



Town of Bethlehem e-newsletter



October 2022

Town Officials

Supervisor

David VanLoven

Board Members

Joyce Becker

Dan Coffey

Maureen Cunningham

David R. DeCancio

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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, sign up for Parks activities, report a concern, and more. These tools are a free service to help manage your online transactions. Visit the [web site](#) for complete details.

Online Media

The monthly e-newsletter provides reminders and announcements on town services, upcoming events, safety tips, what's happening in Bethlehem, and more.

From the Town Supervisor



Several years ago, a man stopped by my office wondering if the town would be interested in buying land that he'd owned in Glenmont and Selkirk since the 1980s. These properties included the historic 150+ acre Heath Dairy Farm on three corners of Wemple Rd/Rte 9W which had been growing crops for more than 250 years, plus a 122-acre farm off Clapper Rd and 31 acres on Weisheit Rd.

Over 30 years of working as an environmental advocate, I've found that if lands are not protected, they will be developed. It might be in 5 years, it might be in 50 years, but they will be developed. Because of this, if we want treasured green spaces to remain green, we have to take responsibility and pay for them. This isn't saying that developments are bad. Rather, it's a recognition that just because a place has been green for as long as we can remember doesn't mean it will always be. Evidence of this is that the fourth corner of the Wemple Rd/Rte 9W intersection will soon host 96 apartments.

When I first started as Supervisor, I worked with the Town Comptroller to create the Farms & Forests Fund, a designated capital fund that can only be used to protect land. The fund is built through a combination of private donations and a portion of Town budget surpluses, and has grown to \$2.2 million (which can only be spent on land protection).

The landowner has offered to sell the properties to the Town for \$3 million, which is \$1 million less than its appraised value. The Town Board this summer approved the purchase, using available capital reserves from the Farms & Forests Fund, Park Land Set Aside Fund (which can only be used for park projects), and federal American Rescue Plan funds.

The vision for the properties is to keep them in agriculture –



except for an 11.5-acre parcel in Glenmont that's beside an 8-acre plot the Town already owns. We'd like to combine these for a future 20-acre park. The remaining farmland properties would be protected with agricultural easements that would allow them to continue growing crops, but

never grow subdivisions. Then, we could sell the properties to a private farmer (with the revenues going back into our Town capital reserves), work with a nonprofit to create a farm incubator, or continue leasing them for farming.



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.

Local Blood Drives

The [Red Cross website](#) provides information on safety protocols and how to make an appointment to donate blood.

October 1, 8am - 1pm
Slingerlands Fire Department
1520 New Scotland Road,
Slingerlands

October 4, 2pm - 7pm
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
16 Elsmere Avenue, Delmar

October 12, 8am - 2pm
Bethlehem High School
700 Delaware Avenue, Delmar

October 22, 9am - 3pm
First United Methodist Church
428 Kenwood 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.

Call 518-439-9973 and ask for the Traffic Safety Officer for more

Opportunities like this are rare. Scenic Hudson noted that this 300+ acre project would be the largest municipal farmland conservation effort in Hudson Valley history.

Whether or not to move forward with the purchase of these lands is now in the hands of voters. On the back of the November 8 ballot, Bethlehem residents will find two referendums: Prop #1 regarding an environmental bond for clean air, clean water, and green jobs; and **Prop #2 regarding whether or not to protect these farmlands.**

The choice is yours, so be sure to turn over your ballot when you vote!

Parks & Recreation News & Events

Fall Park Playbook Online!

Registration is open for 2022 Fall programs! Check out the [online Fall Park Playbook](#) for a full listing of programs and events. Registrations can be submitted in person, over the phone, or through our [online registration process](#).



Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month at Elm Avenue Park

When: Saturday, October 1

Location: Elm Avenue Park, Warming Area

(Adjacent to pool entrance)

Activities: Crafts & a movie, featuring **Disney's Encanto**

There will also be a collection of non-perishable items for the [Capital District Latinos](#) food pantry

Time: 6pm-8:30pm (movie starts 6:35pm sharp). **FREE admission!**

Request for Proposals

If you are interested in running your program or camp in a Town park in the year 2023 and would like to be included on our request for proposal list, [email Assistant Administrator, Heather Maltby](#)



SCREAMS – Wild Play Adventure Course!

Students Craving Really Exciting Activities in Middle School

The SCREAMS Club will be going to the [Wild Play Adventure Course at Thacher Park](#) on **Saturday, October 15!**

[Check out the SCREAMS webpage for more details.](#)

Please note that this event requires Screams Club Membership Form. SCREAMS Club membership can be [completed online](#) as long as you have a household account set up with the Parks and Recreation Department!

Tennis Supervisor WANTED

Do you have a love for tennis you want to share with others? We are looking for a qualified individual to teach youth and/or adult tennis programs. Please contact Assistant Administrator Heather Maltby if you would like more information. hmaltby@townofbethlehem.org, 518-439-4955 ext. 1603.

The Pit

Grand Opening Tuesday October 11!

(6th graders ONLY-Wednesdays in October)

The Pit is operated by the Parks and Recreation Department in cooperation with the Bethlehem Central School District. It is an after school meeting place for Middle School students, **open weekdays**

information.

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 Carol Rhatigan, YES Director at 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.

Tuesday-Thursday from 2:46-3:55pm.

The Pit features a snack bar (bring small bills/change!), billiards, ping pong, foosball, music, and offers a comfortable, safe place for students to hang out. Admission is FREE, but **pre-registration is required**. You can [register online](#) or call the Park Office at 518-439-4955, option 7. [For more details visit the Pit webpage](#).

HALLOWEEN PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Trick or Treat Storywalk

Wednesday, October 19, 4-6pm

FREE, [pre-registration](#) required

Lower Nature Trail, Elm Avenue Park

Children and their families are invited to take a hike on the nature loop and enjoy a self-led Halloween story. In partnership with the [Bethlehem Public Library](#), Parks and Recreation staff will be dressed up along the loop to hand out small giveaways.



Outdoor Halloween Movie and S'mores!

Friday, October 21, 6pm

FREE, [pre-registration](#) preferred

Warming Area, Elm Avenue Park

Enjoy a Halloween movie (PG) and s'mores provided by the Parks and Recreation Department.

Wizards Workshop

Saturday, October 22

Ages 4-7, 10:00-11:15am

Ages 8-13, 11:30am-12:45pm

[MUST REGISTER](#), \$20/resident, \$25/non-resident

From Merlin to Dumbledore fans, all wizards are invited to our Wizards Workshop. Craft wands, cast spells, play games and battle in a wizard duel. Wizard attire is encouraged. **This is a drop-off program.**

31st Annual Halloween Hay Day

Sunday, October 23 from 1-3pm

The 31st Annual Halloween Hay Day will be held at Elm Avenue Park. Come out in costume for hayrides, face painting, games and more! This event is rain or shine & FREE for the whole family!



Paint Your Own Pumpkin

Monday, October 24 from 4-6pm

[MUST REGISTER](#), \$7 residents/\$12 non-resident

Paint your own unique pumpkin! Wear old clothes/smock and bring a small box for your freshly painted pumpkin to transport home. Pumpkins and paint provided. **Parent/guardian must stay on premises.**

3rd Annual Trunk or Treat

Wednesday, October 26, 4-6pm

FREE! Parking lots at Elm Avenue Park

The 3rd Annual Trunk or Treat event brought to you by the Bethlehem Public Library and the Parks and Recreation Department!

Please note, participating "trunks" are selected by the Parks and Recreation Department and Bethlehem Public Library.

Interested in having a trunk with giveaways at the event?

[Contact Assistant Administrator, Heather Maltby](#)



[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@townofbethlehem.org) or call 518-439-4955 ext. 1164.

First Night Sponsorship Opportunities



The [Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce](#) and the Town of Bethlehem are pleased to present [First Night Bethlehem 2023](#).

First Night Bethlehem offers family fun for all ages! **Join us for an all-outdoor event at Delmar's**

Four Corners Saturday, December 31 from 6:00pm - 7:30pm to kick off the New Year and welcome 2023! FREE for all and all are welcome!

Enjoy roving entertainment by **Luke McNamee** and our annual **The Ice Man Custom Ice Sculpture**, this year in front of **Delmar Marketplace**, while we gather **at the Four Corners for a 6:30pm show** by **Santore's World Famous Fireworks**, always a thrill! Arrive early for the pre-fireworks fun!

NEW: Become a sponsor! First Night sponsorship opportunities are available through the [Bethlehem Chamber Foundation](#). Use the [linked form](#) to sponsor this amazing event and make it special for everyone in the community.

Recycling News and Events



PHARMACEUTICAL COLLECTION DAY

Bethlehem Police Department event as part of the DEA National Take Back Initiative

Saturday, October 29, 10am-2pm

at the Elm Avenue Park, 261 Elm Ave, Delmar

Bring expired/unwanted medications for safe disposal.

NOTE: You can also safely dispose of unwanted medications throughout the year 24/7 at CVS pharmacy in Delmar, near the pharmacy counter.



FIRST ANNUAL BETHLEHEM PUMPKIN SMASH!

After Halloween, compost your left-over pumpkins and gourds!

Saturday, November 5, 8am-4pm

Bethlehem Compost Facility (2 miles south of Elm Ave Park), 1244 Feura Bush Rd (Rte 32), Selkirk

NOTE: Remove all candles, etc. in advance.
Natural pumpkins and gourds only please.

You may be done with your Halloween Jack-o-lanterns, pumpkins and gourds on 10/31, but the earth isn't. The only thing spookier than these decorations on Halloween night is the methane (a powerful greenhouse gas) they would produce if landfilled! So join our first annual **Pumpkin Smash**, held right up front by the attendant booth.

Have fun and take a family selfie sending 'Jack' back to the earth to make some compost, which can help grow more pumpkins next year!

America Recycles Day!

Saturday, November 19, 10am-1pm

Bethlehem Central Middle School



332 Kenwood Ave, Delmar

- Clothing and textile reuse and recycling
- Secure Document shredding*
- Book reuse and recycling**
- Bicycle Reuse***

Cosponsored by Bethlehem Central School District Green Team, Grassroot Givers, and the Delmar Farmers Market.

*Secure shredding is limited to Town residents and BCSD Taxpayers with ID. Shredding limit: 3 medium sized boxes per household (i.e. copy paper size).

**Books collected for reuse by Grassroot Givers, or for recycling depending on the book. Please sort and label boxes either "donate" (gently used, newer books) or "recycle" (older books/in poorer condition, textbooks, encyclopedias, etc.).

***Donate useable kid or adult bikes to Wheels Up/Troy Bike Rescue.



UPCOMING 2022 HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS COLLECTIONS

Saturdays: 10/29, 11/19; 8am-1pm

[Please visit the Recycling Events page of the Town Website for fast and easy registration for your choice of one of the upcoming events.](#)



PAINTCARE: NEW, FREE, EASY DROP-OFF PROGRAM FOR PAINT!

Consumers and small businesses now have access to convenient postconsumer paint drop-off sites for the collection, reuse and recycling of paint products. [Learn more!](#)

Farms, Fields, and Forests



I am always hesitant to declare a favorite season, as each season has its own special kind of beauty. However, there is something to be said for the crisp air, late season blooming wildflowers, and the tinge of color the deciduous trees are just starting to show.

Photo: White Turtlehead Flower (Chelone glabra), Henry Hudson Park

An important component of our Farms and Forest Conservation



Program is annual monitoring of conservation easement areas. At the bare minimum, annual monitoring visits are meant to assure that conservation area are not being developed. However, these site visits can also provide insight into the conditions of our Town's natural areas, provide an opportunity to talk with landowners, and to gain a better understanding of how natural landscapes in our Town change over time.

Photo: Conservation Easement Area in Delmar

One of the properties I visited recently was the [Pine Hollow Arboretum](#) (PHA) in the historic hamlet of Slingerlands. In 2020, the Arboretum conserved 20 acres of its property in perpetuity through the Town's Conservation Easement Exemption program. If you haven't been there before, autumn is a beautiful time of year to visit.

On October 22, the Arboretum will be hosting its 4th annual Autumn in the Arboretum Event from 11am to 3pm. Enjoy a Fall afternoon with tours, pumpkin painting, cider belly donuts, live music by Ryan Leddick, birds of prey, crafts, and much more! Visit their website for more information and tickets. All proceeds to benefit this 501c3 organization.

News from the Town Historian



Did you know Bethlehem once had 15 school districts? During the common school era of the 1800s, one room schools were located in walking distance of the local farms and villages. It will come as no surprise that Slingerlands, District No. 9, and Selkirk, District No.2, had one room schools. But how about Houck's Corners (No.8) or Jericho (No.4)? The last to be created in 1911 was No. 15, Elsmere.

Today, Bethlehem has two main school districts, Bethlehem Central and Ravena Coeymans Selkirk, both created in the 1900s when the small districts joined together to improve education.

In other history news, the [Bethlehem Historical Association](#) lecture series, in partnership with the [Bethlehem Public Library](#), continues on October 12 with a talk called "Coping with Life's Necessaries" presented by Ian Mumpton from Schuyler Mansion. The museum at the Cedar Hill Schoolhouse, 1003 River Road, Selkirk, is open Sunday afternoons from 2 to 4 PM through October 30.

The Friends of the Slingerland Family Burial Vault will present a living history walking tour of the hamlet of Slingerlands on October 16. For details go to [The Slingerland Family Burial Vault](#). Bethlehem's historian Susan Leath welcomes your historical inquires. Email her at sleath@townofbethlehem.org.

Albany County Firefighters Honor Lt. Wright

Volunteer firefighters from across the region posthumously honored Elsmere Fire Police **Lieutenant Stephen Wright** as Albany County Firefighter of the Year. Lt. Wright was one of three firefighters receiving similar awards.



Pictured receiving Lt. Wright's award is his widow Elaine Wright and his grandson Trever Moon, a fourth generation Elsmere firefighter.

The Albany County firefighters gathered for their 45th annual dinner and awards ceremony at the Elsmere Fire Department's North Station, as host Elsmere Fire Company celebrated its one-hundredth year centennial.

The Elsmere dinner was attended by many local and statewide fire service representative and dignitaries including Town of Bethlehem Supervisor David VanLuyen.

Elsmere Fire Company received many awards and certificates on its Centennial celebration from government and fire service organizations, including County Executive Dan McCoy.

Senior Services & Outreach



The Senior Services Department, in conjunction with Bethlehem Senior Projects, Inc., provides information and referrals to services, transportation, and social and educational programs for town residents who are 60 years of age and older.

Check out [the Senior Services Newsletter](#) for info on our fall program offerings. Sign-ups are underway!

[A Client Information Form](#) must be completed to participate in programs.

[Sign up to be notified](#) using the web site's Notify Me option when the latest bi-monthly Senior Services Newsletter gets posted, for Senior calendar events, or for Senior news. Contact us at 518-439-4955, extension 1176, if you would like assistance in adding your email to your client profile or learn how to set up Notify Me.

Be sure to check out our not-for-profit sister organization [Bethlehem Senior Projects](#).

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

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