

County Corridors

A Newsletter for
Tompkins County
Employees and Retirees
July 2009
Volume 21, Number 2

<http://www.tompkins-co.org/countycorridors>

Nine New Members Welcomed to 25 Year Club

On May 28th at the 19th annual 25 Year Club Dinner, Tompkins County honored the county employees and retirees who belong to the Club, with 25 or more years of service, and welcomed nine new members who are achieving that milestone of service with the County. Congratulations were offered to each of the county employees who have attained the 25 year mark for their dedication to the County and their service to county government, with admiration and appreciation by all members of the County Legislature.

Legislator Jim Dennis, who currently chairs the Legislature's Budget, Capital and Finance Committee, offers the following thoughts about the contributions of our employees and what that means for Tompkins County:

People think of public employees as the people they see working on the roads, at Motor Vehicles, giving them a ticket, or putting out fires. What they forget is that there are many other people who are not so visible, doing their jobs, who are now more stressed because of the number of people who need the help that Tompkins County offers to our less fortunate citizens during these bad economic times.

We value those people who work for Tompkins County, especially those who have stayed with us for 25 years and beyond. They deserve our respect and admiration. They make the Ithaca area the "special place" that many say it is.



Richard Baker ~ Highway Division



Dale Gregow ~ Highway



Frances Armstrong ~ Comptroller



Daniel Kramer ~ Mental Health



Lauri Wallenbeck ~ Social Services



William VanDeMark ~ Highway



Michelle Pottorff ~ Legislature



Patricia Buechel ~ Probation



Mitzi Banner ~ Social Services

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Notes From the County Administrator:

The Challenges of the 2010 Budget



As we all know, the ripples created by the worldwide economic downturn are wide and deep, touching nearly every business, institution, government, and family.

More than any other level of local government, counties are particularly hard hit by a recession because of the nature of our business, and the source of revenues we use to pay our bills.

Although counties do a lot of things, our core business is the delivery of human services. We help people experiencing distress. When the economy goes down, more and more people rely on us for help.

Unfortunately, the recession not only increases the demand for our services, it also reduces the money available to pay for them. For example, sales tax revenue, which pays for nearly half of our local dollar budget, is down by nearly 10% from a year ago—a major casualty of the recession.

Throw into the mix the fact that the cost of our own pensions is expected to rise by over 50% next year because of losses in the State pension fund's investments, and we begin the 2010 budget process with a very large gap between our revenues and expenses.

If we simply continue to do what we are now doing, and the way we are doing it, we would have to raise the County property tax levy by nearly 15%. That's too high a burden to add to families already experiencing the effects of the recession.

To balance the 2010 budget while respecting the financial limits of our taxpayers, we will explore new sources of revenue, consider a property tax increase of up to 3%, and reduce spending. This balanced approach would raise \$2.4 million in revenue and reduce \$2.4 million in spending.

After years of belt-tightening, a \$2.4 million spending reduction will be a difficult challenge. We will need to look closely at the programs and services we offer, and target our shrinking resources to the services that reflect our highest priorities and provide the greatest benefit to our citizens. That may mean reducing or eliminating programs or services that can no longer be afforded.

Waiting out the recession is not a strategy that will work for individuals, families, institutions, businesses, or governments. Our environment has changed, and we need to adapt to it.

Fortunately, the intelligence, compassion and dedication needed to guide these changes are the hallmarks of this county. Already, my office has received several dozen suggestions from County employees through the new Electronic Suggestion Box. That's not surprising. In my career, I've found the best ideas often come from the people who actually deliver our services.

I greatly appreciate your ideas, and encourage all County employees to pass along their thoughts about cost saving and/or quality enhancing initiatives that would help us through this difficult period. The Suggestion Box is accessed through the County's intra-net (Click on the "Suggestion Box" link under County Administration.).

Joe Mareane

Diversity Consortium Holds Third Diversity Roundtable

By Stephen Estes Deputy Commissioner of Personnel
President, 2009, Diversity Consortium of Tompkins County, Inc.

The Diversity Consortium of Tompkins County, Inc. (DCTC) is a joint and volunteer effort of local employers and community leaders dedicated to promoting the benefits of diversity and inclusion throughout the greater Tompkins County community. Since its founding in 1999, the DCTC has endeavored to cultivate a continuous learning environment, promote a positive community image and provide resources, education and best practices in the field of diversity and inclusion. The Community Diversity Roundtable Event is an ongoing biannual initiative undertaken to further these objectives.

The third biannual Community Diversity Roundtable Event, **Preparing for Change**, was held on May 7, 2009. The roundtable built upon previous events and reinforces our ongoing efforts to enhance awareness of, serve as a supportive network for, and demonstrate how acknowledging and leveraging our differences can create a strong local community and a thriving business environment. The 2009 Roundtable event was a partnership between the Diversity Consortium of Tompkins County, Inc. and the Society for Human Resource Management of Tompkins County. There were, of course, many other supporters and sponsors—including Tompkins County—who helped to make this event such an overwhelming success, and we thank those individuals for their efforts.

Continued on page 11

Please Help Again This Year...

Annual Employee Blood Drive August 11th

By Cheryl Nelson and Jackie Kippola

The date of the annual employee blood drive has been set for August 11th. Once again, the blood drive will take place at the Tompkins County Library, Borg Warner Room.

There is always a need for blood in our region, but the need is especially high in the summer months. Employees are asked to donate one pint of blood, which takes about one hour and can benefit up to three people in need of blood or blood products. If for whatever reason you are unable to donate blood, your assistance would be appreciated either as a canteen worker (serving donors cookies and juice), or registration worker (checking names off the list of donors and providing them reading material while they wait for the nurse to call them to donate). The canteen and registration duties are broken into one-hour shifts.

Please mark your calendar for this very important day. Be sure to get permission from your supervisor. And, be sure to get a good night's sleep the night before donating, eat breakfast (if you are donating in the morning), and lunch (if you are donating in the afternoon). Drinking several glasses of fluid prior to donating is also recommended.

Board of Elections in "Off Year"

By Elizabeth W. Cree and Stephen M. DeWitt, Board of Elections

At the Board of Elections in the run up to the November 2008 election, the phones never stopped ringing, the mail was delivered and sent out by the boxful, and a steady stream of people lined up for their turn at the counter. Temporary staff and volunteers pitched in, and the regular staff worked overtime. A record number of voters, 4,230, requested absentee ballots, and on Election Day, a record number of voters turned out.

Now it's 2009, and all is quiet at the BOE. Employees take naps and dream of 2012 while cobwebs form on the telephones and filing cabinets.

Not quite....

True, the observable hectic activity has slowed to a more manageable pace, but the workload hasn't really diminished, just shifted.

For one thing, about 70 local offices are up for election this year. These include County Legislators, City Alderpersons, Town and Village Supervisors, Councilpersons and Superintendents. This could mean over 140 candidates who need to correctly file petitions, financial disclosures, and other legal documents. Plus the local parties will also file petitions and documents for their party positions. The staff at the BOE will spend a lot of time helping candidates and committees with the whole process.

In addition to the large number of races later in the year, the Board is also involved with many smaller elections. The Board runs Village elections, and provides various levels of support for a number of school board and fire district elections.

Meanwhile, certain tasks continue day in and day out, year after year. New voters register, current voters change their address or party affiliation. Databases need constant checking and updating. Reports are compiled and filed with the State. Voting machines receive periodic maintenance. Voter outreach is conducted at schools and clubs and community events. New procedures, laws, machines and software mean more staff training. Recruiting and training over 300 election poll workers each year is a never ending process.

Because of the uncertainties at the State and Federal level with the status of our HAVA mandated new voting system, at this writing we can't even be sure whether we'll be using the new optical scan/BMD machines, our old lever machines, or a combination this fall. Thus, we have to plan for all possible scenarios. And if we do roll out the new voting system, we will also need to undertake a massive training effort for our election workers, and conduct a public outreach program to educate all voters about the new system, all within an extremely narrow time frame.

So, while one might imagine this year is a pleasant interlude for the Board, the reality is 2009 will be a very busy and extremely challenging year. Guess those naps will have to wait.

Typical BOE Year at a Glance

January - Candidates file for Village Elections, Annual Report and Reporting to State

February - Maintenance on machines, set up for Village Elections

March - Village Elections in Cayuga Heights, Dryden, Groton and Trumansburg

April - Lansing Village Election, Prepare for School Board elections, Secure annual contracts for polling places

May - School Board elections, National Change of Address processing, Poll site evaluations for accessibility

June - Party Petitions passed, Campaign finance school

July - Petition filing, hearings, court cases

August - Mailcheck, nominating petitions filed, hearings, court cases, certificates for caucus, set up for primary

September - Primary elections, pack election material for both elections

October - Setup for General election, absentee voting, machine training for 400 election workers

November - Election, canvassing, certifying takes 25 days

December - Collect year end data, fire elections

**doesn't include special elections created by vacancies*



If, Golf, Golf, Golf, Golf, Golf...
If, Golf, Golf, Golf, Golf, Golf...

Circle your Calendar for the
**15th Annual Employee
Golf Tournament**
Friday, September 11, 2009

Contact jkipolla@Tompkins-co.org for details

A Note on the Jackie Yoder Memorial Golf Tournament

The tournament was replaced by the 1st Annual Dryden Community Golf Tournament on Friday, June 26th, co-sponsored by the Dryden Kiwanis and Sertoma Clubs. All proceeds raised by Kiwanis went to the Caring Community Hospice of Cortland County. So, while Jackie's name is no longer in the tournament her spirit lives, since the proceeds go towards the group that Jackie's family asked them to go to.

Bob Slocum

Sustainability Spotlight:

Biodiesel Comes to Public Fleets Across Tompkins County

By Cheryl Nelson, Public Works Administrator

Municipalities, public-sector entities, and educational institutions in Tompkins County recently formed a consortium for the purpose of investigating and pursuing alternative fuels for use in their vehicle fleets. Up to this point, biodiesel has not been available for public sector use in Tompkins County through state contract purchasing process.

The consortium members recognized the need for biodiesel availability as a prime focus. Biodiesel is available in neighboring counties, but since Tompkins County does not have an interstate highway running through it, delivery costs, coupled with the biodiesel pricing, was not obtainable for municipal and public users. To this point, all of the vehicles were running on regular diesel as provided by the State contract process.

Tompkins County Legislature recently adopted the new element of the Tompkins County Comprehensive Plan that calls for a target reduction in green house gas emissions 80% by the year 2050. This element, coupled with the fact that facilities and vehicles are the largest contributors to the green house gas emissions, caused the consortium to opt to seek bids for biodiesel on its own now to begin to assist with reaching this goal and other sustainability principles. New York State bid pricing for the next two years will be announced later in the fall. On April 7, 2009, the Tompkins County Legislature approved the biodiesel bid of Mirabito Energy Products.

The first delivery of biodiesel into the County, in the amount of 9000 gallons, was made to the County Highway Division on April 9th. Dale Gregrow, Tompkins County Highway Equipment Service Manager, calculated that the use of biodiesel in the County Highway Division's fleet will save an estimated 114 tons of green house gas emissions annually.

Cheryl Nelson, consortium facilitator, states "the consortium members are keenly aware of the environmental issues, but that has to be balanced against the present economics and budgets of each member entity. With this bid's pricing coming in comparable to straight diesel, it is now an attainable commodity. The use of biodiesel in public fleets will have positive impacts on green house gas emissions across Tompkins County. This consortium is an outstanding example of municipal and public sector organizations coming together and using their collective purchasing power to reach a goal that is in the best interest of all of Tompkins County. I am very impressed with and honored to be working with this consortium."



Cheryl Nelson and Dale Gregrow, along with the Mirabito delivery driver, observe the first delivery of biodiesel to the Tompkins County Highway. (Photo by Jerry Stern.)



Did you know...

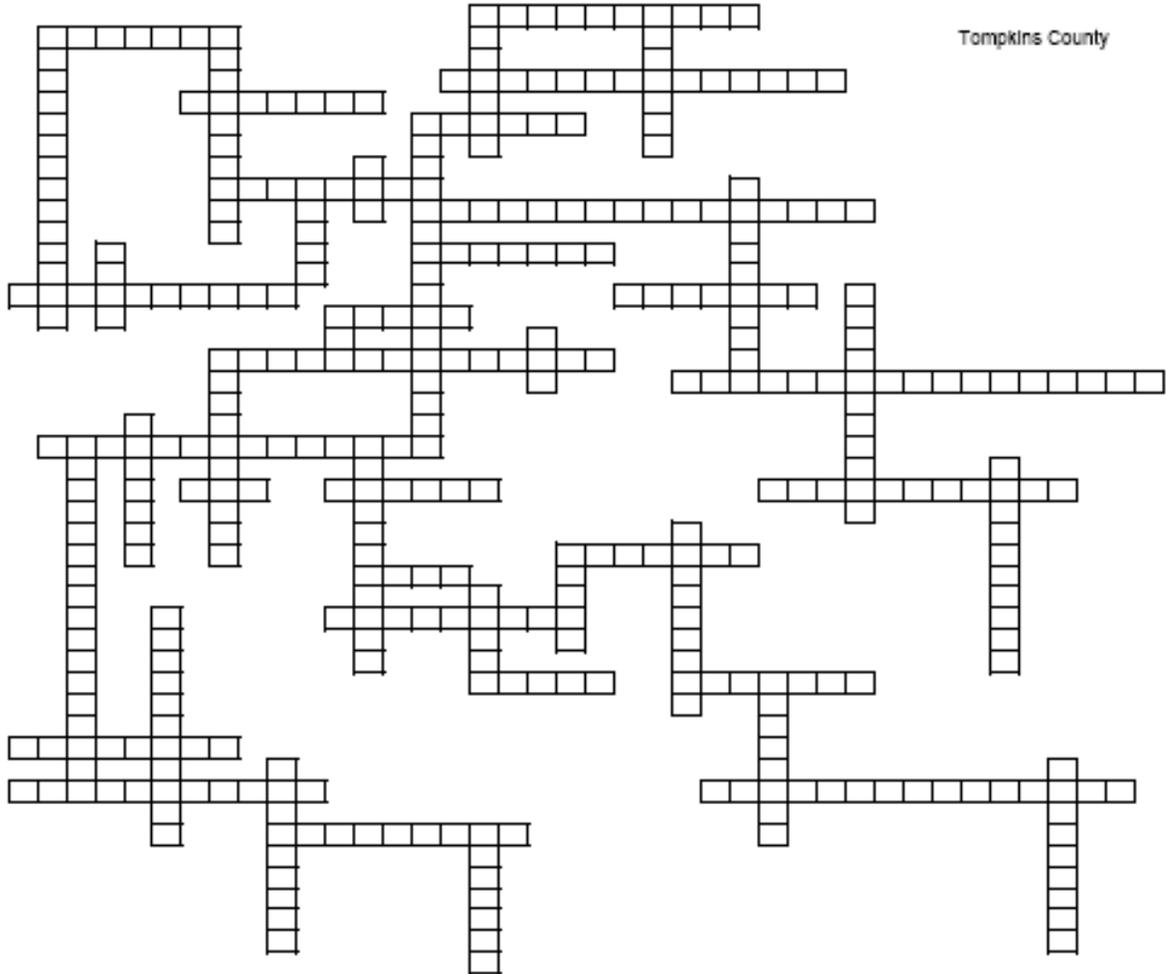
Tompkins County Solid Waste Management Division has free resources available to support your green purchasing initiatives? Ask your department's Waste Reduction Representative to view a copy of the Tompkins County Environmentally Preferred Procurement (EPP) Resource Guide or visit FingerLakesBuyGreen.org for more information on locally available, environmentally responsible products.

- Linnett Short

THE PUZZLE

By Alanna Congden

The goal is to "fill in" the grid with the words in the word list. Words are entered horizontally and vertically, as in crosswords, but the word list gives no indication of location or direction; the puzzle aspect comes from determining the placement of all the words.



Tompkins County

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>3
DMV
GIS
ITS
PEN</p> | <p>8
COMPUTER
PLANNING
MAILROOM</p> | <p>15
CRIMINAL JUSTICE</p> |
| <p>4
CSEA
JAIL</p> | <p>9
BUILDINGS
DIVERSITY
HISTORIAN
PERSONNEL
PROBATION</p> | <p>16
BOARD OF ELECTIONS
DISTRICT ATTORNEY</p> |
| <p>5
NURSE
PAPER
PHONE
SMILE
UNION</p> | <p>10
ASSESSMENT
FACILITIES
HEALTH DEPT
LASERFICHE
RETIREMENT
SOLID WASTE</p> | <p>17
EMERGENCY RESPONSE
OFFICE FOR THE AGING</p> |
| <p>6
BUDGET
PUBLIC</p> | <p>11
COMPTROLLER
COUNTY CLERK
HUMAN RIGHTS
LEGISLATURE
YOUTH BUREAU</p> | |
| <p>7
AIRPORT
DIGITAL
FINANCE
GROUNDS
HIGHWAY
LIBRARY
MEETING
RECORDS
RECYCLE
SHERIFF</p> | <p>14
ADMINISTRATION
COUNTY ATTORNEY
DEPARTMENT HEAD
SOCIAL SERVICES</p> | |

ANSWERS TO "THE PUZZLE"
POSTED ONLINE AT

www.tompkins-co.org/county corridors
AS OF JULY 8th!

A Fond Farewell to Our Steadfast Mail Clerk...

By Aurora R. Valenti, County Clerk

Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds...

Michael Patrick Armstrong was born in Ithaca, NY, on October 29, 1947. He married his lovely wife, Fran, 20, in April, 1967; while serving in the U.S. Army in Germany, their first child, Michael, Jr., was born. In addition to Mike, Jr., Mike and Fran have two daughters, Karen and Krista; and they have four grandchildren.

Mike has been employed by Tompkins County since June of 1987. Prior to that employment he worked for Brown Cow and for a local banking institution as a proof supervisor.

We are sure that when Mike retires on July 24, 2009, he will have a little more time to play golf and to do the other things he loves... watching all sports, walking, traveling. He and Fran have visited many baseball stadiums in the U.S., and we are hoping that they have long, healthy, and happy times together visiting all of them, which Mike would like to do.

We strongly believe the rumor that Mike is a terrific husband, father and grandfather. We know, as a matter of fact, that he is a great big teddy bear whose growl is as loud as his heart is large.

Mike, thanks for all you've done over the years for all of us employees. Here's what we wish for you:

May the road rise up to meet you; may the wind always be at your back; may the sun shine warm upon your face, and rains fall soft upon your fields. And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand.



The Finance Department Bids Adieu to a Very Special Person...

By Lynda Rose and Lisa Jehu

July 30, 2009 will be a day of mixed emotions for the staff in the Finance Department as well as many other County employees and retirees alike as Frances (Fran) Armstrong will be retiring after twenty-five years of dedicated service.

Fran began her employment with the County in June of 1984 as a Typist in the Comptroller's Office. In June of 1987 she accepted the position of Payroll Clerk, which was upgraded in April of 1991 to her current position of Payroll Coordinator. It is through her hard work and dedication that we all receive a paycheck, on time, no matter what the conditions may be.

As well as spending time with her husband, children, and grandchildren Fran enjoys golfing, traveling, and attending sporting events to cheer on her grandchildren. Her love and pride for her family are evident to all that know her.

So, it is with sadness for our loss, joy for her wonderful future that lies ahead, and very fond memories that we must say goodbye and a heartfelt "Thank You" for all she has done over the years. We wish Fran and Michael great

Public Works Managers "Reunion" – Still Looking Good After All The Years!

By Cheryl Nelson, Public Works Administrator

On June 4th, the "old Public Works Managers gang" got together for a reunion luncheon. Although the group has met several times, this was the first time a photo was taken to commemorate the occasion. The two photos were taken in the same location in the airport terminal, but eleven years apart. The first was taken in 1998 just prior to the retirement of then Commissioner of Public Works, Bill Mobbs.

Although some of the time was spent talking "shop", the majority of the time was spent catching up on families and other topics. Most of the managers started working for the county when their families were young. Now, the discussion is of children, grandchildren, college degrees, and career paths for the next generation.

Talk about experience, the combined number of years of service to Tompkins County and the residents by this group is 192! So, when you travel on county highways and bridges in your vehicle or by public transit, fly in or out of the airport, put out your recycling bin or visit the Recycling and Solid Waste Center, or work in or visit county buildings, remember this team and how their service made/make Tompkins County a great place in which to work and live.

If you have fellow employees that you haven't seen in a while, why not give them a call and schedule a time to meet? Life is short – take time to reflect on the past and enjoy those that made it special!

First Row – Arel LeMaro, Facilities Director, Barbara Eckstrom, Solid Waste Manager, Jim Kazda, former Sr. Civil Engineer (now employed by Cornell University)

Second Row – Cheryl Nelson, Public Works Administrator, Ward Hungerford, former County Highway Manager, Bill Mobbs, former Commissioner of Public



Works (now employed by C&S Companies), Dwight Mengel, Chief Transportation Planner, Bob Nicholas, Airport Manager

Highway Highlights...

Submitted by Geri Lockwood, Administrative Assistant

2009 Major Construction Projects:

Please be sure to visit the website, <http://www.tompkins-co.org/highway>, for monthly updates on road and bridge projects.

Careers in Construction Day:

The 5th Annual Central New York Careers in Construction Day, hosted by The Skilled Trades Diversity Council, was held on May 5, 2009, at TC3. The Highway Division of the Tompkins County Public Works Department participated in the event, with *Ryan Sherry*, Engineering Technician, displaying computerized aerial photography of Tompkins County; *Geri Lockwood*, Administrative Assistant, with job descriptions and applications; and *Jerry Stern*, Highway Technician (Permit Agent), with a popular hands-on demonstration of applying thermo-plastic material to the pavement (i.e. stop bars, arrows, etc.), as well as the division's radar traffic counter and road core samples. Jerry was assisted by *Bruce Reed*, Seasonal Worker. (Jerry is also a member of the Skilled Trades Diversity Council and recently instructed a second session of the Flagger Training Course, sponsored by the Council.)



Jerry Stern, with the hands-on application of thermo-plastic material



Ryan Sherry, with the computerized aerial photography.



Bruce, with the road core sample display.



Students reviewing Seasonal Worker job descriptions.

National Public Works Week:

May 17-23, 2009 was National Public Works Week. The Public Works Division includes Airport, Facilities, Highway, Public Works Administration, and Solid Waste Management.

Thank you, all Public Works employees. for your dedicated service!

Employee Spotlights

Doreen Lauper

Doreen Lauper is Secretary for County Administration. Doreen has worked at the County for going on 20 years— three years at DSS, and 13 years as Secretary/Administrative Assistant in the Office of Assigned Council, before joining County Administration in April of 2006. Doreen responded to the following questions from *County Corridors*:



What do you do here (your job duties)?

Duties: atmospheric lightening (as energy efficiently as possible of course); equipment care—speaking nicely to all the cute electrical machinery in the office and contacting the appropriate services when they act out; sustainability—cardboard food containers (after rinsing) and the center of the paper towel roll can be recycled, but not the actual paper towels; directional assistance—Personnel is on the first floor-exit the elevator on “1” and take a left, Certificates of Residency can be applied for on the second floor-exit the elevator on “2” and take a right; and for consistency purposes “Administration, this is Doreen” is my mantra and I have memorized the Airport telephone number along with flight schedules and the luggage/carry-on rules. Oh, and we can’t leave out “Does work related as required.” Please feel free to contact Tompkins County Personnel for a generic job description, a listing of vacancies, and when the exams will be given.

What do you like best about your job?

People, I love to help people. There are also many opportunities available to challenge and improve my skills.

What do you like least about your job?

What I like least is the fact that I have to work to get the paycheck.

What is your favorite thing to do outside of work?

Partaking in loud, obnoxious, hilarious events with my wonderful, large, loving FAMILY. Be it an evening meal (Friday at Mom’s and Sunday at Dad’s), watching any number of nieces and nephews in their scholastic and

sports activities—elementary grade basket ball, Middle and High School Plays, College level soccer; spending quality time with my hubby of 33 years, Roger (watching TV with our eyes closed in the evening) and, oh, let me tell you about our children and grandchildren!

Our older blessings are: Lynn who lives and works locally and Ryan, with wife Elizabeth (Lisy) , who have provided us with a vacation home in South Carolina: all three are good looking, intelligent, considerate and compassionate people (like their Mom!) We have three exemplary grandchildren, Arianna and Riley who reign in South Carolina and Iris who has seized Ithaca—all three are answers to Nana and Papa’s prayers (hope you get one just like you)!

Ten years after our baby was born, our baby was born—Shawn. We still have him at home for another year, well, after a summer in Fort Benning, GA in boot camp. The boy never sits still (hence, parents watching the TV with their eyes closed) and he likes to explore all avenues. He is a Police Explorer, has held many positions—



including Captain, Junior Firefighter of the Year in 2008, is a Certified First Responder, goes to rescue calls-was part of a team that brought someone back to life last August, just graduated from Fire Fighter 1 class. Sports venues consist of an attempt at softball and basketball, played a little football and ran track, but his passion is wrestling. He’s on his fourth season of haying and third season at Taughannock Farms Inn, and serves with the Army Reserves one weekend a month. Thanks for letting me brag a little. Life is Good! (But I need to go watch a little TV;-)

If you ran the world, what is the first thing you would do?

Offer free higher education, which would help put everyone on an equal playing field. Mandatory classes would include Humor as a Second Language, Telephone Etiquette, There Is No “I” In Team, and How To Play Well With Others.

John Navarro

John Navarro has been employed by Tompkins County, as Motor Equipment Operator in the Highway Division for 35 years. John responded to the following questions from *County Corridors*:

What do you do here (your job duties)?

Operate equipment, laborer duties, patch holes, pick up dead deer and adopt-a-highway collections, drive snow plow.

What do you like best about your job?

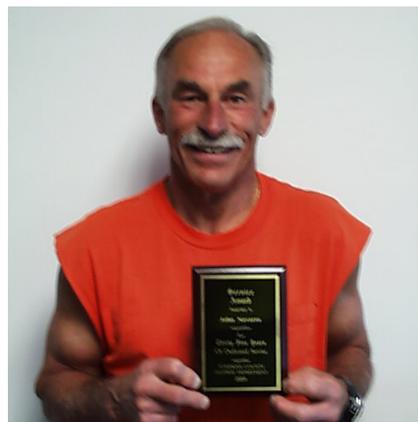
Being outdoors and enjoying the beauty of nature (and the paycheck).

What do you like least about your job?

The long winter.

What is your favorite thing to do outside of work?

Running, riding the Harley, and driving the corvette.



If you ran the world, what is the first thing you would do?

Improve everyone’s health care.

Kudos Korner...

Kat McCarthy Recognized by Toastmasters International

Waste Reduction and Recycling Specialist Kat McCarthy has been recognized as an Advanced Communicator Gold for participation in the Toastmasters International communication program.



Advanced Communicator Gold recognition is the highest award in Toastmasters' communication program. The communication program is a self-paced training program that helps participants improve their speaking skills in a club environment. To achieve Advanced Communicator Gold status, participants must complete a series of challenging speech assignments, conduct a training program, and mentor a new member.

A letter from Toastmasters International Executive Director Daniel Rex states, "Completing these requirements involves several years of study and excellent communication skills. It also involves tremendous self-discipline and a strong interest in self-improvement. By achieving Advanced Communicator Gold recognition, Toastmaster McCarthy has shown a commitment to excellence in communication and a desire to apply these communication in all facets of life." Congratulations, Kat!

Foster Families Needed

To anyone who may be considering becoming a foster parent or adoptive parent and wants more information, Tompkins County Department of Social Services will hold an informational meeting at the Human Services Building, room 142, 320 W. State St., on Thursday July 9 and Thursday, August 13, from noon to 1 p.m. each day. Tompkins County has a special need for foster families in the Ithaca City School District and for families who will foster teenagers. Please call 274-5266 for more information.

- Shawnae Milton, DSS

Tom Valenti will be appearing at BORDER'S, up at the mall, on Saturday, July 18, 2009, at 2:00 p.m., for a book-signing and discussion of YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE DIABETIC TO LOVE THIS COOKBOOK.

We would love to see you, your family, and all your friends there.

Thank you.
Aurora

Hats off to.... Peanut!

Believe it or not, hard hats actually have an expiration date. As they are replaced, the "expired" ones are discarded. "Leave it to Peanut" to think of a creative way to reduce waste and reuse the discarded ones.



Peanut (Ida Besemer) works for the Facilities Division, as a cleaner at Solid Waste and the Public Works Facility (PWF, which houses Facilities, Highway, Public Works Administration, and Weights & Measures). One of her

ideas was to turn them into planters, which she hung with flowers at various locations at the PWF.

We have received several positive comments on how "cute" they are. If you are near Bostwick Road, please be sure to admire her handiwork. Thank you, Peanut – our "hats" are off to you! ☺

Geri Lockwood, Highway



Retiring Member of the Team

By County Clerk Aurora R. Valenti

GERALDINE (Geri) BOCHENSKI, Recording Clerk in the Tompkins County Clerk's Office for a total of 22 years. will retire from service on July 24, 2009. Her first stint in the TCCO was from 1985 to 1987, when military duty called her husband away, and then from 1989 to the present time. Geri tells us she will miss us (every chance she gets). Her fellow team-mates, however, truly do not know what we'll do without her smiling face and ultra-pleasant manner, her wonderful assistance and dependability.

Geri is married to Bernard (Bernie) Bochenski; they have three children, Diane, Patricia, and Jason, and boast five beautiful grandchildren, Zachary, Jordan, Eric, Nicole and Audree. We know Geri and Bernie will spend many wonderful days with their children and grandchildren; but we hope Geri will stop by from time to time to chat and to drop off some of her delicious lemon bread which she bakes at holiday time.

We wish you health, happiness, and many years of joy.
Ciao Geri!

Department News

Airport



Pictured is airport manager *Bob Nicholas* with United States Senator *Chuck Schumer*. The photo was taken at a recent press conference where the Senator announced the continuation of Continental Airlines service to Newark's Liberty International Airport after Continental had initially said they were pulling out of Ithaca. The decision to continue came after Senator *Schumer's* intervention with Continental's CEO and some in-depth discussions between the airline and the local business community.

Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council

Happy Birthday, Teresa!

We all have memories of a favorite birthday (or maybe all those times you turned 29 . . .), but *Teresa Linde's* co-workers at the Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council (Tompkins County's metropolitan planning organization) searched high and low for a special idea to please her.

And that special idea was right in their own building, working as a project assistant for the Planning Department. *Teresa*, of Scottish descent, was thrilled to have tea time begin with *John Simeone* playing the bagpipes outside her office window.

Here's a photo.

- *Kathy Wilsea*



Another "COFA Baby !!"

Congratulations to *Trina Schickel*, of COFA, on the recent birth of her granddaughter, *Mary Kerwick Bogart!*



Mental Health

Celebration Recognizes Community of Care

On Wednesday May 27th, the Tompkins County Community Mental Health Services Board held a celebration event to recognize achievements in the areas of mental health, developmental disabilities and chemical dependency treatment, progress and recovery. Approximately 150 people attended this moving event which celebrated the personal accomplishments of individuals facing significant challenges and individuals and programs that work in this field.

The goal of this event was to recognize the accomplishments and service of individuals, families, programs and organizations, to celebrate successes and to highlight the system of care in our community. It is clear, by the many comments written about the award recipients, as well as their comments, that this goal was achieved.

Many individuals were noted for their long standing contributions to the community—among them *Paula Austic* (at right, recently retired from Mental Health), who acknowledged her unwavering dedication to persons with mental illness over 27 years. Commissioner *Robert De Luca* noted that she was known as "St. Paula" in the department and was a "real deal" case manager who went always beyond the call of duty.



Office for the Aging

Two outstanding seniors were honored at the Office for the Aging's Annual Luncheon May 13. *Joan Barber* was awarded a certificate of appreciation as Senior Citizen of the Year, acknowledging her tireless volunteer work with the Kitchen Cupboard and the Danby Food Pantry. *Ray Oglesby* was also honored with a certificate of appreciation for Outstanding Contribution by a Senior Citizen for his many and varied volunteer efforts.

The keynote speaker for this year's luncheon was *Dr. William H. Thomas* (below) an international authority on geriatric medicine and eldercare and founder of the *Eden Alternative* which offers a creative way to "change the culture" of nursing homes by bringing life and laughter into the lives of elders.

In his remarks, *Dr. Thomas* presented a new way to look at the aging process. "Aging is an amazing journey. Aging offers an opportunity to live a new and different kind of life. I am pro aging. Aging will open up doors and windows to new growth. I believe there is life after adulthood and the silly, fevered obsession that often accompanies it. You can choose to live a life of an elder – choose to let go of adulthood and embrace elderhood!"





FUNNY BONES

Gardening Humor

What does the letter “A” have in common with a flower?
They both have bees coming after them.

The best way to garden is to put on a wide-brimmed straw hat and some old clothes. And with a hoe in one hand and a cold drink in the other, tell somebody else where to dig.

DeWitt Park and Tompkins County Veterans’ Memorials Restoration Project and Rededication Ceremony

The DeWitt Park Restoration Committee, comprised of local veterans, has been working very hard over the past several years to restore the park, maintain the monuments, and honor those who gave the greatest gift to their country.



On Saturday, October 3, 2009, at 1:00 p.m. a rededication ceremony will take place to rededicate all monuments: Civil War, World War I, World II, Korea, Vietnam, USS Liberty, and Iraq. The latest veterans to be added will be John C. Smith, Jr., USS Liberty and Patrick L. Griffin, Jr., Iraq.

The Restoration Committee is seeking relatives of those who valiantly gave their lives for our freedom and intends to provide a special reserved seating. If you are the father, mother, sibling, wife, son, daughter, grandparent, grandchild, great grandchild, niece, cousin, etc. of a Tompkins County resident who died in service during war time, please contact Holly Hollingsworth at 607-539-7696 or pthollingsworth@aol.com.

- Karen Fuller

Diversity Roundtable

Continued From Page 2

This year, we showcased some intriguing topics to demonstrate the myriad ways in which diversity, inclusion and acceptance play a vital role in strengthening the fabric of our community. We were fortunate to have Fernan R. Cepero, PHR, Vice President of Human Resources for the YMCA of Greater Rochester as our keynote speaker. Fernan did an excellent job of blending knowledge, humor, theory and practical hands-on application into his presentation.

The breakout sessions covered the role of our municipalities in promoting diversity and inclusion; why diversity is everyone’s business; “Nasty Fighting Words”; the rights of immigrant and guest workers; measuring diversity initiatives; understanding generational differences; queer and transgender issues in the workplace and community; and retention in our workplace and community. Kirby Edmonds of TFC Associates summarized the day and helped us bring it all together.



~ * * SAVE THE DATE * * ~

CSEA Local 855 – 2008 Employee Recognition Day (Picnic)

Date: Saturday, August 15th

Time: 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Location: Stewart Park (near the small pavillion)

(Informational registration forms to be mailed at a later date.)

Bus Pass Program Renewed

Our popular TCAT bus pass program has been renewed for July through December 2009 for routes within Tompkins County. All county employees are eligible to receive a free pass for Tompkins County TCAT bus service.

New bus pass applications are required for this phase. The application form is attached to this email, and it also is available on the employee intranet (in the Forms section, Personnel Dept.) or via interdepartmental mail from me.

Use of the pass is free to you, though the county pays for each ride. For that reason, a bus pass may be used only by the employee to whom it is issued, and only for commuting to and from work or for work-related travel during your regular work hours.



Anna Smith, Personnel Dept.

Mental Health

Continued From Page 10

The consistent theme of the evening mentioned by many was how someone can go from “darkness to light” and then go on to help others. There were several individuals who were shining examples of this at this event.

Board Chair Mary Hutchens noted that Tompkins County has a forward thinking and high quality system of care, involving many partner organizations, in which people can and do accomplish amazing things in the face of significant challenges.

- Bob De Luca

Classified Ads

Dog Dayz Inn

A place where your dog feels
"at home".

Located in North Lansing

Sandy Strehle, 315-497-3467

dogdayzinn@yahoo.com

<http://www.dogdayzinn.com>



FOR SALE – 1995 31' Challenger 5th-wheel camper. Features include two slide-outs, basement, full-size bathroom, and a queen-sized bed. Excellent condition. Must sell due to health reasons. \$11,000.00, complete with hitch. Please call (607) 898-5196.

FOR SALE – Marantz Stereo System w/turntable, 2 large speakers, cassette, and remote, \$300 or best offer. Butcher block table w/4 chairs, \$200 or best offer. Please call (607) 273-5609, leave message.

FOR SALE – New fishing equipment and accessories. Please call (607) 387-5197, evenings.

FOR SALE – 2000 250 Suzuki motorcycle. Good starter bike. Runs good. Please call (607) 898-2621.

FOR SALE – TAKE YOUR TOYS WITH YOU! 2005 Keystone Hornet Hideout camper-trailer with "garage" in the rear. Sleeps 6+. Excellent condition. Will sell fully stocked and ready to go. \$15,000.00, or best offer. Please call (607) 898-3214, evenings.

FOR SALE – Sofa, loveseat, and recliner – Hunter Green – excellent condition, \$350.00. Dining room suite – Trundle table, 6 high-back chairs w/upholstered seats, extra large lighted hutch – excellent condition, \$900.00. Barbie Princess Car w/battery – great condition, \$25.00. Please call (607) 592-9172.

FOR SALE – Full-size pool table, one-inch thick slate top, with green felt. Includes rack, balls, cues, and help to move it, if needed. \$150.00, negotiable. Please call Nick Berg, at (607) 387-3583 and leave message, or e-mail to berg7777@zoom-dsl.com.

TRAIL RIDING LESSONS – Being offered at Painted Bar Stables in Burdett, NY (20 minutes from Ithaca). We are a family-owned business that combines the fun of horseback riding with the beauty of the Finger Lakes National Forest. Rides accommodate all abilities at affordable fees. For more information, check our website: www.paintedbarstables.com.

WANTED – Nice 1 or 2 bedroom, apartment in private home, in the Ithaca or Triphammer area. Please call (607) 273-5609, leave message.

WANTED – 3-point hitch backhoe attachment, or an older model backhoe. Please call Jim, at (607) 532-4092.

FOR SALE:

6 antique dark oak chairs with 6' pine trestle table, \$400.00; Antique solid cherry drop-leaf table, excellent condition, \$150.00; Black iron baker's rack with 3-18"-wide shelves, \$45.00; Antique wooden clothes dryer/wall mount, \$45.00; 48-piece blue/white dishes, LIBERTY BLUE series, 1960's, \$95.00; Lifestyle treadmill, black standard size and functions, \$100.00; Antique desk, mahogany, 9-drawer, excellent condition, \$200.00; **FREE:** 17" TV
Please call (607) 533-9133, evenings.

VENDING COMMITTEE "VENDS"

DARIEN LAKE DAY TRIP

Date: Saturday, July 25th
Cost: \$25.00/pp* (includes ticket to park and bus transportation) *\$5.00/pp for children 2 and under.

Depart: 7:30 a.m. **SHARP:** (Begin loading bus at 7:15 a.m.)
(From the Tompkins County Public Works Facility on Bostwick Road.)

Depart: From Darien Lake at 7:00 p.m. **SHARP!**

Arrive: Back in Ithaca around 9:30 p.m.
Minimum of 50 people needed to make this trip possible. Call now for reservations or for additional information.

Reservations & Payment: Accepted through Monday, July 13th.

HANGAR THEATRE MUSICAL – "RENT"

Date: Saturday, August 15th

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Cost: \$10.00/pp

Reservations & Payment: Accepted through Friday, July 31st.
(Tickets are limited. Call for details and waiting list information.)

Please visit the website for further 2009 trip information and updates,
www.tompkins-co.org/employee_only/VendingCommitteeNews.pdf,
also accessible from the employee intranet.

THE CORRIDORS TEAM

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