

Village VOICES



Newsletter of the Village of Cayuga Heights

Winter 2014 Volume 1, #1

www.cayuga-heights.ny.us

WELCOME! to Volume 1, #1 of *Village Voices*, newsletter of the Village of Cayuga Heights, following publication of *The Courier* but recycling a former name. Together, Elizabeth Mount and Sally Grubb have agreed to edit the newsletter on a trial basis to see if once again we can get it on a sound footing with 2-3 issues a year.

Watch for indepth articles about Village issues such as rebuilding roads and sewers, changing municipal laws, and potentially redeveloping Community Corners. And as always, we will provide useful information about Village affairs.

Villagers with computer access can get updates on time-sensitive issues from the Village web site and e-News (formerly e-Blast). To sign up, go to <http://www.cayuga-heights.ny.us>, scroll to the bottom of the page, and enter your name and address.

Our focus in this first issue –

“What the Village Does for You” – features the multiple jobs the trustees, mayor, appointees and volunteers do.

Note: The next Village election is Mar. 18, noon–9 pm; candidates must declare by Feb. 11. You’ll want to know which candidates for mayor and three trustees are best suited to these jobs. Watch the media and the Village website for information about election forums and declared candidates.

We’re also bringing back “Youth for Hire” and introducing “What’s on your Mind” to give you a chance to ask questions and hear back from an elected official or a staff member. Submit questions to villagevoices@cayuga-heights.ny.us and we will print them as space allows.

Please note: *Village Voices* is the official newsletter of the Village of Cayuga Heights. The magazine, *CAYUGA HEIGHTS Living*, is not connected to or supported by the Village of Cayuga Heights.



Jennifer Zawislak, Information Aide and Angela Podufalski, Deputy Clerk; Brent Cross, Engineer & Superintendent of Public Works; Cayuga Heights Police Department Clerk Jackie Carr & Officer James Landon. Meeting in the renovated committee room, they represent three branches of the team that keeps our Village on its tracks.

What the Village Does for You: Past and Present

THE ORIGINS OF OUR VILLAGE GO BACK TO 1901 WHEN Jared T. Newman and Charles Blood became partners in the development of the Heights. The Village was incorporated in 1915 with the first election for a president and two trustees taking place on June 24, 1915 and the first board meeting on June 29, both in Newman’s Carriage House. Newman himself was appointed Street Commissioner. Since that time 20 people have served as Mayor, most only for short terms. Only four have not been Cornell Professors and only one a woman. Frederick G. Marcham, 1956-87, Ronald E. Anderson, 1988-2002, and Walter Lynn 2003-07, have served longer terms and helped make the Village what it is today. Their brief histories provide the background to the work a mayor and trustees do for the Village today.

Frederick G. Marcham taught at Cornell for almost 70 years, and served as Mayor of Cayuga Heights for 32 years. He is believed to be the longest serving village mayor in New York State. In the words of President Frank H. T. Rhodes, Marcham was “a devoted teacher of Cornell students, an active leader of the university faculty and an involved citizen of the Ithaca Community.” He was first elected trustee of Cayuga Heights in

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Elected Village Officials

Mayor – Kate Supron

Village Board of Trustees

Liz Karns, *Deputy Mayor*; Chris Crooker,
Steve Hamilton, Peter Salton,
Diana Riesman, Richard Robinson

Justice – Glenn Galbreath

Acting Justice - David Klein

Court Clerk - Pat Kannus

Professional Department Heads/Staff

Clerk & Treasurer – Joan Mangione

Deputy Clerk – Angela Podufalski

Information Aide – Jennifer Zawislak

Engineer & Supt. Public Works – Brent Cross

Asst. Supt. Public Works – Jeff Frisbie

Chief of Police – James M. Steinmetz

Police Clerk – Jackie Carr

Fire Chief – George Tamborelle

Court Clerk – Pat Kannus

Appointed Positions

Planning Board

Martin Harms, *Chair*; Fred Cowett,
Sean Cunningham, Graham Gillespie,
Roger Segelken; Diedre Hay, *Alternate*

Zoning Board of Appeals

Jack Young, *Chair*; Rosemarie Parker,
Alison Shull, Kirk Sigel, Anita Watkins;
Mark Eisner & Sue Manning, *Alternates*

Intermunicipal Committees

SCLIWC Bolton Point Commissioners -

Roy Staley, Kate Supron

Cable Access Oversight Budget -

Wies van Leuken

Environmental Mgmt Council - Brian Eden

Joint Youth Committee - Natalie Detert

Greater TC Municipal Health Insurance Con-

sortium Joint Committee - Joan Mangione

Greater TCMHIC Board of Directors - Salton

Tompkins County Transportation Council -

Supron/Cross

TCCOG Board of Directors - Supron

Village Committees/posts

Communications - Crooker/Riesman

Finance - Robinson/Karns

Forester - André Bensadoun

Gardener - Doug Murray

Historian - Beatrice Szekely

Human Resources - Crooker/Hamilton/Karns

Shade Tree - André Bensadoun, *Chair*;

Fred Cowett, Fairfax Gouldin;

Cross/Frisbie, *ex officio*

Planning Board Liaison - Hamilton

Public Safety - Riesman/Hamilton/Salton

Public Works - Crooker/Riesman/Robinson

the 1950s, in which capacity he successfully opposed the village's annexation by the city of Ithaca and was closely involved in the authorization of a Village fire district in 1954 and the building of the sewer plant.

Ronald E. Anderson, who for over thirty years was a Professor of Plant Breeding at Cornell, became our Village Mayor in 1988 after extended terms as trustee and deputy mayor under Fred Marcham. His primary focus was on maintaining the Village's physical infrastructure: roads, sewer system, wastewater treatment plant and water supply.

Ron was a prominent commissioner at Bolton Point from the early years of the Southern Cayuga Lake Intermunicipal Water Commission and a life member of the Cayuga Heights Fire Department. His close involvement in its planning and construction led to the Village naming the Ron Anderson Fire Station in 2001. Longtime Villagers may remember meeting Mayor Ron at what is now the entrance to the clerks' office in Marcham Hall where he was often on hand to greet anyone coming in. He always enjoyed responding firsthand to Villagers' concerns.

*From the 2013 tribute
by Beatrice Szekely,
Village Historian*



Walter Lynn was a Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Cornell. As University Ombudsman for 12 years, he managed complicated and emotional disputes at Cornell. Walter, who served as a trustee when Ron Anderson was mayor, became Village Mayor in 2003, and was known for being "fair and enjoyable to talk with," even when an issue was sensitive.

"Walter made discussion easy with his common sense and levity and did not bow easily to self-professed experts in anything. He liked open discussions where a person could speak and be heard; it gave him a wider view of the needs and concerns in the village".

But it was Walter's professional background in water supply and treatment that made him the right person to work with the five nearby user municipalities and that defined our current intermunicipal water and sewer agreement. This was the policy that redirected some of our sewer flow to the City of Ithaca, taking the stress off the Village system, and allowing continued growth in the adjoining communities. Not many villagers realize how important these quiet issues have been to insuring the independence of our small community.

From the tribute given by Roy Staley, Village Trustee and neighbor, at Walter's memorial service in 2011

CAYUGA HEIGHTS MAY BE ONLY A VILLAGE, BUT ITS MAYOR, STAFF AND TRUSTEES DO THE JOBS THAT WOULD BE REQUIRED IN ANY MUNICIPALITY. SPEAKING HERE ONLY OF THE MAYOR WHO IS ELECTED FOR A TWO-YEAR TERM, THE PRIMARY STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITY IS TO LEAD THE RESPONSIBLE STEWARDSHIP OF OUR PUBLIC RESOURCES.

To this end, the Mayor presides over Trustee meetings; appoints all non-elected village officers (Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals, Forester, and Historian), representatives to intermunicipal organizations (such as the Environmental Management Council, Time Warner Public Access Committee, the County Youth Board, the Joint Youth Commission, and the Tompkins County Intermunicipal Health Consortium); and employees (Treasurer, Clerk and Deputy Clerk); fills unexpected vacancies; and supervises the Clerk, Treasurer, Village Engineer, Police Chief and Fire Chief.

In addition, the Mayor works closely with the Treasurer and Department Heads to develop a sound budget at the beginning of each fiscal year (June 1) and executes all contracts in the name of the Village ranging from negotiated labor agreements with our two unions (the Policemen's Benevolent Association and Teamsters) to contracts with other municipalities such as our agreement for the Cayuga Heights Fire Department to provide fire protection services to a portion of the Town of Ithaca, down to more routine contracts for professional services.

An action that may more personally touch Villagers is the Mayor's right to intervene in any Village action where the Board deems it necessary to protect the rights of the Village and its inhabitants. This can encompass anything from creating or revising Village laws (fencing, noise ordinance, weapons discharge) to reviewing and updating internal policies and procedures (the employee handbook and code of ethics, creation and oversight of special committees, performance review systems).

What many Villagers may not know is that Cayuga Heights does not stand alone in our wider community, but is part of many intermunicipal organizations. In so doing, the Mayor represents the Village to these organizations. Of special interest is the Southern Cayuga Lake Intermunicipal Water Commission (SCLIWC is our water as it comes from Bolton Point), the Ithaca Tompkins County Transportation Council (including our bus service), and the Tompkins County Council of Governments (TCCOG), which addresses such issues as cable franchise negotiations, health insurance, cell tower legislation, road use agreements and gas drilling.

Serving the Village of Cayuga Heights as its chief executive is a privilege and honor possible only with the hard work, commitment, and dedication of Village staff, elected officials, appointees and volunteers. No one could do this job alone.

The full text of mayoral responsibilities may be found along with this newsletter on the Village website (Quick Link Village Voices, on the left sidebar)



Mayor Kate Supron, Clerk Joan Mangione



Front Office Team: Angela Podulfaski (l) Deputy Clerk; Jennifer Zawislak (c) Information Aide; and Joan Mangione (r) Clerk & Treasurer

“WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU DO AS A VILLAGE TRUSTEE?”

It’s the question I am asked most often after someone learns that I am an elected official in Cayuga Heights. I usually stammer as I try to encapsulate for them what it is I do because, while it’s actually quite involved, it’s sometimes hard to clearly articulate the details of the position.

I begin by likening it to being a city council member. Trustees, who are residents of the Village, are elected to a two-year term to oversee the day-to-day operations of the Village, and to listen and respond to the needs, concerns, and issues important to residents. That’s it in a nutshell and yet it is far more complicated than that which I only realized after being elected!

After I was first elected in 2008, it took time getting up to speed on many disparate issues – department budgets; the condition of streets, sidewalks, and water mains; the Village’s wastewater plant; police contract negotiations; and Village finances, personnel issues, employee health care, and agreements with neighboring municipalities. This required lots of reading, attending meetings, and listening to everyone who works for the Village.

Trustees attend monthly meetings which are open to the public and last between two and four hours, during which we review the Village’s accounting for the month and approve payment of all Village bills, vote on any contracts or other agreements the Village may be entering into, discuss ongoing or potential infrastructure projects, and listen to department head reports as well as to comments made by the public during the portion of the meeting known as

Privilege of the Floor. Our foremost responsibility is to ensure that Village finances are sound for both the long and short term and that we can continue to operate as an independent municipality.

A Trustee is also involved in committees which meet once a month with the related department head. For example, I am the Chair of the Public Safety Committee and, along with two other Trustees, meet once a month with the Chief of Police to hear what is going on in the department: Does a new officer need to be hired? Is there new equipment the department needs? As a member of the Public Works Committee, I confer with the Superintendent of Public Works about street repairs, the water plant at Bolton Point, and recycling and garbage collection. As a member of the Communications Committee, I look for ways to improve connectivity between the Village and its residents including upgrading the Village’s website and promoting e-mail correspondence.

I am in the last year of my third term as a Trustee. It’s been mostly a wonderful, learning experience, though occasionally trying. By far the best part has been working with the Village’s terrific and capable staff, from the members of the DPW, to the police officers, our volunteer firefighters, and everyone else. As a resident, I feel much more connected to the Village because of experiencing first-hand everything that it takes to make it run.

Diana Riesman, Trustee

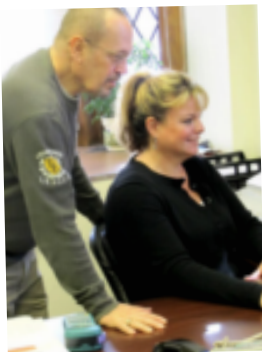
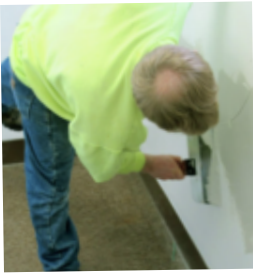


L to R: Matt Torrens (in cab); Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Jeff Frisbie; Dan Potter; Trustee Chris Crooker; Rick Arsenault; and Tim Diller with the Village’s garbage truck. Every Tuesday and Thursday, no matter the weather, the Village’s DPW team is on the road before 7:30 am to collect tagged garbage. Crooker took his role on the Public Works Committee literally when he rode the route on the back of the truck earlier this year. Wisely, he chose a sunny late spring day rather than a sub-zero morning in January.

OUR COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY SERVICE and SAFETY REMAINS CONSTANT

Still, there have been many changes at the Cayuga Heights Police Department (CHPD) over the last few years.

- We now use the Village web page to post important notices and crime alerts (click on the left hand column under 'important notices'). We also post the names of any registered sex offenders residing within the village with a link to the NYS DCJS web page for easy review.
- A review of the village's local laws has generated new and revised laws. We established a Noise Ordinance (LL 5 of 2012) and Parades & Special Event Ordinance (LL 2 of 2013) and revised the Care and Mowing of Property (LL 8 of 2013) and Emergency Lock Box Ordinance. These changes addressed quality of life, procedural and enforcement issues. Current laws and ordinances can be accessed through the Village web page (click on laws and ordinances on the left hand column of the home page). Safety notices are on the CHPD home page.



Wayne of Dept. Public Works; James Conlon & Jackie Carr, CHPD Clerks



Chief of Police, James Steinmetz

- Thanks to the Dept. of Public Works for helping us finish off our new interrogation room and our new staff women's locker room.
- There's now a drop-box just inside the office door where you can dispose of unwanted household pharmaceuticals during office hours, 9 am-4 pm. Note: this does not include medical sharps or equipment, hazardous or medical waste, oxygen cylinders or mercury thermometers. Items will be incinerated at a law-enforced, EPA approved facility.
- As always, we can hold on to a duplicate house key for your use in case you lock yourself out. We do not recommend a product called Hide-a-Key. Also, if you will be away for more than a few days, let us know ahead of time and officers will visually and physically check your home.

In closing, I ask residents to help us help them. We can't be everywhere all the time. Be aware that there has been a number of ongoing "crimes of opportunity" (vehicle and residential theft) in the Town and City of Ithaca. Keep your home and vehicles locked and keep your valuables in a secure location and out of sight. Most important, call us at 257-1011 if you see or hear anything suspicious. *Don't Wait!* because no matter how minor you think it might be or how busy you are, a quick response is the police's friend.

Our door is always open and I invite everyone to stop by the to chat, ask questions, or just say hello. Don't forget to sign up for e-News (formerly e-Blast) as a way of keeping up to date.

James M. Steinmetz, Chief of Police

What's on your mind?

Q: Our water/sewer bill has recently been recalibrated to more equitably assess the amount of sewage generated by each property. Is there any way to distinguish between the household water that goes into the sewers and the water used outdoors that flows into the ground and the storm drain?

A. No. Before the conversion to the water meter system, sewage was billed to each single family property equally, without consideration for how much water was used and how much sewage each family generated. Now, sewage disposal is billed to each property as a function of the amount of water consumed through the Bolton Point water meter, regardless of where that water ultimately goes.

The fact that some residents use water outdoors was a consideration at the time of conversion. However, even though there is no way to measure how much each household uses outdoors, the new system is still more equitable than charging the same fee for a house with one person as for a house with six family members. On their own and with the approval of Bolton Point, property owners may install a second meter to monitor outdoor water consumption. However, that amount will not be deducted from the sewer charge on your bill.



Village of Cayuga Heights
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Office Hours:
Weekdays 9am-4:30 pm

Newsletter also available at
www.cayuga-heights.ny.us

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Our village newsletter has been "out of print" for nearly two years, when it had been edited by and with thanks to Sarah Hatcher. I for one have missed it! It fills a community need to share information through first person articles. Over the years, it has been the touchstone which gave me a small glimpse into Village life and a sense of community. Now that I am working for the Village, I want to share that feeling of belonging. I am optimistic that Village Voices will offer a connection, encourage interest and promote knowledge around The Heights.

Joan Mangione, Village Clerk & Treasurer

YOUTH FOR HIRE, previously a very successful service, now returns to Village Voices, thanks to Villager, Mary Berkelman. If you are over the age of 14 and want to do such jobs as yard work, pet care, baby sitting or snow shoveling, please contact Mary at mberkelman@netscape.net. If you are a Villager offering these jobs, you should also contact Mary who will help bring your jobs and Village youth together. Youth will need the signature of their parents/guardians on the Consent and Liability Waiver form which Mary can provide. Feedback is appreciated!

Geoff Van Dover feeds Arvo Pert and Annie Hall while the family is away.



RESIDENTS RECENTLY RECEIVED A BROCHURE all about planning for our June 2015 centennial and listing ways to get involved in Village history activities. A major piece of our centennial preparations - "The History Project" - is a brand new venture with a new dedicated website, www.cayugaheights.history.weebly.com. This website will provide a shared repository for Village history, including "Highlights of the Heights" which features architectural history, residents' stories, and much more.

Instructions for researching your own house history are available on our site, or via Carole Schiffman, at cschiffman@cayuga-heights.ny.us, or Randi Kepecs, at rkepecs@cayuga-heights.ny.us. Your information will be added to The History Project's database containing every house in the Village.

Foremost among the goals and objectives of the Village's recently adopted comprehensive plan is preservation of our natural and built environment. Community participation in local history projects can help meet that goal.

To take part, help plan the Centennial Celebration, or develop Village history exhibits, contact Bea Szekely, Village Historian, at Bszekely@cayuga-heights.ny.us. And check out the Village's website to learn about Sunday afternoon roundtable discussions as planning unfolds: www.cayuga-heights.ny.us.