



Town of Sweden Snapshots

Volume 15, Issue 1

Spring 2016

A message from the supervisor's office

Spring is officially here and with it, you'll notice lots of early construction around town. Actually, the relatively mild winter allowed some projects to continue through and others to start earlier than normal.

Most of you probably noticed that the old Friendly's Restaurant on Fourth Section Road was demolished at the end of February. The developer hopes to attract a new business to the site. Dunkin Donuts completed its major renovation of the old Burger King building and opened in mid-March. Arby's closed its doors—no news at this time about what the property owners' intentions are.

Over on Redman Road, Senior's Choice got started with its 90 unit senior living complex. Adjacent to the Town Park, the complex will give our seniors, and neighboring

seniors, another choice for living accommodations in their golden years.

McAllister's Deli should begin construction any time on its Transit Way site (behind Buckman's Car Wash). The Econolodge has submitted plans to the Planning Board for an updated façade.

The Town itself has a few projects in the works—the buildings and grounds department is building a new cupola on the Town Hall; The Center will have a major interior face lift including the removal of wallpaper and lots of new paint; and we've applied for a grant for an additional handicapped entrance and parking on the east side of the Community Center.



Supervisor Carges congratulates Dunkin' Donuts manager Jennifer Daley on the opening of their new store.

We're also preparing for the construction of the Lodge at the Town Park beginning this fall.

Rob Carges, Supervisor

Free Rabies Clinic, Saturday May 21

The Town of Sweden's annual rabies clinic for dogs and cats will be held on Saturday, May 21 from 9 am to 12 noon at the Highway Garage, 40 White Road.

For everyone's safety, children should be kept away from other pets. Dogs must be leashed and strictly controlled. Cats should be in sturdy carriers.

In order to receive a vaccination, pets must be at least three months of age. Proof of a previous vaccination is required in order for the pet

to receive a three-year rabies shot; otherwise a one-year initial rabies shot will be given at the clinic.

As the Sweden Town Board believes that the rabies clinic is an important safety program, all pet owners are welcome to take advantage of the clinic regardless of residency.

For more information about either clinic, please call Dog Control Officer Kathy Beaumont at 637-4260.

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Sweden has a new building inspector on the staff



Steve Lauth

Sweden's new building inspector brings a long career in construction to the job with him. Steve Lauth replaces Walt Windus as Sweden's part-time building inspector/code enforcement officer.

A Hamlin resident, Lauth grew up in Hilton and entered the Air Force right out of high school. He specialized in electronics and after four years of active duty service he came home and has spent 32 years in construction.

A few years ago, Lauth decided to take the NYS Building Inspector Classes and sat for the Civil Service exam for Code Enforcement Officer. Serving on Hamlin's Planning Board has also broadened his municipal knowledge.

"It's an adjustment being on the other side of the desk," Steve said, "from being the contractor applying for a building permit to being the guy who approves the permit." He said the most helpful advice he can give homeowners and builders is to stop by the office or call and ask questions prior to submitting an application—"it helps speed up the process and makes it easier for everyone."

Steve and his wife Robin (who works at the Ginther School) have three adult children and four grandkids. Some might recognize him as a guitar player/singer in the local band, Swamp Moose. His other hobby is reclaiming wood and creating custom furniture, shelves and decorative pieces.

Steve has enjoyed his first month on the job—"there's a great group of people here in the department and the town hall." To reach Steve or the other building department staff members, call 637-8684.

Mild snow season... so far

We don't want to be overly optimistic, but the 2015-2016 snow removal season has been mild compared to the past two seasons. Although the Town of Sweden operates on a calendar year budget, we also look at snow removal on a seasonal basis. The Town of Sweden is responsible for plowing and salting 161.45 lane miles of roads and streets. Of those lane miles, 57.28 are Sweden town road and streets, 63.66 are Monroe County roads and 40.51 are New York State roads.

What follows is snow removal seasonal costs—wages salt and related supplies. It does not include employee benefits attached to wages, fuel or equipment repair.

Snow Removal September 2011-April 2012

Wages	\$173,161
Contractual	<u>\$ 99,373</u>
Total	\$272,534

Snow Removal September 2012-April 2013

Wages	\$202,370
Contractual	<u>\$123,647</u>
Total	\$326,017

Snow Removal September 2013-April 2014

Wages	\$210,959
Contractual	<u>\$177,958</u>
Total	\$388,917

Snow Removal September 2014-April 2015

Wages	\$228,225
Contractual	<u>\$176,164</u>
Total	\$404,389

Snow Removal September 2015- February 2016***

Wages	\$113,874
Contractual	<u>\$ 64,040</u>
Total to date	\$177,914

While March and April expenses have not been tabulated, it appears that the Town's snow removal cost will be less than the prior two years.

Court office realigns; welcomes experienced clerk

As 2016 began and the Town of Sweden continued its transition to a smaller court following the creation of the new village court, long-time Sweden court clerk Terri Gay left to accept a position with Irondequoit town court. The resignation gave Sweden the opportunity to reduce the court clerk position to part-time. Sweden had already eliminated one full-time court clerk position and a part-time justice position.

It was important to the court that Gay's replacement be experienced. Stacy Burke was just that person. She's been a part-time court clerk in Clarkson for three years and will continue in that position—splitting her time between Clarkson and Sweden.

Burke (maiden name Coleman), is a fourth generation Sweden resident. A Brockport High School graduate, Stacy is a life-long learner holding a bachelors of science in psychology and a masters in multicultural education, both from the College at Brockport.

Prior to beginning her career in the justice court system, Stacy worked for CStep McNair as an academic advisor to first generation non-traditional students at SUNY Brockport. As the first person in her family to attend college, she was a strong advocate for her students.

Stacy and her husband Gary have three adult daughters: Bridget, Lindsay and Katie; and two granddaughters, Ella and Ava. Her favorite "hobby" is spending time with her family. Stacy enjoys working with Chief Court Clerk Tracy Caporale and Justices Kevin Johnson



Stacy Burke

and Robert Connors. "It's a great office—very professionally managed. It can be busy, but it's very well organized."

Route 531 terminus project update

NYS DOT received federal approval to reconstruct the terminus of Route 531 at Washington Street with a conventional at-grade intersection. The project can move forward with the preparation of construction plans and acquisition of additional property along Route 31. Detailed engineering plans will be complete late this summer and construction bids are scheduled to be received in the fall of 2016. Construction will take place over two years and should begin in March 2017 with substantial completion by fall of 2018.

The way Route 531 currently terminates at Washington Street will be transformed into a conventional four-legged, at-grade, signalized intersection. The main difference from today is that the Route 531 west-bound traffic heading towards Sweden that currently turns right onto Washington Street then left onto Route 31, will now go straight onto Route 31. The new transition from Route 531 to Route 31 will be built next to the existing east-bound on-ramp from Route 31.

Route 31 will also be widened to add a center median to separate the eastbound and westbound travel lanes from

where the "new" Route 531 lanes tie into Route 31 all the way to just east of Gallup Road. An orphaned piece of Route 31 will be transformed to a local road with a cul-de-sac approximately 2,000 feet west of Washington Street, which will continue to provide access to the residential homes located on the north side of Route 31 in that section. A continuous two-way left turn lane between Gallup Road and Salmon Creek Road will be provided to improve safety at the intersections and to provide easier driveway access.

Detailed staging plans are being prepared to allow for traffic to be maintained while the construction is occurring. It is anticipated that some lane closure and detours will be required during certain stages of the construction. The public will be notified in advance of any lane closures and detours. The contract will contain provisions to minimize the time that detours are in place. Learn more about the plans online at www.dot.ny.gov/531

Provided by

Lori G. Maher, NYS DOT

Sweden Dog Park is a huge success—Monroe County continues registrations

The Monroe County Parks Department will continue registering dogs at the Sweden/Clarkson Community Center, 4927 Lake Road on the third Wednesday of each month from 5–7 pm. Upcoming dates include: Wednesday, April 20; Wednesday, May 18 and Wednesday, June 15. Registration is also taken Monday—Friday from 8:30 am—4:30 pm at the Monroe County Parks Office, 171 Reservoir Avenue, Rochester. Registration events are also held at other Monroe County dog parks and at pet supply stores. See the Monroe County website for a complete schedule: www.monroecounty.gov/parks. You may also call 753-7275.

Where is the Sweden Dog Park?

It's located at the Sweden Town Park, Redman Road.

Who can use the dog park?

Registered members of the Monroe County Dog Park system will receive a tag that is valid at all four dog parks in Monroe County.

How much does it cost to register my dog?

The annual fee for access to all Monroe County Dog Parks is \$24 per dog (\$25 if paying by credit/debit card).

What do I need to bring with me for registration?

A current copy of your dog license with current address and a copy of current rabies certificate (documentation, not tags). Please do not bring your dog with you when registering at the Sweden/Clarkson Community Center.

How long does registration take?

Only 5-10 minutes.

How long is the registration valid?

The permit is annual. Any registration processed after October 1 is valid through the following year. Any registration before October 1 is valid only until the end of the current year. Monroe County will mail renewal packets to currently registered dog park members annually in late November.

Visit the County website for the full set of Dog Park rules, then come out and enjoy the park!

Household waste collection date set

The Monroe County Department of Environmental Services and the Town of Sweden, Hamlin, Clarkson, Parma, Ogden and Village of Spencerport, Hilton and Brockport will hold an **appointment-only** Household Hazardous Waste Collection at the Village of Hilton DPW on **Saturday, June 18 from 7:45 am to 12 noon**.

Up to 30 gallons of the following materials will be accepted per appointment at no charge:

- oil-based and latex paint (1/3 can or less of latex paint can be disposed of in the trash and will NOT be accepted. Discard the paint can lid, add kitty litter, mix, let dry and place in trash).
- wood stain and preservatives
- automotive fluids (antifreeze, brake, power steering and transmission)
- pesticides and fertilizers
- flammable products
- household cleaners
- driveway sealer
- pool and photo chemicals
- rechargeable Ni-Cad and button batteries
- mercury thermometers/thermostats
- syringes/sharps (safely packaged)

Waste from businesses will not be accepted. Appointments for this collection can be made until June 17. For residents of Sweden and Brockport, call the Sweden Town Hall at 637-2144 or go on-line to www.monroecounty.gov/hhw



Summer fun for everyone through Sweden/Clarkson Recreation!

Our summer is short so we have to make the best of it by getting an early start on our seasonal recreation activities. In case you missed it, the Recreation Department is still taking registrations for youth baseball and softball as well as adult softball leagues. There are also tot t-ball, pre-season baseball and softball clinics and private pitching instruction in April.

There are some great trips planned through The Center: Niagara Falls in April, a Rochester City Tour in May, and a Buffalo & Niagara Falls tour in June.

The Recreation Department is offering a co-ed sand volleyball league to be played at the Sweden Town Park. There's a gardening class at the Community Center in May and a town-wide garage sale (think spring cleaning!) at the Community Center Saturday, April 16.

Our big summer event is our Independence Day celebration on July 3. Not only do we offer spectacular fireworks, there is live entertainment, food, games and a 5K race early in the day.

If you are thinking about toning up a little bit before shorts season is officially upon us—come try any of our adult fitness classes. We offer Pilates, Yoga, Body Sculpting, Adult Swim, Zumba, Belly Dance, Tai Chi, Tae Kwon Do, Group Ex Training, Personal Training, Silver Sneakers, Jazzercise and a fitness center with new fitness equipment!

For information on any of these programs, call 431-0090, visit www.swedenclarksonrec.com or stop by the Community Center at 4927 Lake Road or The Center at 133 State Street, Brockport.

2015 Building Department Statistics

The Town of Sweden's building department issues permits for residential and commercial construction projects, pool, sign and accessory building installation. The department also issues plumbing, fill, operating, conveyance and burn permits. The following is a summary of the permits granted in 2015 compared to 2014:

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
Total permits	135	141
Building permits	106	88
New 1,2,3 or 4 family homes	21*	9
New commercial/industrial	2	2
Residential additions	16	17
Commercial additions	6	9
Pools	5	12
Sheds, decks, etc.	56	39
Permanent sign permits	5	14
Temporary sign permits	13	10
Burn permits	5	5
Fill permits	3	3
Operating permits	3	7

*A four-unit home was built in 2015; each unit received a separate building permit.

Permit applications can be found on the Town's website at www.townofsweden.org. Choose Permits and Licenses from the tabs on the left side of the home page. Permit applications are also available at the Building Department at the Sweden Town Hall, 18 State Street. For more information about permits, contact Planning, Building, Zoning Department Coordinator Phyllis Brudz at 637-8684.

2016 Spring pick up is April 25—29

The annual Sweden spring pick-up (for residents outside of the Village of Brockport) will be held April 25—29. Debris should be placed at the curb by 7 am Monday, April 25, but not prior to Friday, April 22.

Materials must be separated into homogeneous piles such as metal, lumber, brush, etc. Refrigerators and other appliances that contain freon must have the freon removed by a certified technician. Otherwise, a fee of \$17.50 must be paid at the Sweden Town Hall, 18 State Street prior to pick-up.

There is a limit of one dump truck load per house or property owner. Tires are limited to four per household. Refrigerator/freezer doors must be removed. No off-site material, refuse from contractors or commercial sites is eligible for pick-up. Loose drywall or building materials should be bagged. Brush and wood should be cut to a maximum of eight-foot lengths and piled parallel to the road.

The following items are not eligible for this pick-up: paint cans, fuel tanks, oil, drums, wire fence, garbage, batteries, cardboard, chemical/liquid wastes, tree stumps (over 200 pounds), industrial/commercial wastes, or bagged leaves. Arrangements for these items should be made with commercial haulers.

No items should be placed against light poles, trees, sign posts or the bottom of ditches. The Town of Sweden reserves the right to reject debris that is not in accordance with these regulations. Only one pass will be made per road. The highway crew will not return for a second pass. For additional information, please call the highway department at 637-3369.



Did you notice the cupola on top of the Sweden Town Hall has been removed? A few pieces had blown off during the course of the winter and the Buildings and Grounds Department was waiting for decent weather to inspect it closely. March 7 was a balmy day and the inspection revealed too much rot and damage to make the cupola salvageable. **Roger Evans** and **Todd Dobson** (pictured) dismantled and removed it. The handy duo will build a new cupola to replace the original. The cupola, along with the pillars out front, were features the Town added to the old grocery store building in 1969 to convert it into the Sweden Town Hall. Prior to its State Street location, the Town Hall had been located at 19 King Street in a red brick building. The 1960s saw a need for a larger municipal building (the Village offices were located here also) with more parking.

2016 annual assessment update—important dates coming up

As part of our annual reassessment plan, an analysis of the Town's assessments was made this year. The results of this analysis become part of the plan and are reviewed by the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services (ORPTS). Assessment changes were made as part of our revised five-year annual reassessment program.

Assessment is the tool with which the tax levy is divided among properties. It is my job to make sure that properties are assessed accurately, as determined by state law, so that property owners are paying their fair share of the tax levy established by governing bodies—the county, school, town, village and fire district.

Residents should receive an impact notice by April 1, 2016 if an assessment is changing. For those who do not receive a notice, the property's assessment probably did not change. However, I would ask all property owners to make sure by calling the assessor's office at 637-8683 before May 1 or stop by the Town Hall and the information will be available.

Property owners satisfied with the tentative assessment do not need to schedule a review. Those with any questions or who disagree with the amount may arrange for an informal conference at the assessor's office to review the information on which the value is based. If a mistake was made or the information was not accurate, the assessment can be amended.

To schedule an appoint, please call the assessor's office at 637-8683 Monday through Friday between 9 am and 5 pm. Have the parcel ID numbers of all the properties to be reviewed. Only the property owner or someone with a letter of authorization from the property owner may participate in a review.

The value is presumed correct unless the owner provides information showing the value of the property is incorrect. Some examples of the information that would be helpful are:

- A recent listing of the property showing the asking price, time on market and offers made
- A recent sale of the property (copy of the contract, closing statement and appraisal)
- Recent sale prices of similar properties in the neighborhood
- Photographs showing problems with the property or items the owner wishes to have considered
- Any additional information that would help establish the property's current value

If an owner meets informally with the assessor and still feels over-assessed, the owner has the right to file grievance with the Board of Assessment Review. The Board meets on the fourth Tuesday each May. This year the date is May 24. Applications for grievance will be available in the assessor's office after May 1. For a full explanation of the assessment complaint process, please visit the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Service web site at www.tax.ny.us

In addition, the assessor's office is in the process of updating the photos that appear on the RPS website. The photos will be taken from the roadway and the vehicles will have a sign in the window identifying them as being from the assessor's office.

Tony Eaffaldano, IAO

Assessor

Rain gardens and rain barrels: Make your home the solution to stormwater pollution

Stormwater runoff is one of the biggest causes of water pollution in the United States. The Town of Sweden is a member of the Stormwater Coalition of Monroe County and is working with other municipalities to reduce stormwater pollution. Residents and homeowners can be an important part of these efforts to protect water quality. Green infrastructure is an approach to managing stormwater that protects water quality by soaking water into the ground rather than creating runoff. Rain gardens and rain barrels are popular examples of green infrastructure that can easily be installed by homeowners.



A rain garden is a planted shallow depression that is designed to enhance the ability of the site to infiltrate runoff. Runoff from a roof or driveway is directed to the rain garden where it soaks into the ground. Rain gardens are not ponds and are generally dry unless there has been a recent rain.

Proper design and placement of a rain garden is important to ensure that the runoff can easily be conveyed to the garden and will be quickly absorbed. A rain garden should be placed at least 10 feet from the house to avoid any impacts to the foundation. Compost is generally added to the garden to increase the rate at which water soaks into the ground. Native plants that are attractive and adapted to highly variable amounts of water are a popular choice for rain gardens. Once established a rain garden is very easy to maintain, requiring only occasional weeding comparable to other landscape features.

Rain barrels are designed to collect and store the runoff from your roof for later use in your garden or landscaping. Rain barrels and cisterns have been around for centuries and are becoming increasingly popular as an easy, low-cost method of reducing stormwater runoff and protecting water quality. A properly designed rain barrel

includes an adequately sized overflow directed to an area which can safely receive the runoff.

For a rain garden or rain barrel to work you must first disconnect the downspout from your roof and then direct the water to it. In areas with rapidly draining soils (ie sandy soils), homeowners can disconnect their downspout and simply direct it to a lawn area if they are not interested in constructing a rain garden. Before you disconnect any downspouts, it is important to give consideration to: local building codes and the types of soil present to insure that water will infiltrate fast enough to not create standing water. It is also important to make sure that there are no impacts to adjacent properties.

The Rochester Museum & Science Center recently received a state grant to create the Regional Showcase of Green Infrastructure. The Showcase will consist of a variety of green infrastructure practices installed around its campus including rain gardens, rain barrels, a porous parking lot and a new outdoor education pavilion with a green roof. There will also be new indoor and outdoor exhibits for visitors to come and learn more about green infrastructure. The Showcase is scheduled to open this summer.

In addition, the Stormwater Coalition of Monroe County sponsors free rain garden classes and low-cost rain barrel workshops for people that would like to learn how to install a rain garden or rain barrel at home. For a current schedule of these events check out Larry the H2O Hero on Facebook. For more information visit us online at www.H2OHero.org or call 753-5441.



Caroline M. Kilmer

Monroe County Stormwater Coalition

STAY TUNED: The Stormwater Coalition is working with the Sweden/Clarkson Recreation Department to host a rain garden and/or rain barrel workshop!

Appreciating squirrels

George Elliot wrote, “If we had a keen vision and feeling of all ordinary human life, it would be like hearing the grass grow and the squirrel’s heartbeat and we should die of that roar which lies on the other side of silence.” Expanding this quote to include all life and enhancing its intention could bring a whole new realm of awareness to the world of nature.

Imagine if one could hear the squirrel’s heartbeat as it scurries about. Would this instill compassion and appreciation in the human heart for this cute and industrious little rodent? Would one truly understand as the Dalai Lama stated, “Life is as dear to a mute creature as it is to man. Just as one wants happiness and fears pain, just as one wants to live and not die, so do other creatures.”

The word squirrel comes from the Greek words *skia* meaning “shadow” and *oura* meaning “tail” or “tail that casts a shadow.” Commonly, the word squirrel is the name for rodents of the family Sciuridae and usually refers to tree squirrels. This family, called sciurids, includes ground squirrels (chipmunks, woodchucks, marmots and prairie dogs) and flying squirrels. Squirrels are found on all continents except Australia and Antarctica.

Common grey squirrels are arboreal which means they spend most of their time in trees. They are mammals with adults typically weighing between 1 to 1.5 pounds. A female gives birth to two to eight offspring once or twice per year. Babies are called kits or kittens and are born toothless, naked and blind. They depend on their mothers for up to three months. When the kits leave their nest, they stay within two miles of home.

They have thick fur which can vary in color from brown, gray, red, black or white. Their tail is long and bushy and is useful for a multitude of purposes. It is used for balance, to slow and control falls and jumps, to distract predators, to signal other squirrels and to provide warmth and shade. Squirrels are intelligent, have excellent vision, versatile sturdy claws, large gnawing incisors that grow throughout life and grinding cheek teeth.

Most squirrels die in the first year of life. Adult squirrels can have a lifespan of 5 to 10 years in the wild and up to 20 years in captivity. Squirrels cannot digest cellulose so their foods must be rich in protein, carbohydrates and fats. Their diets consist of a variety of seeds, nuts, fruits, fungi, conifer cones and green vegetation. They are also known to eat insects, eggs and even small animals or carrion when faced with hunger. Early spring is the hardest time of the year for squirrels because the buried nuts



Members of the Environmental Conservation Board are (front, l to r) **Kathy Harter, Jacqueline Morris, George Lloyd;** (back, l to r) **David Arnold and Rick Popen.** Board members bring a wealth of experience to the table—both from their professional lives and personal interests. The Conservation Board meets twice a month and reviews all submissions to the Planning Board to make sure that the best environmental practices are being considered. They also participate at the County level and promote environmental education efforts locally.

begin to sprout and are no longer edible. Some people derive pleasure from watching squirrels and welcome them to their yard while others consider them pests. Many people are surprised to learn squirrels provide various benefits to the environment and the entire life ecosystem.

They are mostly diurnal (active in the daytime) and are scatter-hoarders; the trait of gathering and storing nuts and seeds for the winter, usually by burying them in accessible hiding places. This well-known trait of squirrels plays a vital and beneficial role in the forest ecosystem because a few of the nuts and seeds that are not eaten grow into new trees and plants maintaining the forest and diversity.

Squirrels regularly dig into the soil which helps to aerate the soil and make it healthy for some plants to grow and thrive. Squirrels break up various tree branches, leaves, nuts and other vegetative debris and scatter these on the ground enhancing soil fertility.

They provide shelter for other animal species. Ground squirrels dig holes big enough for other animals to live, while tree squirrels carve out tunnels and build nests for their own shelter. Once squirrels abandon their own shelter, other tree-dwelling animals take advantage of a new, safe ready-made home. Squirrels also keep the population of potentially harmful insects under control.

There is no “paw” too small that it cannot have an impact on the earth.

Kathy A. Harter, Chair

Sweden Environmental Conservation Board

Snapshots: Send ideas, comments and suggestions to Leisa Strabel at the Sweden Town Hall, 18 State Street, Brockport, NY 14420. Phone: 637-7588; Fax: 431-0039; email: leisas@townofsweden.org