



# TOWN OF BERNE COURIER

Vol. 36

News From Your Town Government

Fall 2014

## WARNER'S LAKE HISTORY

**1765**— The first settlers on Warner's Lake were Christopher Warner and his brother Johannes, who built a log cabin in 1765 & built the original farmhouse in 1790. The large hickory trees there were grown from hickory nuts brought from Europe, hence the name Hickory Grove Farm. In 1849 Christopher Warner's son, Abram J., built a second farmhouse on the north end of the lake. Both homes are still owned by Warner descendants.

**1899**—Henry Binns purchased the whole south end of the lake from Sussana Gallup, widow of Moses Gallup, who was the first to provide a swimming area with picnic tables. **Henry Binns** eventually built cabins for rent. At this time the farm was known as **Binn's Grove**, Binn's Landing or Pine Grove. 1920's the grove was sold to Mr. Pitcher and it became known as Pitcher's Camp. Mr. Pitcher then sold his lakefront property to the Roberts family from Ravena, and the property was known as **Robert's Grove** for the next 28 years. The property changed hands a few more times, to owners George Vunck (1946), John and Teresa Cocca (1950), and Dave and Betty O'Hanlon (1955). The property was finally purchased by Mary and Patricia O'Hanlon in 1987 and is maintained as their private residence.

**1906**—George Tompkins built a large home at the north end of the lake on land purchased from the Warner Family. He ran his **Lake View Cottage** as a boarding house for many years.. Mr. Tompkins owned a small covered

## FROM THE SUPERVISOR



Many great things are happening in the Town of Berne. The Town is in the best fiscal shape in its history. In 2014, over \$238,000 was spent on new highway trucks without incurring debt, and an audit by the New York State Comptroller's Office commended our purchasing practices. Our tentative budget for Fiscal year 2015 reflects a one percent decrease in our tax rate. Many thanks to the Town Board members and employees for outstanding work.



### Looking forward:

Every so often, an opportunity comes along that offers the potential for a great addition to our town and our local economy. We're pleased to report that one such opportunity is being realized. The Town of Berne will be acquiring 358 acres of land complete with lodge and out-buildings on Game Farm Road.

\$362,500 in grant money funded most of the purchase. Direct cost to the town will be \$112,500 plus an additional \$12,500 in land conservation easements and \$15,000 for closing costs. These funds had been set aside for building funds that can be used to purchase this property.

It is our goal to promote the new property for revenue-generating activities and jobs for local residents. Camping, summer and winter outdoor recreation activities, wedding receptions and conferences would all make great use of the property while generating revenue and jobs. The Game Farm Road property will also be a great spot for families to come and enjoy the many opportunities that will be available to our residents.

We gratefully acknowledge our partners: County Executive Dan McCoy, IDA Chair Gary Domaliwicz, Open Space Institute and the Mohawk-Hudson Land Conservancy. This purchase could not have been accomplished without their collaboration and support.

~~~Kevin Crosier~~~

(continued on page two)

(continued from page one)

Steam Launch "The Sarah E." which was brought from New York City to Altamont by train. The launch was then delivered to the cottage by Mr. Warner's wagon. Mr. Tompkins gave people rides around the lake for 10 cents. In 1950 the property was sold to Karl and Hilde Zwicklbauer and became a popular German-American restaurant. In 1976 the restaurant was purchased by Reinhold and Adelheid Scholz, who sold it to the present owner, John Pleat.

In the early 1900's,—Jay and Lydia Engle built Engle's Fur Trading Post on the east side of the lake. Jay was a rather eccentric character known for his tall tales and the bear he kept as a pet. This property is now owned by Willard & Jerry Osterhout, who purchased it in 1970.

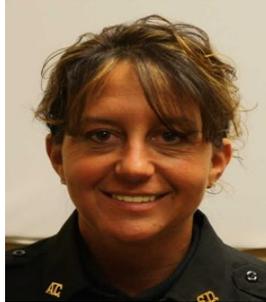
Around 1900 to the mid 1970's—a girls' camp known as Camp Orinsekwa operated on the west shore of the lake. In later years the property expanded to become a co-ed camp known as Orinsekwa-Sonnekwa.

In the 1930's Arthur Warner sold camp lots along the east shore.

1946-1950— Many of the rental camps on the south end were sold to private owners. A large portion of the west shore remains undeveloped. From the 1940's through the 1970's, Warner's Lake was a very popular tourist area with three public beaches, three boat launches and many camps for rent. At present, the lake community is mostly private residences, with only one restaurant and one boat launch remaining.

Learn more about Warner's Lake and surrounding areas in a book entitled *Life Along the Way* available at local libraries.

**SHERIFF'S OFFICE COMMUNITY LIAISON**



The Albany County Sheriff's Office Community Liaison has had a very busy summer. Deputy Tracy Mance has been on the road attending all kinds of events sharing a wide range of information from driving tips for teens, awareness on drugs/alcohol, disaster preparedness, and other valuable resources that the Sheriff's Office can offer. She has also taken time to stop in at summer camps to talk to children about making good choices and what it means to be a police officer. She has also visited seniors to share tips on safety. The Community Relations Unit has proven to be extremely productive and shows by the over flowing emails, letters of thanks, and words of approval. Deputy Mance also attends to some non-emergency quality of life questions and issues that arise. She currently writes a monthly community newsletter that highlights events that the Sheriff's Office has attended, offers valuable suggestions on safety, and lists upcoming events. If anyone is interested in viewing the previous newsletters, they can do so by going to <http://www.albanycounty.com/Government/Departments/CountySheriff/LawEnforcement/acso-communityrelations.aspx> for the newsletter links. Deputy Mance is also available to visit civic groups to talk about any topic. She can be reached at 518.655.7831 or [Tracy.Mance@albanycounty.com](mailto:Tracy.Mance@albanycounty.com).

**COMING EVENTS**

**BERNE FIRE COMPANY ANNUAL ROAST BEEF DINNER**  
Sunday, October 19  
Noon to 5 PM  
\$12—adults; \$5.00—6-12 years  
Five & under Free  
Takeouts available—\$1 extra

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**HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR**  
Sponsored by  
**BERNE FIRE AUXILIARY**

Saturday, November 08  
9am -3pm  
at the Berne Fire House  
Vendors & Crafters needed  
To Participate  
Call 872-0555

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**HOLIDAY PARADE**  
with Santa & Mrs. Santa  
**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7**  
Beginning At BKW  
@ 2 PM

\*\*\*\*

*A wise man will make  
More opportunities  
than he finds.*

The town offices have a new phone system making it easier to reach various departments. Please dial the main number of 872-1448 and use the following extensions:



- Town Clerk 101
- Account Clerk 102
- Supervisor 103
- Building Inspector 104
- Justice Court 105
- Assessor 107
- Highway Office 108
- Highway Shop 109
- Transfer Station 110
- Senior Center 111
- Sewer Plant 112

**SECOND ANNUAL BERNE SUMMERFEST**

The surprising chill in the air is stark reminder that summer is over. Fall, in all its beauty, is silently asserting its presence: the days are cool, the nights longer, and the trees are losing their bright green summer luster. If fall must come, then weren't we lucky to give summer a joyful send-off with a celebration in Town Park: Summerfest! It was a day meant for children. Boys and girls bounced themselves tired on the Bouncy Bounce before heading off to the Climbing Wall. For two hours, there wasn't an empty harness as child after child tested their skills, seeking to reach the top without a slip of the foot. Then it was a quick dash to the children's tent; watching Mike Gaylo's live birds of prey stirred curiosity and awe, while providing respite from the constant movement and play.



Pastor Wendy and retired town clerk Pat Favreau battled it out for best pie, Pat's Sour Cream Raisin against Wendy's Caramel Apple Pie. They each earned a first place ribbon, with Pat's Sour Cream taking the best in show. But, truth be known, it was the firemen judging the contest who really won the day because they got to sample both!!

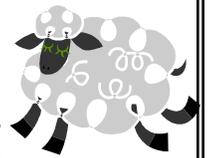
The glint of sunlight off well-polished fenders led straight to the car show. Under Mike Vincent's capable direction, trucks, classic cars, and antiques lined up for close examination. It was tough choosing a winner, but in the end, Jim Burghart with his 1930 4-door Chevy won the People's Choice award; Guy Caswell for his 1985 Honda Interceptor was the Children's choice; Jessica Liddle's 1955 Ford pickup won in the truck category and Wayne Earing's 1960 Ford Falcon was first for the Firemen's Choice.

And all the while, the music played on. No one could resist its lure. Five bands, each as enthralling as the other, brought young & old under the pavilion to listen, sway to the rhythms, and rest their weary feet. The open jam session stretched into the night, lasting well after the fireworks ended the long, busy day.

Vendors, demonstrations, a car show, the smell of BBQ in the air; together, it added up to a delightful community event. It was neighbors meeting neighbors, coming together to celebrate, to have fun, to enjoy the fruits of their labors, and simply enjoy each other's company.....together!!!



**B A A.....**



The Berne Arts Ass'n. ("BAA" with a sheep logo!) is a fledgling group of citizens in the Town of Berne who want to bring public art to the Town. BAA kicked off with two photography projects. The first centered on the theme "What does community mean to you?" and was shot by local youth. It is currently on display in the Town Hall. The second project invited adults to take photos of the Memorial Day Parade. Those photos were displayed at Summerfest at the Town Park on August 23.

Now, other artistic efforts are being considered which include the possibility of jazzing up the newly cleared space at the intersection of Routes 443 and 156 in the hamlet of Berne. Talent and art appreciation abound in the Town of Berne! Celebrating the artistic beauty that is all around can be accomplished by working together. Please consider this as a call to Berne residents to join together and create! Curious? Interested? Please contact Wendy Cook at 872-1443

**DJD YOU KNOW?.....**

That as soon as they settled here, our ancestors began to beautify their surroundings As is evidenced by the lilacs marking the remains of many home sites on West Mountain?

Have you noticed the many bluebird houses, pictured here, that have been placed in the town parks? Built by Helderberg Kiwanis, donated by Town of Berne Historian Ralph Miller and placed by Jeff Alexander, these twenty bird houses will provide shelter for bluebirds, house wrens and tree swallows along with beauty, song and insect eating prowess.



Ralph would like to see the Hilltowns alive with wild life, birds and flowers with a draw to nature and beauty lovers at all seasons of the year and suggests adding to the beauty of the community by planting more daffodils, crocus and snow drops. He also hopes that as our flower beds are dug up and spread out, residents could share the plants by donating them to the Town for planting in the parks and on roadsides which in turn passes on the wealth and helps makes the Hilltowns bloom.

~~ **More flowers, more birds, more wildlife, more beauty,  
More tourists, more value to our property and our lives~~**

**LOST & FOUND  
Found at Town Park after  
Summerfest :**

Camera Case with Battery  
Charger –  
Call Town Clerk  
At 872-1448 x 101.

**ELECTION DAY 2014  
NOVEMBER 4  
POLLS OPEN AT 6 AM**



## ***Helderberg Haven.....***

a program for Hilltown seniors, is opening in Berne. Located at the Helderberg Lutheran Church at 1728 Helderberg Trail, (Route 443), in the hamlet of Berne, it is a day program designed as a place where seniors can socialize and engage in recreational activities together with their friends and neighbors.

The program runs three days a week, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Participants may come for the whole day, or choose to participate for only part of the day. Door to door transportation will be provided for morning pick up and end of day drop off. Morning breakfast & a hot midday meal are served daily.

All seniors are welcome including those who are experiencing physical difficulties, are confined to a wheel chair, or suffering cognitive decline and will find enjoyment in this safe, friendly environment. Interesting conversation, games designed to keep the mind engaged, outings, and perhaps most of all, companionship, are important elements of the day. This is especially true for those seniors who live alone, are house bound, and consequently, don't see other people for long periods.

While the program may enhance the quality of life for our seniors, it also provides respite to family caregivers striving to maintain their own physical, emotional, and mental health. The knowledge that their loved one is in a safe, happy environment allows complete rest. It is a win-win situation for all. There is a fee for participation in the program. Payment is based on a sliding scale, but federal, state, and county funds are often available to offset these fees. Enrollment in the program cannot be denied due to money issues.

For More Information, please call Beth Owen, LMSW or Mary Jo McKeon

Senior Services of Albany

(518) 694-3511

Email: [bowen@seniorservicesofalbany.com](mailto:bowen@seniorservicesofalbany.com) or [mmckeon@seniorservicesofalbany.com](mailto:mmckeon@seniorservicesofalbany.com)

## ***HILLTOWNS COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER***

The Hilltowns Community Resource Center has been very busy. Along with the duties at the food pantry, the Back to School project has just been completed. Thanks to the generosity of the community 124 students were provided with all of the supplies necessary to begin a successful school year.

The focus now is on the upcoming Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. Contributions are needed for Thanksgiving dinners for families; and donations of food or monetary donations are always appreciated. Requesting sponsors for Adopt-a-Family program has begun. Anyone wishing to help those in need are asked to call the HCRC office at 797-5256. Checks for monetary donations can be made out to HCRC and mailed to PO Box 147, Westerlo, NY 12193. Volunteers are always appreciated. Many thanks to all who help make these programs a success.

## ***BERNE HISTORICAL SOCIETY***

The Berne Historical Society meets at 7PM on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the Month at the Berne Library Community Room & has planned the following activity for

***October 27-***

Bonnie Conklin will share stories of her trip to Bern, Switzerland

On August 3rd, The Berne Historical Society together with the Knox Historical Society presented a quilt show at the Berne Senior Center. More than 100 people attended the successful event.

## **Sign up today for Helderberg Haven**

***A New Social Adult Day Program***

***Helderberg Lutheran Church***

***1728 Helderberg Trail (Rt. 443), Berne, NY***

***Days of Operation: Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays***

***8:30 A.M.— 4:30 P.M***

The Helderberg Haven Day Program Emphasizes Social and Recreational Activities In group setting and welcomes Guests 60 and Older.

The Program Includes:

- **Breakfast and a snack**
- **A safe and interactive community**
- **Companionship**

***Transportation Available!***

THE TRUTH BEHIND THE MYTH OF *The Witches Grave*  
Submitted by Jason Romanczuk

In 1868 Eva Bokel traveled in “Steerage” on the SS Aatlanta from Germany and arrived at the Immigrant Receiving Center in Castle Garden, New York. Eva was just one of thousands of people who sought to escape issues in their homelands and dreamed of a new and better life in America. Eva’s original destination was New Orleans but because of the effect of the Civil War she was forced to change her plans.

She was befriended by a sailor, Jacob Messer who arranged for her to stay with his relatives in Huntersland in upstate New York. There she met and married George P. Messer and had a daughter Anna.

Eva died on December 26, 1870 at age 21. The cause of death is unknown. She was loved and respected by her family which is evident by the fact that George placed an elegant stone unique with a Bavarian style trident fence at her grave. The inscription on the stone read: Trennung unser Schicksal Wiedersehen unsere Hoffnung” which translates to “Separation our Fate, Reunion Our Hope”

George married Christina Hock and named one of their daughters Eva. George and Christina eventually moved to Waldenville, with their children and Anna. Jacob Messer eventually married, lived in Eerie New York and named his daughter Eva as well.

Overtime, through ignorance and superstition, rumors began to spread that Eva Messer was a witch and was blamed for causing accidents and bad luck to anyone that visited her gravesite which was most likely due to fence that had been placed there with the tridents that people began calling *devil’s forks*; along with the German inscription which was on the stone. These rumors & superstitious beliefs lead to the destruction of the final resting place of Eva Messer.

There is so much about this young girl that deserves better than a destroyed grave site. Those interested in learning more about this girl behind the myth are invited to join the Eva Messer Friends Group on Facebook.



**SNOWPLOWS AND MAILBOXES:**

*A Brief Guide to Winter Happiness at the End of the Driveway.*

Despite numerous indications of global warming, there is every reason to believe that winter will return for at least another year, bringing with it the usual mix of delightful weather.

Please take time now to make sure your mailbox is winter-ready.

When the snow arrives, please bear in mind:

- Snowplow operators will plow as close to mailboxes as possible, to help maintain accessibility; please remember their primary responsibility is clearing the roads.
- It is the responsibility of the addressee (you) to keep the area around your mailbox free of snow. This may mean a little touch-up shoveling after the plows have gone through in order to keep your mailbox accessible.
- Every effort is made to avoid damage to mailboxes but there are times when drivers are faced with circumstances, such as snow coming off the end of the plow getting compacted between the blade and the mailbox, which may damage or destroy the mailbox. Please understand this is not intentional.
- Clearing a few feet of snow bank along the road approaching your mailbox can help. This makes a space for snow coming off the blade to pile up before the plow reaches your mailbox – it just might save your mailbox from death by compacting!
- Here’s a tip to help minimize the snow pile left across the end of your driveway when the plow passes by: When plowing your driveway, push the pile to the right of your driveway as you exit. This way the highway plow won’t be pushing it back into your driveway when it comes along.
- Remember to leave the road clean after you’ve plowed your driveway – you can be ticketed for piling up snow in the road.

Keep this article in a handy place so that when winter does arrive you’ll be prepared. Stay warm, and drive safely!

**HIGHWAY HAPPENINGS**

Highway Superintendent and long time highway employee Ken Weaver retired from his dedicated service to the Town on September 19. Best wishes and thank you to Ken from the Town Board, town employees and the residents of the Town of Berne.



On September 24th, Ed Hampton was appointed to fill the position of Highway Superintendent. Ed has been a highway employee for ten years, and has been instrumental in the purchasing of new highway trucks and equipment. He also contributed to the newly adopted purchasing practices for the Highway Department. Welcome Ed and good luck.

## ***LIBRARY NOTES***

### **Monthly Events**

(All events are open to the community and free unless otherwise noted.)

1st Wednesday - Friends of the Berne Library-7:30 p.m.  
 1st Friday - Family Movie Night-6:30 p.m.  
 1st Sunday - Book Club for Adults -7 p.m.  
 2nd Tuesday - Memoir Writing for Adults-6:30 p.m.  
 2nd Thursday - Library Board of Trustee Meet  
 2nd Friday - Teen Night (TAG)- 6:30 p.m.  
 2nd Sunday - Game Night for Adults - 7 p.m.  
 3rd Saturday - Lego League ages 5 thru 12—11 a.m.  
 3rd Sunday - Knit Wits for Adults- 7 p.m.  
 4th Tuesday - Memoir Writing for Adults

\*Story time has changed from 11 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. on Tuesdays to accommodate the pre-school program at B-K-W. Many children and caregivers stay after story time for some playtime. In addition to developing pre-literacy skills, this is a great opportunity for socializing.

### **Special Events**

Check for special events posted at the library and on our website at [www.bernepubliclibrary.org](http://www.bernepubliclibrary.org). If you are interested in receiving a monthly e-newsletter, contact the library and give your email address. If you are interested in volunteering to present a program, contact Judy.

### **Grants and Awards**

The library has received two library construction grants from NYS Department Education, Division of Library Development, Library Construction Grant Program. The 2012 and 2014 grants totaled \$245,781. These monies were used toward purchasing the library property and making interior renovations. The library has submitted an application for a 2015 grant to help pay for air conditioning, paving, and other exterior work. Please support the Friends of the Library in their fund-raising efforts in order to obtain matching funds.

The Public Library Section of the NY Library Association recently awarded the Berne Public Library the 2014 Building Award for a library serving a population of less than 20,000. The focus of the award is the impact that a construction project has had on the library's ability to provide services to the community. Thanks again to all the volunteers and the Town of Berne for their support.

The Community Room at the Library is available for use by non-profit groups when it is not being used by the Library or Town. If you are interested in using the room, which can accommodate up to thirty people, applications are available at the Library.

The Library provides computers with internet or wifi access for your devices. One-on-one computer help is available by appointment.



### **LIBRARY HOURS**

Monday: 4 to 8 p.m.  
 Tuesday: 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
     *Storytime* 10:30(new time)\*  
 Wednesday: 4 to 8 p.m.  
 Thursday: 2 to 8 p.m.  
 Saturday: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

### **Friends of the Library**



The Friends enjoyed serving up hot dogs and sub sandwiches while listening to great music at the *Music in the Park* events and at the *Summer-fest*. The money raised at the food booth will be applied to a matching grant from the Upper Hudson Library System. Thanks to all who supported the events.

Mark your calendar for Saturday, Nov. 15 at 5:30 PM for a Lasagna Dinner & Cakewalk will take place at the Senior Center. The Friends will be serving lasagna, salad, bread, beverages & dessert. Buy a chance on your favorite cake and maybe you could be a winner. Tickets available at the Library, \$10 with reservation; \$12 at the door. More information on time and ticket prices will be announced at a later date.

The Friends of the Library meet the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30PM in the Community Room of the library. All are welcome.

2014

# TOWN OF BERNE SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM



*THANKS TO THE COMMUNITY FOR MAKING OUR SUMMER PROGRAM A GREAT SUCCESS! PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT US WITH ANY TIME AND TALENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH THE YOUTH!*

The Summer Youth Program “biked” off to a great start. Partnering with Albany County, a mock community was created on the tennis courts at the Town Park. The children were able to review bike safety in hands on, fun way. A visit from Pine Bush provided the opportunity to explore the wonderful

world of the salamander. Ms. Rapoli returned for an encore presentation of her well- loved mud critters at Thompson’s Lake. The children also enjoyed all that Thacher Park has to offer with its zip lines, hiking trails and playground. Hiking at the Berne Park with Mr. Conklin, crafts with Mrs.

Scram and Mrs. Fisher were among other activities as well as making a splash at the Thompsons’s Lake Nature Center. The Youth, along with many brave adults, were also able to rock climb at the Berne Summer Fest. Check the town website at [berneny.org](http://berneny.org) for upcoming Fall and Winter events.



BIKE RODEO



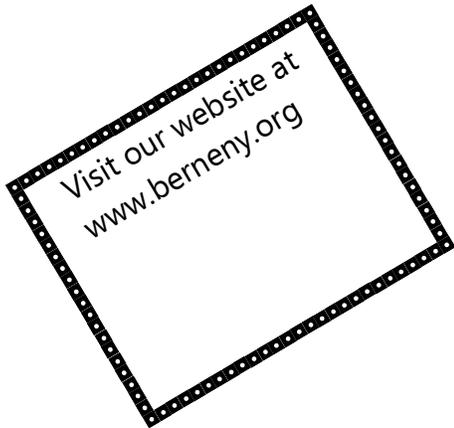
CRITTERS AT THOMPSON’S LAKE



BLASTS WITH CRAFTS



Town of Berne  
 PO Box 57  
 Berne, NY 12023



**DIRECTORY OF TOWN OFFICIALS**

**TOWN of B ERNE—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**  
**FAX... 872-9563**  
**SUPERVISOR Kevin Crosier**  
**TOWN BOARD MEMBERS Joe Golden**  
**Wayne Emory**  
**Dawn Jordan**  
**Karen Schimmer**  
**Anita Clayton**  
**Ed Hampton**  
**Albert E. Raymond**  
**Alan P. Zuk**  
**Stacy Loucks**  
**Gerard Chartier**  
**George Christian**  
**Kathleen Moore**  
**Brian Crawford**  
  
**BUILDING & ZONING Tim Lippert 339-6030**  
**DOG CONTROL OFFICER Cheryl Baitholts 797-5201**  
**TAX COLLECTOR Gerald O'Malley 872-0331**  
**TOWN HISTORIAN Ralph Miller 872-0212**  
  
**BERNE POST OFFICE 872-0424**  
**EAST BERNE POST OFFICE 872-1244**

**TOWN CLERK**

**Monday-Thursday 9 AM-3 PM**  
**Saturday 9 AM-noon**  
**Evenings by appointment**  
**BUILDING INSPECTOR**  
**Thursday 7-9 PM**  
**Saturday 9AM to noon**  
**(except July & August)**

**TOWN BOARD**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday 8 PM**

**PLANNING BOARD**

**1<sup>st</sup> Thursday 7:00 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)**

**TRANSFER STATION**

**Monday 4 PM to 8 PM**  
**Wednesday Noon to 8 PM**  
**Saturday 8 AM to 4 PM**

**\*\*\*Closed Holidays\*\*\***

**Permit required-Obtain from  
 Town Clerk**