

THE PORT HENRY FACT FINDER

Reporting the News and Needs of Port Henry and Surrounding Area

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Natalie Clark and her always beautiful Fashion Corner**

The Christmas Holiday's have officially begun all over the US with the passing of Thanksgiving. Here in our village there are many more signs of holiday spirit: after last year's Christmas in darkness, we are again shining with Christmas lights across Main Street (thanks to so many people's combined efforts); the crèche is installed; the Tree is, again, in the Oval sending out silent blessings from its branches and there is an urgency in people's steps, seemingly not entirely due to the cold.

A last reminder: of another Christmas staple, the CP Rail Christmas Train's visit to Port Henry this Saturday at 4:45 pm. If you come, please bring a non-perishable for the Food Pantry box. **AND** – after the Train, come to the Moriah Chamber of Commerce office (by the Pharmacy) and have hot spiced cider, cookies, and conversation and, for the children, **Penelope the Clown** will be there practicing her magic.

PAST MAGIC MOMENTS

Kellie Valentine is FF's reporter on the following event.

The evening of Saturday, November 15th was a very special evening in the lives of seven young Moriah women. They were participating in the 2015 Distinguished Young Women of Moriah Program at the Moriah Central School Auditorium where they were competing for awards totaling over \$3000 in cash and scholarships and a chance to compete in the New York State DYW Finals.

Sarah Burbank, daughter of Michael and Diane Burbank was the recipient of this year's title of 2015 Distinguished Young Woman of Moriah. She gave a vocal presentation of the song "Popular" from Broadway's *Wicked*. The first-runner up was Lauren Cross, daughter of Brian and Kelly Cross. She too gave a vocal presentation, "I Hope You Can Dance" by Lee Ann Womack. Lauren was also the recipient of the Be-Your-Best-Self award for which she performed a skit with her "little sisters" Morgan Baker and Gwen Eichen. The participants themselves chose Blake Bigelow for the coveted Spirit Award.

This past week Chairwoman Kellie Valentine and Talent Coordinator Michele Costello met with Sarah to help her prepare for her participation the New York State Finals to be held on Saturday, January 10, 2015 at Cohoes High School.

Kellie Ann King had great news from son James who is in his senior year at Albany. He tried out for the *Make Me Laugh Albany* competition and was one of six final finalists. No, that is not an error. Originally, there were about a hundred auditioners from all around the Albany area. Twenty-four finalists were chosen to do two minutes of stand-up, but at the last moment they were told they would have only a minute, so everyone was hastily cutting their two minutes, try toward fame, to one minute - not an easy task at any time, but right before an audition! Then from these twenty-four finalists, six final finalists (James being among them) were chosen to perform for six minutes. True, James has been honing his stand-up, sketch and improve skills for the past two years in the campus group, Sketchy

Characters, but to reach the six final finalists in this competition is quite an achievement! Congrats, James, nothing helps people live longer and happier lives than laughter.

COMING MAGIC MOMENTS

The Friends of the Sherman Free Library are having a Christmas Craft Bazaar on **Saturday, December 6 from 10 AM - 3 PM** in the **Mt. Moriah Presbyterian church fellowship hall**, across Church Street from the library. This is an opportunity to make holiday shopping easier for yourself and very special for the recipients of these handmade gifts. You will be able to choose from pottery, jewelry, paintings, gifts for your pet, quilted items, Christmas decorations, local books, swags and baked goods.

As a very special treat, **Santa Claus** will be reading “The Night Before Christmas” at 10:30 AM on the 6th, during the Library’s story time. What a chance for mothers to shop, leave the kidlets off with Santa and have a bit of quiet time for choosing those special gifts.

Again thanks to the annual lovely gift from Ben Winters and the efforts of Matt Brassard and Ernie Guerin there is a beautiful tree in the Oval and which, this year, is sparkling with Christmas lights. **NOTE: A tree-decorating-and-carol-sing around the Oval’s tree is planned for Sunday, December 7th, at 3PM.** Bring your own ornament to hang on the tree or hang one we will give you and - don’t forget to bring your caroling voices.

NOTES FROM THE MORIAH TOWN BOARD MEETING

The monthly meeting of the Town Board was held Thursday, November 13th. Town highway superintendent Jamie Wilson reported that spring and summer projects were completed and that they came in under the budgeted amount.

\$106,862.00 was received from CHIPS with an extra \$11,000.00 for extreme winter conditions.

The Bulwagga Bay Project is probably completed by the distribution of this Fact Finder issue and it also came in under budgeted amount.

A FEMA audit was completed on the storms that happened a few years ago. FEMA was satisfied with all the information presented and Mr. Wilson was commended on his record-keeping on these storms. Without exact records, proper reimbursement is difficult to obtain.

Supervisor Scozzafava reported on a letter he had received from a Bulwagga Bay seasonal camper who suggested that the closing date be moved to after Columbus Day weekend and opened around May 15th. The change of closing date was met with enthusiasm as State sites close earlier and people are looking for places to stay, especially during the fall foliage season; however, no vote was taken at this time.

The “First Time Homeowner’s” exemption, which was under consideration is income driven. It was suggested that Charlie Lewis of The Essex County Real Property Office be asked to a meeting to have the benefit of his input on this subject. It was discussed that a local law could be created for homeowners, who make substantial improvements to their property, which can help them not fear having their assessment increased.

It was noted that Lani Sprague is now a State Certified Assessor.

A public meeting is being planned to discuss the hydro-project that has been in the works for over ten years and would utilize the now water-filled underground acres and acres of the abandoned old iron mines.

The Town Board, office staff and department heads were thanked for putting together a budget with “no fluff.”

Building Code Enforcement Officer Richard LaPier issued seven permits in October, responded to three complaints, issued one building not be occupied due to unsafe equipment and sanitary reasons.

Mr. LaPier recommended issuing a trailer permit to Joe Drake for a 1977 trailer to go on an existing trailer lot. The Board approved.

The Town of Moriah will be appealing the court's decision to lower Van Slooten Harbor Marina's assessment from \$1,260,000 to \$466,440. There was discussion: "We've had issues with assessment from day one; the assessors

A little thought for the season: there is a reason for calling today's moments *the present*, for they are just that, a present from time, from life. Whether they are filled with the keen enjoyment of laughter or the saltiness of tears, they are a gift, a present, to be experienced, savored and saved to enrich the future.

Look for the *Xmas* issue on **Saturday, December 13, 2014** at Macs, Moriah Pharmacy, Sherman Free Library, George's Restaurant, John Eisenberg's Service Center, Ken and Paula LaDeau's Champlain's Best Wash, Don Foote's "Miss Port Henry" Diner, and TFCU. NOTE: The Fact Finder may also be found on-line at porthenrymoriah.com. Go to "Living Here" and you will see "Fact Finder" to the far right, one line down.