

NEW BALTIMORE NEWS

Volume 2 Issue No. 3

July—September 2006

Water District 4 Update

In late June, the justices of the New York State Appellate Division, Third Department, ruled unanimously to uphold the decision of Judge Daniel Lalor that the Town Board had acted properly in approving the establishment of Water District 4 in the hamlet of New Baltimore.

At the July 12th Town Board meeting, the Town Board, on the recommendation of Supervisor David Louis, acted to authorize a re-estimate of the projected maximum cost of constructing the improvements for Water District 4 by an independent engineer, and Delaware Engineering, P.C., was selected to perform this work. The original maximum cost of this project, when first presented by petition to the Town Board in the fall of 2004 was \$3,048,000. The re-estimation is needed because of the long delays caused by the lawsuit filed against the Town Board challenging its establishment of the Water District.

At the August 14th Town Board meeting, Delaware Engineering presented their report, in which they estimated, on the basis of reviewing recent construction cost trends for water systems, that the estimated cost for constructing the improvements for Water District 4 in 2007 would be \$4,814,338 if PVC piping is used, and \$4,994,230 if ductile iron pipe is used.

The Town Board, on the recommendation of Supervisor Louis, has decided that in the interest in ensuring that this project cost estimation process fulfills the highest standards of integrity, to adopt the independent engineering cost estimate of \$4,994,230 provided by Delaware Engineering as the new maximum estimated cost for this project. If this cost estimate is approved in accordance with the legal process outlined below, the annual cost to a typical homeowner in the Water District within the hamlet would be \$1,077.

As required by law, the Town Board has scheduled a Public Hearing for Wednesday, September 6th, at 7:30 pm at the Cornell Hook and Ladder Firehouse on Gill Road regarding the increase in the maximum cost of this project. Following the Public Hearing, the Town Board must decide on whether to authorize this maximum cost increase at its next Town Board meeting on September 11th. The Town Board, based on discussion at the July 12th Town Board Meeting, will submit any decision to increase the maximum cost of constructing Water District 4 to a referendum of all property owners in Water District 4.

The Town Board must schedule this referendum between 60 and 75 days after authorizing an increase in the maximum cost, and all property owners will be notified by public notice and by mail of the referendum date and time.

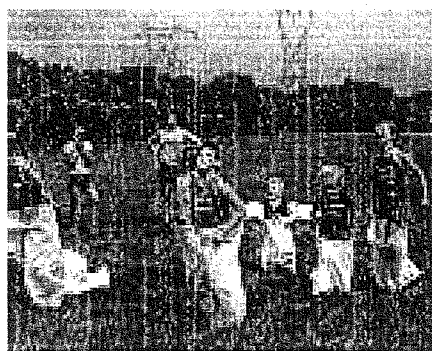
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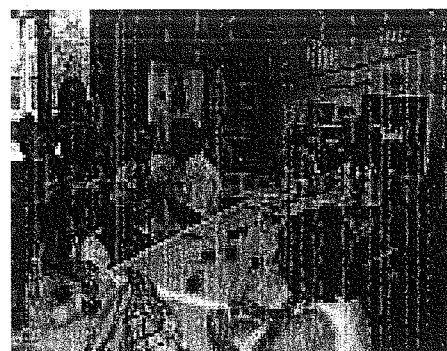
Summer Parks Program A Big Success

The New Baltimore Summer Parks program was a huge success, thanks to the counselors and a great group of participants. Area kids enjoyed everything from arts and crafts to potato sack racing to water balloon fights.

A summary of this year's program, from Parks Director Anna Cooper, is on Page 2.



Children compete in potato sack race



A visit to the Iroquois Museum

Community News and Issues

Three New Baltimore Students Honored

At the July 10th meeting, the Town Board passed resolutions honoring three students from the town for their academic excellence.

Gabrielle Rieth, Anna Brooks and Jeanine Rider were honored for being the top three graduates of their class from Ravena Coeymans Selkirk High School. Gabrielle Rieth was selected as class valedictorian and will attend Cornell University in the fall, Anna Brooks was selected as Salutatorian and will be going to Ithaca College and Jeannine Rider received the third highest academic rating and will be a student at University of Rochester.

The Town Board Resolution stated that each of these students "represents the best of developed potential in our most precious resource, our youth." Each student received a framed copy of the resolution.

Respecting Our Parks

Our town parks are a great treasure available for everyone's enjoyment, but this summer, a few incidents have marred the experiences of some families and groups who had gathered for celebrations. Recently, someone attending a family reunion stopped an individual who had driven into the park to dump their trash. Another family could not hold their party when they discovered broken glass littering picnic tables and the pavilion area. These are just a few instances reported by families who had reserved the park for their function.

In order to make the parks safe and enjoyable venues for everyone, the Town asks that we all show some respect for others. Please clean up after your dogs and make sure you check for any trash or debris you might have left behind. When driving past any of the parks, take note and report any abuses you see – vandalism, after-hour use and any suspicious activity. Let's join to-

gether and take pride in our beautiful parks.

Report from Parks Director Anna Cooper

Thank you for appointing the parks counselors. Each counselor is fabulous with the children at the park program. Some counselors will throw the whiffle ball to the kids and then spend a lot of time chasing the ball after it is hit, while other counselors take a large group of kids to the shaded basketball court to play knockout or other games. Yet other counselors are making sure that the kids are safe on the parks equipment or helping out with the crafts. What has amazed me the most about the counselors is how great they are when it comes to clean-up. Each counselor pitches in and never complains. They are hard workers and are truly making the park program a great and fun place for the children of New Baltimore to come each day.

The kids started out the first day of the park program with a bagel party that was donated by Ravena Shop 'n' Save. The kids enjoyed butter, fluff, peanut butter, strawberry jam and three kinds of cream cheese on their bagels. The kids enjoyed their snack and the many choices that they were able to have. In addition to their bagel party, the kids colored their own kites, decorated the park program parachute, made tote bags and did several other crafts the first week. The park program concluded the first week with field day and small prizes for excellent behavior all week. The kids are great listeners and follow the adults' instructions.

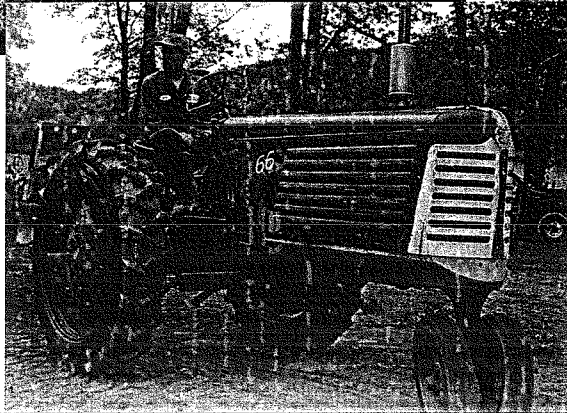
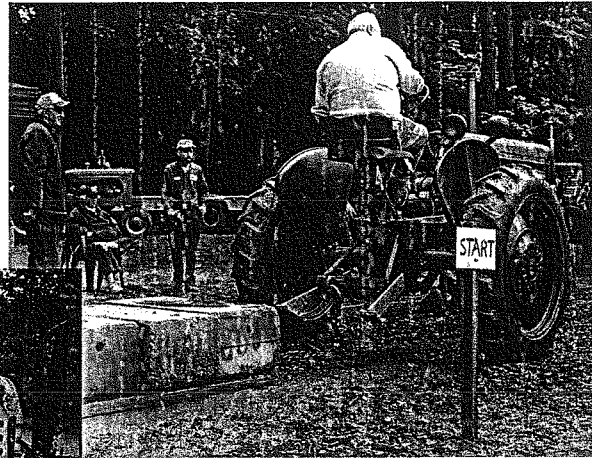
The second week started off with a flooded building, but thanks to Amy and Aaron Decker, the water was vacuumed and pumped out of the building. The kids were great on Monday and listened well while some of the counselors and adults were busy cleaning the building and drying out any wet supplies. I am having a difficult time deciding which

event the kids enjoyed more during the second week of the program: jewelry making, a treasure hunt for their craft pieces, decorating homemade sugar cookies, or the water balloon fight on Friday. Jennifer Strom, Kristen Deso and I made sugar cookies for the kids to decorate. I also made homemade frosting for the cookies. On Friday the kids were thankful that it stopped raining and that the sun came out so that they could be warmer for their water balloon fight.

Many days the exchange students that are staying with Michelle and Cassie Fortney come to the park program and play with the kids or help out with the crafts as well. The two gentlemen and one lady exchange students are from Russia. Sometimes the exchange students share stories with the kids that are about their experiences growing up as a child in Russia or stories that are part of their culture. They have also taught a few of the kids how to say "hi" and "goodbye" in Russian. These three are like extra counselors and yet are sharing their culture with the kids. They have agreed to teach the kids one day more about their culture and heritage.

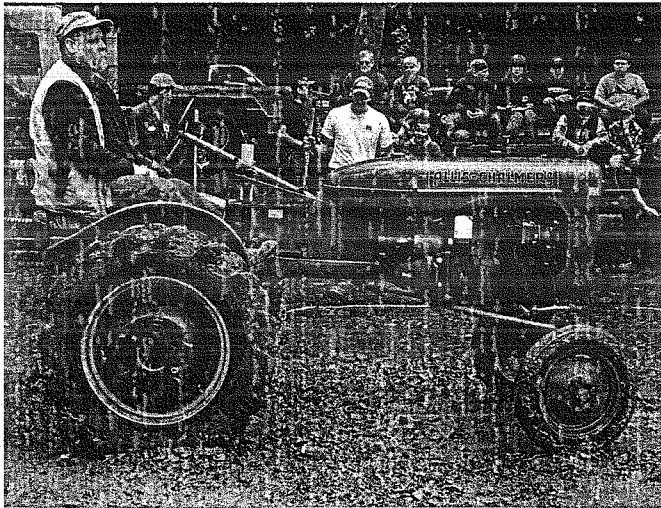
There are several events yet to come for the kids including their trip to the Iroquois Indian Museum on August 8th. At the museum the kids will tour the children's part of the museum, make bracelets, listen to Iroquois legends, and eat their bagged lunch on the grounds. The museum is allowing the park's staff for free, adult chaperones for \$5 and the kids will cost only \$7. Many of the kids have expressed an interest in the visit to the museum and are looking forward to trip. In preparation for the trip, Wednesdays craft included a bowl game that the Iroquois children used to play.

There are about 35 kids signed up for the program and anywhere from 18-28 children have come for the fun activities each day.



Despite a rainy Saturday and a muddy Sunday, Agfest 2006 attracted plenty of visitors, who enjoyed the tractor pulls, music and refreshments.

AGFEST 2006



The tractors in the tractor pulls ranged from antique to relatively new but they all put on a good show.



Town Board News and Issues

Town Board Report

The Town Board has met in regular monthly meetings held on June 12th, July 10th, and August 14th, and work meetings held on June 26th and July 24th. The Town Board Work Meeting on May 24th was cancelled.

Here is a summary of the actions taken at these meetings:

June 12th

- The Town Board adopted a Resolution to establish the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as the standard for emergency incident management and emergency communications for the Town of New Baltimore. This is one of the steps in the Town meeting new federal requirements for emergency management.
- The Town Board adopted a Resolution of Support for efforts that are being undertaken by towns and villages in Greene County to persuade the County Legislature to share future excess sales tax revenues with towns and villages in Greene County.
- The Town Board adopted a Resolution making a determination that a building located on Mill Street in the hamlet of New Baltimore was unsafe and requiring the owner of the building to make repairs to bring the building into compliance with building codes or have the building demolished.
- The Town Board designated C.T. Male Associates, Delaware Engineering and J. Kenneth Fraser & Associates as eligible engineering firms to be selected for work by the Town Board, Town Planning Board or Town Zoning Board of Appeals in connection with the review of engineering reports prepared on behalf of applicants for zoning changes, subdivision approval, site plan approval, special use permits or variances.
- The Town Board authorized the Town Superintendent of Highways to submit a bid on a used Grader to be used for road projects by the Town Highway Depart-

ment. This Grader was offered for sale at auction by the New York State Thruway Authority. The Town Board's authorization was for a maximum bid of \$13,000; the Town was able to purchase the Grader for an actual bid price of \$10,400, and the equipment is now in use.

- The Town Board authorized the purchase of personal protection devices for the Town Hall staff, allowing them to directly contact the State Police in the event of an emergency without having to reach a telephone. The cost of these devices is \$400.
- The Town Board authorized the installation of an upgraded telephone system for the Town Hall, at an additional monthly cost of \$25, and a one-time installation charge of \$300.
- The Town Board authorized an increase in the Justice Court Petty Cash Fund from \$300 to \$400.
- The Town Board adopted a Resolution supporting the Local Land Use Leaders Training Programs offered by Pace University Law School, Land Use Law Center. These educational programs are provided for local officials to learn about laws and policies governing land use, and were recently attended by Supervisor Louis, Councilman Guthrie and Planning Board member Alta Turner. There is no financial obligation or other conditions placed on the Town for its Resolution of Support.
- The Town Board authorized the expenditure of \$450 for a licensed surveyor to document the Town's right of way on Jennings Road to resolve an ongoing dispute regarding this matter.
- County Legislator Jim Van Slyke reported to the Town Board on several county roads in the town that are scheduled to be resurfaced in 2006.

June 26th

- Supervisor Louis reported on a meeting that he had attended in Catskill at which a representative of the New York State Department of State, which is re-

sponsible for overseeing local administration of the New York State Building and Fire Safety Code, discussed significant changes being implemented in January, 2007. Supervisor Louis indicated that the Town would have to consider increasing the salary being paid for Building Inspector and current Building Permit fees that may need to be increased to support an increase in salary for the Building Inspector position without putting the impact on taxpayers.

- Supervisor Louis reported that an announcement has been made regarding a new branch of the Capital District YMCA being built in the New Baltimore-Coxsackie Area, to be known as the Greene YMCA.

July 10th

- New Baltimore residents Gabrielle Rieth, Anna Brooks and Jeannine Rider were each honored with Resolutions commending them for being the top three academically ranked students in the Ravena Coeymans Selkirk High School graduating class of 2006.
- Attorney for the Town David Wukitsch reported that the Appellate Division had upheld Judge Lalor's decision that found that the Town Board had acted properly in forming Water District 4.
- In recognition of this Court Decision, the Town Board accepted a proposal from Delaware Engineering to re-estimate the cost to construct the water system in Water District 4, as current cost estimates are now out of date. Supervisor Louis stated that the Town Board will be required to adopt a Resolution to increase the maximum cost for the construction of this water system for Water District 4, and the issue of increasing the cost will be voted on at a referendum of Water District 4 property owners later this year.
- The Town Board established a Public Memorial Committee to establish a plan for memorializing and officially recognizing deceased Town residents whose

exemplary accomplishments and services have reflected credit and honor upon the Town of New Baltimore.

- The Town Board formally appointed the Summer Parks Program staff.

August 14th

- The Town Board reviewed an independent engineering report prepared by Delaware Engineering, P.C, to re-estimate the cost of construction for Water District 4; the newly estimated cost is \$4,994,230, and the Town Board adopted an order to schedule a Public Hearing on increasing the maximum cost to this amount to be held on Wednesday, September 6th at 7:30 p.m. at the Cornell Hook and Ladder Firehouse on Gill Road.
- Town residents Linda Deyoe and Bill Girvin were added to the Public Memorial Committee.
- The Town Board adopted a Resolution supporting a proposed county sales tax sharing formula developed by Supervisor Louis that would require Greene County to share 80% of sales tax revenues in excess of 105% of the prior year's county sales tax receipts, with most of the distribution to towns and villages being based on population, and a portion based on equalized taxable assessed property value. This proposal is being circulated among all towns and villages in Greene County for support and presentation to the Greene County Legislature.
- Supervisor Louis announced that the Comprehensive Plan Committee will hold a Public Hearing on the Draft Comprehensive Plan Update on Wednesday, September 27th, at 7:00 pm at the Town Hall. A mailing will be sent townwide to inform residents about the Public Hearing, and a copy of the Draft Comprehensive Plan Update will be available at least two weeks in advance at the Town Hall and will be posted on the Town's website for public review.
- The Town Board approved the design of a new welcome sign to be provided by the Greene IDA at the New Baltimore-Coxsackie border on Route 9W.
- The Town Board appointed John Cashin as a Code Enforcement Officer.

Planning Board Report

May 11th

- Vice Chair stamped and signed maps for a Town resident bringing into compliance his non-conforming parcel. The maps also reflected an increase in the limited access to the adjacent parcel which he also owns.
- Received minor subdivision application for the three-lot subdivision of the Nathan & Christie French property on Hillcrest Road. Required Public Hearing has been scheduled for 7:30 p.m., June 8.

June 8th

- A Public Hearing was held on the three-lot minor subdivision application of Nathan & Christie French.
- In the regular monthly meeting following the Public Hearing, the following business was transacted:
- Approved the French minor subdivision.
- Continued preliminary subdivision discussion with the owner of a parcel of land on Hillcrest Road.
- Continued discussion with Boat 'n RV's attorney regarding Site Plan status and buffer issues at their site on Route 9W.
- Received the minor subdivision application for the two-lot subdivision of the Jean Feit property located on Alcove Road. Required public hearing has been scheduled for 7:30 p.m., July 13.
- Received the minor subdivision application for the two-lot subdivision of the Troy Maier/Jean Marie Andzullis property on Featherbed Lane.

July 13th

- A Public Hearing was held on the 2-lot minor subdivision application for Jeanne Feit.
- In the regular monthly meeting that followed, the Planning Board:
- Approved the Jeanne Feit minor subdivision
- Granted a 1-year extension of the Greene Motel Associates Site Plan for the Holiday Inn Express Hotel & Suites
- Approved the minor subdivision maps for Nathan and Christie French
- Received the minor subdivision application for the 2-lot subdivision of the Shawn Hilderandt property located on

Route 144. Required Public Hearing was scheduled for 7:30 pm on August 10, 2006.

August 10th

- Public Hearing was held on the 2-lot minor subdivision application for Shawn Hilderandt.
- In the regular monthly meeting that followed, the Planning Board:
- Approved the Shawn Hildebrandt minor subdivision
- Discussed with a property owner preliminary plans for three parcels of land owned in 9W corridor.
- Held a pre-site plan discussion with Paul Schiller for the placing of a log home sales center on property owned in the development district close to the Thruway.

***Notice:** Due to the volume of business coming before the Planning Board, anyone wishing to be on the agenda should contact the Planning Board Clerk well in advance of the night they wish to appear before the Board.*

Zoning Board of Appeals Report

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) conducted the following business:

August 2nd

- The ZBA heard the Special Use Permit application of Paul and Patricia Schiller to place a log home sales center on property they own in the Developmental District. The proposed log home sales center will be located close to the Thruway and will contain up to five model homes with one containing a sales office. Access to the facility will be from Route 144 to Railroad Avenue, a private Road. Required public hearing for the Special Use Permit has been scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on September 6, 2006

Historical Notes

First Settlers

The Swedish botanist and adventurer Pehr Kalm gave a peek into the kind of world our first settlers entered as he cruised just below Albany in 1749. In speaking about the upper Greene and lower Albany County parts of his mid-June journey up the Hudson: "The country on both sides of the river was low and covered with woods, only here and there were a few little scattered settlements. On the banks of the river were wet meadows, covered with sword grass (*Carex*), and they formed several little islands. We saw no mountains and hastened towards Albany."

On the New Baltimore western shore, Kalm likely would have seen the settlements around Catskill then just an expanse of tall green trees and swamp for some distance. Between there and the Coeymans community, he may have been able to catch a glimpse of the VanSlyk (one version of old spelling) farm in the thick forest just north of where the Cocksackie Creek flows into the Hudson.

It generally has been considered that the first Europeans settled in the wooded wilderness of New Baltimore when Teunis Willemse VanSlyk and his wife Jannetje Van Wie built a stone house on the Hud-

son about a mile below today's Riverside hamlet. We believe that Teunis was born at Heyvelt, a small village in Utrecht Province, The Netherlands. By 1666, he was at Rensselaerswyck (Albany and immediate surroundings in today's world). By 1678, he owned and lived on a farm at Schenectady. He probably married Jannetje on February 6, 1696 at Coeymans.

There is an indenture dated October 4, 1716 transferring land along the River from Samuel and Aryantie Coeymans to Teunis but no firm record before that time. It cannot be said with certainty that Teunis and Jannetje occupied the property before the indenture was effective. So, it appears likely that settlement was made some time in the mid-17 teens.

The VanSlyks owned several hundred acres that his descendants eventually shared in as their settlement spread north and west from the original homestead. Teunis also became a prominent figure in the area as one of four officers who gained a deed in 1733 for land to build the Cocksackie Dutch Reformed Church. He is believed to have been buried in an unmarked grave on a hill near his home

Baltus, one of Teunis' and Jannetje's grandchildren, married Annatjie Lewis.

Their son, Teunis B. VanSlyke, became New Baltimore's first Town Supervisor when the municipality was created by the State Legislature in 1811.

The world the Van Slyks entered on the Hudson was limited. In 1714, there only were 3,329 people in all of Albany County (Greene County did not come until 1800). In Cocksackie (where New Baltimore was located before 1811) and the north part of the Manor of Livingston across the Hudson, there were 54 free adult men, 55 free adult women, 80 boys and girls under 16, 36 male slaves, and 17 female slaves. This area basically comprised Greene County and 160,000 acres in the modern Columbia and Dutchess Counties, which meant a pretty sparse population for such a great space. The Van Slyks certainly were pioneers in the wilderness.

Benson, Adolph B., Peter Kalm's Travels in North America: The English Version of 1770. New York, New York: Dover, 1987, 332.

Land Patents, New York State Archives, Book 8, 333.

O'Callaghan, E.B. The Documentary History of the State of New-York. Albany, New York: Weed, Parsons and Company, 1850, 545.

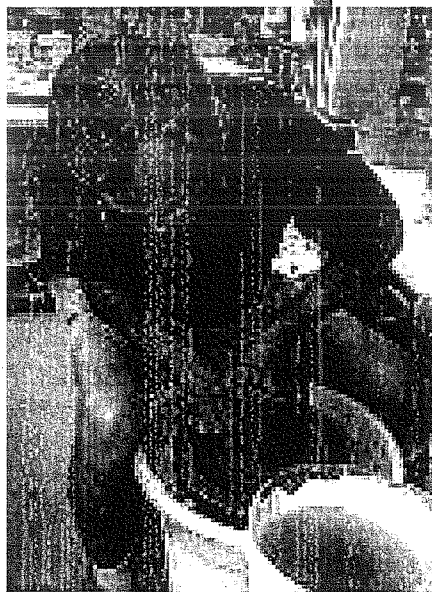
Business Spotlight

Treasure in Earthen Vessels

It started as a form of stress release when the company where Neil Besenfelder worked began downsizing, but very quickly, pottery became much more than a hobby. Now, ten years after launching his business, Treasure in Earthen Vessels, Besenfelder has an established clientele, taking orders as well as selling his crocks, jugs, plates, cups and other items out of his store, located next to his house on Route 9W.

"I am influenced by old types of pottery, especially English crocks and jugs," he says. "I like the simplicity, the clean shapes without too many do-dads."

Besenfelder also experiments a great deal with different colors and glazes. In one urn, for example, he allowed pigment to gather in crevices before the piece was fired, creating a striated finish which



makes it look like an archeological find.

While most of the clay used in his work comes from outside sources, Be-

senfelder also digs for clay in his own backyard and goes through the intensive process required to refine it. The resulting Redware collection is also sold in his store.

"I would say that the crocks and jugs are my specialty," he says.

Most of Besenfelder's business comes from a regular clientele he has established through his years in the business, but he gets some customers through the website on which his work is displayed (www.artimagis.com) and word of mouth. He also does local trade shows.

"I am lucky in that I can make some money doing something I really enjoy," he says. "Plus it's a challenge, always searching for the best possible pot."

The store is located on Route 9W, just north of Thruway Exit 21B. Call 731-8374 to arrange a visit.

Events & Announcements

Town Yard Sale Date: September 16th

Clean out your attics, basements and storage sheds and get ready for our 3rd annual town yard sale and it has been getting better each year. Rain date is Sunday, September 17.

The town will do the newspaper advertising. If you are going to have a yard sale at your house, please call the Town Clerk with your location before August 28. We will then make up maps showing the roads and locations of all yard sales in the town. Maps can be picked up at the town Hall on the day of the sale.

You are welcome to make and post your own signs advertising your sale. Our town parks are available for anyone wish to use them for their sale. We ask that you let the Town Clerk know you are going to be there and that you take out everything you bring in.

Food vendors are welcome. If you are not having a yard sale, venture out for a ride in town, meet your neighbors and perhaps you will find a good bargain while doing so.

We live in a beautiful town and some of you, with the busy lives we have, may never have seen all of New Baltimore. This is a chance to do so.

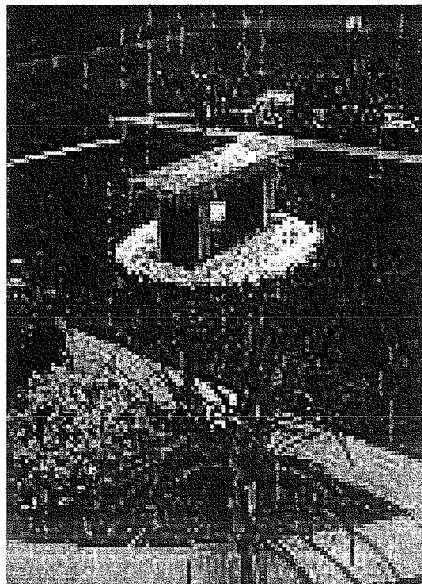
We hope everyone has a great sale!

Town Creates a Public Memorial Committee

After the dedication of the Memory Garden at the Town Hall in the fall of 2005 honoring the memory of our Town Clerk, Barbara Weeks, many of you approached the town regarding memorializing and officially recognizing other individuals who have served the Town. On July 10, the Town Board officially established a Public Memorial Committee.

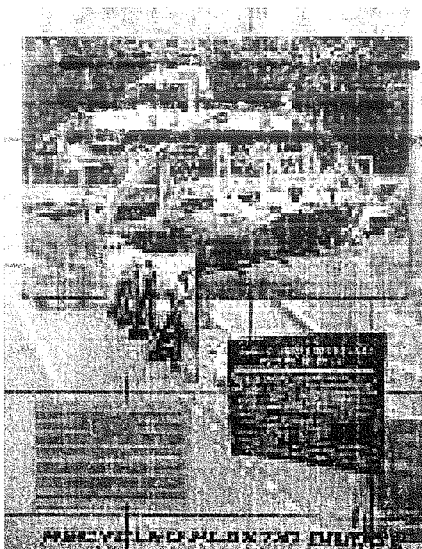
The Town Board appointed Lynn Taylor, Janet Brooks, Clesson Bush, volunteers were being sought to help develop a plan for the Committee, its purpose, formal make-up, and future

actions, and to report to the Town Board on its findings and recommendations. After the meeting, Linda Deyoe and Bill



Girvin have volunteered to serve on the Committee. The Committee held its initial meeting on July 31st. A second annual memorial ceremony is planned for Sunday, September 24th.

Poster of World's First Recycled Bridge



Few people know that the world's first recycled bridge is in New Baltimore. The bridge is part of the Interpre-

tive Trail. A poster of the bridge which was displayed by the NYS Thruway Authority at the 2001 State Fair has been donated by town resident Peter Melewski and is currently exhibited in the foyer to the meeting hall.

Melewski stated that he has worked on hundreds of bridge projects over the years, "but I must say, this little bridge remains my favorite." 100 volunteers from Albany to New York City spent weekends in New Baltimore erecting the bridge, which was a very popular display at the State Fair where people marveled at the pieces of Recycled Plastic Lumber (RPL). The Town extends its thanks to Melewski and all who worked together in bringing such a unique structure to New Baltimore.

Assessor Report

The 2006 School Roll for tax billing has been completed.

The State Department of Taxation and Finance will mail **rebate checks** to STAR recipients by October 31, 2006. Those enrolled in the Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk School District will receive \$264.23 for Enhanced and \$158.22 for Basic STAR. Those enrolled in the Coxsackie-Athens School District will receive \$293.24 for Enhanced and \$175.59 for Basic STAR. Those enrolled in the Greenville School District will receive \$303.61 for Enhanced and \$181.80 for Basic STAR. DTF will be putting a process and an application in place for those who are not enrolled in STAR but are still entitled to the rebate by the end of September or call 1-877-6-STAR-NY for more information.

Gordon Bennett has passed the examination for the **Institute of Assessing Officers of the NYS Assessor's Association** taken at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

In future issues, the newsletter will begin accepting business advertising as well as announcements for the community events page. For rates and information on placing an ad or a listing, please call Arlene McKeon at 756-6653

Town Officials

Supervisor

David Louis

Board Members

Lisa Benway
Richard Guthrie
Kevin Kuenster
Arlene McKeon

Planning Board

Lee Davis
James Coe
Barry W. Guptill
Kenneth Kuder
Eric Hogland
John Murray
Alta Turner

Zoning Board

Stephen Volkheimer
Meave Tooher
Christy Jo Cone
Anthony Rago
Roger Wilson

Town Clerk

Janet Brooks

Tax Collector

Diane Stuart

Assessor

Gordon Bennett

Town Justices

Joseph Farrell
Joseph Cosenza

Superintendent of Highways

Denis Jordan

Town Board Meetings:

2nd and 4th Mondays

Planning Board Meetings

2nd and 4th Thursdays*

Zoning Board Meetings:

1st Wednesday*

*if no agenda, no meeting

Town Office Hours

Monday—Friday 9-4

Highway Hours

Monday—Friday 7-3

Telephone

(518) 756-6671

Website

www.townofnewbaltimore.org

1208702109

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