

Celebrating 40 years of Community Based Services

By Kristine Coulter

The 40th anniversary of Community Based Services (CBS) celebrated the relaunch of its Cultivating Dream Farm with the completion of new recreational learning spaces on Thursday, Aug. 26. The non-profit organization serves people with disabilities in the Hudson Valley and Taconic regions.

"Our goal is to serve more people. We want to provide a sensory experience for people of all abilities, and open doors for people to enjoy and recreate in the peacefulness of the Farm," said Chief Executive Officer Vicki Sylvester.

Sylvester led a tree planting in honor of CBS founder Kevin McCarthy. Sylvester said CBS, which is located by the border of East Fishkill and Lagrange, began in April of 1981.

"It started with eight people. Think about that. Now we serve over 500 people," remarked Sylvester.

During the tree planting, Sylvester told those in attendance, "He (Kevin McCarthy) taught me what I put on this

plaque - 'Whatever can be conceived, can be achieved.'"

"This farm is about [McCarthy's] inspiration. We want it to be a place for people of all abilities," she stated.

Andrea Grady, marketing and communication coordinator, said, "We hope that attendees discover the farm has much to offer. It's a place for all people to come."

According to information from CBS, "Cultivating Dreams provides a holistic farm-to-table learning experience for people with autism and developmental disabilities, emphasizing a strong connection to the environment through agricultural work, as well as the joy of preparing nutritious meals using the harvest. There is a need for opportunities for people with disabilities, who often thrive in a natural and serene setting, for vocational and life skills development as well as athletic and community activities."

BluePath Service Dogs, who train dogs to go to families with autistic children, were there with some of the BluePath dogs.

Music for all ages was played by gui-

tarist Brian Dallas Fields, who had his yellow Labrador, Buck, and his therapy animals. His therapy animals included ducks and turtle Gary Sanchez Jr. and the Leftovers, who are fish.

"CBS is one of the clients I work with," said Fields.

Dina Messina, who is a police officer, is working with Sophie, who is in training to become a therapy dog.

"Our goal is for her to become a therapy dog. We would use her in programs," said Messina.

K-9 Officer Deputy Hill, from the Putnam County Sheriff Office, did demos with his bloodhound, Flash.

Attendees were able to see the greenhouse that has a wheelchair accessible entrance. The entrance is made from locust wood that is found on the property. Another greenhouse was to expand horticulture programs, according to CBS information.

There is also the renovated barn and newly constructed courts to play basketball, pickle ball and bocce ball.



Sophie, who is in training to become a therapy dog, was in attendance to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Community Based Services.

-Photo by Kristine Coulter

NYC DEP official updates Wappinger board on Delaware Aqueduct Bypass in Chelsea

During the Regular Meeting of the Wappinger Town Board on Aug. 23, George Schmitt, Administrative Engineer for the City of New York Department of Environmental Protection, addressed the Town with an update on the City's ongoing project to construct a bypass tunnel underneath the Hudson River from Newburgh to Wappinger in the Chelsea Hamlet, stated a press release.

"This project epitomizes an unique and very successful and very successful years long inter-municipal partnership."

Supervisor Richard L. Thurston said.

The Delaware Aqueduct Bypass Tunnel is the largest repair project in the 178-year history of New York City's water supply system. Its centerpiece is the 2.5-mile-long bypass tunnel that DEP is building 600 feet under the Hudson River from Newburgh to Wappinger. When the project is finished in 2023, the bypass tunnel will be connected to structurally sound portions of the existing Delaware Aqueduct on either side of the Hudson River to convey water around a leaking section of the tunnel. The 85-mile-

long Delaware Aqueduct, the longest tunnel in the world, typically conveys about half of New York City's drinking water each day from reservoirs in the Catskills.

A massive tunnel boring machine completed excavation of the tunnel on Aug. 13, 2019. The tunneling machine excavated 12,448 feet over the course of 582 days, starting deep below the Town of Newburgh and pushing east to an access shaft in the Town of Wappinger. The tunnel boring machine lined the shale and limestone bedrock with precast rings of concrete as it drove the tunnel forward. The steel segments will line 9,200 linear feet of the new tunnel, and will later be coated with a second layer of concrete. This "triple-pass" design will provide the bypass tunnel with structural stability and prevent leaks from occurring again in the future.

The steel liners arrived at a deep-water port in the City of Newburgh in 2016 and 2017, where they stayed in storage until last year. Moving the massive liners 8 miles to the construction site required significant planning and coordination. A route was planned with local authorities, and utility lines were raised to allow the steel segments to pass beneath them. A crane loaded them onto special "lowboy" flat-bed trucks, and each liner was escorted to the site by police who shut down local roads and controlled traffic. The liners could only be moved between the hours of 10pm and 4am to avoid the times when local residents were typically traveling on the roads. Three liner segments were shipped to the site during a typical night of work.

Once they arrived at the construction site in Newburgh, each steel liner was picked up by a crane, turned vertically and lowered into the tunnel. A system of specially designed train cars drove each liner into place, starting at the Wappinger end and working their way back to Newburgh. Once they were fit end-

on-end, workers double welded the liners together. The inside of each liner was outfitted with steel rebar to support the final concrete lining of the tunnel, which will be pumped into the tunnel and formed in the coming months.

Thurston has been in constant communication with the City's representatives to ensure that residents of the Chelsea's needs are continued to be addressed including neighborhood impacts and financial compensation. Shortly it is planned that the Supervisor and DEP will work to allow the Town unlimited access to the water that is transported through the pipeline built by the City through Wappinger.

Second Ward Councilwoman Angela Bettina, who represents the Chelsea Hamlet, addressed a number of concerns in reference to speeding and quality of life impacts to the residents of Chelsea as the project continues to come to a close.

Senior Councilman William H. Beale, from the 1st Ward, stated how this project is truly an "engineering marvel" and discussed the ongoing positive impacts the project has had for the Town such as bringing town water to Hughsonville, Wheeler Hill Historic District, Carnwath Farms Historic Site & Park, and Chelsea.

Negotiations began between the Town of Wappinger and the City of New York in 2012 through former Supervisor Barbara A. Gutzler and her administration. On May 15, 2012 Resolution 2012-163, "A Resolution Ratifying the Execution of an Agreement in Principle Between the Town of Wappinger and the City of New York Acting by and through its Department of Environmental Protection," was unanimously approved by the Town Board and started this unique partnership.

For more information on this project contact the Town Supervisor's Office at 845-297-2744.

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