

The Piermont Newsletter

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Piermont Pier To Be Revived

A year from now the end of the Piermont Pier should look very different than it does today.

Lamont-Doherty plans to refurbish its Hudson River Field Station and make landscaping improvements (see story on Page 14). At the same time, the Piermont Fire Department expects to be adding a 60-foot long L-shaped floating dock there.

They'll connect it with an aluminum ramp to the northeast corner of the existing concrete pier. Piermont's Underwater Rescue Team wants the dock because there's not enough water at low tide to get its boat safely out on the river from its onshore marina. Mud sucked into its engines recently cost the village \$10,000 in repairs for its powerful main boat.

It's a 35 feet long, fiberglass fireboat with twin 350 hp outboard engines. It also has a jet drive that powers a water cannon, or can add some additional speed as an underwater jet. The team tries to answer calls at low tide in their inflatable Zodiac. The shallow, muddy silt of the river damaged even its engines.

They need a way to get the boats quickly to deep water, Piermont Harbor Master Dan Goswick told the Village Board.

Before the village moved ahead with the plans for the fireboat dock, it hired an engineering firm to check the soundness of the concrete pier. It said it was in good shape. Lamont-Doherty originally built the concrete pier to tie up its visiting research vessels. The Sloop Clearwater occasionally use it now, and it attracts tourists and anglers.

During winter, the Fire Department will use a bubbler to keep the boat ice free, but a harsh winter that freezes the river may force them to move the Fire Rescue boat to the nearby boathouse where they store the inflatable Zodiac.

Building the dock is a pricey proposition. Initial estimates put the cost at \$250,000. Assemblywoman Ellen Jaffee and State Senator David Carlucci got the village grants to cover the estimate. "The total costs are still undetermined," Mayor Sanders said, "until the village opens contractors bids." They're due in mid-January.

Not everyone is happy with the plan. Critics questioned the wisdom of building a floating dock at Piermont's most weather-exposed location. Plans call for pilings to anchor the dock that will rise 12 feet above low tide. They are designed to withstand a Category 2 hurricane, Fire Chief Don Hardy told the Village Board. As

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The Piermont Reformed Church, the village's oldest (see story Page 2), looks ready for Christmas. Sally Savage photo.

Community Market Prospects Dim

We're sad to report that the Community Market won't be opening anytime soon.

You can forget about those pictures covering the windows that promise a shiny new store. The guy who put them up a couple of years ago skipped town a few months ago, owing the building's owner several months back rent.

He also fought with Victor Rose. Rose is the former chef and hospitality pro he'd hired to open the place. Rose was going to model it after Dean & DeLuca, the upscale Manhattan grocery store chain. He didn't give up that dream. He found a couple of New Jersey real estate investors to back him.

Rose knew the building is in rough shape. Superstorm Sandy had left 7 feet of water in the Community Market's basement. Plumbers and contractors Rose hired told him that it would cost \$10,000 to \$30,000 to bring it back up to code. The store also needs a new exhaust system and other costly repairs.

In the end, that wasn't what killed the deal. Gibraltar Management Company, the Tarrytown firm that owns the building, "was willing to do whatever we asked," Rose said. "They were just great."

Just last month he and his backers realized that they didn't have the time they would need to reopen the

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President's Corner



I was having troubles getting rid of birds nesting in our awning. I called my friend François Vuilleumier. He knew birds. He'd know what to do. He was, after all, the retired head of the American Museum of Natural History's Department of Ornithology.

It turned out that he didn't. "I am having the same trouble at my house," he said, greatly amused by how absurd that sounded coming from a man who had written encyclopedic bird guides, hundreds of scientific papers on birds and had a Ph.D in natural science from Harvard.

François was one of those remarkable Piermonters who are quiet about who they are, where they've been and what they've done. He succumbed in January, at age 78, to the cancer he had been battling for several years.

It was easy not to notice him sitting in his aging grey Toyota Camry near the end of the pier. It was his favorite place in the village. He'd bring along the New York Times, a cup of coffee from Canzona's Market (perhaps his other favorite Piermont place), and one or more of his vast collection of binoculars to watch the birds. He had used them to study birds all over the world.

François, the father of three, and his wife Rebecca Finnell, moved to Piermont in 1992. He and I met about 10 years ago. After I got to know him, I sent him an e-mail asking if he would be interested in writing an article for the Newsletter. Since I knew he had grown up speaking French in Switzerland (later I learned he also knew German and Spanish and some Italian and Portuguese), as a joke I translated my message into French using Google Translate.

Google Translate worked too well. It fooled François. He wrote an e-mail back in French, agreeing to do the

article, and saying how happy he was to communicate with someone who knew French (which I don't). He wasn't too disappointed when I told him that I'd had to translate his answer.

François went on to write and charmingly illustrate several articles for the Newsletter. Here is one of them:

~Bob Samuels

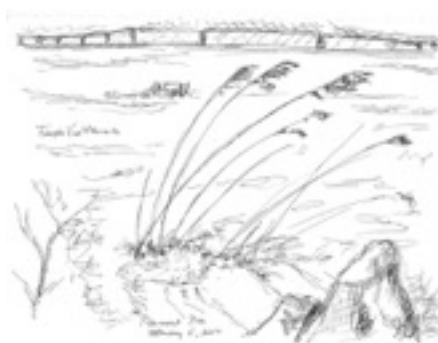
No Other River Like Ours #1 2011

During my globetrotting years I have seen and navigated on all kinds of rivers, some mighty, others less so. In the end, Piermont's Hudson was always the best.

The Amazon remains beyond human comprehension: it is too vast. The Rhône, by contrast, has a definite human dimension (besides, it was my river when I grew up). Even though it divides America into east and west, the Mississippi belongs to us all. And everybody knows that the Danube is grayish-brown, not blue. But so is the Hudson. Ah, but there is a crucial difference! The Hudson is an estuary. It is tidal. With its flux and reflux, it works like a pump and beats, like a heart, daily, weekly, monthly, year after year. Moon and Sun are its pacemaker, but seasons regulate its moods and influence the behavior of its winged inhabitants.

During cold winters, the Hudson freezes over and ice cakes give it an Arctic feel. What is this dark shape riding a block of ice? A look through binoculars reveals a Bald Eagle. In my experience, they always seem to go with the southern flow. Why? Meanwhile, flocks of Canvasbacks, mostly males, handsome with their reddish-brown head, sleep in ice-free patches. They feed at night on vegetal matter on the River floor. Canvasbacks breed in the

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Piermont's Most Historic Place Of Worship

Piermont Reformed Church, organized in 1839, is the village's oldest congregation (and continuous institution).

The white clapboard building, topped by a hexagonal steeple, was built on the Ferdon Avenue in 1946. It is on the National Register list of Historic Places. The church replaced an older one that was destroyed by fire.

The Reverend John VandenOever has been pastor of the small but vibrant congregation since 1988. "We are 178 years old, but our goal is to be a 21st century church," he says. "That means serious spiritual growth as individuals, standing for peace, justice and inclusivity in the world, and enriching the life of the community. It means correcting real flaws in Christianity's past, and

rediscovering the real value in Jesus' way."

For over 10 years, the congregation has been very active in the homeless ministry with Helping Hands of Rockland.

The church supplies meeting space for Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon meetings, Girl Scout troops, Piermont Sons of Italy, Tappan Homemakers seniors club, Senior Yoga, and Rockland Food Swap. It regularly offers musical events such as chamber music, jazz, rock or folk performances, through its own Tallman Mountain Arts or in conjunction with Rockland Symphony Orchestra.

Pastor John studied music at Central College in his home state of Iowa, and theology at New Brunswick Theological Seminary in New Jersey. "We like doing unique

things musically," he says. "We're thrilled to have Albert Ahlf, a great young jazz pianist, play every Sunday." The pastor is himself a songwriter and multi-instrumentalist who performs locally with his band, Who Are They.

The Reverend also studied art at Queens College, and his work has been shown at Hopper House Art Center and Rockland Center for the Arts. He's slated for a Piermont Library exhibit next April.

"What ties it all together for me is just the joy of life," he declares. "It's about observing and reporting, learning and growing. It's about wonder and gratitude, and working anyway we can to see that every person gets to live life to the fullest. Love God, and love your neighbor--no exceptions."

~Fred Burrell



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A New Mayor And Trustee Take The Reins



*Newly elected Mayor Bruce Tucker and Trustee Ivanya Alpert.
Fred Burrell photo*

At the Village Board's January reorganization meeting, two newcomers, Mayor Bruce Tucker and Trustee, Ivanya Alpert will take their seats. What new ideas will they bring to the table?

First, the old business. Something near the top of every Piermonter's wish list is keeping taxes down. Neither new official has a magic formula for meeting the village's many mandated obligations less expensively, but Tucker, who is replacing Chris Sanders, who is stepping down after 10 years as mayor, will continue to pursue the practicality of reducing energy costs by installing LED streetlights and solar power.

As for the cyclists, perhaps the main provokers of citizen complaint, Tucker thinks the Piermont police have done a splendid job of both enforcement and education—by constant surveillance of trouble spots and by letting cyclists know that “in Piermont you had better behave yourself.” But since he believes bicycle traffic will increase with the opening of a bike path on the new TZ Bridge, he is working with Orangetown on a

comprehensive plan for routing cyclists through and around the village.

Also high on his wish list is getting the community more involved in the village. “There are village organizations that need board members and volunteers,” Tucker says. He also wants to make the Village's website friendlier. “There should be a picture of each official on it,” he says, “so if you see them on the street you can say ‘hello’.” And there will be a Village of Piermont Facebook page modeled on Orangetown's which “gets lots of hits.”

Board meeting agendas will be posted on-line a week in advance with scheduled topics up front and public comment at the end; thus listed agenda items will be taken up at the scheduled time, not pushed back by the public comment period when everyone not on the agenda can have their say. And the mayor himself will set regular office hours so anyone who wants to can talk with him.

“Since one of Tucker's goals is to see the empty downtown stores filled with flourishing businesses, the immediate good news is the reopening of the restaurant on the east side of Flywheel Park as the Rivertown Taphouse.”

Tucker has lived in Piermont for 27 years, focused for 23 of them on his New Jersey business. Newly elected Trustee Ivanya Alpert, is replacing John Gallucci Jr., who was elected Village Justice. She is a pediatrician in the city, has lived in Piermont for almost 10 years. Ivanya has been actively involved in politics as a member of Rockland United's steering committee and as a member of the Orangetown Democratic Committee but is a newcomer to the Piermont political scene. Born in New York City, she majored in African American Women's Studies at Harvard, and—in a change of direction—completed pre-med courses at NYU followed by medical school at University of Pittsburg, where she met her husband (also a pediatrician). They moved back to New York where she completed her residency and fellowship training in pediatrics and adolescent medicine at Mount Sinai Hospital.

Ivanya and her husband have raised three children—two boys, 17 and 15 and a girl, 12—who attend local public schools. They handle the demands of parenthood



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with lots of schedule juggling so there's always someone available for the children. Eleven years ago, after vowing never to leave New York, they realized that raising three children in a small apartment was not sustainable.

When she and her husband visited some friends in Nyack they made the trip to Piermont. They never looked back and have been happily settled in "The Patch," with their family since 2007.

Although she has put forward few explicit plans for village change, Ivanya shares the Mayor's insistence on improving transparency. She is also committed to working with current trustee Lisa Deficiani on waterfront resiliency and developing creative solutions to climate change while preserving the character of our village and preventing overdevelopment.

She made some early waves in Piermont with a long October letter to the Our Town in which she criticized Orangetown Supervisor candidate Chris Day for publicly proposing a ferry service between Piermont and Westchester without consulting a single Piermont official—even the Planning Board. She feels strongly about maintaining Piermont's primary character as a wonderful place to live.

Clearly, the voters have elected village protectors. Anything else? Deeply concerned about Piermont's vulnerability to storms and sea level rise, Tucker plans to promote any initiatives needed to make Piermont a "Certified Climate Smart Community"—and he's looking around the village to find a spot for a private mayor's office. As far as anyone can recall, there's never been one.

~Joan Gussow



New York State Assemblywoman Ellen Jaffee presented soon-to-be former Piermont Mayor Chris Sanders with a citation honoring his service to the village. Betsy Franco Feeney photo

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Piermont Wants You: An Update From The Waterfront

If you haven't yet marked Tuesday, December 12, in your calendar, do it this very moment! If you miss this Piermont Village Hall event, which starts at noon and includes a free lunch, you will regret it. Do you wonder why? Well, keep reading!

The recent fifth anniversary of Superstorm Sandy reminded us of the still unanswered question about Piermont: Will we float and flourish, or flood and perish given rising seas and more powerful storms? These are the concerns of the Piermont Waterfront Resiliency Commission (PWRC), and by a parallel State mandated effort, the Long-term Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP).

At the don't miss meeting, more than a dozen Cornell University Landscape Architecture students and faculty, will present their Climate Change Adaptation (CAD) for Piermont. It will offer concepts, visions, and in some cases actual plans with visual displays for ways for Piermont to deal with a rising Hudson River and major storms. The Cornell students have worked in teams on this report through their fall semester. Their teachers guided them with assistance from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

At the first meeting for the CAD study this fall, Cornell faculty and students asked a group of Piermont citizens and officials for their concerns about Piermont's imperiled future and for help in identifying flood prone areas. They brought the

information back to their campus and broke the students into teams.

In October, at the second meeting, the teams pitched their initial ideas to some 20 Piermonters, including our incoming Mayor, PWRC and LWRP members, and other officials. Some of the student proposals were great. Others were frankly questioned and shaken down to reality by inquisitive residents and officials.

But there was true excitement in the room: visions of a lively future for Piermont abounded. Some plans made Piermont into a Venice on the Hudson, with a canal running north south through our low-lying downtown. Other proposals included a museum, a new quarter-moon shaped pier wrapping around to the north of where our marinas are now. It would make a real harbor, deepened by dredging to allow unhindered access by boats even at low tides. Another proposed amphibian houses in Bogertown and the "Patch." The cost? Don't worry. These plans are priceless visions. You can't ask for (outside) money and investments without a vision. So come on December 12, and share and shore up your enthusiasm for a bright future of YOUR village.

The PWRC, assisted by State agencies and their resources, also pursues more mundane, short-term tasks. Its Village of Piermont Flood Preparedness Guide for Residents and Businesses is nearing completion. It has critical Village emergency information and contacts. When you receive it pin it to your refrigerator,

and bookmark it in your browser so you can find it when needed. It also will be on the more informative Piermont Village website promised by the new Mayor.

The PWRC hopes to qualify the Village for the NY State's Clean Energy Communities Program and the Climate Smart Communities Program. It may allow the Village to tap into new funding resources.

Similarly, the LWRP, with the help of a hired consultant, is feverishly trying to finish its draft of a new waterfront revitalization plan. It plans to submit it to the New York State Department of State (DOS) before the end of the year. Once approved, this vital plan may open a way for us to access state and other funding sources.

In the absence of a comprehensive master plan for Piermont, the LWRP document, will guide the Village's development for the next three decades. It also will inform our Mayors, Village Boards and Planning Boards, on zoning, land-use, building codes and other measures. The LWRP considers the economy and livelihood of Piermont, while at the same time coping with sea level rise, storm surges and other perils (think of the California fires!) associated with climate change and economic roller coasters.

Now, did you mark December 12 in your calendar? See you in Village Hall on that Wednesday for a few hours of exciting citizen action. There will even be a free lunch, if that's what it needs to get you there.

~Klaus H. Jacob



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New EMTs Trained For Piermont Fire Department



New EMTs on the job in Piermont are (from left) Adam Bliden, Austin Skywark, Deputy Mayor Mark Blomquist and Mayor Chris Sanders. Ron Derven photo

If you need an ambulance in the Village of Piermont and, the first responders on the scene to treat you might well be Piermont Mayor Chris Sanders and or Deputy Mayor Mark Blomquist.

No, it's not a new personalized service of the Mayor's office. Instead, both men are recent graduates of a special EMT-- Emergency Medical Technician--course, at the Piermont

Fire Department. In all, some 13 enrolled in the course and about 10, graduated.

The course was given by Lt. Donna C. Marques, BS, AEMT-P, CIC Commander, Special Operations, Training Center Coordinator, Rockland Paramedic Services, Inc. EMT training is usually given at the County Fire Training Center in Pomona, but because all the students

were Piermonters, they held it at the firehouse.

Sanders, Blomquist and two other newly minted EMTs, Adam Bliden and Austin Skywark, called the seven-month program "grueling." It included about 200 hours of class time and an additional 100 hours of reading for a total of about 300 hours of training.

"It was a hard course," said the Mayor, "but well worth it." It will allow Mayor Sanders to continue serving the village after he steps down in January. Both Bliden and Skywark called the course work extremely practical and said it will allow them to expand their work with the Piermont Fire Department.

Blomquist said that he joined the fire department 11 years ago when he was 45. Now at 56 he's finding that rushing into fires and up multiple flights of stairs carrying 70 or 80 pounds of gear to be challenging. "I want to stay active in the Fire Department and I thought transitioning into the role of EMT would be a good way to do that."

Once an individual has New York State EMT Certification, he or she is allowed to perform CPR on cardiac patients, splint broken bones, administer certain medications and similar procedures, Blomquist explained. "If we get a call in the Village and it seems serious, the paramedics will respond as well as the ambulance. As the first on the



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The Front Line

Leaf Collection Continues to December

Piermont's leaf collection program will run through the week of December 1, according to Tom Temple, Superintendent of the Piermont Department of Public Works (DPW). He said that homeowners should:

Place all loose-leaf piles at the edge of their property. Piles should be clear of rocks, brush and any other debris that could cause damage the DPW's collection unit.

Use biodegradable bags if you are bagging your leaves. You can get these free during regular business hours while supplies last at the DPW garage (300 Piermont Ave.) The DPW encourages the use of the biodegradable bags. It will not collect leaves in plastic bags.

Please do not block any sidewalks with loose or bagged leaves. This creates a hazard by forcing pedestrians to walk in the roadway.

Police Crackdown on Unsafe Trucks

The Piermont Police, along with officers from Orangetown, the NYS Environmental Conservation and Inspectors from the State Motor Carrier Truck Inspection Unit conducted a commercial vehicle enforcement detail on Tuesday November 7. The aim was to ensure unsafe trucks are not on the highway and enforce the weight restrictions.

Police issued 127 summonses, impounded four trucks and took 10 unsafe trucks out of service.

scene, our job is to stabilize the patient and get them to the hospital as quickly as possible," added the Deputy Mayor.

For Village residents who might be interested in pursuing the EMT Certification and help with emergencies, Blomquist said that there is no upper age limit for volunteers, however, you have to be 18 years of age to enter the program. You also have to lift at least 125 pounds of weight.

If you're interested in becoming an EMT, the first step is to join the Piermont Fire Department. Its Training Officer can enroll you in the EMT training courses.

~Ron Derven



"Winter Landscape with Skaters" by Hendrick Avercamp, used with permission.

Happy Holidays

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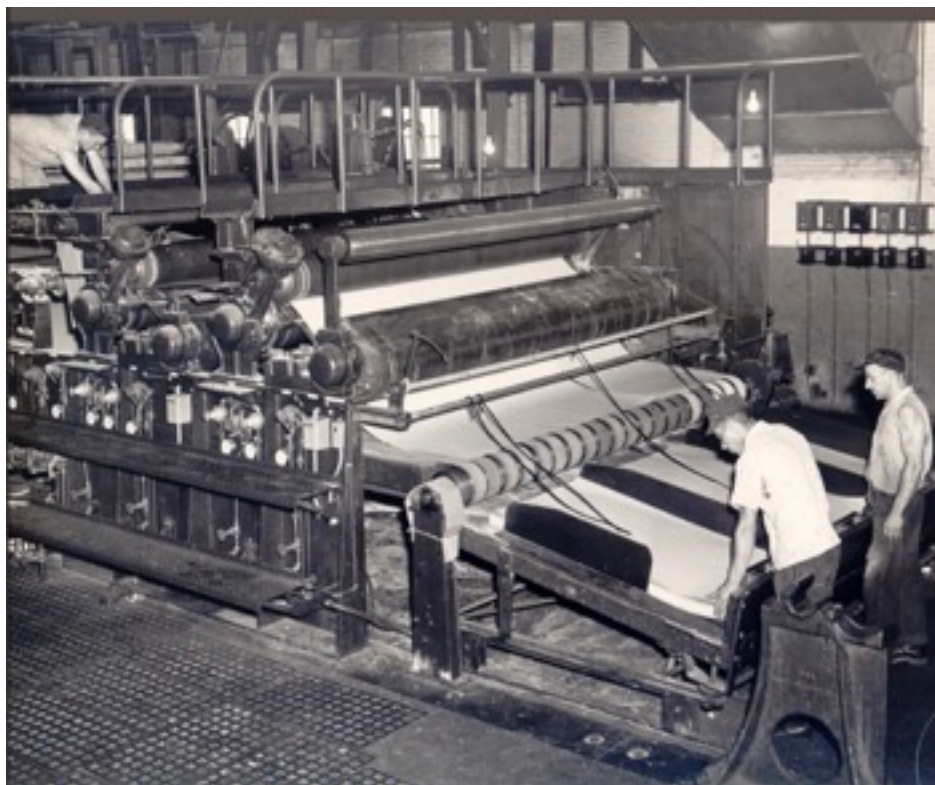
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Memories Of Factory Days



Workers tend a cutting machine at the Robert Gair plant

I never knew what life was like over the mountain in Piermont when I was growing up in Blauvelt in the early seventies. My father, on the other hand, knew the village well. He was a familiar face there, especially in places like Mom Miraglia's, the Krackerbox, and the Hudson Terrace Restaurant. He and my uncle were the "jukebox guys." It was their job to deliver the latest 45s, and collected the nickels and dimes from the machines.

Every year on the Fourth of July, he piled my five siblings and me into the station wagon and took us over the mountain to Piermont to go to the carnival and see the fireworks on the pier. Since we always arrived after dark, I had no idea that there was a hulking factory just beyond the rides and cotton candy. It wasn't until I moved here in 2004 that I

gradually learned what life was like all those years ago.

I found out that in 1901, Martin R. Williams built Piermont's first paper mill. The fresh water from the Sparkill Creek was an essential ingredient in the papermaking process. The Erie Railroad, built in 1851, provided transportation for supplies in and out of the village. In 1920, it's principal customer, the Robert Gair Company of Brooklyn, bought the company and moved its box-making facility to the pier alongside the paper mill.

Gair's paper products had a revolutionary effect on society. Paper fiber containers, cardboard boxes and corrugated cardboard replaced bulky wooden crates and barrels. The use of water-resistant paper cups and bags reduced food borne diseases. Gair obtained a patent for

his innovative design for creasing and folding boxes in one operation. The first Wheaties cereal boxes and boxes for Bloomingdales are just two of the many containers produced at the plant. From paper pulp to printed containers, Gair did it all in Piermont.

Longer than a football field, heated by steam from the burning of coal, the rollers dried the paperboard as it passed from the wet end to the finishing rollers. A revolving knife cut the paper into sheets making it ready for the box-making process.

For over eight decades, Piermont's close-knit, hard-working community largely depended on the pier's paper mill for work. At its peak, Gair's plant employed 1,300 people -- many were Piermonters.

Recently, as a member of the Piermont historical society, I interviewed villagers who shared stories from the factory days. Here are a few.

The late William "Tex" Goswick told of the unbearable heat inside the paper factory. When the sheets of pulp paper slid off the drying irons, the workers cleaned up the mess under the hot rollers. If you were not careful and you touched them, the price you'd pay would be a blistering burn.

Fred Lacker described the way Piermont would "salt" its roads. A village worker shoveled coal ash from Gair onto the streets from the back of a flatbed truck.

Kevin Fagan spoke of the "good old days" when, after a snowfall, the sooty ash was spread at the bottom of Kinney and Ash Streets. They became the best sleigh riding hills around!

James Coza recalled, laundry hung out to dry had to be rewashed because it had become speckled with soot when the wind blew from the direction of the factory's smoke stacks.

Philip "Fuzzy" DeLorenzo recalled his summer job on an overnight shift at the age of 17. By morning he felt 'punchy' from the ear-crushing din of the machinery. He went right to the office for a department transfer. They gave him a new job but it turned out not any better than the first one!

Despite the plant's obvious negative carbon footprint on the environment, the factory was way ahead of its time in paper recycling. The stock houses were filled with old magazines, newspapers and phone books. Local kids searched mountains of waste paper to find treasures like coins, jewelry and comic books. Laura Montesano still has her most precious find – a first

edition copy of "Gone with the Wind".

Fred Schmoll described the giant flywheel, a lumbering hulk of machinery which produced all the electricity needed by the plant. Kevin Fagan said that you could feel the cars rocking back and forth in the parking lot whenever it was running. The plant ran 24-hours a day, 50 weeks a year. It only shut down for two weeks in July when much-needed maintenance took place. That's when they held the carnival.

The factory changed hands over the years from Gair to Clevepak to Federal Paper to Continental Can. After eight decades, they shut the mill down to make way for commercial and residential

development. During the demolition, the wrecking ball bounced off the massive flywheel. The decision was made to leave it in place to stand as a testimony to those hard-working men and women and a tribute to Piermont's industrial past.

The Piermont's Civic Association, Historical Society and Chamber of Commerce joined resources to put a plaque by the Flywheel, explaining its powerful role in Piermont's history.

~Betsy Franco Feeney



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Memories of Factory Days

At The Library

Leaving a legacy at the library

In the thoughtful and highly personal process of estate planning, residents occasionally choose to bequeath a portion of their estates to community organizations such as their public library. In other cases, after a loved one is lost, families may request that friends and extended family donate to a selected non-profit organization in lieu of sending flowers. A gift can be made to the library to honor a loved one or friend at any time in the form of our popular engraved brick donation program.

In the past year, the library has received generous donations in memory of area residents. Funds donated in this way leave a lasting tribute to those we've lost in a way that enriches the community they loved. In one such instance, the library purchased and installed an outdoor bulletin board to help publicize our events using funds donated in memory of longtime library lover and Library Friends member, Helene Winson.

Many donors celebrated our 10th Anniversary in the new building by purchasing engraved bricks in our

new "Path to the Next 10 Years" near the rain garden. Bricks can be engraved with the name of an individual, a family, or a business as a memorial, or simply as a gift. We've even seen bricks dedicated to beloved pets.

Local artist Jeanne Redpath-Berger, widow of renowned author Thomas Berger, left a bequest that will fund, among other things, a village-wide read of Berger's novel, *Neighbors*. This "Piermont Reads" project will include distribution of free paperback copies of the book to residents, a scholarly talk on Berger



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and his writing by Dr. Cara Stepanian, and a screening of the 1981 film adaptation of *Neighbors*, starring John Belushi, Dan Aykroyd, Cathy Moriarty, and Kathryn Walker. "Piermont Reads" will kick off in the summer of 2018. Keep an eye out for details on the launch party.

More events coming in 2018

During the month of January, Recent Oil Pastels by Rena Berger will be on display in the library's gallery space. Ms. Berger works with formal elements-- color, line and shape to realize a composition that has balance, movement, interest, tension and clear structure. All are welcome to the opening reception at the Library on Sunday, January 14th from 2 pm to 4 pm.

Sunday, February 11th at 2 pm join us for "Valentine Inspiration" with Soprano Anna Veleva, who will present a concert of opera arias and classical love songs to celebrate the Valentine season. The performance includes selections from *La Boheme*, *La Traviata*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Turandot*, *The Land of Smiles*, and more.

Mrs. Veleva has received international acclaim as one of today's most gifted and versatile opera stars. She has performed at major venues such as Carnegie Hall - Stern Auditorium, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Suntory Hall in Tokyo, Sofia National Opera House, and the Plovdiv Opera in Bulgaria.

Sign up for monthly e-mails about upcoming library events at piermontlibrary.org under Services/Mailing List Subscriptions or e-mail info@piermontlibrary.org and ask to be put on our mailing list.



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Lamont Is Taking Its Science To The Pier

Our beautiful pier is going to get a bit more beautiful and intellectually stimulating, thanks to an upgrade plan by our scientific research neighbor, Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory. Lamont has designs on that small rectangular building which sits at the pier's end.

You know the place. It's a small, unassuming structure, informally known as the pier blockhouse. It has actually been an active site for Lamont research. Once a place to house instruments dedicated to monitoring local river chemistry and quality, the building was heavily damaged during Superstorm Sandy, completely destroying the lab.

Since the storm, Lamont has secured the building with a nice new door. Now, Lamont sees an enormous opportunity in this small structure. It is working to raise the necessary money to turn it into a new, full-scale field station to serve the multiple

goals of research, outreach, and education.

Lamont envisions it as a valued link between it, Piermonsters and visitors from surrounding communities. It will help explain what the Palisades, NY, research center is and does. Visitors will have a chance to witness the world-class global research. It will also simultaneously educate the public and school children about the natural history of our beautiful Hudson River location.

The project, which has the full support of the Piermont Village Board, is called Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory Hudson River Field Station. Once completed, it will be an exciting attraction. Inside, behind a glass wall, the station will have a working lab dedicated to research and technology.

The remainder of the building will be a museum or an

Exploratorium with vivid displays open to the public. Among the proposed features are a seismograph, constantly recording incoming data; a microscope exhibit where people can look at microfossils, fish larvae, pollen, etc.; and a large projected video screen showing Lamont's scientists in action around the world at all of its other "field stations."

Current plans call for the outside of the building to have large murals relating to the geologic and historic nature of this remarkable location. The Hudson River Field Station is a design in progress. Lamont promises to post updates on its website as the fundraising and design moves forward at: <http://www.ldeo.columbia.edu>

~Farhana Mather

Mather is a Piermonter and Lamont's Director of Development, External Relations and Strategic Initiatives.

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Piermont Pier To Be Revived continued from page 1

he was speaking, Category 4 and 5 hurricanes were heading toward the Atlantic Coast. There also was concern that the floating dock would be too dangerous to use during a nor'easter and other strong storms.

While low water led to this proposal, high water remains an obstacle. Will first responders be able reach the dock when the river floods the pier? Flooding closed Pier Road numerous times this past year. The village has grant money to elevate the roadway at the dogleg where it regularly floods. Work is scheduled to begin in early spring. That will solve one problem.

Critics raised another point too -- because grant funding requires public access, the floating dock and ramp will be open to the public. A floating dock is very different from the stable concrete pier. It is a serious danger to children if they try to explore the dock, even under calm conditions, they say. If you fall into the water, it is difficult to hold onto an exposed floating dock, experienced boaters pointed out. There is also the hazard of currents pulling you under the main pier.

"A camera will be installed to monitor all activity out there", says Deputy Mayor and underwater rescue member Mark Blomquist promised.

Why not explore dredging a channel to deep water from the safety of Piermont Bay instead of building an exposed dock, questioned a boater.

The Piermont Village Board unanimously supports the floating dock plan. There are numerous permits still required before construction can begin, including those from the Army Corps of Engineers and the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation. With approvals, and adequate funding, construction of the dock could move forward -- but not until early March when the Hudson River sturgeon spawning season has ended.

~Margaret Grace



The Village has grant money to raise Ferry Road at the dogleg on the pier so it doesn't flood when there is a heavy high tide, as it has in this photo. The long-delayed work is to start in the spring.

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From The Garden

Wildlife in the garden.

When I lived on North Broadway in Nyack, just three blocks from Main Street, we had so much wildlife in the house and yard that you'd think we were living in the boondocks!

There were raccoons in the trees, skunks in the basement and, squirrels and bats in the attic, snakes in the yard and the basement, mice in the house, and the normal suburban array of insects too.

One thing we didn't have were woodchucks, which was good because I never want woodchucks in my garden. I'd rather eat woodchuck for lunch than have one eating mine.

Some people like to guard against wildlife in the garden, and others like to garden with wildlife. Which of these strategies is best is in some ways personal, but you should also think about your safety.

The three main concerns are allergies, dangerous wildlife intruders and non-dangerous wildlife (that can become dangerous if surprised or cornered) and poop. Some wildlife, and your household pets, have excrement that can pose health problems. .

As for wildlife, Piermonsters who live up on Tweed and near 9W should keep an eye out for copperheads, coyotes, deer and bears, in addition to the normal garden wildlife pests. Lower down, you'll more likely to encounter smaller but still problematic intruders, including foxes,

woodchucks, feral cats, skunks, raccoons, rabbits and mice. That doesn't mean a bear, , coyote, copperhead or herd of deer won't head into town, you're more likely to bump into them up the hill.

If you do have wildlife that you want out of your garden, Google Piermont wildlife removal. You'll find plenty of companies anxious to help. Google also is a great source if you are looking for deer or ordinary garden fencing

Some wildlife will enhance your garden. Beautiful birds and lovely bird songs can be part of the joy of gardening. Bees and other pollinators are always important, though people who are allergic to bees need to be careful. Non-venomous snakes will help keep mice and river rats from foraging in your vegetable patch.

Weigh the risks and benefits of your garden's wildlife visitors. You may find unexpected allies and find yourself gardening with it more than you thought you would. Still, I personally don't recommend woodchucks.

Park Volunteers Needed

I was a Piermont Parks Commission volunteer for many years. I helped Parks Commission Chair Dan Sherman (who is a noted licensed landscape architect) design the Village's summer flower planters.

We would go to plant nurseries in early May, scout what was

available, and design the planters as we went along. On planting day, Dan, and the rest of the volunteer crew would meet at Village Hall at 8 am. I'd lay each planter's design out on the sidewalk. Other Parks Commission projects followed a similar pattern, with volunteer gardeners, volunteer plant donations, and a mid-May weeding and planting blitz..

For a small village Piermont has a surprising number of parks (seven) monuments (four) and many memorial benches and picnic tables. What it doesn't have are enough volunteers. Here's how the Commission is structured and what's happening so you can decide if this is the right place for you to volunteer!

For a number of years, individual volunteers have adopted specific parks, monuments or plantings. They work through the growing season, watering and weeding.

There are a number of Parks and Monuments currently looking for volunteer caretakers. And if you would like to volunteer just one day a year, the May planting and weeding blitz could use you. It is a gratifying way to help the community

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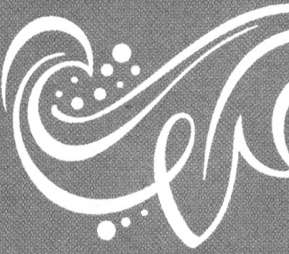
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President's Corner continued from page 2

northern Great Plains but winter here. Why? And speaking of ducks, look for Goldeneyes. Distinguished by their white cheek patch, males sense the coming of spring and start their courtship displays in February. Throwing back their head at top speed, like a mechanical toy, while making low-pitched sounds like a watch being wound, kree-kreek, they attract the attention of brown-colored females, which lay flattened in the water, watching.

Goldeneyes's smaller relative, the Bufflehead, indulge in a similar courtship. But please note: in order to hear such faint voices you must take out all acoustical equipment from your ears. Like Canvasbacks, Goldeneyes and Buffleheads dive for their food. And whereas Canvasbacks nest on the ground, both Goldeneyes and Buffleheads nest in tree holes in the Boreal Forest. Buffleheads are fond of old Flicker holes, some sort of mutualism. Why?

Warmer days will melt the ice, equinoctial tides will flood the Pier, and migratory birds, like the black-and-

orange Baltimore Oriole, will appear one day, as if from nowhere, although we know they spent the winter in the tropics. Longer days encourage their hormones to flow, urge their brain to court, and build nests along the Hudson's shores. Yet, think about it: nothing in their memory tells them that the River was an Arctic wilderness just a few weeks ago.

Oddly, some spring migrants also come north but they breed in the Arctic. Shorebirds like Semipalmated Plovers and Least Sandpipers will spend only a few days along the River, frantically refueling, a brief respite in their enormously long journey from winters in South America to a short breeding season in the tundra. Interestingly, like their songbird counterparts, their memory does not include the frozen side of the Arctic that we, at latitude 42 degrees north, experience for a few winter weeks.

Any season along Piermont's Hudson brings mysteries, makes one ponder the whys of Nature: go there as often as you can, open your eyes and unplug your ears.

-- Francois Vuilleumier



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Community Market continued from page 1

Community Market. "We're in the midst of two other projects," Rose explained. "We like the idea but we can't spread ourselves that thin. It's just not working for us right now. I don't want to hold anyone else up who would be interested."

There is some interest in the store but it's faint. One local woman talked about making it into a food coop. A Piermont entrepreneur, who asked us to withhold his name, is interested but he sounded very uncertain. "I'd call it preliminary at this time," he said.



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