



"The First Not-For-Profit Community Pharmacy in America"

The Wellness Rx Newsletter

Winter 2025-2026



Executive Director's Message

We entered Winter 2025-2026 with the Holiday Season shining its personality on us. Santa came to town, lights sparkled with hope, our romantic mountains sprinkled with snow, passions arose, our spiritual centers shone their light on helping us make a difference in a fragile world. We then took a moment to thank those in our life that we love and we did our best to help our neighbors in need.

We then welcomed New Years 2026 and made our commitments for change and prayed for a less chaotic and gentler world. Soon Winter 2026 took over and brought us to our knees with chilling cold weather, two snow storms, several serious accidents and an inner strength to try and keep it all together.

As 2026 pressed on, we then got to enjoy the Super Bowl and the half-time show, the Winter Olympics followed with an upbeat spirit and amazing Gold Medal performances, especially by our women and men's hockey teams. The skiers returned to the mountains, protesters filled the streets and acts of generosity increased.

Before you knew it the weather became our friend again! The sun lit up the snow filled mountains, hikers hit the trails, the cool air felt wonderful to breathe, the birds started to sing louder, a calming energy filled the air and we remembered how blessed we are to call the Catskills our home. In this Winter Newsletter, we take a moment to share with you some observations serving as a "mini Grand Central Station" for our community. We also wish to put a light on our wonderful volunteers, donors and introduce you to our new staff members.

IN GOOD HEALTH

The cold and flu season has been challenging especially with a second year in a row of a national uptick in flu cases. Our Wellness Rx Special Report on Cold and Flu can hopefully provide some useful information for you.

We continued to provide senior and regular flu shots along with Shingles, RSV, COVID boosters and pneumonia immunizations. Additionally, we continue to encourage immune boosting supplements like Elderberry Tonic, Vitamin D, Vitamin C, Zinc and Mushroom tinctures.



THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME



We continue to observe that so many guests are visiting our area from around the world. Each has their own story, but it doesn't take long for them to fall in love with our natural world, our friendly people and our colorful personalities. It's our best estimate that over 30% of our residents are involved in the creative arts! We also have noticed a continuing increase in hybrid working (home/office) and folks with second homes in our area that are deciding to make the Catskills their primary homes. As one patient explained to me, *"in the city I was just existing, now I am living!"*

HOT OFF THE PRESS

Our model and story continues to receive positive PR.

We are proud that the regional magazine Visit Vortex chose us as a featured story in their Winter Edition.



SALUTE TO COMMUNITY



- We continue to be impressed by the uniqueness and class of our three local spiritual/healing retreat centers Zen Mountain Monastery in Mt. Tremper, Menla in Woodland Valley and Peace Village in Haines Falls.
- Our fast growing boutique resorts that are receiving rave reviews from their guests and are helping to drive our local economy: Urban Cowboy and Full Moon Resort in Big Indian/Olivera, Shandaken Inn, Emerson Resort & Spa and Foxfire Inn in Mt. Tremper, Onteora Mountain House in Boiceville, Black Walnut Farm, and The Graham & Co. in Phoenicia.
- A special shout out to the Phoenicia Diner for becoming a must-see destination visit.
- Of particular interest: One weekend this past fall we counted folks coming into our Wellness Center from eight different weddings that were occurring at the same time. This included the Phoenicia Diner and Timberlake Camp.

In Memoriam



We salute and celebrate the loss of Mike Ryan, a true pillar of the community who served our country, state and community, first in the Air Force, then in law enforcement (Kingston and Ulster) and lastly as the Fire Commissioner of the M.F. Whitney Hose Company for Phoenicia. Mike was committed to public service and suffered a heart attack trying to rescue a fallen hiker.

There was a massive outpouring of love and support for Mike and his family where hundreds of first responders from across the Catskills and Hudson Valley attended along with over 1,000 police officers, firefighters and guests came to Phoenicia to show their respects. What a beautiful reflection of who we truly are as Americans and human beings. *God bless Mike.*



ONGOING PROGRAMING

Yael Bernhard, Certified Integrative Health & Nutrition Coach, has been offering Health Coaching with several workshops covering Nutrition for Cognitive Health at the store. They have been very popular and we continue to look forward to more offerings from Yael.

LENDING A HELPING HAND

Our Patient Assistance Fund (PAF) continues to be a lifeline to the folks in our community who are in need. In the last 3 months we have assisted 28 people.



WELCOME ABOARD

Eden Schouten

Is our new pharmaceutical-technician-in-training. She is enthusiastic and determined to learn about medicine and to be a part of the Pharmacy's efforts in providing care for the community.

Sara Reiss

Is our intern who started in March. She is a recent graduate from Vassar College with a bachelor's in biology and a correlate in studio art. Sara is currently pursuing a career in public health and hopes to make meaningful changes for people in her community.



OUR FRIENDS, VOLUNTEERS & DONORS

- **David Johnson:** Is one of our patients and a local beekeeper who donated many jars of honey for us to sell with the proceeds going into our Patient Assistant Fund.
- **Jim Clark:** Donated a beautiful antique indigenous horn that we proudly display in our Apothecary collection.
- **Michael Byrnes:** Donated 3 prints on canvas to sell with the proceeds going into the Patient Assistance Fund.
- **Eva Otto:** Is a local artist who has brought in several lovely cards for us to sell at the store.
- **Gerry Nilsen:** Who brought in a check for the Patience Assistance Fund.
- **Paul Rodriguez:** Continues to volunteer his time to ensure that we have the happiest fish in town.
- **Dawn Crofoot:** Was part of the Tannersville team and helped with the merger of the two pharmacies. She continues to help whenever her considerable talents are needed.
- **Robin San Vicente:** Prepares and distributes our Quarterly Newsletter along with our social media presence and other tasks that are needed.
- **Steve Neville:** Our Jack-of-all-trades. He freely offers up his time to help us where needed which includes shoveling snow, celebrations and so much more.
- **John (aka Jack) Bazikian:** Is our wonderful staff member who provides delivery service to those who cannot get to the pharmacy themselves.
- **Julie Petruzzo:** Who came to the Catskills from San Francisco and began volunteering for us in the fall. She has brought her wonderful skills to our bookkeeping endeavors as well as inventory and much more.



THE ROAD AHEAD

As we prepare to welcome spring and witness new beginnings, may we receive special blessings that allow us to enter a door of hope that shows that people have the power to come together as a strong force for positive change. A change that respects our differences, celebrates our thirst for kindness and respects others regardless of their income, culture, sex or religion.

May we create a special community based on compassion, common good, values and integrity. A community that helps each other, protects our natural world and thinks big dreams for "tomorrow's kids". *We are on that path of greatness.*



As always, with gratitude, I thank you from my heart for your continuing support and encouragement. Together, we will build a "beacon of hope" in a world that so often feels cold, uncertain and lonely.

Ed