

The Ardsley Villager

A Publication of the Ardsley Village Board of Trustees

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Always dial 911 for emergencies

A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW MAYOR

This is my first report as Mayor. I want to start by saying that I am honored to have been elected and that I fully understand the trust that you have placed in me. I am excited by the prospect and ready to get to work on your behalf.

I can't think of a better way to start this message than by thanking Jay Leon for his service to the Village, first as Trustee, then as Mayor for the past six years. I had the pleasure of serving at his side over the past six years, and saw first hand how dedicated he was to the Village and how concerned he was about the welfare of its residents. He will be a hard act to follow.

I want to welcome Nicole Minore as our new Trustee. Nicole has already made an impression, serving on the Parks & Recreation Commission and the Ardsley Day Committee, taking on assignments and getting things done. Nicole is a young mother with two young children, and brings a fresh perspective to the Board.

I also wish to extend my thanks to Larry Nardecchia, Gary Malone and Beverly Levine for their continued service on the Village Board. The residents should be thankful for their hard work and dedication.

This small Village has been very fortunate over the years to have been served by so many altruistic and dedicated mayors and trustees. Their primary reward stems from the knowledge that they are helping to

VILLAGE TAXES DUE, TUESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2012

The second installment of the Village tax bill, mailed to all property owners in early June, is due by the end of the business day on Tuesday, January 3, 2012.

Mailed payments postmarked Wednesday, January 4, 2012 and beyond, and payments made in person on January 4 and beyond at Village Hall will be assessed a penalty as prescribed by New York State law. No one can waive the penalty. Bear in mind only a bona fide U.S.P.S. postmark evidences timeliness.

Should you have any questions, please contact Village Treasurer Marion DeMaio, or Dipika Patel at 693-1550. – George Calvi, Village Manager

manage and improve the Village and the lives of its residents.

Now for the heart of my message: No one can improve upon Abraham Lincoln's simple and eloquent distillation of American democracy: that we are a government of, by and for the people. My focus is on what

“by the people” means for us here in Ardsley.

In 1896, the Village residents decided to become an incorporated village. This enabled them to better control the things in their lives that were important to them: police and fire protection, sanitation and public works, land use and general administration of their government. I suppose that back in the early days of our Village, things were much simpler. As time passed, the changes occurring in the world around us began to have their effect on life in the Village. Modern life has become far more complex; people demand greater protection and greater services, the standard of living for all workers has improved, laws are passed in Washington and Albany that require the Village to comply with a vast array of regulations, and in response the Village must take on more responsibilities. Over the years it hired more employees, built more municipal facilities, and its budget has grown sharply.

But through it all, the founding spirit remained: that we decide for ourselves what is important and how we want to be governed in Village affairs. Along with that spirit comes the willingness to participate in Village affairs by participating in Village government and serving in the citizens' organizations that make life both more responsive and more affordable. If the Village had to pay for all of the work performed by volunteers, our budget would simply double overnight.

Government by the people comes down to communication and participation. The Village officers

need to make certain to keep residents informed of what is happening in the Village, what the residents need to know about the routine delivery of services and what to do in emergency situations, and when hearings and meetings are being held where the community will be invited to comment.

However, communications is not a one-way street. Residents need to tell us what it is on their minds. And residents need to take some simple steps to keep themselves informed. In this electronic inter-connected world, that is becoming easier by the day. The Village has a website that provides useful information and I intend to improve it to make that information even more accessible. And with the institution of our Village-wide email notification list, the Village Blast, all critical announcements are posted and available to anyone who signs up for the reports. If you have an e-mail account, you need to sign up for the Village Blast. It is the most efficient way to keep on top of Village news. If you are not connected, you have little excuse if you miss an important meeting or miss out on other crucial information.

Finally, your participation in the Village is crucial if we are going to continue to govern ourselves. Our fire department and ambulance corps are all-volunteer organizations. While they demand a significant time commitment, they are essential to the safety of the Village and can be enormously rewarding. And we are always looking for volunteers for our Village boards and committees, all of which are committed to improving life here in the community.

My fellow trustees and I will work hard to improve life in the Village. However, we need your participation. We want to hear from you and we want your help.

As the holidays approach, remember that what is important in life is not

how many gifts you give or receive, but how much you care for friends and family, care for your community and care for those less fortunate than you. I speak for all the Village staff in wishing everyone a very happy Holiday Season and a healthy and prosperous New Year!

Peter Porcino

Peter Porcino
Mayor

VILLAGE ABOLISHES ASSESSMENT UNIT STATUS

Please be advised that at a public hearing held on Monday, October 3, 2011 the Village Board of the Village of Ardsley abolished its status as an assessment unit.

What does this mean?

- All assessment functions have been transferred to the Town of Greenburgh.
- The position of Village Assessor has been abolished. All duties have been transferred to the Town Assessor, Edye McCarthy.
- The Ardsley Village Board no longer acts as the Board of Assessment Review. All of its functions have been transferred to the Greenburgh Board of Assessment Review.
- Grievances and SCAR petitions will no longer be filed with the Village. Such grievances must be filed with the Town of Greenburgh.
- There will no longer be an annual Grievance night in February in Ardsley. All Grievances must be filed with the Town of Greenburgh for its annual Grievance night in June.

- Successful petitions for assessment reductions with the Town in June will apply to Village assessments as well without having to file a second petition, as in the past.
- All exemptions whether they be Veteran, Aged, Disabled, Volunteer Fire, Volunteer Ambulance, must be filed with the Town of Greenburgh Assessor's office.
- The general telephone phone number of the Town Assessor's Office is 993-1520. All filing deadlines must be confirmed with the Town Assessor's Office.

In conclusion the Village of Ardsley is out of the assessment business. If you need any clarification on any of the above items, please do not hesitate to phone me at 693-3435 or email me at ardsleymanager@optonline.net.

-- George F. Calvi, Village Manager

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

I feel that it is incumbent upon me to update you on the long delayed sidewalk project. As you know, the Village of Ardsley a few years ago was provided with a hefty federal "Safe Routes to School" grant to replace the sidewalks along the north side of Heatherdell Road from Farm Road to Olympic Lane (near Anthony Veteran Town Park). Knowing full well that accepting any grant from the federal government comes with its fair share of paperwork we gladly commenced all the preliminaries. Even though we hired a special part-time assistant to aid us with this matter, the task of complying with all of the federal AND state governments' demands was far more than we ever bargained for! In any event, this autumn we learned that we have filed, submitted, and complied with all requests of both agencies. Unfortunately, we have lost a full construction season.

Not wanting to start what is estimated to be a three to four week project and contend with the vagaries of Mother Nature during winter, a decision was made to delay the release of the bids for the project until spring 2012. Once a full construction timetable is established it will be printed in a forthcoming newsletter. Physically, the first indicator that the project is commencing will be the relocation of the utility poles, which the utility companies are obligated to do three weeks prior to the sidewalk work. Should you require further information in the interim, I can easily be reached at 914 693-3435 or via email at ardsleymanager@optonline.net. Thank you in advance for indulging us with your patience for this long anticipated project. -- George F. Calvi, Village Manager

CATCHING UP WITH THE SAYF COALITION

All parents want to keep their children safe and away from the dangers of drugs and alcohol as they navigate their teen years. SAYF Coalition, a new village anti-underage drug and alcohol use committee, is designed to help Ardsley families do just that with programs and activities that involve all aspects of community and village life. SAYF, an acronym for Supporting Ardsley's Youth and Family, was formed in 2009 to increase awareness of the issues of teen risk behavior in our community. The coalition's mission is to reduce the use of alcohol, tobacco and other harmful substances by collaboration of all sectors of our community.

Ardsley resident and parent Theresa Del Grosso is the Ardsley SAYF Coalition Committee Coordinator and works with the twelve member volunteer coalition, which includes parents, school personnel, local government, Ardsley businesses and police. The coalition was started after

an anonymous survey given to students at Ardsley High School revealed significant, troubling alcohol and drug use. "The result of the survey was alarming. We knew if we were going to make any difference in our community, we would have to work together to address the issue" said Del Grosso. In just two years, the coalition has already taken big strides in its goal to inform and educate the community, families and teens themselves on drug and alcohol sale and use and provide safe alternatives. SAYF has organized:

- Focus groups for parents to assess attitudes and perceptions towards youth substance use
- Partnerships with local police to run alcohol sales compliance checks of village retail and restaurant establishments
- Training sessions with local businesses on the safe sale and intervention needed to sell alcohol
- A youth group to conduct alcohol and tobacco community signage scans of local establishments
- Two prescription drug give back days
- Youth survey for 8th, 10th and 12th graders to assess current perceptions and habits of drug/alcohol use
- A presence at Ardsley Day, providing community attendees with information on SAYF programs and drug / alcohol information
- Collaboration with Ardsley Youth Council to organize alcohol / drug free events at the High School, including three dances

This past summer, SAYF was awarded a federal grant which was applied for through the Drug Free Communities initiative of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. The welcome grant was an achievement for the coalition and its work as SAYF was chosen from over 400 grant applications. The grant will allow SAYF to work with the Ardsley police to conduct more compliance checks and provide extra patrol of areas of concern for congregation of teens. Additional plans of the SAYF Coalition include:

- Provide TIPS (training for intervention and prevention skills) training for establishments in Ardsley that serve or sell alcohol
- Bring the "Those Who Host Lose the Most" parent education campaign to Ardsley
- Work with Ardsley youth to create a Public Service Announcement with an anti drug/alcohol message
- Develop a website to provide ongoing information and communication with the community on coalition initiatives
- Offer parent panels to discuss youth alcohol and drug trends, issues and effects

SAYF's new grant was a great achievement, but does not provide adequate funding for all the goals of the coalition to address the conditions in our community that contribute to the problem of underage drug and alcohol use.

The SAYF coalition has a fundraising trust and agency account with the Village of Ardsley and would welcome donations from residents. Send to: The Ardsley Community

Center Attn Ardsley SAYF Coalition
18 Center Street, Ardsley NY 10502.

If you would like to know more about the coalition, wish to volunteer or donate, please contact Theresa Del Grosso at ardsleycoalition@gmail.com

SAYF Coalition would like to take this opportunity to thank the Ardsley Village Board of Trustees for their constant support of our coalition. Special thanks to Village Manager George Calvi and Treasurer Marion DeMaio for their assistance and agreement to take on the fiscal responsibility of the coalition's grant monies. – Theresa Del Grosso, Coordinator

THREE NEW FIRE DEPARTMENT VOLUNTEERS

Fire Chief Vincent Coulehan recently reported that Ardsley Engine Company No.1 at their October monthly meeting unanimously voted in three new volunteer members of the Ardsley Fire Department. The candidates include Daniel O'Shea of Greenburgh, Pasquale Piscitelli of Ardsley, and David Druyan of Yonkers. Welcome gentlemen and thank you for your service to the community! – George Calvi, Village Manager

BUILDING DEPARTMENT SOFTWARE

The Building Department installed new building permit software in mid December. Once fully operational, the software will allow the Building Department staff to operate more efficiently and perform searches with even greater accuracy than our current software allows. As with any new system, it will take several weeks until we are fully acclimated to the new software. We will do everything possible to ensure that the transition goes smoothly and we ask for everyone's patience during this adjustment period. -- Larry Tomasso, Building Inspector

STORMWATER UPDATE: “WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE...”

“...but not a drop to drink!” With Hurricane Irene and the other big storms of the past season, it's easy to forget the water quality issue for all the quantity we've been getting. Clean water is a precious commodity, and Storm water Management is still aimed at cleaning up runoff. How do we do this? GI! Government Issue? Gastrointestinal? No, Green Infrastructure! GI techniques treat water naturally, encouraging infiltration and reducing runoff. For instance, many residents have pulled up their downspouts to allow rainwater to soak into their lawns. And some residents have replaced part or all of their lawn areas with shrubs and perennial plants which don't require fertilizer, herbicide or pesticide, cutting down on POC runoff. POC's, Pollutants of Concern, are Phosphorus (from lawn chemicals), floatables (trash), sediment (from bare soil areas), and pathogens (picking up after your pet reduces this problem). So, while we might get overwhelmed by those 6 inch rainstorms, we can still do a lot to hold water on our properties from those more frequent ½ inch to 1 inch storms. Reducing runoff volume during those smaller storms helps quality and quantity issues. Please visit the Bronx River Watershed Initiative Stormwater Techniques Demonstration project at Pascone Park which showcases a rain garden, rain barrel, porous pavement and sustainable native gardens to see other things that you can do.

Talking about sustainable native plants, just a reminder that the 2012 Wildflower and Native Plant Center Sale will be held April 28 at Westchester Community College, and their catalog will be available online at www.nativeplantcenter.org in mid-January.

And finally, here's an eco-friendly holiday gift idea. How about a nice

pair of waterproof hiking boots? Get off that treadmill for a bit and explore the outdoors! Take a stroll along our local Saw Mill and Bronx Rivers to see how beautiful they can be. These are our waters. Visit them and take pride in the things that you are doing to help clean them up. – Lorraine Kuhn, Storm Water Assistant

ARDSLEY GARDEN CLUB: BUSY AS EVER!

The Garden Club held a successful fundraiser dinner in November to benefit village beautification, Senior Citizen projects and the Ardsley Public Library. Garden Club members designed and the Ardsley Public Works Department planted the memorial garden in Louis M. Pascone Park (formerly Ashford Park).

Mary Keehan, Garden Club Therapy Chairwoman, planted the hanging baskets along Veterans Way, arranged the table flowers for the Senior Holiday Dinner on December 16th and held a Christmas Wreath Workshop for the Senior Citizens at the Community Center. Under the direction of Keehan, club members made 26 swags to decorate the village meters for the Christmas season and 21 Christmas wreaths for distribution to Ardsley Village Hall, Churches, DPW, Children's Village, the Fire Department, Ambulance Corps., Police Department and the VA Hospital in Montrose.

National Garden Clubs, Inc, awarded Eagle Scout Scott McKenna a first place certificate for his High School distinguished service project “A Colonial Garden at Historic Odell House”, sponsored by The Ardsley Garden Club. Great work Scott!

The Garden Club encourages its members to practice and teach conservation of our natural resources and the protection of our environment. If you are interested, call and join us at our next meeting. -- Arline Weston, Vice President

TWO DISPOSAL BANS TAKE EFFECT IN NEW YORK STATE

Electronics: Starting January 1, 2012, NYS law will prohibit "covered electronic equipment" from disposal as garbage, with penalties up to \$250 per incident. This includes all county and probably many private solid waste transfer stations that are not registered with the state DEC as an e-waste collection site. In addition, owners or operators of solid waste management facilities (e.g., DPW yards or transfer stations), that are not registered with the state as an e-waste collection site, must post signs stating that electronic waste may not be disposed of at the facility.

Be aware that electronics are accepted for free (no purchase needed) by many retailers, including Best Buy, Staples and Goodwill (computers only). More information about manufacturer specific recycling programs in New York State is available from the NYS DEC website. When it is opened, the new county Household Chemical collection center in Valhalla will also accept electronics from residents, by appointment.

Batteries: Beginning December 5, 2011, NYS prohibited the disposal of specific rechargeable batteries as solid waste. Similar to cell phones, this law applies to consumers and haulers. Now, retailers that sell rechargeable batteries are required to accept up to ten used rechargeable batteries from consumers per day, for free with no purchase necessary. Rechargeable batteries will also be accepted from residents at the soon to be opened site in Valhalla. Other battery types, such as AAA, AA, C, D, 9 volt, long life C and D cells used for toys, radios, appliances and flashlights, have no special disposal requirement and can be safely disposed with the trash.

If you have any questions about legislative requirements for electronics and batteries, feel free to contact the Westchester County Department of Environmental Facilities at 813-5964

or stg1@westchestergov.com. In closing always remember to buy what you need and use what you buy -- Sarah Garvan, WC DEF as abridged by George Calvi, Village Manager

PEARL HARBOR DAY 2011

Wednesday December 7th represented the 70th anniversary of the attack by the Empire of Japan on the American military installation at Pearl Harbor, Oahu, Hawaii; the event which catapulted the United States into World War II.

On that single morning 2,400 Americans were killed, and at least 1,200 were wounded. It is estimated by the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association that there are about 8,000 survivors still living with the youngest hovering at about 88 years of age. Ardsley lost its own Pearl Harbor survivor, Augie Giusti, of McKinley Place, just a few short years ago. Mr. Giusti was stationed on the USS West Virginia when it was sunk by no less than seven torpedoes. According to the Journal News, one local survivor, Armando Gallella, age 90, resides in nearby Sleepy Hollow.

Also, in recognition of December 7, 1941, the Village flew a flag, as it has done for several years, in Fire Fighter Park that was flown over the USS Arizona Memorial in Pearl Harbor in 2004. -- George Calvi, Village Manager

NEWS BRIEFS

RECYCLING: As the new 2012 Notice of Sanitation calendar will indicate, residents are now able to place in their green recycling bins plastic containers with Nos. 3 through 7 in addition to Nos. 1 and 2.

ALARMS & PARKING: Don't forget that the annual alarm registration permit fee of \$25 is due during the month of January, as is the overnight parking sticker fee of \$25. For information, please contact the Police Desk at 693-1700.

NEW MAYOR MAKES APPOINTMENTS

At the December 5th annual reorganization meeting Mayor Peter Porcino made several appointments for various boards and committees. Trustee Gary Malone was named Deputy Mayor. He and outgoing Mayor Jay Leon were appointed to the Inter-municipal Intersections (Ridge Hill) Committee. Melissa Scalere was welcomed to the Parks & Recreation Commission; Deb Pence was welcomed to the Ardsley Youth Council; and Mollie Monti was welcomed to the Traffic (TPPS) Committee. Planning Board Chairman Robert Pellegrino was re-appointed for a new 5 year term; Patricia Hoffman was re-appointed for a new 5 year term on the Zoning Board of Appeals; Esther Katoni received a new three year appointment on the Board of Architectural Review; and Rita Joselow and Stephanie Bonnie received new 5 year appointments on the Library Board of Trustees. -- G.C.

A FAREWELL TO MAYOR LEON

About nine years ago, during a heated debate about the sudden expulsion of Ardsley commuters from the parking lot at the Dobbs Ferry train station, a man in the crowd made the fateful decision to stand up and voice his opinion about this injustice. Unbeknownst to him, and to just about everyone else, this would be the catalyst that would thrust him into nine years of public service to this community first as a Village Trustee and second as Village Mayor. Over the years he faced many challenges in contending with the powers that be on the county, state, and federal level. He was successful in meeting many challenges, and those he did not make progress with tended to be with agencies populated by those bureaucrats who are so obtuse, so entrenched, and so inclined to throw up road blocks at every turn that no mortal man could ever be expected to surmount those hurdles.

Let's face it - - it's not easy being the top dog in any organization, or this organization. Sure it comes with the trappings of a title, a gavel, perhaps your name on the letterhead, maybe even a little prestige. But the fact of the matter is no matter what you do on behalf of the community, while some sector of that community will proclaim you as the best thing since sliced bread, another sector will decry you as the personification of the fall of western civilization!

"So it goes!" as the late novelist, Kurt Vonnegut, expressed it so succinctly years ago. Not everyone is cut out to be Mayor. No, to be a Mayor takes resolve, temperament, patience, and the ability to derive satisfaction from the little achievements, the little successes, and with a bit of luck perhaps, a few of the big successes. And so in closing, on behalf of all the staff, I wish to extend to Jay Leon, a big thank you for being our Mayor, for addressing those challenges, and all that he accomplished for this community in certainly not the easiest of times. - George Calvi, Village Manager

**VILLAGE OF ARDSLEY
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ARDSLEY, NEW YORK 10502
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TRUSTEE BEVERLY LEVINE
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VILLAGE MANAGER MUSINGS

On December 3, there was a particularly successful Christmas Tree lighting ceremony in Legion Park followed by music and refreshments at the Community Center, the success for which I attribute to our very popular and hard-working Recreation Supervisor Trish Lacy and the members of the Parks Commission. I believe it was also the last formal function for our outgoing Mayor Jay Leon as he passed on the baton to our incoming Mayor Peter Porcino. On December 20 in Legion Park the Menorah lighting took place. This event was sponsored by Chabad of the Rivertowns and included music and refreshments. On December 16, the 4th annual Seniors Holiday Dinner was held at the Ardsley Fire House. Thanks due to the wonderful efforts of Trustee Larry Nardecchia, Senior Coordinator Pierrette Rissland, and Recreation Supervisor Trish Lacy accompanied by the culinary talents of Highway Foreman Rick Thompson and Community Police Officer Tony Vacca, a joyful time was had by all.

OR CURRENT OCCUPANT

Lastly, I wish to extend my sincerest best wishes to our new Village Board, particularly our new Mayor, our re-elected Trustee, and our newly elected Trustee as they join the other Trustees in tackling the major challenges posed in 2012 which include contending with the tax levy cap on the Village budget, the proposed development of Rivertowns Square, compliance with the county's housing implementation plan, the former Waterwheel property re-development, the opening of the new sports center on Elm Street, the widening of Route 9A between Ashford Avenue and Heatherdell Road, and the longstanding plans to rehabilitate the Ashford Avenue bridge. No doubt about it. It's going to be a challenging year! -- George Calvi, Village Manager

**MERRY CHRISTMAS!
MELE KALIKIMAKA!
HAPPY CHANUKAH!
HAPPY KWANZAA!
FELIZ NAVIDAD!
BUON NATALE!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

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