



# MR. SITTS GOES TO COURT

By Jan Mulroy

On October 17, 2017, I attended the Candidates Forum for Franklin Town Council candidates. At one point, Garret Sitts mentioned winning \$80 million in a settlement against DFA

# OFFICE EFFORTS

**PART I: Not Here nor There**

By Brian Brock

The Town of Franklin could use more office space, and our town board has tried for three years to build some.

The issue that sparked this search for office space lay in the lease from 2000 that gave the town half of the Rich tenant house to use for 50 years. With rent of only one dollar per year, all costs for maintenance had to come out of the budget of the Walter Rich Charitable Foundation. Any money spent on this building took away from continuing improvements to the Franklin Railway & Community

and others. I asked: what is DFA?. It is Dairy Farmers of America, a dairy cooperative. [1]

This was an anti-trust case (Allen, et al v. DFA, et al) with the plaintiffs having class action certification against Dean Foods, DFA, and Dairy Marketing Services, LLC (DMS). Dean Foods settled early in the case for \$30 million. DFA and DMS settled for \$50 million in June of 2016, with the court's approval. [2]

DFA is the largest dairy cooperative in the United States, with over 14,000 dairy producers. With that \$50 million agreement, there would be no admission of wrongdoing from DFA. And so, the story continues.

Both Garret Sitts and his father, Ralph Sitts, resigned as Class Representatives, “opting out” of the case. They did not take settlement awards or Class Rep-

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Still the town offices

Museum and the Franklin Farmhouse Community Center, which are the core of its mission.

Over the years, the building fell into disrepair. The general impression was that the Rich Foundation would prefer that the building be abandoned and demolished, thus increasing the visibility of the museum behind it. But the foundation has no such plans, according to its president, John Campbell.

In October 2017, at the request of the town board, Delaware Engineering

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ELECTION DAY IS  
TUESDAY  
NOVEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup>.

DONT  
FORGET  
TO  
VOTE!

# TENTATIVE TOWN TAXES 2021

By Brian Brock

The tentative 2021 budget for the Town of Franklin would spend \$1.80 million. To partially finance this, the town board plans to raise \$1.23 million in property taxes from landowners, an increase of \$ 0.017 million (1.38%) over the 2020 budget. This increase in the levy would be just under the state-imposed soft cap, same as last year.

Salaries of all town officials (personal salary, PS) would the same: Superintendent of Highways Laing \$47,700, Assessor Basile \$27,750, Clerk/collector/registrar Johns \$16,600, Supervisor Taggart \$15,900, Code Enforcement Officer Jacobs \$15,000, Finance Director Warner \$12,750, Justice Arndt \$6,500, Dog Control Officer Constable \$1,800, and councilmen Bruno, Grant, Sitts, and Smith \$1,200 each. (Taggart's salary is \$3,800 (24%) from the town and

**See TAXES, con’t on Page 16**



What famous lost, local landmark is this? See Page 2

# FRANKLIN FM PLANS WINTER MARKETS!



The 2020 socially-distanced farmers' market

## SILVER LININGS

By Trish Tyrell

Despite the sprawling stormfest that is 2020, there have been some silver linings. One is a remarkably successful and sunny fourteenth season at the Franklin Farmers' Market.

Even with the ever-present anxiety and concern around COVID-19, the market saw record-breaking growth, and vendors experienced their most profitable year ever. It is as if COVID led to a greater appreciation for food grown and processed by local folks whom you know and trust.

Remember the meat shortage? The bare shelves when you shopped for basic groceries? Or people sharing information about where to get this or that? Well, it turns out that in the COVID era, farmers' markets are one of the wheres. Blessed with open-air, social distancing signage, a rope perimeter and a giant bottle of liquid hand-sanitizer, the market environment offers a comfortable and safe shopping experience for masked and sometimes gloved patrons.

One of the few traditional community events to survive during the pandemic,

the market was the opportunity for folks wearied by weeks of isolation to discover a sense of normalcy in a strange new world, and to be reassured that this too shall pass. Or, at least become less strange.

Veteran vendors Hank Stahler of Fokish Bread and Bruce Zimmer of Cordwood Acres marked their

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# The View from Sidney Center...

## WELCOME TO SIDNEY CENTER!

By Michael Sellitti

If you've driven through the hamlet of Sidney Center recently, you may have noticed our beautiful new entrance signs. Funded and installed by the Sidney Center Improvement Group (SCIG), the signs are works of art created to welcome folks to Sidney Center by paying homage to the area's long history with the railroad.

Sidney Center was once known to have the longest, tallest railroad trestle in the world. Shaped like a horse-shoe, it towered one hundred feet over the hamlet. Sidney Center is also home to the historic Maywood Depot Museum and Community Space – a beautifully restored and maintained building that was once a stop on the O&W



*Ty Steinbacher's signs welcome visitors*

Railway system. The building and property are currently owned and operated by a non-profit, The Maywood Historical Group of Sidney Center, Inc. SCIG enlisted the help of a local artist for the design and creation of the signs. Ty Steinbacher of Walton – whose family has ties to Sidney Center for generations – hand-painted the nostalgic scene of a steam locomotive passing over the trestle. SCIG hopes the signs will bring new attention and patronage to the Maywood Depot and reinforce the group's mission of moving forward, while not forgetting our past. On your next drive to view the fall foliage, take a ride through the hamlet and see the signs for yourself!

You can follow the Sidney Center Improvement Group on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/scigny](https://www.facebook.com/scigny) or the Maywood Depot by searching "Maywood Historical O&W" on Facebook.



*The Maywood Depot*

## MAYWOOD IN THE PANDEMIC

By Darryl Loker

The Maywood Historical Group of Sidney Center, Inc., made the decision last spring not to open the Maywood Depot for 2020. This meant there would be no Ice Cream Socials, family gatherings, potluck din-

ners, or parties during the summer months. The decision was based on being unable to set up for social distancing or make sure that everyone would be safe.

Closing the Depot for the year meant that there would be no income from the ice cream socials that we have relied on for over twenty-five years. This income always paid the elec-

tric and heating costs. The trustees voted to use our back-up emergency fund, built up from profits over the years, to pay these bills for 2020. Since announcing the closing, the Group has received several unsolicited donations which are greatly appreciated.

But life goes on and certain things must still be done. The Group thanks members Bob King and Lynn Roof for keeping the grounds mowed and the trimming done despite the summer closure. With the help of Larry Mott, they also painted the outside of the Depot. Great job, guys! It really looks nice.

The Group has heard from several people how much they missed the gatherings and the music at the Ice Cream Socials this past summer. The Maywood Historical Group looks forward to 2021 and hopefully getting back to some kind of normality.



*New park benches*

## SIDNEY CENTER PARK NEWS

By Michael Sellitti

This year has certainly presented many challenges for everyone, including community organizations like the Sidney Center Improvement Group [SCIG]. When the pandemic hit, the all-volunteer members of SCIG quickly transitioned to meetings held on Zoom with a commitment to keep moving the efforts of the group forward for the community.

SCIG has had to put on hold many of the park enhancements planned for this summer. However, some progress has been made, with larger improvements to continue next spring.

To date SCIG has completed the following initiatives: planted a dozen flowering and bank-stabilizing trees, gave the swing set a new colorful paint job, repaved the basketball court and installed new posts and backboards, took delivery of a new park announcement board, and had new picnic tables and benches designed and constructed by Sidney High School Students.



New features planned for the spring include: new playground equipment, activity stations for senior citizens and people with limited mobility, a walking trail around the perimeter of the park, and a pavilion designed and constructed by Sidney High School students.

SCIG thanks the Town of Sidney Highway Department for its efforts. We also appreciate the strong support and patience of the community as we navigate these tough times and find creative ways to achieve success with our projects.

To follow the progress of the Park Project and all SCIG's initiatives, visit our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/scigny](https://www.facebook.com/scigny).



*New student-built picnic tables*

**Franklin-Treadwell Fire District**  
Box 151 Franklin, New York 13775

**Franklin – Treadwell Fire District**

With the Holiday Season upon us, the safety of you and your family is very important to us. Here are some safety items to help you and your family stay safe during the Holiday Season.

- \* Be Careful when using candles. Keep the flame away from combustible objects and out of the reach of children.
- \* Use the appropriate sized and type power cords to carry the electric load. Overloaded cords can overheat and cause fires.
- \* All smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms should be tested monthly. All batteries should be replaced with new ones at least once a year.
- \* Christmas Tree Safety; Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, like fireplaces, woodstoves, radiators, candles or heat vents. Be sure to add water daily.
- \* Chimney Maintenance; Keep it clean, have your chimney inspected and cleaned annually by a certified chimney sweep. You should have at least a two foot radius around your fireplace or woodstove that is clear of all flammable items, like paper, cardboard or fabric before lighting a fire.

From our family to your family we would like to wish everyone a

**Safe and Joyful Holiday Season!**

**NEIL ROCHMIS & TOM BRIGGS**  
438 MAIN ST. FRANKLIN, N.Y. 13775  
C: 607.829.5013  
H: 607.746.2359



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**12PM - 5PM**

[WWW.FDGANTIQUES.COM](http://WWW.FDGANTIQUES.COM)





# FRANKLIN LOCAL

Local News  
Local Events

Local Issues  
Local Concerns



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT:

Dear Franklin Community,

We hope this message finds you well, now that we are over a month into the 2020-21 school year at Franklin CSD. Please know that we fully appreciate all the support and cooperation from our students, parents/guardians, families, and community members to get the school year up and running in such a positive way. Assistance from outside the school has been a key to our success thus far. We are hopeful that the year will continue to be both safe and productive as we move forward.

It has been a true team effort within the district, with everyone playing an important role in the process. All FCS employees had a chance to provide input regarding our preparation and planning for reopening, which forced us to consider a wide range of variables in multiple areas of responsibilities. I want to take a moment to highlight the great work that has been done across the board.

First, our directors and administrators are thoughtfully implementing our reopening plan while still being reflective and open

to potential adjustments as needed. Our facility/custodial department is efficiently and effectively disinfecting the building on a daily basis. Each week, nutritious meals are being prepared for both in-person and remote students by our food service department. Also, our transportation department is following all necessary protocols for getting students safely to and from school in a timely manner. Over sixty computer devices have been distributed by our technology department for use at home, along with troubleshooting for numerous issues. Our students and families are continually supported academically, socially, and emotionally by our counseling department. Additionally, our faculty and staff are providing learning opportunities that maximize the potential of our students while continuing to build positive and trusting relationships. Helpful information is provided by our secretaries to answer questions or concerns. Lastly, all health concerns are being handled by our school nurse in accordance with the regulations provided by New York State.

See **SCHOOL**, con't on Page 19

## FRANKLIN STAGE WINS PRESERVE NEW YORK GRANT

Staff report

Franklin Stage Company has won a \$5200 Preserve New York (PNY) grant to fund a Building Condition Report of historic Chapel Hall, to be carried out by Crawford and Sterns, Architects & Preservation Planners, PLLC. The Preservation League of New York State and their program partners at the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) will fund this important work.

Chapel Hall is a magnificent three-story Greek Revival edifice built in 1855 as part of the Delaware Literary Institute, which provided a classical education to young men and women from across the country until the early 1900s. From 1911-1996, the Masons owned the building, converting the first-floor chapel into a theater and the third floor into a stunning Masonic Temple. Chapel Hall is on the National Register of Historic Places as



The refurbished Chapel Hall

part of the Franklin Village Historic District.

This report will inform Franklin Stage Company's planning for continued restoration, rehabilitation, and upkeep of their historic home. "We're thrilled and grateful to be a grant recipient this year!" said Co-Artistic Director Leslie Noble. "In this difficult time of pandemic, when we're not able to produce theater, it's heartening to be able to continue our stewardship of Chapel Hall."

At its 2020 meeting, the Preserve New York grant panel selected 19 applicants in 15 counties to receive support totaling \$193,390. Many of these grants will lead to historic district designation or expansion, allowing property owners to take advantage of the New York State and Federal Historic Tax Credits. With the announcement

of the 2020 awards, support provided by Preserve New York since its launch in 1993 totals more than \$3 million to 457 projects statewide.

The Preserve New York grant program is a partnership between the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) and the Preservation League, made possible with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

Since 1993, the Preserve New York grant program has been providing funds to municipalities and nonprofit organizations that need technical, professional assistance to guide a variety of preservation projects. The historic structure reports, building condition reports, cultural landscape reports, and cultural resource surveys that are

See **FSC**, con't on Page 4

### THE MAYOR'S CORNER

With Tom Briggs

*To everything (turn, turn, turn)  
There is a season  
(turn, turn, turn)  
And a time to every purpose  
under heaven  
A time to be born, a time to die  
A time to plant, a time to reap  
A time to kill, a time to heal  
A time to laugh, a time to weep  
To everything (turn, turn, turn)  
There is a season  
(turn, turn, turn)  
And a time to every purpose,  
under heaven...*

It was suggested that I write something about the COVID-19 pandemic for the Mayor's Corner. I'm not sure I'm the go-to guy to

bring clarity to what we're going through right now, but I read something recently posted by a Trappist monk referencing the significance of the third chapter of the Book of Ecclesiastes to these times.

I became a Byrds fan in 1965 when I first heard their version of *Turn, Turn, Turn*, although the depth of its meaning escaped me at the time. Folk music types might remember Pete Seeger's original version from 1959, which drew attention to human rights issues.

The passage, commonly attributed to King Solomon, is poetic, controversial, reprimanding, comforting, and pays tribute to the wisdom of Solomon.

The core message: to understand and accept that everything in life is cyclical. Wars, weather events, periods of great persecution, world peace, periods of great prosperity, famine, and even pan-

demics are all cyclical (seasons). This is the universe, after all, and we have no choice other than to be subject to its great balancing act. Is it not our responsibility to respect this, and to respond accordingly? Humanity can defiantly push forward with its recreational agenda and its warped sense of entitlement in the face of yet one more "turn", or it can pause, mask up, and view life with a chastened appreciation. This is, as it were, a time to seek purpose under heaven.

In concert with the act of seeking purpose, I'm pleased that in Franklin there have been many instances where residents have banded together to provide support for those in need during this pandemic.

The relocation of the food bank and the accompanying volunteer effort, the social media posts of encouragement, the support for local businesses, the rally in support of our post office, the kind words exchanged on the street and the continued support and understanding of our school district employees as

they work so hard to come up with strategies to educate our children, are all positive responses to this unexpected turn.

As far as the current state of the village, Franklin is doing surprisingly well. The Village budget is not impacted by the economic downturn at this time. Local businesses are still operating, though they have seen a downturn in revenue. Most of the village houses that have gone on the market have been sold. Several of the new homeowners are planning to be full-time village residents.

Our village infrastructure is sound, though we have had an unexpected delay in this season's sidewalk replacement.

Better still, there is a possibility that a new small business will be opening in the village, offering professional level employment.

In short, while we must be cautious about whatever "turn" of the pandemic we are entering as winter sets in, we can remain optimistic about our community's future.





## SAMOSAS

For years, you could buy fresh samosas at Good Cheap Foods in Delhi. Ironical that Indian pastries were available in Delhi, New York. Vijaya Samudrala, who made them, has been in India since last year so they are no longer available.

Finding fresh samosas is hard in our neck of the woods and this led me to making them at home. Thanks to a [video](#), I learned the trick of prebaking the dough on one side. It has made making samosas as easy as pie.

- FILLING:**
  - 2 medium potatoes
  - 1 Tbsp. oil
  - 1 tsp. cumin seeds
  - ½ cup frozen peas
  - 1 small finely chopped chili pepper
  - ½ tsp. salt
  - 1 tsp. garam masala
  - ½ tsp. cayenne pepper
  - 1 Tbsp. grated fresh ginger
  - ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- PASTRY:**
  - 1 cup flour
  - ½ tsp salt
  - 1 ½ Tbsp. oil
  - 1/3-1/2 cup water
- GLUE:**
  - 1 Tbsp. flour
  - 1 Tbsp. water

# kitchen basics

Boil the potatoes whole in a pot of water. When a fork goes through them easily, remove from the water, cool, and peel off the skin, cut into small pieces, and set aside in a bowl. Add oil to a frying pan at medium heat. Add the cumin seeds and roast until fragrant. Add frozen peas and cook until the skins are shiny, and water has evaporated. Add the chopped chili pepper and continue cooking until heated through. Set aside to cool. Add salt, garam masala, cayenne pepper, and grated ginger to the potatoes. With a fork mash the potatoes gently, add the pea mixture, and refrigerate while making the dough.

In a bowl, combine flour, salt, oil and water to form a soft dough. Let it sit for 30 minutes. Combine flour and water for the

glue in a small bowl. Place some flour on a plate to use for dusting the dough. You will need two pans to cook the samosas, an ungreased skillet on medium low heat and a deep fat fryer.

Remove the filling from the refrigerator and mix in the chopped cilantro.

Divide the dough into 6 balls. Roll out each into very thin round disk. Form and fill each samosa as follows:

Place a disk on the skillet for a short time, gently baking it on one side. Remove to a flat surface and cut the disk in half. With the baked side down, use your finger to spread some glue along the edge of half of the cut side. Twist the semicircle into a cone and hold it between your thumb and forefinger. The baked side will be on the outside. Press the seam to make sure the cone is sealed.

By  
Carla  
Nordstrom



Add 1-2 tsp. of mixture to the cone. Don't fill it too full. Smear the glue along the inside top edge of the cone, then press the edges together and seal. Place samosa on a plate with a light dusting of flour. Using the same steps, continue making the rest of the samosas.

Heat enough oil to submerge the samosas at medium high heat in a deep fat fryer. When it comes to heat, fry 3 or 4 at a time until golden on both sides. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels.

Serve samosas with different chutneys such as mango, cilantro, onion, or mint. Yield: 12 samosas.

Photos by Andy Bobrow

Thank you, Franklin.  
It's easy to sell homes in such a great town.



Susan Barnett  
Licensed Associate Broker  
845.514.5360 (m)  
[upstatecountryrealty.com](http://upstatecountryrealty.com)



KW UPSTATE NY PROPERTIES  
KELLER WILLIAMS REALTY

FSC, con't from Page 3

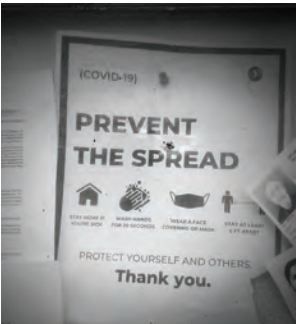
funded through this program can have profound impacts on the sites they are studying.

"Architecture and design are vital art forms that greatly impact the character and health of communities across the state," said Mara Manus, Executive Director of the New York State Council on the Arts.

"Our longtime partnership with NYSCA has enabled us to support preservation initiatives in all of New York's 62 counties," said Erin Tobin, Vice President for Policy and Preservation and the Preservation League. "This year's group of Preserve New York grant recipients continues the successful track record of this program of enabling preservation to thrive in every corner of the state."

Connect with PNY at [preservenys.org](http://preservenys.org), [facebook.com/preservenys](https://www.facebook.com/preservenys), [twitter.com/preservenys](https://twitter.com/preservenys), and [instagram.com/preservenys](https://www.instagram.com/preservenys).

Village Hall sign  
Photo by Tony Breuer





# life on the internet:

## DON'T TAKE THE (CLICK) BAIT!

By Shana Ko

One of the first things you learn when studying cloud computing is the shared responsibility model. Simply put, this means that the responsibility for security in the cloud is shared between you and your provider. If we apply this to our own online experience, the responsibility is shared between you and the advertisers and content creators. Below, I have outlined several ways to curate your online viewing experience.

First, let us discuss those annoying ads. While there is no way to avoid advertising entirely, you can provide feedback and/or hide ads and advertisers that you prefer not to see. Most often, an ad will display a small symbol somewhere in the upper right corner (Figure 1). Click this and a small window pops up that presents you with a few options. Choose the one that best suits the situation. These small actions train the artificial intelligence about your preferences over time.

Here is what Google has to say about providing feedback and hiding advertising:

Next to Google ad:  
In Google Search on your phone

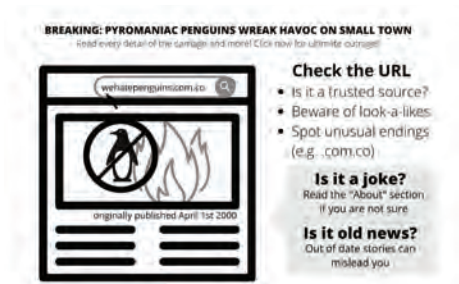


Figure 1. Minimizing Annoyance from Video Ads: 1. Identify annoying Ad. 2. Click small X. 3. Make your selection. 4. Relax.

or tablet, tap Info > Why this ad? On YouTube, select Info > Stop seeing this ad.

On Gmail, select Info > Control ads like this >Block this advertiser.

On websites & apps that partner with Google to show ads:

At the top right of an ad, select Remove X > Stop seeing this ad.

At the top right of an ad, select Remove X > Report this ad.

You can also let them know about ads that violate their policies.

To turn off ad personalization from your Google account:

Navigate to the Ad Settings page.  
Turn off Ad Personalization.

Google will no longer use your information to personalize your ads. However, ads can still be targeted using your general location or the content of the websites you are visiting.

For Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter:  
Hide a specific ad:

Click \*\*\* on the top right corner of the ad. > Choose Hide ad. > Follow the on-screen instructions.  
Hide all ads from an advertiser:  
Click \*\*\* on the top right corner of the ad and choose Why am I seeing this? > From the Options menu, select "Hide all ads from this advertiser". > Follow the on-screen instructions.

The internet has forever changed our access to information. Much like the printing press, this great innovation, with potential to connect and inform, can just as easily become a tool for those with bad intentions. It is wise to look closely at the inflammatory headlines, false reporting, and viral memes that make your blood boil. Read on for practical tips to help critically evaluate the content you are viewing online and across social media platforms.

When a headline makes you angry, take a step back to consider. In this example, we read "Pyromaniac Penguins Wreak Havoc



Figure 2. Is this Actually News?

on a Small Town" (Figure 2). Is the title informative or does it focus on fear? A descriptive headline might instead read "Local Fire at Zoo under Investigation". Can you see the URL? Does it link to a site that you are familiar with? Check that the URL is what you would expect (news.com, not news.com.co). If anything looks suspicious, do not take the click bait.

You may have heard the phrase "the internet is forever". Keep this in mind when critically evaluating news reports. Out of date information can be rebranded in the context of current events to mislead the reader. Beware of satire sites that present larger-than-life headlines. Look for the "about us" section to learn more about the content creator.

If you are curious, read more than one article (Figure 3). Research multiple sources covering the same event or story. Read to the end of the article to see if they have cited their sources and follow those sources to make sure that they are legitimate. Who is the author? Google their name. What are their credentials? Do they have a clear bias?

As consumers of information, some of the responsibility rests on our shoulders. We should check the quality of the content we are viewing online and across social

See BAIT, con't on Page 17

## IS IT A SCAM?

By Helen McLean and Bill Gruber

Recently, we've received an unusually high number of calls from friends and clients who have been swindled by scammers. This is a brief summary of ways scammers try to con you, but remember: your best defense is to be aware and cautious.

All these scams share a common thread: to get your money for a supposed service, such as cleaning an infection on your computer. But what they really want is access to your computer, thereby gaining access to your personal information, which they can use either to con you themselves or to sell to other scammers.

They often ask to connect to your computer in order to "clean" it. They may display messages that look like errors or even simulate a cleaning process, but meanwhile they are stealing your data and placing malware on your computer, giving them a "back door" to visit your computer later and gather more information. The malware planted on your computer may collect your keystrokes, passwords, credit card numbers, and other sensitive information which may then be sent off to another site.

If this scam includes a phone conversation, they will try to keep you on the line long enough to give them time to download your files.

They may even place a follow-up call to assure you they are helping. Or they will offer a call-back number, lending a false assurance that they are legitimate. The aim is to keep you engaged long enough to do an end run around you and collect your information, then charge you for it, too!

Here are some specifics:

We all get spam. If we use Gmail or sophisticated spam detector software, hopefully most spam ends up in a junk folder. But eventually, something ends up in the inbox that makes us think twice. There are the obvious spam messages hawking VIAGRA, but then there are the possibly legitimate emails about a problem with your Amazon or Netflix or online banking account. Maybe it looks okay, the icons are familiar, so you consider clicking on a link to check it out.

Pause right here and look for clues. If reading email on a computer, hover your cursor over the link to display the true link - does it look legitimate? Or does it try to fake you out by grouping a familiar URL with other info, such as "amazon.com.someothername.ru"?

Or look at the actual email address by hovering over the sender's name. If it purports to be from Amazon but is actually from Gmail or any domain besides amazon.com, it is definitely a scam.

If reading from a smart device (phone, tablet, etc.) you can usu-

ally press and hold your finger on the sender's name to see the underlying email address.

Instead of clicking on any links within the email, the best way to check for a purported problem with your account is to sign onto your account directly by typing the address (e.g., amazon.com) into your browser, or by using a bookmark you've saved and know to be correct. When logged in to your account, look at your account settings, your order history, your profile. If all that looks good, the email alert was a scam. If there are oddities, such as a shipping address you don't recognize or other changes you did not make, someone has gained access to your account. Change your password immediately and notify the company.

If you use "Google" or another search method to find a website and click on a link, there is further possibility for deceit. Scammers can push their fake sites to the top of search lists, so instead of the actual Amazon site, the first link may take you to amazon.com or some other misspelled link, or even a completely different link.


If, while browsing the web, you get

a popup alert saying your computer is infected, click here to get help, never click on such a popup. Some popups do not allow you to close or get away from them, so you might have to resort to force-quitting the browser (Command-Option-Esc on a Mac; CTRL-ALT-DEL on a PC). A last resort is to force your computer to shut down.

One common popup alert - the Flash Player update scam - is still around. This lures you to a bogus site to download a version of Flash Player that will infect your computer and give access to scammers. If you want to update Adobe Flash Player, go directly to Adobe and download it: get.adobe.com/flashplayer.

If you think you may have downloaded the fake Flash Player, do not resort to Google to find the fix unless you know what to look for. Many sites will discuss the problem credibly but then invite you to download a "cleaner" program. In most cases, these cleaner pro-

See SCAM, con't on Page 18



173 Main Street  
Franklin, NY 13775

the  
Squire's  
tankard

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# INSIDE LOCAL REAL ESTATE with SUSAN BARNETT

## PORTRAIT OF A SELLERS' MARKET

*A Wild Ride, Then a Slow Crawl To The Finish*

By Susan Barnett

2020 has been a wild ride for everyone. For people buying or selling properties, it's a ride they'll probably never forget.

Real estate, like everything else, was shut down in the spring. But my phone rang throughout the shutdown. People stuck at home had plenty of time to surf the Internet, looking for their dream property in the country.

The shocking inflation in prices upstate is driving buyers further into the Catskills, and Franklin is very much on their radar. Every buyer I've worked with this year has known about Franklin, and many of them say it is their community of choice. Just as I saw happen in Kingston, they know people who live here, or they know people who want to live here, and they're spreading the word. But those urban expats have a strong sense of the market. They know it's a seller's market, but they're not willing to pay inflated prices.

Good houses with prices higher than similar houses in the same community are not selling fast. They sell eventually, because there just isn't enough inventory to meet the demand this year. But they're sitting on the market longer.

Virtual tours became essential, and homeowners were enlisted to coordinate showings while realtors were prohibited from attending. One sale I handled was done completely remotely, sight unseen.

Once the restrictions were relaxed, the floodgates opened and the buyers poured in. I col-

lected COVID-19 disclosure forms, handed out masks and gloves, and followed buyers around houses, wiping down doorknobs with disinfectant cloths as we went.

Everything sold. Well, almost everything. The properties that lingered on the market were in three categories: multi-family, commer-



725 Main St., listed at \$189,000, expected to close in October.

cial, or properties with a challenge.

The properties with a challenge either need a lot of work, or have a location issue. But at the right price, even those properties are getting a lot of interest. As inventory dwindles, they start becoming more marketable.

Commercial and multi-family properties aren't moving. But that's how it happened in Kingston, too. The residential rush was a couple



272 Main St., in contract to sell, was put on the market at \$179,900 during the shutdown.

of years old when the businesses moved in to capitalize on the new customer base. Kingston has now made national news with the biggest property price spikes in the

country.

According to the county registrar, 34 properties sold in Franklin this year through August. [See Page 20] More are just waiting for closing. There are six homes for sale for more than half a million dollars now. That's unusual.

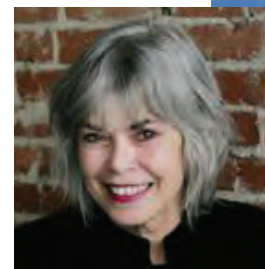
Even more eye-popping is the Multiple Listing Service statistic on sale price. The average sale price was 97% of asking. That's the definition of a sellers' market. Downstate buyers looking in Delaware County expect to find bargains, and they do. But the market here isn't what it was even two years ago. It's much stronger. And prices reflect that.



2047 Russell Rd. sold in June for \$250,000

Sellers, despite being in the driver's seat, also need to understand that the key to making the most of a strong market is to price a property well. Houses priced to undercut the competition just slightly generate showings, and that gets a house sold. It may even result in multiple bids.

Staging still matters, too. The houses that sell fast and sell for the best price are the ones that show well. Don't wait to fix problems until you've had lots of showings but lost buyers. Look at Zillow. Compare the houses with pictures that are dark and cluttered. Your brain immediately says, "Looks like work." A clean, bright, spacious home looks move-in ready. A buy-



er arrives ready to fall in love.

If you're a buyer, I'm sorry. It's a tough market. Act quickly if you find a house you like. Have your financials ready, your mortgage pre-qualification in hand, and make a good offer as soon as you're thinking this is the house for you. Because if you don't, it'll be gone.

And finally, buyers and sellers both must be prepared for the frustratingly slow experience that follows the excitement of an accepted offer. The shutdown has impacted everything, and closings that once took six to eight weeks are taking three months or more. Lawyers are swamped, title search companies are drowning. Some banks are moving forward fairly smoothly, others are crawling. Sellers are angry and buyers are, too, but there's nothing to be done. The backlog after the shutdown was compounded by a flood of new deals. It's just slow.

How long will the sellers' market hold? No one knows. But my guess is that as long as COVID is an issue, we'll see downstate buyers looking for country homes. Many of them are working from home now. All they need is a good Internet connection. And a place to unwind.

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## BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD

By Robert Lamb

We have all seen someone somewhere at sometime and wondered.

Why doesn't she go on a diet? Or she would not be obese if she exercised more.

Some may have thought more distasteful thoughts.

A few might have thought, "There but for the grace of God go I."

In one such case, most will never know that

Kaeleen has suffered a devastating debilitating disease. A disease that went undiagnosed for many years.

For fifteen years, she sought answers to her deteriorating health and unexplained weight gain. You could see her weight gain was unusual by the places it formed on her body. Her face got round and a large amount formed on her upper back, while her legs and arms got smaller. All those years she endured the stares and knew what people were probably thinking.

Few knew that in 2013 she overcame thyroid cancer. Even fewer knew that In 2015 she developed

DVT blood clots in her legs and a blind spot in her vision. When she had to leave her job, some thought she was just too obese or lazy.

In reality, she had been suffering from a tumor in her pituitary gland deep in her brain. Even with this evidence from a MRI, the doctors misdiagnosed her. For another four years she continued to fight the symptoms. During this time people seemed to pull away as she also pulled away from attending events. Imagine her isolation. Imagine the years lost to a disease

that was slowly killing her. Yet she persevered and convinced a doctor to examine her records and do some more extensive testing.

As devastating as it was to be diagnosed with Cushing's disease, it was also a relief. A relief to know her weight was not her fault. It was due to the hormones her tumor was secreting.

Now she had a diagnosis and was looking forward to surgery and better health. But it was not to be. Not just yet.

Here is where you all come in. Kaeleen still faces surgery. Her expenses have been mounting and she could use a little support. A call or note of encouragement. A prayer for her and maybe one of gratitude for yourself.

Please consider a donation to help Kaeleen during this trying time for her and her family.

If you would like to help Kaeleen, you can find her go fund me page at:

<https://www.gofundme.com/t/243kdfav5c>

Despite the global slowdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic, the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere hit a record high of 417 parts per million on May 2020.

**Audubon, September/October 2020**



# FRANKLIN IN THE PANDEMIC

WHO ARE THESE MASKED FRANKLINITES?

PHOTOS BY TONY BREUER







# FOCUS ON ENERGY

## FOR SALE: CONSTITUTION PIPE *High-quality, U.S.-made, never-used*

By Brian Brock

Due to the cancellation of the Constitution Pipeline project last February, the now-excess inventory of pipe is available for purchase -- over 96 miles of it. This 30"-diameter line pipe is suited for a range of uses including: pipe for culverts, gas transmission, and water; or pilings for bridges, buildings, transmission towers, and moorings.

"All of this line pipe is double-submerged and arc-welded, with material test reports available for every foot," said Chad Farrell, managing director of Tiger Commercial & Industrial Dispositions of California, which is managing the sale. "This sale presents a unique opportunity for commercial buyers looking to leverage the secondary marketplace to purchase line pipe manufactured by top-quality U.S. mills."

The pipe was rolled by Berg Pipe in Panama City, Florida or Dura-Bond Industries in Duquesne, Pennsylvania.

The line pipe on offer includes: 332,000 feet with 0.529" thick walls, 177,000 feet with 0.562" walls, and 1,700 feet with 0.750" walls. The vast majority of the over 12,000 lengths of pipe are 40 feet long. Such lengths weigh from three to five tons each.

The walls are controlled micro-alloyed carbon/manganese steel. The micro-alloys ele-

ments are mainly niobium, vanadium, and titanium. This X70 pipe is a premium grade piping material that meets American Petroleum Institute 5L-0476 standard specifications with a minimum yield strength minimum of 485 Mpa or 70,300 psi.

All pipe is coated with fusion-bond epoxy and an abrasion-resistant coating. An industry



*One of more than a dozen such racks of pipe in Supply Yard 5, Guilderland Center, New York. Photo by Tiger Group.*

group recommends that anti-corrosion epoxy be exposed for only six months, but this pipe has been sitting exposed to the elements for almost six years. In addition, there are a few hundred lengths that are additionally coated with concrete.

It has been several years since a comparable amount of unused, 30-inch line pipe has come on the U.S. market, Farrell noted, and because all of the inventory was domestically produced, it meets the requirements of the federal

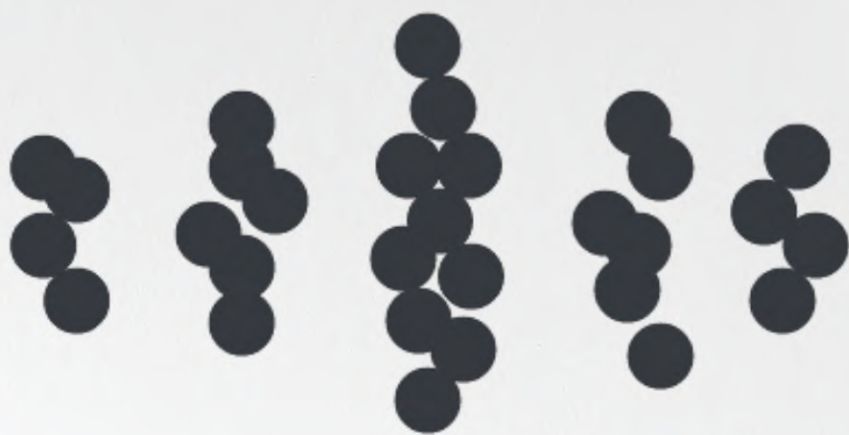
Buy America Act as well as those that are often in place for city, town, county or state contracts.

All the half million feet of pipe will be sold FOB Albany, New York. (Free on Board means that the buyer takes liability at time of purchase and is responsible for shipping.) This pipe is stored at an industrial yard in Guilderland Center just west of Albany. The sale partners have an on-site crew and front-end loader available to load the pipe onto buyer's train cars or trucks. Cutting and welding are also offered for dead lengths if needed. The yard where the material is stored includes an active rail spur and is also paved, which allows loading even under wet conditions.

Guilderland Center is only 90 miles from Franklin down I-88. When else will you have a chance to buy this quality of steel at surplus prices? The possible uses are endless. Or just own a piece of history from a time when people-power triumphed over two Oklahoma companies that tried to run roughshod over New York landowners to profit from selling Pennsylvania gas to Canada.

"A federal judge rules that Devin Nunes, an anti-environmental California representative, cannot sue Twitter over mocking tweets by a fictional cow."

- *Audubon*, September/October 2020



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## PIPELINE UPDATE

Compiled by Brian Brock

**June 30<sup>th</sup>:** **U.S. Court of Appeals, D.C. Circuit** in ALLEGHENY DEFENSE PROJECT, ET AL. v. FERC (No. 17-1098) rules en banc that FERC has illegally used tolling orders to deny landowners timely judicial review while easements were seized by eminent domain and construction commenced. Consolidated with 17-1128, 17-1263, and 18-1030.

**July 23<sup>rd</sup>:** **Constitution Pipeline Company, LLC** submits Quarterly Report No. 7 for the Constitution Pipeline project under CP13-499.

**August 4<sup>th</sup>:** **CPC** requests that towns along the right-of-way terminate their road-use agreements with it.

**September 1<sup>st</sup>:** **Franklin Town Council** passes a resolution to terminate the road-use agreement with CPC of April 5, 2016, pending a review by the town attorney.

**September 17<sup>th</sup>:** For the **U.S. District Court of the Northern District of New York**, Syracuse, senior judge Norman Mordue issues a decision and order that dissolves his two previous orders from February 22, 2015. The first order was a partial summary judgment granting CPC the right of eminent domain to seize easements. The second was a preliminary injunction against landowners allowing CPC immediate access to the land prior to its seizing the easements. Mordue further orders CPC to record his decision with the appropriate county clerks, thereby removing from their deeds those easements so seized. This order applies to deeds of only the 39 landowners who resisted signing away their rights. All the other landowners who did sign easements will have those attached to their deeds in perpetuity.

**September 17<sup>th</sup>:** **Tiger Commercial & Industrial Dispositions** puts up for sale the 510,700 feet of 30"-diameter pipe that is stored at Supply Yard #5 in Guiderland Center, New York.

**October 6<sup>th</sup>:** With only \$12,000 remaining in mechanical equipment appropriation for 2020, the **Franklin Town Council** adds the \$56,000 from the CPC road-use agreement to buy a 2012 Volvo grader with 5,800 hours for \$65,000.

**October 16<sup>th</sup>:** **CPC** submits Quarterly Report No. 8 for the Constitution Pipeline project under CP13-499.

### FFM. continued from Page 1



*The new market entrance*

tenth year at the market, having joined early on. This year, Fokish shelves were often empty before noon. Bruce sold almost all of the 800-plus goat's milk soap bars he crafted over the previous winter.

Newbies Jade and Asa of Vitality Homestead brought perennial plants, reishi and chaga mushrooms, Herkimer diamond rings, quail eggs, and delicious fresh vegetables, joining the FFM's other traditional produce vendors. In addition to soap, Cordwood Acres sold locally cultivated gourmet fungi such as Lion's Mane and Blue Oyster Mushrooms, garlic varieties, and continued to expand in the number and volume of fruits and berries available.

East Brook Farm rocks on as reigning regenerative farming champ, first with hundreds of vegetable and herb seedlings, then the freshest greens, biggest beets, and... the whole-est chickens?! That's right! In addition to their amazing veggies, Cicada and the East Brook

gang expanded to offer delicious locally grown whole chickens.

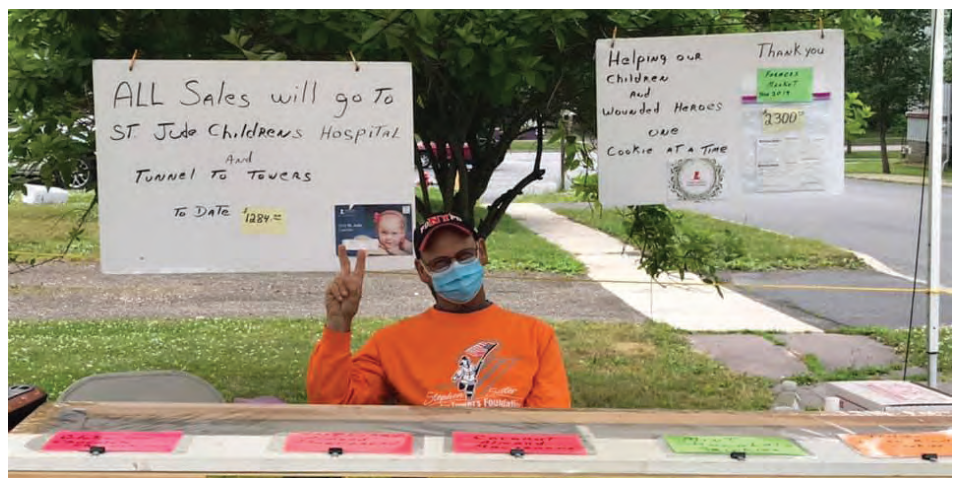
Poultry products complemented other protein-packed producers, such as Mike Sellitti with Sky-top Springs' rainbow trout fillets, sold fresh and smoked. Since the smoked trout almost always sold out, it is important to know that orders can be placed in advance.

The same is true for Meg and Empire Angus. With eager beef-eaters blowing up her Messenger since March, it was a challenge for the Shivers family to meet the significant increase in demand for their beef throughout the entire market season. Angus beef has most certainly been what's for dinner.



The addition of Lindner's Cider provided a new treat: hard apple cider products. Having all the components of a meal available in one place - including beverage - definitely adds market appeal.

Diane Jordan from Off Road Maple offered a selection of Pure NYS Maple Syrup products and related items, including syrup (some bourbon-barrel infused), candies, teas, coffee, sugar, pancake mixes, and more.



*John the Baker*

Also offering maple products was Larry of Elk Meadow Farm. His maple-pepper seasoning has always been a hit. Honey is another sweet treat for sale. Alongside Larry was Betty, who sold hand-made masks in both adult and children's sizes.

Karen of Hare and Feather Farm expanded her stock of traditional jams, jellies, fudges, salsas, and eggs, despite an "unofficially declared" jar-shortage. John the Baker has again sent thousands of dollars to St. Jude's and Tunnels for Towers charities with his authentic Italian cookies and desserts. John's commitment to his causes has been an inspiration to us all.

Occasional appearances included newcomer Ostrander Woodworking, with handmade wooden spoons and kitchen utensils; Grandpas' Garlic, with garlic and scape pesto; Braestone's Alpaca Farm, with knit items made of local fiber, including from Franklin; and, finally, much missed Izza-bon handmade jewelry and dyed

silk-scarves.

While the weekly market has ended, significant vendor and customer interest prompted exploration of a winter market possibility, from November to April. Success! A location has been identified. Thanks to the hospitality of the Walter Rich Foundation, both the Community Center and Railroad Museum will be housing vendors.

The inaugural Winter Franklin Farmers' Market will be on Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, featuring almost all of your favorite vendors. COVID-19 guidelines will be in effect and enforced. More details will be available through Facebook at Franklin, NY Farmer's Market.

Lastly and always, thank you to all the volunteers who make each week possible, to the vendors who offer amazing products, and to our loyal customers.

Your support gives strength to the market and the community.



*The last outdoor market is celebrated with a socially distanced pot luck lunch.*

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# annals of sustainability

## THE VILLAGE BOUNTIFUL:

Unadilla's New Food Co-Op

By Cassidy Frazier

The Village Bountiful Community Market, on Route 7 just west of the village of Unadilla, opened its doors on September 26th. This small-town food co-op has been in the works for a couple of years and is sustained by vendors from the surrounding area, its members, and its shoppers.

The idea for the food co-op began after Unadilla's one and only grocery store closed in spring of 2018. Suddenly, there was a huge gap to be filled for accessible, everyday groceries in Unadilla. But local residents felt the need for something more in their community and met to discuss it: a place to shop for fruits and vegetables but also to support local businesses, to reconnect the community, a store that felt like home. It started with a vision: a store that could be accessible, refreshing, and convenient - a market for the community, but also run by the community. A place for citizens to purchase



The Village Bountiful Community Market on Route 7 in Unadilla

wholesome food and products grown or made in upstate New York. The group created a mission statement outlining core values that would root the market within the town and strive to bring people together. As committees formed, the idea grew with each meeting. The shop went from an idea pitched in a local coffee shop to a reality: a local, consumer-owned market with great potential to unite the community.

Although The Village Bountiful is not a health food store, it offers an array of wholesome foods such as dairy, meat, fruits, vegetables, jams, jellies, and much more. The co-op sources a majority of its products from upstate New York, supporting local businesses and vendors through the sale of their products, while

buyers simultaneously support the local economy by shopping at the market. And The Village Bountiful provides its fresh, locally sourced products at prices you might not find at your regular grocery store.

Like other food co-ops across the nation, Village Bountiful Community Market offers memberships, though you do not have to be a member to shop there. A membership comes with perks; for a one-time payment of \$250 (with optional payment plans), you receive 10% off all your purchases. By shopping at this market, not only are you opening the door to healthy food options, but you will also be supporting local jobs, sustainable agriculture, business startups, family farms, a connected community, and a localized

economy. At Village Bountiful, everyone can shop and anyone can join.

What began as an idea in a time of need has grown into a year-round opportunity for surrounding communities to buy local, and for consumers to have a say in what is offered. You can feel good about giving back to local businesses simply by shopping for your groceries. A sense of community is restored during a time when it

feels as if we have lost it.

The market is open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10 A.M. to 1 P.M., Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4 P.M. to 7 P.M., and Saturdays from 8 A.M. to 2 P.M.

To become a member, visit:

[www.villagebountiful.com](http://www.villagebountiful.com) or "The Village Bountiful Community Market" on Facebook, or call 607-353-1946.

### Need exercise in the pandemic? Hungry for something new? Step out on... FRANKLIN'S EDIBLE WALKING TRAIL behind the Village Park!

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**Tubers/Bulbs:**

Jerusalem Artichoke, Horseradish\*, Egyptian Walking Onion\*, Garlic\*, Grape Hyacinth, Ditch Daylily, Ramps\*

**Herbs/Flowers:**

Wild Thyme, Spearmint, Oregano, Lemon Balm\*, Yarrow\*, Echinacea\*, Hibiscus\*, Hosta\*, Red Clover, Dandelion, Comfrey\*\*, Chives

**Other:**

Grapes, Watercress, Asparagus, Fir, Sumac, Partridge Berry\*

\* Newly planted    \*\* For Medicinal Use Only, Not For Consumption

**Planned Plants:** Rhubarb, Bee Balm, Calendula  
**Planned Projects:** Green Space, Signage, Seating/Benches, Pavillion



### Greater Franklin Food Pantry

574 Main Street, PO Box 209, Franklin NY 13775

Open Fridays 2-4PM or by appointment

Call or text: 607-386-1601

### Pantry Hours

Individuals or families residing in the town of Franklin, including Treadwell and the former Treadwell school district, may shop once a month on Fridays 2-4PM or by appointment. First-time customers are required to fill out a brief and confidential questionnaire.



### We welcome donations:

- Please mail checks to our Post Office Box
- Food (non-expired) may be dropped off during pantry hours, or call to arrange another time or pickup.

## Holiday Boxes

In coordination with Headstart, Franklin Central School, Delaware Opportunities and the Methodist churches of Franklin and Treadwell, the Greater Franklin Food Pantry supplies boxes of Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday meals every year for families in need.

**Sponsor a box:** You may sponsor a box for \$50. Please send a check to our PO Box.

**Receive a box:** Do you want to be on the list to receive a box? Reach out to the pantry with your information.

**Holiday Boxes include** turkey, ham or other meat choices, potatoes and vegetables, dessert **and** basic staples to help you through the week when kids are home from school.



### Thanksgiving Holiday Box

Sponsor or Reserve by Oct. 31

### Christmas Holiday Box

Sponsor or Reserve by Nov. 30







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## GREEN BANKS GARDENING



**With  
Deborah Banks**

This summer, my garden went through a couple of dry periods where every rain cloud went just north of us or veered south. Each week without rain, I carried water to the handful of perennials I had planted this year. (I keep a list of them each year.) They were the most vulnerable since they were not rooted into the soil yet.

As the dry period continued, I watched hosta and primula leaves wilt and turn brown. The ligularia leaves drooped during what should have been their moment of blooming glory. The *Kirengeshoma palmata* looked miserable, despite some hand watering. Finally, when the middle of my oldest *Daphne mezereum* died, I belatedly realized more action was required. I dragged the hoses out and started watering in earnest. However, I still only watered certain areas, especially my shade gardens. The sun-baked beds were doing fine.

My biggest shade area is under maple trees with greedy surface roots that continually rob the bed of water and nutrients. All trees do this of course, but some trees are more difficult to garden under than others. Even though my shade plants are protected from the drying heat of the sun, they suffer more from lack of rain than plants in other parts of my garden. And when it does rain, not as much water makes it down through the trees to the ground.

This summer I never watered the sunny bed on the south-facing slope in front of our house,

even though the slope makes that area fast draining and the plants were in full sun. The soil was often very dry, but the bed contains many plants that prefer those conditions, including penstemon, *Echinacea* (coneflower), alliums, veronica, bearded iris, weigela, bronze fennel, hardy geraniums, *Nepeta* (catmint), sedums and *Physostegia*. Putting the right plant in the right place is the key to limiting the need for water.

Other plants that do well in sunny dry conditions include most ornamental grasses, lavender, Phlox paniculata (summer phlox), *Euphorbia polychroma* (cushion spurge), *Echinops ritro* (globe thistle), *Eryngium planum* (sea holly), *Perovskia* (Russian sage), *Agastache* (Anise Hyssop), yarrow, lamb's ear, salvia, asters, *Phlomis russeliana* and several *Artemisia* species (common cultivars are 'Silver Mound', 'Valerie Finnis' and 'Powis Castle'). As you plan your own drought tolerant garden, a general rule of thumb is that a plant with silver or furry or tiny leaves is more likely to be drought tolerant, with the bonus of being less attractive to deer and rabbits.

I try to group plants according to their need for water. If I had planted ligularia or blue flag iris in that dry bed, I would have needed to water frequently, even though most of the plants in the bed didn't need that help and, in some cases, would even resent it. If I site a plant badly but follow my watering plan for the bed, the plant will alert me that it needs moving by its failure to thrive, its yellowing leaves or sometimes by its death, if I have been slow to take notice.

So that's great for the sunny bed, but what can I do to improve the drought tolerance of the shady areas? Even here there are plants that can tolerate dryness. In my stressed shade garden, hellebores and various epimedium cultivars still looked great this year amidst the sea of

browning hostas, astilbes and ferns. In fact, the hellebores looked newly minted with glossy dark green leaves.

Other stars in my dry shade included *Hakonechloa* (Japanese forest grass), carex, *Athyrium niponicum* (Japanese painted fern), *Geranium phaeum*, *Brunnera*, Japanese anemones and *Eurybia divaricata* (our native wood aster). Some pulmonarias and heucheras also did well, especially those with heavily silvered leaves. The more common pulmonarias fried and also succumbed to powdery mildew.

My list of plants that did well in my dry garden applies only for the well-established plants. I watered newly planted perennials often, even if the variety was on my drought-tolerant list.

Any garden fares better in a drought if the soil has been amended with compost or shredded leaves and if the bed has been mulched to conserve what moisture is present. When I do water, I try to water deeply once a week (or less) instead of doing frequent light sprinkling. I want to encourage my plants to root deeply.

I'm sure my talk of drought would be laughable to Californian gardeners who wait years for rain instead of weeks. However, we too should try to make our gardens more resilient to weather extremes. Regardless of your opinion of climate change, it is certain that our summers are often warmer and dryer than in the past. We should all think about a plant's water needs as we choose what to add to our gardens.



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# AT THE LIBRARY

## NEW BOOK REVIEWS

**HAMNET: a Novel of the Plague**  
By Maggie O'Farrell  
Reviewed by Lynne Kemen

The irony of reading a historical fiction about a child dying during the London plague of 1596 while we are in the middle of a pandemic in 2020 is huge but appropriate. Maggie O'Farrell's **HAMNET: a novel of the Plague** was released this year, but I am quite certain that the author did not know how prescient the book would be.

William Shakespeare is probably the world's most famous playwright, yet we know almost nothing of his private life. He was married and had three children: Susanna and the twins Hamnet and Judith. He spent most of his career in London or touring with his company while his family remained in Stratford. In the book, the family stays in the small town due to health issues of the younger daughter and the dangers of plague and pollution in London.

Shakespeare is never mentioned by name. The book opens with an 11-year-old boy desperately searching for an adult



when his twin sister suddenly collapses. But it is Hamnet who dies, not his sister, and the family is deep in grief. Shakespeare arrives too late, then leaves and does not return for almost a year. During that time, it is his wife's grief that is central to the story.



"Every life has its kernel, its hub, its epicentre, from which everything flows out, to which everything returns. This moment is the absent mother's: the boy, the empty house, the deserted yard, the unheard cry ... It will lie at her very core, for the rest of her life."

Midway through the book, there is an interlude concerning the flea that caused the death of Hamnet and spread the plague. It is very dispassionate and effective. By the end, we are in London at a production of *Hamlet*. We see how an artist immortalizes his son and his grief.

*"If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,  
Absent thee from felicity awhile,  
And in this harsh world, draw thy breath  
in pain,  
To tell my story."*

—*Hamlet*, Act V, scene ii

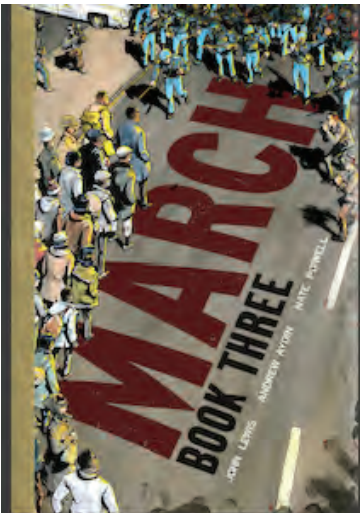
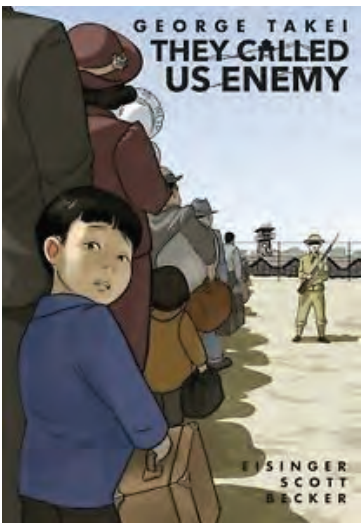
### LIBRARIAN'S PICKS By Wendy Barckhaus

Two great graphic novels:

**THEY CALLED US ENEMY**  
By George Takei

This book recounts the story of the author's imprisonment in "relocation centers" set up by the United States government during World War II. Takei was four years old when he and his family were moved from their home to the camps. Their "crime" was being Japanese-American. Takei writes about the trauma of growing up under armed

guard and government sanctioned racism. Meanwhile, his parents struggle to keep their family safe as they are moved from camp to camp. A story that needs to be told. And yes, this IS the George Takei from *Star Trek*.



**MARCH**  
By John Lewis and Andrew Aydin

This is the third book that the late, great John Lewis wrote about the civil rights movement. It starts in 1963 with the bombing

of a Birmingham church, which killed four little girls. It takes us through the Freedom Summer and ends with Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965. As non-violent demonstrators tried to march over the Edwin Pettis bridge in Selma, they were savagely beaten, John Lewis included. He does not sugarcoat the horrific violence that civil rights advocates were subjected to. A must read for all ages.

**ALL THE DEVILS ARE HERE**  
By Louise Penny.

This latest Inspector Gamache novel takes place in Paris, not in the usual village of Three Pines. Armand and his wife Reine-Marie go to Paris to await the birth of their grandchild. Their daughter Annie and husband Jean-Guy, Gamache's former second in command, live in Paris, as does the Gamaches' son Daniel. Gamache's godfather, billionaire Stephen

THE DAISY FOLLOWS SOFT THE SUN  
- Emily Dickinson  
Poem 106

The Daisy follows soft the Sun—  
And when his golden walk is done—  
Sits shyly at his feet—  
He—waking—finds the flower there  
Wherefore—Marauder—art thou here?  
Because, Sir, love is sweet!

We are the Flower—Thou the Sun!  
Forgive us, if as days decline—  
We nearer steal to Thee!  
Enamored of the parting West—  
The peace—the flight—the Amethyst  
Night's possibility!

Emily Dickinson was born in 1830 and died in 1886. "The Daisy Follows Soft the Sun," one of the many poems written by Dickinson, was published posthumously in 1890 in the book **Poems by Emily Dickinson**, edited by Mabel Loomis Todd and T. W. Higginson, which contained 115 of Dickinson's poems.

She was a prolific poet, but she hid most of her verses; after her death, 900 of them were found in a small box, bound in 60 little volumes tied together with twine. Although Emily Dickinson lived a "small" life in Amherst, Massachusetts, this American genius had a vast understanding of people, animals, and the world.

— Bertha Rogers

KENNETH L. BENNETT

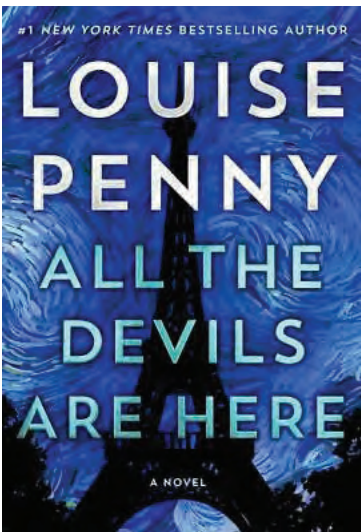
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Horowitz, joins them. The family reunion is spoiled when Horowitz is hit by a car and lies in a coma. Of course, Gamache must investigate the hit and run. And of course, secrets will be uncovered.

This novel is a departure from her fifteen other Inspector Gamache novels. Its Paris locale is beautifully described, but it lacks the quirky characters we've come to love from Three Pines. Are they much missed? Readers of the series will have to de-



cide when they read this latest book.



The COVID-19 virus and protective health mandates have brought to public spaces a look that many Americans might better associate with Halloween, criminals, or surgical procedures. Today, more than in any recent moment, we live in a world of masks.

Traditionally, mask wearing generally falls under one of three categories: protection, expression, or ritual transformation. Etymologists trace the origin of the word "mask" back to the Arabic *maskharah*, meaning "buffoon". The word for mask in Latin is *persona* or *larva*, suggesting our English language connection with personality and transformation. A mask can provide the cover needed to evoke a different being



"Intrigue" by James Ensor, 1980

As an element of fine art, masks are used in theater to mythologize or aggrandize characters in the storytelling. But they appear also in painting, most notably in the work of James Ensor (Belgium 1860-1949) who grew up in a family whose shop sold carnival

## UpState Arts with Charlie Bremer

masks. When I asked my friend, Franklin artist Edmond Rinnooy-Kan, if he had ever painted a mask on his iconic character Gou-gou, he very aptly replied: "Gou-gou is a mask."



"Gou-Gou" by Edmond Rinnooy Kan

Surrealist artists employ masks as symbols of the subconscious or personalities of the alter-ego. Numerous examples are found in the work of Rene Magritte and Man Ray. Sometimes masks are a part of art in unexpected ways. Anyone attending the Burning Man art festival in the Black Rock Desert of northern Nevada during late August had better bring a

mask - better yet, several. Dust storms appear quite suddenly off the desert playa and swallow this gathering of 70,000 people in minutes, art and all. Amazing masks and costumes are an essential part of this annual and remarkable "no spectator" art event. Bank robbers and thieves usually wear masks, but then, so do their adversaries. The Lone Ranger, Zorro, and most of our DC and



"American" by Charlie Bremer, 2020

Marvel Comic superheroes all get masked up for battling crime. Recently in Cooperstown, NY, signs went up requiring all peo-

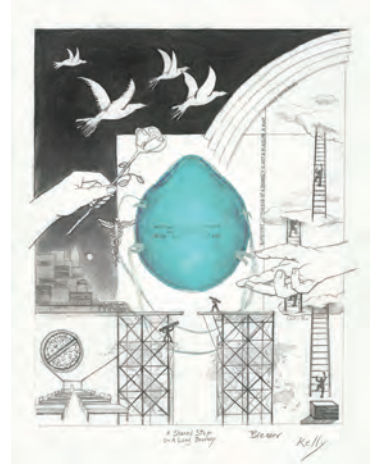
ple entering the downtown district to wear a mask. One person, incensed by the notion of being told what to do, resorted to vandalism. He snuck around town with black spray paint to put a large X over each sign. Had he done as the sign requested, he might never have been identified by security cameras and subsequently arrested. Irony prevails. Our deepest connection to masks derives from ancient and primitive societies throughout every culture and time. The oldest known masks date back some 10,000 years. Here, the evocation of deity and the transformation of life spirit become one through the mask. Rites of passage, fertility, marriage, good harvest, connecting to the spirit of ancestors, or the journey to the afterlife are all woven into the power of masks. It is speculated that the wearing of animal masks may date as far back as 35,000 years.

Even a primitive "witch seeker" mask seems to share a relevance today with our over-heated political climate. Amid COVID-19, we wear masks to protect ourselves and others. In many ways we have always been a nation of masks: Republican / Democrat, conservative /



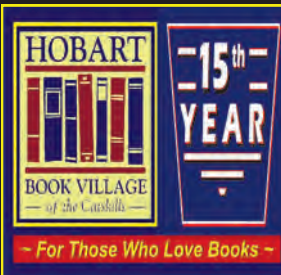
Witch-seeker mask 20th Century  
Dan People, Liberia/Ivory Coast

liberal, male / female, and perhaps every role we play in life is a form of mask - artist included. From our participation in society to the revelations of our inner self, a mask is often the creative tool of choice.



"A Shared Step on a Long Journey"  
William Kelly, Charlie Bremer,  
Louise Neaderland, 2020

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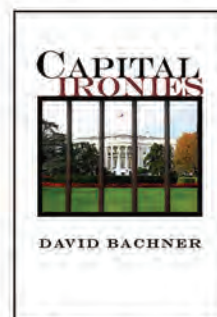
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"Julene Waffle's *So I Will Remember*, her first book of poetry, is filled with small shining gems—glimpses of her young son; an ode to the world of wind and stars—full of insight into the human nature within us. I'd be much the poorer without her words." —Liz Rosenberg

Vicki Whicker's *Caught Before Flight* is storytelling with a strong feminine gaze: beautifully honest, edgy, sensual, lyrical and vivid. "...overflowing with exquisitely succulent imagery, creating residual longing that lingers beyond the final page...Rich, mature, and impressively lyrical, these poems demand to be savored." —Josh Kilmer-Purcell



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## SEEING THINGS

By Susan Barnett

The spring of 2020 punched holes in our expectation of “normal.” Life, for many of us, slowed down. Bird watching, gardening, stargazing, all enjoyed a renaissance. It seems an appropriate time for a collection of poetry entitled *Seeing Things*.

*Seeing Things* is a compilation of poems written by participants of Robert Bensen's writing workshop of the same name, held at Treadwell's Bright Hill Literary Center. Bensen, an author and former Director of Writing at Hartwick College, said that after a year of workshops, he envisioned creating a simple collection of the group's work.

But “the project grew to a 120-page file that begged to be a printed book,” he explained. “Several anonymous donors contributed nearly \$5,000, which enabled us to raise our production values to the highest standards available.”

Among the contributors are Bensen himself, plus area residents including Lynne Kemen, Karen Miritello, Pam Strother, and Vicki Whicker, who also contributed photos to the book. Once the state shutdown forced the workshops to move to a virtual format, Benson said participants joined from the Capital District, downstate, and Washington D.C.

The poems weren't written specifically for a book, but the collec-

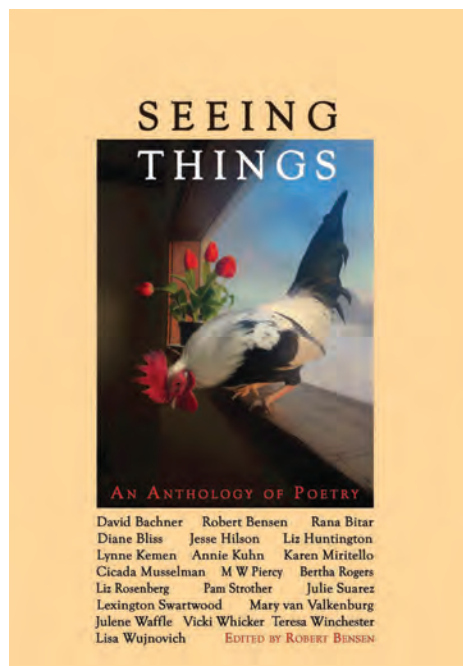
tion cannot help but be interpreted by the reader as a reflection of the unique time in which they were written – life before and during a pandemic.

The shutdown itself impacted the writers in different ways.

Strother said the shutdown “strangely” didn't really affect her creative life. “I had visions of great productivity, but it never materialized. I continued to write at the same pace as I always have and that, unfortunately, is slow and sporadically.”

For Miritello, the shutdown was an opportunity to work. “I was able to do so many things that my ordinary schedule doesn't permit me to do. Of course, it naturally shifted the point of view, but as far as opening up a window of time, I

See **POEMS**, con't on Page 16



## CATSKILL CATS

### MUSIC NOTES

BY JOHN O'CONNOR



### WHITHER SENSUALITY?

Since March, the live music scene has been, for the most part, dead. Musicians, as well as other performing artists, lost their means of making a living overnight. Had COVID-19 happened twenty years ago, some of the loss would have been made up in sales of recordings, but that source of income has been long decimated by the digital world. Performing freelance musicians were able to take advantage of the extension of unemployment insurance to independent contractors. But life has been tough for these musicians, as it has for all performing artists. In the phases of partial opening in the pandemic, the last includes musicians, but only under limited conditions.

In the scene loosely defined as folk music - my turf - musicians have resorted to various formats available to them on the internet. I did a Zoom concert in May for Music on the Delaware, which has hosted a series of virtual concerts. The experience, frankly, is unsatisfying for both the audience and the performer. No matter how advanced the technology, nothing makes up for the interaction of audience and performer in a live setting. Still, musicians persist, and many artists have been able to make up for their loss of live performance income by playing for venues offering this virtual alternative, or by hosting their own concerts online, charging admission on a mandatory or voluntary basis. The experience lacks the vitality of live performance, but there are consolations - the audience doesn't have to travel distances, making it possible for someone anywhere in the world to “attend”. And everyone has a front row seat.

\*\*\*

In March of this year I visited the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The next day, I left New York and drove back to Franklin. On that day, the museum closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. And so began the suspended world we now live in. Artists, musicians, theater artists, and dancers since then have tried to practice their art in the way we call “virtual”, using the various platforms of the internet that allow us to sit in our rooms and watch an approximation of what was (and with some luck, will be again) the real world of space and reaction, of touch and visual and audio sensuality that has been ours until the year of 2020.

A few weeks ago, the Met opened its doors again under strict pandemic guidelines, assuring that the museum is not too crowded and that viewers take precautions not to catch or spread the little in-

visible pests that cause havoc on our respiratory systems. Being one of zillions who finds the virtual version of art, acting, music, etc. extremely unsatisfactory and depressing, I decided to make the trip to New York to visit the Met (as well as one of my favorite galleries, St. Etienne). I thought it would be a nice to see the Jacob Lawrence show: paintings of the American experience. In person.

On my wanderings through the American wing to reach the Lawrence exhibit, I feasted on the many twentieth century paintings gracing those walls. Paintings that make you stand in wonder of this magnificent art form and those whose gigantic talents move us through a meditation of visual stillness. Painting has always seemed to me the closest art to poetry. Good poetry can be read and re-read, revealing something new each time. The same is true with a painting. But I don't think you can experience this discovery and rediscovery without seeing the painting directly, having in front of you its texture and real-world dimension. In the middle of the pandemic, standing in front of these paintings, I felt what a human privilege it is to see works that are tremendously moving and filled with the context of the epoch that produced them.

I have never been a big admirer of Edward Hopper, but there I was, entranced by his painting of a restaurant with a waitress preparing a fruit counter (can't recall the title), and acutely aware of its painterliness. I learned the word “painterly” from painters who have been personal friends, and for me the term expresses the dimension that paint adds to the two we normally consider a painting to exist in. But paintings are, if one observes their painterliness, anything but two-dimensional. So, it is impossible to understand and experience a painting without being in front of the actual work.

The sensuality of my visit to the museum that day was unlike any other time viewing paintings of the stature seen at the Met. Our world cannot be truly represented by the virtual, in my opinion. And that world, I think, is in danger of slipping away. The pandemic has shown how important it is. Perhaps that is the silver lining of the pandemic; the appreciation of what is real and sensual.



Masks off Main Street - Photo: Tony Breuer



# FRANKLIN COMMUNITY EDUCATION FOUNDATION

By Trish Tyrell

During the greater portion of 2020, COVID-19 significantly impacted the activities typically conducted by the Franklin Community Education Foundation (FCEF). In addition, COVID-19 has impacted two academic years and the educational experience of every child in Franklin and beyond.

Following the shutdown at the end of the 2019-2020 academic year and the start of “crisis education” through remote learning, it was difficult to determine the real needs of the school, students and community.

Lengthy email and Zoom discussions were held about internet and technology access, transportation costs, food stability, supervision and guidance, and the social consequences of an iso-

lated student body - challenges faced throughout the state and country.

Fortunately, the community of Franklin again proved itself strong. The school and community generally had the resources needed to get through. In the one instance where a technology need was identified, FCEF met it through the generosity of Erna Morgan McReynolds and Tom Morgan. For other needs, federal and state programs were often able to step in.

Summer provided some relief to weary teachers and students alike. However, concern remained about what the 2020-2021 school year would look like, about when and if school might start, and what kind of support the school might require.

The problem of education during the pandemic remains an evolving one. Providing an in-person education requires additional expense, and the Fall of 2020 has proven much different than the Spring.

FCEF has been able to support the school with funding for tools and sup-

plies required for in-person programming, such as carts to move supplies with teachers between classrooms.

On Friday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, FCEF kicked off the First Annual School Supply Give-Away. Due to COVID-19, this was done in a drive-thru format, open to anyone who came. The leftover supplies were given to the school to be passed along to any student needing them. A big thank you to ACCO Brands for their generous donation, which contributed to the overall success of the event. FCEF was also able to purchase a Chromebook to feature in the annual raffle, resulting in a successful fundraiser. Additionally, a Fire8 Tablet was donated to be given away as a promotional prize.

Through its partnership with Franklin Central School, FCEF will continue to identify current needs that support in-person programming and remote student learning. In these unprecedented times, FCEF is honored to be part of the resource network that



The First Annual School Supply Give-Away in action

keeps Franklin strong by supporting our youth and our school.

Our greatest strength is the support of individuals in the community, so we will be asking for donations through a mail-in giving campaign. FCEF is grateful to each and every person who contributes to our efforts and activities.

Hopefully, we will one-day resume support of more traditional items like

field trips and scholarships. Regardless the situation, FCEF is proud to serve the Franklin community.

*The Franklin Community Education Foundation supports extracurricular and supplemental education opportunities to the youth and students of Franklin from cradle to career.*

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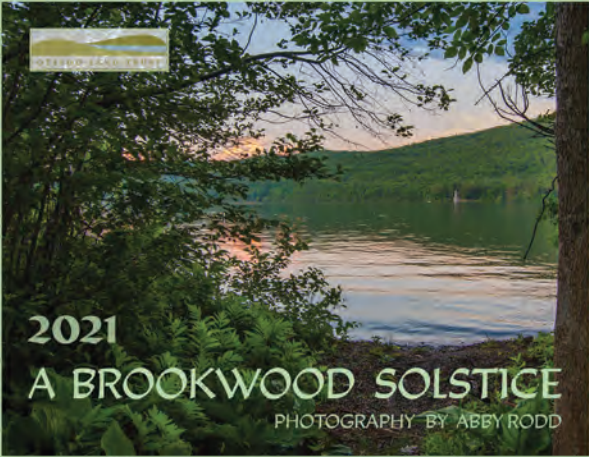
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**TAXES, continued from Page 1**

\$12,100 (76%) from the county.) Total of salaries for town officials would be \$137,300. Benefits would increase \$2,360 (3.8%) to \$64,010.

Capital expenses (contractual expenditures, CE) for government would decrease a total of approximately \$17,500: tax collector \$435, attorney \$1,200, buildings \$15,000, and dog control \$885.

For the highway department, total salaries would stay the same at \$350,000 and benefits would increase \$9,400 (4.5%) to \$217,835. Benefits are state retirement, social security, and medical insurance. Of the highway appropriations, labor (wages and benefits) would account for \$0.568 million or 41.4%, which would be 31.6 % of the total budget.

Highway capital expenses would increase by net \$20,000: equipment maintenance increasing by \$30,000 and machinery decreasing by \$10,000.

Appropriations and revenues for the hamlet of Treadwell would be unchanged from 2020. Expenditures for water and light of \$26,750 would be partially offset by revenues of \$11,015. The balance of \$15,735 would be a subsidy paid by all Franklin landowners.

With only these small changes, the 2021 budget would be similar to that of 2020, with highway department receiving \$1.371 million (76.2%), all other town accounts (general) \$0.401 million (22.3%), and Treadwell light and water \$0.027 million (1.5%). The proportion of budget for the department rose about a percent.

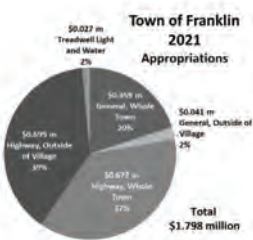
These appropriations would be mostly paid by property taxes, but there are significant contributions from revenues and appropriated fund balances. Revenues would remain essentially unchanged from 2020 at \$0.376 million. Most of the revenue would be the \$0.250 million from New York state under the Consolidated Local Streets and Highway Improvement Program. The next largest would be \$0.038 million from rent of the land under the cellphone tower.



Appropriated balances are funds carried over from the previous years. These funds are allocated to provide operating cash and a buffer for unexpected costs. The total of \$0.188 million would be the same as last year. Over the last decade, fund balances have declined from \$0.262 million.

Annual [Financial] Update Documents (2014 to 2019) reveal funds that are not reported in the budget document, typically a hundred thousand dollars or more. In the most recent AUD, cash on hand was \$0.526 million whereas the total allocated fund balances reported in the 2020 budget was \$0.188 million – a third that amount. Funds in these eleven town bank accounts are not included in the budget document. Cash in the Kellogg-Franklin Trust is not included in that total.

Annual financial reports for Franklin 2005 to 2008 and 2014 to 2019 can be read, downloaded, or printed at: <http://www2.osc.state.ny.us/transparency/LocalGov/Lo->



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calGovIntro.cfm. Our board has not audited town books for 2009 to 2013, nor has the supervisor filed AUDs for those years.

The levy for the Franklin and Treadwell fire departments, which is set by the departments themselves, was not known at the time of the budget workshop. Levy for 2020 was \$0.227 million. While this levy is collected through the town tax billing, it is not part of the town budget.

This tentative budget was considered during the annual budget workshop at the meeting of the board on October 6th. Beforehand, the tentative budget was prepared by supervisor Taggart (financial officer) in consultation with director of finances Warner (assistant financial officer). At the workshop, Mr. Warner read only the few changes from the 2020 budget. (If you forgot to bring your copy of last year's budget, then you could not follow along.) After some remarks by the supervisor, the board approved his tentative budget without discussion. Thereby, it became our preliminary budget.

Copies of the budget are available from the town clerk. A public hearing on the preliminary Town of Franklin Budget 2021 will be held Wednesday the 4<sup>th</sup> of November at 6:00 p.m. in the town hall.

Immediately after this hearing, the board may approve the preliminary budget either with or without revisions. While a budget does not have to be passed that evening, it should be approved by November 20<sup>th</sup>.

**POEMS, con't from Page 14**

honestly loved that!"

Whicker, too, found creative fuel in the shutdown, with an acceleration of her output, and more space to create. "The anxiety and despair can work well for poetry, too."

Bensen viewed the shutdown more as a logistical challenge, as he sought to keep the writing group together. "We had to adjust to the new social modes imposed by ZOOM, but the online form was a blessing, in that we were able to bring in writers who could not drive to Treadwell every Monday night for in-person meetings. And recording the sessions meant that people could watch and hear the workshop at a more convenient time, if they couldn't ZOOM in at the moment."

The book may be complete, but the online workshops continue, starting Monday, September 21.

Seeing Things is available at The Green Toad Bookstore in Oneonta:

<https://greentoadbookstore.com/>

For more information on the book or the workshop, contact Robert Bensen at [bensenr@hartwick.edu](mailto:bensenr@hartwick.edu), or the Bright Hill Press and Literary Center.



Martha Bremer at Burning Man in August



# SARS VS. US

By Brian Brock

By and large, we have managed well since the first wave of SARS-CoV-2 infections swept through Delaware County in late March and April. By avoiding crowds, keeping distant, and wearing masks when close or indoors, our sacrifices have been rewarded by low levels of infection and death. Positive tests for this virus show a background increase of about two each week among the 44,000 residents. Epidemiologists estimate that for every case identified there could be nine that were missed, so for us about 20 infections a week. Half of those infected are asymptomatic and go untested. In addition, some sick people prefer not to go to the doctor.

Since this first wave subsided, our county has suffered four upticks when people were careless: a cattle auction in mid-May (8 positives), field days around the Independence Day weekend and then a church service and reception in early to mid-July (14), the start of the fall semester at SUNY Delhi in late August (16) and the start of in-person grade school in October (30+). During up-ticks, the testing averaged seven new infections per week.

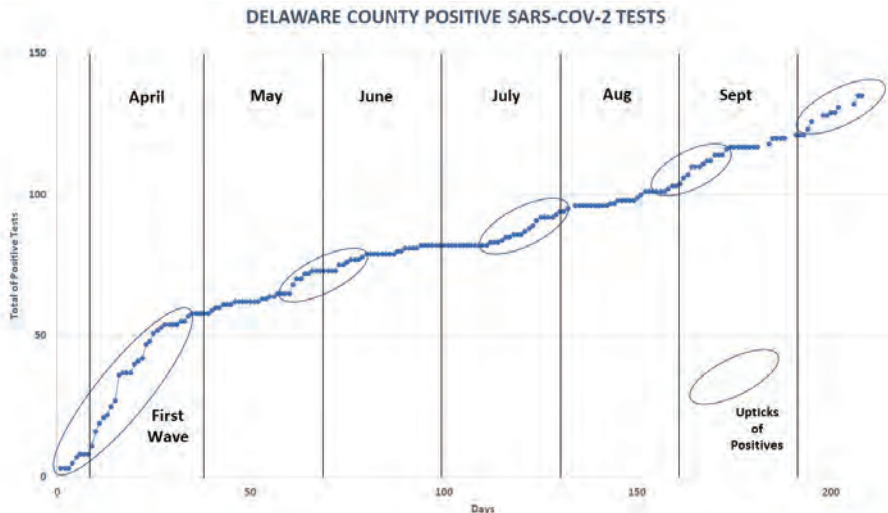
Fortunately, the Delaware County Department of Health managed to identify many of the infected through testing and contact tracing. By late October, they had recorded 22,500 tests and found 150 infected individuals, a rate of 0.7 percent. (One percent

is a warning level, two percent is a danger.) During an uptick, the number of people under mandatory quarantine spikes from a few to a few dozen. The department has to manage each person for 14 days from the initial letter of quarantine until the letter of release.

Four patients died during the first month of the pandemic, but only four more died in the next six months. Hospitals have become better at treating COVID-19 as we

into the surrounding community, let alone Delaware County.

Starting the last weekend in September, an outbreak spread through the general population in the greater Binghamton region, becoming one of the top 20 hotspots in our state. First week of the month saw over 340 positive tests, the second over 500, and 440 the third. While SUNY Binghamton was not the cause of this outbreak, once over a hundred students were



learn more about this disease.

Nearby, there have been two full-scale outbreaks that required outside intervention: Oneonta and Binghamton.

In early September, SUCO students started being infected. Eventually over 700 tested positive, a quarter of those attending. This outbreak was a failure of some students to behave responsibly and of the administration to prepare for this inevitability. In Oneonta, governments at city, county, and state levels cooperated to contain this outbreak to the student body. Fortunately, the virus did not spread

infected, it paused in-person classes for two weeks.

Here, there was only a small uptick at SUNY Delhi. As in Oneonta, students began showing symptoms about a week following the weekend of freshman orientation. Likely a few infected but asymptomatic students spread it to other students, some of whom developed a more serious case. However, students accounted for only half this uptick.

The outbreaks in Oneonta and Binghamton showed how quickly SARS-CoV-2 can spread if safeguards are neglected or disdained.

Cloth masks mostly protect others in case the wearer is infected. It is considerate of others to wear them outdoors in crowds and indoors. To protect yourself where the virus is likely floating about, you need an N95 mask that fits tightly on your face, or something better.

It might be spring of 2021 before we can begin to achieve herd immunity through vaccinations. The alternative of herd immunity through infections would be costly.

As of late October, there were 150 positive tests in Delaware county. Even if this indicates a total of 1,500 infected individuals, that is only 3 percent of our population. An estimate of the fraction that would be required to protect the community from further outbreaks of COVID-19 through herd immunity is 60 to 70 percent recovered or 26,000 to 30,000 more people here.

Since the first wave ended, Delaware County has been averaging one death for every 20 positive tests (four dead and 80 positives) or maybe 200 infections, assuming a ratio of positives to infections of 1:10. Therefore to achieve herd immunity would cost the death of 130 to 150 of your neighbors, seven to eight in our town alone.

The dead are not the only lasting cost of this pandemic. There are those who survive but remain disabled months later. Some might never fully recover.

Winter is coming. Much of our time will be spent indoors, thereby increasing risks of spreading. Past pandemics have had a second wave in winter, larger than the first. Now is the time for diligence.



## THE BARN IS OPEN!

At the Franklin Railroad and Community museum:

“Our biggest project has been the addition of George Rich’s barn, offering more display area for the museum. Some of the displays include farm machinery, an old time house display, an O&W train station display, hit-and-miss engines, and historic items from Franklin.”



FOR HOURS AND DIRECTIONS, VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE: <https://franklinrrcommuseum.wixsite.com/museum> OR FIND US ON FACEBOOK OR INSTAGRAM.

## BAIT, continued from Page 5

media. Clicks are the currency of this new world. Online advertisers and content creators are competing for your views. In our example, somebody clearly does not like penguins and is using this platform to spread fear and misinformation. I hope that this information grants a little bit more control and peace of mind to your online experience.

Figure 3. Read a Little Further and do research.



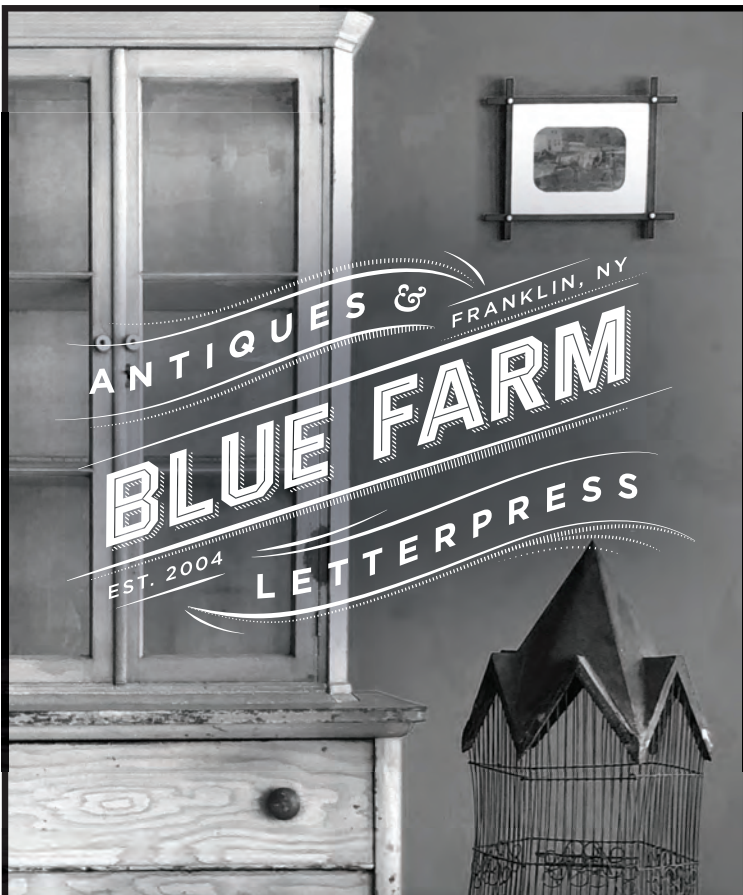
- Research the author
- Seek out multiple reports
- Read beyond the headline
- Verify sources and citations

written by P. Hater



## HAS ANYONE SEEN HOMER?

If you have any information, please call the Whitakers at 607-432-3747



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The South Pole is warming three times as fast as the rest of the planet. Sweden and Austria have closed all their coal-fired power plants. - Audubon, Oct./Sept. 2020



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### THE NEW FRANKLIN REGISTER

contact

**Manette Berlinger:**

**manette.berlinger@gmail.com**

#### OFFICE, con't from Page 1

P.D.C. of Oneonta made a presentation of possible layouts for a new office building. Then in 2018, the heating system in the tenant house failed and repairs had to be paid for by the town. Our town board decided that rather than put more of the taxpayers' money into someone else's property, they would build a new office building. Not only would it be owned and operated by the town, but a new building could provide much needed additional space.

Our Justice Court is very short of space. The existing non-jury courtroom and office is crowded into around 400 square feet, whereas the NYS Unified Court System recommends a minimum of 600 sq. ft. for a courtroom alone.

The tenant house has office space for only the clerk and code enforcement officer. Offices of assessor and bookkeeper are a mile down the road at the highway department garages (aka sheds), as is the town hall. Also, Franklin has no dedicated records room to preserve vital documents. A new building could accommodate all these functions.

In addition, a larger courtroom could double as meeting hall for our boards (town board, planning board, zoning board of appeal, and board of assess-

ment review) and as the annual polling place. Voting at town hall has been crowded since all polling in Franklin was consolidated there.

In 2014, newly elected supervisor Taggart set-up a savings account for construction which is funded by rent payments from the owner of the cellphone tower. (Unlike a reserve fund, such an account does not require public notice.) By 2019, it had accumulated \$91,300. However, with an estimated cost of \$750,000, most of the construction would be paid with grants and debt.

The first hurdle for this project was finding a building site. The initial choice was to adjoin the existing town hall, which itself adjoins the garages. However, the nearby cellphone tower limits the possible floor space, and during the day the area in front is much trafficked by highway department heavy equipment. Despite this, the board contracted with Delaware Engineering for evaluation of site and draft a possible plan. Locally DE has designed the Village of Walton police building and several town highway garages. In the end, the board decided against this option.

Briefly interest shifted to a double wide on the same property, but this could not accommodate

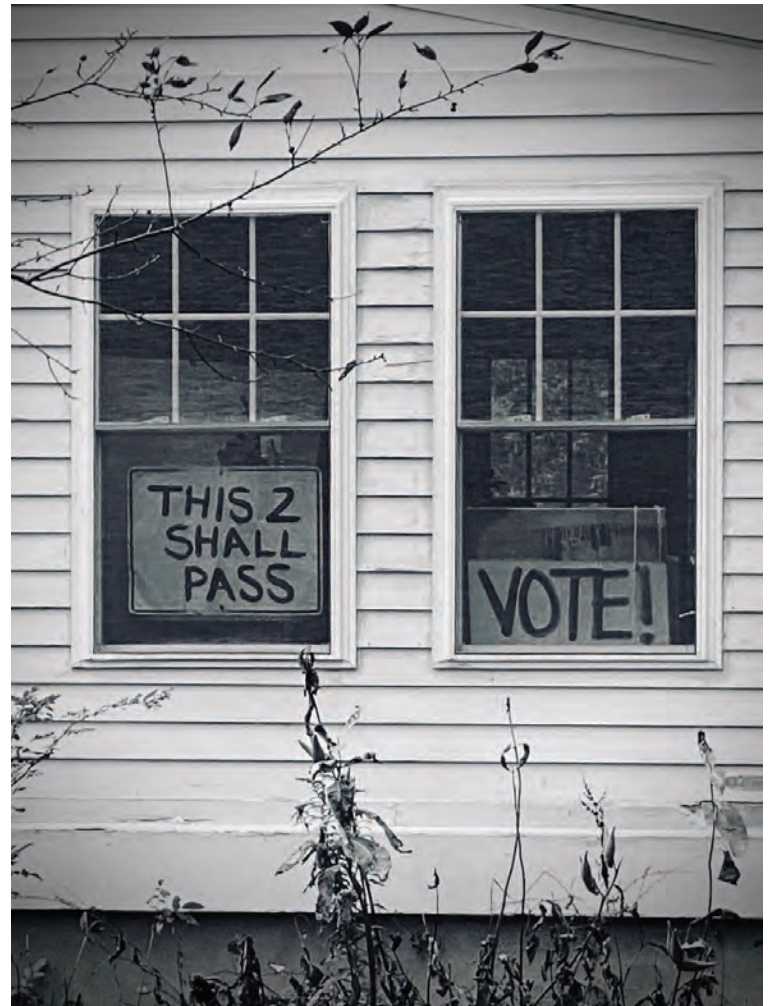
the needs of the Justice Court and offices.

Looking in the village, a search found no suitable empty lot on Main Street. In 2017, Chris Downin purchased the former Bradley house and gas station at 202 Main Street for \$64,000, which he offered to sell part of to the town. Again, Delaware Engineering was contracted, and this time it came up with three possible plans. The least expensive was to renovate the first floor for the court and offices. Space would be cramped even with some offices remaining at the town garages. Another plan dedicated the first floor for offices with an addition behind to be built for a dual courtroom and meeting hall. On consideration, bringing this residential structure up to commercial building codes was too expensive.

The most elaborate plan was to demolish the existing house, garage, and out-buildings. Then a new single-story building in the rear of the lot would house offices and a combined courtroom and meeting hall. A parking lot would be built where the house stood. This plan ran afoul of a village law that requires obtaining a permit from the village for the demolition of any building deemed to have "historical value" (e.g., 50 years or older). Since then, this property was sold to Matthew Campbell for his offices.

With no suitable site in the village, the board resumed searching outside of it.

*Part II will conclude this chronicle of our town board's unsuccessful efforts to build a new office building.*



*Pandemic Hopes - Photo by Tony Breuer*

## CONSTITUTION PROJECT ENDS WELL FOR SIDNEY

### Staff Report

The Amphenol Aerospace manufacturing plant in Sidney was built on a floodplain and was flooded by the Susquehanna River in 2006. After that, the company built a more modern facility a mile upslope and demolished the old buildings. On this now-vacant land, it built a solar farm of 23 acres. The 18,000 collector panels produce 7,540 Mw per year, thereby providing as much (clean) power as would have come from the (polluting) burning of methane acquired from the Constitution Pipeline. Any excess power can be fed into the local grid. This is one of the largest on-site corporate solar farms in the U.S. and largest such in New York. Amphenol is the largest manufacturer of military and aerospace connectors in the world and provided many of the components for the project.

A short video on this project: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AfE3DDG4Mew&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AfE3DDG4Mew&feature=emb_logo)



*Artist's birdseye rendering of Amphenol's solar farm in Sidney, NY*

### SCAM, continued from Page 5

grams cause more problems than they fix. Some are even malware that create problems that they then claim can only be fixed by paying the scammers.

It bears repeating: your best defense is to be aware and cautious.

If an email, phone call, or browser popup suddenly offers to fix a problem you didn't know you had, stop and think about it before paying, answering questions, or downloading software.

Above all, do not let someone unknown to you have access to your computer.

**Have a question? Reach out to us at:**

[techtalk@franklinlocal.org](mailto:techtalk@franklinlocal.org)



*Turkey vultures gather on the Bridge to Nowhere*

*Photo by Craig Brock*



**SITTS, continued from Page 1**

representative Incentive payments. They and 114 others wanted to take DFA to trial. [3]

On October 26, 2016, the first document, "Complaint and Jury Demand" was filed for Sitts, et al, or "Farmers United", Plaintiffs v. The Dairy Farmers of America, Inc. and Dairy Marketing Services, LLC, Defendants. The Complaint and Jury Demand or "Complaint" is brought under Sections 1 and 2 of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 1 and 2.

From this Complaint, Plaintiffs allege:

"Defendants (however) have engaged in an illegal conspiracy to restrain competition, fix and suppress prices paid to farmers and monopolize/monopsonize the raw Grade A milk market in the Northeast. This activity has suppressed at artificially low levels the over-order premiums that would otherwise exist in a competitive market. [9]

"At its core, the conspiracy is simple; DFA/DMS controls the milk producers and then sells the milk at a low price to processors, also partially owned by DFA/DMS. Instead of distributing the money back to its members, DFA/DMS use complex accounting and opaque financial records to keep the money for their executives and their cronies." [4]

The Capper-Volstead Act provides anti-trust immunity or exemptions for agricultural cooperatives. For the exemptions to apply, two universal conditions must be met. The first one figures prominently in this case, stating that "the cooperative must be operated for the mutual benefit of its members insofar as they are producers of agricultural products, in that they are farmers, planters, ranchmen, dairymen, nut or fruit growers."

On July 27, 2020, the U.S. Justice Department filed a Statement of Interest in this case (document 285). The conclusion reads "The Capper-Volstead exemption should be construed narrowly and consistent with the Act's purpose to enhance the bargaining power of farmer-producers. It should be applied as an affirmative defense, with the defendant bearing the burden of showing that the exemption applies." [5]

At a World Dairy Expo last year in Madison, Wisconsin, Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue said, "In America, the big get bigger and the small go out." [6]

In 2016, according to the Complaint, DFA's member farms produced more than 20% of the total US milk production. DFA also marketed 30% of the total US milk production, representing three-quarters of DFA's revenue.

DFA is Goliath to Farmers United's David. If DFA is the largest dairy cooperative in the US, controlling 20% of the total milk production in the US, how could its apparent success affect smaller farms in such a negative way as to cause litigation?

In a case document, Judge Christina Reiss states "Plaintiffs proffer admissible evidence from which a rational jury could conclude that DFA management favored growth of its commercial operations and empire building over the interests of its farmer-members, including through executive compensation and benefits which were not fully disclosed to DFA members and improper payments to DFA Board Members and Area Council Members." [7]

This case could level the playing field for independent and smaller dairy producers alike. As the first condition of the Capper-Volstead Act states, "for the mutual benefit of its members", Eduardo Castro at the University of Minnesota Law

School writes, "As cooperatives have accrued more control of the dairy industry, and smaller farmers have seen their own power diminish, this language provides a powerful tool for litigants to pierce the veil of Capper-Volstead protection."

After conferences in August and September, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September Judge Reiss signed a stipulation of dismissal with prejudice, which was mutually agreeable. "With prejudice" means the case is discharged permanently and may not be re-filed with this court.

**Endnotes**

[1] How Can We Reinstantiate Our Farms

[https://www.facebook.com/1554768334759293/vid-eos/2048821858687269/Reinivating\\_Our\\_Farms](https://www.facebook.com/1554768334759293/vid-eos/2048821858687269/Reinivating_Our_Farms)

[2] Case 5:09-cv-00230-cr, OPINION AND ORDER GRANTING MOTION FOR FINAL APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 2015 PROPOSED SETTLEMENT (Doc. 2076)

[https://www.courtlistener.com/re-cap/gov.uscourts.vtd.18481/gov.uscourts.vtd.18481.2093.0\\_2.pdf](https://www.courtlistener.com/re-cap/gov.uscourts.vtd.18481/gov.uscourts.vtd.18481.2093.0_2.pdf)

[3] Judge Denies Motion to Dismiss Sitts vs. DFA/DMS Antitrust Case

<https://www.themilkweed.com/MWP-102019-Month.pdf>

[4] Case 2:16-cv-00287-cr, COMPLAINT AND JURY DEMAND (Doc.1)

<https://www.courtlistener.com/re-cap/gov.uscourts.vtd.27234/gov.uscourts.vtd.27234.1.0.pdf>

[5] STATEMENT OF INTEREST ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

<https://www.justice.gov/atr/case-document/file/1298411/download>

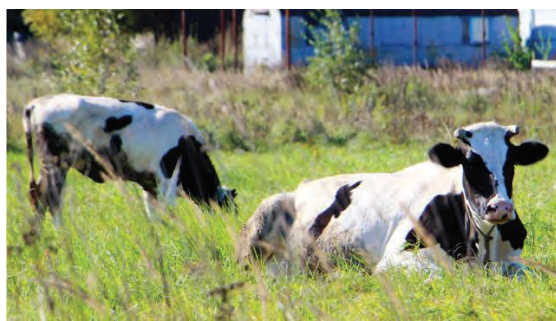
[6] U.S. Agriculture Secretary: Family farms might not survive OCTOBER 2, 2019 / 1:41 PM / CBS/AP

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/agriculture-secretary-sonny-perdue-says-family-farms-might-not-survive/>

[7] Case 2:16-cv-00287-cr, OPINION AND ORDER GRANTING IN PART AND DENYING IN PART DEFENDANTS' MOTION FOR SUMMARY JUDGMENT (Doc. 91)

[https://www.courtlistener.com/re-cap/gov.uscourts.vtd.27234/gov.uscourts.vtd.27234.130.0\\_1.pdf](https://www.courtlistener.com/re-cap/gov.uscourts.vtd.27234/gov.uscourts.vtd.27234.130.0_1.pdf)

[8] **Monopsonize:** In business, where there is a single buyer of a good or service as opposed to a monopoly where there is a single seller. In either case, the single operator distorts the market by controlling the price of the good or service.

**SCHOOL, continued from Page 3**

York State or Delaware County.

Please join me in recognizing and thanking everyone involved for working together to put our students in the best possible position to be successful. I am proud to be the superintendent in a district that has met the challenges of the last six months with understanding, flexibility, and professionalism.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact our offices at any time with questions, concerns, or ideas.

Respectfully,

Brad Zilliox  
Franklin CSD Superintendent  
[bzilliox@franklincsd.org](mailto:bzilliox@franklincsd.org)



The Newsletter of Franklin Local

**Editorial Board**

Ellen Curtis      Helen McLean  
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

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**What are we about?**

Franklin Local Ltd, the parent organization for The New Franklin Register and the Franklin Farmers' Market, is a not-for-profit corporation made up of Franklin residents who volunteer their time to serve this community.

Our mission statement: to work to preserve the rural character of Franklin, to grow the local economy, foster community solidarity, encourage volunteerism, and raise awareness of economic and social challenges that are likely to result from the transition from fossil fuels to sustainable energy.

We generally meet once a month, at 7 P.M. at the Franklin Free Library. The date is 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
- EV Charging Station
- 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, location and directions, as well as lots of other information about our town, check our website:**

[franklinlocal.org](http://franklinlocal.org)

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The Franklin Village Board meeting on October 15<sup>th</sup>  
Photo by Tony Breuer





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## RECENT REAL PROPERTY SALES IN THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN

DATE	LOCATION	ACRES	TYPE	ASSESS	SALE	SELLER	BUYER
1/15/2020	577 Main St	0.31	Apartment	200,000	229,000	Menard, Faith J	Siddiqi, Ali
1/24/2020	700 Sanly Rd (2)	77.53	Rural Res	246,000	200,000	MTGLQ Investors LP,	Zaiser, William
2/3/2020	652 Main St	0.46	1 Family Res	98,000	80,000	Cassinelli, Gary	Ecklund, Bianca B
3/17/2020	816 Main St	0.59	1 Family Res	102,000	11,000	Bank of New York,	Matheson, Ronald
4/13/2020	2445 Merrickville Rd (2)	268.50	Rural Res&Ag	550,000	325,000	DalCanton, James A	Montuori, Raymond A
4/20/2020	70 Case Hill Rd	0.57	1 Family Res	145,000	64,760	HSBC Bank USA,	Potrzeba, Luke
5/6/2020	9219 State Hwy 357	4.60	1 Family Res	200,000	190,000	Brown, Bruce A	Doig, Kevin William
5/7/2020	127 Center St	0.36	1 Family Res	84,000	35,000	Carr, William	Ibrahimovic, Emsud
5/11/2020	950 Campbell Rd (2)	12.37	1 Family Res	108,000	30,700	Deutsche Bank Nat Trust	Zhang, Richard
5/15/2020	78 Bennett Hollow Rd	44.40	Rural Res	219,000	295,000	McCabe, Thomas	Garofalo, Charles Anthony
5/27/2020	4386 County Hwy 14	0.73	1 Family Res	95,000	135,000	Joan Dworkin Living Trust	Houshmand, Jessie M
6/4/2020	6732 County Hwy 16	3.10	1 Family Res	122,000	120,000	Currie, Robert H	Talbot, Tera L
6/10/2020	2047 Russell Rd	13.72	Rural Res	102,000	250,000	White, Gail	Ortiz, Richard
6/10/2020	3058 Russell Rd	15.53	Rural Res	103,000	135,000	Falco, Silvana	Rocha, John-Paul
6/15/2020	738 State Hwy 28 S	5.20	Mfg Housing	60,000	105,500	Rose, Joshua B	Powers, Jennifer
6/18/2020	1681 Buck Horn Fm Rd	53.33	Mfg Housing	105,000	105,000	Leva, Salvatore T	Smith, Thomas
6/22/2020	State Hwy 357	31.63	Rural Vac>10	65,000	34,000	Little, Paul	Lyons, Michael
6/25/2020	136 Water St	0.15	1 Family Res	58,000	75,000	Winfield, Rose M	Simonds, Donald J
7/2/2020	140 Bennett Hollow Rd	42.89	Rural Res (\$)	149,000	293,000	Nystrom, Michael A	SSMK West Cat LLC
7/9/2020	East Brook Rd (2)	7.20	Rural Vac<10	21,000	32,500	Walley, Brian	Salzmann, George Richard Jr
7/20/2020	2447 Sanly Rd	9.50	1 Family Res	127,000	197,000	Fairbairn, Susan	Beadle, Darrell
7/23/2020	Pomeroy Rd	10.30	Rural Vac>10	21,000	26,000	Wallace, Michael S	Broni Properties LLC
7/27/2020	State Hwy 28 S	13.20	Rural Vac>10	34,000	63,100	Menendez, Maya	Zoller, Daniel E
7/31/2020	5180 County Hwy 14	9.60	1 Family Res	225,000	315,000	Matthews, Ian P	Coulter, Murray Keedick III
8/5/2020	Dunk Hill Rd	7.58	Rural Vac<10	31,000	30,000	Wisbrun, Wendy	Fundaro, Samuel
8/10/2020	669 Main St	0.55	1 Family Res	200,000	230,000	Cable, Umayyah	Frankel, Leah H
8/12/2020	855 Thoroughbred Rd	24.00	Mfg Housing	65,000	117,000	Spinelli, Daniel	Deonandan, Ashwant Kumar
8/20/2020	2888 Tupper Hill Rd	1.40	Mfg Housing	35,000	25,000	Javalay, Nicole	Vessey, Tricia
8/21/2020	3205 County Hwy 14	9.00	1 Family Res	280,000	286,000	Konuklar, Gul	Bishop, Ebone
8/24/2020	2 Campbell Estates Rd	7.59	Vac w/Imprv	20,000	30,000	Stack, Richard	Brody, Adam Chad
8/24/2020	Ed Klug Rd	30.00	Vac w/Imprv	67,000	30,000	Leva, Salvatore T	Leva, Salvatore T
8/26/2020	5800 State Hwy 357	11.40	Rural res	133,000	242,000	Otello, Donna	Vuolo, K. Mishell
8/27/2020	4132 E Handsome Bk Rd	5.10	Res w/Com	186,000	350,000	Holliman, Emily	Mathew, Della M
8/31/2020	499 Otego Rd	2.00	Mfg Housing	58,000	75,000	Thowe, William B	Wikoff, Joseph C
	(2)TwoParcels		(S) Changes				