

TAKE ONE FREE

# HEALTH & WELLNESS

breathe  
easy!  
page 10



# Finding help for PTSD and depression



Veterans who have served this country are very often prone to PTSD or depression for which help is available.

BY JAMES RAFTERY  
VETERAN SERVICES COORDINATOR  
VET 2 VET AND  
ACTION TOWARD INDEPENDENCE

May might be the month that brings flowers from April

Showers, but it's also National Mental Health Awareness Month. It's also an amazing allegory for the mental health of all people in the United States, especially our Veterans; men and women

who have sacrificed blood, sweat, tears, life and limb to protect our country. Many of us have had to deal with the crushing losses of friends to enemy fire, accidents, or succumbing to the demons of substance abuse and suicide. Like the doldrums of life that affect the mental health of so many, the sunshine of love and life bring light to issues affecting so many of our Veterans today.

We, as Veterans, have a duty not only to protect our country from all enemies foreign and domestic, but also from the enemies on the inside. All too often, we find that there's no room to cry, no room to be sad, no room to grieve.

"Suck it up and keep it moving" was the mantra. It didn't work then; it doesn't work now.

Every day, 22 Veterans choose to take their lives, but it doesn't have to be that way. There are a number of organizations out there, not only to check on your brother and sister Veterans, but as we say in the military, "Check your Six" - a military term that cautions you to check at your 6 o'clock position, which would be right behind

## Health & Wellness

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METRO CREATIVE SERVICES PHOTOS

**Depression can entrap people in all walks of life, at varying ages and for many reasons.**

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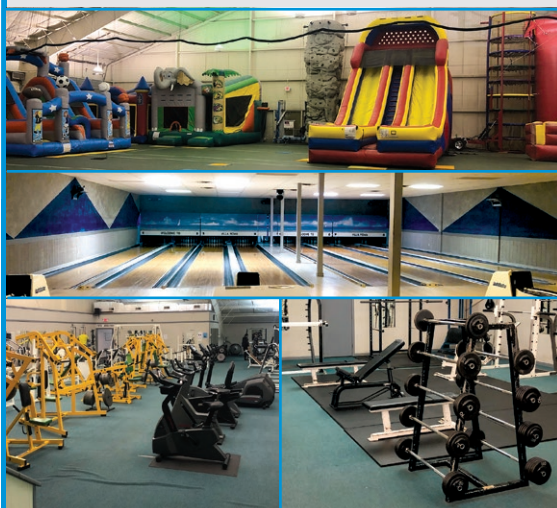
What is needed even more so is the erasing of the stigma surrounding mental health. Resources are available to bring you back from the precipice. Locally, we have the PFC Joseph P. Dwyer Vet 2 Vet program at Action Toward Independence (ATI). Named to honor the memory of an Iraq war hero from Mount Sinai, NY, the Dwyer Program provides Vet-to-Vet support among Veterans who personally understand the effects of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). Our goal is to deliver a comprehensive supportive program that involves access to collaborative services, social activities, and community engagement.

Another support is dialing 9-8-8. This is a number that's been established to help people on the edge and in crisis. It is also a line for Veterans to call directly to speak to a brother or sister Veteran who is trained to help. As Veterans, we are our brother's and sister's keepers, and we will always have their Six. As we near Memorial Day, the day we commemorate the ones who never came home, we have a duty to protect the ones still with us. Please call today or reach out to a Veteran to see how you can be of service to them.

Contact Action Toward Independence and Vet 2 Vet at 845-794-4228 or visit [atitoday.org](http://atitoday.org). If you are a Veteran in crisis, please call 9-8-8.



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# Help support health and wellness with a Turtle Award



**S**ullivan 180 has announced a way to support health and wellness in Sullivan County. Look no further than the Sullivan 180 Turtle Award Fund!

Sullivan 180 Turtle Awards are presented annually to organizations and individuals who are leading the way in helping to build a healthy Sullivan County. The awards recognize those who are making a positive impact on the community by promoting healthy eating, active living, and community engagement.

Turtle Awards in the amount of \$500 are offered in the school based Empowering a Healthier Generation Program and the community based Healthiest Fire Department Challenge. Turtle Awards are reinvested at more schools for resources to empower students to lead healthy lifestyles; and emergency responders to be in the best

physical condition.

Empowering a Healthier Generation provides funding and resources to schools in Sullivan County to help promote healthy habits among students. The Healthiest Fire Department Challenge, with support from Assemblywoman Aileen Gunther, engages fire departments in a range of activities focused on health improvement. To learn more about Empowering a Healthier Generation and the Healthiest Fire Department Challenge visit [www.sullivan180.org](http://www.sullivan180.org).

By contributing to the Turtle Award Fund, you will be supporting Sullivan 180's mission to build a healthy community, one degree at a time. "The intent of this fund is to acknowledge efforts in prevention and health improvement," said Shanna Nigro Gonzalez, Development Director at

Sullivan 180. "Supporters will have the gratification of knowing that they are making a positive impact among the youth and emergency responders in our community."

**How to Donate:** To support the Turtle Award Fund, simply visit Hudson Valley Gives at <https://www.hvgives.org/organizations/sullivan-180> and select the Sullivan 180 page. From there click on the "Donate Now" button. Your donation will go directly to supporting health and wellness initiatives in Sullivan County.

For more information on how to contribute, contact Shanna Nigro-Gonzalez, Development Director at 845-295-2682 or [Shanna@sullivan180.org](mailto:Shanna@sullivan180.org). For information about grants or how to get involved email [info@sullivan180.org](mailto:info@sullivan180.org) or call 845.295.2680.



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# County welcomes new Public Health Officer

**E**ducator. Mentor. Learner. Nurse. Mother. Cook. Runner. Animal lover. Relationship builder.

And now Karen Holden can also be called Acting Director of Sullivan County's Office of Public Health, a role she assumed on March 3.

"I was a little apprehensive," she admits. "But I don't think the community knows the full amount of work we do, and I'd like to change that. I want us to be a trusted voice and a trusted resource."

Few know the amount of work Holden herself has accomplished... and plans on continuing.

Born in Honesdale, Pa. and raised in Cohecton Center, NY, Holden graduated from the former Narrowsburg High School (now part of Sullivan West) as salutatorian. She then spent the next four years earning her

bachelor's in nursing at St. John Fisher College in Rochester.

"I always wanted to help people, to give them the dignity, respect and compassion that they deserve," she explains. "It's incredibly humbling when you have an ability to change lives for the better."

She's done just that over the course of her career, starting off as a nursing assistant and then registered nurse (RN) at Wayne Memorial Hospital in Pennsylvania. She spent nearly two decades with Garnet Medical Center-Catskills (then known as Community General Hospital of Sullivan County and Catskill Regional Medical Center), first as a Charge RN in the emergency room, then as Director of Staff Development, Education and Training, then as Administrator of Quality Management, Performance Improvement and Risk Management, and finally as

an educator at and Director of the hospital's well-regarded 64-bed Skilled Nursing Unit. During that period, she also was an infection preventionist and created the hospital's Bariatrics Program.

"I worked with some fabulous and compassionate human beings, many of whom I keep in touch with," Holden affirms.

She also helped train them, both in her roles at the hospital and as an adjunct clinical instructor in the LPN-RN Bridge Program at SUNY Sullivan (where she's now on the Nursing Advisory Board).

"I'm a nurturer, and I became an educator to stay invested and reinvest in the people we hire."

Thanks to the recruitment of Deputy Health and Human Services Commissioner Wendy Brown, Holden brought that approach with her when she joined Sullivan County Public Health in 2018 as its Coordinator

of Quality and Training. Just a few months later, she became the Director of Patient Services, then the Supervisor of Epidemiology – on March 13, 2020, the day the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns began.

"Everything was shutting down," she recalls, "and our people were working incredible amounts of hours."

Her own performance during that strenuous period impressed her superiors, and as the pandemic began fading, Holden was named Deputy Director of Public Health in February 2022.

"I had already been supervising the two largest sections we have in Public Health: Epidemiology and Patient Services," she relates. "I've built good relationships with the people in Public Health and throughout County government, and I have no qualms asking how we can do things better. If what I do is get obstacles out of the way



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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Karen Holden.

and showcase the greatness in Public Health, I've done my job."

Holden herself will soon be working on earning her master's in public health, supplementing her RN and LNC (Legal Nurse Consultant) certifications. And she's still Public Health's Director of Patient Services and Epidemiology Supervisor, and she just finished a stint as an addiction medicine/

methadone maintenance RN at Lexington Center for Recovery in Monticello.

"I don't think someone who has this much impact on public policy should be too far removed from the people they serve," she says.

Holden was also a Case Manager at Hospice of Orange and Sullivan.

"Hospice has been the most rewarding nursing I've ever done," she notes. "It's incredibly humbling to be let into that intimate part of a person's life. You can lend them and their families the skills and resources they need to manage as effectively as they can."

Her own family keeps her busy, too. Holden lives with two of her four children in Liberty, along with two dogs, three cats (all rescues) and one goldfish. Twenty-year-old daughter Annalyse is currently a healthcare student at the University of Buffalo, and 16-year-old son Matthew attends Liberty High School. Stepdaughters Arianna

(17) and Daniela (16) live in Brooklyn, though she sees them often.

"I also like to travel and find places where people gather and eat," she explains. "That's one of the best ways to find common ground amongst all of us."

That's when she's not running. In fact, she's preparing for a triathlon.

"I did a 'virtual marathon' – 26.2 miles on my own – in Liberty a couple years ago," she recalls with a smile. "All of a sudden, my friends were lining the road, cheering me on, giving me water. There's still a sign at the 'finish line' along the road that says, 'Karen Rocks!'"

"Exercise is a form of self-care," Holden adds. "I get up at 4 a.m., go to the gym, run, row, lift weights. That enables me to handle the challenges of work and life, because I've taken care of myself."

In turn, she can take care of others.

"Karen is the kind of leader that draws people to her because she's

always invested in their well-being," observes County Manager Josh Potossek. "The County is fortunate to have her leading Public Health at this time."

"I've been impressed with Karen's work since she joined Public Health, and I look forward to working with her to continue our successful efforts to definitively and permanently lift our health rankings," adds Health & Human Services Commissioner John Liddle.

"Karen represents the kind of homegrown talent we need and want in County government," says District 4 Legislator Nicholas Salomone, who chairs the Legislature's Health & Human Services Committee. "She sets a great example not just by her professional skills but her commitment to good health and fitness."

"Anyone who knows me knows I don't talk the talk without walking the walk," Holden remarks. "I've fallen into a profession that I hope I've served as well as it's served me."

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# Boost your hydration with the new offering from River View Wellness

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JEANNE SAGER

For countless people around the world, the pandemic was a wake-up call reminding them to put their health on the front burner where it belongs.

It was a call for friends Jenny Phelps, Sara Diehl and Christina Wood, too.

The trio are all nurses – Phelps and Diehl are each registered nurses while Wood is a family nurse practitioner – and as they saw more people putting their health first, they saw a chance to

help more people do just that.

Enter Mountain View Hydration, a new Callicoon business founded by the three women to offer local residents wellness support in the form of vitamin therapy.

Vitamins like B1, B3, zinc and others that might come packed in a multi-vitamin are instead delivered via IV in the spa-like setting of River Family Wellness on Route 97 in Callicoon.

“Only 10 to 50 percent of the

vitamins you take are absorbed by the body,” Phelps explains. “It’s shockingly low.

“When you’re getting it through the IV, your body can grab exactly what it needs,” she continues.

And unlike oral vitamins that have to be taken daily, Phelps says a single treatment at Mountain View will last four to six weeks.

Currently the service offers five different combinations, each with its own benefits. Some, like Boost,

which is loaded with vitamins B1 and B3, are recommended for people who are feeling dehydrated, burned out or even hungover. Others like Immune, with vitamins C and D among its ingredients, are suggested for those who are recovering from surgery or illnesses.

The goal of vitamin hydration isn’t to treat or cure illnesses, Wood says. “We just support what a client is doing to focus on their health,” she notes.

Kara Gould jokes with the team at Mountain View during her hydration appointment.







The founders, from left, are Jenny Phelps, Chris Wood and Sara Diehl.

It's a point all three women were quick to make as nurses who work locally in healthcare and are maintaining their jobs in the healthcare industry.

This is a chance to support people's wellness goals, they say, but it's not a replacement for healthcare.

It was that chance to support her own health that attracted Kara Gould to stop by Mountain View recently for her first treatment. A runner prepping for a big race, Gould said she was looking

for something to help with her recovery days.

The procedure was painless, Gould said, and she's eager to reap the benefits of a full array of nutrients delivered directly to the body.

Mountain View Hydration is currently offering appointment-only services on Friday evenings and Saturdays at River Family Wellness. For information or to book an appointment, visit [www.mountainviewhydration.com](http://www.mountainviewhydration.com).

The Boost-in-a-bag hangs near the client doing its thing.





# Allergies? Asthma? COVID? Breathe easy!

## Here are ways to support your lung health



METRO CREATIVE SERVICES PHOTO

BY DR. AAMIR M. GILANI

**A**s we pull ourselves out of winter hibernation, it's beautiful to see the trees blooming, flowers blossoming and fresh grass growing. For many, it feels great to get outside and breathe in the fresh, cool spring air—unless you have seasonal allergies or asthma. According to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA), more than 81 million people in the United States were diagnosed with seasonal allergies in 2021. Symptoms are usually mild and can include:

- Congestion
- Sneezing
- Itchy eyes, nose and throat
- Clear runny nose
- Postnasal drip (drainage in the throat)
- Coughing

### Allergies and Asthma

When you have an allergy, it occurs because the body reacts to something benign, like pollen, as though it were an enemy. While the immune system fights off the perceived threat, a chemical called histamine is released, which causes the allergic reactions in the eyes, nose, throat, skin and lungs. When those reactions hit the lungs, it can cause coughing, wheezing and trouble breathing.

For those who also suffer from asthma, seasonal allergies can be a trigger to more breathing problems. At Garnet Health Doctors, our pulmonology specialists see many patients at this time of year, as their allergies or asthma (or both) can make it difficult to breathe. Here are some important tips to keep in mind:

- Get a proper diagnosis. A clinical exam can help pinpoint what triggers your allergies and/or asthma, so proper treatment can be given.

- Proper treatment. Once you understand what is causing your symptoms, proper treatment can be prescribed. Medications are available for both allergies and asthma, along with immunotherapy, which helps train the body to handle allergens better. A proper diagnosis can determine if this is an option for you.

- Avoid triggers. That may be much easier said than done, but once you understand what causes your symptoms, working to avoid them can help limit exposure. The AAFA has a healthy home checklist that can help you identify and reduce triggers inside your home. Allergy testing can help determine what triggers your reaction.



DR. AAMIR M. GILANI

- Have an asthma action plan. Your doctor can work with you to make sure you have an asthma action plan that ensures everyone knows how your asthma—or your family member's—should be treated.

### Other Breathing Problems

Sometimes our breathing troubles are not related to allergies or asthma. Witnessing someone with breathing trouble can be scary, and if it occurs, you need to get to an emergency department or call 9-1-1 right away. At Garnet Health Doctors, our pulmonologists see and treat a variety of lung-related problems, from mild cases of allergies to very serious lung diseases. A doctor can evaluate you when you are experiencing breathing issues, diagnose potentially serious conditions and have them treated faster for better outcomes. Pulmonologists can also provide you with medicine and resources to be used in case of emergency, decreasing the need for emergency department or urgent care visits.

If you are dealing with a chronic



cough, shortness of breath or disrupted sleep, or if you want help to quit smoking, make an appointment with a pulmonologist right away. Here are some conditions that can cause breathing issues:

- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Lung infections and pneumonia
- Lung cancer
- Environmentally triggered lung diseases
- Long-COVID symptoms
- Pulmonary hypertension—a serious condition where there is very high pressure in the blood vessels between the lungs and heart.
- Sarcoidosis—a rare disease that causes clumps of inflamed tissue to form in different part of the body, including the lungs.

To make an appointment with a Garnet Health Doctors pulmonology specialist in Harris, New York, call (845) 333-8909.

## Is It Allergies or COVID?

You've likely heard that the new strain of COVID, called Arcturus, has a new symptom, conjunctivitis, also known as pink eye. This can make it even harder to tell if you are experiencing allergies or COVID. While symptoms like coughing, itchy eyes (with this new COVID strain) and congestion can overlap, here are symptoms that are common with COVID and other viruses but happen rarely, if at all, with allergies:

- Fever
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath (unless you have allergy-induced asthma)

The best way to truly know if it's allergies or COVID is to take a COVID test.

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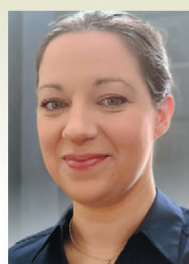
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# How antioxidant-rich foods benefit your body

A nutritious diet is a vital component of a healthy lifestyle. Unfortunately, a popular misconception that characterizes healthy foods as lacking flavor can be hard to overcome. Thankfully, the notion that healthy foods are bland doesn't hold water, and various antioxidant-rich foods are a testament to just how flavorful nutritious foods can be.

Pecans, blueberries, strawberries, kale, and beans are just a handful of the many flavorful foods that are rich in antioxidants. Antioxidant-rich foods benefit the body in myriad ways, and recognition of those benefits might compel more people to include these flavorful, nutritious foods in their diets.

## Antioxidants and cancer risk

Stanford Medicine notes that

researchers are currently investigating the role antioxidants might play in decreasing a person's risk for cancer. Though it's hard to draw a straight line between antioxidants and cancer risk, the National Cancer Institute notes that the antioxidant vitamin C may protect against cancers of the rectum, pancreas, cervix, breast, and lung. In addition, the American Cancer Society reports that the antioxidant beta carotene, which is found in orange, yellow and green leafy fruits and vegetables, may prevent cancer by enhancing white blood cells that are responsible for blocking harmful free radicals.

## Antioxidants and improved vision

The American Optometric Association reports that adding antioxidants to a diet can help

people improve their vision. The AOA notes that various studies have shown that the antioxidants lutein and zeaxanthin reduce the risk for chronic eye diseases. Such studies found that individuals who got the most lutein and zeaxanthin had a much lower risk for developing new cataracts. In addition, the fat-soluble antioxidant vitamin E, which can be found in nuts and sweet potatoes, among other foods, can protect cells in the eyes from free radicals that can cause the breakdown of healthy tissue.

## Antioxidants and heart health

There's much debate surrounding a potential link between antioxidants and a lower risk for heart disease. Much of that debate has to do with antioxidant

supplements, which tend to deliver higher concentrations of antioxidants than natural sources like fruits and vegetables. Individuals who want to try antioxidant supplements in an effort to improve heart health should discuss that option with their physicians before making any changes to their routines, as this approach may not be best for everyone. That said, numerous studies have found that eating a diet that features a lot of antioxidant-rich foods, including fruits and vegetables, can lower risk for heart disease.

Antioxidants can be a powerful ally as people strive to be as healthy as possible. And the many flavorful antioxidant-rich foods can quell any misconceptions that a healthy diet must be a bland diet.



METRO CREATIVE SERVICES PHOTO  
Kale is so nutritious that many consider it a super-food.

## May is Mental Health Awareness Month.

This is a time to raise awareness and reduce the stigma surrounding behavioral health issues; as well as highlighting the ways mental illness and addiction can affect all of us.

Sullivan 180 offers free workshops and trainings that can be brought to your organization, neighborhood or school to help support mental health needs. Connect with us about:

- QPR Suicide Prevention Training
- Naloxone (Narcan) Training
- Youth Mental Health First Aid
- Screening the Film "Resilience"



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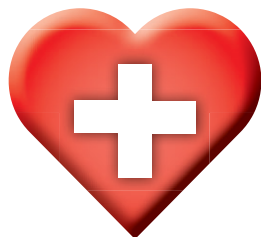
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- Online and in-person classes with tips on how to handle challenges at every stage of the disease.
- Information on legal and financial issues to consider following a diagnosis.
- Social programs to help people with the disease and loved ones get out and interact.
- Financial aid to pay for respite care.

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This advertisement is supported in part by a grant from the New York State Department of Health.

7072



# Tri-Valley Lions support Journey for Sight walk

The Tri-Valley Lions would like to THANK one and all who supported our Journey For Sight Walk on Saturday, May 6. SPECIAL THANKS to our friends at THE NEVERSINK GENERAL STORE, which provided coffee, rolls, bagels, and cakes for our event. Chris, Jaime, Angel, and Mark – what an incredible and delicious spread, which was enjoyed by Walkers and Volunteers alike. Thank you, thank you, thank you. We would also like to thank The Grahamsville Fire Department for their generous donation of \$150, but more importantly, for JOINING US FOR THE WALK. It was so very nice and special to Walk side-by-side with the Fire Department folks – you make our community proud to have the wonderful men and women always there and ready to



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Tri-Valley Lions at the Journey for Sight walk.

handle emergencies as they occur. Thank you to The Grahamsville Deli for the bagels. But most of all, THANK YOU to All the Walkers, Volunteers, and those who donated to The Journey For Sight Walk and accompanying TAG DAY. It is your ongoing support and donations that allow the Tri-Valley Lions to contribute to Local Food

Pantries, do eye screenings at our schools, support organizations like Guiding Eyes for the Blind, Diabetes, the annual Heart-A-Thon, The Rock Hill Run and Ramble which supports Leukemia and Lymphoma causes, and local assistance for our community in event of catastrophic medical or personal needs where insurance

may not be available. This is just a partial list of what The Tri-Valley Lions do on an annual basis.

The Journey For Sight Walk is held each year on the FIRST SATURDAY IN MAY, so "SAVE THE DATE" and come walk with us again next year. For more information about the Walk or Tri-Valley Lions and how to become a member, please contact Lion President Stephen Miller at 845-798-1981 or [srecords@hvc.rr.com](mailto:srecords@hvc.rr.com) or membership chairperson, Patricia Menje at 917-783-6253 or [hvacpat69@gmail.com](mailto:hvacpat69@gmail.com) or Esta Jacob at 845-866-1579 or [ejacob4848@gmail.com](mailto:ejacob4848@gmail.com).

Also, please plan to visit our new SODA BOOTH at the Grahamsville Fairgrounds during this year's Little World's Fair at the Grahamsville Fairgrounds and all other Fairground events.

## Rotary Clubs of Sullivan County join for The Wellness Experience

The Monticello, Liberty, and Livingston Manor Rotary Clubs have joined together with Community Partners to present The Wellness Experience: Connecting Mind, Body, and Spirit on Saturday, May 20 as part of the Rotary District 7210 Day of Service to be held at Resorts World – Catskill Meeting Rooms at 888 Resorts World Drive in Monticello, New York.

The day consists of multiple opportunities for all in the community.

1. Blood Drive from 10 am until 4 pm

conducted by the New York Blood Center. We are in critical need of blood donors to save lives and you can help. You can register for the Blood Drive at [https://donate.nybc.org/donor/schedules/drive\\_schedule/311203](https://donate.nybc.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/311203)

2. Wellness Seminars and Classes from 9 am – 3 pm. There will be an Expert Panel Discussion (9:30 am) lead by our very own Assemblyperson Aileen Gunther, Chair for the Assembly Committee on Mental Health, Chair - Subcommittee on Women's Health, and Committee Member on Health.

3. Vendors/Agencies/Organization will be available from 10 am - 2 pm to share information, speak to attendees, and provide information.

All events and activities are open to the public and free of charge. Walk-ins are Welcome. Attendees will receive a Goodies Collection Bag and chances to win door prizes.

For more information, please email [rotarymonti@gmail.com](mailto:rotarymonti@gmail.com) or call 845-798-1770.

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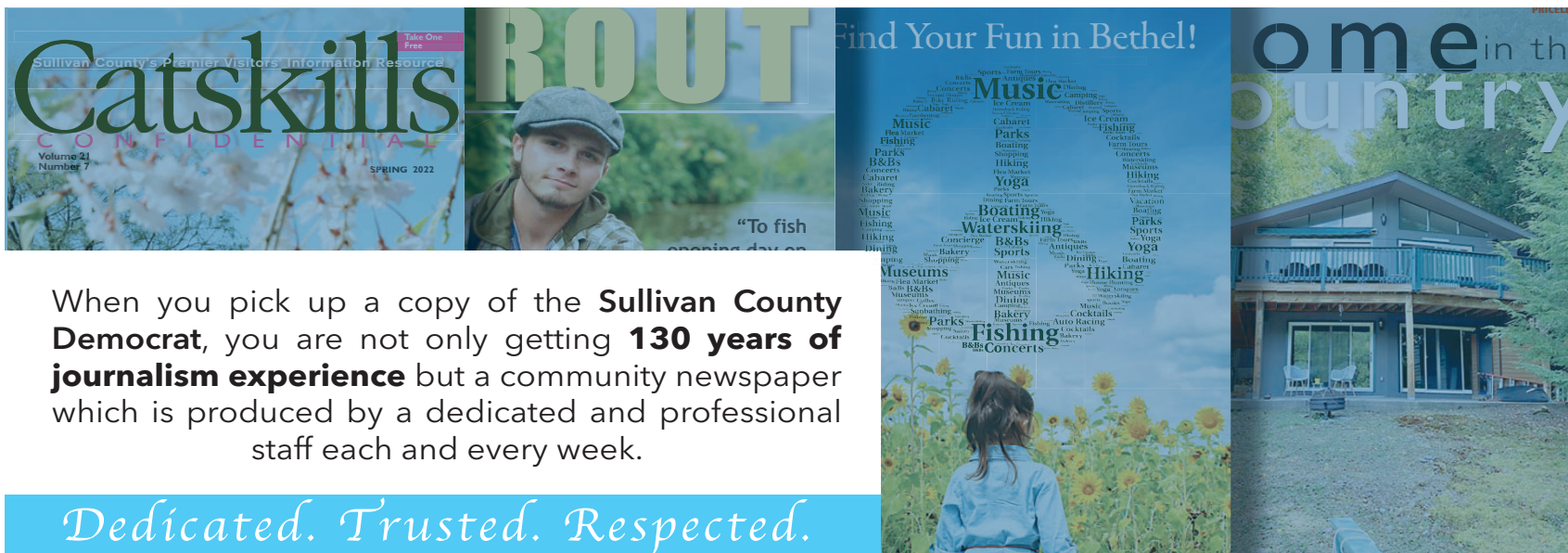
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## National Newspaper Assn. Awards

**1st Place**, Best Sports Column, Daily and Non-Daily Division, 6,000 or more, Ken Cohen, 2017

**2nd Place**, Agricultural Story Series, Daily and Non-Daily Division, 6,000 or more, Kathy Daley, 2019

**3rd Place**, Best Multiple Advertiser Section, Daily and Non-Daily Division, circ. 5,000 to 9,000, Bethel Destination Guide, 2020

## NEW YORK PRESS ASSN. AWARDS

### 1st Place

Best Picture Story, 2022  
Best Multi-Advertiser Pages, 2021  
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### 2nd Place

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Special Sections/Niche  
Publications-Newsprint, 2021  
Past Presidents' Award, 2021  
Best News or Feature Series, 2020  
Special Sections/Niche  
Publications/Glossy, 2019

### 3rd Place

Best Special Section Cover, 2022  
Best Art Photo, 2021  
Best Small Space Ad, 2021

### 3rd Place

Best Obituaries, 2020  
Best Large Space Ad, 2018  
Best Special Glossy Section, 2020  
Best Classified Section, 2020  
Best Public Service  
or Non-Profit Section, 2020  
Best Spot News Photo, 2020

### Honorable Mention

Best Feature Photo(s), 2022  
Best Large Space Ad, 2021  
General Excellence, 2020  
Best Stand-Alone Magazine, 2020  
Best Special Section,  
Niche Publication, 2020  
Best House Ad Campaign, 2020