

THE PORT HENRY FACT FINDER

Reporting the News and Needs of Port Henry and Surrounding Area

April 19, 2014

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Lynda Smyth & Jeff Kelly, The North Cheever Yacht Club and Boyea's Lakeside**

Fact Finder thanks you, 3rd grader Kendra Weber, for its last issue's cover picture of flowers.

HELP!!!

The Fact Finder needs help, if it is going to continue and improve. Its old editor cannot, anymore, do everything - go out and get the news, write the articles, print the paper, collate the pages, staple the pages and then deliver the paper.

Fact Finder needs younger people who, *first*, love our village, *second*, have a wide open mind that looks at both sides of an issue, *third*, are fascinated by humans and will write of them and their foibles with kind understanding, and, *fourth*, love words and how they will act upon the brain and taste upon the tongue. If you have one or more of the requirements and are interested in helping, call The Chamber of Commerce and leave a message for Sandra, 518-250-1050 or drop by the Chamber of Commerce office on Main Street when the "OPEN" sign is out.

NOTES FROM THE VILLAGE BOARD

The April 14th Village Board's monthly-meeting was unusually informative and, therefore, very interesting. Fire Chief Hughes' reported there will be an OSHA SCBA (Self-contained breathing apparatus) recertification and training this month; annual Firefighter physicals are in process; the PHFD and Auxiliary held Benefit Pancake Breakfasts on Sunday, March 30th and April 13th at the KFC; and PHFD will host, in conjunction with and in support of FASNY (Firemen's Association of New York State), an open house on Saturday, April 26th from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Drop by and visit your Fire Department: see what it is like, how it is run and become aware of its needs (Fact Finder suggests that we never be annoyed by PHFD coin drops, they are truly needed as there is never enough budgeted money, never enough grant money to cover all the requirements of a top-functioning Fire Department. They are always having to rob Peter to pay Paul and sometimes even rob Peter and Paul to pay Simon. Also, Fire Chief Hughes asked the Board to approve Zachery Martin's application to become a Port Henry Firefighter, which they did.

Although all aspects relating to the Fire Department should concern us as we have some control over our own welfare by supporting these volunteers, there is one potential disaster over which we have little control - the trains transporting fuels and other hazardous materials which go by daily. Chief Hughes asked for and received a copy of CP Railway's Density Report. It seems there has been a daily increase in the number of these hazardous tanker trains, however, those who live right beside the tracks, report that these trains seem to be slowing speed as they pass by Port Henry and *that* is a good thing. In furthering safety factors as much as possible, PHFD and Essex County HAZ MAT Team toured the Griffith Energy Facility Saturday, April 5th for pre-planning purposes. PHFD has requested and scheduled a "hands-on" training event with CP Railway to occur in the fall. All this preparation for disaster is quite warranted, if for nothing more than a seeming "truism" if you are prepared, it won't happen, if you are not, then it probably will. When my family flies, we have always tried to buy insurance as a real protection for us, as we are quite sure no one in our family is destined to come by a lot of money.

Although the Village did receive \$137,277, representing the remaining reimbursement for Campground damage from 2011's Hurricane Irene, it is still waiting for the State to schedule a formal closeout of the Beach and Rip Rap projects. These funds are expected in the next few months. Hallelujah! Note: Because the Village had to borrow money to pay for all the repairs to the Campground and Beach, they had to pay interest on a large loan, while waiting for all the governmental agencies to get all their dominoes in line, which took over two years! And this does not take into account all the man-hours spent in keeping on top of this turtle-like problem.

A Public Hearing was held on April 10th to present the proposed budget for the fiscal year of June 1, 2014 through May 31, 2015. The Board adopted the budget without opposition, as the only "Public" there was Fact Finder's editor and I had been to the previous budget meeting and realized Port Henry is financially better off than it was last year, what's to oppose?

pH7 Committee reported that the Port Henry Farmers' Market will be opening Wednesday, June 25th, 9:00 am to 1 pm. There was also discussion of the proposed tree plantings along Main Street. A question was raised about planted trees heaving sidewalks as they grow and the difficulty of plowing about them in the winter. The answer was that there are trees which do not heave sidewalks and having a more inviting Main Street is probably worth having to take a bit more time to plow. There are many tree-lined Main Streets in this area. Also, it was pointed out that the Trees for Main Street Project will be done in steps, only two or three trees per year, unless families wish to donate a tree in memory of a loved one. In that case, the Project would be able to "green up" Port Henry in fewer years. Note: The physical planting of donated trees can be done by the Project.

A motion was approved to re-levy 2013's unpaid water and sewer bills onto the Village property taxes for 2014.

The Elizabeth Street Water and Sewer Reconstruction Project bid was awarded to John W. Sheenan & Sons at the recommendation of AES Northeast (Architecture, Engineering and Land Surveying Northeast) for the amount of \$548,834., deemed to be the lowest responsible bid.

Other problems discussed and solved: a water problem in the basement of the Lake Champlain Bible Fellowship Church, allowing the campground beach house to be used as a venue in which family and friends might gather to honor and remember Dick Dickinson and a property maintenance complaint. Meeting adjourned!

NOTES FROM CATS

Here is some great news--You can turn bottles into trails! As a North Country resident (or when you visit), you can recycle your bottles and cans and make a donation to CATS at the same time.

Rapid Returns, the new redemption center in Elizabethtown, has set up an account for CATS so you can choose to have the cash, you would normally get back from "returnables," go to CATS! Please, take your bottles and cans to Rapid Returns and ask them to credit CATS. Rapid Returns is located on Water Street just west of the blinking light. They are open daily, for further information call, 518-222-7294.

Tuesday, April 22, 7 p.m. – There will be an inspiring slide show at the Westport Library titled "From Here to There." This presentation illustrates the beauty and biological richness of the Champlain Valley and how CATS is creating trails so people can enjoy this amazing place in which we live.

Friday, April 25, 7 p.m. - Joe Racette, New York's Wildlife Action Plan Coordinator, will present "Timber Rattlesnakes in Folklore and Fiction" at the Wallonsburg Grange. Fact Finder thinks this would be a fascinating way to spend an evening.

Saturday, April 26, 9 a.m. – Help prepare the trails for the Grand Hike coming up Saturday, **May 3rd**. Meet at the Dogwood Bakery in Wadhams.

CATS is an example to be followed of what can be accomplished when a group of like-minded, determined and energetic people decide to do something. With the reality of their trails, they encourage a sense of commonality and community for the whole area.

FROM OUR SCHOOL

The article below is not only well-written and interesting it, seems highly appropriate to Spring, the season we seem to be timidly inching into; and will become even more appropriate as Spring dries out into Summer.

Does it bug you?

by Alice Cochran

"Bugs are incredibly unique. They live in water, tree and dirt. Very unique." States Anne Roberts, a graduate biology student at RPI.

Bugs are the least appreciated creatures in the world, even though they are the most abundant. Many people are under the misconception that they are disgusting and vile. I believe this is untrue. Bugs are cool, not creepy and we gain so much from them, including nutrition, medical advances and even some fashion.

Bugs are highly nutritious. All over the world, for centuries, people have been eating bugs. Over 80% of the world's population eats bugs. Why? Because not only are they accessible, they are an outstanding source of protein, making them very good for humans. Six ounces of crickets have 60% less saturated fat and double the amount of vitamin B-12 when compared to the same amount of beef. Also, it would be a veritable challenge to get a disease from a bug after it has been cooked. The people of Madagascar eat 26 different types of bugs! However, in the advanced 10 English class, only 3 out 13 students said they would eat a properly prepared bug. So, Americans are a long way off from bugs on the dinner table. Bugs aren't the stereotypical creepy-crawlies you would imagine, because you can have them for dinner!

Bugs, being the extremely cool creatures that they are, are vital to the survival of humankind. Without composting insects, we would be living in a big mess with things in need of being composted everywhere. Insects, especially honey bees, are a fundamental part in providing the palatable diet we enjoy by pollinating the plants our food comes from. Also, miniature beasties, we are all familiar with (such as mosquitoes) are an imperative cornerstone in the food chain. In short, a world without bugs would be a world without fruits, vegetables and cattle. Inevitably, this means it would also be a world without humans. So bugs are awesome. In addition bugs, like the blister beetle, are used for medical and other purposes. Blister beetles are found in some wart removal products. Worms help your garden. Maggots have helped solve crimes by helping forensic scientists determine how long a body has been decomposing. Maggots have cleaned wounds of gangrene more completely and easily than surgeons would have.

Many things in our lives were inspired by the biology and behavior of bugs making them bug-inspired. Some robots have been inspired by insects to take less damage in

collisions. Jewelry has been a source of inspiration as far back as the ancient Egyptians. Recently, fashion has been venturing out into more exotic styles, inspired by bugs. Such outfits include features like wing sleeves and patterns similar to beetle shells. We owe bugs much our very way of life.

In the world of science, we owe bugs a huge thank you. The fruit fly scientists (yeah, that's their job title) today observe the heredity of certain genetic diseases. They can breed a particular kind of fruit fly to allow them to observe, study and better understand genetic diseases in humans. They have been doing this for over 100 years. By sharing, with humans, 75% of the genetic makeup that cause diseases in humans makes them the perfect candidate. Flies helping scientists help us, it can't be niftier than that.

Besides being super helpful to us in our way of life, bugs themselves are fascinating. Aquatic bugs, in particular, are intriguing. The common water strider eats other bugs with their rostrum (kind of like a mouth) that have died or are on the brink of death. Wounded dragonfly is a particular favorite of theirs. They also help to control the mosquito population by eating mosquito larvae. But they are far from the only ones. Another interesting bug is the water scorpion. This aquatic bug gets air through long breathing tubes in their abdomen. These are just two examples of the *ex-stream* awesomeness of bugs in H₂O.

Land bound bugs such as the common grasshopper or the stink bug, which terrorize classrooms this time of year, are terrestrial bugs. Terrestrial bugs are my personal favorite because they do not need wings or long water skimming legs to be awe-inspiring. For instance, did you know that army ants can lift up to 3 times their own weight?! Or, that lady bugs are fierce garden protectors in the realm of bugs? Terrestrial bugs are so much more than just annoying pests, all the clever ingenious things they do should inspire awe in all.

Winged things are pretty cool, and are adored/envied by many. It is no wonder why, when you look closer at some of them. For example, the monarch butterfly migrates to either southern California or Mexico. They do this because they cannot survive the winter up north but the prime their prime breeding grounds are here. Black flies can live up to a year, but on average, females live 4 weeks and males much less. For them a full meal is 2mg of blood and they can fly at 1 mph. Flying insects are very cool bugs, so ting yet so remarkable.

Not only can insects do incredible things, but they are incredibly tough. During the winter, in order to survive, some migrate, others hibernate like bears and some larvae replace the water in their systems with glycol, a type of antifreeze. So, maybe tough is an understatement. Cockroach's brains contain an unfathomable amount of anti-bacterial molecules that make high strength medication look weak. So now you have a better idea of where the phrase you "*you can't kill a cockroach*" comes from.

Sadly though, some of our bugs are disappearing, like so many other species. Unfortunately, they go more unnoticed because they are just little bugs that many people are either indifferent to or they severely despise. For example, the coffin cave beetle is losing its habitat. It has no eyes and is only found in 2 caves in Texas. People irresponsibly squash the cave beetle, which is not very nice. These under-credited creatures need recognition and action, or they will disappear. Another endangered bug is the honey bee, partly due to pesticides. If a plant is sprayed with pesticides and a bee attempts to pollinate it, the bee and other pollinating insects will be affected negatively by the chemical (basically they die). What people don't realize is the dramatic effect bugs have on us. As previously stated, they pollinate many of the of the food plants we enjoy. "When you go into a super market, half the things you see won't be there anymore if the honey bee disappears" says Roberts.

Given all these facts, it is surprising how anyone can still see an insect as a creepy-crawly-something-that-goes-bump-in-the-night, a scheming evil doer or, simply, a pest. Bugs contribute to a vital part of our ecosystem. Without them life, as we know it, would crumble. Not only do we need them but also they can, at times, be quite fascinating and we can learn a thing or two from them when it comes to survival. In conclusion, whether we like it or not, we need bugs, so think about that the next time you're about to squash one and decide to let it live.

Now that you have made it to the end of my article, you are either my English teacher, you really like bugs or you think I am insane. In any case, for more information, check out these sites.

Antbase.org <http://antbase.org/>

Butterflies and Moths of North America <http://www.butterfliesandmoths.org>

Discover Entomology at Texas A&M University
<https://insects.tamu.edu/extension/insectans/>

The Entomology Society of America <http://entsoc.org/>

FLMNH–BtterflyRainforest[http://www.flmnh,ufl.edu/index.php/exhibits/always-on-](http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/index.php/exhibits/always-on-)

[display/butterfly-rainforest/visitor-info/](http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/index.php/exhibits/always-on-display/butterfly-rainforest/visitor-info/)

Monarch Watch <http://www.monarchwatch.org/>

Thank you Alice for your excellent article which does what all articles should do, raise questions in the mind of the reader, which should send them on their own quest for more “bug” knowledge. By the way, there is an absolutely fabulous Bug Museum in Montreal. Their beetle collection looks like a collection of gems.

IF YOU DON'T KNOW, YOU MIGHT TRY

*Put a bit of baking soda in your tea-stained cups, wipe, rinse, dry and they will look like new.

*For a minor burn try putting Colgate or Crest toothpaste on the hurt.

*Kool Aid to clean dishwasher pipes. Just put in the detergent section and run a cycle, it will also clean a toilet, and we drink this?!

*Tie Dye T-shirt – mix a solution of Kool Aid in a container; tie a rubber band around a section or sections of the shirt and soak until you get the shade you want.

*Arthritis? WD-40, spray and rub in, kills insect stings too.

*To remove wax – take a paper towel and iron it over the wax stain, it will absorb the stain into the towel.

*For dirty grout try Listerine.

*Foe grass stains try Listerine? Oh well, it can't hurt.

*To keep flowers fresh add a couple of or use 7-up instead of water.

Note: Fact Finder wishes to state it takes no responsibility for the results of trying any of the above, everyone is on their own.

Look for the next issue of the Fact Finder on **Saturday, May 3, 2014** 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 (but no one will be upset if you leave with one) at 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.