

Berkshire Community Association
PO Box 113
Berkshire, NY 13736
www.BerkshireNY.net

August 2015

BERKSHIRE TOWN NEWSLETTER

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SUPERVISORS NOTES

It is time again to update you on the progress of town projects. The Planning Board is hard at work on the Comprehensive Plan and has submitted a narrowed down list of the items most addressed in the survey to the Town Board for review. The Board had a couple of suggestions, but in general has agreed with the topics outlined for inclusion in the plan. The Planning Board will now expand on the subjects by defining each category. After that process they will again review with the Town Board and work to decide how to complete the topic in the best interest of the entire town. The development of this plan will not be an easy or short process. By next newsletter we may be able to give a list of the subjects being included for review in the plan. My sincere thanks goes out to the Planning Board and the Town Board for their efforts in this project. The Town's financial position is very sound and the expenditures are well within the Budget. We experienced some flood damage from the flash flooding of June and July, but should be able to shoulder it within our budget. We have been waiting for the final FEMA payment from the 2011 flooding and when received in August "so they tell us" it should cover the added expenses of this year. The progress of Route 38 being resurfaced in 2017, and the bridge replacement in 2016, is moving forward as originally planned. The State DOT has contacted me about holding a public meeting at the town hall with plans and alternatives for traffic during the bridgework. This meeting will probably take place in August or September of this year and will be advertised by the State.

We are beginning to see some movement with Code compliance in the Town. This is credited in part to the CEO, Rachael Jacobs that began work in October of last year. Several abandoned cars have been removed by the town and fines levied on those in non-compliance. We also appreciate the efforts of those that are voluntarily complying with cleanup thus avoiding the time in court and the fines. Thank you to all the volunteers that helped make the "Blueberry and Books" event a success for the town. This was one of the items in our survey requested by the residents.

Until next time, please attend Your Town Board Meetings. Help us help you make beneficial changes in our community. Please visit our Web Site for current information at <http://www.berkshireny.com> and you will now find us on Facebook "Town of Berkshire New York", please like us and follow current posts.

Your Supervisor *Ron McEwen*



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HIGHWAY NEWS

Nothing out of the ordinary happening at the Highway Department – and that is good news. Equipment and trucks all in good shape. Rob Howland is back so we have our full crew again plus Bill Leonard for the summer. The heavy rains of late spring and early summer have required a lot of road repair work like repairing washouts, reclaiming filled in ditches, and replacing clogged pipes. The rain has also delayed the paving of Rejmer and N. Ketchumville roads. Once we get some dryer weather we will begin honing the gravel roads. Still checking on the best way to get the gravel we need. Options are to hire a crusher to condition some low cost gravel that might be available this season. We also have a good pile of creek gravel behind the Town Hall that could be crushed or used as a base when we do some major roadwork. We also are looking at the possibility of just buying what we need for this year. Once I am sure of our needs this year, we will pick the most efficient and budget friendly option.

Karl Spoonhower

BERKSHIRE FREE LIBRARY

As everyone has seen, a lot has been happening at the library. We have started the Summer Reading Programs for the kids and families in the area. The first family program with Michael Albert, the Pop-art Artist, was well attended. He showed everyone how to make posters out of cut up cereal boxes. There are many of his posters hanging around the library and his book can be checked out. The children will be able to keep reading until the end of August and still win prizes and medals. Our second family program will be on Saturday, Aug. 15 from 1-4 when the GAME TRUCK will roll into town. It has 5 HD TVs on the inside with 11 gaming consoles and tons of games to choose from. There is one huge TV on the outside that plays "Just Dance". All are welcome to come and try different games and play against each other for FREE. These programs are sponsored by the BOOKS Program and Sen. Libous. as well as the help of Morrisville College. Story Time has stopped for the rest of the summer as of the end of July and will start back up on September 23 in Berkshire from 10-11 at the library and September 25 from 10-11 in Richford at the Congregational Church. Story Time is for any child not yet going to school. If your child is attending the afternoon session of Pre-K they are always welcome to come. This fall "Story Laurie" will be coming for a visit again.

Work on the library continues as our energy efficiency improvements are made. You may have seen some of our windows being reworked. The cracked and broken panes are being replaced and new calk and weather stripping applied to keep the drafts out. We are still waiting to hear about the State Library Construction Grant so that we can finish the work on the foundation. We are planning to apply again this year for the removal of the lead paint from the building and building of a new ramp and platform on the back of the building for better access to the building for all. Our Pie and Ice Cream Social will be held on Aug. 20th this year. If you would like to help us by making a pie please let us know at the library. We hope to see everyone there. The biggest thing to happen was the first ever BLUEBERRY AND BOOKS FESTIVAL. We hope this will become an annual event for everyone in the area. The weather held out for us with just a little rain in the afternoon. The day started with blueberry pancakes and crepes with many trying out crapes for the first time. The firemen sold all of the BBQ Chicken which tasted wonderful. All of the baked goods sold out. M. L. Stoughton was on hand to sign and sell her new book "Pleasantwick". We have a copy at the library for anyone to check out. There were many local vendors on hand selling everything from hand woven rugs to of course Blueberries and the music was enjoyed by all, the students did a fantastic job on their songs. We will be going over everything that went on this year to see how we can make it bigger and better for the community next year. We would like to thank everyone who helped make this a great event and to all the wonderful people who donated to our raffle. The baskets had such wonderful things inside and the gift certificates will be happily used. We will post the donations and the winners at the library. Have a great end of the summer and kids remember to keep reading.

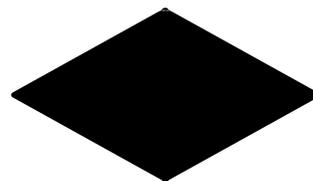
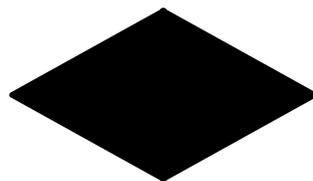
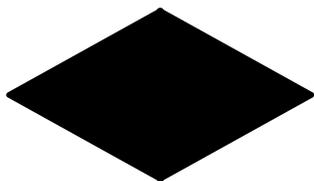
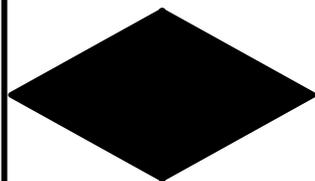
Library Hours: Tuesday: 12-5, Wednesday: 1:30-7, Thursday: 1-5, Friday: 1:30-7 & Saturday: 9-2

LuAnn Whirl, Director

BERKSHIRE PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board continues its primary focus on the updating of the Town of Berkshire Comprehensive Plan. Unfortunately one of our regular members, Sarah Albrecht, has resigned from the Planning Board as of the end of June, so we are once again looking for members. There are now openings for two alternate members, which is an annual appointment, renewed each January. Alternate members are not expected to hold an office or do major research unless they desire to do so, and only have voting privileges if appointed during the absence of a regular member. If you would like to be involved, you can "try us out" at our regular meetings on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Town Hall before making a firm commitment, or you can contact Ken Ceurter at 657-2831 for more information. Working with the Planning Board is an excellent way to understand more about our town government, have input on the development of local laws that protect the citizens of Berkshire, and to serve your community without necessarily making a huge time commitment. There is no specific formal training or experience required, just the desire to serve, and there is training available both on line and through local counties if you wish to pursue it. The five current Planning Board members are: Ken Ceurter, Bette Johnson, Frank Kunik, Marty Mattrazzo and Tim Pollard.

Ken Ceurter, Chair



BERKSHIRE FIRE COMPANY

First we would like thank those of you that came out to vote for the new ambulance. It passed by a wide margin and a new ambulance will be ordered soon. We appreciate everyone that came out to support us. Once again I would like to reiterate that this ambulance purchase will not increase taxes. Most of the money will come from an account where we have been saving for apparatus and the remainder will be paid for with money already in the budget that was used to pay for the rescue we bought in 2006. While on the subject of the ambulance I would like to lay some rumors to rest. When we transport someone in our ambulance there is no charge to the patient from us. Some calls require advance life support, commonly called ALS, and we are not an ALS agency so we pick up a paramedic from an ALS agency on the way to the hospital. We do not take patients out of our ambulance, the paramedic gets in with us. The agency providing the paramedic may bill the patient for their services. This is still cheaper than riding in an ambulance from a billing agency. Also, there are times that we do not have an EMT available, we are volunteers and do have lives, and another agency needs to come in and take the patient. That agency can then bill the patient. But, no one has or will receive a bill from Berkshire Fire District for any service we provide. The best way to ensure we don't miss any calls is to volunteer. Our EMTs as well as drivers are very dedicated and make most of the calls but the need is always there for EMTs and drivers. If you are interested in joining a great EMS agency stop by the station the first Monday of any month at 7:00PM for the squad meeting and find out how you can help your community.

The fireman have been busy this summer as well. We had a great chicken BBQ at the first annual Books and Blueberry Festival, thank you all who came out to support us. We are also cooking and selling food at four hare scramble motorcycle races again this year. We are doing all of this cooking to raise money to fix the pavilion behind the fire station. We need to have all the poles replaced, new electric run from the road and throughout the pavilion, a well put in, and a fresh paint job. All of this is going to cost in the ball park of \$20,000. We are attempting to do it all with funds from fund raisers and not tax dollars. If anyone would like to send in a donation to help get the pavilion fixed up send it to: Berkshire Fire Company, PO Box 183, Berkshire NY 13736. Put pavilion on the check and we will be sure it is used for that purpose. All donations are tax deductible. Thank you for your help. Once it is fixed up it would be nice to see everyone at a town wide picnic again. That used to be a big annual event and we would like to bring it back. Anyone interested in renting the fire hall for events call Bill Morris at 657-2536. The new station is a great place to have your event. It is larger than the old station and we just purchased two ac units so it is can be nice and cool on a hot day.

We would like to remind everyone as summer comes to a close to be safe. There are still a lot of nice weekends left for parties and get-togethers but please do it safely. Remember if you have a bonfire keep it small and clear all combustibles away from the area before lighting it. Also keep a garden hose or fire extinguisher close by just in case. As always the one thing we need the most is volunteers. If you are interested learning how you can help your community stop by the station any Tuesday night at 7:00 or give me a call at 427-0964 and I will talk to you about it. There is a job for everyone in the volunteer fire service and we will provide all the training at no cost to you. *Bret Welch, Fire Chief*

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TOWN WIDE EMAIL LIST

We maintain a list of email addresses to disseminate information of significant happenings in and around Berkshire such as major projects, meetings, fundraisers, public hearings, new or proposed legislation, etc. We have 200 addresses on the list and have been using it to help keep you informed for more than 12 years. It has proven to be a very effective way to get near real time communications to those people in Town who have email capability and wish to keep up with what is happening around Berkshire and surrounding areas. The program also serves as an excellent way for us to receive feedback. As a protection against personal use and SPAM, messages are sent out as Blind Carbon Copies so the entire list will never be sent to any recipients. Comments on the information provided and the use of the list has been very positive. To be placed on the list or to change an email address, contact Skip Hartwig - 657 8418, email skhartwig@frontiernet.net.

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*Youth Activities***NEWARK VALLEY YOUTH CHEER**

NV Youth Cheer Mission Statement: The purpose of Newark Valley Youth Cheer is to create and maintain a cheerleading program for youth that teaches the fundamentals of cheerleading in an environment that stresses great sportsmanship, teamwork, responsibility, and respect in the spirit of cheerleading and school spirit. Newark Valley Youth Cheer (under the umbrella of the Northern Tier Youth League) was established in 2001. In the last several years they have become not only spirit leaders for the youth football team, but also compete against other youth cheer teams at three competitions in the areas of hometown cheer and cheer dance. The current director of the program, Barbara Gehm-Jordan, has lead the program since 2003. It was under her initiative that NV cheer began going to competitions. Many NV Youth Cheerleaders continue on to be exceptional Varsity Cheerleaders having gained the basic skill of cheering from an early age. Our organization strives for a quality program of growth. We aim for a well-rounded program that lifts up the spirit of the cheerleader as well as offering an outlet for becoming physically fit. We are still accepting registration for the fall season even though practices have started. If your child (girl or boy) is age 4 to 14 by November 1, 2015, they can join our program this fall. Practices have already started but there is time to register and join in the fund. Please visit <http://tinyurl.com/NTYL Cheer> to find out more or to register. You can also email NTYLcheer@gmail.com or call me, the coordinator of the program, at [607-972-4847](tel:607-972-4847) and leave a message. – *Telessa Bean*

BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY HALL

Over this summer, members of last year's fourth grade boys basketball team have been playing ball in the Berkshire Community Hall. There is a core group of four players who always show, and usually a few more. Running full court with a 3 on 3 or 4 on 4 game is ideal. Having access to an indoor facility allows us to play independent of the weather, later in the evening, is easier on the body when a player trips or hits the floor, and also provides a touch more "seriousness" than playing outside. The new backboards and rims, and the refinished hardwood floor, provide a great environment to play. The players are focused every night and the improvement in their game is clear. We are extremely thankful for having access to the facility. To all of those who revived the Community Hall, and continue to support its mission, thank you! *Bruce Pirger*

Have you seen the community hall's basketball court? With a freshly finished floor and 2 new baskets it's like playing at a high school gym. They're nice glass backboards with breakaway rims, floor is a little lighter colored than before but it looks great and it brightens up the place nice. With lots of grip! It will make your old shoes squeak again. It's a great place to play pickup games with your friends or even just shooting around. I enjoy playing there and a lot of my friends do as well we all love playing on a new court. Sometimes we have 12 people and have 3 teams of 4 on 4, it's a riot and a real good time enjoying the game of basketball. It's great that the community hall lets us play there for free, all you have to do is bring clean shoes for the floor and sweep it before you leave. If you want to play there have to talk to Fraser Williams and check out the schedule to see what times are available. Everything is shiny new, we want to keep it that way for as long as we can. To me it's a privilege being able to play at such a nice court, it's better than blacktop and no worries about the rain bothering your plans. So let's keep it nice and enjoy the game of basketball.

Cole Liddington

NEWSLETTER DELIVERY

We want to make sure you get the Town Quarterly newsletter. Keeping the address list current is still one of the most difficult and time consuming things that we do. We really need your help. Please let us know if: you or someone you know is not receiving a newsletter or getting duplicates; have a change or correction of a name or address or email; you can receive the newsletter via email saving us printing and mailing costs; are receiving the newsletter but it is addressed to Current Resident or Boxholder. We would like to have your **name** on our address list. Contacts: Fraser Williams, 657 2742, fraserw@citlink.net or Skip Hartwig 657 8418, skhartwig@frontiernet.net

NOVEMBER ELECTIONS

There will be three Berkshire Town Official positions on the November Ballot. Town Board (2) and Town Clerk. At this time, John Stoughton and Ron Sharp, both incumbents, have announced their candidacy. Annette Thayer and Bonnie Swartwood are vying for the Town Clerk position.

*C.M. Ochrymowycz, DVM
J.M. O'Krepki, DVM*

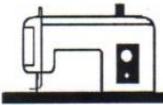


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BERKSHIRE ASSESSOR

The town has authorized me to update all of the assessments in Berkshire for the 2016 Roll year. I will be visiting all properties in early Fall to review the current information and to update photos for the Assessment records. There will be notices mailed out in April/2016 with the updated assessments, at that time property owners may make appointments to review these new assessments with me. I will start in September making office hours again, no changes can be made to the current roll. Thank you, property owners may call to make appointment at 315-391-8323.

Michael Maxwell/Sole Assessor



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OPPORTUNITY:

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To keep building up our Berkshire area Community!
Others pending!

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CODE ENFORCMENT

I have been the Code Enforcement Officer here in Berkshire for around 10 months now. It is going well, keeping me very busy! As I stated before, I am here to follow the State and Local Laws but also I am hoping to clean up the Town and restore pride in the community. Spring and summer projects have begun – many without permits. Please contact me prior to beginning any projects, to see if permits are needed. NYS has many laws regarding Swimming Pools. A permit is needed for a swimming pool, along with other state mandates, such as fences and/or pool alarms. There are several properties currently in violation of the unregistered Vehicle ordinance in place. The Town of Berkshire ordinance states not more than **ONE** unregistered Vehicle in Open Storage is permitted on any parcel of land. I am doing my best to be reasonable with those residents who are working with me. If the laws are not followed, I will follow up with enforcement, which can involve going to court, as well as fines. For those residents looking to bring back the integrity to Berkshire, please contact me with any questions or concerns. I am more than happy to help! Please be aware of the laws and if you are unsure, please call! I am available by cell phone at 607-744-9383. I look forward to continuing my services with Berkshire and cleaning up this great community. Thank you! *Rachel Jacobs*