

Pound Ridge 2013

Report from the Town Supervisor, May 15, 2013

The Pound Ridge I know, love and have dedicated much of my life serving is all about volunteerism. Nothing exhibited that more than during super storm sandy. But, do residents really appreciate the dedication and sacrifice these volunteers make on our behalf, or is this "free service" taken for granted. The members of our Volunteer Fire Department, Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Resident Volunteer Corps, Neighbor-to-Neighbor group and Office of Emergency Management include a combination of residents and town employees. The members of our Police Department, Highway Department, Parks and Maintenance Department and Town House Staff are also our First Responders and Emergency Managers. Before complaining to them about potholes and speeding tickets you should thank them for this priceless service. The next life they save may be yours. Each year on Memorial Day we recognize service to our community and nation. It puzzles me that so few residents turn out to show their gratitude to these men and women who are there for us every hour of every day of every year. And shame on those who sit at the pool during the parade and ceremony and then show up for the free BBQ. Volunteerism in our Town goes beyond emergency services. It includes those dedicated to protecting the environment, maintaining our historic and cultural resources and running our recreation programs. In addition to coming out on Memorial Day every resident should donate annually to the Fire Department, Ambulance Corps, PBA, Historical Society, Library, Neighbor-to-Neighbor, Land Conservancy and Fireworks Day. No amount is too small and it lets them know that you appreciate what they do.

With Sincere Gratitude to our Volunteers,
Gary Warshauer, Town Supervisor

Emergency Preparedness

Emergency preparedness begins at home. We all should be prepared to be without power for 3 days or more. This means having enough water for drinking and flushing toilets, flashlights and batteries, a portable radio, wood for your fire place and non-perishable

provisions. In a major event, such as super storm Sandy, you will be able to reach us for non-emergency questions or information by calling the police department at 914-764-4206. FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS ALWAYS CALL 911. IF necessary, Pound Ridge OEM will be activated and the Town House opened as a warming center. Follow us on twitter (@poundridgeny) sign up on the town web site for emergency services emails and monitor the web site for alerts, for information prior to and during an event.

Pound Ridge Volunteer Fire Department

Most everyone will agree that our town Volunteer Fire Department ("VFD") exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism. Far fewer however are aware of the depth of commitment they really make to the town and the concern for community safety that they single-handedly bring about. What makes them and Pound Ridge so special? It's a case of them literally backing their commitment with their own money.

Years ago, members of the Pound Ridge Volunteer Fire Department realized that our town faced a crisis. Purchasing a home in Pound Ridge was simply unaffordable for many of their younger members. To keep the Department a vigorous, thriving organization, young members must be added as the "old hands" age. We all know about that. There was a concern that the young members would move elsewhere, leaving a depleted department. Aside from seeing a treasured resource... a Volunteer Fire Department... wither, which would be a tragedy, they realized that the cost of replacing the volunteers with a paid Fire Department would be on the order \$4 million per year. That was then. Now it would likely be a lot more. *Then* it was an amount about equal to the entire Town tax collections.

The VFD initiated a unique solution to the dilemma. Using the money they received from their annual fund drive they undertook the down payment on purchase of a moderately priced home located close by on Trinity Pass

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and secured a mortgage for the balance of the cost. The house was then rented to young firefighters. In short, instead of using their contributions for a picnic, or jackets, or other expenses for their own benefit, they cut back on their enjoyment and truly gave back to the town. They managed, after many lean years to pay off the mortgage while still maintaining the annual Halloween party for the town's children.

Then they did it a second time for a house on Selleck's Walk.

Remember, the transactions were accomplished through the VFD's annual fund drive; not a cent came from tax money.

The homes are rented to qualified members of the Department, at below-market rents. But for that concession they must accept being 'on alert' evenings and weekends. If an alarm is sounded, these volunteers will see to it that a fire truck is on the road within minutes while other volunteers get out of their beds to assist in dealing with whatever problem has arisen.

Ray Clark, a former VFD Chief, who spearheaded the efforts said "We are proud that we were able to provide a way to make affordable housing available to some of our members and keep them in town. And", he added, "the rotating assignment requiring them to be on call nights and weekends has worked out beautifully for the Department. It has benefited the town and allowed kids born in Pound Ridge to remain here."

Residents should keep in mind that while you do pay Fire District taxes, those funds are only used to purchase fire trucks and equipment and to maintain the Fire House. The other, somewhat more visible things you see and associate with the Fire Department, such as Halloween night, school fire prevention talks, marching in parades, and open houses, are done by Department members on their own, using the contributions you give to them. They truly make Pound Ridge a special place to live in.

Adopt-A-Triangle Program

Thanks to Councilman Richard Lyman for suggesting and administering a program whereby our local Pound Ridge based

landscape companies perform the routine maintenance at the triangles created by our more prominent road intersections, as well as the parcel by Pound Ridge Auto Repair donated to the Town by Mary Moat. With some financial assistance for materials provided by the Pound Ridge Business Association, the five participating firms (Anderson Landscaping, Pound Ridge Home Management, Westchester Home Management, Luppino Landscaping and Miller's Landscaping) will be keeping the areas looking spiffy in exchange for a small sign denoting their service to the community. It is a great way for the Town to be able to redirect some tax dollars to other areas, the Business Association to continue their good works beyond Scotts Corner and for the businesses themselves to showcase their work. Truly a win,win,win!!!

Police Cars Going Green

The Town Board is entering the final stages of negotiation on the retro-fitting of four police cars in a pilot program to enable them to run on both regular gasoline and LNG (propane). Once up and running, the police cars will be able to run on either fuel but will rely primarily on the LNG which offers significant cost savings in vehicle operation and maintenance, with the added benefit of a much cleaner exhaust, giving us all cleaner air to breathe. The technology was developed by American Alternative Fuels LLC and is used successfully in other parts of the country. Should the program provide the positive results expected, more vehicles will be converted over time.

Deer Management Plan

Now in its 7th successful year, the Conservation Board initiated and Police Department administered deer management plan continues our efforts to bring the environment back into balance. For those who are new to town, this is not about hunting. It is an environmental program established to restore the vegetative undergrowth in the forested areas of our community. The undergrowth is critical in filtering storm water as it makes its way to our reservoirs and aquifers. The proper balance of deer is 10 to 15 per square mile. When we started the program the deer population was estimated to be over 60 per square mile. That number has been reduced, but we still have a ways to go to get to a healthy balance. Stopping the

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program now, as some have suggested, would undo the progress we have made and in my opinion be irresponsible. Maintaining the quality of our water supply is one of our prime responsibilities and this program is critical to that goal.

Recycling

The Pound Ridge Recycling Center is open every Wednesday and Saturday morning, except for holiday weekends, from 8:00am to 12noon. Residents can bring plastic, cardboard, paper, metal and e-waste free of charge. Household junk is also accepted, but requires purchasing a permit at the town house.

Pool House Renovation

The Town Park Pool House (and pool) is scheduled to be open on Memorial Day Weekend. As many of you may know, last year, following extensive renovation, the Pool House was not quite complete for the pool opening. This year, everything is complete and ready. While the renovations took a bit longer than anticipated and cost more than originally budgeted, the many improvements suggested by local architect James Best (who generously donated a lot of his time in project administration and construction management) have transformed the building into a bright, clean, and eminently usable facility that now meets all the latest building codes. The new kitchen will allow for a greater variety of foods to be served as well. Special thanks also to Councilman Richard Lyman, Parks and maintenance Foreman Ray Andretta, Highway Superintendent Vinnie Duffield and members of the Parks and Maintenance Department and Highway Department who worked on the project.

Housing

The Federal Housing Settlement Agreement requires that we modify our zoning to provide for "Fair and Affordable Housing". The Town Board together with the Housing Board and Planning Board have been working diligently on this. Follow the Town Board, Planning Board and Housing Board Agendas to participate in these discussions. For more information on the issue please visit www.westchestergov.com and the town web site.

Cell Tower

The cell tower at the Ambulance Corps property in Scotts Corners was approved a year ago, but installation has been delayed by T-mobile because they are apparently getting out of the Cell Tower Construction business and are negotiating with a third party group to build it for them. We are Hopeful they will complete construction this summer.

Scotts Corners

The town board has established a Parking District Committee, comprising owners of properties in the PB-A district, to make recommendations on the maintenance and other improvements along the sidewalk and within the parking areas. Infrastructure continues to be an issue of concern and Councilman Lyman has been working diligently on a solution that includes a decentralized wastewater treatment system.

Pump Your Septic Tank **It's The Law**

A new law adopted in March of 2012 requires that every septic system in town be pumped before December 31st, 2015. This environmental initiative will help minimize the pollution of our drinking water aquifers. The company that you hire to pump your septic tank will submit a report to the Westchester County Department of Health. If they find a problem the County will have an engineer prepare a more detailed analysis and restoration plan. Please visit the Conservation Board section of the town web site for more information on this program.

Town Budget

Managing the Town budget remains one of our most important responsibilities. The economic downturn continues to impact our sales and mortgage tax revenues and unfunded mandates from New York State have not eased as promised when the 2% tax cap was instituted. However, the town portion of your taxes is still only about 10% of your tax bill. We continue our commitment to manage our money wisely, but this does not come without a concentrated effort by your town volunteers and staff. Special thanks to my fellow Town Board members and all of our

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town department heads and employees, who continuously monitor and evaluate their efficiencies to minimize spending.

Neighbor-To-Neighbor

N2N wants to be able to help you in an Emergency, but can't if they don't know who you are. Special needs residents of any age should contact Felice Joaquim, 764-5472, or Louise Paolicelli 764-3987, to be included in their program.

Pound Ridge OEM & NYSEG
Team-up on a groundbreaking
Emergency Restoration Program

Our biggest challenge after a storm is clearing downed electric wires and trees, making the roads safe and passable and restoring power. Pound Ridge OEM has been trained by NYSEG to make post storm damage assessments and has developed a software program that will monitor an event, providing critical information about road closures and restoration progress for our residents and emergency responders.

Supervisor Forums

In addition to our monthly Town Board meetings public meetings have also been scheduled for the following Saturday mornings at the Town House starting at 10am, to focus on issues of special interest to our residents. The following is the remaining schedule for 2013 (the courtesy of an RSVP to Marianne Vitelli (mvitelli@townofpoundridge.com), if you are planning to attend, is very much appreciated):

- June 8th** Traffic and Pedestrian Safety
- Sept 7th** NYS Legislative Update by Senator Ball and Assemblyman Buchwald.
- Oct 5th** Emergency Preparedness
- Nov 2nd** Sustainability, Recycling and Water Quality
- Dec 7th** Goals and Priorities for 2014 with Board and Commission Chairpersons and anyone else who wants to come.



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Supervisor

Jonathan G. Powers
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Peter J. Falco
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POUND RIDGE, NEW YORK