



VOLUME 37 NO 2

HAGUE, N.Y. 12836

February 2008

MARCH 1st DEADLINE FAST APPROACHING

David Martucci, Sole Assessor, urges all **primary residence** homeowners to contact the office (543-6161) to see if they are eligible for the following partial property tax exemptions:

Senior Citizens' exemption

Income limitations are:

County & Town taxes	\$23,700
School taxes	\$22,000

Basic STAR exemption: No age or income limitations.

Enhanced STAR exemption: 65 or over (or turning 65 in 2008)

Income limitation \$70,650

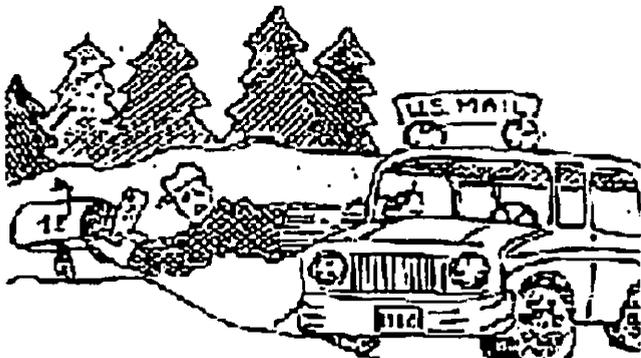
Veterans' exemption - for wartime military service

Details and applications are available Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 am to 3 pm

The filing deadline is **March 1, 2008.**

RURAL ROUTE CUSTOMERS NOTE

The snow is piling up and delivering mail to your boxes has become a challenge. Postmaster Jackie Fort says, "If you can't easily drive to your box to get the mail, then the carrier will have trouble delivering it." Snow has to be shoveled away from the box and enough snow cleared around it so that a car can pull up to it.



CHAMBERLAIN HONORED

Bob Chamberlain of Silver Bay made a life-saving discovery early on February 1, 2008 while driving on his Ticonderoga bus route. Roxanne Dore of Ticonderoga had driven over an embankment the previous evening. Although exhausted and suffering from frostbite, she just managed to crawl up to the roadside as the school bus approached.



Bob noticed her, pulled over and called for emergency help. He and the four students riding with him lifted her onto the bus and wrapped their coats around her. They were all credited for saving Dore's life and were cited for heroism at a February 4th ceremony at Moses Ludington Hospital. Then on February 14th, Bob, the students and the emergency workers were

honored by the Ticonderoga Town Board including receipt of a medal from the NYS legislature arranged by Senator Betty Little.

Bob is a member of the Hague Volunteer Fire Department and is engaged to Hague Postmaster, Jackie Fort.

HAGUE CHRONICLE SURVEY

Last month we sent out a survey with our contributions receipts. If you receive the paper as a gift, or your mailing date was not in 2007, you would not have received the survey.

We would be happy to send a copy to you. Just mail us (PO Box 748, Hague) or email us <HagueChronicle@nycap.rr.com>.

Results of our survey will be included in next month's issue so please return any copies by the end of February.

TAX TIME IS HERE

And free tax help is available for people of all ages. If you file a basic tax form and need help, the AARP tax program, staffed by local volunteers, is for you. The program ends on April 15 so call the Community Center at 543-6161 for more information or to make an appointment.

HAGUE SENIOR CITIZENS CLUB

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MEMORIAL DAY 2008

The seniors had their first meeting of the new year on January 22nd. The new officers were introduced by Madeline Pelkey and she happily handed over the gavel to Judy Stock! (It should be noted that Bill Pelkey was grinning!) Plaques of Appreciation were presented to both Maddie and Emily Cobb.

Karen Laundree of the Hague Chamber of Commerce brought us up to date on the AARP Free Tax Preparation Program. This is the third year of the program in Hague and it is growing! They had 19 "customers" in their first year and last year there were 70! Senior Citizens and low-to-middle income families may participate by calling Bertha for an appointment. The program runs from February 1st through April 15.

The Club will again plan the Memorial Day parade and weekend festivities under Maddie's leadership. The first Parade meeting will be held on February 25 at 9:30 am and anyone wishing to chip in and help is welcome!

The next general meeting of the Senior Club will be on Tuesday, February 26, at 1:30 PM at the Community Center. The program for the day will be our popular BINGO party. Participants should bring along a "white elephant" item which will become a prize for the winners. This is a fun way to spend an afternoon in February -- helps to break up the winter doldrums -- so come and join us!

If you need a ride to any of our meetings, you can call Pat McDonough (543-6725) or Judy Stock (543-6517) and we'll make arrangements for you. See you on the 26th! ...pmm

CHORALE RESUMES REHEARSALS

The Champlain Valley Chorale announced resumption of rehearsals for its upcoming Spring concert. Weekly rehearsals will be held each Tuesday evening at 7:00 pm in Fellowship Hall of the First United Methodist Church, Wicker Street, Ticonderoga until the concert presentation in May. New singers in all sections are welcomed, and no audition is necessary. For further information, please contact Richard Barney at 585-9809.

On Saturday, May 24th, The Hague Senior Citizens Club once again will sponsor Hague's Memorial Day Celebration. We ask that you all mark the date on your calendars and start planning now.

For the FUNFEST at the Town Beach we will be seeking crafters, food concessions, demonstrations of interest, etc. For the PARADE anyone can enter - family groups, clubs, businesses, single individuals, clowns - both youth and adult. Prizes will be awarded in several categories.

The Parade Committee will be meeting on Monday, Feb 25th, at 9:30 am at the Community Center. Anyone interested in planning this event is welcome to join us. Club Membership is not a requirement. For further information please contact Emily Cobb at 543-6325 or Madeline Pelkey at 543-6130.
... mp

MEMORIAL DAY DOG SHOW

Linda Benway has announced that the popular Dog Show, held in conjunction with the Senior Club sponsored Funfest, on the day of the Memorial Day Parade will be repeated. For more information or to volunteer for this event, contact Linda at 585-6884.

PIZZA AND A MOVIE

On the second Friday of each month through May, the Silver Bay YMCA is offering a movie and pizza evening for the general public at 6 pm in Watson Arts Center. It is a fun get-together where neighbors spend a little time with other neighbors. For a suggested donation of \$5 they offer a movie on the big screen as well as pizza, salad, and beverages. They would appreciate an RSVP before the Friday to ensure that there will be enough pizzas for all.

The upcoming movies will be "Calendar Girls" on March 14th, "Ocean's Thirteen" on April 11th and "Music & Lyrics" on May 9th. For further information contact Chip Devenger at 543-8833 x 215 or email <cdevenger@silverbay.org>.

THE HAGUE CHRONICLE is mailed out by volunteers on the Thursday after the third Tuesday of each month. The news deadline is six days earlier. Please send news or address corrections to Judy Stock at <HagueChronicle@nycap.rr.com>.

The Hague Chronicle is supported by its readers and you may send your yearly tax deductible contribution (check your label) to: the Treasurer, George Ianson at:

THE HAGUE CHRONICLE
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Our website: www.thehaguechronicle.org

HAGUE FISH & GAME CLUB EVENTS

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OWL PROWL

The Hague Fish & Game Club has planned its annual Fishing, Ice Auger & Chisel Contest for March 8th & 9th with lots of cash awards including \$200 each to the largest Lake Trout and Salmon, in the adult division. There will be music and food at the club on Saturday evening.

Treasurer Korinna Ryder has announced that in September she submitted a grant application to the Friends of the NRA and the club will be receiving \$4025 to redo the shooting range. Among the plans are permanent, enclosed shooting positions and upgrading the downrange targets. The Club is also holding a raffle for a Mossberg model 500, 12 gauge pump in full camouflage with tickets at events and at the Hague Market where the gun is on display. Also at the Hague Market and available to the public are shirts, caps, sweatshirts and other items with the Fish & Game Club logo on them.

For more information on the Club or any of its events call Val Lawrence at 543-6846, Steve Ramant at 543-6542 or Korinna Ryder at 543-6157.



Korinna Ryder & Steve Ramant

On Saturday, March 22, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. the LGLC staff will lead a ramble through the wintry landscape in search of owls at the Pilot Knob Ridge Preserve, in Fort Ann. You can join them to learn the different sounds of the common species of owls found in the area and may even catch a glimpse of a curious owl who flies in to get a better look at its visitors. Pre-registration required - call Sarah Hoffman at 518-644-9763 or email <shoffman@lgc.org>

BATTLE ON SNOWSHOES 250TH ANNIVERSARY

On Saturday, March 8, 2008 the Town of Hague will sponsor a snowshoe and ski rally at the Rogers Rock Campsite to commemorate Major Robert Rogers historic Battle on Snowshoes.

Events will occur from 11 am - 2 pm. Period garb and gear are encouraged but not required. NASTAR format race option - ski, snowshoe or both. Prizes will be offered for most authentic garb and best race times.

A special guest will be Bob Bearor, author, re-enactor and foremost authority on Rogers' battle. He is the author of five books on the French and Indian War. His "The Battle on Snowshoes" has had over 30 printings and is available on VHS and DVD. Bob will also be presenting a slide/lecture program the evening before at the Ticonderoga Community Center at 7 pm. The program will include the "Legend of Rogers Slide."

Come on March 8th to help celebrate this important event in the early history of what would eventually become Hague. Come to participate or just to watch for a time of fun, food and history. For information call Joe McCranels at 543-6588 or Karen Costello at 543-6590. ...jmc

TRIATHLON TO BE STAGED AGAIN

Randy Engler, founder of North Country Events, has announced that the 2nd annual *North Country Triathlon* will be held on Saturday, June 28th starting at 7:30 am at Hague Beach. For the 2008 race they will be adding a Sprint distance race in addition to the Olympic distance race.

The 2007 event raised over \$4000 to support The Hope Lodge in Burlington, VT which is a non-profit organization where cancer patients can stay while receiving treatment. Most of their patients are from the upstate New York region. The 2008 event will also raise funds for the ROOM-TO-READ organization which seeks to intervene early in the lives of children.

For more information of the events or to volunteer see <www.northcountrytri.com>.

HVFD 2007 IN REVIEW

The year past at the Hague Volunteer Fire Department (HVFD) was marked by some significant changes in leadership, an ambitious schedule of training and certification and a busy call schedule. With the departure of long time Chief Chris Swinton, Dave Hoffay and Jim Young were appointed and then elected Co-Chiefs for 2008.

Training occurred in several areas, most notably; 240 man hours in Confined Space Rescue, a National Grid Electrical Safety Class, and a Response to Hypothermia class. There were 2 newly certified EMTs (Meg Haskell and Jocelyn Fisher) and 2 recertified EMTs (Lu Megow and Bill Cobb). Recently WC Emergency Communication Specialists presented a course to 24 members.

For 2007 there were a combined 131 EMT and Fire calls using 1576 man hrs. The Department is enthused with the progress to date toward reorganization, and we look for community support as we move into the new year. ... jmc



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS - 1/24/08

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The meeting was canceled due to lack of applications. The next ZBA meeting will be held on February 21st.

PLANNING BOARD - 2/7/08

Chairman EJ Siwek and members Rolly Allen, John Brown, Bruce Clark and Pam Peterson were present. Dick Frasier was absent and there was one vacancy.

CONNOLLY, (26.18-1-8) 9236 Lakeshore Dr (TR-1)

The applicant is requesting an addition to a legal nonconforming structure. A 48 sq. ft. raised walkway is proposed for the purpose of relocating the entrance to the structure. Although the entire structure will be renovated all other components of the structure will remain within the footprint of the original structure. A 22% increase in living space is proposed. The applicant is also requesting a variance to build a 165 sq. ft. lean-to within 50 feet of the Lake. A stormwater plan has been submitted. A site visit was planned.

MORGAN (76.20-1-12) 8116 Lakeshore Dr (TR-1R)

The Board approved a reissuing by the ZEO of a Hague Land Use Compliance certificate that had expired. Although the dwelling is not completed all of the setbacks, height, and compliance issues still exist.

USING THE WARREN COUNTY GIS MAP

Some readers have wondered 1) why we include the tax map number in our Planning and Zoning reports and 2) where the properties are located. This number identifies the parcel and can be referenced in the Assessor's books at the Community Center.

For those of you with internet service, here is a very useful tool to get the information. Go to <<http://gis.co.warren.ny.us>>. Click on "Hague". Click on "Search for Parcel". Enter tax map number and search. Voila! You can work with the other features such as: "click on map to:" zoom, identify, pan, etc.

SECRETARY NEEDED FOR MEETINGS

With the resignation of Nancy Young as secretary of the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals, the Town of Hague is looking for another person to take the minutes. The Boards each meet once per month. Any interested person should contact the Community Center at 543-6161.

TOWN BOARD MEETING - 2/12/08

Supervisor Dan Belden and Board Members Edna Frasier, Dick Gladu, Mark Martucci and Rudy Meola were all present.

Joe McCranels appeared before the Board with a request for \$300 toward the reenactment of Rogers Battle on Snowshoes. The request was approved and it will come out of the occupancy tax funds which are used for promotional events. However, Supervisor Belden pointed out that the funds cannot be used for prize money or food.

McCranels also mentioned that the responsibility for cross country ski trail grooming had been transferred from the County to the Town which then "subcontracted" it to the Hague Sno-goers.

Art Hatfield represented the Walkway Committee (it is only a walkway now - not a joint walkway/bikepath) with a request for a commitment from the Town on maintenance of the walkway once it is completed. This decision is needed before the June application for the grant. Maintenance could include plowing, repairs, cleaning, etc.

David Dunn outlined some of the Chamber of Commerce activities for the coming Winter Weekend and also mentioned that the Chamber has a new website designed by Nikolay Wilen <www.visithague.com>. The Board agreed to have the Visitor Center facilities opened on Friday for the weekend and then closed on Monday. The road race will originate from that area.

Tom Haskell, President of the Hague Sno-goers snowmobile club asked for help to ensure that the roads used for snowmobiling (among them are Tannery and McCoy roads) are not plowed back or have sand put on them. He noted that they are working hard to make them attractive to tourists coming into town and don't want people having to ride on dirt. The Highway committee will discuss the matter with the highway personnel. The Town has approved money in the 2008 budget for the grooming work and the Supervisor said that a check will be written to the Sno-goers when funds come in from the county.

Linda Benway asked what had happened on plans for cable service on New Hague Road. Property owners had been receiving letters from Time Warner that they would have to pay to have it done. Supervisor Belden said that was an error since the Town had designated its portion of the franchise fees for it. He will urge them to get started on the project.

Benway also announced that she will again organize a Dog Show for the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend. She suggested more benches for the Park and Art Hatfield said that the Kiwanis Club might donate them.

Although the issue was not clarified for the audience, apparently a resident was cited by the Town for barking dogs and then fined. Linda Benway asked about the situation since the dogs are still barking. She wondered if a new law could be proposed.

Committee Reports:

Assessor/Justice - Councilman Gladu reported that a Supreme Court judge in New York has ruled that the State cannot use taxpayers money for taxes on forest preserve lands. This ruling could have a great impact in Hague where 52% of land is owned by NYS. Since this affects all the counties in the Adirondack park they will be fighting it.

Buildings & Grounds/CC - Councilman Martucci mentioned a lack of office space and a plan to convert the Board Room to the Assessor's office and the two offices of the assessor would be freed up with one used for the Town Board members and the other for the Town Historian. Councilman

Con't from page 4 - Town Board

Meola noted that this was a far-reaching proposal and a decision should not be made immediately. Martucci felt that it should be implemented even if temporary. However no change can be made now since the Board room is being used by the AARP volunteer tax preparation program.

Martucci also noted that the proposal for work on the back porch are due back in March and should be ready for the next meeting.

Finance & Insurance - Council member Frasier reported that they are getting ready for requests for proposals (RFP) on the Town insurance coverage. She also noted that CD rates have gone down and that GFNB, TDBanknorth & TFCU will be asked to give presentations to the Board.

Councilman Meola asked the Supervisor what process had been used to renew the CDs. Meola also noted that if rates had been selected at different banks, the Town could have, for example, earned more than 2 times the interest it received during December and January on the general accounts. He submitted a proposal for the board to study from GFNB with a variety of options.

Fire Dept. - Councilman Gladu noted a problem with getting water out of the new hydrants in the Town Park which will need to be corrected in the spring.

Highway - No bids were received on the truck so suggestions were made that it be put into the County auction or on eBay. Councilman Gladu reported that the highway department has gone through 1/2 the salt budget for the year. He also noted that the "CHIPS" (highway) money from the state will be less this year. The Supervisor noted that the highway department has been using the transfer station truck and the transmission went out so repairs should be charged to the highway budget.

Museum & Historian - Councilwoman Frasier said that she has met with the new Town Historian Jerry Crammond and as Chairperson of the committee she will be the liaison with him.

Personnel - The committee interviewed 4 people who were all very qualified for the Planning Board vacancy. They recommended that Martin Fitzgerald, who has the most experience, be appointed. The other names will be kept on a list for any future vacancies.

Planning/Zoning/Stormwater - Councilman Gladu reported on a request from the ZEO for permission for planning and zoning members to attend a 2 day Lake Placid meeting. He and Supervisor Belden also plan to go. ZEO Cathy Clark has set May 14th for the Training Day for members of those boards.

Councilman Gladu also reported meeting with a communications cell system provider. There are systems that can be used but because of the light traffic in our area it is cost prohibitive. The company could link to a receiver/transmitter pole in Ticonderoga but it would cost about \$45K per mile or a total of about \$450,000. The committee will continue to search for options.

Recreation/Promotion & Youth - Councilman Meola announced that the Warren County Youth Leadership Conference will be held on March 12 at Adirondack Community College. He offered to take any interested young people to the conference and the Board gave him authorization to do so.

Sewer District #1 & #2 - Supervisor Belden reported on a leak in the 9N pump station in Sewer District #1 causing a need for emergency repair. He called other Board members for approval to spend the necessary \$8000 which will come out of the sewer capital fund.

Most of the necessary easements have been signed for Sewer District #2 but they need 2 more to be signed.

Town Park - Councilmen Meola and Martucci met and recommended the following employees for the summer. Park Attendants - Scott Barringer and Kathi Ramant, Visitor Center - Evelyn Gravelle and Joe McCranels, and Life Guards - John Paul Ockrin and Jamie Patchett and Frankie Lafferty (alternate) pending certification.

Transfer Station - Councilman Martucci said the current contract will be up for renewal and they will go over it. Councilman Gladu said they will have a plan for Clean-Up day.

Under other business, the Board:

1. Approved 4-1 the signing by the Supervisor of the Cross-country ski trail management agreement. Councilman Meola noted that the contract had been signed by the Supervisor previously before authorizing him to do so. The agreement gives the Town all responsibilities for the trails including liability.
2. Approved a request for training expenses in June for Waste Water Treatment Plant employee O'Leary.
3. Approved the signing by the Supervisor of the \$1500 contract with the Hague Sno-goers to maintain the Cross-Country ski trails.
4. Approved recommended changes in the Employee Manual.
5. Appointed Martin Fitzgerald to fill a vacancy on the Planning Board with term to expire in December 2014.
6. Received a letter from Randy Engler about the 2008 North Country Triathlon and will set up a meeting with him.
7. Received the year-end financial statement from the Hague Senior Citizens Club.
8. Approved a request by the Chamber of Commerce to use the Community Center for the August 1-3, 2008 Annual Arts Fair.
9. Discussed a letter from the NYS DOT recommending enforcement rather than a reduction in the speed limit by Rogers Rock campsite.
10. Received a thank you for the \$250 toward the Federal Scenic Byway.

Con't on page 6 - Town Board

Con't from page 5 - Town Board

- 11. Approved a motion to sign the \$8,500 contract with Alonzo Fireworks for 1/2 hour for the July 3, 2008 fireworks show and also gave them permission to dock at the Town boat dock from June 27 until after the fireworks.
- 12. Passed a resolution about the Henry Knox Cannon Trail Marker in Sabbath Day Point.
- 13. Accepted with regret the resignation of Nancy Young as secretary to the Planning and Zoning Boards effective March 1, 2008. They will advertise to fill the vacancy.
- 14. Approved a \$1000 agreement with Thermal Associates for maintenance of the cooling system.
- 15. Approved the hiring of summer personnel.
- 16. By consensus agreed to maintain the proposed walkway. Supervisor Belden said his idea would be to buy a small tractor with cab and snowblower and that could be put into the grant application.

Supervisor's Report:

Supervisor Belden mentioned tax assessments might be done by the county. Councilman Gladu noted that New York has one of the most complex and difficult assessment procedures in the nation and read a letter from Governor Spitzer.

Gladu said that the state must establish standards and that money would be wasted if done by the counties.

Councilman Meola said that the town is limited in what it can do but the the Board should try to meet with the Ticonderoga School Board and Town Board to discuss the issues. It might help if Hague and Ticonderoga were to send similar petitions and there was a consensus as to what has to be done.

Supervisor Belden reported on the Gaslight Village property environmental project in Lake George Village. He said he wasn't in favor of it because he didn't like the DEC easement and that the project doesn't benefit Hague directly but it does benefit the Lake.

HAGUESCAPES

You must see this! The Hague Firehouse Restaurant has been transformed into a marvelous art gallery with the showing of "Haguescapes" - paintings by Richard Stout and Victoria Stewart. Fourteen of these bold and colorful works grace the walls for a show that will last until March 2. The public is invited to a reception on Sunday, February 24, 2008 at 4 pm at the restaurant.

Richard Stout and Victoria Stewart first visited at Silver Bay and then they rented summer places. In 1978, they purchased the Turner family property adjacent to Lake Forest Acres. In 2005 they made Hague their permanent home and have extensively renovated the home to include their studios.

Richard and Victoria, a portrait painter, are active members of the new Ticonderoga Arts Council.



**Katie Wells,
Hague Creek chef**

**HAGUE CREEK COMPLEX
FOR SALE**

The Hague Creek Antiques & Gift shop building with the Post Office and the Hague Creek Cafe are all listed for sale with Alison Craig Realty

<<http://www.alisonvcraigrealty.com/comm3.htm>>. Good news for anyone wanting to own a great, well-established business in Hague. Even better news for town residents is knowing that the businesses will remain open and, in fact, a full summer's planning is well under way.

Diane and George Farinick have worked side by side for over 50 years and would like to enjoy retirement and travel. We wish them well as they certainly deserve it but we are glad they will maintain the business until it is sold.

The Cafe continues with its special dinners on Wednesday evenings. For menus and more information see <www.haguecreekcafe.com>.



**Paintings by Richard Stout
from "HAGUESCAPES"**



~SOUNDINGS~

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TAX REFORM

BORN: A son, Brendyn Jacob on February 7, 2008 to Amy and Justin Molnar of Southampton, NY. Brendyn is the grandson of Kathi and Steve Ramant of Hague.

MARRIED: Matthew Elliott and Bonnie Tsui at Silver Bay on Slim Point on July 21, 2007. Matt is the son of Robin Van Sickle and James Elliott, and grandson of Ted and Shirley Halliday of Silver Bay and Carlisle, PA. Matt and Bonnie are living in San Francisco, CA.

DIED: Robert Brennan on August 30, 2007. He is survived by his wife, Ann and his six children. Bob's cottage on Uncas Bay was his delight for fifty years and continues to be a second home for his children.

CONGRATULATIONS: To Edward & Bessie Yaw formerly of Hague who celebrated 50 years of marriage on January 4, 2008. And to Bessie who will be 94 on March 30, 2008. They now reside at the Adirondack Tri County Nursing Home. Their address is PO Box 500, Rm # 109B, North Creek, New York 12853 and they would love to hear from any friends in Hague.

ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

Special congratulations to Karen Costello who has had an active and successful month of sporting activities. She came in fourth, and had a personal best, in the Lake Placid LOPPET long distance (25K) nordic ski race in the 50-55 women's age group. During the Winter Weekend on Saturday she competed in the Fred LaPann 5 mile race and came in 2nd in the mixed age group.

On Sunday, after cross-country skiing on the Rogers Rock Park trails in the morning, Karen and her family sold hot dogs and hot chocolate to grateful skiers and snowshoers enjoying the Park and wonderful view of Lake George. Proceeds of the sale went to the John Costello Memorial Fund and the Beste Scholarship Fund.

**Karen Costello
at Rogers Rock
Ski Trails**



Since 2003 we have been reporting on the efforts of Councilman Dick Gladu and others in the area (including John Whiteley, Richard Wray, Bert Windle) to address the issues relating to property tax and school funding reform.

Some of these efforts created the Tri-County Committee for Property Tax Relief - an action-oriented group of citizens in the North Country who are deeply concerned about the burdens and inequities of New York State's local property tax system - a situation spiraling out of control. Resolutions, petitions, meetings with legislators and testimony for government panels have all been part of their volunteer work. One result of this activism has been the establishment by Governor Spitzer of a NYS Commission on Property tax relief. John Whiteley has given testimony to the Commission who are expected to release a preliminary report by mid-May.

Over the past two years the Tri County Committee for Property Tax Relief has been working with our legislators (Senator Little, Assemblywoman Galef, and Assemblywoman Sayward) on the development of a circuit breaker bill which caps a residential homeowner's property tax at a certain portion of his household income. The circuit breaker has been traditionally used for homeowners with very low incomes and low assessments. The concept has been practiced in New York for decades with the maximum household income capped at \$ 18,000 and the maximum eligible home value at \$ 85,000.

During the past month, 52 Tax Activists groups, representing tens of thousands of concerned tax payers across the State have joined forces under the name of the *New York State Coalition For Property Tax Reform* and are currently lobbying our legislators to pass a property tax relief bill in the form of a circuit breaker bill followed by substantive school funding reform reducing the dependency on property taxes.

While overall progress towards meaningful property tax relief and school funding reform may be admittedly viewed as slow, the key issues have been recognized and substantive work put in place. The Coalition of concerned tax payers will continue to push for meaningful reform.

For additional specific information, contact Dick Gladu <rgladu@nycap.rr.com>.

MORE YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

Youth who would like to learn about trees, insects, how to read a compass or all about fly fishing can join 4-H clubs being formed by the Cornell Cooperative Extension. For more information on these and other programs or to volunteer to help, contact Shawn Lynch, Community Educator at 623-3291.

CATHOLIC CHURCH NOTE

It has been announced from the pulpit of Blessed Sacrament Church that beginning in 2009, there will be no services during the winter months of January through March.



SNOWMOBILE RACES: Saturday afternoon 23 snowmobiles raced each other around and around a one mile course. They were divided into four classes and had to go round 50 times except in one class where the winner found himself with no competitors after about 40 laps.

Each entrant paid \$15. to enter the grueling chase and those fees made up the prize money which was divided between the winners and one or two runner-ups for each class.

The progress of the races was relayed by watchers from four corners of the course by CB radio to Supervisor Dick Bolton who announced developments over a PA system for the spectators. The course was shortened this year (1978) to make it more interesting for the spectators.

When the big races were finished there were still several eager snowmobilers and a short drag race was organized for which each contestant paid \$5. and divided the money between the winner & 2nd place.

NIGHT RIDE: After the Buffet Dinner they were ready to go again. 25 sleds, led by Clifford Frasier & Art Belden, rode the snow to Bolton and back, up to Jabes Pond, down to Silver Bay, onto the lake and back up to Battle Hill for refreshments.

WEST POINT JUMP TEAM: It was a pleasant change to see an Army "Chopper" being greeted by a friendly people and their leader, as it was set down in the Public Park on a cold clear Sunday afternoon with just enough cloud cover to prevent snow blindness.

The helicopter circled and dimbed for a while then spilled out six West Point Cadettes, two at a time. Bright colored, wing-type parachutes opened and they made lazy circles and zig-zags over Hague leaving trails of colored smoke then landed right on target where the crowd was waiting for them on the ice. You could hear the cheers up on Holman Hill. The Army's Jump Team has won 6 out of 10 National Championships in competition with other academies and colleges.

PARASAIL: Between events it was fun to watch Jim Rypkema work out with his Parasail which looks like a small red and white parachute being pulled by a truck. Jim says two people lift it until it fills with air then he sometimes has to take 4 or 5 steps but usually "it lifts right off" and he sails along up to 100 feet above the ice. A rink had been cleared on the ice by the Patchetts and several young people were showing signs of latent talent on skates.

Little Julie Middleton, age six, granddaughter of Julia & Aaron had put on skates that morning for the first time and was skating merrily the rest of the day - with time out for lunch.

{From *The Hague Chronicle*, March 1978 ~ Researched by The Hague Historical Society}



left: Gale Halm, Bob deBuys and Holly deBuys ~ above: Visitor Center Banner

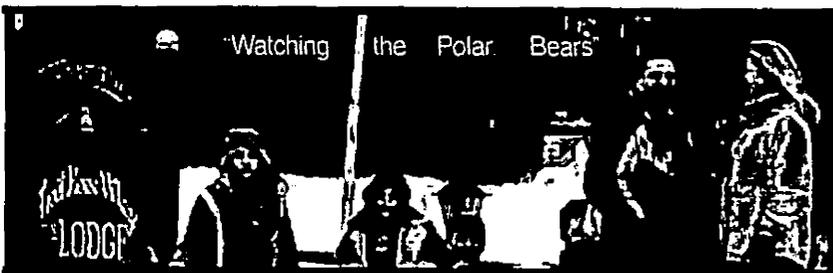
The 2008 Winter Weekend, organized by the Hague Chamber of Commerce, started with a traditional hearty breakfast served by the Hague Fire Department. Then runners gathered at the Visitor Center for the yearly Fred LaPann Memorial Run.

Medalists in this 5 Mile run were: Co-Ed Open: 1st - Steve Engler (27:30), 2nd - Tavish Costello (28:24), 3rd - Bob McLaughlin (31:14); Masters: 1st - Dave Burrows (26:38), 2nd - Tim Malaney (30:11), 3rd - Will McGivney (32:28); Seniors: 1st - Jim Cunningham (33.15), 2nd - Karen Costello (33:30), 3rd - Glen Chapman (34.01).

The Silver Bay YMCA of the Adirondacks invited the community for a day of activities and then hosted the Beste Scholarship Buffet. Receiving Beste Scholarships for 2008 were: Janine Best, John Breitenbach, Stephanie Nast, Jason Siwek, Akashia Swinton and Kacheena Trudeau.

The Northern Lake George Rotary Club held a silent auction and a raffle was held to benefit the Beste Fund. The 50/50 raffle was won by Barbara Folkemer who donated most of it back to the Beste Fund.

Sunday saw snowmobiling, sledding, cross country skiing and swimming. Well, not really swimming but the annual Polar Bear Swim was held off the Trout House Village Dock. More aptly called the "Polar Bear Jump",



about 20 brave (or crazy) souls of all ages took a leap into the water carefully monitored by the HVFD. It proved to be a popular spectator sport causing a near traffic jam as dozens watched the antics. Many of them then headed to the Fire Department where a "Chili Bake-Off" presented several different versions of a warm filling meal.

NATURE NEWS

-9-

by Nancy Wotton Scarzello

Bats in Graphite

Spring, summer and fall, when dusk comes and the last light of day gives way to the indiscernible shadows of the evening, when most of our world is thinking of sleep, a small bird-like mammal is just emerging for its daily foray into the world. With a carnival of swoops and dives and twists and flapping, members of the bat family will, in mid-air, consume thousands of midges, crop pests and mosquitoes in just a few hours. They could be the Little brown bat, Large brown bat, Small-footed bat or the endangered Indiana bat as they feed on flying insects preparing for the breeding season and winter that follows.

Indiana bats are one of nine species found in New York, weighing only .2-.3 ounce (6-9 grams) and being just 2 inches in length, it is distinguished from its relative, the little brown bat, by its dark gray to grayish-brown fur and pink nose. The little brown bat has brown fur and a dark nose and ears giving it a mask-like feature lacking in the Indiana. In the spring, females will congregate in nursery colonies along the banks of streams or lakes in forested habitat, under the loose bark of dead trees, where in June, a single young is born to each female. Capable of flight within a month, they'll spend the rest of the summer and early fall accumulating layers of fat to sustain them during the winter hibernation. In late August or early September, the bats will swarm at the cave or mine entrance to mate and then will spend the winter months hibernating in the secluded site where they may congregate in densities of more than 300 per square foot! Returning to the same sites for hibernation (called hibernacula), year after year, there are only eight hibernacula currently known for these bats. One of them is in Graphite.

This is significant for us to note, as the Indiana bat was one of the mammals listed on the original federal Endangered Species list. Additionally, 85% of these bats winter in only seven caves or mines, with nearly one-half the world's population being found in only two caves. The caves and mines are subject to flooding or ceiling collapses, which can and have killed thousands in the past, but the most serious problem for hibernating bats is believed to be disturbances by humans. Bats are very sensitive to noise and light and can be aroused from their sleeping state even by passing cavers. Each time they are awakened, precious energy reserves are depleted ~ too many disturbances and they will not survive the winter.

Steps have been taken to help protect the bats from disturbances both natural and human by gating the entrances to the caves and mines. With joint efforts by the NY State DEC, the State's Landowner Incentive Program and the US Fish & Wildlife Service, particular attention has been given to the site in Graphite where an estimated 180,000 bats spend the winter, including about 200 of the endangered Indiana bats.

From the late 1800's to 1920, this mine was the chief source of graphite for the country ~ now it has become a critical site for hibernating bats! The privately owned mine had been originally gated by The Nature Conservancy and Bat Conservation International in 1997, but since then several new holes have opened up due to both erosion and illegal digging and trespass and had to be repaired in June of 2007. The gates allow the bats to pass through and do not interfere with air circulation, but prevent unauthorized human access to a potentially dangerous and unstable mine, thus protecting both bats and people.

Recently the Boston Globe reported that a mysterious illness is sickening and killing thousands of hibernating bats in New York and Vermont, prompting the writing of this article. Called the "white nose syndrome" because of a flaky white fungus on the nose of many of the sick and dead bats, officials at the NY DEC have determined that as many as 11,000 bats had already died from the disease first discovered in a cave near Albany in January 2007.

The sick bats behave oddly, clustering near the entrances to the caves, flying about and crashing into snowbanks when they should be sleeping, thus depleting their stored energy and dying as a result from this behavior and the pneumonia-like symptoms associated with the disease.

Scientists are baffled as to the cause and how it is spread, with more than a dozen government and university labs across the country trying to solve the mystery, but all agree that humans may be a factor in spreading the disease as most of the infected populations have been found in caves or mines popular with cavers with the exception of one found recently. Scientists are currently entering winter hibernating caves and mines to draw blood and use thermal cameras to help them determine the status of the bat populations and have asked that cavers avoid caves until more is known about the disease. They have not extended that request to tourist attractions because so few bats hibernate in places where people regularly visit.

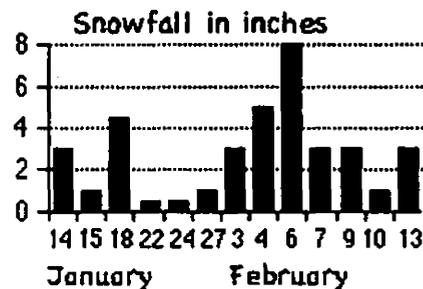
A healthy bat has a life expectancy of up to 31 years, so I do hope to see many of the little mosquito-eating creatures this spring, and as dusk falls I'll be watching for them to resume their evening forays into the future.

WEATHER NOTES

by JoAnne DeFranco

Weather Notes- January 13 - Feb 16, 2008

COLD, SNOWY, ICY are three appropriate words to describe our weather for the past month. Every few days we have cleaned the walks and driveways. My husband plows snow and reports he has plowed the driveways 15-16 times since the season began in December. Over the past thirty days we have accumulated about 36" snow, all in small amounts.



Since January 13th we have gained about 90 minutes more daylight. Sunrise is 6:50 AM and sunset is now at 5:26. I did notice that the pussy willows are blooming in my yard.

The lake has finally frozen on February 12. It froze 2 other times but broke up. The southern basin has been frozen for some time and fishermen are taking advantage of the opportunity to enjoy some angling.

A resident of Sabbath Day Point reported an eagle sighting. The majestic bird swooped down and grabbed a duck swimming in the lake, flying away with its prey. Maybe we need more eagles to lower our duck population. I wonder if the eagles would be interested in taking a few geese too. Anyone else have any sightings? Email sightings to jdefranco_10@yahoo.com.

February - March 2008



February

- 26 1:30 pm Senior Citizens Mtg (p. 2)
- 28 7 pm Zoning Board of Appeals
- 25 6 pm
- 29 LEAP DAY

March

- 6 7 pm Planning Board
- 7 7 pm "The Battle on Snowshoes" (p. 3)
- 8 11 am - 2 pm Snowshoe & Ski rally (p. 3)
- 8-9 THS Play in auditorium
- 8-9 Fish & Game Contests (p. 3)
- 9 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS BEGINS
- 11 6:30 pm Town Board
- 17 HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY
- 19 Elementary school play
- 20 Next *Hague Chronicle* mailed
- 21-24 No school - Easter Vacation
- 23 HAPPY EASTER
- 27 7 pm Zoning Board of Appeals



Please help us get the news by sending us any information you have about events, organization meetings or reports, soundings and other items of interest.

TRANSFER STATION HOURS

Wednesday: 9 am to 4 pm
Saturday: 9 am to 4 pm

ONGOING EVENTS

- 1st Monday: Fire Department (7 pm)
- 2nd Monday: Senior Bus to Glens Falls (8:30 am)
- 3rd Monday: Chamber of Commerce (7 pm)
- 1st & 3rd Tuesday: Mohican Crafters (10 am)
- 3rd Tuesday: Fish & Game Club (7:30 pm)
- 3rd Tuesday: Sno-goers
- 3rd Thursday: Carillon Garden Club (11 am)
- 4th Wednesday: Extra Helpings Distribution (noon)

Every Tuesday at 7:30 am - Rotary Club meets
Every Thursday at noon: Kiwanis meets

TICONDEROGA COMMUNITY SERIES

The next program in the series will be hosted by Fort Ticonderoga and take place on March 5, 2008 at 7 pm at Fort Ticonderoga's Thompson-Pell research Center. The speaker will be Karl Crannell, Public Program Coordinator at Fort Ticonderoga on *Live Free or Die! The Life of John Stark*.

ANOTHER ACTIVE WEEKEND: See page 3 for events the weekend of March 8 - 9, 2008.

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