

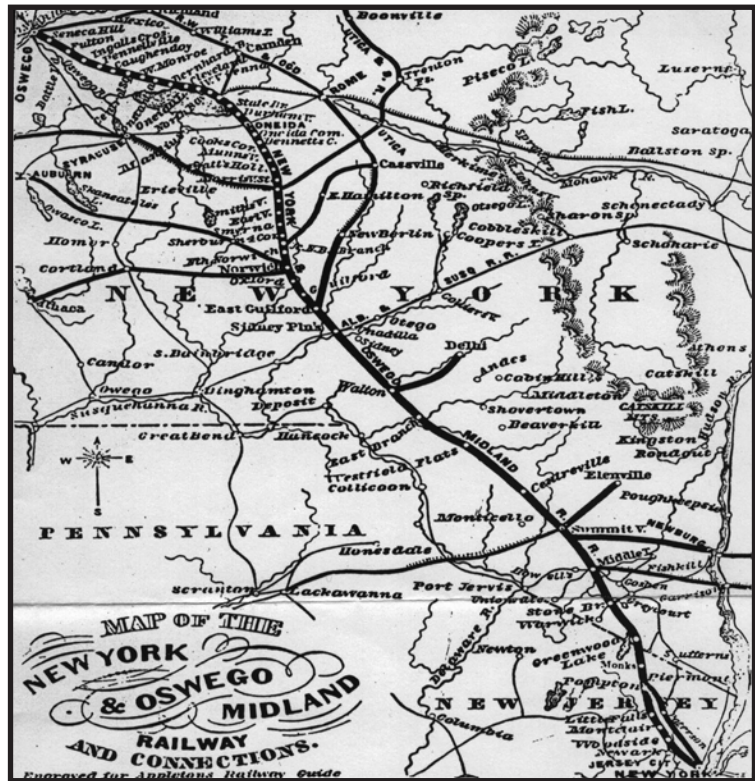
THE NORTHFIELD TUNNEL

By Brian Brock

In the late 1860s, the New York and Oswego Midland Railroad Company began planning a railroad from Jersey City, NJ on the Atlantic Ocean to Oswego, NY on the Great Lakes. Construction was to be financed by bonding each municipality along the route. Cities that already had train service were uninterested; cities such as Binghamton and Syracuse. The resulting route ran through rural towns such as Cornwall, Middletown, Cadosia, Walton, Sidney, Norwich, and Oneida. Because of that, this line would struggle to be profitable. The construction cost \$26 million (the equivalent of several hundred million dollars today), and the first passenger train completed the entire route in July of 1873.

On the stretch crossing the western flank of the Catskills, the high point is the pass over Northfield Mountain, which is on the drainage divide between the Delaware River Basin to the south and the Susquehanna River Basin to the north. This mountain rises just west of the Plymouth Church off Route 21. The route of the railroad rises 600 feet from the Delaware River at Walton and falls 700 feet to the Susquehanna River at Sidney. Originally back-and-forth switchbacks, known as zigzags, allowed trains to climb to the top of the pass at 1847 feet. Longer trains had to uncouple, and the engines make repeated trips over the pass.

See **NORTHFIELD** on Page 7



In the Good Old Days

“Franklin is situated four miles from Otego station, on the Albany and Susquehanna Railroad, and five miles from Merrickville station, on New York and Oswego Midland Railroad.

A daily line of stages is run from Otego to Franklin, by J. B. Ingalls, on the arrival of trains ; *fare, fifty cents.* A daily line of stages is run from Merrickville to Franklin, by H. P. Birdsall, on the arrival of trains; *fare, fifty cents.*

Students can take night boat from New York to Albany, and via Albany and Susquehanna Railroad, arrive in Franklin at 1 p. m. the following day. Or they can leave New York city at 9 a. m. via New York and Oswego Midland Railroad, and arrive in Franklin at 5 p. m. of the same day.”

Delaware Literary Institute Catalogue, ca. 1878

OVERHEARD AT THE FRANKLIN FARMERS MARKET...



“Whose little car is that?” “Where’s the other half?

“One good thing about that car: if it breaks down, you can always carry it home!”

“So, where do you put the wind-up key?”

FRANKLIN RAILROAD MUSEUM: OPENING SOON

By John Taibi

Perpetuating the memory of the O&W railroad in Delaware County is one of the goals of the new Franklin Railroad & Community Museum that has been constructed behind the Town Clerk’s office.

The museum building, which measures 40 feet wide by 125 feet long, has been built with funds provided by the Walter G. Rich Charitable Foundation. Its appearance draws from the O&W’s architectural styles from the 1880-1890 period as well from the earliest days of its predecessor, the New York & Oswego Midland Railroad.

The yellow and white colors reflect those used on the Midland’s earliest station houses, while the board and batten sheathing represents a building style then in vogue. The roof mounted “sky lights” are patterned after “ventilator housings” used on O&W ice houses of the 1890’s period.

The museum houses the O&W railroad’s official private car, # 30. Built in 1889, it was named “Warwick.” The name derived from the O&W President Thomas P. Fowler’s summer residence at Warwick, New York.

See **MUSEUM** on Page 6



A fine new home for O & W’s official private car # 30

Carsharing in Upstate NY

By Andy Goodell

Ithaca Carshare is a non-profit car-sharing organization which recently launched in June. Since then, over 400 residents of the greater Ithaca area have applied to become members of this program, including many bus commuters and college students, faculty, and staff. Members have access to ten vehicles that are located all over Ithaca in areas easily accessed by bus routes, walking and biking.

You might be wondering why a car-share company has any reason to be

See **CARSHARE** on Page 5

SNAPSHOTS OF JOY

By Anne Ohman

“It is not selfish to be happy. It is your highest purpose.

Your joy is the greatest contribution you can make to life on the planet

A heart at peace with its owner blesses everyone it touches.” ~ Alan Cohen

Monday, 9 a.m.

When we first unlock the door and enter the library, it looks like it could be the beginning of any other day. But it’s not. It’s the day of the Parent/Child Program at the Franklin Free Library. And so my children and I get to work, knowing full well what our first job of the day is: transformation.

Together, we move furniture, and make several trips up and down the stairs, our arms so full of pillows and musical instruments and art supplies and puzzles that we can barely see around our loads.

By 9:30, we have transformed this already extraordinary little library into a space created for the sole purpose of honoring

See **JOY** on Page 7

The NEW Franklin Register

The Newsletter of the Franklin Citizens Commission on Peak Oil
Editorial Board

Brandon Dennis Eugene Marner
Ellen Curtis Gregory Williams
Brian Brock, assoc. editor
Marjorie B. Kellogg, editor

Have an opinion? Write to us!

At: The New Franklin Register
P.O. Box 258
Franklin, NY 13775
or by email: franklin_local@frontiernet.net

What are we about?

The Franklin Citizens' Commission on Peak Oil was authorized on December 6th, 2005 by a Town Board Resolution. Our purpose is to assess the needs and resources of the Town of Franklin in the face of Peak Oil, and to report back to the Town Board and to the people of Franklin.

We are a group of Franklin residents who meet for one evening a month at a member's home. We begin with a pot luck supper before we get down to actual business. All are welcome to join us, to ask questions and help us answer them, to share thoughts and ideas

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

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

In a nutshell, we are trying to imagine a more energy efficient habit of living, and to put it to work here in Franklin, for a brighter, more sustainable future..

We hope you will join us!

For meeting times, location and directions, email us at franklin_local@frontiernet.net

You can also join our Peak Oil AwarenessYahoo Group.

It's POA_CNY@yahoo.com.

That is, Peak Oil Awareness_Central NewYork.

This group fosters discussion of local efforts, potential or ongoing, to deal with the effects of Peak Oil on our communities.

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The NFR thanks Seathrun O'Corrain for his continuing support.

Letters in our mailbox...

To the Editors:

The people of Franklin are spoiled with an embarrassment of farm riches! I visit from New Jersey (the "garden state") and am envious of the amazing quality of food and talent in the local farmers. I am in awe, and looking forward to my visits every year. Thank you all for pointing the way to sustainability and beauty!

Elizabeth Talmoud
Westfield, NJ

Dear Franklin Neighbors:

You are welcome to arrange a tour of our grass-fed farm, to see how we are

moving toward our goal of eliminating fossil fuel use. Jim Hayes has been a great mentor for us in expanding our grazing program. We have been grazing seriously since 1989. I have also put together a portable water pumping system for drinking water for the cows in remote fields. It is solar powered.

Please call ahead if you wish to visit, and learn more about sustainable local food production.

Siobhan Griffin
Raindance Farm
607-286-9362

For more letters:
see **MAILBOX** on Page 8



The last fall market was a huge success - did you score a Fokish cinnamon roll?

Franklin Farmers' Holiday Market

by Ellen Curtis

We are happy to announce a Christmas/Holiday Farmers Market this year.

It will take place in the afternoon of **December 6** at the Franklin Firehouse, in coordination with the annual Christmas Stroll. Together with the Franklin Improvement Society, we are planning several seasonal activities.

Our regular vendors will be offering special goods for the holidays. In addition, we will invite Arts and Crafts vendors with many gift ideas. If you know of an artist or craftsperson who might be interested in joining us, please send them our way.

What would you like to find at our market? Please send your comments and ideas to: PO Box 258 in Franklin, NY 13775 or e-mail to: franklin_local@frontiernet.net



Own this view of our local landscape, by Franklin painter Lisbeth Firmin. See below.

Bid on a painting and help develop our park

The Franklin Improvement Society's latest report

Perhaps it looks like we haven't accomplished much on the park this summer. But what we have accomplished is the work that needs to be done before the real work can begin.

We hired landscape architect Birgitta Brophy to draw up a landscape plan. She brought her first plans to our June meeting. We combined aspects of different plans and made a few suggestions. She came back with a plan we all liked very much. Her design lets us work on the park in sections, as money is raised for the different aspects. We call these sections *quadrants*. Quadrant I is the right front section as you stand on the sidewalk and look into the park. This area will contain a fountain, paver stones, a gazebo, benches and trees. Birgitta also supplied a plant list and drawings showing grades and dimensions for

the whole park. Copies of the Quadrant I landscape plan are available. A copy of the whole park plan will soon be on display on the sign in front of the park.

On Saturday, Sept. 13, we had another work day. We cleared out Quadrant I, cut down some trees that needed to go, and struggled with multi-flora rose root systems. Fill will be brought in soon so that it can settle over the winter. We are looking for help in assessing the stone walls and having any needed reinforcement done. A fence, probably wrought iron, will be installed at the top of the wall after the stone wall is repaired.

Of course, we are always looking for donations, big or small. Any monies brought in are still being matched by our O'Connor Foundation grant. Contributions should be sent to Chris Geertgens, PO Box

948, Franklin, NY 13775. We have a new member who is quite knowledgeable about grants, so we are investigating all possibilities there. The landscape plan will be very helpful for these applications.

Currently, we are having a silent auction of two of Lisbeth Firmin's lovely watercolors. The minimum bid is \$150.00 each. The winning bid(s) will be announced at our Christmas Stroll on Saturday, December 6. One or both of these paintings would make a great Christmas gift! Contact us with your bid!

This project will take a few years to complete, but now that we have a plan and drawings, we are excited to really get going!! If you have any questions, would like to bid on a painting, or would like copies of the Quadrant I landscape plan, call Kim Hyzer at 829-8820.

Your Neighbor's View...

PEAK OIL RECOIL, or Yesterday is History

A Rap by MC Paul Barman

Control CFCs or ignore tomorrow's problems and the rich will join the poor or starvin'.
Whether you toil in the soil or you're royal's the same thing.
"I love this crowd! Is this an audience or oil painting?"
Grief has four sections: Denial, Anger, Depression and Acceptance.
Science Guise'll diagnose we're headed for the second.

So chew on that and masticate.
Procrastinate makes what should go first go last and wait.

Whether oil peaks in 1960 or 2040 is weeks by cosmic standards.
Autos transferred from horses and'll go back when oil depletes.
Antiques are scared stiff. "The edge of a plateau looks a lot like a cliff."

Hindsight's 20/20.
Finite can be many.
It took a century to drain the oil but there's other fossil fuels.
CH4 has the smallest molecules.
Act now and change is still possible!

Millions of years ago, before land was man-owned,
plankton sank in to porous sandstone.
Inside the sediment, it changed to other elements as layers settled in.

Top rock is called the cap.
Oil and gas got trapped.
Now businessmen search for new veins to tap.

When wells slow down, oil's cut with water.
UV from the sun makes the greenhouse hotter.
Infrared wavelengths from the ground, too long to pass through glass,
get trapped inside. In the same way, Earth gets over-hot from gas.

Whales, coal and timber burnt for tinder.
Global warming makes a colder winter.
Chernobyl warning didn't hinder.
Nuclear may be cleaner than coal cinders as a whole
but neither is ideal so slow your roll!
You can't love the first and hate the latter.
There's always an effect when you change a state of matter.
We took the gas out the grounds and put it in the skies.
The morass compounds as China industrializes.
Demands can't, and never again, will meet supplies.

Carbon forms as branched chains, straight chains and closed rings.
Two families: Alkanes and Alkenes.
As the structure varies, so does its production of things.
iPods, swings, fork and knife at the chip shop.
It's hip-hop like Crip talk to wash out that Ziplock!

World War 2 was more than just gypsy or Jew. The US, an economilitary giant, grew.
Clinton undermined the Kyoto Treaty but W withdrew.
In Kyoto, Japan, they devised a plan to go low on co-two emissions, rather than a ban.
Tough systems would measure with computers but if the world's worst polluters won't
sign, then that treaty's neuter.

OPEC holds back, it is viewed, for kopeks, so next Iraq got jacked for its crude.
150 billion barrels. Arab apparel's a 'kaffiyeh,' not a 'towel.'

After 1,2, or 3 wars, oil will still be a nonrenewable resource.

Now we pay for our follies. Car corp.s took out hemp and trollies.
It's a fix, both politics and getting out jollies. Who predicts
the new immigration when sky inflicts fire and desertification,
famine and flood, islands go glug, and malaria spreads to new areas from bugs?

We survive guided by stars.
Not enough to drive hybrid cars.
Respect arrives for this hide of ours.
Back on the range, attraction'll change.
Shaved arm, waxed back, is bad for survival.
A strong women'll keep you alive a lot longer.
Leave behind what's too heavy, tv, torah or a bible.

Tribes'll form from themselves. No resources for photovoltaic cells.
Too late for remorse that Natives can no longer help.

All things go in a circle. We work all day to pay what you burgle.
Yesterday is history, twist a tree and listen to Mr. B!

YARD OF THE MONTH

JULY:

This month's spectacular yard is reminiscent of good old American pride! The yard, located at **30 Main Street**, is the home of **Scott and Tina Worden**. It is lush with a variety of flowers, not a single blade of grass out of place, and it features American flags in the planters and an antique wheelbarrow full of bright flowers. The mix of red annuals, wax begonias, impatiens and geraniums is a perfect complement to the white house and healthy green shrubbery. Each of the hanging planters along the front, the potted plants throughout the yard and the hanging impatiens bags on the trees are perfectly spaced, well-maintained and beautifully coordinated. The beauty continues to the back of the property, where the out buildings have spectacular window boxes. We would like to thank Scott and Tina for adding to the beauty of historical downtown Franklin.

AUGUST:

As we toured around Franklin to choose a special yard for the month, we were amazed to find so many annuals still looking as fresh as last month. We know it takes diligence and care to keep them looking full and not scraggly. Many perennial gardens were also still colorful and well cared for. Once again we found it a difficult decision to choose one yard above all others. But we're sure everyone has noticed the home of **Richard and Anne Costello** at **529 Main Street**.

Large ferns in front of the porch make a dark green back drop for red coleus. These are contrasted with yellow marigolds, making a stunning display. The coleus continues to wrap around the side of the house, and by the back door is yet another nice splash of yellow. On the front porch sits a magnificent bright red geranium, three to four feet in diameter. Closer to the street, a lovely circle garden of bright red cock's comb blends into the softer reds of zinnias. Adding height to this circle is a large clay-like container nicely planted with a variety of annuals. All together, the plantings and the well kept house and lawn, help to make Franklin a village to be proud of.

SEPTEMBER:

We have been looking forward to selecting a yard for the month of September. We waited for a hard frost, and were curious to see how the gardeners would cope with the sudden change handed to them by Mother Nature. We watched this month's selection throughout the gardening season, and were impressed each time by the upkeep of the annuals and perennials. By September, the window boxes - even on the upper story - were still alive and thriving, enhancing the beauty of the house. This month, **Shirley Ferguson, at 134 Main Street**, has done a magnificent job of transforming her yard into fun and beauty for the fall season. Mums, flowering kale, hardy annuals, plus the strategic location of scarecrow figures, highlight the flowers and greenery. The eye-catching picket fence at the rear of the house with a skull on each post gets us in the mood for a fun-filled Halloween. Since this yard has kept its beauty for the entire season, we are sure that travellers passing through Franklin have been - and will continue to be - delighted with this lovely and interesting home.

Many times, we have all been advised to 'stop and smell the roses.' As our job of selecting a yard each month comes to an end, we want the residents of our beautiful village to know it was a great pleasure to do just that.
Louise Hebbard
Karen Kemp
May Miller

Some Inconvenient Truths Relating to Peak Oil

Part 1 of 2 Parts

By John O'Connor

Bertolt Brecht's play, *Galileo*, which was presented at the Franklin Stage Company in August, is about the fight for truth and knowledge in a time when established power tries to do everything to prevent people from knowing the truth. In other words, a time much like ours.

So when Gene Marner began to inform us about the issues of Peak Oil, he did the citizens of Franklin a tremendous service. I had honestly not heard much about peak oil before Gene began holding his meetings. My first response to the facts of the end of cheap oil was that this was good news. By some cosmic coincidence, at the very time when we need to curb carbon emissions to avert climate disaster, and in the absence of any political will to deal with the matter, the end of cheap oil will force our hand. Problem solved.

Not so simple, the Peak Oilers remind us. Look around you. The needs of our whole society are organized around the use of petroleum products, from our cars down to our fountain pens and votive candles.

The end of oil (EOO) and climate change are the two great questions of our time. Al Gore, speaking of climate change, coined the phrase, "inconvenient truth" and it seems to apply to EEO at least as much as it does to climate change.

But there are inconvenient truths behind the inconvenient truth, ones that are not talked about much, and they need to be.

One inconvenient truth leads me to quibble with something written in an earlier issue of the New Franklin Register. The piece counsels us that what we need to do is to go back to the way we used to do things. I found that a rather alarming concept. What came before the age of oil? It was the age of coal. Well, anyone thinking seriously about this issue knows that coal is not a solution. It emits a lot of carbon and it is as finite a resource as oil is. (The Franklin of the 19th Century was built in the

age of coal and probably wouldn't have survived otherwise.)

And what came before the age of coal? The age of wood. Now we are back in Galileo's time. The age of wood offered us scarcity, slavery, disease and mass starvation. All that, in a world with a population of about one twelfth of today's count. Going back to the way things were then could mean destroying society as we know it, and most of its people.

I understand that the desire to go back to the way things were is spurred by skepticism about technology. But not all technologies are our enemies. A better bicycle is not contradictory to the solutions we need for an oil-free society. And a better sailing ship could be crucial to the continuance of trade between far-flung countries, for goods that are scarce but necessary to keep their peoples alive.

I would submit that going back to the way things used to be is neither desirable nor possible. We must find solutions that look to the future. We have no other choice. And those solutions will require a lot of new technologies.

Another inconvenient truth is that the solutions we must move toward in order to meet the challenges of the EEO are not possible under our capitalist economic system. Now, before anyone starts saying, "I knew this guy was a Communist," let's think about what capitalism is. It is the economic system by which the profit motive provides for the needs of a society. The greatest defenders of capitalism will tell you that all needs can be fulfilled by the profit motive. But this ideology is seriously challenged by EEO. Capitalism created today's consumer society by exploiting oil while it was still cheap and abundant. Since capitalism is expansionist by nature and since the solutions to EEO will require contraction of consumerism and production and profits, the capitalist system is just not suited for the job.

I don't know exactly what alternative to our present economic system would get us out of the fix we're in, but we need to be talking about it. And we, as citizens, should have

as much to say about it as about any other policy question on the table. Many European countries are in a better position to confront this issue, because many of their economies are already a mixture of socialistic, capitalistic and anarchistic institutions. In a country where the energy industry is nationalized, for instance, the citizens have a much greater say in energy policy decisions than we do in the United States.

What shape will society take, under the new paradigm that will develop in the next few decades in response to peak oil and climate change? It's hard to know for sure. But if we are going to face our inconvenient truths, we must face them with reason and with an open mind, just as Galileo did in his time and Brecht did in his. And we must remember that solutions mean including all people, not just those of us who have benefited financially from the age of oil. We can't leave most of the world behind. The solutions must be bigger than that.

In the next issue of the NFR: The Role of the State



GAS DRILLING REGULATION a report

by Kate Marsiglio

What is there to say about the gas and oil drilling debacle in Upstate New York? This issue has been weighing on me for months now. I lie awake at night and imagine huge trucks driving polluted water past my farm, or the well's compressors running twenty-four hours a day in my neighbor's fields. So, when the opportunity arose to go to a public hearing at City Hall in Manhattan, I decided to haul my family and my concerns to New York City.

The hearing, held by Queens councilman Jim Gennaro, provided a forum for experts, government officials, and any member

of the public to offer testimony on the issue of oil and gas drilling in upstate New York. Primarily the city officials are interested in the NYC watershed and the five counties it lies in. But for me, it was a chance to have my concerns heard by members of our government, individuals who in theory are elected to represent all of us as they make laws.

Here is my report from the hearing:

Gennaro's opening comments asked for a two year moratorium on drilling in the watershed until a more detailed environmental analysis can be done. There is currently an informal moratorium in place. This will end in the spring of 2009.

State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Pete Grannis denied that there was any "emergency" to be addressed and promised not to grant permits for projects posing a threat to the city's watershed. Albany maintains that it will not allow gas companies to endanger New York City's water supply.

The city's Department of Environmental Protection—which did not attend the hearing—has requested a one-mile buffer around the reservoirs but does not oppose fracking altogether.

It's my guess that the state government, represented by Mr. Grannis, wishes to avoid making laws that are unconstitutional. When asked about an outright ban on drilling in the watershed, Mr. Grannis replied that the state government cannot deny private property owners their 'right' to lease their land unless they can prove just cause. What constitutes 'just cause'? Protection of the public health is the government's responsibility. If evidence shows that drilling, especially in the watershed, poses a serious threat to the public's health, the state government could legally ban drilling. James Brennan of our state assembly and members of the state senate are preparing a bill that would place a ban on drilling in the five counties that surround the watershed.

The experts that spoke at the hearing came from as far as Colorado and as close as the town of Liv-

ingston Manor. Scientists and lawyers from a watchdog group called the Oil And Gas Accountability Project testified about the consequences that the individuals in the Midwest have suffered since the oil boom began seven years ago. They reported health complications as common as increased asthma and allergies to more serious life threatening cases of kidney damage, heart conditions, and even premature death. An article in the Albany Times Union July 22 noted: "The U.S. Department of Energy lists produced water from gas drilling as among the most toxic of any oil industry byproduct."

Many of the experts underscored the difficulty of obtaining from gas and oil companies an accurate list of ingredients used for fracking. It is now known that over 100 chemicals, most of them toxic, are added to the two or more million gallons of water that are injected into the ground and return to the surface after breaking up the shale. OGAP reported that they have found over seven hundred incidents of groundwater contamination in New Mexico and over fifteen hundred spills and or releases in Colorado. In Wyoming, when two hundred and twenty private water wells were tested for contaminants, fifty of them were above acceptable limits for drinking water. (To read the complete testimony from OGAP, go to www.ogap.org)

Citizens from Catskill Mountainkeeper, the Delaware Riverkeeper, and Damascus Citizens for Responsible Energy all offered evidence about how our lives will be negatively affected if the Catskills turn into a giant gas field. They mentioned how a flood (like the three we have had in this area in the last ten years) would wreck an oil well and cause a disastrous spill of toxic chemicals. The trucks and other heavy equipment needed to drill and supply a well with the millions of gallons of water, toxic chemicals, and fuel leave behind tons of carcinogens in our air, not to mention the noise and traffic. The testimony quoted an increase in traffic accidents, the destruction of country roads that were never meant to carry thousands of ten-ton trucks, and the loss of local businesses since workers can earn more working long

DRILLING, con't from Pg. 4

shifts for the gas companies. Members of these organizations also noted how this area - these mountains we all live in - are a unique and important place not just to New Yorkers, but for animals, fish and plants as well. We need to be thinking of them as well.

It was good to go and hear others speak the words, "Ban oil and gas drilling in the Catskills." At least I know I am not the only crazy one. A friend recently commented, "We can put people on the moon, you would think that we could drill into the earth without polluting the surface." And I agree - you *would* think so. But up until now, no one, not even our government has held the gas and oil companies accountable for all of the destruction and disease they leave in their wake.

I only hope the people of the Catskills don't turn green with greed when we see dollar signs, forgetting what we love about this place. If we allow the wells onto our land, we will have them in our backyard for twenty to thirty years, and all in order to keep our country in fuel for no more than two years.

Doesn't quite seem worth it.

GAS FROM BLACK SHALE

by Brian Brock

Shale is a rock made from mud that has been buried deep underground and changed by heat and pressure. This rock is so fine grained that you can not see individual mineral grains – not even with a magnifying glass.

The black color come from organic matter. You may have seen thin beds of red shale in our area, although most of the rock is siltstone and sandstone. These were deposited in shallow water that was rich in oxygen, and the red color is from "rusty" minerals. In contrast, black shale was deposited in deeper water that was poor in oxygen. Without oxygen, little lived in the mud to eat the organic matter that drifted down from surface waters. Therefore these organics accumulated in the mud.

Black shales are not common. Fresh samples will burn, and if immersed in water, an oily sheen will float on the surface. In the eastern United States, these shales are found where black muds were deposited hundreds of millions of years ago along the margin of inland seas, which stretched from Texas to Quebec. In Franklin, there are layers of black shale thousands of feet beneath us. Two of these layers that are being explored for profitable supplies of gas are the Utica Shale and the younger and shallower Marcellus Shale.

Natural gas, which is mostly methane, formed here from the breakdown of organic matter during deeper burial and heating to 800 to 950 degrees Fahrenheit some 240 million years ago when the Allegheny Mountains were growing east of where the Hudson River is today. Had the shales remained a bit cooler, oil would have accumulated and been preserved.

Shale is so fine grained that it is impermeable or tight. Therefore the five wells drilled in Franklin since the 1930s did not yield much gas because it could not flow into the hole fast enough. In the last decade, the technique of drilling horizontally within a layer and then fracturing the shale has yielded abundant flows of gas elsewhere. It is this new technology plus the increase in the price of oil and gas that have made the production of gas from black shale profitable.

CARSHARE, continued from Page 1

in a publication that focuses on relocation. Car-sharing is actually a community enhancing service, and is quite different from car rental. Ithaca Carshare serves as part of the transportation system, helping residents find ways to reduce vehicle ownership, and consequently all of the costs associated with owning and maintaining a vehicle. Part of the success of this program is due to the convenience of having a fleet of fuel efficient vehicles available for pick-up at any time without having to go to an office to get the keys or sign paperwork. In addition, for the same low rates, any member can use the fleet's pick-up truck to carry loads of mulch, bring trash to the dump or move furniture.

A study in 2004 by the Transportation Research Board showed that for every car-share vehicle in use, 15 personal cars are taken off the roads. While a small fleet is not going to make a major difference in traffic or fuel consumption, Ithaca Carshare is rapidly growing, and will be able to expand as the demand increases. Any step towards deciding not to buy a new car is a step towards weaning ourselves off oil. A survey of Ithaca Carshare members showed that over half have considered owning one less car. Over two-thirds had either gotten rid of a car already, or were hoping to in the near future, because of this service.

According to Philly-CarShare in Philadelphia, PA, the average car-share member saves \$4,000 each year from the cost of owning, maintaining, filling the gas tank, and paying for personal insurance. Ithaca Carshare members can pay as low as \$4.95 per hour and 20 cents per mile to use any of the vehicles at any time of the day. Gas fill-ups are paid for by those usage rates, as is insurance for members over 21. Members who are 18 through 21 years old can apply with proof of their own insurance, which has lead to an overwhelming response from the college communities around Cornell University and Ithaca College.

As for me, when Ithaca Carshare started, I sold my car immediately. I could have taken the time to calculate how much money I was spending on each aspect of car ownership, but thinking back on just one year of repair costs and \$4 per gallon gas, I knew that it was the right choice. Using car-share vehicles combined with walking, biking, and taking the bus gives me access to anywhere I need to be for a fraction of what it cost me to drive my own car.

To read more about Ithaca Carshare, check out the website at www.IthacaCarshare.org.

Andy Goodell lives in Ithaca, NY. He is the Assistant Director of Ithaca Carshare.

WHAT IS A MORATORIUM, ANYWAY?

By Mary Jo Long, Esq.

Some communities may be considering moratoria on gas drilling, so an understanding of the Moratorium principles and practices is necessary.

A Moratorium is a law passed by a local government, e.g. a Town Board, to temporarily halt a particular kind of land use. For example, when New York Regional Interconnect (NYRI) announced their proposal to build high voltage lines through their towns, many Town Boards in Chenango County voted in Local Laws (moratoria) that temporarily prohibited the construction of high voltage electric transmission lines.

This halting of a particular land use is specifically to provide time to consider impacts and change laws, such as zoning and land use laws. This allows the community to have careful, comprehensive planning, rather than after the fact realizing that there could have been a better way. If the municipal government waits until the changes have happened, its ability to channel and change the project's land use, or health and safety impacts will be too late.

The Moratorium is passed by the Town Board by preparing a Local Law (usually by the Town Attorney) which: (1) says why the activity is being temporarily banned. (For example, if the Town needed time to study, in a careful manner, the proposed activity and

be in a position to adopt a comprehensive local law relating to the proposal.) (2) It must give the effective period for the moratorium to last (which must be a reasonable time frame to conduct the investigation). (3) Moratoria allow consideration of the health, safety and/or general welfare of the community. (One has also been upheld to preserve the town's aesthetic character.) (4) It is also recommended that the local law include a provision dealing with hardship by which the Town Board could vary the application of the Moratorium if they determine there is an unnecessary hardship if the local is strictly applied. (Courts will invalidate a moratorium that does not have a hardship provision. Courts will also invalidate a moratorium if it is solely passed because of public opposition to the project.)

After a proposed law is prepared, there must be notice and a public hearing before the Town can pass the Local Law.

Once the Moratorium is passed, a committee should be set up to conduct the investigations, hold more hearings and any other gathering of needed information. This will allow the community time to consider the impact of the project before it happens.

Mary Jo Long is Chair of the Chenango County Green Party and a member of the Afton Town Board.

Peak Oil Update

by Gene Marner & Brandon Dennis

Oil prices are falling! Do we say hooray? Has Peak Oil peaked? Are our problems over? If only.

Alas, the reality is that, at \$4.00 per gallon, gasoline usage plummeted, the economy slowed, demand fell and oil prices followed. There's more to it, of course. The financial crisis around the world has - probably temporarily - strengthened the dollar. This has also contributed to lower prices. The fundamentals of the oil business remain the same, however, and the world's oil fields continue to deplete more rapidly than new oil is being found.

While falling oil prices obviously feel like a good thing when we fill our gas tanks and pay for heating fuel, other effects that are now not so obvious will cause grave problems just a little further down the road. When oil prices fall,

oil companies stop exploration. They stop building the drilling rigs that are already in short supply and delay the urgently needed repair and upgrading of refineries, pipelines and the rest of our rusting oil infrastructure. To make things worse, lower oil prices remove the incentives for alternative energy projects: many have been put on hold.

At the same time, lower oil prices are also destabilizing the oil-producing countries that rely on oil exports to support the economic aspirations of their people. The globalized oil industry, with its just-on-time deliveries and production that can barely meet demand is vulnerable to disruptions by all sorts of storms - political and economic, as well as meteorological ones. It won't take much to drive prices back up to \$150 a barrel and beyond.

More to come in the next issue.

Local News
Local Events

FRANKLIN LOCAL

Local Issues
Local Concerns

PREMATURELY GREEN - THE HEBBARDS' SOLAR HOUSE

Just over twenty years ago, Rodney and Sally Hebbard built a house.

It is a beautiful house on a hill above Franklin, with gorgeous views all around. They built it themselves, with help from their friends. It is a passive solar house, built over a heat storage mass, the first around here. Recently, Rod's brother Don and his wife Louise have built one, too. There are a few others now, but sadly, too few.

It all started when Rod read an article by Bruce Brownell, who lives in the Adirondacks. He had figured out a way to keep cabins warm while summer residents were away. The Hebbards visited Brownell and picked his brains.

"I thought his heat storage idea was neat," says Rod. This was the late 1970's. The Hebbards were adding a large family room to their house in the village. "It happened to be south facing, so I thought it would be worth a try, so as not to spend money on heat." And, he adds, "I wanted to do something different. Something challenging."

Before this, the Hebbards hadn't done much building. But they had both grown up on farms and had farmed for themselves, so they knew how to use tools. "We built the new room with a heat storage mass underneath, using recycled lumber and Brownell's principles." A fan at the top of the room's cathedral ceiling forced air down through a duct to the mass underneath, where it was warmed and rose again to circulate its warmth in the living space above. "And it worked."

The Hebbards wanted to build a house from scratch, and now they knew it could be, it had to be passive solar. They had no particular time table. They were both working full time, their four children grown, the youngest in college. "We spent a lot of time finding the right location," says Rod. "In earlier times, people in the north always looked for a south facing location. Don't know why anyone gave it up."

The site was a big hill-top meadow with just the right spot for a house facing directly south. The roof overhang was calculated so that in winter the sun would pour in but be

shaded out in summer. "And there were no trees. All the trees here now, we planted," says Sally. "Sometimes in the winter, especially if there's snow, sunlight is our only source of heat."

"We found a design we liked in the literature but then scrapped it," recalls Rod. "It was not going to work. So I made a model with sticks of wood. Trial and error." He had never done any model building either. Sally says, "You could move things around in it and see how everything would relate. Rod is so good at models now - he just built an exquisite barn for our granddaughter - a miniature of our son's barn."

A photo album documents every step of the construction of the house, from close-ups to aerial views taken by their pilot son. One could learn to build this house by studying the album.

In the first summer, the foundation hole was dug and the cinder block foundation walls - 28 ft. x 48 ft. - laid up. The foundation was insulated on the outside with two layers of rigid foam. The surrounding area was backfilled with dirt.

The foundation is divided by a cinderblock wall. Two thirds of it - 28' x 32' -

large central pipe runs the length of that area, ending at an opening in the wall shared with the cellar. This main duct is intersected by smaller pipes that run crosswise and curve up along the outside walls of the foundation. On top of the duct work are another two feet of sand, leaving a two foot crawl space - a cushion of air - between



Vent pipes are laid inside the foundation

the sand and the first floor deck. In all, the Hebbards laid down 100 tons of sand.

By the end of the first summer, the first floor deck and part of its frame were completed, then covered with a tarp for the winter. During that winter, the deck became a carpentry shop. When weather allowed, they worked under the tarp, preparing the

roof is laid on. The rigid foam insulation - two layers thick - is put up, separated from the framing of the interior walls by an air space. This is tricky to do but provides a much tighter house than a flush installation.

The small ducts in the cellar are connected to registers in the floors above. The main duct is connected to a pipe leading to the



peak of the double height living room. Here, a small fan will send warm air through the pipe down to the heat storage. Insulated windows cover almost the entire south wall of this room. The other walls have fewer, smaller windows. By winter there is plumbing and electricity.

Less than two years after they started building, the Hebbards moved in, finishing the house while they lived in it.

"Except for the foundation hole, it was all volunteer labor," says Rod. "And we used all local materials. For the beams and rafters, Jim Sickler cut the logs from his property. Ralph Sitts sawed them up. We had a lot of help."

The house is a delight. Huge windows in the south wall of the living room look over the beautiful Delaware County landscape. A stone-faced masonry stove, built from a kit, rises up between the windows. It took Rod a while to find and place the perfect stones. "For six months, the living room floor was covered with rocks."

The rest of the house is on two levels. On the ground floor are the entry hall, the kitchen, a couple of bedrooms and a bath. At the back, the north side, is a garage. An open stairway in the entry hall leads up to a large den overlooking the living room and the

by Carole Marner

view. Up here are the Hebbards' own bedroom and bathroom.

The temperature is an even 70 degrees everywhere. In the winter, the heat - partly passive solar, partly from a small wood furnace in the cellar - rises from the storage mass, by conduction through the floors and convection through the registers in the walls. In the summer, convection from the same sand mass, unheated, cools the house to about 70 degrees. The humidity is a healthy 50%. There is no dust, no mold. The temperature in the house has never gone below 42 degrees. In winter, the Hebbards can go away, confident that the house will take care of itself.

Standing in the doorway, looking at their landscaped garden and the hills turning colors in the fall, Sally says, "I pinch myself every time I think that we actually did this."

For more information:

Bruce Brownell is a 1964 graduate of the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry in Syracuse. <http://www.esf.edu/success/brownell.htm>

<http://www.aepas-sivesolar.com/index.htm>, <http://www.nesea.org/buildings/images/bruce-brownell.pdf>

MUSEUM, con't from Pg. 1

The museum will also house the extensive railroadiana collection of Mr. Rich, as well as items from other noteworthy contributors. Its admirable research library will be able to assist persons seeking information regarding the railroad history of Delaware County, as well as the state of New York. Railroad's hardware artifacts will also be displayed inside the museum.

The appearance and purpose of the Franklin Railroad & Community Museum is a luxury not afforded to many communities, and certainly Franklin should be pleased to have such a generous facility within the village.

John Taibi is Curator of the Franklin Railroad and Community Museum.

He can be reached in his office at 829-2692 or via e-mail at:

jTaibi@stny.rr.com.



An old fashioned community barn raising...

is heat storage area, six feet deep, with a floor of insulation and plastic sheeting. The other third is a cellar - 28' x 16' by 8' deep - built on a concrete slab.

Next, two feet of sand were laid on the floor insulation in the heat storage area. On top of the sand, a

rough-cut lumber they'd build with in the spring.

Suddenly the photos are filled with smiling people - family, friends, neighbors - swarming over the worksite. It is time for a barn raising. The roof rafters, each 2' by 22', are assembled and lifted up. The

JOY, continued from Page 1

and celebrating children.

Very soon afterward, gleeful chatter descends upon the village of Franklin, and the click of the library door indicates that smiles and giggles are right on the other side.

The Parent/Child Library Program at the Franklin Free Library is not your typical library program. For me, it's never been about getting kids to read books. Children are so wise and perceptive. They know when we're trying to get them to do something. For me, it's always been about bringing joy to the children. Meanwhile, we just *happen* to be doing that in the library (which just *happens* to be full of wonderful books!).

As the children enter the library, their energy is celebratory. They are full of stories and smiles and enthusiastic anticipation for the time we will share together. The sounds of conversation and gentle background music swirl together, adding to the excitement.

And the children just seem to KNOW. They know that when they enter those doors, they can choose to do exactly what their hearts tell them to do. Some go directly to the books, either browsing through them by themselves, or handing them to their parents. Some children head straight for the puzzles, knowing their parent is not far behind. Usually, one particular child heads straight for the bag of musical instruments, knowing that this is how we "officially" begin our time together. She overturns the bag and dumps them all out, claiming her favorite for herself, and saving my favorite for me - it's the claves!

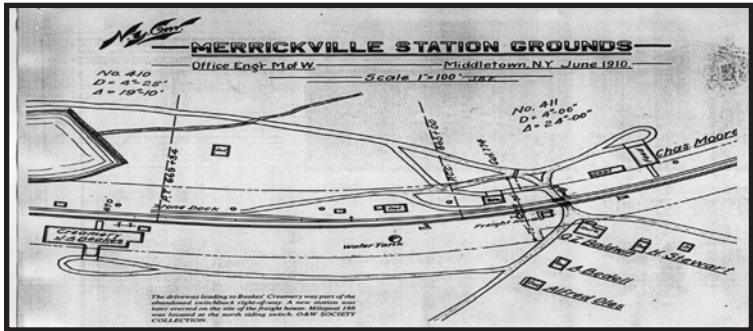
From that point on, our time together is sheer joy. We play our instruments and raise our voices along to the music of Raffi, Skip West, or Dan Zanes. Or we might visit Africa, Spain or Peru with our music. Or perhaps some jazz, or blues today? The adults seem to enjoy this music time as much as the children, as we take the opportunity to get in touch with our own inner child!

After the music, we read thoughtfully selected children's books together, allowing a space for each other's voices to be heard. Children are welcome to interject and share their thoughts, feelings and stories that are inspired by the books. And the adults know that this is exactly how we honor and celebrate the children, not only by truly *hearing* them, but by seeing the world through their eyes and allowing their perspective to enlighten and expand our own.

Next, it's onto the day's art project. It's a gift to witness the free and brilliant creativity of the children's minds each week. I furnish the materials. I show them what *I* did with the materials. And then the children usually come up with something completely different, something stemming from the depths of their *own* hearts and ideas and inspiration. Which is as it should be.

A snapshot taken at any moment of this library program would convey the true meaning of the word community. Children and adults of all ages are interacting joyfully, but also caring for each other. Parents are using the time to connect with other parents, but are always aware that the best part of this program is a deep connection with their own child, rooted in the absolute best place in the universe: their child's joy.

If you are interested in joining us on **Mondays at the Library**, it is important to call and register, as space and materials are, sadly, not unlimited! Call me, **Anne Ohman**, at **829-5818** and leave your name, children's names and ages, and your phone number, so I can get back to you and let you know if space is available.



Jake and Griffin reading

NORTHFIELD, continued from Page 1

In November of 1879, the Midland Railroad Company was sold under bankruptcy for \$4.6 million and conveyed to New York, Ontario & Western Railway Company in January of 1880.

To accommodate the longer and heavier coal trains, a lower and straighter grade was built by tunneling beneath the pass, thus lowering the crest by 90 feet. This new route is two miles shorter. The tunnel is 1636 feet long, long enough that crew and passengers alike suffered from the black, sulphurous smoke from the engine. Originally it was 14 feet wide and 16.5 feet height, a standard size for the time. In Franklin, this tunnel is known as the Merrickville Tunnel because the Merrickville Station was the closest station on our side of the mountain.

Over a quarter million cubic yards of spoils were excavated. Approaches to the tunnel could be dug using a steam shovel, but the tunnel had to be dug by hand, using picks and shovels, and spoils were hauled out on stone boats pulled by mules. Pay for laborers was 85 cents a day. Finished in two years by June of 1891 at a cost of \$282,500, it was at first called the Zig Zag Tunnel after the switchbacks it replaced.

Tunnels are difficult and expensive to build and maintain. On this route,

there were only three other tunnels: at Hawk Mountain in Delaware County and at South Fallsberg and High View in Sullivan County.

In the decades after the tunnel was finished, the line profited by hauling Catskill freight year round: exporting milk and importing coal. In summer, more passenger trains were added to carry tourists. The O&W even published its own tourist magazine.

The Northfield Tunnel is only 75 feet underground, but groundwater was a constant problem, probably because spurs of the mountain rise over 300 feet above the pass and funnel water down to the pass. In winter, ice on the tracks and falling from the ceiling and walls was a hazard. For a time, a boiler outside the south portal supplied hot water to melt the ice inside.

Falling rocks were also a hazard to trains. Employees walked the tunnel before each train to check for debris. To stabilize the bore, the tunnel was partially lined with bricks. Water from springs and exhaust from coal-burning engines attacked these bricks. In February of 1923, a cave-in blocked the tunnel. One hundred and forty tons of rock were cleared by hand in only eight hours. Subsequently in 1926, the tunnel was enlarged by two feet all around and lined with steel. Soon rust began to

eat into the steel. In 1955, this steel was replaced with reinforced concrete, reducing width to 15.5 feet. This finally stabilized the bore of the tunnel. In the bore, stone can still be seen in the backs of the many safety niches. Unfortunately concrete has replaced the original stonework of the portals.

Replacement of coal by fuel oil and Great Depression reduced freight traffic and forced this railroad into receivership. Prodigious freight shipments during World War II brought a brief return to profitability, but the drop in freight traffic after the war and the construction of the interstate highway system doomed the railroad.

The O&W Railroad (known by then as "old and weary") went bankrupt for the final time in March of 1957. It was the first major railroad in the United States to be abandoned, but in less than twenty years, all the other lines were merged into Conrail or abandoned. The iron rails were pulled up and sold for scrap. Some of the wood ties are scattered about, and in places you can find pieces of coal.

Today there is the start of a resurgence of railroads as a more energy efficient mode of freight transportation – perhaps heralding the return of good old days of passengers service.



Intrepid explorers approach the north mouth of the Merrickville Tunnel

FREE BROCHURES!!

Students in Grades 3-6 at Franklin Central School have created nine free brochures illustrating aspects of the Village of Franklin's history. Their reference materials included newspaper articles, Pearl Whigham scrapbooks, Ouleout Historical Society records, Village and Town minutes and information from the Franklin Free Library, illustrated with images from our village past.

Pick them up at Dawn's Deli - donations to finance further printings are welcome.

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Available at Dawn's Deli in Franklin.

LIST YOUR PRODUCTS WITH THE NEW FRANKLIN REGISTER!

MAILBOX, continued from Page 2

To the Editors:

Hi there. First let me congratulate you on "The New Franklin Register"--it's a neat paper, with a message and a vision. I discovered a copy at the Cornell Cooperative office in Hamden. Their offices are just below ours: The Arc of Delaware County. A number of the people we serve live in the greater Franklin area, so the calendar on the back is a good source of community activities.

My responsibility at The Arc is finding our participants activities, paid work and volunteerism ideally in their local community. How can I make sure I get a copy of The Register early each month? Secondly, I live in New Kingston, recently honored and listed on both the New York State and the National Registry of Historic Places. The Hamlet dates back to before 1800, and has just a Post Office, about 25 historic homes on Main Street (Cty Rte. 6) and a large number of homes, and farms scattered throughout New Kingston Valley. We currently

have a group called The New Kingston Valley Association. While it's inactive for now, it's still a legal 501c non-profit entity. As a result of the recent state/federal recognition, we are planning to bring the Association back to life so that it can serve as both a springboard for community inclusion and a source for community assistance, education, development and fun. One of the reasons we are here is for the peace and quiet, so we are not looking to build a commercial presence. We have no local government and are part of Middletown, just 5 miles from Margaretville and Bovina. Both groups: The Franklin Citizens' Commission on Peak Oil and The Franklin Improvement Society, while separate, seem to have some common goals. Of course, Franklin has a much greater commercial/ community base...library, government, businesses, etc. What we're looking for is any suggestions, copies of by-laws, mission statements, etc. that can

List your products with us!

The New Franklin Register is adding a new feature: a regular listing of local produce and products for sale in our community.

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Let us know who you are! Sign up with us now, using the form below.

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NYRI's Proposed Route Thru Franklin

by Brian Brock

New York Regional Interconnect wants to build a second high-voltage power line which runs 184 miles from Marcy in Oneida County to Hamptonburgh in Orange County and would carry 1200 megawatts of electrical power at 400 kV DC.

The first line, Marcy South, crosses north/south through center of Delaware County and Franklin Town. The initial proposed route of the second line crosses the western edge of Delaware County. This route ran into a tide of local opposition. The Public Service Commission required

NYRI to propose an alternate route along Marcy South. Such a power line requires a corridor 150 feet wide. Where the two lines are adjacent, 50 feet could come from the existing right-of-way and therefore NYRI would have to purchase an additional 100 feet.

Through Franklin, the two lines would be adjacent except where they cross the Ouleout flood plane. To thread the second line between existing structures, the second line would swing westward at most 2000 feet, crossing Rt. 357 west of the intersection with Chamberlain Hill Road. The choice of which of the two routes and the exact course of the final route will not be finalized until fall of next year.

Maps and air photos are available on nyri.us, and comments can be made on dsp.state.ny.us.

help guide us in New Kingston. We are planning an open-to-all Valley wide meeting in late May, early June, seeking the input of all that wish to attend, discuss the Assoc. and it's "rebirth", some goals, ideals, etc.---even elect officers of the Assoc. so we can begin to create some structure to the group again. Any thoughts, information, guidance, etc. would be appreciated very much. I can be reached via phone, email or can mail me at: Steve Finkel, c/o The Arc of Delaware County, 34570 State Route 10, Walton, NY 13856.

Thanks in advance for any help and input.

Steve Finkel
Developing Community

Opportunities: The Arc of Delaware County
Ph: (607) 865-7126 Fax: (607) 865-7129

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IN FRANKLIN: NOVEMBER:

1 st Sat.	4to7	Chicken Barbeque Dinner \$8.5/\$5	Aldrich Baptist Church
2 nd Sun.	2:00a	Day Light Savings Time Ends	
	3to5	Opening: Photo Falling Word (J.D.Morton)	Bright Hill
	7:30	Franklin Explorers	
3 rd Mon.	7:00	Franklin Fire Department	Franklin Firehouse
	8:00	Treadwell Fire Department	Treadwell Firehouse
4 th Tues.		ELECTION DAY	
	7:30	Recreation Committee	Village Hall
5 th Wed.	7:30	Treadwell Explorers	
6 th Thurs.	7:30	Franklin Planning Board	Town Garage
7 th Fri.	2:15	Cybermobile	Treadwell
	7:00	Franklin Town Budget	Town Garage
	7:30	Franklin Town Board	Town Garage
8 th Sun.	7:30	High School Musical	Franklin Central School
10 th Mon.	7:30a	Veterans' Day Breakfast	Franklin Central School
	8:30a	Veterans' Day Program	Franklin Central School
	7:00	Franklin Village Board	Village Board
	7:30	Washington Reading Circle	
11 th Tues.		VETERANS' DAY	

To have your event listed, contact Brian Brock at this newspaper or at 607-829-3202

	7:00	Tredwell Community Improvement Society	
12 th Wed.	7:00	Doodlebug Club	Ogden's
	8:00	Treadwell Emergency Squad	Treadwell Firerhouse
13 th Thurs	6:00	Franklin Town Court	Town Hall
	6:00	Franklin Local	
	7:00	Word Thursday (Alan Catlin) \$3	Bright Hill
14 th Fri.	11to7	Corned Beef and Cabbage	Dawn's Deli
15 th Sat.	6:53a	Opening Deer Hunting with Rifle	
	4to7	Chicken and Biscuit Dinner	Franklin Firehouse
17 th Mon.	7:00	Franklin Emergency Squad	Franklin Firehouse
	7:00	Franklin Improvement Society	Village Hall
18th Tues	7:00	Lewis Hines presentation	Franklin Free Library
20 th Thurs.	3:15	Did They Really Eat Turkey?	Franklin Free Library
	6:00	Ouleout Valley Historical Society	Town Garage
	7:30	Board of Education	Franklin Central School
	7:30	Binghamton Comm. Orchestra	Franklin Central School
24 th Mon.	6:00	Ouleout Valley American Legion	Post 1689
	7:30	Washington Reading Circle	
25 th Tues.	7:30	Treadwell Fire Department Auxiliary	Treadwell Firehouse
26 th Wed.	6:00	Greater Franklin Chamber of Commerce	Dawn's Deli
27 th Thurs.		THANKSGIVING	