



TOWN OF BERGEN NEWSLETTER

December 2017, January and February 2018



Michele M. Smith, Editor

Town News ... From the Desk of Town Supervisor *Donald Cunningham*

The Town Board has adopted the 2018 budget and has several projects planned for the coming year. The budget includes a slight rise in the tax rate to \$2.2381 per thousand after 3 consecutive years at \$2.2198 per thousand. With other revenue sources on a decline the increase was inevitable to cover rising costs, maintain services, and fund planned projects. The Fire District saw a more significant rise of approximately \$0.10 per thousand due primarily to adjusted rates for Workers Compensation Insurance. The budget covers the traditional equipment, operational, and service needs of the town and holds appropriations for projects to further enhance community sites and upgrade facilities for accessibility and efficiency. To that end, the board has approved a project outline submitted by the Genesee Valley Educational Partnership (G.V.E.P.) Conservation & Heavy Equipment Class to begin improvements at Drews Nature Center, and further work is being identified for both the Library Building and Historians Office. Plans are also in motion for the Robins Brook Park project. All should be shaping up and progressing in the coming year.

A Turning Over of the Reins...

As I write this article and prepare to hand over the Supervisors office to Ernest Haywood at the end of the year, I reflect on my 16 years of service on the town board with many fond memories. Several projects have been completed over the years through careful planning to minimize the tax impact on residents. Renewing the roof on the Harford Barn & Livery, revitalizing the exterior and improving the roof design of the Library building, completing new facilities for the town hall, court, and highway garage, moving the Historians office & museum for greater accessibility, and developing a variety of high quality recreation fields to support our youth programs are but just a few. Public water was extended north of the village and down Peachey Road, the Comprehensive Plan has been renewed, and commercial development continues to grow. As I contemplate many other projects completed, the ones planned, and the efforts put forth by this, and boards past, it seems more staggering than stagnant.

Through it all I've been honored by the service of the town employees and fellow elected officials who were devoted to common goals and whom I had the pleasure of serving with. To them I owe a great deal of thanks in supporting the projects and processes of town business with a conservative approach to minimize the impact on town tax payers while being persistent year after year to address areas in need of improvement or change. I'm very confident that this trend will continue under the leadership of Ernie Haywood. Ernie brings strong experience from his former roles as Village Trustee and School Board President. He is also well connected with state officials and familiar with state programs through his professional career and will bring his knowledge and experience to the benefit of Bergen. Congratulations to Anne Sapienza and James Starowitz on election success as they join the board with new perspectives and fresh ideas. As Supervisor I've been very fortunate to always have a good back up in my Deputy; Brian Stone, Joe Nenni, and Barry Miller were always at the ready and there when needed. I was comfortable and confident knowing that the town was in good hands in my absence. As a native and long time resident of Bergen, I am most honored by having had the opportunity to serve the community I love in this capacity and my appreciation goes to all who supported me in this experience.

Thank You! Best Wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Years!

Thank you to the voters of the Town of Bergen for your support of my election to the position of Town Supervisor as of 1/1/18. It has been a pleasure serving as your Town Councilman for the past few years and I look forward to continue my responsibilities to represent your interest as your Town Supervisor.

The new year will see some changes on the Town Board. On behalf of the Town Board and the citizens of the town, I want to thank Don Cunningham for his 16 years of dedicated service to the town. Don started on the Town Board in January of 2002 as a Town Councilman and assumed the duties of Town Supervisor in January of 2010. I also want to thank Brian Stone for his 7 years of service as Town Councilman and as Deputy Supervisor, and Mark Anderson for his nearly 2 years of service as a Town Councilman.

Please also join me in welcoming James (Jim) Starowitz, and Anne Sapienza our new Town Council members as of January 1.

As I assume my new duties as Supervisor, I look forward to serving the Town and continuing the outstanding work that Supervisor Don Cunningham and the Town Board has undertaken.

As of January 1, I will have open office hours at the town hall every first and third Saturday of the month between 9-11am. Please call the town hall (494-1121) prior to coming to be sure I am there.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me at, 494-2128 (home) or at 494-1121 x 22 (town office). I can also be reached via e-mail at ehaywood@bergenny.org

Best Wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

From the Desk of County Legislator *Robert Bausch*

I would like to begin by thanking the voters in Legislature District 2 for their support on Election Day. It was gratifying that a significant number of residents took the time to vote. So again, thank you.



When the County Legislature reorganizes in January, there will be three new legislators. District 1 (Towns of Alabama and Oakfield) has been represented by Ray Cianfrini for the past 10 years. Ray has also served as legislative chairman for the past four years. He did not seek reelection. John Hilchey, former Highway Superintendent for the Town of Oakfield and currently a sales representative for roadway materials will be the new legislator from District 1. In District 3 (Towns of Pembroke and Darien) the current legislator, Mike Davis also did not seek reelection. Gordy Dibble will be the new legislator from District 3. Gordy is currently the Chief Deputy, Road Patrol in the Sheriff Department. Finally, in District 9 (west end of the City of Batavia) long time legislator Ed DeJaneiro was defeated by former Sheriff Gary Maha. With these changes, one third of the legislators will be new in January.

The new legislature will be facing some significant issues. The most pressing will be water. The county is in the process of increasing the water supply from the Monroe County Water Agency (MCWA). In addition to the actual construction, an updated water agreement with MCWA will be required. Also, the agreements with the City of Batavia, towns and villages require updating (18 different agreements).

In mid-January, the legislature is scheduled to receive its initial report on the status and need for a jail. This has been, and will continue to be, a very slow and deliberate process. Genesee County is not immune to the opioid crisis. Although the options available to the county are limited, it must be prepared to take the necessary actions when required. County residents must recognize that this epidemic is impacting the county government as well as the personal toll in loss lives and family tragedies.

A little good news: The 2018 county budget was passed without a property tax increase. After some quarters of flat, and in some cases negative growth in sales tax revenue, it is at least remaining flat and hopefully will grow slightly in 2018.

In closing, I would like to wish everyone Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and look forward to serving District 2 residents in the coming year.

As 2017 draws to a close, I am looking forward to what will hope to be another prosperous year for the Harford Museum in 2018. I am pleased to report that we set a new attendance record for museum visitors during our annual Park Festival. I think a major factor of the day's success was the debut of an information booth about the Bergen Historical Society and the Harford Livery Museum. The booth was located on vendor's row and was packed full of upcoming events, local attraction information, and Genesee County history. Free coffee and doughnuts were also available courtesy of Dunkin Donuts and was organized by Historical Society Treasurer, Lisa Teremy. The booth vendor space was donated by Connie VanHoute. Theresa and Willard Pengelley did a fine job managing the booth during the festival. It was wonderful to see some repeat visitors as well as some new faces. Some new artifacts and exhibits did not disappoint!

With winter and the holidays fast approaching, it will be time once again to catch up on research and office work. Archivist, Gina Schelemanow will be getting back into the swing of things after taking the summer season off to welcome the birth of her new baby girl, Harper and settle into her new home. It will be great to be up to speed as a team again! We are ready to roll up our sleeves, make a big pot of coffee and get to work.

Last but not least, I wish to thank to thank some pretty special people in our community that went above and beyond to support the Harford Livery Museum this year.

A big thank you goes out to Russell Cunningham, Michael & Maura Shaffer, and Christopher Stewart. Russell spent some time doing a great job with some archival duties. Michael & Maura made a very generous donation and Christopher has selflessly volunteered an extensive amount of time helping out around the museum as a greeter and a much needed extra pair of hands. These Bergenites are the Harford Livery's "History Heroes" and I can't thank you enough!

Remember to "find us on Facebook!" You can like us at the Harford Livery Museum Facebook Page. Check us out and take a trip down memory lane! As always, the historian's office is located at 15 S. Lake Ave in the village of Bergen and if you would like to contact us for any reason, feel free to call 585-494-0080 and I will be happy to assist you!

Happy Holidays!

Mary Utley Wightman early resident of 12 Rochester St., my current home. Wanda MacVean, former Bergen Town Historian, found a series of letters between Mary Wightman to her daughter, May. Wanda typed them out and handed copies to me shortly before her death in 1997. The letters led me to be inquisitive about the people who had lived in the house before my family occupied it.

The house was built in about 1850 and I believe Mary and her two children were the first residents of it. Mary was a widow. She never spoke of her husband in the letters I received from Wanda. He died in 1857 in Herkimer County, New York. He was a Baptist minister. The copied letters were dated 1864 and 1865. I believe Mary and her family moved into Bergen shortly after her husband's death. Why they chose Bergen, I do not know. Mary had 2 children May Elizabeth born in 1848, and Jay Cuttler in 1854. Jay died in 1873 of typhoid fever at the age of 19 in Westfield, NY. The daughter died in 1927 at the age of 77, also in Westfield, from angina pectoris. Mary died in 1924 at the age of 104 years, 8 months. All 3 are buried in Westfield, NY. I have visited the grave sites.

I believe Mary left Bergen in or around 1870 and moved to Westfield. This move was made to be closer to her daughter who was teaching in the Westfield schools and Chautauqua area. The letters were written to her daughter and were full of family news, sickness, and village happenings. Most happenings were related to church meetings, conversions, and all. The greetings which Mary used in the letters were "My Dear Little Girl", and "My Dear Child".

My house was also owned by Mrs. E.V. Green, then Willard and Lillian Munger. He was a mail carrier. My grandparents on my father's side, Erotus and Mary MacConnell later owned the home. My parents took it over after his father died and his mother was unable to stoke the coal fire. They moved in about 1946 just before my birth. Mary died soon after, and my mother's mother, Martha Wilcox, joined us until her death in early 1958. I was devastated upon her death because she spent so much time listening to my stories from school. Grandma Wilcox was my everything! I will continue to live in the home, until it is no longer possible.

Happy Holidays!! During your holiday rush of activities don't forget to enjoy the many holiday books and movies available at your Library! We have cook books for meals on the go as well as baking cookbooks for the perfect Christmas cookie! Stop by when the children are on vacation for boredom buster books and craft books to inspire their imaginations. Don't forget your audio books for the long car rides to Grandma's house! Search our website at www.byron-bergenpubliclibrary.org and check out Library happenings as well as our on-line catalog or join us on Facebook and Twitter too!

The Holiday Library hours will be:

Friday Dec. 22nd 10am -6pm

Saturday Dec. 23rd -Closed

Merry Christmas!

Tuesday Dec. 26th 10am-12pm and 2pm-8pm

Wednesday Dec. 27th 10am-12pm and 2pm-8pm

Thursday Dec. 28th -10am-12pm and 2pm-8pm

Friday Dec. 29th – 10am- 6pm

Saturday Dec. 30th 10am – 1pm

Happy New Year!



Holiday Happenings-

Holiday Make and take Christmas Present on Friday December 22nd Stop anytime from 10:30-2pm to make a special gift to give. Call the Library for more information. No Registration required.

Disney Movie Day Tuesday Dec. 26th starting at 10:30 with Frozen- at 2:30pm-Oliver & Company and at 6 pm – Ratatouille will be showing on the big screen! Join us for a treat and drink too! Registration is appreciated.

Game Night at the Library will be Dec. 28th – Come join us for games of all kinds-board games-card games and Xbox games as well as pizza and a treat! All the fun starts at 5pm! Registration is appreciated.

Pre-school story time will run Fridays at 10:30am starting on January 12th. Join us for a story, craft and a treat with Miss Brilyn! This is recommended for ages 2-5 but younger children are welcome with their parents/guardian. Registration is appreciated.

Did you get a new Gadget for Christmas? Do you need help getting Library books, movies and music on you gadget? Set up an appointment any Wednesday during regular Library hours to get the help you need. There are more free materials for our patrons that have E-readers, smart phones, laptops and tablets using your Library card. Call 494-1120 or stopping in.

A babysitting workshop on Monday January 15th from 10 am to 3 pm at the Library. This workshop is recommended for children 11 years old and up. The cost is \$25 with book included. Registration and payment is due by January 12th. Please call 494-1120 for more information.

February Break Happenings! Look upcoming activities during winter break– check us out on the web at www.Byron-BergenPublicLibrary.org.

Is your child staying home alone while you are at work? The Library is offering a “Home Alone” safety workshop on Saturday Feb. 17th from 10-12. This National Safety Council workshop will prepare your child for situations that can occur when they stay home alone. The cost is only \$18. Class size is limited so stop by soon to sign up no later than February 14th!

Did you know that the Library has free digital magazines? Check it out on our website at www.byron-bergenpubliclibrary.org . All you need is a valid Library card. Click on RBdigital – sign in with your Library Card and you are on your way!

Getting a new E-Reader for Christmas or have one now.....Check out our catalog for downloadable e-books free with a valid Nioga Library card. We have Digital movies- music- eBooks- and audio books through HOOPLA! All you have to do is stop at our website www.byron-bergenpubliclibrary.org to sign up with your Library Card!

If you don't find what you are looking for at the Library, we can order it for you from the NIOGA Library System. The website is www.byron-bergenpubliclibrary.org and click on catalog to see if our system has the book you are looking for. You then can order online, call the Library at 494-1120 or stop in with your request.

The Library has copy /fax service for a small cost, Roadrunner Internet on three computers, Wi-Fi and interlibrary loans from any Library in the NIOGA Library system. Check us out on the web at www.byron-bergenpubliclibrary.org or stop in and we will assist you! You can also friend us on Facebook and follow is on Twitter to keep up with the latest events. For more information on our services or programs, please call the Library at 494-1120.

Happy Holiday Reading -

Nancy Bailey

Library Manager



New computer for our younger patrons! Loads of fun educational games!
Not connected to the internet so no worries for parents! Stop in and check it out!

Library Board of Trustees is looking for volunteers to serve a five year term on the board. They meet 2nd Monday of every month. The Board is responsible for the finances and the policies of the Library. Please send a letter of interest to Byron-Bergen Library P.O. Box 430 Bergen NY 14416. Have a Happy Holiday Season.





Please be reminded that during a “normal” snow event, it will take plow trucks 2 ½ to 3 hours to complete one pass on all roads. As such, it is very possible that everyone will encounter less than pleasant driving conditions at times. Late evenings and early mornings, with very light traffic volumes, will receive lower levels of service. Every attempt will be made to maintain open and passable roadways, both for normal and emergency traffic. At times, lanes may narrow and accumulate snow. The Town is responsible for snow and ice removal on all Town and County roadways in Bergen as well as State routes. This winter, as in the past, we will strive to provide the same level of the safest possible roadways at all times, within reason and budget constraints.

Also remember to use caution on snow covered roads. Here are a few safety tips: Slow Down, Make safe lane changes, pump your brakes on slick roads, and lastly don't tailgate, especially the plow truck. If you can't see him in his side mirror there is a good chance he can't see you! And for one First Aid rule: Carbon Monoxide is called “the silent Killer” if you go off the road keep your exhaust clear of snow.

Two additional reminders: Mailboxes, if damaged by our plows will be repaired or replaced, within Town Board adopted limits, as soon as weather, time permits. PLEASE, when installing or repairing your mailbox, remember that our trucks require a minimum 17 ½ feet from center of the roadway. Also, take into account the excessive force of the exhausted snow as it strikes your mailbox assembly.

Please don't hesitate to call me at 494-1362 if I may be of service. Highway Department hours are 7:00 am – 3:30 pm Monday thru Friday. However, you may leave a message 24 hours a day on our answering machine, and I will return your call as soon as possible. In closing, the entire highway department would like to wish everyone a healthy and happy holiday season, and a safe winter.

Community Christmas Activities

Annual Village Tree Lighting will be held Monday Dec 4th

Carolers leave Hickory Park at 6:15 pm to escort Mr. and Mrs. Claus to Ward Park.

Ward Park festivities include meeting the Clauses, tree lighting, hot cocoa and cookies, elementary band, decorated trees by community organizations, etc. Bus provided to ride back to Hickory Park

For further information contact the village office 494-1513

Bergen Community Christmas Concert

Saturday, December 9th, 2017

6:00 PM

**Bergen Evangelical Presbyterian Church
38 Lake Ave, Bergen, NY**

Christmas Eve Service at 5:00 PM



Join us for an evening of Christmas music performed by members of the community. Young and old are welcome to attend. Special Family Friendly seating available this, bring all your little ones! There will be Cookies, milk, and cocoa to follow. New this year: Need a ride? Please call 494-1251. Calling all musicians- please share your talent with our community! Questions about attending or performing? Contact Jocelyn Rebisz, 494-6031.

Saturday, December 9th

Santa's Workshop

9:00 am – 1:00 pm Gillam-Grant Community Center

Breakfast, Mrs. Claus Kitchen open all day, Entertainment, Cookie Decorating, Christmas BINGO, Face Painting, Reindeer Games, Christmas Crafts, Lego Club Winter Scene Display, Santa Visits and Mr. Scribbles.





Town & County Taxes

If you pay your own taxes, you will receive your tax bill shortly after January 1, 2018. If you should receive a tax bill that an escrow company or someone else is supposed to pay, please call me right away. Don't put it aside and assume that it will be paid. Also, if you have paid off your mortgage and did not receive a tax bill, you should call me. No matter what the situation is, you are responsible for your taxes and penalties, if it is not paid. If you are leaving town for the winter please leave your "winter" address with me so late fees can be avoided. Credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express) are accepted for payment with a convenience fee.

Tax payments cannot be received before January 1, 2018 per the County Treasurers office, all payments will be stamped after that date. Taxes are due penalty free by January 31st, all taxes have to be paid to me by March 31st. After **March 31st**, the unpaid taxes are returned to the County Treasurer. If you are going to pay them to the County Treasurer by mail, you will need to call his office in Batavia at 344-2550, ext. 2211 as there will be additional penalties.



Dog License News:

I hate to "hound" you, but if your dog's license renewal is due or past due, please take care of it so we don't have to send you a reminder notice or eventually a court appearance ticket. All dogs, four months of age need to be licensed even those in apartments. Proof of a rabies vaccination and proof of neutering or spaying must be presented at the time of licensing. If you receive an appearance ticket, you will have to pay a fee of \$25.00 plus also pay for your dog's renewal. If there is a problem getting an appointment for a rabies vaccination, etc., please call me. I have an answering machine so you can call anytime day or night.

Office Closing

December 23rd & 25th – Christmas Holiday
January 1, 2018 – New Years Day
January 15, 2018 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day
February 19, 2018 – Presidents Day

Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday
8:00 am – noon & 1:00 – 4:00
Saturday 9:00 am - noon
Closed on Thursdays



Sad Goodbyes: Two of my Deputy Clerks have decided to move on this year; Connie Kaufman had decided to retire after working with me for 10 years and Susan Brownell is moving out of state after working with me for 7 years. They will be greatly missed!

Welcome: Aimee Maurer has started working with me as Deputy Clerk, please be patient as she learns the workings of the office; she has been doing a great job working along with Deputy Clerk Barb Fisher.



Transfer station Holiday Hours

Normal Hours during the Christmas Holidays Saturdays 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

(The Town Clerk's office will be closed Dec. 23rd and open Dec. 30th)



Check out the new Town of Bergen Facebook page



HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE TOWN OF BERGEN



**TOWN of BERGEN
10 HUNTER STREET
BERGEN, NY 14416
bergenny.org**

"This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html or at any USDA office, or call (866)632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S.D.A., Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W. Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202)690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov"