



Newsletter

VILLAGE OF LANSING *Incorporated 1974*

2405 North Triphammer Road * Ithaca, NY 14850 * 257-0424 * (FAX) 257-3230

MARCH 2000

Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 9:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

<http://people.clarityconnect.com/webpages/vlansing>

Vlansing@clarityconnect.com

A SHORT NOTE FROM THE MAYOR

Hopefully, spring is just around the corner here in the Village of Lansing. With it comes the inevitable appearance of pot holes and the dust from the traction materials used during our winter road maintenance activities. Our Public Works staff continuously monitors the road situation and welcomes input from our residents as to problems that develop quickly and need immediate attention. Another aspect of spring is our Village Tree Planting Program which is mentioned later in the Newsletter. I urge you to take advantage of this opportunity to make the Village a more livable place.

I would like to introduce you to our two newest Trustees. John Bailey was appointed in October 1999. He lives in Sevanna Park and is employed at George B. Bailey Insurance Agency in Dryden. The other new Trustee, appointed in January 2000, is Franklin Moore. He resides on Sun Downs Road and is retired from the Engineering Dept. at Cornell University.

As you have probably read in the newspapers and heard from the electronic media, the 2000 Census is upon us. Because many of the Village's sources of revenue depend on the population of the Village, it is critical that the census accurately counts the Village residents. College students living in the village are counted as village residents and not as residents where their parents live. If you have not received census material by the end of March, please contact the Village Office at 257-0424 and we will see that you receive the materials. There are also opportunities for part-time employment as a Census canvasser to follow up on the mail questionnaire response. Again, the Village Office can put you in touch with the appropriate Census official for one of these jobs. In the past, it is our feeling that the Village residents have been undercounted by a significant amount, so please get counted in the 2000

Census.

Progress continues on combining the Bolton Point, Cornell and City of Ithaca water systems into a single unit which will provide water at lower cost to the present customers of the three systems. I expect that the intermunicipal agreement will be in place by late summer. We are making good progress on a similar joint sewer system that will provide increased capacity to the Village and the Town of Lansing and improve phosphorous removal capability of the Cayuga Heights and Ithaca Area Waste Water Treatment Plants. Seven million dollars of state funding has already been granted for this important project. We should have an intermunicipal project in place before the end of 2000.

The North Triphammer Road reconstruction project is still on track for a construction start in 2001. New traffic lights will be installed this year which will fully synchronize the existing signals, along with a new light at Graham Road to replace the existing four-way stop sign.

On a sad note, the Village lost a good friend recently. George Kahin, husband of former Trustee Audrey Kahin, passed away. George was active in the formation of the Village and was very supportive of the various Village administrations. He loved living in the Village with its broad spectrum of residents and vistas. We will miss him a great deal.

Donald Hartill
Mayor

PLANNING BOARD NEWS

The Planning Board composed of Chairman Ned Hickey and Planner/Members Doris Brown, Carol Klepack, Steven Halevy and Janet Waterman meets the second Monday and last Tuesday evening of each month at 7:30 PM at the Village Office, 2405 North Triphammer Road. The public is invited to attend. A public comment period is provided at the beginning of each meeting to give members of the public an opportunity to speak on issues of interest and concern to them.

During 1999, the Planning Board held 24 regular meetings and one joint meeting with the Village of Lansing Board of Trustees.

The highlights of the work of the Planning Board during 1999 were:

1. Finalization of the Village of Lansing Comprehensive Plan

With the culmination of more than a year's work by the Planning Board, the Board of Trustees and with the technical assistance of the Tompkins County Planning Department, the final version of the Plan was approved on February 8th and was adopted by resolution by the Board of Trustees on February 15th.

2. Selection of a Consultant to Advise the Village of Lansing on Design Standard for the Low Traffic Commercial District

The Planning Board recommended to the Board of Trustees that the Village hire a consultant to advise on Design Standard for the 33 acres of undeveloped land that comprises the Low Traffic Commercial District. The purpose of this district is to act as a buffer between residential neighborhoods and the activities of the High Traffic Commercial District.

The Planning Board devoted several meetings to establishing goals for this district and then invited bids from consulting firms. Three firms were selected and interviewed by the Planning Board over the course of several meetings and the final selection was Environmental Design Research (EDR), a firm that works out of Syracuse and Rochester. EDR came highly recommended by other municipalities in the upstate New York area and had a track record of having almost 90% of their projects actually implemented. Planner Carol Klepack was designated by the Chairman of the Planning Board to act as liaison with EDR.

EDR held their first public meeting during December with a specially selected "focus group" of Village of Lansing residents and other interested parties. A second meeting was held in February 2000. One more meeting is scheduled for sometime in March 2000 after which EDR will present a proposal for the use of the Low Traffic Commercial District undeveloped land to the Planning Board.

3. Trip to the Town of Victor

Several members of the Village of Lansing Planning Board and the Code Officer went to Victor, NY to observe first hand the results of the implementation of recommendations by a consultant on use of undeveloped land. The Planning Board members were particularly interested in the procedures developed by the Town in hiring the consultant. While in Victor and aware that the Marriott Corporation was going to apply for a special permit to construct a hotel in the Cornell Business and Technology Park, the members traveled to Rochester, NY to see a hotel actually under construction and to the factory that manufactured the modules that went into the construction.

4. Courtyard Inn by Marriott

As mentioned above, members of the Planning Board and the Code Officer visited the factory of the Del Monte Corporation who have developed the technique of manufacturing rooms in the form of concrete modules and moving them to the site and placing them one upon another. This new technique has cut the construction time down to less than one month. A Special Permit for the new hotel, located in the southwest corner of the Cornell Business and Technology Park was approved on June 29th. It will occupy 58,000 square feet, will be four stories high, have 106 rooms and will cater primarily to travelers arriving at the Tompkins County Airport.

5. Pyramid Mall Renovation

The Planning Board decided to give as much time to this request as was needed to make sure that they were operating strictly within the Zoning Law and with the best interests of the residents of the Village in mind. Accordingly, the Planning Board devoted the better part of eight meetings which included not one, but two public hearings. Everyone was given a chance to voice their concerns, both the residents of the Village and a great number of non-residents. The Planning Board took many hours of testimony, examined several traffic reports prepared by several traffic consultants, and finally hired their own traffic consultant to advise on the validity of the assumptions made in these reports. The net result was that the original request for an expansion of 420,000 square feet was deemed to be detrimental to the safe flow of traffic on N. Triphammer Road and nearby streets and the request was cut back by a 2/3rd margin to a maximum of 150,000 square feet.

6. Tops Markets

Approval was given for a Special Permit to construct a one-story 48,208 square foot supermarket and a 19,200 square foot retail/restaurant on the unused property currently occupied by the Howard Johnson Motel. The Planning Board held six separate meetings on the Tops proposal, including a Public Hearing. Tops agreed to install a new traffic light on Pyramid Drive and to upgrade all the lights on N. Triphammer Road to mitigate any increase in traffic on N. Triphammer Road.

7. McDonald's Corporation

McDonalds will abandon their present restaurant which is a pre-existing, non-conforming use and move across the street to a larger property to construct a 3,791 square foot restaurant and Drive-Through. This move will double their parking lot and enable stacking to occur on their site and not on N. Triphammer Road as it now does. It is anticipated that this will greatly improve the safety and flow of traffic on N. Triphammer Road. The abandoned site will revert to a Low Traffic Commercial use.

In addition to the above, the Planning Board approved several applications for the construction of private residences, approved an amendment to the Bishop's Small Mall to allow Bill Cooke Imports to become part of the Planned Sign Area, held discussions on such diverse subjects as mobile homes, traffic calming, road shoulders, the Village SEQRA laws and other relevant matters.

The agendas of the Planning Board are varied and timely and again we invite all Village residents to attend our meetings and participate in our work.

Steven Halevy
Acting Chairman

VILLAGE LOGO

In December, a logo was adopted to reflect the Village. Hope you noticed it on the heading for this Newsletter. The colorful version is done in black, white, green and gold. Soon you will see it on Greenway signs, stationary, Village trucks, etc. A big THANK YOU goes out to Ned Hickey who was instrumental in taking this project through to completion.

Carol Willard
Clerk, part-time

PYRAMID MALL

Spring Events

April

6-9: Home Show

8: Easter Bunny Arrival & Breakfast 9 AM-11 AM

16: Sertoma Antique Show

23: Easter – Mall Closed

30: Jupiter Craft Show

May

14: Lawn & Garden Show

30: National Senior Health & Fitness Day 10 AM-2 PM

Enjoy different shows and exhibits throughout the year ... always something for the entire family! For additional information on events happening at Pyramid Mall, check out their website at www.pyramidithaca.com where you will find a listing of events, store directory, special sales info, print out coupons, and more!

Liz Heath
Marketing Assistant

RECYCLING

No Plastic Bags, Please!

Most Tompkins County residents are doing a great job placing recyclables out at the curb, both in the amount of material they put in the bins and in the way the recyclables are prepared. We have been experiencing some problems lately, however, caused by residents putting their recyclables in plastic bags. In fact, this habit causes processing delays and much unnecessary extra handling once the recyclables are delivered to the Recycling and Solid Waste Center. Floor workers must stop what

they are doing to break open the plastic bags to shake the contents out into the conveyor system. Time spent dealing with plastic bags full of recyclables delays the sorting process by pulling workers away from other more important tasks.

We remind residents that placing your mixed household papers in a brown paper grocery bag is the preferred way to prepare this material. Laying the bag on its side in the green curbside bin will protect the paper from rain and snow. Once at the Center, the bag is easy to empty on the sorting line and goes right in with corrugated cardboard for recycling. Plastic bags, on the other hand, end up in the trash. There is no way to recycle them at the Center. Ask for a paper bag when you are checking out at the grocery store and use it for your mixed paper. Recycle your plastic bags at the grocery store. Please don't use them for recyclables.

Lynn Leopold
Trustee
(Recycling Specialist, TCSWMD)

JOINT YOUTH SERVICES

Joint Youth Services, which represents the Town of Ithaca and the Villages of Cayuga Heights and Lansing, is pleased to announce the year 2000 youth programs. Our main focus in the past has been on career development and job training for youth. Employment is an important part of their career development, but we feel it plays a secondary role. We offer a continuum of employment programs that include job training,

career development, volunteer opportunities, and subsidized employment.

If you are a youth between the ages of 14 and 18 and are interested in employment opportunities for the summer of 2000, you should plan to attend one of the information workshops being held in March and April. These are free workshops which will untangle the questions that many youth face when seeking employment. Workshop dates are as follows:

Ithaca High School

March 22 3:30-5:00 PM

Teacher's Lounge

Alternative Community School

March 29 3:30-5:00 PM

West Social Studies Room

DeWitt Middle School

April 5 3:30-5:00 PM

Location TBA

Boynton Middle School

April 12 3:30-5:00 PM

Location TBA

For additional information, contact Chuck Leo at 272-4833 (#225 to register).

Chuck Leo
Program Manager

NOTARY SERVICES

Notary public services are available free of charge to Village residents at the Village Office.

VILLAGE ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Village Web Page

As a reminder, the Village has its own web page at this address:

<<http://people.clarityconnect.com/webpages/vlansing>>. Over the course of the last several months we have added several items to the web page including:

- Board of Trustees and Planning Board meeting minutes
- A link for our new logo
- Email addresses for our two newly appointed trustees
- Village highlights for 1999
- Updated platforms for the Board of Trustees

We have had about 200 people visit the web pages this calendar year so far. We encourage you to visit the web page and send your comments and suggestions to vlansing@clarityconnect.com regarding your interest in having items changed or updated. Further, we encourage you to sign-up for the Village's Email list which allows messages to be sent by any group member to all the others. As construction begins on several projects starting soon, we'll send Email to those who have subscribed as to the status of the project and planned disruptions in traffic.

Email to the Village

General issues associated with the Village may be sent to the Email address: vlansing@clarityconnect.com. If you have non-emergency items for our Department of Public Works, send Email to: vlansdpw@clarityconnect.com.

Larry Fresinski
Trustee

HUMAN SERVICES COALITION

Imagine Action Rides Again

Be active and earn up to 6 chances to win more than 30 prizes, including a \$500 travel certificate from Stone Travel. We have added options for signing up with a buddy, joining special walks, networking with others at your worksite and setting up your own team competition.

Imagine Action is a 6-week program (April 3-May12) designed to inspire all to be physically active every day. From walking the dog to running a mile, *Imagine Action* allows you to design your own routine for earning points to qualify for the prize drawings. Small lifestyle changes have proved to be as effective as a structured exercise program, providing the same long-term health effects: improving blood pressure, lowering body fat and boosting aerobic fitness. There is no better time than now to start making physical activity a part of your daily life.

All participants will receive an incentive prize and tips for staying active and having fun. And, of course, the chance to feel better, handle stress, sleep better, gain strength, and lift their spirits.

Everyone over 18 is eligible to participate. There is a \$5 individual registration fee. Please register by March 31st. To get a registration form, call 273-8686 or e-mail eafb@cornell.edu. *Imagine Action* is organized by the Tompkins County Health Department and the Health Planning Council of Tompkins County, a program of the Human Services Coalition.

Dorothy Palladino
Program Assistant
Human Services Coalition

BUDGET AND ELECTIONS

The Board of Trustees is currently working on the preliminary Village budget and will probably set the Public Hearing for the April 3rd Board meeting.

Upcoming Village elections are scheduled for April 25th. There are two Trustee positions open. These positions are currently held by John Bailey and Franklin Moore, both of who will place their names on the ballot for a two-year term. The polls are open from noon to 9:00 PM at Fire Station No. 5 on

Oakcrest Road and ALL Village registered voters will cast their ballot at this site.

For dates and times of the budget Public Hearing, details on additional names of candidates (if applicable), etc., call the Village Office at 257-0424 or check the legal section of the Ithaca Journal.

Carol Willard
Clerk, part-time

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE MANAGEMENT IN TOMPKINS COUNTY

What is Household Hazardous Waste?

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) is any leftover chemical waste which is poisonous/toxic, corrosive, flammable or explosive. Although most people associate the generation of hazardous waste with industrial activities, households and small businesses may also be hazardous waste generators. HHW includes lawn/garden products, such as pesticides; cleaning products; auto and boat care products; paints and stains; photochemicals and pool chemicals; and some personal care products.

Why is HHW a Problem?

Because of their chemical makeup, household hazardous products may pose a threat to the health of humans, animals, and the environment if they are not used, stored or disposed of properly. People and animals may be poisoned from improper use of these products. Soil, water and air can be contaminated if HHW is discarded down a drain, in a ditch, or burned. If HHW is thrown in the trash, waste handlers and water treatment plant workers may be injured; wasted handling equipment can be destroyed; solid and groundwater may be polluted.

How Should Household Hazardous Materials be Handled?

Handle hazardous materials with utmost care, in accordance with their labels. Since unidentified or unlabeled materials could be hazardous, they should always be handled with caution. Use and store hazardous products away from children and pets, sources of flame and water, and away from food or medicine. Keep hazardous materials in original, labeled containers, in locked storage areas, if possible. Unless directed by a product label, *never* mix chemicals together.

What Should we do with HHW?

All HHW should be safely stored until it can be brought to the County's permanent Household Hazardous Waste Management Facility, which is projected to open mid-year 2000, at the current Recycling and Solid Waste Center site. This Facility will be open two days per month, year round, by appointment only, to household generators, as well as to small businesses* of Tompkins County. Households may be required to pay a nominal user fee; eligible businesses will be charged waste management fees. The County has hired a hazardous waste contractor to operate the Facility and to

properly manage HHW, such as that listed above. Unacceptable wastes include: explosives, ammunition, firearms; pressure-sensitive and highly-reactive materials; infectious or biological waste; pharmaceuticals and controlled substances; and radioactive wastes.

Please call the Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Division (273-6632 or 273-5700) for further information, or to make an appointment to bring HHW to the Household Hazardous Waste Management Facility once it is operational.

*Note: Interested businesses must prove compliance with NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation's regulatory definition of conditionally exempt small quantity generator (CESQG) prior to being authorized to use of the County's HHW Management Facility.

Barbara Hotchkiss
Recycling Coordinator
TCSWMD

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS

Certain property exemptions are available for seniors and veterans

relating to Village, Town and County taxes.

Senior exemptions are available if your income is less than \$28,000. The Tompkins County Assessment Office (274-5517) can explain this program.

Veteran exemptions are limited as to the exemptions themselves, but, unlike the senior exemptions, have no income limitations. The place to begin an inquiry about these exemptions is at the office of Veteran's Counseling Center of NYS located in the Babcock Building (272-1084).

Frank Moore
Trustee

TOMPKINS COUNTY

BOARD OF ELECTIONS

The Board of Elections is currently looking for dedicated men and women to serve as Election Inspectors for the Primary and General elections held in September and November. These citizens will be placed at the voting locations throughout Tompkins County. Requirements include:

- Must be a registered voter in Tompkins County and 18 years or older
- Represent either the Republican or Democratic Party
- Enjoy people and service to others

Once you have decided to dedicate yourself the electoral process, you will be required to attend a two-hour training class once every three years. The municipality that you work for will reimburse you for attendance. In most election years, you will be expected to work twice a year:

- Primary Election Day

September

11:30AM - 9:00+PM

- General Election Day

November

5:30 AM – 9:00+PM

Before each election in which you are scheduled to work, you will need to attend a one-hour session for machine training.

Reimbursement range of pay depends on the municipality you work for, but many towns pay \$100 for General Election Day and Primary Day's pay is usually no less than \$50.

If you are interested, please contact the Board of Elections (telephone 274-5521 or 274-5522, FAX 274-5533, or e-mail brdelect@tom-pkins-co.org) for more information.

Elizabeth Cree
Shary Zifchock
Commissioners of Elections

NORTHEAST SENIORS

The Northeast Senior Citizens Unit of the Tompkins County Senior Council includes areas of the Town of Lansing (including the Village of Lansing), Village of Cayuga Heights, the northeast portion of the Town of Ithaca, and a part of the Town of Dryden. In addition, some members of other areas are included in membership.

Members, guests and would-be members are always welcome to attend and participate in the meetings which are held the 2nd Monday of each month. Because of on-going renovations at the regular meeting place of St. Catherine's of Siena Parish Hall on Hanshaw Road, the meetings have been moved to the Congregational Church Hall on Highland Road.

Meetings are held from noon until 2:30-3:00 PM. The meetings feature a generous dish-to-pass lunch and a planned program. Everyone should bring a food item such as a casserole, salad, vegetable dish,

rolls or bread, or dessert. A reputation for excellent and delicious luncheons (really dinner – because there is always enough great food to make this the main meal of the day!) has been established.

The program for the April 10th meeting will feature our local well-known ornithologist and bird artist, Karen L. Allaben-Confer. Karen will show slides and tell of her experiences in creating her ornithological art and will bring some examples of her paintings and sketches as well as some of her note cards and t-shirt designs. With all of the local interest in "birding", this will be a most enjoyable program, and one not to miss.

The May 8th meeting will feature the talents of a select few members of the unit. Included will be china painting, fly tying, quilting, carving and possibly one or two surprises. Hopefully, May's meeting place may be back to St. Catherine's of Siena, but check to be sure.

The June 12th meeting will be the annual picnic – place to be announced and details at a later date. This is the last meeting for the season as there are no meeting held during the summer but they will resume in September.

In addition to the regular monthly meetings, there are weekly Wednesday 9:30 AM – noon watercolor classes under the capable direction of new member, Ron Walters. Mr. Walters is a professional artist and a teacher of art. The weekly class is most enthusiastic about his talents and teaching abilities. If you are interested in joining the group, call Raymond Fox at 272-6867.

All seniors are welcome to the monthly meetings. You do not have to be a member to come and join in the fun. Come meet and make new friends.

Co-Chairman
Raymond Fox

TOWN OF LANSING RECREATION DEPT.

The Town of Lansing Parks and Recreation Department is currently accepting reservations for pavilion rentals. The Town has 6 pavilions available for rental; 5 are located at the Town Park in Myers and 1 is located at the ballfields on Auburn Road. Pavilions are reserved on a first come, first serve basis for a fee of \$30 for small pavilions (holding 100 – 150 people) and \$50 for larger pavilions (holding 150-200 people).

Camping will be available at the Town Park in Myers beginning approx. May 20th. There are 30 sites, all equipped with electric and water hookups. A fee of \$9 per night for Lansing residents or \$15 per night for nonresidents is charged. Sites are available again on a first-come, first-serve basis. No reservations are accepted.

The boat launch will officially open approx. mid-May. The launch is available for use earlier but boaters are cautioned to check the lake level prior to launching. We are hoping to again have the

concession stand open at Myers. A & L Concessions has expressed an interest in returning for the 2000 season.

The Recreation Department is offering a **Horse Care and Riding Camp** during spring break April 17-21 for youth 8 years of age and older. The camp is held at Patchwork Therapeutic Center in Groton from 12:30 –3:00 PM. The registration fee is \$60 per participant. A maximum of 12 students will be registered on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Summer recreation programs are currently being planned. The complete brochure and information will be available in mid-May at the Town or Village Office.

For more information on any of these items, contact the Parks and Recreation Department at 533-7388 or stop in at the office in the new Town Hall, 29 Auburn Road. Also check out their website at www.recreation.lansing.ny.us.

Beverly French/Steve Colt
Recreation Department

LOAP NEWS

The Lansing Older Adult Program (LOAP) strives to improve the quality of life for older adults in Lansing. They provide educational and supportive services as well as activities and workshops for the senior community.

LOAP has two workshops scheduled for this spring. Try to attend one of these events:

Stress in the Elderly

Kay Friedlander, Pres. Of Elderhelp Assoc. of Ithaca

April 12 1:30 PM

Woodsedge Apts.

The Physical Aspects of Avoiding Injury

Dr. Megan Van Loon

May 9 1:30 P.M.

Woodsedge Apts.

Arts and crafts workshops (Decorative Art) are also scheduled. These workshops are directed by artists Barbara Hlywa and Elnora Hoaglin and will feature "Painted Place Mats in a Floral Design.

Classes will be held on April 10, 17 and 24 and May 1. Sessions are \$1.00 each and are held at Woodsedge Apts. Further details and applications can be obtained at Woodsedge Apts. or by calling Barbara Hlywa at 533-4626.

Seniors should also save the date of May 6th for the Annual Spring Banquet which is held at the Lansing United Methodist Church on Brickyard Rd. Friends and neighbors gather to share a wonderful turkey dinner and honor those volunteers that truly make a contribution to the community. This year, Eileen Cundy, Mary Searles and Marian Thompson will be among the honored guests. Reservations can be made by calling Betty Fedorka at 533-7508.

Another program which may be of interest to seniors is the weatherization referral and assistance program called WRAP. This program has a home repair program for seniors and is run through the Tompkins County Office for the Aging. It is designed to connect senior homeowners with many community organizations which assist with weatherization and home repair. If you could use some help with energy related home repairs or need some help in finding out about programs for which you may be eligible, call the Tompkins County Office for the Aging at 274-5482.

Marilyn Paradise
LOAP Consultant

VILLAGE STREET TREE PLANTING PROGRAMS

Since 1990, the Village, through its Street Tree Planting Program, has been concentrating efforts on developing shade trees in the commercial areas of the Village. This program now extends and amplifies the beautification efforts to include all areas.

The Village has an important commitment to the quality and beauty of the community. The Street Tree Planting Program seeks to encourage the planting of shade trees along Village streets. The Village offers to reimburse homeowners 75% of the cost of a tree, up to a maximum of \$75 per tree. To qualify, please follow these procedures:

- Make application to enter the tree planting program before the tree is purchased. Applications may be picked up at the Village Office or may be obtained by calling the Village Office (257-0424) and requesting an application be mailed to you.
- The location must be mutually agreed upon by the property owner and a representative of the Greenspace Advisory Council (GAC) before planting.
- Reimbursement shall take place upon presentation of a receipt from a recognized nursery and approval of the planted tree by a representative of the GAC.
- Any one property owner will be eligible for reimbursement of up to two trees in any year.
- Applicants will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Landowners may plant trees in the spring up to mid-May.

New Tree Program

The GAC will also be purchasing evergreen and deciduous seedlings from the US Soil and Water Conservation Department. These seedlings will arrive on April 21st and should be planted shortly after that date. If you are interested in having some of these planted on your property or would like to assist with their planting throughout the Village, please call the Village Office at 257-0424 and leave a message for Walt Wietgreffe. Also, if you have seedlings such as those from Arbor Day and would like to donate them, they would be gladly accepted and appreciated. Again, call and leave a message.

Walt Wietgreffe
GAC Chairman

LEARNING WEB

The Learning Web will be offering its Volunteer Community Service Project (VCSP) to DeWitt Middle School seventh and eighth graders this spring semester. Funded by the Joint Youth Commission of Tompkins County, the group offers youth from the Town of Ithaca, the Village of Cayuga Heights, and the Village of Lansing the opportunity to participate in volunteer projects to benefit their community. The group will meet after school at DeWitt on Thursdays from March to June.

Last year, VCSP won the City of Ithaca's Distinguished Youth Award.

Some examples of last year's DeWitt VCSP projects include: playing Bingo with residents of the Reconstruction Home, visiting at the Farm Sanctuary, walking dogs at the SPCA, and more.

Interested students or parents should call Jen Johnson at the Learning Web at 275-0122 for more information.

Summer Service Program

The Learning Web's Summer Service Program is an opportunity for youth ages 11-14 who live in the Town of Ithaca and the Villages of Cayuga Heights and Lansing to have fun and make friends while helping their community. Service sites include the SPCA, recording a public service announcement, Reconstruction Home, AIDS Work, Finger Lakes Land Trust, and more (subject to change).

Session run from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM Mondays and Wednesdays OR Tuesdays and Thursdays, from June 26th through August 3rd. (No sessions July 3rd or 4th). There is no fee.

Again for information, contact Jen Johnson at 275-0122. Her mailing address is 515 W. Seneca St. and her e-mail address is jen@learningweb.clarityconnect.com.

Jen Johnson

REPORT OF COUNTY BOARD OF REPRESENTATIVES

Solar Electricity for a Major Public Building?!

Tompkins County has a chance to incorporate solar-generated electricity on the roof of the Woolworth building in downtown Ithaca as part of remodeling that building to house the Tompkins County Public Library. We have received a proposal from the PowerLight Corporation of California to install a photovoltaic (PV) system that would deliver clean solar electricity to the building, thereby cutting the cost of electricity purchase – and with the additional money-saving benefits of extending the roof life and increasing roof insulation. In addition, PowerLight is offering the County a Federal grant it has received, to apply to what would be the largest building-integrated PV system in New York State, and this grant – together with support from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), which has worked with PowerLight before – would cover about 45% of the total system cost, leaving the County cost at \$551,000.

A solar cell is a semiconductor device; the commonest semiconductor sandwiched, e.g., between shatterproof glass, is silicon. Silicon is one of the elements that make up sand (the other being oxygen), and aside from oxygen, it is the most abundant element on the planet. PV cells are in common use today in solar calculators and in NASA's space probes. PowerLight's solar electric roof tiles are completely solid-state little power plants, with no moving parts or fluids, or air or water emissions, and essentially no maintenance. They lie flat above the roof on 2" of extruded polystyrene, with no roof penetrations. They reflect the color of the sky. There are no exposed wires. The direct current generated is converted to standard alternating current.

It has been interesting to hear from County residents who have been living here for years "off the grid", lighting their homes and running their appliance (refrigerators, freezers, stoves, TVs, computers) from solar power. It is clear that even in cloudy Ithaca there is sufficient insolation (solar radiation) to make this worthwhile. PowerLight's financial analysis of this project, done for a 25-year period, shows a net financial return of 7.4% on our investment (which is more than the County could earn by investing its half million dollars today).

The Library and the County will also benefit from the positive publicity and educational opportunities of this installation, and NYSERDA, as part of its grant support, requires PowerLight to conduct an Outreach Program to ensure the Tompkins County Public Library (TCPL) is recognized as a compelling example of a successful PV system. To this end they plan to showcase TCPL on various national websites, post performance data from their data-acquisition system (that makes operational and meteorological measurements each second) on web pages, place an educational kiosk on the diagonal "main street" in the new library, include students and others in monitoring, and hold solar workshops and tours of the library (and TCPL would incur no direct costs from any of this).

Last, but by no means, if the County decides to go forward with this enhancement of the library

project, the 147 kilowatt system it will have invested in will be an environmentally benign method of electric generation. There would be no fuel cost, nothing to be dug deep from the earth or strip mined. Instead, over a 25-year period it will conserve 8,228 barrels of oil or 2,394 tons of coal or 524 million cubic feet of natural gas, which would otherwise have been used in electricity generation. It will prevent the emission of 4,488 tons of carbon dioxide, 51,000 pounds of sulfur oxides, and 13,784 pounds of nitrogen oxides, so we will be doing our part by lessening those respective pollutant contributions to global warming, acid rain, and smog. I believe this is the kind of example local government can and should set. And I believe that a strong case can be made that this is the type of project on which we should spend a portion of our tobacco-settlement money.

County Jail Update

The Tompkins County Jail, located in the Village of Lansing near the County Airport, is in need of renovation to improve administrative efficiency and provide adequate room for programs and medical services. Whether to increase the number of cells - and if so by how much - and/or to put money towards keeping people out of jail is a hot topic for discussion. Cost estimated for the various expansion options range from \$8.4 million to \$13.2 million.

Recently another possibility has entered the mix of alternatives: Cortland has expressed interest in a shared jail facility.

I am not a member of the Jail Space Study Committee, but if it were up to me, my preference at this time would be to pursue the possibility of Tompkins and Cortland counties sharing a facility for *sentenced* prisoners only, for Tompkins County to house pre-trial detainees in a new smaller facility somewhere downtown closer to the courts, and for Tompkins County to invest more in both alternatives to incarceration and "jail prevention", since it is both cheaper and more socially beneficial to prevent people from having to be jailed.

Recently the League of Women Voters of Tompkins County participated in a statewide "Balancing Justice" study to help define citizen priorities for New York State's criminal justice system via community study and discussion. About fifty County residents have participated, and that effort may help us in our decision making, as could a community-based ad hoc group advocating for alternatives to jail cell expansion (United Citizens for Alternative to Jail Expansion [UNCAGE]).

I would welcome input on this subject from any interested Village residents.

Dooley Kiefer
District # 10 Rep.
257-5453

VILLAGE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

Brush Pick-Up

The Public Works Dept. will be providing a spring brush and limb pick-up in the Village the week of May 1st.

Residents are asked to leave all materials near the roadside by 7:00 AM on *Monday* morning. To assist the work crews, all limbs and brush (up to five inches in diameter) should be piled with the cut ends facing the same direction. Also, the piles should not be tied but should be left loose. It also helps if thorny materials are separated from the rest. Each household is limited to approximately one pick-up size load. Excessive amount will not be picked up and will become the responsibility of the homeowner to see they are removed. Leaves and trash bags will not be picked up.

Home Improvements in the Road Right-of-Ways

Many homeowners like to plant flowers, shrubs and trees, and build structures in an effort to enhance the appearance of their property. The Village law states "No structures, improvements or plantings shall be placed in the Village right-of-way without the written consent of the Village Superintendent of Public Works." There are several important reasons for this law with respect to public works operations.

The first is that most underground utilities are located in the road right-of-way. When repairs to these facilities become necessary, work crews need to access them without obstruction. Restoration of lawns and driveways can be expected, but beyond that, there are no assurances. Planting and structures could interfere with proper drainage necessary for longer road life. Line of sight distances could be reduced, making for potentially dangerous conditions.

During and after a snow storm the plows have two objectives. The first, of course, is to remove the snow from the roadway and then to sand and salt. Since there is no way of really knowing how many storms or how much snow is in the future, or when it will be warm enough to melt some of it down, the plows must make room at the side of the road by "winging back". The wing extends well past the edge of the paved driving lane and anything above the level of the shoulder or driveway can be hit and damaged by, or do damage to the wing. Mailboxes, on the other hand, have to be in the right-of-way and the Village has a repair policy for them.

If you are planning a project near the road and have questions as to where the right-of-way ends, please call Dennis Reinhart at 257-6280 and he will discuss it with you.

Dennis Reinhart
Super. of Public Works