am  
--Spring Overlook Hike • 1-3 pm

**MassAudubon.org**/pleasantvalleyprograms • Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary, Lenox, MA • Pre-reg. REQ'D • Tracking Workshop: Weasels & Rodents • 10 am-12 pm  
• Family Winter Hike to Lenox Mtn. • 1-4 pm

**BerkshireMusicSchool.org** • Masterclass w/ guitarist Jennifer Batten • Online via Zoom • 3 pm

REQ'D 413-637-3206

misc.

**DeweyHall.org** • Winter Market • 10 am-1 pm

**Moreau Lake State Park** • High Rock Trail (6-7 mi) • 9:30 am-2:30 pm • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174

**HudsonGalleryCrawl.com** • 2nd Saturday • 5-8 pm • One square mile w/Art & Culture everywhere • Hudson, NY

**MassAudubon.org**/pleasantvalleyprograms • Starlight Owl & Wildlife Prowl • 6:30-8 pm • Lime Kiln Farm Wildlife Sanctuary, Sheffield, MA • Pre-reg. REQ'D

**Cornell.edu** • Holistic Wellness: Treats for Furry Friends • 10 am on Zoom • Reg. at [cornell.zoom.us](https://cornell.zoom.us) for link

# Arts & Culture

## THE CALENDAR FEB - MARCH 2022

Sun

Mon

Tues

Wed

20



**HudsonHall.org** • Hudson Jazz Festival: Jimmy Greene Quartet • 3 pm • Digital-only now available • Free, res. req'd

**CaffeLena.org** • Carolyn Shapiro Album Release • 7-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

misc.

**BenningtonMuseum.org** • "Capture of Remem-

ber Baker" • 2 pm

**Moreau Lake State Park** • Family Hike • 2 pm • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174

**TamarackHollow.com** • Boreal Spruce-Fir Forest Ecology, Trees and Tracking Snowshoe (1-2 mi., hike if no snow) • 10 am-12 pm • Windsor, MA

21



**CaffeLena.org** • Open Mic Night • 7-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D



**Imagescinema.org** • Anime & Film Arts Series: "Belle" • 7:30 pm

misc.

**Moreau Lake State Park** • Intro to Biomimetics • 10 am • All welcome, but esp Grds 3-7 • Masks & reg. req'd 518-917-2174

**TamarackHollow.com** • W. African & Caribbean Drum & Song Class • 5:30 beg./6:30 adv. • Masks & reg. REQ'D aimee@gaiaroots.com • Zoom if inclement weather

22



See Theater Listings

• **Ghent Playhouse**



**Northshire.com** from home • Jennifer Fawcett ("Beneath the Stairs") • 6 pm

**CaffeLena.org** • Storytelling Night: Jesse Bowman Bruchac, Barbara Chepaitis, Mary Murphy • 7-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

misc.

**BerkshireMuseum.org** • Records & Burpee Zoo Show • 1-2 pm • Free

23



**CaffeLena.org** • Acoustic Blues Open Mic & Jam • 7-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D



See Theater Listings

• **Ghent Playhouse**



**HubbardHall.org** • Listening to the Field: Artists & Art Leaders Discuss Adaptations and Evolutions • 7 pm • Pre-reg. REQ'D

misc.

**Moreau Lake State Park** • Snowshoe Obstacle Course • 1 pm • \$1/child • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174

**Cornell.edu** Online • Winter One-Pot Comfort Foods • 6-7 pm • Reg. req'd <https://cornell.zoom.us> • Questions kem18@cornell.edu or 518-765-3552

27



**CaffeLena.org** • 51 Reasons to Love Joni Mitchell's Blue Fundraiser for Caffe Lena • 7-9 pm

misc.

**Kaatsbaan.org** • Sunday Morning Writing Session (All levels) w/Molly Prentiss • 10 am-12 pm • Vax proof & masks req'd • \$35

**Moreau Lake State Park** • Family Hike • 2 pm • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174

28



**CaffeLena.org** • Open Mic Night • 7-10 pm • Vax proof REQ'D



**Imagescinema.org** • French Film Festival: "Nous / We" • 7:30 pm

misc.

**TamarackHollow.com** • W. African & Caribbean Drum & Song Class • 5:30 beg./6:30 adv. • Masks & reg. REQ'D aimee@gaiaroots.com • Zoom if inclement weather

1 March

2

6



**TheFoundryWS.com** • Yevgeny Kutik w/ Collaborative Pianist Max Levinson • 3 pm • Masks & vax proof req'd

**SaratogaChamberPlayers** • Jill Levy, violin, & Margaret Kampmeier, piano • 3-5 pm • Adv. tix rec'd • Masks & vax proof or neg. test REQ'D. • United Methodist Church, 175 Fifth Ave., Saratoga Springs



**Mahaiwe.org** • Bolshoi Ballet in HD: "Swan Lake" •

1 pm



See Theater Listings

• **Skidmore**



**CaffeLena.org** • Playwright's Jam • 1-3pm • Vax proof REQ'D

misc.

**ClarkArt.edu** • First Sundays Free

7



**Imagescinema.org** • French Film Festival: "Une Histoire a Soi / A Story of One's Own" • 7:30 pm

8



See Theater Listings

• **Skidmore**



**Northshire.com** from home • Willard Sterne ("The Founders' Fortunes") • 6 pm

**SandLakeHistory.org** • "The Kittle Family Murders," by Jill Whitbeck Knapp • 7 pm • 518-527-9926

9



See Theater Listings

• **Skidmore**

13



See Theater Listings

• **Fort Salem**

14



**Imagescinema.org** • French Film Festival: "Kuesipan" • 7:30 pm

15

16

misc.

**BerkshireBotanical.org** Online • Updates & Outlook: Insect Pests of Trees & Shrubs • 3-4 pm

# Arts & Culture


## THE CALENDAR FEB-MARCH 2022

Thurs

Fri


Sat

24

 **CaffeLena.org** • Ria Curley, Chuck Lamb & the Curley Lamb Nu-Soul-Jazz Trio • 7-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

 See Theater Listings

• Ghent Playhouse


 **Northshire.com** from home • Benjamin Bogin ("How the Swans Came to the Lake") • 6 pm

misc.


**BerkshireMuseum.org** • 10x10 Real Art Party • 6-8 pm • Free • Raffle fundraiser tix in adv.

**Moreau Lake State Park** • Luminary Walk (3 mi., flat) • 6-8 pm • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174


3 Thu

 **CaffeLena.org** • Taylor Ashton • 7-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

10

 **CaffeLena.org** • Nordlys Global Voices: Talisk • 7-9 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

17

 **Mahaiwe.org** • Scott Eyerly's Virtual met Opera Lecture: Strauss's Ariadne auf Naxos

25

 **DeweyHall.org** • Taproot Sessions: Sol y Canto • 7 pm


**TheFoundryWS.com** • Muddy Ruckus (Ryan Flaherty & Erika Stahl) • 7 pm • Masks & vax proof req'd

**CaffeLena.org** • David Wax Museum • 8-10 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

misc.


**Moreau Lake State Park** • Fire Starting • Kids 10+ • 10 am • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174

4 Fri

 **UniversalPreservationHall.org** • The Seven Wonders – Fleetwood Mac Tribute • 7 pm • Masks & vax proof REQ'D • Saratoga Springs, NY

 See Theater Listings

• Skidmore

 **Mahaiwe.org** • "The Gods Must Be Crazy" (1980) • 7 pm

11


 See Theater Listings

• Ft. Salem

misc.

**Mahaiwe.org** • Comedian Tom Papa • 8 pm •


18

 **CaffeLena.org** • Mauthausen Cycle • 8-10 pm • Vax proof REQ'D


**UniversalPreservationHall.org** • Spa City Guitar Festival • TBA • Masks & vax proof REQ'D

 See Theater Listings

• Fort Salem

 **GildedAge.org** • Ghost Tour at Ventfort Hall • 7 pm • Vax proof, ID, masks & reg. REQ'D 413-637-3206

26

 **CEWM.org** • Folk and Baroque • 6-7:45 pm • Saint James Place, 352 Main St., Great Barrington, MA

**TheFoundryWS.com** • The Big Takeover • 7-9 pm • Masks & vax proof req'd

**CaffeLena.org** • Nellie McKay • 8-10 pm • Vax proof REQ'D

 See Theater Listings

• Ghent Playhouse



**GildedAge.org** • Ghost Tour at Ventfort Hall • 7 pm • Vax proof, ID, masks & reg. REQ'D 413-637-3206

misc.

**GMDKillington.org** • Slate Valley Trails, Poultney (Snowshoe or hike, 5 mi. loop, mod., steep) • Vax REQ'D • Call hike leader for details: 413-687-1109

**Moreau Lake State Park** • Eagle Watch • 9:30-11:30 am • Reg. req'd 518-917-2174


**BerkshireBoanical.org** Online • Pre-req. and Vax proof REQ'D --Growing Nut Trees • 10:30 am-12 pm --Clean Composting 101 •

12:30-2 pm

**DeweyHall.org** • Young at Heart: Science & Art Exploration with Flying Cloud • 11 am

**MassAudubon.org/pleasantvalleyprograms** • Starlight Owl & Wildlife Prowl • 6:30-8 pm • Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary, Lenox, MA • Pre-reg. REQ'D

5 Sat

 **DeweyHall.org** • Berkshire Strings Jam Session • 11 am • Vax proof, ID & masks REQ'D

**UniversalPreservationHall.org** • Ladysmith Black Mambazo • 7 pm • Masks & vax proof REQ'D • Saratoga Springs, NY

**TheFoundryWS.com** • Helen Gillet, cellist • 7:30 pm • Masks & vax proof req'd


 See Theater Listings

• Skidmore

misc.

**BerkshireBotanical.org** • Pre-reg and vax proof REQ'D • Growing Giant Pumpkins • 10 am-2 pm • Ramen from Scratch • 11 am-2 pm • Grafting for the Home Gardener • 1-5 pm

12

 **UniversalPreservationHall.org** • Irish Hooley w/ the Screaming Orphans • 7 pm • Masks & vax proof REQ'D • Saratoga Springs, NY

**BerkshireTheatreGroup.org** • Moon-dance – The Ultimate Van Morrison Tribute Concert • 7:30 pm • Masks & vax proof REQ'D • Colonial Theatre, Pittsfield, MA

**TheFoundryWS.com** • Josephine Network • 7:30-9:30 pm • Masks & vax proof req'd



• Ft. Salem

**ClarkArt.edu** • The Met Live in HD: "Ariadne auf Naxos" • 12:55 pm • Box office: 413-458-0524



**GildedAge.org** • Ghost Tour at Ventfort Hall • 7 pm • Vax proof, ID, masks & reg. REQ'D 413-637-3206

misc.

**DeweyHall.org** • Winter

Market • 10 am-1 pm

**BerkshireBotanical.org** • Pre-reg. & vax proof REQ'D --Ready, Set, Grow: Starting Seeds for Plants that Will Hit the Ground Growing! • 10 am-1 pm --Botanical Wellness: Fire Cider Make + Take • 11 am-1 pm --Spring Planting For fall Color • 12-1 pm

19

 **UniversalPreservationHall.org** • Spa City Guitar Festival • TBA • Masks & vax proof REQ'D • Saratoga Springs, NY

**DeweyHall.org** • Vax proof, ID & masks REQ'D

--Young at Heart: Music with Aldo & Maggie • 11 am --DeweyHall.org • Berkshire Strings Jam Session • 3 pm

 See Theater Listings

• Fort Salem **Mahaiwe.org** • The Met

Live in HD: "Ariadne auf Naxos" • 1 pm



**CCHSNY.org** • "19th Century Photography in Columbia County," with David Sokosh & Lisa Weil-

continued on page 26

## THEATER LISTINGS

**Fort Salem Theater** • 11 E. Broadway, Salem, NY • 518-854-9200 • FortSalem.com

• "Little Shop of Horrors" • Original family-friendly holiday showtune revue and sing-a-long with familiar, traditional Christmas tunes, as well as new ones • Mar. 11-20 • Tix start at \$15

**The Ghent Playhouse** • 6 Town Hall Pl., Ghent, NY • GhentPlayhouse.org • Masks & proof of vax REQ'D

• "The Curious Savage," by John Patrick, dir. by Cathy Lee-Visscher • A fanciful comedy that compares the kindness and loyalty of patients in a psychiatric hospital with the greed and hostility of so-called "normal people" • Feb. 4, 5, 11 & 12, 7:30 pm; Feb. 6 & 13, 2 pm

• "Fun Home," based on Alison Bechdel's best-selling graphic memoir • Mar. 25-Apr. 10 • Fri. & Sat. at 7:30 pm; Sun. at 2 pm • \$23 members; \$28 non-members; \$12 students

**Skidmore College Theater** • Janet Kinghorn Bernhard Theater, Skidmore College Campus, Saratoga Springs, NY • theater.skidmore.edu or 518-580-5439 • Vax proof AND 48 hr. neg. COVID test REQ'D

• Mar. 4-9: Black Box: "And Bay Makes Seven + The Chaparral"

### March 19 Sat *continued from page 25*

lbacker • 4:30 pm • Zoom link after payment

People-Plant Partnership • 12-3 pm

misc.

**BerkshireBotanical.org** • Pre-reg. & vax proof REQ'D

--Spring Pruning of Woody Ornamental Plants • 10 am-1 pm

--Horticultural Therapy: The

**Cornell.edu** • Holistic Wellness: Tiger Balm & Gardening Salve • 10 am on Zoom • Reg. at cornell.zoom.us for link

### Sunday, March 20



**Mahaiwe.org** • Close Encounters With music: A Night of Chopin and Brahms—Presenting Yekwon Sunwoo • 4 pm

**UniversalPreservation-Hall.org** • Spa City Guitar Festival • TBA • Masks & vax proof REQ'D • Saratoga Springs, NY

**CEWM.org** • Night of Chopin & Brahms w/Yekwon Sunwoo • 4-5:45 pm • Mahaiwe PAC, Great Barrington, MA



See Theater Listings

• Fort Salem

### Thursday 24



**Mahaiwe.org** • Scot Eyerly's Virtual Met Opera Lecture: Verdi's Don Carlos • 5:30 pm

### Friday 25



See Theater Listings

• Ghent

### Tuesday 22

### Saturday 26



**TheFoundryWS.com** • Pinc Lounds • 7:30-9:30 pm • Masks & vax proof req'd

**UniversalPreservation-Hall.org** • Top of the World – a Carpenter's Tribute • 7:30 pm • Masks & vax proof REQ'D



See Theater Listings

• Ghent

Mahaiwe.org • Met Opera Live in HD: Verdi's Don Carlos" • 12 pm

**ClarkArt.edu** • The Met Live in HD: "Don Carlos" • 12:55 pm • Box office: 413-458-0524

misc.

**DeweyHall.org** • Young at Heart: Science & Art Exploration with Flying Cloud • 11 am

### Wed. 23

### Sunday 27



See Theater Listings

• Ghent

## Exhibitions *continued from page 20*

**Tang.skidmore.edu Museum and Gallery** •

518-580-8080 • Vax proof and masks REQ'D

• Jan. 29-Jun. 12: "Radical Fiber: Threads Connecting Art and Science"

• through February 27: "Hyde Cabinet #15: Doomsday

• through April 10: "Elevator Music 42:

Laura Splan—Rhapsody for an Expanded Biotechnological Apparatus" and "On Their Own Terms"

• through May 15: "Opener 34: Ruby Sky Stiler" • Online: <https://tang.skidmore.edu/exhibitions/287-opener-34-ruby-sky-stiler>

• through Sep. 10: "Lauren Kelley: Location Scouting" • Online: <https://tang.skidmore.edu/exhibitions/360-lauren-kelley-location-scouting>

**ThompsonGirouxGallery.com** • 57 Main St., Chatham, NY • 518-392-3336

• Mar. 5 – Apr. 3: Dan Devine

• Apr. 9 – May 8: T. Klacsmann

**ValleyArtisansMarket.com** • 25 E. Main St., Cambridge, NY • 518-677-2765 • Online shop

• through Feb. 17: C.J. Lyttle: Birds

• Feb. 18 – Mar. 15: Anne Dambrowski and Sandy Brett: Together Again

• Mar. 18 – Apr. 12: Elizabeth Phillips: Pebble Art

**Warren County Historical Society** • 50

Gurney Lane, Queensbury, NY • 518-743-0734 • wcnys.org

• Permanent exhibit: "Warren County 360: Celebrating Place and People"

**WorldChildrensMuseum.org** • 89 Warren St., Glens Falls, NY • 518-793-2773

• Artifacts Collection Online • Online "COVID-19 & Me: Changes in My World" Exhibition Walkthrough

## Berkshire Museum presents 'Voyage to the Deep'

PITTSFIELD, Mass.

"Voyage to the Deep," a new interactive exhibit based on French author Jules Verne's 1870 classic "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea," opened Jan. 29 at the Berkshire Museum.

The show, which runs through May, brings to life the deep-sea adventures of Captain Nemo, his fantastical Nautilus submarine and the mythical world he inhabited.

At the center of this fantasy world is the giant Nautilus – spanning two rooms on the museum's second floor – where kids can climb aboard and discover the inner workings of a deep-sea submersible. Visitors can take up the controls at the helm, peer through the periscopes, crank the propeller, test out the bunks, and explore Captain Nemo's "Cabinet of Curiosities," full of wonderful marine specimens.

Verne's submarine was a fantastical craft with a basis in genuine technologies. This exhibition will present both the fantasy and the facts, allowing

visitors to explore both Verne's imaginary world and the real-life wonders of exploring the oceans. Visitors will discover what it is to operate a submarine and learn about the underwater world as it would be seen from inside an imaginary deep-sea exploration vessel.

In conjunction with 'Voyage to the Deep,' the museum will be displaying 12 historic and contemporary works from its collection that contextualize the human connection to water.

On Saturday, Feb. 19, from 11 to 11:30 a.m. and again from 1 to 1:30 p.m., singer-songwriters Cosby Gibson and Tom Staudle will perform "Songs of the Sea" on the "Voyage to the Deep" exhibition's Atlantis Stage.

Museum admission is \$15 for adults, \$8 for children, \$13 for students, and free for children 3 and under, Berkshire Museum members, and EBT card holders. Proof of full vaccination (digital or printed card) and photo identification will be required of all visitors 18 and older.

## Wages *continued from page 6*

applications,” Kallich said.

Worker advocates point out that other industries have been able to adapt to 40-hour overtime thresholds, including in highly seasonal businesses such as resorts, landscaping and construction – and at those that run around the clock, such as health care.

“The industry will have to change,” Kreyche said. “Agriculture is no different.”

But farmers insist their ability to change is limited. They can adjust workers’ schedules and possibly invest in labor-saving equipment, but not all farms have the resources or the set-up to make that feasible.

In addition to Covid-related disruptions and rising supply and equipment prices, farmers are dealing with a state minimum wage that has increased by about 70 cents an hour annually since 2013. Those wage increases have been accompanied by higher payroll taxes and other wage-based costs.

New York farm workers on average earn about \$4 an hour more than the state minimum wage, according to state statistics.

“In business, you can invest in labor or you can invest in large machinery to cut down on hours,” Ziehm said. “Every situation is different. You still need team members to make sure the farm runs smoothly.”

### An exodus of farmers?

The Farm Credit East report noted that given the tight U.S. job market, many farmers doubt they could readily find more workers, and farmers who provide housing may not be able to build more. The report concluded that with a 40-hour overtime threshold, dairy farms would lose their entire profit margin, and fruit and vegetable producers would lose 73 percent of their profits.

The Cornell report predicted equally dire results. In interviews with Cornell’s researchers, two-thirds of dairy farmers said they’d get out of dairy farming, invest out of state, or leave agriculture altogether. Half of fruit and vegetable farmers said they’d shrink their operations or exit production.

The results weren’t quite as bad with a 50-hour threshold, but the report noted that farmers have already adopted the easy fixes, such as contracting out some labor-intensive operations or cutting back or eliminating the more demanding crops.

“If we were to move from 60 to 55, that would be more manageable, but not easy,” Ziehm said. “That’s much more realistic than a move to 40.”

On the other hand, advocates of lowering the threshold cite state statistics showing since the 60-hour overtime requirement took effect, both the number of farms in the state and their gross cash income have gone up.

The Farm Bureau of New York, allied agricultural organizations, and individual businesses formed a coalition, Grow NY Farms, to push for keeping the threshold at 60 hours. Many of the coalition’s members testified before the Farm Labor Wage Board, where comments were heavily opposed to any changes in the threshold.

Although labor and social justice activists also testified, few farm workers took part in the first three hearings. Kreyche said access to the online hearings was difficult for farm laborers, but she expected more would submit recorded testimony for the Jan. 28 hearing.

### Area legislators oppose change

Most state legislators in the region were on record in opposition to lowering the overtime threshold.

Assemblywoman Carrie Woerner, D-Round Lake, has many dairy and some fruit and vegetable farms in her district, which covers parts of Saratoga and Washington counties. In a statement issued in September, she called the current 60-hour threshold a compromise.

“As agricultural work is seasonal, many farm workers still seek to work as many hours as possible when the work is available,” Woerner wrote. “A further reduction of the overtime threshold will reduce their already limited opportunity to work. Moreover, any reduction threatens farmers’ ability to afford workers during the peak season and consequently the ability to operate these farms at all.”

The state needs to maintain a reliable local

food system to reduce its dependence on imported food, Woerner said.

Assemblyman Jake Ashby, R-Castleton, whose district includes parts of Rensselaer, Columbia and Washington counties, has held two summits with farmers in his district, said Tom Grand, Ashby’s chief of staff. Participating farms ranged in size from those with two employees to those with a hundred, Grand said.

The consensus was that a 40-hour overtime threshold would “not only be bad for farmers and businesses, it would be bad for workers because it would lower their hours,” Grand said. “It doesn’t help either side.”

State Sens. Daphne Jordan, R-Halfmoon, and Dan Stec, R-Queensbury, were among 13 Republican state senators who signed a letter to the members of the Farm Laborer Wage Board asking them to delay action on the overtime threshold until the end of 2024. They cited the Cornell study and said the board needs more time to review the effects of the 2019 law.

In her budget address for 2022-23, Gov. Kathy Hochul proposed new tax credits for farmers to offset added overtime expenses, although the details of those proposals have yet to be worked out. Hochul also supports an increase in investment tax credits, and an extension and doubling of the Farm Workforce Retention Credit, which currently provides farmers with a tax credit of \$600 per employee per year.

The Farm Bureau specifically supports the workforce retention credit and generally backs other budget proposals intended to benefit farmers, although critics note that tax credits require farmers to lay out money first and be reimbursed later — and that state budgets are subject to annual negotiations that make such benefits unpredictable.

Kreyche, of the Worker Justice Center, said she also supports providing tax credits or other benefits to help farmers meet the new overtime pay requirements.

“I would fully support any subsidies or incentives to create a better future for farm workers,” Kreyche said. “It would help us all collectively to absorb these costs.”

## Letters *continued from page 15*

For the people, cynicism takes over. All politicians seem the same. All elections are rigged. Democracy becomes meaningless, but fortunately there are enough flat-screen televisions and Subarus to keep everyone happy.

People talk about “civil war” ahead, but I fear democracy will end with a whimper, not a bang.

Paul Kolderie  
Hoosick, N.Y.

## Social spending doesn’t use ‘other people’s money’

To the editor:

What do local conservatives have in common with economist Thomas Sowell, Britain’s Margaret Thatcher, and Elon Musk? They all decry liberals (or “socialists” or “communists”) spending “other people’s money” on social programs.

You can find that phrase in the comments to any online story about a social program, from unemployment benefits to food stamps to Medicare for all.

By “other people’s money,” they mean taxes collected by the government. But taxes aren’t “other people’s money.” That money comes from and belongs to all the people. Calling it “other people’s money” implies that the people who support social programs aren’t contributing to their funding. That’s an effective propaganda tool to stir up opposition, but it isn’t true.

I pay taxes and have since I was 17 (now 55 years ago). Those taxes always have been used to fund any social programs that I advocate. Even the poorest people pay taxes in several forms, especially sales tax. Those taxes also fund any social programs they advocate. Social programs are undeniably funded by everyone’s money, just like the military is.

It’s a very different story when you look at the

misery that social programs intend to alleviate. The people who complain about social support programs aren’t going to be affected by cuts to those programs. They won’t suddenly find themselves unable to pay rent, visit a doctor, or feed themselves or their families — or forced to go without a community service that allows them to live independently. Those who advocate cutting these programs are, in a very real sense, voting for other people’s misery.

So who is really being cavalier about what they do to other people? Like so many other conservative mantras, “other people’s money” is simply a propaganda slogan.

Lee Russ  
Bennington, Vt.



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- from Hudson: 2 hours (Dorset, 2:10)
- from Pittsfield: 1 hr, 20 min (Dorset, 1:30)
- from Saratoga Springs: 1 hour, 20 min (Dorset, 1:10)
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See map on page 13

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