

**VILLAGE NEWSLETTER**  
Village of Green Island  
20 Clinton Street  
Green Island, NY 12183  
518-273-2201  
**www.villageofgreenisland.com**

**MARCH 2014**

**BUDGET HEARINGS AND MARCH MONTHLY MEETING DATE**

Budget Hearings will be held on **Wednesday, April 2nd, 2014** at the Green Island Municipal Center, 19 George Street, Green Island. **GIPA Budget** presentation is scheduled for **5:45 p.m.** and the **Village Budget** presentations are scheduled for **6:00 p.m.** PLEASE NOTE that the regular monthly meetings for March will be held on Monday, March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014 starting at 6:00 p.m.

**ONLINE BILL PAYING FOR GIPA and WATER & SEWER CUSTOMERS**

The Green Island Power Authority and the Village Water & Sewer Billing Departments are now pleased to offer online payments with credit/debit cards. To register please visit our website <http://www.villageofgreenisland.com> and look for the button that says "Online Payments". Simply click to register and you will be ready to pay online.

**RECREATION NEWS**

The **Easter Bunny** will be at the Gazebo on **Friday, April 11th, from 2:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.** Start your Spring break by stopping to get your picture taken with the Easter Bunny. The Bunny will have plenty of treats for everyone! In the event of inclement weather, we will move the event to the Green Island Community Center, 5 George Street.

**Summer Employment:** The Recreation Department is accepting applications for **summer employment**. Due to budget constraints, summer jobs will be extremely limited. A competitive interview process will be mandatory for all applicants. Applications are now available at the Village Office or with Mrs. Legault in the main office at Heatly School. All applications must be returned to the **VILLAGE OFFICE** on or before April 25<sup>th</sup>, no exceptions. Applicants must be 14 years old by July 1, 2014 to be eligible for employment.

**STORMWATER COALITION OF ALBANY COUNTY**

The Stormwater Coalition of Albany County was formed in 2008 via an inter-municipal agreement between 13 municipalities and the University of Albany. The Village of Green Island is a charter member and Executive Assistant to the Mayor Sean Ward has been Chairman of their Board of Directors since its inception. The purpose of the Coalition is to foster cooperation, achieve cost savings and to provide for the provision of joint shared services related to compliance with the NYSDEC SPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) Permit program and Federal Clean Water Act requirements. For more information about the Stormwater Coalition please log on to their website at [www.stormwateralbanycounty.org](http://www.stormwateralbanycounty.org). This website has very specific information about how our community benefits from the program and includes educational components for homeowners, businesses and contractors. We also do our own outreach as well and periodically mail out flyers to many businesses that show best management practices as it relates to their operations. This is just an example of the many efforts to educate the public in our quest for clean water. For further information about Green Island's MS4 program contact Sean Ward at 273-2201 or [seanw@villageofgreenisland.com](mailto:seanw@villageofgreenisland.com).

### **NEWS FROM THE GREEN ISLAND SENIOR CITIZENS**

Due to inclement weather, the Valentine's Day **Chicken Parm Dinner** was cancelled; however, it has been rescheduled for **Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>**. The cost is \$9.00 a person and will include a salad, chicken parm, ziti, bread & butter, coffee, tea & dessert. Dinner will be served 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., and take-out is available until 6:30 p.m. Call the Senior Center at 272-7262 to make your reservations and/or to place your order for take-out.

### **NEWS FROM THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD**

**BAKED CHICKEN DINNER** – Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. The cost is \$10.00 for Adults, \$6.00 for Children and Under 5 are FREE. Bring the family, all are welcome! After dinner sit back and enjoy a delicious dessert with your coffee or tea. Proceeds will benefit church projects, missions, and programs. Eat in/take-out (free delivery in Green Island), parking available.

### **NEWS FROM HEATLY CLASS OF 2017**

The Heatly Class of 2017 is sponsoring a **Chili, Sauce, Mac'n Cheese Cook-Off** on **Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup>**. The Class of 2017 will would like to take this opportunity to invite you to be a participant. The event will be held at the Green Island Community Center (former Italian Club), 5 George Street. Set up is at 10:00 a.m., entrance fee for cooks is \$15.00 and there will be prizes for each category. The public is invited from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. to sample a bottomless cup of chili, sauce, mac'n cheese for \$5.00. For further information or to obtain an entry form, please contact Kathy Kirch or Kim Watkins at Heatly School at 273-1422 or [kkirch@greenisland.org](mailto:kkirch@greenisland.org) or [kwatkins@greenisland.org](mailto:kwatkins@greenisland.org).



## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN GREEN ISLAND

March 12, 2014

Dear Friends,

I thought I had seen the last of beginning my letter with "I'm sitting at my desk looking out at the snow coming down as I write to you." Apparently I was WRONG because I am doing it again. Only this time it is freezing rain. When is this weather ever going to end? This has been the toughest winter in my 12 years as your mayor. That last snow removal broke the bank -- but **we had the best plowed streets in the Capital District.** Where we did fail this year is getting property owners to shovel their sidewalks. I received a lot of complaints from people who had to walk in the road because the sidewalks were impassable. In my January letter I cited the local law that states that a property owner must shovel the sidewalk within six hours after the storm ceases. The fine is \$250.00 and up to 15 days in jail. I thought that might encourage people to shovel, but apparently it didn't work. So next year we will be handing out tickets to violators to appear in court and pay \$250.00 for each violation. I am well aware that some people are physically unable to shovel snow, but that does not relieve you of the duty. You must hire someone and there were lots of kids ringing doorbells and looking to shovel this year so there is no excuse. Hopefully this is the last letter of the season about snow. But get ready because I'm sure next month's letter will be about picking up your dog's poop! Ahhhh, I get to have such great conversations with you!

Well you all got your new assessment notices. This has been a long and painful process, especially for our Assessor, Maggie. It isn't a perfect process and I am sure there will be some adjustments made. If you would like to have a review of your assessment, all I ask is that you be respectful and do your homework before you come in. As I said, this isn't a perfect process and we expect to make some adjustments. I wish the state laws on how properties are assessed were different because I think they penalize the property owners who keep up their property and they reward the property owners who let their properties deteriorate. Property taxes are paid for the services provided by the taxing entity, so my theory is: If you have a one family home, your taxes should be 1X; if you have a two family home, your taxes should be 2X; three family -- 3X and so on. We have multi-dwelling homes whose taxes are less than a nicely kept one family home. Problem is, state law says the assessment must be made by looking at the sale price of comparable properties. We didn't make the laws folks -- we just have to go by them. Bottom line is, if you would sell your home for the assessed value, then you are assessed properly. If you know you could never get that price, then you need to make an appointment and come in for a review. If you know your home is worth a lot more than your assessment --- thank God, make a donation to charity and keep your mouth shut! You caught a break. Now that these assessments have been brought up to full value, the assessor has to review them every year to keep them in line with the current sales market. Changes in the market may affect your assessment year to year. If your assessment goes up, it doesn't necessarily mean you will pay more taxes. It just means that your assessment will be current.

Speaking of taxes, it looks like we will be able to stay under the Governor's Tax Cap -- at least for this year. I am not going to get into it too much in this letter, but the Governor's proposals for a property tax rebate are unrealistic for the long term. First of all, who is responsible for calculating all the data for the amount each property owner will be reimbursed with his plan? If it is the local assessor, that will be one more unfunded local mandate and I'm sure Maggie will be out the door. If the Governor has some extra money, instead of sending property owners around \$35, he might better send that money to the local municipalities so they can do some much needed infrastructure repairs (water lines, sewer lines, roads) that they simply can't afford to do because of so many unfunded mandates. I will give you a perfect example of the types of expenses that we have to pay that we have no control over. Since I became Mayor in 2003, between 2003 and 2013, our contribution to the Retirement System has gone up 3,400%. Yes, I said 3,400%. You can do the math and realize very quickly that keeping within a 2% tax cap doesn't work very well when you have a 3,400% increase in 10 years. And that isn't counting health insurance and liability insurance increases. And our employees did not receive any raises in many of those years. We have cut our budget to the bone. We have consolidated services, reduced the workforce and asked employees to wear more hats. We can't go any further without laying more people off and reducing services to our residents. That is not something we want to do. I don't know where we are going, but I'm here for the long haul (as long as you keep me.) We have gotten through tough times before because we have loyal employees, but everyone is stretched to the max. Let's see where the road leads us. And I don't mean into potholes!!!!

No matter what we were discussing above, the old saying goes: "If you have your health, you have everything." Truer words were never spoken. Two local folks are going through some tough times right now and could use our help. Melissa Bressette, daughter of Sharon Cocco Bressette and the late Fred Bressette, has had a really tough year with health issues. There is a fundraiser being held for her on March 30<sup>th</sup> from 1 to 4 at the Cohoes Community Center to help out with her medical bills. If you would like further information, you can call Sharon at 272-3922 or 256-1213. Gary Vogt, husband of Kathy Vogt (works at Carioto) and brother of Tim Vogt with United Auto Workers, is going through some serious health issues and can no longer work. There is a fundraiser for him on April 12<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. at the All Troy Club, corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave and 114<sup>th</sup> Street in Troy. Both of these families could use our help, so please give whatever you can.

Onto happier things. Please see the other newsletter for info on topics I didn't get to talk about. Make sure you see the news about being able to pay your GIPA and water and sewer bill on line. Also, we have booked our bands for the summer concerts and I will get that info to you in the coming months. And I promise that no matter how hot it gets at our concerts this summer -- I WILL NOT COMPLAIN ABOUT THE HEAT. I will probably still complain about the rain, but not the heat.

I hope Spring makes its way to us soon. This weather is soooooo depressing. I need sunshine!!! Maybe if I go out front and pretend I am Little Orphan Annie and sing "The sun will come out --- tomorrow" the weather will improve. OR --- they will just lock me up! Either way, I could use a few days off.

Sincerely,



Ellen M. McNulty-Ryan