



TOWN OF BERNE COURIER

Vol. 43

News From Your Town Government

Summer 2017

FROM THE SUPERVISOR: Berne and County to Study Highway Consolidation

After four straight years of property tax cuts, including a 3% cut in 2017, and continued improvements to Town services, we are now at a crossroads. This has been spurred by Governor Cuomo's recent initiative to encourage service and government consolidations across the state.

In the potential highway consolidation, the Town of Berne employees who maintain the roads in Berne would continue to maintain those same roads. The same conscientious Town and County employees that serve you now will serve you after a consolidation. No full-time Town or County employee will lose their job or any pay or benefits because of consolidation. This proposal is about smart government - not about reducing services, jobs or benefits.

One unified public works department is more efficient than two separate departments serving the same geographic area. We have the chance to have significant property tax relief - anywhere from 20% to 40% - with improved services. We must take a factual and deliberate look at this proposal and the benefits for all the citizens of Berne.

As the consolidation study moves forward, we will have meetings with all stakeholders, from employees to residents, to discuss facts and concerns. I look forward to working with everyone to strengthen and improve upon all the things that make the Town of Berne such a wonderful place to live and raise a family.

-Kevin Crosier



The Berne Youth Council Summer Recreation Program will be held July 17 through the 21st from 9:00 a.m. – noon. The Youth Council kicks things off with a magic show and celebration of National Ice Cream Day. Activities throughout the week include crafts, games, free play, making musical instruments out of recycled materials, daily snacks, and lots of fun. Details

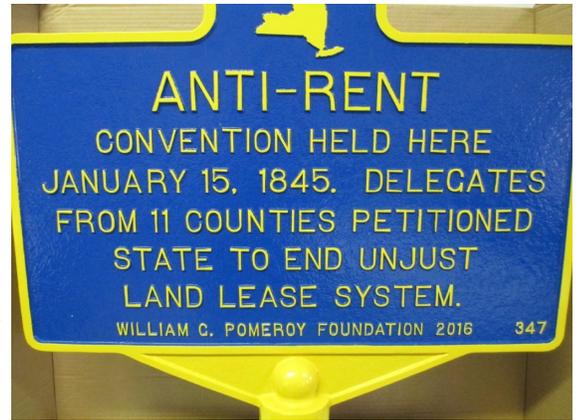
can be found on the sign-up sheets which will be available at the Town Hall, on the town website berneny.org/youth-council, and sent home with BKW elementary students in June. Get involved and join the fun!

CHURCH NAMED TO NATIONAL REGISTER

St. Paul's Lutheran Church (currently Helderberg Lutheran; the National Register uses the historic name) was named to the National Register of Historic Places this past fall. The church was built starting in 1835 and completed in 1836. The building is historically notable for its Federal Greek Revival architecture. The structure was constructed with locally sourced materials. The bricks were fired with clay from the Peter Bassler farm at Beaver Dam and transported to the church site during a one day working bee. The local timber came from massive trunks that William Krattinger, a historic preservation program analyst, called among the largest he has ever seen.

In addition to architectural importance, the building has social history significance for its association with the Anti-Rent Wars spanning from the 1830's

to 1880's. This was when the Van Rensselaer family attempted to collect back rent from tenant farmers in Albany County and beyond. In January 1845 the church, being the largest building in the area, was the site of the first Anti-Rent State Convention. Approximately 150 delegates from 11 counties attended the two day event. (Imagine the line at the church outhouse!)



First Annual Bio-Blitz at Switzkill Farm

So! What is a "bio-blitz" you may well ask! If you dissect the word, you'll get a hint - *bio* means life, and *blitz* means a quick, intense effort. Taken together, it means a quick, intensive look at living organisms in a particular area. But to say that is only the simplest of explanations...

The Switzkill Farm Bio-blitz will be so much more! Our one-day event will be an exciting and fun gathering of volunteers working in teams to locate and identify the plants, animals, fungi and other organisms in the woods and fields, and the streams and ponds of the property.

"The Conservation Board has long desired to conduct an event like this, to highlight the biological diversity that exists in the Town," said Kathleen Moore, the Berne Conservation Board Chair. "The Switzkill Farm affords a great opportunity to do this because of its diversity of habitat and great support facilities and staff. We are looking forward to meeting with all the 'citizen scientists' who will gather there on June 10th."

Surrounded by other interested participants and led by scientists and experts in their field, volunteers will generate a list of organisms that inhabit specific areas on the property and help identify

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One Hundred Years Ago

*From the Enterprise,
Nov. 1915–Jan 5, 1916.*

Editor's note: On April 6, 1917, the United States declared war on Germany, entering the "Great War" that began July 28, 1914. When it ended on Armistice Day in 1918, on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, 20 million were dead including 113,000 New Yorkers.

Our country declares war on Germany on April 6. All male New Yorkers, ages 21 to 30, must register on June 5, 1917 and all New York men and women, ages 16 - 50, must register for purposes of a census and inventory of military resources. The first draft quota will include 141 men from the Hilltowns. Those exempted include the "father of a motherless child," and a widow's son as she depends on him.

Navy recruiting stations are issuing buttons and letters to those certified as unable to serve: to "protect men of patriotic motives from being confused with spineless slackers because of their civilian attire."

Ford dealers have new cars to sell, from \$300 (Touring model) up \$645 (Sedan). Support the Women's Suffrage Movement by buying an auto hood cap with the logo "Vote for Women" and two slots for mounting flags.

Thompson's Lake gets four inches of snow on May 5. On May 14 and 15, Lake area residents find ice in exposed areas.

The Thacher Park Superintendent seeks a concessionaire to sell refreshments at the head of the Indian Ladder Trail. Buy new shoes for the Trail at Lainhart's in Altamont. Use its 25-cent, cut-out coupon (the first this editor has seen). Enterprise editors note that in July 1897, there was very hot weather, which may account for the behavior of Empress the Elephant, who struck and seriously injured a workman when the circus visited Albany back then. She "has an ugly disposition and has killed six men."

Thompson's Lake feels the nineties in late July. Plank and Righter will deliver ice by wagon. No elephant sightings reported.

-Submitted by George Christian

(Bio-Blitz cont'd) special habitats for protection and management.

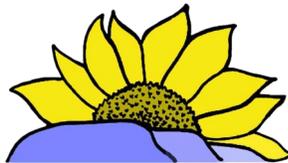
Categories of specific biological/natural science groups will be emphasized. Specialists recruited by Berne's Conservation Board members will determine the specific areas to be studied and will guide their group's work. Field guides and recording forms will be available to help document findings. Tools necessary for the collection and study of specimens will be provided.

Anyone interested is encouraged to participate. Students, seniors, enthusiasts, those needing extra credit for school work - from beginner to the more advanced - all are welcome! Each volunteer will choose the group with whom they'd like to work, and will receive a free t-shirt. There will be a barbecue, hosted by the Switzkill Farm Board and drinking water will be provided throughout the day.

"When the Switzkill Farm Board came together to develop a vision for the property we sought to bring the community, children, educators, and naturalists together to celebrate the farm and all it offers. This bio-blitz represents just that," said Ted Kunker, Chair of Switzkill Farm Board. "So come and join us for a fun day outside

Calling All Farmers, Artisans, and Crafters!

The Helderberg Hilltowns Association is planning our 7th Annual Discover the Hilltowns: Farms and Artisans Tour for Sep-



tember 16 & 17, 2017. If you have a farm or sell farm products, or are an artisan or crafter, and haven't been a vendor on our self-guided driving tour but would like to be this year, let us know. You can host at your location or set up a booth at one of our central locations. If you'd like more information, go to our website www.hilltowns.org/farms-and-artisans-tour or contact Dawn Jordan at 872-1390 or HHAPublicity@gmail.com.

with others and you may also get a much closer look of your surroundings and a renewed appreciation for this area." Come join the fun and enjoy the beauty and natural world of Switzkill Farm! Increase your knowledge and understanding of the organisms around you from the best in the field while you indulge your inner naturalist.

Saturday June 10,
9a.m. to 4p.m.
at 165 Game Farm Road

Advanced registration is not necessary, but, if you are confident of your plans, we'd like to reserve a t-shirt for you. Sign up on our website at www.berneny.com under the Switzkill Farm tab. Bring your bug spray, binoculars, sun screen and curiosity! It will be a relaxed day well-spent!

Health Information Workshop Scheduled

If you have ever left the doctor's office and remembered while driving home that you forgot to ask an important question or realize that you didn't really understand what to do next, you're not alone.

Community Caregivers, the Berne Public Library, Albany Medical College's Division of Community Outreach and Medical Education and the Schaffer Library of Health Sciences at Albany Medical College are joining forces to offer the community a valuable health information workshop. Participants will learn how to navigate online health information and ask important follow-up questions during medical appointments. This interactive workshop will help participants become effective health advocates for themselves and others. Join us for:

Navigating the Healthcare Maze
at the Berne Public Library
on Monday, May 8th 6:30-8 p.m.
Please call 872-1246 to register.

Community Caregivers, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization that provides non-medical services, including transportation and caregiver support, at no charge. To find out more about our services, as well as volunteer opportunities, please visit www.communitycaregivers.org or call us at (518) 456-2898.

***What good is the warmth of summer, without the cold
of winter to give it sweetness? - John Steinbeck***

Helderberg Senior Services,

which serves lunch Monday, Tuesday and Friday at the Berne Community and Senior Services Center, is starting up some new activities.

We have a Tai Chi balance class on Tuesdays at 11:30 facilitated by MaryJo McKeon. This class involves a very simple 20-minute workout that can be done sitting or standing. On May 15 the Albany County Sherriff's Department will be doing a presentation on Emergency Preparedness at 1p.m. On May 16 we will paint rocks and on May 30 we will be vase decorating and making flowers to put in them. June 5 we will be weaving a fabric basket. On June 30 we are starting a new painting class called Paint with Fran. We hope to have this class at least monthly or more often as interest dictates. All crafts include free materials and start after lunch. Each day we have games and there is always a jigsaw puzzle going for those like me who enjoy them but don't have the room at home to work on them. We also have

people who hang out after lunch and talk. Come hang out, learn a new craft and make a new friend or two.

Call Linda Hodges at 872-0940, for lunch reservations, for transportation or with any questions. The monthly menus are always on the Town's website and in *The Altamont Enterprise*. We can't wait to meet you!



Local Scout Earns Eagle

Zane Valachovic, a member of Boy Scouts of America, earned his Eagle this winter. Zane's project was the construction of a trail kiosk at the trailhead for the Long Path on Cole Hill Road and a park bench on the Long Path about halfway between Cole Hill and Willsie Roads.

Zane is a senior at Berne-Knox-Westerlo CSD and will be pursuing a career in education. He started his scouting career as a Cub Scout in second grade in Pack 79 which is chartered by the Mason's lodge in Berne. Throughout the years, Zane held many different positions in the troop including Guide and Senior Patrol Leader. He will continue on as an Assistant Scoutmaster for the troop while he attends college and plans on being involved in scouting as an adult.

An unflagging supporter of the ideals of scouting and the scouting program, Zane hopes to be an inspiration to all youth in scouting programs in the Hilltowns.

NEW PLAYGROUND TO OPEN IN BERNE TOWN PARK



There will be a new, cedar log playground at the Town Park this summer that will incorporate slides, a suspension bridge, monkey bars and numerous other interesting features. Built of Northern White Cedar logs, the structures are bold, sturdily built, and nature-inspired. Together, these elements will allow children the opportunity to challenge themselves, measure their capabilities, make choices and take chances—all fundamental skills needed to achieve and grow.

The play space is built on a universal design model which meets industry standards and will be accessible to children of all ages and abilities. A grant written by Town Board member Karen Schimmer and awarded by Assemblymen Angelo San-

tabarbara funded the project. Trey Socash, a Certified Playground Safety Inspector designed the structure to insure compliance with all required safety standards.

Installation of the new play structure will take place in July, at a date to be determined. A ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held for the public once installation is complete. An announcement of that date will be forthcoming.

"People asked for it; we found a way to provide it" said Supervisor Kevin Crosier. "By using grant dollars matched with Town funds, we're able to provide a playground that offers recreational opportunities for our young residents, all the while reducing property taxes 3% last year."

The new addition to the Town Park represents the first phase of a multi-phase upgrade of the Park's play space. Mark Hohengasser, a state park planner and landscape architect, is developing a natural play area that will surround the new play structures. A former Certified Playground Safety Inspector, Mark is designing an area that will meld the natural outdoor play of yesterday's children with the safety standards of today. Mark's design will reflect his view that "natural

playgrounds provide our children with a valuable link to nature. As children adapt to our changing society, they are missing out on many of those connections. Encouraging and inspiring this type of nature-based play early on in life can build an appreciation for the outdoors and a healthy lifestyle later in life."

Mark will be discussing his plans at a community gathering, Thursday, May 18 at 7:00 p.m. in the pavilion at our Town Park. Open to all Berne residents, Mark will welcome ideas for the design, adding suggested features that may be desirable, and adapting his plans to better serve our children. We'd love to hear from you!

We Want Your Junk!

Well, only some of it! We're making musical instruments out of recycled materials at our Summer Rec Program this year and could use your help. We are looking for 2-liter soda bottles (rinsed out, please) and plastic coffee cans. Donations can be left at the Town Hall in the tote at the back of the meeting room. If you have any questions, contact Dawn Jordan at 872-1390 or email dawngjordan@gmail.com.

Thank you!

Switzkill Farm Music Festival

The trees are beginning to bud, the jonquils are up and spring is in the air. Baseball season is underway, and soon summer, with its warm days and soft breezes, will be upon us.

There is always a wealth of activity during the summer months in Berne. This year will be no exception. But among the many activities planned will be a new one - a Music Festival at Switzkill Farm, July 22 beginning at 3 p.m.

Set among the green fields and expansive views of the Catskill Mountains, the Music Festival promises to be an afternoon and evening of great music and dance. Under the able organization of our own Dick Stock, several bands will be performing: Lazy Sun, The Hilltown Ramblers, the TLC Country Cloggers and Kilashandra - an Irish music based band featuring the fantastic voice of Chris Gil.

Teri Roben will offer a special concert for our children in the children's tent. Her performance will be complimented by instrument making workshops, group percussion activities, movement classes and sing-a-longs. Kids from the Berne Summer Youth Program will participate as well.

Vendors of all sorts are welcome to join us at the festival including artisans, crafters and sellers of baked goods. Bring your own table, tent or canopy, signs and

equipment, and join us for the day. Registration forms will be available on a first-come-first-serve basis on the Town website: www.berneny.com under Switzkill Farm. Reserve your spot today! There is no fee.

Food and drink will be offered by the Switzkill Farm Board. Hot dogs, hamburgers, drinks and snack items will be available.

This eclectic mix of music and activities will be capped by a dazzling fireworks display at dusk followed by an open jam session. Any and all musicians, from the newly minted to the talented pro, are encouraged to hop up on stage and join the merrymakers to perform an ad lib Grand Finale.

So.....pack up your blankets, folding chairs, sunscreen, coolers, musical instruments, or any other needed paraphernalia, and settle in for a good time. It will be the most fun in a skunk's age!!!!

JULY 22

**From 3p.m. to Dusk
Bands, Food and Fireworks!**

(This event is in place
of Summerfest.)



Highway Happenings

In 2016-2017 we welcomed a new salt shed. This year we will have material in the shed before next winter which will make a huge difference. Last year we didn't get material until the end of November which was affected and in return had to be worked a lot to get the material thru the sanders. We went thru 450 ton of salt and 2600 ton of sanding material, also 1000 ton of stone. Also we are working on tree trimming along roads and also filling potholes.

Please, if you have a concern about a dirt road, call my cell phone at 573-3002. Keep in mind we have 46 dirt roads. I promise we will get to you. I will be putting together a list soon of the roads we want to pave for the next few years.

*-Berne Highway Superintendent
Randy Bashwinger*

**The Town
Highway Garage is now
closed on Fridays.**

Music in the Park



Thanks to our Library, once again there will be live music on Wednesday evenings (July 12-Aug. 9) from 6:30 p.m. until dusk at the Berne Town Park. Featured performers are:

*7/12— Just a Bunch of Guys
7/19—WoodchuckWood
7/26—Two's Company
8/2—Slim Pick'ins
8/9—The Bluestones*

Admission is free and refreshments will be available for purchase from the Friends of the Berne Library.

The Hilltown Garden Exchange will be held again this year, May 20th in the Pavilion at the Berne Town Park. Gardeners from everywhere are welcome to bring their plant "extras" to be swapped out for new varieties. We welcome



perennials, fruit or flowering bushes, ground cover, bulbs and annual vegetables or flowers. This is a great opportunity to expand your garden varieties, and meet other local gardeners. Also on hand will be Emma's Incredibles-Team Lymphedema with their Fresh Lemonade Stand and Bake Sale, taking contributions for the Lymphatic Education & Research Network.

This event will be held rain or shine. Please bring your plants labeled and individually potted for set up between 10am -11am. Swapping

will begin at 11am. This event is hosted by Debra and Haytham Bajouwa of CM Fox Real Estate. For additional information, please visit www.debrabajouwa.com or Facebook pages "2 Bajouwas at CM Fox Real Estate" or "The Hilltown Garden Exchange".

Berne Public Library—Read All About It

What activities are fun, free, and build brain power? This summer brings an opportunity for you and your family to Build a Better World by exploring, discovering, participating in and contributing to a variety of programs. We will be looking at your home, your community, the country and the world with programs for all age groups. For ages 1 to 5 - Wee Read Storytime at 10:30 a.m. on June 27, July 11, 18, & 25, August 1 & 8; for ages 6 to 12 - Build a Better World Club with programs at 6:30 p.m. on June 29, July 13, 20, 27, August 3 & 10; for ages 13 to 18 -Teen Building programs at 6:30 p.m. on June 9, July 14, August 11; and, for Adults programs at 7:00 p.m. on July 2, August 6, September 10. Additional programs TBD.

The community room looks empty without a hanging display. If you have any artwork or historical artifacts that you would like to display at the library for a month, please contact Judy Petrosillo at the library, 872-1246.

Jester Jim—Thursday, July 6 at 7 p.m.

Jester Jim is coming up from Long Island to entertain us with his comedy and beatbox performance. This interactive family event takes place at the Town of Berne Community and Senior Resources Center, 1360 Helderberg Trail. All are welcome. This project is made possible with funds from the Decentralization Program, a re-grant program of the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Cuomo and the New York State Legislature and administered by The Arts Center of the Capital Region.

B-K-W Yearbooks: Yearbooks from 1947 to 2000 were recently digitalized and put on a DVD. Within each yearbook, it is possible to do a name search. This DVD may be borrowed from the library for a week at a time for home use.

Museum passes: Free passes for three museums may be borrowed from the library with your library card. There is a complimentary pass good for one admission to the Clark Museum in Williamstown, MA. The Friends of the Berne Library purchased two family passes for MiSci in Schenectady, NY. The Helderberg Hilltown Association purchased two family passes for the USS Slater in Albany, NY. These passes must be picked up from and returned to the Berne Public Library.

Beanstack: For those interested in keeping track of your summer reading, register on Beanstack located on the right column of the library website. Log in minutes, write book reviews and earn prizes.



Patricia Aronson (above) was the Grand Prize winner in the adult division for the 2017 Photography Contest. Her picture of the black cat also won People's Choice.

Storytime - preliteracy program for babies to 5 years - Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m.

Teen Action Group (TAG)- teen activities - second Friday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

Book Club - adult program for discussing books - first Sunday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

Knit Wits - knitting and crocheting time for adults - third Sunday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

Library Trustees Meeting - 2nd Thursday of the month

Friends of the Library Meeting - 1st Wednesday of the month

Check our website www.bernepubliclibrary.org for upcoming programs and events.

Friends of the Berne Library

While you are out enjoying the beautiful summer weather in the Hilltowns, capture some of those moments with your camera! The Friends will sponsor the 3rd Juried Photo Exhibit at the Berne Public Library. Photos must be submitted by the end of January 2018. Categories are: Hilltown Charm, Pets, Self-Portrait (Selfies) and Colors & Shapes.

StoryWalks® have been installed in the town parks in Berne and Knox. Take a leisurely walk through our beautiful community parks, get some exercise and read a picture book at the same time.

Please consider becoming a member of the Friends of the Berne Library. Your membership gives you a voice in choosing the programs we support at the library. Individual membership is \$15 and family membership is \$25. Membership envelopes can be picked up at the library or checks can be made out to Friends of the Town of Berne Library and mailed to FOBL, P.O. Box 42, Berne, NY 12023.

The Friends meet the first Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. in the library community room and we welcome you to join us.

-Donna Gwin, Pres. Friends of the Berne Public Library

LIBRARY HOURS

Monday: 4 to 8 p.m.
 Tuesday: 10 a.m. to 8
 Wednesday: 12 to 8 p.m.
 Thursday: 2 to 8 p.m.
 Saturday: 10 a.m. to 2



Town of Berne
 PO Box 57
 Berne, NY 12023

Visit our website at
www.berneny.org

TOWN DIRECTORY:

TOWN of BERNE—ALL DEPARTMENTS PHONE _____ 872-1448
 TOWN HALL FAX _____ 872-9303
 TOWN OF BERNE LIBRARY— PHONE _____ 872-1246
 FAX _____ 872-9024
 HIGHWAY GARAGE PHONE _____ 872-1448. EXT 108
 (Closed on Fridays) FAX _____ 872-9563
 SUPERVISOR Kevin Crosier
 TOWN BOARD MEMBERS: Joe Golden, James Cooke,
 Dawn Jordan, Karen Schimmer
 TOWN CLERK Anita Clayton
 HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT Randy Bashwinger
 TOWN JUSTICE Albert E. Raymond
 TOWN JUSTICE Alan P. Zuk
 COURT CLERK Stacy Loucks
 PLANNING BOARD CHAIR Rick Rapp
 ZONING BOARD CHAIR Ron Jordan
 CONSERVATION BOARD CHAIR Kathleen Moore
 ASSESSOR Brian Crawford
 YOUTH COUNCIL CHAIR Trudy Horl
 YOUTH DIRECTOR Kathy Wank
 SEWER DISTRICT ISSUES/EMERGENCIES Kevin Crosier 424-3446
 BUILDING & ZONING Tim Lippert 339-6030
 DOG CONTROL OFFICER Cheryl Baitsholts 728-8082
 TAX COLLECTOR Gerald O'Malley 872-0331
 TOWN HISTORIAN Kathleen Putzig 585-752-5822
 BERNE POST OFFICE 872-0424
 EAST BERNE POST OFFICE 872-1244

TOWN CLERK

Monday-Wednesday 8 AM-3 PM
Thursday 9 AM- 2 PM
Saturday 9 AM-noon
 (Closed Saturdays 7/1-8/12)
 Evenings by appointment

BUILDING INSPECTOR

Thursday 7-9 PM
Saturday 9 AM-noon

TOWN BOARD

2nd Wednesday 7:30 PM

PLANNING BOARD

1st and 2nd Thursday (as needed) 7 PM

TOWN COURT CLERK HOURS

Tuesday 9 AM TO 1 PM

TOWN COURT

Tuesday 5 PM

ASSESSOR

Wednesday 5:30 to 7 PM

(January through May)

Located at Town Library Building

TRANSFER STATION

Monday 4 PM to 8 PM

Wednesday Noon to 8 PM

Saturday 8 AM to 4 PM

Closed Holidays