



# the Town of Broome

## NEWSLETTER

SPRING/SUMMER 2012 ISSUE

**CELEBRATING OUR HISTORY, LISTING CURRENT  
EVENTS, ENCOURAGING PARTICIPATION**

### Message from the Supervisor

First I would like to thank everyone for their support in the polls last November. For me, it has been an eye opening and a learning experience since beginning my term on January 1st. Thanks to the support of Marie Campbell, our previous Supervisor, it has been a fairly smooth transition. These are very difficult times to be involved in government, but I believe it can only get better! Please contact me if there is anything I can do or questions you have.

The Town of Broome sustained \$1.2 million in road damage from Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. We still have one road to repair: Thorington Road. Work is scheduled to begin on June 1st. FEMA reimburses 75% of the cost of repairs, and ordinarily the State of New York pays 12.5% and the Town picks up the remaining 12.5%. However, these storms are being considered an exception, and Governor Cuomo has notified us that the State will pick up the Town's share and reimburse us the full 25%. The Town has borrowed \$900,000 in two Bond Anticipation Notes, and we are responsible for the interest, at approximately 2%.

We are very proud of the new Town Highway and Office Building. We are hoping to have a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on June 30th. We will invite all our residents, local news channels and papers, all the county supervisors, as well as Senator Seward, Assemblyman Lopez and other representatives.

We know that hydro-fracking is becoming the center of much attention. The Town will be exploring the pros and cons of this practice. I invite all residents to share their thoughts on the idea. (*Editor's Note:* See the article on hydro-fracking on page 3). Please email me at: broomesupervisor@yahoo.com, or you can call the office and leave a message at 518-827-8772.

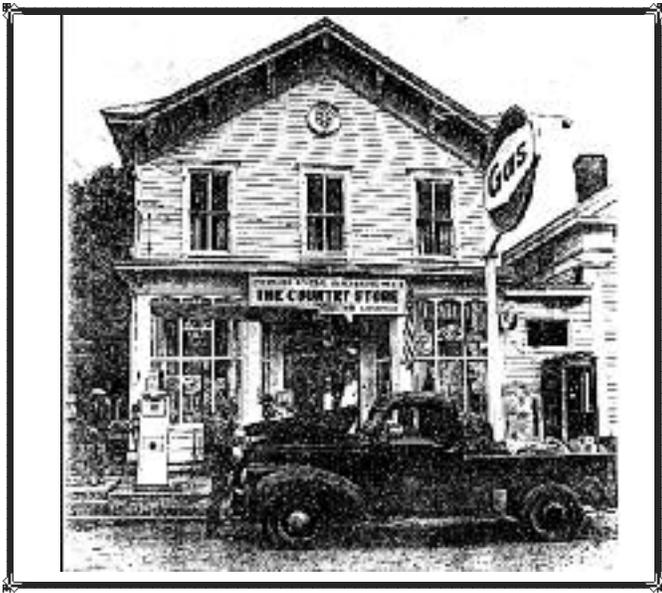
On April 28<sup>TH</sup>, to help clean up the Town, we held our first tire collection day in conjunction with our usual *White Goods Day*. It went well, with approximately 1,000 old tires delivered for disposal. We hope to hold another collection day in the future.

Again, thank you for your support, and please don't hesitate to contact me with questions or comments.

**Anne M. Batz**  
**Town of Broome Supervisor**

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## THE LIVINGSTONVILLE STORE

The Livingstonville General store was built in 1870 and was located at the corner of County Route 19A (Hauverville Road) and Route 145. Myron A. Losee and his wife Mary were the first store owners, and the store was in the possession of the Losee family for 77 years. Through the years, the store also housed the town's post office, town meeting hall, a gas station, and a doctor's office. In 1913, owner Leland Losee went bankrupt and the store was put up for public auction to the highest bidder. The store was sold to Myron Losee's son, Mace A. Losee for \$10. Mace Losee, who was a prominent physician, was the operator of the store from 1914 to 1941 as well as the postmaster. As a country store, it had everything from fresh vegetables, to 20 Mule Team Borax for 15 cents, to Ivory flakes for 19 cents, to Blue Plate Shrimp, 2 cans for 25 cents. Many residents can remember going there for comic books and candy. The Gulf Oil Company owned two gasoline pumps in front of the store and two underground gas tanks alongside the store.

In 1969, the country store was featured in a full page advertisement for General Telephone and Electronics, with the title: "What's a big company like us doing in a small town like this?" The ad was in the *Wall Street Journal* and national magazines including *Newsweek*, *Time*, *International News*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *Forbes* magazine. The Broome residents shown in the picture were Burton Proper, Mr. & Mrs. Leland Teter, Donald Wood, Paul Chichester and Keith Chichester. Mr. Proper's pick-up was also shown in front of the store.

The store was in operation for over 115 years. The building still stands as a private residence.

## From The Assessor

Last Spring, we began a revaluation of all property in the Town of Broome, and the revaluation continues on track. Inventory was checked and verified for physical improvements, and owners received property information reports last fall. Sales from Broome and contiguous towns were analyzed, and a computer model was created to assist in the valuation of properties. Disclosure notices were sent to all property owners in early March. Informal hearings were held in March and early April so owners could discuss their tentative values with the Board of Assessors. While the informal hearings were being held, the preliminary assessments were reviewed a second time by the Board of Assessors. Necessary changes were made and the tentative roll was filed on May 1st. Grievance Day was held on May 22nd.

The revaluation was approved and funded by the Town Board to insure each property owner is at his/her proper assessment and is, therefore, paying his/her fair share of the tax burden, no more and no less. We will be doing an update revaluation, pursuant to our agreement with the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services, every four years to insure the assessment roll remains equitable.

**Bob Breglio, Chairman, Board of Assessors**

## From The Highway Superintendent

Spring has arrived, and we are thankful for having had a winter without much snow and not much cold weather. In February we moved into our new Highway Garage. It is a pleasure to be able to work on our equipment indoors.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, we have one road left to work on: the seasonal section of Thornington Road. We're hoping to begin on June 1st, and will do the work in-house.

We recently bought a used bulldozer to add to our equipment list. It was put through under the Capitol Highway Improvement Programs (CHIPS), a state-funded program that enables us to purchase certain equipment with no impact on our local budget. Under the CHIPS program, we are reimbursed fully for our expenditures, receiving approximately \$110,000 a year.

Once we complete Thornington Road, we plan to move on to Cook Road. We recently began work on Federal City Road from the beaver dam to Teter Road, cutting brush and pushing back the banks. We plan to top the seasonal section of Federal City Road as well as Cook Road with gravel from our own gravel bank. Our hard-road projects for the summer also will include re-doing Blueberry Hill Road.

**Mike Parker, Highway Superintendent**

## Board Minutes–Highlights January–March 2012

### January

Board approved the Property Tax Flood Relief Act, which applied to individuals who had more than 50% of their property damaged by Hurricane Irene.

Matt Fagnani gave updates on the building project. The deadline of completion was extended and set for January 23rd.

The board voted in favor of participating in the FEMA buyout program.

The Highway Dept. is waiting on payment from FEMA to cover the cost of damage repairs from Hurricane Irene.

### February

Town Justice Sandra Johnson was awarded almost \$30,000, with \$15,000 going directly to the new building.

A *Violence in the Workplace* prevention policy was adopted.

Matt Fagnani reported that the water test report for the new building came back negative for pollutants and toxins.

The current Code of Ethics is to be reviewed and revised for any necessary updates.

### March

The deadline for the Assessment Relief Act was extended until December 9th, 2012.

The board approved the Highway Department's request to purchase a used bulldozer. It will be beneficial for damage repairs throughout the town.

The county will be blacktopping the parking lot free of charge. The town is only to cover the cost of materials.

Donald K. Wood and Sonny Ochs were appointed to the Assessment Review Board.

## From the Schoharie Soil And Water Conservation District

### Update: The State of the Streams in Schoharie County

Since my last entry regarding stream conditions in the county, many developments have been underway.

The Soil and Water District (SWCD) has continued to assist landowners with obtaining permits for stream work on their property. Many of these projects have already been completed. Landowners have also been helping nature along by planting trees and shrubs along the streams (aka Riparian Buffers) in an effort to provide them with a natural way to reduce soil erosion and improve water quality. At our 2012 annual tree and shrub sale the SWCD sold a record number of stream stabilizing tree and shrub species. This is a clear indication that people are getting it. You will not find a more cost effective way of slowing down bank erosion or protecting property values and drinking water than planting riparian vegetation.



A three stage stream buffer with herbaceous (grass), shrub (dogwood, willow), and tree (red maple, box elder etc).

The updated condition of the streams is that miles of channels have been repaired, but we feel that there is still work to be done. Bank armoring (aka Rip Rap) has been used where needed to protect roads, bridges, and other public infrastructure. Although debris still remains in some areas of streams, we are working hard to find funds to help pay for this work. Streams on private property remain the responsibility of the individual landowners, but the SWCD is seeking funding to repair the areas that we feel still present a threat to public safety downstream. Your local Soil and Water Conservation District has on-staff stream technicians who can offer guidance with conceptual designs, and DEC permit applications. You can contact us at 518 295-8811.

### What is Hydraulic Fracturing for Gas and Oil?

There have been many articles regarding “fracking” in local papers, and position papers pro and con. Below is a brief explanation of what fracking actually involves.

Marcellus Shale is a sedimentary rock formation deposited over 350 million years ago. This shale contains significant quantities of natural gas. The shale extends under five states, and exists under most of Schoharie County across all but the northernmost fringes. Many discussions have begun at the local municipal level as to whether or not local zoning adequately protects resources (i.e. air, water). There is a concern regarding what quality of life issues extraction of this resource may bring. However, some feel that the resource will provide much needed jobs and economic benefits at a critical time.

### What is Hydraulic Fracturing?

A process involving water, sand, and chemicals being pumped into a vertical and/or horizontal well hole, which forms fractures in the rock (shale). The fractures are then propped open by sand or other materials to provide pathways for gas to move to the well. This process is sometimes referred to as “stimulation”

by petroleum engineers. Once this water is pumped back out of the well it allows the gas to flow up out of the ground for reclamation and use. The gas then needs to be compressed to move it long distances to get it to market using compressor stations placed at certain intervals.



A hydro-fracking drill rig in Bradford County, Pennsylvania, with a 5 acre drill pad.

### Why is there concern?

Fracking under its current design uses large quantities of water and chemicals in the process. There is a fear that excessive exploration in populated areas will lead to degraded water quality. There is also fear that ozone levels will increase with excessive fracturing, and truck traffic will increase resulting in road damage. Also, there is concern with the flow back of water and brine (salty water) out of the well to release the gas. In addition to the chemicals used in the process this water is known to contain *Naturally Occurring Radioactive Materials* (NORMS). This presents an issue with where to store this water safely where it does not pose a risk to people or the environment.

### What are the positives to fracking?

If wells produce gas or oil, landowners with lease agreements for those wells will make money. There can also be the added benefit of jobs being created locally. Many local gas/oil related jobs provided will be for folks with trucking and welding experience. Another bi-product of a “boom” in gas or oil production would be increases in the service industries locally (i.e. motels, laundromats, restaurants). Property values could initially increase as a need for housing will increase as workers move into the area for drilling and other related activities.

### What should people do?

Educate yourself about leasing rights, and zoning regulations. Be careful what you read on the internet! The SWCD maintains a neutral position regarding hydraulic fracturing, but we are happy to share information with individuals who ask. Our

opinion is that with current pricing, it will probably be years before the gas industry begins operations locally, but folks are prudent to educate themselves on the process now. We have seen the industry evolve in the few years we have studied it, and feel more changes and improvements to the process are likely.

**Peter Nichols, Stream Program Manager,  
Schoharie County SWCD**

## HEATHER RIDGE FARM

### Thriving in the Town of Broome

High on a hill in the Town of Broome, looking down the spine of the rugged northern Catskills, is Heather Ridge Farm, brain-child of Carol Clement and her husband, John Harrison. With a wide variety of farm animals, tours, a thriving food store and an increasingly popular lunch spot—the Bees Knees Café—this 160 acre farm uses techniques that are both new and traditional to produce beef, chicken, pork, and honey. These products are sold to a growing population of loyal customers in the farm’s own store, online and in markets around the valley.

Carol Clement started Heather Ridge nine years ago after making a video about rotational crops as a method of raising livestock. The “rotational” approach avoids the use of outside grain and feed, and instead uses the farm’s naturally growing grass, which replenishes itself as the animals are shifted to other sections. Then, different animals move into the previously grazed sections, picking at parasites and spreading the manure through their pecking and feeding. When properly planned and implemented, there is almost no need to use outside animal feed, which frequently includes preservatives and antibiotics. Instead, this method depends on the natural cycles of growth, feeding, fertilization and re-growth.

“It’s a movement,” Ms. Clement says, “which emerges out of a new, intense concern on the part of consumers about where the food they eat comes from and how the animals are treated.”

Heather Ridge Farm has beef cows, chickens, pigs, sheep, goats, turkeys, guinea fowl, and bees. Oh, and four very suspicious Llamas, whose job is protecting the sheep from predators. Carol and John recently installed an array of solar panels, with grants from New York State and the federal government, which eventually will provide the entire farm’s electrical needs.

On alternate Saturdays and Sundays in the summer there are scheduled guided tours in which guests see how this unique method of farming works. “We’re also building self-guided walking trails,” Mr. Harrison says, “one to the top the hill with its extraordinary views, and a picnic table. We’ll be giving people box lunches to hike up and picnic.”

Heather Ridge’s online presence is growing, too. Its web site, [www.heather-ridge-farm.com](http://www.heather-ridge-farm.com) includes a scrumptious list of foods, café menus and farm-related information. The farm’s



Carol Clement bottle-feeding a lamb.

produce is also sold in Slater's Great American, in local farmers markets, and, of course, in the farm's own store.

"We started the Bees Knees Café because people visiting the store wanted to stay and chat," laughed Ms. Clement. "So we thought, 'Well, let's feed them here.'" A typical Bees Knees luncheon menu includes Oink and Moo Chili, wild mushroom custards, grass-fed beef and local cheese paninis, Irish brown bread, and fruit tarts in season.

The farm's animals are vital. "We are small," says Mr. Harrison, who grew up in the Bronx and in Ireland and who feels that Heather Ridge is the home he always wanted. "And unlike the big industrial farms, which routinely expect a number of animals not to survive, we care about every animal. If we lose one, we say, 'What did we do wrong?' And try to learn from it."

"There are an increasing number of farms like ours," says Ms. Clement, "but we need more. I came here hoping to be part of a dairy farm community, but the two farms that were on either side of us are gone now. In the old days, there were Granges and Agways, and entire communities devoted to sustaining the dairy farm culture. We need more farms like ours to sustain and rebuild that kind of infrastructure."

Each summer, Heather Ridge takes on interns who apply from agricultural colleges—Cornell, Columbia Greene, and others. While helping out on the farm they learn about the rotational farming techniques. "We're grass farmers," Ms. Clement says, laughing. "We manage the grass, rotate the feeding animals, and give them good lives as long as they're here. And our customers appreciate it."



John Harrison and the llamas.

Heather Ridge Farm is at 989 Broome Center Road, in Preston Hollow, NY 12469. Telephone: 518-239-6234. [www.heather-ridge-farm.com](http://www.heather-ridge-farm.com)

**Robert A. Miller**

## Spring/Summer Events & Activities Town of Broome

- **Creekside Antiques and Flea Market** Sundays April through October, Rte 145, Livingstonville, 8 AM–4 PM.
- **Middleburgh Arts & Crafts Festival** Saturday, July 28<sup>TH</sup>
- **Middleburgh 300th Anniversary Celebration** August 3, 4, and 5<sup>TH</sup>

## Around Schoharie County

### Gilboa Museum

Open Saturdays and Sundays, 12:30 PM–4:30 PM, July 2<sup>ND</sup> through Sept 4<sup>TH</sup>, Gilboa.

- **"The Suffocation of Gilboa: Construction of the Schoharie Reservoir 1917-1926,"** Wednesday, June 20<sup>TH</sup>, 7 PM, Gilboa Historical Society.
- **"Old Time Music"** with Rena Kosersky, Wednesday, September 19<sup>TH</sup>, 7 PM, Gilboa Historical Society.

### Mine Kill & Max V. Shaul State Parks

Call Ashley Drum for information on these and other activities at 518-827-6111. Dates and times are subject to change. Also, check the Web site [www.nysparks.com](http://www.nysparks.com) for additional programming information.

- **The American Hiking Society's National Trails Day**, Saturday, June 2<sup>ND</sup>, 10<sup>AM</sup>–4<sup>PM</sup>. Mine Kill Falls. Trail Maintenance & Improvement, Invasive Species Education and Surve, Picnic at the Falls.
- **Early Summer Fishing Tournament**, Saturday, June 9<sup>TH</sup>, 7:00<sup>AM</sup>. Mine Kill State Park. Coffee & Breakfast Sandwiches with Armlin's Army! Cash prizes!
- **Free Fishing Day** with DEC Fish & Wildlife. Saturday, June 23<sup>RD</sup>, 10<sup>AM</sup>–12<sup>NOON</sup>. Mine Kill State Park. Fishing rods and bait provided. Fishing education including ethics, fish species, bait, knot tying, rigging and casting a pole. No Fishing Permit is necessary over this weekend.
- **Summer Hike**, Saturday, July 7<sup>TH</sup>, 11<sup>AM</sup>–1<sup>PM</sup>, NYPA Visitor's Center. A guided hike in and around the woods at the Power Authority and Mine Kill!
- **Summer Fest**, Saturday, July 28<sup>TH</sup>, Time TBA. Mine Kill State Park. Environmental Education, Swimming, Ice Cream, Bounce House, Music, Games, T-Shirt Up-Cycling, Tie-Dying, Hula Hooping, Silent Auction, and more!
- **Full Moon Walk and Blue Moon Party**, Friday, August 31<sup>ST</sup>, 8:30<sup>PM</sup>–10:30<sup>PM</sup>. Max V. Shaul State Park. Enjoy a guided moonlit walk along Old Route 30 along with festivities.

### Landis Arboretum

174 Lapel Road, Esperance, NY. Meet at the Meeting House, with free parking in the adjoining field. See website: <http://www.landisarboretum.org/> for complete listings.

- **Fathers' Day Nature Hike**, Sunday, June 17<sup>TH</sup>, 2<sup>PM</sup>–3:30<sup>PM</sup>. Bring your dad for a healthy walk exploring Landis Arboretum. Members: \$10/family; non-members: \$25/family
- **The Finnegan's Wake Music Festival**, Saturday, July 7<sup>TH</sup>, 5<sup>PM</sup>, the Meeting House. What a great place to kick back with friends and listen to wonderful live music! Join us for a great lineup of local musicians. Check the Finnegan's Wake website at [www.finneganswakemusic.org](http://www.finneganswakemusic.org). Members and non-members suggested donation: \$10
- **Midsummer Night Hike**, Saturday, July 21<sup>ST</sup>, 9<sup>PM</sup>–10:30<sup>PM</sup>. Join us to use your night vision and rabbit ears to find our nocturnal neighbors, the bats, frogs and all the summer night time creatures. Members: \$5/person; \$15/family; non-members: \$10/person; \$25/family.
- **Dragonflies & Damselflies**, Saturday, August 4<sup>TH</sup>, 1<sup>PM</sup>–3<sup>PM</sup>. Learn what to look for, how to tell dragonflies from damselflies, recognize habitat preferences, capture and identify these winged jewels in the Arboretum ponds. Members: \$5/person, \$15/family; non-members: \$10/person, \$25/family.

## Town Of Broome Information

### Meeting Dates

Town Board: 3<sup>RD</sup> Wednesday of the month at 7<sup>PM</sup>.

Planning Board: 4<sup>TH</sup> Monday of the month at 7<sup>PM</sup>.

Town Court/Traffic Court: 1<sup>ST</sup> Tuesday of the month at 3<sup>PM</sup>. Small Claims: by appointment (Judge Sandra Johnson 518-827-3160)

Town Clerk Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday, 4<sup>PM</sup>–8<sup>PM</sup>, Saturday 10<sup>AM</sup>–1<sup>PM</sup>. 827-7788

### 2012 Town Officials

Supervisor: Anne M. Batz 827-8772

Town Board members:

• Hal Lloyd 827-5913 • Ruth Yung 827-4423

• Joe Piscatella 827-6755 • Dave Simpkins 827-7196

Town Clerk: Megan Wood 827-7788

Highway Supervisor: Mike Parker 827-5074

Planning Board Chairmen: George Chichester 827-6233

Chair, Board of Assessors: Bob Breglio 239-4188

Assessors: Irent Schmidt • Mary Jo Gilligan

Dog Control Officer: Joseph Durma 872-0127

Town Historian: Betty M. Chichester 827-5092

Town Attorney: Raynor Duncombe

Local Code Enforcement Officer: Lloyd Stannard 231-7779

### Newsletter Staff

#### Editor/Publisher

Robert A. Miller

#### Contributing Editor

Diane DiGiovanni

#### Graphic Design

Donna Maria Ramirez

#### Photo Credits

D. M. Ramirez: page 1 • Historical photo: page 2 • Peter Nichols: pages 3 and 4 • Heather Ridge Farm website: page 5

*Do you have new neighbors... Tell them about our newsletter!* They can get on our list by sending their email address to: [broomenewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:broomenewsletter@gmail.com)

#### Fire Department News

At the Town of Broome Volunteer Fire Department's annual installation of officers on May 19<sup>TH</sup>, the Dept. was presented with a check in the amount of \$1,500 from the Wright's Corners VFD, located near Niagara Falls. Chief Jayson Wayman presented plaques to Howard Wayman for the most calls attended in 2011 and a *Firefighter of the Year* award to the entire membership, recognizing their efforts during and after Hurricane Irene. The Chief was then surprised with a plaque recognizing his dedication during and after the hurricane. Anyone interested in joining the Town of Broome Fire Dept. or the Aux., please stop by the firehouse on any Tuesday night or call at 518-827-5820 to leave a message.

#### Generous Donation

A generous donation of furniture was received for the Town Building from GlaxoSmithKline, formerly Stiefels, in East Durham.