

AMENIA

Town board addresses issues

By STEFANIE GIGLIO
Staff Reporter

AMENIA — On Thursday, Aug. 18, the Town Board began its meeting by recognizing resident Pat Kelsey with a large plaque for her years of service to the town.

Kelsey has spent 34 years organizing trips for seniors living in the area. She said she organized at least one trip per month (except in January and February) every year, with at least two overnight trips during the year. Most of the trips were within two hours of Amenia, but she said that one of her favorite trips was to Alaska.

Amenia quilt square

Town Historian Arlene Iuliano updated the board on her activities and presented the finished quilt square made by Marie Clark.

The quilt square, which features Amenia's Fountain Square, will become part of a larger quilt made to recognize municipalities throughout New York state. The finished quilt will be hung in the New York State Museum in Albany.

Iuliano plans to hand-deliver the quilt square to ensure it reaches its destination safely. (See photo of square on Page A1.)

Roxbury

During the Thursday, Aug. 11, Town Hall meeting, Nina Peeks presented board members with photographs she took at the Roxbury Sand and Gravel site located on Route 22. The photographs showed "plastic" and other "garbage" mixed with piles of soil.

Peeks said some of these piles reach 60 feet high.

Peeks, who sits on the Amenia Planning Board, said that the local laws prohibit the presence of such items on that property, which is located over the town's water supply.

On Thursday, Aug. 18, the board announced that the piles will be moved to another property owned by Roxbury in Claverack, N.Y.

Town Supervisor Wayne Euvrard noted that the owners of Roxbury Sand and Gravel are respectable people and are trying to follow the town's rules.

Amenia grant proposals

Amenia's grant writer Michael Hagerty gave an update on the grants he is working on for the town.

Amenia has received a grant from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), which will be used to update the Amenia Town Hall and make it more energy efficient.

Webutuck's Back to School night

By STEFANIE GIGLIO
Staff Reporter

WEBUTUCK — The North East (Webutuck) Central School District will host a Back to School night on Tuesday, Sept. 6, for parents and students in grades four through 12 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

"This family event is intended to give students and families the opportunity to come back to school, reconnect with friends, meet teachers in an informal and relaxed setting as we kick off the new school year," elementary and high school principals, Katy McEnroe and Ken Sauer, respectively, said in a letter to parents.

"Back to School is also a great opportunity for [the students] to transition from summer to the upcoming school year and to not have the first-day stress of finding their classes or lockers," the letter continued.

Sauer said the event will "start the year off on a positive note" and will be like a meet and greet for the students and families to become familiar with the school staff.

C.T. Male has been hired for the initial pre-design stage of the project. Hagerty said he is checking to make sure that the pre-design costs will be covered by either the grant or the grant's match amount.

Attorney for the Town Michael Hayes said he has been communicating with C.T. Male to clarify parts of the contract. The most recent draft of the contract has an error, but Hayes recommended that the town board accept the contract.

The board voted to accept the contract, providing the error is fixed.

Hagerty said that he is actively looking for more grants for the Trail to the Train project, which will extend the Harlem Valley Rail Trail into the hamlet of Wassaic.

Hagerty said that it is necessary for the town to pursue additional grants for this project since the estimated cost is not higher than originally anticipated.

14 Powder House Road

Dave Connors, who lives at 14 Powder House Road, has been battling with the Town Board over a law that limits the number of unregistered vehicles allowed on a property.

Connors had admitted to having more than 50 unregistered vehicles on his land, but he believes this is within his rights. He believes the cars do not affect his neighbors.

Connors wants the Town Board to repeal the law and allow him to continue with his hobby of working on cars.

The Town Board had Hayes write up an agreement that will give Connors six months to remove most of the unregistered cars from his property.

Connors said during the meeting that the agreement did not take into account some of his stipulations.

Hayes explained that Connors' stipulations could not be included in the same agreement because the agreement's purpose was to settle on Connors' citation.

Town Hall exterior painting

The board received three bids for the painting project that will spruce up and repair the Amenia Town Hall exterior.

All three bids were opened during the meeting and were given to Darlene Riemer to review.

A bid was not accepted during the meeting.

Old Amenia Landfill

The town is waiting for the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to approve a few changes to the remedial design plan for the Old Amenia Landfill. Once that is complete, a 30-day bidding period will open, which is expected to happen in October. The project will be awarded in November and construction will begin after that.

Scenic Protection Overlay

The board set a date for the public hearing regarding the adoption of a new Scenic Protection Overlay Map for Amenia.

The public hearing will be held on Thursday, Sept. 15, at 7 p.m. during the Town Board meeting.

Highway department

Amenia Highway Department Manager Stanley Whitehead explained to the board that he feels it is necessary for the highway department to purchase a roller to help with the dirt roads in town.

The roller helps compact the dirt after the road is re-graded.

Whitehead received several quotes on the cost to purchase a roller and presented those numbers to the board.

The board agreed to let the Highway Department purchase the cheapest quoted roller.

Ethics Committee

The Ethics Committee had new ethics handbooks printed for the staff at Town Hall.

Copies were distributed to the board members and will be distributed to the rest of the staff.

Important dates

• Monday, Sept. 5: Town Hall will be closed due to the holiday.

• Thursday, Sept. 15: New York Sen. Greg Ball will attend the Amenia Town Hall meeting at 7 p.m.

• Saturday, Sept. 17: Amenia Community Day and Juvenile Diabetes Walkathon. Held at the Indian Rock Schoolhouse on Mygatt Road.

• Saturday, Sept. 24: Historic Walking Tour of Wassaic. Part of the Hudson River Valley Ramble. 10 a.m. to noon. Donations requested for entrance fee.

• Sunday, Sept. 25: World Peace Fest. Held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the World Peace Sanctuary in Wassaic. Free.

• Saturday, Oct. 1: The Fall Bazaar will be held at the Amenia firehouse from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Wassaic firehouse breakfast slated Sept. 11

WASSAIC — A breakfast, sponsored by the Wassaic Fire Company and Ladies Auxiliary, will be served on Sunday, Sept. 11, from 8 to 11 a.m. The breakfast will take place at the Wassaic

firehouse, 27 Firehouse Road. The cost is \$7 for adults, \$6 for seniors and \$3 for children. For more information, call Nancy at 845-373-9557 or Sue at 845-373-9588.

A trip of a lifetime

By STEFANIE GIGLIO
Staff Reporter

AMENIA — Ellen Flanagan is a motorcyclist with a taste for adventure. Seemingly unrelated, as of last month, she can now add "travel writer" to her resume.

The 40-year-old Amenia resident, recently achieved two goals with one exciting trip down South: Not only did she cross off "riding a motorcycle on one of the highest, most dangerous roads on the East Coast" from her bucket list, but she was also able to get a travel piece she wrote about the trip published in the July issue of American Motorcyclist, one of the country's premiere motorcycling magazines.

Flanagan's story detailed her August 2010 trip along the Tail of the Dragon, a notoriously curvy and dangerous stretch of U.S. Route 129 that snakes along the Tennessee-North Carolina border.

Flanagan conquered personal fears, several roads with daunting names (Devil's Drop, anyone?), extreme temperatures, torrential downpours and an ill-timed wrong turn to deliver a wonderful account of her once-in-a-lifetime ride.

"This route was all new territory for me, with some of the most challenging roads I had ridden, some with little room for error. This was no place to push my limits," she said.

"It was something I had been thinking about for a couple of years," she went on. "I had ridden to Virginia with some friends who offered to let me tag along with them down the Blue Ridge Parkway. I did not feel ready yet for such technical roads, but was intrigued by the thought and eventually felt ready to go there myself."

Flanagan said that she loves motorcycling for the feeling of freedom and the close interaction between the driver and the environment.

"[It's] not a passive activity like driving a car. It is both



PHOTO BY STEFANIE GIGLIO

Amenia motorcycle enthusiast Ellen Flanagan recently had an article about her ride on one of motorcycling's "must-do" routes published in a national magazine.

invigorating and relaxing. And challenging," she said. "I have a hard time remembering what I did for fun before I took up motorcycling."

Flanagan's interest in motorcycles was sparked during her childhood when her older brother began riding. It wasn't until her 30s that she decided to learn to ride for herself, but once that decision was made, she took a motorcycle safety course and got her permit, license and a bike all in less than a month. That was seven years ago in 2004.

Flanagan currently owns three motorcycles, a husky Suzuki Savage, a sporty Kawasaki Ninja and a powerful Honda Shadow. It was the Honda that carried her safely to the Tail of the Dragon and back.

In addition to a wonderful sense of accomplishment, Flanagan said that her trip made

her more confident in her riding abilities.

"It's made me more willing to seek out other roads or areas that interest me, and less afraid to explore them," she said.

Her journey into the world of travel writing gave her the opportunity to explore more new territory.

"This was the first time I had actually written about any of my travels. I have to admit it was exciting to see my name and story in print," she said. "It was a valuable experience and I think I may try submitting other stories to other motorcycling or travel magazines."

Flanagan plans on taking to the open road again next year, destination still yet to be determined. After her first success with her writing, she said hopefully she'll remember to bring a pen along for that ride, too.

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