

SPEEDING THROUGH SIDNEY CENTER

By Michael Sellitti

For years the issue of speeding through Sidney Center has been on the radar of the Sidney Center Improvement Group (SCIG). Hearing from concerned residents living in and around town about the excessive speeds, SCIG felt a responsibility to come up with a proactive solution to the issue before anything devastating happened.

Sidney Center is a hamlet, that is, an unincorporated settlement, without its own government. As in any community, there are families with young children who ride bikes on the



Electronic sign in Unadilla street, and older folks walking along the roads. The posted speed limit through the hamlet is 30 mph, but speeds are observed in excess of that limit on a daily basis. These observations have been proven with traffic data taken by Delaware County Dept. of Public Works (DPW).

Over the years, SCIG has received support from

Delaware County Sheriff's Office and the New York State Police. Both have kept a presence in the hamlet in order to slow traffic, as well as providing a temporary mobile radar sign at the entrance to town. Unfortunately, this only works when deputies and troopers are actually present and the sign is in place. SCIG is grateful for this support and will continue to keep law enforcement involved in our efforts.

SCIG has also received support at Town of Sidney board meetings for continuing to find ways to resolve this public safety concern. In 2017, SCIG initiated a petition to gather as much public support for this effort as possible. In just a few months, over 100 signatures were received.

See **SPEED**, con't on Page 11

UPDATE: Clean Energy Community

By Don Hebbard

The Clean Energy Community Program, sponsored by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), is an incentive program designed to advance specific New York State (NYS) energy use goals by the year 2030. Adopted in 2015, the major goals are:

- 40% reduction in greenhouse gases from 1990 levels,
- generate 50% of NYS electric usage from renewable energy sources, and
- 23% reduction in energy consumption in buildings.

After qualifying for this program, a municipality would become eligible for a \$100,000 or \$50,000 grant, to be applied to reducing that municipality's energy usage. Franklin is located in the Southern Tier Region of NYS where four grants of \$100,000 and ten grants of \$50,000 were to be awarded to small municipalities with a population less than 40,000. **To date, all four \$100,000 grants have already been awarded. Only six \$50,000 grants remain. Sixteen municipalities across the Southern Tier have started the process to qualify; three municipalities have only one item left to complete.**

These grants are awarded on a first-come, first-awarded basis. To qualify for a grant a municipality must complete four out of ten High Impact Items listed in the program. After reviewing the list of impact items with Tara

See **CLEAN**, con't on Pg. 9



FEATHERS AND FINS

Staff Report

In the Spring, a young person's fancy turns to thoughts of – well, that, but also hunting and fishing.

Besides Fool's Day, Sunday April 1st brings the opening of the spring fishing season for kokanee, lake trout, land-locked Atlantic salmon, striped bass, and trout (brook, brown, rainbow, and splake). All seasons end on October 15th, except that for striped bass, which ends November 30th.

May 1st is opening day for spring bearded turkey. While the majority of bearded turkey are male, there is the rare hen with a beard. The bag limit is one per day, total of two. Turkeys may be taken only from a half-hour before dawn until noon. The season ends May 31st.

First Saturday in May brings opening of the season for northern pike, pickerel, tiger muskellunge, and walleye. The season ends March 15th in 2019.

May 26th is opening day for muskellunge, and June 13th is opening day for black bass. Both seasons close November 30th. Good luck and good eating!

FRANKLIN FISCAL FACT-FINDING

By Brian Brock

In 2010, the Franklin Town Board stopped their annual internal auditing of the town books and stopped releasing an accounting, both required under NY Town Law. In addition, they did not file an Annual Update Document of this accounting with the Office of the State Comptroller, required under NY Municipal Law.

In 2014, after the OSC audit of town financial operations for 2012 and 2013, our town government agreed with the findings (letter, 4/30), and agreed to restart auditing and filing (Comprehensive Action Plan, 7/16), but they have not.

In 2016, The New Franklin Register learned of this audit, which had never been discussed in town meetings – contrary to the practice of neighboring towns and Delaware County. During late 2016 and early 2017, the newspaper requested these accountings, but without success.

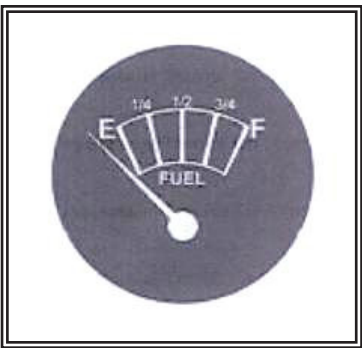
In 2017, to bring this matter before the Franklin community, the NFR published a series of investigations. All that time, repeated requests were stonewalled, with the supervisor Jeffery Taggart stating only that “we’re working on it.” The supervisor served his first two terms without producing a single accounting.

In November, this problem was brought to the attention of the regional community through letters to the editor in The Reporter (Walton) and The Daily Star (Oneonta) by Associate Editor Brian Brock. To date, no accounting has been released.

What might be in the town finances that our board does not want the townspeople to see, something they would be willing to break multiple state laws for, nine years in a row? This ill-advised practice has continued under two supervisors (Smith and Taggart) who as the town financial officers are responsible. Each has had the tacit consent – at the very least – of a dozen councilmen and women. Clearly, this is a long-standing policy of our Republican government.

Absent the AUDs for 2009 to 2017, a few scraps of information can still provide hints. The last six complete Annual Update Documents that our board did file, 2003 to 2008, are available from the NY Office of the State Comptroller website: www2.osc.state.ny.us/transparency/LocalGov/

See **FACTS**, con't on Pg. 17



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Your Neighbor's View...

Editor's Note: The New Franklin Register received this letter last fall. Normally, it is against our policy to print an anonymous comment, but this is a true cry from the heart of one who loves Franklin and wishes the best for our town. We thought it only right to make an exception and share it.

Nov. 1, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

Your paper says "Independent, Fearless and Free." That's why I send this letter. I was born and raised in Franklin and walk the valley every morning. I meet many neighbors and friends. People are talking about the condition of the village clerk office and the town clerk and court offices. Everyone is appalled. I've been told that the village clerk's office is not up to state specifications as it does not have a handicap access. I have heard around town that the town clerk's office and court are leased for \$1 a year and that besides paying utilities, all the town is responsible for is maintenance. It's obvious that this building has not been maintained in a very long time. It is literally falling apart. How can they let a historical home in the village go to rack and ruin? It is a disgrace and shows a lack of pride and respect for the beautiful village of Franklin. I've heard talk that the town wants to move the clerk's office and court down to Pat's Pond area. Shouldn't the taxpaying citizens of Franklin be allowed to vote on this? Besides making it inconvenient for everyone, erecting a new building has got to be more expensive than renovations to the existing building. Look at how lovely the eyeglass building next door is coming along. I'm sure there are grants out there too. I'm sorry to burden you with this, but you folks are the only ones it seems to me are willing to take on the establishment. The rest of us are just plain scared.

Thank you.
[Name withheld]

The Franklin Rotary Club would like to thank the sponsors of our Lighted Christmas Tree Project 2017

- Erna McReynolds and Tom Morgan
- Taggart's Electric Inc.
- Chen-Del-O Federal Credit Union
- Kenneth Bennett Funeral Home
- Burgin's Auto
- Matthew Campbell Insurance
- Wise Guys Pizza
- Roger at Whites Farm Store
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- Franklin American Legion
- Franklin Railroad Community Museum
- Franklin Improvement Society
- John Wilson

- Janet and Dan Branigan
- Donald Hebbard Fencing
- Paul and Barbara White
- Franklin Eyewear
- The Squire's Tankard
- Jeanne DeSilva, in memory of her husband Roger
- Special thanks to:
 - Carl and Dale Lobdell
 - Charlene Parslowe & Ken Taylor
- Members of the Franklin Honor Society

We hope the residents of Franklin, along with people passing through, enjoyed our beautiful village this past Christmas season.



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BURN BAN IN EFFECT

Staff Report

Spring is the season of wildfires in New York. Annually the Department of Environmental Conservation bans open burning from mid-March to mid-May in Franklin and throughout New York. With the melting of the winter snows, exposed dead annual vegetation can provide fuel for fires. By mid-spring the new growth of grasses will greatly reduce this fire risk. Violators may be subject to civil or criminal enforcement, with a minimum fine of \$500 for the first offense. The department posts a map of fire risk for regions of the state at: dec.ny.gov/lands/98329.html Annual burn bans have gone into effect since 2009. According to DEC, in the last decade this ban has reduced the number of wildfires by one third. At other times, burning brush (less than 6 inches in diameter) is allowed in smaller towns such as Franklin unless designated a "fire town." Nearby fire towns include Andes, Colchester, Hancock, and Middletown. Also allowed most of the year are controlled burns of invasive species. Burning garbage or leaves is illegal year round. Trash must go to the county landfill. Leaves may be composted. Campfires and bonfires are allowed but must not be left unattended. Any fire should be thoroughly extinguished by stirring water into ashes. Also, organic agricultural waste may be burned. Other exceptions are listed at: dec.ny.gov/chemical/58519.html

TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS - 2018

Franklin Town Council meetings are generally held on the first Tuesday of each month at the Franklin Town Sheds at the intersection of Routes 357 & 21.

Every third month, as indicated below, meetings will be held in Treadwell at either the Fire House or Kellogg Educational and Community Center.

- January 2nd
- February 6th
- March 6th (*Treadwell*)
- April 3rd
- May 1st
- June 5th (*Treadwell*)
- July 10th (*due to July 4th holiday, meeting is on the second Tuesday*)
- August 7th
- September 4th (*Treadwell*)
- October 2nd
- November 7th (*due to Election Day, meeting is on the first Wednesday*)
- December 4th (*Treadwell*)

The New Franklin Register mourns the passing, late last year, of

ELIZABETH (SUE) AVERY

our resourceful and good-spirited recipe columnist since the summer issue of 2013.



FRANKLIN LOCAL

Local News
Local Events

Local Issues
Local Concerns



IS FRANKLIN HANDICAP-FRIENDLY?

By Lynne Kemen

I have been thinking about accessibility issues for members of our community. In the last issue of NFR (#33), Mary Ellen Collier discussed the Franklin Free Library's installation of an elevator to allow patrons access to the building without having to climb stairs. At the same time, a wheelchair-accessible bathroom was built.

As you are probably aware, there are many challenges to making Franklin and Treadwell handicap-accessible. Delaware County was founded in 1797 and many of the buildings in Franklin and Treadwell were built in the 1800s, long before the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was ever imagined. Consequently, making older buildings more accessible can be daunting. Franklin is a town of steps and the sidewalks are often uneven and the segments

of stone are broken. The east side of Main Street is steep and it can be almost impossible for someone on the passenger side to get to the sidewalk, especially if that person is disabled.

Title III of the ADA requires public accommodations to provide goods and services to people with disabilities on an equal basis with the rest of the general public. The goal is to afford every individual the opportunity to benefit from our country's businesses and services, and to afford our businesses and



The Franklin Free Library is now handicap-accessible

services the opportunity to benefit from the patronage of all Americans. The regulations require that structural architectural and communication barriers be removed in public areas of existing facilities when their removal is readily achievable - in other words, easily accomplished and able to be carried out without unreasonable difficulty or expense. The ADA.gov website states that millions of people with disabilities regularly travel, shop, and eat out with family and friends. They also note that according to the 2000 census, approximately 20.9 million families in this country have at least one member with a disability. In this census, almost 42% of older adults (sixty-five years or more) have one or more disabilities. The Administration on Aging projects that by 2030, approximately 20% of our national population will be in this

See **HANDICAP**, con't on Pg. 11



Front row, from left to right: Nate Dennis, Treadwell; Brynne Backus, Sidney Center; Alexis Pernice, Hamden; and Gregory Zuill, Davenport. Back row from left to right: Extension 4-H Resource Educator Emily Roach, Autumn Madugno, Deposit; Raina Howe, Walton; Mikala Anderson, Deposit; George Machala, Franklin; Ryan Zuill, Davenport; Matt Cox, Franklin; and 4-H Program Issue Committee Chairman Mike Steele. Award winners missing from photo are Grace Dunham, Summit; Cael Howland, Franklin; Tracer Howland, Franklin; Mikayla Pernice, Hamden; Jacob Pomeroy, Walton and Lindsey Wright, Delancey. Photo by Cornell Cooperative Extension.

4-H AWARDS

By Brian Brock

This January, at the annual 4-H Teen Recognition Night for Delaware County, members were acknowledged for their accomplishments in 2016 and

2017. Those recognized included local members Matt Cox, Cael Howland, Tracer Howland, and George Machala of Franklin, Brynne Backus of Sidney Center, and Nate Dennis of Treadwell. Ms. Backus is a member of the Koun-

See **4-H**, con't on Pg. 16

THE MAYOR'S CORNER

With Tom Briggs

PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY! Walking Tours of Franklin

"No one else looks out upon the world so kindly and so charitably as the pedestrian"

"No one gives and takes so much from the country he passes through."

- John Burroughs

We are very fortunate, living here in Franklin. We mustn't disregard what we love about living here. We should be mindful of our quality of life resources, compelling both to ourselves and to people new to the area.

For those who are disillusioned by the bright lights and are seeking a simpler and more therapeutic lifestyle, Franklin has much to offer. Our little village is blessed with an abundance of handsome mid-nineteenth-century houses that still retain their charm and curb appeal. Each street is graced with majestic century-old maple trees, and flowers abound because

so many of the residents take great pride in their gardening and landscaping skills. We're cradled by picturesque hills on one side and the graceful Ouleout Creek on the other. Best of all, for both casual and goal-driven pedestrians, Franklin offers three enjoyable walking options.

Whether you are just walking down the street to visit the post office or hiking the length of the village, to the cemetery and down the side streets to the West Street loop, you're bound to have a pleasant experience. It's a shame that most of the original slate sidewalks have been removed, but it does make for smoother and safer strolling, as the village continues within its means to improve the concrete sidewalks. Franklin's sidewalk stroll gets a high-five (paw) from our canine partners as well. My dog Mimi especially enjoys the diverse smells that rise from the hydrants and other points of interest.

There are some delightful paths skirting the Ouleout Creek on the north side of the village as well. By taking the road behind the school that leads downward to the athletic fields, walkers can bear west behind the softball field and proceed to the adjacent field. At this point, they can choose to be either walkers or hikers.

On the right, paths lead up a slightly steep esker (ice age river

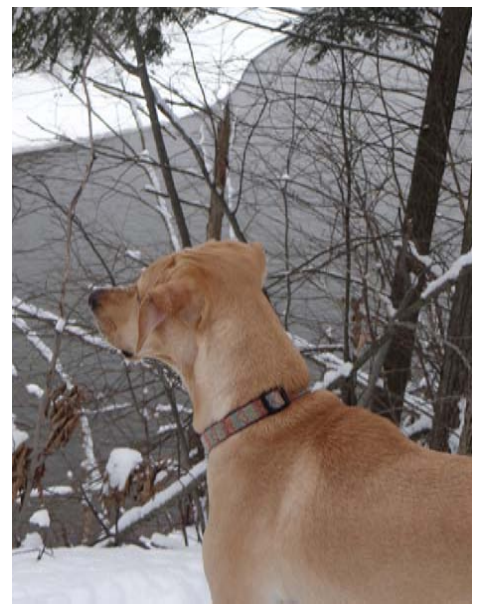
ridge). A path along the spine at the top offers a breathtaking vista of the Ouleout Creek below. It then leads down to the water's edge for a wide view of the field and hillside across the creek.

Walkers choosing to avoid the esker can proceed forward on a path crossing a flat field that, depending on the season, can be quite colorful.

After fording a tiny brook, hikers can take an abandoned service road up an incline past the extensive ruins of an old depression-era creamery. The road then tunnels its way through a beautiful tree-lined bower, with the Ouleout occasionally peeking up from the bottom of a steep bank.

As the road reaches the end of its incline, the hiker will notice the remains of an early nineteenth-century paper mill hugging the creek's edge. At this point, the creek splits and widens, offering a pleasant scene sometimes enhanced by waterfowl or deer. The road then narrows to a path and continues onward along the creek to offer additional surprises, making the jaunt a truly enjoyable experience.

The third walking option is a work in progress. The Village recently was gifted hillside property from the Walter Rich Foundation, to be added to our park in the center of town. A stalwart group of volunteers have been reconnoitering, designing, and clearing paths on



Sidekick Mimi looks down past the Ouleout for prey or play from her vantage point above. Photo by the author

this plot to create an "edible walking tour" for hikers as they climb to the top of the property. Accommodations will be made to assist mobility-challenged hikers as well. This new park extension will enable village walkers to proceed from the sidewalk through the park and up the trail to gain an impressive bird's-eye view of the village.

For those who seek the subtle qualities that define the merits of community living, trekking the sidewalk paths is an excellent means. For those in quest of a community that offers a variety of walking experiences, Franklin with all its charm is a good choice.

ANNA AND BLACKBERRY: an update

PLAYGROUND RESTORATION TO START SOON!

By Robert Lamb

As the fall edition of The New Franklin Register was coming out, Anna Masucci of Franklin and her horse Blackberry were at the World Barrel Racing Championship event in Georgia. They did very well. Anna's times got faster with each race. It was exciting to watch her and Blackberry work together as one very fast unit. Together, they won a large beautiful belt buckle, a wild-card ticket and two nice cash awards that kept Anna smiling.

The wildcard ticket allows Anna and Blackberry to enter any finals in any event any time in Anna's lifetime. It is a one-time chance to run in an event even though she may not have had fast enough times to qualify. The cash awards will help defray the costs of attending the events.

Blackberry is taking a well-deserved break for the winter, and Anna has gone back to college. I asked Anna if she was going to continue barrel rac-



Anna and Kaci at the event

ing. She stared at me for a moment as if I had lost my mind, then said, "Of course!"

In the winners' circle with Anna was Kaci Madison, her friend and stable mate from Downsville who also did very well at the world event. Both girls were trained and mentored by Laura Phoenix. It is because of Laura that these girls have done so well. She has put a lot of effort into mentoring these two up-and-coming racers.

While neither girl won the overall championship this year, I am sure we will be hearing a lot about them in the future, so watch for the continuing story of Anna and Blackberry

By Michael Sellitti

In 2017, the Sidney Center Improvement Group (SCIG) launched a fundraising campaign to restore the Sidney Center park and playground. Following a flood, the mitigation project effectively cut the park in half with a drainage ditch, requiring the removal of the baseball field and other equipment. SCIG heard the calls from the community to revive the park for the growing number of young families in the hamlet.

The project will be broken down into three phases. Phase 1 will consist of rehabilitating what is currently there: basketball court, swings, signage. Phase 2 will be for installing new equipment and features to the park: a slide, playhouse, benches, picnic tables. Phase 3, the most ambitious stage of the project, will be to install a walking footbridge over the drainage ditch that currently divides the park.

SCIG has raised enough funds to cover Phase 1 of the project and will begin work in the spring. SCIG has also received significant funding commitments from two local non-profit organizations and will be working closely with several large com-

panies in the area. The group will apply for grants to secure the funding needed to complete Phase 2, as well as for engineering services for the viability of Phase 3. SCIG will consult with the Town of Sidney throughout each phase of the project.

Up-to-date progress reports will be available on our website at www.SCIGNY.org, as well as our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/SCIGNY.

SCIG is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. If you would like to help finance this project, please send donations to: Sidney Center Improvement Group, P.O. Box 456, Sidney Center, NY 13839, and put 'S.C. Park Project' on the memo line.



Basketball court in Sidney Center Park sorely in need of restoration.



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kitchen
basics

By
Carla
Nordstrom

It was with deep sadness that I learned of the passing of longtime Franklin icon Sue Avery, who wrote the **In the Kitchen** column. Though I haven’t seen Sue in many years, she was a friend of my parents and a wonderful member of the Franklin community.

MUFFINS

With bake sale and potluck season approaching, it is nice to throw something together that is easy to prepare, uses ingredients that you have around the house, and that everybody enjoys. I call them bus muffins because I make three different batches to hand out on lobbying bus trips to Albany or Washington DC. Activists appreciate a snack first thing in the morning or later in the afternoon on the way home.

Making muffins involves a few simple steps. I use the same basic recipe for each batch, but change the additions and flavorings.

There are a couple of things that will help make it an easy bake.

- Make sure to take the butter out of the refrigerator and let it stand at room temperature overnight. I usually forget to do this and end up fighting with the batter. I could just as easily melt the butter, but have never been a sensible baker.
- When using washed or wet fruit, dust it with 2 Tbs. of the dry mixture and it will blend in better.
- I never use salt with sweet breads, but feel free to add ½ tsp.
- Don’t limit yourself to milk. Buttermilk, yogurt, sour cream, and even curdled milk will give your muffins a bit of tang. When using these, replace ½ tsp. of baking powder with baking soda to neutralize the acid. Half-and-half or cream give muffins a richer flavor and don’t need baking soda.
- Add spices or lemon zest to dry ingredients.
- Also, it is not necessary to use paper baking cups, but I do for two reasons: it is easier than greasing muffin tins, and muffins travel better when baked in liners.

Basic Recipe makes 12 muffins

Preheat the oven to 375°.

Combine dry ingredients in a large bowl
2 cups flour
2 tsps. baking powder

In a separate bowl cream together
1 stick of soft unsalted butter
¾-1 cup sugar (depending on how sweet you like your muffins)
2 eggs
1 tsp. vanilla (unless you are using a spice or flavoring)

Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients, and mix in creamed butter
2 cups of fruit or vegetables (if using)
½ cup of milk

Mix until just combined (don’t overmix). Spoon batter into muffin tins lined with paper muffin cups. Bake for about 20 minutes. or until browned on top and an inserted toothpick comes out clean. Remove muffins from the tin and cool on a rack.

Additions and flavorings:

- Blueberry: 2 cups of washed fresh or frozen blueberries. Add the zest of one lemon.
- Apple spice: peel and chop one large apple into small pieces. Add 1 tsp. cinnamon.
- Chocolate: Combine ½ cup cocoa and ¼ tsp. baking soda with dry ingredients. Add ½ cup chocolate chips to the batter.
Zucchini: Add 1 tsp. cinnamon and ¼ tsp. nutmeg to dry ingredients & 1 grated zucchini to batter. To jazz these up, add ½ cup chocolate chips.
- Nuts, dried fruit, or chocolate chips: Add ½ cup to the batter.
- Substituting flours: Decrease flour by the amount used of the substitute. For cornmeal, use ¾ cup and 1 cup flour. Also, with cornmeal, more liquid will be needed.





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SEVA's greenhouse

ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING

By Esther Tzoumas

SEVA, the School of Environmental and Vocational Arts, started as a dream to create a place where people can enhance their well-being. It was a dream of a better world, where growth is encouraged, and life is in harmony and balance with the Earth.

Situated on fifty acres of beautiful gardens, forest, meadows, and brooks, SEVA was founded in 1981. Seventy-five people from all walks of life and from all over the country came together to build the school, creating a non-profit educational center offering a wide array of workshops, seminars, and classes.

The campus was intended as a teaching model to foster environmental awareness and balanced, healthful living. A vibrant community spirit grew and thrived. New interests include organic vegetable and herb gardens, a greenhouse, and classes in vegetarian cooking, herb preparation, stress reduction, and healthy living, for the healing of our bodies and the land.

SEVA welcomes you to visit our campus to attend our workshops and classes. SEVA is located at 365 SEVA Lane, off Scott Road in South Kortright, Delaware County, New York, in the beautiful western Catskill Mountains.

Course offerings for Spring through Fall 2018 include: Energetics of Plants, Fire Cider, Mushroom Walk, Wine and Mead, Cheese Making, Drum Making, Harmonica, Herbalism Through the Ages, Numerology’s Influence in Your Life. For more information and class availability, please visit our website: SEVAFoundationNY.org



FRESH FOR SPRING:

A NEW BROCHURE FOR THE GREATER FRANKLIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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20Franklin Durable Goods
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GreentreeHomeCandle.com (607) 746-7095

22The Squire's Tankard Antiques
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MARK YOUR 2018 CALENDARS

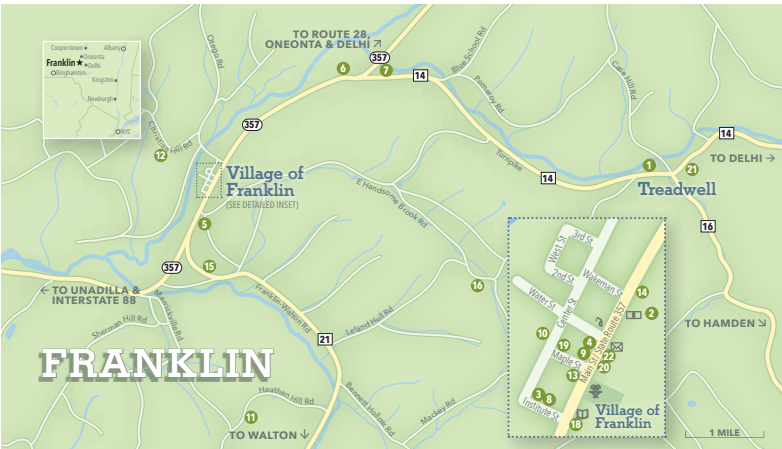
Mar 25 Annual Easter Egg Hunt and Breakfast
Village of Franklin
May 27-Oct 7 Franklin Farmers Market
Village of Franklin
May 28 Franklin Memorial Day Parade
Village of Franklin
July-Sept Franklin Stage Company Summer Season
Village of Franklin
July 7-8 Stagecoach Run Art Festival
Hamlet of Treadwell and elsewhere in Franklin
Early Aug Annual Blueberry Bake-Off
Park, Village of Franklin
Aug 25 New "Old Franklin Day"
Village of Franklin
Mid-Oct Annual Pumpkin Carving Contest
Village of Franklin
Nov Annual Big Buck Contest
Village of Franklin
Dec 8 Franklin Christmas Stroll,
Holiday Market and House Tour
Village of Franklin
Up-to-date information for all events can be found on the Franklin
Chamber of Commerce website (below).

A DELAWARE COUNTY FIRST

The Village of Franklin's *Edible Walking Trail*, with its entrance in
the village park, features walking paths winding through indigenous
edible features, landmarks, and vistas. From early spring through
late fall, edible features including berries, herbs, apples, nuts, root
vegetables and more. When completed, there will be three trails totaling
approximately a mile in walking length across variable terrains.
Follow: [f](#)/Franklin-Edible-Walking-Trail

This directory was made possible in part by a grant from the
Delaware County Office of Economic Development.
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A NEW LOOK FOR AN OLD FAVORITE

Leanne Taggart, owner of the newly remodeled Two Brothers Lunchbox restaurant, poses with her sons Nolan and Jaron, for whom the restaurant is named.

Leanne states that the Lunchbox is open from Monday through Saturday, and that she is in the process of purchasing additional equipment in order to offer an enhanced dinner menu.

ALIEN SEEDS

By Jack Siman

One morning without much to do, paging through my book on woody landscape plants, I broke off at *Aesculus parviflora* or Bottlebrush Buckeye, basically because I wasn't really in the mood for going through the whole book (it weighs a ton and has 1325 pages). The listing being alphabetical, *Aesculus parviflora* is pretty close to the front.

Bottlebrush buckeye is a shrub (from same genus as the horse chestnut) that every gardener seems to love. It gets big and spreads and has lots of aesthetic attributes to recommend it; I figured one would be a great filler specimen for some open, less formal area of the Franklin Village Park.

The book's description of *Aesculus parviflora*'s propagation implied seed germination so foolproof that only intentional neglect could deter it. It was mid-October and the bush on the side of my house had a handful of seeds with shiny mahogany-colored seed coats and plump endosperms (the starchy inside part of the seed – I had to look that one up). About five looked viable. So, I went for it.

I buried the seeds an inch deep in gallon pots filled with a loamy mix of garden and potting soils, then watered and set them in a forty-five-degree basement to wait the proscribed four to six week germination period. I'm a gardener with no patience and lots of curiosity, so after a month, I teased one of the seeds up out of the loam. Up with the seed came three inches of woody root, looking like a small horseradish. Expecting the lima bean growth trajectory observed in grammar school science class, I found the root's speed of growth and stage of maturity a little disturbing. What I expected next, again based on the lima bean progression, was for the endosperm to rise on its root, out of the soil, expand to split open the seed coat and reveal its cotyledons - the succulent "fake" leaves that unfold to expose the first real leaves on the seedling. Well, the endosperm, its seed coat and whatever was in it, rotted and fell off into the soil, leaving little tan warts on the top of the woody, horse-radishy root of each seedling.

After a few weeks, the little warts stirred, edged out about an eighth of an inch, and then sat. I left the seeds in the basement for a while, but becoming impatient and fearing failure, I brought them upstairs to a warm sunny window. Wouldn't the light draw foliage out of the little warts? Instead, they stirred again, grew another three-eighths of an inch to form little tubes. And stopped again. By now, I wasn't sure if I'd done the seedlings in or they just liked vacillating in and out of dormancy. But finally, four weeks after bringing the pots to the sunny window, little slips of green squeaked out of the tan tubes. Foliage! The little green nips at the ends of the tiny tubes are now moving at a glacial pace. But I'll wait with hope that this growing season's sun and warm weather will coax the seedlings up to their promised two feet of height.

There is another way to propagate *Aesculus parviflora*: root cuttings. Bottlebrush buckeye offsets suckers. Choose a sucker, scratch around its base, and see if it has developed some feeder roots. If so, cut the sucker from the parent plant, getting some of the woody root (for anchoring) and as much of the feeder roots (for nourishment) as you can. Pot it up or plant in a protected area of the garden and nurse the hell out of it for its first season.

Ogden Nash wrote, "Candy is dandy but liquor is quicker." To paraphrase, "Seedlings are dandy but suckers are faster."

Editor's note:
PlantFinder says:
"*Aesculus parviflora* is noted for being

Aesculus parviflora
one of the best summer-flowering shrubs for shade areas. It is a dense, mounded, suckering, deciduous, multi-stemmed shrub which typically grows 6-12' tall. Features palmate green leaves (5-7 leaflets) and erect, showy, cylindrical panicles."

Zone 4-8, part-shade to full shade.

GREENBANKS GARDENING



**With
Deborah Banks**

Early spring is a difficult time for gardeners in upstate NY. If the garden is buried in snow, your impatience builds as you look online at luscious garden pictures from gardeners farther south. Most available books on winter gardening are a sure road to depression, with their lists of winter blooming shrubs that we can't grow here, like winter jasmine and wintersweet.

If we're experiencing an early spring, you worry about your trees and shrubs budding out too early and being killed by a hard freeze. Those Zone 5 plants you took a chance on a couple of years ago may have sailed through a snowy winter or two, only to die during a late spring freeze. Kathy Purdy, garden blogger at ColdClimateGardening.com, notes

that we may now have Zone 5 winters, but we still have Zone 4 springs.

Try to set aside your depression and worry. This is a good time to work on your garden design in your pajamas. You need a garden that looks good from inside your house, even during winter and our fickle early spring. Get yourself a hot cup of coffee and wander from window to window, looking critically at your garden. For starters, if your view out the front window is blocked by a seven foot tall yew or rhododendron, drastically pruning it should be first on your list of action items.

What do you see when you look out your windows? Most of your perennials disappeared for the winter or look distinctly disreputable by now. The latest recommendation is to leave the dead foliage of most perennials in place until spring,

except for plants that reseed profusely, like *Phlox paniculata*, or those that may harbor disease on the old leaves, like peonies. Good news for us procrastinators! The idea is to provide shelter for beneficial insects and native bees. The "scorched earth" method of fall cleanup gives them nowhere to overwinter.

So, you're looking out your window at cleared beds or maybe a lot of blackened stalks and dead leaves. You need a few conifers, trees, and shrubs to add that all-important "winter interest" and possibly some ornamental grasses that you can leave standing until spring.

One of my favorite parts of my garden is a small grouping of conifers that I can admire from the front windows. The tall moss-green weeper is *Thuja occidentalis 'Filiformis'*, a golden mound of *Thuja occidentalis 'Aurea'* fronts it, and the pair is edged with the dark green of creeping juniper (*Juniperus horizontalis*). A tall pale brown clump of ornamental grass to the left of the conifers frames the scene. My backyard view includes a state-ly weeping Alaskan cedar

(*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis 'Pendula'*).

Deciduous trees can also be wonderful in winter. The river birch (*Betula nigra*) has gorgeous multi-hued peeling bark and is readily available, not expensive, completely hardy, happy in moist soil, and resistant to the pests that afflict the white birch. *Acer triflorum* is another tree with exfoliating bark, which has the added attraction of three lobed leaves that remind me of certain Japanese maples when they emerge in spring. If you live in town and are reliably Zone 5, you might need a *Stewartia* or *Acer griseum* (small trees known for their beautiful bark) or a Japanese maple with a good sculptural form.

Daphne mezereum is a small shrub with intensely fragrant magenta florets that appear all along its branches. Its nickname of 'February Daphne' indicates how early it can flower, though for us it is more likely to awaken in March. It is a lovely grace note in the garden at a time when the only other optimistic sight is the tough little snowdrop (*Galanthus*).

Many cultivars of witch hazel (*Hamamelis*) are

available now, their blossoms appearing in very early spring and ranging in color from warm yellow to orange or red. The Chinese and Japanese varieties and their intermedia hybrids are hardy only to Zone 5 or even 6. Luckily for me there is *Hamamelis vernalis*, which flowers in early spring and is hardy to Zone 4. My 'Amethyst' variety provides a thick fringe of that very hue, the blooms lasting for many days.

Pussy willows (*Salix*) also offer cheer early in the season, though few of us plant them in the front yard. They love sun and moisture, and give sustenance to bees at a time when little is available elsewhere. *Salix 'Mt Aso'* has catkins of rosy pink. *Salix chaenomeloides* is the giant pussy willow with large soft gray catkins. *Salix 'Melanostachys'* has small black catkins.

Your garden should make room for such stars of the winter and early spring landscape, to cheer you until your early daffodils, winter aconite (*Eranthis hyemalis*), and glory-of-the-snow (*Chionodoxa*) start to bloom.

Then you will have made it safely through another Catskill winter.



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FOCUS ON ENERGY

SOLAR, WIND, AND WATER DESERVE A SERIOUS LOOK

By Donald Hebbard

Power from solar, wind, and water are the low-cost, low-polluting solution for reducing greenhouse gases (GHG) and thereby slowing global warming.

The New York Reforming the Energy Vision strategy and the federal Clean Power Act were adopted in 2014 as road maps for reducing GHGs by 2030. However, both are seriously flawed by not considering methane as a GHG, and thus encouraging gas as a "bridge fuel" to adopting renewable energies. In reality, by laying more gas pipelines, exporting more gas, and building more gas-fired electric generation facilities, it will be impossible to meet even the minimum goals proposed for GHG reduction. These actions will lock our state and country into increased release of GHGs for the next thirty to forty years, negating the intent of both policies.

The market price of energy is often the prime factor in private and public decision-making when choosing an energy source. A temporary glut of gas from the Pennsylvania fracking boom has driven gas prices down, but that market price is by no means the total cost of consuming gas. The fossil fuel industry is the poster child for socializing the costs of production, transportation, waste removal, emissions, fugitive emissions, and clean-up expenses. Oil and gas industries are subsidized by exemption from critical provisions of the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, in the guise of national energy security. **If the exemptions were removed, these energies would be priced above renewable energies.** Renewable energies are still in the infant stage relative to fossil fuels, but that infant is one of the fastest-growing segments of the economy and leads other industries in adding new jobs. Technological advances are reducing production costs as volume increases, much as the automobile industry blossomed when the assembly line replaced individual auto production by hand. We live in a global society and global economy today. Air and water are global. No longer can the "solution to pollution be dilution." It's like having a "no-peeing" section in a swimming pool, as ineffective as were the no-smoking sections of restaurants, airplanes, or movie theatres. It is time to encourage increased implementa-

tion of renewable energies on private and public facilities, ramp up energy conservation efforts, increase renewable energy research and development investment, and implement a Marshall Plan-type effort for reversing fossil fuel consumption. We are addicted to fossil fuels. Clinging to fossil fuels should be viewed like any self-destructive habit — it must be abandoned. We know better, so we must do better.

A NASA study on methane sources (www.ecowatch.com/nasa-study-methane-spike-2526089909.html) links the recent sharp increase of atmospheric methane to the fracking boom. Methane is capable of trapping eighty-six times as much heat as the same amount of carbon dioxide in the first twenty years after its release. Thus, a relatively small amount of methane in the air can pack a large climate-changing punch. This means burning natural gas produces more global warming than burning coal. This NASA study is not the first to suggest the connection of methane from leaks and venting to climate change. Starting in 2011, researchers at Cornell University were reporting that switching from coal to gas would be catastrophic.

When all costs are calculated, renewable energies and electric storage technologies are the hands-down, low-cost energy option. And remember — once manufactured and installed, solar panels, solar water heating, and hydro-power do not continue to pollute or emit over their decades of energy-producing life. We can start reducing greenhouse gas levels by not releasing GHGs in the first place! Conversely, each unit of fossil fuel produced, transported, and consumed produces GHGs. Fossil fuel proponents decry the tax incentives provided to advance renewable energies, but then ignore the much larger cost-saving (and pollution-causing) exemptions granted fossil fuels by law. Too often, the debate over which energy is "better" is centered on single issues such as price, water pollution, emissions, or traffic. Only when energy is evaluated on the basis of total production and operating costs, plus environmental and health costs, plus the social costs for cleaning up behind energy consumption, can a realistic cost comparison be made between renewable energies and fossil fuels.

In addition, renewable energies do not require the use of eminent domain such as pipeline rights-of-way, taking away property use rights on private land for corporate gain.

It is unacceptable for large corporations to legally pollute the planet's air and water, harm the health of all living creatures, and expect future generations to pay the price.

Donald Hebbard is president of Compressor Free Franklin

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FRANKLIN FISCAL CHRONICLE

By Brian Brock

The following is the time line of a long-running scandal of the Town of Franklin Board. Annually they have failed to either audit town books or release the end-of-year financial accounting. Their inactions are illegal under New York Town Law. Also, our board failed to file this accounting annually with the Office of the State Comptroller, which is illegal under General Municipal Law.

2008

1/01 **Garret Sitts** takes a seat on the town board, having won an uncontested election. He joins councilmen Campbell, Swensen, and Taggart.

2009

9/21 **Supervisor Smith** files the Town of Franklin end-of-year financial report (Annual Update Document or AUD) for 2008 with New York Office of the State Comptroller, 240 days after books close and 180 days past the statutory deadline. This is the last annual accounting that our town government has filed to date.

2010

1/01 **Susan Fairbairn** takes a seat on the town board, having won an uncontested election. She replaces Campbell.

3/22 Manager Dolan of **OSC Data Management Unit**, Division of Local Government and School Accountability, sends Supervisor Smith the first of four overdue notices for 2009 AUD; also on 4/20, 5/18 (copied to town clerk), and 6/21 (copied to councilmen).

2011

3/22 Manager Dolan of **OSC DMU** sends Supervisor Smith the first of four overdue notices for 2010 AUD; also on 4/18,

5/18 (copied to town clerk), and 6/22 (copied to councilmen).

2012

3/19 Manager Dolan of **OSC DMU** sends Supervisor Smith the first of four overdue notices for 2011 AUD; also on 4/18, 5/17 (copied to town clerk), and 6/18 (copied to councilmen).

2013

1/28 **OSC** initiates a Fiscal Stress Monitoring System for local governments and school districts using data in AUDs.

3/20 Manager Dolan of **OSC DMU** sends Supervisor Smith the first of four overdue notices for 2012 AUD; also on 4/22, 5/22 (copied to town clerk), and 6/18 (copied to councilmen).

9/?? **OCS** releases first set of fiscal stress ratings for 2012. Franklin is designated as "not filed" for missing AUDs.

??/? **OSC** begins audit of Town of Franklin financial operations in 2012, later extended to 2013.

2014

1/01 **Jeffery Taggart** takes over as supervisor from Donald M. Smith, who is then appointed to Taggart's now-open seat on town board.

1/01 **David Grant** takes a seat on the town board after he and Garret Sitts win a contested election. Grant replaces Fairbairn.

3/24 Manager Dolan of **OSC DMU** sends Supervisor Smith [sic] the first of four overdue notices for 2013 AUD; also 4/22, 5/19 (copied to town clerk), and 6/18 (copied to councilmen). The latter two notices were addressed to Taggart.

See **FISCAL**, con't on Pg. 19



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INFRASTRUCTURE UP-DATE

Compiled by Brian Brock

October 11th **Constitution Pipeline Company, LLC** petitions FERC to declare that NYS DEC failed to act within the legal time limit on its Section 401 application for a Water Quality Certificate and thereby waived authority to deny this certificate, Docket No. CP18-5.

October 19th **United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit NY** rejects the petition by CPC (9/1/17) for rehearing by full bench of its denial of the contention that NYS Department of Environmental Conservation had acted arbitrarily and capriciously in rejecting the WQC for Constitution Pipeline Project (8/18/17), No. 16-1568.

November 2nd **NYS Department of Transportation** sends letter to Franklin residents announcing construction of roundabout at intersection of routes 357 and 28 to begin in spring 2018 and finish that fall.

November 28th **CPC** makes motion to FERC answering arguments by NYS DEC, CP18-5.

December 6th **Williams Companies**, in presentation to the Well Fargo Symposium on Securities Pipeline, MPL, and Utility does not include Constitution Pipeline in its list of projects for 2018 to 2020. It notes that “Constitution, is not included in financial forecast.

January 11th **Federal Energy Regulatory Commission** denies a declaratory order to waive authority of NYS DEC for WQC, CP18-5.

January 16th **CPC** petitions Supreme Court of the United States for a writ of certiorari (agreement to review) for decision of the USCA 2nd Circuit (8/18/17) concerning whether NYSDEC exceeded its authority under the National Gas Act of 1938 and the Energy Policy Act of 2005. SCOTUS only grants such a writ only in approximately one percent of the cases, and only for compelling reasons.

January 19th **SCOTUS** places petition for writ of cert on its docket, No. 17-1009.

January 30th **CPC** submits motion to SCOTUS to extend time to file response from February 20th, 17-1009 .

February 1st **US Court Appeals 2nd Circuit NY** sets date of April 9th for arguments in *Catskill Mountainkeeper et al v. FERC*, 16-345 and 16-361.

February 5th **FERC** requests that appeals court delay arguments from April 9th until the related case is resolved, 16-345 and 16-361 combined.

February 6th **SCOTUS** grants motion to extend time to file response to March 22nd, 17-1009.

February 7th In fourth quarter earnings report, **WGL Holding, Inc.** states plans to take an impairment of its entire stake (10 percent) in CPC, worth \$38.2 million, during upcoming second quarter.

February 8th **Stop the Pipeline** opposes delay in oral arguments before appeals court in 16-345 and 16-361.

February 12th **CPC** petitions FERC to reconsider its denial of January 11th, CP 18-5.

February 16th **US Court Appeals 2nd Circuit NY** defers oral arguments in *Catskill Mountainkeeper et al v. FERC*, 16-345 and 16-361 pending decision by SCOTUS, 17-1009.

February 23rd During Q&A in the earnings call for fourth quarter results, **CEO of Williams Companies**, Alan Armstrong, downplays importance of Constitution Pipeline, makes no mention of a way forward through courts, and hopes that Trump administration will override authority of NYS DEC to deny Water Quality Certificate for project.

February 28th In fourth quarter earnings report, **Frontier Communications** cancels quarterly common dividend, resulting in a 28 percent drop of its market value. (It has lost 86 percent of its value in the last year.) Cash is needed to pay down debt. Despite taking on \$17 billion in debt to buy networks from Verizon and AT&T, Frontier lost customers throughout 2017.

CLEAN, continued from Page 1

Donadio, Cornell Cooperative Extension Clean Energy Program Coordinator for the Southern Tier Region, the Franklin Town board selected four High Impact Items:

Adopt the NYS Unified Solar Permit – this item is intended to standardize the permitting process for new solar energy systems within NYS. Franklin completed this action by passing a resolution at the Special Board Meeting on July 24, 2017. This won Franklin an additional incentive payment of \$2500.

Benchmarking – adopt a policy to report annually the energy use of municipal buildings over 1000 square feet. The Town Shed building with the Town offices qualifies. This action item was discussed at the August 1, 2017 Board meeting. **Energy usage data has been compiled for 2016 and 2017. The remaining step entails adopting a resolution, which is expected at the April Town Board meeting. Once adopted, the resolution and energy usage report will be submitted to NYSERDA to complete this high impact item.**

Energy Code Enforcement Training – train local compliance officers in current energy-related code regulations. Franklin’s Code Enforcement Officer is Mark



Farmers’ Market favorite Bruce Zimmer lives off the grid

Jacobs, who also serves the Town of Hamden. **There have been some challenges with this training program. NYSERDA has changed the format to a classroom format. Hopefully attendance and documentation of the training by Mr. Jacobs will complete this item.**

Clean Energy Upgrades – achieve a 10% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from energy usage in municipal buildings. This was selected as the fourth item to complete and will require a modest investment to upgrade the current Town Shed building’s lighting to LED fixtures. The Town Board approached the New York Power Authority (NYPA) in November 2017, for assistance with this item. NYPA provides an analysis of the cost savings expected by changing to LED lighting, as well as design and construction assistance with energy efficiency upgrades to municipal buildings. **To date, NYPA has not responded.**

SUMMARY: Franklin has only completed one of the High Impact Action Items. Completing the last three items is still an attainable goal, but the question remains - can it be done in time before all the grants have been awarded? I have been assured the Town Board is following up on these items and that they could be completed in the next few months. It may turn into a race to the finish line with the other fifteen competing municipalities currently seeking the six remaining grants.

The likely use of the proceeds from this grant would be to construct a new Town Office building. Most surrounding towns do have updated, more energy efficient headquarters. Consolidating the Justice Court, Town Clerk’s Office, Code Enforcement, Assessor, Superintendent of Highways, and other Town offices in one space would be desirable. A larger space for voting and Town meetings would be a plus. A \$50,000 grant would be a significant boost for such a proposal, reducing the financial burden for the Town.



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HOME

Some of us are born children of the road. We yearn to learn what is over the next hill or around the next bend. We have a curiosity that is only soothed by discovery. No place is off limits or out of the question to our exploratory mindset. We are conquerors of our own fears. On the road, the destination is often less important than the awesome discoveries we make on the way. These discoveries leave memories that last a lifetime and give us stories to tell.

Like the time Jared and I were heading back to town and he spied a break in the brush along the highway. At his urging I pushed the old truck through the brush and branches. Ahead of us, a dirt path led away from the highway. At the end was a parking area and a well-worn trail leading downhill to a stream.

The scene before us was post-card beautiful. The stream had cut down through layers of glaci-

THE BARE TRUTH

By Robert Lamb (Photo by the author)

gravels. Its banks were lined with black spruce and spindly white birch, cluttered with alder and willow brush. The stream started in a hanging bog, then coursed over a large beaver dam and around the ends of several older dams. At the end, a deep hole had been carved out by the rush of the water. As we moved along the trail, it quickly became obvious it was not made by human feet. Bear tracks were everywhere. As we got closer to the water, we were hit by the stench of rotting fish and bear musk. Along the bank were dozens of salmon carcasses, most of them partially eaten. Bears eat the most nutritious parts, like the eyes, brain, and skin, then discard the rest. I would be a liar if I said we weren't nervous. We were. Hungry bears were around there somewhere, and we were interrupting their dinner.

sockeyes was a school of long slim chum salmon, their silvery sides bearing the colored stripes of their metamorphic phase. With a rush, a large group of dime-bright silver salmon surged upstream.

All salmon go through a metamorphic stage after leaving the ocean for their freshwater natal streams. The salmon littering the banks were mostly spawned-out pink salmon, also known as humpies. Their once-long silver bodies were now hump-backed and their jaws crooked. There were several spawn beds known as reeds where a female had used her tail to make a pebble nest for her eggs. Several males often compete for a single female and the fights and chases are comical.

Then, just off the edge of an undercut bank, I spotted what had

sent Jared back to the truck. It was a rainbow trout, lying in wait for a female salmon to drop her eggs. It was a beautiful fish, at least twenty inches long with a fat midsection. Jared returned with his fly rod and set about trying to entice the big trout to take a bite. At first, the big fish followed his fly, but after a few casts, it lost interest. Jared tried just about every fly he had, to no avail. But Jared was never one to give up, even with hungry bears waiting for us to leave. He spotted a low bush cranberry patch. Would the trout take a berry? On the first cast, the big fellow hit it hard. After landing and releasing three more fish, we decided to let the bears have their mess hall back and headed home.

Our wanderlust had led us to a place where, over the years, we made many fond memories. It is a special place we share with visiting friends and family. Remarkably, it hosts four kinds of salmon, as well as a healthy population of resident rainbow trout. The quiet solitude and wildness of a place so close to civilization make it very special indeed.

On the way back to the highway, we surprised a mother black bear with two little kitten-sized cubs crossing the road in front of us. It pays to take the unknown trail, for treasures may await you.

Yet the thrill of discovery makes coming home ever sweeter.

After all, there is no place like home.



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We understand a simple truth: when people connect with the land and water, they will care for them more deeply and feel more responsible for their protection now and for future generations.

OLT's program of land acquisition is focused on the specific goal of encouraging meaningful connection to land and water through providing public access to special places. Our Blueway project accomplishes this goal.

The Blueway is a series of OLT owned and pro-

tected places that provide fishing, hiking, paddling, bird watching, and educational opportunities from Canadarago Lake to the Susquehanna River, including Brookwood Point on Otsego Lake.

The Blueway Project was supported with funding from the New York State Conservation Partnership Program and New York's Environmental Protection Fund (EPF). The New York State Conservation Partnership Program is administered by the Land Trust Alliance, in coordination with the State Department of Environmental Conservation. Funding was also provided by the Canadarago Lake Improvement Association, the Royal Bank of Canada, the Chesapeake Conservancy, the Department of Environmental Conservation, The Nature Conservancy, and the Upper Susquehanna Coalition.

See BLUEWAY, con't on P. 19

HANDICAP, con't from Page 3

Updated Dynamic Accessibility Symbol



Original Accessibility Symbol

category.

According to the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), four million Americans turn fifty each year. After that age, adults are more likely to experience age-related physical changes that affect hearing, vision, cognition, and mobility. And while people in this age group may not consider themselves to be disabled, they also prefer businesses that accommodate those changes by offering better lighting, less ambient noise, and fewer stairs. Handicapped individuals could be adding to the local economy by spending money on meals, shopping, or entertainment, but are less likely to do so if there are obstacles to getting there. Parents and grandparents may wish to attend sports events that their families are participating in, but cannot if physical barriers are in the way.

According to the 2013 census, the national median age is thirty-eight; for Delaware County, it is forty-six; for the Franklin zip code, it is fifty. For the Treadwell zip code, it is fifty-seven.

So, the Franklin community is aging and there will be an increased need for

there on Main Street that would preclude someone on the passenger side from being able to get into or out of a vehicle.

I spoke with Don Wyckoff, Community Relations Director of the Catskill Center for Independence, about accessibility issues in our area. He said, "One of the biggest barriers to folks with disabilities in Franklin is the sidewalks that go through the town. If you were using a mobility device such as a walker or wheelchair, you would have few areas that you could traverse independently. The issue is (for most towns) that all residents are expected to pay taxes; but those taxes are to be used to keep the town functioning properly and keep up on roads and sidewalks. I think you will agree the sidewalks have for the most part been neglected. Frost heaves and time have made many of the sidewalks literally impossible for folks with limited abilities."

Consider a single street in Franklin: Institute Street has the American Legion, the fire station, Franklin Stage Company, the Farmer's Market, Franklin Central School, and St. John's Episcopal Church. Does the single existing handicapped parking space properly serve all those facilities? Are the sidewalks truly safe for the elderly or disabled? We can all benefit if there is accessibility for all members of the community. This becomes more urgent as our communities age and the number of people affected grows.

public services to be more accessible. Many of the public buildings now have ramps at the entrance in addition to stairs. But we need to be thinking about adding grab bars and railings to help support people with knee and hip problems. Also, the number of handicapped parking spaces is low. There are steep banks here and

LOOKING FOR A LOCATION FOR YOUR SUMMERTIME WEDDING?



Consider getting married in the Village Park on Main Street in Franklin, N.Y.

Mayor Tom Briggs can officiate at your ceremony.
Flower arrangements can be provided by

The Franklin Garden Club

Vintage wedding attire can be found at:

The Squire's Tankard

173 Main Street
Franklin, NY
(607) 829-6885

The wedding feast can be catered by:

The Tulip and the Rose

453 Main Street
Franklin, NY
(607) 829-4040
<http://thetulipandtherose.com>

Local artistic baker **Xina Sheenan**

can create your wedding cake.

You or your guests can stay at:

The Franklin Guest House:

113 Center Street
Franklin NY 13775
franklin.guest.house@gmail.com

Franklin, the perfect place for a summertime wedding!

KENNETH L. BENNETT FUNERAL HOME

425 MAIN STREET
FRANKLIN, NY 13776

607-829-2272

SPEED, continued from Page 1

The group will use this petition as proof of public agreement that this is a serious safety issue.

After much discussion, it was decided that the only viable option for slowing traffic is to install more visible signage. Many communities in the area have moved toward solar-powered speed radar signage. These signs show your current speed as you approach, and blink if the posted speed is exceeded. Route 23, the main road passing through Sidney Center, is a county road. Therefore, anything relating to signage or other traffic control devices must be approved by the Delaware County Department of Public Works Council. It must also adhere to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and other Federal & State guidelines.

At this time, the Sidney Center Improvement Group, an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is working with the Delaware County DPW to decide on the type of sign that would work best for the hamlet as well as the best location for maximum effectiveness.

SCIG will report on our progress via our website (www.SCIGNY.org) and our Facebook page: (www.facebook.com/SCIGNY.org).



Advice from the Audubon Society:

GIVE BLUEBIRDS A HELPING HAND

Bluebirds prefer farmland, meadows, and other open habitats. They rarely nest in woodlands or cities.

Locate your nest box within fifty feet of a tree, tall shrub, or other solitary perch. The adults use this spot to scan the ground for insects, and the young use this perch on their first flights from the nest.

Mount the box on a freestanding ¾" galvanized pipe or sturdy fence post, about five feet off the

ground. Face the box away from prevailing winds and toward the nearest tree or shrub so that the young birds can fly easily to the perch rather than landing on the ground.

Avoid locating your nest box near a forest edge or hedgerow. This reduces risk of competition with house wrens, who often displace bluebirds with their

bulky stick nests.

Tree swallows also compete with bluebirds for nest boxes. The best solution is to place TWO boxes near each other, five to fifteen feet

apart. The highly territorial swallows

will chase other swallows from the vicinity, but will not usually fight with a neighboring bluebird.

Avoid using garden and lawn pesticides. Bluebirds are small-fruit and insect eaters, and are very vulnerable to poisoning from pesticides. Plant berry-producing shrubs that provide food. Bluebirds especially like serviceberries, elderberries, spicebush, hollies, and blueberries.



music
literature
education

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

fine arts
poetry
holiday fun

AT THE LIBRARY

**LYNNE KEMEN
REVIEWS NEW BOOKS**



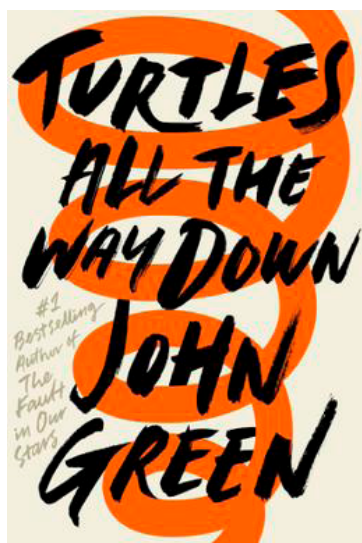
It wasn't until last year's Franklin Free Library Book Sale that I became aware of Young Adult (YA) fiction. Several kids stopped to ask me where to find the YA section and I decided to learn more. Often YA fiction is lumped with fantasy or science fiction or children's books. And often not-so-youth adults are also eagerly reading this genre. Here are two good examples of YA fiction.

TURTLES ALL THE WAY DOWN

By John Greene

This is a story about friendship, grieving, and anxiety. Don't worry, it's not all depressing. Greene writes about his own mental health issues, including Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. His main characters are Aza Holmes, a 16-year-old whose father died suddenly, and Davis Pickett, whose mother died after a long struggle with disease. The two met at a camp for kids who had lost parents and were close at the time but lost contact later. They reunite after Davis's father, a multi-millionaire, disappears just before a court case about his alleged bribery. A large reward is offered to the person who finds him. Aza is from a struggling middle-class family and needs the reward money to go to college.

All of the kids in the book have coping mechanisms for dealing with loss. Aza, in particular, has phobias, rituals, and major anxiety. Greene describes these problems with humor and understanding. He has won numerous awards and this book is likely to result in more honors.



COPPER BEECH TREES IN WINTER

Leaves arc, like paintings of blown leaves;
like cut paper, like sunset strewn
across red-gold sky, like smoldering fires;

serrate-edged, notched, like some knives.
But they cut only the hard wind,
the wind that tries to bridge them.

Wind can't; these trees are too feisty;
they do not hide in niches or ditches;
they flaunt, they claim rough edges.

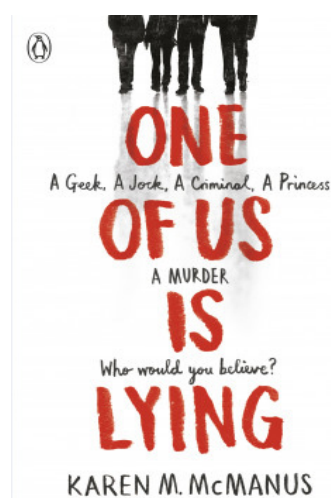
Farmers call beeches weeds; they push
through field soil. Their roots patiently wait,
shove worker-laid stones, open faces.

December disrupts, beats black branches,
feathered, fingered twigs; they're like pens
writing winter's aggregate history;

black barriers; hinged nodes above snow,
hanging on against blizzard breath;
hanging on all the scarred, bleak season.

-- Bertha Rogers

*Originally published in
"From the Finger Lakes: A Poetry Anthology"
Cayuga Lake Press. 2016*



ONE OF US IS LYING

By Karen M. McManus

A locked-room mystery reminiscent of *The Breakfast Club*, in that nothing about the people in the book is what it seems. Five students from a high school are in detention for having cell phones.

The book jacket describes the characters this way: "Bronwyn, the brain, is Yale-bound and never breaks a rule. Addy, the beauty, is the picture-perfect homecoming princess. Nate, the criminal, is already on probation for dealing. Cooper, the athlete, is the all-star baseball pitcher. And Simon, the outcast, is the creator of Bayview High's notorious gossip app." The students are not friends and don't really know each other. Simon is about to publish something that will ruin one or more of them, but dies of an allergic reaction in the detention room. As each of the students tells his or her story, we discover that each has a secret. This is a first novel for McManus.

LIBRARIANS' PICKS for SPRING

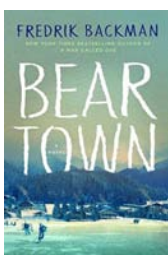
BEAR TOWN

By Fredrik Backman

Beartown explores the hopes that bring a small community together, the secrets that tear it apart, and the courage it takes for an individual to go against the grain. In this story of a small forest town, Fredrik Backman has found the entire world.

From the book jacket: "Like *Friday Night Lights*, this is about more than youth sports; it's part coming-of-age novel, part study of moral failure, and finally a chronicle of groupthink in which an unlikely hero steps forward to save more than one person from self-destruction."

- Kirkus Reviews



STRAYS: A Lost Cat, a Homeless Man, and Their Journey Across America

By Britt Collins

From the book jacket:

"*Strays* is a compelling true story of a man who rescues a stray, injured cat and how they save each other....When Michael takes Tabor to a veterinarian in Montana, he discovers that Tabor has an identification chip and an owner in Portland who has never given up hope of finding his beloved cat. Michael makes the difficult choice to return to Portland and reunite Tabor with her owner. Now Michael must create a new purpose in his life after Tabor.

"The authentic tale of an adventurous and charismatic cat and her compassionate human admirers, *Strays* proves the healing power of love and the profound bond between humans and animals."



Artists and art lovers mix and gather at the Fisher Barn, one of several shared venues at last year's Stagecoach Run Art Festival in Franklin and Treadwell.

For information about this year's grand event, see next page.



UpState Arts with Charlie Bremer

STUDIO SPACE & ARTIST COLORS

How to grow a community of artists?

How best to share the common ground of creative expression that connects our lives?

What kind of life will enrich the young makers and visionaries of our 21st century community?

Perhaps a path to answering these questions and understanding the heart and soul of the creative spirit is the fertile earth and clean water that sustain our region. The hills and valleys, creeks and rivers of our watershed are part of Earth's ecstatic skin, connecting all living things and providing a touchstone for inspiration. For artists, studio space and studio time are the same sort of lifeline and crucible of inspiration. Studio work offers the creative mind freedom to explore that which nourishes spirit and body. Most every artist I know regards their studio with a near sacred appreciation. Perhaps our landscape should be thought of as the studio space of our community.

Recently, the city of Oneonta was in contact with an organization called Artspace, a not-for-profit group dedicated to establishing affordable housing and studio space for artists. Begun in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1979, they have in almost forty years racked up a successful and impressive record of accomplishment with numerous projects across the United States.

Simply stated, the mission of Artspace is "to cre-

ate, foster, and preserve sustainable, affordable space for artists and arts organizations." In support of creative communities, they provide a range of development, management, and consultation services. The notion of Oneonta developing both living and work



space specifically for artists is visionary. While this type of project targets the needs of only one group, and while it is vitally important to support affordable housing for all, our region has an active and vital creative community that it would be wise for us to encourage and preserve. Artists benefit from being around other artists, and this is precisely the kind of thinking we need to ensure a dynamic and creative future for our community.

Go to Artspace.org and take a close look at this organization. Projects of this nature take years to realize, and these are only the first tentative stages of consideration. We all benefit when our communities support creative minds.

In some other rather amazing news, it seems scientists have developed a completely new way of creating color.

First, some background. For thousands of years, color was derived from three primary sources:

plant, animal, or mineral. Then, beginning in the 18th century, science gave rise to the development of very strong colors derived from chemicals, principally chromium and cadmium. With the commercial production of hydrocarbons in the late 19th century, oil and plastic mediums were added, as well as iridescent powder pigments, all of which were industrially developed and marketed to perfection in the 20th century.

In the 21st century, this past fall, biomimicry researchers at the University of Akron announced an entirely new process for creating color. Using a form of synthetic melanin similar to the natural material that gives color to skin or feathers, scientists have learned to create "structural" color that does not rely on pigments or dyes.

This is something of a major breakthrough in the history of color. For the first time, we are able to create the full visible spectrum from a single source.

A basic layman's nutshell description: nanoparticles of melanin are coated with silicon in a mixture of oil and water. The mixture ratio of these materials determines particle size, which determines color. There are many details in development but the process has a poetic simplicity, is completely nontoxic, does not fade, and takes nature for its cue. Chances are good that this will change the future of color in coming decades, eliminate heavy metals from common paint, and expand the microtones of our color palette.

All rather incredible, and welcome to the world of art.

Upcoming this May, the Smithy Pioneer Gallery in Cooperstown will open its new season with an exhibition exploring the color green. Apart from envy, jealousy, and the color of money, this show aims to celebrate the remarkable variety of hues that springtime affords with this most lively of secondary colors.

Photos by the author



The Stagecoach Run Art Festival announces its 23rd season and 2018 dates: Saturday and Sunday, July 7–8, 10 A.M. to 5 P.M., rain or shine!

This annual, free, self-guided tour of artists' studios and galleries in and around Treadwell has for twenty-two years delivered great art to crowds of spectators and collectors from all over the Catskills and New York State. The 2017 festival had nearly seventy participating artists at twenty-five venues. Many of the over 700 visitors dedicated both days to see it all.

From realist to conceptual, from conventional to experimental, 2017's roster included artists working in virtually every conceivable medium. And while it is not a juried show, participation in the Festival is by invitation, thereby ensuring that the work is both diverse and of the highest caliber.

In an effort to make 2018's festival more visitor-friendly and easy to navigate, an exhibition of participating artists' works will be staged at Treadwell's own Bright Hill Literary Center. There, visitors will be able to see representative works first-hand, decide what they'd like to see more of, and plan their tour accordingly... or just buy a piece right off the wall!

Begun in 1995 by fifteen Treadwell artists, the Festival has grown over its two-decade history, but its original mission remains unchanged: 1) to spotlight artists living and working locally, 2) to forge new relationships between those artists and their neighbors, and 3) to show how artists can provide an indefinable yet undeniable financial and cultural value to a community.

As always, the Festival is completely free to attend, and maps will be widely available across the region leading up to the event, at all of the venues during the event, and downloadable via the festival's website (StagecoachRun.com) at any time.

For further information, contact Phil Warish, 718.781.5487 or info@StagecoachRun.com



GETTING TO THE STAGECOACH RUN ART FESTIVAL

The hamlet of Treadwell is in the Town of Franklin along the northern edge of Delaware County, NY. It's situated along Delaware County Route 14 (part of the 1804 Catskill Turnpike locally known as "Old Stage Road," hence the festival's name). While the majority of the studios and exhibition venues are located along Route 14, another concentration is found in the Village of Franklin, 7 miles west of Treadwell on State Route 357.

Approximate local travel times to Treadwell: 15 minutes from Delhi and Oneonta, 30 minutes from Andes or Walton, 45 minutes from Cooperstown, Stamford, Margaretville, and about 1 hour from either Roxbury or Binghamton.

For more information and festival updates: StagecoachRun.com

Find and follow:

Facebook: [facebook.com/StagecoachRunFestival](https://www.facebook.com/StagecoachRunFestival)

Instagram: [instagram.com/StagecoachRunFestival](https://www.instagram.com/StagecoachRunFestival)

#StagecoachRunFestival #StagecoachRunArtFestival



ARMS FULL OF BOOKS

By Charlotte Zoë Walker

When I was growing up, my dad was in the Navy, and because we moved around so much - each time he was ordered to a new assignment - I ended up going to sixteen schools, including four high schools. My brother adapted to this by being gregarious, charming, and funny, and making new friends wherever he went. I did the opposite, growing shy each time I was "the new girl," and retreating more and more into books. Books were the most reliable friends one could hope for. With the right book, you could just open the pages, find the spot where you left off, and dive right back in again to a world that welcomed and embraced you. Your mother might call you to help with dinner or make your bed, but you could barely hear her or pull yourself out of the world of that book.

At such moments, my escape into books must have annoyed my mother. I remember a phrase that went something like, "Get your nose out of that book and come help!" But she also seemed to encourage and understand. Each time we moved to a new location, she would find where the public library was and be sure to take me there once a week. In those days, libraries limited you to five books at a time. My mother would explain that five books would barely last me a day, and librarians were always sympathetic. The five-book rule would be suspended, and out we would go with books tumbling from our arms--as many as we could carry. What a delicious feeling that was!

So libraries, as the sacred temples of books, became almost as dear to me as the books themselves. In junior high school in San Diego, I was allowed to take the bus downtown after school to the public library, where I had a volunteer job. I didn't know then that it was one of the magnificent Carnegie Libraries, built in the early



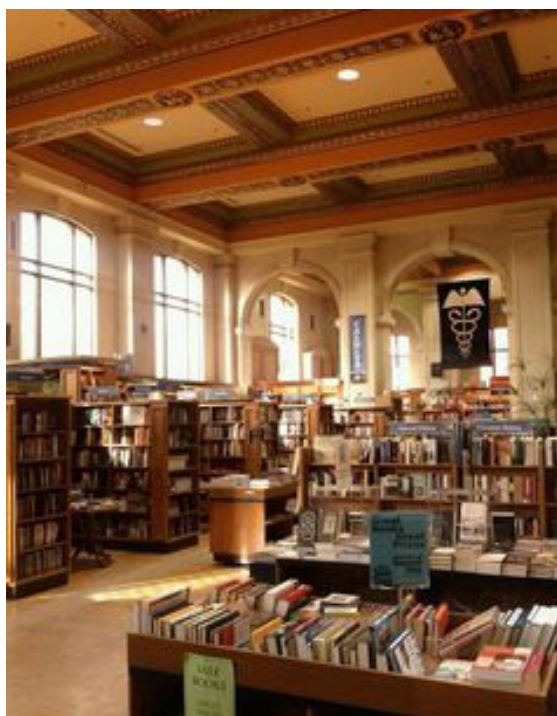
Carnegie Library, San Diego, CA

twentieth century, or that it would soon be shamefully demolished. But I knew that it felt wonderful to run up the handsome stone steps and report to the librarians at the desk, who would entrust me with carts full of books to shelve. Shelving was a great way to discover new books; often a book didn't make it to the shelves because I would put it aside to check out and take home with me.

Wherever we moved, there was always a library, one of the luckiest things about life in America. Recently, I have read of libraries being shuttered and the buildings put up for sale. This occurs sometimes in the U.S., but it has become an even bigger problem in the United Kingdom, where you can easily pick up an old library and turn it to some clever new use--a beautiful building, minus its books. Sometimes this is because a community has built a

newer and fancier library, but more often it's because a city council has decided that libraries are just not important or fiscally practical any more. After all, everyone has the internet!

Local libraries have fought back, making sure to offer free wi-fi service, along with stacks full of books and periodicals. But they need strong community support. In the history of any library system, especially small-town libraries, you will read of visionary citizens, or groups of citizens,



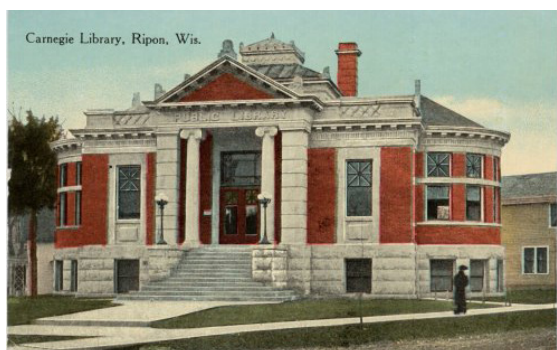
Interior of the Carnegie Library in Pittsburgh, PA

determined that their community should have an enduring and dependable library. I am so grateful to those people - who most often were women - just as in the early years librarians were almost always women.

I'm also grateful to my mother, who never got to be on a library board, but who made sure that her children knew the solace and the treasures that libraries held for them. I was not so good a mother to my own children. Bookworms don't always make the most reliable parents, for how can a kid yell at her mom, "Get your nose out of that book"? As a working, single parent, I didn't have much time for trips to the nearest public library, though we got there as often as we could.

But at least my kids did learn to love books as much as I did, and what I remember most is visiting the Bookmobile on Thursday afternoons in Wells Bridge, the village nearest our home. There it would be, a shiny bus marked BOOKMOBILE, pulled up at the side of State Highway 7, just past the old post office. Its doors would be wide open, and we'd eagerly climb the steel steps, as if about to take a pleasant journey. We'd look down the aisle, packed tight with books on either side, eager to discover what the librarians had sent out that week.

It wasn't a huge selection, but my children always found plenty of treasure, and we'd go home--just as we did in my childhood--with our arms full of books.



Carnegie Library in Ripon, WI



The 2017 Franklin Farmers' Market poster, by Charles Bremer

WANTED:

VOLUNTEER HELPER(S) FOR FRANKLIN FARMERS' MARKET



Help is needed for the twenty Market Days, every Sunday from May 27th to October 7th.

Working hours are roughly 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Markets are held rain or shine, except during hurricanes and tornadoes.



If interested, please contact **Ellen Curtis** at 607-829-5631 or at ellen-curtis184@aol.com.



Responsibilities include:

- Assisting with setup and breakdown
- Staffing the market tent
- Answering customers' questions
- Selling market merchandise
- Collecting fees from vendors
- Settling disputes with/ between vendors

(With multiple helpers, the schedule can accommodate each person's availability.)



A perennial favorite at the Franklin Farmers' Market: **FOKISH BREADS AND BREAKFAST TREATS**

Spring & Summer 2018

26th Season: Bright History, Bright Future

Word Thursdays, 2nd & 4th Thursdays, 7 pm

Featured Poets & Writers from Everywhere! + Open Mic Hosted by
Sierra Sangetti-Daniels; Special Women's History Month Reading: March 22, 7 pm

The Word & Image Gallery Exhibit Openings

April - November - 3 - 5 pm (Call or visit website for dates and artists)
Annual Stagecoach Run Exhibit Spotighting All Artists, July 7 & 8

National Poetry Month Readings, April 12 & 28, 7 pm

Bright Kids Book Club - Saturdays through 2018

Reading great books for kids, chosen by kids - call for schedule

War, Words, Dance: A Collaboration Final Performance, August 18

Walton Theatre: Ballet performance of Veteran stories brought to life by pro choreographers and student dancers

24th Annual Bright Hill Summer Literary Workshops for Kids Program (Ages 6 - 18)

1. Spring 1: Kids, Ages 6 - 14: March 26-30; (Mon. - Fri.) - "Beowulf and Other Anglo-Saxon Tales & Riddles for Today"
2. Summer 1: Kids, Ages 6-14: June 25-30; (Mon. - Fri.) - "Slavery & Abolition in NY"
Includes Visit to the National Abolition Hall of Fame & Museum
3. Summer 2: High School, Ages 14-18: July 13,14,15; (Fri - Sun) - "War, Words, Dance: Veteran Workshop"
4. Summer 3: High School, Ages 14-18, July 30-August 3 (Mon. - Fri.): "War, Words, Dance: Writing Workshop"
5. Summer 4: Kids, Ages 6 - 14: August 6-10; (Mon. - Fri.) - "Tales of Glass and Other Breaking Things"
Includes Visit to the Coming Museum of Glass
6. Summer 6: High School, Ages 14-18: August 13-18; (Mon-Sat) Professional Videography Workshop,
with Jessica Vecchione

Call 607-829-5055 or email info@brighthillpress.org
for details and to register



Bright Hill Press & Literary Center
94 Church Street - Treadwell, NY 13846-4607
Where Literature Lives!



Bright Hill is Home to the NYSCA Literary Map
& NYSCA Literary Website

We're Here!

Voice: 607-829-5055
Email: wordthur@stny.rr.com
Websites:
www.brighthillpress.org
www.nyslittree.org

GALLERY LISTINGS: FRANKLIN STAGE COMPANY WINS MAJOR GRANT

For details and more on our local arts:

Bright Hill Press, Word & Image Gallery,
Treadwell, NY: <http://www.brighthillpress.org/>

Bushel, Delhi, NY: <http://bushelcollective.org>

CANO - Community Arts Network of Oneonta:
<http://www.canoneonta.org>

Cherry Branch Gallery, Cherry Valley, NY:
<http://cherrybranchgallery.com/>

Cherry Valley Artworks, Cherry Valley, NY:
<http://cvartworks.org/>

Cooperstown Art Association (CAA) Cooperstown, NY: <http://www.cooperstownart.com/>

Fenimore Art Museum, Cooperstown, NY:
<http://www.fenimoreartmuseum.org/>

Mural on Main Art Gallery, Hobart, NY:
<http://www.muralartgallery.org>

Roxbury Arts Group (RAG) Roxbury, NY:
<http://roxburyartsgroup.org/>

Smithy Center for the Arts, Cooperstown, NY:
<http://www.smithyarts.org>

SUNY Martin-Mullen Gallery, Oneonta, NY:
<http://www.oneonta.edu/academics/art/gallery/gallery.asp>

Walton Theatre, Arts in the Parlor, Walton, NY:
<http://waltontheatre.org/arts-in-the-parlor/>

West Kortright Centre, East Meredith, NY:
<http://westkc.org/events/category/exhibitions/>

PRESS RELEASE

The Franklin Stage Company (FSC) is honored to announce receipt of a \$40,000 workforce investment grant from the New York State Regional Economic Development Council (REDC). The funds will support wages for executive leadership for one year.

The grant will be administered through the New York State Council for the Arts (NYSCA) with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

"We're thrilled," said Franklin Stage Company Co-Artistic Director Patricia Buckley. "These funds will allow FSC to expand our capacity, attract new businesses and contribute to the REDC's goal of revitalizing local communities."

Co-Artistic Director Leslie Noble added, "This grant represents the faith of NY State and Delaware County in FSC's value as an anchor cultural institution in our area. We proudly join with our area's growing number of artisanal food and beverage businesses and arts destinations to promote Delaware County

tourism. It's our hope that this grant will help us become an integral cultural addition to these emerging tourist attractions."

Franklin Stage Company, Delaware County's only fully-professional theatre, hires highly skilled practitioners both onstage (local and visiting artists) and behind the scenes (carpenters, designers, technicians, etc.). Additionally,

technical skills and offers young people the opportunity to work side by side with theater professionals.

With executive salary support, the organization will be able to direct other resources to board development, expanding programming and education, improving facilities, and increasing outreach to donors and community partners. The grant will also free up



Rehearsing the 2017 staged reading of
The Government Inspector

the theatre rents local housing to accommodate visiting artists throughout its production season. It also provides training opportunities to youth from area high schools and colleges through its intern program, which teaches hands-on

funds to hire part-time administrative support.

"We're grateful for the council's vote of confidence," said Buckley, "and we look forward to welcoming loyal friends and new visitors to our twenty-second season this summer."

4-H, con’t from Page 3

try Kids & Kritters club. Mr. Cox and Mr. Dennis are independents. Mr. and Ms. Howland are members of the TRAEL Pets club. Mr. Machala is a member of the Little Clovers club.

Business of the meeting was preceded by a dinner of ziti, meatballs, and salad. Forty attended.

After welcoming the audience, Emily Roach, 4-H Resource Educator, offered a few thoughts on the past year, then went on to talk to the teens about not being afraid to take chances. She ended by telling them to “keep your heads up, make good choices, and don’t worry about failures. Worry about the chances you miss when you don’t even try.”

Championships, awards, and trips were presented by Michael Steele, chairman of the 4-H Program Issues Committee and 4-H representative on the Cornell Co-operative Extension of Delaware County Board of Directors. A certificate and pin were handed out for each.

Selections were made by a committee of the CCE, based on a review of the 4-H teenage member’s record books.

Recognition of County Champions included local 4-H members. Backus was recognized for agriculture, goats, and gardening and horticulture. Cox was recognized for clothing and texture and cooking. Dennis was recognized for clothing and texture, gardening and horticulture, and visual arts. Cael Howland was recognized



for agriculture, beef, dogs, public speaking, swine, and veterinary science. Tracer Howland was recognized for agriculture, beef, dogs, engines/tractors/equipment (field), public speaking, swine, and veterinary science. Machala was recognized for aerospace, cooking, fashion review, goats, hobbies and collec-

tions, home environment, photography and video, public speaking, and visual arts.

Awards were given for achievement (Dennis, C. Howland, and T. Howland), community service (Machala), and leadership (C. Howland, T. Howland, and Machala).

Local winners of Trips are Ag-Business Career to Albany/Cobleskill - T. Howland

Capital Days to Albany - Machala and T. Howland, with alternate Dennis

Career Exploration to Cornell - Backus, Cox, and C. Howland, with alternates Dennis, T. Howland, and Machala

Career Exploration to Vermont - T. Howland with alternates Dennis and Machala

Honor to New York City - Machala with alternates Cox and T. Howland

State Teen Action Representative Retreat (STARR) to NYS Fair Grounds in Syracuse - Dennis, with alternates T. Howland and Machala.

The trips raised the most excitement from the members. After the awards ceremony, everyone took time to catch up before heading for home.

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The Franklin Post Office, from an old postcard

ACTIONS BY THE FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL

DATE	MOTION	VOTE				
		Taggart	Bruno	Grant	Sitts	Smith
6/06/17	Appoint Dale Downin as Deputy Code Enforcement Officer.	Y		Y	Y	Y
6/06/17	Sign with Mang NY Municipal Insurance Reciprocal - NBT for one year.	Y		Y	Y	Y
7/ 11/17	Convey easement to DTC for equipment shed near town garages.	Y		Y	Y	Y
7/ 11/17	Pay all of the capitalization fee for MIR now, instead of over 5 years.	Y		Y	Y	Y
7/24/17	Set permit fee for a solar farm with maximum power of 25kW at \$105.	Y		Y	Y	Y
7/24/17	Adopt the New York State Unified Solar Permit.	Y		Y	Y	Y
8/01/17		-		-	-	-
9/05/17	Relocate 12/5 meeting in Treadwell to Educational & Community Center.	Y		Y	Y	Y
9/05/17	Vote for members to Watershed Coalition of Towns: Gladstone, Tuttle, and Merrel, with alternates Chapland, Hilson, and Davis.	Y		Y	Y	Y
10/03/17	Authorize execution of Local Consultation on Land Acquisition Contract with the Catskill Watershed Corporation.	Y		Y	a	Y
10/03/17	Order processing of 11,000 cubic yards of gravel.	Y		Y	a	Y
10/03/17	Reappoint Jan Schlafer as Court Clerk.	Y		Y	a	Y
10/03/17	Accept 2018 preliminary budget.	Y		Y	a	Y
10/03/17	Enter executive session.	Y		Y	a	Y
11/08/17	Accept 2018 budget with amendments to unexpended funds.	Y		Y	Y	Y
11/08/17	Consult town attorney on lease of space in Kellogg School building.	Y		Y	Y	Y
11/08/17	Grant franchise to Delhi Telephone Company for optic cable network.	Y		Y	Y	Y
11/08/17	Pursue better telephone service.	Y		Y	Y	Y
11/08/17	Enter executive session.	Y		Y	Y	Y
11/25/17		-		-	-	-
12/05/17	Set dates and locations for monthly meeting in 2018.	Y		Y	Y	Y

Y Yes, N No, A Abstain, a absent

Note. Not included are routine motions to: accept minutes, return after executive session, or adjourn meeting.

FACTS, continued from Page 1
LocalGovIntro.cfm.

At its most basic, the formula for our town budget is: **appropriations = revenues + unexpended funds + property taxes + loans.**

APPROPRIATIONS

The annual budget document for next year lists appropriations spent for the previous year. Because the board has not audited the town books, we do not know how accurate and complete this list is.

REVENUES

Similarly, the annual budget document for next year lists revenues collected for the previous year. Because the board has not audited the town books, we do not know how accurate and complete this list is.

UNEXPENDED FUNDS

In November of the years 2003, 2004, and 2005, the town board reported estimated totals of unexpended funds as \$67,000, \$65,000, and \$80,000, respectively. Two months later, in January of each following year, the board reported to OSC actual totals of unexpended funds as approximately \$304,000, \$333,000, and \$300,000. Our board was carrying on the books over a quarter million dollars more cash than it was reporting to the townspeople, and this at a time when the budget ran \$1.0 to \$1.3 million.

In the decade since the rebuilding of local roads (2006 to 2008), the annual budget document reports a total of estimated unexpended funds at close to a quarter million dollars: \$225,000 to \$264,000. This total remains remarkably constant, rarely changing more than a few thousand dollars year to year.

Similarly, the amounts in individual accounts typically remain

the same from year to year. For example, for the Highway Whole Town account (DA), the estimated amount left at the end of December was somehow the same \$36,000 for eight years in a row, 2010 to 2017.

But every few years, the amounts in individual accounts are rearranged while the total for all accounts remains the same or nearly so. For example, at the public budget hearing last November, Supervisor Taggart announced that the estimates printed in the prelimi-

What might be in the town finances that our board does not want the townspeople to see?

nary budget document from October had been changed. (Those numbers were identical to those of the previous year.) Instead, estimated unexpended funds in General Whole Town (A) went from \$41,000 to zero, in Highway Whole Town (DA) went from \$36,000 to \$117,000, and in Highway Outside of Village (DB) went from \$150,000 to \$110,000. Despite these sizeable revisions to individual accounts, the total remained the same.

These line items behave less like monies left unspent at the end of the fiscal year and more like reserve funds rolled over from year to year.

In September of last year, the NFR made a FOIL request to the

OSC for documents related to its audit of town financial operations, the resulting report, and responses to that report. From an email between the auditor and his supervisor (10/18/13), the auditor states that while Town of Franklin does not have "formal reserves," it does use saving accounts.

PROPERTY TAXES

There is one source of revenue that is not reported in the annual budget document: taxes on real property, the single largest source of funds to finance town operations. In fact, property taxes are larger than all other revenues combined.

LOANS

The Franklin AUD of 2008 reports a debt of \$2.5 million. The flood of July 2006 required extensive repairs to local roads. Presumably grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency were used to pay down this bond. However, this 2008 report was the last one filed, and therefore we do not know when this debt was retired. What is more, without subsequent accountings, townspeople cannot be sure if our board has taken on more debt.

BALANCE SHEETS

What these fiscal issues have in common is their contribution to the cash on hand. One way to address these issues is by examining the balance sheets. A balance sheet is a financial statement of the capital, liabilities, and assets of the town municipal corporation at a particular point in time, laying out the balance of revenues and expenditures over the preceding period. An end-of-year balance sheet lists all funds carried over into the next year.

For the years that Franklin did file annual reports, these balance

sheets are also posted on the OSC website. For the years that the town did not, the NFR made a request under the NYS Freedom of Information Law for Franklin balance sheets for the years 2000 to 2017 to the financial officer, Supervisor Taggart.

These balance sheets were sent to the NFR but arrived on the day of our deadline for this spring issue, February 21. An analysis of these almost hundred pages of financial documents will be in the summer issue.

Recently, the campaign of The New Franklin Register for transparency in town finances, now well into the second year, has had limited success. In the February meeting, the town board appointed a committee of councilmen Donald Smith and Dwight Bruno. In the March meeting, the committee reported that they found no issues with the books according to state guidelines and this audit was accepted by the board – but only for 2017. We have yet to see a report for that year or any year since 2008.

We the townspeople should know how our town board spends our taxes. The way to do so is by examining the recent accounting – information that the town board withholds. First, the board's annual budget document does not fully report these numbers. Second, the board has not filed an end-of-year accounting since 2008. Third, the board did not disclose an OSC audit and resulting report, and afterward it continued not to file AUDs.

We hope that the restart of audits is the beginning of this stone wall coming down.

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RECENT REAL PROPERTY SALES IN THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN

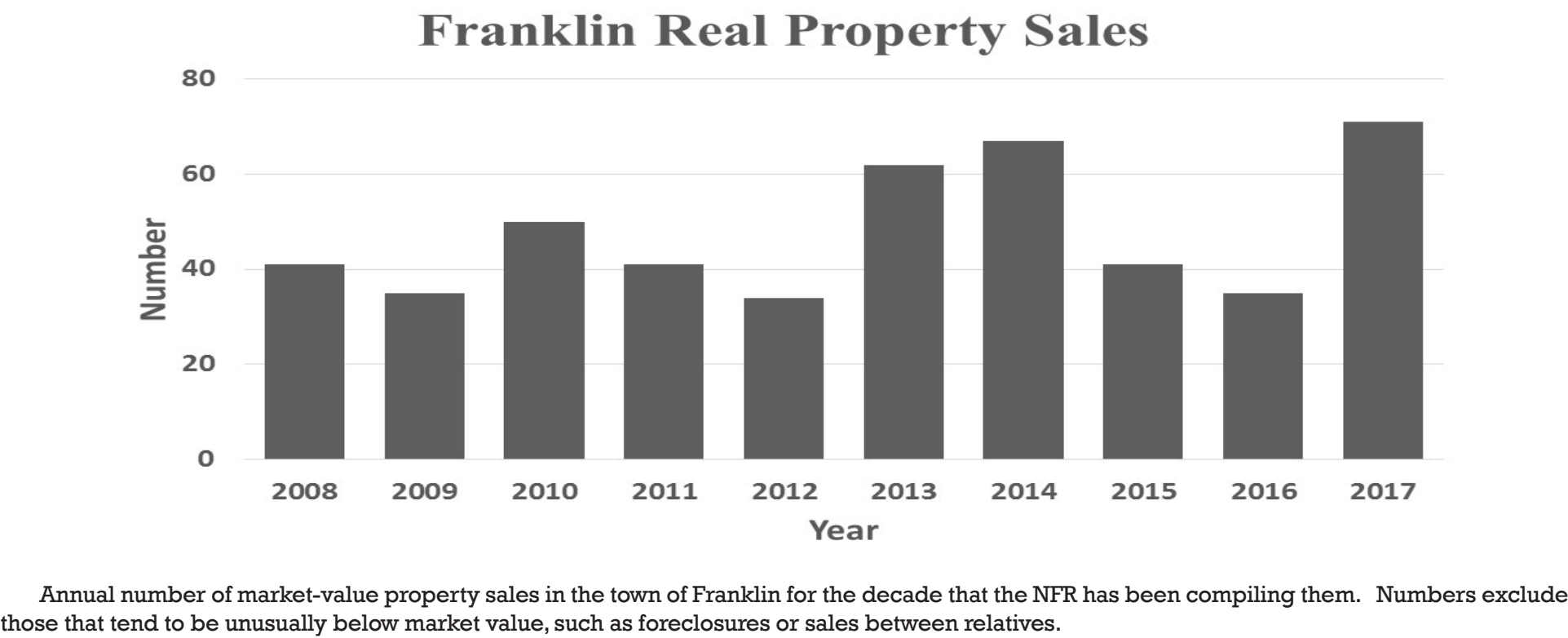
DATE	LOCATION	ACRES	TYPE	ASSESS.	SALES	SELLER	BUYER
7/27/17	7125 State Highway 357	4.00	1 Family Res	\$ 168,000	\$ 135,000	Smith, James P	Dunne, Laura (E)
8/10/17	202 Main St (2)	2.80	1 Family Res	\$ 118,000	\$ 25,000	First Tennessee Bank	Downin, Chris (B)
8/24/17	4404 County Highway 14	0.50	1 Family Res	\$ 89,000	\$ 27,000	Secretary, HUD	Potrzeba, Luke
9/8/17	Grange Hall Rd	40.60	Abandoned Ag	\$ 37,000	\$ 10,000	Henderson, James	H4 Properties LLC (R)
9/18/17	269 Center St	0.27	Apartment	\$ 95,000	\$ 12,500	IS3 Properties LLC	Downin, Chris (B)
9/18/17	9179 County Highway 21	5.18	2 Family Res	\$ 84,000	\$ 30,000	Nunez, Dallan B	Duke, Joshua
9/20/17	4208 County Highway 14	0.75	1 Family Res	\$ 58,000	\$ 73,000	Dorn, Katherine M	Ross, Nicole K
9/21/17	181 Henry Edwards Rd	35.16	Rural Res&Ag	\$ 290,000	\$ 360,000	Mullen, James A	Kochhar, Neeraj
9/25/17	County Highway 14	3.60	Rural Vac<10	\$ 14,000	\$ 15,000	Estate of W. Degenhardt	Shaw, Bruce (E)
9/26/17	272 Main St (2)	3.50	1 Family Res	\$ 145,000	\$ 165,000	Lohrman, Richard F	Scharling, Christopher B
9/29/17	6598 Dunk Hill Rd	56.42	Rural Res	\$ 350,000	\$ 430,000	Ponzio, Nicholas J	Stankiewicz, Terri
9/29/17	456 E Handsome Bk Rd	5.47	1 Family Res	\$ 166,000	\$ 255,000	Addington, John	Sampath, Christopher
10/2/17	Gibson Hill Rd	5.15	Rural Vac<10	\$ 19,000	\$ 19,500	Walsh, Damian A	Swears, Stanley B
10/4/17	392 Snake Hill Rd	5.10	Vac w/Imprv	\$ 16,000	\$ 21,500	Galasso, Lisa	Butoi-Teodorescu, M.
10/12/17	2735 State Highway 28 S	2.36	1 Family Res	\$ 120,000	\$ 123,750	Roccotagliata, John	Osborne, Kevin D (E)
10/16/17	751 Snake Hill Rd	41.00	Rural Res	\$ 160,000	\$ 35,000	Nastri, Salvatore	Pinon, Ernest A (R)
10/24/17	2907 Case Hill Rd	2.00	1 Family Res	\$ 148,000	\$ 155,000	Miner, Donald E	Bird, Kenneth J
10/26/17	2717 County Highway 14	1.10	1 Family Res	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	Estate of W. Degenhardt,	Meres, Ashley K (E)
10/31/17	3976 Freer Hollow Rd	10.54	1 Family Res	\$ 196,000	\$ 225,000	Franks, Neale R	Robertson, Robert W Jr
11/2/17	1579 Snake Hill Rd	10.00	Rural Res	\$ 166,000	\$ 110,000	Racalbuto, Joseph William	Lopez-Nino, J. Socorro
11/6/17	49 Water St	0.25	1 Family Res	\$ 71,000	\$ 130,000	Marner, Carmela	deMauro, Paul
11/8/17	6005 County Highway 21	69.10	Vac w/Imprv	\$ 109,000	\$ 70,000	Morgan, William	Calbo, Adam
11/9/17	789 Main St	0.50	1 Family Res	\$ 135,000	\$ 132,500	Oliver, Chad J	Guardia, Brian D
11/14/17	7725 State Highway 357	3.80	1 Family Res	\$ 175,000	\$ 52,500	Fed Nat Mortgage Assn.	Bermejo, Alvaro (B)
11/14/17	656 Snake Hill Rd	4.95	Rural Vac<10	part of par	\$ 15,000	Snake Hill Realty	Butoi-Teodorescu, B.
11/17/17	1917 Palmer Hill Rd	0.46	Mfg housing	\$ 37,000	\$ 50,000	Mullinnex, Sandra J	Esposito, Eileen
11/22/17	7051 County Highway 16 (2)	15.70	1 Family Res	\$ 134,000	\$ 167,000	Archibald, Fred J	Quigley, Brendan W
11/30/17	3205 County Highway 14	9.00	1 Family Res	\$ 280,000	\$ 279,000	Weiss, Michael	Konuklar, Gul
11/30/17	509 Poet Hill Rd	6.00	1 Family Res	\$ 210,000	\$ 210,000	Albano, Benedict J	Carnevale, Frank P
12/4/17	1613 Chamberlain Hill Rd	23.60	Mfg Housing	\$ 80,000	\$ 110,000	Keys, Brendan	Shaw, Arthur L
12/6/17	1660 County Highway 14	2.80	Mfg Housing	\$ 38,000	\$ 1,000	McNeilly, Agnes	McNeilly, Harry (R)
12/7/17	500 Stewart Rd	10.90	1 Family Res	\$ 165,000	\$ 280,000	Miller, Robert	Kaschak, Kristopher M
12/15/17	450 Main St	0.03	Att Row Bldg	\$ 34,000	\$ 40,850	Cassinelli, Gary	Franklin Main Street LLC
12/15/17	444 Main St	0.05	Att Row Bldg	\$ 45,000	\$ 54,150	Cassinelli, Gary	Franklin Main Street LLC
12/16/17	Franklin Depot Rd	2.40	Rural Vac<10	\$ 11,000	\$ 7,000	Kocienda, Joseph T	Prinz, Ferdinand Jr
12/20/17	Sunset Trl (2)	16.70	1 Family Res	\$ 139,000	\$ 80,000	Gillow, Carmen	Gillow, Carmen T (R)
12/20/17	Dunk Hill Rd	37.23	Rural Vac>10	\$ 63,000	\$ 50,000	Jung, Roger	DiAngelo, Michael
12/21/17	off County Highway 14 (2)	120.30	Vac Farmland			Huyck, Roland R	Hissong, Darlene (R)
1/10/18	468 Main St	1.05	2 Family Res	\$ 66,000	\$ 42,500	Van Steenburg, Julia	468 Main LLC
1/12/18	68 Hill St	0.33	1 Family Res	\$ 122,000	\$ 102,500	Shivers, Margaret	Walsh, Ryan T
1/15/18	1466 Post Rd	23.80	Mfg Housing	\$ 105,000	\$ 55,000	Fava, Umberto	Hall, Mary Wilson
1/16/18	4429 County Highway 14	0.25	1 Family Res	\$ 68,000	\$ 58,500	Serafine, Sandra	Sokol, Amy L
1/24/18	Freer Hollow Rd	5.06	Vac w/Imprv	\$ 19,000	\$ 2,047	Delaware County	Gerwald (Estate), Ernest
1/24/18	1013 Grange Hall Rd	16.08	Mfg Housing	\$ 36,000	\$ 40,000	Stavrakis, George	Stavrakis, George B/S
1/24/18	Case Hill Rd	9.32	Rural Vac>10	\$ 26,000	\$ 28,250	Wheeler, Effie D	Reilly, Kevin
1/30/18	Stewart Rd	30.36	Rural Vac>10	\$ 48,000	\$ 40,000	Eldred Trust,	Kingsbury, Robert W Jr
2/6/18	Campbell Rd (2)	12.33	Rural Vac<10	\$ 37,000	\$ 22,000	Loguercio, Dominick	Loguercio, Robert (R)

(2) Two parcels

(B) Bank

B/S Buyer=Seller

(R) Related (E) Estate



FISCAL, continued from Page 8

4/?? **OSC** submits draft of *Town of Franklin Financial Operations, Report of Examination* to town, citing significant failure of oversight and including:

Supervisor Taggart failed to supervise bookkeeper

Board failed to annually audit fiscal records of town

Supervisor Smith failed to submit an annual financial report since the one for 2008.

Also included is a brochure: *Responding to an OSC Audit Report*.

4/30 **Supervisor Taggart** responds to draft with a letter that acknowledges failures.

5/09 **OSC Deputy Comptroller Deyo**, Division of Local Government and School Accountability, releases the final report of examination, Report 2014M-32, to assistant financial officer and town clerk. She reminds the town that its Comprehensive Action Plan is due in 90 days.

5/21 **Town of Franklin** places notice of this report in The Walton Reporter and a copy in files. Otherwise, townspeople are not informed of audit or report.

7/16 **Supervisor Taggart** submits town's Corrective Action Plan to OSC, agreeing to follow the law and best practices. Board had made no resolution supporting this submission nor even dis-

BEST PRACTICES



cussed audit in open meetings.

9/05 **OSC** reviews Franklin CAP and requests that the audit recommendation concerning timely deposit of cash receipts be addressed.

11/04 Appointed councilmen **Lisa Huyck** and **Donald M. Smith** are up for a vote in a contested special election. OSC audit remains unknown to voters. These two councilmen retain their seats.

2015

5/18 Manager Burgess of **OSC DMU** sends Supervisor Taggart the first of two overdue notices for 2014 AUD; also on 7/15.

2016

1/01 **Dwight Bruno** and **Donald T. Smith** take seats on the town board after winning a contested election. They replace Huyck and Donald Smith, senior.

5/?? Manager Burgess of **OSC DMU** sends Supervisor Taggart the first of two overdue notices for 2015 AUD, also on 7/18.

9/06 **The New Franklin Register** learns of a recent audit of Town of Franklin from a town official and opens an investigation.

11/09 At annual budget hearing, **NFR** inquires about CAP and missing AUDs, now seven, with the most recent three the responsibility of Supervisor Taggart. Response is that "we're working on it." Report for 2014 is promised for release next month. It is not released.

2017

4/04 At monthly meeting of town board, **NFR** again inquires about missing AUDs, now eight. Response is that "we're working on it."

4/07 In spring issue, **NFR** publishes the first article of its investigative series on this scandal concerning OSC audit of Franklin financial operations.

4/21 **Committee on Open Government** of the NY Department of State issues an advisory opinion (OML-AO-5544) that the Town of Franklin's submission of a CAP without a resolution is illegal under the Open Meeting Law.

5/02 At monthly meeting of town board, resident **Liz Serano** inquires about missing AUDs.

5/02 At monthly meeting of town board, Councilmen **Garret Sitts** and **Donald T. Smith** question operations of Franklin Local and NFR. The board recesses to consider legal options for 85 minutes.

5/23 Manager Burgess of **OSC DMU** sends Supervisor Taggart the first of two overdue notices for 2016 AUD, also on 7/20.

6/10 An **anonymous citizen** emails to NFR a copy of OSC/Taggart letter. A second copy arrives via postal mail shortly afterwards.

7/01 In summer issue, **NFR** publishes second article of its investigative series on this scandal concerning the cover-up of audit by town board.

8/03 **NFR** requests that OSC reopen its file on Franklin financial operations and compel town supervisor and board to obey state General Municipal Law and their own CAP.

9/12 Under the NY Freedom of Information Law, **NFR** requests from the OSC all communications between their office and the Town of Franklin from the time that the town inexplicably ceased filing annual financial reports (fiscal year 2009) to the present.

9/21 Ms. Hall, **OSC Records Access Officer**, acknowledges receipt of NFR FOIL request and initiates the gathering of documents.

10/17 At the Franklin Candidate Forum, **Garret Sitts**, in response to a question from NFR (If reelected, would the stonewalling of OSC and the townspeople continue?), stated that relief would require action by the Attorney General. **David Grant** did not respond.

10/30 Ms. Hall, **OSC RAO**, sends NFR the first batch of letters and emails.

11/04 In fall issue, **NFR** publishes third article in its investigative series on this scandal concerning possible effects of our board's withholding of AUDs, including on Franklin's credit ratings and eligibility for state grants.

2018

1/05 Ms. Hall, **OSC RAO**, sends the **NFR** the second batch of letters.

1/30 **NFR** makes a FOIL request from Town of Franklin for end-of-year balance sheets from 2000 to 2017.

2/06 Councilmen Bruno and Smith are appointed to audit books for 2017.

2/21 Franklin assistant financial officer sends NFR the balance sheets of 12/31 for 2000 to 2017.

3/06 Town board accepts audit of town books for 2017 by the audit committee, first audit in many years. No mention is made of the release to the public of audited report of financials for 2014.

3/06 Franklin financial officer Taggart announces possibility of hiring an accounting firm to catch up on backlog of audits.



The Newsletter of Franklin Local

Editorial Board

Ellen Curtis Carole Satrina Marner
Eugene Marner Manette Berlinger
Associate Editor: Brian Brock

Editor
Marjorie Bradley Kellogg

HAVE AN OPINION? WRITE TO US!

At: The New Franklin Register

P.O. Box 258

Franklin, NY 13775

or by email: nfr@franklinlocal.org

What are we about?

Franklin Local Ltd, the parent organization for The New Franklin Register and of the Franklin Farmers' Market, is a not-for-profit corporation made up of Franklin residents.

Our mission statement: to work to preserve the rural character of Franklin, to build the local economy, to encourage volunteerism, and to raise awareness of economic and social challenges that may result from climate change and the transition from fossil fuels to sustainable energy.

We generally meet once a month, at 7 P.M.; the date and location are posted on our website. All are welcome, to offer questions and help us answer them, to share thoughts and ideas, to make things happen.

We have a number of projects that we hope to move from idea to action:

- Local food production network
- Skills and services exchange
- Goods exchange
- Ride sharing bulletin board and/or website
- Farm to School Program for school lunches
- Community Greenhouses
- Community Energy Production
- Community Health Network

Together, let us imagine a more energy-efficient, healthier habit of living, and put it to work here in Franklin, for a brighter, more sustainable future.

PLEASE JOIN US!

For meeting times and location, as well as lots of other information about our town, check our website:

franklinlocal.org

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BLUEWAY, continued from Page 10

Visit the following conservation areas along the Blueway Trail:

- Fetterley Forest Conservation Area
- Deowongo Island
- Oaks Creek/Crave Conservation Area
- Parslow Road Conservation Area
- Greenough Road Conservation Area
- Compton Bridge Conservation Area

OLT's conservation areas along the Blueway are free and open for your outdoor recreational and educational enjoyment. You can hike, bird watch, paddle, fish, or just relax and enjoy the peace of nature around you. Please, always strive to have as little impact on the land as possible. Practice "Leave No Trace" principles and be respectful of the land, native plants and animals, and other people.

Visit our website at otsegolandtrust.org.



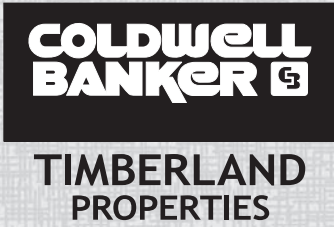
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THE SKY IS FALLING!!

DUCK AND COVER?

Staff Report

We know April Fool's Day is approaching, but this is not fake news. Keep your eyes on the skies toward the end of March until early April. The abandoned Tiangong-1 space station is in a decaying orbit and is expected to crash to earth about then. It orbits between 42.7 degrees north and south latitude and therefore can impact the surface anywhere in between. The most probable impact is between

42.7 and 38.7 degrees - see map below. The Village of Franklin, at 42.3 north latitude, is in the target zone. But most likely, the craft will end up in the ocean. China launched the Tiangong (Heavenly Palace) in September 2011 from Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center. It weighs 8,500 kg (9.3 tons) and is 3.4 m (11 ft) in diameter and 10.5 m (34 ft) long. There were three missions to the station, one unmanned in 2011 and two manned in 2012 and 2013. In March 2016, China lost telemetry from its first space station and therefore was unable to control its orbit. The

last boost from thrusters on the Tiangong-1 was December 2015, and the orbit has been dropping ever since.

As of March 6th, the European Space Agency estimates impact between March 29th and April 9th. They will provide weekly updates until impact: <http://blogs.esa.int/rocketscience>.

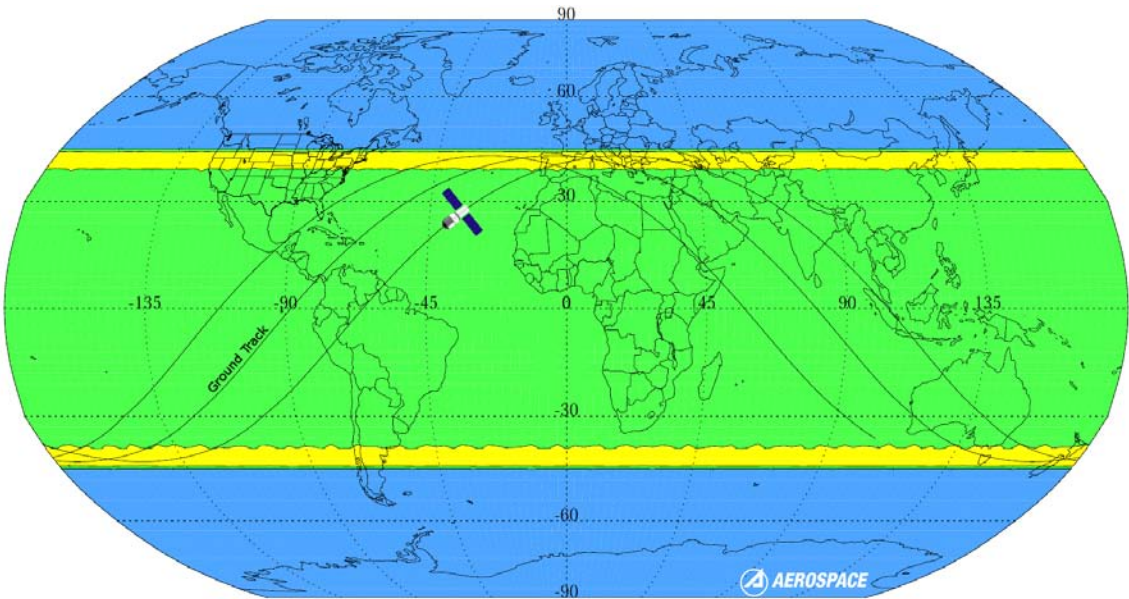
As time progresses, the estimated date of impact will become more precise, but the final location of impact will remain a mystery until reentry.

Even if the station impacts land, the risk to life and limb is infinitesimal. Most of the space station is expected to burn up during reentry. Any surviving fragments will be scattered over thousands of square kilometers. The odds of your being struck are



The Tiangong-1 Space Station

millions of time smaller than your chance of winning the Powerball lottery. According to Aerospace, one in 292 billion. In 1979, our first space station, Skylab, reentered the atmosphere semi-controlled. It was nearly ten times as large as Tiangong-1 at 77,000 kg (95 tons). Pieces fell in western Australia over an area of 130 by 150 km (81 by 93 mi) without harming anyone.



Orbital path of the abandoned Tiangong-1 space station. The two thin light-gray bands (yellow in full-color version) are the most probable impact zones. Franklin is in the northern zone. Picture credit: The Aerospace Corporation.

