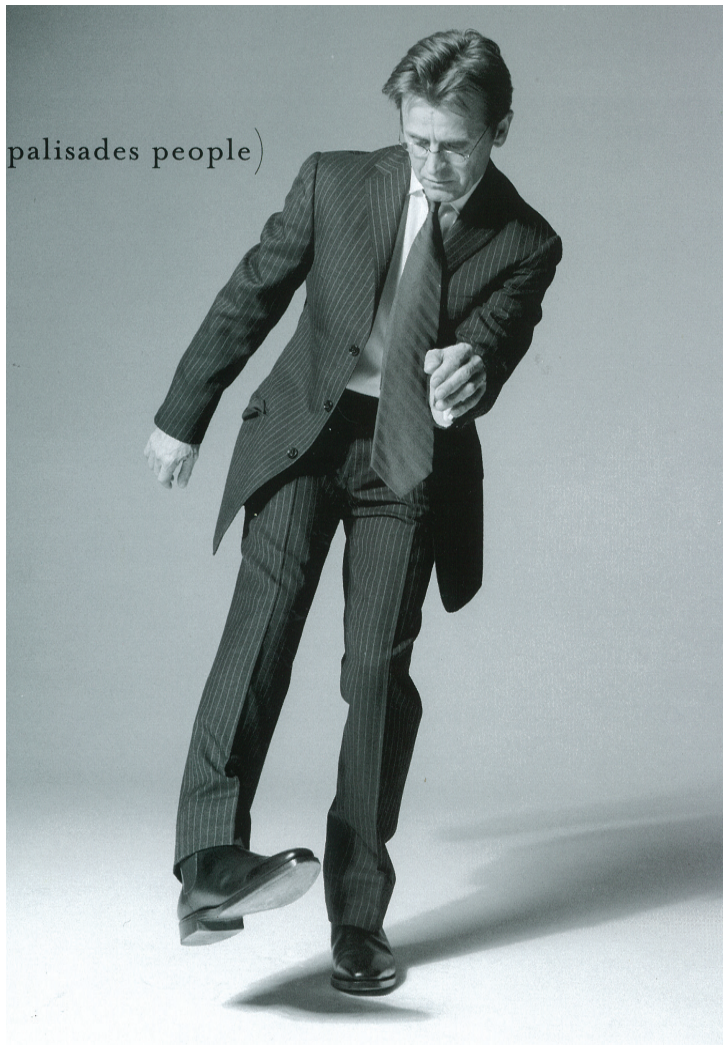


10964

THE
PALISADES
NEWSLETTER

OCT 2006 NUMBER 194

The Inaugural Season Sunday Symposia



The first of the Inaugural Symposia, Mikhail Baryshnikov's talk with Didi Conn about his art, his life and some new moves was a standing-room-only success. The venue was moved to Lamont-Doherty due to the amount of interest in the community. (Photo of Mikhail Baryshnikov by Walter Chin.)

Four more Sunday Symposia are being offered by the Palisades Free Library. Reservations are required. Stop by the library or call (845) 359-0136. The suggested donation is \$10 to benefit the library.

The Mystery of Love

November 19: Joan Konner and Al Perlmutter present excerpts from their new documentary special, *The Mystery of Love*, to air on TV December 13 at 9 pm.

Doctors and Their Patients: Kudos and Complaints

January 21: A pain-free appointment with Doctors Ray Bernick, Welton Gersony, Mel Rosenwasser and Jeffrey Sandhaus.

Question: What do the Hudson River and Lake Vostok in the Antarctic have in common?

March 4: Answer: Dr. Robin E. Bell, Senior Research Scientist, Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory.

Do you see what I see?

May 20: The artists Grace Knowlton and Joan Hooker try to understand each other's perspectives.

Programs will be held at the Palisades Community Center, 675, Oak Tree Rd, Palisades, NY 10964.

Sparkhill Firehouse

Our Sparkill-Palisades All-Volunteer Fire Department Voted “Best in County” by Fireman’s Association

by Greta Nettleton

(SPARKILL-Monday September 11) On Monday evening, they were rolling up the clean “parade” hoses at the John Paulding Engine Co. in Sparkill, and putting the sooty ones back on the trucks. This time the chore was no trouble at all for these proud volunteer firefighters. They returned from the 94th annual Rockland County Volunteer Fireman’s Association Parade (held in Stony Point on Sunday, Sept 10th) with top honors for Best in County, besting 39 other county fire departments as to their equipment turnout, manpower, marching style and organization.

At the same time, the spirit of celebration was tempered by solemn memories of the attack on the World Trade Center five years ago—the company attended the town of Orangetown’s memorial service late Monday afternoon shortly before returning to their working routine at the firehouse on Route 340.

Monday evenings are drill nights as a matter of course, and drop-in visitors are welcomed anytime after 7 p.m. Brian DeBonis, the firehouse captain, seemed hardly to have to say anything to the men and women firefighters as they busied themselves with many complex tasks while trading jokes and laughs. Clearly, everyone already knew their jobs. Could they put on some uniforms for a picture? That request only took about 30 seconds.

Several young men, ranging in age from 16 to 18 years were the fastest into their boots and heavy coats. They are part of a group of six or seven new members who recently signed up to become Junior Fire Fighters. By committing 72 hours of their time over the course of a year to



a standardized training program, they become qualified to participate in most of the department’s activities (although you must be 18 and do additional training to actively fight a fire inside a building).

Not only do these kids learn how to work as a team and contribute to important community service activities (that, by the way, look good on a resume or college application) they also get a chance to have fun. The department hosts a number of picnics and other social



events, and the kids have gone deep sea fishing and skiing at Hunter Mountain together when off-duty.

Of course, we all know that the Fire Department keeps us safe, and that their excellence keeps our fire insurance rates down, and that their efficiency means that our per capita fire tax is among the lowest in Rockland County. But it’s not just a money-for-services situation. All of these men and women give up many hours of personal time and are not paid a penny for their efforts.

“As our society gets more impersonal,” Fire Chief John McCullough told 10964, “We’re one of the last real, old-time community organizations that still has the ability to keep history and deep ties to the community going.” He stressed that the traditions embodied in the Department’s many activities are valuable to all of us. These can only survive if they are passed on to the next generation through direct involvement.

(Continued on p14.)

Bulletin Board

Singer-Songwriter Katie Elevitch Performs November 4th

Where: Palisades Presbyterian Church / Parish Hall

When: Saturday, November 4th, 7pm to 9pm.

All ages are encouraged to attend; no admission charge.

Katie Elevitch, a Palisades native, is a Brooklyn-based



singer-songwriter whose original music has been described as "...folk plunging toward jam band funk" (Village Voice). This past Spring she played across Germany in her first international tour, and continues to perform all over the New York City area. This show will feature Katie on Guitar and Vocals, accompanied by Lee Farber (Percussion) and her long-time collaborator/pro-

ducer Riley McMahon (Guitar), as well as a special appearance by Michael Shapiro (Piano), Choir and Music Director of the Palisades Presbyterian Church. Refreshments served. Visit www.KatieElevitch.com for information on Katie's music.

The Spring Fling was a Huge Success

Thanks again to the generous contributions of so many neighbors and friends. A very special thanks to the Co-Chairs Marianne Brown and Helen Nelson for their tireless efforts and energy and their very special creativity. With this creativity came many new activities including a Gourmet Food Court, a full spa 'get away' gift basket, a gourmet basket from the IBM's Executive Chef, and the First Annual Palisades Dog Show featuring 20 beautiful happy pups. We of course enjoyed the special traditionals – a spectacular medley of raffle prizes, beautiful plants and seedlings from D'Ercole, Bumps and Co., and the all time favorite pony ride. Go to www.palisadesny.com for a view of the fun that was had by all!

*Mary Ellen Ledwith, President, Board of Trustees,
Palisades Free Library*

Children's Art Classes are Starting

Simon Gerard is once again teaching children's art classes this year. He uses good quality art materials to explore drawing and painting in various mediums, also

other fun stuff. Coming up, Halloween masks! Anyone interested can call 365 6312



NYACK FARMERS' MARKET Tenth Annual Harvest Festival, Thursday, October 12, 10 am to 12 noon at the Nyack Farmers' Market

October is a very colorful month at the Nyack Farmers' Market. Marking the harvest season, the stands are bursting with vibrant oranges, yellows, reds, purples and greens. As the days grow colder, thoughts turn to warm vegetable stews, holiday dinners and peach, pear and apple pies straight from the oven.

Kids can make a scarecrow! Just bring an old shirt and pants. Also, learn how to make a felted pumpkin with Una Wildwood. Music by Tom Gardner of the Uncle Brothers' band at 11:00 and more...

Throughout October, shoppers can enjoy: beans, beets, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, eggplants, fennel, garlic, herbs, kale, leeks, onions, parsnips, peppers, pumpkins, radishes, scallions, squash, lettuce, mesclun and other greens, onions, potatoes, turnips, spinach, apples, cantaloupes, peaches, pears, plums, watermelons and fresh cut flowers and mums.

Not to forget the usual offerings of cheeses, wine, jams and jellies, pasture-fed chickens and eggs, flowers and other food specialties such as baked goods, pickles, soul food, artisanal breads and hand creams.

The Nyack Farmers' Market is open every Thursday, rain or shine, through November. It is located in the municipal parking lot at Main Street and Cedar Street. The 10:00 am Story Hour continues through October. The market is sponsored by Optimum Triple Play. For further information, call Lorie Reynolds at the Chamber of Commerce of the Nyacks at 353-2221.

French and Spanish Tutoring

A multilingual Palisadian with extensive language and teaching experience at home and abroad. Available to tutor students and lead conversation at all levels of French & Spanish. Child-care and language instruction also possible. Contact: clochette345@yahoo.com.

(Bulletin Board continued on p7.)

Children's Shakespeare Theater on the Road

Back in Palisades, after a working vacation in Texas, look forward to their next production of *Measure for Measure*, performed by the Rogue Players on November 10, 11, 12, 17 and 18 at the Palisades Presbyterian Church.*

By Milbry Polk

Last February 14 young actors from the Children's Shakespeare Theater (CST), flew to Fort Worth, Texas with Director Diana Green, Associate Director Cristina Biaggi and Milbry Polk. They were invited to perform *Winter's Tale* in four high schools and lead workshops in stage fighting, Pavanne Dance and scene building in other schools and after school programs. It was a special experience as Diana said, "the kids took a big step up because they became visiting artists and teaching artists. They were great ambassadors of goodwill and creativity."

CST was invited to Texas to be part of a pilot program entitled *The Art of Exploration* created by Ginger Head, Director of Imagination Celebration Fort Worth, and Milbry Polk, Director of Wings WorldQuest. The purpose of the pilot is to bring together science and

art through the accomplishments and discoveries of individual heroes. Shakespeare was chosen as a program because he not only is one of the greatest artists who ever lived, creating through the spoken word plays that speak to the human soul, but he is also one of the first creative authors that wrote about exploration. Diana was chosen to be the hero (the program is based on identifying heroes) because of her unique ability to make Shakespeare come alive for children inspiring them to become Shakespearean actors.

The troupe was put up in Cowtown, an incredible experience for New Yorkers, most who had never been to Texas and even one child who went along who had never been on an airplane before. Before too long the children were dressed in hats, boots and belts, watching their first rodeo, posing on bulls and eating lots of TexMex. It was life changing for all of them!

They were all very professional, enduring a hectic day walking onto new stages three times a day, in widely distant schools, quickly changing and performing. The best times were the chances they had to interact with children and teach them some of what they have been doing for years. Amazed parents, coming to pick their children up, were treated to scenes from *Romeo and Juliet*, a dance and fight scenes performed with our CST.

It was a special experience. We hope CST can go on the road again!

**Performances are Friday and Saturday at 8 pm and Sundays at 4 pm. For information call 365-9709.*



The Rogue Players stop in at The Cowgirl Hall of Fame on their visit to Fort Worth, Texas.

The Gas Station on 9W

Caught in the Twilight

A fascinating history and a question about the future.

By Carol Baxter

Mention the gas station on Route 9W to people in the vicinity and you are sure to get a smile and a fond story. Like the woman who said that during the gas crisis in the 1970's, the owner, Henry Kennell, would open the gas pumps privately for her ailing mother to

looking out at the miniature golf. The gas station obviously isn't the reason we moved here, but it absolutely added to the charm and magic of this area. Years later, still in love with the station, after opening the Nyack Farmers' Market I tried to set up a farmers' market there but the property wasn't available for this use.

The gas station was built and opened for business in 1939. Although the first American gas station was built in 1909 in California, it wasn't until the 1930's that there was a gas station boom across the United States. In 1939, there were only four cars in Palisades, but a number of factors necessitated the need for a gas station in rural Palisades, NY.

Route 9W was built and completed between the years of 1927 and 1929 making it a major thoroughfare for anyone traveling north from New Jersey.



ensure she had enough gas to make the frequent trips to her doctor. Or the man who was thrilled to meet Drew Barrymore when it was the set for the movie "Riding in Cars with Boys." Or how in the 1960's, Palisades children loved to walk to the gas station for candy, soda and rocket pops. And what about the stolen Indian Motorcycle sign? Was it ever found? No, it never was!

I fell in love with the station even before I lived here. My husband and young daughters would come up to Rockland from Manhattan on weekends looking at houses and we loved to stop for a falafel sandwich and a coke at the "Oasis" and eat at a picnic table while

little gas station was an important link in the chain of the development of NYS road system and highways. It provided a valuable service to the increased volume of motorists traveling north.

The gas station was the first stop on Route 9W in New York State giving travelers their first experience and impression of New York State.

Today, there are no gas stations from this period remaining in Rockland County. It is unknown if any with this character and age even exist in New York State. Stations of this style were immortalized as a part of

- The opening of the George Washington Bridge in 1931 increased the traffic going north on Route 9W.

- Construction of the Palisades Interstate Parkway began in 1950. In 1957, the section from the GW Bridge to Alpine, NJ was completed. In 1958, the section into NYS to Exit 9 was completed. So, until 1958, anyone traveling north through New York State had to travel along Route 9W.

- For twenty years, from 1939-1958, this

(9W Gas continued on p6.)

(9W Gas continued from p5.)

Americana by Nyack artist Edward Hopper, specifically in his famous 1940 painting entitled "Gas." Although "Gas" was painted on Cape Cod, the similarity to our station is remarkable. Echoing the many reviews of



Edward Hopper's "Gas," painted

this painting, Masterpiece Painting Gallery states, "Many viewers of Hopper's 'Gas' are convinced it is about the struggle between commercial development aka 'civilization' and nature. It seems

set in a twilight zone halfway between where the world lost its innocence and where we destroy ourselves with 'development' and high tech 'improvements' to make life 'better'."

Since 1939, it has been a community focal point. In the early days, it was a place where Mr. Kennell, the owner, would hold court at the gas pumps sharing stories over a bottle of soda. The Kennells also sold fruits, vegetables and flowers from their gardens and orchard across the street along with Mrs. Kennell's homemade pies.

In June the property had been sold. Since then representatives of the owners have appeared before the Orangetown Historic Review Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board. On two occasions when asked who are the owners of the property, their lawyer refused to disclose the names.

In the late 1980's, regulations of gas stations changed. Unable to afford the up-grades, the gas station stopped pumping gas. After the passing of Mr. Kennell, his son Hank took over the property. To continue as a viable business, it was used for other endeavors. Throughout the 1990's, a popular lunch and snack shop, "The Oasis," prepared and sold burgers, falafels and other middle-eastern food specialties. Artists have been inspired to paint the gas station and movies have been shot there. (In June, it was transformed into the set of "A Girls Guide to Hunting and Fishing" starring Sarah Michelle Geller, Alec Baldwin and Richard Dreyfuss.) But over the years, the site has become derelict and unsightly. At one point, it became a lot for antique and

junk cars. For years and even today, illegal dumping on the site has made this gem an eyesore.

After years of planning and dreaming, two years ago, Danny Foti, Lisa Rinehart and I began a process to purchase the gas station with the plan to turn it into a food shop/farm stand called "The Station," that would sell wholesome soups, salads, sandwiches, breads, pastries, smoothies, crepes, coffee, tea and locally grown produce. Our primary goal was to retain the gas station's rural feel (gravel and all), preserve this 1939 landmark building, give it new life as a food business celebrating Hudson Valley produce and make it a positive service to the community. We wanted to make it the pride of Palisades. We appreciated the community's interest and support for this project.

However, at the end of April, with heavy hearts, we ended our contract to purchase the gas station. After

over eighteen months of persistent effort addressing the multitude of environmental, zoning and code issues, we were only half way through



the process. Our purchase of the property depended on getting approval from nine government agencies. Every single issue that could plague a site, plagues this little 3/4 acre property. The escalating costs (including application, architect, engineering and legal fees) didn't make it financially feasible for us to continue.

We learned in early June that the property had been sold. Since that time representatives of the new owners have appeared before the Orangetown Historic Review Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board. On two public occasions when asked who are the owners of the property, their lawyer refused to disclose their names. Although it may be a food business, the exact nature is not yet clear.

As we watch the landscape of our neighborhood change with the bulldozing of the 9W Golf and Driving Range, the future of the gas station is of community concern. It is our hope that the new owners will create a business which will embody and retain the integrity, historic and rural feel of this unique landmark building. Local residents have been attending meetings in the past and we hope that such interest will continue. If future meetings are scheduled, information will be posted on the **10964** website at www.palisadesny.com.

(Bulletin Board continued from p3.)

Attention Palisades Kindergarten Parents

10964 wants to publish a photo of your kindergartner in the December issue. Please send photo to 10964 newsletter, P.O. Box 201, Palisades, NY no later than November 10. Note: *Photos will be returned. Include child's name and your phone number.* For information call Carol Elevitch, 365-3772.

New Civic Association Formed

by Eileen Larkin

The Orangetown Civic Association was formed in June of 06 to address issues affecting all of us. We have a web site, www.orangetownny.org, and post office box 42 at the Palisades Post Office. Eileen Larkin and Carol Silverstein are co-directors of the association,

Mike Mandel is our secretary and Maureen Echimendia is our treasurer.

Please join our organization for \$15.00 and plan to attend our meetings.

Eileen Larkin can be reached by e-mail at <ileenog@aol.com>

Orangetown Men's Over-40 Soccer

Men from Palisades, Nyack, Piermont, Grandview, South Nyack, and other Orangetown residents play every Sunday at 10 am from April until early June, then pick up again in September for the fall season. Home games are played at Veterans Memorial Park in Orangeburg. Palisades resident Jerry Sheer, the team manager, hopes to help promote soccer, the fastest growing sport in the area, opening up the playing to adults. Those interested can reach him by e-mail at jerry@sheer.net

In Our Backyard

By Lisa Rinehart

At 15 miles south, New York City is our backyard, so why bother searching out local services and amenities when they're readily available in one of the biggest cities in the world? Well, because, even if we work in the city, we shop, socialize, raise children, maintain houses and relax here in Rockland County. Consequently, this column is dedicated to the pursuit of excellence with nary a bridge, tunnel, or toll required. It rests on the premise that they're out there — dedicated people with vision and creativity, and a commitment to provide quality to those who've decamped to the burbs. So let's get to it!

Inaugural kudos go to former Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, Joseph B. Clarke, and the Orangetown Parks Department for creating the **Joseph B. Clarke Rail-Trail**. It's not often that cumbersome county legislatures can translate lofty notions into concrete — or, in this case, asphalt — but Clarke turned the trick just prior to his retirement in 1997. He wanted the abandoned tracks of the Erie Railroad converted to "a ribbon" of green winding through the villages of Orangetown, effectively tying them together into a cohesive group. Clarke must have understood that suburban life is, in the words of one

neighbor, "a bit much in the car," and that an area's vibrancy is enhanced when people get out of their SUV's and enjoy pleasant public spaces. With 80% federal funding from a program encouraging green spaces across the country, and the balance coming from the New York State Department of Transportation, Clarke's vision is now a semi-shaded path enjoyed by walkers, joggers and bikers (and the occasional black bear!).

The four mile trail begins off Oak Tree Road, opposite Finn McCools, and ends at Route 303 in Orangeburg. A pedestrian bridge spanning 303 will open in the near future taking the trail to Greenbush Road, by the Orangeburg Library. (Phase II, slated for completion in 2008, will extend the path on to Blauvelt.) In Sparkill, the trail forks and the more ambitious traveler can head north towards the river villages. The paved trail, however, is unusual in that it makes Tappan, Sparkill, and Orangeburg accessible by bicycle. Not a bad idea as future gas prices are anybody's guess, and biking on Oak Tree Road qualifies as an Extreme Sport. More importantly, however, the trail represents a local attempt to reduce car traffic and it's nothing short of miraculous that so much time, money and effort have been directed towards the realization of a bike path. In our automobile-centric era, Clarke's efforts on behalf of the residents of Rockland are refreshingly pedestrian.

Boards and Buildings

In Orangetown, what is built, where it is built, and what it is used for is controlled by Town zoning ordinances.

*By Caroline Tapley**

Here in Orangetown, what is built, where it is built, and what it is used for is controlled by Town zoning ordinances, as enforced by the Building Department zoning officer and amended by the Zoning Board. Zoning ordinances regulate the use of the land (residential, industrial, institutional, commercial, recreational etc.), in accordance with the Town's Master Plan. They also address lot sizes, building heights, setbacks (the amount of space between a lot line and a building), density (the number of housing units per acre in a subdivision) – among other particulars. In Palisades, most of the older parts of the hamlet are zoned R 40 (low density residential: one dwelling per 40,000 square foot lot – a “builder's acre.”) Some of the land to the south and east of 9W is zoned R 80 (rural residence: one dwelling on 80,000 square feet). Horne Tooke Road and the land around it, which was developed in the 1950s, is zoned R15 (medium density). There are scattered R 22 parcels. The former driving range on 9W is zoned R40. About two-thirds of this piece of land is within the Historic District (see below).

All new construction has to conform to the Town bulk and use regulations for the zoning area. These include (but are not limited to) regulations on lot area, lot area per dwelling unit, lot frontage and width, height of the building, required yards, floor-area ratio, and the spacing between buildings on a single lot.

Floor area is the sum of the gross horizontal areas of every floor in a building, including basement, attic, roofed porches, etc. Floor area ratio is the floor area in square feet divided by the area of the lot in square feet.

For a house in the R 40 zone this means: a minimum lot area of 40,000 square feet, a maximum floor-area ratio of 0.15, a street frontage of at least 100 feet, a minimum 50 foot front yard and back yard, a minimum 30 foot side yard (80 feet total on side yards), and a height of 8 inches per foot from the lot line.

If the plans for a house don't conform – for example, if the proposed side yard is 22 feet, the street frontage only 40 – variances must be obtained from the Zoning Board before a building permit is given and work can begin. In special situations further permits may be required – where there are wetlands, for example. But the basic questions of the size of a house, its placement on its lot and its relationship to its neighbors, are determined by the Zoning Board regulations.

In the Historic Districts of Palisades and Tappan there is another layer of control. The historic areas are deemed to be

of “such historic value, by reason of places, buildings and other objects” relating to the “history and development of the Town of Orangetown from early colonial days through the end of World War I . . . that these areas should be protected.” The bounds of the historic areas take in what is essentially the core of each hamlet /village (in Palisades the northern line of the area cuts somewhat arbitrarily across the former driving range on 9W). A local law was adopted in 1997 to protect these places and buildings and “thereby preserve the overall historic look and character within the Historic Areas for future generations.” The responsibility of interpreting this law is given to the Historic Areas Board of Review, seven citizens from the two historic districts (one of whom must be an architect) appointed by the Supervisor. HABR reports to the Zoning Board, which can overturn any ruling it makes. Enforcement is a matter for the Building Department. HABR's counterpart outside the historic districts is the Architecture and Community Appearance Board of Reviews [ACABOR] whose parent board is the Planning Board.

In the historic areas, plans for a new house, conforming to the zoning regulations and with any variances that may be needed, still must be signed off on by HABR. The same is true for a new wing, or substantial changes to the outside of the house. Without approval from HABR, a building permit will not be given. (Repairs are different – no permit is needed if a repair or replacement uses the same materials as the existing structure.)

The guidelines are that “proposed changes, additions or new construction shall be in keeping with the existing structure.” New buildings “shall harmonize with surrounding buildings, yet not necessarily recall any historic style.” “Harmonize” is defined as meaning congruity in such things as height, width, position on site, square footage (all of which are addressed by the zoning regulations) and architectural style. On this last point, it is emphasized that “no new structure shall be required to be a copy of any particular style or architectural period.”

Thus HABR's decisions/suggestions are largely aesthetic – fenestration; materials to be used for siding, roofs and chimneys; the color of roofs, walls, doors and shutters; the style of balusters and railings; the provision of outdoor lighting and so on. Taken individually, such details may seem trivial. But together, and when the end product serves to help preserve the overall character of a place for future generations, they have weight and validity.

**The writer is a member of HABR*

Historic Award

Eli Josephs Given Preservation Award

The 16th annual Rockland County Executive's Preservation Merit Awards ceremony took place on Sunday, May 21, at the Historical Society's Jacob Blaauvelt House Historical Site. The Rescue Award, presented for a historic site or structure rescued from possible demolition and reclaimed for further use, was given to Eli Josephs of Palisades.



The Josephs House was the recipient of the The Rescue Award. Eli Josephs, owner; Jo Machinist, architect.

The original house on this level half-acre lot fronting the historic road to the ferry at Snedens Landing was built in 1929. It was a small dwelling with steeply pitched roofs and an irregular facade. The neighborhood was one of modest houses of various styles and vintages—some of great age—centered on a venerable crossroads.

Over the years the house had become increasingly dilapidated. Ivy was undermining the walls. Rot had taken its toll on the woodwork. The screened-in porch had collapsed, and there was mold everywhere.

Eli Josephs, a developer and neighbor, bought the derelict building in 2003. Rather than tearing down the house to build a bigger one, ostensibly easier and probably less costly as well, he decided to restore it. His goal was to retain the structure's original scale and demeanor, while adding the essentials of contemporary living. The history of the neighborhood and the exterior vocabulary of the house was to be respected. Manhattan architect Jo Machinist, a Piermont resident, was chosen to do the job.

The resulting design owes its style to the English Vernacular of the 1920s, characterized by steep rooflines, asymmetrical massing, uneven fenestration and dramatic, tall chimneys. The original materials and details were replicated whenever possible: a wood shake roof, stucco walls, round-headed windows and multitransomed windows. The chimney was rebuilt in indigenous brownstone and the paths in recycled brick.

Interior walls and ceilings were changed to make a double-storied living room with a cathedral ceiling and a brownstone and mahogany fireplace. The existing kitchen became the dining room and the old garage an eat-in kitchen. The house is far more spacious than its predecessor, but the footprint is identical. This was a timely and courageous rescue!

The information for this article originally appeared in the July-September issue of South of the Mountains, the publication of the Historical Society of Rockland County.

Book Review

The Column Rule

The Historical Society of Rockland County's newest publication, *The Column Rule: Rockland People, Rockland Places* by Arthur H. Gunther 3rd is now available. Unabashedly nostalgic and often poetic, Gunther's book contains 100 essays selected from the 2600 or so columns that he wrote as Editorial Page Editor of the *Journal News* over the past 25 years. Gunther's memories are often of "little people," unsung heroes and heroines of recent decades, some of whom you've probably known.



Arthur Gunther is a Rocklander through and through. He grew up in the Spring Valley-Hillcrest area, graduated from Spring Valley High School and worked at the *Journal News* from 1964, when he signed on as a "fly-boy," catching newspapers as they came off the press, until he retired this year as Editorial Page Editor. His first essay under the signature *The Column Rule* (a printers' term and also, for him, a metaphor) appeared in 1981, and over the next 25 years he wrote more than 2600. This book collects one hundred of them.

The essays are arranged here in four groups—Rockland People, Rockland Places, Rockland History, Various Themes—each preceded by one of Mr. Gunther's evocative photographs.

The author's Rockland people include the well known and those he calls "unannounced." Helen Hayes, in whose Irish face we can read a gritty determination to do things just so and be stubborn where it counts. Mildred Rippey, whose engaging soul was one of the strongest of human river currents. Gus Weltie, who worked on the farm at High Tor and was paid \$5 a month, never traveled farther than New York City (maybe once or twice there) and was a passionate fighter for the protection of the mountain. Many times, the occasion for a portrait is the end of a long life; sometimes the subject is "in the news." This gallery reaffirms that "we are all characters."

Gunther writes with keen nostalgia about a greener, quieter Rockland, with narrower roads, busier downtowns. He recalls the evening walk on the Boulevard in Spring Valley, when the village still had summer resort hotels and bungalows and was to many the best resort outside the Catskills. He elegizes fall days in Viola where the remains of a thousand apple trees still nurture the soil of development homes—"gone forever is the taste peculiar to fruit bred of this soil, graced by a

special wind, hardened by stiff and chilly nights."

He counts himself among those county people who can add B.B. (Before Bridge) to their names. "I recall the South Nyack downtown that no longer exists. I built a hut on land now occupied by the Thruway toll exchange at Spring Valley... I have no quarrel with change, but I do dispute the methods by which this county has grown... The doubling of the county's population... Congested roads. The loss of floodplains. Far too many shopping areas developed at the expense of downtown shopping areas." His trenchant conclusion: Rockland "cannot accommodate another bridge at South Nyack simply because the cost has been too great for the first one."

Many times, the occasion for a portrait is the end of a long life; sometimes the subject is "in the news." This gallery reaffirms that "we are all characters."

The cost includes the fouling of the landscape. Gunther suggests that an archaeologist digging in the county two centuries hence might well conclude that current Rocklanders disliked their fellow humans so much that they dumped wherever they wanted, regardless of whom it may have hurt.

Back in the all-too-real present, he writes movingly of the deep sense of mourning in Pearl River for those lost in the World Trade Center disaster. These men were a part of the Town brotherhood, "the Brotherhood of deep concern and respect for each officer, active or retired, and son or daughter or father or grandchild of that officer." Pearl River, home to so many of New York's

(Book Review continued on p12.)

Palisades Presbyterian Church News

Summer is at an end, school has begun, and the young children are back at Palisades Church on Sundays, adding their presence to the congregation. During each Sunday's "Children's Message" we all lean forward to make certain we catch their special comments and answers to questions.

Worship is at 10:00 AM every Sunday, and the 1st Sunday of each month we have Communion. The children return to the sanctuary and sit with their parents to share in that ritual.

The Palisades Presbyterian Church is about to celebrate one year of Interim Pastor Ray Bagnuolo's tenure with us. It has been an event-filled, productive year as we continue our path forward. And we have enjoyed his sermons and his presence in our community immensely. All are welcome to join us.

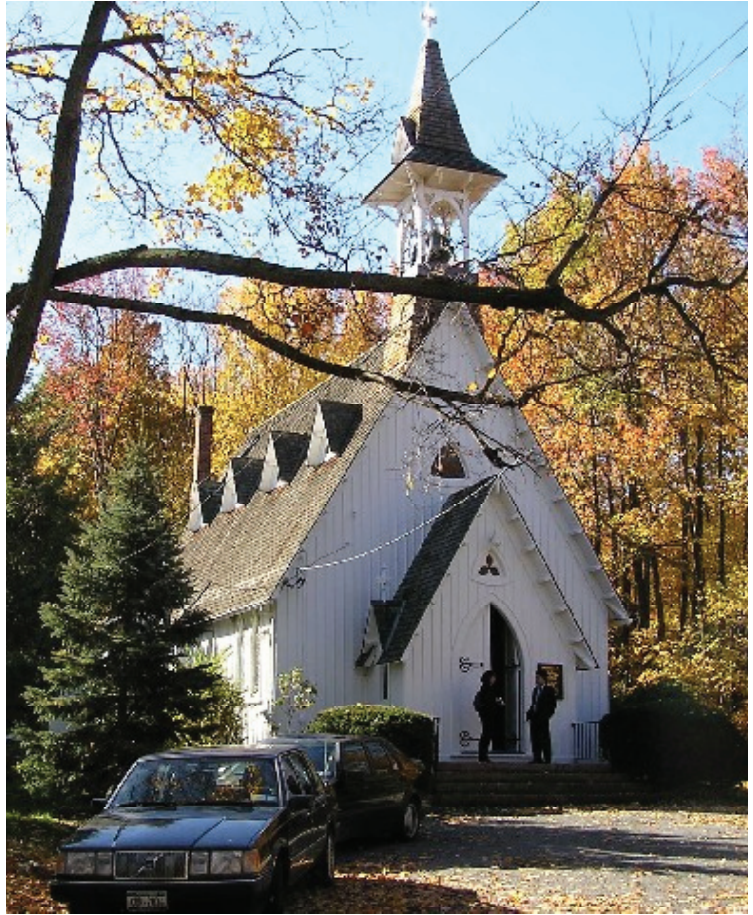
Church Calendar

Please note that the weekly **Play Group** has changed its day from **Wednesday** to **Thursday**. All young children in the community with their parents or care-givers are invited to share playtime at the Church every Thursday from 10 am to noon. It is an opportunity to meet your neighbors and let your children play together. Do put it on your calendar.

In October we are continuing our **Palisades Periodic Pot-Luck and Picture Show** evenings. Please check out our web site for information, and join us.

Children's Shakespeare Theatre: We welcome CST back to Palisades Church after the summer vacation and look forward to their next production, *Measure for Measure*, performed by the Rogue Players on November 10, 11, 12, 17 and 18. (See article on page 4.)

Singer-Songwriter **Katie Elevitch Performs** Saturday, November 4th at the Church in the Parish hall. 7 pm to 9 pm. All ages are encouraged to attend; no admission charge and refreshments will be served.



Weekly Gatherings

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| Tuesdays: | 10:00 AM Tai Chi |
| Wednesdays: | 12:15 PM Bible Study
AA Meetings: 7:30 PM
Womens Meeting: 9:00 PM |
| Thursdays: | 10:00–12:00 AM Play Group
8:00 PM Choir Rehearsal |
| Fridays: | 10:00 AM Chair Tai Chi |

Contact Us

PO Box 687
117 Washington Spring Road
Palisades NY 10964.
Email: palisadespc1@aol.com
Phone: (845) 359-3147
Website: www.ppc10964.org

Palisades Community Center

By Michèle A. Balm, PCC Board President

As we regroup after a brief summer respite, the PCC Board is diligently working on several fronts to continue the trend toward making the Center an active hub of our community. The fresh paint job, wallpaper and gorgeous new curtains have given the center that added touch to make it much more inviting and flexible for a broader spectrum of venues. We urge you to consider renting the space for your upcoming special event as it is becoming our own little backyard special events facility! Let's keep it thriving!

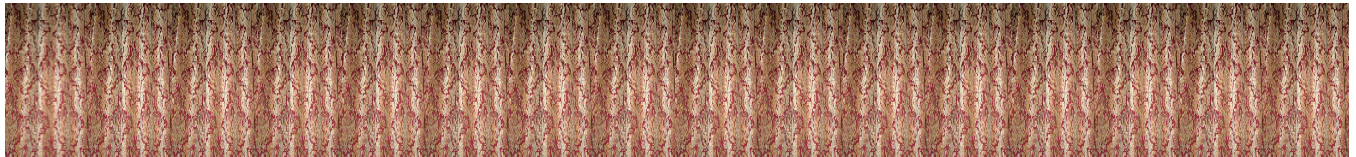
We have some new regular tenants this year including the Audubon Society who will run their annual monthly meetings here. The Children's Shakespeare Group will utilize the space for additional rehearsals during production time. We are also thrilled to be working with the Palisades Free Library Board. The library will be using the space to host some of its adult programs. Because the center is a natural place for those programs to

be housed, we hope that additional events will move there permanently.

The www.palisadesny.com website has proven to be a very efficient way for our community to communicate. Please don't forget to visit the site and familiarize yourself with all it has to offer. All upcoming PCC events will be posted on the website as well.

We welcome any and all community residents to become members of the Palisades Community Center which will enable you to receive good discounts of the rental fee for the building! It's quick and easy and just a phone call away to Michele Balm at 845-359-3776 or you can easily download the form from the above website.

Looking ahead to December, we will be sponsoring the Holiday Caroling Sing-a-Long. Watch for posting of time as the season draws nearer.



(Book Review continued from p10.)

bravest and finest, is not the Usual Suburbia.

The collection ends with Gunther's first essay for the *Journal News*, published in August, 1981. Here he described the use of the column rule and its significance in the newspaper business, noting that it required some effort and the result was worth some pride. He wrote that he aimed to speak, as the column rule did, "of tradition and craft, of the values of the old and of the necessity of maintaining standards in a topsy-turvy world of which Rockland is a small but important part." This collection bears him out. It is a treasure.

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845 634 9629

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(prices include postage and sales tax).

The Spring Fling showcased the First Annual Palisades Dog Show and some delighted participants.



Palisades Library News

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Mr. Twister: Wednesday, October 1 I , 4:30 p. m. Mr. Twister creates giant balloon cartoon characters, animals, flowers and much more. Each child will also have an opportunity to create his or her own balloon sculpture. A fun-filled afternoon for children 5 and up.

Spooky & Silly Halloween Gala for preschoolers: Tuesday, October 24, 4:15 p.m. Preschoolers are welcome to come in costume and listen to spooky and silly Halloween stories. Create a boo-tiful craft to take home. Ages 2 1/2 to 4.

Spook-tacular Halloween Haunting: Wednesday, October 25, 4:30 p.m. Wear your costume and hear some spooky stories. Create some creepy crafts and ingest some eerie eats. Ages 5 and up.

Native American Adventures: Wednesday, November 15, 4:30 p.m. Find out about the Warnpamoag tribe and how they helped create the first Thanksgiving. Create a Thanksgiving craft for your celebration table. Ages 5 and up.

Card and Ornament Workshop for Tweens and Teens: Thursday, December 7, 4:15 p.m. We'll use rubber stamps, shape punches and other tools to create beautiful holiday cards along with ornaments. Moms are welcome to come craft with their children. Ages 8 and up.

Gingerbread Gathering: Wednesday, December 13, 4:30 p.m. Learn about the custom of the gingerbread house and hear the famous story about the Gingerbread Baby. Bring your own box of graham-crackers and we'll build a house that tastes good enough to eat! Ages 5 and up.

Story Time for Ages 3-K: Carol Baxter will welcome children back to story time on Wednesdays at 1:30. Come choose some wonderful books to listen to and take home. Story time will begin on September 27th and follows the school vacation calendar.

LIBRARY NEWS AND EVENTS

The Tappan Zee thrift Shop welcomes donations and volunteers. Proceeds benefit the library and seven other worthwhile organizations in the community. Open Tuesday through Saturday. Call for hours and donation policy. 359-5753.

Museum memberships. The library has membership cards for the Guggenheim,



Museum of Natural History, and the Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum. These free passes are available at the circulation desk and may be reserved for a particular date.

How do I get a library card? You must live in Palisades or Sparkill. Bring proof of your name and address, such as a driver's license or utility bill, etc., to the circulation desk. **How do I obtain a card for my child?** Children starting kindergarten are eligible for a library card. A parent must have an updated Palisades Free Library card. Apply at the circulation desk.

Order your books from home and receive notification via E-mail when your material arrives. Late notices can also be sent by E-mail. To register for this service go to our home page and follow the instructions found in "online forms."

The computer catalog is available in the library and on the internet (www.rcls.org/pal/). You can look for adult and juvenile material: books, DVDs, CDs and databases. Please come after 5 p.m. on Mondays or Thursdays for an introduction to the computer catalog.

Once again, the Library will be offering high school students an opportunity to help younger children with their homework and special assignments. High School students can sign up to help a student one day a week for an hour at the library. Students who would like help, should sign up too.

Student reader's forum. Read a book you have liked recently or maybe didn't like? Share your thoughts and opinions with other young people. Look for the bulletin board display in the Children's Room at the library for further information.

Author Reception. Judith Lingle Ryan has written the book, *Journey from Mount Rainier: a mother's chronicle of grief and hope*, about loss and healing. The library will hold a reception for Ms. Ryan on Sunday, November 5th at 2:00 p.m. She was an active psychologist in Rockland County for a number of years and has explored writing since retiring.

(Palisades Library News continued on p14.)

(Palisades Library News continued from p13.)

Fiction, Non-Fiction and DVDs

New Adult Fiction

Arana, Marie - Cellophane
Da Chen - Brothers
Ford, Richard - The Lay of the Land
Hamilton, Jane - When Madeline
Was Young
Katzenbach, John - The Wrong Man
McCarthy, Cormac - The Road
Messud, Claire - The Emperor's
Children
Oates, Joyce Carol - Black Girl/
White Girl
Rubinfeld, Jed - The Interpretation
of Murder

New Adult Nonfiction

Bryson, Bill - The Life and Times
of the Thunderbolt Kid
Ephron, Nora - I Feel Bad about My
Neck
Franzen, Jonathan - The Discomfort
Zone: A Personal History
Hughes, Robert - Things I Didn't

Know: A Memoir
Isikoff, Michael & David Corn - Hubris
Mayle, Peter - Provence A-Z
Ricks, Thomas - Fiasco
Roiphe, Anne - Water from the Well
Thomas, Abigail - A Three Dog Life
Woodward, Bob - Bush at War

Forthcoming DVDs

Akeelah and the Bee
Before the Fall
Brick
Changing Times
Death of Mr. Lazarescu
District B13
Down in the Valley
Duck Season
Friends with Money
Hard Candy
Iron Island
Keeping up with the Steins
Kings & Queens
Lady Vengeance
L'enfant
Lonesome Jim
Notorious Bettie Page

Thank You for Asking
Three Times
Twelve and Holding
An Inconvenient Truth

Contact Information

Palisades Free Library

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(Sparkill Firehouse continued from p2.)

Our Sparkill-Palisades Fire Department encourages everyone in the community to increase their awareness of the organization's activities. Any interested young person in the community is welcome to join as a Junior Fire Fighter, and adults can participate as auxiliaries or be trained to become active fire fighters as well. Financial contributions can also be made by sending a check to:

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3. New homeowners must learn how to use their pre-installed alarms correctly when they move in.



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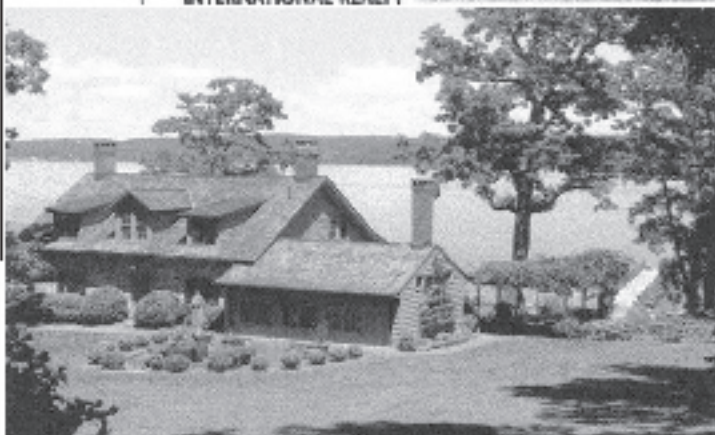
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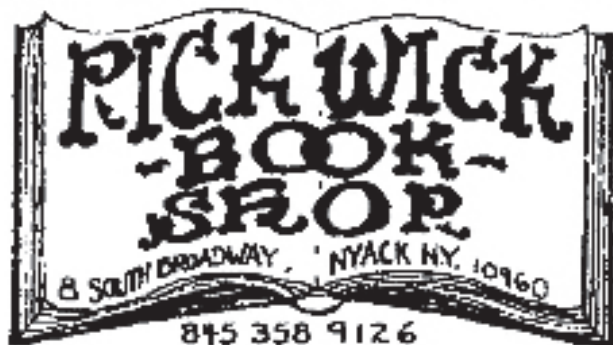
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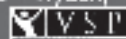
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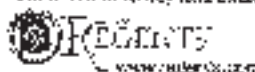
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