

# NEW BALTIMORE NEWS

Volume 3 Issue No. 4

October—December 2007

## 2008 Budget Adopted by Town Board

The New Baltimore Town Board has adopted the 2008 Budget, which calls for an increase of 1.39% in the town-wide tax rate. The proposed town-wide tax rate of \$4.958 per \$1,000 assessed valuation includes funding for the General Fund and the Highway Fund. In addition to these town-wide taxes, the Town property tax rate will include a chargeback from Greene County for the cost of sending New Baltimore residents to community colleges other than Columbia-Greene Community College. Unfortunately, this Greene County Chargeback, over which the Town has no control, will be increasing significantly for the 2008 tax levy. The tax rate for these chargebacks will be \$0.376 per \$1,000 assessed valuation, an increase of \$0.173 per \$1,000 assessed valuation above the 2007 tax rate. The owner of a home assessed at \$100,000 will see an increase in their taxes from the adoption of the 2008 budget of less than \$7, while the increase in the Greene County Chargeback included in the town tax bill will be over \$17.

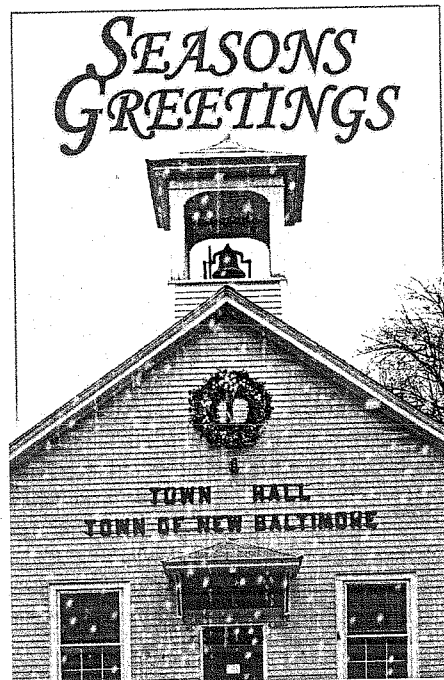
In addition to these taxes, the January, 2008 tax bill will include property taxes levied for Greene County services. The County budget is expected to include a tax increase, but as of this writing, the total increase is not available. The tax bill issued in January, 2008 will also taxes levied for Special Districts in the Town of New Baltimore. All New Baltimore property owners will pay taxes for their fire and ambulance district. In the New Baltimore Fire District, which serves the eastern part of the Town of New Baltimore, the fire district tax rate will increase from \$2.39 per \$1,000 assessed valuation to \$2.48 per \$1,000 assessed valuation. The ambulance tax (which includes paramedic services) will remain about the same at \$0.157 per \$1,000 assessed valuation. In the

## Year End Message from Supervisor Louis

On behalf of the Town Board, I want to wish all New Baltimore residents a peaceful and safe holiday season. 2007 will soon be coming to an end, and there is much for us all to be excited about in the Town. In January, a new Town Board will be taking office. The voters have elected Art Byas and Chris Norris to join Arlene McKeon, Kevin Kuenster and myself. I am currently working with my colleagues to provide a meaningful and productive orientation to Art and Chris so that they will be ready to hit the ground running when they begin their terms. Congratulations are to be extended to Art and Chris on their election and I look forward to working with them to continue our progress on the Town Board in meeting the needs of our residents.

Over the past four years, Councilman Richard Guthrie has served on our Town Board with diligence, dedication and enthusiasm. He has been and continues to be a valuable asset to our town, and on behalf of our colleagues and residents, I thank Rich for his service to the Town, and wish him well in his future pursuits. On the same note, Councilwoman Lisa Benway will be leaving the Town Board after two years of distinguished service. She has contributed her knowledge and experience to many facets of Town government. Many thanks to Lisa for her work and best wishes for her future.

I know that 2008 will bring its share of opportunities and challenges for our town and our Town Board. Working together with the invaluable input of our residents, I am fully confident that 2008 will bring new achievements and accomplishments for our town.



*Town Hall in holiday garb with a wreath donated by James Matera*

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# Community News and Issues

Medway-Grapeville Fire District, which serves the western part of the Town of New Baltimore, the Board of Fire Commissioners have approved a budget for 2008 that will increase the fire district tax rate from \$1.58 per \$1,000 assessed valuation to \$2.105 per \$1,000 assessed valuation. The ambulance tax (which includes paramedic services) will remain about the same at \$0.072 per \$1,000 assessed valuation.

There are a few other special districts in the town with taxing jurisdiction over a smaller number of taxpayers. In the hamlet area, the Lighting District tax will increase from \$0.374 per \$1,000 assessed valuation to \$0.394 per \$1,000 assessed valuation. Water District Number 1, which provides funding for fire hydrants on the northern section of Route 9W will see no change in taxes.

The annual user fees for the New Baltimore Sewer District in the hamlet of New Baltimore will increase from \$532.99 to \$585.70 for a one family home. For a complete listing of all estimated 2008 tax changes for town taxing jurisdictions, please refer to **TABLE 1- 2008 TOWN BUDGET - ESTIMATED TAX RATES AND CHANGE FROM 2007.**

A summary of the 2008 Town Budget is presented in **TABLE 2.** Total expenditures for the General and Highway Funds (excluding interfund transfers) are budgeted at \$1,465,303 of which \$890,853 is budgeted for the Highway Fund (61%), and \$574,450 is budgeted for the General Fund (39%). The largest spending item is personal services in the amount of \$583,950 (40% of total budget), which includes

salaries and wages for the Highway Department employees (\$276,000) and other town employees paid from the General Fund (\$307,950). The employees paid out of the General Fund include the Town Highway Superintendent, Town Clerk, Justice Court Clerk, Assessor, Assessor's Clerk, Planning and Zoning Clerk, Deputy Justice Court Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk, other Elected Officials (Town Supervisor, Town Board, Town Justices, Tax Collector) and other appointed boards and officials (Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Building Inspector, Code Enforcement Officers, Animal Control Officer, Town Historian, Recycling Station Operator, Parks Program Director and staff). For 2008, overall salaries will be increased by \$29,127. Of this amount, \$5,200 is going towards an

**Table 1: 2008 Town Budget—Estimated Tax Rates and Change from 2007**

|                                     | Tax Rate per \$1000<br>(Assessed Value for<br>2008) | Change (per \$1000<br>assessed) | Percent Change | Est. Tax Change for<br>Home Assessed at<br>\$100,000 |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|----------------|--|
| <u>Town-Wide Funds</u>              |   |                                 |                |  |
| General Fund                        | \$1.632   | 0.006                           |                |  |
| Highway Fund                        | \$3.325   | 0.062                           |                |  |
| Total for Town-Wide Funds           | \$4.958   | 0.068                           | 1.39%          | \$6.78   |
| County Chargebacks                  | \$0.376   | 0.173                           | 85.71%         | \$17.33  |
| Town Tax Total                      | \$5.334   | 0.241                           | 4.73%          | \$24.11  |
| <u>Fire and Ambulance Districts</u> |   |                                 |                |  |
| New Baltimore Fire District         | \$2.489   | 0.103                           | 4.29%          | \$10.25  |
| Ambulance District #1               | \$0.157 *   | -0.002                          | -1.23%         | -\$0.20 *  |
| Medway-Grapeville Fire District     | \$2.105   | 0.525                           | 33.24%         | \$52.51  |
| Ambulance District #2               | \$0.072   | -0.001                          | -1.30%         | -\$0.09  |
| <u>Other Special Districts</u>      |   |                                 |                |  |
| Lighting District (Hamlet Area)     | \$0.394   | 0.020                           | 5.43%          | \$2.03   |
| Water District #1 (9W Hydrants)     | \$0.080   | 0.000                           | 0.00%          | \$0.00   |
| Sewer District (Hamlet Area)        | \$585.70<br>(annual fee)                            | \$52.71<br>(annual change)      | 9.89%          | \$52.71<br>(1 family home)                           |

Table 2: Town Budget Details for 2008

|   | Adopted Budget<br>for 2008 | Change from<br>2007 |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Expenditures:</b>                                |                            |                     |
| <u>Description</u>                                  |                            |                     |
| Personal Services—General Fund                      | 307,950                    | 20,627              |
| Personal Services—Highway Fund                      | 276,000                    | 8,500               |
| Subtotal: Personal Services                         | 583,950                    | 29,127              |
| Benefits (Highway and General)                      | 216,200                    | 16,200              |
| Highway Improvement and Repair                      | 258,000                    | 23,000              |
| Debt Services (Highway and General)                 | 103,603                    | (587)               |
| Centralized Services (General)                      | 83,150                     | 1,575               |
| Machinery (Highway)                                 | 71,000                     | 3,000               |
| Snow Removal/Road Maintenance                       | 59,000                     | 0                   |
| Departmental Non Personal Service                   | 31,800                     | 200                 |
| Professional Services                               | 18,000                     | 0                   |
| Programs  | 20,600                     | 400                 |
| Transfer to Highway Equipment Reserve               | 15,000                     | 0                   |
| Contingency   | 5,000                      | 0                   |
| <b>Total Appropriated Expenses</b>                  | <b>1,465,303</b>           | <b>72,915</b>       |
| <b>Revenues</b>                                     |                            |                     |
| Property Taxes                                      | 985,933                    | 23,997              |
| Payments in lieu of Taxes                           | 46,870                     | (232)               |
| State and County Aid                                | 105,700                    | 4,350               |
| Justice Court Fines Revenue                         | 95,000                     | 10,000              |
| Uncollected Fine Revenue                            | 15,000                     | 15,000              |
| Mortgage Tax Receipts                               | 45,000                     | 0                   |
| Permits and Fees                                    | 31,300                     | 1,800               |
| Interest Income and Penalty Revenue                 | 37,500                     | 5000                |
| Fund Transfers (Bond Interest to Highway)           | 13,000                     | 13,000              |
| <b>Total Revenues</b>                               | <b>1,375,303</b>           | <b>72,915</b>       |
| Appropriated Fund Balance                           | 90,000                     | 0                   |
| <b>Total Revenues and Appropriated Fund Balance</b> | <b>1,465,303</b>           | <b>72,915</b>       |

increase in part time staffing in the Justice Court to handle an increase in workload, \$3,750 is going towards an increase in clerical support at the Town Hall for the Town Clerk's Office and Building Department, \$4,805 is going towards an increase in salaries for elected officials (Supervisor, Town Board, Town Clerk, Town Justices, Highway Superintendent, Tax Collector), \$8,500 is going towards an increase in the hourly wages paid for Highway Department employees, and the balance of \$6,872 is going towards cost of living increases for other town employees.

The 2008 budget for benefits will be \$216,200, which is an increase of \$16,200 above the amount budgeted for 2007. Benefits include health insurance for full time employees (including Highway Superintendent, Highway employees, Town Clerk and Justice Clerks) and retirees; the Town's mandated contribution to the State Retirement System, the employer's share of Social Security and Medicare, and Workers' Compensation and Disability Insurance.

The 2008 Budget for Highway Improvements and Repairs will be \$258,000, which includes the cost of all paving materials, and this is being increased by \$23,000 over the amount budgeted for 2007 to address escalating fuel and material costs which have significantly increased the price of paving materials. The Debt Service budget (\$103,603) includes the annual repayment of the five year, \$385,000 bond issue for road reconstruction and bonds issued for highway equipment. Centralized Services includes all insurance on town buildings and Highway Department vehicles and equipment, the cost of maintaining the Town Hall and Highway Garage, printing expenses including the cost of publishing and mailing the Town Newsletter, and other miscellaneous expenses, such as replacement of stolen road signs, disposal of recycled tires, dues to municipal organizations, educational seminars and technology.

The 2008 budget includes \$71,000 for the operation and maintenance of vehicles and equipment used by the Highway Department, primarily used for fuel and parts. Much of the actual upkeep of Highway Department equipment is done in-house by the Highway Superintendent and Highway Department employees, yielding significant savings to the Town. The amount budgeted for Snow Removal and Other Road Maintenance (\$59,000) includes road salt and sand used during winters. The amount budgeted for Departmental Non Personal Service (\$31,800) for 2008 includes the costs in-

*Continued page 9*

# Town Board

## News and Issues

### Town Board Report

The Town Board has met in regular monthly meetings held on September 10<sup>th</sup>, October 8<sup>th</sup> and November 12<sup>th</sup>. A Special Town Board Meeting was held for the presentation of the Tentative 2008 Budget on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Work meetings were held on August 27<sup>th</sup>, September 24<sup>th</sup>, October 22<sup>nd</sup> and November 26<sup>th</sup>.

Here is a summary of the actions taken at these meetings:

#### September 10<sup>th</sup>

- Following a Public Hearing, the Town Board adopted Local Law 6 of 2007 which made technical corrections to Local Law 3 of 2007 regarding the review and approval of Special Use Permits.
- Following a Public Hearing, the Town Board adopted Local Law 7 of 2007 which requires dog owners to remove any feces left in any town park or on any street or public area.
- The Town Board was advised by the Attorney for the Town that a lawsuit had been commenced by the owners of the Boat NRV Warehouse against the Town Planning Board in Federal Court. The Town's insurance company is providing for the legal defense.
- The Town Board adopted a Resolution to establish the position of Justice Clerk as an exempt title under civil service rules. This action was necessitated by a directive issued by the Greene County Civil Service Commission.
- Supervisor Louis reported to the Town Board that the Supervisor of the Town of Coxsackie had sent correspondence informing the Town that the Town of Coxsackie Ambulance Service would be seeking a Certificate of Need to continue its service, previously provided by its predecessor, the Coxsackie Rescue Squad, to New Baltimore Ambulance District No. 2 (same boundaries as Medway-Grapeville Fire District).
- The Town Board authorized the settlement of assessment litigation brought against the Town by Verizon New York. The assessment settlement will result in

a minor reduction in the tax base, and the settlement amount is significantly less than what was demanded in the original litigation.

- The Town Board re-appointed Jack Ablett to the Board of Assessment Review.

#### October 1<sup>st</sup>

- The Town Board met in a Special Meeting to receive the presentation of the Tentative Town Budget for 2008 from Supervisor Louis.

#### October 8<sup>th</sup>

- Following a Public Hearing, the Town Board adopted Local Law 8 of 2007 to establish the position of Deputy Justice Clerk as an exempt title under civil service rules. This action was necessitated by a directive issued by the Greene County Civil Service Commission.
- The Town Board adopted a policy for the overnight use of Town Parks to restrict such usage to community groups with membership of 20 or more, subject to the prior approval of the Town Board.
- Supervisor Louis reported to the Town Board regarding complaints of excess and non-permitted signage at a New Baltimore business located on Route 9W, and indicated that a review of the situation would take place by the Code Enforcement Officer and himself.
- The Town Board appointed Marie Corrado to a vacancy on the Zoning Board of Appeals, and appointed Meave Tooher as the Chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals.
- The Town Board authorized the Town Clerk to hire two town residents as temporary employees to assist in a records management project for which funding had been provided in the 2007 Town Budget.
- The Town Board adopted a Resolution to express its continuing support for the current system of local courts in each Town and opposing efforts to require that Town Justices be lawyers.
- The Town Board authorized the Planning Board to require a current applicant for Site Plan Review and Special Use

Permit to deposit funds into escrow for an independent engineering review of the applicant's plans in accordance with the Town Zoning Code.

- The Town Board approved of minor changes to the Supervisor's Tentative Budget for 2008 and adopted these changes as the Preliminary 2008 Budget, calling for a tax levy increase in the General and Highway Funds of 1.39%, a reduction from the Supervisor's proposed increase of 1.99%.

#### October 22<sup>nd</sup>

- Prior to the Work Meeting, the Town Board held a Public Hearing on the Preliminary 2008 Town Budget.

#### November 12<sup>th</sup>

- Prior to the Town Board Meeting, the Town Board held a Public Hearing on proposed Local Law 9 of 2007 to provide for a one time user fee levy to the owners of property in New Baltimore Water District 4 to repay funds advanced by the General Fund. This levy is necessitated by the following expenses that were incurred by the General Fund on behalf of New Baltimore Water District 4: \$5,500 in legal fees to arrange for the financing of the zero interest loan for the Water District; \$8,779 for legal fees incurred in defending the Town from a lawsuit that was filed against the Town challenging the legality of the formation of the Water District (the legal fees pertained to the appeal of the Supreme Court decision in favor of the Town, as the original legal fees incurred in the Supreme Court case were paid by the parties who sued the Town); \$1,500 for engineering costs incurred to re-estimate the project cost in 2006; \$747 for expenses incurred in conjunction with the referendum to authorize an increase in the maximum cost of the Water District held in November, 2006. The total amount per one family household to be levied for the repayment of these expenses will be \$98.48 and are proposed to be collected along with the February, 2008 Sewer Use Fee. The Public Hearing was adjourned to

## New Baltimore Farmers' Market Customer Survey

A farmers' market is being proposed for New Baltimore. We are trying to assess the level of interest of customers in the community. Answering these questions will help build a desirable market.

Yes, I am interested in a farmers' market in New Baltimore.

1. Have you ever shopped at a farmers' market before?    Yes    No

2. If local farmers' offered their agricultural products at a neighborhood farmers' market would you shop for your produce there?  
\_\_\_ definitely    -- \_\_\_ occasionally    \_\_\_ seldom    \_\_\_ not interested

3. What types of products would you like to have offered at a farmers' market?

☐ Fresh, local vegetables

☐ Fresh cut flowers

☐ NYS Wines

☐ Fresh, local fruits

☐ Fresh herbs

☐ Homemade jams & jellies

☐ Eggs

☐ Meats

Ethnic Food (*list*) \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Cheese

☐ Organic produce

☐ Maple Syrup

☐ Crafts

Other (*list*) \_\_\_\_\_

4. What days of the week would be most convenient for you to shop?    M    Tu    W    Th    F    Sa    Su

5. The best time of day for a market is:    \_\_\_ morning    -- \_\_\_ afternoon    \_\_\_ morning & afternoon    \_\_\_ evening

6. What amenities would you like to have available at the farmers' market?

☐ Protection for the elements

☐ Lunch or snack vendor

☐ Restroom facilities

☐ Picnic tables

Other (*list*) \_\_\_\_\_

7. How would you like to be informed about the farmers' market once it is established?

☐ Newspaper

☐ Direct Mail

☐ Television

☐ Doesn't matter

☐ Radio

☐ Other (*list*) \_\_\_\_\_

8. Including yourself, how many people live in your household?

9. How many children are living in your home?

10. What is the age range of the main food shopper in your home?    20s    30s    40s    50s    60+    retired

11. Do you have any suggestions for the committee planning the new farmers' market?

12. Are you interested in participating in either of the following ways?

\_\_\_ farmers market committee

\_\_\_ volunteering to assist with market functions

Thank you! The information you provided will be used to best develop the farmers' market. If you would like to be contacted to assist with the market, please provide the following:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

The Town of New Baltimore Agricultural Committee is planning a farmers' market for 2008. In response to growing interest in preserving open space and our agricultural heritage the outdoor farmers' market would provide local farmers and residents with an opportunity to connect, exchange goods, and strengthen the community as a whole.

The farmers' market will provide a gathering place where you can meet your neighbors, shop for local goods, and enjoy a leisurely summer day in the country. Or when you are pressed for time, the convenient location will allow you to quickly grab a dozen eggs and go. Weekly market patrons will reap the benefits of a wide variety of fresh, seasonal, locally-grown produce. Special events could include music, children's events, guest chefs, and more.

The possibilities for a farmers' market in our town are limited only by the communities' involvement. Please complete the enclosed farmers' or customers' survey. Your input is valuable to us.

**Make the commitment to support local farms. It is a sound investment in your health and your community.**

.....*fold*.....

*Return Address*

Place  
Stamp  
Here

New Baltimore Town Hall  
3809 Route 51  
Hannacroix, NY 12087

.....*fold*.....

**Residents,**

**Your completed survey may also be dropped off at the New Baltimore Post Office in the Hamlet.  
There will be a marked mailbox outside the building in the parking lot.**

**In addition, completed surveys can also be hand delivered to the Town Hall.**

**Thank you,**

*Tape shut*

December 10, 2007.

- The Town Board adopted the 2008 Town Budget, making no changes to the Preliminary Budget calling for a 1.39% tax increase in town-wide funds.

- Supervisor Louis presented a proposal for a new Local Law 10 to provide for a real property tax exemption for veterans who served in the armed forces between 1945 and 1991 who had previously not qualified for tax exemptions; this local law is being adopted pursuant to new state legislation signed into law earlier this year.

- Supervisor Louis presented a proposal for a new Local Law 11 to provide for a change in the Sewer Use Fee for the Sewer District for 2008. The Sewer Use Fee for a one family home in the hamlet of New Baltimore will be increased from \$532.99 to \$585.70. This increase is necessitated by an increase in operating expenses and a need to put additional funds into reserve for the repair and replacement of equipment serving the Wastewater Treatment Plant. A public hearing was scheduled for December 10<sup>th</sup> regarding this proposed local law.

- The Town Board authorized the expenditure of \$849 for an ultraviolet disinfection system to be installed at the Town Hall to address current water contamination issues there.

- The Town Board authorized the Highway Superintendent to bid up to \$2,500 for used highway equipment at an upcoming NYS Thruway Authority auction. It was estimated that the items to be purchased at this auction could be acquired at one-third of the cost of purchasing these items new.

- Supervisor Louis reported to the Town Board regarding complaints received about excessive speed on town and state highways, and his efforts to contact the State Police, County Sheriff and Department of Transportation to address these complaints by increasing the frequency of speed patrols and conducting a traffic safety study on State Route 144.

- The Town Board authorized the expenditure of \$4,752 from the Capital Reserve Fund for Sewer Repairs for the repair of equipment at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

## **November 26th**

- Following a Public Hearing at which no comments were offered, the Town Board adopted Local Law 10 to provide for a real property tax exemption for veterans who served in the armed forces between 1945 and 1991 who had previously not qualified for tax exemptions; this local law is being adopted pursuant to new state legislation signed into law earlier this year.

- Christopher Kemnah, representing the Town of New Baltimore Agriculture Committee, provided a briefing to the Town Board regarding the Agriculture Committee's proposal to commence a weekly farm market beginning in June, 2008 at Wyche Park on New Baltimore Road. The Agriculture Committee will be providing the Town with an application for the use of the park and proof of insurance to operate the farm market. It is anticipated that many vendors will participate in the farm market, offering a wide variety of locally grown produce and meats, locally produced food items and crafts. An aggressive marketing and publicity campaign to be undertaken by the Agriculture Committee will precede the opening of the farm market.

## **Planning Board Report**

### **September 13th**

- Began discussion with William Brandt on his special use permit application and continued site plan application discussion for his proposed assisted living facility to be built on his property on Route 9W

- Continued discussion with Dr. Marvin Gertzberg and his engineer regarding the dentist office he plans to construct on his recently purchased land on Route 9W

- Discussed with a town resident whether it would be possible or not to subdivide her property.

### **October 11th**

- Continued Site Plan and Special Use Permit discussion with Bill Brandt for his proposed assisted living facility

- Received Minor Subdivision Application from Ralph & Deborah Collins for the two-lot subdivision of their property located on High Mount and School Hill

Roads. Required Public Hearing was scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on November 8

## **November 8th**

- Public hearing was held on the minor subdivision application of Ralph & Deborah Collins.

In the regular monthly meeting:

- The Collins minor subdivision was approved

- Discussions were held with Paul Schiller on the renewal of his Site Plan for the proposed Log Cabin Sales Center, which is in the process of being constructed on his property facing the NYS Thruway. The Board granted a one-year renewal of the Site Plan.

- The Board held initial minor subdivision discussion with a Town resident.

## **Zoning Board of Appeals Report**

The Zoning Board of Appeals did not meet during September, October and November since there were no applications to come before the Board.

## **Assessor Report**

### **September 2007**

Middle Class Star Rebate 2007 - Seniors received their rebate checks. The fastest way to receive a rebate check is to apply online to [www.tax.state.ny.us](http://www.tax.state.ny.us), the NYS Department of Tax & Finance Home Page, and click on the 2007 Middle Class Star link.

School rates 2007: Check the town website for school rate information at [www.townofnewbaltimore.org](http://www.townofnewbaltimore.org) and click on the tax and budget link. Continuing education:

### **October 2007**

Senior star enhanced renewals--Those enrolled in the program will be receiving their renewal forms to be returned by March 1, 2008.

### **November 2007.**

Deadline has been extended to December 31 2007 for Middle Class Star Recipients to file for their refunds. Visit the New York State Department of Tax & Finance home page at [www.tax.state.ny.us](http://www.tax.state.ny.us) to download forms for filing. Refund applications must be postmarked by December 31<sup>st</sup>. Don Doust will be collecting data for the month of December.

# Historical Notes

## 1929 Fire

What many would consider the worst fire in New Baltimore's history came suddenly in the early hours of May 14, 1929. It destroyed all the buildings on the east side of Main Street from the Sherman house (still standing) at the Washington Avenue intersection all the way to the Cornell Hall Park.

Jennie Miller discovered the well-underway blaze between her family's store and Herman Schillenger's Imperial Hotel. It may have started in the latter's garage. Miller's husband, Lewis, quickly scrambled to ring the Cornell Hook and Ladder Company alarm system, a sledge hammer and a locomotive wheel. The fire company was headquartered at Cornell Hall just across the street from the Miller place. Coxsackie, Coeymans, Ravena, and Selkirk companies soon joined the effort and fought valiantly as dawn came.

Before the fire fighters could make much headway, though, the blaze had spread through the hotel and its barn, Charles Stott's garage, Charles Bortle's plumbing and radio shop, another garage owned by Town Supervisor Levit Powell on a neighboring dock, and old sheds and lumber near the Hudson. All were rapidly destroyed. A crisis arose

when a 200-gallon fuel tank at Miller's went up in an explosive burst.

Courageous firemen prevented the blaze from crossing the street but the intense heat badly damaged Cornell Hall, scorching paint and breaking many windows. Panes of glass also were shattered and paint peeled away from wooden siding across Main Street at Platt Wheat's post office and general store and the Nelson confectionary store next door. Charles Stott's tall brick structure south of the stores also was damaged. Sparks floated several hundred feet, and the firemen barely kept the fire from taking a much wider path of destruction. Half a dozen automobiles were burned. Small blazes flared in the shipyard just south of the main fire site but were quickly extinguished.

Much of the damage was believed to be covered by insurance, and several property owners expressed enthusiasm about rebuilding. Just a week after the fire, Levit Powell had Irving Vanderzee hard at work rebuilding his garage. In the meantime, it was reported that more than 2,000 cars and 5,000 people visited the fire site in the week after the disaster. A new building eventually rose on the hotel site, becoming a nursing home and now a private home. The Miller building also was reconstructed, eventu-

ally incorporating the post office, which moved from across the street. It now has been converted into apartments.

It also is interesting to note that the Cornell Hall in this story was the second such building, the first destroyed by fire in 1905 along with Leonard Colvin's neighboring grocery. The Wheat (then Whitbeck's) and Nelson stores had burned in 1912 and were rebuilt. These were torn down in more recent years.

(Sources: Albany's Times-Union and Knickerbocker News, Ravena News-Herald, and Catskill's The Recorder)  
—Cless Bush, Town Historian.

## Fire Sweeps New Baltimore Business Block; Loss \$75,000



Six Buildings Razed by Flames

# Business Spotlight

## Circle of Friends

"Play is a child's work," says Linda Orsino, Nursery School Coordinator and teacher at Circle of Friends Nursery School and Daycare.

It is a basic tenet of the school's philosophy, which relies on what it calls a creative curriculum, incorporating yoga, indoor and outdoor play and various educational components to prepare three and four year olds for kindergarten and beyond.

Established in 1988 in Coeymans, Circle of Friends moved to its current New Baltimore location in 1995. It is owned by Alice Kears, who also owns similar schools in Glenmont and Delmar. Currently, approximately 60 chil-



Linda Orsino reads to students

dren attend the school's nursery school and daycare programs. Students come from all over the area, including Coxsackie, Greenville, Ravena and Bethlehem.

Circle of Friends has a very strong program for special needs children, and the high teacher to student ratio allows the school to focus on the children as individuals and tailor the curriculum to their specific needs.

Currently, the two programs — nursery school and daycare — are open only to three (or three months before three) and four year-olds. There are morning and afternoon sessions.

"Our goal has been to create a safe and loving learning environment for every child," says Orsino.

Circle of Friends is located at 14379 Route 9W. The phone number is 756-3124



# Events & Announcements

## Justice Corner

Last month, Judge Joseph Farrell was re-elected as Town Justice of New Baltimore. Judge Farrell has served as the Town Justice for New Baltimore for the past 16 years and has done an exemplary job on the bench. He has proven to be a fair and impartial Judge and we, the voters of New Baltimore are very fortunate to have him serve in our courts. We would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Judge Joe Cosenza in his appointment as President of the Greene County Magistrates Association. He was selected by his peers of the 16 other courts in Greene County. Congratulations also go to our Chief Court Clerk Lynn Taylor who was appointed as Secretary of the Greene County Court Clerks Association.

As many of you are aware, there is quite a traffic jam in and around the parking lot of the Town Hall on Tuesday evenings when court is in session. What you are not aware of is between Judge Farrell and Judge Cosenza; they have presided in over 3100 cases since the beginning of 2007. These cases involve traffic violations, civil and criminal, small claims and even an occasional family court matter. They are awakened at all hours of the night to arraign defendants on violations, misdemeanors and felonies.

Did you know that out of almost 1300 courts in the State of New York, our Town Court of New Baltimore is ranked 152<sup>nd</sup> in caseload and revenue? Did you also know that out of 17 courts in Greene County, we are ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the county?

All of this could not be accomplished with the dedicated staff that we have in New Baltimore. Lynn Taylor and Sheri Jourdin work feverously to keep the courts running smoothly and up to date. The volume of mail alone is insurmountable, but somehow they manage to accomplish the other tasks needed in the day to day operation.

Outside of the caseloads of the courts, your Judges and its staff are actively seeking a court grant in the amount of \$15,235. If awarded, this money will go to records management,

office equipment and improvements to the court. Previous grants have paid for computer equipment, filing cabinets, printers, fax machine and reference material. All of this, without ANY cost to the taxpayers of New Baltimore.

Are you aware that it is a mandatory requirement that your judges attend continuing education training to maintain their certification? Every year Judge Farrell and Judge Cosenza attend and complete a minimum of 12 credit courses to stay current on the changes of the laws in the courts. The court clerks also attend training yearly to stay current on the changes within the courts.

So next time you drive by the Town Hall and see the full parking lot when court is in session, take a moment to reflect and be assured that your court is working for you.

## Building and Code Enforcement Reports

Beginning with this newsletter, we will also include reports of the Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Officers. The following reports were submitted for the month of October 2007:

Building Inspector Foley: New Building Permit Applications Received – 8, Building Permit Applications extended – 1, Commercial Site Fire Inspections Completed – 4, Inspections Satisfactory – 3, Violations Found with two-weeks granted to comply – 1, Certificates of Occupancy granted – None, Stop Work Orders issued – None  
Code Enforcement Officer Cashin: Trash complaints – 8, Open burning complaints – 4, Junk vehicle complaints – 11, Illegal sign complaints – 5, Building Inspections – 6, Fire Inspections – 7, Court Appearances – 9

## Snow Removal Announcement

Denis Jordan, the Highway Superintendent, would like to remind residents that there is to be NO DISCARDING OF SNOW onto any highway or public road pursuant to Vehicle & Traffic Law Section 1660-Section 8. Also, there is to be NO PARKING ON ANY TOWN

STREETS, or shoulders from November 15, 2007 to May 15, 2008 to allow for snow removal. Pursuant to Vehicle & Traffic Law Section 1660-Section 8 the Highway Superintendent is authorized to have any vehicle in violation of this notice towed at the owner's expense. Please make arrangements to park vehicles elsewhere.

## 2008 Budget

(continued from page 3)

curred by the Supervisor for book-keeping and payroll services, the expenses of the Justice Court, Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Assessor, Animal Control Officer, Building Inspectors and Code Enforcement Officer, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals. Much of these costs cover postage, newspaper publication and mileage reimbursement.

The Town's budget for professional services (\$18,000) primarily covers legal expenses under the Town's annual contract with the Attorney for the Town. The budget for Programs (\$20,600) includes the cost of maintaining the Town parks, the Town's annual support of the AgFest and American Legion Post. The budget also includes \$15,000 to be transferred into the Highway Department Capital Reserve Fund to set aside funds for future equipment purchases.

The Town's revenues will be bolstered in 2008 by increases in Justice Court revenues, interest earnings, and state aid. Town revenues (excluding property taxes) include State Aid, including the Consolidated Highway Improvement Program, Payments in lieu of Taxes from Serta Mattress, General State Revenue Sharing, Justice Court Fines, Mortgage Tax Receipts, permit and fee revenue, interest earnings and penalties levied for the late payment of property taxes.

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## Town Officials

**Supervisor**  
David Louis

**Board Members**  
Lisa Benway  
Richard Guthrie  
Kevin Kuenster  
Arlene McKeon

**Planning Board**  
Lee Davis  
James Coe  
Howard Goldson  
Kenneth Kuder  
Eric Hogland  
John Murray  
Alta Turner

**Zoning Board**  
Stephen Volkheimer  
Meave Tooher  
Christy Jo Cone  
Anthony Rago  
Roger Wilson

**Town Clerk**  
Janet Brooks

**Tax Collector**  
Diane Stuart

**Assessor**  
Gordon Bennett

**Town Justices**  
Joseph Farrell  
Joseph Cosenza

**Superintendent of Highways**  
Denis Jordan

**Town Board Meetings:**  
2nd and 4th Mondays

**Planning Board Meetings**  
2nd Thursday\*

**Zoning Board Meetings**  
1st Wednesday\*

\*if no agenda, no meeting

**Town Office Hours**  
Monday—Friday 9-4

**Highway Hours**  
Monday—Friday 7-3

**Telephone**  
(518) 756-6671

**Website**  
[www.townofnewbaltimore.org](http://www.townofnewbaltimore.org)

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NEW BALTIMORE TOWN HALL  
3809 ROUTE 51  
HANNACROIX, NEW YORK 12087

**Important!**  
**Survey Enclosed**

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