



# Town of Somerset

Volume 34, Issue 2

Summer 2019

## From Your Town Clerk

Dear Residents,

Happy Summer!! This is a great time to be outdoors! Don't forget that you can reserve a pavilion at our park by calling my office at 795-3575, ext. 2. We also sell fishing licenses so if you get the urge to go fishing, stop by my office first. Golden Hill is open and they have hiking trails, a creek for kayaking, and tables for picnicking. Our community is alive with many events, most of which are listed in this newsletter. Please help support our organizations that are vital to our community.

Don't forget to mark August 3rd on your calendar. That is our annual Town-Wide Yard sale. If you would like to be placed on the map, please contact my office by July 29th. Maps will be available beginning July 31st and you can pick them up at the Town Hall, Barker Library, or Thee Barker Store.

Have an enjoyable summer!

*Tracy L. Carmer, RMC*

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### NEWS FROM THE BARKER FIRE DEPARTMENT

- Mark your calendars, our annual Fall Raffle will be Sunday, October 13th. Watch our sign for ticket availability.
- Please keep the fire hydrants near your property clear of weeds and tall grass.
- Reflective house numbers help us tremendously when responding to an emergency. We can customize signs with your house number for \$15.00. Order sheets are available at the Town Hall or stop by the fire hall any Thursday evening.
- Effective July 1, 2019, UBMD doctors will be residing over the Emergency Room at Eastern Niagara Lockport. They are the same doctors as you would see at Buffalo General, Millard Fillmore Suburban or DeGraff hospitals.

## A Word From Your Supervisor

Daniel Engert 716-795-3575, ext. 3



Greetings, friends and neighbors in Somerset! Well, it appears that summer is finally here and I thank you for taking a few moments to review the town newsletter.

Many of you are aware but the NYS DEC recently wrote (at the direction of Governor Cuomo) new emission rules for the remaining coal fired power plants (Somerset/Cayuga) in New York State. Essentially, the new rules are intentionally unattainable and therefore it will require the closure of the plants. A big win for the Governor to claim that he killed coal in New York but a big loss to the two small communities that were impacted, Somerset and Cayuga, NY.

I have been urging the owner (Beowolf Energy) to develop a transition plan/proposal since and as part of the recently re-negotiated PILOT agreement. At this time, I am pleased to support their proposal to repurpose the site into a large-scale data center. This \$550 million dollar local capital investment would be among, if not the largest in the history of Niagara County and would provide computing power for artificial intelligence, machine learning and other advanced computational power services sought by end users. If approved, the project will produce hundreds of construction jobs and 160-170 new long-term jobs paying \$40,000 - \$60,000 annually. This project would be a game-changer for our community! It needs the support of Governor Cuomo and the allocation of low-cost hydro-power and Empire State Development funding. We have been organizing a coalition across the environmental, business as well as union and local community leaders. We are also planning to hold a community rally to allow everyone in Somerset to show our support for this huge economic development opportunity. Please look for further announcements regarding the date/time/location. I would encourage everyone to come out and support the data center project and to call upon the Governor to support the transition of our plant.

Also as previously reported, I am very excited about my application for REDC funding to study the feasibility of developing a recreational park on the site of the Somerset Operating Company power plant. The Study will assess site constraints and opportunities, evaluate potential environmental issues and result in a Master Plan for park development. The over 150-acre property, along Lake Road, rests atop the former coal ash pile that underwent full remediation and now rises 200 feet above the surrounding landscape, offering some of the best views in the area. I've toured the site multiple times and on a clear day, you can see the plume from Niagara Falls, over 30 miles to the southwest. We're really excited to be developing the concept for a new park in Somerset! Stay tuned for more information and public involvement plans and opportunities! We are finalizing the contractual requirements to be able to commence this project.

Lastly, I am again very disappointed to report that while Apex announced in April that they will not file an application for their project in 2019 and they closed their office, they also stated that they continue to "look forward to identifying the proper time to advance those benefits to the (Somerset) region." They report that they continue to work on the Lighthouse Wind project from their "consolidated" office in the town of Barre, Orleans County. Notably, they still have not achieved even one single sign-off from any local, state or federal agency regarding their project. However, please be very assured that in the event that Apex actually files an application, the Town will vehemently defend the overwhelming will of our community to reject this project in order to protect the health, safety, welfare and future of our Town.

Finally, with the warmer summer weather, please be sure to drive safely throughout the Town and be extra careful for the sake of the many bicyclists, runners, and walkers who are outside enjoying the summer season!

Also, please be sure to stop by the many local produce stands that provide awesome, fresh vegetables in Somerset!

In your service,

Daniel M. Engert – Town Supervisor

## Councilwoman's Corner



Did you know?

There are many invasive pests in the United States and Canada that are broadly distributed primarily due to people inadvertently transporting infested nursery stock, unprocessed logs, firewood and other commodities. I'm sure by now you have heard of the Emerald Ash Borer. According to the NYSDEC about 14% of trees in New York State are Ash. There are many other pests that we now need to be on the lookout for.

The Spotted Lanternfly (SLF): SLF is an invasive pest from Asia that primarily feeds on tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) but can also feed on a wide variety of plants such as grapevine, hops, maple, walnut, fruit trees and others. This insect could impact New York's forests as well as the agricultural and tourism industries. SLF were first discovered in Pennsylvania in 2014 and have since been found in



New Jersey, Delaware and Virginia. In New York, a dead insect was found in Delaware County in the fall of 2017. In 2018, insects were reported in Albany, Monroe, Yates and Suffolk counties. Following the reports, DEC and Department of Agriculture and Markets (DAM) staff immediately began extensive surveys throughout the area. At this time, no additional insects have been found. SLF can jump and fly short distances and they spread primarily through human activity. They often hitch rides to new areas when they lay their eggs on vehicles, firewood, outdoor furniture, stone, etc. and are inadvertently transported to new areas. If you visit states with SLF, be sure to check all equipment and gear before leaving. **If you believe you've found spotted lanternfly in New York:** Take pictures of the insect, egg masses and/or infestation signs as described above (include something for scale such as a coin or ruler) and email to [spottedlanternfly@dec.ny.gov](mailto:spottedlanternfly@dec.ny.gov) OR fill out a reporting form. Note the location (address, intersecting roads, landmarks or GPS coordinates.) Let's do what we can do prevent the spread of this insect to our local agricultural and tourism industries. For more information on SLF visit [www.dec.ny.gov/animals/113303.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/113303.html)

Protect your Oaks: Avoid spreading Oak Wilt– Prune in fall and winter. Oak wilt is a serious fungal disease that kills thousands of oaks in the United States each year. There is no known treatment, so limiting exposure to the fungus is key to keeping it from spreading. One way oak wilt spreads is when fungal spores hitch rides on insects. Pruning healthy oaks during the growing season greatly increases the chances of insects infecting them with Oak Wilt. To avoid the threat of Oak wilt, prune Oaks from October to February, when insects and fungi are inactive. For more information visit the DEC Oak Wilt page [www.dec.ny.gov/lands/46919.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/46919.html)

What can you do? Adhere to the NYS firewood regulation which limits firewood movement to no more than 50 miles and obey the rules of the protective Zones which prevent firewood or oak wood from leaving those areas. For more information visit [www.dec.ny.gov](http://www.dec.ny.gov)

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## ORTT ON THE END OF THE 2019 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

*A column from Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,IP,Ref-North Tonawanda)*

The 2019 Legislative Session saw several misguided policies passed into law that will hurt New Yorkers and those who live in upstate rural areas specifically. While the session may be over, the effects of the damaging legislation that was passed over the last six months will have long-lasting negative repercussions and continue to drive our hard-working, middle-income families out of New York.

We have seen the consequences of elections and the damage one-party rule in government can inflict on entire geographic regions across the state. There is a stark divide between those who represent New York City and those who represent the rest of our state. While we may be one state, the priorities of upstate and western New York could not be more different than those south of the Tappan-Zee.

This year, I continued to defend our constitutional freedoms, as well as work for a more affordable New York. I recognize the incredible value of agriculture and the tremendous burdens that taxes and regulations have on families and small businesses. The Democrat majority, on the other hand, sought to kill jobs, expand abortion up to the moment of birth, and reward those who have violated the sanctity of our borders.

I was proud to support additional funding for New Yorkers impacted by Plan 2014 and the historic flooding along Lake Ontario, including many of my constituents. I have been proud to support over \$300 million to help those impacted by the flooding since 2017. It is time for the IJC, and the federal government, to accept their responsibility to Lake Ontario communities and property owners by sinking Plan 2014 and providing financial assistance to those impacted by its disastrous consequences.

Under the new Democrat majority, thousands of jobs primed for New York State were driven away by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and her radical state government counterparts, and they are just getting started. Under the guise of helping farm workers, they passed a bill that will force more New York farms to close up shop and hire fewer workers. Under the pretext of safety, they passed more gun confiscation laws. Under the pretext of fighting climate change, they are adding tens of billions in new taxes and fees for upstate ratepayers. Many of us mourned when they expanded late-term abortion – they responded with cheers and lit up One World Trade Center in celebration. Illegal immigrants will now receive taxpayer-funded tuition and drivers licenses. Taxpayer-funded campaigns were approved by Democrats who believe your hard-earned money should help run their re-election campaigns.

The liberal regressive agenda pursued by Democrats is more concerned with attacking our president and his family than helping New York's middle-class families like yours, who are struggling to make ends meet. When Democrats took complete control of our state government, we heard that they would serve all New Yorkers and not just those living in the five boroughs. Unfortunately, actions speak louder than words, and their actions did not live up to their words.

I will continue to fight for you and your family at a time when many of you no longer recognize the place you have called home for so long. I refuse to surrender and my commitment to you remains unwavering.

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## HISTORIAN'S CORNER

Peter Devereaux 716-795-3575, ext. 7



## Aircraft Warning Service Observation Post

The Aircraft Warning Service Observation Post was a Civil Defense Operation Used during World War II to spot and identify planes flying in this area. A small observation building was built on Barker Central School property, it was heated and had a telephone and maps and pictures of aircraft and where their identification numbers were located so the planes could be identified and reported to the Civic Defense operation in Lockport. It was manned by school faculty and members of the community 24 hours a day.

The post was closed after the war ended. Frank Bradley was in charge of the post during WW II. The post was organized again in 1950 with Arthur Hood as supervisor of operations and Norman Phillips as chief observer.

On May 4, 1952 a training meeting was held and operation "Skywatch" was started July 19, 1952 with a 24 hour watch.

In July of 1954 the Barker post staff re-organized with appointments of Mable Sherwood as Supervisor, Fred McComb chief observer and asst. observers Esther Hyde, Doris Hill, Carl Riley and Burton Dietrick.

March of 1955 starts a new watch with a new "Loop Circuit" phone as the Barker Observation Post was moved to Haight Road east of Quaker Road on the Town of Somerset property.

I wish I had more information about the Barker Observation Post so if anyone has any family records or stories of family members that helped man the station please feel free to share them with me. I would especially like any pictures as I have none. It would be nice to see what the building looked like.

Thank you Maryann Costello and Cecilia (Dutcher) Swarts for getting me started on this project.



**Niagara County Legislature**  
**14th District - John Syracuse**

### Road Construction

The 2019 road repair/maintenance/reconstruction was off to a slow start due to the weather, however the Public Works road crew is making up for lost time. The second round of pothole repair will be underway shortly. The county-owned portion of Coleman Rd. and West Somerset Rd. are priorities. Should you see a pothole needing repair, please contact the county highway department at 439-7360. Road side mowing continues. There are 3 of the 4 major projects under way so far this season:

Carmen Road cross-culvert replacement is moving along. The crew is at Hall Rd. and progressing toward Townline Rd. Upon completion, milling and repaving will commence as quickly as possible. Carmen Road is "sandwiched" between the North Beebe cross-culvert repair and Bunker Hill/Gasport Rd. milling and paving.

The Highway Dept. is making every effort to keep West Somerset Road "driveable." Over the last few years, the County has budgeted over \$3 million toward this reconstruction. Money has been spent on design and engineering. The current balance is just over \$2.7 million. The Highway crew is looking to replace the cross-culverts toward the fall. The County continues to utilize state funding in order to advance this project.



Fantastic Voyage! The **Barker Public Library** offers free or discounted admission passes to participating destinations in Niagara, Orleans and Genesee Counties. Castellani Art Museum, Erie Canal Discovery Center, Holland Land Office Museum, Historical Assoc. of Lewiston and the Medina Railroad Museum just to name a few. It's easy! Come to the Barker Public Library and check out a **Fantastic Voyage Pass** on your library card. Each pass allows for admission of up to 4 people to a single destination. There's a ton of entertainment, local history and educational fun here in Western New York just waiting for you. Now is the perfect time to go!!

**Highway Department**  
Michael M. Flint, Superintendent  
(716) 795-3866

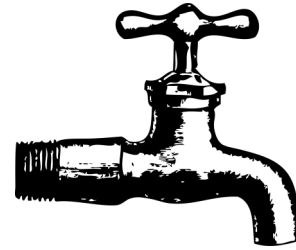


Summer is finally here after a very long, wet spring. Road projects are underway so please watch for workers and equipment. Carmen Road north of Route 18 is closed from July 1 until November, weather permitting. Coleman Road from Carmen Road to Johnson Creek Road should be completed by the end of August if it dries up enough. Please be aware that it is against the law to mow and deposit grass clippings on the roads as it makes for very unsafe conditions for motorcyclists. Serious injury and even death can happen so be aware that you will be ticketed by our local police if you do this. Look twice for motorcyclists and be prepared to share the roads with everyone. Have a safe summer.



## Water/Sewer Department News

**Jonathan D. Dewart, Water/Sewer/Grounds Superintendent**  
716-795-9919



**Cemeteries** - I have received many inquiries regarding cemetery regulations and fees. This information can be found on the Town website [www.somersetny.org](http://www.somersetny.org) under the cemetery link. You may also call my office with any questions you may have.

**Before you Dig** - Remember to call 811 before you do any digging. It is the law that you must call at least two (2) full business days in advance so the underground utilities have a chance to mark out their lines.

**Backflow Preventers** - These are **required** on all new homes and homes that are being sold. It is your responsibility to install a preventer. Your water/sewer account will not be transferred without this requirement being met.

**Electronic Recycling** - This is an ongoing program and items can be dropped off at the Sewer Plant, 8500 Lower Lake Rd, on garbage days from 7am - 3pm.

**Park Pavilions** - If you are a Somerset resident and you would like to use the pavilions in the Somerset Park, you can make a reservation by calling the Town Hall at 795-3575 ext. 2 for the Clerk's office. There is no charge for using them if you are a resident.

**\*\*\*Reminder :** Please remember to use your **new** water/sewer account number on all correspondence. This includes quarterly payments made through your financial institution.



### Barker Lions: We Serve

Since 1947, Barker Lions have been helping our community. As Helen Keller's Knights of the Blind, we help provide glasses for those in our community who cannot afford them. That has expanded to hearing aids and to a Loan Closet with a myriad of hospital beds, wheelchairs, walkers and other medical supplies.

We also sponsor the Barker Boy Scout Troop. Community service is at the heart of what Barker Lions do, so every year we sponsor four scholarships for graduating seniors. You'll find out who earned this designation at graduation.

On Saturday, June 15, the Lions installed the officers for the 2019-2020 year. They are President Tom Ware, First Vice President Tim Leising, Second Vice President Scott Ecker, Third Vice President Dale Corwin, Secretary Matt Costello, Treasurer Jim Bittner, Board members Phil Russell, Chris Czelusta, Kurt Lutz and Scott Reiner, Lion Tamer Art Harris and Tail Twister Abe Sullivan. In addition, community members were honored with the Robert Uplinger Award. This is the highest award given to members of the community who have performed exemplary service. Past recipients include the Barker Fire Hall, Barker Food Pantry, Sally Harrison, and Cheryl Chunco. This year the Barker Music Boosters and Carol Anders were recognized.

Our monthly dinner meetings take place on the first Wednesday of each month September – June at the Lions building. We invite speakers to make various presentations and organize our projects. If you would like to be involved or need assistance, contact the club at [Roar@BarkerLions.org](mailto:Roar@BarkerLions.org) or call 778-7001.

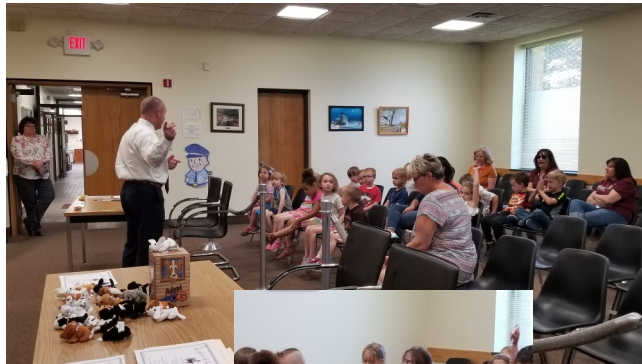


Cont'd. from page 5 **Niagara County Legislature 14th District - John Syracuse**

### Lake Ontario Water Levels

The Governor has introduced Lake Ontario Resiliency and Economic Development Initiative (Lake Ontario REDI) program. The Governor states that the goal of REDI is "to bring together key stakeholders to develop a plan to protect and adapt infrastructure along the Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River Waterfronts while strengthening the region's local economies. By working together, localities along Lake Ontario will develop a comprehensive approach to investments that will make us safer and more resilient, competitive and entrepreneurial, while protecting and growing our industries." Gov. Cuomo goes on to say, "REDI aims to address immediate and long-term resiliency needs of our lakefront communities, as well as a longer-term economic development strategy. By making our shorelines more resilient and protecting waterfront districts, we will also strengthen our critical industries, including tourism. Input from our communities will be vital to our success."

If you or someone you know has not communicated waterfront damage to your supervisor or town board, please do so immediately. If you wish to contact me, you can email me at [newfanechiro@verizon.net](mailto:newfanechiro@verizon.net) or call my home, 778-5064. The county, under the leadership of Jonathan Schultz, our EMS Coordinator, continues to track property/infrastructure damage. You can also call or email me in order to provide any input you may feel important to the Governor's initiative.



*Pre-K Day  
2019  
June 12, 2019*





### **A Message From the Town Court:**

I would like to take a moment to introduce the Court staff, I am Hon. Pamela S Rider, the recently elected Town of Somerset Justice and the Court Clerk is Janice Rider.

I wish to extend a sincere thank you for the opportunity you have given me to pursue this path and I will do my utmost to keep your faith in your election decision.

We have been working very long hours and very diligently to learn all of the aspects of running this office and feel like we are making great progress and getting to some semblance of a comfort level in our new roles.

The biggest change that has taken place after so many years are the hours that the office is open. The Court is no longer open during the day but is available for appointment by calling 716-795-3575, Option 1, and leaving a voice message. This voice message is then immediately transcribed by the new phone system into an email that is sent directly to the Court Clerk who makes it a practice to answer calls the day they are received.

The Town Clerk does not have information or forms available to her, to assist you in your legal matters so making the call to the Court will facilitate a quick response to your inquiry. Should you wish to file a Small Claim, there are copies of "A Guide to Small Claims", with application, and if looking to pay a fine there are blue Court fine payment forms, in the magazine rack at the entry nearest the Courtroom which are available during any regular Town Hall hours.

We have instituted a pay online option, as well as the current pay by mail with Money Order or Credit Card information, that will make it even easier to pay any fines and/or surcharges due to the Court and lessen the burden of having to appear in Court solely to pay a fine.

In the event that you are looking to start a civil matter with the Court, there is a website, [WWW.NYCOURTHELP.GOV](http://WWW.NYCOURTHELP.GOV), that offers access to the necessary forms and information on filing them with the court.

Thank you again for this opportunity and I look forward to serving as your Town Justice as long as you continue to have trust in my performance.

Sincerely,

Hon. Pamela S Rider

Town of Somerset Justice



### **COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

- ♦ July 13th 10AM - 4PM The Barker Garden Club garden tours, plant and bake sale to benefit the Barker Public Library. The tour starts in the Barker Gazebo on Main Street.
- ♦ July 15, 2019 6PM Barker Public Library Trustees Meeting
- ♦ August 3rd 9AM - 5PM Annual Town-Wide Garage Sale (table rental and space is available at Faith United Methodist Church)
- ♦ August 5th Food Express at Faith United Methodist Church, sign in at 12:45PM
- ♦ August 11th 1PM Historical Society Annual Picnic
- ♦ August 19th Ice Cream Social, Silent Auction and Barker Community Band Concert at Faith United Methodist Church. Festivities begin at 6PM.
- ♦ September 10th 1PM - 6PM Red Cross Blood Drive at Faith United Methodist Church
- ♦ September 15th 10AM - 4PM Historical Society Old Fashioned Farm Festival
- ♦ October 7th 9AM - 3PM Windsong Mobile Mammography at Faith United Methodist Church
- ♦ October 7th 7PM Historical Society Guest Speaker Greg Gerstung will be discussing Olcott Trollies at the Somerset Town Hall
- ♦ October 13th Barker Fire Department Fall Raffle (watch for details)

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## **RURAL ROUTE**

**Town Wide Garage Sale - August 3 - 9am to 5pm**

If you are in need of a place to cool down on a hot summer day when there is a heat index warning, Faith United Methodist Church will open their doors to you. There you will find cool air, cool drinks, and bathrooms. Please contact Dexter at 716-795-9079 for more information.

National Grid wants you to know that they will pick up your fridge or freezer at no cost, recycle it responsibly, and send you \$50. Give them a call at 1-888-740-8122 to schedule your no-cost pickup! This is a great way to get rid of that old fridge in your garage, or the fridge in your home that you are replacing with a newer model.