

The Piermont Newsletter

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Piermont's Summer: Fireworks, Rides, Music And Food! Food! Food!

Tallman Mountain Park's swimming pool probably won't open this year but despite that, Piermonters can look forward to a summer of fun with a carnival, Bastille Day, fireworks and a rocking Labor Day concert.

The carnival, sponsored by the Piermont Fire Department, will be at Flywheel Park, from July 12 through July 15. Bastille Day, celebrated here the last few years as a gourmet food feast, will go on simultaneously July 14. That day ends around 10 pm with fireworks over the river from Parelli Park. It should be spectacular.

The Tallman pool was closed the last two summers, a victim of the New York State's budget ax. James F. Hall, Executive Director, of the Palisades Interstate Park Commission (PIPC) said that they had two proposals to reopen it from outside companies. One has already dropped out, but negotiations are ongoing with the second.

There were published reports that a group might open it, charging a membership fee -- perhaps \$500 a year for a family. Hall rejected that proposal. The pool must be open to the public, he said. The pools at Rockland Lake will be open this year, as will be High Tor, the beaches at Lake Welch and Lake Tiorati in Harriman State Park, and the Bear Mountain pool, he said.

Meanwhile, Piermont is getting ready for its first carnival since 1999. Back then, the rides, lights, fireworks and merriment drew thousands from outside of the village and created mas-

sive traffic problems. When it ended, officials said it was because firefighters were tired of giving up summer weekends for the event.

So, what's changed? For one, there'll be no firemen-manned booths this time. "Mainly, what the firemen are going to provide public safety with the police," explained Assistant Fire Chief Dan Goswick. "Yes, we are trying to make money," he explained, "but the reason I'm doing this is I am trying to draw money into the village for the restaurants and other businesses. We are not going to do the food -- we are going to have the restaurants do the food. That way they can make a couple of bucks."

Goswick, a lifelong Piermonter and the son of a former mayor, is alarmed about the future of the village's downtown businesses. "We are going to have a ghost town if we don't do something to help these people," he declared. "It is going to be like it was back in the 60s and 70s. There was nothing here. I just

want to start bringing money into the village. It's bad, really bad!"

The carnival will pay the Fire Department 25% of the money it makes on rides. In addition, it is chipping in half the \$10,000 cost of the fireworks. The Fire Department is picking up the rest. The village is paying the police overtime bill. Goswick said he may help with that. "If we make halfway decent money at the carnival, I have no problem giving the village \$2,500 to pay for the overtime," Goswick pledged.

For the third straight year the village's summer-ending event will be a Labor Day (Monday, September 3) concert for the benefit of the Piermont Police Athletic League (PAL). Organized by John McAvoy, owner of the Turning Point. The concert is held at the Little League field and will run from noon until 6 pm.

It all sounds like fun!

.....
: The Village Board is closing the pier :
: to traffic four days this summer, :
: just as it had last year. The dates :
: are Sunday, June 17 (Father's Day); :
: Sunday, June 22: Sunday, August :
: 19 and Monday, September 3 :
: (Labor Day) :
:.....



Fire Chief Kevin Fagan (left) and Assistant Fire Chief Dan Goswick are happy with the department's new boat storage facility at the end of the pier. (See story page 7) Fred Burrell photo

President's Corner



I was a New York City newspaper reporter in the 1960s, but during a printers' strike, I landed a temporary job editing *The County Citizen*. It was a liberal weekly tabloid, published in New City.

Mostly we covered the local issues of the day but we also ran Jules Pfeiffer's brilliant comic strip and the somewhat ponderous commentary of Eric Seva-reid, the famed CBS correspondent.

A five-member Board of Supervisors ran the county government then. Those guys made all the decisions. We, along with others, said an Executive and a County Legislature should run Rockland. We won. Now, I'm not so sure that we wouldn't have been better off leaving it the way it was. The old way was vastly less expensive than the messy system we now have.

Another hot issue involved ConEdison, the big New York City utility. It wanted to build a reservoir on the top of Storm King Mountain and pump Hudson water up to it at night. In the daytime, when electric demand was

peaking, it planned to release the water to a generating station on the river.

Environmentalists soon organized to fight the utility. The *County Citizen* happily joined the m el e. We claimed the project would deface the Hudson Highlands's most dramatic mountain. I doubt that it would have had that kind of impact. Our far better and winning argument was that sucking up the water would kill millions of fish eggs and hatchlings.

I'm proud of my small part in that struggle. Historians say that it began the movement to clean up the river, just as the effort to save Grand Central Terminal begat New York City's landmark preservation laws.

Clarkstown and Ramapo didn't have sewers back then. The politicians told us that we were risking our health without them. I bought their argument and I've regretted it ever since. They wanted sewers because their monied backers (builders and construction unions) wanted more development. That's usually why public officials

are pro-growth. Without sewers, new development is limited. That's was the real issue but I didn't grasp it.

Today, as Yogi would say, its d ej a vu all over again. This time United Water wants to desalinate and purify Hudson water so we can drink it. It says that without a new supply, Rockland will face severe water restrictions during droughts. It doesn't mention that without a new supply it will stop growing.

There are many reasons to oppose United Water besides the big ick factor. For one, critics say it can't remove the radioactive elements that they say the Indian Point nuclear plant discharges into the river. Indian Point, they add, already kills millions of fish eggs and hatchlings. United Water's proposed desalinization plant will kill even more. Environmentalists add that we can save enough water for our needs by being more conservative with what we have.

The Hudson's limitless supply solves United Water's problem, but it doesn't build the new roads and schools more development demands

~Bob Samuels

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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 Turning Point

Charlie Berger, A Shaper of Today's Piermont

When the Sunday New York Times landed with a thud on Piermont porches February 10, 1983, it sent shock waves through the village. It reported that Clevepak, one of the pier's two paper mills, was closing and, with the Village Board, was planning a large-scale residential development for the site. That evening I had a call from Charlie Berger. Could I come to his house to talk about this with some other neighbors? Charlie was worried. So was I.

It will be 25 years next year since we broke ground for Piermont Landing. It began a new era in Piermont history, one that changed us from a factory town to a residential village. Charlie's contribution to the success of that transition was pivotal.

Charlie had moved here in 1971 with his wife Rena and daughter Ruth. With a doctorate in mathematics from Cornell, he has taught it at the college and graduate level since 1962, and for the past 30 years at CUNY's Lehman College.

I recently asked him what he felt was his most important professional contribution. His reply was stunning. In 1965, funded by a grant, and while teaching at Rutgers, he completed the mathematical formula that made it possible for the United States and Russia to mathematically achieve nuclear test results, through computer modeling, without actual nuclear testing. The Russians could now review data as proof that we were armed and dangerous, and we could do the same. "As a result, millions of kids have since grown up with far less radiation in the environment," Charlie adds.

So, there he was laughingly call-



Charlie Berger. Photo by Fred Burrell

ing himself "a numbers guy" among a group of concerned neighbors, loving the life his family was living in a small Hudson river factory town, knowing that the numbers and scope of the redevelopment plan were seriously flawed.

The prospect of losing both Clevepak, Piermont's biggest tax ratable, and Federal Paperboard, on the adjoining industrial parcel, understandably alarmed the Village Board. It was working hard on the plan to revise the zoning to allow residential development to replace the lost revenue. An early proposal for the Clevepak site alone called for more than 500 units in three 13-story buildings.

Charlie collected the available data on the proposed zone change, and presented it to concerned neighbors at that first meeting in his living room. They agreed -- they had to put the brakes on the Board. He told them two things had to happen: First, residents needed to be educated about the new zoning and be alerted to its dangers. Second, in very short order, they needed to elect two new Village Board members who would vote to stop the zoning changes.

Charlie's group became Piermonters for Piermont.

Soon after, he made a brilliant presentation on rezoning to a full house at St. John's Church. Many who were there still remember Charlie's talk. That was the educational part of the plan. Meanwhile, the dozen members of Piermonters for Piermont, a group of people with assorted political party affiliations, created a new political party—the Village Party. It needed two candidates.

They decided to draw straws. John Zahn, who would later become mayor, picked the first short one. I drew the second. My heart sank. As a single mother of two small children, I couldn't spare the time. Charlie came forward, took my straw, and headed with John toward Election Day.

He went into office hoping that Piermont could keep industry on the pier. Most village residents shared those hopes. During Charlie's first term, the proposed pier development, as expected, included both industrial sites. With no hope of attracting new industry, he worked with the Board to create a plan that would do the least harm. He was trying to match the community goals laid out in the early drafts of the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP).

Over the course of two terms, Charlie brought to this work a combination of empathy for the community, scrutiny of detail, and his brilliant mathematician's understanding of numbers and application of statistics. He guided weekly reviews of environmental documents, allowing the Village to not only be responsible for the content, but also to write a substantial portion of the Final

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Piermont's Mysterious Mine Hole



The mine hole today. Fred Burrell photo

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the Mysterious Mine Hole on South Piermont Avenue was a Piermont tourist attraction, one of the "curiosities of Rockland" and "a must see for Victorian vacationists."

A spring in the mine provided drinking water for passersby, their horses and the surrounding African-American community. You can still find postcards picturing the entrance, c. 1905, for sale on various online sites. One shows a marble plaque above the entrance bearing lines modeled on a poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

Over the years, fanciful stories grew up around the place, suggesting that Vikings had made it, or it had been a gold mine, or part of the Underground Railroad -- but any real knowledge of its original purpose was lost.

A story, in a 1974 Piermont Newsletter, speculated that a nineteenth century resident, John Moore, a free black man,

who set up mills here "dug the mine to get rock to use in making grinding wheels." However, published histories refer to Moore as a "mill wheel maker by trade," with no reference to millstones. Early American mills generally used imported stones for grinding.

At the time of the American Revolution, long before Moore's day, it was already old and abandoned. In a 1999 article for *South of the Mountains*, a publication of the Historical Society of Rockland, Marge Bauer (a Piermont resident) reported that she'd found some entries from Revolutionary War diaries that mentioned the Mine Hole.

One 1780 writer thought it had been "dug for some kind of mineral," and the other reported that someone had told him that the mine hole "was made there by a gentleman some years ago, in expectation of gold or copper, but unhappily he found neither." He described the place in some detail: "The miners began at the foot of a small mountain, and worked their way in horizontally, by blasting the rocks near a hundred feet. About thirty feet from the mouth it parts in two veins, at the extremity of one of which, there is a very good spring five feet deep."

Marge's article also included the late Leonard Cooke's fascinating story about his exploration of the Mine Hole in 1934, not long after he graduated from high school. He wore a bathing suit and brought along a flashlight but he could not convince a friend to come with him. Cooke grew up near the mine hole entrance and was a confident swimmer.

"Leonard walked carefully into the mine hole," wrote Marge, "using his flashlight. He could walk upright; the passage way was about six feet high and wide. People had said that it went all the way back to Route 9W, but Leonard found that it did not. The passage went about 200 feet more or less north and then turned west. A short way past the turn, there was a hole on the right side about three feet in diameter. Lying on the bottom edge of the hole was a candle.

"This opening led to a room, about ten feet square and eight feet high," continued the story. "Coming down from the roof of the room were roots of trees from the mountain, growing down to the water. Leonard stepped through the hole and walked all around the room, which was covered with about two feet of very cold water. Leonard came out of the room and picked up the candle..." and "then walked further down the passage, which made two more slight turns

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before it abruptly stopped, no more than 100 feet from the entrance. The inside of the mine hole was generally smooth and Leonard found no artifacts except the candle, which is still in his possession."

The spring produced clean drinking water until WWII when a hastily built sewer line from Camp Shanks contaminated it. The entrance was sealed with concrete in 1943. Someone ran off with the plaque, and the former attraction became overgrown with vines and weeds.

The celebration of the national Bicentennial in 1976 sparked a group of Piermonsters to rehabilitate the entrance, but in the process the inside passageway collapsed and the entrance had to be covered by a fixed barred grill. Another Piermonster, Louise Windisch, created a replica of the plaque in wood, and the whole area looked lovely for some time. Although the flow of spring water was restored, the Board of Health said it was still not fit for human consumption.

In the last few years, the old Mine Hole has again deteriorated. The wooden sign is faded, cracked and hard to read, and the interesting stonework that frames the entrance is once more overgrown with weeds. Wouldn't it be nice if another generation of Piermonsters found a way to help restore the place to its former glory as one of Rockland's "curiosities?"

~Grace Mitchell



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Your Piermont Taxes Explained

(Editor's note: Joan Gussow, the author of this article, has been a member of the Piermont Village Board since 2003.)

Before you fly into a rage at your Village Board, the next time you open your tax bill, go to your files and look up your total property taxes for 2011. Then calculate what percentage of it you pay to Piermont as opposed to payments that go to the town of Orangetown and the South Orangetown School District. My Piermont portion in 2011 was just under 35 percent. As we move into budget season, the only control those of us on the Village Board can have over your total taxes is to try to control that percentage.

This doesn't mean, of course, that any of us is—or should be—happy about the weight of our tax burden. Rockland County's property taxes are the fifth highest in the nation. And despite the Governor imposing a 2% cap last year on any property tax increase, that gesture was political, since no local gov-

ernment will be able to stay under the cap except by cutting employees thereby seriously reducing services in the village.

And, as has been pointed out a number of times in board meetings and elsewhere, a significant portion of the village's budget is entirely outside of the village's control. We are an employer: payments for our employees' retirement, workman's compensation and health insurance are mandated by the state, and ever increasing.


Even worse, retirement costs are not predictable since a significant proportion of them are normally paid out of the State's Retirement fund to which our employees belong. But when things are not normal, when the economy crashes, the state has less to contribute. And since the total cost is fixed, local governments are required to pick up the unpaid portion. Here is what that means. Out of the village's 2011-12 total budget of \$4,976,693, roughly \$500,000—10% of the budget—ended up going to pay for retirement.

In addition, \$83,000 went for Workman's Comp, Health costs—ever increasing for our employees as well as for the rest of us—were about \$430,000. Thus before we could account for just over \$2 million in salaries plus heating, lighting, maintenance, infrastructure repair (see street paving), and payment on the debt, well over \$1 million, roughly 23% of the budget was already accounted for.

You'd know all this, of course, if you came to the budget meetings that occupy the Village Board during the entire month of March, or if you had come to the Public Hearing for the 2012-2013 budget on April 3. Those of us on the Village Board work hard to keep costs as low as possible. If you really want to begin to make a difference in taxes, you need to direct your attention to Albany much earlier than that, starting now, and see if you can convince our state government to begin chipping away at the mandates that cost us well over a million dollars a year. . . and rising.

Celia Smith Katzen
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Piermont's New Bud Sedlack Fire/Rescue Boathouse

That big, new building near the end of the pier that you may have been wondering about is for the Piermont Fire Department's rescue boats. A dedication, officially naming it Bud Sedlack Fire/Rescue Boathouse, is being held at 10 am, Saturday, May 19. Sedlack, was a lifelong resident and former fire chief. He died last year.

Mayor Chris Sanders called the prefabricated steel building "a great improvement over what we have been using." That was a tent in the parking lot across from the firehouse, and a shipping container on the pier. The new building is 20 by 40 feet, and costs just

under \$200,000, some \$125,000 of that paid with a state grant. Besides boats, the fire department will use the building to store extra equipment.

"This building," the Mayor added, "is a more than the winter home for our equipment. It also is a symbol of our dedication to rendering assistance on the Hudson. I am proud of our stewardship of the waters off Piermont and the assistance we provide to municipalities, mariners and hikers from Hook Mtn. to Alpine." Piermont's dive team and water rescue crew is often in the news, responding to suicide and suicide attempts at the Tappan Zee Bridge.

The Department has two boats: a 28-foot Hulls Unlimited, with twin 255 hp Evinrude outboards. It's used mainly during the summer months, where it is kept at the Tappan Zee Marina, explained Assistant Fire Chief Dan Goswick.

The second is a 21-foot Zodiac Hurricane with twin 70 hp Johnsons. They use it mainly in the winter, or if they are called to a job at a lake. They'll keep it year-round in the new building. "If we need it we can put it in the water there," explained Goswick.

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Decoding Those Seed Catalogs

My first year in the Piermont Community Garden I planted a wide variety of crops, including tomatoes. I don't remember the tomato type, but there was one word in the seed catalogue description that I didn't understand -- "determinate."

Everything else about it had sounded fantastic. I thought that the one word wouldn't make much of a difference. However, later that summer, when everyone else's tomato plants kept blooming and making tomatoes, mine just stopped. When I asked Colleen Duffy ceile Leidy, who is a much more experienced gardener than I am, she suggested that maybe my tomatoes were determinate, while everyone else's were indeterminate. She was right!

As it turns out, that one word made quite a big difference after all! So..... to spare you the same gardening fate, here is a short glossary of some of the terms used in seed catalogues and on seed packets and plant tags. If you come across a word that you don't understand and is not on this list, I encourage you to look it up so you won't be surprised later. To help you with that, I've listed a few gardening glossary resources at the end of this article.

Determinate/Indeterminate: *Determinate* plants flower and produce fruit only once or twice during the growing season. *Indeterminate* plants keep growing, flowering and producing fruits all season long. People who like to can their own tomatoes like determinate plants because they get the harvest in big batches. Most other home gardeners prefer indeterminate plants.

Open-Pollinated/Non-Hybrid: A plant that reproduces in its own natural way. Some possible pollination strategies include insects, wind and self-pollination.

Heirloom: An open pollinated, non-hybrid plant that has existed for 50 - 100 years in the same form with the same features.

F1/Hybrid: A seed/plant they developed intentionally by interbreeding two varieties of a plant to create a new set of characteristics.

Resistant to: Plants are susceptible to various diseases, including bacterial, viral and fungal diseases. Plants may be bred, often through hybridization, to be resistant to certain diseases. A small sample of plant diseases that breeders strive to create resistance to includes: Bacterial Wilt, Downy and Powdery Mildew and Mosaic Virus.

Seed Scarification: To nick and abrade the outer seed surface to let in more water.

Full sun: At least 6 hours of full and direct sunlight every day

Days/Maturity Date: An estimate of the time it will take until harvest or plant maturity. The actual time may vary

widely but this is still a useful number.

USDA Zone/Hardiness Zone: Based on how cold it gets in the winter. The lower portions of Piermont are in Zone 7. The rest is in zone 6a or 6b, depending on how high up the hill you are, and therefore how much colder it gets in the winter.



Susan Freiman photo

Broadcast: To scatter seeds randomly over the top of the soil.

Direct Seed/Direct Sow: To plant seeds directly into the garden soil.

Harden Off: To slowly acclimate indoor or greenhouse seedlings to harsher garden conditions outside.

Germinate: Begin to grow, to sprout.

Dead Heading: to remove old, dead and dying flowers from a plant to encourage it to keep producing flowers instead of going to seed.

Looseleaf, Oakleaf, Cutting, Bib, Butterhead, Cos, Romaine, Batavian, Crisphead, Iceberg: All are types of lettuce. Two of the many

factors determining type are how the plant grows include the plant and leaf shape. Each type has many varieties.

Shell beans/dry beans: Shell beans are fully formed beans that are cooked and eaten while they are still "fresh," meaning the plants are still green and the beans are not dried out. Dry beans may be the same beans only they are cooked and eaten after they have been fully dried out. Dry beans keep a long time. Shell beans do not.

Resources: glossary.gardenweb.com/glossary, seedsofchange.com, johnnyseeds.com, sparkpeople.com, flosergardennews.com, stokessseeds.com.

~Susan Freiman

Special thanks to Joan Gussow for her fact checking and editing suggestions.

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The Front Line

Residents And Merchants Are Vital Link In Solving Crime

The Piermont Police Department is reminding residents and merchants that they are a vital part of the department's work in preventing and solving crime. The public should call the Police (Non emergencies at 845-359-0240, Emergencies 911) if they see something they think is suspicious or out of the ordinary for their neighborhood.

Rubbish Pickup Starts April 10

Tom Temple, Supervisor of the Piermont Department of Public Works (DPW), said that the Rubbish and

Debris program will start on Tuesday April 10 and will run every other week until Wednesday October 10. Tie, bundle or stack items in an orderly fashion and put them curbside no earlier than the weekend before the scheduled collection date. For safety reasons you must remove refrigerator doors.

The village code prohibits the DPW from collecting debris left from renovations, repairs or demolition. Contractors and homeowners must remove it themselves.

The DPW also cannot accept any type of hazardous household waste (chemicals, paint etc). Residents may

bring this type of waste to the Rockland County Household Hazardous Waste Facility in Pomona. For any questions you can call the DPW at (845) 359-1717.

Fire Department Looks For Volunteers

The Piermont Fire Department is constantly looking for new members to join its ranks. Anyone who is interested in joining the Department should come to the firehouse on any Monday evening between 7-9 pm.

~Ron Derven

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Sparkill Group Applauds Piermont Pump Station Upgrade

The Sparkill Creek Watershed Alliance (SCWA) applauded the actions of the Orangetown Town Board for voting recently to upgrade the Piermont sewage pump station.

"We understand" said Laurie Seeman, "founder of the group that the pumping station, which was designed for three pumps, only had two and that there have been numerous failures at the pumping facility over the years. There had been no upgrades to the pumping station since it was first opened in the 1960s, so it was important to bring the station up to today's standards."

Seeman said that one of SCWA's main tasks is to monitor the health of the creek's waters. Its testing has consistently found high levels of sewage, even in the area not far from the headwaters, below the first housing development in Orangeburg. Despite that, the state plans to stock the creek with 800 trout this year, up from just 200 last year.

What's ahead for the 18-month-old organization in 2012? "We will continue with our two different stream monitoring programs," said Seeman. "The first monitoring tests the waters for enterococcus, a bacterium found in the human gut and in waters with sewage," she explained.

The second program that the group will undertake is benthic macro-invertebrate testing to see what small creatures live in the waters in the bottom of the creek. "Testing for various forms of macro-invertebrates tells us a lot about the quality of the water, how it supports life and the impacts of the surrounding landscapes on that water," noted Seeman.

The alliance wants to reach out to people living along the creek this spring, summer and fall. "We are looking for gardeners to join us to work on plantings," she said. "We want to plant water retention rain gardens, offer a rain-barrel workshop and implement green infrastructure for flood mitigation. These gardens are good for the environment and good for reducing water volume and improving water quality as are the use of rain barrels."

The group welcomes new members. It meets monthly at Christ Church in Sparkill, in the Parish House. To learn more, call Laurie Seeman at (845) 558-0877.

~Ron Derven



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From The Library

Once again, the library's annual report to New York State shows increases in attendance and circulation. Library visits totaled 23,257, up from 22,000 in 2010, and 17,808 circulated items, up from 16,998. Without increasing the budget, the library hired Nancy Russell, a professional children's librarian and added new materials and services and extended weekend hours. We now open at 10 am on Saturday.

Nancy has added an early evening pajama time, a second story time, a story and craft program and two book groups to already existing programs. Judy Epstein continues with the original story time, and both are full. Alexis Starke's popular art classes are ongoing and her students will have an exhibit in our gallery during July.

IN THE GALLERY

April has traditionally been Earth Month at the library, and this year Rockland photographer Tom Artin will exhibit "Whose Woods These Are," a series of beautiful black-and-white photographs taken in the early 1990s that document environmental art created by Father Jorn, an octogenarian who was chaplain for the Dominican Convent in Sparkill for many years. Father Jorn was responsible for tending the cemetery behind the convent. In the process of his work he dug up stones, picked up trash and cut brush,

and rather than discard these materials he used them to build stone cairns, stick teepees and a variety of assemblages in the neighboring woods near Artin's home. Dubbed an Outsider artist by New York Times critic Vivien Raynor when she reviewed an exhibit of the photographs in 1997, Father Jorn did not think of himself as an artist at all. But Artin recognized his talent and carefully photographed the work for four years. He will host an opening reception on Sunday, April 1, from 2 to

4 pm Come and see what you think!

In May, Gosha Karpowicz will exhibit a series of riverscapes in oil. Gosha grew up around the beautiful farmlands of Poland, moved to the U.S. and graduated from the Parsons School of Design with a degree in Fine Arts. Gosha will host a reception for the show on Sunday, May 6, from 2 to 4 pm

And have you noticed that the library's new logo is a charming painting of the building by Sue Barassi. A



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Sue, whose work will be on display here in June, trained as an illustrator at the School of Visual Arts and continued her studies with a merit scholarship at the Art Students League. Her award winning paintings have been exhibited widely and she has recently been awarded a grant from the Arts Council of Rockland/New York State Council on the Arts to execute a series of paintings entitled "Rockland Renaissance." For examples of her work, see www.suebarrasi.com, and stay tuned for more information on an opening reception.

Artwork created by students in Alexis Starke's popular art classes for children will liven up our gallery space in July.

FIRST FRIDAY FILM SERIES

Marc Farre has exciting things planned for the next couple of months. On Friday, April 13 (the second Friday), at 7:30 pm, he will be showing *The Passion of Joan of Arc* (1928), with special guests!

With its stunning camerawork and striking compositions, Carl Theodor Dreyer's *The Passion of Joan of Arc*, a silent film shot in France and long thought lost in a fire, is considered one of the greatest masterpieces of cinema. Renée Falconetti gave one of the most searing performances ever recorded on film, as the young maiden who died for God and France.

When a copy of the original film was miraculously found in perfect condition in 1981—in a Norwegian mental institution—Grammy-winning composer Richard Einhorn decided to create an exquisite and powerful oratorio (*Voices of Light*) for orchestra and singers to accompany it, along with acappella masters Anonymous 4. The resulting production—the milestone film with live music—has been performed all over the world to enormous acclaim.

We are extremely honored to have composer Einhorn here, along with former Piermonter Johanna Maria Rose (a founder of Anonymous 4) to talk about this extraordinary film and project. The stories they will tell are fascinating, and if we're lucky, Johanna may sing some of the sections for us live. Don't miss this very rare opportunity!

On Friday, May 4, at 7:30 pm, he will screen *Like Water for Chocolate* (1992). A feast for the senses, this magical romance

continued on next page



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From The Library continued from page 13

from director Alfonso Arau was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award and a Golden Globe.

SPECIAL FILM AND DEDICATION

In honor of National Library Week, on Sunday, April 15, at 2 pm, we will be showing the documentary film, *From the Ground Up*, the story of five widows of firefighters killed on September 11, 2001. Una McHugh, widow of Dennis McHugh for whom our new building is named, is part of this group of women who are working to "empower their communities and honor their heroic husbands in the most fitting personal ways they can imagine." The McHugh family chose to set up a charitable foundation in memory of Dennis, and because he was a firm believer in the importance of education, loved reading to his children and often took his older daughter to the library, its first major gift was to our library's building fund. Their contribution was crucial in getting our new building off the ground. Una McHugh will speak at the event and a new plaque featuring a picture of Dennis will be dedicated. Copies of the film will be available.

NEW PERFORMANCE SERIES

We are very excited to be able to present another series of three free musical performances, all featuring the human voice as instrument. Entitled *In Different Voices*, this project is made possible, in part, with funds from the Community Arts Grants program of the Arts Council of Rockland and the Decentralization Program of the New York State Council on the Arts. The Friends of the Piermont Library have also contributed to this series.

The first concert, scheduled for Sunday, April 29, at 4 pm, features *GHOSTLIGHT*, a 16-20 member vocal ensemble that


will perform, a cappella, selections from classical, modern and contemporary music on the theme of *Water and Light*. Piermonter Walter Cain, is a member of this ensemble.

The second in the series, on Sunday, May 20, at 4 pm, brings a former, Johanna Maria Rose, back to us to introduce a new project. Her Anonymous 4 ensemble, is now working with soprano Karol Steadman on *KLEINE MUSIK*, a project interweaving selections from the *Kleine Geistliche Konzerte*, a vocal and instrumental collection by the 17th-century German master, Heinrich Schütz, with new settings of the same texts by the wonderful British contemporary composer, Ivan Moody.


The third performance in the series, on Friday, June 15, at 7 pm, entitled *SCHISMISM: NATURAL LAW*, is a multimedia solo performance inspired by the life of Charles Darwin. Performer-vocalist-videographer Lisa Karrer is featured with an arresting assortment of sonic and visual backdrops, including video sequences linked with original soundtracks and musical arrangements, triggered Theremin and voice, and acoustic and electronic compositions performed live with David Simons.

~Grace Mitchell

The library is located at 25 Flywheel Park West and is open 10-8, Monday through Thursday, 12-5 on Friday and 10-4 on Saturday. For more information, please go to www.piermontlibrary.org or call 845-359-4595.



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Charlie Berger continued from page 3

Environmental Review Statement, the foundation of the zone change for the pier.

Charlie and the Village Board, with Mayor William Goswick, steered Piermont to a mixed-use development with 225 residential units that included affordable housing. Charlie will tell you that his proudest accomplishments were acquiring much needed parking, land for a new library and the creation of Flywheel Park.

After stepping down from his trusteeship, Charlie became chairman of the Planning Board and began working on Piermont's Floor Area Ratio (FAR) legislation. It set standards for square footage and land coverage, relative to lot size, setbacks, slope steepness etc. It is a protection against, what was in the 90s becoming a rush to McMansion-sized housing on Piermont-sized lots.

The way Piermont's land use boards have enforced FAR has frustrated Charlie. "It should be looked at as an ironclad rule—not subject to exception!" He'd also like to see legislation to create a National Viewing Area" along the Hudson to preserve what vistas remain.

Charlie will be 75 this year. He has finally retired after 50 years of teaching. From their dinner table, he and wife Rena look over the pier and Piermont Landing. It remains the lowest density residential development of the Hudson River, with a vibrant library, and beautiful riverfront park. Thanks, Charlie.

~Margaret Grace



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