

## STATE GOVERNMENT

# Can we get a Lyft?

Nothing's for sure, but ride-sharing company might operate locally **BY JESSE J. SMITH**

**S**TATE LAWMAKERS HAVE passed legislation that will allow ride-sharing companies like Uber and Lyft to operate statewide. But it remains unclear whether pink mustachioed Lyft

cars and Uber SUV's will appear on Ulster County roadways anytime soon.

Over the past five years the ride-sharing outfits, known as transportation network companies (TNCs), have become a ubiquitous presence in New York City

and other urban centers around the world. The companies use smart phone-based technology to link riders with drivers who operate as independent contractors using their own vehicles. The app handles payment, lets users know when their ride will show up and allows riders and drivers to rate one another. In New York City, the companies operate under the oversight of the city's Taxi and Limousine Commission. But insurance coverage and concerns over worker compensation and other labor issues have prevented the networks from operating upstate.

The compromise agreement hammered out in Albany as part of this spring's budget process comes after several failed

efforts in the past few years. The new law calls for transportation network companies and drivers to be licensed by the state Department of Motor Vehicles and for drivers to pass criminal background checks.

The law also creates a new insurance policy tailored for TNC drivers. The policy, which will be more affordable than standard commercial policies carried by cab companies, offers different levels of coverage for periods when the TNC vehicle is waiting for a call and actually transporting passengers. A 4 percent tax on TNC rides is expected to generate \$24 million in revenue and offset the costs of including  
 (CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

## LOCAL HISTORY



PHOTOS COURTESY NEW YORK STATE POLICE

Left, Col. George F. Chandler; right, a photo from the mid-1960s heralds the use of a light plane to patrol the state Thruway.

# High moral character

First State Police superintendent, a Kingston physician, set the tone for the organization he led **BY HUGH REYNOLDS**

**O**NE HUNDRED YEARS AFTER its founding, the office of superintendent of state police seems to have come full circle. The division's first superintendent, Colonel George F. Chandler, was a Kingston physician and surgeon. The current and 15th superintendent, George Beach II, lives in Hurley.

Beach visited the Chandler monument in front of the County Office Building on Fair Street in Kingston last Friday to pay his respects. The monument was erected by the county legislature on the 50th anniversary of the founding of the troopers. Chandler, who lived at the Gov. Clinton Hotel in his latter years, died in 1964. Chandler Drive, which connects Kingston with the Thruway, was named for him in 1965.

The State Police launched a year-long celebration of the organization's centenary with the dedication of a monument at the former National Guard Camp Newayou near Manlius.

Chandler (1872-1964), born near Syracuse, recruited and equipped that first class of troopers, known as "the camp men," established regional zones with barracks, and designed their uniforms. According to Beach, appointed superintendent last June, Chandler established the ethics and rules that govern the near 5,000-person force to this day.

"It's quite amazing," said Beach, a 34-year member of the force and a former lo-



HUGH REYNOLDS

Current Superintendent George Beach II with the monument to Chandler at the County Office Building.

cal zone commander and staff inspector in internal affairs, "that the precepts Colonel Chandler set down for us, that we are to 'serve, protect and defend the people while preserving the rights and dignity of all' have guided us all these years. He wanted a special kind of people, an organization that was strong from within."

At Chandler's request, his ashes were spread over Glenerie Falls in the Town of Ulster.

The history of the troopers originates

with a spectacular crime, a 1913 robbery/murder in Westchester County of a construction foreman delivering a payroll. The victim was able to identify his three assailants before dying from multiple gunshot wounds, but owing to the lack of a local police force, they escaped, never to be apprehended.

One of the man's employers, a Miss Moyca Newell and her companion, wealthy author Katherine Mayo, began  
 (CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

## COMMUNITY

# Struggling to make it home

Readings describe refugee kids' pain and hope **BY VIOLET SNOW**

**"H**OME IS A SENSATION OF relief... a place where you feel comfortable walking around in your pajamas ... where there are people who one minute are driving you crazy, and the next minute you know they love you." — from an essay by a Kingston High School student

"I was walking home one day and saw my parents in front of my house, talking to some gang members. The gangs wanted my 15-year-old brother to join, and my parents did not want him to join. ... I hid behind the house, and then I heard shots. I knew they had killed my parents. I hid in a closet until my brother found me, and we decided to leave. We rode on top of a train all the way through Mexico ... I was 10 years old." — from an essay by a Latin American refugee.

The writings are the product of workshops held in local high schools and at the Children's Home of Kingston, one of 265 shelters across the country where young refugees might end up after fleeing gang violence in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. Shauna Kanter, director of the Woodstock-based Voice Theater, has led these sessions. She encourages teenagers to write about the concept of "home" and then holds readings to present the writings to students at Kingston and Saugerties high schools and two vocational programs, Hudson Valley Pathways and the Alternative High School in Port Ewen.

On April 7, about 30 teenagers sat on the floor of the stage at Kingston High School, listening to the writings of fellow students and young refugees. Some of the compositions were read both in English and in Spanish, and most were not read by the people who had written them.

Not all the Kingston students' essays were warm and fuzzy. One writer described running away from home twice because she was overwhelmed by her parents' constant fighting and her struggles to care for her younger siblings.  
 (CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)





VIOLET SNOW

From left: Kingston High School students Aquarius Love Creamer, Emily Rosario, Christian Dedovich, Brandon Krom and Parker Saunders Ferris.

## Struggling to make it home

*Continued from Page 1*

"But I went back because I was needed," she wrote. Ada Lowengard, the student who read aloud this writer's work, said after the presentation that she found it painful to read.

Still, the refugees' accounts reached a whole different level of starkness. One boy described fleeing after his brother murdered a half-brother for joining a rival gang: "Leaving my family was one of the worst moments of my life. But I was going to be killed like my brother."

Another boy wrote of leaving because there was not enough work for his family to buy food. He had also been asked to join a gang, whose members told him, "Everything your family cannot give you, we will give you. But we will be first, before your parents."

Wrote another, "My parents were always negotiating with the gangs. On all sides, everything looked dead." His sisters arranged to get him to the U.S., where, he stated, "A boy who excels in all aspects can do anything in this world."

After a previous presentation at Saugerties High School, said Kanter, "The refugee kids said it was important to see other Hispanic kids in a high school. They so want next September to be enrolled. They say it's important to them to have their stories heard."

Some of the accounts brought Emily Rosario, one of the Kingston High School readers, to tears. She lived in Puerto Rico until she was five. "My oldest brother was forced into a gang," she said. "That was the last time I ever saw him."

Christian Dedovich, also a reader, said of the visitors afterward, "I shook their hands. I didn't know if I was making them uncomfortable."

Aquarius Creamer reported that before her reading, "They looked sad. I smiled at them. One of them gave me a bracelet."

### 'These kids are not criminals'

"I've gained an enormous amount of empathy and respect for these children," said Kanter. "On CNN, I heard a border patrol officer say, 'I don't know why they're coming to this country. I guess they just want a better life. I want Americans to understand, these kids are not criminals, they're literally running for their lives.'"

Kanter's theater company has a history of addressing social and political issues through performance. In 1995, she wrote the play *Legacy*, based on the rescue of her Jewish ancestors from Germany under Hitler. Using the play as a springboard, she has conducted workshops in Europe and in the U.S., encouraging students to write monologues about their personal experiences of exclusion, discrimination and bullying.

*Legacy* is about prejudice, but it's also about refugees, pointed out Kanter. "It's about people having to leave their country and seek a home elsewhere. As a Jew, I feel it's my responsibility to help people because this was my family's experience. The Voice Theater method is to take disparate groups, people who would never come together, and put them in the same room."

To help lead the recent series of workshops, she selected actors Sean Marrinan, an acting teacher who appeared for five years on *30 Rock*, and Jordana Rubenstein, who teaches at a Palestinian summer

camp in the West Bank.

When a minor crosses the border illegally from Mexico into the U.S., without parents, he is immediately detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), which has 72 hours to send him to a shelter such as the Children's Home of Kingston. Boys at the shelter are connected to family members or past

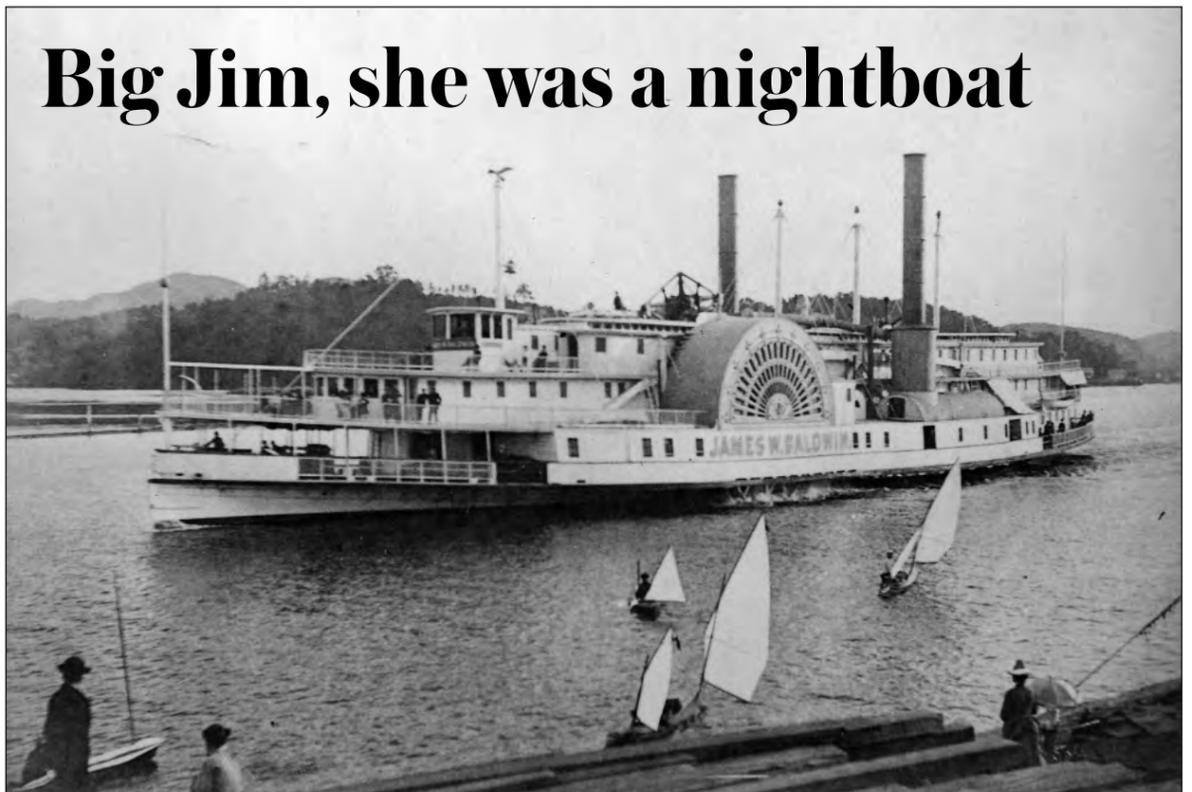
acquaintances who are now living in the U.S. and are willing to take care of them. Sponsors may either drive to pick up the boys or pay for airfare to transport them to their new home. "One family drove all night from Kentucky to Kingston," said Kanter, "picked up their relative, then drove right back because they couldn't afford a night in a motel."

An official at the Children's Home said sponsors go through an extensive vetting process that includes background check for any criminal offenses, child abuse registry in their state, and FBI fingerprinting. Youth are expected to attend school, not work per child labor laws, and attend all immigration court proceedings.

Ironically, U.S. intervention is said to be responsible for the gang rule in Central America. The book *Bitter Fruit: The Story of the American Coup in Guatemala* by Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer documents the actions of CIA head Allen Dulles and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles under President Eisenhower in the 1950s. As part of the government's policy to fight Communism, according to the book, the CIA armed, funded and trained revolutionary forces, installing a right-wing dictator in Guatemala. The Dulles brothers, the book states, were on the payroll of the United Fruit Company, whose Guatemalan plantations were losing profits because of the socialist government's effort to end exploitative labor practices. The coup resulted in civil war and a long-term destabilization of the government. "The gangs are the government," said Kanter. "One boy's aunt had to go to the hospital but didn't want to go because the gangs own the hospitals. You have to join the gang to get what you need."

She told students at Kingston High School, "Now you are the bearers of truth that will inform people."

## SHIPPING NEWS OF THE RONDOUT



IN THIS CIRCA-1880S IMAGE FROM THE HUDSON River Maritime Museum archives, the steamer James W. Baldwin, a nightboat out of the Rondout is seen. She was built in 1860 in the same shipyard in New Jersey as the "Mary Powell." A group of small sailboats catch the evening breezes on the Rondout as the "Baldwin" heads out to New York City.

### Opening day

The museum is in the final stages of preparing an exceptional exhibit of over 100 model boats for display. "The Modeler's Craft" opens to the public on Saturday, April 29 at 11 a.m. The HRMM's regular season opens on Saturday, April 29, seven days a week from 11 a.m.-5 p.m.) with:

- "The Modeler's Craft — An Artisan's View of Hudson River Boats"
- "The Charlie Niles Model Shop Installation"
- An expanded and refreshed version of "Hudson's Journey"

Volunteer for one of the museum's opening reception preparation parties on

Saturday, April 15 and/or Saturday, April 22, beginning at 9 a.m. We have lots of tasks for everyone — email [volunteer@hrmm.org](mailto:volunteer@hrmm.org) or call (845) 338-0071, ext. 11.

### Winter hours

The museum is open 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Thursdays-Sundays with the following exhibits through April 23:

- "White Oak, Shipwrights and Varnish: Wooden Boat Building on the Hudson"

- "Rowing on the Hudson"
- "Caves & Kilns: Cement in the Hudson Valley"

### Classes

The spring/summer course catalog is now available.

Friday, April 21 is the registration deadline for the boat school's two-week "Charting a Course: Navigation" class, which is open to beginners.

"Canoe Paddle Carving" — it's really easier than one would think! Beginners encouraged. In only two days, you can turn an ordinary plank of wood into a beautiful and functional paddle that will be cherished for years. Saturday & Sunday, April 29 and 30, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. A great chance to get ready for getting out on the river with your very own tailor-made canoe paddle, fashioned by you, just for you.

To register for our Riverport Wooden Boat School classes, visit our online store at [www.hrmm.org/support/](http://www.hrmm.org/support/) and click on "Classes and Workshops" for our full course offerings or call (845) 338-0071 ext. 16.

### Ongoing

Currently at HRMM's docks: Hudson River sloop Clearwater and the replica Dutch vessel Onrust — the protective winter wrappings on both vessels have been removed. Come down to the Rondout and take a look.

For more information on the above, volunteering or the museum in general, visit [www.hrmm.org](http://www.hrmm.org) and don't forget to "like" the museum on Facebook and follow it on Twitter.