

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

November 2016

BERKSHIRE TOWN NEWSLETTER

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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
PO Box 196
Berkshire, NY 13736
Sunday Service 11:00 AM
Summer Hours 10:00 AM
Sunday School 9:30 AM

HOLLENBECK'S
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SATURDAY 6am to 6pm, SUNDAY 9am to 5pm
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FOODS

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Fruit Trays and Veggie Trays!!
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SUPERVISOR'S NOTES

Sure feels like winter is coming as I write this article. Hope everyone enjoyed the hot summer weather and brief fall. Your Town Board and members of the community have been busy working to improve some of the items that were requested in your survey results.

The resurface of Rt. 38 and the bridge replacement are still scheduled for the Spring of 2017 by the NYS DOT. This may cause some inconvenience while the work is done but well worth it to get a smooth road.

Last newsletter I talked about a group of towns and village working together to obtain financial benefits for all residents. That project to replace streetlights with energy efficient LED lights is moving forward. A MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) has been sent out for review and when completed the costs and benefits of the project will be calculated and reviewed for feasibility of going to the next phase. This project has the potential of saving tax dollars on the cost of electricity for the streetlights in the thousands of dollars.

Speaking of streetlights, look for the new Holiday Lights to be put up the week of Thanksgiving. The candles we have had for years have finally seen their last season and we hope you enjoy the replacement lights.

The Planning Board is moving forward with the comprehensive plan and the Town Board is trying to implement some of what is included. We have a new Berkshire Recreation Committee composed of volunteers from the community. They will also have an article in this newsletter. Some of the projects include updating the ball field to bring it back to standards. The NTYL has been invited to use the field in 2017 and forward for league games. This is really exciting and should bring activities back to the field. We are also planning a playground for the children. All of this takes time and community effort and are so lucky to have this new committee of volunteers as well as other volunteers to help bring these items to reality.

Be safe for the winter and look forward to other exciting news in the spring.

Until next time, please attend Your Town Board Meetings, held on the third Monday of each month 7:00PM 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*

HIGHWAY NEWS

Our equipment is in pretty good shape but we are overdue for a new truck. We have been faithfully replacing them on a 5-year cycle and that is the main reason that our trucks are so reliable. However, we now have 2 that are more than 20 years old. We have been putting money each year in a reserve fund for new highway equipment and I will be talking with the Town Board about a new truck. At this point I am keeping my eyes open for a good used one. Ever increasing emission control standards are driving prices up and reliability down.

Our road sand stockpile is quite substantial, due in part to last year's mild winter but also because we have found a source in Lisle of quality sand at less than half the former cost.

The Town has bought new lighted Christmas decorations for Main Street and we will be putting them up around Thanksgiving.

Our supply of used motor oil that we heat with is in pretty good shape, thanks in large part to the Dryden School Bus Garage. We can always use more though so if you have any, drop it off at the barn or call us if you have a large quantity. *Karl Spoonhower*

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Dave and Carol Cooley
Ryan and Erica Lamb

www.macphersonfuneralhome.com

Newark Valley * 607.642.5535



BERKSHIRE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH NEWS

Sunday Night Worship J.A.M. that's the theme and the name of the new Sunday night Youth Ministry here in Berkshire at the Congregational Church. For several years, Mike Kunik has been helping kids learn how to play the instruments and perform as part of a worship band. We also still had our Sunday night youth ministry as the number of kids grew, we were having different groups meeting on 3 different nights a week. But after prayer and planning, we've been able to bring some other musically gifted youth-loving leaders into our group, so that we could do our whole program on only one night of the week.

We're calling it "Sunday Night Worship JAM", building on ideas given from some our older youth. JAM stands for Jesus And Me, and the Bible lesson portion is called the "JAM Session". We'll also be calling the youth involved in the ministry the "JAM CREW": C.R.E.W. stands for "Christians Ready, Equipped, Willing".

Katie Schultheis is helping with keyboard training, and Ann Woodard is helping with guitar and vocal training. Both teach music, and we're delighted for their help. Mike Kunik continues working with the kids on drums; Jenn Willard (with help from Kathy Platz) leads the Bible devotional each night, and Pastor Jerry helps with games and closing.

We start with an opening game/contest every week at 5:45 pm. Then after singing to Jesus with our live band, kids split up to follow different tracks, depending on what instrument they want to learn. We also have an "activity" track with different featured presenters each week for the kids who aren't interested in the music. Because we're welcoming kids from age 10 up through High School, we have let the older and younger kids have their own groups for games and for the JAM Session Bible studies. We're done (after closing and snacks) by 7:45 pm. Usually one night a month we'll have an activity like roller skating or Corn Maize, a concert or a service project.

We'd be glad if folks would spread the word about this opportunity for our community youth to have fun and learn about Jesus. For more information and questions, call Jenn Willard at 657-2578, or Jerry & Kathy Platz at 657-8058.

BERKSHIRE RECREATION COMMITTEE

After presenting a proposal for a playground and walking path at the town board meeting this past June, a group of interested Berkshire residents met to begin a discussion regarding the accomplishment of these goals. It was agreed to call the group the Berkshire Recreation Committee, with the goal to provide recreational options for residence of all ages.

The committee, which includes representation from the Town Board and the Planning Board, will be helping with a comprehensive plan that will include refurbishing the baseball field at George M. Smith Park and building a playground and eventually a walking path. Other ideas that have been discussed include horseshoe pits, an area for other outdoor games and at least one basketball hoop.

Representatives from the committee have met with and secured the support of Town Supervision Ron McEwen and Ron Sharp, who has been appointed to head this initiative. The Board is expected to formally recognize the committee at its November meeting. The committee will help to explore funding sources and write grants to minimize expenses for the town. The Berkshire Recreation Committee has met twice since its formation, once in September and again in October. Its next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 16, 2016, 6:30pm, downstairs in the Berkshire Community Hall. All interested parties are welcome to attend.

Contact Nancy or George Lohmann if you wish to be added to the E-mail list to be kept up to date on our progress: 657-8037 or Nancy's gnlohmann@gmail.com or 765-1600 or George's tioactc@gmail.com or 765-1198.

BERKSHIRE FIRE COMPANY

Winter is right around the corner. We would like to remind everyone to slow down be safe on the slippery winter roads. Also, have you had your chimney cleaned and furnace serviced? With the windows and doors closed the chance of CO poisoning increases as well so be sure you have a working CO detector.

It is budget time for the fire district and the final budget has been approved. With the rising cost of things like equipment, legal fees, training cost, and insurance we have had to increase the budget by \$9,368. This is the first time we have increased the budget with the exception of the building payment in 5 years. We do our best to keep cost down for the tax payer but with the requirements placed on the fire service to maintain training and equipment it could not be helped this year. That is a small price to pay for the great service you get from your volunteers and the training and equipment requirements are designed to keep our fire fighters safe.

The Berkshire Fire District has received a \$5,000.00 grant from NYS to purchase new radios. Senator Fred Akshar played a key role in securing this grant for us and we owe him a big thank you. This money is being used to purchase 8 new portable radios to be used by our firefighters and fire police. The remainder of the money is being used to put speakers for the fire radio throughout the new station so we can hear what is going on no matter where we are in the station.

We have been told that some of our residents have had trouble changing batteries in their smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. We are always here to help, if you need someone to change them for you don't hesitate to call the Chief, or any member, and ask for help. The Chief, Bret Welch, can be reached at (607)427-0964 and will be sure to have someone come out and assist you. We always strive to make our community safer.

For anyone looking for a place to host your special event we do still rent the fire station. It has room for 96 people seated with tables and chairs, a nice big yard for outdoor activities, and the pavilion with picnic tables for summer events. Anyone interested in renting the station contact Bill or Jackie Morris at 657-2536. The cost for renting the station is \$100 for members, \$200 for Berkshire residents who are not members, and \$300 for non-residents of Berkshire who are not members. It makes a great place to host family holiday, birthday, anniversary or any other parties.

We have several winter events in the plans. The auxiliary will be having their annual election day dinner on November 8th. The children's Christmas party is being planned and should be bigger and better than ever. We will also be having other dinners and pancake breakfast through the winter. Watch the sign for dates and details.

Our biggest need is still volunteers. We can't continue to provide service to our friends and neighbors without volunteers. We need you to help keep this organization going. Not all members run into burning buildings we need people for all tasks. Whether it is putting out a fire, stopping someone's bleeding, cooking or serving chicken, bringing drinks and food to fires, directing traffic, serving as secretary or treasurer, cleaning up the station, washing fire trucks, collecting money at fund raisers, going shopping for supplies, or any of the other task we have everyone's help is needed. As you can see from this short list there is a task everyone can do no matter how young or old. Anyone 16 years or older can join and we need you. When you volunteer you get repaid tenfold in the good feeling you have in your heart for helping your friends and neighbors. Feel free to stop by the station the first Tuesday of any month at 7:00PM and check us out at one of our monthly meetings. Or call (607)427-0964 and talk to Chief Welch. He will be happy to get you an application and show you what the fire department is all about. *Bret Welch*

BERKSHIRE BALL FIELD

Recently the Northern Tioga Youth League (NTYL) approached the Berkshire Town Board to indicate that they had voted to use the ball field in George Smith Park on a regular basis. A number of needed improvements were discussed, including refurbishing the dugouts and bleachers, providing a Port-a-John, maintaining the bases and chalk lines, adding a little fill and possibly providing a small concession stand. The Town Board passed a resolution to allow NTYL to use the facility and agreed to do most, if not all, of the improvements.

Ron Sharp was appointed to head this initiative. To that end he has already met with Karl Spoonhower, who has agreed to repair the dugouts. He also approached the Berkshire Fire Department, who agreed to provide some of the necessary labor. Additionally, he met with representatives of the newly formed Berkshire Recreation Committee to discuss funding sources and general support for the plan. The goal is to have the ball field in good shape by May 2017.

Assessor News

All exemption renewal notices will be mailed out in early December 2017. Enclosed will be my schedule to be in the office to assist you in processing these forms. *Mike Maxwell*

Gene Payne's Body Shop
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Gene Payne · Brian Payne

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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

BERKSHIRE PLANNING BOARD

The Planning Board is making good progress on the Comprehensive Plan. We continue to build the multi-year plan utilizing survey results and other data to identify current and future needs of our town. We were fortunate enough to tour the Tioga Hardwoods facility this past week and were very impressed and it demonstrates the small business development we need to plan for and how our neighborhoods benefit from support we can provide. We strongly encourage input and open discussion 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. We recently found ourselves with another member opening and would like to thank Frank Kunik for his service during his tenure on the Board. 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. Ken Ceurter



Mon-Thurs 9-9
Fri-Sat 9-10, Sun N-7

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HELPING HANDS FOOD PANTRY

Holiday Food Boxes pickup days are Saturdays, November 19 and December 17. (Boxes are packed the night prior to distribution.) No walk-ins on those days. To sign up, call Joan @ 657-2501 or Emily @ 657-8158 or visit the pantry during regular business hours.

Pickup times will be assigned at time of signup. Changes in pickup times need to be made with Emily. No signups after November 12 for Thanksgiving box or after December 10 for Christmas box. Each family should sign up for themselves. Sign up once for both holiday boxes. If someone else is picking up the holiday box for you, please provide written permission. Anyone interested in volunteering for packing or distributing boxes should call Emily or Joan or leave your name and phone number at the pantry during regular hours. A monetary donation to help defray the costs of providing these boxes is always appreciated. Regular pantry hours are: Mondays, 6:30 to 7:30 pm and Thursdays, 2 to 4 pm.

Melinda Eaton

Owner/Operator

Valley Hair Visions

142 South Main Street
Newark Valley, New York 13811

(607) 642-9924

<http://www.valleyhairvisions.com>



CODE ENFORCEMENT

Hello everyone! I have now completed my second year here with the Town of Berkshire. It is still my goal to clean up the Town and restore pride in the community – this can be achieved by following State and Local Codes/Laws. Progress is slow but it is happening. There are several properties throughout the Town that are currently or will be shortly going through court actions for cleanup. My current focus is still on Route 38, Railroad Ave, Mill Street, and East Berkshire Rd.

The updated version of the Uniform Code became fully effective on October 3, 2016. Any new permits will now be subject to the new Codes. All codes are available online for your review. The Town Clerk does have the new code books in her office as well if anyone is interested in reviewing them. One important change I would like to address is in regards to motor vehicles. NO inoperative or unlicensed motor vehicle shall be parked, kept or stored on any premises.

If anyone has any complaints or issues – please contact me at any time. I am doing the best that I can at the moment but I will again emphasize that Code Enforcement is very time consuming. Results will not be seen overnight! The Town residents can help speed up this process by ensuring to follow the codes in place. Also, spend more time looking in your own yards, rather than rushing to complain about others.

There have been 12 permits issued so far this year. Heating season is upon us. Please remember to test your carbon monoxide and smoke detectors monthly. Also, batteries should be changed yearly. Remember to get a proper container for ashes and do not put them in or on any combustible materials. Please remember to inspect and clean your chimney if using wood, pellets, or coal. Make note that if you install or have a company install any new heating source such as a wood stove, pellet stove, coal stove, boiler furnace, gas furnace, or any type of fire place insert you need to get a permit at the Town Clerk's Office for the installation of such heating sources and the new unit needs to be inspected by Code Enforcement prior to its use.

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*

Grandview Farms
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- Reasonable Rates -

Howard & Gay Coon 400 Hartwell Rd.
Owners East Berkshire, NY 13736

TOWN WIDE EMAIL LIST: We maintain a list of email addresses to disseminate information on things of interest and significant events in and around Berkshire such as major projects, meetings, fundraisers, public hearings, new or proposed legislation, lost or found pets, etc. We have 220 addresses on the list and have been using it to help keep you informed for 15 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@frontier.net.



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Patsi Spoonhower
Housing Consultant

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Cell (607) 725-1395
Fax: (607) 725-8388
Patsi3467@aol.com

BERKSHIRE FREE LIBRARY

Your Library is getting ready for winter. Come see our new books that will make great winter reading. So many of your favorite authors, Debbie Macomber, Nicholas Sparks, Harlan Coban, Janet Evanovich are just a few of your favorite fiction authors that we have put on our shelves this month. Take a look at our new webpage, www.berkshirefreelibrary.org. You can easily get to our Facebook page from the small f at the top of the page.

Save the date, November 16, at 7:00 PM for a book talk and signing by local author, Mary Jordan. Her new book, *The 109th New York Volunteer Infantry Remembered*, which is a compilation from letters and diaries of 54 soldiers and officers of the local regiment. Please watch our websites for more local author book signing in the next few months.

Story Hour has started again! All preschoolers, homeschoolers, parents, grandparents and caregivers are all welcome. Join us at the Berkshire Free Library, Tuesday morning at 10 AM. If you miss us then, the story and story craft will be available throughout the week during our regular business hours. Look for our pictures on the Berkshire Free Library Facebook page to see what we are working on.

Adults, do you feel like you don't have enough time for your favorite craft or to visit with your neighbors? Come join us on the 1st and 3rd Thursday starting in November and bring the craft that you are working on while you see what craft your neighbors are working on. November 3 will be our first night. We will have some examples of crafts if you are looking for something new. Join us from 7 - 8:30 PM on the 1st and 3rd Thursday nights.

Please watch the website, www.berkshirefreelibrary.org and Facebook for upcoming dates for our events in December. Plan to attend our traditional December holiday party and our local author book talks.

Remember the library is more than just books. You can now download movies, comic books, TV shows, audio books and magazines for free just because you have a library card and use your Berkshire card at any of the 38 libraries in the Finger Lakes Library System.

Fran Miller

*C.M. Ochrymowych, DVM
J.M. O'Krepi, DVM*

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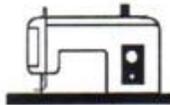
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NEWSLETTER DELIVERY

We want get everyone the Town Quarterly newsletter. Keeping the address list current is 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 Board Members

Supervisor	Ron McEwen	607-372-3096	Highway Superintendent	Karl Spoonhower	607-657-2705
Board	Lillian Hoffmier	607-657-2769	Justice	Kelly Sharp	607-657-8286
	Ronald Sharp	607-657-5555	Court Clerk	Rebecca Randall	607-657-8090
	John Stoughton	607-657-2501	• Town Court: 3rd Monday at 5:00PM		
	Fraser Williams	607-657-2742	Dog Control Officer	Ron Raab	607-426-4567
Town Assessor	Mike Maxwell	315-391-8323	Attorney	Nicholas R. Canizio	607-642-8500
Town Board Meetings: Berkshire Town Hall 18 Railroad Avenue			Bookkeeper	Sue Bierl	607-657-8312
• Workshop Tuesday before Board Meeting at 5:30PM					
• Regular Monthly Meeting 3rd Monday at 7:00PM					

Clerk	Annette Thayer	607-657-8647	Code Enforcement Officer	Rachel Jacobs	607-744-9383
• Tuesday and Thursday 6:00PM to 8:00PM			• Every Thursday 5:30PM to 7:00PM		
• Saturday 9:00AM to 11:00AM					
Berkshire Town Hall 18 Railroad Avenue					
• Tax Collector, Records Management Officer and Registrar of Vital Statistics:					

Planning Board

Chair	Ken Ceurter	607-657-2831	County Planning Board Rep	Tim Pollard	607-657-8210
• Meeting 1st Tuesday each month at 6:30PM Town Hall					
Town Historian	Nancy Hunt	607-657-4416			

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Cell (607) 725-1402

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Berkshire, NY 13736

REMINDER: Tuesday, November 8, is election day. Polls will be open at the Town Hall from 6am till 9pm. This is not only a Presidential election, but will determine state positions and local issues as well.