



# THE HAGUE CHRONICLE

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## WHAT A WEEKEND!

The Hague Winter Weekend experienced a healthy dose of Murphy's Law ("if anything can go wrong, it will"). NO snow, NO ice, NO POWER.

As a series of exceedingly strong wind gusts, directly from the west, swept over our area on Friday, February 18, power went out in Hague. Trees and downed power lines closed many area roads including Lakeshore Drive from the downtown intersection in Hague to the end of New Hague Road where it meets Rt 9N by the Rogers Rock campsite. To get to Ticonderoga, one had to drive up Graphite Mountain Road to West Hague Road to New Hague Road and back out onto 9N.

While we "locals" knew this route, it was very frustrating for visitors and those traveling through since no detour road signs were posted. (While standing on Lakeshore Drive for a couple of minutes to take pictures, three different cars stopped and asked me for directions.) When contacted by *The Hague Chronicle*, Don Smith, Highway Superintendent, said he was unsure about whose responsibility it was to post the signs but said he was going to have some made up at the Highway shed to be available the next time.

The temperatures dropped into the single digits overnight as those without auxiliary power struggled to keep warm and worried about frozen pipes. Some questioned why the Supervisor did not declare a state of emergency for Hague which might have encouraged earlier response from National Grid as well as make possible funds available to those with damage brought on by broken pipes. *The Hague Chronicle* was unable to contact Supervisor Belden on Sunday morning as he was out of town for a meeting in New York City.

The Hague Volunteer Fire Department (HVFD) responded to the emergency by contacting all Senior citizens living alone and offering to take them to the temporary housing provided at Silver Bay. Fire Chief Chris Swinton alerted National Grid to additional problem areas and removed some trees that were blocking the roads. The HVFD also provided a welcome spot on Saturday and Sunday mornings as they once again served delicious breakfasts at the firehouse. The 50/50 raffle they held was won by Judy Stock.

While all snow and ice activities had to be cancelled, as well as the volleyball games due to high winds, several people were able to enjoy the family fun weekend. The Tug of War was a draw between the men's and women's teams. The Lawn Chair Race was won by the Locust Inn entry driven/pushed by guests, Deb Sykes, Kevan VaCoughnett and Brian McNeill. Second place went to the Hague Motel entry. The Polar Bear dip was enjoyed by six swimmers, Colin Dunn, Kevan VanCoughnett, Aren Laudree, Emily Eder, Shannon Armstrong and Joan Schultz.

The Fred LaPann Memorial Polar Bear Run was held on Saturday. In the Junior division, first place went to Mike Lonergan and second to Pat Lonergan. In the Coed Open division, first place went to Steven Engler, second to Lisa Engler and third to Megan Taylor. In the Master's division, Dave Burrows took first place and Fred Herbst took second. The Senior division saw first place go to Karen Costello followed by second place to Judy Taylor and third place to Jim Cunningham.

The Hague Sno-Goers Snomobile Club raised \$100.00 in raffles for the Mary C. Beste Scholarship Fund. Winners were Karen Costello - 2 face cords of wood from Smith's Excavating; Mike Fitzgerald - Eddie's Restaurant gift certificate; Judy Stock - Hague Creek Cafe gift certificate; Angela Whisher - Graphite Mountain Stoneworks donation and Don Smith, Meg Haskell, Deb Manning, and Charmane Winters - Tony's Ticonderoga Sports.

The Beste Scholarship awards went to Danielle Connors, Joshua Frasier, Aren Laudree, Maureen Palait and Joshua Patchett. The 50/50 raffle for the benefit of the Scholarship Fund was won by Mike D'Attilio. ...js

## CHECK YOUR LABELS

**Date highlighted?** Your renewal date is approaching and your donation will be appreciated.

**Date circled in red?** This issue will be the LAST unless we hear from you.

We will no longer be sending "last issue notices" but we will continue to send our Thank You notes so that you will have a record of your tax-deductible contribution.

## SENIOR NEWS

Our January meeting was a great kickoff to the New Year. Awards of Appreciation for Years of Service were presented to outgoing Secretary, Ethel Andrus and to outgoing Vice President, Dottie Henry. Club Member Bertha Dunsmore was presented with a framed photo of her receiving her Chamber of Commerce Award for Hague Senior of the Year.

Our Speaker of the Day was Candy Whitehead, a representative from EPIC, who gave a marvelous program about the new Medicare Part D Drug Insurance coverage for Seniors. Candy's presentation was not only extremely informative but her delivery was very direct, concise and to the point. Members present were able to receive clear and accurate answers to their questions during and after the meeting. Everyone left feeling that finally they now were comfortable with a plan of action for their needs with regard to the Part D Issue.

To any of you Seniors who still have questions regarding pharmacy coverage, Candy recommends that you contact The Warren County Office For the Aging, Candace Kelly, Director - phone (518) 761-6347 - located at 333 Glen St., Glens Falls, NY. They have trained personnel available to help you. Call for an appointment. **REMEMBER - you need CREDIBLE INSURANCE COVERAGE in place by MAY 15th to avoid premium penalties should you choose to take Part D at a later date.**

February's Meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 28th at NOON at the Community Center. This tasty & fun gathering is our Annual Covered Dish Luncheon with each member bringing a 'Dish-to-Share'. Our Guest Speaker for the day will be Linda Benway, Animal Control Officer for the Town of Hague. The topic of her presentation will be about a FERAL 'WILD' CAT PROGRAM which she is involved in via the Angel Network - an agency which cares for animals in need.

As always, we Seniors extend an invitation to all you '55+' out there to join our Club. On Feb 28th bring a dish and come check us out. We look forward to seeing you there. ...mp

## MEMORIAL DAY 2006

The fourth annual revival of the Memorial Day Celebration will take place on Saturday, May 27, 2006, again organized by the Hague Senior Citizens Club. They remind you to put the date on your calendars and start planning now.

For the FUNFEST AT THE BEACH they will need Crafters, Food Concessions, Demonstrations of Interest, etc. For the PARADE, clubs, businesses or family groups can enter their creative floats. Prizes will be awarded in several categories.

For further information contact Emily at 543-6325 or Madeline at 543-6130.

## FREE TAX HELP REMINDER

Open to taxpayers in all area communities, the Hague Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring the free, volunteer-run tax counseling and preparation service at the Hague Community Center. The program is available to taxpayers with low-and middle-income, with special attention to those age 60 and older and runs from February 1 to April 15.

APPOINTMENTS are available on Mondays and Wednesdays for this FREE TAX PREPARATION by calling Debbie Manning at 518-543-6161, Ext. 13.

## CHURCH WOMEN UNITED

The Church Women United will hold their next World Day of Prayer at 10 am on Saturday, March 3, 2006 at Watson Hall on the Silver Bay Association campus. A collection of stories about courageous people living with HIV and AIDS in Kenya and Tanzania will be shown following a short business meeting and worship prepared by the Women of South Africa. A discussion of AIDS and HIV and how it affects our area will follow the documentary. Come with your questions.

Donations will be collected for the Safe House (Homes for Victims of Domestic Violence) as well as an offering of one's "Least Coin."

For further information on this program phone Cathie at 585-7015.

## GLENS FALLS SYMPHONY

The Glens Falls Symphony Orchestra will perform its fourth concert of the season on Sunday, March 5 at 4PM at the First Presbyterian Church of Glens Falls at the corner of Glen and Notre Dame Street in Glens Falls.

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY TO MEET

The Hague Historical Society meeting is scheduled for March 20, 2006 at 7:30 PM at the Hague Community Center. The society welcomes all those who are interested in the history of the town of Hague and the area to attend. Refreshments will be served prior to the meeting.

## CHORALE REHERSALS

The Champlain Valley Chorale is in rehearsals for their upcoming June 4 concert. It is not too late to join the chorale. No audition is necessary - just the love of singing. The Chorale meets on Tuesday evenings at the First United Methodist Church in Ticonderoga at 7PM.

The Chorale was organized in 1976 and has matured in its virtuosity and versatility over a 30 year history which today musically inspires both the singer and listener as well.

If you are interested in joining, and we hope you will be - simply attend a rehearsal or call the group's president, Lori Fox, at 585-3575.

*I cannot give you the formula for success, but I can give you the formula for failure, which is: Try to please everybody.*

... Herbert Bayard Swope, journalist

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS - 1/26/06

Chairman Robert Goetsch opened the meeting with Mary Lou Doulin, Martin Fitzgerald, Jr., George Ianson, Tina King, Lindsay Mydlarz, and William Pittman all present.

Hague Volunteer Fire Department, (25.5-1-16) West Hague Rd., OC-1

The public hearing on the HVFD request for retroactive approval of greater than 25% lot coverage and less than the minimum 25 ft. front line setback was continued. Chairman Goetsch noted it had been held open since August 25th by mutual agreement. John Breitenbach represented the HVFD and informed the Board that the macadam has been removed, the stormwater issues have been resolved and the two lots have been merged. ZEO Cathy Clark stated her intention to inspect the leach field with a licensed engineer in the spring. Breitenbach had no objection to the spring inspection, assuming he is properly notified, and agreed to review the area then to determine if the stormwater measures are sufficient with further steps to be taken at that time, if necessary. He noted there is no evidence of a system failure.

Tina King recused herself from the discussion and vote but addressed the Board as a neighboring property owner. She said that she and her husband have no more objections as long as stormwater measures are in place by early summer. She made reference to the Order on Consent issued by the Lake George Park Commission which outlines the required work and the conditions regarding the suspended fine. She further noted the LGPC and the LG Waterkeeper have stated they will be monitoring the situation.

The Board approved the request with the conditions that the existing temporary tarps will be removed, there will be compliance with the LGPC conditions no later than July 15 and the septic system will be examined to ensure no damage has resulted from the macadam.

More, (43.5-2-35), Dock Rd., Hamlet/TR-1

Mr. More requested a variance for new construction within 50 ft of the lake in order to replace/cover an existing concrete patio and stairs with wooden decking and stairs. The existing 14 ft. shoreline setback will be reduced to 12 ft. A site visit was scheduled and a public hearing will be held next month.

Harrison, (43.17-1-1), Lakeshore Dr., TR-1

The applicant wishes to erect a 4 ft. high by 320 ft. long fence on the southern property line. A fence is considered a structure, therefore a variance waiving the sideline setback requirements is needed. The application was deemed incomplete based on the following: The proper area variance section of the application must be completed and a scaled drawing reflecting the highway setback, property lines and adjacent neighbor's homes should be supplied.

In other business, ZEO Clark noted the Beaty (26.18-1-1.2) request has been tabled. The Board also reviewed the DOS conditions for variance approval which were stated in a letter to the ZEO.

PLANNING BOARD - 2/2/06

Chairman David Swanson, Rolly Allen, John Brown, Tim Costello and Pam Peterson were all present. Peter Foster and Katy Wells were absent.

Navitsky, (93.19-1-10), Lakeshore Dr., RC

The applicants wish to construct a single family dwelling and garage on a .51 acre legal, non-conforming lot. The barn currently located 9 ft. from the rear property line will be removed.

Plans call for a handicapped ramp into the house which will place construction for the detached garage 16 ft. from the rear line. A variance granting relief from the required 25 ft. is requested.

Because the property is located in the Resource Conservation zone, ZEO Cathy Clark explained a Type II Site Plan Review is required, needing APA review. A Site Visit was scheduled for 9:00am on 02/04/06.

More, (43.5-2-35) Dock Rd. Hamlet/TR-1

A site visit was made to the property and the group agreed removing it would not adversely affect the environment because the existing concrete has been placed over rock. There are no plans to remove any vegetation. The Planning Board recommended variance approval (see ZBA on 1/26) to the Zoning Board of Appeals with the condition of removing the concrete and replacing it with crushed stone would create a more environmentally sound area. Rolly Allen recused himself from the discussion and vote.

In other business the Board:

1. Discussed the possibility of extending an invitation to Mike White and the Lake George Park Commission to discuss concerns about several land use issues, including ridge-line, stream corridor and upland development. It was noted the Town Ordinance does not currently address these issues.

2. Learned that the Town has received a copy of a letter from the LGPC to Scott Miller of CLA Site (Beneduce subdivision) dated 1/31/06. They are waiting for the Archeological Survey and proposed deed language to complete their review. Cathy Clark produced a map of Hague showing the large amount of land deemed "archeologically sensitive " by the NYS Historic Preservation Society.

PLANNING/ZONING WORKSHOP - 1/23/06

A very informative workshop was held with all Town Board members present and most of the other boards. Among the interesting points made: ZBA & PB members should not talk about any applications with anyone outside the public meetings, alternate members may be allowed if adopted by local law, recommended that members take time to deliberate and prepare a written decision which details reasons to approve a request, rural boards need to apply the "rule of reasonableness".

## SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETINGS

**1/10/06:** Supervisor Belden and Council members Frasier, Gladu, LaPointe and Steitz were all present at the 4 - 5 pm meeting on highway personnel. The Board and Highway Superintendent Don Smith went into executive session although former Councilman Rudy Meola noted that it was not a legal reason and cited a passage from the Open Meeting Law.

When they returned to the regular session, the Board said they will re-address the 2-hour call in for the Highway Department. Superintendent Smith will cover the position of Dan Steitz who is on disability due to a heart attack. There is a list of individuals with their CDL, who can be utilized in case of an emergency.

**1/17/06:** Supervisor Belden and Council members Frasier, Gladu and Steitz were present at the 1:30 -2:30 pm meeting with representatives from National Grid (former Niagara Mohawk) John Murphy and Steve Arthur.

National Grid stressed that residents should call them to report power outages, especially on side roads so they will know where the outages are occurring. When there is a major storm their first priority is to get the main line up and running. A trimming cycle is scheduled for every seven years (which they are trying to change to five years) and West Hague Road is on the schedule for next year.

In response to reports of many power outages by residents, Mr. Murphy said that there were nine major storms last fall and they were called out for 46 operations. Mr. Arthur explained that due to retirements and a lineman who passed away that the Ticonderoga area has only 3 qualified men and 5 unqualified. It takes 5 1/2 years to become trained and qualified. Also mentioned was the fact that the system is designed to initiate a 3-time set up which is why you see three bumps of power in your home before loss of power.

**1/19/06:** All members were present at the 4:30 - 5:35 pm meeting for information on the proposed sewer district #2.

Bill Lamy, Warren County Engineer, was also present and presented a summary of the project costs. The minutes from this meeting show the estimated cost is \$3,410,000 less EPA funding of \$2,841,000. In estimating the annual user costs a total project cost of \$3,200,000 was given less EPA funding of \$2,900,00 leaving \$300,000 for a bond amount. With a projected 121 EDU's, the annual cost per EDU for the debt service would be \$161. The annual operation and maintenance fee is projected to be \$400, making the total annual cost of \$561.00 for users in the new district.

The Board approved formation of Sewer District #2 to include Forest Bay, Friends Point, along Route 9N (Lakeshore Drive) to current District #1, from the current district to and including Pine Cove. In addition pipes will be installed that would allow a possible connection to Arcady Bay at a later date.

**1/24/06:** All present at the 4:30 - 5:30 pm meeting.

The stated purpose of the meeting was to review with the Highway Superintendent the response to a recent storm which deposited 5 inches of rain in a very short time. Highway Superintendent Don Smith reported that the Department had been kept busy keeping culverts open and the road wash-outs have been documented. There was further discussion about the size of the culverts. Councilman Gladu stated, "I thought the Department did a good job handling a very difficult situation. We have learned where the stress points are and I believe we are better prepared to respond." Superintendent Smith also noted that the Town can put out cones for warning of a problem area but only the State can close the road down. The NYS Department of Transportation (DOT) shut Tongue Mountain during the afternoon of the storm due to flooding. DOT will be contacted to review the problems with them.

Another issue was the trees that were leaning on power lines. Councilman Gladu stressed the need to document the phone calls to National Grid when reporting about the trees. Councilman LaPointe urged that they "be persistent" in this matter.

Although the stated purpose of the meeting was response to the storm, Councilman LaPointe discussed the issue of evaluation of Town employees and keeping the line of communication open with them.

There was also discussion of the need for "preventive maintenance" on Town equipment. Nelson Waters who was in attendance suggested that money be put into the Highway budget to update equipment.

**2/3/06:** Supervisor Belden and Council members Frasier, LaPointe and Steitz were all present at the 4 - 5 pm meeting. Councilman Gladu was absent.

When this reporter arrived at the meeting, the members were already in full discussion about the building plans for the museum although it was never discussed after the meeting was called to order.

The stated purpose of the meeting was to review personnel issues. The Board went into Executive Session where they reviewed the position of the secretary. They also discussed the possibility of hiring a part-time employee to help with purchase orders, payroll and Highway Department reports. When they returned to the regular session they reported that the Personnel Committee (of the Town Board) will meet with the Secretary to discuss the job procedures and review their findings. A motion was approved to hire Charlene Schaffer on a part-time basis to work with the Secretary until the books are closed for 2005.

The Board then discussed the possibility of a cell tower and Supervisor Belden will call the company doing the work in Bolton.

Supervisor Belden also discussed possible revised costs relating to proposed sewer district #2. For the plan that the Board has endorsed a total of \$3,400,000 may be needed. The Supervisor said they have \$2,900,000 from EPA funding for the project and will probably get an additional \$150,000 from the County grant. That would leave \$350,000 to be borrowed to complete the project. Revised per EDU costs were not indicated.

TOWN BOARD MEETING - 2/14/06

Supervisor Dan Belden, and Town Board members Edna Frasier, Tom LaPointe and Art Steitz were present. Councilman Dick Gladu was absent.

After the Pledge of Allegiance a moment of silence was held for Walter Porter, Sr.

Under public comments several representative of the Hague Sno-goers Snowmobile Club were present with a request for the town to support their efforts at revitalizing the club and working on the trails. They have written bylaws and will be incorporated soon. With town backing they can apply for NYS grant money. Councilman LaPointe, a member of the Club, spoke in support of the plan. The club can be contacted at <haguesnogoers@yahoo.com>.

The Board approved payment of the Town's current bills in the amount of \$85,329.72.

Committee Reports:

Assessor/Justice - Councilman Steitz reported that he did not know if all the audits had been done. (Each Town Board member is required to audit the books of the Town Clerk and Justice.) The supervisor had audited the town clerk books and Ms. Frasier has audited both accounts.

Buildings & Grounds/CC - Councilman LaPointe reported that repair estimates for all the necessary projects would exceed the bid limit of \$10,000. There was also a problem finding people to work on that large a project. They will try to break it into smaller jobs in order to get things done. He will see that the streetlights are covered with a tarp. Councilman Steitz will have more information by the next meeting on returning the lights as previously approved.

Enhancement Committee - Councilwoman Frasier will be sending out a letter to get the committee together.

CARE - Councilwoman Frasier noted that there is a wonderful supply in the food pantry and more people should be encouraged to use it.

Finance - Councilwoman Frasier reported that they have invested in short term accounts (180 days) of \$200,000 at 4.75% and \$300,000 at 4.5%. The funds in the consolidated account are in a money market fund yielding 3.75%. Supervisor Belden reported that interest for 2005 in all accounts amounted to \$43,970.

Fire - Councilman Steitz reported he has asked Fire Chief Chris Swinton for quarterly reports as well as annual reports.

Highway - Highway Superintendent Don Smith has been in touch with the DOT with regard to the flooding area across from Cape Cod. The new truck will be in tomorrow and Dick Frasier will help him make sure it is up to specifications although he can't do the actual inspection because it is a conflict of interest.

Councilman Steitz got the plans for Newcomb's salt shed for further information. There is money remaining from the DEC grant on the stabilizing of the Hague Brook bank and some of it can be transferred to use for the sedimentation project and salt shed before the December 31st deadline.

Museum & Historian - Councilwoman Frasier met with the museum committee and reviewed plans for an extension off the west end of the building. However, the doors that are there currently can't be closed off because of the need for a fire exit so more planning will need to be done.

Planning/Zoning/Stormwater - ZEO Cathy Clark reported on the current permits and variances. She also noted that while this "should be a down time" she has had several inquiries for researching property for sales. She reported that the Planning Board would like the code to reflect the original wording in the square foot definition and has requested an informal review of the wording by the APA. Any change will have to come before the Town Board, a public hearing and then the APA for final approval.

Recreation/Promotion - Chamber of Commerce President David Dunn told the Board that the Winter Weekend will go on as planned although the activities revolving around snow and ice would be out.

Sewer District #1 & #2 - Supervisor Belden discussed figures and trying to get additional grant money. He will schedule a public information meeting close to the Memorial Day weekend where the county engineer could answer questions.

Town Park/Beautification - Councilman LaPointe is lining up performers for the Music in the Park series. Lifeguards will need to be hired and he has talked to the HS guidance counselor.

Transfer and Recycling - Councilman Steitz will talk to Scott Olsen of Casella about how things are working at the Transfer Station.

Youth - Councilwoman Frasier reported that an application to the County for \$1600 in grants has been sent in and she will contact Silver Bay about the program.

Under unfinished business, the Board:

1. Acknowledged the proposal from Graham Bailey relative to representing the town in the state planning of walkways along 9N. The fees were indicated and the Board will hire him as needed after exhausting state resources first.
2. Will wait until Councilman Gladu returns before making any decision on filling the vacancy on the Board of Assessment Review and more applications can be received until then.
3. Approved vacation dates of 3/13 to 3/21/2006 for Debbie and Mike Manning.
4. Accepted the financial statement from the Hague Senior Citizens Club.
5. Acknowledged receipt of a letter from Linda Benway outlining the plan for neutering the feral cats in Hague and approved entering into a contract with the program run by the Angel Connection. Reimbursement will be sent for each cat as it is spayed or neutered.

(Con't on page 6 - Town Board)

(Con't from page 5 - Town Board)

APWA AWARD TO HAGUE

6. Discussed again, and decided to put off for 60 days, the issue of the building at the intersection of Overbrook Road and Lakeshore Drive (former Polino gas station). Some feel the Town should obtain the property offered by Joyce Martin (by paying off the taxes and lien if necessary), clean it up (buried gas tanks) using 90% of federal Brownfield money, and then sell it later to recoup expenses. Others are concerned about whether or not the Town would be allowed to sell it and what the actual legal claims are on the property now. (ed. note: Although noone was actually designated the responsibility of researching the facts, hopefully during the 60 day period the Board will make sure that they get all the facts on this issue.)

7. Acknowledged receipt of a letter from former councilman Bob Patchett requesting that the Board consider asking the APA for relief of certain zoning requirements in order to open up the possibility of affordable housing.

8. Acknowledged receipt of a letter from Derrico (owner of house which was formerly the Coon's apartment house on Route 8 west of the Baptist church) offering to sell the building for \$199,500 to use for a museum.

9. Learned that a rabies clinic is scheduled for Monday, May 15, 2006 at the Firehouse.

Under new business, the Board:

1. Approved attendance by William O'Leary (Sewer Treatment Plant employee) to attend a course at ACC on 4/21/06.
2. Approved a resolution to pay Warren County \$1200 to take care of all inspections and voting booths.
3. Approved a motion to accept the American Legion building with conditions and to let the supervisor apply for grant money for a memorial.
4. Authorized the supervisor to contact Independent Towers to assess the possibility of cell phone coverage.
5. Authorized Councilman Steitz to discuss with a current part-time employee the possibility of working in the office one day per week or two days when needed. If the current employee is not available, then the position will be posted.

**FOOD PANTRY**

The well-stocked CARE food pantry is available every Thursday from 1-2 pm for any eligible residents. There are enough food supplies for several additional people to participate in this program. The Town Board would like anyone eligible to be encouraged to take advantage of this helpful program.

For additional information, including transportation if needed, call the Community Center at 543-6161.



The American Public Works Association, New York Chapter Capital Branch is pleased to announce that Hague is the 2005 recipient of the APWA Capital Branch Public Works Project of the Year in our Environmental/Wastewater Category (\$2 - 10 Million).

The award was presented at a luncheon on February 17, 2006 at the Italian American Community Center in Albany and was accepted by our supervisor, Dan Belden.

The branch award nomination will also be forwarded to the NYS Chapter where the project will be a candidate for Chapter Recognition in Upstate NY.

**MEOLA QUESTIONS PROCEDURES**

Town Board members have important powers and have been entrusted with great responsibilities which must be discharged properly and according to laws, regulations and procedures. The public is entitled to know when this is not done.

The Town's procurement policy states that "all purchases must be accompanied by a duly signed and completed purchase order." This is not being done.

Town Law requires that the Town Board shall meet on or before January 20 each year for the purposes of making the annual accounting. This has not been done.

The Town Board has held two executive meetings closed to the public addressed as "personnel". The open meetings law describes this label as "inadequate". The Highway Superintendent was the subject of one meeting and the staffing of the office the other. The Highway Superintendent is our elected official and accountable to the electorate, not the Town Board. The second meeting resulted in the decision to hire a secretary part time. The staffing of an office is not one of the eight subjects which may be discussed behind closed doors. The Town Board voted to hire a specific person without first creating the position, advertising the vacancy, taking applications, conducting interviews and finally making the appointment. It was a closed process, violating the recruitment policy.

The present clerical staff is more than adequate to handle the current workload. Towns of similar size have similar smaller staffs. The problem is that they are given tasks which do not fall within their job description but fall more within the duties of the Town Supervisor. The Town is not being managed in a business like manner. Constant interruptions and visitors walking in at will, create havoc with the work schedule. Organization and a sense of direction is lacking.

The Town Board voted to accept the American Legion property with this clause, "Reserving to the American Legion, the perpetual right of access and use of the existing building located on the premises conveyed herein, or any modification, addition or replacement thereof, for conducting any and all American Legion business and purposes." This obligates the town to keep and maintain the building in perpetuity with no escape clause of any kind. ...rm

## ~SOUNDINGS~

**BORN:** A girl, Kaitlyn Madden Barton, to Chuck and Kim Barton,, Chatham, NJ on January 13, 2006. She is the granddaughter of Mrs. Charles (Kay) Barton, Sabbath Day Point.

**DIED:** Evelyn G. Wiltsie, 88, Hague, a former resident of Scotia, NY, on January 13, 2006. She was a daughter of the late Frank and Jessie Martin, who summered at Indian Kettles since the 1940's. Mrs. Wiltsie retired to Hague in 1975 and has been a year-round resident since that time. She is survived by her son Glen and his wife, Ellen, of Scotia, her son-in-law Thomas B. Azer, sister Shirley Weisgerber, Scotia, several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

**DIED:** Mary Ursula Havern Montbriand, on February 16, 2006 at her home in Hague. Ursula, one of the most beloved members of our community, had celebrated her 95th birthday on February 15, having been born in Ticonderoga on February 15, 1911. She and her husband, Major Francis Montbriand, who died in 1989, retired to Hague in 1969. She is survived by her son, Francis (Frank) Montbriand, Ticonderoga, and daughter, Mary (Mimi) Noppenberger, Bel Air, Md., two granddaughters, three grandsons, and three great-granddaughters.

### UPDATE ON BOB WOODRUFF

On January 29th, Bob Woodruff, new co-anchor of ABC's "World News Tonight" and an ABC cameraman, Doug Vogt, suffered serious head wounds in a roadside bomb attack in Taji, north of Baghdad while imbedded with Iraqi troops.

ABC released a statement on February 16th, which contained a message from Bob's brother, David, in an update about his condition. David said in part, "...Bob's amazing team of doctors, nurses and corpsmen continue to be pleased with the progress he makes each day and they are optimistic about his recovery." He also noted that, "Lee (Bob's wife and daughter of the McConaughy's of Silver Bay) ... has been at Bethesda almost every day since we all arrived there from Germany. The kids have come down on the weekends. Thanks to Bob and Lee's dedicated army of friends in their hometown the kids are receiving love, tenderness and most importantly, continuing with their routines as much as possible. My brothers and I and our spouses are rotating in and out of Bethesda along with Lee's sisters and their spouses — remaining a constant presence for Bob, Lee and my parents."

The full statement can be read at <http://www.abcnews.go.com/WNT/story?id=1627667>.

We join others across America who are keeping Bob and his family in our thoughts and prayers.

note: We are reprinting the Wiltsie sounding above due to an omission last month.



National Grid trucks at work on Route 9N by Lakeshore Terrace on Sunday, February 19th.

photo by J. Stock

### FREE WINTER SAFETY BOOKLET

Winter is far from being over and Cornell Cooperative Extension and Warren County Disaster Preparedness Office are offering a free Winter Safety booklet. Topics include winter storm preparedness and response, protecting plumbing during the winter storm, ice dam prevention on roofs, staying warm in an unheated house, carbon monoxide poisoning, helping kids cope during a storm, animal safety in winter and winter weather terms. Call Cornell Cooperative Ext. at 518-668-4881 or 623-3291 or Email: [warren@cornell.edu](mailto:warren@cornell.edu) or stop by the office at 377 Schroon River Road, Warrensburg, NY to obtain this free booklet.

### SANTANIELLO RELAY MEDALS

Ted Santaniello, a Senior at Plattsburgh State, was on the relay team at a meet held at Dartmouth College on February 4th where they set a school record of 1:30:83 in the 4x200m relay. The team also received silver medals in the SUNYAC championships held at Hobart & William Smith Colleges for the 4x400m relay and the Distance Medley Relay.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL HONORS

The Sentinel Merit Society lists the following Hague students on its roll for the second marking period:

Grade 6: Corey King, William Lawrie, Victoria Tompkins, Harley Trudeau

Grade 7: Kaylene Ross

Grade 8: Kaley Manning, Qirsten Ross

The second period Honor Roll lists the following Hague students:

Grade 6: First Honors - Corey King, William Lawrie, Walter Porter, Harley Trudeau

Second Honors - Edward Kearns, Victoria Tompkins

Grade 7: First Honors - Kaylene Ross

Grade 8: First Honors - Kaley Manning, Jamie Patchett, Qirsten Ross

Second Honors - Taylor Denno, Robert Kearns



### CARTOONIST'S WORK ON DISPLAY

An exhibition of 40 framed editorial cartoons by area cartoonist Stan Burdick are at the Chestertown Library, March 2 through 29.

The cartoon show, entitled "2005 - a Year of Conflict and Concern," will contain 40 original cartoons that have appeared during the past year in the Lake Champlain Weekly newspaper. The display depicts humorous and satirical spoofs of political and human interest events from the presidential campaign to the Katrina tragedy. For further information, call Wendy at 494-5384 or Stan at 585-7015.

The show is on display at the Chester Library in Chestertown across from the TOPS Market in the Municipal Center Building, Second Floor Rear. Library Hours: Wed. 9am to 8pm; Thurs, 1pm to 6pm; Fri. 9am to 6pm and Sat. 9am to 1pm.

### MONEY SMART SEMINAR

The USDA Rural Development office will be holding a "Money Smart" seminar at its Greenwich, NY location (2530 NYS Rt 40) on Monday, March 4, 2006 from 9 am to 3 pm.

The program, designed by the FDIC, will discuss the benefits of owning a home vs. renting, how to determine the amount of mortgage you can afford, how to create a budget and make money grow and how to read a credit report and ways to repair credit.

For further information and to reserve a seat, call (518) 692-9940, ext 4.

### MORE 2005 REAL ESTATE SALES

The following information comes from the Warren County Deeds records covering the period from September through December 2005. Sale from Walker to Halbach for \$1,430,000, from Galo to Canali for \$385,000, from Zuhlke to Rolf Ronning for \$25,000, from Chesky to Kossbiel/Fazio for \$400,475, from Glenn to Cooper for \$194,500, from Larkin to Upson for \$165,000, from Shattuck to Quinn for \$640,000, from Wilson to Polachek for \$270,000, from McDonald to Wood for \$81,000, from Waters to Urbon for \$48,000, from Graves to Graves for \$102,500, from Van Horen to Ezekwo for \$69,500, from Kaercher to Balouch for \$38,000, from Bouvet to Asiel for \$1,450,000, from Neal to Neal/Cashman for \$450,000, from Disbrow to Barry for \$20,000 and from Hamilton to Rebenak for \$880,000.



### 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 exemptions:

**Veterans' exemption:** military service during wartime periods.

**Senior Citizens' exemption:** primary residence homeowners over age 65 with the following household income ceilings:

County	\$23,700
Town	\$17,725.
School	\$12,500

This exemption must be renewed each year.

**Basic STAR exemption:** primary residence homeowners, regardless of age or income.

**Enhanced STAR exemption:** primary residence homeowners over age 65 with household income less than \$66,050. This exemption must be renewed each year, unless the owner participates in the Optional Income Verification Program.

Details and applications are available Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**The filing deadline is March 1, 2006.**



# NATURE NEWS

by Nancy Wotton Scarzello

## Telltale Tracks

Wild animals are shy by nature, and try to avoid human contact. Many are nocturnal and are rarely seen in daylight when people are about, and with the exception of birds and the more social chipmunks and squirrels, we are not usually aware that there are many wild creatures living right around our homes.

A recent walk around our house proved this true, when a dusting of fresh snow provided the foundation for the telltale tracks of our four-legged neighbors in Forest Bay. It takes a bit of sleuthing to get beyond just the initial identification of the animal, but following the tracks and paying attention to other signs is quite fun when the story of what goes on when we are not looking is revealed. This day we found tracks of a raccoon that poked around the entire house and yard. This way and that, he nosed into everything, under the house, down to the brook, over to a log, down to the beach until his tracks disappeared in the frozen sand. While following those tracks we came across others crisscrossing his trail. A red squirrel had run across the yard to a white pine tree, picked up a pine cone and carried it to a log bench overlooking the lake where he sat and ate the seeds hidden within, leaving a pile of pine cone scales next to him on the bench to tell the story. We too, have had picnics on the same bench enjoying the view of the lake while we ate our lunch.

Two white-tailed deer strolled through the yard on their way to the oak trees in the neighbor's yard. They may have been the same two we saw this fall, a mother and young one judging from the size of their tracks, one decidedly smaller than the other. Under the oaks they stopped and scraped away the snow and leaves to get to the acorns on the ground. Here they feasted and filled their bellies with the high protein and concentrated fats in the acorns that help sustain them through the cold winter.

Red foxes are very deliberate in their movements, and this was evident in the tracks we found that day. Traveling in a straight line across the yard and down to the beach, he may have been looking for mice or voles scavenging for seeds.

How can you identify the tracks of animals without seeing the animal itself? It's quite easy with the help of some experienced trackers. I've found an informative web site put out by the US Search and Rescue Task Force <[www.ussartf.org/animal\\_tracking.htm](http://www.ussartf.org/animal_tracking.htm)> describing the tracks and other signs that was easy to print and have on hand.

Peterson's Field Guide to Animal Tracks covers not only animal tracks and scat (yes, you can identify an animal by it's scat too!), but also includes some birds, reptiles and insects that leave tracks for us to see. Even markings on twigs, limbs, and bone chewing tell us who was there.

The best over-all guide is Tom Brown's Field Guide to Nature Observation and Tracking. This book not only gives the tracks and scat info, but also informs us how to stalk, where to look and how to put all the signs together for a complete story, we may even be able to "see" what is happening around us.

Best described in his own words, "In the widest sense, nature observation is the basis of all enjoyment and well-being in the outdoors...helps you become more aware of nature and to feel more fully the joy of living...helps you hear the voices modern man misses ~ not just the voices that speak to the five senses, but the universal voice that speaks to the heart." Tom Brown, Jr.

## WEATHER NOTES by Mary Lou Doulin

This January was the warmest ever recorded. The pattern this winter has been extended periods of remarkable spring-like conditions with shocking bouts of cold. For example, Thursday, Feb. 16 it 's 50 degrees and I am basking in the full sun enjoying being outdoors listening to the brook flow and the songs of the birds, while simultaneously observing the lack of snow and the ground thawing.

I am thinking this may be one of the years that the lake may not freeze in Hague. For the umpteenth time I embrace spring fever but then remind myself this is the middle of winter.

Twenty-four hours later on Friday, Feb. 17 Hague got hit with a huge wind storm. The temperature dropped 20 degrees in twenty minutes. Thunder, lightening and powerful hail occurred as the warm fronts met an Arctic blast in late morning. Hague lost power at 1:15 Friday afternoon. Violent winds, with gusts up to 60-70 m.p.h. lashed through for the next twenty-four hours. Gradually by Sunday afternoon the winds partially subsided.

Coinciding with a 48 hr. power outage were the coldest temperatures of the season (0 and below) . This storm was wide-spread as tens of thousands of people in the region were impacted.

When the power finally returned I commenced filling my water buckets in preparation for the next episode. Power outages are so common in these parts, maybe we should consider underground power lines.



February - March 2006

February

28 Noon Senior Citizens luncheon (p. 2)

March

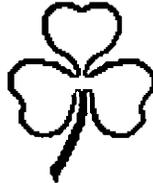
1 Exemption Deadline (see p. 8)  
 2 7pm Planning Board  
 3 10am Church Women United (p. 2)  
 4 9am "Money Smart" Seminar (p. 8)  
 5 4pm GF Symphony (p. 2)  
 14 6:30 pm Town Board  
 17 Happy Saint Patrick's Day!  
 20 7pm Chamber of Commerce  
 20 7:30 pm Hague Historical Society  
 22 1pm Extra Helping Distribution  
 23 7pm Zoning Board of Appeals  
 23 *March Hague Chronicle mailed*

**TRANSFER STATION HOURS**

To June 30, 2006:

Wednesdays & Saturdays  
 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Closed all other days



**FOOD PANTRY**

Open every Thursday: 1- 2pm

New Participants Welcome



**Having Fun on Winter Weekend**

photos by David Dunn



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