

The Bluff Point Association (BPA)

www.bluffpoint.org

October 2014

2014-2

President's Report

Fall is here and I am listening to a steady bombardment of acorns on the roof. I don't recall a heavier mast year. The squirrels, turkeys and deer should be well fed this winter.

The annual meeting was amazing, including a spellbinding presentation on the vision of the future of Keuka College by President Jorge Díaz-Herrera. A summary of the meeting is included below, and minutes of the meeting will be posted on our website www.bluffpoint.org along with a copy of the overheads used in the meeting.

Don't forget to vote in the **November 4 General Elections**. We will be electing: A congressional representative for the 23rd District; a governor and a lieutenant governor.

Have a safe, happy and successful hunting season.

Tom Close, President

Annual Meeting Summary

The Annual Meeting was held July 19th at the Keuka College Lightner Library.

Tom Close, Martha Johnstone, & Lynn Wuytowicz were re-elected to two-year terms on the Board of Directors with Tom Close continuing as President and Martha Johnstone as Secretary. Art Adams, ex officio, continues to donate his time and wisdom as well as serving as liaison to PYCSD and TOJ. Ray Copson continues to manage the website.

Our legal status as a 501(c)(4) corporation is now in effect. We do not pay taxes on the dues or donations we receive, but dues are not tax-deductible and we cannot contribute to political campaigns. The BPA By-Laws now include the, IRS required, "conflict of interest" policy declaring that no member benefits financially from activities of the Bluff Point Association.

Members approved a contribution of \$500 to the Garrett Chapel Trust in memory of Jim Barden. Jim served for many years as a liaison between the BPA and the Town of Jerusalem and was a principal author of the Town of Jerusalem Comprehensive Plan. Donations may be made in his memory to the Garrett Chapel Trust, c/o John Barden, 60 Indian Spring Lane, Rochester, NY 14618.

54A Overlook Signage

Martha Johnstone and Tom Close are working with Annette Toaspern, Kent & Anne Salisbury, Bob Evans, Bob Gillespie and Chris Trombley to create interpretive signage to be installed at the Route 54A Overlook above the west branch of Keuka Lake. NYSDOT and TOJ approvals are forthcoming.

Keuka College

Dr. Jorge Díaz-Herrera, President, gave an update of the college's status and future plans. The Keuka experience extends throughout the world including five campuses in China and three in Viet Nam. The "Empowering Excellence 2013-2023" program contains extensive plans for campus renovation and expansion, curriculum development, and cultural opportunities enabling Keuka to produce leaders who are prepared for the 21st Century world. Keuka Park campus enrollment stands at 930.

Waterfront Revitalization

Mike Steppe, of the Jerusalem Town Board, updated members on the coordinated effort to preserve and revitalize the cultural and scenic beauty of this area, with the objective of positioning the Town of Jerusalem as a premier Finger Lakes destination.

The Waterfront Revitalization Steering Committee has been working closely with the consulting firms of Ingalls Planning & Design and Trowbridge Wolf Michaels Landscape Architects to develop a strategy for Keuka Lake and Sugar Creek waterfronts. Funding has been received from the NYS Department of State –

Waterfront Revitalization cont'd

with additional support from The Finger Lakes Museum and Keuka College. The plan seeks to incorporate a community-based vision for public access, recreation, resource protection, our hamlet "main streets", and economic development, including: goals for revitalization, strategies for the protection of waterfront resources; an analysis of natural and cultural resources; the identification of appropriate land and water uses; future waterfront projects; and the determination of local regulations. The plan complements the development of the Finger Lakes Museum and the transformation of Keuka College. Focus areas include Branchport, Kinney's Corners/Keuka Park, Keuka College, areas adjacent to the village of Penn Yan, and Keuka Lake State Park.

Information about the comprehensive plan may be accessed by going to the Town of Jerusalem website at: www.jerusalem-ny.org/, and clicking on the blue box labeled "Branchport Hamlet Master Plan".

Penn Yan Central School District

Howard Dennis, interim superintendent, spoke of the need for repairs to several areas of buildings and grounds, following the May 2014 flooding, in addition to the capital expenses to keep school facilities in good repair. New programs include an extended day at Penn Yan Middle School and opportunities for students to receive technical training. The district is sharing or combining some services with the Dundee CSD and BOCES. A Nord Foundation grant along with money from the technology reserve fund will enable the purchase of tablet computers for students. Programs at the elementary and high schools have been recognized for academic excellence with many students participating in programs at FLCC. The entire student body was recognized with the Yates County Distinguished Youth Award for their service in flood recovery efforts.

Invasive Species and Tree Mulching Briefing

Annette Toaspern urged members to become informed about invasive species of plants in our area, in particular hydrilla in water and giant hogweed on land. Explore Cornell Co-Operative Extension & the NY Department of Environmental Conservation for more information.

Lynn Wuytowicz addressed correct techniques for tree mulching. (See Tree Mulching in this Newsletter.)

Hydrofracking

Jim Barre and Joe Hoff addressed the on-going issue of hydrofracking bans and moratoria in area towns. The State of New York recently upheld the rights of towns to prohibit hydrofracking through zoning ordinances. The Town of Jerusalem has a ban in place, prohibiting high volume hydrofracking in the Keuka Lake watershed and 4000 feet beyond.

Finger Lakes Museum

Art Adams provided a brief update on the Finger Lakes Museum. The interior of their facility at the former Branchport Elementary School will be opened up to create exhibit areas and other facilities. A new septic system has been installed, underground electric service is in place, and a new entrance road and parking lot are complete. The kayak and canoe center on Sugar Creek has been offering programs led by New York State-licensed guides. Since the Annual Meeting, as a result of the discovery that the school structure could support 17,000 sq ft of completely open floor space, which would support museum exhibits, the FLM Board decided to relocate the entire museum operation to the Branchport Campus.

Welcome to New Director Fred Geyer

We are pleased to announce that Fred Geyer has agreed to serve on the Board, filling a vacancy left upon Ray Copson's leaving the Board. Fred was unanimously voted in by the BPA Board at the July 31st meeting.

Fred and his wife have owned property on the bluff since 1992, where they currently reside full-time. Fred is a research physicist, a former corporate executive, and an entrepreneur- a career which has taken him from Dallas to San Diego to New Haven. Today, Fred consults for high technology companies and business start-ups. Fred is active in the local community and serves on the board, and as vice president, of the Yates County chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

Water & Sewer Update

As many of you remember, our Town of Jerusalem has been trying to resolve several contract conflicts with Penn Yan for a number of years. There was a suit several years ago and recently a lawsuit was brought claiming that Penn Yan had sold capacity that was reserved and paid for by the TOJ to a number of new customers. Earlier this summer, our Board agreed to withdraw the recent suit and try again to work out the differences with Penn Yan. Three leaders from Penn Yan and three leaders from the TOJ have met two times to see if an agreement can be reached. Another meeting is scheduled for October. Steve Griffin, CEO of the Finger Lakes Economic Development Center, has agreed to be the mediator. While there has not been an agreement as yet, we remain hopeful.

As reported in our last newsletter, Larson Engineers prepared a report that indicated the cost may be about equal for the TOJ to collect and treat our own wastewater when compared to using the system at Penn Yan. This report is on hold waiting for a conclusion in the negotiations with Penn Yan and confirmation by the DEC that the estimated maximum flow used in the report was acceptable.

Hopefully, we will have an accurate update for our next newsletter and if possible information posted on our website.

Art Adams

Penn Yan Central School District Update

The Board of Education and the District continue to move forward with three distinct Focus Areas: Student Character, Student Opportunity, and Student Success. Areas of distinction for PYCSD included top rankings in the region in Algebra, Geometry, ELA(English/Language Arts), Global Studies, Chemistry, and Physics.

PYCSD will continue the reforms in Literacy and Math at all levels with an expanded in-depth focus on writing, including different genres and purposes.

Noteworthy accomplishments include achieving 2nd place in Agricultural Electrification at the Future Farmers of America competition at the State Fair.

The Penn Yan team did mathematical calculations and applied them to science concepts to beat out 10 other teams from around the state.

Upcoming capital improvement projects include replacement of the Middle School roof, along with other minor improvements in all buildings. The Board's goal is to submit a project to the voters that will be funded primarily through current Capital Reserve Funds.

Howard J. Dennis
Interim Superintendent
PYCSD

Land Grant to Finger Lakes Museum

Thanks to the generous gift of land donated by sisters Anne Salisbury and Molly Suján and to a cash contribution from museum board member Rolf Zerges and his wife, Lynda Rummel, the Museum now owns the 16-acre wetland adjacent to Crescent Beach at the North end of the West branch of Keuka Lake. The parcel comes with nearly 600 feet of frontage on Sugar Creek, which is a navigable inlet to the lake.

The sisters donated half of the value of their property as a gift to the museum and Rolf and Lynda paid to purchase and donate the other half and to fund the closing costs and title transfer fees. The legal transaction was handled by Penn Yan attorney Donald Schneider who donated his professional services to the museum as an in-kind contribution.

The parcel, which is being named The Townsend-Grady Wildlife Preserve in honor of the sisters' father and grandmother, is deed-restricted for use as wildlife preserve and will be used for biological studies and educational purposes by the museum. A variety of bird and waterfowl species as well as mammals like beavers, foxes, and mink already inhabit the wetland and bald eagles and ospreys perch there on occasion.

The Finger Lakes Museum will be working with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and The Nature Conservancy to develop an interpretive boardwalk trail, observation

Land Grant to Finger Lakes Museum cont'd

platform, and pavilion at the site. When added to its present 13-acre parcel, the new acquisition gives the museum a 29-acre presence in Branchport. The two parcels are juxtaposed on opposite sides of Sugar Creek and NYS Route 54A.

Construction work at the Discovery Campus has been temporarily suspended pending the board's consideration of a significant change in strategy for the museum's use of the site. Museum officials have been in discussions with potential benefactors, state agencies, and government officials to take a fresh new look at the options and opportunities that are available there.

John Adamski, FLM Board President

Yates County Open Access Network

Yates County has been working to install a fiber optic system in the County since 2008. An assessment of our telecommunications needs was completed in 2008 and funded by a small grant. In 2005, Axxess Ontario LDC was formed in Ontario County to study and install a fiber optic system. This work was accomplished by ECC Technologies Inc. (ECC), a national leader in evaluating open access fiber networks. Yates County contracted with ECC to prepare a business plan in 2010. This plan was updated in 2012 in order for the County to apply for a grant. This process included essentially applying for three different grants: first - thru the FDA for Rural Broadband money (our system was apparently too small to qualify), second - for a Consolidated Funding Agreement (CFA) grant and finally to reapply as a subset of the CFA grant for a brand new New York Broadband Connect.

Yates County, in partnership with Axxess Ontario received a grant for about 2.4 million dollars to build about 68 miles of open access fiber network with an estimated construction cost of 3 million dollars. Axxess Ontario is a nonprofit group that contracts out all the work. ECC is the principal consultant at the moment, with a contract that ends in 2015. This network will serve as a backbone for the development of community-based broadband initiatives. Installation would connect to existing systems in Rushville, Geneva and Watkins Glen with a stub ending in Branchport providing an

interconnected regional network. Construction cost determined the routes chosen.

Although Yates County held several public meetings to discuss the project they were not well attended. If the Yates County Legislature succeeds in overcoming differences with regard to situational logistics and financing, a resolution may be passed as early as the October 14th meeting. **The County proposes to fund the difference between the grant and the construction cost.** Construction contracts to install the fiber optic network are pretty much ready to go, with a goal to start construction this winter and complete construction by the end of 2015.

Open access means that customers may contract to "light" a dark fiber, providing them with unlimited bandwidth. ECC and the County have identified a number of customers, such as schools, health care and public safety facilities, and government offices and libraries, who have written letters of support to move the project forward. This pre-planning was used to forecast that **the project should break even in about 5 years. Bluff residents will be funding part of this project until it breaks even.** A concept identified as the "last mile" would eventually include individual customers, including Bluff residents, who would most likely connect via a wireless service vs. hard wire connection. Without something like this our broadband width is not likely to improve much.

To find out more about the Yates County Open Access Network, contact the Yates County Legislature at: legislature@yatescounty.org or sbonshak@yatescounty.org or call 315-536-5150.

This article provided by Yates County.

Battery Recycling at Keuka College

Keuka College has two battery recycling stations on campus. You may drop off your AA, AAA, C, D, 9 volt or button batteries at either Lightner Library (just inside front entrance to the left) or Dahlstrom Building (just inside the South entrance to the right). Best to do this outside of business hours as parking is tight during the weekdays.

Dark Sky Lighting

One of the more coveted attractions of the Bluff, aside from the lake views, moon rises, sunsets and associated water activities, has been the fabulous night sky arrayed in all of its starry splendor. When stepping out at night, under clear skies, one could count on viewing the Milky Way along with the occasional planet making its glorious appearance.

Unfortunately, due to the inevitable increase in development of the lands surrounding Keuka Lake, we are losing our “starry, starry night”. Although a boost to the local economy, the resulting light pollution is contributing to the loss of our resplendent night sky. Increased security lighting at the College has further compounded the deteriorating night sky.

There are some measures local residents can take to avoid contributing to the loss of our starry sky. When choosing outdoor lighting, select fixtures that direct the light downward. “Dark Sky” lighting fixtures can be found at local hardware stores, Lighting Catalogs, Lowe’s, Home Depot, or at numerous online sites. One resource can be found at: http://www.lampsplus.com/products/outdoor-lighting/type_dark-sky/ or just do an internet search of “Dark Sky Lighting”.

Dark Sky Lighting is not only good for budding astrologers, it is also neighbor & creature sensitive. So, next time you’re in the market for outdoor lighting, or to replace current invasive outdoor lighting, please take the time to choose night-sensitive, neighbor friendly dark sky lighting.

Instead of this: Please consider choosing this:



Thank You!

Explore further at: www.darksky.org

Lynn Wuytowicz

Proper Tree Mulching

The practice of mulching around trees is promoted by arborists and landscape designers alike. Unfortunately, many trees are being mulched incorrectly. The practice of “volcano” mulching (building up the mulch around the base of the tree) is extremely detrimental. It promotes “girdling” of roots (a shallow or above ground root system - see below) and potentially harmful bug infestation.



Don't mound mulch up against the trunks of trees and shrubs (above). Those volcano-shaped piles may look good to some, but they can kill your trees.

Instead, spread the mulch about 3 to 4 inches deep in a circle at least 3 feet in diameter around young trees and shrubs. Then brush away mulch at the center of the circle so that it is several inches from the base of the tree. A slight depression in the center is OK. Think lunar crater -- not Mt. Vesuvius.

Even if you keep it away from the trunk, spreading mulch deeper than 4 inches can create shallow, vulnerable root systems. As your trees grow, extend the mulch to their dripline (the edge of the canopy).

Lynn Wuytowicz

Resource: Cornell Cooperative Extension

We Welcome Your Thoughts

A comment was made, at the Annual Meeting, by one of our constituents about the amount of attention given to PYCSD. The BPA Board feels that this is an appropriate focus given that Bluff Point Residents pay a lion’s share of the School Tax.

Ideas for BPA Activities and Newsletter/Website topics are always welcome! Please feel free to contact any of our Board members listed on the back of this Newsletter with your suggestions! Or you may submit your ideas for consideration to Lynn at: lwuytowicz@gmail.com

BPA Mission Statement

Article III: Purposes

Section 1: Mission

The Mission of the BPA is to promote the common good, general welfare and quality of land and water for the residents and landowners of the Bluff Point area in the Town of Jerusalem, New York. The goal of the organization is to support improvement in the environment, cost-of-ownership of property, quality of life for all residents, enforcement and improvement of laws, housing and commercial development, and communications within the community.

Section 2: Purposes

- 1) To promote and protect the community interests of residents on the area known as The Bluff, on Keuka Lake, Town of Jerusalem, Yates County, State of New York
- 2) To secure by lawful means, greater economy, efficiency and enforcement of laws in local government
- 3) To promote the common good and general welfare of the residents of the Bluff area and the Town of Jerusalem
- 4) To inform the general public in The Bluff area and the Town of Jerusalem regarding the preservation of the natural resources of the community
- 5) To encourage the preservation of the scenic beauty of the community through enforcement of zoning regulations, thereby benefitting all members of the community
- 6) To inform the community about the importance of and means for conserving the natural resources of the area
- 7) To review zoning matters affecting the community and oppose applications for changes or variances considered detrimental to the traditions of the community
- 8) To encourage members of the community to participate in local civic activities

- 9) To protect the natural resources and environment of The Bluff area
- 10) To maintain and protect the quality of Keuka Lake
- 11) To do any other thing or act incidental to or connected with the foregoing purposes or in advancement thereof, but not for the pecuniary profit or financial gain of its members except as permitted under Article 5 of the Not-For-Profit Corporation Law

Excerpted from Bluff Point Association Bylaws

2014 Grape Harvest Update

According to New York Wine and Grape foundation President, Jim Trezise, damage in the Finger Lakes, from frigid winter temperatures, flooding and hail appears to be limited to a one year crop reduction vs. vine loss.

Bluff resident and owner of Simmons Vineyard, Neil Simmons, said he lost about 25 percent of some 40 acres of Cabernet Franc, Riesling and Concord, but stated that, overall, his 459 acres fared pretty well.

Excerpted from the October 8 Chronicle Express



Keuka Lake Steamboats



The Cricket, seen here, docked at the Guile and Windnagle dock; the now abandoned dock at the head of the Keuka Outlet, across from Indian Pines.

Steamboats operated on Keuka Lake from the launching of the Keuka in 1835 until the retirement of the PennYan in 1922. During the peak year of operations in 1895, there were seven

steamboats on Keuka Lake. Originally, the steamboats were designed to carry only freight. Grapes, the main cargo, were transported to the railroads at the ends of the lake for shipment to the cities or to the wineries. Later, passengers used the steamers as the only reliable transportation in the area, but freight still had priority. On Sundays, steamboats operated for passengers only and were filled with those on summer excursions. Prohibition and the faster more easily accessible automobile were responsible for the end of the steamboat era on Keuka Lake. Steamboats were not the only craft on the lake; rowboats, sailboats, and power boats were all built here. Penn Yan Boats, established in 1921 operated on the North Shore of Keuka's East branch until 2001.

Excerpted from Keuka Lake, by Charles Mitchell

Membership Renewal

We are pleased to provide you with this issue of the Bluff Point Association Newsletter. To continue receiving future news and to support our many efforts affecting the Bluff, we invite you to renew or join the many other Bluff residents who support the BPA with their annual membership gift of \$15.

Bluff Point Association, Membership Form, 2014-2015

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address 1

Address 2

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

Street: _____

Street: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Telephone: _____

Bluff Point Address: _____

Renewal New membership Annual **Membership** Fee is \$15. Make checks payable to **Bluff Point Association**.

Send checks to: Bluff Point Association, PO Box 72, Bluff Point, NY 14478

Please check here if you would prefer to receive newsletters electronically.

I am including my contribution to the Bluff Point Fund, check made out to The Finger Lakes Land Trust; memo: Bluff Point Fund.

The Bluff Point Association is a 501(c)(4) non-profit organization. Member dues are not deductible.

Bluff Point Association

Tom Close, President 315-536-2779
Wendy Disbrow, Treasurer 315-536-3584
Martha Johnstone, Secretary 315-531-8889
Lynn Wuytowicz, Director 315-536-0912
lwuytowicz@gmail.com
Marcia English, Director 315-536-9436
Fred Geyer, Director 315-536-7183
Rodge Williams, Director 315-536-3456
Ray Copson, Web Support 315-536-6891
Lisa Saether, liaison FLLT 315-536-2620
Art Adams, *ex officio* 678-319-0984

Federal

29th District House of Representatives

Representative Thomas Reed

Email via webstie: <http://reed.house.gov>
202-225-3161 Washington D.C Office
607-654-7566 Corning Office

New York State

Assemblyman Phil Palmesano

E-mail: palmesanop@assembly.state.ny.us
607-776-9691 Bath Office

Senator Tom O'Mara

E-mail: omara@nysenate.gov
607-776-3201 Bath Office

Governor Andrew Cuomo

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NYS State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224
518-474-8390
www.governor.ny.gov and choose 'Contact'

The Bluff Point Association

P. O. Box 72
Bluff Point, NY 14478
www.bluffpoint.org

Yates County Legislators

417 Liberty Street, Penn Yan, NY 14527
www.yatescounty.org
legislature@yatescounty.org
Ph: 315-536-5150

Gary Montgomery, Eldon Morrison, Margaret Dunn,
Doug Paddock

Town of Jerusalem

3816 Italy Hill Rd., Branchport, NY 14418
www.jerusalem-ny.org Ph: 315-595-6668

Jim Balyszak, Watershed Inspector 315-536-5188

Pat Killen, Supervisor
Mike Folts, Town Board
Max Parsons, Town Board
Mike Steppe, Town Board
Daryl Jones, Town Board
Sheila McMichael, Town Clerk
Vernon Brand, Town Assessor
John Phillips, Town Code Enforcement Officer
Rob Martin, Highway Superintendent

Community Meeting Dates

At Yates County Office Building

County Legislature: 1pm, 2nd Monday of month
County Planning Board: 7pm, 4th Thursday of month

At Town of Jerusalem Offices

Planning Board: 7pm, 1st Thursday of month
Zoning Bd. Appeals: 7pm, 2nd Thursday of month
Town Board: 7pm, 3rd Wednesday of month

Penn Yan Central School Board:

7pm, 1st and 3rd Wed. of month at Penn Yan Academy