

# From the Walkway to the Bardavon, attracting visitors

John W. Barry, Poughkeepsie Journal 10:34 p.m. EDT June 11, 2015

*The arts, the Hudson River and a strong sense of community frame multiple tourist attractions in the City of Poughkeepsie.*



(Photo: Journal file photo)

The arts, the Hudson River and a strong sense of community frame multiple tourist attractions in the City of Poughkeepsie.

Towering above them all, in more than one respect, is Walkway Over the Hudson — which rises 212 feet above the Hudson River and stretches for more than a mile.

The longest elevated pedestrian bridge in the world connects the City of Poughkeepsie to the Town of Lloyd. And it represents just one of multiple tourism destinations in the Queen City.



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Tony Speziale of Cold Spring was recently in Poughkeepsie because of a performance his son was in at the Bardavon 1869 Opera House. He gave the city high marks.

"It's totally beautiful," he said. "I love it. It's a very pretty place."

And Speziale and his wife, when visiting for any reason, typically help drive the tourism economy. While in Poughkeepsie for his son's engagement at the Bardavon, the Speziales were planning on eating dinner at the River Station.

"That's what we do when we come up here," he said. "We go out."

Here are a few tourism destination gems in the City of Poughkeepsie:

- Mid-Hudson Children's Museum:** This destination for families with young children offers hands-on exhibits and programs in science, the arts and river heritage.
- Victor C. Waryas Park:** The waterfront park features a boat launch, scenic views and a restaurant. Benches, grills and a river walk with informative displays make this a great place to connect with the river, said Tom O'Dowd of Bard College's Environmental and Urban Studies Department.
- Bardavon 1869 Opera House:** It's the oldest continuously operating theater in the state, earning it a place on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places. The 944-seat venue attracts famous performers and shows classic films. Mark Twain, Tony Bennett and Bob Dylan are among the performers who have appeared on the Bardavon stage.
- Mount Carmel Square:** This neighborhood was once home to numerous Italian grocery stores, meat markets and fish shops and is also called Poughkeepsie's "Little Italy." Along Mount Carmel Place and Mill Street, there are two bakeries, La Deliziosa Pastry Shoppe and Caffè Aurora.
- The Olde Main Street mural:** Artist Franc Palaia said he hoped to inspire "nostalgic happiness" when he painted the "biggest mural in the city" on the 200 block of Main Street. Rising 16 feet and stretching horizontally for 130 feet, the work depicts the city's long-lasting businesses from the 20th century to today.

**Video online**

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