

BEACON FREE PRESS

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Fjord Trail board appoints Peter Mullan as President and CEO

The Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, Inc. (HHFT) Board of Directors announced that Peter Mullan has been appointed to the new role of President and Chief Executive Officer of Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail. Mullan is a national nonprofit leader with extensive experience in public greenway design and operations. The President and CEO will have broad oversight of the nonprofit's operations as the organization grows its capacity and resources to meet its mission. Mullan will officially assume his post on January 1, 2025.

Trained as an architect, Mullan has already successfully shepherded other public-private partnership greenway projects, including the High Line in New York and the Waterloo Greenway in Austin, TX. Presently, he serves as the Executive Vice President and Chief of Architecture and Urban Design for the Austin Transit Partnership, overseeing the development of Austin's first light-rail system.

"This is an exciting time for the Hudson Highlands Fjord Trail, where we begin to move from concept and design to implementation," said HHFT Board Chair Chris Davis. "This organizational expansion will provide us additional leadership and capacity to shepherd the project through construction of the Breakneck Connector and the state environmental review process. With Peter's extensive experience in public space design and operations and Amy Kacala's deep experience with large scale project planning and the regulatory environment, we have the right team for the right moment."

Executive Director Amy Kacala will continue serving in her current role as part of an expanded leadership team, with particular focus on both the management of the capital project and all related regulatory matters. Kacala's leadership and experience as an urban planner has successfully moved the project forward for the last ten years.

"As HHFT moves from planning and design to construction and operations, Peter's experience and knowledge will be a terrific asset to the project and the organization. Deputy Executive Director MJ Martin and I are thrilled to have him join the Fjord Trail as a partner and leader. Peter's appointment is a meaningful expansion and strengthening of the HHFT team as we work to bring this long-awaited project into reality," said Amy Kacala.

With the appointment of a President and CEO, HHFT brings additional, full-time management to the project. Up until this point, Ned Sullivan, President of the Hudson Valley's largest environmental organization, Scenic Hudson, has been fulfilling some of these responsibilities. Mullan's appointment will allow Sullivan to fully focus on Scenic Hudson's other priorities across the region.

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Hocus Pocus Halloween Parade in Beacon on Oct. 26

By Kristine Coulter

Get ready for the annual Hocus Pocus Halloween Parade in Beacon. The event will take place on Saturday, October 26 at 2 p.m. All are welcome to dress up in costume and walk down Main St. said organizers.

"The start of the parade is at the traditional starting point of Bank Square on the corner of Main Street and South Avenue, but this year it will end at Veterans Place just past the post office as the city was concerned about safety going further than Teller Avenue," explained Charlotte Guernsey, organizer and with The Gate House Team at Compass.

How many people are expected for this 'spook-tacular' event?

"Depending on the weather we expect 500 to 1,000 people," said Guernsey.

On Friday, Oct. 25, from 3-6 p.m. there will be Main St. Trick or Treating and Black Cat Scavenger Hunt. Businesses with an orange pumpkin in the window will have a 'black cat' hidden in the store. Find the cat and have one's event passport stamped. One can win a grab bag prize for every 15 stamps collected. The grab bag locations are at Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices, 226 Main St., and The Gate House Team at Compass, 490 Main St.

Why is this event one you look forward to every year?

"It's a great community event where everyone is welcome to get dressed up



The annual Hocus Pocus Halloween Parade will take place on Main St. on Saturday, Oct. 26 in Beacon.

-Archive photo

and meet up with their friends and family and get into the Halloween spirit a little early. The black cat scavenger hunt is something we started two years ago and is a big hit with the kids and something they really look forward to," she stated.

The scavenger hunt continues on Saturday, Oct. 26, from 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. The parade line up is at the corner of Main St. and South Ave. at 1:30 p.m. The parade will begin 30 minutes later.

So, what has been the feedback from businesses and attendees?

Guernsey replied, "Businesses have had parents come into their store who have never been in there before, find things they loved and come back later to make a purchase! The parade is a traditional event everyone looks forward to."

Organizers of the festivities "hope everyone comes out and enjoys the parade, trick or treating and scavenger hunt!" said Guernsey.

For more information, go to Facebook.com.

PSC cites 'apparent violations' by Central Hudson during investigation of WF explosion



The PSC recently released results from a preliminary investigation into the Nov. 2023 natural gas explosion on Brick Row in Wappingers Falls. Pictured is one of the injured being assisted by first responders after the explosion last year.

-Archive photo

By Kristine Coulter

The New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) ordered Central Hudson Gas & Electric Corporation on Oct. 16 to show why a civil enforcement proceeding should not begin and why civil penalties or other remedies should not be imposed by the Commission "for apparent violations relating to a natural gas-related explosion that occurred in Wappingers Falls." The gas-related explosion,

in which multiple people were injured, occurred at 7 Brick Row on November 2, 2023. The utility has 30 days to provide a response. The Department of Public Service staff released a report describing the results of its preliminary investigation last week.

According to the report, Central Hudson in Nov. 2023 "was conducting natural gas distribution upgrades in the Wappingers Falls area as part of a distribution improvement project. These gas system upgrades included excavating gas facilities located under roadways and walkways to replace steel gas pipelines with new plastic pipelines, as well as installing new service lines to ratepayer residences." During operations, states the press release, "Central Hudson contractors struck an unmarked natural gas service line, causing a natural gas leak. Minutes later, the residence at 7 Brick Row exploded, severely injuring multiple individuals."

The Department, which is the staff arm of the Commission, investigated. According to the release, the Department determined that there appears to be "sufficiently credible evidence indicating that Central Hudson had prior knowledge of the residence's active natural gas service line. The residence contained an active natural gas meter that had

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Viewpoints



Letters may be edited for legal considerations, reader interest and length. Please include a telephone number and address for verification purposes. **Deadline for letters is Friday at noon.** Letters must be submitted by e-mail to be considered for publication. Letters can be e-mailed to newsplace@aol.com, and the phrase "Letter to the Editor" should be included in the subject line of the e-mail.

Policy on letters:

- Letters that contain statements that are libelous or slanderous will not be published.
- Letters that include personal attacks will not be published
- Letters written in response to other letter writers must address the issue at hand, rather than mentioning the writer by name and must refer to the headline and date the letter was published.
- Letters referring to news stories must mention the headline and date of publication.
- The Southern Dutchess News will not be used as a vehicle to place misinformation.
- Information must be attributed to a specific individual or published item (ie- tell us where or from whom you obtained the information)
- All letters must contain a name, hometown and phone number for verification.
- Letters appearing on the Viewpoints page are the views of the writers alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Beacon Free Press.

GUIDELINES FOR POLITICAL LETTERS

- Maximum 200 words
 - Must be sent via email
 - Provide a phone number where we may reach you to confirm you have written the letter-writers
 - We will run as many letters as possible, space permitting, in our Oct. 23 and Oct. 30 issues. Please note that we will NOT run negative letters against any candidate in the Oct. 30 issue; only letters endorsing candidates will be run in that issue.
- EDITOR'S NOTE: We appreciate the passion that people feel for their candidates and their political parties, but encourage letter-writers to express support for their candidates in a positive and instructive manner. It is easy to criticize others, but at the local level, we know that great things can be accomplished through cooperation. We have faith that our readers, and our communities, can rise above the partisan fray in this election season, and emphasize the good that their candidates will do.

Prop 1 will not benefit a civil society

To the Editor:

As if this contentious Presidential election weren't enough, New Yorkers will vote on an initiative which will have ramifications way beyond who sits in the Oval Office for the next four years.

Proposition 1 - an amendment to the NYS Constitution - will add a hodgepodge of new characteristics as "protected" categories. Among these are "age, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression...reproductive healthcare & autonomy" (the sacrosanct code words for abortion.)

The Democratic Party is marketing Prop 1 as protecting abortion. This is disingenuous, as the repeal of abortion in New York is not about to happen. This approach is a tactical ruse to boost voter turnout for Democratic candidates.

Adding "age" alongside "autonomy" in anti-discrimination code will essentially make children de facto wards of the state while nullifying the role of parents. For exam-

ple, could children make medical decisions in defiance of parental knowledge? Could minors be allowed to obtain a driver's license or a marriage license? Could they purchase/possess/use tobacco, alcohol or cannabis? Would age-of-consent be eliminated? Would pedophilia be a protected "sexual orientation"? If "age" becomes a protected category, then the legality of being underage is in serious jeopardy.

Prop 1 puts women and girls at risk for loss of privacy and safety in rest rooms, changing rooms, locker rooms, crisis shelters and prisons. Female students are being cheated out of athletic scholarships. They are being injured on the field.

What more evidence is needed that "gender equity" is nothing but misogyny writ large? New York State justices will have scant leeway when adjudicating ensuing cases. Prop 1 will be the proverbial thumb on the scale, tipping the balance in one direction.

There is nothing in Prop 1 to benefit a civil society. It's a social engineering project which will overhaul traditional norms and ingrain state dominion of human behavior into the framework of community.

In our town, many road and lawn signs are appearing that say "Choice is on the Ballot."

I agree. But, the "choice" before us is between normal and crazy.

Linda Cebrian
Dutchess County Conservative Committee

Come together as a community to support those affected by domestic violence

To the Editor:

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, a time to shine a light on the challenges faced by survivors and to honor their strength and resilience. We must come together as a community to support those affected by domestic violence, raise awareness about its impact, and advocate for change. It's important to listen, believe, and empower survivors as they navigate their healing journeys.

Together, we can foster a culture of compassion and safety for all, which begins with immediate assistance in the aftermath of violence to begin to create a safe space for healing. Counseling and therapy, especially trauma-informed therapy, helps survivors process their experiences, develop coping strategies, and rebuild their lives. Also important are advocacy and support services to assist survivors in accessing legal aid, housing, and healthcare, ensuring they have the resources needed to regain independence. Finally, community education is important to raise awareness about domestic violence and promote prevention through workshops and outreach programs.

At Astor, we have the privilege of witnessing the incredible resilience and strength of our clients who have experienced domestic violence. Each journey is unique, but it is always inspiring to see clients begin to reclaim their sense of self and agency. Initially, many feel overwhelmed by fear and uncertainty, but with work they learn to set healthy boundaries, advocate for themselves, and make choices that prioritize their safety and well-being. Another key area of progress is in the development of healthy relationships. Clients often start by feeling distrustful or isolated, but as they heal, we've witnessed many begin to form supportive connections with friends, family, or community resources. These relationships can provide essential support and encouragement as they navigate their journey. Ultimately, the progress we witness is not just about overcoming past trauma; it's about cultivating resilience, hope, and a vision for a brighter future.

There is always hope and you are not alone. Please reach out to Astor Services or your local agency if you or a loved one is experiencing domestic violence.

Virginia Guerrero, Care Manager
Program Director of Trauma Recovery Center, Astor Services

Trump 'not one of the gang' in D.C.

To the Editor:

I must comment on the recent letter from Kevin Murphy re: Trump never being in the White House again that was in the Oct. 16th edition. First of all, many of the "wave of Republicans" not supporting Trump are the status quo BAU folks (you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours). You know, the ones who get nothing done? Basically, Deep Staters and RINOs (Republicans In Name Only). Remember, Trump is not one of them, yet "The Donald" was loved by all before entering politics and putting an "R" after his name (right, Oprah?). Others simply hate the man for various reasons, much of it based on lies, half-truths and exaggerations. Bigotry, antisemitism, inciting violence etc.? Just the usual projection from the Left.

Regarding a stolen election, anyone who cannot see the weird shenanigans that took place in 2020 has both hands over their eyes and their ears plugged. I'll leave it at that.

"Protecting democracy, our country and our Constitution." That's rich. Mark Zuckerberg admitted that the Biden administration pressured him to monitor COVID-related content, Russia, the "tape" and Hunter's laptop. We can only imagine what else our "pro-democracy" leaders monitor and mislead about. Hillary Clinton, John Kerry and Tim Walz have all stated their disdain for the First Amendment, but Trump is the real threat to democracy? Go figure.

NEWS FLASH! Trump already served 1 term, and our country is still here. We had a great economy, relative peace in the world, a decent border situation, and groceries were affordable. Currently we have no border and all the problems that stem from it, high prices and possibly on the verge of WWII.

Donald Trump is one of the few people in Washington who actually cares about America and its people. He is not one of the gang, can't be bought, and the establishment can't stand it.

Kevin Wirsch
Fishkill

Halloween Dance Party set for Oct. 26

Night of the Living Dead Halloween Dance Party will be held on Saturday, October 26, 8 p.m. until midnight. Admission is \$40, \$50 or \$75 in advance, \$50, \$60, and \$85 at the door (includes drinks & snacks)

The party will be held at the University Settlement Camp in Beacon with DJs. For more information, o to <https://site.corsizio.com/event/66f1b22e36fb002cd75fd080>.

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