

# The Piermont Newsletter

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## Piermont Pier's Year Of Change



*Piermont's magnificent and unique pier underwent many changes this year. Photo by Daniel Spitzer MD*

Piermont's nearly mile-long pier is the village's most unique and cherished feature. For years things there seldom changed, but this year was different – there were many, and still more are in the works. But before we get to them, here's a brief pier history adapted from Piermont Historical Society publications:

The Erie Railroad built the pier to make space for its buildings and tracks. In 1851 the line's first passengers landed at the pier after a steamboat ride from New York City. They boarded a train and travelled 447 miles to Dunkirk, NY, on Lake Erie. By the way, it was the

world's longest railroad then.

Piermont's paper mill would later be built on the pier. During WWII more than a half-million soldiers left for Europe from it. Today, the Piermont Landing development occupies a big chunk of it.

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The village has long banned motor vehicles from the pier's Ferry Road on three summer Sundays. This summer it did it every Sunday from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The traffic free days were so popular that officials are considering adding even more next year.

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## Piermont's Bravest Ask For Pension Change

When Piermonters go to vote this fall for village, town and county candidates, they'll also find a special referendum on the ballot. It asks them if they want to change the pension rules (called service awards) for the village's all-volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians.

Proposition No. 1 reads:

**Referendum on the Amendment of the Service Award Program for Active Volunteer Firefighter Members of the Piermont Fire Department**

**Should the defined benefit Service Award Program for Active Volunteer Firefighter Members of the Piermont Fire Department be amended to increase the maximum number of eligible years of service from 30 to 40 years and to lower the entitlement retirement age from 62 years to 55 years old, both effective January 1, 2021?**

Piermont has had a Service Awards Program for its firefighters and EMTs since 2002. They can apply to become "vested" participants in the program after 5 years of credited service.

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# Piermont Reflections



Where the wine store is now, Piermont had a well-stocked liquor store. George Walter opened it when he got out of the Army after World War II. A few years later, my parents moved from Westchester to an apartment in Grand View. They soon began a long relationship with George.

My folks weren't alcoholics, but like most of their friends they were drinkers – heavy drinkers. They had come of age during prohibition. My father was 18 years-old when the federal ban on alcohol began, and 31 when it ended. The idea was to stop people from drinking, but outlawing booze made it glamorous and desirable, especially to young people.

The New York State Liquor Authority (SLA) has many strict rules about selling alcohol. George Walter defied many of them. The law said you could only sell liquor during store hours but that never stopped George. He'd deliver any size order, from a pint to a case, right to your door. If your party ran out of Scotch late on Saturday night, you could call him at home, and he'd drive right over with a bottle. If you were having a big party and needed more glasses, no problem. George would lend them to you.

Credit cards and ATMs were yet to be invented. Piermont didn't have a bank, but it had George. The SLA said all liquor store customers must pay cash. George would let his customers charge, although it put his license at risk. If you needed money, he'd cash your check even on a Sunday and, if you asked, not deposit it until Thursday.

Even when we moved to Nyack, my parents stuck with George. When they moved back to Manhattan, he continued to make deliveries to them when they had big parties.

My brand-new bride and I began our marriage in a Piermont apartment in 1961. We had very little money and we weren't big drinkers. Occasionally, I would stop in at George's for a half-gallon of Gallo Hearty Burgundy. That would take care of our alcohol needs for weeks.

When I went by to get another bottle one day, George

was in a red-face rage. "I know you're buying your liquor at a Route 59 discount store!" he charged. I guess he thought we drank like my parents did. I was so shaken that I decided to start doing what he thought I was doing. From then on, I bought our Gallo in Nanuet.

My wife and I remained in Rockland County, eventually buying a house in Piermont. We had graduated from Gallo, but I was still boycotting George's store. My wife finally decided that not shopping there was too inconvenient. We started using George again but I'm afraid that until the day he retired George believed I was cheating on him. I wasn't.

Rest in peace George Walter. –Bob Samuels

## You Can Vote Early This Year

Attention Piermont registered voters!

In addition to being able to vote on Election Day, November 5, 2019, 6am – 9pm at St. John's Church, 895 Piermont Ave., you'll be able to vote early, on the following nine days in Orangetown Town Hall, 26 West Orangeburg Road, Orangeburg, New York 10962

- Saturday, October 26, 2019 From 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM
- Sunday, October 27, 2019 From 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM
- Monday, October 28, 2019 From Noon to 8:00 PM
- Tuesday, October 29, 2019 From 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
- Wednesday, October 30, 2019 From Noon to 8:00 PM
- Thursday, October 31, 2019 From 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
- Friday, November 1, 2019 From 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
- Saturday, November 2, 2019 From 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM
- Sunday, November 3, 2019 From 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Remember to bring a picture ID with you that shows your registered Piermont address.

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This issue of *The Piermont Newsletter*, and many past issues, can be found online at

<http://www.piermont-ny.com/newsletter/>  
thanks to volunteer Richie Stark.



*The Old No. 7 Band rocks away in Flywheel Park. It was just one of a series of concerts the Piermont Civic Association sponsored there this summer. The PCA topped it all off in September with its Lobster Fest. Photo by Betsy Franco Feeney*

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*Piermont Pier's Year of Change, continued from page 1*

So many came here to enjoy the pier on Sundays that it created a parking problem

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For years the village has shut the pier's Ferry Road to motor vehicles on three summer Sundays. This summer it tried banning motor vehicles every Sunday from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The traffic free days proved so popular that officials are considering adding even more days next year.

So many came here to enjoy the pier on Sundays that it created a parking problem at the lot near the ballfield and the Goswick Pavilion. As a result, the village will be limiting parking there to people with Piermont Pier Permits. They are free for residents and for sale to others.

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Volunteers recently revitalized the Piermont Community Dog Park. It's off the first part of Ferry Road, just beyond the ballpark. To see some pictures of cute local pups and learn how your dog can join the fun check out: <https://www.piermontdogpark.com/>

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A small number of Piermont Landing condo owners are trying to change what you see on the first long stretch of Ferry Road. Calling themselves the Piermont Pier Waterfront Beautification Group, they hope to improve their view of the Piermont Marsh (and their property values) by taking down some Ferry Road utility poles and burying the wires. This will happen, if it happens, between the pier's gate and the beginning of the big turn called the dog leg.

The Village Board okayed the group's plan but said it wouldn't help pay any of its estimated \$50,000 cost. However, when its fund raising efforts started to drag it came to the Board again, asking for a \$20,000 donation. The Board said no. At last check, the group's Go Fund Me Page shows a \$3,122 balance.

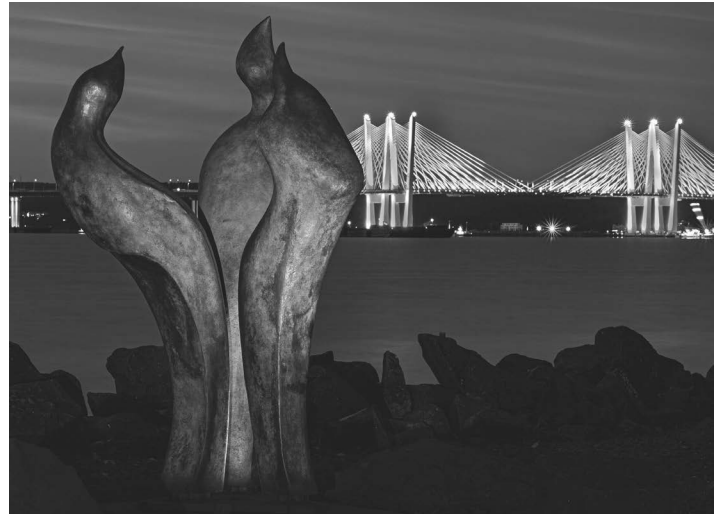
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The first new Ferry Road blacktop starts just beyond the dog park. A NYS Thruway Authority grant paid for the work. Because high tide flooding often halted traffic, the rebuilt road was designed to raise the level of the road. That trapped water at the Fred C. Scheffold Memorial, killing its trees and other plants. Scheffold, a NYC Fire Department Battalion Chief who lived in Piermont, lost his life at the World Trade Center on 9-11. The Piermont Fire Department has volunteered to restore and improve the site at no cost to the village.

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*Just beyond the memorial is a striking new statue. Newsletter contributor Joe Serra (Full disclosure: He is a partner in Piermont's OUTSIDE IN Gallery) reports on it:*

When long time village resident Lynn Boone came across the sculpture last summer at our gallery she reacted: "As soon as I saw it, I knew it was just the perfect piece to pay homage to my late sister Luanne Henderson and her husband Charles. And I knew exactly where on the pier I wanted it. I couldn't imagine



*Piermonter Lynn Boone gave the village Élan Vital, a sculpture by Elaine Lorenz. It is dedicated in the memory of Lynn's family who gave so much to the village. Photo by Daniel Spitzer MD*

it in any other location. I also wanted to donate the sculpture to Piermont because Charles and Luanne loved this village and contributed so much to it."

The sculpture Ms. Boone bought was by New Jersey artist Elaine Lorenz. It is called Élan Vital (which means Life Force). Because it was made of fiberglass and resin, it would need to be cast in something stronger and more durable to survive the pier's extreme weather.

There was also the question of how to get approval for installing a sculpture on the pier. To solve the problem, the Village Board created the Piermont Public Arts Committee (PPAC). The Committee has since identified seven sites for prospective artwork (including one spot on the pier).

Lynn paid a foundry in Pennsylvania to cast the statue in bronze. It was installed in late August and unveiled to the public at a ceremony on September 22. "I just absolutely love it!" she said. "It's joyful. It's playful. It reminds me of birds or dolphins interacting with each other."

Lorenz is thrilled that the piece is near the river. Explaining the work, she wrote in 2012: "I see this sculpture as three humans, animals or birds participating in an exuberant exchange at the water's edge. My work often hovers between the abstract and the representational. It is up to the viewer to decide what type of organism the work represents, bird, fish, mammal or if it matters. But the forms are certainly communicating their joy of being alive. I am inspired by life's beginnings, especially the more subtle elements in the landscape, such as the sprouting and burgeoning growth of seedlings. Beginning of life is the focus of the series of work that includes Élan Vital."

#### **About the artist:**

Elaine Lorenz is a former president of the NYC Sculpture's Guild and is a tenured professor at New Jersey's William Paterson University where she teaches sculpture and ceramics. Her works are in private, public and corporate collections throughout the US. She has received numerous awards and grants.

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**About the donor and her family:**

Among Luanne and Charles Henderson's many contributions are a six-unit apartment building given to the Fire Department to house volunteer firemen, a rescue boat (that bears Charles's name), an ambulance, and a fire truck. The Hendersons also built a greenspace and garden on Piermont Avenue for the public to enjoy.

Lynn Boone is a longtime village benefactor. She has supported numerous civic and community events throughout the years, and has been a contributor to the formation and maintenance of many of our parks. Lynn and her sister Luanne co-owned Boondocks, The Mole Hole and Flywheel Creamery.

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Ferry Road's surface turns rough after you pass the statue, but it will soon be repaved thanks to a \$215,000 grant that Assemblywoman Ellen Jaffee won from the state Department of Transportation. It will meet the fresh blacktop at the eastern end of the pier. The state Department of Environmental Conservation paid for it earlier in the summer. This means that the village managed to have nearly all of Ferry Road resurfaced this year at no cost to Piermont taxpayers.

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On the north side of the pier, just before Lamont-Doherty's Earth Observatory Hudson River Field Station, is a newly installed circle of stone blocks. Dubbed PIERHENGE, it was the idea of Columbia University's Dr. Maureen Raymo and Dr.

Kate Orff. The space will be an outdoor classroom to supplement the Field Station's teaching and outreach programs. It also is a place for children and adults to play, sit or relax.

Landscape architect Dan Sherman, who is the chairman of Piermont's Parks Commission, planned it and selected the stones. The Piermont Department of Public Works installed them, and Piermont's VFW Post 7462 paid for it. Piermont VFW Post Commander Lawrence Goswick said they'll add a plaque commemorating the service of the men and women from Piermont who left from the pier to fight in Europe during World War II.

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Lamont's Nicole deRoberts tells what's been happening just next door:

For more than two decades the Field Station has been Lamont-Doherty's site for research, education and outreach. Recently, Lamont extensively renovated the building. On its front is an educational mural by artist James Kimak, a local resident. Kimak's

first experience with Lamont was as a band member at a scientist's birthday party. (Piermonters know Jim for his saxophone and bass prowess in the bluesy, American-roots band, Old No. 7.)

It was Lamont Research Professor Maureen Raymo's idea for a geological timeline-based mural. She and Kimak closely collaborated on the content. This is typical of the process, according to Kimak. He generally works alongside the person who commissioned the mural to ensure that the vision for the piece is realized.

With over 40 years as a fine artist and designer, and almost 15 years creating murals, Kimak seems to approach this process with ease. And the result is truly stunning. Instead of a traditional straight line running through the timeline, each point in history is connected by the Hudson River meandering throughout the piece.



Photo by Margie Turrin

The timeline starts 200 million years ago and goes to the present day. Text describing major Hudson Valley historical events is surrounded by colorful, exciting images of maps, extinct animals, asteroids, and more. The two 4-foot by 10-foot panels of the mural are dense with detailed, eye-catching images, and passages of text provide information. The result is a fun, engaging, and educational piece. Kimak said that the mural will stand up to harsh weather because it was printed on washable, mounted rigid pane. "Working with Jim has been fantastic," says Raymo. "His vision and talent have led to the creation of something really special for a really special place, the Piermont Pier."

Kimak's portfolio includes a variety of mural installations in different high-traffic areas, mostly across New York City. His work can be seen at Montefiore Medical Center, Madison Square Garden's Garden of Dreams Foundation projects, Columbia University and New York Presbyterian among others. However, Kimak's first project here holds a special place for him. "It means everything. I mean, this is the first project I'm doing locally. I'm very involved in the community here, so to have something visually up there is

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# Water Chestnuts Threaten the Sparkill Creek

The word “invasion” has its roots in the Latin *invadere*, meaning to penetrate, to assail, to enter violently. This past summer, European water chestnuts, which have been clogging tributaries to the Hudson River for years, finally found the Sparkill Creek. The invasion was not violent, but the consequences are dire.

The water chestnuts first appeared on the Ferdon Avenue pond in early June. In about a week’s time, they went from small clusters to an alarming infestation. Seemingly overnight, the pond became a dense floating carpet of leafy green plants with ominous looking black seed pods. At the pond’s widest point, the patch grew to about 200 feet long by 20 feet wide.

Even before this happened, the creek had many problems. Less than 100 years ago, its waters were clean enough to make ice for human consumption. But in the past 25 years, its waters have become the most polluted of any going into the Hudson River, according to the Sparkill Creek Watershed Alliance. Silt deposits in the Ferdon pond are forming islands. These heavily vegetated berms trap trash and untreated biological waste, making parts of the pond impassable for canoes and other small boats.

Invasive plants have been a problem in Piermont for decades. Phragmites have taken over the Piermont Marsh and bamboo threatens local yards, but nothing seems to have come on as fast as the water chestnuts. My husband, Tom Mastronardi, has lived on the pond for 25 years and sees the problem first-hand. “The chestnuts block sunlight from penetrating the water and crowd out vegetation supplying food for fish and birds,” he says. “When they decompose, they deplete the oxygen in the water, which can kill wildlife.”

By July, some people living on the creek and its pond were desperate to get rid of the invaders. Using a borrowed canoe, my husband and I started pulling out some of the long, leafy vines. It is messy, backbreaking work. We managed to get a dozen garbage bags full of the soggy weeds curbside for Pier-

mont’s DPW to pick up. JoAnn Tuttle, one of our neighbors, had a similar experience. The Piermont Fire Department pulled the water chestnuts from the ice-skating pond near Eleanor Stroud Park, before holding water rescues training there.

We later learned we all had only made a temporary dent. JoAnn had cleared the water behind her house, and we had made a small hole in the weeds by ours. The Fire Department had cleared the skating pond, but we discovered that our fixes aren’t permanent. The plant’s black seeds had already dropped from the weeds into the mucky creek bed, guaranteeing their return next spring.

And that muck gets deeper each year. When Tom waded into the pond, he was alarmed. “Although small birds can wade in the ankle-deep water near these islands,” he says, “I was quickly up to mid-thigh in what felt like quicksand. It was, to say the least, a concern.”

Despite all that, the creek remains a Piermont treasure, but for how much longer remains unknown. Each summer it still attracts white herons, egrets and dozens of other types of birds. Large, lazy carp and snapping turtles still fill its waters. But they won’t be here much longer unless the water chestnuts are eliminated.

In a sobering report, the Lower Hudson Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM), says it will take 5 to 12 years to eradicate them. They need to be pulled by hand or mechanically early each spring before they drop their seeds. Westchester County has machines with a rotating mechanism to pull up and roll the vines. Other places use herbicides.

An ad-hoc approach to this invasive plant will not be enough, experts warn. It will take coordination between the Village, the County, the State and advocacy groups to ensure next year’s crop is nipped in the bud, literally. – *Julie Harman*

**For more about the invader:** [http://nyis.info/invasive\\_species/water-chestnut/](http://nyis.info/invasive_species/water-chestnut/)



Photo left by Julie Harman shows the density of the European water chestnuts that invaded the Sparkill Creek this summer. In photo right by Bob Samuels, Tom Mastronardi and Julie Harman, struggle to remove some of the plants.

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## Canzona's Wants You To Join The Family

The origin story has been told before, but for those of you who didn't pay attention, the two-story building on Piermont Avenue just west of the bridge over the Sparkill Creek, began its life as a food store almost a century ago under the name Berardi's grocery. It morphed successively into Jimmy's Deli, under the direction of Jimmy Alise, then into another Jimmy's Deli under the direction of Jimmy Artrip, and then, just over thirty years ago, it was transformed into what we now know and love as Canzona's Market.

A great grandson of the original Berardi, who still owned the building, lured Carl Canzona who had spent twenty years doing production control for a major hardware company, to come take over the business. Canzona was ready for a change and although, as his younger son Mike now notes, his father couldn't even boil water, he jumped at the offer. Canzona's Market began its run as a village institution and the Artrips moved upstairs where they still live.

From the beginning, the business was a family undertaking that included Carl, his wife Adeline, and their three children, Carl, Elena, Mike -- all of them in their 20's. Everyone worked behind the counter, some regularly, some intermittently. Two years after the family took over the store, Carl went into partnership with his father.

Since it was already an operating grocery store the Canzonas inherited a stock list and a set of suppliers, both of which have obviously changed over the years as public tastes—and the competition for business—have changed. But until seven or so years ago the market carried a full line of groceries. You could, if you wanted to, do your regular shopping there—as well as stopping in to pick up breakfast, lunch, or something to take home for dinner. Lunchtime often meant a line out the door. Piermont's highway department folks faithfully came, as they still do, for one of the store's giant sandwiches and, perhaps, one of their deliciously fresh homemade salads, for which Mike is the cook (and yes, he does cook at home— for company).

In those days there was very little competition. What there was included the Community Market, a little deli where Olar is now, and the long gone Gallucci's in Sparkill. Canzona's stayed open until 7:30 so residents could stop by after work to pick up something for dinner.

Their busiest years, Mike says, were from 1990 to the early 2000s when the pier morphed from a collection of factory build-

ings into upscale housing. The major destruction and construction work pulled lots of day workers into the village who soon discovered Canzona's. Now people can buy food anywhere and everywhere, including when they stop for gas, and Canzona's closes at 4:00.

The family has also changed over the 31 years. Carl Sr. began to cut down his hours several years before his much too early death in 2014. After that, Carl and Mike became co-owners.

Carl Jr. married Laura, Elena married Darrell, and Mike married DeAnna, and each has produced their own families, at least two of whom, Mike's son Mike and Carl's son Joe, sometimes work behind the counter.

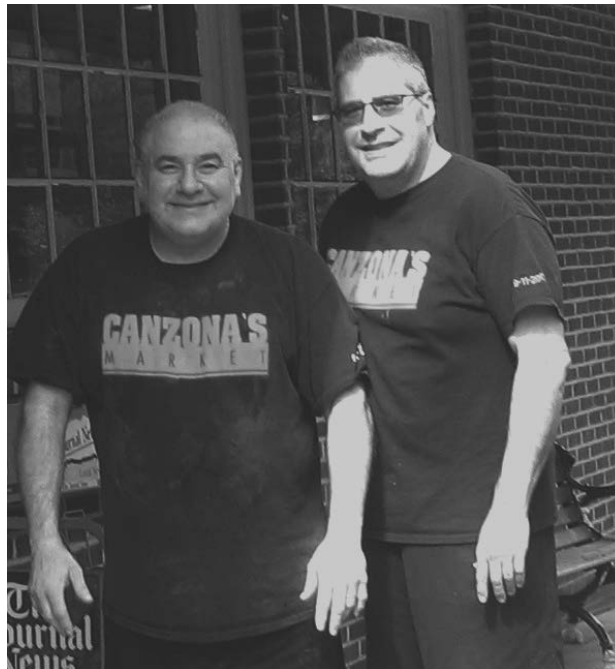
But it is unlikely that another generation of Canzonas will take over the store when Mike and Carl retire because lots of things have changed in the last thirty-plus years. For one, there are many more places to get food; for another, the newspapers that used to sit on boxes outside the store are casualties of the same forces that have decimated the newspaper industry -- the cell phone, the internet, and a generation or so of young people who don't read newspapers.

But inside Canzonas, some things have never changed like the

house-roasted beef, the homemade coleslaw and the freshly made tuna, egg, chicken, macaroni, and potato salads. And most of all, the fact that everyone who comes into the store becomes part of the family. Mike and Carl know your name, ask about your family, and if you order the same thing a few times, remember your order almost before you do, down to "salt, pepper and catsup." And don't believe that old sign that says "Our bookkeeper is named Helen Waite. So, if you want credit, go to Helen Waite." Lots of regulars have a tab there.

There may be no other place in the county where you can have your cold cuts weighed on a non-digital rail scale that dates to 1955—the last one in Rockland, Mike believes. And they can still make change, fast, without a computerized cash register telling them how much money they need to hand back.

Since Canzona's is in a residential district, down Piermont Avenue from where most Piermont shopping takes place, Mike says from time to time newer residents turn up, surprised to discover the deli is there. Which means there are lots of you readers missing out on what may be the friendliest place in the village. Stop in and join the family. – Joan Gussow



Carl and Mike Canzona. Staff photo

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# Piermont's New Street Lights; Everything You Wanted to Know

**W**hat are LED streetlights? LED stands for Light Emitting Diodes. LED streetlights are energy efficient, virtually maintenance-free, and last up to 4 times longer than High Pressure Sodium (HPS) streetlights. LED optics are designed to diffuse and distribute the light in a more precise manner than traditional streetlights, reducing glare and lighting only targeted areas. Unlike most lights currently in use, the raw materials used to construct an LED contain no toxic materials and may be recycled or disposed of in any landfill with no negative environmental impact.

## *Why switch to LED streetlights?*

Piermont wants to reduce the energy consumption, maintenance costs and the environmental impact associated with its network of streetlights. By installing LED streetlights, the village will benefit from significant energy efficiency and cost savings, reduced maintenance, improved lighting quality and greater roadway safety for both vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

- Energy costs lowered by up to 70%
- Reduced maintenance costs by up to 80% (due to the technology). LED's do not require relamping of ballast replacements such as traditional HID lighting and typically have a 100,000 hour (~23 years) rated operating life.
- Improved visual acuity
- Reduced light pollution
- Environmentally friendly

## *Why is the Village purchasing the streetlights from O&R?*

Piermont has negotiated the purchase of the existing cobrahead fixtures, which will then be replaced with new LED fixtures. By purchasing and taking on the responsibility of maintaining the lights, the Village will realize significant savings in maintenance fees that are included in the delivery charges from O&R.

## *Why convert to LED now?*

Innovations in LED technology and production methods have resulted in dramatically reduced pricing for LED street lights in recent years. LED luminaires are a small component of overall production costs, which for many manufacturers have now stabilized. Given the cost of maintaining an old and expensive lighting system versus the immediate savings from the new LED street lighting, it makes sense to change to LEDs now.

## *How many streetlights will be replaced with LEDs?*

This project will replace 183 streetlights.

## *How much will Piermont save when it upgrades to LED street light fixtures?*

Piermont expects to save an estimated 101,053 kilowatt-hours of energy per year, equivalent to a 66% reduction, compared to our current consumption. As mentioned above, LEDs will also help reduce maintenance costs by up to 80% because LEDs are a sol-

id-state technology (no moving parts) and last up to four times longer than the Municipality's existing streetlights. The retrofit will also improve Piermont's environmental footprint by reducing greenhouse gas emissions by an estimated 72 metric tons of greenhouse gas annually, equivalent to the gas emissions from approximately 15 passenger vehicles driven for one year.

## *How will the street lighting change?*

Light levels will be maintained or reduced if appropriate for the location.

However, the new LED street lights will provide better visibility to both pedestrians and motorists. They offer better clarity and improve the ability to identify colors at night. The LED Streetlight Conversion Project includes a change from a drop glass fixture to a flat glass fixture, which changes how light is distributed on the roadway and associated area. This change supports Piermont's design criteria of being "Dark Sky Compliant" and preventing light from trespassing onto adjacent spaces where it is not intended to be. Roadway lighting criteria is governed by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America standard RP-8-14 and this project is designed to meet this criteria. The primary purpose of roadway lighting is to provide drivers the ability to navigate roadways safely and recognize objects or pedestrians within the road allowance; the intent is not to provide perimeter lighting for homeowners (in fact it is discouraged and often a source of complaints).

## *What wavelength/color temperature (°K) are the LED lights?*

While a range of color temperatures have been used in projects installed in other areas, Real Term Energy, the company that is developing the design for the project, recommends using 3000 kelvin lighting throughout. Using 3000k throughout will increase resident comfort without compromising visual acuity and safety.

## *How bright will the new ones be?*

The LED lighting to be installed downtown will be in the 3000k range and will appear less glaring. LED lighting is more directional than the previous technologies and therefore will focus light more efficiently on the road. This can help to avoid light where it is not needed. The design process will ensure that the light replacements downtown are only as bright as they need to be for safe lighting, and will avoid hot spots (excessive lighting) as much as possible.

## *How bright will the street lights in residential neighborhoods be?*

Residential neighborhoods will be designed with light levels to ensure pedestrian and driver safety. The design process also compares the replacement light levels relative to the existing wattages to ensure the new lights are not significantly brighter

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# Piermont Rowing Club Celebrates 20 Years



Members of the Piermont Rowing Club start out on a morning row. Photo by Michelle Gelles

**E**arly on summer mornings, Piermonters with a river view delight in watching members of the Piermont Rowing Club (PRC) head out into the Hudson in long skinny boats called sculls or shells. This scene has become a part of the community landscape and identity.

The club hosted a 20th anniversary weekend celebration this summer, inviting former members—some traveling from across the country—to return to row, feast and commemorate two decades of Piermont’s rowing revival.

When the club began, few members knew the lower Hudson had a rich rowing history. Piermont’s first rowing club, they learned, was founded in 1878. Back then competing clubs staged races and other events, attracting scores of gamblers and spectators. There were local rowing heroes—typically working-class tradesmen. The sport eventually lost its appeal. It was viewed as something for the Ivy League set.

The years passed and rowing regained some of its popularity. It was time to bring the sport back to Piermont. In its first year, the club’s 20 or so founding members were joined by some 50 others. Its first boats were two second-hand collegiate four-man shells. At the close of the season, one women’s

four-oared shell competed at the famous Head of the Charles Regatta in Boston.

Club members today enjoy the rigorous workout rowing provides, and improve their skills with regular coaching. A few compete in regional regattas. Membership has leveled out at 50-60 members, with plenty of boats and oars to go around. It’s a working club, and member-volunteers maintain the equipment. The club’s social events include a potluck dinner, a regatta, sunset rows, and organized long rows, as well as some winter training events.

A typical row lasts 1 - 1 1/2 hours and will take rowers up to the bridge in Nyack and back, or to the state line in Sneden’s Landing, or even as far as Alpine, New Jersey. The rowing season runs from mid-April to mid-November.

Experienced adult rowers are welcome to join at any time during the season. For those new to rowing, the club holds a Learn-to-Row program every other year. The next is scheduled for the spring.

You can find more detailed information about the Piermont Rowing Club and how to join on the club’s website at: <http://www.piermontrowing.org>—Pamela Hudson

## The PCA Has A New Logo

The Piermont Civic Association has an elegant new logo and a new motto, “Connecting the Community.” It’s what the PCA has been doing for more than 50 years with its events, newsletter and mailing list.

Piermonter Lisa Fisher designed the winning logo. She’s a professional graphic designer and animator who answered an online ad asking for volunteers to create a new PCA logo.

Joanne Ottaviano, a PCA Board member with an arts background, came up with the idea of seeking entries online. A handful of designs were submitted, but Fisher’s was the one the PCA Board preferred.





just big. It could be the capstone of my career and I would be happy with that.”

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*Finally, Margaret Grace, a Newsletter editor and sailboat owner, reports on the issue of commercial boats docking at the end of the pier:*

Two boat charter companies asked the Village Board at its July meeting for permission to dock at the end of our pier.

One, New York Boat Charter, wants to use the dock to pick-up and drop off passengers. It owns an event boat operating out of Weehawken, NJ, specializing in event cruises for about 75 people. The same company owns Nyack Boat Charter. It has both a 54-ft sailing boat and a speed boat that takes passengers for tours of the Hudson, north of the Tappan Zee Bridge.

The other company, Hudson River Adventures, plans to have a large day-tour boat pick up passengers in New York City and deliver them directly to Piermont. The passengers would spend three or four hours dining and shopping, ending with a scenic cruise back to the city on the boat.

After deliberating, the Board decided to allow New York Boat Charter's event boat tie-up twice at the pier for two cruises. One is for a private party, the other is for local business leaders. "We look at these as 'test drives' for possible future use of the pier," said Mayor Tucker.

He pointed out that the company will pay the village significant dockage fees. Passengers will be parking off-site and be brought to the boat on buses or jitneys to minimize Ferry Road traffic.

New York State encourages communities to provide access to their waterfronts, and waterfront marine-related uses through

its Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP). Piermont adopted a LWRP in the mid 80's, revised and adopted it again in 2017. Mayor Tucker said the planned test fit in with the LWRP, Piermont's "Master Plan" for our waterfront.

"Residents," Tucker added, "have loved the no-car days on the pier. Finding a way to bring visitors to the village, via the Hudson, would be an obvious boon to our businesses, but it needs to be done without adding traffic and more parking problems."

Trustee Ivanya Alpert added that this use must be done in an eco-friendly way, appreciating the natural aspects of the pier.

Piermont has several marinas, but because the bay is so shallow, event vessels and deeper keeled sailboats stay away. We've long restricted boats from tying up at the end of the pier. Only the Hudson River sloop Clearwater used it this past year. But there is a history of marine activity there. Most famously, it was the debarkation point for thousands of troops headed to Europe during World War II.

Some years after that, Lamont added the concrete dock at the pier's end so that their ocean-going research ships could tie up near its labs. Its famed three-masted Vema often docked there as it prepared for voyages that created the first maps of the ocean floor. The dock is still structurally sound. The village studied it earlier this year for a proposed floating dock for Piermont's fireboats.

Later this year, when the Village Board addresses opening the pier for occasional commercial dockage, residents will want to let the board know how they liked it.

## Piermont Police First with 'Hope, Not Handcuffs' Initiative

The Piermont Police Department launched a new program in May called "Hope, Not Handcuffs." It aims to help steer drug abusers away from arrest and possibly prison, to drug treatment and a second chance at life.

"We have all heard the terrifying statistics on the news about the number of people dying from drug overdoses today," said Chief Michael O'Shea. "Many young people are overdosing on a combination of fentanyl and heroin. Our contacts at the U.S. Postal Service tell us that they are probably intercepting only 10 percent of the fentanyl that is coming into the country. And the fentanyl that is coming in is increasingly stronger in potency."

"Drug addiction is not a problem that we can arrest our way out of," said the chief. The Piermont Police found a program called "Hope Not Handcuffs." It works with local police departments to get people with alcohol and drug problems into immediate treatment rather than jail.

Within the program is a group of volunteers called "angels." When a drug addict asks for treatment, the police will call an angel. He or she will come to the police station, meet the person in

need and arrange for immediate treatment and transportation to a drug treatment facility. Chief O'Shea said that if a person wants help, they need to bring in all their drugs and weapons.

The department recently had its first "win" with the program. The police were called about a person high on drugs who had already physically harmed his family. When they arrived, the person was highly agitated. Later when he came down from the drugs, the police told him about the program and that they would call an angel to help him.

"He refused the angel's help," explained the chief, "saying that if he was not immediately transported to a drug facility, he would use more drugs." The police took him to the facility where he was greeted by a doctor who could help him. He went into the Hope program.

A few weeks later the chief received a call from the man who thanked him for helping him. "I told him don't thank me," O'Shea recalled. "We have a whole team that is working together to help people like him. In the future, if he needed help, he could call me, and I would get him help."—Ron Derven

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## Village Board Amends Rental Registry Law

The Piermont Village Board voted to amend its rental registry law that has been in effect in the village since the beginning of the year.

For many at the meeting, both the amendment and the original law, which requires owners who rent one-family or two-family homes to register them with the village, came as a surprise.

The amendment requires owners of buildings with commercial space on the first floor, and less than three rental units above to submit a rental registry form (available at the building inspector's office). The village wants to be able to inspect the building to see if they comply with fire safety standards.

The law also says if a Piermonter has created a separate apartment in a single-family residence, he or she needs to register that unit with the village and pay a \$250 fee. If that single-family home lacks a certificate of occupancy for a second unit, that unit is probably illegal, and the owner must seek

a new certificate of occupancy. That entails going before the zoning board to get approval to convert that single-family house into a two-family house.

There are hefty fines associated with violations of this law. "A fine of not less than \$3,500 and not exceeding \$5,000 upon conviction of a first offense; a fine of not less than \$7,000 nor more than \$10,000 for a conviction of the second of two offenses, both of which were committed within a period of five years; a fine of not less than \$10,000 nor more than \$15,000 for a conviction of the third of three offenses, all of which were committed within a period of five years."

If a resident is simply renting out a room in their house to a boarder, many of the elements of the law do not apply, however, the building inspector requires that the rental registry form be submitted to the village. The \$250 fee will likely be waived where the owner also occupies the house as a primary residence. – *Ron Derven*

## A Message From Mayor Bruce Tucker

We did it! The Village of Piermont has now been recognized as a Certified Climate Smart Community - Bronze level! Out of 277 registered communities, we are now one of only 34 communities in New York State that are Certified! This now makes us eligible for DEC Climate Smart Communities Grants. Thank you to the hard working members of the Sustainable Piermont Committee.

Also a shout out to Tom Temple and the DPW employees for their assistance.

<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-cuomo-announces-city-buffalo-and-erie-county-among-16-new-certified-climate-smart>

You can learn more about Climate Smart Communities here:<https://climatesmart.ny.gov/>

## What About Those Big Stone Blocks?

People are asking about the big stone blocks piled next to the OUTSIDE IN on Ferdon Avenue. The short answer is, there are plans to use them to build a small park surrounding the upstream side of the Sparkill Creek's Rockland Road Bridge.

Years ago, before the bridge was renovated, I proposed that the village build a tiny park here. There wasn't enough money for it then, but they did reshape the intersection to make room for a future park.

Since then, Dan Sherman, Chair of the Parks Commission, interested neighbors and village representatives have met to discuss what they could build. I am donating my architectural firm's services (WaCa Design) to design the park. Grants and private donations will pay for its construction.

The design will aim for minimal environmental impact, dovetailing with Piermont's commitment to prepare for climate change. We plan to use sustainable construction methods and buy local and re-used materials. This explains those massive granite blocks across the street from the new park. They sit on land PJ Mouquin graciously allowed us to use.

Some of those big fellows had supported railroad overpasses.

They came from a stone yard in Connecticut. Others were windowsills salvaged from the demolition of a mill in Southern Massachusetts (135 miles from here). We'll also use local stone from nearby property owners.

An exciting new development for the park is in the works: celebrated local sculptor, Grace Knowlton, and her family have agreed to donate one of her signature works to the village. The recently formed Piermont Public Art Committee (PPAC) recommended placing this sculpture at the park. We'll use some of the stone blocks to make a plinth to support the sculpture.

The new park is the latest in a series of improvements at the foot of Rockland Road. This is an important entrance to Piermont. The Village Board had designated it as an historic district and rebuilt its bridge and sidewalks. Private property owners renovated their homes and buildings. Two of them opened a new business, the OUTSIDE IN. It is a gallery and a coffee bar.

The new park will be a shady spot for visitors and Piermonters to sit and enjoy the view of the water cascading over the dam, as well as the brick arch of the bridge.

If you're interested in getting involved, please contact Dan Sherman, Joe Serra or me. – *Walter Cain*

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## Front Line Report

With the hiring of five new officers, the Piermont Police Department has become more diverse. "Piermont is a diverse community and its police department needs to reflect that," said Chief Michael O'Shea. "Recently, we hired an officer who is not only fluent in Spanish but also Arabic; we added a female officer; and we added another officer who is fluent in Spanish. We want to be able to easily communicate with people who need our help."

The new officers include:

Matt Dicembri, an experienced officer who previously worked in the Town of Chester, in Orange County, New York.

Detective Peter Boutros comes to Piermont from the City of Beacon, New York.

Shannon Hansen worked for the Town of Highlands near West Point and the Spring Valley Police Department before coming to Piermont.

Dennis Donahue was formerly a New

York City police officer.

Dennis Rolon is a certified evidence technician.

Chief O'Shea said that the department has also initiated a community outreach program in the village. "We will have officers wearing white shirts with the markings of the Piermont Police Department who will be dedicated to community outreach. The police are here to help in any way we can."

With autumn approaching, traffic will increase as more travelers visit the village to enjoy its restaurants, shops and the beautiful foliage. The chief reminds drivers to keep a safe distance from bicyclists and other cars. You need to be one car length apart for every 10 miles per hour that your car is traveling.

\*\*\*

The DPW is collecting leaves starting the week of October 21 and ending the week of December 2. Loose-

leaf piles should be placed at the edge of your property, says Tom Temple, Superintendent of Public Works. They should be clear of rocks, brush and any other debris, which could either clog or cause damage to the collection unit. Do not block any sidewalks with loose or bagged leaves, forcing pedestrians to walk in the roadway.

Leaves that are to be bagged should be placed in biodegradable bags. The DPW supplies these bags to residents free of charge. While supplies last, pick them up at the DPW garage during regular business hours. The DPW will not collect leaves in plastic bags.

The Piermont Fire Department is always looking for new members to join its ranks. Anyone who is interested should come to the firehouse Monday evenings between 7-9 pm. —Ron Deroen

## Gardening in Rising Waters

Is sea level rise lifting the water table and flooding the Piermont Community Garden from below?

Gardeners there have been telling me that when they pull up weeds sometimes, in some parts of the garden they find water from below filling up the hole. That happens even if the garden doesn't look or feel flooded, and even when it hasn't been raining.

I wondered if the rising level of the Hudson River was affecting the water table under the garden. And since tides and moon phases effect the river level, do these also have an impact? What about rain? What about drainage pipes? I contacted two people. Both have answers to pieces of the puzzle.

One was Margie Turin, a Rockland resident who is the Education Coordinator for the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory in Palisades. Even though Margie was at a conference, she was kind enough to e-mail back and forth with me several times. Below are quotes [edited for clarity] where Margie lays out what is happening:

Margie on sea level rise, tides, moon phases, rain, storms and changes over time:

"The whole (Hudson River) waterfront is being affected by sea level rise. At the Battery in NYC it is increasing 2.85 millimeters or 0.1122047 an inch per year. While it doesn't sound like much it is enough that we are seeing the affects over time

- with sea level rising a foot in the last 100 years. High tide, storm events, full moons etc. just adds to the already increasing water levels.

"All expectations are that the river will continue to rise but no one has the definitive rate or time. A New York State Task Force projects an increase from 2-10 inches by the 2020s and 8-30 inches by the 2050s.

"Base level is the river. It is responding to input from rain and run off in the short term, and changes in sea level in the long term. One side coming from run off down from the higher ground and the other from the river. This past year has been very wet, even last fall we saw the ground so saturated it forced fresh water into the river."

"The level of the river matters because the garden is close to it. It sets the baseline for the water table. Its rise and fall in the garden is mostly due to seasonal rain fall. During drought years it will go down, and during wet years it will rise. The whole thing is a system that is affected by the amount of rain and changes in sea level."

The second person I spoke with was Ellen Tress, a multi-decade Piermont community gardener. She believes there may still be old drainage and storm sewer pipes under the garden adding to the problem. Within the garden, there may be slight differences in elevation. This could cause water to collect.

— Susan Freiman

*Piermont's New Street Lights, continued from page 7*

than the existing lights. Regardless of the design process, the LED street light replacement will feel brighter due to the eye's perception of light; LEDs use a wider spectrum of light than the older technology and is more favorable to human nighttime vision.

***Will LEDs reduce or contribute to the light pollution problem?***

LED lights actually eliminate the "orange sky glow" found over many cities since the LED is directional and does not disperse in all directions the same way older light technologies do. Regarding night sky pollution, the LED fixtures will be required to be "Dark Sky Compliant" as all light is directed downward.

***What are the anticipated installation impacts for my neighborhood?***

Residents and business owners will experience only minor impacts as a result of this project. There will be no permanent construction sites, as crews will be mobile during the installation phase. Proper traffic control will be in effect, with clear signage directing motorists around the installation locations.

***What are the environmental benefits of LED lights in comparison to the previous lights?***

The estimated energy savings of 101,053 kwh per year is equivalent to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 72 metric tons per year. The amount of greenhouse gas emissions that will be reduced each year is equivalent to the amount of carbon sequestered by 1,178 tree seedlings grown for ten years. LED is a more environmentally-friendly option: it contains no mercury and lasts four times longer (four high-pressure sodium bulbs would need to be disposed of properly for each LED recycled).

***How will the maintenance be done once O&R no longer is responsible?***

Piermont will obtain a maintenance contract with an electrical contractor, possibly the one that installs the lights. There will likely be little maintenance required on the mast arm, which the Village will now be responsible for. If a pole goes down for any reason the pole is the responsibility of Orange and Rockland. A portion of the savings will be allocated to cover the annual maintenance cost.

***How do streetlights turn on/off?***

Streetlights are controlled by an individual photo cell which turns the lights on/off based on light levels present, so lights turn on when it gets dark and off when it gets light.

***How will the project improve lighting deficiencies?***

This project is an opportunity to improve Piermont's street

The image shows a promotional graphic for Palisades Physical Therapy. At the top, the name "PALISADES" is written in a large, spaced-out font, with a hand icon in the center. Below it, "PHYSICAL THERAPY" is written in a smaller font. Underneath that, it says "MANUAL THERAPY | ORTHOPEDIC REHABILITATION". To the right of the text is a vertical stack of four small images showing hands-on physical therapy treatments. To the left of these images are the words "HANDS-ON", "ONE-TO-ONE", "PAIN RELIEF", and "STRENGTH" stacked vertically. At the bottom of the graphic, it says "NO REFERRAL REQUIRED, INSURANCE PLANS ACCEPTED" and "Dr. Edmund Kalotkin, PT, DPT, COMT (845) 359-3950 | Palisades | Bardonia | Manhattan".

lighting. The Village's consultant, Real Term Energy, completed an audit of the existing system, which will be used to complete a photometric design for the new LED system that meets RP-8 industry guidelines wherever possible. As a result, each street will have an optimal level of illumination given the current characteristics of the street such as pole spacing and height, road width, etc.

***How will the old lights be disposed of?***

All of the old lights will be recycled at qualified environmental disposal centers.

***I have heard that in some places where new lights were installed they shown brightly into people's apartments. What can be done if that happens?***

While LEDs are more directional than previous technologies, their focused light can occasionally light private property where it does not belong. This can be caused by variations in elevation, curves in the road, or residential properties located close to road to name a few common causes. In these cases where a light was installed and there are issues with light shining into a window, the specific situation will be evaluated to determine if the fixture should be tilted, if a shield should be installed, or both tilted and shielded.

***Who should I call if the new LED streetlight is shining directly into my home and requires adjustment?***

Call the Piermont DPW at 845-359-1717.

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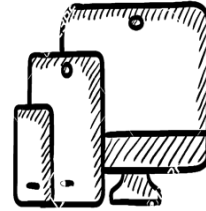
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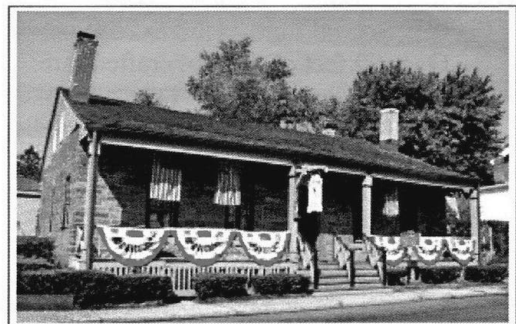
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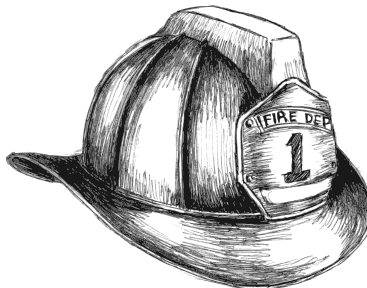
### *Piermont's Bravest, continued from page 1*

The accrued benefit for qualified, vested participants is \$20 per month, multiplied by the total years of credited service, with a capped monthly benefit of \$400. The program also has a death benefit, with a minimum value of \$40,000 for volunteers' vested beneficiaries.

The referendum is asking Piermont voters to approve lowering the age of entitlement (payout date) from 62 to 55, while raising the years of service needed to collect from 30 to 40 to allow the volunteers to reach the \$400 capped monthly benefit.

The program now costs Piermont about \$137,000 a year, or some \$160 for each of its 1,180 households. The village has 80 firefighters and 35 EMTs. As of now 34 of those volunteers are vested. If the proposed referendum passes, three to six volunteers would be eligible to join

the program in 2021. If they did, it would mean a \$62 year tax increase for Piermont households.




The Service Awards Program was created to reward the hard and dangerous work of these community-minded volunteers. It adds a retention incentive for the departments, who, like all volunteer departments here and in the county, and Rockland County firefighting is all-volunteer, find recruitment extremely difficult, for several reasons. Piermont has an aging population, and, in communities like ours, housing prices have sent younger residents and potential volunteers to other more affordable communities. Currently, about 30 percent of Piermont's volunteer firefighters and EMT live in Sparkill and Orangetown.

— Margaret Grace



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