



Town of Bethlehem e-Newsletter

October 2008

445 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, NY 12054
518.439.4955

www.townofbethlehem.org

Town Board

Jack Cunningham, Supervisor
Joann Dawson, Board Member
Mark Hennessey, Board Member
Kyle Kotary, Board Member
Sam Messina, Board Member

October Meeting Schedule

All meetings are held at the Town Hall unless otherwise indicated

Ambulance/EMS Billing Community Meeting
Wednesday, October 1, 7:00 p.m.

Zoning Board of Appeals
Wednesday, October 1, 7:00 p.m.

Citizens Advisory Committee on Conservation
Monday, October 6, 7:00 p.m.

Noise Ordinance Task Force
Tuesday, October 7, 1:00 p.m.

Planning Board
Tuesday, October 7, 7:00 p.m.

Town Board
Wednesday, October 8, 6:00 p.m.

Town Offices Closed
Monday, October 13

Agriculture & Farmland Study Committee
Tuesday, October 14, 7:00 p.m.

Zoning Board of Appeals
Wednesday, October 15, 7:00 p.m.

Development Planning Committee
Thursday, October 16, 10:00 a.m.

20/20 Advisory Committee
Friday, October 17, 7:30 a.m.
at the Elsmere Fire Dept.

Industrial Development Agency
Tuesday, October 21, 8:00 a.m.

Noise Ordinance Task Force
Tuesday, October 21, 1:00 p.m.

From the Supervisor

This week we presented the 2009 budget for the Town of Bethlehem. Of course, we are all feeling the impact that the weakened economy is having on our finances. Federal, state and local governments have seen budget surpluses turn to deficits and balanced budgets become undermined from the pressures of rising costs and shrinking revenues. The Town of Bethlehem, like other municipalities throughout the region, is not exempt from the impacts of our unsteady economy and we are realizing these same budget struggles.

As the economic storm continues to present itself, **I assure you that our financial foundation is strong and we are fully prepared to weather this storm.**

There are, however, some harsh economic realities that our community is facing now and will likely face in the foreseeable future. The cost of government operations continues to grow at a rapid rate, much greater than the rate of inflation. This is because the Town's expenses include products and materials that increase in cost much faster than the rate of inflation. These items include materials like steel, which increased at a rate of 43% and chemicals used for processing our drinking water and wastewater, which have increased by 27%. The impact of increasing oil prices also impacts the cost of fuel dependent products such as paving material, which has risen in price by 33% this year alone. In 2009, we will see a 14% increase in health insurance costs.

One of the principal sources of income for the Town is sales tax revenue which we use to fund much of our operation, however, in a down economy, these revenues decline and we are forced to look to the property tax payer for additional revenues to balance our books.

Of course, raising taxes is not our first line of defense against budget increases. We have been very successful in reducing operating costs over the past year, securing grant funding to advance operations, adding new revenue streams and managing the ongoing expenses for the Town. Nevertheless, these efforts are not nearly enough to counter the growing costs of products we need to operate.

The proposed budget for 2009 includes a tax increase to pay for Town services of 6.89% over 2008. Of course people pay in dollars and not percentages so it is important to understand what this increase means in real dollars to the average homeowner.

Currently, your Town tax levy for water, sewer, highway and town operations is \$2.53 per thousand dollars assessed value. Our proposed increase is 17 cents, which will change the tax levy to \$2.70 per thousand dollars assessed value. If your home is assessed at a value of \$300,000, the annualized increase will amount to \$52.35 per year, or for those who escrow for taxes with your mortgage payment, this amounts to an increase of \$4.36 per month.

Although these amounts seem relatively small in comparison to other property taxes and household expenses, I remain focused on the fact that there are many competing priorities for your dollars each month and that additional expenses, no matter how insignificant, still impact the family budget.

We will continue to work here at Town Hall to be responsible stewards of our community and look for opportunities to manage our costs while providing the same services that residents have come to rely on. I welcome your thoughts and ideas and

Planning Board

Tuesday, October 21, 7:00 p.m.

Town Board

Wednesday, October 22, 6:00 p.m.

Public Hearing on the preliminary budget at the October 22 Town Board meeting

For agendas, please see:

www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/agenda/agenda.asp

Town Board meetings can be seen on public access channel TV-18 every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m., every Friday at 7:30 p.m. and every Saturday at 3:00 p.m.

hope you will contact me to let me know what you think.

supervisor@townofbethlehem.org

Upcoming Dates to Remember

Students Craving Really Exciting Activities at the Middle School (SCREAMS) will be hosting a trip to a Corn Maze on Friday, October 3 (see below)

Colonial Acres Youth Golf Tournament, Saturday, October 4 (see below)

Town Offices closed on Monday, October 13, Columbus Day

Community Clean-Up Day, Saturday, October 18

Halloween Hay Day at Elm Avenue Park, Sunday, October 19 (see below)

Last day to pay School Tax bills (with penalty) at Town Hall, Friday, October 31, 4:30 p.m.

Daylight Savings Time Ends, Sunday, November 2, 2:00 a.m. - Fall BACK one hour

Election Day, Tuesday, November 4 - Town Offices closed

Community Health Fair at Town Hall, November 7, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Department of Public Works News

NOTICE

FALL WATER MAIN FLUSHING PROGRAM

Area #1 - September 22 through October 7
Slingerlands, North Bethlehem and the Town of New Scotland

Area #2 - October 1 through October 17
Delmar, Elsmere

Area #3 - October 15 through October 31
Glenmont, Selkirk

Some discoloration may be seen during this flushing program which could result in the staining of laundry. Run water until it clears before doing laundry.



Did You Know?



Clean out your book collection for a worthy cause



There is a collection box inside the side doors to Town Hall for books for the Albany County Nursing Home. Books, especially large print, and monetary donations for the Albany County Nursing Home Library would be greatly appreciated! Other drop-off locations include the First United Methodist Church and the CVS in Delmar.

All Town offices will be closed on Monday, October 13 in observance of Columbus Day



Tax Office Information

If you have not yet paid your school tax bill

This year's school taxes were due on or before September 30, 2008. If you did not pay your school taxes by the due date, you have incurred a penalty of 2% of the tax bill. Payments (with the penalty included) can still be made in person at the Town Hall, mailed, or placed in the new Drop Box by the bicycle rack by the Town Hall - NO cash payments in the drop box, please. The drop box will be emptied at 4:30 p.m. on the due date. If your school tax bill still remains unpaid after 4:30 p.m. on October 31, the amount due will be re-levied on your January property tax bill and will include additional percentage penalties. Please call Nancy Mendick, [Receiver of Taxes](#), 439-4955, ext. 1178, if you have any questions.



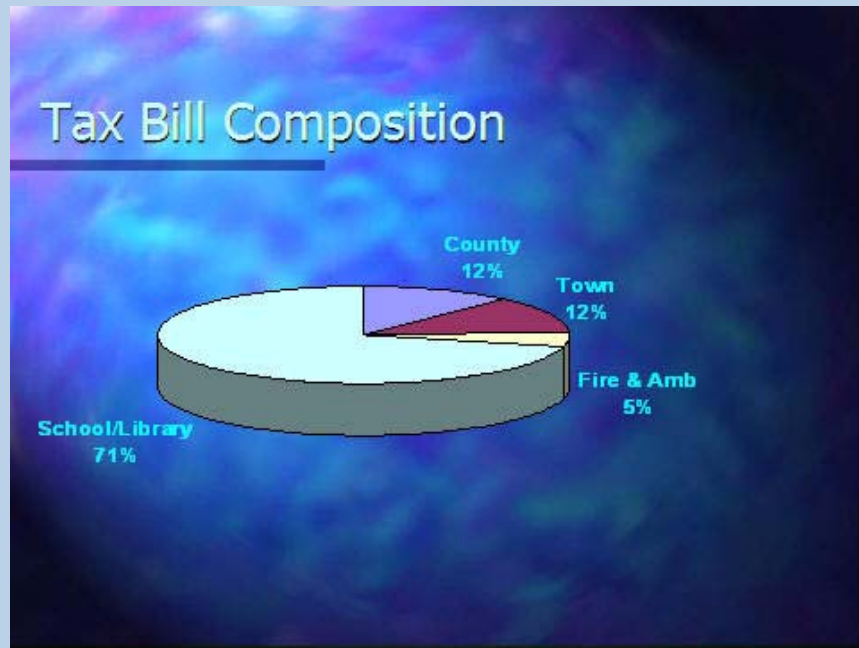
RAVENA ★ COEYMANS ★ SELKIRK Central School District



Did You Know?



Where Tax Dollars are Used
 (chart based on 2008 BCSD school and 2008 property tax rates)



Parks and Recreation Department News

Colonial Acres Youth Golf Tournament
Saturday, October 4



Sign up for our first youth golf tournament at [Colonial Acres](http://www.townofbethlehem.org/images/parks/2008YouthGolfTournament.pdf) for children ages 4-12, boys and girls. There will be prizes for Low Gross (3 age groups), Closest to the Pin (holes #2 and #9) and Longest Drive (boys and girls). The \$20 entry fee includes 9 holes of tournament play, prizes, pizza and beverage. Please arrive and check in by 2:30 p.m. Shotgun start begins at 3:00 sharp. All golfers will be placed in a foursome predetermined by the Parks and Recreation Department. All golfers must have their own clubs and bag. Rain date is Sunday, October 5 at 3:00 p.m. For more information, please call the Bethlehem Parks and Recreation Department at 439-4955, option 3 or to download a registration flyer, visit:

<http://www.townofbethlehem.org/images/parks/2008YouthGolfTournament.pdf>

HOLE-IN-ONES at Colonial Acres!

<u>Golfer</u>	<u>Hole</u>	<u>Yardage</u>	<u>Club</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Witnesses</u>
Ryan Drew	#8	152	3 wood	September 21	Justin Santiski and Robert Santiski
Joseph Dobrindt	#2	106	4 iron	September 18	Jeanne Dobrindt and Terry Miller
Hedy Lowenheim	#2	106	7 iron	September 8	Earl Green and Jake Watson
Jim Walsh	#2	106	pitching wedge	August 18	Ed Hart

S.C.R.E.A.M.S. – Corn Maze
Friday, October 3

SCREAMS will be going to the Liberty Ridge Farm to visit their Haunted Corn Maze on Friday, October 3rd. Registration is open to all middle school students who reside in the Town of Bethlehem or the Bethlehem School District. For more information or to register, download the flyer at http://www.townofbethlehem.org/images/parks/2008SCREAMS_CornMaze.pdf

18th Annual Halloween Hay Day
Sunday, October 19



On Sunday, October 19 from 1-3:30 p.m., the 18th Annual Halloween Hay Day will be held at Elm Avenue Park. Come out in costume for hayrides, trick or treat bag decorating, face painting, games and much more. This event is FREE for the whole family!



For upcoming special events, please see the Bethlehem Report or the Parks calendar on the Town's web site at <http://www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/news/showParksCal.asp>

Dog Park Tag Price Reduced

Beginning October 1, the fee for a Dog Park tag is \$15 and is valid through December 31, 2008. Tags are available at the [Town Clerk's office](#) in the Town Hall.

NEW! Parks and Recreation Online Registration System



After a long term group effort between the Parks and Recreation Administrative Staff and the Town's MIS Department, the Parks and Recreation Department's new online registration system is now ready for viewing. On the Town's web site, follow the Department link to the newly redesigned Parks and Recreation home page. From there click on *Activity Information and Registration* to the left and start out by reading *Activity Registration General Information*. When done, click on *How to Register... Online* on the left for more detailed information.

At this time you may enter the system as a Guest and view the current fall activities. In early October, if you are a Parks and Recreation registered Household, you will be emailed your Household ID number and a Password. This ID number will be your permanent User Name for all future online registrations. (If you are not a registered Household, contact the Parks and Recreation Office to have a Household created for you.)



Beginning with Winter 2008/2009 activities, registered Households can search online to find the activities and classes you are looking for, register whenever it is convenient for you and receive email confirmations of online registrations. Beginning January 2009, you will also be able to view facility calendars to see date availability of rental pavilions.

We hope you enjoy this new online service and the convenience it provides when registering for Parks and Recreation activities!

[Click here to go to the Parks and Recreation Department's home page](#)



Recycling Plastic Bottles

Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET, PETE or polyester) is commonly used for carbonated beverage and water bottles

High Density Polyethylene (HDPE) is the most widely used resin for plastic bottles. This material is economical, impact resistant, and provides a good moisture barrier.

PET bottles are actually a form of polyester, which makes it easy to recycle bottles into tee shirts, fleece, sweaters and socks. HDPE bottles can be remade into traffic cones, fencing, plastic wood, and other items. Plastic makes up 8% of our trash by weight, but is 24% of the volume. A plastic bottle can take 500 years to decompose.

For more information, please contact the [Town's Recycling Coordinator](#).

Senior Services News

There will be no Senior Transportation on Monday, October 13.

The deadline to file for your Economic Stimulus Plan credit has been extended to October 15, 2008. Bethlehem Senior Services Outreach workers can provide forms and assistance for filing for the rebate. To schedule an appointment, please call 439-4955, extension 1176.

There will be no Senior Transportation on Tuesday, November 4, Election Day EXCEPT for those who have reserved a space (439-5770) for transportation to voting in the morning, only.



The **Senior Legal Services Program** provides legal services for residents of Albany County who are 60 years of age or older. The program is funded by the Albany County Department for Aging and is staffed through the Legal Aid Society of Northeastern New York, Inc. There is **NO COST** for this program. A representative will be at the Bethlehem Town Hall on Thursdays, October 9, November 13 and December 11. Please call Bethlehem Senior Services at 439-4955, extension 1176 for an appointment.

To see all of the interesting activities, events, programs and services provided by Town's Senior Services department, pick up a copy of the bi-monthly Senior Services newsletter at the Senior Services Department, Room 110 at the Town Hall, on Senior Services transportation vehicles or on the Town's web site at <http://www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/depServices/seniorServices.asp#Brochures> .

Town Clerk News

Quadracentennial neckties now available at Town Clerk's office, \$30, cash only. Celebration of 400th Anniversary of Henry Hudson's historic 1609 voyage up the Hudson River to be held in 2009.

Community Health Fair, Friday, November 7



The Town of Bethlehem Senior Services and Bethlehem Senior Projects, Inc. will host a **Community Health Fair** on Friday, November 7, 2008 at the Bethlehem Town Hall in Delmar from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Services to be provided may include the following:

Albany County Health Department Flu Shot Clinic, St. Peter's Health Care Services to provide screenings for cholesterol, glucose and pulmonary function, body fat measurement and osteoporosis (free for those age 60 or older - under 60, the fee is \$13.00)

and

blood pressure screening, audiology screening, Umbrella (supporting aging at home), St. Peter's Lifeline, National Grid, EPIC (Elderly Pharmaceutical Insurance Coverage), St. Peter's Home Care and NYS Division of Veterans' Affairs and much more.

Please see the [September-October Senior Newsletter](#) for more information.

ALL ages are welcome!



Town Hall Blood Drive was a Great Success!



On September 3rd, Bethlehem Town Hall sponsored an American Red Cross blood drive. Thank you to Joyce Becker and Elizabeth Mosier who organized the drive and Dorothy Mann, R.N. who "manned" the canteen, on behalf of the Town and thank you to all those who donated. We had 5 first time donors! What kind of impact did this one drive have? Enough blood was collected to potentially save 165 lives!

See the Red Cross web site, <http://www.donatebloodnow.org/DonateBlood/Listings.asp?co=Albany>, for more upcoming blood drives in the area (click on Refresh if the page doesn't appear the first time).

The following files may help answer any questions you may have as well as amaze you what you do by donating.

[Blood Donation - Common Questions](#)

[The Blood Donation Process](#)
[Tips for Blood Donors](#)

[Why Give Blood? What Happens to Donated Blood?](#)

[Double Red Cell Donation Information](#)
[50 Facts About Donating Blood](#)





TOWN of Bethlehem *Economic Developments*

[Subscribe](#) and keep up with economic development in the Town.

In conjunction with the Bethlehem IDA and the Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce, the Town of Bethlehem, NY has initiated a monthly electronic bulletin to communicate information related to economic development activity in the Town. [E-mail subscribers](#) will receive regular monthly bulletins-and special edition bulletins-that contain timely and newsworthy economic development news.

Albany County News



[Albany County Department of Health](#) Immunization Clinics, 4-6 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month, call for appointment or more information, 447-4602 for infants and children, 447-4589 for college immunizations. For this month, the clinic dates are October 1 and October 15.

Albany County Rabies Clinics 2008

**Saturday
November 8
1:00-4:00pm**

Village of Green Island Public Works
Garage
Cohoes Avenue - Green Island

**cats/ferrets | 1:00-2:30
dogs | 2:30-4:00**

Low cost immunizations. All dogs, cats and ferrets in New York State are required, by law, to have current rabies vaccinations. For more information, visit the Albany County Department of Health web page at http://www.albanycounty.com/departments/health/programs_services.asp?id=747

Foster and Adoption Families Needed! For more information go to the [Albany County Department for Children, Youth and Families web site](#).



Did You Know?



- If you have a question that may pertain to Town government or operations, you can visit our [Frequently Asked Questions page](#) on our web site to look for quick references.



We'd like to hear from you

Let us know what you think of this newsletter. Please use the feedback form on the Town's web site, www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/about/contact.asp

[Click here for a printable version of this e-Newsletter](#)

You are receiving this e-mail because you have subscribed to our e-newsletter. If you wish to be taken off our monthly mailing, click here to [unsubscribe](#).

Town of Bethlehem | 445 Delaware Avenue | Delmar | NY | 12054

web: <http://www.townofbethlehem.org>

disclaimer: <http://www.townofbethlehem.org/pages/includes/disclaimer.asp>

For the best viewing of the Town's e-Newsletter in **gmail**, scroll all the way down the page and click on "basic HTML" next to "Gmail view:" at the bottom of the screen.