

Town of Johnsburg Newsletter

Supervisor's Report

Short Takes

Highway Superintendent

Congratulations to Dan Hitchcock, Sr. who was victorious in the recent town election. The Town Board appointed Dan at its Nov. 18 meeting rather than waiting until January to facilitate winter preparations.

Town Budget Finalized

A town budget which reduces taxes by .08% was finalized at the town board meeting on Nov. 6. The budget also increases the town's contingency fund in case additional funds are needed for emergency purposes.

County Budget Near Final

As of this writing the county budget was at preliminary phase with final adoption anticipated in a few weeks. The anticipated impact on Johnsburg residents is a 4.1% increase.

Office Restructure

Discussions are underway in Town hall for a reshuffling of personnel in an effort to make things more efficient and user friendly. More on this in January.

Supervisor & Town Council Pay Cuts

On Nov. 6 the Town Board voted unanimously to reduce each members pay by 5%.

Santa to Visit Ski Bowl Park

Santa's annual visit to Ski Bowl Park is scheduled for December 14. The event begins at noon as fire trucks arrive in time to greet Santa at 1 p.m. The fire trucks will transport children to the school where they can visit Santa. The Johnsburg PTSA will also have its Secret Santa Sale set up so that children can purchase inexpensive gifts for family members all on their own. If weather does not permit, this event will be rescheduled for Dec. 21.

Tree Lighting & Parade

The annual tree lighting ceremony will occur on Dec. 5 at 5 p.m. in downtown North Creek. On Dec. 6 there will be a holiday parade beginning at JCS at 11:45 a.m. Hope to see everyone there!

Evaluating Revaluation

The Town Board has taken the first steps to undertake a real property tax revaluation project. The project is a long and complicated one that will not likely reach conclusion until 2010.

Towns across New York State often undertake revals every few years but for Johnsburg there has never been a reval.

What is the goal of a reval?

In a word, fairness.

As time goes on the accuracy of taxing information becomes more questionable, meaning that property owners are not taxed fairly. Some property owners are being taxed too much for the worth of their land while others are being taxed too little for actual value.

At a recent Town Board meeting Johnsburg officials were advised that the anticipated disparity in Johnsburg may be as great as any town has ever faced in the State of New York because a revaluation has never occurred.

Particularly unjust are situations where some taxpayers are paying too much on property that is overvalued, thus meaning these owners are actually subsidizing taxes that should be paid by more valuable land owners.

A revaluation may be a painful experience. Certainly no one wants to pay more taxes, but without a review of this nature, fair taxation is impossible.

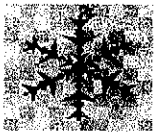
Our Town Assessor Ann Deppe will be working in close association with Warren County Real Property Tax Chief Mike Swan and various officials from the State of New York.

While the board is moving forward, the exact start date is far from certain. In particular, questions remain about funding the project. More information will follow in subsequent issues of this newsletter.

Hannah Jay's Ski Bowl Garden Project

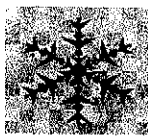
JCS senior Hannah Jay plans to enhance the Ski Bowl Community Garden with several new developments. The garden has made the Ski Bowl Park visually outstanding, and the committee envisions it becoming one of the central gathering places in North Creek, where weddings may be held or where people may visit for inspiration, tranquility and fellowship.

(Garden, continued on page 2)



UP Lifting

What if an existing business in Town invested a capital invest-



ment in their company of \$8 million over 3 months time? What if the investment created more jobs and could be used to assist with marketing for the entire region? One more what if. What if the capital investment was projected to dramatically increase the draw of this local business, sending ripples through the economy for entire region? Before the chorus of "that doesn't happen around here" sounds, consider the newly completed Burnt Ridge Lift Pod at Gore Mountain.

The lift system means jobs in a troubled economy, enhances Gore's Street level visibility and improves the product that Gore delivers.

I recently hiked into the new area with my family as the lift was being completed. There is little doubt that this expansion on the mountain is not only impressive in its own right but offers economic promise at a regional level.

As Supervisor it is not my job to be a cheerleader for any business or entity but it is important to acknowledge the impact of the lift that is now completed and will open this season. Likewise, the lift should be viewed in its context with the interconnection of Gore to the Ski Bowl Park. People are talking about this project and the interconnect. If we can keep them talking I am convinced we can help soften the blows of the current economic crisis.

Safe Wood Burning Practices As Set Forth by the EPA

*The Environmental Protection Agency recommends
Following these guidelines for a safe wood burning season*

1. *Keep all flammable household items ie newspapers, books, furniture, away from your woodstove.*
2. *Start fires only with newspaper and dry kindling. Do not use kerosene, gas, propane torch or charcoal fluid to start fire.*
3. *Do not burn wet or green (unseasoned) logs.*
4. *Do not use logs made from wax and sawdust, if using manufactured logs, use only ones made from compressed sawdust.*
5. *Built small, hot fires. A smoldering fire is not safe or efficient.*
6. *Keep the doors of your woodstove closed unless loading or stoking the fire.*
7. *Regularly remove ashes from your woodstove in a metal container. Do not store on or near a wooden surface or deck.*
8. *Keep a fire extinguisher handy.*

Town & School Cooperation

By the date of this publication, several meetings will have occurred between town and JCS officials with an eye towards exchanging services to save money. How would this work? If the school contracts for a particular service that the town may be able to provide, there would be a swap of services with anticipated taxpayer savings on both sides. The town and school officials will continue to work on this in the upcoming year.

Sign of the Times

Warren County Supervisors were briefed on November 7 by Barbara Sweet of the United Way regarding United Way's efforts to ensure services can be made available to all those in need.

Most important in this effort is the establishment of a dedicated phone line for residents seeking assistance to call. The phone line is available and staffed with a live person who can answer questions and make referrals. Someone is available on the line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The phone number is 761-6300.

Farmer's Market Progress

Meetings continue with progress being made for a farmer's market for the Summer of 2009. An initial board of directors has been established for the organization at this time. If you are interested in getting involved, please call Barbara Thomas at 251-5692.

Holiday Greetings from the Supervisor

As we countdown the days until the end of 2008, I would just like to wish everyone in the Town of Johnsbury a peaceful and safe holiday season. It has been my honor and privilege to serve you for the past 11 months and I look forward to working hard in the year ahead to further streamline the budget and to work on the issues and challenges that are important to our community and quality of life. I have lived in Johnsbury nearly my whole life, it is the town that my family and I call home and nothing is more important to me than safeguarding it for future generations.

(Garden, continued from page 1)

The project includes the construction of a tool shed adjacent to the water building to store tools and supplies for the volunteers at the garden. In addition, a sitting area will be created with Adirondack furniture so that visitors may relax and admire the gardens.

Hannah would like to thank Robert Nettle for his assistance with the shed design and construction, TC Murphy for their generous donation toward building supplies, and Judy Brown for her support and inspiration. Hannah hopes to earn her Girl Scout Gold Award, which is the equivalent of the Boy Scout Eagle Award, upon completion of the project.

Anyone who would like to contribute to or discuss the project may contact Hannah at 251-3338.