

# HOME TOWN NEWS

ALPLAUS, NEW YORK 12008

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## Tomesa Casella Wins 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Chili Challenge

It may have been cold outside, but the competition at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Chili Challenge sponsored by the Ladies Auxiliary was hot. The fire house was filled with friends, family and neighbors serving and enjoying a wide variety of chili. If you missed it this year plan on attending next year, and start working on your chili recipe now. *See the Ladies Auxiliary column on page 3 for the full results.*

## GroundHog Day

Forget the science, Doppler radar, and greenhouse gas levels, the only true way to predict the end of winter is by asking the Groundhog. Each year people from all over the country gather in Punxsutawney Pennsylvania to see if the groundhog named Phil will see his shadow or not. If he sees his shadow and runs back into his burrow, then we are guaranteed to have 6 more weeks of winter. If on the other hand he does not see his shadow, then spring is just around the corner. If we are going to have 6 more weeks of this winter I think I may start making a burrow of my own to hide in.



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## On the Hill

The winter is just a bonus for living in the northeast, one that the snowbirds just can't seem to grasp. I mean who in their right mind would want to leave this behind and go live some place warm for the winter months? Maybe I should think about that again when my brain thaws out. As I am sure you noticed this HTN is a bit different. Our regular editor, Art, asked me to sit in for him this month, so I agreed to give it a shot. Don't worry, Art will be back next month and all will be right with the world again. In the mean time, if you were wondering about the rest of the results from the Chili Challenge, make sure you check out Jill Batson's *Ladies Auxillary* column on page 3. In his *ARA News* column that starts on page 3, Bud Watson has updates on the sewer project, the Taylor's recovery from their house fire, and other happenings around our hamlet. Also in this month's issue Pastor Carl has news about all the action at the Alplaus church in his *News From the Alplaus Church* column on page 5. Finally, don't forget to check out Mike Sheppeck's *Alplaus Fire Department News* column below this one to keep up to date on the folks that come when you call 911. I know they are always looking for members so consider stopping over at the firehouse some Tuesday night around 7pm to see how you could join Alplaus's breavest.

Acting Editor.....RM



## Alplaus Fire Department News

### Annual Installation & Awards Banquet

By Mike Sheppeck, AFD Historian

The Alplaus Volunteer Fire Company will hold the Annual Installation and Awards Banquet on Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, at the Woodlin Club, beginning at 5:30pm. Although already sworn in and on duty, it is at this event the elected Officers will be formally installed. Awards and accolades for last year's efforts, including the much anticipated Firefighter of the Year will also be announced.

Social Officers for 2009 are:

President	Gary Hastings
Vice President	Alex Coppola
Treasurer	Joseph Beaver
Financial Secretary	Carl Nappi

Recording Secretary	James Palmer
Corresponding Secretary	Kathleen Sheppeck
Statistical Secretary	Robert Mazur
Trustee [3 year term]	Joseph Beaver
Historian	Michael Sheppeck

Firematic Officers for 2009 are:

Chief	Andrew Coppola
Assistant Chief	Kathleen Sheppeck
Captain	Michael Sheppeck
Captain	Christopher Breslin
Captain-Fire Police	Michael Cuoco
Lieutenant	Scott Runkel

## Ladies Auxiliary

by Jill Batson

The new year started with our post holiday dinner at the Edison Club on January 15<sup>th</sup>. Most of our auxiliary members were able to make this event, despite the freezing temperature (-4 degrees). A good dinner and lots of laughs warmed us up. We were able to warm up the evening again on January 23<sup>rd</sup> with our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Chili Challenge. People came out and enjoyed a nice warm bowl of chili with their neighbors, I would like to thank everybody for their time and support to make this happen again this year, without the

hard work of many this event would be impossible.

Our Champions this year:

First prize: Tomesa Casella

First runner up: Matt Misner

Second runner up: Pat Beaver

Third runner up: Jason Goldgerg

Our next meeting will be February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7pm. We will be planning our spring and summer activities, we are always looking for fresh ideas so please consider joining us! If you are interested please contact Margaret Rockwell at 399-7682

## ARA News

by Bud Watson

Hello everyone, I hope that you are staying warm and enjoying Mother Nature's snow and ice barrage. We have a lot to discuss so let's get started:

**Sewer Taxes:** Barb Casey and Keith Abatto met with town representatives to go over some final items regarding the sewers. During that meeting, it was announced that there would be some additions to the sewer tax, also known as an inter-departmental charge. As an accounting novice, I would like to take this time to defer to Keith's understanding of what the town is doing.

*The "inter-departmental charge" is the Town's attempt at "activity based costing". This practice gained popularity in the 1990's. It was more of a general business practice than a governmental practice. However, many governments used consultants to help them adopt activity based costing. The intent is a good one. Often the application of the concept gets off track. The basic concept is trying to allocate costs to the department or the residents that receive the benefit of the cost. The problem with this approach for a Government is the fact that it is very hard to apply the concept for some costs and not all*

*costs without making residents concerned about fairness.*

*The Town is allocating the costs of some of the Water and Sewer Dept to the water and sewer districts directly instead of the general population of Glenville. It is very hard to track and apply the tracking to the cost base and apply the costs fairly.*

*The other major difference this "inter departmental charge" creates is the fact that the costs that are being specifically allocated are not paid for by the Town's General Fund. The General Fund is the main tax revenue and expenditure fund. This is the fund that has the advertised 2.9% tax increase that is displayed in the Gazette, and in your tax bill. However – the interdepartmental charges that go to the special tax districts like water and sewer districts also have increases. These are tax increases that are not advertised, debated, made public, etc... It takes a very bright accountant to really figure out the true total tax increase each year to a resident in Glenville because of this approach.*

*The main concern for Alplaus with the "interdepartmental charge" is the fact that*

*this practice was not explained before Alplaus Residents signed petitions a couple times to form our sewer district. We were told that \$904/year + or – usage and O&M charges was the highest our tax bill could be because of the new sewer system. At a time when the ink is barley dry on our petitions, and most residents have not even connected to receive a benefit, our tax may increase \$120 year because of the interdepartmental charge. That is a 13.3% increase over the \$904 we were quoted! If this increase was because of a construction problem, residents might accept it. However – this is simply because of a change in accounting principle. This practice is a generally accepted governmental accounting procedure and it is legal; however there was a lack of communication from the town.*

*Rick Leclair thinks we will stay under \$904 even with these charges. That is good, but if we could be at \$780 instead of \$900, we want to be at \$780.*

This is a developing story and we will do our best to keep you informed, please check Alplaus.org and your email to stay informed. If you have any questions please feel free to call, or email me at [alplaus12008@yahoo.com](mailto:alplaus12008@yahoo.com)

**Talyor Fire:** As mentioned in our last issue, A fire ripped through Dave and Christine's Taylor Brookside home and gutted it. All family members and animals were not at home at the time and were never in danger; however, all materials and family keepsakes inside the house as well as one car outside were destroyed.

Currently they are living in Saratoga, and Dave has set up a blog about what the family is going through:  
<http://www.taylordsoftware.com/>. His entries are eye-opening to the struggle of getting back on your feet after an event such as this.

If you would still like to help out, they have set up a wish list on [www.myregistry.com](http://www.myregistry.com) - (type in "David Taylor").

**ARA Board Volunteers:** With the start of the New Year, it is time to start thinking of the ARA Board for next year. We hold our annual meeting in March, with the new Board members starting in April. Serving on this Board is a great way to get to know your neighbors better while making an impact in the community. It is generally fun, with a controversial issue or two sprinkled in every now and then. Some positions are elected, while others are appointed by the President of the Board. Volunteers are rarely, if ever turned away because the Board is too large.

The time commitment is minimal with about 4 -5 meetings per year and some minor volunteer work at some of our annual events. Each year we help coordinate the 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities, the Alplaus Runaround, and the Christmas Tree Lighting. There are always veteran Board members to give advice and to advise on tradition – so don't worry about being a rookie. We typically have a nominating committee that combs the neighborhood looking for people who want to be more active in the community. Until that committee is formed, feel free to contact me at any time if you are interested in serving. We always welcome new people and new ideas.

**ARA Annual Meeting:** Save the Date: The Alplaus Residents Association will be meeting on Thursday, March 26, 7 pm, at the firehouse. Representatives from the Town of Glenville will be present to field your questions on topics you might have. We will collect dues to help us support Skye Farm scholarships and other activities throughout the year are \$3 per person or \$5 per family. All are welcome to join us.

**Alplaus.org:** In order to keep our information fresh, we need your help! The Alplaus hometown website, [www.alplaus.org](http://www.alplaus.org), not only houses the current issue of the Home Town News and its archives; it also provides ARA updates, a schedule of Alplaus community events, links to important information in our community, and much, much, more!

If you are having an event, pictures from one, or have information that you would like get out to the Alplaus community, please send it to [Alplaus12008@yahoo.com](mailto:Alplaus12008@yahoo.com) and we'll post it on the website.

P.S. We are also in desperate need of photos for the "Past Events" section. If you have photos of past 4th of July, St. Patrick's Day, Runaround and other Alplaus celebrations, please send them to us. We need your help!

### Closing Notes:

That's all for now; we're halfway through this crazy winter. If you have a topic that was not addressed, please feel free to contact me at [alplaus12008@yahoo.com](mailto:alplaus12008@yahoo.com).

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## News from the Alplaus Church

*by Pastor Carl*

When I started to write this note for the HTN this month I thought, "Well, it's pretty quiet now in the depths of the winter. Not much to report!" But then as I gathered my thoughts I found there are a number of things I want to tell you about.

First, the church is very grateful to have received a whole new sound system courtesy of the Herrick family as a memorial to Kirk. We now have microphones to capture the sounds of the choir, the congregation, the lectors, the weekly puppet plays, and a wireless headset mic for me. Speakers have been replaced and added and the whole thing feeds into a digital recorder system so we now burn CDs of the service to deliver to shut-ins or those who had to miss church. I'm struggling now with copyright issues involved in posting recordings to the web. Many thanks go to Bob Herrick who designed the system, ordered all the parts, and spent days installing the system, assisted by Jim Burke, Dick Flanders and me.

We are still accepting donations to the Taylor Family Emergency Fund. Just send a check to the church at PO Box 1 and mark Taylor family in the memo line. To date we have sent them \$685 to be used as needed.

Christine's e-mail said, "Thank you so much. It will be very helpful." Scout Troop 36, sponsored by the church, is hoping to co-host a fund-raising dinner using the church's facilities and partnering with the Fire Department or Auxiliary. Watch for news of that to come.

Speaking of the Scouts, Sunday February 8 is Scouting Sunday. Scouts from Cubs on up will be participating in worship service that day - greeting, ushering, reading, puppeteering, just about everything but the sermon and the choir. We would be delighted to have anyone who would like to see these kids take on this project join us that day. Worship will be followed by a coffee hour at which we expect a bounty of baked goods to feast on. By the way, the sermon topic that day is (what else?) "Be Prepared."

Finally, we will have a wedding at the church on Valentine's Day. The couple are not local but chose the church because it's such a beautiful little church in a beautiful little town!

May God bless you and keep you warm and safe this winter.

*Pastor Carl*



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