

# HOME TOWN NEWS

A monthly newsletter that chronicles the happenings in and around Alplaus



ABOVE: Alplaus Fire Engine 221 decked out in bright lights at the 50th annual holiday parade in downtown Schenectady (PHOTO CREDIT: The Daily Gazette of Schenectady)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Ladies Auxiliary Holiday Cookie Sale

December 8th  
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM  
at the Alplaus Firehouse

### Holiday Party

December 8th at  
5:00 PM at the Alplaus Firehouse

### Board of Fire Commissioners Elections

December 11th  
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM at the Alplaus Firehouse

### ARA Board Meeting

December 12th at  
7:15 PM at the Alplaus Firehouse

### Christmas Eve Luminaries

December 24th  
don't forget to illuminate Alplaus by displaying your beautiful Christmas Luminaries!

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## News from the Alplaus Residents' Association

Maurice "Bud" Watson

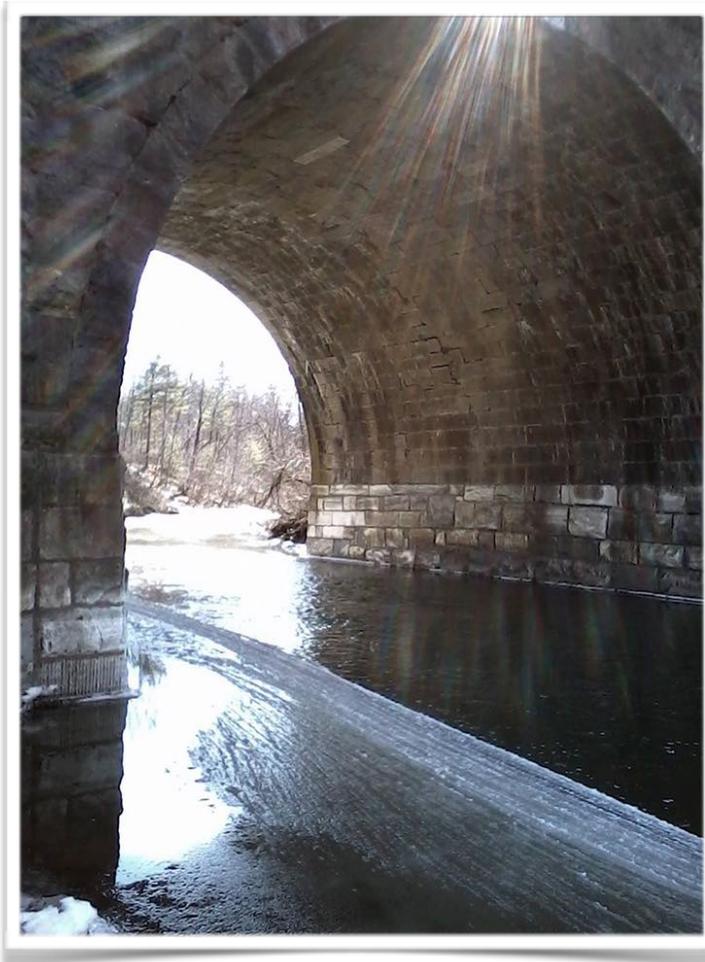
It's beginning to look a lot like...rain? It's been a wet couple of months, but hopefully December will be better. The news from the ARA Board is chock full of happenings this month. And we do have newly paved roads, just in time for the Holidays!

**Alplaus Runaround:** Thank you to Andy Gilpin and the Alplaus Run Around Committee, as well as our participants, for braving the elements and putting on another terrific event in October. Please make sure to read Andy's take on this year's Run Around, and check out the top finishers!

**Holiday Party:** The Annual Holiday Party at the Firehouse will be held on Saturday, December 8th, at 5 pm. I hope you'll join us for Santa's arrival, great refreshments, crafts for the kids, music, and Christmas caroling. For anyone not observing or celebrating Christmas, please come; it is a wonderful way to spend time with your neighbors.

**Board of Fire Commissioners Elections:** The fire commissioners play a significant role in what goes on in this hamlet. An election for a new commissioner for the Glenville Fire District #2 (Alplaus) will take place at the firehouse on December 11, 2018, 6-9 pm. Please come out and vote; it would be nice to maintain significant Alplaus representation on this board.

**Luminaries:** The Watson family moved to Alplaus in late December '02 and were able to experience the magic of luminaries in the hamlet. There was a snowstorm on Christmas Eve, and we were returning home from visiting family only to be welcomed



by luminaries lining the streets. It was an amazing sight. Although some residents have carried on the luminaries tradition, it has faded over the years. If you are interested in carrying it forward this year, the Alplaus Methodist Church is selling luminaries; to purchase some, contact Barb Trask at 518 399-6454. Luminaries can also be purchased at local craft shops. No matter what your holiday traditions are, luminaries are a great way to display the magic of our community. I hope you will join us in illuminating Alplaus on the evening of December 24th.

**Volunteer with the ARA Board:** The ARA could always use more people to help out with hamlet activities. If you would like to volunteer, please contact me to sign up.

The next ARA Board meeting is **Wednesday, December 12, at 7:15 pm.**

**Closing Notes:** That's all for now; I hope that your Thanksgiving was a pleasant one and that the upcoming holidays bring you and your family much joy.

## SHARING IS CARING

Celebrating a birthday or anniversary? Have news or an announcement for the next issue of Home Town News? Interested in writing an article? Send it to [alplausHTN12008@gmail.com](mailto:alplausHTN12008@gmail.com).

### GET SOCIAL



The Hamlet of Alplaus



@alwaysalplaus

The Hamlet of Alplaus is now on Facebook and Instagram. Connect with us online!

## Notes from the Ladies Auxiliary

Tracy Jeror

A big thank you to everyone who came out to celebrate our 50th anniversary! It was a lovely time spent with the community enjoying a delightful cake made by Amelia George.

It's hard to believe that December is here! Our Holiday Cookie sale is on December 8th. Stop in a fill up a box with a variety of homemade cookies for \$9 a pound. If you have an Adopt a Family tag, please return your gifts unwrapped to our event with the tag.

Our Chili Challenge is also coming up on January 25th. We are currently seeking Chili cooks! If you are interested is putting your chili to the challenge please contact Caron at 977-2464 or Shawna at 526-5526.

Alplaus Ladies Auxiliary annual  
**Holiday Cookie Sale**  
**Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup>**

10am – 1pm at the Alplaus firehouse



Come fill up a box and pay per the pound.  
 The cost is \$9 per pound

*Alplaus Ladies Auxiliary*  
*presents*



Come warm up!  
**January 25<sup>th</sup>**

5:30 – 7:00pm

Adults \$5

Kids \$3

## Al-paws: Getting to Know Our Neighborhood Pets

Megan Breslin

### Sassy

Sassy has been with my family for my entire life. She has gotten older and changed but still loves to be outside to play. She is very protective of my brother, parents and me, but she is NOT a mean cat, she doesn't scratch or bite and is the neighborhood cat.

Here is what she thinks of herself:

Hi, my name is Sassy. I'm a white cat with big black spots. I'm outside all the time so don't be scared if you see me around. I adore people, but I'm very protective of my family, the Breslin's, I follow them when they go for walks. This neighborhood is mine, I absolutely rule it. Right now I'm 13,



### PAWS WITH A PURPOSE

We'll be featuring a beloved pet in each issue of Home Town News in order to help our neighbors get acquainted with the cats and dogs of Alplaus.

While many readers may be curious to learn the story behind that cat or dog walking by their home everyday, we hope that getting to know these local pets will help foster friendship and goodwill between neighbors.

We also hope that attaching a name and background to our community's pets will help folks identify these special animals in the case of an emergency.

Would you like your furry friend featured in an upcoming issue? Send your pet pictures and stories to [alplausHTN12008@gmail.com](mailto:alplausHTN12008@gmail.com).

my birthday is on November 9th, the same day as my owner Charlie's birthday, but I'm older than him by 3 years.

One of my favorite pastimes is stopping in the middle of the road to clean myself when a car stops to wait for me to cross, but don't think I'm stupid I wouldn't stop if the car kept going, I would run as fast as I could. I once witnessed a cat get ran over and I vowed to never be that cat.

You see I am the best pet in the neighborhood since cat's are way better than dogs and I simply am the best cat in the world I mean who wouldn't like me (no offense other pets). The reasons everyone should think I'm the best cat are: if you are a dog person don't worry I'm a dog inside a cat's body, if you are a cat person, I am the nicest cat in the world.

## ALPLAUS CAT COLONY

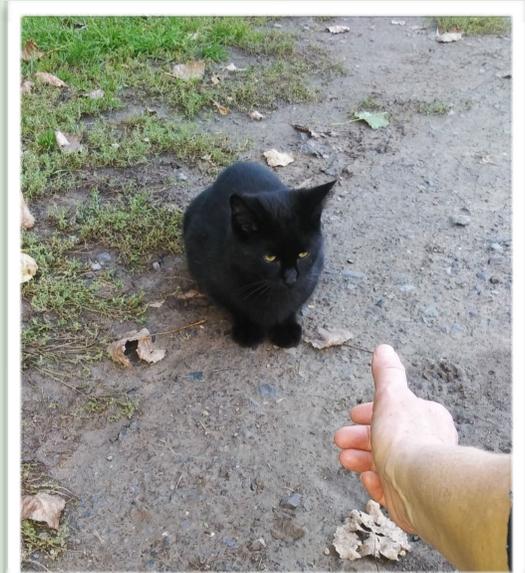
There has been a feral cat colony living in Alplaus (near the Mohawk Marina) for the past 15 years or so. This colony consisted of approximately 50 cats— many suffering from fleas, tics, hunger, and various diseases.

Alplaus community member and good samaritan, Caryn Weaver, decided to do something about this issue and started a GoFundMe for the purpose of collecting donations to trap, spay/neuter, and adopt out these cats. She has been working tirelessly to keep these homeless felines from multiplying, and to ensure that these cats are receiving adequate care.

\$1,270 has been raised to date, along with many in-kind donations of towels, blankets, and other supplies. So far, 11 female cats have been spayed, 6 male cats have been neutered, and 7 cats are in foster care or have been adopted.

For those interested in donating and following the ongoing efforts to care for the needs of the Alplaus Cat Colony, please visit [www.gofundme.com/alplaus-cat-colony](http://www.gofundme.com/alplaus-cat-colony)

Bravo, Caryn! Thank you for spearheading this worthy cause.



## Notes from the Alplaus United Methodist Church

Barbara Trask

### Christmas Luminaries

About 35 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.

They are placed outside along the roadside edge of your property, your driveway, and 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.



## Notes from the Alplaus Historian

Jessica Polmateer

### The Roots of the Home Town News

The Home Town News was first issued on June 1, 1942 by the Alplaus Volunteer Fire Company. Copies were mailed monthly (then less frequently as time went on) to Alplaus military service personnel who were mobilized for World War II, so that they could stay updated on the town business of Alplaus. Each issue was also mailed to the families of the servicemen and women, and to every house in Alplaus. The Home Town News contained detailed information about each member of the military including rank, minutiae of daily life in wartime conditions, and their mailing address, until the government censors began to take notice by the seventh edition, published December 31, 1942. At the time of the first publication, the total Alplaus population was 518 and there were 28 service personnel deployed.

The first issue of the Home Town News mentioned the new minister of the Alplaus United Methodist Church, Rev. George W. Swart and his address. The new bus service had just commenced operation through town, replacing the trolley system that stopped running on December 1, 1941. There was concern about a housing shortage as the census showed a population increase of 150 people but few new houses being built in town. Also of note were the two babies born that month, a railroad crossing accident, gas and sugar rationing, and the fire department instruction school attendance. Citizens were encouraged to take precautions for possible East Coast air raids that could take place in retaliation for the Jimmy Doolittle raids over Tokyo. There was some excitement over the Marty Servo (of Schenectady) versus Sugar Ray Robinson fight in Madison Square Garden, of which several Alplaus citizens attended in person.

Later issues during the World War II years added new columns such as: Story of the Month, Oldest Citizen, Church Notes, Societies & Clubs and Biography. Notable news from the 1942-45 editions included \$400,000 spent by the U.S. government on the Schenectady airport, continuing demolition on the street railway bridge and the fires on the rail ties, construction of the skating rink, and \$500 given by Alplaus citizens to keep the Home Town News running.

The Home Town News was published throughout World War II and ceased production in December 1946. It was restarted in 1980, and continues to be a valuable resource for Alplaus citizens today.

NEWS FROM THE HOME TOWN  
ALPLAUS, N. Y., U.S.A.

June 1, 1942

PURPOSE OF THIS NEWS-LETTER: This letter is conducted by the Alplaus Volunteer Fire Company.

It will be mailed each month (or more often if we can afford it) to each young man or woman in the Service from Alplaus and immediate vicinity. It will be sent to the parents of each of them, and will be distributed to each house in the Village.

There are now 28 men and women from Alplaus in the Service. The total population of the village and vicinity in the 1940 U.S. Census was about 518. The names and service addresses of each of the 28 are given below. They may wish to write to one another. Their neighbors may wish to write to them. It is expected that by the end of this year the number in the Service will be about doubled.

The following are the names and addresses, arranged alphabetically, and a brief note as to any news we have about each of them. We wish that each person in the Service would write us, telling us what he is doing. Also, we wish that the parents would give us copies of parts of the letters they receive from their sons and daughters. THEN THE NEXT NEWS-LETTER WILL BE MORE COMPLETE. Write to Alplaus Volunteer Fire Company, Alplaus, N. Y., U.S.A., or to any member of the Committee which is preparing this letter. The Committee is G. L. Dingley, J. Edward (Pappy) Molony, A. J. Nerad and Wm. D. Smith. The address of each is Alplaus, N. Y. P L E A S E W R I T E ! !

NORMAN BAUGH, Alplaus, N. Y.

Swede was on an oil tanker which was torpedoed off New Jersey in January. He was in the water eight hours, and was the last man picked up by a life boat. He was then transferred to the Great Lakes Socony Vacuum Tanker fleet. He is expected home today for entry into another branch of the Service. Mail to him at Alplaus, N. Y., will be forwarded to him.

BENJAMIN BEVERLY, Co. 417, Naval Training Station, Newport, Rhode Island.

Son of Fire Captain and Mrs. Benjamin Beverly, of Alplaus. Enlisted in the Navy at age 17, with his parents' consent.

## JUST FOR KIDS

### Calling all Home Town Kids!

Do you like to draw, write, or take photos? Submit your drawings, photos, or article ideas to Home Town News, and your work might be featured in a future issue!

SEND IT TO  
[ALPLAUSHTN12008@GMAIL.COM](mailto:ALPLAUSHTN12008@GMAIL.COM)

