

Village of Middleport Annual Spring Newsletter - May 2013

The Village of Middleport welcomed Brian Belson on February 1, 2013, to replace Tom Arlington, who retired from the position of Code Enforcement Officer at the end of December 2012. Mr. Belson has several years' experience in the Code Enforcement area, and he brings that expertise to the Village.

You will be seeing a lot of him in the Village as he checks out properties for violations of Village code, to help ensure that Middleport remains a beautiful place in which to reside. Remember, if you have an issue, please do not hesitate to contact him regarding it. He will be at the Village Hall most Saturday mornings from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. During the week, he will be available by appointment Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday evenings. He may be reached to leave a message at (716) 735-3303, ext 16 or via email at Code.Enforce@villageofmiddleport.org.

Mr. Belson would like to remind all Village residents about:

- **Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms:** it's time to replace the batteries in these alarms if you didn't do it when the clocks changed in March. If your smoke or carbon monoxide alarm is 10 years old or older, it should be replaced.
- **Premises Identification:** Village Code requires that new and existing buildings shall have approved address numbers, building numbers, or approved building identification plainly legible and visible from the street. Numbers shall be a minimum of 4 inches. Remember, the Middleport Fire Company's Junior Firefighters are still selling reflective house numbers that fit this description. Order forms are available at the Village Hall or by downloading from the Village's website at www.villageofmiddleport.org.
- **Open Burning:** Middleport enforces the open burning laws of the Niagara County Health Dept. and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. **PLEASE NOTE:** burning trash (newspaper, paper, glass and plastic), chemically treated wood (pressure treated), and plywood is prohibited. The NCHD's Sanitary Code allows fires in outdoor grills and outdoor fireplaces for the purpose of preparing food. Campfires and fires used solely for recreational purposes and when a public health nuisance is not created are also permissible. Campfires shall be self-contained and limited to four (4) logs of dry wood, not to exceed 18 inches in length and 6 inches in diameter. Should a complaint be received, your fire becomes a public nuisance, and you will be told to extinguish it. Refusal to do so, could land you in court.

- **Building Permits:** New York State continually changes the requirements for building permits. Before you renovate, build, or install anything on your property (including a swimming pool), please contact Mr. Belson for guidance on the matter.

HAVE YOU CHECKED OUT the Village's website lately? There is a lot of information available there, including the 2013 NC Rabies Clinic Schedule, and you might just get a question or two answered! Find us at www.villageofmiddleport.org. Think something's missing & should be added? Contact Rebecca at the Village Hall with your suggestion(s).

FAQs for the Clerk's Office:

- **I'd like to pay my water/sewer and/or tax bill electronically. Do you take electronic payments?**
At this time, we are unable to take electronic payments, but we hope to offer this service in the future. At present, you do have the option to set up electronic banking through your bank and make your payments through their electronic bill paying services. If you do this, remember to make a payment at least 7 days prior to the due date, as it can take that long for a check to be cut and sent to us. Regardless of the date on the check, your payment is logged in on the day it is received as the envelope arrives without a postmark. If that date is after the due date, a penalty will be assessed to your account.
- **Does the Clerk's Office take credit or debit cards for payments?**
At this time we are unable to process debit or credit cards for payments. We hope to change that in the future, as well. We will accept a credit card check at present, along with cash, personal check, or money order.
- **I'm a landlord and want the water/sewer bill sent to my tenant. Will you do that?**
We will send a copy of the water/sewer bill to a tenant *as a courtesy*, but the original bill must be in the property owner's name and sent to the property owner. Please note that it is the owner's responsibility to make sure the water/sewer bill is paid. If a tenant defaults on a bill, the amount will be added to the property's Village tax bill as required by **NYS Village Law § 11- 1118**.

PLEASE BE CONSIDERATE OF YOUR NEIGHBORS if you hang out windchimes. What may be a lovely sound to you, just might be very annoying to them. Check with your neighbors to see if the chimes are bothering them on occasion. It's the neighborly thing to do!

If solicitors come to your door selling something, they must have a permit **issued by the Village**. If they do not, please refer them to the Clerk's Office or report them to the Police Department. Put a notice where it can clearly be seen advising "NO SOLICITORS" if you don't want door-to-door

salespeople stopping at your residence. This notice allows the police to enforce the local law enacted in 2011 which prohibits trespassing. Religious, not-for-profit (i.e., Boy and/or Girl Scouts, etc.) or political visitors may still stop, though.

We get calls at the Village Hall regarding a neighbor's dog being left out without adequate protection. So, FYI **NYS Agriculture and Markets Law § 353-b** requires that any person who owns or has custody or control of a dog that is left outdoors provide them with appropriate shelter. Appropriate shelter is currently defined as a structurally sound housing facility that is: insulated, has a waterproof roof; and is large enough to allow the dog to stand up, lie down, and turn around. The law also requires that there be a shaded area away from direct sunlight that is accessible to the dog at all times. Violations can trigger a series of escalating fines, which the court can reduce by an amount the owner or custodian proves he or she has spent to correct the deficiencies in the dog's shelter.

As a dog owner, it is also your responsibility to make sure adequate food and water are available to your pet(s), especially water in the summer. Be considerate of your neighbor and do not leave your dog(s) out barking or whining for long periods of time. Complaints may be lodged at any time of the day, and the Police will take action if a complaint is received. Responsible pet owners make for happy pets & happy neighbors!

SUMMER SWIM CLASSES will be held from July 1 through July 19, 2013, and July 22 through August 9, 2013. This program is for children 6 months & older who reside in the Royalton Hartland School District. Sign up will be held on Saturday, June 8, 2013, from 9 – 11:30 a.m. at the Village Hall. Watch for notices to be sent home with children in grades Kindergarten through 6th. Parents/guardians will be required to complete a hold harmless agreement and provide proof of health insurance. If you do not have a child in school, call the Village Hall at (716) 735-3303 if you need more information.

THE SUMMER RECREATION PROGRAM IS EXPANDING!

Starting this year, the rec program will now be held for **5 weeks!** This program is for **Village residents only** entering Kindergarten through 6th grade. The program will run from July 8 through August 9, 2013. Signup sheets will be available at the Village Hall or by downloading from the Village's website. Parents/guardians must also sign a hold harmless agreement & provide proof of health insurance coverage for their child(ren). **Please note:** there is a limit of 30 children, and applications will NOT be accepted after the program starts.

REMINDERS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

BRUSH: will be chipped each Monday **except for the months of January, February and March.** Brush is to be placed at the curb on Sunday evenings, butt site toward the street, stacked no more than 4 feet high. Please do not place roots, stumps, vines or rose bushes out for chipping. **Failure to follow this advice can cause all of the brush to be left at the curb.**

Continually leaving brush at the curb too early can be cause for citation of the Village's yard maintenance law. When tree or lawn work is performed by a private contractor, they should take away the debris.

WOOD CHIPS: Wood chips are available for Village residents' yard use. Please call Dan Dodge at 735-3303 for arrangements.

LEAVES: in the fall, leaves are to be raked to the edge of the street and left in open piles. **Any other time they are to be bagged and placed out with garbage.**

Vehicles are prohibited from driving on the grass on Village parks. Please do not take motorized vehicles onto the grass at Rotary Park or at Margaret Droman Park as they can cause considerable damage to the grounds.

THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS may delay
▪ refuse/recycle pickup in the Village by one day: NEW
YEAR'S DAY, MEMORIAL DAY, INDEPENDENCE DAY,
LABOR DAY, AND CHRISTMAS. If regular collection is on
or follows any of these holidays, collection will be one day
later. If you're not sure, call the Clerk's Office at (716)
735-3303 to verify when pickup will be. **WE REMIND YOU**
that your refuse/recycling should not be placed to the
curb before 6:30 pm the day before pickup.
Due to an increase in costs, **replacement recycle**
bins are now \$15 a piece. According to the contract with
Modern Disposal, only one recycle bin is permitted at
each address for pickup. Replacement bins may be
purchased at the Village Hall.

Here's how to contact your elected or appointed Village officials:
(anonymous complaints will not be addressed. Confidentiality will be observed if requested)

Mayor Richard Westcott: mayorwestcott@villageofmiddleport.org or (716)735-7717

Deputy Mayor Tom Conley: trusteeconley@villageofmiddleport.org or (716)735-7332

Trustee Wayne Blumrick: trusteeblumrick@villageofmiddleport.org or (716)735-9622

Trustee Rebecca Hinkson: trusteehinkson@villageofmiddleport.org or (716) 341-0106

VILLAGE CLERK'S OFFICE – (716) 735-3303

Clerk-Treasurer *Rebecca A. Schweigert*
Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Mon. to Fri.
Email: ClerkTreasurer@villageofmiddleport.org

POLICE DEPARTMENT – 735-3373

Police Chief *John J. Swick*
Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Mon. to Fri.
Non-emergency calls: 735-3700
Emergency calls: 911
Email: MiddleportPD@villageofmiddleport.org

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT – (716) 735-3373

Village Coordinator *Daniel A. Dodge*
Hours: 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Mon. through Fri.
Email: MiddleportDPW@villageofmiddleport.org

CODE/ZONING ENFORCEMENT – 735-3303 ext. 16

Brian Belson
Office Hours: 9 am to 11 am, Saturdays
Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday evenings by appt.
Email: Code.Enforce@villageofmiddleport.org