

# ARTS | LIFE

SUNDAY

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September 7, 2008

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**Dog days**

Cats and dogs reign supreme in Catskill and Hudson. **PAGE B8**



Located in the center of Greenwich, Mowry Park maintains the historic charm of the past. Artist Elizabeth Cockey captured the park's charm in this watercolor painting. **BELOW LEFT:** Cockey painted these cows waiting for a treat after seeing them on a friend's farm. **BELOW RIGHT:** 'Looking up the Kill' a gouache on canvas, portrays the Batten Kill River in late September.



**MARTHA PETTEYS**

COMMENTARY

## Oh, the games we play

I was lying in bed pretending not to feel the pair of eyes watching me. The stab of pain on my arm that came next, however, was not so easy to ignore. "Ouch, what are you doing? The little girl I stood at the side of my bed. While staring at me, willing I wake up, she got briefly distracted by the scab on my arm. She decided to remove it. "Mom, I want some fresh feet," she said, still examining the mark on my arm. It's a wonder I've ever got out of bed before giving birth to two human alarm clocks. Being lazy with two children around is not impossible: It just takes creativity. "Play with me, Mom. Let's play!" said the 4-year-old after breakfast.

But on this morning, I don't feel like playing. Even reading a book seems to require too much effort. It is times like these, I suggest one of two games: hairdresser or doctor. The game of hairdresser involves the lying like a vegetable on the couch while the child rubs various combs, brushes, sprays, sprays, combs, and the occasional Barbie doll leg through my hair. While this game can be slightly painful, the upside is, movement is limited to me turning my head when instructed.

"Now this will make you feel like STACCO!" bellowed the 11-year-old, running a Marbrich car down the center of my scalp. Her little brother, acting as the dutiful salon assistant, sits on my head, grabs a handful of hair and screams I want hairpins as a time of dread makes a slow descent onto my cheek. That's when I realize a section of my hair is wrapped around the side of a small black Curvette.

After extracting the car, I suggest we move on to our second game, doctor.

Playing is as simple as telling the little girl my big toe, knee or elbow hurts. Then, I again lie like an eggplant while my daughter gets to work (with many of the same tools from her salon), snatching at, tearing and squeezing the area of complaint until... well until it actually DOES hurt.

On this day, however, I believe she got the two games mixed up. Either that or, she is a little fuzzy on what doctors actually do. As I relaxed on the couch calling for the doctor, complaining that my head hurt, she began putting eye-shades on me. Now this was of course, pretend eye-shades and by that I mean, my daughter licked her finger and then applied her spit to my eyelids. "What are you doing?" I asked, on receiving the first coat of spit.

"Stibbi, you're OK now," she said in a chirpy tone. "I'm just giving you some eye-shades. It will make you feel better."

Well, who am I to argue with a doctor... especially one with a medical degree in counterplay?

Martha Petteys serves a weekly column for The Post-Star. Write to her at [pettey@poststar.com](mailto:pettey@poststar.com) or visit The Mommy Blog at [www.poststar.com](http://www.poststar.com).

# Capturing Upstate New York's landscape



Book is 'Love' affair with local sites, history

By DOUG GRUSE  
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With every brushstroke, artist Elizabeth Cockey feels closer to home. When Cockey was growing up in Greenwich, she dreamt of getting out and seeing the world. She went off to college and moved around, making a life far from her origins in Washington County.

But something about her childhood years on the old family farm stuck with her. Although she had a life outside of Greenwich, she remained linked to the people and the land.

After her father, Bob Barber, was diagnosed with advanced tongue cancer, Cockey's visits back home from Baltimore became more frequent. She and her husband, Barton, would travel north to see family and friends.

While showing the area to her husband, Cockey saw her native region through fresh eyes.

And she had to paint. "I was gone a long time, but I always missed it. I missed the land. I missed the landscape," Cockey said. "I painted it because I missed it."

A professional art therapist, Cockey used her painting both to cope with grief and to capture the sites around Greenwich she suddenly was seeing in a different way. "I couldn't be here all the time, but I could be here through painting. I always reconnect when I paint," she said.

Cockey's paintings are the framework of "Upstate New York: Towns That We Love."



A Saturday morning trip to Cambridge inspired Elizabeth Cockey to paint the farmers market with the Cambridge Hotel in the background. **RIGHT:** Barton, left, and Elizabeth Cockey share their interest in Washington County and the surrounding area in "Upstate New York: Towns That We Love." Elizabeth Cockey painted Susquehanna for the book, and Barton provided the text.



**INFORMATION**

"Upstate New York: Towns That We Love" by Elizabeth and Barton Cockey is available at local bookstores and online. For more information, go to [www.thepoststar.com](http://www.thepoststar.com).

**CONTACTS**

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**COMING TOMORROW**

One local collector has more than a Jeter's dozen of voting pins.

**COMING TUESDAY**

The 100-year-old Assembly Square Theatre is getting ready to perform again. Artists Director Pamela Perry reflects on the organization's past and looks ahead to the future.

**COMING WEDNESDAY**

Sally's captures its beauty with flowers, a collection of the region's agapanthus. Get the details on the activities, including a Harvest Dinner.