

Town of Rensselaerville

# Newsletter

*The Hamlets of Cooksburg, Medusa, Potter Hollow, Preston Hollow and Rensselaerville*

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Volume 17, Number 9

September 2006

### **Letter from Supervisor Jost Nickelsberg**

Our town is well along the path we charted for revising our town plan. In August we contracted with Community Planning and Environmental Associates, a firm located in Schoharie County, that concentrates in the planning and environmental needs of small communities in rural areas. Nan Stolzenburg, AICP principle planner, is directing the work in Rensselaerville. Nan will help us revise our comprehensive plan and prepare other needed protection strategies, so her firm is a good match for us. She has teamed up with the Laberge Group to provide specialty services needed to support our planning and environmental work such as geographic information systems, hydrology, environmental engineering and land use/municipal law. Nan has described the planning process in this newsletter.

Your enthusiastic participation at the three visioning sessions and an over 33% response to the 1,400 hundred surveys sent out is unprecedented and a very visible demonstration of the interest you have in shaping our future. Over 110 people turned out on August 17 to provide their ideas on how we should plan our future. The plan will provide an important means for citizens to control more of the factors that determine how Rensselaerville will be shaped by the forces that are influencing rural towns in the greater Capital District.

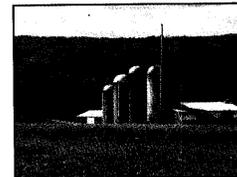
Our Citizens Land Use Committee is doing exceptionally good and important work for the rest of us. If you see any of them please thank them for volunteering to serve us. I thank you all very much. They are very busy working on the first step in the planning process; pulling together a wide range of town related inventory information (natural areas, wetlands, building permits and policies, school capacity etc.) that describes the features and existing characteristics of Rensselaerville. Next they will be formulating recommendations on where we want to be 10-20 years from now so our planning documents are worded to accomplish those goals. Your questionnaire responses and visioning session comments will be incorporated into their deliberations. Again, we all owe them thanks for the time and effort they are contributing to a sound plan for our town.

We have a rich history in our five hamlets. In this newsletter we highlight one of our most famous and accomplished citizens, Potter Palmer, a Potter family member who was instrumental in the retailing

*(continued on page 12)*



Cooksburg



Medusa



Potter Hollow



Preston Hollow



Rensselaerville

# THE RENSSELAERVILLE LIBRARY *Bookmark*

TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY  
10 - noon, 4 - 9:00 pm

THURSDAY & FRIDAY  
4 - 9:00 PM

SATURDAY  
9 - 1:00 PM

*We are closed Sunday,  
Monday and Holidays.*

↪  
MAIN STREET  
518.797.3949

Summer has certainly flown by this year. It is already time for the annual library lawn party in the Ballinger Garden on Sat., Sept 2, 5-7 p.m. Everyone is welcome. We will even have a special table of goodies just for kids. And after, don't forget to go across the street to Conkling Hall for the Huyck Preserve 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dance. Two great organizations, one great evening.

September is National Library Card Sign Up Month. To celebrate, the library will be issuing all existing and new cardholders new library cards. These cards will have special bard code that will enable card holders to access from any computer the Upper Hudson Library System catalog to request materials from other libraries. You can have them sent to Rensselaerville. Download free audio and ebooks, get full text articles from magazines such as Consumer Reports and newspapers from around the country, and also access special homework help sites for all ages and grades. The library will be holding special tutorial sessions to show you all of the wonderful features available to you with your new library card, so come and get one today.

Congratulations to Clay Sorrough who was elected to the library board of trustees at our annual meeting in August. Dave Bryan and Myra Dorman were reelected to the board. Thanks to outgoing trustee Richard Tollner.

Special thanks to Kate Barker who helped out the library staff enormously this summer by working Wednesday mornings and some Saturdays. She did all of this while working full time at the lake. You're great Kate.

Congratulations to all the kids who have been diligently reading all summer as part of the library summer reading program, Books: A Treasure. Thirty seven kids read over 250 hours this summer. Great job everyone. Congratulations also to all of those adults who participated in the second annual adult summer reading program. If you haven't already done so, please stop by and pick out your free book.

The Rensselaerville Library, in partnership with the Cass Residential Center, is pleased to be one of 181 recipients nationwide of an American Library Association Great Stories Club Grant, a book club grant to connect underserved youth with books. The grant, organized by the ALA Public Programs Office, and the Young Adult Library Services Organization with a grant from Oprah's Angel Network, provides sets of three books and online resources to hold book discussion groups. Librarian Rebecca Lubin and volunteer Linda Miller will conduct three

## **Refuse/Recycling Hours**

The Rensselaerville Refuse/ Recycling Department Hours are Saturday and Wednesday from 7 a.m.-3:45 p.m.

Please display your permit. If you do not have one, one can be obtained at the Town Clerk's office.

Please cover your refuse, so that it is not left on someone else's property. No sheet rock or shingles will be accepted.

## **Sporting Licenses**

The 2006-2007 Sporting Licenses go on sale Aug. 14. Applications for deer management permits must be submitted by Oct. 1.

## **...Library**

book discussion groups with Cass residents and staff through the end of the year. The library is grateful for this grant and is pleased to be able to work with the staff and residents of Cass Residential Center.

The next library board of trustees meeting will be Tues., Sept. 5 at 7:30 p.m. (Note the change in date due to Labor Day weekend.)

The next friends of the Rensselaerville Library meeting will be Mon., Sept. 18 at 7:30 p.m. Join us or call the library and ask to be put on the email list.

Library staff: Rebecca Lubin, director; Barbara Bolster Barrett, associate librarian; Candy Wilson, clerk.

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## Historical Society Annual Meeting Sept. 16

Garrett Platel will be the speaker at the Town of Rensselaerville Historical Society annual meeting Saturday, September 16, presenting a program on "Rural Alternative Energy Resources: A Historical Perspective."

He has a degree in historic preservation, and is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Historical Society.

The meeting, which is open to the public, will be at 7 p.m. at the fellowship hall of the United Church of Christ at Medusa.

A potluck dinner at 6 p.m. will precede the meeting and everyone is invited to this also.

The business meeting will be at 4:30 p.m., before the dinner. All members are encouraged to attend and other interested persons are invited also.

## Conkling Hall – What's On September

September 2, Huyck Preserve Diamond Jubilee Ball Annual Benefit Dance: 7:00 PM. Music and Dancing to celebrate summer, the Preserve and Conkling Hall.

October 7, Sixth Annual Chili Cookoff. Starts at noon. Spend an afternoon tasting the best the Chili cooks have to offer. Choose from a variety of chilis—traditional, vegetarian, white, wild card—the cook's imagination will take us to new frontiers. Judging done by a panel of cooking professionals and by "People's Choice". You get to vote, too.

October 8, RHDA presents the Rensselaerville Revue at 2:00 PM: Townwide Talent on the Stage. This event has always been a grand success and it is the major fund-raiser for the Rensselaerville Historic District Association.

Pilates: Saturdays 9 - 10 AM. Pilates Mat class with Sara Nelson Weiss. Strengthen your abdominals, gain long, lean muscles and work with good alignment. Appropriate for all levels. Please call 239-6825 for more information and to confirm schedule.

Library First Friday Movies resume in October.

Coffee House - Third Friday resumes in October.

### Thank You

Cakewalk: The third annual cakewalk was by far the most successful to date. We thank all of the talented bakers who contributed their delicious cakes; and we thank the generous audience who purchased the cakes. A special note of thanks to Molly O'Neil for her exuberant auctioneer style and to Cynthia Nicholson who, teamed with Molly, auctioned a dinner for six

complete with wine to be prepared by them.

Eldridge Reunion: Many thanks to the participants of the Eldridge Family Reunion (Also a celebration of Conkling Hall's 100th Anniversary). During their gathering they raffled a framed Audubon print. The entire raffle, as well as additional contributions were presented to Conkling Hall. It was a generous donation and we will use it in further improvements on the Hall.

### Church Services About Town

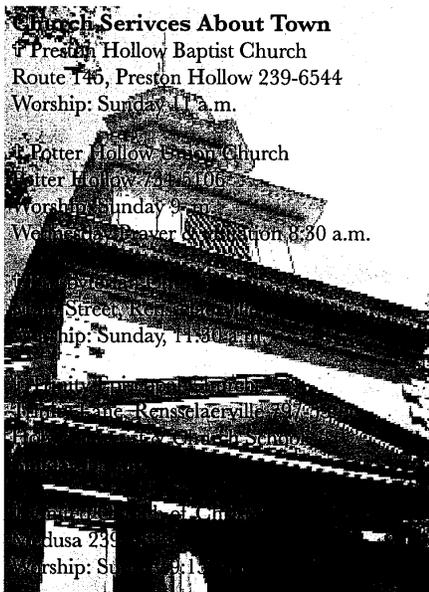
St. Preston Hollow Baptist Church  
Route 146, Preston Hollow 239-6544  
Worship: Sunday, 11 a.m.

St. Potter Hollow Baptist Church  
Potter Hollow 239-6406  
Worship: Sunday 9 a.m.  
Wednesday Prayer & Meditation 8:30 a.m.

St. Street View Baptist Church  
Worship: Sunday, 11:30 a.m.

St. Rensselaerville Baptist Church  
Rensselaerville 239-6825  
Worship: Sunday, 11:30 a.m.

St. Medusa Baptist Church  
Worship: Sunday, 11:30 a.m.



## HCRC Back to School Project

The old adage "always be prepared" is certainly true when it comes time to return to school to begin the task of learning new and exciting things.

Arriving in school that first day well-prepared for learning sets the tone for success throughout the school year.

The Hilltowns Community Resource Center (HCRC), an outreach site of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany, wants to ensure that children from families in need that receive HCRC services are set for success each school year.

To do so, HCRC is seeking individuals and organizations willing to "adopt a student" and assist in sending him or her back to school prepared for learning. HCRC is asking sponsors to commit to providing each student with a new backpack containing school supplies needed and a new pair of sneakers.

Sponsors will be provided with a list of supplies each student is required to have, shoe size and color preferences.

Please call HCRC at 797-5256 if you or your organization is interesting in sponsoring a student. In addition, during the

month of August, HCRC will conduct a back to school supply drive throughout the towns of Berne, Knox, Westerlo and Rensselaerville.

Community members can help with HCRC's efforts by purchasing a variety of school supplies and dropping the items in bins at the following locations: post offices in East Berne, Berne, Knox, Westerlo, Medusa, Preston Hollow and Rensselaerville; and transfer stations and libraries in Rensselaerville and Westerlo.

Back to school items that can be donated include boys and girls sneakers (all sizes,) pens, pencils, colored pencils, crayons, markers, highlighters, pencil holders, pocket folders,

primary school writing tablets, three-ring binders, binder paper, binder dividers, spiral notebooks, composition notebooks, rulers, protractors, calculators, erasers, 3X5 index cards, tissues, post-it notes, small and large zip lock bags.

HCRC is also looking to obtain graphing calculators for use by students in advanced math classes.

These calculators will be loaned to students for the duration of the math course.

Monetary contributions are always welcome. Checks can be made payable to HCRC and can be sent to HCRC, PO Box 147, Westerlo, NY 12193. Please call 797-5256 with any questions.

## New Extra Helpings Food Club

Extra Helpings is a program of the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York and is offered to the community through the Hilltowns Community Resource Center (HCRC,) in Westerlo.

The program is open to all individuals regardless of age or income. Extra Helpings has changed the prices and menus being offered. Anyone is welcome to purchase any or all of the package options. The menu for each month's Extra Helpings' offerings will still be published one month in advance.

September's Extra Helpings regular menu, for \$20, includes 2 pounds eye round steaks, 4 pounds chicken wings, 6 4 oz. 100% beef patties, 1 pound chicken patties, 1 pint grape tomatoes, 1 bag salad mix. Special #1, for \$15.25 is tuna, peanut butter, elbow macaroni, rice and macaroni and cheese; Special #2, for \$19.50 is 10 pounds of hamburger patties; Special #3, for \$30 is the meat box, which includes sliced deli turkey, honey flavor dinner ham, Italian sausage, bun length hot dogs and sliced mild cheddar cheese. Substitutions of equal value may be necessary due to availability.

Please note: Orders with payment are due at the HCRC office by September 5 for pickup on September 26. HCRC distributes Extra Helpings at the Rensselaerville firehouse from noon-1 p.m. and St. Bernadette's Church, Berne, from 12:30-2 p.m., and St. Lucy's Church, Altamont, from 3:30-5 p.m. on delivery days. The pickup site must be noted with each order. Anyone wishing more information regarding Extra Helpings or other HCRC services, please call 797-5256. HCRC's mailing address is PO Box 147, Westerlo, NY 12193. Please include your phone number on all correspondence.



United States Postal Service  
in the Town of Rensselaerville

Medusa Post Office  
239-4826  
Preston Hollow Post Office  
239-6111  
Rensselaerville Post Office  
797-3231

## JAZZ CABARET

MICHAEL BENEDICT QUINTET/ NEW YORK'S DEBRA ARMELINO

Cocktail Reception by Cynthia Nicholson

Dinner Show!

~Benefit for the Greenville Educational Foundation~

AT HISTORIC CONKLING HALL, RENSSELAERVILLE

FRIDAY, SEPT. 15 6:30-10 P.M.

Dinner prepared by local chefs

Live Auction by Mooney's Auction House

Tickets \$75 each

Reservations/ information, call Tim Lippert 797-3610



## Conkling Descendants Visit Their Roots

One hundred descendants of early settler Daniel Conkling met in the hamlet of Rensselaerville on the weekend of July 28-30 to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Conkling Hall being a community center and the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Daniel Conkling Jr. building one of the oldest houses in Rensselaerville.

Contributions and a raffle for the benefit of programs and operating costs of Conkling Hall raised \$1,096.50.

Among the weekend events were a community dance for all ages which was open to the public and sponsored by the Town of Rensselaerville Historical Society with help from a Traditional Arts grant from the New York State Council on the Arts and The Arts Center of the Capital Region. Music was by the FireFlies and the caller was Fern Bradley.

Other activities included

a concert by the Village Voices, tours of the hamlet, the Conkling House, the EN Huyck Preserve and the Rensselaerville Falls, the Rensselaerville Grist Mill with its antique blacksmith shop and informal visits to the library, churches, cemeteries, Lake Myosotis, the playground and Saturday morning farmers market.

The premiere of a new History of Rensselaerville documentary was shown at Conkling Hall because many of the Conkling descendants had never been to Rensselaerville. The film covers early history from the 1700s and 1800s when Revolutionary War veterans took advantage of "free" land offered by the Dutch patron Stephen Van Rensselaer. It goes on to show photos of other early residents and the history of many of the homes, inns, water powered mills, the start of the first library in Albany County

and the history of the Preserve, The Rensselaerville Institute, churches and other landmarks. The film was produced by the Town of Rensselaerville Historical Society and DVD copies may be ordered by contacting Historical Society Research Chair Janet Haseley at 797-3194 or by email at edhase@aol.com.

The youngest Conkling descendant was three months old and the person who traveled the farthest was from London, England. Others were from Canada, California, Colorado, Washington State, Vermont, Massachusetts, Maryland, North Carolina, Georgia, Connecticut, Virginia, Idaho, New Hampshire, New York City and several other New York towns. Two families were from East Hampton, LI, the town from which the Rensselaerville Conklings came in the late 1790s

## Potter Hollow Historical Perspective

By Janet Haseley

Potter Hollow was founded two hundred years ago, in 1806, by pioneer Quakers Samuel and Tim Potter. It is a tiny hamlet only ten miles from Greenville and three miles from Oak Hill, both of which are in Greene County, but Potter Hollow is in the Township of Rensselaerville, in the extreme southwest corner of the Town of Rensselaerville.

Potter descendants now living in Chicago are expected to attend the hamlet's Bicentennial Celebration on Sunday, September 10, 2006, when a village-wide Family Day is planned.

Craftspersons, food, and games for children will be featured and the public is invited. The Town of Rensselaerville Historical Society and the library will have exhibits.

Among the Potter descendants who are expected are Potter Palmer IV, whose ancestor Potter Palmer the first was the most famous native son of the hamlet. The first Potter Palmer was born in 1826 to Benjamin Palmer and his wife Rebecca Potter. The Palmers as well as the Potters were Quakers and Potter was expected to work when he was not in school. By the time he was 17 he had acquired a good education and decided that he wanted to be a merchant.

He went to work in a store in Durham, Greene County, about four miles from his home, and did so well that he was put in charge of the establishment which also housed a bank and a post office. Two years later he went to Oneida, NY, where he worked in a dry goods store for two and a half years. He then went to Lockport, NY, where he opened a larger store and in 1852 when he was 26 years old he visited New York City and Chicago. He decided to move to Chicago and founded the dry goods store which eventually became Marshall Field.

He initiated the policy of allowing customers to return and exchange goods and at one point before R. H. Macy opened his own store in New York City, Potter Palmer gave Macy many tips about



Potter Palmer in 1868. Photo by John Carbutt in "Silhouette in Diamonds" by Ishbel Ross.

merchandising and how to display items to the best advantage in a store and how to advertise in newspapers. The rest, as they say, is history.

Potter Palmer became a civic leader in Chicago and acquired much real estate, built the world-famous Palmer House Hotel, and during the Civil War loaned a vast amount of money to the U. S. Government even though, being a Quaker, he was a pacifist. After the disastrous Chicago Fire of October 1871 which destroyed much of the city, most of the business district, and 32 brand new buildings he had just built, Potter Palmer led the effort to rebuild and he financed much of the huge undertaking himself.

Not long before the fire, the 45-year-old bachelor married Bertha Honore who was 23 years younger than he. She became a philanthropic and social leader of Chicago for 48 years and was instrumental in organizing the World's Fair in Chicago and was on first-name basis with world leaders. Years later she was an important civic and real estate leader in Florida also.

Potter Hollow citizens and others in the southern part of the Township of Rensselaerville often feel closer to Greene County than to Albany County, partly because it is a toll charge for them to telephone

the rest of the township. Telephone service for this southern part of Rensselaerville Township is through the Oak Hill (Greene County) exchange.

Today mail comes through the Preston Hollow Post Office which is two miles away. The Potter Hollow Post Office closed on May 31, 1972. It had been housed in the People's Store, a country general store, which closed in 1980. Today Potter Hollow has no stores, Post Office or school.

The single church in the community was originally a Quaker Meeting House organized in 1795 and is no doubt where Potter Palmer and his relatives worshipped. It became the nondenominational Potter Hollow Union Church about 1895. The church had no inside plumbing and in recent years the congregation has been meeting in the old grange hall instead of in the historic church building.

Some children attend school in Greenville and some in Middleburgh. They used to attend a one-room schoolhouse on Potter Mountain Road which now belongs to the Greenville Central School District. This school has been abandoned for many years and a group of Potter Hollow citizens have been working for several years to raise funds to restore it, with the project being a major focus of the hamlet's Bicentennial celebration this year to mark their 200th birthday.

Happy 200th birthday, Potter Hollow!

Reprinted from the Town of Rensselaerville Historical Society newsletter, The Rensselaerville Press, Spring/Summer 2006 issue.



# Landmark Historical Birthdays Observed

A special double sized issue of the Town of Rensselaerville Historical Society newsletter, *The Rensselaerville Press*, was mailed to members of the Society in August, containing articles on all five of the landmark celebrations being marked in the town during 2006.

Some extra copies were printed and persons who are not currently members may pick up a copy at the Rensselaerville Grist Mill on Wednesdays from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. or on Saturdays from noon-2 p.m. or by calling newsletter editor Janet Haseley at 797-3194 or by email at edhase@aol.com.

The five landmark celebrations are the founding

## **Community Dance Oct. 28**

The fall Community Dance sponsored by the Town of Rensselaerville Historical Society will be Saturday, October 28, from 7:30 to 10:30 p.m. at historic Conkling Hall in the hamlet of Rensselaerville.

Caller will be Paul Rosenberg and the band will be FireFlies. This dance will be for all ages and no experience is necessary because each dance will be taught. Partners are also not needed as the tradition is to dance with a different partner for each dance. Round dances, square dances, contra dances, mixers, waltzes and polkas will be among the types of dances on the program.

Admission is \$7.50 for adults (\$6.50 for Historical Society members) and \$2.00 for children age 12 and under. Those under 5 will be admitted free.

The dance is partially sponsored by an art grant from the New York State Council on the Arts and The Arts Center of the Capital Region.

of Potter Hollow in 1806, the founding of the E.N. Huyck Preserve 75 years ago, the building of the Catalpa House bed and breakfast 200 years ago, the building of the Daniel Conkling Jr. house 200 years ago and the conversion of a former church to a community center, Conkling Hall,

100 years ago. History of each of these is detailed and photos accompany the articles.

Information about joining the historical society is printed on the last page of the newsletter.

Call the number above for more information.

## **Clam Steam Prints Available to Mark Conkling Hall Anniversary**

In celebration of Conkling Hall's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday this year, the Town of Rensselaerville Historical Society is offering 11 X 17 inch prints of a clam steam held on the grounds of the hall many years ago.

The original drawing was by Warren Riter and belongs to the Rensselaerville Volunteer Fire Company.

It is framed and hanging in the fire hall. Several years ago, the Historical Society held all the historic photos at the fire hall matted with acid free mats and replaced the old frame backings with acid free backs.

At that time, the Historical Society got permission from Doug Riter, son of the artist, to make reproductions of the clam steam drawing and offer them for sale.

Half of the sale price of \$15 per print will go to the fire company and half to the historical society. Prints may be purchased at the Rensselaerville Grist Mill on Wednesdays from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. or on Saturdays from noon-2 p.m. or call research chair Janet Haseley at 797-3194 or by email at edhase@aol.com.

The first clam steam at Conkling Hall was in 1941, two years after the fire company was given Conkling Hall by the Huyck family, who had operated the hall

as a community center since 1906.

The annual clam steams were a major fund raiser for the fire company and the highlight of summer activities in Rensselaerville for decades. Festivities started in the afternoon with raw clams and there was always a square dance in the evening after the clam steam meal. Little wire baskets which held a dozen clams, and ear of corn and a baked potato were put in the big steamer set up in the back yard of the hall. Watermelon was the standard dessert.

The fire company moved to its present building on Route 85 in 1975 after Mrs. Edmund Niles Huyck died and willed the building to them. But prior to then, the clam steams had been discontinued because of the high price of obtaining clams.

## **Trinity Episcopal Roast Beef Dinner Sept. 17**

Trinity Episcopal Church will sponsor its annual roast beef dinner Sun., Sept. 17 from 1-4 p.m. at the Rensselaerville Firehouse.

Serving is family style, with ticket prices at \$15 for adults and \$7.50 for children under 10.

For tickets, contact Dave Bryan at 797-3707 or by email at ddrb1253@aol.com or Irene Tanner at 797-3338.

# Comprehensive Plan Update Process

By Nan Stolzenburg  
Principal Planner and Project  
Manager

The Town of Rensselaerville is updating its town Comprehensive Plan which was adopted in 1990. To help this plan remain a relevant "roadmap for our future growth" it needs to reflect current trends, conditions, growth patterns, and citizen concerns. This update is being coordinated by the Town Planning Board and a town-board appointed committee (Land Use Committee) with the help from a planning consultant. In general, the comprehensive plan update will answer the following three questions:

What are the current conditions, trends, issues, and public perceptions in the Town now?

What do citizens want the town to be like in the future?

What kind of actions and strategies need to be put in place to help the Town reach that future vision?

It is especially important to have public input early and often during the planning process. Specifically, our planning process is going to include the following steps:

1. Gain public input to understand the needs, issues, concerns, and future direction desired by residents, landowners, and businesses in town. This will be done through a new resident survey (recently completed); Visioning workshops in Medusa, Preston Hollow,

and Rensselaerville (completed in August), and future public meetings and hearings to be held at each phase of the project.

2. Update information on a variety of resources in the town. This will include an analysis of population, development, and housing trends, along with collecting and understanding information on natural resources, historic and cultural resources, infrastructure, economic conditions, recreational opportunities, schools, building and development trends, land use, and agriculture.

3. Update the vision and goals of the 1990 plan as needed.

4. Once the vision and goals are completed, we will

evaluate existing, and develop new strategies that can be put in place to help us meet our goals over the next 15 to 20 years.

5. There will be additional public input opportunities at each step of the planning process. Citizen input is important. Keep an eye out for upcoming meetings. Your participation is needed!

Once a plan has been drafted, the Town Board will consider it for adoption. The Town Board will do a required environmental review, county planning board review, and public hearing.

We hope to have an updated plan completed by January and then begin work on making any zoning changes as recommended in the plan.

## Food Drive Cooperative Effort

The three Town of Rensselaerville Fire departments – Medusa, Rensselaerville and Tri-Village – have planned a food and supplies drive for Hilltowns Community Resource Center (HCRC.) The event will run from Sept. 16-Oct. 14.

HCRC currently assists about 300 families in the area. With the cost of heating fuel and other items on the rise, now is the time to lend a helping hand to those facing hardships this winter.

Items needed include non perishable food items (please, no expired dates,) laundry supplies (detergent, softener, etc.,) personal hygiene items (shampoo, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, etc.)

Dropoff locations are at the Hilltown Café, Route 353, Rensselaerville; Medusa Post Office; Preston Hollow Baptist Church, Route 145, Preston Hollow; and Rensselaerville Town Hall, 87 Barger Rd., Medusa.

## Annual Variety Show Oct. 8

The Rensselaerville Historic District Association will present its annual variety show Oct. 8 at 4 p.m. at Historic Conkling Hall. Tickets are \$10 per person.

Anyone interested in performing can contact Dave Bryan at 797-3707 or by email at ddrb1253@aol.com.

## Office Closed Sept. 4

The Rensselaerville Town Clerk's office will be closed Sept. 4 in observance of Labor Day; and will also close at 10:30 a.m. on Sept. 22 for a town clerk's meeting.

## Rensselaerville Water Quality Survey for Private Wells: From the Town Planning Board

We ask for your help. As we continue planning for future land use in Rensselaerville, we need to find out more about our water supply. Clean water may be our most precious resource. Most of our drinking water comes from private wells. The biggest reason why your water quantity and quality may change is related to the size of the underground reserve (aquifer) you are tapping into and the rate at which it refills (recharges). If too many wells tap into the same aquifer, there is a real concern that we could develop problems.

As we plan for the future, we have to accurately map the aquifers in the Town and determine how much development each aquifer can sustain. We are getting some of the data we need from the Albany County Health Dept. and from the State, but there is no public data for wells drilled before the year 2000. Do you have a well drilled before 2000? We ask you to complete this Survey.

Since you may not know the actual yield of your well in gallons-per-minute or the quantities of minerals in it, the questions are general. For the data to be meaningful we also need to know your location. Please use the map to locate your house/well. This information will be confidential. It will only be used to create the aquifer maps. The goal is to protect your water supply. Please return your completed Survey to the Town Building, Clerk's Office. You may also put it in the mail slot or in a special box at the Transfer Station.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Please check the appropriate answer.

1. My well is :

- dug  
 drilled

2. Well depth:

- Less than 50 ft  
 50 - 100 ft  
 100-150 ft  
 150-200 ft  
 200-300 ft  
 300-400 ft  
 More than 400 ft

3. My well performance is such that:

- It has never run dry, even with heavy use  
 It occasionally runs dry with heavy use  
 It will usually run dry with heavy use

Note: If you know the approximate output of your drilled well in gal/min., please enter here: \_\_\_\_\_gallons per minute.

4. Have you noticed a change in the well performance during the last several years?

- Yes: less water \_\_\_\_\_; more water \_\_\_\_\_  
 No

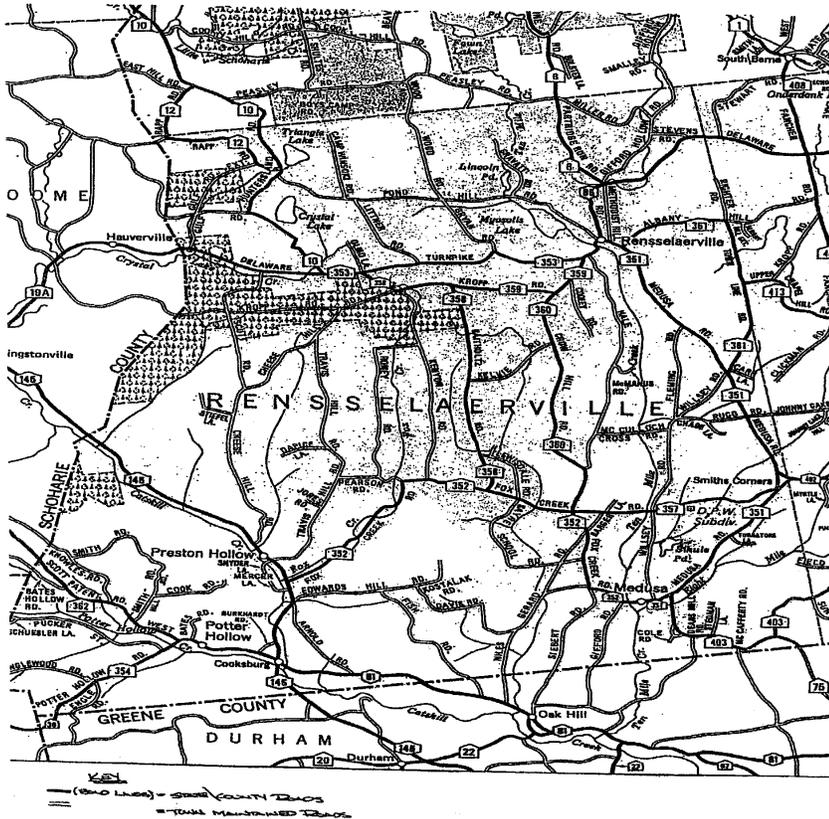
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5. Do any of these problems affect your water?  
How much? (rate 1-5; 1=small - 5=big)

- \_\_\_ Turbidity \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ High iron (discolors white clothes) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Rotten egg odor (sulfur) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ Bacteria \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ High nitrates \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ High salt (sodium) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_ High Hardness (soap scum in sink,  
thick scale in tea pot) \_\_\_\_\_

Please locate your house/well on this map.  
Put an "X" on the location.



THANK YOU! PLEASE RETURN FORM TO THE TOWN BUILDING.

# August Town Board Minutes

Supervisor Nickelsberg convened the meeting, 37 citizens were present.

Minutes of the regular meeting of July 13 and special meetings of July 25 were approved.

A lengthy discussion about the cost of the newsletter took place with Councilwoman Pine and Chase voting against a motion to transfer \$2,190 from the contingency fund for the newsletter. The motion was approved.

Various unspecified vouchers were approved for the expenditure of \$77,602.12.

## Reports:

The monthly reports of the Town Supervisor, Road Superintendent and Town Clerk were approved.

## Old business:

Several years of neglect to the salt barn, town hall and refuse center were discussed along with a proposal to hire a part-time worker to repair the buildings.

The discussion resulted in a motion to first prepare and analysis of what has to be done to the buildings and then prepare an RFP for bids. Motion approved unanimously.

The assessors requested approval to spend \$3,000 to hire assistance to finish the Reval process.

Attorney Ryan gave a brief explanation of real property taxation issues as they relate to reval.

The board agreed that the \$3,000 was already allocated to

the their budget.

Mr. Milkulka reported that the disturbed topsoil on town property had been repaired and now needs to be seeded.

Allyn Wright reported that the household survey was being tabulated.

The response was very high for this kind of survey, 33%.

Three meetings for public input to the planning process are planned for August 17 at the three firehouses.

A second questionnaire on well water quality and quantity will be circulated throughout the town.

The board needs to approve preparation of an RFP for a waste oil furnace

## New business:

Don Parker was appointed to replace Gerald Wood on the communications committee.

There is continued interest in utilizing the American Tower on Pond Hill Road for emergency communications. The committee will pursue that issue with the Sheriff's Department.

A motion was approved unanimously to request consideration from the Greenway Community for a grant to defray the cost of revising the town's planning documents.

A motion authorized Supervisor Nickelsberg to sign the contract with the planning group for the comprehensive plan for a maximum of \$58,520.

The actual cost to the town will be reduced from that amount by the value of work done by the citizens land-use committee.

DEC issued a permit to relocate Potter Hollow Creek in order to alleviate the flooding problem that has been a topic of discussion for several months at town board meetings.

A lengthy discussion on the Hamlet water supply dam on 10 mile Creek resulted in an understanding that a DEC permit would be needed and the town engineer's would be asked to provide recommendations before work would commence.

Work will be started on the 2007 annual budget in September.

All departments will be notified and required to submit their detailed work plans.

## Audience comments:

Sheila Whiteford discussed flooding on her property along Potter Hollow Creek and the assistance she anticipated to correct the problem.

There was a question about the supervisor's financial report at last month's meeting.

There was a question about the Rensselaerville Institute's restaurant on a tax-exempt property.

A growing concerns about the excessive speed of traffic on Fox Creek Road.

Criticism was voiced over the length of the newsletter.

A request was heard for town road specifications.

A request was heard for reports from the New York City trip to the Association of Town's meeting.

## Documentary History of R'ville Available

"People, Place and Things; Then and Now – A Rensselaerville Documentary" is a new film about the history of Rensselaerville which is produced by the Town of Rensselaerville Historical Society and available for a suggested donation of \$20.

Among the people whose contributions in the 1700s and 1800s are chronicled are Samuel and Jonathan Jenkins, Rev. Samuel Fuller, Stephen Van Rensselaer, Daniel and David Conkling, Isabella Conkling, Jacob Becker, William Felter, Francis Conkling Huyck, Sr., Edmund Niles Huyck, Jessie Van Antwerp, Ephraim Russ, Niles Searls, Charles Niles, Elizabeth Huyck Eldridge, Henry Waterbury, and many more.

Places include the stories of many of the historic buildings, Mount Pisgah where the hamlet of Rensselaerville began two miles southwest and many feet higher than the present location, and natural features such as the Catskill Mountains, Lincoln Pond and the Rensselaerville Falls. Things include items such as the grinding stones in the Grist Mill and the murals inside Conkling Hall.

The documentary is available in DVD or VCR format. To order a copy, call Historical Society Research Chair Janet Haseley at 518-797-3194 or e-mail her at edhase@aol.com.

The film was taped by Adele Ayotte of Schenectady who is a descendant of Rensselaerville Conklings, Felters and Beckers. William Felter owned a shoe shop in the building which now houses the Rensselaerville Library. Script and narration were by Janet Haseley whose ancestor, Rensselaerville native Charles Niles, was in the Union Army

and stood guard at Lincoln's casket after he was assassinated. Technical advice and editing were by Bryan Burstall of Atomburst Production Support of Ravena. Many people contributed or loaned drawings and photos for the making of the film and these persons are acknowledged in the credits at the end of the documentary.

### ...Supervisor's Letter

*continued from front page*

world as one of the founders of the Marshall Field Department Store and helping R.H.Macy in his merchandising accomplishments. We talked with Janet Haseley, who did a wonderful job in putting this issue of the Rensselaerville Press (a quarterly newsletter of the Rensselaerville Historical Society) together. It became apparent that most of our 2,000 citizens do not get this newsletter, which is inconsistent with our mission, therefore we got private funding to do this mailing to the entire town after getting permission from Janet and the Historical Society. This newsletter is a good study of what sets us apart from

other towns and the history behind the landmark birthdays for the three buildings, one organization and one hamlet in the Town of Rensselaerville. Happy Birthday.

We thank Janet Haseley for her excellent work in keeping us connected with what came before and made our town possible. We also thank her for bringing to life a man, Potter Palmer, who had courage, ingenuity, and wanderlust to successfully compete in the biggest market in the history of the world.

Please stop by the bicentennial celebrations in Potter Hollow Sept. 10 at Cotter Equestrian Center.

#### Advertising Rates

**RENSELÆRVILLE Newsletter**  
 2" x 3.5" \$30 (business card size)  
 4" x 3" \$46 (double business card size, quarter of a page)  
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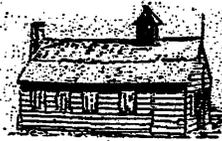
Please contact Town Hall if you have a full page to be separately inserted into the Newsletter. Cost of ad is for camera-ready copy. Any typing or graphics work will cost an additional \$30. Annual rate—pay in advance for entire year and get 12th month free! Copy due the 10th of the month preceding publication.

**SAVE THIS DATE!!!!**

**October 28, 2006**

**The Hilltowns Community Resource Center's  
 HAUNTED HILLTOWN HALLOWEEN**

Catapult • Costume Contests • Hayrides • Bonfire • Games • Music • Food  
 Watch for details in October's Newsletter  
 Volunteers wanted. Contact HCRG at 797-5256.



ON SEPTEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup> 2006   
 POTTER HOLLOW  
 IS CELEBRATING ITS  
 200<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY,  
 AND  
 YOU ARE INVITED

FESTIVITIES START AT 12:00 NOON,  
 AND WILL INCLUDE:

A Postal Cancellation featuring the Potter Hollow Schoolhouse  
 The Haskin Family Reunion; (do you want to include yours)

Local Music 

Old fashion horseshoe pitching and board games

Heritage crafts - including wool spinning and weaving, and blacksmithing

MECC - Missing and Exploited Children Clearing House - they will  
 answer questions and have information handouts, they also make  
 ID cards of your children for parents to keep

☺ Two local women will entertain children with old time games  
 and nature studies.

The Rensselaerville Historical Society and  
 The Rensselaerville Library will also be there

And of course Food - Pot Luck - Bake Sale

Hamburgers and Hot Dogs

History of Potter Hollow in Pictures

and A donation Box for the Restoration  
 Of The Potter Hollow Schoolhouse

☞ Festivities will be held at

Cotter Equestrian Center

in the Hamlet of Potter Hollow

Contact Sue Lynch at 518-239-4748 for further information

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**Assem. John McEneny, 104th Dist.**  
LOB, Albany, NY 12248; 518-455-4100  
**County Legislature, 39th Dist.**  
Alexander (Sandy) Gordon, 872-2602  
144 Beebe Rd., Berne, NY 12023  
**Albany County Highway Dept.**  
239-6715, 239-6710  
**Rensselaerville Fire Company, 911**  
Social number—797-3218  
**Tri-Village Fire Company, 911**  
Social number—239-6780  
**Medusa Fire Company, 911**  
Social number—239-6166  
**Rensselaerville Vol. Ambulance, 911**  
Information number—797-5233  
**Albany County Sheriff, 911, 765-2351**  
**State Police, Rensselaerville & Hilltowns**  
911, 477-9333  
**Town Board Meetings**  
Second Thursday, 7 p.m.; Working meeting  
Tuesday before regular meeting, as needed.  
**Town Justice Court**  
Mondays, 7 p.m.  
**Planning Board**  
First and third Thursdays, 7:30 p.m.  
**Zoning Board of Appeals**  
Second Tuesday, 7 p.m.  
**Building Inspector/Zoning Officer**  
Thursday, 8-10 a.m., 7-9 p.m.  
**Town Clerk's Hours**  
Monday - Wednesday, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Thursday, 1:30-7:30 p.m.  
Friday, 9 a.m.-noon  
**Supervisor's Hours**  
Seven days a week, by appointment  
**Assessors' Hours**  
Thursday, 6-8 p.m.  
**Assessors' Clerk Hours**  
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday mornings  
**Dog Control Officer**  
Cheryl Tefft-Baitsholts, 797-5201  
**Town Refuse Station Hours**  
Wednesdays, 7 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.  
Saturday, 7 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.  
**Water/Sewer District Meeting**  
First Tuesday, 7 p.m.

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