



Newsletter

April Calendar

- 7 & 21** Village Board Mtg.
- 8 & 22** Planning Bd. Mtg.
- 9** Zoning Board Mtg.
- 1** Bike/Ped Comm.
- 2** Cons. Advisory Comm.
- 8** Rec. Advisory Comm.
- 16** Visual Envir. Board.
- 23** Trails Comm.

In this issue

- Earth Day Event 2
- Farmers' Market 2
- Secrets of the Deep 2
- 88th Blood Drive 2
- Camp Registration Due 2
- Overdue Bill Reminder 2
- RideConnect Program 3
- April Recreation Events 3
- Green Living Series 3
- Arboretum Lease 3
- Drug Take Back Day 3
- Recreation Brochure 3
- Yacht Club Lease 4
- Spring Break Pgm. 4
- Snowman Winners 4
- Got a Question? 4

Proposed 2014/2015 Budget

On March 20, the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2014/2015 was announced by Abe Zambrano, Village Manager and Chief Executive Officer. The tentative General Fund budget is \$18,345,651. It will be extensively reviewed by the Village Board in the coming weeks. The amount proposed to be raised by taxes is \$11,268,618 at a tax rate of \$255.957 per thousand of assessed valuation. This tax rate is \$9.417 higher than the rate for the current fiscal year. It represents a 3.82% tax rate increase. The total increase in appropriations is \$187,580 or 1.03% over 2013/2014.

The NYS Property Tax Levy Cap has been in effect for 3 years. The first two years limited tax levy increases to 2% but the percentage for the coming year has been lowered to 1.42% for Villages. Although the Village received some credit since last year's Village tax levy was below the 2% cap limit, the 2014/2015 budget, as proposed, will exceed the Tax Cap limit by \$232,121.

Non-tax revenues projected for the coming year are \$6,577,033 and represent 35.85% of the total revenue. They are projected to remain flat from the prior tax year. As in past budget years, the Manager proposes appropriating \$500,000 from the Fund Balance. Last year's budget also included a \$200,000 appropriation from the Retirement Reserve, which is not being recommended this year. This amount is almost the total of the tax levy cap overage.

Budget accounts for the various Village departments all include salary increases based on the Teamsters' Local 456 contract and the Manager's recommended increases for the non-union staff. Negotiations with the Croton Police Association are near finalization and it is anticipated that the final terms will be incorporated into the 2014/2015 budget. The Teamsters' contract was finalized after

the 2013/2014 budget was adopted and reflected increases for three years since its expiration in May 2011. The compounded increases for those three years, more than \$140,000, are reflected in this year's budget.

Generally, the increases by department are very small or flat. The Police Dept budget reflects a decrease of \$61,414 due, in part, to the hiring of new officers at entry level salaries. The Law budget is \$197,000 as legal fees have been significant in the last few years due to litigation matters. It is anticipated that this amount will not cover the expenses for next year but since they are impossible to calculate now, the Board will likely have to cover costs either from the Contingency Account or the General Fund's fund balance, if and when they occur. The Fire Dept. is proposing an increase of \$73,440 reflecting an increase in contractual expenses for building maintenance, as well as upgrading of equipment and funds for a recruitment and retention program,

The Village's contributions to the retirement systems is anticipated to be \$1,603,831, a decrease of \$201,421 from last year. Health insurance costs will decrease by \$134,309 due to employee contributions towards the premiums and a change in the carrier for retirees.

Short-term debt service will increase by \$35,700 due to planned short-term borrowing that is amortized over 5 years, savings thousands in interest that would accrue if the same amount were borrowed as long-term debt. Long-term debt service will also increase by \$198,206.

The Village's total assessed valuation has decreased due largely to a reduction in special franchise assessments which were greater than the small increase in residential assessment.

The entire proposed Village budget can be viewed on the Village's website.

Earth Day at Vassallo Park

Croton's Conservation Advisory Committee (CCAC) is organizing Earth Day activities on Saturday, April 26 from 9am to 2 pm. at Vassallo Park.

There will be activities, educational opportunities and presentations for all who attend. Music during the event will be provided by Strange Pools. Food will be available from La Monica Salumeria and The Blue Pig.



Among the special presentations and exhibits are the following: Joe Mullins with the Japanese art of Fish Printing, Margaret Vondermeden on bees and beekeeping, John Phillips on the Croton Nature

Center, Jim Gmelin on identifying invasive plants, and Karolyn Lamb on Duck Pond plantings and storm-water management. Hemlock Hills Farm, Teatown Lake Reservation, Ferry Sloops, Energize Croton and the CCAC Garden Club will be present with information and exhibits. Children's activities such as arts and crafts with recyclable materials and storytelling will take place at the Park as well.

The Village's Bicycle Pedestrian Committee will also be present doing bicycle safety inspections for those who bring their bikes to the event in the park.

88th Blood Drive Coming!

The Community Blood Program's 88th Blood Drive is set for Sunday, May 4 from 9am to 3pm at Croton-Harmon High School.

For appointments, call 271-7645, 8449 or 3010 or email communityblooddrive@gmail.com.

Donors must be over 16 and under 76, at least 110 pounds and healthy. Written parent's permission is required for 16 year olds and a doctor's permission for those 76 and older. All must provide an official form of identification.

Farmers' Market Resumes

The Farmers' Market will return to the Village on Sunday, May 26th and continue on Sundays to November 24th, 2014. The hours are 9 am to 2 pm. It will be located in the Village-owned lot at the intersection of Municipal Place and S. Riverside Ave.

Camp Applications Due

Program registration for Croton's Day Camp and Tiny Tots Camp is held by lottery. The lottery process eliminates long lines and the need to be present on a specific date and time.

For 2014, the lottery registration deadline for both camps is Wednesday, April 16 at 12 noon.

Filling out a specific Day Camp or Tiny Tots Camp triplicate form

is required. The completed forms must be received in the Recreation Office before the deadline, paid in full. The Dept. staff suggests bringing the completed form(s) to the office in person during regular office hours on

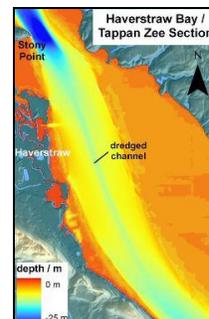
weekdays (8:30 am to 4:00 pm). The triplicate registration forms are available in the office and at the Croton Free Library.

After the registration deadline, registration will be on a first-come, first-served basis if there are any spaces still available.



Secrets of the Deep

A program that will present and review the results of the Hudson River bottom mapping project will be presented by the Croton Yacht Club on Friday, April 4 at 7:30 pm at the club. Dr. John Ladd from the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary program will talk about the information that has been revealed since the project began in 1998. Surveys



Haverstraw Bay depth map from DEC website

have revealed the critical habitat areas for fish on the endangered species list, large patches of ancient oyster reefs, and numerous ship wrecks. More on the mapping project can be found at

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/87303.html>.

Utility Bill Overdue Reminder!

Utility bills (water and sewer fees) that were due on January 15 and not paid by April 15 are subject to an additional \$100 delinquent fee in addition to the accrued penalties for each month between January 15 and April 15. A delinquent notice will be sent.

Reminder!

**Village Offices are closed Friday, April 18
for Good Friday,**



RideConnect Program

The RideConnect program is now available to residents of Northern Westchester, including Cortlandt, Ossining, Peekskill, Yorktown and New Castle. The program connects seniors, disabled persons and home healthcare workers with transportation in Northern Westchester where access to public transportation is limited. Individuals can use RideConnect to schedule rides to medical appointments, shopping, cultural events, hairdresser appointments and errands.

Westchester County secured a federal grant of \$1.43 million from the Dept. of Transportation that will fund the program through March 2017. The program is run by the Family Services of Westchester and supported by the County Office of Senior Programs and Services. To arrange for a ride, call RideConnect from 9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday, at 914-242-7433 or at their website: www.rideconnectwestchester.org. With advance notice, rides can also be scheduled for weekends.

Green Living Series

Croton's Conservation Advisory Council (CCAC) will continue its Green Living Series of lectures on April 29. Jan Johnsen, the CAC Chair, and a noted Landscape Designer, Author and Educator, will present "Heaven is a Garden: Designing Serene Outdoor Spaces".

Jan will present a PowerPoint lecture of simplicity, sanctuary and delight in the garden. Learn about the power spot in a landscape, why rocks are such great assets in your garden, how water adds magic and why blue gardens are so popular.

The presentation will be at the Croton Free Library, from 7 to 8:30 pm with light refreshments served. Admission is free.



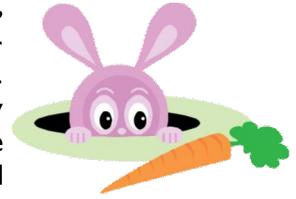
Also, thanks to the CAC, many beautiful daffodils are blooming along Benedict Blvd. and other streets in the Village. Each year, in the Autumn, the CAC sponsors the planting of 500 or more daffodils which continue to bloom for many years. The daffodil plantings began over a decade ago to commemorate the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center.

Spring/Summer Recreation Brochure

The Spring/Summer Recreation brochure is available now online at the Village's website. Look for it to see all the exciting activities available in the Spring/Summer.

April Recreation Events

The Recreation Dept. invites all resident and school district children to have Lunch with the Spring Bunny. This fun family event is on Saturday, April 12 at 12 noon in the Municipal Building Community Room. Preregistration is required by April 7 and space is limited. The fee is \$20/resident family and \$25/school district family.



Spring Window Decorating! Express yourself and have fun decorating store windows for Spring. Participants may begin painting their assigned window on April 14 and must be finished by April 18. This is not a contest but a fun event for the whole family. Sign up in the Recreation Dept. to get a window assignment.

Arboretum Lease Renewed

At its March 3 meeting, the Village Board approved the renewal of the lease for the Jane Lytle Arboretum for a period of twenty years with an automatic renewal of five years. The Arboretum is a non-profit corporation which has been managing the Village-owned land. The land was originally gifted by Samuel Rubin in 1975. There is no lease fee to the Village.



CROTON ARBORETUM

The Arboretum manages the 22.4 acre property as a conservation area, planting site-specific native plants, replacing trees as needed, controlling the overgrowth of vines and pruning when necessary. The Arboretum is open to the public providing a network of trails and contemplative areas for its visitors.

Drug Take Back Day in Croton

For the third year, the Croton Police will be holding Drug Take Back Day. The program is sponsored in conjunction with the national program organized by the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

Detective Sergeant Nikitopoulos and Detective Gabrielsen will be present in the parking lot at Croton Commons on Saturday, April 26 From 10 am to 2 pm to receive any unwanted drugs and medications, prescription and non-prescription. No liquids, syringes or needles will be accepted.

The Croton Police Dept. also has a secure box in the lobby of their department in the Municipal Building where unused drugs can be dropped off.

Published for the Residents of the Village of Croton-on-Hudson

Leo A. W. Wiegman, Mayor; Kevin Davis, Trustee; Ann H. Gallelli, Trustee; Andrew Levitt, Trustee; Maria Slippen, Trustee

Abraham J. Zambrano, Village Manager

Stanley H. Kellerhouse Municipal Building, One Van Wyck Street

(914) 271-4781-2, www.crotononhudson-ny.gov

Got a Question?



With Winter finally coming to an end, I look forward to Spring cleanup in my yard. I know that in the Fall leaves cannot be bagged but what are the rules for yard waste?

Yard waste must be put in biodegradable leaf bags or open-top garbage containers. **No waste in plastic bags will be collected.**



Leaves, raked up yard waste, small twigs, flowers, hedge trimmings may be placed in biodegradable yard waste (leaf) bags. Small branches will be collected provided they meet the following criteria: 1) Cut into lengths not to exceed 4 feet; 2) Tied into bundles not exceeding 18" in diameter; 3) Not more than two bundles of small branches per collection.

Grass clippings should be left on the lawn.

The collection date for yard waste by the DPW is on Wednesdays with the north and south sections of the village being collected on alternate Wednesdays. Collections will begin in April and continue through October as follows:

- North of Rte. 129 (Maple St..) - 1st & 3rd Weds.
- South of Rte. 129 (Maple St.) - 2nd & 4th Weds.
- There will be NO pickup on April 30, July 30 and Oct. 29.

Congrats to Croton Coalition!

The Croton Coalition Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse won first prize for Innovative Ideas at the National Convention of similar coalitions.

The Croton Coalition developed a "Tool Kit for Parents" consisting of a series of postcards sent to parents. Each card has a different suggestion or "tool" for helping youth avoid the problems of substance abuse. The Village manages the federal grant that supports the Coalition and is one of its member constituencies.

Yacht Club Lease Renewed

The Village has renewed its lease with the Croton Yacht Club allowing the Club to continue in its Village-owned location for twenty years with a ten year renewal option.

The new lease period begins in June of 2014.

The Village and the Club had been in discussions for over a year to revise the existing lease to benefit both the Club and Village residents.

The Club, which performs substantial work for the Village each year on the Hudson River waterfront outside of its own location, will also pay an annual fee of \$20,000 which will



escalate over time to \$30,000 followed by a 1% increase thereafter.



The Club will continue to sponsor village-wide river-related events through out the year and has opened up a new trail extension to Croton Landing Park. Among the events currently offered are river-related environmental education lectures, annual Veterans luncheons, July 4th and New Year's celebrations.

Spring Break LEGO Program

During the Spring Break from school, the Recreation Program is offering a **LEGO! Build, Play & Create** class. This class is designed for youth in grades 1 to 6 who really like to build. Participants will select models from many different themes like **THE LEGO MOVIE**, Star Wars, The Hobbit and more! Each student will take home a project.

The class will be held on Wednesday, April 16 from 9 am to 3 pm in the Municipal Building Community Room. The registration deadline is April 9; \$70 res/\$85 nonres. Each student should bring a non-perishable lunch as no one will be permitted to leave for lunch.

SNOWMAN CONTEST WINNERS!

The Recreation Dept.'s annual winter contest had two winners. The Snowman contest winner was Gabriella Malgieri while the winner of the Snow Sculpture contest was Dillon O'Keefe. Each winner received a gift certificate to Capriccio's II.

