

# Register-Star

**Police ID victim**  
A Queens man drowns in a Claverack pond **Inside, A3**



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## WEATHER

TODAY	TONIGHT	WED
A shower and t-storm	A strong t-storm early	Humid with a heavy t-storm
<b>HIGH 77</b>	<b>LOW 67</b>	<b>82</b>

Complete weather, A2

## SPORTS



### Little League Baseball

Hudson 10-12s win District 15 title

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## LOCAL



### Damage seen from the air

Officials get aerial view of Stuyvesant storm damage

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## STATE



### Everything is awesome

First new theme park in decades opens in NY

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### On the web

www.HudsonValley360.com



# Labor shortages hamper business

By **Natasha Vaughn**  
Columbia-Greene Media

HUDSON — The Twin Counties continue to face a labor shortage as unemployment numbers fall to near-pre-pandemic levels.

The state Department of Labor said unemployment levels dropped in both Columbia

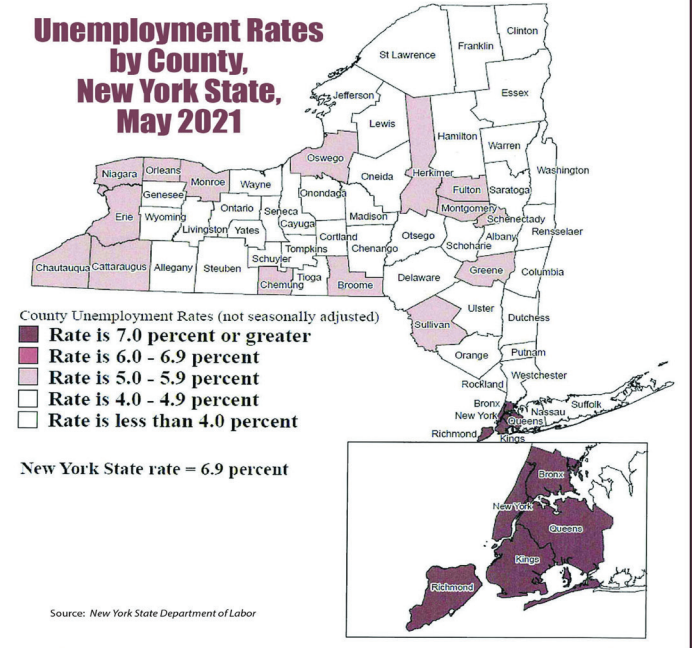
County and Greene County.

“I believe employers continue to struggle to find enough employees to run their businesses, both anecdotally and based on unemployment numbers and job openings that are posted,” Columbia Economic Development President F. Michael Tucker said.

A June 22 report from the Labor Department compares the unemployment rates of May 2021 to May 2020. In May 2020, while many industries in the state were shut down or more restricted because of the pandemic, the unemployment rate

See LABOR A8

## Unemployment Rates by County, New York State, May 2021



# Family homeless after lightning sparks fire

BILL WILLIAMS/COLUMBIA-GREENE MEDIA

Firefighters at the scene of a house fire on Orchard Road in Livingston on Friday night that displaced a local family.



BILL WILLIAMS/COLUMBIA-GREENE MEDIA

A Livingston family was displaced after lightning struck their home and started a fire Friday night.

By **Bill Williams**  
Columbia-Greene Media

LIVINGSTON — A local family was displaced after their home caught fire Friday when lightning struck the property for the second time this year, fire officials said.

Lightning struck the home at 457 Orchard Road, Livingston, just before 7:42 p.m. Friday, Livingston Fire Chief Paul Jahns IV said Saturday. The homeowners called Columbia County 911 immediately afterward to report their house was filling with smoke.

The lightning strike caused significant electrical damage to the home. The family will be staying at another home nearby until repairs can be made, Jahns said. There were no reported injuries.

The first firefighters to arrive found a working fire in the basement and a heavy condition of smoke, the fire chief said.

Firefighters went to work inside the home and extinguished the blaze at 8:16 p.m. Afterward, they inspected the residence to ensure the flames had not

spread.

Friday's incident marked the second time lightning struck the Orchard Road house this year. A large tree in the front yard was destroyed by lightning in early May, Jahns said.

Fire officials Friday requested mutual-aid assistance from Taghkanic and Greenport fire departments.

National Grid was requested to the scene to disconnect electric power.

Northern Dutchess Paramedics and the Columbia County Fire Coordinator's Office assisted at the scene. The town building inspector also responded.

All firefighters were back in service at 9:47 p.m.

The area was being pounded by a severe thunderstorm on Friday evening when the house was struck by lightning. That same storm brought heavy rains, and was responsible for street flooding across Columbia and Greene counties.

Lightning is the most dangerous

See FIRE A8

# COVID-19 trends tell tale of two counties



PHOTO COURTESY OF GOV. ANDREW CUOMO'S OFFICE

Numbers of new COVID-19 cases differ between Columbia County and Greene County.

By **Natasha Vaughn and Sam Raudins**  
Columbia-Greene Media

HUDSON — Numbers of new COVID-19 cases differ widely between Columbia County and Greene County. Columbia's are trending down. But Greene's are tracking upward.

Vaccination rates tell another side of the story. Columbia County's rate is above 70% but Greene County's rate is 48%, or more than 20 percentage points below the state average.

The Columbia County Department of Health reported two new cases of the virus Monday morning — the first new cases the county had in four

days.

But Greene County has seen a small spike in cases since July 6.

“We had two cases today,” Columbia County Department of Health Director Jack Mabb said Monday. “That’s over the whole weekend. That’s Saturday, Sunday and today.”

Twenty-five states in the country are seeing a rise in COVID cases, Mabb said. A number of states are experiencing growing numbers of the Delta Variant as well.

“New York is one of the 25 that is seeing a rise,” Mabb said. “On the other hand, when I look at the vaccine tracker for the

state, I see the counties around the Hudson Valley, from right up from Long Island all the way up have pretty much gotten over 70%.”

The two cases Mabb talked about Monday were two unrelated people from different areas of the county. He said one of them was in their 50s and the other was in their 70s. He said their vaccination status was not known. In recent weeks a number of the positive cases reported in Columbia County had been people who were 30 and younger.

“And for me when I interpret

See COVID A8