

The Piermont Newsletter

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WINTER 2010

Sea Level Rise And Our Evolving Coastline

After a long dry summer during which the north parking lot was leveled and graveled without serious intervention by the neighboring Hudson and the blacktop was topped off and neatly striped, the parkers whom the construction process had scattered all over the village returned to a tidy ordinary-looking parking lot, full of hope that the worst was behind them. And then, in early October, as a succession of low pressure systems moved slowly up the coast, the north parking lot repeatedly turned into what some wags took to calling Sanders Lake in honor of the Village's mayor. It was back to business almost as usual for Piermont whose romance with its tidal river is the story of an evolving coastline, a coastline that has in the past been pushed out into the river by a lust for additional solid land and is now with increasing frequency being pushed back into the community by the rising tides.

The repeated arrival of tides in the

newly improved parking lot is the result of several factors, one of which is that at very high tide the lot sits lower than the neighboring river. Thus the drains that carry storm water into the river, also carry the river back into the storm drains when the water is high enough. A second cause of the flooding is that these invading peak tides are higher and more frequent than they used to be because of sea level rise due to global warming. But the third reason the parking lot in particular is so vulnerable is that it is part of the land that used to belong to the Hudson.

Below is a picture of Piermont taken from somewhere near the north edge of what is now Flywheel Park, showing children swimming in a bay now occupied by the Community garden, Parelli Park and the parking lot. The Mercurio house at 563 Piermont Avenue, the house in which Anna Hickey and her siblings grew up is right in the middle of the picture with the now-

demolished Pagnozzi house next door, and—visible across the street—the three story building that is now the VFW Hall. Anna remembers that her family used to take ashes out the back door to dump in the reeds close behind the house.

An 1876 Rockland County Atlas owned by the library shows the river close to the houses, and maps from 1893 and 1912 show the coastline unchanged. But a 1927 map shows the land behind those houses extended much further into the river. When Parelli Park was constructed in 1980, the land was built up to be level with the property to the south, protecting from flooding the low lying areas behind it (now the community garden and the parking lot) except when the river, moving back into what was once its territory, poured over the boardwalk or into the outlet from the storm drains and back onto the former river bank. The river has a long history

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Piermont, N. Y., circa 1930. Children swimming at the current site of Parelli Park, the Community Garden, and parking lot.

President's Corner



Let's preserve downtown Piermont for future generations!

That may soon be possible because the Village Board is again about to tackle the red-hot topic of historic preservation. The last time around Piermonters rose up and shouted no. Now the Board is planning a much more modest 2.0 Version.

On the first go around people feared—with some justification—that if their homes were in an historic district they might eventually have a problem. They worried that they would have to satisfy the demands of an elitist Historic Preservation Board before they could make changes to their homes.

This time only a very few parts of Piermont would be historic zones. The law would stop owners in those areas from tearing down their buildings. It has no other restrictions and adds no special boards.

We think the first area the Trustees should designate is the one block stretch that most Piermonters call Main Street. (It is actually Piermont Avenue between Ash Street and Tate Avenue.) That block, especially its west side, defines our lovely little village more than any other single stretch.

That unique mix of 19th and early 20th century buildings is the heart of Piermont. Unbelievably, we almost lost them all in the 1960s. Those were the days when President Lyndon Johnson and his Great Society were handing out generous grants to municipalities that wanted to rip down blighted buildings and replace them with new structures.

Main Street's buildings were in sad state. Most of the stores were empty. Almost all of the structures needed major work. Our Mayor at the time wanted to take a wrecking ball to all of it and build what we today call a strip

shopping mall.

Fortunately, it didn't happen. If it had, downtown Piermont would be a totally charmless place. Instead, those empty stores and apartments over them all have tenants. Our Main Street is alive with tourists and residents every weekend. Imagine how different it would have been.

No one is likely to do that to Main Street today but an ambitious restaurateur might come in and buy a number of buildings, rip them down and build a large restaurant. A retailer could make a similar move. Likely? No. Possible? Sure.

If the Village Board designates Main Street as an historic district, we can be sure that Piermont will retain its unique flavor and charm for future generations to enjoy. That's what historic preservation is all about, isn't it?

~Bob Samuels

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Piermont Considers Check Valve For North Parking Lot To Control Flooding

The village is considering the installation of a large, expensive check valve to alleviate the flooding that occurs during very high tides and storm surges in Piermont's North Parking Lot. Piermont Mayor Chris Sanders is skeptical. "I am not opposed to the installation of the valve in the North Parking Lot but I am concerned about its cost and effectiveness," said Mayor Sanders. "We put in a check valve on Bridge Street behind the post office when we rebuilt it and the street still floods." Critics say that this flooding has little to do with the valve. They point out that the retaining wall on this part of the Sparkill Creek is just too low and the water comes over it.

"My biggest concern," the Mayor continued, "is that we will spend the money to put in a valve in the North Parking Lot and that there will still be flooding."

The Bridge Street valve cost between \$9,000- and \$10,000. The North Parking Lot is a much larger area so a check valve constructed there would be more costly—perhaps more than double the price of the Bridge Street installation.

This check valve would prevent the inflow of water through the mechanism when there is an abnormally high tide, even though water would probably seep into the lot through a variety of cracks and crevices in the ground. Meanwhile, when the tide recedes, the valve would automatically open and quickly drain any water in the parking lot. Similarly, if there were a large rain storm and water cas-

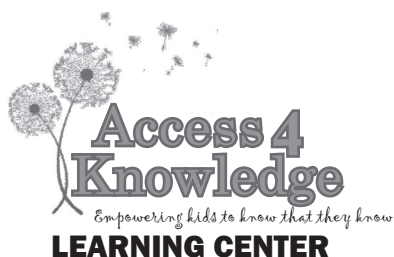
caded down Ash Street, across Piermont Avenue and into the parking lot, the check-valve would open and release that water immediately or as the tide receded.

When the North Parking Lot was originally constructed, the village anticipated that it would occasionally flood. "We had no illusion that we were going to overcome nature, none at all," said the mayor. "We wanted to mitigate flooding as much as possible but we knew we were not going to stop it. When the parking lot was finished, a new outflow drainage line was installed to handle the surface water on the lot. That line drains all of the water from Ash Street and areas on lower Piermont Ave as well."

Although the mayor is unwilling to pay for the valve out of village funds, Piermont has submitted a grant application for money to purchase and install the valve. Should that grant be approved, the village would go forward with the installation.

The mayor said that there are discussions underway at the village level about what to do about high tides and flooding looking out 20 years. "We must come up with a 20-year plan but this requires more than talking, it requires action. We need to look at the infrastructure improvements that will be needed and at what cost. This infrastructure is likely to be far more costly than the village can afford. Perhaps we need to consider a regional solution to the problem."

~Ron Derven



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Bob And Rosemary Cone



The Cones at the Griffith Observatory in LA, tracking their place under the stars.

After more than 40 years in Piermont, Bob and Rosemary Cone have moved away. They sold their house on Franklin Street in September and have hit the open road with the goal of visiting their children on the west coast this fall and finding a way to keep warm during the winter.

"It's an adventure, better than sitting home," said Bob. After driving across the United States, they stayed in Oregon with their son, Robert and his wife Loretta, who had brought the Cones their first grandchild, Autumn, earlier this year. They have continued by travelling to visit their daughter, Maggie, in Los Angeles and friends in Arizona. Later they will figure out where to settle down-- at least temporarily.

Bob and Rosemary have been married for 58 years. He hails from Cincinnati; she from Miami. After graduating from the University of Cincinnati as an English major, Bob came to New York and opened an advertising agency. He met Rosemary in Greenwich Village and they married there.

The Cones bought their first house on Hudson Terrace in 1962, when Piermont was a factory town with ten bars and few civic graces. "We bought the house without realizing they had a smoke-belching factory down the hill," Rosemary said. Later they would move to Franklin Street, where they lived for 38 years.

The Cones developed a deep interest in the community. Bob was one of the founders of the Piermont Civic Association and the first editor of the Piermont Newsletter. The PCA volunteers planted trees along the west side of Piermont Avenue. They raised money and put up a gazebo and jungle gyms, turning Kane Park into a child-welcoming oasis. Bob was responsible for organizing the Bluegrass Festivals, popular for many years.

Bob ran his advertising agency in Manhattan for 20 years, but then developed a curiosity about photographic chemistry. He was not a chemist by education, but by reading books, looking up patents in the NY Public Library and experimenting with many trial by error samples, he formulated a group of photographic products, which he then started to manufacture on premises in Piermont. He called his company Rockland Colloid. One product, called Liquid Light, is a photographic emulsion that can be painted on most any surface. It is used by many innovative photographers, and forms the image of the largest photograph ever made, in an airplane hangar in California.

Rosemary managed the financial and distribution ends. They made their mom-and-pop endeavor into an international business with clients ranged from Reikjavic, Iceland to Melbourne, Australia. In recent years, they've turned over more and more of the business to their son, Robert, who conducts the manufacturing operation in Oregon.

The Cones have been interested in growing plants, ranging from mushrooms to orchids in a greenhouse Bob built on the south side of their house on Franklin Street, which they bought in 1976. They were active farmers in the Piermont community garden. Rosemary became a master gardener accredited by the Cornell Cooperative.

Bob was in the horse cavalry (really) during the late days of WWII where he was taught Morse code. He was one of the first GI's in Japan after the war. He later became a ham radio operator and with a more modern technology learned HTML to put his business ads on line. A whiz at crossword puzzles, He enjoys anagrams as a language sport. He named his 39-foot Pierson sailboat Anagram. Bob and Rosemary spent many winters sailing in the Bahamas. They came in second in a race from St. Petersburg, to Havana.

Bob's ability to figure out the concept of a project and then make it work is remarkable. This skill was challenged when Anagram sank at anchor in a Bahamas harbor. The boat, unin-

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The Piermont Community Gardener

It's December, and the proverbial frost is on the pumpkin. For many gardeners it's time to get cozy on the couch and read seed and gardening catalogues. Below you will find a brief introduction to eight of the many great seed and gardening catalogues used by Community Gardeners, as well as a couple of outstanding vegetable choices.

Fedco is a co-op of seed growers and garden suppliers. They sell: seeds for vegetables, herbs and flowers; bulbs; fruit and nut trees; books; gardening supplies and much more. This is my go-to catalogue. Whether you have a few pots on a terrace, a small garden plot or a larger gardening space, Fedco has something for you. You can find Fedco online at: www.fedcoseeds.com. Fedco isn't fancy, but I think it's fabulous.

Community Garden herb garden coordinator, Sandy Sheridan, recommends two catalogues: The Cook's Garden, www.cooksgarden.com, and Well-Sweep Herb Farm, www.wellsweep.com. Well-Sweep's wonderful herb farm

is in Port Murray, New Jersey.

Master gardener and Community Garden co-coordinator Mary Lukens uses many excellent catalogues including Johnny's Select Seeds, www.johnnysseeds.com, Stoke Seeds, www.stokeseeds.com, Seeds of Change, www.seedsofchange.com, and Totally Tomatoes, www.totallytomato.com.

Wondering what to order? Here are two suggestions. For many years, community gardener Ellen Tress has successfully grown a terrific zucchini variety that is perfect for small gardening spaces. This variety is named Raven. You can buy the seeds from one of Ellen's favorite catalogues, Renee's Garden Seeds, www.reneesgarden.com. Raven grows as a compact, bushy plant that produces many, many tasty, zucchini in a smaller space.

Tomatoes? Sungold (or Sun Gold) is a super sweet, orange/gold cherry tomato that everyone seemed to be growing. This delicious variety is a good producer, so you only need a few plants for a great harvest.

When you're ordering seeds, remember that many kinds of seeds stay viable for years when properly stored in the refrigerator.

If you live in Piermont, and you're not a garden member but are interested in joining the Piermont Community Garden, winter is a good time to get on the waiting list. There are usually a few plots that open up each spring. For more information, contact: Mary Lukens at 365-0826.

Note: This year the Piermont Community Garden participated in the Plant a Row for the Hungry project. By the end of 2010, our gardeners will have donated almost 100 pounds of food to various Rockland County food pantries. Individuals can also participate in this program. To find out more, visit the Cooperative Extension's website: www.rocklandcce.org

~Susan Freiman

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From The Library

How much did you spend on your last trip to a major New York City museum? Fifty dollars? A hundred?? Or more? Now the library can help you with that by providing free passes to several of the museums.

Museums presently participating are the Guggenheim, Intrepid, American Museum of Natural History and the Museum of the City of New York. Passes are available to adult (18 years or older) Piermont and Palisades Library patrons in good standing. A current library card is required to check them out and should be taken with you in case the museum also wants to see it. Passes can be borrowed for a period of three days and cannot be reserved or

renewed. They must be returned to our library. Families and individuals can check out one pass at a time, and the passes can be held up to one hour in advance if you call ahead. A late fee of \$1/day will be charged to the borrower if the pass is not returned on time.

Benefits vary from place to place, but typically include free general admission for a specific number of adults and children (as many as six people total!) plus discounts on gift shop and restaurant purchases as well as programs and special shows. Patrons have been delighted with them, regaling us with stories of significant savings and the pleasure of bypassing long ticket lines. We thank the Friends of the Piermont Library for funding this valuable ser-

vice which helps provide greater access to the major museums for members of our community.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Our Annual Gift of Art Show and Sale opened on Sunday, December 5, with a lovely reception, and will continue throughout the month. Please stop by and have a look if you get a chance. Many of our fine Piermont area artists are included, showing pieces that are the right size and price to be considered for holiday giving. A percentage of all sales will go to help support the library's programming budget for the coming year.

Make sure to put Sunday, December 12, at 2 p.m., on your calendar

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for a special **Meet the Author** program with Piermont's own Joan Gussow, often referred to as the matriarch of the locavore movement, who will talk to us about her new memoir, *Growing, Older: A Chronicle of Death, Life, and Vegetables*.

*Growing, Older* begins when Gussow loses her husband of forty years to cancer. Without a partner, she continues growing her own year-round diet while bucking popular notions of how 'an elderly widowed woman' should behave. Gussow's garden becomes teacher, child, therapist, confidant, and friend.

Gussow, in her curious and wryly unflinching manner, uncovers themes of self-reliance and self-restraint, yielding to necessity, and coming to terms with the realities of the natural world." —Chelsea Green Publishers. A founding member of Piermont's Community Garden, Joan has helped lots of Piermonters discover the joys of home grown food and community spirit. This summer, Joan and her upcoming book were profiled in an extensive article in the New York Times (<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/19/garden/19garden.html>)

We'll try to have a good supply on hand – just in time for the holidays!

**Piermont and the Rising Hudson – An Informative Panel Discussion**, featuring panelists Klaus Jacob of Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, a Piermont resident who has organized the discussion, as well as William Ryan, also of Lamont-Doherty, Sacha Spector of Scenic Hudson, and Kristin Marcell, of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, will be held

in the Hudson River Room on **Sunday, March 20** (snow date March 27) from 3 to 5 p.m. This program will explore the impact of the rising sea level on Piermont.

Putting the issue into an historical context, Klaus Jacob writes; "Long before there was a Village of Piermont, Tappan Indians were fishing and living along the shores of the Hudson River, its mean water elevation being some 3 feet lower than today. In the seventeenth century, the first land patents were granted to European settlers. Settlers of mostly Dutch origin established on the "Slote" (lower Sparkill) a ship landing for trade between New York, the prospering Hudson River Valley, and the Sparkill's fertile hinterland in what became the NY/NJ state border region. When the foundations of the Onderdonk House were laid (ca. 1738), the water level of the Hudson was more than 2 feet lower than it is today." Piermont became incorporated as a Village in 1850, and as its population and uses changed over the succeeding years, so did the waterfront and building stock, largely unaware of the rising tides. Between 1856 and now, sea level -- and with it the Hudson—has risen by 16.8 inches (1.4 feet), as measured by the tide gauge at NYC's Battery Park.

Sea level will rise, at an accelerating rate, another 2 to 4 feet by the end of this century, and even faster thereafter, all because of global warming.

How will Piermont survive this onslaught? This panel will provide some scientific, historic, and environmental (climate science) background, as a basis for future considerations about how river communities can develop effective adaptation strate-

gies to cope with a changing climate and dynamic, rising waterfront. The goal is to make communities less vulnerable by smart planning, so they can maintain a healthy relation to the rising river and enjoy a safe, sustainable, and prosperous future."

Don't miss the opportunity to learn about our future prospects from this distinguished panel!

#### IN THE GALLERY

**Black and white photographs by Roger Pellegrini** will be featured in the gallery during January.

Roger Pellegrini was born in New York City in 1948. Both his father and mother were freelance commercial photographers and one of his earliest memories was the red glow of a safe-light in the small apartment kitchen on Perry Street that his parents had converted to a darkroom. During the 1950's and 60's Pellegrini slowly learned all aspects of commercial photography, later working for other commercial photographers as a professional printer and studio manager. Pellegrini also learned to build studio space. During the 1970's, he and his wife Maureen became part of the urban pioneer movement that converted unused commercial space south of Canal Street (now known as Tribeca) into artists' lofts. This interest led them to Piermont where, in 1976, they purchased The Silk Mill on the Sparkill Creek and converted it to loft spaces over a period of ten years.

Pellegrini's interest in Photography itself never waned and he has continued to photograph and print his own work through the years. He has little to say about his own work, believing

*continued on next page*

## PIERMONT P.B.A

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From The Library continued from previous page

that art in general is over-analyzed. As he understands it, "When it's good, there's nothing much to say. A good photograph is its own reward and will silence your mind for a moment."

In February, we are pleased to feature **Lens-Less Photographs: Pinhole Camera Images by Daniel Kazimierski**. About his work, Kazimierski writes: "For the past 27 years, I have been working almost exclusively with a lens-less apparatus. I have always been attracted by the intuitive way one comes to use what is essentially a camera obscura: there is no viewfinder, no shutter, nor any other controls. Through the years, I have built many cardboard and wooden cameras, all of them fitted with a tiny aperture made by drilling a sewing needle into a thin piece of brass. Only a small piece of black tape functions as a shutter. Giving myself over to an unpredictable result, I point the camera, uncover the aperture, and allow the camera to absorb the image. Exposures are lengthy, and I cherish the quiet, meditative moments while the image is formed. Only later on, in the darkroom, that image presents

itself to me."

Daniel Kazimierski has exhibited his work in numerous solo and group shows in the Americas and Europe. His work is in many private and public collections. He taught photography and filmmaking at New York University, International Center of Photography, and other colleges and universities, and led workshops in historical photographic printing processes. Presently he is Head of the Photography Department at Trevor Day School in Manhattan. He and his wife, artist Page Simon, are Piermont residents.

Kazimierski will host an opening reception for the exhibit on Sunday, February 6, from 2 to 4 p.m. All welcome!

In March we will show **ABANDONED: photographs by Christopher Farrell**. Since the day he explored his first abandoned building, Christopher Farrell of Sparkill has been fascinated by the myriad of questions that each one raises: how did the building end up this way? Will it ever again be as it was? Many of the abandoned hospitals, factories, or houses that interest

him have been left as they were the day they were shut down or deserted. Each abandoned site has a past, an unknown span of history filled with pleasant and some rather unpleasant memories. Farrell's photographs honor and document those mostly forgotten places and offer them a second chance to be remembered.

Christopher Farrell, a lifelong resident of Rockland County, is a graduate of SUNY New Paltz with a degree in Photography who works as a freelance photographer.

An opening reception for the exhibit will be held on Sunday, March 6, from 2 to 4 p.m. Again all are welcome!

FIRST FRIDAY FILM SERIES

January: **The Kite Runner** (2007) – Friday, January 7, at 7:30 pm. A heart-wrenching tale of lost friendship and redemption, *The Kite Runner* well serves Khaled Hosseini's best-selling 2003 novel set against the repeated traumas of Afghanistan (from the 1978 Soviet invasion to the Taliban takeover). It also boasts one of the best perfor-

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mances by a child actor (Ahmad Khan Mahmoodzada), you will ever see. Directed by Marc Forster, also starring Homayoun Ershadim, Khalid Abdalla, Zekiria Ebrahimi, *The Kite Runner* is a stunningly beautiful film whose main protagonists you will not soon forget.

February: **Defending Your Life** (1991) -- Friday, February 4, at 7:30 p.m. A near-perfect comedy about the Just-Afterlife, filled with mild jokes and visual gags, yet leavened with sly profundity. Director Albert Brooks plays a yuppie who is killed in a car accident and goes to Judgment City, a kind of post-death waiting room where he, along with thousands of others, are subjected to a trial (complete with prosecutor, defense attorney and judges) to see if he is worthy to advance to the next stage -- or condemned to return to another dreary life on earth. Co-starring Meryl Streep, Rip Torn, Lee Grant, Buck Henry and even Shirley MacLaine!

March: **La Règle du Jeu** (*The Rules of the Game*) (1939) -- Friday, March 4, at 7:30 p. Widely considered one of the two or three greatest ever made, and French director Jean Renoir's mas-

terpiece? This biting and tragic satire set in an opulent country home over a weekend, captures the frenetic emotions of France on the cusp of World War II. This film was recently given a spectacular restoration and rerelease. If you love cinema, you simply must not miss this rare screening of one of the most influential films ever!

All films are FREE and introduced by Marc Farre, who hosts a lively discussion afterward.

Our popular **Toddler Storytime** will continue on Mondays at 11 a.m., and **Moon River Music Together with Catherine** will meet on the third Wednesday of each month at 11:30 a.m. Both are lots of fun and provide a good way for young children and their caregivers to meet one another and learn about the library.

The library is open Monday through Thursday, 10-8 p.m.; Friday, 12-5 p.m., and Saturday, 12-4 p.m., and is closed Sundays except for special programs. For more information, please call 359-4595.

~Grace Mitchell

Winter Reminders From Piermont's Department Of Public Works

With the winter months upon us we would like to remind Village residents to not throw snow from their driveways or walkways onto the streets or sidewalks as it could refreeze and may cause injuries or accidents to both pedestrians and drivers.

Also, if you have a fire hydrant in front of your house you can help the Fire Department by clearing the snow from around the front and sides of the hydrant.

After the holidays our crew will be picking up Christmas Trees on Tuesday January 4th and Tuesday January 18th as part of our tree recycling program.

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Trustee Gussow Makes Her Case

Editor's note: Joan Gussow won re-election in November to a third term as Piermont Trustee. When Joan came before the Piermont Democratic Caucus, to ask to be their candidate, she made a speech, excerpted here, which so accurately and humorously describes the work of a Trustee in this small village,, that we thought we'd share it with our readers.

"What am I good for that you should re-elect me?"

"...since I began my professional life as a Time Magazine researcher, I decided to do my homework by looking through the minutes of the meetings of the last two years to see what I had done.

Now, as those very few of you who come regularly to board meetings know, they are not always a barrel of fun; they are often long and sometimes they're even hostile.

And if you think they're demanding to sit through, just try reading through the minutes where even the few moments of levity and hostility are missing!

Anyway, as far as I could tell from the minutes, my only unique contributions were:

One: my suggestion that we move into the post-modern age with a composting toilet for the skating pond. This idea turned out to be so outrageous that it would have won an unpopularity contest,

And my second, perhaps my most important contribution—long ago assigned to me by Fred Devan—is to offer the motion to adjourn Board meetings. Chris counts on me so much that when I missed a meeting a few weeks ago, he said he considered calling me on his Blackberry to see if I could move for adjournment from home.

But seriously, I believe that most of us who live in Piermont think we are privileged, that it is a very special place. And because it's a special place—not a suburb, but a real village, very close to New York City—it is vitally important to keep it that way, despite all the pressures for change popularity brings.

Of all our responsibilities on the board, that's the one I consider most


vital: to make sure that whatever change occurs does not make the Village lose its special character.

And I realized as I read the minutes, that what I had mostly been engaged in, other than trying to keep asking difficult questions, was to try to be a useful part of a team that had had to make a lot of difficult—and sometimes unpopular decisions.

Our biggest problem this year, of course, was the budget. Which was universally unpopular.


I'll say no more about it other than to point out once again that with all of us working very hard to cut the budget to the bone we managed to increase spending scarcely at all that we kept expenses down while giving employees a small raise—by cutting our own salaries. And that the reason taxes went up was because the recession drastically reduced our income from the State, something over which we had no control.

None of us is happy with the result. But those of us on the board worked very hard to make it as good as possible.




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The second big thing that I worked on closely was the completion of the north parking lot.

Now there are some of us who rather like having parts of Piermont scruffy. And the North parking lot met a lot of our scruffiness needs. But it really wasn't functional—and it flooded regularly.

However, the first plan for it had parking jammed in everywhere—it would have held almost twice as many cars as are there now. And despite the need for parking, we felt it important—in maintaining the character of the village—that the lot not end up looking like a Wal-Mart parking lot. So Chris and I spent a morning in my living room relaying it out and most of our ideas survived relatively intact.

So it's now paved, and by next month will be planted with handsome grasses, by volunteers.

A related activity—a committee on which I sit as a board member has been struggling with setting a parking policy for the entire town—trying to resolve

problems turned up when our new building inspector began trying to enforce our village code and discovered we couldn't give new Certificates of Occupancy because stores on Main Street could not supply the off-street parking required by the code. We haven't finished, but we're getting there.

Another contentious issue the board worked on was setting up a fee schedule for events that took place in the Village and required street closings or extra police and DPW attention—i.e. taxpayer money.

This one looked for a while as if it would defeat us. But it's now in place and functioning well.

Then, we had finally to resolve the fate of the Playgroup which had a long history in the village and for some people a loving one. How do you end a program for little children that simply won't pay its rent when the law requires that village-owned properties cannot allow free use of their facilities by a profit-making enterprise? We all

stepped slowly and gingerly; we were not happy doing it, but we did it. That's what you put us in office to do.

Finally, to end on a happy note. Most people who have lived in the village for any length of time worried a lot about what would happen when Al Bartley, the always dependable head of the DPW decided to retire. And when he did, there was a lot of worry about how we could possibly replace him.

As a member of the Board that decided to entrust Tom Temple with that heavy load, I am very proud. He has done a remarkable job filling giant shoes, managing his crew perfectly through floods and snowstorms and everything else nature could throw at him. Thank you Tom for making the Board that appointed you look good.

So being a trustee is about being on a team. I am happy to have served on the team that accomplished these and other often difficult tasks, and I would ask you to allow me to continue to serve.

Thank you."
Joan Gussow

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Sea Level Rise continued from page 1

here. Test borings in the old parking lot taken when preparations to build the library were going forward found river-edge peat moss more than 100 feet down.

According to Dr. Klaus Jacob, Piermont's resident expert on sea level rise, the river was about 2 feet lower than it is today when the foundations of the Onderdonk House were laid around 1738; present forecasts are that after rising at the rate of about a foot a century, sea level rise will accelerate well beyond that, adding another two to four feet to its present level by the end of our own century, a figure that does not count the often two foot higher tides caused by storm surges. Where will that put the coastline? No serious investigation of that question has been carried out.

However, no Piermont resident who ventures out during one of our significant weather events needs to be told that the combination of rising waters and more intense rainstorms already causes serious flooding, not only in the north parking lot and its environs, but along the tidal portions of the Sparkill Creek, most notably in Bogertown whose streets flood as often as twenty times a year. And there is simply no avoiding the fact that things are going to get worse. The issue is what should be done, and by whom?

Fortunately, in just a few months, we'll have a chance to learn more of the facts from the experts and carefully examine some of the options. On March 20 from 3-5 p.m. the Library will host a panel discussion on the topic "Piermont and the Rising Hudson," organized by Dr. Jacob and featuring experts from Lamont, Scenic Hudson and the State Department of Environmental Conservation. The panelists will lay out what will confront this historic waterfront community and what options exist for what Dr. Jacob calls "progressive adaptation" (for more program details, see "From The Library", this issue.) What the panel hopes to do is encourage the village as a whole to engage in thoughtful, forward looking planning, working to "develop effective adaptation strategies" that will make the community less vulnerable. Save the date!

Bob And Rosemary Cone continued from page 4

sured, was restored from electronics to settee cushions by Bob and Rosemary. It sailed again for many years.

Bob is willing to take chances in life more than most people. They have had a lot of good fortune, a large part of which was their marriage. While most of us settle our lives within the coverage of our insurance policies. Bob and Rosemary have made adventure a policy of their lives. As Bob said, "Most of us have a lot more freedom than we use."

~Fred Burrell



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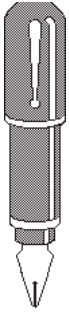
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Reader's Write

"Can't Piermont Do Better?"

Most of us take pride in the fact that we live in a visually attractive village. For this reason, I have been puzzled about why nothing has been done to improve the appearance of the small bridge over the Sparkill Creek (the one next to the Silk Mill apartments and Canzona's market).

My understanding is that the bridge had to be made one-way because it could not safely hold the weight of two vehicles going in opposite directions at the same time. To enforce this restriction, numerous orange and white plastic tubs have been placed around the edge of the bridge. These tubs, which have been in place for several years, are quite unsightly, as anyone who passes this way on car, foot, or bicycle can attest.

It is also my understanding that the village has no present expectation of being able to repair the bridge to enable it to carry two-way traffic again, lacking the funds to do so. That being so, wouldn't it be sensible to replace the plastic tubs with planters and other landscaping that would enforce the same single lane set-up?

Piermont is fortunate to have not only an excellent DPW department, but also a resident landscaper, Dan Sherman, who has said that he would help with this effort if the village's government gave him the go ahead (the bridge just south of the post office has several attractive planters on it that could



Rockland Road Bridge. Photo by Fred Burrell

serve as a model). If necessary, I bet that village residents would chip in to help make this happen—I know I would!

Perhaps if others besides myself let the village board know that they think this eyesore should be remedied, the board will decide to take action

Marjorie Smith

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Piermont Votes

Piermont has 1823 registered voters: 968 Democrats, 348 Republicans, 86 Independence Party, 10 Conservative Party, 3 Working Families Party, 7 Green Party, and 401 voters with no party listed. Of Piermont's registered voters, 1650 vote on a regular basis.

How did Piermont vote in this year's election?

994 of us voted.

Looking at just the votes in the governor's race, we voted 717 for Cuomo, 237 for Paladino, and 21 for other candidates.

How about 2008 Presidential Race?

1387 Piermonters voted.

944 for Obama/Biden, 417 for McCain/Palin, and other candidates shared 15 votes.

Now, how about the 1980 Presidential Race? Piermont was still a factory town.

962 Piermonters voted.


422 for Carter/Mondale, 384 for Regan/Bush, and 98 for Anderson/Lucey.

What a year '80 was, with John Anderson's Libertarian party on the ballot, and Angela Davis running as a vice-presidential candidate on the Communist line.

The Rockland County Board of Election has lots of fascinating data on its website. <http://www.co.rockland.ny.us/BOE/ElectionResults.htm>

Piermont voting records are listed for Piermont's two election districts—Orangetown Election Districts 1 and 33.

~Margaret Grace



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