



# TOWN TALK

News from the Town of Elmira

F A L L - W I N T E R 2 0 1 6

## SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

Number 41

By Dave Sullivan

### BY THE NUMBERS

Please enjoy this issue of Town Talk. If you have any questions or need any clarification about the articles in this issue please give me a call at 607-734-2031.

The Town Board is putting the final touches on the 2017 budget. The New York State Tax cap of less than 1% doesn't give us a lot of room for growth or expansion of services. At the September meeting of the Town Board a resolution was passed to exceed the Tax Cap if necessary. And I always like to remind our residents that the Town tax levy remains more than 20% lower than it was in 2010.

I am pleased to report the Town just received its annual audit report from the EFPR Group, CPAs, and it is available for public viewing. Contact the Town Clerk for details.

The New York State Comptroller's office also conducts reviews of municipal finances and stops in about every other year to review financial practices. I find that they provide good suggestions in terms of best practices and they generally will publicize their findings in the local media. We do not always agree with their recommendations but always welcome this additional layer of oversight.

For the past three years the Town has had the privilege of having accounting services provided by Joe Sartori, County Treasurer. Joe launched the program of having the Treasurer's office provide accounting services to local municipalities. The Town of Elmira was the first to sign on to this program and I can tell you that Joe and his staff have provided excellent service.

With the holidays right around the corner please accept my best wishes for a happy holiday season.

## PARK NEWS

By Scott Eschbach

As fall is upon us, it's that time of the year to finish as many summer projects as time allows. The newest baseball and revamped soccer fields that were worked on in 2015, (and should have been ready by now) have suffered the effects of an extreme drought. They are now being prepped for next spring and hopefully will be ready for recreational use. Other projects in the park include; repairs to our tennis courts and repainting of the parking lots with the addition of 12 accessible parking spaces-which have been welcomed by numerous park patrons. If you haven't been down to the river trail you should check out the 2 new swings installed giving a restful view of the river. They are located either left or right of the boat launch at the rivers' edge of our park. The benches were a group effort involving The Friends of the River, town highway department and Vulcraft Steel Corporation.



Our Town Community Center has seen a very successful growth year! We are expecting to add a few extras inside this fall and winter to make it more updated and convenient for everyone. Outside there should be one more parking lot light in place before winter sets in.



Another busy season has passed for the town pool program. A hot and dry summer always is made more tolerable when there is a pool in the neighborhood. The pool received 2 new diving boards this year along with several mechanical upgrades. The time is upon us to close down our water systems and prepare for what I hope to be a good winter season. Till Next Year....

## FROM THE TOWN COMMUNITY CENTER:



The "TCC" is a great place to use for many purposes such as rentals for birthday parties, showers, anniversaries and any other events that you can't have at your house. It is a very inexpensive place to have events but at this point in time the facility does not have a kitchen so prepared food must be brought in. If you are interested in renting or finding out more information about the community center please email Patty Carozza at [pcaozza@stny.rr.com](mailto:pcaozza@stny.rr.com)



During the week, we host weekly bridge games, bone builders, and health oriented workshops. If you have an idea for the building that you feel would benefit the community or be something different for people to try, please contact Patty Carozza. We do have some offerings listed that you might be interested in with the contact numbers readily available.

## FROM THE CLERK'S OFFICE

By Jo Ann Sherwood, Town Clerk

Often my office receives phone calls from new residents of the Town inquiring about various services the town provides. The one most often asked question is about garbage pick up. The Town does not have regular garbage pick-up for Town residents. Residents must hire a local hauler for their garbage pick-up. Another frequently asked question is regarding leaf pickup. The town does provide leaf pick up in the fall of each year. The leaf pickup usually begins in late October and lasts until the first big snowfall. The highway department will pick up leaves ONLY. They allow no brush or twigs and yes, you can bag the leaves. They should be left on the curbside but away from storm drain areas. The compost pit at the west end highway garage is also available to residents for taking yard waste to. You can get your free Compost Permit at the Clerk's office. Proof of residency is required with a current driver's license. After the Christmas holiday, the highway department provides the service of picking up Christmas trees. The Christmas tree pick up begins the day after Christmas. All trees should be left by the curbside bare with all decorations removed.



The Town also provides a variety of services available through the Town Clerk's Office. Our office issues licenses for Hunting/Fishing, Marriage as well as handicap permits. For Hunting and Fishing Licenses you must bring a valid drivers license with you. If you are a new hunter, you will need to bring proof of completion of a hunter safety course. For a marriage



license, New York State requires that you provide proof of birth date and current residence. Certified documentation for a divorce or death of previous spouse is also required. The fee for a marriage license is \$40. To obtain a handicap permit you must have a form filled out by your doctor providing proof of disability either temporary or permanent. Handicap permits are only issued to residents of the town they live in.

The Clerk's office also has voter registration forms for you. If you need to change your address or are not a registered voter yet, you can pick up these forms at our office, fill them out, and then mail them to the Chemung County Board of Elections. Exercise your right to vote!



Tax Bills are sent out December 31 of each year. If you are going south for the winter and are leaving before that date and wish to have your tax bill sent to you at your winter address please contact our office to make arrangements for this.



These are just a few of the services available to our residents of the Town of Elmira. As always, if you have any concerns or other questions that we can help you with, please contact our office at 734-2031.

## A CINDERELLA STORY...

Even though our softball program is called The West Elmira Softball League, we truly have a Cinderella story. The girls, Isabel Milazzo, Mackenzie Maloney, Megan Niles, Morgan Cox, Jordyn Fargo, Mackenzie Mahajan and Ally Wichtowski have left a lasting impression on softball fields everywhere.



The Notre Dame / West Elmira Superstars

Front left to right: Isabel Milazzo, Mackenzie Maloney, Megan Niles

Back left to right: Morgan Cox, Jordyn Fargo, Mackenzie Mahajan, Ally Wichtowski

During their time in the West Elmira League, they were under the direction of Coach John Wakefield (who was commissioner and president of the West Elmira Softball) and Coach Craig Milazzo. Some of their accomplishments include the success they achieved in tournament play. It did not matter where they played; they definitely made their presence known.

Tournament successes include making the finals (8U level) at the Heights tournament in 2007, the finals (10U) at the Heights and Horseheads tourneys in 2009 and 2010. In 2011, they continued to play together and at the 10U level is where they won the Heights and Corning World Series. The next year they won the 12U Heights Tournament. They are great competitors and athletes and made West Elmira Softball a great league and competitive in tournaments.

They brought that talent and level of competition with them to Notre Dame High School, where they continued to play together. In spring of 2016, they helped ND win the Class C state softball title while overcoming a three-run deficit and beat Caledonia-Mumford, 8—6. These girls are loyal and dedicated to the game and their hard work payed off.

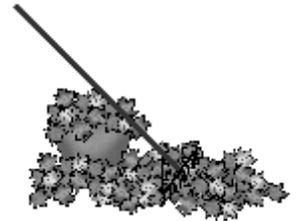
We would like to thank John Wakefield who built the league from the bottom up. His leadership, dedication, and time he spent at the fields are a contributing factor in the successes of our West Elmira League. Also, a thank you to Craig Milazzo who took over after John left and has always been a big supporter of our league. It does take a village.



## HIGHWAY - MATT MUSTICO

If you have driven up Hendy Ave and onto Clinton Street you have probably noticed that a lot of work has been done there. New drainage has been put under ground for a total of over 500 feet. Also, we straightened out the road, stabilized the sub base, and then added 2.5 inches of black top. This project will improve the drainage on Clinton Street. It was a much needed fix and really turned out beautiful. We are working hard to keep our town and our roads in excellent condition.

This year our annual leaf pick up will begin the week of October 31st. Remember that with winter coming odd –even parking begins and if possible during big snow events park off the street. Also a friendly reminder that it is illegal to push or blow snow into the streets.



With Christmas right around the corner, a reminder that our annual tree pick up will begin the 26th of December and run for a month into January.

## CODE ENFORCEMENT

Chip LeValley, Code Enforcement Officer



The importance of Carbon Monoxide (CO) detectors and smoke alarms simply can't be overstated! They have saved lives right here in West Elmira and one could save yours as well. The law now requires that a CO detector be installed on the lowest sleeping level (such as in a hallway, for example), and where CO may be produced (near the boiler, furnace or water heater). Of course if everything is electrical in your home then no carbon monoxide is generated and no detector is necessary.

Smoke detectors/alarms are just as important! Again, the law states that a smoke detector be installed INSIDE each bedroom as well as in the hallway outside the bedrooms. The hallway detector may be a combined CO and smoke unit.

Please remember that a new roof, swimming pools, decks all require a Building Permit and if you contemplate doing some work on your house such as an addition or removing some walls to open space, they

make require a Permit as well. Give me a call at 734-3608 or e-mail to [codeofficer@townofelmira.com](mailto:codeofficer@townofelmira.com) and we can make it happen!



Finally, to make living more enjoyable in the Town of Elmira, I ask that we all look to our own property by keeping it neat and tidy....which includes keeping the sidewalk free and clear of snow and ice as well as free of trip hazards and broken sections. Cutting grass and trimming weeds certainly makes the neighborhood attractive. We want to keep the Town of Elmira looking beautiful and a great place to live.

## STAR CHANGES FOR 2016

**Bruce A. Stanko, Assessor**

You may have seen TV reports and newspaper articles concerning the recent change made by the State to the STAR school tax relief for NEW homeowners. If you are currently receiving the BASIC STAR or ENHANCED STAR for homeowners 65 or older your exemption will not change.

Below is information from the New State Taxation and Finance Page for NEW homeowners:

Summary of 2016 STAR Transition Legislation Part A of Chapter 60 of the Laws of 2016 gradually converts the School Tax Relief (STAR) program from a real property tax exemption (Real Property Tax Law §425) to a personal income tax credit (Tax Law § 606(eee)). New exemptions barred, replaced by credits: The law prohibits new STAR exemptions from being granted unless at least one of the applicants held title to the property on the taxable status date of the assessment roll that was used to levy school district taxes for the 2015-2016 school year (generally, March 1, 2015), and the property was granted a STAR exemption on that assessment roll. However, a new homeowner may receive a new personal income tax credit in the form of a check. The dollar benefit to eligible taxpayers will not change. A taxpayer who is eligible for the new credit will receive a check from the State equal to the amount by which the STAR exemption would have reduced his or her school tax bill. The assessor may not approve any STAR exemption applications submitted after the taxable status date specified above; any such approval is void. Instead, the assessor will notify the applicant of the ability to claim the STAR credit by registering with the NYS Dept. of Taxation and Finance.



### **Pre-existing exemptions unaffected:**

A homeowner who owned his or her home on the taxable status date for the assessment roll used to levy taxes for the 2015-2016 school years, and who received a STAR exemption on that roll, may continue to receive a STAR exemption on that home as long as he or she still owns and primarily resides in it. No further action is required (unless the homeowner has been receiving Basic STAR and wants to apply for Enhanced STAR, which is permissible).

### **Eligibility requirements:**

The eligibility requirements for the new STAR income tax credit are essentially identical to those of the existing STAR exemption. Most notably: The property must be owned by, and the primary residence of, the applicants (this determination is based on the facts as of December 31 of the taxable year, rather than as of the local taxable status date). The income of the applicants would have to be less than the applicable limit (for Basic STAR, \$500,000; for Enhanced STAR, \$86,000 in 2017, adjusted annually for inflation). The term "income" for this purpose means the combined federal adjusted gross income of the property owners, and their spouses, who reside on the property as of December 31 of the taxable year. Taxable distributions from IRAs and annuities are subtracted from adjusted gross income for this purpose. For Enhanced STAR, all owners must be at least 65 years of age as of December 31, unless the owners are spouses or siblings, in which case at least one owner must be 65. If owned by a married couple, only one of whom is 65 years of age or older, the credit, once allowed, will not be disallowed after the death of the older spouse if the surviving spouse is 62 years of age or older.

**Credit amount:**

The value of the STAR credit within each school district portion is the same as the value of the tax savings under the STAR exemption. The STAR credit amount is the lesser of (a) the Basic or Enhanced STAR tax savings, whichever is applicable, for the school district portion containing the taxpayer's primary residence, or (b) the taxpayer's qualifying taxes. Qualifying taxes are the school taxes levied on the taxpayer's primary residence for the taxable year that were actually paid by the taxpayer during the taxable year. If a taxpayer pays only a portion of the school district taxes levied on their primary residence the credit allowable to that taxpayer will be the pro-rata share of the total credit amount. In city school districts in cities with a population of 125,000 or more, these calculations are based upon the combined city and school district taxes, rather than just the school district taxes.



**STAR**  
**The School Property  
Tax Exemption**  
DEPARTMENT OF TAX AND FINANCE  
[www.tax.ny.gov/star](http://www.tax.ny.gov/star)

**Application Procedure:**

A taxpayer who has acquired a new primary residence may register with the Department to receive the STAR credit. By September 15 of each year (or as soon thereafter as practicable) the Department will determine the eligibility of those taxpayers who registered by July 1 (or such later date as may have been established by the Commissioner). Eligible taxpayers who register by July 1 will be issued the STAR credit by September 30 of the applicable year (or as soon thereafter as practicable). The Commissioner will notify school districts at least 30 days prior to the levy of school district taxes to place a statement on the tax bills of eligible taxpayers that reads substantially as follows: "A STAR reimbursement check of \$\_ will be mailed to you upon issuance by the NYS Tax Department." If an advance payment exceeds a

taxpayer's qualifying taxes for the applicable year, the excess amount must be added back as tax on the taxpayer's personal income tax return for that year. If the Department determines that an advance payment was issued in an excessive amount or to an ineligible or incorrect taxpayer, the Department may recoup the improperly issued amount. A taxpayer who applies for but fails to receive an advance payment, or who has received an advance payment that he or she believes is less than the amount due, may request payment of the deficiency from the Department. A qualified taxpayer who registers after July 1 is still eligible for the STAR credit but should not expect to receive the check by September 30. Voluntarily Switching from the Exemption to the Credit A homeowner who is receiving the STAR exemption and who wishes to switch to the STAR credit may do so by renouncing the exemption in the manner provided by RPTL § 496 and registering for the STAR credit. All owners of the property must jointly renounce the exemption. Any such renunciation is irrevocable. The homeowner must pay any required taxes, interest and penalties attributable to the renounced STAR exemption on or before December 31 of the year for which they wish to claim the credit.

If you are a NEW home owner and have questions please call the State of New York STAR Tax Credit Hotline at **518-457-2036**. **The local Assessor's Office will not be administrating the NEW STAR tax Credit**





## **GUN SAFETY STARTS AT HOME...**

**Chief Peter Michalko**

West Elmira Police Department

The members of the West Elmira Police Department (WEPD) would like to urge ALL residents who are firearm owners to take a minute and check the security status of the firearm(s) in your home. Ask yourself the following questions:

Are the guns locked? Are the guns accessible to a child? Are the firearms kept loaded? Is the ammunition readily available whereas a child could have access to both, the firearm and the ammunition? In the event of a burglary would the bad guy have access to your firearm? If you have answered YES to any of the aforesaid questions than perhaps NOW is the time to make changes in your home.

The WEPD has a limited supply of gun locks available to residents of West Elmira (these are locks for handguns only and are key operated). Another option a gun owner may consider is purchasing a Gun Locker or Gun Safe. There are numerous models available for handguns, long guns, or combinations for both. For home security and quick access, perhaps one of the newer security boxes with fingerprint technology should be considered. The TOP priority for the firearm owner should in fact be SAFETY and SECURITY of the firearm(s). As we have recently had a young boy accidentally shot in Chemung County, which resulted in his death, the members of the WEPD are encouraging ALL parents and gun owners to take several minutes and review the current situation surrounding the safety and security of your firearm(s). We would encourage you to take a few minutes with your child or children and discuss the dangers associated with firearms. Pose questions such as what should they do if they are at a friend's house and the friend wants to show them a gun, what should they do if they come across a gun, whether it looks real or fake, what actions should they then take? The basic firearm safety rules reviewed with your children could possibly save their life. If you would like assistance in determining the safety status of your firearm(s), PLEASE feel free to stop in to the WEPD and speak with an officer. If you would like a free gun lock that fits handguns please stop by as we have a limited supply. Our ultimate goal is for you and your family to Stay Safe.

## **WEST ELMIRA SUMMER CAMPERS GET UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH CHIEF MICHALKO AND OFFICER BARR**



This summer during our Outdoor Exploration Camp, with the permission of the campers' parents/ guardians, camp counselors Jason Stukey, Troy Monks, and Jimmy Sincock decided that it would be a great time to give campers a lesson on gun safety. In lieu of recent events regarding accidental shootings, Chief Michalko and Officer Barr discussed with the campers the importance of gun safety and shared ideas on how to stay safe when a gun is present. This was well received by our campers and these discussions could possibly save a life. This directly ties in with Chief Michalko's article for this newsletter. Please read and reflect on his words



**Bridge** is a great game that brings fun and interesting groups of people together. It is exciting and there is always more to learn!

Are you looking to learn to play bridge?

OR

Are you looking to increase your skills?

The Town of Elmira Community Center is the place to come –

**Free bridge lessons for Beginner's** will be offered in October.

**Tuesdays – Starting October 4, 11, 18, 25 (9:30 – 11:30) OR**

**Thursday, Starting – October 6, 13, 20, 27 (6:30– 8:30)**

For more information email Patty Carozza [pcarozza@stny.rr.com](mailto:pcarozza@stny.rr.com)

Or

Pat Stadelmaier – 607 732 0601 email [pstad145@aol.com](mailto:pstad145@aol.com)

**Already play bridge and want to try duplicate?** – join us on the following days...

**Tuesday Afternoons – October 4, 11, 18, 25 (12:15 – 2:30)**

**Mondays Evenings– October 3, 10, 17, 24 (6:15 – 8:30)**

**Sponsored by Town of Elmira Community Center and the Tuesday Night Bridge Group.**



### **Duplicate Bridge Opportunities**

Town Community Center

Tuesday Night – 6:20 PM non-sanctioned

Wednesday Afternoon – 12:30 PM – sanctioned  
Call Shirley 607-732-4094 for details

Friday Mornings – 9:00 AM – sanctioned  
Call Pat 607-732-0601 for details



## EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

James Couse approached the Town of Elmira to see if he could do his Eagle Scout Project in the town. The project had to be something that is beneficial to the community so we offered a few projects that he could choose from. One was to construct a sign for the Town



Community Center that has been needed to help identify our newly remodeled center for the town. The other project was to incorporate a new park bench that would be a place where parents could enjoy the view of the playground as their children play, a place to sit while enjoying the Music in the Park series, and a nice place to sit while enjoying a treat from the snack shack. The park bench was dedicated to the loving memory of Kelley Stage who spent much of her life in the town park.

James was very conscience in every decision he made regarding his project and worked closely with the town to make sure the final project would be long lasting and appropriate for the park setting. The projects turned out beautiful and we are lucky to have such talented and community minded young adults in our town.

## Contact Us

### We Still answer the phones!

- David Sullivan (Supervisor) 734-2031
- Jo Ann Sherwood (Town Clerk) 734-2031
- Lori Rupp (Deputy Clerk ) 734-2031
- Liz Lucarelli (Court Clerk ) 734-5971
- Fred (Chip) LeValley (Code Enforcement Officer) 734-3608
- Bruce Stanko (Assessor) 734-1486
- Becky Carpenter (Assessor Aide) 734-1486
- Peter Michalko (Chief of Police ) 8:30 - 4:30 - 734-2031
- Matt Mustico (Highway Superintendent) 734-0199

### Councilpersons

- Ron Allison 734-6474
- Scott Bush 733-5899
- Thomas Milliken 732-6760
- Karen Krusen 734-9412



Police Business After Hours 735-8600

## OFFERING AT TOWN COMMUNITY CENTER



# SMART Recovery

Self-Management and Recovery Training

*"Discover the Power of Choice!"™*

SMART Recovery is a recognized resource for substance abuse and addiction recovery by the American Academy of Family Physicians, the Center for Health Care Evaluation, The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), US Department of Health and Human Services, and the American Society of Addiction Medicine.

SMART Recovery is the leading self-empowering addiction recovery support group. Our participants learn tools for addiction recovery based on the latest scientific research and participate in a world-wide community which includes free, self-empowering, science-based mutual help groups.

The SMART Recovery 4-Point Program® helps people recover from all types of addiction and addictive behaviors, including: drug abuse, drug addiction, substance abuse, alcohol abuse, gambling addiction, cocaine addiction, prescription drug abuse, sexual addiction, and problem addiction to other substances and activities.

What: SMART Recovery Meeting

<http://www.smartrecovery.org/>

When: First Sunday of each Month, beginning October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016

7:00 – 8:30 pm

Where: Town Community Center (Grandview Extension)

For more information please contact Fell Cadwallader 607.742.6821 or [fell.cadwallader@gmail.com](mailto:fell.cadwallader@gmail.com)



**I VOTED.**



### TIME TO GO!

All political signs should be removed no later than one week after the general election!

### DOGS WILL BE DOGS!

If you have an incessant barker please bring your dog into the house or employ a "Teaching tool" to discourage the behavior. It's not that we don't like dogs but many people have early morning or late responsibilities and really need their sleep!

Please remember that there is a leash law in effect in the Town of Elmira – you might have a nice friendly dog but not all dogs get along with other dogs! Of course, if your dog does its "business" during your walk – please remember to be considerate and clean it up!



Town of Elmira  
1255 West Water Street  
Elmira, New York 14905

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PERMIT # 420

# TOWN TALK

News from the Town of Elmira

F A L L - W I N T E R 2 0 1 6

## READ ALL ABOUT IT

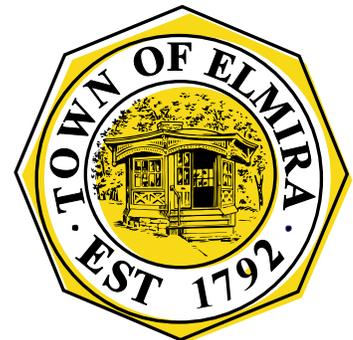
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GUN SAFETY STARTS AT HOME

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