

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

May 2016

BERKSHIRE TOWN NEWSLETTER

PRSRSTD
U.S. Postage
Newark Valley, NY
Permit No. 3

Published by the
Berkshire Community Association
Vol: 2016 Issue #2

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Address Label to be pasted here

The Red Brick Church
"Neighbors loving Jesus and you!"

**The 1st Congregational Church
of Berkshire, NY**



Corner of RT 38 & Glen Road
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Sunday Service 11:00 AM
Summer Hours 10:00 AM
Sunday School 9:30 AM

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FOODS

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SUPERVISORS NOTES

It is time again to update you on the progress of town activity. The Town's Comprehensive Plan is moving forward. A joint meeting was held with the Town Board and Planning Board to assure everyone was on the same page in the progress. Elaine Jardine, Director of Planning for the County also attended that meeting to give us some pointers on what should be accomplished next. That was extremely helpful to all of us. We thank her for her suggestions and time. When I write about the Comprehensive Plan I assume everyone knows what a comprehensive plan is. That may not be the case. Stated another way, it is a road map of where we see the town going in the next 10 years. It puts into primary focus the survey that was completed by you, the residents. Ideas change and so can the plan – the Planning Board and the Town Board rely on input from everyone to make sure the residents' concerns are addressed. We can only do this with your input – please contact any member of the Town Board or Planning Board with your thoughts and concerns so that they may be considered in what happens in your town in the next 10 years. The progress of Route 38 being resurfaced in 2017/2018, and the bridge replacement in 2017, were addressed at a public information meeting held in the Town Hall by the NYS Department of Transportation. Funding is definitely in the budget for this work and the plans have been drawn. The resurfacing of 38 is scheduled for 2017 after the bridge is completed, however it may go into 2018 depending on the weather conditions and the bridge work. We at least know it will now be done and has been funded by the State. The Town and Highway finances are on target – with the winter being so mild Highway came in under budget, which will give additional funding for road work this year. Until next time, please attend Your Town Board Meetings, held on the third Monday of each month at the Town Hall, 18 Railroad Avenue. 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.

Ron McEwen, Town Supervisor

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Dave and Carol Cooley

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Newark Valley * 607.642.5535



BERKSHIRE FREE LIBRARY**The Berkshire Free Library has a lot going on!**

On **Saturday, May 14** a full day of fun. In the morning, **Caterpillars and Butterflies**, stories, games and crafts from 10am-12 am, sponsored by the Family Resource Center. This is a great playtime for families with young children. This event is at the Berkshire Community Hall (behind the library). In the afternoon, **Game Day - Mario Kart Tournament** for the entire family, presented by Tappan-Spaulling Memorial Library and the Berkshire Free Library at the Village Noble Room, 9 Park Street from 1:00pm-3:00pm. National Library Week was April 3-10 and thank you to all the patrons who brought in all the delicious goodies to celebrate with. We will continue our **Food For Fines** program into May. Patrons can reduce or clear library fines and benefit the local food bank. What a great way to take care of your overdue fines. Call 607 657-4418 if you need more information. Did you know that the Berkshire Free Library offers **free downloads** of audiobooks, ebooks and about 100 magazines anywhere, anytime just by having a library card? Let us show you with some one-on-one training how it works. It is like having the library in your home!

Thank you to everyone that participated in our Saturday morning **Technology Class**. We covered organizing by making folders, social media, buying and selling on-line, excel etc. and everyone had a good time!

Children's Story Time continues Wednesday at 10:00 am at the Berkshire Free Library and Thursday at 10:00 am at the Richford Congregational Church. All children are welcome. Join us for stories, crafts and creative play. Last but not least, in the last three months we have put about 300 new books out on our shelves. Come see if there is one for you. Summer is right around the corner and we have started planning our Summer Reading Program! Watch for more details. Fran Miller, Berkshire Free Library *Fran Miller*

HIGHWAY NEWS

For the first time in many years we finished the winter season with a pretty good portion of our road sand pile remaining. We have also been able to start our road work early because of the dry weather. Finally had the large creek gravel pile behind the Town Hall crushed which gives us a significant reserve of quality gravel – there might be enough to get through the summer. We have been replacing one plow truck each 5 years for the past 2 decades and the result is that we have a reliable fleet. As a result we did not seek a new one last year which was the 5th year since our last truck purchase. Also increasing environmental and emissions standards have caused prices to skyrocket. However, we do not want to find ourselves in the same position we were in the mid-nineties when the Town truck fleet was so ancient and unreliable that we had to spend a fortune annually on parts & repairs. So I am trying to get info to see what might best serve Berkshire. The Town of Harford is expecting delivery of a new truck similar to ours. I will see how that truck performs before we try to make any decision. Some good news! The Consolidated Highway Improvement Plan (CHIPS) money that we get from the NYS Thruway Authority is scheduled to increase significantly this year and we may be able to do a bit more paving than we originally planned. Hopefully with fuel prices significantly lower, the price of asphalt and road tar will decrease.

Karl Spoonhower

ASSESSOR NEWS:

Grievance Day is Thursday, May 26 from 4-8pm at the Berkshire Town Hall. I will be in the office on 5/14 8-10am, 5/17 12-4pm, 5/18 5-9pm, and on Grievance Day from 12-4pm. Grievance Day is first come, first served. Sign in and the panel/board will review your assessment with you and you will be notified a few weeks later of their decision. You must fill out a form RP-524 before the Board can review your case. Grievance forms can be printed off the computer from the ORPS web site at www.tax.ny.gov, or we may have a few copies on hand. The form is 4 pages with an additional 10 page instruction booklet. We will assist anyone who has trouble filling out the form. Assessor: *Mike Maxwell* ph 315 391 8323 e-mail: maxappraisal@hotmail.com

BERKSHIRE FIRE COMPANY

We had a nice mild winter but don't forget after the heating season is over it is a good time to have your chimney cleaned and checked. Let's get ready for next year and keep everyone safe. With spring comes the statewide burn ban. Remember until May 15th all burning is illegal except small camp/cooking fires less than 3 feet by 3 feet by 4 feet. Starting May 15th you can burn brush less than 8 foot in length but it is always illegal to burn trash and leaves. When burning be sure to keep the area around the fire clear of combustibles and have a means of extinguishment on hand. This spring has been a busy one statewide with large brush and wildfires. Let's not be the next town needing help with a large brush fire. The fines for illegal fires can be anywhere from \$500 - \$10,000 and may include jail time depending on size of the fire and if anyone is hurt in process of extinguishing it. So please follow the rules and be safe. We are currently planning an open house at the fire station for some time in June; the date will be posted on the sign as soon as it is set. We will have lots of free stuff and games for the kids and information booklets for all ages. Our EMTs will be there to check your blood pressure and share health information with you. This will also give you a chance to see our beautiful station and also to see the new ambulance we just purchased. There will be food fun and laughs for all. It will be a good time to stop by and thank the volunteers as well as see all of your friends and neighbors. The highlight of the open house will be a dedication ceremony of the new memorial that will be placed in front of the station. The memorial will honor all the past members of the Fire Company, Auxiliary, and Emergency Squad. It is being donated by Dave and Carol Cooley so when you see them be sure to thank them for all they do to support local communities. As always we are in need of volunteers. That is the one resource we cannot buy, trade for or steal. That is where we need you. There is a job for everyone from 16-160. Stop by at one of our monthly meetings the first Tuesday of every month at 7:00 and see what you can do for your community. Like all volunteers we are not paid in dollars and cents but get the pride in helping those who need it at their worst time. If you have my cell phone (607)427-0964.

Bret Welch, Fire Chief

Town Board Members:[Lillian Hoffmier](#) 607-657-2769[John Stoughton](#) 607-657-2501[Ron McEwen](#) 607-372-3096, **Town Supervisor**[Ronald Sharp](#) 607-657-5555[Fraser Williams](#) 607-657-2742**Town Board Meetings:** Berkshire Town Hall 18 Railroad Avenue

Workshop - Tuesday before Board Meeting at 5:30PM Regular Monthly Meeting 3rd Monday at 7:00PM

Town Attorney: Nicholas R. Canizio 607-642-8500**Bookkeeper:** [Sue Bierl](#) 607-657-8312**Town Clerk:** [Annette Thayer](#) 607-657-8647 Berkshire Town Hall 18 Railroad Avenue

Tax Collector, Records Management Officer and Registrar of Vital Statistics:

Tuesday and Thursday 6:00PM to 8:00PM Saturday 9:00AM to 11:00AM

Highway Superintendent: Karl Spoonhower 607-657-2705**Town Justice:** Kelly Sharp 607-657-8286**Court Clerk:** Rebecca Randall 607-657-8090**Town Court:** 3rd Monday at 5:00PM**Town Assessor:** Mike Maxwell 315-391-8323**Dog Control Officer:** Ron Raab 607-426-4567**Code Enforcement Officer:** [Rachel Jacobs](#) 607-744-9383 Every Thursday 5:30PM to 7:00PM**Planning Board:** Ken Ceurter, Chair 607-657-2831. Meeting 1st Tuesday each month at 6:30PM Town Hall**County Planning Board Rep.** Tim Pollard, 607-657-8210**Town Historian:** Nancy Hunt 607-657-4416**Town REAP Representative:** Dick Bierl 607-657-8312

Gene Payne's Body Shop
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Gene Payne · Brian Payne

12500 Route 38
Berkshire, NY
607.657.8088



BERKSHIRE POST OFFICE HOURS

Post Office Lobby Monday - Friday 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM Saturday 7:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Retail Window Monday - Friday 8:00 AM - 11:30 AM and 12:30 PM - 3:00 PM Saturday 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM Call Martin Kilmer, Post Master with any questions at phone number 607-642-3611

Melinda Eaton

Owner/Operator

Valley Hair Visions

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Newark Valley, New York 13811

(607) 642-9924

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Fri-Sat 9-10, Sun N-7

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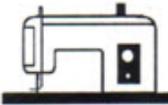
BERKSHIRE PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board and Town Board recently met to discuss the Comprehensive Plan. The multi-year plan incorporates desires of the community (using survey results) and other visions of current and future needs. Communication is a high priority and input still desirable so please feel free to attend our meetings on the 1st Tuesday of the month at 6:30 in the Town Hall. We are also looking for residents who would like to volunteer and join the board and work on this plan and other relevant issues such as local laws. Please consider joining our team by attending a meeting or contacting our Chair, Ken Ceurter at 657-2831 or by email at kc_cute@frontiernet.net and he can send you a summary of our purpose and/or read our bylaws at <http://www.berkshirenyc.net/planning-board.html>.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

Hi everyone! I am still working on correcting many ongoing property maintenance and unlicensed vehicle issues. It is a long tedious process but I am seeing progress so it is worth the time and effort. I will continue to work hard to get Berkshire cleaned up and community integrity restored. I have been issuing several orders to remedy as well as court appearance tickets. My hope is that slowly the residents will realize, I do follow through on these code violations and if you do not correct the violations, you will be fined by the courts. As for unlicensed vehicles – currently Berkshire residents are allowed only **1 unlicensed vehicle** in open storage. My goal is to correct this violation without fines – in the near future – violators will have their vehicles towed away and if appropriate proof of registration is not provided and storage fees are not paid – the vehicles will be sent to local scrap yard and the monies will be used to pay for any fines and/or storage fees. This may seem severe to many but at this point, I think strict enforcement is needed. Later this year, there will be new code adoptions. Once this occurs – there will be a short transition period before the new codes are in full force. A majority of my time as Code Enforcement Officer is spent working on complaints. There are several properties currently in violation and I hope to get them all corrected. You will see clean-up progress along route 38 at a couple of properties. Also, there will be clean-up along Mill Street as well as East Berkshire Rd. I am just one person, and I am part time but I am doing my best to get to as many properties as I can but rest assured, eventually I will get to all of them! My office hours are Thursday evenings 5:30-7pm. I can be reached by cell phone at (607) 744-9383 (call or text) and also by e-mail at racheljacobsceo@gmail.com. Have a great Spring and Summer! Thanks *Rachel Jacobs*

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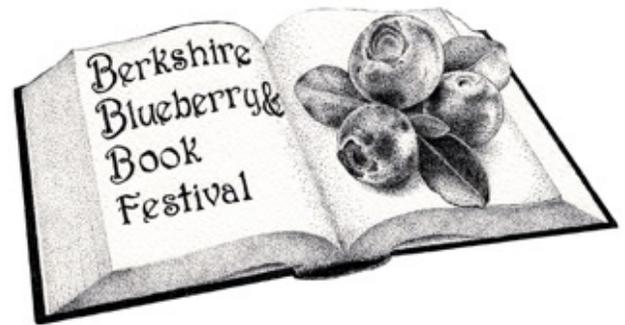

Karl Spoonhower
Office (607) 657-8202
Cell (607) 725-1402

New Homes Additions Remodeling

128 Barnes Rd.
Berkshire, NY 13736

BLUEBERRIES GALORE

BLUE SKIES & SUNSHINE are ordered for **SATURDAY, JULY 23rd**, for the 2nd annual **Berkshire Blueberry & Book Festival!** The Fire Station, Community Hall and Library will be bustling with events from 9am through 4pm. Come early for blueberry pancakes served from 7 – 10am and don't miss the Fire Department's finger-licking chicken BBQ beginning at 11am! Bring your family, friends and neighbors to enjoy delicious food, raffles, prizes and a wide variety of entertainment. All ages will find inspiration through music, art, dance and history. Live entertainment and an Art Show will be featured in the Community Hall throughout the day. We have many local and some not-so-local musicians lined up! This year we welcome Sister Moon, Valley Harmony with Tina Salasny, Ain't Misbehavin' and the Steve Holcomb Band. Local students and Full of Grace dancers will also entertain us! The grounds will be filled with meet and greet authors, unique vendors, children's activities and the popular classic car show. Antique appraisals by internationally known Bob Connelly (www.bobconnelly.com), fun family programs and History Museum tours are planned in the library. Calling all bakers!! New this year, is a Blueberry Bake-Off sponsored by the First Congregational Church of Berkshire. Categories include pies, muffins, desserts, gluten-free, and jam/jelly with proceeds going to the Helping Hands Food Pantry. Registration forms and complete rules will be available in May online at RedBrickChurch.org and at the Berkshire Library. Also, your baking talents will again be needed for the library's berry good bake sale. If you would like to volunteer for set-up, clean up, or help for an hour or two at one of the event stations, please contact Karen McNally (657-8558). You get back more than you give when you volunteer!



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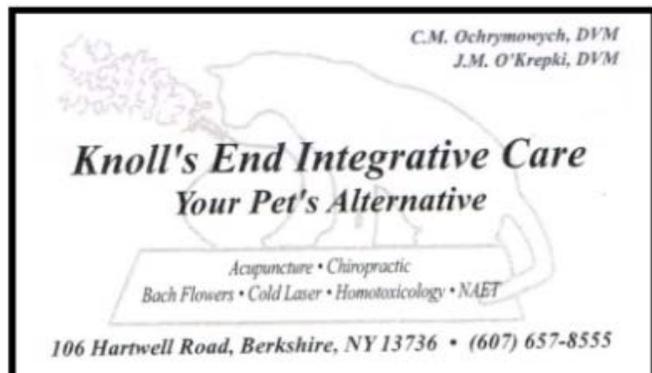


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NEWSLETTER DELIVERY

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

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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Housing Consultant

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Patsi3467@aol.com