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FIRE! FIRE! *But where's the hydrant?* From the Desk of Your Emergency Management Coordinator

On Friday January 28, the Manhasset Lakeville Fire Department responded to a residential fire on Plandome Road in our village. I happened to be there to witness firemen search for and then have to dig out the hydrant closest to that home.

You have seen and read countless times of how quickly a residential fire spreads, especially in the dry air winter, and we have asked homeowners to clear the hydrants in front of and near their homes.

I have taken a quick survey of VPH's forty hydrants. I can count those

shoveled out on one hand, and many are completely buried under snow. I have also contacted the Manhasset-Lakeville Water District requesting that locator flags be affixed to the hydrants in Plandome Heights. Although this project will aid firefighters in bad weather and at night, there's no doubt that a clean hydrant is the best course of action in a fire emergency.

Please for the sake of your family, or your neighbor's, please shovel a clearing around any hydrants in your vicinity.

-- Bart Giusto ■

What Do You Think About ... new stop signs at the intersection of Bournedale Road South and Chester Drive, and at the bottom of the hill at Bournedale Road North and Brookwold Drive?

We need your help in responding to this article which first appeared in the last edition. Please call or email the office with your opinion.

Drivers are using our quiet residential streets village streets as a cut-through to avoid Plandome Road, often driving beyond legal speeds when they do. This combination holds potential hazards and has led some members of

the Board to consider placement of stop signs on Bournedale Road South at the intersection of Chester Drive, and at the bottom of the hill at Bournedale Road North and Brookwold Drive.

Do you believe such stop signs are warranted? Let us know and we will schedule a public hearing to discuss.

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Shade Tree Program

Now is the time to start thinking about planting a tree on your property at the Right of Way.

Through the VPH 'Shade Tree Program' the Village offers a selection of trees and pays half the cost.

Letters are being sent to targeted homeowners with details of the program.

In the meantime, please contact the VPH Office if you are interested.

Kids' Corner

My name is Philip Stiger. I am 14 years old and in 8th grade. This is the first time I am writing an article for the Plandome Heights Newsletter!

Manhasset, New York, is a great place to live. It has attractive neighborhoods with rows of pretty homes on tree-lined streets. In addition, it has a great school district! Shopping in the center of town is fun with different stores, a movie theatre and places to eat. It is also on one of the best Long Island branch lines where your ride into Penn Station is under an hour. Sports are big in Manhasset. Lacrosse is probably the number one sport here. But, for me, my favorite sport has been with the Manhasset PAL Baseball League.

I joined the Manhasset PAL Baseball League when I was in the third grade. I must admit that I had little baseball practice up until then. Most of the boys were better than me, but, what was special about my teammates, they all supported me in my effort to do well. All the coaches in the Manhasset PAL Baseball League are caring, patient and generous with their time. They encourage all the players to support each other and learn good sportsmanship. The coaches also have great patience in teaching us the best way to hit, field and steal bases.

One of the best lessons I learned was when I was at home plate waiting for the right pitch to hit. When you stand there, you can be impatient wanting to hit a home run for your team. You can't help the feeling of trying to swing at all the balls being thrown. With much patience, the coaches teach you to wait for the right ball to come across the plate. Swinging the bat is only part of

getting a hit. You have to remember to stand near the plate, and keep your eye on the ball.

Then, once you get on base, the coaches tell you when to run or stay where you are. If someone hits a pop fly while you are on first, you shouldn't run to second, or you will be tagged out. (Even though you feel you can outrun the throw).

I must admit that my first year in the league, I didn't get many hits. It was still all new to me. But in the following years, my hitting got better. I was glad to get a hit mostly every game with a single or double. But even though I enjoyed playing on the field, I also enjoyed sitting with my teammates when we were up at bat. It was also fun to hear our parents support our team on the sidelines.

I don't play in the league anymore because of school work and the violin. I play in my school's orchestra. However, I will always remember what a great time I had in the Manhasset PAL Baseball League. I really think it is one of Manhasset's great traditions.

Editor's Note: We received Philip's essay for publication in the next Plandome Heights Newsletter just before he and his family moved from 166 Bournedale Road North. We are sorry to see the Stiger family leave and wish them well in their new home!

Contributions to Kids' Corner are welcome. All VPH residents aged 18 years or younger are entitled to participate. Please submit articles of no more than 400 words on any topic, so long as the child's parent(s) approve. Thank you! ■

***Village
Elections Are
Scheduled for
March 15th***

***On the ballot
for this year's
elections are
three positions
for Village
Trustee.***

***Voting will be
at the
Plandome
Village Hall on
65 South Drive,
Plandome,
during the
hours of 12
noon to 9PM.***

***Please vote and
show your
support for
your Village
Government.***

Changing of the Guard at the 6th Precinct

After many years of service, Commanding Officer Inspector Steve Williams has retired and Deputy Inspector Thomas DePaola has been newly appointed as Commanding Officer of the 6th Precinct. Mayor Diana Merenda, Clerk/Treasurer Marianne Lobaccaro and Deputy Clerk/Court Clerk Ann Demeri met with the new Commanding Officer as well as Administrative Officer Sergeant Robert Johnston. AO Sgt Johnston served in the same capacity under CO Inspector Williams, and therefore serves as good continuity. The meeting was productive, with the following assurances given:

- Officers will issue warnings and/or summons to enforce VPH Code where appropriate, when VPH's own code enforcement officers are unavailable
- At least one Officer is to be present during the Village Court sessions for security

- There will continued "police presence" especially during holiday weekends
- Police staff will work with the Village office to facilitate good communication

In turn, CO Deputy Inspector DePaola asked that the Village encourage residents to report any mischievous and illegal activity (anonymously, if preferred). He also asked that we use our notification system to alert residents to recent suspicious activity, especially after vandalism such as uprooted street signs

Finally, CO Deputy Inspector DePaola agreed to send a representative from the 6th to address the Board of Trustees and residents regarding security-related issues at our annual Village Organizational meeting. This year it is scheduled for Wednesday, April 6, 2011 at 7:30 at the Manhasset Library. ■

Thank You, Cow Bay



The Village of Plandome Heights new snow removal contract with Cow Bay is in its second year and despite a horrific winter to date, this vendor continues to do a good job for our residents. In the latest major storm

we had only one complaint and even with that, Cow Bay was aware of the situation and had already made arrangements to rectify before our Clerk contacted them.

Many thanks for a job well done ... even as we pray for an end to this season's snow! ■

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Norman Taylor
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Marianne C. Lobaccaro
Village Clerk / Treasurer

Ann Demeri
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Court Clerk

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Village Justice

Edward P. Butt, AIA
Village Building Inspector
Stormwater Mgmt Officer

Richard Hirt
Architectural Review
Board, Chair

Marion Endrizzi
Planning Board, Chair

Trey Harragan
Technology Advisory
Board, Chair

Eugene O'Connor
Zoning and Appeals
Board, Chair



A Memo from Your Village Clerk

It has been a busy 8 months as your new Village Clerk. Every day is different and I face all of the challenges with the desire to make the Village office more user friendly and efficient for you – the constituents that come into our office. With that in mind, I will be writing a column in the Village Newsletter to keep you informed of VPH procedures and events. Anytime you are considering performing work on your property, please contact the Village office for the requirements of the Village Building Code and related Building Permits. All of the necessary forms are available on the Village website, <http://www.plandomeheights-ny.gov/>, under the FAQ's section. The Building Inspector is in the office

on Wednesday and Friday mornings. Please call in advance to schedule an appointment. As we are thoroughly immersed in the winter snow season, we remind all residents to refrain from parking any cars on the street during a snow event. Additionally we ask that when clearing snow from your property, please avoid directing the snow back onto the street. Please remember to vote in the Village election, to be held on Tuesday, March 15, 2011 at Plandome Village Hall, 65 South Drive, Plandome, between the hours of 12 PM – 9 PM. As always, please feel free to call the Village or visit the office with any questions, comments or just to say hello.

-- Marianne Lobaccaro ■

Voting Machine Controversy

When New York State Legislature mandated the change to optical scanners for all elections, they exempted the school districts for a limited period of time. However they did not exempt other municipal districts. This is a problem for us and our sister villages!

The Executive Committee of the Nassau Village Officials Association has been working with Senator Jack Martins and Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel to sponsor a bill that will similarly exempt villages from mandatory use of the optical scanners.

We ask that you take a moment and go to the Plandome Heights website, link to the websites of Martins and Schimel and please voice your support for the respective legislation they are putting forth on our behalf. The NYS Legislative bill numbers for the Election Machine exemption are (Senate) S2339 and (Assembly) A83093.

The optical scanners are not being leased to villages by Nassau County Board of Elections due to the county's inability to certify data. To rent these machines from another 'vendor' would cost \$1500 per machine which is much more than our budget for the election. ■

All Village Newsletters are posted under “News and Events” link on the website, at www.plandomeheights-ny.gov

Newsletters are published seasonally. Usually a postcard is mailed announcing their availability.

VPH Budget Process Underway – Impact of NIFA Takeover of Nassau County Unknown

The Board of Trustees has begun its annual budget preparation process. The first working session was held on January 24th with the next session to take place soon, at a time and place to be announced. As usual, the goal of the Board is to ensure the safety and quality of life for our residents while simultaneously ensuring the lowest taxes necessary to support those objectives.

Because of the intense scrutiny we have applied to the budget over the last few years, there is relatively little residual maneuverability as a result. In addition, the numerous vendors who worked with us during the financial crisis by giving a reduction or keeping costs fixed must necessarily bring prices back to where they should be. We have been and continue to be grateful to those vendors as they helped us over a hurdle.

Due to the fact that Nassau County has failed to balance its budget, the Nassau Interim Finance Authority (NIFA) has instituted control over our county's finances. Prior to the NIFA takeover, the county was downgraded by two ticks by ratings agencies making the county's borrowings more expensive. Nonetheless, the Mayor along with other members of the Nassau County Village Officials Association Executive Committee met with County Executive Mangano in an effort to confirm that our portion of sales tax revenues would continue to be given to villages, as had been the case under then County Executive Suozzi. Mr. Mangano assured all present that the county WOULD honor its commitment to remit the relevant sales tax revenues to each village municipality. Subsequent to that meeting, however, the newly imposed NIFA takeover of the county puts this promise at risk. Regardless of whether or not the NIFA takeover stands up successfully to an expected court challenge, it is the Mayor's opinion that the VPH budget should adopt a conservative approach and omit its reliance on those revenues.

Independent from the NIFA/NC issues, there is considerable budget discussion in Albany. The buzz is that there will be forthcoming legislation to limit property tax increases to 2% in the future. Although it is unlikely to affect our budget in the upcoming fiscal year, such legislation could have a devastating effect on budgets such as ours, when such items as excessive snowfall and need for snow removal or unexpected litigation costs could obliterate that 2% cap in one season. We will keep you posted on developments from Albany.

Once the draft budget has been finalized by the Board of Trustees, it will be presented for a public hearing at the Organizational Meeting to be held in April.

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