



## *The Guide*

*Town of Duane Newsletter*  
*September 2014*  
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### Debar Pond Lodge Update



On May 23<sup>rd</sup> Town Supervisor, Ned LeMieux met with representatives from NYS DEC concerning Debar Lodge. On May 28<sup>th</sup> the supervisor shared his results of this meeting with the town board at a special meeting. At the meeting representative Bob Stegeman, DEC Region 5 Director, stated that the DEC is actively pursuing ways to utilize the Debar property. He explained that the DEC needs to follow NYS law which states that the state cannot sell the property and cannot host any "for profit" business. It was confirmed that the naming of the lodge to the National

Register of Historic Places does not mean the site will be preserved. What the town can do is to continue to look for a not-for-profit organization that might be interested to move into the lodge.

### Town Board Votes to Override Tax Cap

The Duane Town Board at its regularly scheduled meeting on August 20<sup>th</sup> voted to override the state-imposed two percent tax cap if necessary. Town Supervisor, Ned LeMieux, said rising costs will likely give the board little option but to go above the state tax cap. He anticipates the following increases: health insurance (6.7% increase); a \$3,000 jump in the state pension fund; fuel; and a tripling in the price of road salt.

The board is in the process of building next year's budget and finding money to cover these growing expenses is becoming more and more difficult. The past couple of years the board has dipped into its unexpended funds to the tune of \$60,000. Maintaining unexpended funds are important when confronted with unexpected emergencies.

The supervisor is projecting there could be an increase in the tax rate of 61 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, raising the tax rate from \$5.38 to \$6.01 per \$1,000. A home assessed for \$100,000 would see a tax increase of \$61.

## Eagles Make Nest In Duane



Eagle sightings are not uncommon in the Duane area. I've seen several over the years and most were near a body of water. What is rare is to see a nest and be able to watch the eagles come and leave the nest. For the past few years a pair of eagles have nested just off Rt. 30 high above the Deer River. The nest can be seen from Rt. 30 but is not easy to spot unless someone gives you directions, so here goes. At the intersection of Rt.30 and Rt.26 head south on Rt.30. After driving a couple of miles you will see a sign for the Cold Brook Rd on your right. Shortly pass this sign you will drive over the Deer River. Drive a short distance ahead and look for a Rt. 30 sign and below it is a brown and yellow Bike Route sign. Just past the Bike Route sign slow down and start to pull off the road. Ahead you will see a guard rail made from steel cables on your right. Park before the cable rail to make sure you are safely off the highway. Walk across the road and walk south a short distance. Look for a large opening that allows you to face east. Look high in the tops of the pine trees. Hope you see it!

## Park Line Deli to Close

In September of 2007 the Tamarack burnt to the ground. It was the lone store serving the community of Duane. In July of 2011 William Duryea opened the Park Line Deli not too far from where the Tamarack once stood. On August 31<sup>st</sup> the Park Line Deli closed its door for the last time. The business and property are up for sale.

## The Election This Fall Will Not See Any Town Positions on the Ballot

Election Day is November 4<sup>th</sup>. The polls will open at the Duane Fire Station at 6AM and close at 9AM. This year you will not be voting on any town positions. Your vote is still important as several state positions will be voted upon.

# *Town of Duane Historical Notes*

*Prepared by: Gloria Gori, Town Historian*

## **Mattie Haskin's: A Grand Lady of Duane**

We are so fortunate that Mattie was interviewed by her nephew Robert McGowan. Her personal accounts are filled with information of Duane of the early days and its neighbors and businesses. This will also be a two part article. I would like you to know Mattie, the person. She was a dear friend.

Mattie Haskins was born in Woodstock, Vermont in 1897 and moved to Duane when she was eight years old. She could list the names of old timers and the Adirondack Guides of Duane. "Back in those days there were hop yards, farms and a lot of people. Now here are a lot of empty houses made into camps." She married Elmer Haskins and raised two sons, Gerald and Calvin. Gerald was in ill health from birth till his death at the early age of 22. Mattie provided all the loving care for him right at home.

Mattie was devoted to public service. She served the town as the Welfare Officer, a Town Clerk Deputy and then in 1944 was elected Town Justice and held that office for 28 years. Court was held in her dining room, but eventually moved to the kitchen. She had a pet weasel that would pop out from under her sink that would suddenly interrupt the proceedings.

Mattie was asked how she went about judging a case? "Well, I don't know. I don't treat people as criminals. I tell them that I'm sorry it happened; I'm sorry they has to be brought in and that I will try and be as lenient as I can. Of course, why, if they're miserable to me they get the works, but if they're nice, I put that into consideration." When she learned her first case was her next door neighbor her reaction was; "Well, I wanted to die. I went through with it, yes I did."

The question was asked if the neighbor ever spoke to her after that. "Why, he didn't never hold any grudge."

Most of her cases were either speeding or conservation violations. Mattie so enjoyed marrying couples. Of course there were cases that she would never forget. "One couple came in once and the girl asked, "How much does it cost to get married?" "I told her I received a salary so there would be no charge." "That's good, because we haven't got a G.D. cent." Mattie was a little concerned about how that marriage would turn out.

Another case a man became angry. "One time a Frenchman with a very thick voice spit in my face and I hit him, and knocked him clear across the kitchen floor. He was a little fellow or I couldn't have done it. He says "I'm a visitor

in your country! I'm a visitor in your home." And I said, "Oh, no! You're not a visitor in my home. I didn't invite you and I hope I never see you again!" In the late 40's Mattie opened Duane's first gift shop. The shop was located on her front I-shaped porch. Her enthusiasm for inventory over spilled to her dining room, living room and on up the stairs to the second floor. She carried collectables, calendar towels, lamps, toys and cigarettes. She hired photographers to take pictures of our church, various homes and Meacham Lake and had post cards made that she sold. The main road went right by her door so before long she built a very prosperous business, summer or winter. Even justice cases that came through her door provided business for her shop. "I had a couple in here once from Buffalo. They were driving drunk and using abusive language, and, well of course anybody that had a certain percentage of alcohol in their system, you've gotta lock them up. So I locked them up and they brought them back the next morning and they pleaded guilty, and paid \$25 a piece; and she sat there and said, "Henry, We've got to buy some gifts for the people back home. We might just as well buy them here."

Mattie was a 4-H leader for 7 years. At one time we had 18 members. Eight members came from one family. We marched in a big parade in Malone and took first place for being the nicest looking, the nicest dressed, and the nicest acting. We all had to be dressed in green and white. Mattie spent many nights making green slacks and white shirts for the boys. Our mothers had to make us green dresses with white bolero jackets.

She spent a great deal of her time organizing church suppers that rotated from home to home. These suppers happened at least once a month. To raise money for the school she organized Box Parties. It was held at the school. All the ladies and the girls would decorate a hat box or boot box and fill it with a box lunch. Elmer, her husband would auction off the boxes and you would have to eat with who ever purchased your box.

Mattie also served as the Malone Telegram correspondent for Duane for many years. She had an article published in the Readers Digest and I hope someday I will be able to find it. She was a lady that wasn't afraid to speak her mind. She would attend the board meetings and voice her opinion. She was noted to be able to stir up controversy. Mattie has a heart of gold and will always be a grand lady in my opinion.

Information was taken from the Reynoldston & Studies Collection and the Malone Evening Telegram, 12/22/72 An article by Harold Brown and Toni Unwin

# Highlights from Town Board Meetings

## June 18th meeting:

*Absent:* None

Gordon Crossman was welcomed to the board meeting. He presented information on ProAct Prescription assistance through Franklin County.

Board member, Laura Paquin distributed notes to the board regarding a discussion she had with JCEO mobile unit. She reviewed a number of programs offered. The board discussed the fact that many town residents do not know about these services. Suggestions included a bulk mailing to residents or placing information in *The Guide* regarding JCEO and ProAct.

Supervisor LeMieux reported that conversations with Jeff Farrel (DEC) do not appear to be effective regarding Debar. He is pressing for a meeting with Albany lawyers and Senator Betty Little.

Supervisor discussed NYS Shared Services. He related discussions with Tom Leitz, Franklin County Manager. The shared services discussed included highway, code officer, animal control officer and possible health benefits through Franklin County.

Supervisor also reported that NYS is now going to enforce the 2% transition on NYS land. The state will reduce the taxes paid on state land by 2% each year until taxes no longer due.

## July 16th meeting:

*Absent:* Carmella Teeple and Mark Young

Supervisor LeMieux discussed the status of the proposed health insurance rate increase by Excellus BC/BS. Tish Biesemeyer feels it is unlikely that the 15.8% increase would be approved, but all is pending. Also, it was disclosed that Duane cannot access the health insurance plan offered to Franklin County employees.

Supervisor shared his recent communication with Assemblywoman Janet Duprey. In regards to Debar, she doesn't think a "gift" to the town will happen, but she will continue to support the town's efforts.

## August 20th meeting:

*Absent:* Carmella Teeple

Supervisor LeMieux discussed the NY State 2% tax cap. After a discussion the board unanimously voted to override the tax cap.

The supervisor updated the board on the proposed boat launch on Deer River Flow. This will take some time and effort and it is likely that Duane will not see approvals this year.

Supervisor discussed repairs needed on the church, specifically the front wall and the front door. Board member Laura Paquin discussed the need for additional shelving in the records room.

## September 17<sup>th</sup> meeting:

*Absent:* Mark Young

Gary Cring addressed the board. He cautioned the board about obtaining Debar as a gift. He showed board members pictures of the extensive rotting/deterioration on the south side of the lodge. The repairs will be very costly and an ongoing expense.

The board discussed ways in which the church might possibly be used in the future. The board would like to see a group of community members get together and form a committee to pursue this topic.

The board worked on the development of the 2015 town budget.

## Dates of Upcoming Meetings and Events

October 15<sup>th</sup> - Town Board Meeting at the Fire Station 7 PM

October 18<sup>th</sup> - Town of Duane Halloween Party

November 4<sup>th</sup> - Election Day Polls open from 6AM to 9PM

November 19<sup>th</sup> - Town Board Meeting at the Fire Station 7 PM

December 6<sup>th</sup> - Town of Duane Christmas Party

December 17<sup>th</sup> - Town Board Meeting at the Fire Station 7 PM

January 21st - Town Board Meeting at the Fire Station 7 PM

Next issue of *The Guide* to be mailed out at the end of January 2015.

Any suggestions or questions concerning *The Guide* should be directed to Gary Cring (483-2611).

Reminder: As winter approaches just a few reminders. If you burn wood be sure to get your chimney cleaned and inspected. Be sure to run your generator once a month and it's a good idea to use an ethanol gasoline treatment to prevent carburetor problems.

Reminder: The fall is a great time to take a hike on the town trails in back of the church. The colors are great, no bugs and a short easy walk to the viewing stand. Most likely you will be able to see a number of migrating birds on the pond.