

## THE PORT HENRY FACT FINDER

### Reporting the News and Needs of Port Henry and Surrounding Area

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**Patrick and Aurora McCaffrey, Bill and Nicky Bryant, Literacy Volunteers of Essex and Franklin Counties**

***WELCOME CAMPERS - PORT HENRY'S SEASONAL FAMILY - BUT FAMILY ALL THE SAME!***

#### OF SPECIAL NOTE

Don't forget to get your copy of *Moriah and Port Henry in the Adirondacks* signed this Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup> from 10am to noon, at the Library by its authors Jackie Viestenz and Frank Martin. If you don't have your copy as yet, copies will be available for purchase at the time of signing.

Also, a reminder from the Library Board of Trustees of their yard sale in just two weeks on June 8<sup>th</sup> at the Library. They are asking for donations of nice furniture, gently used items, household goods and sporting equipment. Contact the Library at 546-7461 for further information on making donations. The Library is open Tuesday and Wednesday 12 - 4 pm, Thursday and Friday 12 - 7 pm and Saturday 10 - 2 pm.

#### BOARD NOTES

The Village Board held its monthly meeting, Monday, May 13<sup>th</sup>. The following two items taken from the agenda for this meeting illustrate how frustrating being a Mayor and Trustee of a small Upstate village can be.

The Board is still waiting for the final FEMA payment on the Campground Restoration Project from 2010's Tropical Storm Irene's damage. And - here is a quote from the agenda for this meeting.

“A response letter was received from the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation with regard to the hardship application submitted by the Village in May of 2012 with regard to the Manhole 13 Order on Consent. The NYSEFC indicated that the information received last May was used to assess the village's eligibility for CWSRF grant funds, it was not used to re-evaluate eligibility for hardship financing. The Village was not deemed eligible for CWSRF grant funds because the annual user cost (\$777) was higher than the projected service charge (\$548), based on the Village's 2009 MHI of \$53,864.”

Yes, this is what our elected officials must not only read, but thoroughly understand and then, with our best interest in mind, act upon it. Reading this made my brain ache on several counts. Although it does let you know what the acronym NYSEFC stands for, I had to find out that CWSRF stands for Clean Water State Revolving Fund, which really didn't create an “Ah-ha!” moment for me. The next “brain ache” was that this response, ***made a whole year late***, was based on a projection (which, to me, means an informed guess, but a guess none-the-less) and finally, what almost caused a migraine, was it was ***denied!*** Seemingly on a misunderstanding. Of course, this is having to be reexamined. Just another example of wasted time for the Village, caused by other people - by bureaucracy.

Our volunteer Fire Department continues to behave as if they were on a salary worthy of their hours spent in maintaining and up-grading a well-run and always-ready Fire Department. Chief Hughes crafted and submitted a “Draft” of an Emergency Evacuation Plan for Port Henry's Municipal Beach & Campground.

Board business, such as approving previous Board minutes and a Resolution on the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Village and the Teamster's Local 294 were adopted. The May 2013 Water and Sewer billing amount was approved. A Vendor License was issued by the Village to the Adirondack Farmer's Market Cooperative, Inc. on April 19, 2013 for a six month period to hold a weekly Farmer's Market within the Village limits. Two Property Maintenance Complaints were received and distributed to the Mayor, Board and Code Enforcement Officer, for review. Meeting adjourned.

### FROM OUR SCHOOL

This past week Fact Finder went to Moriah Central specifically to interview eighth-grader Nick Manfred, who will be headed to Washington, DC this coming Sunday to participate in the Scripps National Spelling Bee for a second time. This is quite an accomplishment, a bit of a "big deal." To show just how big a "deal" it is, I have copied the "stats" provided on the internet by Scripps itself.

"This year we welcome **281 spellers** from the 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands and Department of Defense Dependents Schools in Europe; as well as the Bahamas, Canada, China, Ghana, Jamaica, Japan and South Korea.

Bee Week 2013 marks the first visit to the nation's capital for 97 spellers. Speller 94

[Tara Singh](#), of Louisville, Kentucky, is the youngest speller in this year's competition at age 8. The spellers range in age from 8 to 14 years old, but 89% are between the ages of 12 and 14 years old. Two spellers, speller 91, [Vanya Shivashankar](#), and speller 191, [Ashwin Veeramani](#), have siblings who have previously won the Scripps National Spelling Bee. 116 spellers speak more than one language.

This year's group of competitors is 52% girls and 48% boys. Among this year's field, math is most frequently cited as a favorite subject.

Four spellers said the person they would most like to meet is Dr. Jacques Bailly, the official pronouncer of the Bee. During Bee Week, they'll get their chance. The spellers' favorite words include [conquistador](#), [flibbertigibbet](#), [humuhumunukunukuapuaa](#), [physiognomy](#), [weissnichtwo](#) and [gobbledegook](#)."

It was a real pleasure meeting Nick and to be able to discuss words beyond their utilitarian use as a means of communication. Of course that was exactly what we were doing, being utilitarian, communicating. Words are history in use in our daily lives. Each word has a micro-history clinging to it, coming down to us from many places and through many transitions to serve us today. These beginnings and transitions whisper to us through the spelling of a word. This is one of the "helps" a spelling bee contestant uses if he doesn't know the word outright.

Nick first discovered the spelling bee in fourth grade when he took a spelling test that would send the top two fourth grade spellers to the school spelling bee where fourth through eighth grades compete to be sent to the Regional Bee. Nick did not win in fourth grade, but he did win school in fifth grade and was given resource material for regional.

In Regional your first two rounds are oral and the third is written. You must spell 80 to 85 percent correctly to move on. In sixth grade he was the alternate for Regional, however he went to Regional when the year's winner chose not to go. Last year in seventh grade he not only again went to Regional, he won Regional and went to Washington as he will be doing this year. One of only 281 young people in Washington for the National Spelling Bee! That is truly pretty awesome.

At the National, every contestant sits at a computer and puts on head phones, ready for the first round on their journey through the National Spelling Bee. They hear a word and write it down. The second part of the test is multiple-choice vocabulary, a new addition to the test. Each contestant may take whatever time they need on a word, but both parts of the test can take no longer than 45 minutes. At the end of the test they are asked if this is the way they wish to enter it. If they choose to change something, they enter "edit" and make whatever final changes they may want to make. All answers are worth one point except at the end, contestants are given one word and one vocabulary which are worth three points each. There are three rounds before finalists are chosen - the computer test and two oral rounds.

It is a stressful time for these 281 young persons and Scripps organizers are well aware of this and have fitted interesting and fun events into the schedule to help de-stress them. There is an annual barbecue on Memorial Day with games, food and activities for spellers and their guardian's to enjoy. On one of the days there is a tour for all and, after the year's winner has been announced, there is a farewell dance.

How far Nick will progress in the Bee will be decided by the words he falls heir to, a gamble, a fate shared by all the contestants. No matter how hard you have worked and how many words you know, no one can know every word. The truly important point of Nick's trip to Washington is it has brought focus on the wonder of words and the fun to be found in their study and use. Each word has a different taste on the tongue. No word is too small or too large not to warrant our use. Already Nick's trip to Washington last year seems to be causing a bit of a ripple effect in the Regional Bee. Moriah's fourth grader Lilly Hochon and fifth grader Madeline Cochran won Regional for their grade level. Oh yes, Fact Finder being the Fact Finder must add one more Nick-fact for readers. Those who don't know Nick will think he might be *just* a "word nerd." Not so! He enjoys playing basketball, football and participating in track and field.

Nick said he would like to thank Mr. Hoops for his extraordinary help with vocabulary, his entire family for their support and the Press Republican for their sponsorship.

The Fact Finder wishes Nick, his mother and grandmother who are accompanying him, a wonderful week in Washington.

### THE VISITOR WHO FELL FROM THE SKY - RIGHT INTO PORT HENRY

by Linda Smyth

It was her birthday present to herself. A trip to New York City. Her name was Barbara. An adventuresome, once-married-now-single lady in her 60's. Originally from Minnesota, she now lives in Salt Lake City, Utah. "But I'm not a Mormon," she said.

She flew to New York to see a Broadway show called "The Book of Mormon." Then, as planned, she joined a tour group to visit each of the five boroughs of Manhattan. She stayed the night in a hostel.

The next day she called up AMTRAK Trains and asked "Where is a pretty ride on the train from Manhattan?" They told her to go north to Port Henry, New York. "Hummmmm." she said.

She began researching where to stay the night in Port Henry, and that is where she came across a motel called Collins and a woman named Rita. When she spoke with Rita on the phone, a gentle, sweet and warm voice came across the line insisting that she would pick her up at the Port Henry train station. Immediately Barbara LOVED this woman named Rita. She felt assured that she would be safe being the guest of Rita at the Collins Motel in Port Henry; in a village she had never heard of before that day.

It was a Saturday night, potluck pizza night, that I joined my friends at Collins Motel for a casual gathering in my village, Port Henry. The owner Rita tends bar with a smile on her face. It was then that

this visitor, this random woman from Salt Lake City crosses the room from the bar and approaches me and my friends. She strikes up a conversation and we happily engage with her. We learn where she is from and how she happened to come to our village, Port Henry in the Town of Moriah.... out of the blue!!! We were amazed!. How adventuresome you are, we told her. We would never do that! But what will you do in Port Henry without a car for the duration of your visit....another day and a half? Late Sundays and Mondays the Miss Port Henry Diner and the Sherman Free Library are closed. That's when my friends and I got a great idea. We'll take Barbara on a hike up our local mountain, Cheney Mountain. Sunday was a beautiful day for a hike up Cheney. The great thing about Cheney Mountain is, once at the top, there are three fabulous vistas to see. Each view is well marked and easy to find. The view to the West shows the Tailing Pile and a factory. We explained to our visitor the mining history of Moriah. She was a curious listener. The views to the East are of our beautiful Lake Champlain and Vermont beyond. "This reminds me of Minnesota!" she exclaimed.

Once our hike was done we agreed it had been so much fun - let's make another plan for the next morning. Barbara's train would not be departing until 1:30 pm. We'd have time. We would show off our new Champlain Bridge by walking over it and back, and drop in at the Visitor Center Museum. Then breakfast at The Bridge Restaurant. Perfect! When it was time for Barbara to leave we waved goodbye to her as the AMTRAK train pulled out of the Port Henry Station.

Between Rita's hospitality and stories of old, and our guided tours we felt that we had shown our visitor a great time. She loved it! It is such an opportunity for ALL involved if you allow a stranger to become a friend.

I wonder how many of us have missed just such an opportunity, in which ever role we have been cast - stranger or local. As the stranger, we must be willing to expect welcome and step off into unknown moments as they present themselves. As the local we should be willing to view each stranger with no preconceptions, open ourselves to what they bring from their unique life and, in turn, offer all we can to make them feel "at home" with us, as in the story above. If each of us in Port Henry took this story to heart and practiced it each chance presented to us, we would become known as that-wonderful-village-where-everyone-makes-you-feel-at-home, people would want to live here, would move here, businesses would follow and everyone would live in just the kind of village everyone dreams about.

### HELP!!!

The Zoning Commission held a public meeting Wednesday the 22<sup>nd</sup> which had been announced in the Times of Ti and advertised by flyers, but there were only eight of the public present. Although the Commission was very grateful to those who did attend and welcomed their helpful comments, the Commission needs input from many, many more resident property owners to be able to create a zoning plan reflecting the needs and wishes of a majority. It cannot be stressed strongly enough the need for zoning, if for nothing else than to save those storefronts still on Main and Broad Streets. Beyond the fact that the State will not allow only specific area-zoning, zoning puts in place protections for the future for each and every home owner in the village. Fact: what exists now is not changed by zoning! The best way to think about zoning is to think: "What would I like NOT be right next door to me in the future?" Such as "I don't want a five-story building right up against my property line." or "I would be uncomfortable with several mobile homes placed in a space meant for one house." This is what the Commission needs to know to be able to zone each area as protectively as possible and yet be as non-restrictive and as flexible as possible. The Commission can do this only if it has guidance from the public as to what the public needs and wants. For the large majority who were not able to make the meeting, you have NOT lost your chance to voice your opinions, your needs, your wishes and have them put into the zoning brew. Email [johnv.porthenry@gmail.com](mailto:johnv.porthenry@gmail.com). or drop off written suggestions, addressed to the Zoning Commission, at the Village Hall. We would welcome these suggestions within

the next week, as we are trying to frame a useful proposal to present to the Board as soon as possible. Thank you.

### SUMMER SCHEDULES FOR EATING IN PORT HENRY

Boyea's Lakeside, 15 Dock La., 546-4164, W-Sun. 11-10pm, but will be open this Memorial Day.

Dockside Café, though not official until June 1<sup>st</sup>, it *is* open now. Turn at Bulwagga Bay Campsite entrance off 9N, first left (says "Food"), follow road until you see the lake, you will also see the Cafe. 546-3432, Sun-W 7-4pm, Thurs.-Sat. 7-7pm

Don Foote's Miss Port Henry Diner, 5 St. Patrick's Place, 546-7600, Tue-Sat. 7-2pm, Sun. 7-1pm, (breakfast only)

Gene's Michigan Stand, 4201 Rte. 9N, 546-7292, T-Thurs. 11-8:30pm, F, Sat., Sun. 11-9pm

George's Italian Restaurant, 3262 Broad St., 546-3026, M-Thurs. 11-9pm, F-Sat. 11-10pm, Sun. 11-9pm.

Golden Palace, 3266 Broad St., 546-7950, open seven days a week, 11am-10:30pm

King's Inn, 109 Broad St., 546-7633, W-Sat. 4:30-9pm, Sun. 4:30-8pm.

Look for the next issue of the Fact Finder on Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup> at Adirondack Hair Associates, Macs and Moriah Pharmacy; also, find copies to read at the Sherman Free Library. There are read-while-you-wait copies at John Eisenberg's Service Center, Ken and Paula LaDeau's Champlain's Best Wash, Don Foote's "Miss Port Henry" Diner, Danielle and Andy Brassard's Firefly Home Furnishings and TFCU. NOTE: The Fact Finder may also be found on-line at [porthenrymoriah.com](http://porthenrymoriah.com). Go to "Living Here" and you will see "Fact Finder" to the far right, one line down.