

HOME TOWN NEWS

ALPLAUS, NEW YORK 12008

December 2010

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Some upcoming events to note:

Holiday Cookie Sale on December 11th (11 AM - 2 PM) at the Alplaus Post Office

Village Christmas Tree Lighting and Holiday Party at the Alplaus Fire House on December 11th (5 PM)

Glenville Fire District #2 (Alplaus) Elections on the December 14th (6-9 PM)

Annual Chili Challenge on January 28, 2011



See more about these events and more Alplaus holiday season events in this issue of the Home Town News.

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Home Town News underwritten by
Alplaus Volunteer Fire Company

On the Hill

Hooray! The leaves are finally gone and the town made the final pick-up to capture almost all of them around Alplaus. A good job was done by the residents in gathering them and by the town highway department in picking them up by vacuum, shovel, and/or front loader.

It is great good news for Alplaus to have Samuel's reopening just in time for the holiday season. The Esposito family has brought the coffee shop back to life, including home made baked goods. Be sure to make this a "recovery stop" on your shopping trips.

Judy and I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a New Year 2011 filled with Blessings.....AWH

Alplaus Ladies Auxiliary

by Jill Batson

We had our monthly meeting on November 22nd and we are busy planning all of our upcoming events. The nominating Committee reported that all of the current officers agreed to run another term. The officers for this coming year are Margaret Rockwell as President, Tracie Williams as Vice President, Jill Batson as Secretary, Pat Beaver as Treasurer, and Vicki Watkins as Trustee.

The annual Cookie Sale will be held December 11th 10 AM to 2 PM at the Post Office. Come early for the best selection. We are pleased that the price remains the same as last year, only \$6.00 for a pound of homemade cookies! We will also be



delivering baskets of goodies to our neighbors that need some Holiday cheer.

We once again have adopted a family for the Holidays. There is an information sheet posted in the Post Office and a list of needed items. If you choose to help us purchase items, please mark it on the sheet so we don't have duplicate items. We would like to have the community involved, so stop by the Post office and see how you can make this family's Christmas merry.

We wish everybody in our hamlet a healthy and happy holiday and thank you for all your support this year. We are always looking for new members so make a New Years resolution to become more involved with your community. Give us a call or stop by the firehouse any 4th Monday of the month. For more information on the Ladies Auxiliary call Margaret @ 399-7682.

Good News about Samuel's

by the Espositos

Samuel's reopened this past weekend; under the management of Amelia Esposito.

Hours of Operation:

Mon - Fri 7am - 7pm
Sat & Sun 8am - 3pm

Order your holiday pies and cookie platters now!

Come and join us for your favorite warm drink and try the delicious home baked pies, cakes, and more.

We are so excited to be open again and serving this great community!





ALPLAUS FIRE DEPARTMENT NEWS

by Mike Sheppeck

AFD will be electing their social officers for the coming year on Monday the 6th at 7:30pm. Firematic officer elections are Tuesday the 7th at 7:00pm. Let's have a good turnout from the membership. Results will be reported in a later issue.

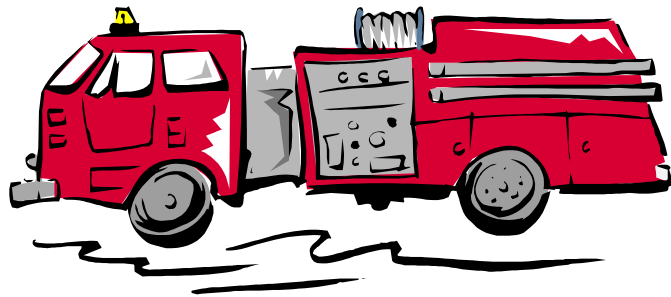
The Tree Lighting with Santa will be Saturday, December 11th. Santa will arrive on Alplaus Engine 221, his borrowed fire engine 'sleigh' promptly at 5:00pm. Get the kiddos there on time if you want to help Santa light the tree, then inside the firehouse we all go to sing, laugh and feast.

Remember to cast your vote at the annual Fire District election on Tuesday, December 14th, between 6:00 and 9:00 pm. There are two positions open on the five member Board of Fire Commissioners; however, no one has stepped forward from the community to be a declared candidate. This means that write-in candidates will be the winners, so please do not vote for Mickey Mouse - unless you want him running your fire district.

There will also be a referendum on the ballet to change the district treasurer position from an elected model [as it is currently] to an appointed model. The state training required for all new Commissioners includes recommendation to enact this change as a best practice. If passed, it will not take effect until after the end of the sitting treasurer's elected term.

This year the Chief will again be thanking the active firefighters for their service this past year on Tuesday, December 21st at 7:00pm. Euphemistically called the 'Chief's Drill', it is really a sumptuous dinner in disguise, orchestrated entirely by the Chief. There are few perquisites in the volunteers; this is certainly one of them. All active members are strongly encouraged to attend.

Happy Holidays to all!



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Alplaus Bird Line

by *Shawna Thompson*

Alison Hendrickson was at Samuel's on opening day [#2] and mentioned she was headed out to buy bird food. Many others are getting feeders ready for winter with a good cleaning and stocking up on seed. A wide variety will attract many different species.

Blue Jays are one of the best looking birds we have locally. Their beautiful slate blue color, stately crest, and large size make them look most impressive.



But sometimes they do weird things. The other day a Blue Jay landed in an abandoned Robin's nest. He tore it apart, tossing twigs, clots of mud, and accumulated leaves onto the ground before flying off. Why this odd

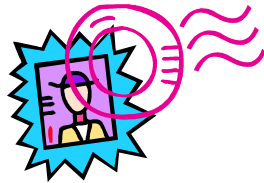
behavior? Was he looking for eggs, which Jays are notorious for eating? But it was November when local birds are not breeding (except possibly a Mourning Dove).

Then, last week there was quite a ruckus with a gathering of Blue Jays cawing and squawking. As it turns out they were interested in a flock of small birds (Tufted Titmice or Chickadees) huddled in a thick pine tree. The Jays were noisily swooping into the tree, flying back up, and swooping down again. Finally the bunch of small birds burst out of the tree and flew off together to another roost.

Why Blue Jays would take part in these activities is beyond me, but who knows what thoughts go through their little bird brains? If you have any ideas, call the Alplaus Bird Line at 399-0490 or e-mail me at swanalaka@aol.com.

Alplaus Post Office Holiday Message

The holiday season is upon us once again. We have a lovely selection of holiday stamps this year. Be sure to come in and purchase early, they go really fast.



A few tips for mailing packages: Packages not only get priced by weight and size, they also get priced by the zone they are going to. A package sent to California can be double the price of the same package going to New Jersey. So use the smallest boxes possible, but do not sacrifice using fillers such as Styrofoam peanuts for fragile items. If reusing a box obliterate all markings and barcodes. Be sure to have a return address on your package. Make sure the destination address is written clearly and legibly. If possible let the person receiving the package know its estimated arrival time so they can check their porches and back doors.

We have services available to send your special packages insured or with Delivery Confirmation. Also available are Priority Mail boxes flat rate and regular. Flat rate boxes could save you some money on those heavier items. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to give us a call at 399-8048 or just stop by.

The Alplaus Ladies Auxiliary will be holding their annual homemade cookie sale December 11 (10 AM - 2 PM) at the Post Office. There is always a tremendous assortment of cookies to choose from. So pick up your holiday stamps, mail your packages and go home with a delicious assortment of homemade cookies at a price that can't be beat!

Wishing all of my customers a wonderful healthy, happy holiday season,

Kathy

Christmas Luminaries

from the Trasks

About 20 years ago the Alplaus United Methodist Church introduced the hamlet of Alplaus to Christmas luminaries. A couple of years after the families here started putting out the luminaries on Christmas Eve, the Schenectady Gazette featured an article and picture of the numerous luminaries lining our streets. The more families that put out the luminaries, the more impressive the sight is.

Luminaries are small white bags with a burning candle inside that are placed outside along your sidewalk on Christmas Eve. They are an adaptation from the small bonfires that were built in front of each home in Mexico to welcome the Christ Child on Christmas Eve. People in New Mexico carried on this tradition for many years. However, one year in the early 20th century, one family had been unable to adequately prepare the traditional home bonfire because of illness in their family. As the holiday season drew near, the youngest child placed a broken candle in a paper bag

partially filled with sand, and placed it outside their home to keep the tradition and welcoming spirit alive. These “little lights” or “farolitos” have become a popular way to keep this welcome tradition alive.

Luminaries will be available for purchase again this year. You can contact Barb or Dan Trask at 399-6454 to place an order. They will cost \$3.50 per dozen, which will include the bags and candles. Wouldn't it be great if Alplaus could get the majority of the houses decorated with these lights again this year, making a long, continuous welcome for Christ.



News from the ARA Board

Happy Holidays Everyone! The news from the ARA Board is limited this month, but I wanted to invite everyone to the Holiday Party at the Firehouse this year.

The Holiday Party will be held on Saturday, December 11, at 5 pm. There will be a tree lighting, Santa will make an appearance, snacks, cookies, gingerbread man decorating, wonderful music by our own Gray Watkins and accompanying players, and fun for everyone.

The Next Installment from ARA Board.

The next issue of the hometown news will have an update from the ARA Board on the sewer project and what the current situation

is now that more users from Clifton Park are being brought on-line. We are still waiting from some information and numbers from the Town of Glenville, and will have an update very soon.

Volunteer with the ARA Board. The ARA Board could always use more people to help and volunteer their time. We have openings on the Board and if you would like to provide support to the Board and its activities throughout the year, please contact me to sign up.

Thank you and I hope that everyone has a safe and joyous Holiday Season.

Notes from the Alplaus Church

Merry Christmas! Or Happy Hanukkah, as the case may be. Although Happy Holidays is not entirely inappropriate as “holidays” is really just a contraction for “Holy Days.”

The Alplaus church is in full swing in the midst of the Advent season of preparation for Christmas. We’ve already held a “hanging of the greens” party to decorate the sanctuary for the first Sunday of Advent. The first candle of the Advent wreath has been lit and more candles will be lit as the Light grows into the world. By the time you receive this we will have held the open house at the parsonage. We’re well on our way to Christmas!



There are a number of activities on our calendar to tell about. Our Christmas **Community luncheon** will be held at noon on Tuesday, December 14, with a lot of good food and carol singing. Everyone is always welcome. Then on the 18th we host the wedding of Lea Vedder to Rich Sheward.

On the 19th our Sunday School kids will put on their **Christmas pageant** after worship. Again, all are welcome to come see these cute kids perform. This will be followed by a potluck luncheon.

That evening at 7:00 we will offer our third annual **Blue Christmas** or Longest Night event. This is held on or near the darkest night of the year, the winter solstice when the days are the shortest and the nights the longest. Both nights and days can seem long if you are “blue,” depressed or grieving, taking the joy out of the Christmas season. Dealing with the death of a loved one, facing life after divorce or separation, coping with the loss of a job, living with cancer or some other disease that puts a question mark over the future, and a number of other human situations make parties and joviality painful for many people. We offer a quiet, meditative worship service in a comforting setting that makes time for remembering, sharing our hurting places with God, and preparing our hearts for the coming of Christ. I’d pleased if you’d join us. There is comfort in a community of similarly troubled people.

Then on Tuesday the 21st we will be serving dinner at city Mission. Serving there last month was a moving experience as our knitting group had made 250 hat and mitten or scarf sets to be given free to those in need. The most touching was an elderly man who held three sets and said, “Now I have something to give my grandchildren for Christmas.” We are also providing gifts for 40 residents of Ten Eyck apartments. That’s as many people as we have attending church!

Two short notes: Yay! Samuels will be opening again. And the church has luminaries available again this year to light up the Alplaus community for Christmas Eve. Please see related articles in this Home Town News.

Finally, we will hold our traditional **Christmas Eve service of Lessons and Carols at 7 pm.**

Again, Merry Christmas!

Pastor Carl

Life in Alplaus as a 1950's Kid

by Cliff Hayes

Below is an email from Susan Hayes (no relation) with some thoughts on being raised in Alplaus. Susan was a 1953 Alplaus School and 1959 Niskayuna HS graduate. As my lifelong friend, Bob Nerad, commented, *"I think how blessed we were to be raised in Alplaus back then. We had the freedom from forced activities and electronic distractions."*

"I visited Alplaus just before returning to Colorado this fall. To me, the town seemed much the same.....safe; quiet, sort of like a "best kept secret" sort of place. If I could, I'd move back there in a flash. I have maintained a couple of log houses on the water at Schroon Lake, and spend two or three months there in the summer.....but haven't been back to Alplaus in some time.

As I went past 11 Hill Street, I took pictures of the house and the creek side, and then went on down the street to chat with Mr. Fleming at Linda Gray's old house, and then to leave a note for Mark Riddell, my old next door neighbor. (I have since communicated with both Linda and Mark.) Anyway, I loved growing up in Alplaus. I communicated with Betty Wood, my K-2 teacher at Alplaus School till she passed away a few years ago.)

There were so many boys in our neighborhood ---Bobby Birch on the corner, Kenny and Donny Coyle across the street, Spencer and Billy Morrison across the street and others. Kick ball in our front yard was a great favorite.

My Dad built a mahogany boat that we docked behind the house and used it to go up and down the Mohawk River. Mother would make a casserole wrapped in newspaper and placed in a straw picnic basket and off we would go.

By the time sixth grade rolled around, Miss Salton was the principal and teacher. I was scared of her....especially since we had to memorize poems quite often. My grade went to Van Antwerp for junior high and then chose between Nott Terrace and Mt. Pleasant [high schools]. I chose Nott Terrace since my mother and grandmother had both attended there. Then, our class was the first into Niskayuna High School. We got to choose school colors etc. I had amazing preparation for college music there.....and then went on to Potsdam, at the Crane Music School.

My Grandmother also went to the very old Alplaus School which was located, I believe, just to the right of the Alplaus School we attended. She was born in the late 1800s. As for me, I'm married to Paul Tillotson, have three kids: Dan who is a Colorado State Senator, Jeff who is in charge of fraud for the Progressive Insurance Co. in Michigan, and Melissa who manages a sign company office and is going to school too in Michigan. Jeff and Kelly have 4 year old Kiley and 7 year old Tyler, and Melissa's 15 year old son is a record breaking football player for his school in Grand Ledge, Michigan.

*Guess I've rambled on enough. I have fond, fond memories of my roots in Alplaus.
Sincerely, Susan"*

Alplaus competitor results of the 35th Gazette Stockade-athon Nov. 7th

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Mike McHale- | 1:03:25.6 |
| Brian Dillenbeck- | 1:07:47.9 |
| Robyn Salvin- | 1:15:38.0 |
| Chris Sparano- | 1:19:43.0 |
| Alicia Sparano- | 1:37:41.6 |

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