



The Gardiner Gazette

www.gardinergazette.com

A call to community ...

Free! Please take one



Archer Tshering Dorji. Photos: Anne Allbright Smith

Bhutanese Take Aim In Gardiner

by Anne Smith

Gardiner is a surprising town; one never knows what might lie around the next corner. Well, road. This handsome young man is Tshering Dorji, member of the five-man team that won a Bhutanese archery tournament here recently. Tucked away on an isolated field off Sand Hill Road, eight teams competed with one another over a two-day period in honor of the marriage of the King of Bhutan.

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An Anniversary Reaffirmation And A New Website

by The Gardiner Gazette Editorial Committee

This issue marks the third anniversary of *The Gardiner Gazette* and, no, we didn't think we'd get this far either. We've just come across the statement we printed in the first issue, in January of 2009, and were surprised at how "right" it still sounds. Here it is again:

"The Gardiner Gazette was born out of a conversation about our future, and a realization that each of us has a unique responsibility to meet the challenges ahead. If change is coming, what do we want it to look like, and how do we shape it? We have no answer, but feel that the kernel of an answer lies in coming together as a community in these tough times. None of us has been immune to the troubles on Wall Street—no matter how far away that world seems. It is a problem that has felt utterly out of our control, and yet it affects us at the core of our goals and dreams. Many of the articles in this issue focus on the resources that we have available to us locally: they can help us and those around us."

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First They Have To Find You

by Ray Smith



If you have an emergency and call 911, the skill and rapid deployment of our first responders will mean little if they can't locate your home.

Dave Bailin, Gardiner Fire Chief, gave this example when asked to illustrate the difficulty of finding some homes in their response area:

"There was a Rescue Squad call-out on one road. No mail box. The house numbers jumped on either side of the road. And it took us a little while to find, because the homeowner didn't come outside to say, 'Hey, here I am.' No lights on. This was in the middle of the night and it was a difficulty breathing call."

And that was just one of several examples. The Gardiner Fire Department celebrates its 100th anniversary this year and, as a fundraiser for these festivities, the Fire Department and Rescue Squad are selling and installing reflective house numbers. These signs have a green background and large white numbers—both highly reflective to insure immediate visibility, especially at

House Numbers...continued page 7

A Gardiner Family Farm

by Barbara Sides

On any given weekend you can find the beef, pork, chicken and eggs from Brookside Farm selling briskly at six different farm markets scattered throughout the Hudson Valley. The 169 acre Brookside Farm on Albany Post Road just south of Route 44/55 is owned by Drew and Sharon Syckoff. We met in their lovely old farmhouse where they live with their three children, Lily, Hank and Mack, and Pineapple, a faithful guard dog that protects the farm animals from coyotes, foxes, skunks and hawks.

Sharon Syckoff grew up on a farm in South Carolina and Drew was raised on Long Island among potato farms. They love animals and hoped to raise their prospective family in a rural, farm environment. "It has always been a dream of mine to have a farm," Drew adds. In September Brookside Farm was certified organic by the Northeast Organic Farmers Association. Their herd is grass-fed and finished as well as organic. Achieving certification is a source of pride and a testament to the Sycoffs' desire to humanely raise the very highest quality beef, chicken and pork. "We went out there and researched the best current methods for running an organic farm, which included management-intensive grazing and moving the animals to fresh pasture every day." The Sycoffs invested heavily in the genetics of the animals on the farm and chose the "best of the best," the Wye Angus breed of beef cattle maintained by the University of

Maryland. A genetically pure breed, Wye Angus beef cattle have never been bred to be big, and they fatten beautifully on grass which they eat in abundance as they move from pasture to pasture.

Culinary Institute chefs and students have been to the farm and praise the quality of Brookside beef and eggs. The farm's eggs have been featured at the Culinary Institute and are here in Gardiner. A couple married at The Mohonk Mountain House arranged for the farm's chicken to be served at their wedding reception.



The Sycoff's barn and some of their Wye Angus cows. Photos courtesy Sycoff family

The Sycoffs' goal, to run a small scale, very high-quality, profitable farm is clearly succeeding. Sharon can't keep up with the demand for Brookside eggs and the pair have had to hire three staff to run the six weekend farm markets, and two full time workers to help run the farm. There are plans for regular hours to sell—as well as grill—beef and pork right on the property, and Drew envisions a gazebo for dining, with beautiful views of the fields.

The Sycoffs speak very well of the other grass fed beef farms in Gardiner. Very much in keeping with the Farm to Table movement, in addition to Brook-

side, Gardiner's "Beef Belt" includes Kiernan Farm, Brykill Farm, Full Moon and Four Winds. The Sycoffs reserve special praise for Jay and Polly Armour of Four Winds. "Jay and Polly were amazing," Drew adds. The pair spent hours helping the Sycoffs fill out the formidable application for organic certification and shared their experience and passion for farming, for which the Sycoffs are most grateful.

Three years ago, Drew and Sharon launched Brookside when they bought three cow/calf pairs, one steer and 26 egg-layers at auction. Today, the farm grazes 48 head of cattle with 23 calves due in the Spring and raises 250 egg-layers with plans for 500 next year. From modest beginnings, the Sycoffs have built a successful family business and a busy, productive life. "I'm happy that my children know where their food comes from," Sharon adds. "Lily and I collect eggs and we have begun to set up the cow paddocks with the kids. There's nothing like watching them run through the fields," enthuses Drew. It sounds like a dream come true.

You'll find Brookside meat, poultry and eggs at the Gardiner Green Market (winter hours) at the Gardiner Library. Visit their website at brookside-farm.com, or call them at 845-895-7433 to order. □

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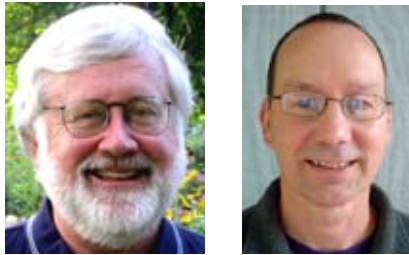
Meet Your New Town Government

by Laurie Willow

On November 8th, 2011 voters in Gardiner elected their town government for the next two years. Sworn in on January 1, 2012, they are pictured below:



Left to right: Supervisor Carl Zatz, returning after a two-year hiatus to a two year term; sitting board member Carmine Mele, two years left in a four-year term; Newcomer Mike Reynolds, elected to a four year term.



Sitting Board member Warren Wiegand, re-elected to a four-year term as Councilman; sitting board member Rich Koenig, two years left in a four-year term.

As we know, the elected leaders of Gardiner (the Town Board) appoint additional leaders (the Planning Board and Zoning Board) and together this relative handful of representatives set the priorities and the tone for all of us. They decide what is important and what are the problems and issues that

need to be addressed. They decide where to spend funds, and where to withhold funds. In all matters they decide on what direction to send Gardiner.

Needless to say, these representatives, though elected by the public, need the continued input of the public if they are to truly represent it. There are many ways to involve ourselves. Attending Board meetings and speaking up on issues that matter is certainly a good way, but for those who are unable to make that

level of time commitment, the Town website (www.townofgardiner.org) is a tremendous resource. There, you can find meeting agendas or sign up to receive them, via email, automatically in advance of the Town, Planning or Zoning Board meetings. Whether you can attend the meetings or not, the agendas alone will keep you up to date on the issues facing the Boards.

Following a meeting, the minutes, which summarize the actions taken at the meeting, can also be found on the site and, finally, there you can also find contact numbers for Town officials in order to send them your comments and ideas. It will be very interesting to watch this new town board guide Gardiner into the future. Helping them will be even more interesting! ☐ [Back ...](#)

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Gardiner Goes To The Dogs

by Anne Smith

Plans for the Gardiner Dog Park behind our Town Hall are well underway. Parks and Recreation Commission member Nancy Cass has been working with the Town Board and DEC to gain the necessary permissions, and the only obstacle now is the water-soaked ground. Nancy, with the help of Michele Zigrossi and Kim Burger (owner and manager of The Natural Pet Center), raised \$1,079 in donations for the dog park, and ten local businesses contributed to four raffle baskets which included two handcrafted dog dining stations, movie tickets, pizza, champagne and wine, meal certificates for The Mohonk Mountain House and a gift card for the Tuthill House at the Mill restaurant. The lucky

winners were Eric Kwac, Karen Skillman, John O'Mara and Richard Condon. The Natural Pet Center has been the biggest supporter of the dog park and has not only been selling homemade dog biscuits and frisbees in their store (proceeds go directly to the Dog Park) but has also donated all of the fencing for it.

The project has been adopted by Girl Scout Cadette Troups 60288 and 60383 for their Silver Award, the highest award that can be received at their level. These girls will put 50 hours of time into planning, researching and implementing their chosen task. Their work will include baking dog biscuits to be sold at points in town, clearing brush, building flower boxes for the fence, planting trees and building a shade structure with benches for dog owners.

You can find the Gardiner Dog Park on Facebook, along with announcements of upcoming events, lost dogs and dogs available for adoption. Locate the site by searching for Facebook Gardiner Dog Park. Look for the Grand Opening next spring! ☐

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Nancy Cass (far right) and her standard poodle, Zazu. With her are some sixth and seventh graders (in no particular order): Michele; Scout leader Melissa Curtis; Ashley Curtis and her collie, Harley; Selena Velez and her shih tzu, Snowie; Siena Rust and her Australian cattledog mix, Rusty; Lia Natze, Alejandra Guzman, and Elexis Woolsey. Photo: Anne Smith





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2011 Gardiner Fire District Election Draws Large Turnout

by Ray Smith

Small towns usually have difficulty filling volunteer jobs, and Gardiner has been no exception. Often, single candidates run unopposed for Fire District Commissioner. While one Commissioner's seat was contested in the December, 2010 election, the winner in that election won by a single vote—24 to 23. The recent December, 2011 Fire District election, however, saw 297 ballots cast out of 3,284 registered voters.

In the recent election Luke J. Lyons, current Chairman of the Commission, ran unopposed for a five year term and received 220 votes. Christian "Bill" Ecker, 2011 President of the Gardiner Fire Department, ran against David Sides to fill the unexpired term of Commissioner Erik Holter. Bill Ecker received 170 votes against Dave Sides' 121 votes. Beverly Tantillo, current Treasurer of the Gardiner Fire District, ran unopposed for a one year term as Treasurer and received 234 votes. A proposition to make the Fire District Treasurer position an appointive rather than elective position commencing January, 2013 passed with 176 yes votes to 94 no votes.

Bill Ecker, also recently reelected President of the Gardiner Fire Department, has ceded that post to Fire Department Vice President Frank Ogno III.

When asked to comment after the election results were announced, Bill Ecker said, "I want to thank the voters for coming out in such numbers and showing that a larger portion of citizenry can be proactive with regard to the Fire District. I look forward to working on behalf of all our citizens. In Gardiner the Fire Department is a volunteer service. I've been doing it for forty-five years for the welfare and safety of the residents of the

town and their property. Some of the biggest hurdles we have now are state mandates and the hundreds of hours required of members of the Fire Department to become qualified and stay qualified. The rules have changed drastically over the years. A lot of people join but, when they find out the requirements, about 50% of new members don't stay. It's dirty work."

Dave Sides said, "I congratulate Bill Ecker on his election and applaud our citizens for demonstrating greater interest in Fire District matters by turning out in such numbers to vote. I look forward to continuing to serve the community by working with the Fire District to promote fiscal responsibility and controls, open communications and transparency. ☐

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The Gardiner Gazette Needs Story Writers!

You don't have to be a great writer, but if you're interested in what goes on in town, like to write, are good with details and can meet deadlines, we would like to hear from you.

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Gardiner Gone Wild

by Peter Beuf

Jennifer and Ben Munger are the owners of the Gardiner based business Wildlife Busters, a full service wildlife management company that provides information, consultation and resolution of human/wildlife conflict for both commercial and residential property owners. They are Wildlife Nuisance Control Operators who are licensed by and regulated through the DEC. The wildlife management services industry generates over \$22 billion dollars nationally.

Jennifer grew up on Long Island and Ben was raised in Orange County. The couple met in college, at SUNY Cortland, and moved to Manhattan to pursue careers in the financial services industry. They became Gardiner weekenders after September 11, 2001. They enjoyed their fast-paced and challenging Wall Street careers, but when their son Jason was born in 2004 they realized that their true passions were



The Wildlife Busters Truck. Photo courtesy Jenn and Ben Munger.

their family and the outdoors. After 17 years of city living they moved permanently to Gardiner in 2006.

Ben has always been active (he was a spring board and platform diver in college) and he is an outdoor enthusiast who frequented the Mohonk Preserve and Minnewaska State Park as a child. Jenn appreciates the peace, quiet and diversity of flora and fauna that Gardiner has to offer and was excited about using her analytical skills and marketing background to start a new business in the area. At this time a friend serendipitously introduced Ben to the wildlife management industry. So the entrepreneurial husband and wife team threw themselves at the challenges of becoming experts in their chosen new field. They read everything they could about critters, attended

wildlife control seminars, were trained in bird exclusion techniques and bat conservation, and Ben became a licensed wildlife control officer for the State of New York.

Jenn and Ben's skill sets compliment each other and the success of their business demonstrates this. After only three years in the industry their services are in demand and they are looking to hire young energetic wildlife enthusiasts to assist in growing their recently incorporated company. They currently have one full time employee and a few part timers.

Wildlife Busters serves the Greater Hudson Valley. What sets them apart from other wildlife managers is that they are a full service company that strives to eliminate a customer's particular issue. Trapping and removing is only part of what they do. Their mission statement is to provide "professional humane solutions to human wildlife conflicts." According to Jenn, "Wildlife has the purest intentions. Their entire life revolves around three main objectives; food, shelter, and looking for a mate to procreate. Therefore, the more difficult you make it for them to obtain their objectives on your property, the less likely you are to encounter [them]." For instance, removing bird feeders can dramatically reduce squirrel and chipmunk populations. If squirrels are the problem, tree branches located close to the roof must be removed. On many jobs Ben and his employees must eliminate access and egress points into and out of a building. After that has been accomplished, conditions surrounding the edifice that are favorable for unwanted wildlife must be altered to prevent future infestation.

Wildlife Busters ...continued page 7

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Wildlife Busters, from page 6

Jenn wants to "provide value that is above and beyond the point of service." Their web site, www.WildlifeBusters.com, gives seasonal information about human/wildlife conflicts and employment opportunities.

Ben and Jenn left the rat race of the city for the bat and squirrel chase of the country. Ben has managed to stay bite free and continues to love his work. Jenn is content developing new internet marketing strategies to expand the business. You can contact them at (917) 750-5884 or toll free at (855) 945-1212. ☐ [Back ...](#)

House Numbers, from page 1

night. All the signs will be made by Gardiner Fire and Rescue personnel and will be sold for \$15 if homeowner installed, or \$20 if mounted by Gardiner Fire Department volunteers. Signs can be made with either a horizontal or vertical orientation.

Homeowner installed signs will be accompanied by installation instructions and suggestions for where best to place the sign for maximum visibility. Signs will be mailed or delivered to your home. Order forms are available at the Gardiner Library, Ireland Corners General Store and other places in town as well as from Fire Department personnel. You may also order by emailing gfd2012committee@yahoo.com. (Questions may also be sent to that email address.)

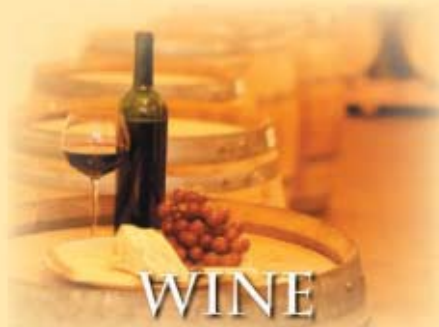


Photo: Ray Smith

Completed order forms, accompanied by a check payable to Gardiner Fire Department, should be mailed to the 2012 Committee, Gardiner Fire Department, Post Office Box 271, Gardiner, NY 12525-0271. Chief Bailin summed up, "It's more a way of helping ourselves while helping the town when time is extremely important." ☐ [Back ...](#)

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Gardiner Committee Focuses on Senior Residents

by Jane Barile, Member,
Gardiner Livable Community Committee

The Gardiner Livable Community Committee (GLCC) was formed in April, 2011 as part of the Ulster County "aging in place" initiative. Its goal is to explore and meet the needs of local seniors so that they may continue to stay in their homes with dignity and independence. Current committee members include Joe Katz (chair), Jane Barile, Leitha Ortiz-Lesh, Marilyn Rogers, George Wheeler and Yvonne Allenson.

The first project tackled by the committee has been the creation of a Gardiner seniors resource guide containing valuable information in the areas of health services, household assistance, emergency response systems and interventions, transportation, meal options, adult day care programs, learning opportunities, legal services, senior discounts and more, with contact names and phone numbers. In the near future a dedicated extension number for the committee will be made available at Town Hall.

This resource guide, in the form of a handbook, will be available in January, 2012 at the Town Hall, food pantry, library, houses of worship and other locations, as well as online at the library and the Town websites (www.gardinerlibrary.org and www.townofgardiner.org). It is the hope of the committee that future projects will also meet with success as it goes forward.

Gardiner residents interested in getting involved may contact Joe Katz at 255-5693. ☐

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Real Property Tax Exemptions Available

Residents of Gardiner take note; you may be eligible for tax savings if you file the appropriate forms with the Gardiner Assessor's Office on or before March 1, 2012.

See if you qualify:

- Basic STAR: Available on your primary residence with a \$500,000 income limit.
- Enhanced STAR: Available if you are over or turning 65 in 2012 and your adjusted gross income is under \$79,050.
- Senior Exemption: Available for owners who have resided in their home at least 1 year, are over 65 with incomes less than \$32,399.
- Veterans: Available if you or your spouse served during a war time period.
- Cold War Veterans: Available if you served from 1945-1991 and you receive no other veteran's exemption.

Forms and further details are available at the Assessor's Office or online at www.tax.ny.gov. If you have questions, call the Assessor's Office, 255-9675, Extensions 104 or 105, where you will reach either Maureen Gallagher, Assessor, or Monique Morano, Assessor Clerk.

Remember: completed exemption forms must be filed on or before March 1, 2012. ☐

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We hope that future issues will provide a space in which we can sustain a dialogue about strengthening our community, developing community programs, and caring for and helping those who live around us. If you would like to contribute an article or suggestion for that future dialogue, please contact us."

So, as it enters its fourth year, *The Gazette* has launched a new and improved website ... www.gardinergazette.com. It was designed by SUNY New Paltz graphics major graduate Kristen Bruno. Besides being able to view the current issue as well as all past issues, advertisers can now find the media kit on the site, readers can sign up for digital subscriptions and supporters can donate using PayPal.

The web address will be on the masthead of all future issues. Even if you have no interest in reading digital material, please just take a peak. We look GREAT in living color! So great that you might want to trade in that black and white copy you get in your mailbox for this enhanced version.

In parting, we'd like to thank our readers and advertisers for their input and suport. We've still got a lot to learn (for example, the mission statement above is minus the typos that existed the first time around ...) but we look forward to continuing to bring you news of Gardiner! ☐

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Voila! SUNY New Paltz graduate Kristen Bruno unveiling the new Gardiner Gazette website. Photo: Anne Smith

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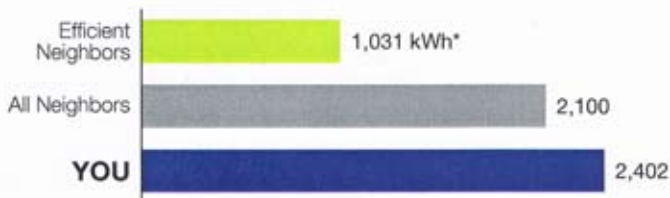
Who Are Those Energy-Efficient Neighbors, Anyway?

by Carol O'Biso

In the 1969 movie *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*, starring Paul Newman and Robert Redford, Butch and Sundance are pursued throughout the movie by a band of mysterious horsemen. In a recurring refrain Sundance looks back and says, "Who are those guys, anyway?" Butch and the Kid get so frustrated that Butch says, "Don't they get tired? Don't they get hungry? Why don't they slow up? Hell, they could even go faster, at least that'd be a change."

I can sympathize. Not that I'm being pursued; I just can't seem to catch these mysterious people out in front. They are my "Energy Efficient Neighbors," to whom I am regularly compared by Central Hudson's Energy Efficiency Reports.

When our first Home Energy Report arrived in the mail I was shocked. It showed that we were using 16% more energy than our neighbors! And the bar chart ... Oh my God.



It was like being in third grade and bringing home a bad report

card. We have electric heat and hot water, so surely Central Hudson was comparing us to people who only use electricity for lights, fridges, freezers etc.. Closer examination of the report, however, indicated that we were being compared to "100 neighbors with electric heat and similar-sized houses." Holy Cow! We don't even know anyone else with electric heat, so how did they find 99 neighbors who have not only electric heat, but electric heat and a similar-sized house to ours?

I logged on to www.centralhudson.com/energyreports.com and found that my "neighbors" all live within 26 miles, so I guess I shouldn't really expect to know them. I found out that I can make an energy conservation plan and can "commit" (by clicking) to various actions that will reduce my energy usage (washing our clothes in cold water can save \$20 per year; using heated blankets and lowering the thermostat can save \$10 per year; shaving a minute off my shower can save \$60 per year, etc..)

It's a very cool site full of very good suggestions, but I was troubled. The good thing about electric heat is that every single room has its own thermostat and in our house they are all completely OFF in any room we are not in. We were already using a wood burner to heat the downstairs, doing most laundry in cold water and using a heated mattress pad while keeping our bedroom freezing overnight (I won't get up in the morning until my husband turns up the thermostat). What were we doing wrong? I started asking around to see if I could find the people who were using so much less energy than I was, but, funny thing, everyone I spoke to was trying to figure out who was using so much less energy than they were.

Well, in September of 2010 two ancient window air conditioners in our most frequently used spaces both died. We decided to bite the bullet and replace them with super-efficient air conditioner/heater units alternatively called mini-split systems or ductless air conditioners. These things are so efficient we got \$1,500 back in a government rebate and \$400 back from Central Hudson. Best of all, they are fantastic units for both heating and cooling and, wonder of wonders, we used *1,100 fewer kilowatts of electricity* than the same two-month period the year before! That was in spite of a brutal winter.

By then I'd forgotten all about Central Hudson's Home Energy Reports, but when our next one arrived in the mail I tore it open in triumph. Now I was going to be one of those guys out in front of the pack. Ha! Nobody was going to wag a finger at me this time.

Do I even have to write this next sentence?

Energy Efficiency ...continued page 11



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Energy Efficiency, from page 10

Your Rank Last Month

#63 out of 100 neighbors
#1 is the most efficient

★ Your rank is improving. Great job!

My rank is improving? I'm ranked 63rd out of 100! (Who are those guys, anyway? Don't they get cold? Don't they wash themselves?)

I called Central Hudson's Home Energy hot line and got a call back from an extremely nice man named Barry Henck. He was kind and soothing and concerned and explained that the energy reports are not meant to be critiques. Central Hudson sends them to a third of their customers and then compares those to another third to see if knowing what your usage is has any impact on usage. Barry reviewed every possible reason my energy reports might be so high. He explained that no two homes are alike, that lifestyle patterns differ and, interestingly, that Gardiner is unique right now; people are building very large homes here, then disappearing back to the city. It's possible, he said, that we are being compared to empty houses.

Barry Henck certainly calmed me down, though he was unable to identify why I haven't done a better job of reducing my energy consumption. Maybe what my home needs is a fleet of tradesmen replacing all the windows, rehangng the doors and improving the insulation but, ummm, let's not hold our breath waiting for that to happen. All in all, here's what I think: Butch and Sundance did not come to a happy ending at the hands of those mysterious horsemen and I have stopped trying to keep up with my "energy-efficient neighbors." Cutting energy consumption of any kind is a very good goal (not just for the cost savings) and Central Hudson's website is a great resource for finding ways to do that. I'm going to keep plugging away at it.

And those Home Energy Reports? I've come to realize that they are very useful; they make good kindling. ☐

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Nurture Your Skin, And Soul

by Kathy Muessig

Did you know that on average a woman uses 12 cosmetic products in the morning before leaving home? For men, it is closer to six or seven. Do you know what you are putting on your body? We have had our consciousness raised when it comes to what we put into our bodies—the campaign to buy fresh, local produce and groceries continues to gain momentum. By and large though, the cosmetic and beauty product industry is not regulated by the FDA, and purchasing cosmetics labeled “natural” or sold in a health food store does not guarantee that the ingredients are safe to put on your skin.

As consumers we need to educate ourselves and make the best choices possible. Fortunately, residents of Gardiner have a sensible option and an informed advocate for safe skin care close to home.

Meet Gardiner native, Michele Tomasicchio, local entrepreneur of *Made with Love Products*. Several years ago, in response to her own troublesome reactions to over the counter lotions and shampoos, Michele took a course in herbalism which served to jump start her down the road of research into alternative, safe ingredients as well as methods of hand crafting satisfying products in her own kitchen. When a lingering running injury set her back, Michele researched oils and herbs that would heal the body without subjecting it to harsh chemicals.

On her website, www.madewithloveskincare.com, Michele offers an array of her products, but she also spells out quite simply the hidden dangers of the chemical ingredients commonly found in products we all use every day. What's in your toothpaste?

Here's an informative site to go check that out on: www.ewg.org/skindeep, where the Environmental Working Group maintains the Skin Deep Cosmetics Database for consumers to do their own research on products from deodorants to baby shampoo.

What do the giant cosmetic producers hide when you see “fragrance” on their labels? The unfortunate answer: everything they do not want you to know they have put in the bottle. Not sure about all those glycols and sodium lauryl sulfates in

your moisturizer? Visit www.safecosmetics.org to learn how much of all those unknowns are absorbed into our bodies over our lifetime.

Increase your awareness of synthetic, laboratory-produced stabilizers and fragrances on Michele's website and you will also find her products for sale there. You can also catch her at local craft fairs and most informative of all attend a home party for a first-hand demonstration of her scrubs, salts, salves and sprays. Michele's

Succulent Body Crème is a best seller and has helped people with not only dry skin, but eczema, sun burn and the after effects of radiation for cancer treatments.

Michele's goals include using simple, natural ingredients that she tries to obtain locally as much as possible. In the over 10 years that she has been preparing washes, butters, crèmes and therapeutic oils, Michele has developed her own recipe book and finds that working in small batches gives her the best results. In this way, quality and safety are promoted by

Skin Care continued page 13



Michele Tomasicchio with some of her natural skin care products at the Unison Crafts Fair. Photo: Kathy Muessig

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Skin Care, from page 12

her careful, time-tested methods. "I want to grow the company to be large, but keep it handcrafted in a facility out of my home," she says. She envisions a building of some sort with gas ranges where she can teach others how to make her products and be able to reach a large audience. The goal is to get out of the kitchen, but to keep the products truly handmade, bottled and labeled with love. ☐ [Back ...](#)

Possible Sale of Steve's Lane Property

by Ray Smith



Editor's Note: In both the fall and winter 2010 issues of The Gardiner Gazette we ran stories on the old Asa Barton house at the corner of Steve's Lane and Dusenberre Road. It was acquired by the Town of Gardiner in a tax sale in 2009 and the Town was waiting for the title to clear to decide what to do with the house.

The Gardiner Town Board, after deciding that the property with the old house on it at the corner of Steve's Lane and Dusenberre Road was not needed for public use, authorized its sale and advertised for bids in early November, 2011 by placing a legal notice in the Kingston *Daily Freeman* and posting the notice in Gardiner Town Offices. Sealed bids were accepted until noon on December 15, 2011.

In general, real estate ads tend to emphasize the positive and downplay the negative. Even a wreck will carry the euphemistic description "handyman special." Gardiner's bid notice for the old house stuck to the facts, including: "... hand dug well. Potable water is not guaranteed," and "There is no septic system, nor is any representation made that a septic system may be sited on the premises."

By noon on December 15, 2011 the Town of Gardiner had received one bid for the property, for \$12,000. The Gardiner Town Board will decide the next step. ☐ [Back ...](#)



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Just A Bite ...

This column reports on exemplary offerings from area restaurants.

Ay, Caramba! Margarita Mussels At Nu-Cavu

by Carol O'Biso

The omnivores in my household are so glad that Carmela Vitolo-Gelsomine and Michael Gelsomine decided to move on from their previous restaurants in Fire Island and bring their considerable skills to the Hudson Valley. In particular, we were pleased to discover that Wednesday night is Mexican night at their Walkill restaurant, Nu-Cavu, and we were near delirious to discover that on Mexican night one can indulge in a dish Michael originally developed for one of their Fire Island restaurants: Margarita Mussels.



This heaping plate of Prince Edward Island mussels gently simmered in lime juice, tequila, garlic, white wine and cilantro is finished with just a smattering of chopped fresh tomatoes. When they're harvested in the spring, the mussel meat of PEI mussels is almost as big as the shell, but they are delicious even when they're smaller, and the broth at the bottom of the bowl is so incredibly good I drink it. (You can use a spoon, but it's way more fun with a mussel shell and, no, I really don't care who's watching.)

I don't ask much more on an average Wednesday night than one of Nu-Cavu's generous arugula salads (with blue cheese,

walnuts, apples and a lemon vinaigrette) followed by these mussels. It makes for an economical meal (\$9.95 for the arugula salad/\$10.95 for the mussels) and a healthy enough one that I can forgive myself a Palm (Belgian beer on tap) and the chips and salsa they bring while you're waiting.

Nu-Cavu, located at the Walkill Airport, has a bar seating area, a charming formal dining room and, in warmer weather, an open patio where you can watch the small planes take off and land. They also have a bar menu, the Mexican menu on Wednesdays and a full dinner menu, so there are plenty of choices. Nu-Cavu will reopen after a holiday break on January 25th (which happens to be a Mexican Wednesday!) They're at 857 Plains Road, Walkill. 845 895-9000. Open for Lunch (11:30am - 4pm) and Dinner (4pm - 10pm) Wednesday thru Sunday from. ☐ [Back ...](#)

Gazette Food Columnist Publishes Second Book

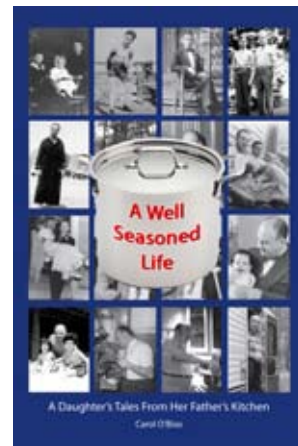
by Laurie Willow



If you've been enjoying Carol O'Biso's Just A Bite column in *The Gardiner Gazette*, you might want to have a look at *A Well Seasoned Life: A Daughter's Tales From Her Father's Kitchen*, her new memoir about growing up in a first generation Italian-American family in the 1950's. In a world rife with the constant pressure of militant, polarized stances on every imaginable issue, here is a real story about the creation

and growth of humanity's smallest community—a family. The family in this story develops into a working, loving, intertwined group in which each person becomes useful and appreciated, and all efforts are concentrated around a common goal: mealtime. The choreography of each meal is a dance around the planning, then the shopping, preparing, eating and cleaning up. Every meal is a family adventure and an event, and each is seasoned with laughter and tears. O'Biso's telling of the story of her growing up is touching, funny and delicious, both literally and figuratively (there is a recipe section at the end). It is a story that is remarkably powerful in its simplicity.

Carol O'Biso has lived in Gardiner with her husband and stepson for over 12 years. Her previous book, *First Light* is a culture-clash story chronicling her work organizing an international tour of



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native Maori art never before seen outside New Zealand. It was published in New Zealand in 1987 and in the US and Canada in 1989, remaining in print in New Zealand (where she lived for 11 years) for an unprecedented 13 years. The New Zealand Herald, Auckland's largest circulation daily, called it, "Jaunty, edgy and powerfully moving."

A *Well Seasoned Life* is now available on www.amazon.com and at the Gardiner Library. ☐

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Bhutanese, from page 1

The land is owned by Colm Lanigan, a Manhattan based Canadian who plans to build a home here eventually with his Bhutanese wife, Sonam, and son and daughter. On most Sundays and some Tuesdays, Colm is host to a group of Bhutanese young men who are here temporarily from their small Himalayan kingdom, population 700,000, sandwiched between China and India. These men take weekends from a heavy work schedule in New York City to indulge in the national sport of Bhutan archery. Some come even in winter, although they admitted that it's hard to find the arrows in deep snow.

This is not archery as we know it! The shooting distance is 150 yards. One does not see or hear the arrow until it hits—or doesn't

hit—the faraway target. The archer begins by lifting his bow high; it was explained to us that this action lifts the 50 to 70 pound draw weight away from the arms and onto the shoulders. Then the archer lowers the bow and aims. This is very friendly competition and it is normal for the other teams to yell and shout jeers in order to distract their opponents! The bamboo bows of yore have been replaced by Hoyt compound target bows, but aim must still be very accurate as members of other teams are standing not that far away from the target!



Tshering Sambo wearing a "gho."

We arrived on day one and, as the only non-Bhutanese there, all heads turned. The organizer of the event immediately welcomed us, and then we fell into conversation with Tshering Sambo (Tshering is a common name in Bhutan—means "long life"). He was wearing a beautiful "gho," (pictured above) all handwoven, which he said took about three months to make. Day one was the semi-finals, at which two teams would be eliminated. Unfortunately one of those teams was his, but he was team captain and high scorer so did not seem concerned. What was really interesting is that when we returned on day two we discovered that, for luck, Tshering had loaned his gorgeous gho to Tshering Dorji, his best friend from seventh grade onwards. Tshering Dorji later emailed us that we had brought him luck, but obviously it was all due to this incredible gho.

We were invited to share lunch, which was extremely spicy but topped off by Raffaella's pies from Tantillos. Then there was a lot of dancing in which the women showed off their "kiras"; traditional attire is required in Bhutan except in the privacy of one's home. We were honored to attend this event and humbled by the hospitality. ☐

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Articles are written by community members, not reporters. If you would like to submit an article for consideration, please contact us. Articles are usually between 350 and 450 words and do not promote any particular person or point of view. Articles promoting businesses appear only in the Business as Usual column and are written by our editorial committee. If you would like to suggest a business that should be featured, please contact us.

Keep Gazettes Out Of The Trash

The intent is to mail one *Gardiner Gazette*, free, to every household in Gardiner, including weekenders. Our address list was just updated using several sources and "weeded" for duplications and known errors—but we need your help. If your household received extra copies, a misaddressed copy, no copy at all, or there's any other wastage, please let us know. If you would prefer to receive your copy electronically and save paper, we'd like to know that, too. Email Ray Smith at raydsmith@gmail.com or phone him at 845 750-7119.

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