



Town of Bethlehem e-newsletter



January 2020

Town Officials

Supervisor

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Board Members

Joyce Becker

Dan Coffey

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Online Services



The Town of Bethlehem is always looking for ways to serve you better, including bill payment options. Our Online Services provide residents and businesses the ability to manage bill payments, check on requests for quotes, sign up for Parks activities, and more. These tools are a free service to help manage your online transactions. Visit the [web site](#) for complete details.

This e-newsletter is a monthly reminder about town services, safety tips, upcoming events, contact information, and more.

From the Town Supervisor



This year, the Town of Bethlehem and 12 other regional municipalities are leveraging our collective buying power for the good of our community and our planet.

That's a big thing to say, but it's true.

Right now, the State of NY mandates that when you move into a new home National Grid is your electricity supplier. It's an opt-out situation, meaning if you want a cheaper or renewable supplier, you have to switch. This works fine for the most part, but National Grid doesn't provide us with as much renewable electricity as it could.

Through a partnership called Community Choice Aggregation (CCA), 13 municipalities will together ask electricity suppliers for their best electricity prices for all of our residents. Our goal is to get clean, renewable energy for the same or lower rates than we currently pay. With more than 50,000 households participating, and based on results seen in CCAs in Westchester County and the mid-Hudson Valley, I'm optimistic. But, we will not commit to anything until we are sure we can get the right electricity mix at the right price.



With the CCA, National Grid will still deliver our electricity, maintain powerlines, and make repairs during storms. Everyone will still get their bills from them too. The CCA, however, will allow us to painlessly shift to a supplier with better rates and cleaner options. And just like now, if you want a different supplier the choice will be yours. It's easy, it's simple, and it's an exciting opportunity to benefit our community and our environment.

If you want more information, a local group called [Bethlehem Tomorrow](#) has a great fact sheet on their Facebook. You can also visit the [MEGA website](#) (MEGA is our CCA Administrator) and watch these short videos on YouTube:

- [Intro](#)
- [What is the benefit of CCA?](#)
- [How do residents opt-out of CCA?](#)
- [How does CCA support renewable energy?](#)

Post Holiday Recycling Tips

Christmas tree recycling: Set real trees out curbside after the

Online Media



Check us out on the web, live, and on-demand, for all board meetings and other special media events.

Visit the [web portal](#) for more information.

Web Calendars

The Town, Parks and Recreation, Seniors, and Public Meetings [Calendars](#) are the place to find up to date information on upcoming committee meetings, programs, senior activities, and more.

Senior Service News

The Senior Services Department issues a bi-monthly newsletter which can be accessed [online](#) or in the office at Town Hall.

Local Blood Drives

January 17, 1pm - 6pm
Delmar Reformed Church
386 Delaware Avenue, Delmar

Visit the [Red Cross](#) for more info.

Car Seat Check

Infants and children less than 8 years of age are required to be in an appropriate child restraint system. If you are unsure of your type, need help with its installation, or want to make sure you have installed it correctly, the Police Department offers safety seat inspections.

Appointments are required and can be made by filling out a [Car Safety Seat Check Request Form](#) or by calling 518-439-9973 and asking for the Traffic Safety Officer.

Are you a Veteran?

Do you qualify for benefits from the Veterans' Administration?
Bruce Pentland, a Veterans

holiday, remove all ornaments and tinsel. No plastic bags please. The Town picks up trees after the holidays.

Recycling holiday gift packaging and other details, [visit the Town website](#).



You can also recycle old electronics and much more at the [Rupert Rd Transfer Station](#).

First Night Bethlehem - Welcome in 2020!



[Bethlehem's First Night 2020 Celebration](#), a family friendly, fun event, will be held New Year's Eve, **Tuesday, December 31, starting at 6pm at the Four Corners** with Saxophone Sam and a custom ice sculpture, and a **fireworks display at 6:30pm**.

[Music, crafts, facepainting, dance, and performers start at 7pm at venues within walking distance from the Four Corners.](#)

A First Night button is your admission to [all the indoor fun, performers, and activities!](#)



Adult buttons are \$10 until the day of the event, **12/31, when the price increases to \$15** for an adult button. **Teen buttons are \$5** (no price increase). **Kids under 12 are free!**

Proceeds from First Night button sales will be divided equally among four Bethlehem non-profits and their programs that benefit our neighbors in need!

Buy your First Night buttons at the [Adams Station Clubhouse](#), [Bake for You Bakery and Café](#), [Bethlehem Public Library](#), [Delmar Marketplace](#), [KeyBank](#) branches in Delmar, Elsmere, & Glenmont, [Perfect Blend Café](#), [Bethlehem Town Hall](#), or online at [Eventbrite.com](#).

Stay up-to-date on event details by following First Night Bethlehem!

Twitter [@Bethlehem1stNgt](#)

Facebook [@BethlehemFirstNight](#)

Instagram [#firstnightbethlehem](#)

Forests, Fields, and Farmland

Farmland protection grant funding for farms in transition



Recently announced [New York State grant funding](#) is available for purchases of agricultural easements on farms to both protect the farmland from conversion to non-farm uses, as well as provide capital to the farmer to initiate or complete a transition to help ensure the long-term financial security of their farm operation. Bethlehem's [Farms and Forests Fund](#) may be able to help eligible farmers with the local match required by the state grant. Farm transitions include "transition to the next ownership, transition to a more diversified overall farm operation, or transition to a different type of farm operation". Eligible farms must have over 50% of their acreage in the production of one or more of the following: beef or hogs; cash grains, fruits, maple sap, or vegetables. Interested farmers are invited to contact the Town (Karen Shaw, Open Space Coordinator, kshaw@townofbethlehem.org), or the NYS

Benefits Advisor, will be at **Bethlehem Town Hall on third Monday of each month from noon to 2pm.** Bring your questions and speak with the one who knows all about programs for Veterans. This is a first come, first served program.

Town Employment Information

If you are interested in checking for open positions with the town, please visit the Job Postings section of the [website](#).

If you have any questions, contact the Human Resources Department at 518-439-4955, ext. 1128 or 1129.

The NYS [Jobs Express](#) site is available to help New Yorkers who are seeking employment.

Youth Employment Service

Need part-time help?

The Youth Employment Service (YES) has a large database of reliable teens eager for part-time work. Town of Bethlehem residents needing help with housework, yard work, baby-sitting, animal care, or handyman work should contact YES. Bethlehem businesses can also contact the service for help finding part-time staff.

Want some extra cash?

The Youth Employment Service (YES) is a free, year round job matching program for teens. Town of Bethlehem residents, ages 14-21, can register with YES at the Parks and Recreation office located at Elm Avenue Park.

For more information, contact YES Director, Carol Rhatigan at 518-439-4955 ext. 1608 or YES@townofbethlehem.org



Questions?

If you have a question regarding Town government or operations, you can visit our [How Do I?](#) page on our web site to look for quick references.

Department of Agriculture & Markets (David Behm, david.behm@agriculture.ny.gov). This grant has no application deadline and will remain available until resources are committed.

New Year's Bird Count! January 1, 9am-12pm

Join local bird experts for the 39th annual bird survey at Five Rivers Environmental Education Center, 56 Game Farm Road in Delmar. Seventy-one different species have been found at Five Rivers on Albany's "First Morning," and the birds found over the decades of this long-term study show interesting range changes for many species. Bring binoculars if you have them. Dress warmly. If severe weather is forecast, call on Tuesday, December 31 to confirm the event will be held. Contact: 518-475-0291, 5Rivers@dec.ny.gov



Save the Date!

Farm Transition Workshop February 8, 9am-4pm Knox Town Hall

The workshop is open to all and features speakers from Cornell Cooperative Extension, American Farmland Trust, NYS Farmland Protection Program, National Young Farmers Coalition, and Farm Credit East Local Farms Fund.

Hosted by the Town of Knox Agricultural Advisory Committee: "It's tough for an older farmer to transition out of the farm; it's tough for a young farmer to transition into one; we'd like to provide some help." Contact: [Gary Kleppel](#), Town of Knox AAC Chair, 518-362-6576.

Parks & Recreation News

[2020 Winter / Spring Activity Registration](#)

We are currently accepting 2020 winter and spring activity registrations for both residents and nonresidents, on a first come first served basis. Registration can be submitted either through our online registration process, in person or over the phone.

New for 2020 – Dogs Permitted in all Town Parks

We are pleased to announce that beginning January 2020, dogs will be permitted in all town parks, with restrictions and enforcement measures. This initiative has been a few years in the making, starting with the recommendation from the 2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and supported with public outreach, research, and reports by the Friends of Bethlehem Parks and Recreation.



In order to achieve a successful outcome of this new law, we intend to provide dog waste station(s), new signage, educational materials, and community outreach. These measures will start to roll out in 2020. Ultimately, it will be the actions of responsible dog owners, and informed park goers, which will make this work and help us maintain safe and clean parks for all!

For new rules allowing dogs in parks, [please visit Park Rules and Regulations](#).

For all rules related to dogs in the Town of Bethlehem, [visit the Town Code, Chapter 61](#).



New! Family Trivia!

Sunday, January 12 Town Hall 2-4pm

Join us for some friendly competition and fun! This pop-culture trivia will have questions for the whole family. Each

Call Before You Dig

For your safety, call for a stake-out request when considering any building, landscaping, or renovation projects involving digging as mandated by New York State Code law. To create a stake-out request, call 800-962-7962 before you dig. More info is online at [Dig Safely New York](#). This is a FREE service.

Albany County Information

Immunizations

Vaccines are provided against childhood diseases for infants and children to meet school and child care requirements. Adult and college immunizations are also available by appointment. For more information and appointments, please call 518-447-4589.

If you are interested in influenza vaccine information, please click [here](#).

Low Cost Rabies Immunization Clinics for Pets

Rabies shots are required for all cats, dogs, and domestic ferrets by four months of age, and owners can be fined if they fail to get their pets vaccinated and keep them up-to-date. Check with the [Albany County Department of Health](#) for the 2020 clinic schedule, when available.

Do1Thing: Small Steps Toward Being Prepared For An Emergency

The Albany County Citizen Corps is promoting Do1Thing, a web-based nationwide initiative to increase personal and family preparedness. Looking for resources to share with your neighbors, friends or family?

family represents a team. First place prize is a \$50 gift card and second place prize is a \$25 gift card to I Love Books.

January Ski Club Trip for Middle and High School Age Students Saturday, January 18 – Mt. Snow

[Ski Club Information and Permission Slips are available online.](#)



- Registration needs to be submitted to the Park Office.
- Permission slips required prior to attending your first trip.
- Bus fees are required prior to attending each trip.
- Lift ticket paid for the morning of prior to departure.
- Rentals or lessons are paid for ahead of time by calling the Parks & Rec office to assist.



Friends of Bethlehem Parks & Recreation Bus Trip to Boston March 14

Attend the Boston Flower & Garden Show or spend the day your way!

For complete details, [visit the Friends](#).

Pavilion Reservations

Residents of the Town or Town based organizations may reserve the pavilions at Elm Avenue Park, Henry Hudson Park and Maple Ridge Park for recreational functions. [Permit forms and fee information are available online.](#)

Permits for all users will be issued on a first come, first paid basis for all dates in 2020 starting January 2.

2020 Delmar Duathlon!

Sunday, April 26, 8am at Elm Avenue Park

The 9th annual Delmar Duathlon features a 2-mile run followed by a 10-mile bike ride concluding with another 2-mile run.

Co-sponsored by the Town of Bethlehem Parks and Recreation Department and the Bethlehem area YMCA.

[Complete race details Registration](#)

SCREAMS – Students Craving Really Exciting Activities at the Middle School

[Albany Indoor Rock Climbing Gym \(A.I.R.\)](#)

Saturday, January 11

For all middle school students who reside in the Town of Bethlehem or the Bethlehem School District.



Apply For Summer Jobs NOW!

Applications for summer jobs are now available at the Parks and Recreation office or [online](#).



Employment applications must be received by March 1. Job opportunities include: Camp Director, Assistant Camp Director, Camp Counselor, Lifeguard, Pool Attendant, Swim Instructor, Maintenance, and other program

leaders, instructors, and supervisors.

Summer Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer applications are currently being accepted for summer programs. Applicants are required to be at minimum entering 8th

More info, including videos, audio-only messages, and fact sheets in 8 languages and large print, is available [here](#).

Team Green

is an [online resource](#) to help Albany County residents and businesses lower energy use and save money on their utility bills.



[Sign up](#) to receive this monthly e-newsletter from the Town of Bethlehem.

About the eNewsletter

This newsletter is compiled by the Supervisor's Office of the Town of Bethlehem. For more information, email [Robin Nagengast](mailto:Robin.Nagengast) or call 518-439-4955 ext. 1164.

grade. Pick up an application at the Parks Office or [download online](#). **Volunteer applications must be received by May 1.**

From the Town Historian



Winter is a great time to get outside and History Hike. Town Historian Susan Leath will lead a brisk winter walk on **Saturday, January 11** at **Henry Hudson Town Park**. We'll see Follywyck and Bethlehem House, historic homes

hidden by leafy trees most of the year, and learn about the ice industry.

After the walk, we'll visit the nearby **Cedar Hill Schoolhouse**, home of the Bethlehem Historical Association, for warming drinks and an informal slide show.

Meet near the large picnic pavilion at 10am. Please pre-register with Bethlehem Parks & Recreation. Questions? Contact Susan at sleath@townofbethlehem.org

Exemption Info/Deadlines from the Assessor

Renewal forms for the Senior Citizens w/limited income exemption were mailed early December. Because of the changes in the law and our local option, **we have extended the due date for this one exemption to May 1.** That is for renewals only. **All new applications** must be received by March 1.

Renewal forms for Agricultural, Disability w/limited income, Clergy, and Non Profit will be mailed in the next couple of days. These renewals are all due by March 1.

If you are currently receiving the Basic Star exemption and will be 65 before December 31, 2020, your 2018 federal adjusted gross income (less IRA distribution) is under \$88,050, you may apply for the Enhanced Star exemption in the Assessor's office. If you are currently getting the Basic or Enhanced STAR exemption, you have the option to make the switch to the STAR Credit Check with NYSDTF. (See below for contact info).

All new applications for any exemptions are due in the Assessor's office by March 1.

If you are a new homeowner and it's your primary residence, don't forget to file for the Star Credit Check with NYS Department of Taxation and Finance. Their website is www.tax.ny.gov or call 518-457-2036.

Reminder from Bethlehem Police Department



Winter is here, and with it, snowfall and snow removal. Bethlehem Police Department reminds everyone that plowing or shoveling snow into the roadway is unsafe and also illegal.

January Senior Health & Wellness



Weekly Health and Wellness
Bethlehem Town Hall, Fridays at 1pm
January Program Topics

Reservation not required. Check the Bethlehem [Senior Services newsletter](#) or [webpage](#) for more information/updates.

- January 10 **Tai Chi**
- January 17 **CBD Oil 101**
- January 24 **Chiropractic Wellness**
- January 31 **Gizmos and Gadgets**

Town of Bethlehem | 445 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, NY 12054 | 518.439.4955 | [Email](#) | [Website](#)

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