

Town of Spafford Newsletter

Mary Bean, Supervisor

January, 2015

2014 – A YEAR OF CHANGE

By Mary Bean

In the Town of Spafford, a majority of citizens voted for change in November, 2013. However, even those who voted for change are struggling with the many challenges and changes that we have faced during the past year. One of the biggest changes is reflected in the length of Board meetings. The Board's first meeting in January of 2014 was 5 hours and our shortest meeting to date was 2 hours. All meetings now include much debate and discussion of the issues. But the length of meetings is just one indication of change. Executive sessions are rare and brief to protect the public's right to know. Counselors have been asked to take on responsibilities for management of town affairs such as committee chairs, overseeing contractors, the cemeteries, financial audits, etc. in order convey to fellow Board members a better understanding of the issues before us. There is now more citizen input into plans and decisions via the new Facilities and Energy Committee, as well as the Recreation, Highway Dept. Advisory and Ethics Committees. Having a lawyer present at Town Board meetings as well as Zoning and Planning Boards has made a huge positive difference in how effectively and efficiently those bodies function. The 2% tax cap created a big and stressful change in the town's budget development process and the resulting budget. The Board is adjusting to all the changes while we continue to deal with inherited and emerging challenges.

In this newsletter, I would like to take an opportunity to provide a review and summary of our work on your behalf, and to provide a preview of some of the work that we will do in 2015.

Highway Department: In January we realized that there were a number of hazardous conditions in the town garage that had gone uncorrected for several years. Some of these were noted in a 5 year old PESH report, and others were the result of our new Codes Enforcement Officer's initial review of Town facilities. The Board immediately authorized the repairs to the garage that threatened the integrity of the building's east wall and the safety of our highway workers. Our Town's accountant provided a report that revealed that our cost per mile for operation of the Highway Department is one of the highest in Onondaga County. To find out why, I recommended to the Town Board that we establish a Highway Department Advisory Committee. We did so, and charged them with identifying opportunities to bring our costs in line with similar towns. (As a reminder, the Committee, consisting of Counselor Lou Hanlon, Kathy Adams, Mark Delaney, Leland Springstead and Luke Dewitt, has put in hundreds of hours visiting highway departments in three counties, truck and equipment distributors, materials providers, etc. When Carl Wiers remarked that knowledge of Highway operations would be critical to the committee's success, Kathy and Lou attended two Cornell University Local Roads Schools at their own expense to learn more about road maintenance and highway department management.)

During the committee's investigation process, we found that the Section 284 agreement that used to be signed each year had been abandoned. This is an agreement required by NY State law that creates a "check & balance" and a contract for Highway work between the Highway Department and the Town Board. One benefit of this agreement is that it causes the Highway Superintendent and the Town Board to discuss and agree on summer projects so that the specific expenses for the Highway Department can be planned for and tracked. The Section 284 agreement process was reinstated for the 2015 Budget Year. In August, after six months of investigation of our Highway Department, the Highway Department Advisory Committee concluded that the Highway Department does not have the data needed to determine why costs are so high. (As a medical professional, I was fortunate to be on the cutting edge of the implementation of Evidenced Based Medicine (EBM). EBM requires that treatments be based on

evidence of effectiveness. In fact, effective management is highly dependent on good data in any environment.) We concluded that the absence of data was an important finding, and resolved to find a way to obtain good data. To that end, we asked the committee to continue their efforts. They have been looking in detail at the operations of other highway departments (called “best practices” research) and are working on recommendations that could result in cost savings for Spafford. On January 17, the committee delivered their next set of recommendations. These included a recommendation for a new Highway Truck (consistent with Carl’s recommendations), an approach to replacing equipment going forward, and the first of several potential cost savings recommendations.

Brief Summary of the Highway Committee’s report and recommendations from January 17th:

In researching other Highway Departments, we have found that “doing it right” was generally less expensive than doing it “cheaply.” For example, instead of purchasing one truck at a time and stretching the life of that truck over 10 or 15 years, a steady plan of replacement combined with a top notch maintenance program appears to yield the lowest equipment costs, and reduces the need for keeping and storing old equipment “just in case” one of the primary vehicles fails at a critical time. Additionally, we found that careful attention to the quantity of material used for snow and ice treatment makes a big difference in the overall cost for that material. In order to effectively manage the quantity, we would have to invest in spread control equipment, and we are currently investigating if we can install this on our older trucks or if we will have to wait until these are replaced. In February, we will report to the Board and community on the cost of using the abrasive mix (gravel + salt + brine) vs. pure salt where appropriate, and make recommendations for the Board and the Highway Department to consider. The committee intends to continue researching our Highway costs in an effort to fund a transition to better equipment and a better building so that our long-term costs are reduced.

The bridge on Church Rd over Spafford Creek has been a problem for the Town since 2011. Carl Wiers told me of the condition of the bridge shortly after my election and I went to examine the bridge myself. It was clear that something had to be done to either repair the existing bridge or build a new one. In order to make a decision on repair or replacement, the Town hired an engineer to evaluate the structure. The engineer recommended repairs to the apron and to close the bridge to traffic until the repairs could be made. The Board agreed that repair was the best option and that the bridge should be closed to traffic until repairs could be completed. This was a difficult decision, since it stands to inconvenience nearby residents, local farm operations as well school bus traffic. However, our citizens’ safety is paramount. Repair of the bridge is complicated by the fact that Spafford Creek is under the protection of DEC and work in the creek requires permits and is restricted to certain times of the year. Carl hopes to complete the work this summer but again, the project is complicated and weather dependent.

Ethics Committee: Every town in NYS is required to have an Ethics Committee. Spafford had one “on paper” but the committee had never met. When I asked the Board to expand and activate the Ethics Committee, Counselor David Venezia volunteered to chair the committee. In August, a complaint of possible Code of Ethics violation was referred to the committee and in October, the Committee began to investigate that complaint. Scott Chatfield, town lawyer, assisted the committee in getting organized, understanding their responsibilities, and identifying options for recommendations to the Board that would conclude their review of the case. To date, the committee is continuing to deliberate in spite of the recent resignation of Counselor Venezia. I thank Dave for his service during the challenging first year of the committee; however, I am reluctant to replace a member at this point in their deliberations. I plan to recommend that the Town Board appoint an elector to the vacant position after the committee concludes their deliberations on the case before them. Management of public money is a position of trust and the existence of a viable Ethics Committee is but one deterrent to fraud and abuse.

Town Hall & Garage: Energy standards have come a long way since our Town Hall was built in 1967. We are therefore pursuing opportunities to reduce our Town buildings’ expenses, as well as reduce our

energy "footprint." As you pass by the Town Hall at night you will note new and significantly brighter exterior lights on the Hall and Garage. This energy saving improvement was facilitated by a grant from NYSEG and has a 4-year payback time on our investment. The grant also enabled us to replace the light fixtures in the garage and the Community Room with energy efficient, quieter and brighter lights. Agreement to replace the town hall roof took several months but the debate and discussion preceding the contracting for the roof was good practice for the choices that we will face this year. On the weekend before Christmas the furnace in the Highway Garage quit working. Three of four repairpersons pronounced the furnace "beyond repair." We must have heat in the garage or the material in the trucks will freeze and we can't spread it on the roads. This created an emergency situation. I was away so Chris Fesko stepped in to gather Board members, members of the Highway Committee, contractors and citizens for an emergency Board meeting where estimates for replacement of the furnace were considered and a decision made. Chris worked with Carl Wiers to be sure the new furnace was doing the job. A big thank-you to the team, and especially to Chris for stepping in and leading the group to the best decision.

Now we have a new challenge and must pull together in order to take advantage of a potential \$50,000 grant for renovations to the Town Hall and Garage. The newly formed Facilities and Energy committee will be recommending renovations to the Town Hall to make it more energy efficient and a more comfortable work environment. The Highway Dept. Advisory Committee will assess the options for expanding or replacing the current highway garage, and will explore any improvements that could be kept/reused in the event we renovate or build a new building. Former Supervisor Gordon Ireland described the situation simply at the January 17th meeting, "We have outgrown the Garage." While we acknowledge that the existing Highway Garage is badly in need of improvements, we wonder if we should we be putting money into a building we may need to replace in a few years. The next few Board meetings will be lengthy as we take up this and many other issues.

Phone and internet service for the Town Hall has been over capacity since I came to work here. On a busy day we can have 6 to 8 computers going at once and just as many phones. The Town Hall is a busy place, our team provides quite a lot of services to our community, and is regularly engaged with County and State agencies on behalf of citizens. Too few phone lines and inadequate internet capacity is no longer acceptable. We have switched to a new provider and are enjoying much more consistent service. We also hope you'll notice that our web site is up and functioning more reliably.

Town Cemeteries: Spafford has 4 cemeteries, three of which are active. Each has a Superintendent who supervises burials and maintenance. Merrill Clark is responsible for the Spafford Cemetery, and Jim Clark is responsible for Cold Brook Cemetery. Jeff Ireland has recently resigned as the Superintendent of the Borodino Cemetery and we will be recruiting a replacement for that position. Last Spring the Highway Department was unable to help with spring cleanup at the cemeteries resulting in citizen complaints. This year, we will contract out the job of spring cleaning the cemeteries so they are ready for early spring burials.

Recycling: Recycling of electronic waste has become a major problem for all cities and towns in the state. Fortunately, we in Onondaga County have OCRRA working with us to solve the problem of disposal of e-waste. OCRRA's Ann Fordock was able to save the town \$1900 in disposal fees for the last batch of e-waste. For the immediate future, the Spafford Transfer Station will not be accepting e-waste but we hope that situation is only temporary. See the enclosed flier on recycling e-waste.



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POSTER CONTEST.....PG 4
Learn about this contest as well as a school grant opportunity.



HOME & GARDEN SHOW.....PG 5
Get a free blue bin, a compost sample and info from OCRRA at our booth (#4010).



BLUE RIBBON RECYCLING.....PG 5
Resolve to be a business recycling standout this year, apply online today.



WASTE-TO-ENERGY CONTRACT.....PG 7
Learn what benefits this contract extension brings to our community.



FACEBOOK.....PG 8
Learn how you can get a free blue bin from OCRRA year-round.

Electronic Waste Recycling Solutions

Ann Fordock, Recycling Specialist

A new element of New York's 2010 electronics law means old TVs can no longer be put out on the curb for disposal. As of January 1, 2015, a statewide ban went into effect that prohibits individuals and households from throwing electronic waste, including TVs, into the trash. While this may sound ominous, the law encourages people to recycle their electronic or e-waste, which is better for the environment.

What is e-waste?

- Televisions
- Computers
- Monitors
- Computer peripherals (key boards, mice, fax machines, scanners, printers, etc.)
- Small electronic equipment (tablets, VCRs, MP3 players, DVD players, digital converter boxes, cable or satellite receivers, video game consoles, etc.)
- Small scale servers
- Cables, cords and wires affixed or associated with the above referenced items

Where to RECYCLE it:

Battery World (Syracuse):

Accepts electronics and projection and flat screen TVs for free. They will also accept tube TVs or monitors for a fee. Call 437-1404 for details.

Best Buy (Various Locations):

Takes electronics, including all types of TVs and monitors that are 32 inches and smaller. Call 1-888-BESTBUY for details and restrictions.

Bruin Computer (Liverpool):

Accepts electronics, but no TVs. Call 410-0050 for details.

Environmental Products and Services of Vermont (Syracuse):

Accepts TVs that are physically broken for a fee. Call 451-6666 for details.

Salvation Army (Various Locations):

Takes TVs and electronics. Working and non-working TVs of all sizes are accepted. However, TVs and monitors cannot be physically broken in any way. Call 445-0520 prior to dropping off any electronic waste. Pick up services may be available. Call for details.

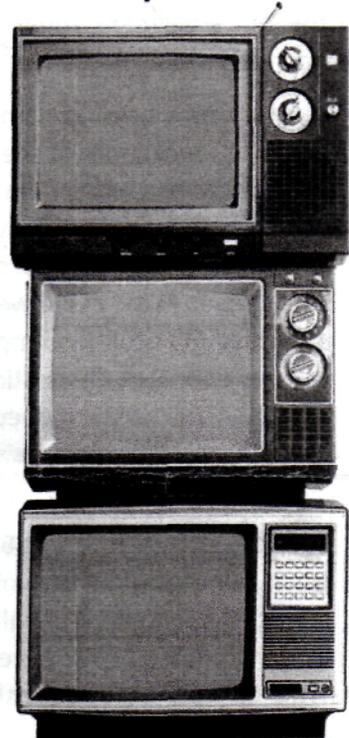
Please note, you must call in advance of dropping off at any of the locations above to confirm they will accept your e-waste.

As part of the law that went into effect January 1, manufacturers are required to take back what they sell. You may contact the manufacturer of your e-waste (or the manufacturer of your replacement electronic) for details on their collection program. Visit www.tinyurl.com/DEClst-Manufacturers for manufacturer contact information.

Remember, **do not** put your old TV or other e-waste out to the curb, this will only create an eye-sore and endanger the environment.

If you have any questions, please call OCRRA at 453-2866.

Ann Fordock can be reached at afordock@ocrra.org.



Throwing televisions and other electronic waste out (or worse yet, on the roadside) is harmful to the environment and as of January 1, 2015 it is now illegal under NY State law. Recycling old e-waste is easy if you know what to do. Visit www.OCRRA.org for a list of local drop offs or to find manufacturer take back programs.



Save the world
a little each day.



WHAT ABOUT CELL PHONES?

Under the New York State Wireless Recycling Act, effective January 1, 2007, all wireless telephone service providers that offer phones for sale will accept your cell phones for reuse or recycling. Cell phones contain many hazardous materials including mercury and lead, that if improperly disposed can harm the environment, and potentially become detrimental to humans and wildlife. Many organizations collect cell phones as donations for refurbishment and redistribution.

Please visit www.ocrra.org/show_detail/107.

Help Wanted- Borodino Cemetery Superintendent

Responsibilities include maintenance of burial records kept in the Town Hall, arranging for digging of graves and attendance when graves are dug and filled, and regular inspection of grounds to identify needed services to grounds and markers. Position reports to the Town Board. Position is voluntary. For more information or to express interest in the position please call Mary Bean at 315-391-8477.

Marcellus School District Tax Payers

The Marcellus School Board has reduced the cost of the capital improvement project rejected by voters last October from \$18.5 million to \$14.84 million. The project will again be presented to the voters, noon to 9 PM on March 10th. A public hearing will be held at 7 PM, March 3rd.

Otisco Lake Management Plan

The Onondaga County Health Department with the help of Cornell Cooperative Extension has created a management plan for Otisco Lake. Skaneateles Lake has had a management plan for a long time that the Town of Spafford supports. A meeting was held on January 22nd with all the municipal stakeholders in the Otisco Lake watershed to discuss the plan. The Town of Otisco did not send a representative. The Town of Spafford enforces Codes effectively along the west shore of the lake to protect this valuable natural asset. Runoff however is a problem with the steep slopes and deep ravines bringing agricultural runoff into the lake. The next meeting where the plan will be discussed will be in conjunction with a meeting of the Otisco Lake Preservation Association at a time and place to be announced. Copies of the plan will be available at Town Hall upon advance request.

Spafford Area Historical Society

SAHS continues to await the official notification of their requested grant for the purchase of a wheelchair lift to make Borodino Hall fully handicapped accessible. Meanwhile they are working on the preparation of the building for installation of the lift. Contractors are now being engaged for the drainage work that when completed will allow a new floor to be installed in the basement. That floor will provide the base for the lift. Making that building fully handicapped accessible is important to the community due to the buildings audience capacity and stage. Note in our calendar of events that the building is a busy place and some of the activities are youth driven giving our children opportunities for development of leadership and business skills.

JAZZ & CHOCOLATE



SAT. FEB 7th 7PM- 9PM

AN EVENING OF LIVE MUSIC
BY THE SKANEATELES HS JAZZ BAND AND
DESSERT BUFFET AT
BORODINO HALL RT 41S & RT174

FOR RESERVATIONS SEND \$15.00 PER PERSON DONATION
CHECKS MADE OUT TO SPAFFORD AREA HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

MAIL TO : SAHS, PO BOX 250, MARIETTA, NY 13110
SEATING IS LIMITED RESERVE BY FEB 1ST
THIS EVENT WAS SOLD OUT LAST YEAR!!!!

PROCEEDS HELP TO RESTORE BORODINO HALL
COME OUT FOR FUN, SURPRISE RAFFLES, MUSIC AND
GREAT FOOD!!
INFO CALL 636-9511

COME MEET THE AUTHOR!

Saturday, Jan. 31, 10:00 – 12:30
VERNAK FARMS COUNTRY STORE
1889 E. Lake Rd., Skaneateles (Borodino)

WORDS OF WISDOM is a compilation of Ed's experiences and observations on life. Best known as a mentor-coach (Central Tech's unbeaten basketball team, Westhill's unbeaten track and cross-country teams), this 93-year old 'kid from Skunk City' set international track and field records and is an SU Letterman of Distinction. He's led fishing excursions to northern Quebec and ice-fished most of Central NY's lakes. Today, Ed stays active gardening, cutting wood, and having coffee with the boys at Vernak's.

WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT THE AUTHOR –
"A TIMELESS COACHING LEGACY... A SYMBOL OF EDUCATION."
-Sean Kirst, columnist, Syracuse Post-Standard
"ONE OF THE MOST PRINCIPLED, HONORABLE GUYS I'VE EVER MET."
-Tim Cowin, Commissioner of Corrections, Onondaga Co.
"HE WAS JUST FANTASTIC. HE WAS A SHAPER OF PEOPLE'S LIVES."
-Bob Couse, former Central Tech student & basketball player
"I WAS AMAZED THAT HE REMEMBERED ME (AFTER 40 YEARS).
BUT I KNOW I WILL NEVER FORGET HIM."
-Bill Swift, former Central Tech 3-sport athlete, Amherst, NH

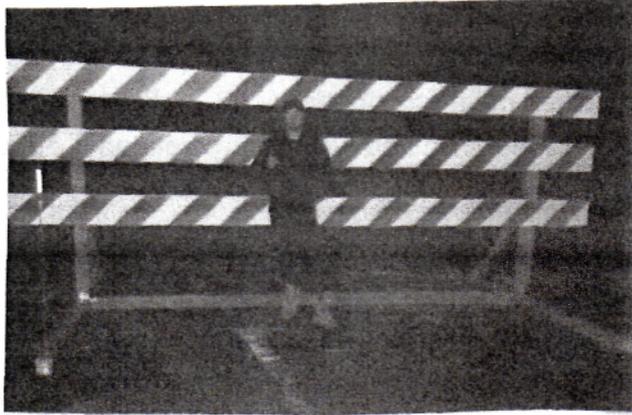
AUTOGRAPHED COPIES FOR \$15



**WORDS OF WISDOM:
FROM SKUNK CITY
TO SKANEATELES**
EDWIN W. LUKENS

Thank You's

A big Thank You to our Highway Department workers who spent Thanksgiving plowing so we could all get to "grandma's house" safely.



This photo shows Taih Taylor in front of the barricades he constructed for the Spafford Highway Department's use in closing Church Road. Federal and State regulations prescribe a standard type of barricade for closing roads and Spafford did not own the required type.

I asked Tiah to build and install the barricades according to Federal and State regulations. The barricades can be disassembled for transport and storage until the next time they are needed. Taih is starting his own contracting business in Spafford and we appreciate his willingness to help us out on short notice. Taih also negotiated with Time Warner for our new internet and phone service and installed the needed cables inside and outside both the Hall and Garage. TaylorMade Contracting, GC, Tracy Dr., (716) 909-2266.

John and Mary Menapace, Jeff Spain, and Murray Vassar have volunteered for the new Facilities and Energy Committee. John is a contractor and Mary is deeply involved in energy issues. Jeff Spain is newly returned to Spafford and setting up his own contracting business, (315) 436-0567. Murray has all around renovation and maintenance experience. This committee of skilled citizens will be meeting frequently over the coming weeks to come up with a plan to recommend to the Board for use of the promised grant money. We plan to look at the building and its needs from a long term perspective so we are spending the money wisely. Solar panels on the roof facing south are a possibility that you will hear more about in a few months.

I want to thank the members of the Highway Department Advisory Committee who have given so much of their time driving all over the area and meeting with other superintendents without asking for any compensation. The Committee's recommendations deserve the Board's full attention and consideration because they are doing best practice research that identifies best ideas and practices from similar communities in Central New York.

Thank you to Jeff Ireland who has resigned as superintendent of the Borodino Cemetery after many years of consistent and capable service to our community. This was a voluntary position and it will be difficult to replace Jeff who was dedicated to keeping the cemeteries in respectful condition.

SENIOR CITIZEN SERVICES AND PROGRAMS FOR TOWN OF SPAFFORD RESIDENTS

Prepared by Ann Furze for the Recreation Committee

Nutrition services:

Peace Inc. in conjunction with the Onondaga County Department of Aging and Youth provide senior dining sites in relevant location listed below. The suggested meal contribution is \$2.75. Reservations need to be made through phone numbers listed below. Most meal sites also include a recreational, educational or entertainment program in conjunction with the meal.

| | | |
|---|-------------------|---|
| Marcellus United Methodist Church, 1 Slocomb Ave. Marcellus | 673-2533 | Thursday Noon |
| Otisco Lake Community Center, 2223 Amber Rd. Amber | 636-7267 | 2 nd & 4 th Wednesday Noon |
| Skaneateles YMCA 97 State St., Skaneateles | 685-5607 | Wednesday Noon |
| Town of Scott United Methodist Church, Rt. 41, Scott | 607 749-7973 | Fridays – breakfast 7:30 – 9:30 |
| Meals on Wheels program in Skaneateles: | 685-6079 | |
| Food Stamps program for Onondaga County | 437-1899 ext. 229 | |

Transportation/ delivery services:

Laker Limo will service anyone living in the Skaneateles School District. They have a designated schedule as to predetermined destinations; such as Auburn, Skaneateles and Syracuse on specific days. Call 685-3030 a minimum of 2 days previous to make a reservation.

Kinney Drug at all local locations such as Skaneateles, Auburn, Elbridge and Tully will deliver prescriptions free of charge. They will also include any items in the store's regular inventory i.e.: convenience foods, household items, over the counter drugs. A \$2.00 fee will be charged if no prescription is included.

FISH: Friends In Service Here, a non-profit volunteer group will provide transportation to seniors in the Skaneateles School District. Phone: 685-6679

One Week at Lourdes Day Camp for Spafford children between 7 and 11 years old.



The Recreation Committee has arranged with Mike Preston, Director of Lourdes Camp, for Spafford Children to attend the Day Camp program for one week. Spafford children will be accepted for any week day camp is offered. Spafford campers will be integrated into the regular program and have access to all activities including boating and swimming in our beautiful Skaneateles Lake. There will be a small charge of \$25 per child and Spafford campers must provide their own transportation. Brochures and applications are not yet available so please call Lisa Valletta at Town Hall 315-673-4144 to get your child's name on the list for information as it becomes available.

Problems with fee or transportation, Call Mary Bean, 315-391-8477. Angel's in Spafford want every child to have the opportunity to attend camp.



Dates and Events

- January 31, 10 to 12:30, Come meet the author at Vernak Farms Country Store. Our own **Ed Lukens** will be signing copies of the book he has written.
- February 7, **Jazz and Chocolate**, an evening of music by the Skaneateles High School Jazz Band and chocolate dessert buffet. Borodino Hall. Reservations are recommended. This event has been sold out in the past.
- February 12, **Town Board Meeting** at 7 PM. The Spafford Town Board meets on the second Thursday of the month.
- February 21, **Town Board Meeting** at 10AM with the **Highway Department Advisory Committee**.
- March 3, 7PM, a **Public Hearing** on the proposed \$14.84 million capital improvement project for the **Marcellus School District** will be held at the high school.
- March 10, Noon to 9PM, Vote on Marcellus School District capital improvement project at the high school.
- March 14 and 15, **The Treblemakers** will present a program with Irish Dancers and Musicians at Borodino Hall. March 14th at 7 PM, \$8.00 admission. March 15th at 4 PM, \$5.00 admission.
- May 24, **Memorial Day Parade**, Veterans Memorial Park, Borodino
- August 1st, **SAHS Barn Sale**. Save your discards to support SAHS Borodino Hall renovations.

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Skaneateles, NY 13152

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Town of Spafford

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