

TOWN OF BERGEN

December, 2024:
January, February 2025



From the Desk of Town Supervisor,
Ernie Haywood....

I reported in the last newsletter that the Town of Bergen received NYSERDA's Clean Energy Communities Designation and was subsequently awarded a total of \$15,000 to conduct energy audits on the Town's buildings to determine ways to save on our energy costs. Additionally, we are pursuing the installation of electric charging stations at Robins Brook Park.

Future improvements to Robins Brook Park depend heavily on the availability of utilities, namely electric and water. We are in the process of installing both utilities at the park which will not only allow the installation of the EV charging stations, but also down the road, public restrooms. We hope to have both the energy study and electric utility installation completed at year's end or soon afterwards.

We will continue to pursue grants for improvements at the park. We also are awaiting a decision on a grant application to improve Cyber Security for town information technology systems.

The Bergen Town Board adopted the 2025 Budget at our November 12 meeting. For the first time in many years, we were able to keep the budget below the New York State Tax Cap. The tax cap allowed us to raise taxes by \$22,431 on a \$2.6 million budget. We only raised taxes by \$21,405 (\$1,026 less than allowed). The areas of tax levy increase were the highway fund (\$19,639) and Fire District (\$10,295). These increases were partially offset by reductions in the general fund tax levy and WIBA1 levy. The WIBA1 EDU (the amount property owners will see on their January 2025 town tax bill) fell from \$590.30 to \$580.13 primarily due to new users.

We reduced the use of fund balance by \$54,607 (or 2.95%) as certain non-property tax revenue streams remain stagnant or have dropped. Between some new growth and our assessor updating the rolls, our tax base grew by \$23,804,464 or 11.25%. This increase, coupled by a very small

Bergen Town Supervisor
Ernie Haywood
494-1121 ext. 122
Deputy Supervisor
Belinda Grant

Town Board
Jim Starowitz
Karen Ely
Mark Swanson

Town Clerk
Teresa Robinson
494-1121 ext. 120

Highway Superintendent
Joel Pocock
494-1121 ext.300

Assessor
Rhonda Saulsbury
494-1121 ext. 100

Planning/Zoning
Gerry Wood
(585) 490-4152

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tax levy increase, resulted in a tax rate reduction from the 2024 rate of \$2.8003 to \$2.5743 in 2025. This \$.226 rate drop means the impact of the assessment increase will only be about \$2.46% for the average property owner which is close to the inflation rate.

Overall, I believe we adopted a fiscally responsible budget with a minimal impact to property tax payers while preserving all services for our residents.

Construction has begun on both the OXBO Facility and Dollar General in the Appletree Industrial Park. Thank you to the planning board for its work reviewing these projects to make sure that all state and local requirements are met as we welcome these new facilities to our community.

The Town Board has scheduled its final meeting of the year for December 30 and we will hold our 2025 Organizational Meeting on January 14, 2025. We wish everyone a safe, healthy and happy holiday season.

Ernie Haywood, Supervisor



From the Desk of Highway Superintendent, Joel Pocock.....

Before you know it, winter is here! I would like to take a moment to remind everyone to take a few extra minutes when heading out this winter. Allow extra time for uncertain road conditions, brush off your vehicle, and additional stopping time while driving.

For our road crews to make one complete pass on all roads, it takes 2 1/2 to 3 hours. Please be patient and courteous with our road crew they are doing their best to keep everyone safe on the roads.

If your mailbox is damaged by our plows, it will be repaired or replaced as per Town Board adopted limits, as soon as time/weather permits. New York State statute states; the depositing of snow or other materials onto a highway is dangerous and illegal.



Town Board Meetings

December 10, 2024 7:00pm

December 30, 2024 5:00 pm

January 14, 2025 Regular & Organizational Meeting 7:00 pm

February 11, 2025 7:00 pm

March 11, 2025 7:00 pm



DO NOT plow your snow across the roadway and be sure to clean up any snow that may have been accidentally placed in the road-way.


Normal highway hours are from 7:00 am to 3:30 pm, Monday through Friday. Please leave a message 24 hours a day and I will return your call as soon as possible. 585 494-1121 ext. 300.

On behalf of the entire highway department, we would like to wish everyone a safe, healthy, and Happy Holiday Season!

December 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4 Town Court 5pm	5	6	7 Bergen Evangelical Presbyterian Church
8	9 Village Tree Lighting	10 Town Board Meeting 7pm	11 Town Court 5pm	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 Town Court 5pm	19 Planning Board Meeting 7 pm	20	21
22	23	24	25 	26	27	28
29	30 Town Board Meeting 5:00 pm	31				

January 2025 Office hours extended on Weds for the month of January until 7:00 pm & Fri. until 4:00 pm

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 	2 First day to pay Town & County Taxes	3	4
5	6	7	8 Town Court 5 pm	9	10	11
12	13	14 Town Board & Organizational Meeting	15 Town Court 5 pm	16	17	18
19	20	21	22 Town Court 5pm	23	24	25
26	27	28	29 Town Court 5pm	30	31 Last Day for Town & County Taxes without penalty	

February 2025 Friday, Feb. 28 Tax Collector open until 4:00 pm

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5 Town Court 5pm	6	7	8
9	10	11 Town Board Meeting	12 Town Court 5pm	13	14 Valentine's Day	15
16	17 President's Day	18	19 Town Court 5pm	20	21	22
23	24	25	26 Town Court 5pm	27	28 Tax Collector open Until 4 pm	

Mark your Calanders—Bergen Events...

Saturday, December 7, 2024

6:00 pm - Bergen Evangelical Presbyterian Church, 38 South Lake Ave, Bergen. Join us for an evening of Christmas music performed by members of the community. Young & old are welcome to attend. Family, friends, bring all your little ones! Cookies and milk to follow. 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.

Monday, December 9, 2024

Tree Lighting & Santa's Family Block Party in Zuber Park starting at 6:30 pm. Featuring performances by the Elementary School Band, Senior High Chorus, and a DJ. Enjoy refreshments of cookies & hot cocoa.

Special Guests.... Santa & Mrs. Clause!

Bergen Evangelical Presbyterian Church

Mustard Seed Food Pantry Hours:

Open 2nd Thursday of the month from 5:00—8:00pm.

Last Saturday of the month from 9:00am -12pm.

Christmas box - Sat. Dec. 21 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm.

Closed November 30th and December 28th

From the Bergen Triangle Club....

Hometown Hero Banners

The Bergen Triangle Club, Ladies Auxiliary of the Sackett-Merrill-White American Legion, and the Friends of Bergen are proud to continue the Hometown Heroes Banner Program for spring 2025.

The program serves as a tribute to recognize service men and women from Bergen who are

from Bergen who are currently serving or have been honorably discharged from service to our country, in any branch of the military.

These banners are proudly displayed in the Village of Bergen from Memorial Day through Veteran's Day each year.

Have a service member you know honored with a banner of their own. To order a banner to honor a service member, and to have questions concerning the banners answered, please email amb0330@rochester.rr.com. Guidelines and an application will be sent to you. Orders must be submitted by February 28, 2025 for banners to be added to our display in 2025.

Bergen Triangle Club Celebrates 115 Years of Community Service

On October 19th the Bergen Triangle club celebrated their 115th anniversary. Members past and present enjoyed tea, refreshments and conversation. They shared many memories of past meeting and members.

The Triangle Club was first organized as a chapter of the Rochester YWCA in 1909. The meetings were held monthly on Saturday at the homes of the members. In 1923 the members of the Bergen YWCA Chapter decided to separate from the YWCA and form an independent club. The ladies decided to call their new organization the Triangle Club, referring to the YWCA logo. At the time the 3 points stood for Civic, Social & Mental Improvement. Now the 3 points stand for Civic, Social & Intellectual.

Some of the Club's past initiatives of the have included helping to finance the veterans memorial in Hickory Park, working to start the Bergen Library, and more recently initiating the hometown heroes banner program.

Triangle meets every other month on the 3rd Saturday at 2 p.m., usually in the community room at the Library. New members are always welcome and the next scheduled meeting is January 18th.

From the Desk of the Assessor,
Rhonda Saulsbury



It's a great time of year to take note of the following

Partial Property Tax Exemptions/ Credits:

STAR Exemption (Only applies to your primary residence purchased prior to March 1st, 2015 & reduces School tax bill only).

Basic Star Exemption: Primary residence, any age owner, Household Adjusted Gross Income \$250,000 or less.

Enhanced Star Exemption: Primary residence, one resident owner or spouse 65 or older, Household **Adjusted** Gross Income of \$107,300 or less (taxable IRA not included). Must apply by March 1st any given year with the Assessor's Office.

STAR Credit (Only applies to your primary residence purchased after March 1st, 2015 applies to School tax only...issued as a check from NYS Taxation vs a reduced School tax bill).

Basic same as above

Enhanced same as above For both STAR Credits...you **must apply directly with NYS Taxation** by July 1st any given year:
<https://www.tax.ny.gov/star/>
OR: 518-457-2036

***You can only receive one: The Star Exemption or the STAR Credit.**

Senior/Aged Exemption (This partial exemption can apply to both the School tax billing and the Town/County tax billing in addition to the Enhanced Star, based on a sliding scale).

Must be 65 or older, with Household **Gross** Income of \$32,200 or less (taxable IRA not included). Apply any given year by March 1st with the Assessor's Office.

Limited Income Disability Exemption (This partial exemption applies to the County tax billing only).

Any age, Household Gross Income of \$24,900 or less, must have NYS disability award letter. (If over 65, you can only receive Senior **or** Limited Income).

If you have any questions please contact the Assessor, Rhonda Saulsbury at the Assessor's Office:

13 South Lake Ave
585-494-1121 Ext 100

From the Desk of Town Clerk,
Teresa Robinson....

**Town Clerk
Hours:**

Monday –
Thursday
8 am – 4:30
pm Closed
from 12:00
pm – 12:30
pm

Friday 8 am—
11 am

Evening hours
available by
appointment
494-1121 ext.
120

The Clerks’
office will be
closed for the
following
Holidays:

December 24
and 25th

December 31
and January
1, 2025.

January
20th—Martin
Luther King
Jr. Day

February 17th
Presidents
Day

As the new Town Clerk
of Bergen, I would like
to take a moment to
recognize a former
Town Clerk, Myrna List.

Myrna has been a
Bergen resident since
1960 and celebrated her
90th Birthday on
September 29, 2024.
She became the Bergen
Town Clerk on Aug. 15,
1988 and retired on
March 31, 2007. She &
her husband Paul, raised
6 children in Bergen and
they have 14
grandchildren and 23
great-grandchildren!

Through the years
Myrna has belonged to
many organizations in-
cluding the Grange,
AFS, American Legion
Auxiliary, Bergen
Historical Society,
BBCA, Spencerport
Alumni Association and
past President of the
Genesee Town Clerk’s
Association. She has
volunteered countless
hours to many organiza-
tions in the Town.

I would like to say
Thank you Myrna for
paving the way and I
know it’s late but,
Happy 90th Birthday!

TOWN & COUNTY TAXES

Extended Office hours during the month of

January are listed below:

Weds 8:00 am - 1:00 pm 2:00 pm -7:00 pm.

Friday 8:00 am-1:00 pm 2:00 pm-4:00 pm

Normal business hours Monday, Tuesday, Thursday.

If you don’t receive your tax bill, Please call me and I will
send you a copy.

Taxes can be mailed to: Town of Bergen, P.O. Box 249,
Bergen, NY 14416, paid in person or the drop box is
available in the front of the office for your convenience.

Taxes can not be paid prior to January 1st.

Taxes can be paid with cash check or money order,
debit/credit card. If paying by card, a 2.45% additional
fee is charged.

If you are leaving town for the winter, Please leave your
address with the Town Clerk/Tax Collector and I can mail
your Town & County tax bill to you.

COMING SOON

The new user friendly Town of Bergen website!

DOG LICENSE

RENEWALS

Please license your dogs with
the Town Clerk. All dogs at 4
months or older legally need
to be registered. Please bring
an updated rabies vaccination
certificate. If your fur baby
gets lost, being licensed may
help bring them home.



*Happy
Holidays*

From the Desk of County Legislator Christian Yunker.....



The Managers office and the Legislature has
been very busy working on the 2025 Genesee
County Budget. The Budget was built in an
efficient and responsible manner while making
key investments which that will help deliver
better service to residents of the County. The
Budget stays under the NYS tax cap, while
covering the many expensive State mandates
of which we no control over (makes of 95% of
the property tax levied estimated at over
\$32.1 million for 2025). The Managers office
and Legislature decisions had been influenced
by the County embarking on two of the largest
capital infrastructure projects in its history
with a new County jail that we completed with
a price tag of \$70 million and continued
progress on the County wide water system
with a current projected price tag of \$150
million.

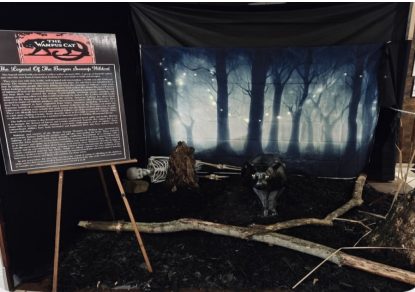
The 2025 all funds budget totals over \$189.2
million which is \$5.7 million more than the
2024 adopted General fund budget. Major
increases impacting this are \$4.4 million
increase in salaries and related costs, \$1.5
million increase in NYS retirement system
costs, \$1.9 million increase preschool
supportive health services program, increases
in court ordered competency evaluation costs,
health care costs increases among many other
inflationary pressures that face all of us.
Personnel related costs are significant drivers
in a service and public safety related business
that we are in. We are one of the largest

employers in the County. A large
part of this related increase is the addition of
10 new correction officer positions needed
to fill the posts at the County Jail.

The County continues to make key
investments in water infrastructure and the
regular addition to our bridge and culvert
replacement fund and as well as many public
safety investments. Among those is our effort
to stabilize and continue to contribute to
Mercy Flight and LeRoy Ambulance.

For the first time since 2000, our sales tax
revenue has declined year over year falling
behind our 2024 budgeted revenue. To
combat this decline in sales tax revenue, while
increases persist in most other costs, we have
decided to utilize \$2.5 million of our fund
balance, \$639K of our medical reserve
balance, raise the tax levy but not to our
allowance. This is the 5th consecutive year
staying under the cap and over the past 5
budgets only have an 8.3% levy increase which
would be well below the cost of inflation for
that time period. Despite all these costs
increases and investments we were able to
bring the tax rate down from \$8.08/1000 to
\$7.57/1000 or 6.3% in the recommended
budget. We believe this budget is responsible
provides key investments for our future that
benefits all the residents of the County. Enjoy
the Winter months and as always, feel free to
reach out to me anytime with questions or
concerns.

As the holiday season approaches, I first want to take a moment to thank the Historian's Office volunteers who helped make our 2nd annual "Halloween Night At The Museum" a great success! Brenda Alvut and Linda Johnston really did a fantastic job with the coordination, creativity, and decoration of the museum and grounds this year. We had over 175 trick or treaters come to visit. They got some candy, warm cider and some spooky Bergen history to enjoy. Our spotlight display this year was the "Legend of the Bergen Wildcat". This story will be featured in an upcoming Bergen Newsletter for 2025.



It seems like Christmas is taking the Polar Express this year with how fast it's approaching. It's hard to believe that 2024 is in its last month already. Time flew by. It's actually overwhelming to reflect on the past year. It seems like yesterday that the 4th grade BBCSD class was visiting the museum for their annual field trip in June. They always have a great time and walk away with a bit of Bergen's history. This year, we also saw the long awaited eclipse. We had visitors from around the country stop by our museum and get some photos with our selfie 2024 eclipse board.



Most recently, we witnessed one of the most anticipated elections of our generation and now, history is happening as we witness tensions rising between the US and Russia unlike anything we've seen since the Cuban Missile Crisis. As a historian, I don't see the political polarization that most people see. I see it through the lens of history. Whether it's a scientific phenomenon, an unprecedented weather event, or a political climate, 2024 will definitely go into the history books as a critical time to be alive. Now, some meteorologists are predicting that we may see a snowstorm of the century before year's end. We will have to wait and see on that one. No matter what, it just proves that history happens every day, and we need to reflect on that weather it's the good, the bad, and the ugly that we will remember. Some of us are old enough to remember events like the invention of television, the moon landing, rotary telephones, and life before the World Wide Web. Maybe this year is indeed a good time to reflect. Remember when.... Remember the good old days. Pass these memories on to your children and grandchildren. This is what keeps history alive for future generations. Someday, our children will be telling stories about the events that happened in 2024. As always, the Historian's office is located at 15 S. Lake Ave and if you have any questions or need assistance in research, call me at 494-0080 and I will be happy to assist you.



Library hours

Sunday and
Monday – Closed
Tues. -10-1 and 2-7
Weds. 10-1 and 2-7
Thurs.- 10-1 and 2-7
Friday - 10-6
Saturday - 10-1

The Library has copy /fax service for a small cost, Spectrum Internet on three computers, Wi-Fi and interlibrary loans from any Library in the NIOGA Library system. You can follow us on Facebook. If you would like to get on our e-mail list – just call us or e-mail your information to byrbgn@nioga.org For more information on our services or programs, please call the Library at 494-1120.

Happy Holidays!! During your holiday rush of activities don't forget to enjoy the many holiday books, music and movies available at your Library! We have cookbooks 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 and follow us on Facebook and Instagram! Remember we are open 24/7 with our online apps- Hoopla and Libby!

The Holiday Library hours will be:

Friday December 20th 10 am to 6pm
Saturday December 21st 10am to 1pm
Tuesday Dec. 24th **Closed**

Merry Christmas!

Wednesday Dec. 25th -**Closed**
Thursday Dec. 26th 10am-1pm and 2pm-7pm
Friday Dec. 27st – 10am- 6pm
Saturday December 29th -10am-1pm
Tuesday December 31st **Closed**

Happy New Year!

Wednesday January 1st - **Closed**
Thursday January 2nd – 10am – 1pm and 2pm- 7pm
Friday January 3rd 10am – 6pm

Saturday January 4th 10am – 1 pm



The Library is more than just books- we have many family games and puzzles to lend- Stop in and take out a new game to try during your holiday gatherings. All you need is a Library card!

Holiday Happenings-

Christmas Bingo Thursday, December 5th at 6:30pm- Bring the whole family for a fun round of Christmas themed Bingo! No Registration needed but is appreciated.

A Grinch Story Time Saturday, December 7th at 10:30 am --Have you ever wanted to meet the Grinch? Stop by the Library for a fun Christmas story and a craft with the Grinch! Photo opportunities with the Grinch to follow. Registration is appreciated but not necessary.

Christmas Centerpieces with Leslie Hill will be held at the Library two separate dates, Saturday, December 14th at 10:30am and Tuesday, December 17th at 6:30pm. This Holiday Craft is sure to compliment your dining table or holiday

buffet with traditional holiday colors of red, green, and white and the fresh scent of pine. Candle included. This also makes a beautiful gift for family and friends. Cost will be \$15.00 and you must sign up by Saturday, December 9th to join.

Space is limited–so sign up ASAP!!

Please either stop into the Library, call us at 585-494-1120, or register on Leslie Hill’s website here: <https://www.sosnflowers.com/product-page/holiday-centerpiece-workshop>

This program is made possible with funds from the Statewide Community Regrant Program, a regrant program of the New York State Council on the Arts with support of the office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature and administered by GO Art!

Collaborative Story telling with Jacob

Saturday, December 21st at 10:30 am! Join us at the Library for our next collaborative storytelling program ran by Master Storyteller Jacob Seward! The theme will be pirates raiding Christmas! You’ll adventure through interactive storytelling, and tell a tale with your own pirate character by rolling the dice and changing the story! Test yourself with this “D&D rules-light” system one-shot game!

Movie Day – fun for the whole family! Bring your family and friends and enjoy the movie “Wild Robot” Rated PG – have some popcorn and a drink on Friday, December 27th at 2:00pm! Registration is appreciated call us at 585-494-1120.

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 with Libby and Hoopla apps. Call 585-494-1120 or stop in.

Home School Book Club will be held at the Library on the second Tuesday of every month. Call

us or stop into the Library for more information. We can order you each month’s books on request!

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

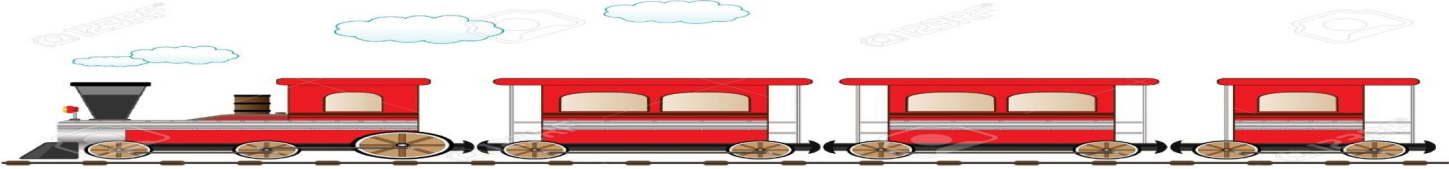
Book Club meets the 2nd Thursday of every month at 3pm! Join us as we explore new and different books and meet new people! No registration required--call the Library for more information.

Home Alone Workshop Monday January 20th at 10:30am to 11:30am- Help your children stay safe by taking this course on safety tips, useful knowledge, and more for when they are home alone. The cost is \$20 per child. Please sign up and have paid by January 15th.

Babysitting Workshop Monday January 20th at 11:30am to 3:30pm- The Library will host a Babysitting Course at the Library where young boys and girls ages 11 to 15 can become a certified babysitter! The course will start at 11:30am and go until 3:30pm. Please make sure you bring a drink, a snack, and a Self -Addressed Stamped Envelope. Cost is \$35 per child to attend, and you will be mailed your certification after the workshop has been completed. Please sign up and pay by Wednesday, January 15th.

Winter Fun Craft Day Wednesday, January 29th from 3:00 pm to 5pm. Join us for wintery crafts- registration is appreciated by calling 585-494-1120. Fun for all ages!

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



Getting a new E-Reader for Christmas or have one now.... Check out our catalog for downloadable e-books free with a valid Byron-Bergen Public Library card. We have Digital movies- magazines-music- eBooks- and audio books through HOOPLA and OverDrive/Libby apps! All you have to do is go to the website www.byron-bergenpubliclibrary.org to download the app & 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 585-494-1120 or stop in with your request.

Happy Holiday Reading -
Nancy Bailey
Library Manager



The Byron Bergen Chapter of the Imagination Library is entering its 10th year of delivering monthly books to children that live in the Byron Bergen School District. These books are delivered to children from birth to age five each month at no cost to their families. We are very thankful for all past donations that have been made by the Byron Bergen Community to this program, which has delivered close to 10,000 books to be enjoyed by our children. We have been able to provide our children with the opportunity to enjoy quality age-appropriate books through the generosity of the community, and a generous grant received last year.

Please consider a donation to the Imagination Library to enable our Byron Bergen Chapter to continue.

Name _____

Address _____

Donation Amount _____

Please indicate Byron-Bergen in memo line of your check. Please make checks to:

The Richter Family Foundation and mail to: The Richter Family Foundation1600 Ham Rd. Basom, NY 14013