

THE PORT HENRY FACT FINDER

Reporting the News and Needs of Port Henry and Vicinity

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NOTES FROM THE BOARD

Prior to its regularly scheduled October 15th meeting, the Board held a Public Hearing for review and comment on Proposed Local Law #4 of 2012; extending the Moratorium on Street Level Residential Development in a Portion of the Village.

There was a long and in-depth discussion of the very expensive but, also, very necessary need to upgrade Port Henry's Water Meters. We have discussed this necessity before. The meters are old and when they are old they do not tally water usage correctly, usually on the low side, which means the Village is losing revenue on the water being used. It also means users with correctly tallying meters can be paying an unfair percentage of the water revenue. Although the new meters are very expensive, they would begin paying for themselves almost immediately. Where it now takes six or seven men several weeks to read the meters, one or two persons could do it in a few days. The meters are made from a composite material, making them environmentally very "green;" so, just how long will it be before the State makes these meters mandatory anyway?

The APA OK'd the Verizon Cell Phone Tower (aka a *Frankenpine*, all our very own, every ungainly *branch* of the very unnatural *trunk*) to be placed close to the old Water Tower. Ugly though it will be, it means an excellent cell phone coverage for not only Port Henry but a very large surrounding area. This is one of those rare win/win situations. The public benefits from a highly improved cell phone coverage, Verizon will be able to service a very large (thus profitable) area and with this new business, both Town and Village will have a new source of revenue.

NOTES FROM THE EDGE

The October 17th meeting was primarily devoted to the electing of a full roster of new officers for the Moriah Chamber of Commerce. Tim Bryant, the new President, with his officers and board of directors, will be working on new By-laws to aid in the restructuring of this vital instrument to growth for the Town of Moriah and adjacent areas.

Not only businesses, but the general public is encouraged to become members of the Chamber. Knowledge of and interest in all aspects of the life of a Town, of a Village, by all who live there is what revitalizes that Town, that Village. Join President Tim Bryant (Property Management); 1st Vice-President Linda Smyth (Artist); 2nd Vice-President Ronnie Cunningham (Decker's Flats); Secretary Mary Eichen (TFCU); Treasurer Jennifer Patch (JPW Accounting) and Board of Directors: John Viestenz (www.porthenrymoriah.com webmaster); Ken Ladeau (Champlain's Best Wash LLC); Bella Broadway (Glens Falls National Bank); Cathy Sprague (Penelope the Clown & Cheever Gardens); and Sandra Lovell (Port Henry Vocal Studio) in helping change our Town, our Village into a vital, prosperous place in which to live and entertain visitors.

REQUESTS, REMINDERS, REALITIES, REVIEWS AND RUMOURS

Moriah's Elementary art teacher, Shari Prim is offering to take those "what-do-I-do-with-it" odd bits of latex and semi-latex paint off your hands. She welcomes all colors and all quantities. There is to be a new mural in the elementary dining room, and these donations will be used in the execution of this

mural. Paint may be dropped off at Shari Prim's art room, during school hours, between now and December 20th. Donations are so welcomed and needed.

Between this issue and the next, there will have been an election. The United States will have a newly elected President, elected by its citizens. Whoever wins will have been chosen by our one-person-one-vote system. Exercise your right, really your duty - VOTE. Don't allow someone else to choose for you. Don't allow campaign jargon, like carnival mirrors, warp how you see your remembered *facts* of the past four years, beginning with that last election. Remember the *facts*, consider the causes of these resultant *facts* then - VOTE! There will be so much at stake during the following four years. I pray the man who wins will - *most wisely, most selflessly* - guide our country's ship of state through the shoals of today's global living. Remember, you do have a say in how these next four years evolve; so begin having your say by voting.

The Laundromat has a new owner, Ken Landeau whom I met at the last EDGe meeting. I stopped by, hoping to find him there but there were only customers. Nothing major seems to have been done as yet except everything looked very, very newly cleaned. Nothing like a new broom.

The Firefly, Port Henry's soon-to-be new furniture store is entering its almost-ready-to-open mode. November here comes a new, filled storefront.

The Campground is closed and, considering last year's two natural disasters that sent many usual campers elsewhere, had a successful season. The conservation lamprey treatment was successful so, fishermen, fishing should be great, now and for the winter.

Just in case there is anyone in Port Henry who hasn't discovered it as yet, College Street is, indeed, open.

The Port Henry History Sign's replacement was installed on the left of the Info Booth this past weekend by Mayor Ernie Guerin, John Sheldon and Matt Brassard. Its background color is the same color as Town Hall in the Park mural causing the eye to connect the corner to the Park proper and indicating quite firmly that this corner is no longer just wasted space, but an integral part of Main Street Park.

Moriah Central School hosted the 2012 Junior High All-County Music Festival Thursday October 25th. Ninety-three students representing ten Essex County schools participated in the presentation of music for mixed chorus, orchestra and concert band. All students had been selected by their teachers and each school's music department prepared their students in the pieces selected for the program. The conductor's for the performance had only four hours to bring their separate groups into one cohesive performance group. This is a lot to ask of conductors and students alike. The results were surprisingly good. As would be expected, the choruses performance level was the best and they are to be congratulated on the clarity of their sound and pronunciation, you could understand words and with a group that size! Singing is something everyone does, often at a very early age, where as, usually, one learns to play an instrument at a later age. Also, a group of voices are much easier to tune than a group of instruments. However, that being, said the band and the orchestra have every reason to be proud, there were many, many moments of real performance sound. The real joy of the evening was realizing how many young people are able to enjoy the making of music and, for this, gratitude must go to the schools, the teachers and the evening's conductors and pianists.

It is rumored that Bonnie's Bistro *has* been sold, contingent on soil analysis of the property, as it was a garage at a time when little thought was given to how you disposed of waste materials.

Fact Finder is not quite sure under which of the above categories the following should be placed: review or reality, probably reality, but into whatever category it falls it deserves note. For the newly arrived residents of Port Henry, you need to know that Tom Scozzafava runs a business as well as

running the Town of Moriah as Supervisor. He is a licensed electrician and now his words are in print. The magazine *The Electrical Contractor* 9/12 printed his following submission under "Ideas that Work," for which, not only was he printed but he won tools.

"Feeding electricians -

I have screwed a heavy plastic dog dish to the top platform on my 5-ft fiberglass ladder, the dish and the contents stay secure. No more climbing up and down the ladder for forgotten or dropped parts. Tom Scozzafava, Port Henry, NY"

Not only is it surprising and interesting when someone does something outside the general expectations of them, it points up that having and sharing small ideas is just as important an accomplishment as any headline-worthy idea.

THE SAGA OF THE SIGN

The original sign was 8' x 12' (three panels of 4' x 8' layout) and had 10 lines of information besides a big banner announcing "Village of Port Henry." The first problem was deciding where the new sign would be placed. In this process the sign's size was changed to 8' x 8', going from a rectangle to a square. I had my own personal problem, where was I going to work on this, quite literally, huge project? Nowhere in my house was large enough except in an upstairs back area, accessible only by small, steep steps. My garage/barn was far from the house and dirty, dirty. Then, as with this whole project and a major reason I decided to share this journey of creation, help began being offered. An empty store on Main Street became mine in which to work. I bought the layout (rough plywood used under flooring - which, by the way, was delivered *free*) and the paint and - I began - having a picture of the original sign for reference and absolutely no knowledge or experience painting a real sign, particularly one so big. At some time, fortunately early on, I realized I could not duplicate the spacings of the original sign, it was a whole 4' narrower and still 8' tall. I would wake in the middle of the night saying "Oh, that's how I can do it." and, if I thought I might forget this brilliant piece of thinking, I would get up and scribble down my idea.

People asked if I needed help and though I desperately wanted help, no one *could* help until the stenciling of the information lines. All the changes needed in reducing the side-to-side lettering and filling in the still 8' feet of up-and-down space had to be my decision and execution. The banner was crucial. I cut a banner out of heavy paper and made adjustments in this manner and was amazed and thrilled when the banner became a painted reality on the sign. Finally, I began to feel as if I *could* really do this. The top portion was tedious, measure and measure again and finally dare to draw in a letter.

Here is where a second serendipitous thing happened. I had bought plastic stencils at Michael's art supplies, but had not tried them. On the Fourth of July I went to an auction with my daughter Amanda and noticed a man in front of me looking at metal things in a small wooden box and I stared, trying to figure out what exactly was in the box. Stencils! Lovely Brass Stencils! I nudged Amanda and said "I need those." When they came up for auction, she quickly said "\$25." I got my stencils and can say I do not know how I could have completed the sign without them. There were four different sizes, 4", 3", 2" and 1", the exact sizes I needed. I asked Amanda why she had begun the bidding so high. She said, "If you begin low, it builds and builds, but if you begin a bit high, people tend to not want to bid over a high beginning."

When it was time to stencil the informational lines, dear Louise Belden offered to help. Others offered also, but it could be only a two person job - there was only one set of stencils (spacers had to be used when letters were duplicated in a word) and only one set of the brushes. I forgot to mention that the two panels had to be separated to be worked on because no one could work in a middle four feet away. Therefore, sentences were separated, even one letter on the banner had to be divided. I had tried to

draw the lines for the sentences, but realized they were all wrong and had to paint-out the whole bottom before Louise and I could begin. Then it was measure and measure again before the lines were drawn. Measure and measure to center each separate line. Measure to decide how much space between words on every line. Measure, measure, measure, never really knowing if, when the two panels were put together, the lines would be straight and separated words would fit just right. The other terror was that we would make some error in spelling or dates and we wouldn't notice it until we had finished the line, so we checked and checked each word, each number as we completed it.

The first four lines of information would have gone much easier and looked much better if only I had known there was such a thing as a "stencil brush", duh. Danielle Brassard was next door working on *The Firefly*, her new store-to-be, and came in to look at the sign. When I complained how the paint kept sneaking under the stencils, she asked if I was using a stencil brush. A STENCIL BRUSH?! She said, "I have one." and went next door and brought one back for me. Stenciling became much faster and much more beautiful! As everything was painted at least twice, the offending first four lines were stenciled over properly and greatly improved the second time around.

The sign was finally and truly finished. We moved the two panels together and just stared for a moment before bursting out shouting, "They fit! They fit!" then we were laughing, then again just staring hardly able to believe it was so right.

The Saga of the Sign is almost finished, but not quite. I had been in possession of a one-and-only key while using the store. The lock was old and the key had to be coaxed into opening it. Originally, I had placed the keys (there was another key on the small ring with *the* key) on my key ring, but when the store's keys dropped off, I began placing them in one of the pockets of my car door. I was so concerned having them in my possession, I even changed their place from a shallow pocket in the door to a deeper pocket. Soon after the sign was finished I was asked for them and went to get them from the car. NO KEYS! I looked everywhere in the car, once, twice at least three times I checked. I drove home and checked every pocket of every piece of clothing I had worn for days. I emptied my purse at least twice. NO KEYS! I was so frantic I was calm. I got in the car, hurried up to the store, as I was pretty sure I knew what had happened. I do many things by habit, such as not looking as I drop keys into a deep pocket. It had to be on the street close to the sidewalk. It was not. Finally, I had to tell the keeper of the key. When I said I did not have the key, I was, quite unnecessarily, reminded that it was the one-and-only key. People were listening to my frantic story and one said a man had found two keys the day before and it was suggested he take them to the Post Office. I sped up to the Post Office and didn't even have to ask for them, there they were on the counter! I yelped "My keys!," grabbed them and, oh, so gratefully returned them to their "keeper."

I felt compelled to share this story as it became and has become so important to me on two main levels. The first level, that of the inexplicable answers to the needs of the project: the space, the stencils, the waking up in the night with answers to yesterday's problems, Louise, even the stencil brush and then finding the lost one-of-a-kind key. But the real continuing worth to me was, is and will continue to be, the affirmation that I can still accomplish difficult goals in spite of the aches of age. So there Betty White, you're not the only one.

It is now over two-and-a-half years since the letter below appeared in the Saturday, March 10, 2010 Press Republican.

"Fellow Villagers of Port Henry - On March 16th, the majority of voters voted to remain as we have been for so many years, that unique place the Village of Port Henry. For those of us who wanted this, we are happy, but what about all those others who thought the other choice might have served them better. They will never know.

Whatever led to those decisions, they are still in place and need to be known and addressed, if at all possible. It is the duty of each of us to all of us to create the Village all of us need. Participate, share concerns, ideas and possible solutions. Come to Board Meetings. They are not only open to all of us, but the Board welcomes our input. Let's, together, do away with any possible need for another dissolution referendum. Sandra Lovell"

It is this editor's fervent hope that over these past years a larger and larger majority of Port Henry villagers are glad and proud that we are still a village. It can be a true village only if everyone participates in making it so. The last three lines of that 2010 letter are still as relevant and necessary to say today as they were then. True, there is so much to be done, but that is *why* we need every hand and head involved in the effort. So, OK, I've been on my soap box long enough. **HAVE A HOWLING HALLOWEEN!**

Look for the next issue of the Fact Finder on Saturday, November 10th at Adirondack Hair Associates, Macs and Moriah Pharmacy; also you may find copies to read at the Sherman Free Library.