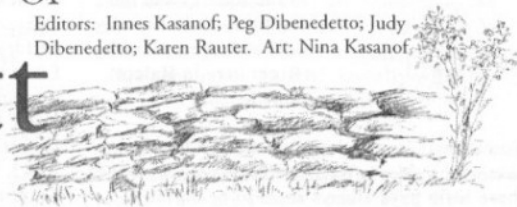


# THE TIMES OF Halcott

Editors: Innes Kasanof; Peg Dibenedetto; Judy  
Dibenedetto; Karen Rauter. Art: Nina Kasanof.



A Quarterly Newsletter  
Volume 18, Spring 2002

## The Beautiful Springtime

Oh, give me the days of the early spring,  
When you look for bluebirds and hear robins  
sing.  
The sap is running from the sturdy hard maple,  
The cattle are longing to get out of the stable.  
The boys with fish poles, all happy with glee,  
Are headed for the trout streams way over the  
lea.  
The girls come along with their springtime togs,  
And we hear the noise of the peepers and frogs.  
The dogs like the spring air and playfully romp,  
The next thing we see is green grass in the  
swamp.  
The bright spring sunshine and an April shower,  
Then look in the sabbush for the first may-  
flower.  
The golden autumn is in our memory still,  
And the winds of winter blowing over the hill.  
The green of last summer and sunshine so  
bright,  
The best in the Catskills fills our hearts with  
delight.  
But of all the seasons and the good that they  
bring,  
You'll find that there is none of them quite like  
the spring. *Carson Bouton*



## Nighttime Rescue

The car moves slowly through the drizzly  
spring darkness; low beams light the rescuers  
leading the way. They bend and scoop their  
way down the road and deposit the delicate  
catch into a bucket, trying to save the little  
creatures from being flattened by the occa-  
sional car on this stretch of Halcott highway.  
Almost every year since the children were  
small we have found ourselves participating in  
this phenomenon, which is one of the most  
exotic of wildlife expeditions one can find  
around here. We would encourage others to  
experience it, too.

In the springtime, the amphibians of our  
Catskills and of the world are drawn to partici-  
pate in the ancient life ritual of getting to water  
to breed and begin again a new generation.  
This in itself can provide an evening of  
enthraling entertainment. I've never wit-  
nessed it myself, but a NYSDEC educational  
leaflet on the subject describes it as such: the  
breeding of the Jefferson's Salamander is "a  
sort of pasture-pond square dance (the ob-  
server needs warm clothes, stout boots, a good  
flashlight, and some would suggest a weak  
head)" and that the mating dance of the spotted  
Salamander is "a real wing-ding compared  
with that of the Jefferson's as there are often as

when snow was snow, if you catch my drift, the snow was so deep on County Route 3 between the Johnson and the Griffin houses that the highway crew would lose the road. When it melted, the new "road" was discovered to be on top of the stone wall. But many of these walls were demolished when the roads were modernized. The stones were tossed into the roadbeds to firm up the sub-base. Then Mr. Kopetz, Ward tells me, would come along on the steam-roller and smash them all up.

The building of stone walls was discontinued as soon as farmers found wire. According to Pete Ballard, during the depression of the 1930s, his Uncle Lon (Alonzo) Ballard, his cousin Julien Earl and a friend all rode trains together out west looking for work. There they saw barbed wire for the first time. It had been invented in 1873 by a New Yorker, Joseph Glidden, but it was after he had moved to Illinois and probably because he couldn't find any boulders to build the walls he was used to. Pete tells me that when his uncle returned to Halcott, the GLF (Grange and League Federation) store carried barbed wire as well. Mike Morse used to run the GLF and it was located in George and Hazel Crosby's house. But that's another story... *IK*

### Wildlife Babies

Springtime is a very busy time for wildlife rehabilitators. Birds and animals are more plentiful and more active; fresh from winter slumbers, newly arrived from southern climes, they become occupied with territories and reproduction and are less observant of roads and cars, dogs and cats. While accidents and injuries increase at this time, well-intentioned calls concerning non-emergencies do also. Here are a few guidelines for determining a wildlife emergency:

1. If you see an unaccompanied fawn, leave it alone! Mom will come and get it within 24 hours. If by that time it is still there, and you are relatively certain the mom has not been

back, a call to NYS DEC (Stamford Sub-Office 607-652-2326) or to a wildlife rehabilitator would be in order. Call immediately if you know the mother is injured or dead.

2. If you find a baby bird that has fallen out of its nest, and you can safely reach it, put it back! A common myth is that a mother bird will not accept a baby after a person has touched it, because of the human scent.

However, birds have no sense of smell. This line of reasoning would apply more to mammals. The main goal here is to reunite the juvenile with its best caregiver-- Mom.

3. If you find any mammal that seems out of place, confused, or friendly, do not approach it! There are many reasons for any of these conditions, but one of them can be rabies. Immediately call the DEC.

If you have wildlife questions or need the services of a rehabilitator, give Peg and Michael Dibenedetto a call at 254 4492. *PD*

### Foreign Correspondents

Happy spring! Happy Chinese New Year, the Year of the Horse. Bangkok is 70% Chinese and we celebrated Chinese or Lunar New Year in Bangkok's Chinatown. We met a Thai-American from Massachusetts. He returns every year to celebrate the New Year with his father. He was waiting outside the largest gold shop for the Royal Highness to make an appearance. We believe we saw her head! In honor of spring I have filled our apartment with tulips, carnations, orchids and a sweet smelling tropical wonder. Orchids grow effortlessly in the most improbable locations in this city of 8 million. We continue to explore the countryside around Bangkok. On Sunday we will head south with



the driver and his wife and young son to see our first Thai beaches. We will go to Hua Hin. The area was selected by a King of Siam for his summer palace because of its beauty and proximity to Bangkok. Of course hotel and tourism developers have come along, but we are practiced at looking past that and finding the "bones" of a place. Much love to you all,  
*Sybil and Paul Margaritis*

### WELCOME!

*Ed. Note: Thanks to our Town's website ([www.townofhalcott.com](http://www.townofhalcott.com)) Nancy Amy, a new homeowner in Halcott, found us. We introduce Nancy below, having interviewed her "virtually," by computer.*

**TTOH:** Nancy, welcome to our town. How did you find Halcott?

**NA:** Well, there is the long answer and the short answer to this question. The short answer is, I came up to Margaretville over Labor Day weekend to meet with a real estate broker. We looked at 8 houses that day. The next week Sept 11th

happened, and I didn't get back until 5 weeks later. We looked at 10 places this time, but I knew that night that the place in Halcott was what I wanted.

The long answer involves my decision to take up motorcycle riding in 1997, my dad who died in 1996, and my mom who had knee surgery last year. It involves the way the hills and the blue sky looked one perfect day last summer, how the grasses and the earth smelled, and how very much at peace I felt. And not least it involved the temptation of having my own basement with a workbench and lots of tools and space to tinker on whatever I felt like.

**TTOH:** Do you have a family?

**NA:** I have a wonderful Mother (84) in Indiana, and an older sister and brother. Numerous aunts, uncles (big farm families in Indiana), nephews, neices, 2 grandnephews, 1 grandneice, and one more on the way this month.

**TTOH:** Are you employed outside the home?

**NA:** I am. I work in the Financial Systems area of a management consulting firm in Manhattan.

**TTOH:** Do you have any hobbies or interests?

**NA:** I love kayaking, hiking, snowshoeing, motorcycling (quietly), tinkering in my workshop. I also like jazz, blues, and Bach organ music.

**TTOH:** We are in a "Four-season resort" area, with skiing in the winter, trout fishing in spring and summer, gardening and discovering hiking trails in summer, and deer and turkey hunting in autumn. Do you plan to participate in any of these sports?

**NA:** Cross-county skiing and snowshoeing in the winter, and hiking in the spring and summer definitely. My brother-in-law hunts deer and turkey, so I've invited him up (after I get the house in order).

Thank you, Nancy. We hope to meet you in person soon. *IK*

### CRYSTAL!

Who enjoys pizza, sweets and bagels, sometimes sneaks out to have fun, but occupies a special place in your heart? A teenager? Well, yes, maybe, but this was actually the precocious behavior of a beautiful, deep-red cow named "Crystal." She was extraordinary in many ways, a truly gentle but silly bovine.

A Christmas gift in 1979, Crystal was the first cow I ever had the privilege of owning. This incredibly special gift was the work of both my family and some dear friends, the Rowe family, who own an outstanding herd of



rest of her days at the Rowe's farm where she was born, eating pasture with the other cows and indulging in the occasional blueberry bagel when Chris and I visited her. Though many cows have come into our hearts since Crystal, certainly there is a special place for her alone. Her unique status lives on in the name of our Halcott farm, "Crystal Valley." Rest well, old friend, you will not be forgotten.  
*Judy Dibenedetto.*

**Halcott's Comprehensive Plan Committee**  
The Town of Halcott applied for and received a State grant to create a Town of Halcott Master Plan. This includes monies for consultant services, Greene County Planning Department and Catskill Center who will assist us.

On January 16, 2002, Supervisor Kasanof, Pete Ballard, Jennifer Bouton, Ed Diamante of Greene County Planning and Helen Budrock of the Catskill Center met to discuss the plan. We then sent a "request for proposals" to qualified professional planning firms to assist the town with the preparing of the plan, proposals to be received back by March 15, 2002. At the January 18, 2002 meeting the Town Board approved the following people to sit on the committee: Pete Ballard, chair, Nancy Reynolds, Chris Dibenedetto, Michael Dibenedetto, Innes Kasanof, Karen Rauter, and Adele Siegel, with alternates Judy Dibenedetto, Tim Johnson, Jennifer Bouton, Ted Randazzo and Patrick Pagnano.

Soon, we will select one of firms to work with us and set a date for the first meeting. We were told there should be 12 to 14 meetings to complete the Master Plan. All meetings are open to the public and we ask that people do attend as we want as much input as we can get. The purpose of the Master Plan is - **WHAT DO YOU WANT HALCOTT TO BE LIKE**

**YEARS FROM NOW?** Please note: this plan is not connected with zoning. If you are interested in learning more about this, please call me at 254-4141. *Pete Ballard*

**From the Highway Department:**  
The re-cycling center has been updated and is now easier to access. People seem to be handling the changes well. Also, we would like to thank Milt Champlin for donating parts for our overhead doors. *Russell Bouton.*

### *Spring Means Daffodils*

The American Cancer Society is again raising money for its important work with a sale of daffodils. If you wish to participate, call me at 254-5589, by March 30 to sign up to receive your daffodils. They will be delivered between April 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. They come in bunches of 10 for \$7.00 and are a welcome signpost to spring. Acrylic blue-green vases with floral Daffodil Days logo are also available at \$8.00. *Pattie*



*Kelder.*

### **SKUNK AWAY!**

MIX: 1 quart hydrogen peroxide  
1/4 cup baking soda  
2 teaspoons dish detergent (Dawn is best)

RINSE DOG.

SPONGE ON MIX.

AFTER 10 MINUTES, RINSE AGAIN.  
REPEAT AS NEEDED.

### **Letter to the Editor:**

Asking favors from the Town Highway Department is very easy for some people. "It only takes a couple of minutes to make me a turn-around spot, to sand my driveway, patch a couple of holes, cut those small trees, tow

milking Shorthorns near Davis, California. My mom, still dressed in her white nurse's uniform from work, had decorated Crystal's stall with a big red bell and streamers and the Rowses were there too. What a surprise! I still have pictures from that day. Little did I know what joy that calf would bring over the next few years.



Crystal was a part of my FFA (Future Farmers of America) project so she was exhibited at several cattle shows. Her first

show was at the Cow Palace near San Francisco. "Patty," a big beef Shorthorn heifer and veteran "show girl," accompanied Crystal to the show. Happily, both heifers were up to the task at hand despite my own inexperience. Patty was first in her class at the beef show while Crystal was named Jr. Champion in the dairy show. Neither heifer was intimidated by the crowds or big show ring in the cavernous arena. Crystal, in particular, had one of those days where she looked just right for the judge.

During the years that followed, Crystal developed quite a reputation for the unusual, especially with respect to her appetite. At one county fair, a friend of mine thought it would be fun to try to feed her pizza and soft-serve vanilla ice cream. Sure enough, Crystal happily obliged and ate them. She also loved cookies of any kind, but especially molasses crinkles, and mince pie. Once, while Crystal was recuperating from an illness at the UC Davis hospital, she grabbed a bagel right out of the hands of an unsuspecting vet student (wish I could have seen the student's face!) who was on morning rounds. The vet who told me about it got a big laugh, and probably a lot of mileage, out of that story.

Crystal's goofiness wasn't limited to

her taste buds. After my family moved to the country, Crystal managed to escape her pasture on more than one occasion. (Houdini couldn't have done it better!) She often took some of our other cows along as accomplices while she made her way to the feed shed. When caught in the act of rummaging through the feed, Crystal acted like a defiant kid with her hand in the cookie jar. The other cows would scurry out, but Crystal, not being afraid of anything, would just continue to eat until someone put a halter on her and led her back.

Another one of her escapes came as I was supposed to be leaving for a dairy cattle judging contest in Fresno. We heard a bunch of noise on the back patio and, lo and behold, there's Crystal peering through the sliding glass door, smearing her big nose down the window. She knew she was in trouble when I went out to catch her, so she proceeded to go frolicking around the yard, mockingly kicking up her heels as she went. Needless to say, catching the cavorting heifer took time, making me late in leaving. Incidents like this make it easy to see why we nicknamed her "Clown" and "Mama Red Devil."

Crystal had several wonderful calves. Though none were quite as "colorful" as their mother, all shared her gentle nature. Her calves that were shown did very well. Her last calf, a roan bull dubbed "Little Squirt," marched with Crystal in the annual Picnic Day parade in Davis (actually, Crystal marched well, but Little Squirt gave the young woman leading him a good workout).

Mother and son then spent the rest of the day basking in lots of attention in front of the old Animal Science building on the UC Davis campus.



Crystal went on to spend the

my machine to get it started..." The list goes on and on! Theory being you are already here or do it on your way by, it won't cost anything, besides I pay a lot of taxes here or I have been paying taxes for years and nobody will know anyway or it's the Town's fault because my car went off the road in the first place or that I got stuck.

We have almost 200 full-time residents. Now add 52 to 54% part-time residents and we have over 400 people. If one person gets favors shouldn't the other 400+ get them, too?

Think of the worker who you are asking to do something on taxpayer time and machinery. You just put him in a very awkward position (worse if you are a friend or neighbor). If it were after hours and he had his own machine he (I am sure) would help you out in a heartbeat. At this point you will probably notice he is getting uneasy and nervous. He knows he is not supposed to do it but he also knows if he does not, there will be bad feelings. He is going to feel bad because he had to say no and you are going to be very unhappy because "that guy

would not do me a favor even if it did not cost him anything." Please think next time before you ask. Thank you. *Pete Ballard.*



### PASSAGES

This winter we lost two daughters of Halcott. **Albertine Brand** was born in Elk Creek, a cousin to Virgil Streeter. She moved away from Halcott when she was young and, like many of us, returned after some years to spend the rest of her life on the road where she was born. **Evelyn Zudock** settled in Halcott, keeping sheep, horses and other animals. Evelyn drove the Margaretville Central School bus for awhile and worked at Frost Valley. Both women were strong characters typical of this climate and both will be missed. *IK*

The Times of Halcott  
813 Rt 3  
Halcott Center, NY  
12430

