

New Baltimore

From the Desk of Supervisor Jeff Ruso

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I would like to welcome you to the 2019 Edition of our Town's Newsletter. I'm very proud to have worked closely with our Town Board, Town Clerk Barb Finke, and Department Heads to bring you important information and let you know what is happening in the very special Town of New Baltimore that we call home.

This edition includes the Community Choice Aggregation Program, Assessor Gordon Bennett on Changes to the STAR Program, Wastewater Treatment Plant Construction Update, News from our Greene County Legislator Pat Linger, Historian Report, Town Committee Updates, and How-When-Where Do I?

The next Public Information Meeting for Community Choice Aggregation is Wednesday, July 17 at 4PM and 7PM at Town Hall.

ASSESSOR GORDON BENNETT UPDATE ON STAR PROGRAM CHANGES

The STAR program that we have all known for almost 20 years has seen some changes over the past couple years. There has been a new STAR credit added to the options available and is a check mailed to you instead of a reduction in your tax bill. There are more changes in the years to come and we will keep you up to date as they come along. The link below goes to the NYS Tax and Finance page and gives you all of the information currently in place and, of course, you can always call the office at (518)756-6671, Ext. 8 and we can explain the details of your own personal situation. Please see attachment with more details.

<https://www.tax.ny.gov/star/default.htm>

WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT UPDATE

The construction work to complete the \$2.6 million upgrade project to the Wastewater Treatment Plant has started. The upgrade will replace equipment installed in 1984 that is obsolete and in some cases non-functioning. New clarifier tanks and new UV disinfection equipment is being built that will improve the water quality of the treated effluent. Energy efficient pumps are being installed to improve the overall performance of the plant. Work on the capital project will continue until December of this year. The construction project is being financed by a combination of grants and 0% loans.

Fiscal Stress Score Improves

The State Comptroller annually releases the Fiscal Stress for every municipality and school district in the State. I am happy to report that New Baltimore's score is currently 3.3 with the average score among New York Towns is 5.1.

Since 2014 we ended deficit spending, reduced and prioritized spending, increased revenues from other sources, shared services with other organizations, and tightened the Town's Procurement Policy and required quotes from outside vendors and suppliers to achieve the lowest possible cost for all goods and services.

Collectively these measures resulted in a budget surplus and the Town Board was able to enact a tax cut for each of the last five years.

The next Fiscal Stress scores will be updated in late summer and I will keep everyone posted in our next edition.

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**TRAVELING MEMORIAL WALL
COMING SOON TO CATSKILL**

The Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall will be open to the public at the Historic Catskill Point, 1 Main Street in the Village of Catskill from August 22-25. The exhibit is a 3/5 scale of the memorial in Washington, DC and features more than 58,000 names of military members who lost their lives during the Vietnam War. Information is available at:

<https://www.greatnortherncatskills.com/events/vietnam-traveling-memorial-wall>

GCEDC Launches New Website

The Greene County Economic Development Corporation is now online at:

<https://greenecountyedc.com/>

The site is specifically designed to engage site selectors and developers and promote the advantages and benefits of bringing job-creating businesses to our communities. Supporting digital advertising and social media campaigns will direct information seekers to content ranging from available shovel-ready sites, to key economic indicators, to programs and incentives available to businesses starting or expanding in Greene County.

Ted Hilscher's Town Historian Report

The Vanderzee Hay Press

The historic Vanderzee hay press has a new home.

A hay press once located at the Vanderzee farm on the New Baltimore/Coeymans line has found a permanent home on the grounds of the Bronck House Museum. This hay press was built by Dederick Agricultural Machine Works in Albany, and will soon be one of only two operating Dederick presses on public display in North America.

The pressing of hay for sale to the New York City market was once a major source of income for Hudson Valley farmers. According to *The Horse in the City* (by Clay McShane and Jack A. Tarr) there were 130,000 horses in Manhattan in 1900. It was estimated that each horse was eating 12 pounds of hay a day (plus 12 pounds of oats).

New appreciation for hay presses has been growing in recent years. I have learned, through primary sources, of twenty presses once in use in New Baltimore and the neighboring towns of Coxsackie and Coeymans. Known hay presses in New Baltimore were at the Vanderzee, Lisk, Van Slyke, Cary, Dietz, Baldwin and H.T. Houghtaling farms. The Waddington brothers, whose farm was just west of town hall where the powerlines cross Route 51, traveled farm-to-farm with a hay press in 1914, according to the *Coxsackie Recorder*. An unnamed hay press owner or owners pressed hay at the farms of Spencer Palmer and Augustus Conrad near Medway in the 1880s and 1890s. Hay presses often were found at railroad stations, such as Claverack, Ghent, Pulver's Station and Rider's Mills in Columbia County. Martin Van Buren had an early press at his farm in Kinderhook.

The Vanderzee press has been rescued through the efforts of many interested persons. Art Byas first became aware of the hay press, and secured its gift from Lynn Vanderzee Christie. During the time the press was being made ready to move, Lynn transferred the farm which had been in her family for almost 250 years to her neighbors the Collins family, who continued to help with the removal of the press from the barn in which it was located. One very cold winter, my sons Jack and Cole helped me remove great accumulations of manure and hay from the site of the press and to get its moving parts to work for the first time in decades. The Van Etten family was the caretaker of the press for the last seven years. Lee Van Etten made some repairs to the press which were necessary for its stability. Rob Van Etten moved the hay press to the Bronck House grounds recently where the Meadow Ridge Heritage Barn is literally being erected around it. Tom Satterlee and Tim Meier are the masterminds behind that end of the project. A barn that was once part of the Cornwell farm west of Earlton, built in 1913, was dismantled and is rising again at the Bronck House thanks to Tom and Tim. It is now named Meadow Ridge Heritage Barn in recognition of the strong support of the Greene County Historical Society by Meadow Ridge Farm on Route 385.

The Vanderzee hay press dates from 1870, is 17 feet 11 inches tall and weighs 6300 or so pounds. The hay press was purchased that year for \$78 when Lynn's great-grandfather John Vanderzee took down an old Dutch barn and erected a modern two level bank barn. Inscribed with a knife into a post is "S.T. Nov. 1872." "Stephen Tompkins" is stenciled in another place on the press. The Tompkins family operated the farm where the Sycamore Golf Course is today.

Hay is loaded from the top of the press, on the upper floor of the barn. The hay is placed in a hay bale chamber with a moveable floor.

The floor is moved through the use of a capstan. The capstan is 8 feet high measuring from the floor, with another two feet beneath the floor, and is installed about twelve feet from the press. Beneath the floor boards is a chain which is attached to the base of the capstan. The other end of the chain is attached to a pair of "legs" on the press. A horse tethered to the capstan walks in a circle, which causes the chain to wrap around the bottom of the capstan. As the chain tightens it pulls the legs of the press from a semi-horizontal position to a vertical position, the upper ends of the legs pushing the hay bale floor up and pressing the hay. The hay bale weighs 200 or so pounds, or more when a few rocks are mixed in with the hay.

Village of Ravena Pool Passes Available to Town Residents

The Village of Ravena has offered Town of New Baltimore residents the use of Mosher Park Pool for the 2019 summer season. Rates are \$90 for a single person, \$100 for a two-person family, and \$125 for a family. Passes can be picked up at the Village Offices at 15 Mountain Road.

How Do I Rent a Town Pavilion?

2019 dates are still available for pavilion rentals. Call Town Clerk Barb Finke to reserve your date at (518)756-6671, Ext. 5. The cost is \$25 to rent the pavilion, \$20 alcohol permit (if serving), and \$25 deposit which is refunded after inspection.

Forms are available at the Town Clerk's Office or at www.townofnewbaltimore.org under Parks.

When Do I Need A Dog License?

All dogs four months of age or older are required to have a license. Owners must provide proof of rabies and spaying/neutering certificate if applicable.

Spayed/Neutered.....\$ 7.00

Unspayed/Unneutered.....\$15.00

Where Do I Get An E-Z Pass Tag?

The Governor has announced that cashless tolling on the New York State Thruway will be implemented by the end of 2020. The Town Clerk's Office has prepackaged tags available for \$25 which is credited to the applicant's personal account and becomes active within 24-48 hours. There are multiple plans and payment options available and accounts can be replenished by credit card, bank account, or money order.

Other states that accept E-ZPass include Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia and West Virginia.

Replacement Velcro tabs to hang the tags are also available in the Town Clerk's Office.

2019 Summer Recreation Program

Director Lynne Wallace is very excited to announce the return of the Summer Recreation Program for 2019. The Program will run from Monday, July 15-Friday, August 9 at Cecil C. Hallock Park from 9-11:30 AM.

Each week will have a different theme — traveling around the world, studying animals, safety in the community, and a week of surprises. The sign-up forms can be found at www.townofnewbaltimore.org, under Parks or at Town Hall. Any questions can be directed to Lynne at wacky150@gmail.com.

Senior Citizen Committee

The Town Senior Committee recently held their annual picnic at Cecil Hallock Park. Everyone brought a dish to share and enjoyed the company of residents who live throughout the Town. Their next event will be a Christmas Party in December.

The Committee consists of Ellie Alfeld, Dorothy and Conrad Jurgens, Betty Jane and Santo Costanza, Buddy Melick, and Linda and Jim Polverelli. Any interested residents are invited to join the Committee to help plan the December Christmas Party and other future events.

Are You A Veteran?

Would you like to become a member of the Veterans Committee? Please join us at our annual picnic at Cecil C. Hallock Park on Saturday, August 10 at noon. This event is free for all veterans, their families, and caregivers.

This year the Traveling Memorial Wall is coming to Catskill from August 22-25. The Committee will be providing a bus to bring veterans to the Historic Catskill Point on Thursday, August 22 at 10AM. Call Councilmember Shelly VanEtten at (518)756-3517 or Barb Finke (518)756-6671, ext. 5 to make a reservation for the bus.

A luncheon is also held in February to thank all veterans and their families for their service.

Memorials Committee

The Memorials Committee will be holding an Honor of Service Ceremony on Sunday, September 22 at 2PM. Councilmember Shelly VanEtten will be meeting with Committee members to develop the application and procedures for nomination.

Summer Hours for Highway Department

The Highway Department hours are Monday-Thursday from 6AM- 4:30 PM until Labor Day. Highway Superintendent Alan VanWormer can be reached at (518)756-2078 or cell (518)567-4961.

2019 Townwide Yard Sale

The 2019 Townwide Yard Sale will be held on Saturday, September 21 at 9 AM. Town Clerk Barb Finke, Lynn Taylor, and Donna Degnen will again Co-Chair this annual event.

Sign-up forms are available at Town Hall, by calling the Town Clerk at (518)756-6671, Ext. 5, or at www.townofnewbaltimore.org.

Categories of goods for sale include (A-Antiques; B-Books; C-Clothing; F-Furniture; H-Housewares; KCT-Kids' Clothes/Toys; SG-Sporting Goods; T-Tools; and O-Other)

Stay connected with what's going on in New Baltimore
www.townofnewbaltimore.org and Like us on Facebook

Calendar

Town Board Meetings
2nd and 4th Mondays
7 PM

Planning Board Meetings
2nd Thursday* 7 PM

Zoning Board Meetings
1st Wednesday* 7:30 PM

*If no agenda, no meeting

For agendas and other
Town information, please
call Town Offices or visit
our website.

www.townofnewbaltimore.org

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING ON THE COMMUNITY CHOICE AGGREGATION PROGRAM

Wednesday, July 17, 2019

4 PM and 7 PM

**New Baltimore Town Hall
3809 County Route 51
Hannacroix, NY 12087**

**New Baltimore Town Hall
3809 County Route 51
Hannacroix, NY 12087**

***Fact Sheet on Community Choice Aggregation and
STAR Changes (On Reverse of this Page)***

**Public Information Meeting on Community Choice Aggregation
Wednesday, July 17 at 4PM and 7PM
Town Hall, 3809 County Route 51, Hannacroix**

COMMUNITY CHOICE AGGREGATION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Community Choice Aggregation: Community Choice Aggregation (“CCA”) is a program in New York that empowers eligible municipalities’ entities such as villages, cities, and towns to create large buying groups of residential and small commercial electricity accounts in order to seek bids for cheaper supply rates, essentially bulk-purchasing.

What are the benefits of Community Choice Aggregation? The key benefit of CCA is the opportunity for residents to save money on their electric bills. This is based on market conditions and the utility region in which one resides.

How does Community Choice Aggregation impact my electricity bill? The impact of Community Choice Aggregation is primarily savings. Participants will see no change in their delivery rate, but a reduction of their supply rate. They will continue to receive a single bill, make one payment, and continue to receive all other services from their respective utility.

What do I need to do in order to participate? If you are currently being served by your local utility, you do not need to do anything. You will automatically be included in the program unless you Opt-Out (see next question).

Do I have to participate in the Community Choice Aggregation program if I don’t want to? No. Residents can Opt-Out during a 30-day Opt-Out period. Opt-Out notices will be provided via USPS mail prior to the program commencing. Simply return the Opt-Out notice within 30 days and your account(s) will not be included. Participating account holders may leave the program at any time and without penalty. There are different ways that you can opt-out of the program. One way is to mail the opt-out card back to the supplier. Another way is to call or email the supplier and clarify you want to opt-out. Opting-out can also be done through the program website.

What if I choose to leave the program early? Residents who are enrolled in the program may terminate their participation at any time without early termination or exit fees.

If I Opt-Out, can I opt back in at a later date? Yes, you can opt back in to the program at any time and you will see the change to your bill after one billing cycle. One billing cycle, or 30 days, will elapse to allow for processing of the account(s) by the supplier.

What if I have a photovoltaic or solar panel system? Having a solar system which allows you to earn net metering credits, e.g., Solarize (New York), does not preclude you from participating in the aggregation program. As long as the account holder is receiving supply from the utility, they are able to participate in the aggregation program and will continue to receive net metering credits from the utility. Net metering will function in the same way as before you joined the CCA program. Your net metering credits will continue to appear on your utility bill and will continue to be calculated based on utility’s Basic Service price

www.greenecountycommunityenergy.com



TOWN OF NEW BALTIMORE

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Fax: (518) 756-8880
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Email: assessor@townofnewbaltimore.org

Assessor's Office

There have been some changes with New York State Taxation and Finance (NYST&F) in regards to the STAR Exemption and STAR Credit

If you are a STAR recipient, you currently receive the benefit in one of two ways:

- **STAR CREDIT:** This is open to any eligible homeowner whose income is \$500,000 or less, in which you would receive a check in the mail from NYST&F to apply towards your school tax
- **STAR EXEMPTION:** This is now closed to New Applicants, but if you are enrolled in this program prior to the law change in 2015, you would receive a direct reduction on your school taxes. This would either be the Basic STAR (No age requirement but an income limit of \$250,000-based on a new law change), or the Enhanced STAR, whereas there is an age requirement 65 or older with an income limit of \$86,300

Due to recent law changes, NYST&F is advising:

- The value of the STAR Credit, **MAY** increase by as much as 2% each year, whereas they claim the STAR Exemption cannot increase, along with the income limit is \$250,000

If your income is more than \$250,000, you **MUST SWITCH** to the STAR Credit to continue receiving your benefit, if your income is \$250,000 or less, you have the option to switch.

To Switch to the STAR Credit, you would need to file a RP-496 application with the County Director of Real Property Tax Services, and then register with NYS Taxation and Finance, in which will notify the Assessor's Office of request received and removal of the exemption.

Please visit the NYST&F web-site at: www.tax.ny.gov/Star or call them at **518-457-2036 8:30-4:30 week-days** to obtain more information in regards to these options.