



TOWN TALK

News from the Town of Elmira

F A L L - W I N T E R 2 0 1 0

Number 30

GREETINGS

I know some of you may have been looking for this newsletter a little earlier in the season, but we've been so busy working for you – toppling town taxes, taking inventory of town trees and attempting to document as many of the town's great stories as possible – we hope you won't mind. Please consider the following a special holiday treat:

Total Town Tax Reduction Tops 10%!

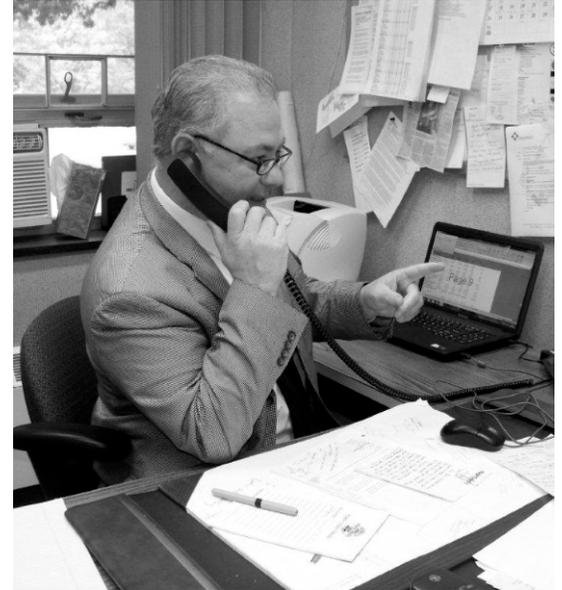
That's right. This is *your* town, *your* local government and we've listened to *you*. The Town Board and staff are committed to bringing you the same services, or better, at reduced costs. (See article below)

We're still committed to new services and programs as the need arises. For instance, 2011 promises the formation of our Community Tree Board to ensure the Town always maintains its canopy of trees and the wonderful shade it provides. (pg. 4) Plus, our Recreation Board is busy planning more great events (pg. 5) and our Town Board is busy making sure Outstanding Youths (pg.10) and Interesting Neighbors (pg. 8) are recognized. If you are interested in joining any of these efforts, or if you have suggestions, questions or comments, please call me or send me an email at dsullivan@townofelmira.com.

As always, thank you for all you, our residents, do to make the Town of Elmira a great place to live.

GREAT NEWS Town Tax Relief on the Way

At the October 18th regular Town Board meeting, supervisor, David P. Sullivan drew appreciative nods when he revealed the proposed figures for the Town of Elmira 2011 Budget. In the new budget, the 2011 **tax levy is reduced by \$237,000** from 2010 levels. The total tax levy is \$1,773,209, a decrease of 11.79%. The Town's aggressive reduction in taxes is the result of a nine month budget process during which the Board and department heads worked diligently to reduce expenses while maintaining services. In addition to reigning-in costs, the Town considered increased sale tax revenues based on realistic projections and the use of more than \$700,000 from cash reserves to reduce residents' total tax burden.



Town Supervisor, David P. Sullivan

continued page 3

SEASONAL SHORTS

George Hart Retires



This November, Buildings & Grounds Custodian and Town fixture, George Hart handed over the keys to his riding mower after thirty-three years of service to the Town of Elmira. Park Superintendent, Chip LeValley says he can't yet imagine the town without him. "The overall appearance and condition of the park has been due almost entirely to George's skill in terms of maintenance and enhancements."



Court Room Makeover

Next time you're at Town Hall check out the stately new court room. Thanks to a grant from the NY State Office of Court Administration and the persistent, hard work of Liz Lucarelli, the Town has improved the look, security and function of the court at no cost to taxpayers. "The new bench brings the security of the courtroom up to modern standards," says Town Justice, James E. DeFillipo. "Plus, we were able to make the facilities useful for all." Town Justice, Dick Woodhouse



adds that the volume of court business was also a key factor in seeking the upgrade. "Volume has increased many fold since I began thirty-one years ago," Woodhouse notes. "The new furnishings and electronics make us better equipped to do our jobs."



Scarecrow Sightings

Several West Elmira neighbors hope to start a new tradition. From October 1st through December 1st they hung small, store-bought scarecrows high up in the trees along their street. Organizers say they imported the idea from New Cumberland, PA where dozens of friendly scarecrows greet passers-by throughout the harvest season. They encourage neighbors, especially those along Church and Water Streets to feature the festive fellows and join the fun.

Slow Down

Highway Department Superintendent, Matt Mustico reports the Town of Elmira has received NY State approval for a speed reduction from 55 to 50 on North Hoffman Road. In response to residents' concerns, the Town will continue to seek a further reduction to 45 mph.

Tons of Fun

Mustico and his crew also unloaded more than 5000 tons of blacktop to complete road repairs on fourteen streets in town. Additionally, they covered seven roads on East Hill with slurry seal.

And a New Truck, Too

Be sure to get a glimpse of the Highway Department's new set of wheels. Mustico took delivery of a beautiful, big plow truck in October. The new truck is ready to roll and to share with other localities. To be on the safe side, Mustico says he kept the old truck for a winter spare.

GREAT NEWS *continued - Town Tax Relief*

Sullivan noted the reduction in the tax levy will not affect the services residents have come to expect. For example, in 2011, \$170,000 is allocated to the Highway Department to fix roads and \$15,000 is allocated to continue the Senior Home Improvement Grant Program for repairs and home improvement projects. "I'm really pleased with the process," he said. "We set out to cut town taxes and that's exactly what we were able to do." Sullivan expressed gratitude to the Board and all department heads for their great "team effort" to trim the budget.

Town of Elmira 2011 Tax Rates (Draft)				5-Oct-10			
				2011	2010	Diff.	Pct.
Town			0.65	0.89	-0.24	-27.0%	
Highway			0.37	0.73	-0.36	-49.2%	
Park Dt.			0.62	0.66	-0.04	-6.1%	
Traffic			1.40	1.41	-0.01	-0.7%	
Fire #1			2.35	2.24	0.11	4.9%	
Light Dt. #1			0.16	0.27	-0.11	-41%	
West Elmira Total			5.55	6.20	-0.65	-10.5%	
(less Upland)							

Chart illustrates tax reductions for only three areas of the Town of Elmira. Samples are representative of all areas and include all fire districts which set their own budgets, independent of the Town. For a complete chart of all areas, contact Town Hall at 734 -2031.

Lake Road Area							
Town			0.65	0.89	-0.24	-27%	
Highway			0.37	0.73	-0.36	-49%	
Fire District #2			1.27	1.29	-0.02	-2%	
Light Dt. #3			0.15	0.40	-0.25	-63%	
Lake Road Area				2.44	3.31	-0.87	-26%
East Hill North							
Town			0.65	0.89	-0.24	-27%	
Highway			0.37	0.73	-0.36	-49%	
Fire Dt. #5			0.96	1.00	-0.04	-4%	
East Hill (North) Total				1.98	2.62	-0.64	-24%

SIM-ERING SUMMERTIME

Here are some hot shots to warm you through the cold, winter months ahead.



The Sim Redmond Band

In August your Town Recreation Board hosted Ithaca favorites, **The Sim Redmond Band** for an evening of music and community at Pirozzolo Park. Representatives from local non-profits, like Glove House came out to share their stories and New York Sport & Fitness provided a free **Zumba!** lesson. It was picture-perfect as babies bounced in their strollers, children climbed at the playground, teens danced on the grass, grandparents gathered under the trees and dogs lazed at the tapping toes of their owners.



Show Off Day



Zumba!



MORE GREAT NEWS

Taking Inventory – Town Trees Offer Tremendous Value

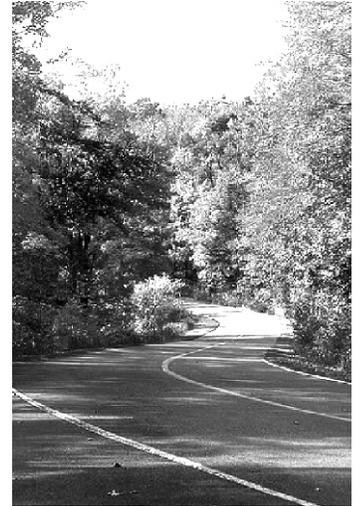
This fall, Cornell University's Student Weekend Arborist Team (S.W.A.T.) presented results and recommendations from its inventory of a representative sample of the Town's trees. The presentation capped a process begun more than 18-months ago by residents concerned with the long-term stability of this valuable resource. The data is to be used by a newly-formed Community Tree Board that will work in conjunction with the Town and the Highway Department. Goals include strategic planning for future tree planting, as well as proactive management and health maintenance of the current tree population to maximize its benefits to the community.

Those benefits as outlined in the S.W.A.T. report are both environmental and economic. In terms of dollars and cents, residents reap value from the tree canopy through energy conservation (both heat and cooling), increased property values, storm water reduction, air quality improvement and CO2 reduction. According to the results, the Town realizes \$167.23 per tree in total value.

On the flip side, the S.W.A.T. report indicates the Town has a disproportionate number of Maple trees, many of which are old or require attention. Recommendations include planting more young trees of different varieties in the Town's generous "tree lawn" to increase diversity, reducing the risk of canopy loss by species-specific insects and/or diseases.

Community Tree Board founding member, Paul DiPietro is also a member of the New York State Urban and Community Forestry Council. "This report is a great beginning," he says. "Both S.W.A.T. and the DEC offer recommendations and resources to help us improve our canopy. We can plant trees that are compatible with our climate, that don't cause wire conflicts and that help better manage storm water."

Throughout the winter, the Town and the Tree Board will pursue grants to access a portion of the \$500,000 allocated in NY State's budget for urban forestry to facilitate the process. If you'd like to join the effort and/or review a complete copy of the S.W.A.T. report contact Town Hall at 734-2031.



Valuable Canopy

Hail to the Chief



Chief Michalko

Whether he's handing out free bicycle helmets or coordinating a complicated criminal investigation, Police Chief Pete Michalko is the consummate professional. This fall, he attained the distinction of Chief, making the Town of Elmira the only traffic district in New York State to maintain an officer of his rank. Town Supervisor, David P. Sullivan says he appreciates Michalko for many reasons. "He's a serious career officer who's also very budget conscious," says Sullivan. "His department provides excellent safety and security for Town residents and he works well with the Board." Michalko has served in law enforcement for twenty-four years, twenty-one of them with the Town. "I still love it," he says. "I look forward to going to work every day."

TOWN TALK

HISTORY LESSONS

EXTRA - CREDIT

The Schornstheimer Dairy
Corner of Church and Wall Streets
Town of Elmira
1865 To 1980
Scott W. Deming - Town Historian

The Schornstheimer name in the Town of Elmira can be traced back to the early dairy farms in both the City and Town of Elmira. The first Schornstheimers to arrive in the area were Conrad Martin Schornstheimer and his cousin Peter Schornstheimer. Peter was born in Hesse Darmstadt, Germany. He came to America in 1850 at 23 years of age and located in Elmira. Conrad arrived in America from Bodenheim, Germany around 1860 at 24 years of age. Many of the Schornstheimers living in the Elmira area can trace their roots back to Conrad or Peter.

Conrad Schornstheimer was born on January 6, 1836. He married Frederika (Koop) in the old Grace Church (where the congregation of the German Evangelical Church worshipped prior to their new church being built) on Main Street. Their wedding was the first one held there. Conrad and Frederika had eight children – son Charles born around 1869, daughter Ella born on Sept 9, 1873, son Edward born on June 28, 1875, son Harry born on June 23, 1880, son William, daughter Elizabeth, daughter Rosey and an infant son all died young.

Shortly after his arrival in Elmira, Conrad became involved in dairy farming by managing several large farms including the Hoffman farm on Hoffman Street and the Foster farm on West Water Street in the City of Elmira. Conrad started his own dairy by purchasing the Hoffman dairy business about 1865. The dairy was located on the corner of Church and Wall Streets where the Elmira Savings Bank West Elmira branch now stands. This land was adjacent to the original Hoffman farm property.

According to Dick Schornstheimer [Conrad's grandson and the son of Harry and Eva (Harvey) Schornstheimer] of West Elmira the original dairy property extended from Church and Wall Streets all the way south to the river. Tobacco was raised on the property along the river and a tobacco shed behind the barn at Church and Wall was used to dry it. The southern end of the Schornstheimer property was sold when the dikes were built along the river.

For many years Church Street, west of Hoffman Street, ended at Wall Street and was called Schornstheimer Lane. It was renamed Church Street when the street was extended to "The Point" at Coleman Avenue in 1898 after Judge Hiram Gray's family sold a strip of land for the proposed extension beyond its end at Wall Street. Charles, Edward and Harry Schornstheimer took over the dairy when their father Conrad died on December 16, 1916. The processing of milk at the dairy ended in 1953. Robert Schornstheimer (Dick's brother) continued to operate the grocery store until 1980 when the property was sold to Elmira Savings Bank for the expansion of the West Elmira branch.

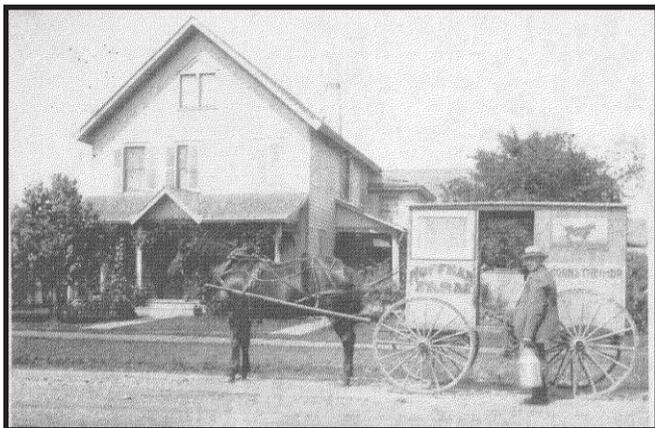
HISTORY LESSONS *continued*

Ralph Hoskins of West Elmira remembers his mother going down Wall Street to the Schornstheimer dairy store to get a can of fresh milk. He remembers ice skating on the pond behind the old dairy barn and watching the dairy cows walk from the barn to the north end of Wall Street (which ended south of Clinton Street in those days) to go to pasture in the open field. Ralph still has a Schornstheimer Dairy milk box on his back porch.



The Schornstheimer Dairy store as it looked prior to the Elmira Savings Bank West Elmira Branch locating there in 1980.

Conrad's cousin, Peter Schornstheimer married Christina (Stampf) (from his native town in Germany) on August 30, 1855. They had seven children – Henry, Fred, Peter Jr., Ella, Carrie, Kate and Lena. Peter operated the Schornstheimer-Stampf grocery store at the corner of Lake and Clinton Street in the city of Elmira for many years. Peter's son Fred eventually took over operation of the store. Peter died on December 27, 1914 and is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery.



Conrad Martin Schornstheimer- founder of the Schornstheimer Dairy with his horse-drawn milk wagon in the late 1800's. The sign on the wagon says Hoffman Farm and Schornstheimer.

Conrad and Peter Schornstheimer were involved in the founding of the German Evangelical Church (now known as the First United Church of Christ) on Madison Avenue in the City of Elmira. The church was organized in 1874 and the building was erected in 1876. Many of the early baptisms and weddings at the church were connected to the Schornstheimer family.

Information for this article was taken from Dick Schornstheimer, Ralph Hoskins, Elmira Savings Bank, the Steele Memorial Library and its website, US Census Records, Our County and It's

People by Ausburn Towner, Chemung County 1890-1975 by Thomas Byrne and various other internet websites.

Writer's Note: I continue to look for historic subjects (people, places, homes, historical events, old schools, family history, etc) about the Town of Elmira to write about. I am interested in doing an article on the old one room school house No.6 that was located on West Water Street just east of the point. If anyone has any information about the school please let me know. If you have any suggestions or information for future articles please e-mail them to me at demingsw@yahoo.com or call me at 607-732-1177.



The German Evangelical Church (now the First United Church of Christ) on Madison Avenue in Elmira.

Community Spotlight – Fire Prevention Celebration

To celebrate National Fire Prevention Week the West Elmira Fire Department pulled out all the stops. This year's Open House featured the usual favorites – fire hats, hot dogs and hoses, but also included a realistic “smoke” room, tons of jumping fun, free bicycle helmets fitted by Chief Michalko and a “drop-in” visit by the Guthrie One helicopter.

Fire Chief, Jack LeValley thanks all the neighbors who came out for the event. “It's a great feeling to know that the public we protect is there to support us,” he says.



Chief LeValley's Check List

- ✓ Change the batteries on smoke and carbon monoxide detectors now
- ✓ Clean the chimney and/or fire box
- ✓ Confirm the fire extinguishers are ready and at-hand
- ✓ Call with any questions



Get to Know Your Neighbor

Mary Ann Kasper



“The Town is really the centerpiece of my story,” insists the gracious, auburn-haired woman serving coffee and croissants. “It's such a marvelous place to live.” So begins Mary Ann Kasper, a lifelong resident of Elmira who moved to Upper Larchmont Road with her husband, Eldon in 1964. Together they raised four children – Kathryn, Margaret, John and Bill, and entertained eight grandchildren. From the top of Larchmont Hill where she and Eldon would marvel at the panoramic view of the valley to the bottom of the road where she and her grandchildren would pick handfuls of violets, Kasper has traversed the Town's topography. From the West Elmira Library where she plays bridge each week to Pirozollo Park where she swims “lots and lots” each summer, Kasper has traversed it's breadth as well. “Our family has certainly appreciated the whole complex behind Town Hall,” Kasper says. “It's so well-kept, supervised and clean. I've enjoyed baseball, softball and soccer games, tennis lessons and of course, the pool.” She is one of many neighbors who remember the distinct pleasure of feeding apples to Rommel the horse.



Retired from the Elmira City School District, Kasper taught English, Latin and Social Studies then became a curriculum consultant for fellow teachers. She sat on the Elmira Heights School Board for twelve years, serving two terms as president. She is a member of the American Association of University Women, Wednesday Morning Club, TORCH and Friends of the Steele Memorial Library. This past summer, Kasper attended her 65th reunion at Elmira College. She remains a voracious reader with a unique way of staying connected to her grandchildren. “I read what they're reading,” she laughs. Thanks to grandson, George she recently finished Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*.

SEASONAL SHORTS *continued*

New Code/Assessor Clerk



Becky Carpenter

APEX Assures Accuracy

Assessor Melanie Purcell and code/assessor clerk Becky Carpenter have completed training on a new software program designed to make property maps more accurate and easily accessible. Purcell has spent a great deal of time taking measurements with a D8 laser wand and using the APEX system to digitalize all of the Town's property records. She says the program can immediately graph each property in town with 100% accuracy. At \$1./sq. foot, accuracy is imperative for assuring a fair assessment.

New Zoning Map Committee

Resident and Planning Board Member, David Clovsky has volunteered to chair a new committee to review the Town's current zoning map. "We want to make sure all zoning ordinances fit today's building- and lifestyles," he says. "Ultimately, we will ask the question, 'what makes sense' in terms of zoning and variances." The committee includes members from the zoning board, planning board, Town Code and Assessor's offices, as well as residents. Clovsky welcomes residents' feedback and personal experiences. Call him directly at 733-6030.

STAR Status

Just another reminder, residents must file for Enhanced Star Exemptions by March 1st of the calendar year in which they turn 65. Anyone born in the year 1946 must file by March 1, 2011.

New Buildings & Ground Custodian



Scott Eschbach

Popular Programs

Cool Compost

Town of Elmira Highway Superintendent, Matt Mustico reports the new compost program offered free of charge to all town residents was a complete success. 328 permits were granted to residents who were able to deposit leaves and brush at the Town's Highway Garage through November 30th. Mustico says they've got it ground up so good, garden compost should be ready for pick-up come springtime.

Fabulous Fix-Ups

Twenty-one neighbors took advantage of the Town's 2010 Senior Home Improvement Program, resulting in grants of nearly 11K for exterior projects. The 2011 Budget includes funds allocated to this program again and Supervisor, David P. Sullivan says the list of qualified projects may expand to include energy-saving inside work. 2011 grant request forms and information should be available by May.

FANTASTIC FUTURES

On Monday, July 19th the Town of Elmira bestowed Outstanding Youth Awards to second quarter winners, David Chorpenning and Aubrianna Rupp. On Monday, November 15th, the Town honored third quarter winners, Andrew Booth and Emma Cadwallader. All four young people are lifelong residents who have made significant contributions to their schools and community, as well as demonstrated qualities of leadership, character and good citizenship.



Aubrianna Rupp

Chorpenning, an EFA junior was dually nominated by his photography teacher, June Gordon and his guidance counselor, Terry Nicklaus. Both acknowledged his kindness, strong work ethic and community involvement, as well as his service to his fellow classmates as a positive, compassionate role model. Chorpenning was named an "Everyday Hero" by First Heritage Federal Credit Union in June.



Andrew Booth & Emma Cadwallader

Rupp, an EFA 2010 graduate was noted for her integrity, kind heart and consistent ability to be a "team player" both on and off the basketball court. In her nomination, EFA guidance counselor, Eloise Streeter devotes two full paragraphs to Rupp's community involvement, including volunteer activities with the National Honor Society, Key Club, Elmira Youth Court, YMCA, Relay for Life, and Circle of Friends.

Rupp, an EFA 2010 graduate was noted for her integrity, kind heart and consistent ability to be a "team player" both on and off the basketball court.

Booth, an EFA senior is credited by his guidance counselor with being not only a talented athlete and musician, but also an actively-engaged listener who relates well to people of all ages. "I enjoy every interaction with him," writes Nicklaus. "(Andrew) is creative and able to put his ideas into operation." In October Booth was honored by the Rotary Club of Elmira during its 2010 Youth Salute Event.



David Chorpenning

Cadwallader, an accelerated senior at EFA, will complete her high school career after three years and receive the advanced designation Regents diploma with distinction when she graduates in June. In her nomination, Nicklaus refers to Cadwallader as politically astute, caring and committed to a number of causes related to food and hunger issues. In October she won second place in the Rotary Club of Elmira's 2010 Youth Salute.

Outstanding Youth Awards are given quarterly by the Town of Elmira. For the fourth quarter, youth leaders, parents, educators, coaches and clergy may submit nominations of young people in grades 7 – 12 who reside in the town of Elmira by December 30th.

Burning Backfire

In the spring we ignited a bit of confusion. Rather than further fuel the flames, Code Enforcement Officer, Chip LeValley states the following: "While there is strict 'no burning' language in the National Fire Protection Guidelines, the Department of Environmental Conservation of the State of New York has adopted Part 215 – Open Fires, wherein it says 'barbeque grills, maple sugar arches and similar outdoor cooking devices are allowed as are small cooking and campfires.'" Both Chip and his brother, Fire Chief, Jack LeValley recommend all residents exercise good sense and due caution where burning is concerned.

ESSENTIALS

-SAVE-

-SAVE-

-SAVE-

Join Us

Town Board Meetings

3rd Monday of the month (Workshop - 2nd Monday)
7 P.M. at Town Hall
(except January, February & December)

Call 734- 2031 for accurate meeting dates/times for Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Assessment Review, Recreation Commission & Justice Court.

Town Hall Hours M-F 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.
Justice Court Hours 8:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.
Night Court Wednesdays @ 7 P.M.

Call for Submissions

Do you have a feature suggestion for a future issue? Do you have a great Town photo, poem or story? Do you know a neighbor whom we should highlight? Call us. 734-2031

Town Talk is produced bi-annually as a vehicle for news and information about the Town of Elmira which includes West Elmira, West Hill Road, Hillcrest Road, Gordon Circle, Sunset Drive, East Hill and sections of the Village of Elmira Heights. Please contact the Town Hall if you have questions about residency.

Writer/Editor: Blink Creative Services
Designer/Printer: Copy Express

Check us out on the Web: www.townofelmira.com

Contact Us

Seriously, we'd love to hear from you. Better yet. Stop by for a visit!

David Sullivan (Supervisor) 259-0698 / 734-2031
Jo Ann Sherwood (Town Clerk) 734-2031
Lori Rupp (Deputy Clerk) 734-2031
Joe Cost (Bookkeeper) 734-2031
Liz Lucarelli (Court Clerk) 734-5971
Fred (Chip) LeValley (Code Enforcement Officer) 734-3608
Melanie Purcell (Assessor) 734-1486
Becky Carpenter (Code/Assessor Clerk) 734-1486 - 734-3608
Matt Mustico (Highway Superintendent) 734-0199
Peter Michalko (Chief of Police) 8:30 - 4:30 -- 734-2031 After Hours 735-8600



New Bookkeeper - Joe Cost

Councilpersons

Joseph Prunier 732-2882 Ron Allison 734-6474
Thomas Milliken 732-6760 Kenneth Bush 733-4373



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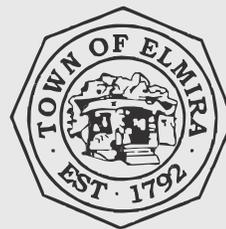
News from the Town of Elmira

F A L L - W I N T E R 2 0 1 0

READ ALL ABOUT IT

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New Chief
New Court Room
Tree Inventory & Recommendations



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Resident Profile – Mary Ann Kasper

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