

The Piermont Newsletter

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The Mayor Speaks For Our Waterways

In Mid-October, Mayor Chris Sanders testified before the State Standing Committee on Environmental Conservation to urge passage of a Sewage Right to Know Law. His testimony was timely, coming at the heels of the very concerning sampling results taken from locations on the Sparkill Creek and Piermont's Hudson River waters this summer by the Hudson River Fisherman's Association.

Mayor Chris Sanders:

"In Rockland County, along the Tappan Zee, the renovation of riverfront communities like the Village of Piermont in the 1980's and 90's was tied to the improving health of the Hudson River. In Piermont, we were successful in making the transition from turning our back on the river, to the public embracing the Hudson as a national treasure.

And while the Village of Piermont was able to transform an early 20th century factory town to a 21st century residential community, we still live with a 19th century wastewater infrastructure. With every large rainfall, raw or untreated sewage continues to overflow into the Hudson River and its tributaries. Many of the sewage outfall pipes are located near "unofficial" beaches and frequently used areas of recreation.

We have reached a divide between reality and perception - perhaps a victim of our success. Most often, the river is the cleanest it has been in decades. Yet there are instances where the news of significant sewage discharges reinforces long held perceptions that even casual contact with the Hudson, at any time, can be unhealthy.

The challenge from this infrastructure will continue for the foreseeable future. According to an EPA survey, the two facilities near Piermont, which have a direct impact on our unique salt water estuary, will need over \$81 million dollars in infrastructure upgrades. Meanwhile, these discharges will continue and their potential impacts on health are not communicated in a way

that is actionable. For instance, in Nyack this summer, the junior sailing camp had to decide whether or not to continue its program after the news of the sewage spill into the Hudson from the North River treatment plant in New York. Missing in the news reports were the details to make good decisions on where and when it is safe to be in the river.

We can increase monitoring by the inclusion of the entire Hudson River estuary, bank to bank, south of Troy into the BEACH act of 2000, (note: think of the Jones Beach water quality alerts) which mandates monitoring and assessment of coastal recreation waters adjacent to points of access by the public, and prompt notification regarding public health and safety. We also need to designate the Hudson as an "outstanding natural resource", specific language that offers greater protection through the Clean Water Act.

We need the public informed with-

out reinforcing the fear that the river is a septic catastrophe, lest the public throw up its collective hands and turn its back on the river again, rolling back decades of community action, environmental and economic progress. I believe that an accessible flow of constant data on the water quality of the Hudson will serve to engage the public in this continual effort to improve the health of the Hudson River.

Local municipalities need a system to communicate on a consistent basis the health of the river and its tributaries to the general public. We support the effort to enact legislation for daily information that will establish an objective picture, a baseline of the health of the river to aid in recognizing spikes in pathogens. This will help guide us to make the tough political decisions to invest in the infrastructure and continue to improve our environment."

~Christopher Sanders,
Mayor of Piermont



Overflow gushes from sewer outflow connection box on Pier Road during heavy rain. Photo by Margaret Grace

President's Corner



If you haven't yet considered becoming a "Friend" of the Piermont Facebook page you should. The page has become an important village bulletin board. Folks click in to find out what's happening. Many also use it as a virtual street corner where they meet to brag, gossip, and gripe and show their best photos.

Piermont singer-songwriter Marc Farre started the page about three years ago, but it took Hurricane Irene to make it popular. With the big storm threatening, membership quadrupled. Fearful residents, desperate for local information, found the page and started checking it for its regular updates.

Most television and radio stations were making it seem as if the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse were already at end of the pier, set to destroy our little village. But if you were reading the cautious forecasts Klaus Jacob was making on the Piermont page, you would have known that things were going to be bad, but we would survive. Jacob, a retired Lamont scientist who lives in the oft-flooded Bogertown section of Piermont, has long sent high water warnings to his neighbors. For the first time, its regular updates were available to all.

While Irene raged, and after, there were announcements from our Police and Fire Departments and Department of Public Works. Marc and others posted photos of flooded houses, swamped streets and downed trees so that those who were stuck in their houses could see what was happening.

And when it was all over, many put messages of thanks on the site to the volunteers and village employees who had worked tirelessly through the storm. They had performed magnificently, as they always do, but this time the outpouring of gratitude was visible to everyone. As Piermont began pulling itself together, Marc posted notices from FEMA about financial aid.

Bulletin boards can be fascinating and even charming. This one is no exception. In a typical posting, a woman is looking for, "a 2 bedroom apt with no fee in Piermont that allows pets." Another warns, "...please be aware, this is tree-falling season on the [Erie] path. The ground has become so saturated that some trees just give way. Between that and the trees that are already dead and overloaded with vines, there's a real issue up here on what we Upper Piermonters refer to as Our Sidewalk."

Someone wants to know about reliable movers. Almost immediately, she gets several recommendations. The same thing happens when a person seeks a reliable pet sitter. Recommendations are quickly posted. Noisy motorcycles are driving Marc Farre crazy and he rants about them. The site explodes with sympathetic comments from other Piermonters. They are livid about the unbearable racket the machines make and other traffic problems. I post a comment suggesting that people bring their complaints to the next Village Board meeting. (They are held at 7:30 pm on the first and third Tuesdays of every month. They reserve the first agenda item for the public to comment on any item not on the agenda.) Mayor Sanders, who obviously had been eyeing the page, seems surprised when no one shows up that Tuesday to gripe about the motorcycles. So am I. The meeting passes without any traffic discussion. The page is a great outlet but complaining on it about village issues doesn't change anything. When a Piermonter comes to a meeting and speaks the Village Board listens. If a group of angry citizens with the same complaint backs that person up, it usually takes action. It's power to the people, but the people must show up.

~ Bob Samuels

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New On The Board: Meet Piermont's Incoming Trustee: John A. Gallucci, Jr., Esq.

John Gallucci will become the newest trustee on the Piermont Village Board in January, joining our mayor, Christopher Sanders and fellow trustees Joan Gussow, Audie Moran and Mark Blomquist. He will be replacing Steven Silverberg, who did not run for a second term as trustee.

While new to the Village Board, John has lived in Piermont his entire life and both his parents grew up in the village as well. John lives in a lovely Victorian home with his wife Ann, son John and daughter Caitlin, and where he maintains a legal practice.

John says his decision to join the Board, which provides operational oversight of Piermont, is inspired by his love of the village. "Piermont is my home and has a special character, which is kind of a patchwork quilt—we have such a blend of different kinds of people and homes. We will have to balance a sense of continuity as well as inevitable change as the village continues to evolve."

Another motivator for John to get involved is his desire to give back to the community. He explains that growing up, he was very influenced by President John F. Kennedy's



John Gallucci. Photo by Fred Burrell

famous inaugural speech, in which he proclaimed, "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." John sees the role of Trustee as a way to make a meaningful contribution to our community.

Admitted to the New York Bar in 1978, John's practice includes a range of legal services, including real estate, banking work and estate law. "I will definitely bring my legal background to the Trustee role," he explains, "not to supplement what the Village Attorney does, but rather, as a way of thinking and analyzing issues."

John was commissioned to conduct a study to examine combining the police forces of Nyack and Piermont

more than ten years ago, and the insights from that experience was a big factor in his decision to join the Village Board today. "I was quite surprised by the data, when I looked at how little money Piermont would save by disbanding our police force," he said. "I intend to bring the same kind of data-based decision making to my role as Trustee, whether we are considering the budget, governance or other issues before the board."

In this time of tight financial constraints, John recognizes that there will be many trade-off decisions that the board will have to tackle. He expects that his broad business background, combined with his legal training, will help inform the issues that he will be called upon to address with his fellow trustees. At the same time, his perspective is that Piermont citizens should play an active role around emerging issues. "I feel strongly that people shouldn't bring up complaints without also offering potential solutions." John promises that when Piermonters bring up issues before the Village Board, he will listen to their concerns, and expects that they will also offer ideas about how to solve problems—a perspective no doubt shaped by the JFK speech he heard decades ago.

~Marjorie Derven



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Surviving The White Waters



Karen Brown and Bob Samuels. Photo by CharlieSamuels.com

Bob Samuels opens his riveting soon-to-be-published memoir, *Blue Water, White Water*, with a short anecdote about a dinner party celebrating his 70th birthday. He gives no hint of his physical status until the final line when he takes his place at a beautifully set table and switches off his electric wheelchair. It seems only appropriate then to open with an anecdote of my own about this remarkably happy man and his bravely touching, terrifying, and often profanely funny book about his life-changing encounter thirty years ago with Guillain-Barré syndrome.

A couple of years ago, Bob parked the wheelchair-accessible van in which his companion Karen Brown and myself were passengers, across from Fiesta Mexico on Route 303. We had descended to the sidewalk and were watching the traffic in preparation for crossing when Bob sped out onto the highway in his wheelchair as Karen vainly called out “Bob, watch it!” He made it. Clearly he had opted for a survivor’s life that was daring, as well as full.

On the morning of December 2, 1981, after waking up with a slight weakness in his left leg that seemed to grow worse as he prepared for the day, Bob found himself in the emergency room at Nyack Hospital, frustrated by the thought of missing a day of work. By the end of the day he was in intensive care, with a tentative diagnosis—later confirmed—of Guillain-Barré, a syndrome that destroys the fatty sheaths around the motor nerves, impairing their ability to transmit information.

By evening, now too weak to pick up the phone, he is moved to intensive care and hooked up to a urinary catheter. Then, when his wife Rikki has gone to dinner, he is put on a respirator which they had not been warned would make it impossible for him to speak to her when she returned. In the next few weeks, desperate to communicate with her, with rare visitors (Rikki is keeping everyone away as he requests) and most of all the with nurses and doctors on whom he is helplessly dependent, he can do nothing but blink or move his eyes back and forth—sometimes frantically—to attract attention to anything that’s going wrong. And for a long time lots of things go wrong.

As a newspaper man, and later Editor of a company magazine called *The Texaco Star* (called an “oil slick” by one friend), Bob had lived a happy, healthy, and successful 45 years. Raised mostly in Rockland, he attended school in Piermont until he went to Nyack High. He met his wife-to-be Rikki while reporting at the *White Plains Reporter Dispatch*, one of a succession of newspaper jobs (including stints on two New York City dailies). After their marriage in 1961, they produced a son. Twenty years later, with Texaco, Bob was enjoying the opportunity to travel for his magazine.

Now, abruptly, he was helpless. In the often terrifying weeks that followed his hospitalization, he faced successively more devastating realizations: first that he might

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never "fully recover," then that he might not have full use of his hands, next that he might never be able to walk without a cane, and finally, that all of these things and worse were true; he had permanently lost the use of most of his muscles, and was a quadriplegic.

After 5 days in Nyack hospital, 4 weeks at Helen Hayes for rehabilitation and finally for 5 months at Rusk in New York, he gradually learned to breathe and eat on his own, and to sit up without crushing pain. Nine months after he and Ricki had driven away from their Kings Highway home, he went from Rusk back to Piermont, to a new wheelchair-accessible house on Ferdon, where he began a different life.

Near the beginning of his ordeal, he remembered thinking that what was happening to him was a story he might one day write down, so six months after he came home, using rubber-tipped plastic sheaths on his index fingers to assist his weakened hands, Bob began writing that story on an early IBM home computer.

Three things are remarkable about what took a year to put into writing: the first is how rich and suspenseful he makes a story that might seem at first to be predictable, so limited in cast and setting; the book is a page-turner. The second is how convincingly exact are the memories stuffed into Bob's brain box throughout the months when he could

neither talk nor write, including every command he could not utter and every unspeakable but passionately-thought expletive hurled silently at insensitive nurses.

And finally, there is Bob's remarkable ability to keep this account of lots of painful and horrifying events from being painful and horrifying, to keep the reader absorbing much more than you thought you would ever want to know about having your mucous secretions suctioned to prevent your drowning in your own fluids, about synchronizing your breathing with a ventilator, about suffering day after day as your unpadded coccyx is rubbed raw on a carelessly unpadded shower chair, and about confronting the possibility that your wheelchair might hurtle down a steep incline when a nurse too weak to hold it insists on taking you for a walk.. Bob lets you know what it feels like to be helpless, but it never really gets you, or him, down. He says in the book that he's always been an incredible optimist. It shows.

Blue Water, White Water is published by Up the Creek Publishing, Bob's own creation. It is available at The Outside In Piermont, as well as on line at Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com. Bob will be reading from the book at the Piermont Library on December 18th, 2-4pm.

~Joan Gussow

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Gardening And Weather, Part 1

This was a year of weather extremes. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Cornell University's Northeast Regional Climate Center, we had a record setting wet spring followed by a hot late spring and early summer which included multiple days with temperatures over 100 degrees combined with dry weather interspersed with scattered severe storms. Then we had a very wet August - even before Irene and Lee. Add in Irene and Lee, which added more rain and severe flooding to our weather woes, followed by more rain and high water in later September and early October, and you have a potentially disastrous gardening season.

So how did our gardens fare? Here are a few summaries based on earlier summer observations and conversations with gardeners, plus an October walk through the Piermont Community Garden, Joan Gussow's garden and the Cropsy farm in New City, and

October conversations with a Cropsy farm team member and a group of Piermonters who garden at home or in the Piermont Community Garden.

There are people who wait all year for the first, homegrown, summer tomato. For these gardeners, tomatoes define gardening and summer. Luckily for them, this year, tomatoes, peppers and eggplants all did well. In Piermont and at the Cropsy Farm, this was a banner year for all three. For many, harvests were bountiful. Some even said fantastic - the best in ages. From my conversations with gardeners and from what I observed, tomatoes, peppers and eggplants were often weighted down with copious amounts of produce to harvest. As for the late summer rains and flooding, many people's plants did suffer.

Cool weather loving plants in the brassicas family - cabbage, kale, broccoli, collards, kohlrabi, Brussels sprouts, radishes, etc. - are also popular with local gardeners. This year, brassicas lovers in our area planted

widely and well, including some interesting varieties of kale. Redbor, which I saw for the first time last year, when it did really well, never seemed to flourish this year. A new and beautiful kale variety that is a cross between Red Russian and Lacinato did really well, but was killed by the flooding from Irene in the two places I had seen it growing. Fortunately, the old standby, Red Russian, a beautiful plant and a Community Garden favorite, seemed to hold up despite the weather and the flooding, and did fine.

For some gardeners, chard, seemed to take a hit, not thriving as much as in past years. For others it did fine. Chard is a biennial, bolting and blooming in the second year. However, this year, at the Cropsy farm, many of the first year chard plants bolted and bloomed in the 100 plus heat of July. Beets, which are one of chard's many cousins in the Goosefoot plant family, seemed to weather the weather and did OK. Beets can be harvested in the

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any season, so for our local three and four season gardeners, the beet crop is important.

Carrots, parsnips, celery, dill, parsley, celeriac, caraway and fennel, are all in the Umbelliferae plant family. Despite being flooded severely, many of the carrot, celery, parsley, fennel and parsnip plants that I saw survived the flooding. Additionally, before Irene and Lee flooded many gardens, it had been a great year for parsley, with huge plants leading to generous "cut and come again" harvests all summer long.

Lettuce is another cool weather crop which people plant in the spring and then again in the later summer/early fall. The early season crop was fantas-

tic, and those gardeners who had a dry enough plot to plant a late summer/fall crop will have another good harvest too.

When we work out our garden plan for the year we can never know exactly what that the weather will be or how it will affect our garden. I always hedge my bets by planting a wide variety of plants - and usually it's a good year for a few things.

Thanks to: Elaine Brown, Arielle Bareket, Mary Weitzman, Karen Brown, Lisa Kaess, Joan Gussow, Frances Wells.

~Susan Freiman

Piermonsters!

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Sparkill Watershed Alliance Aims To Clean Up Creek



Sparkill Watershed Alliance volunteers collect water samples.

The Sparkill Watershed Alliance, a group of citizens concerned about the Sparkill Creek and watershed, recently began its second year of work. Given the commitment of the group and its diverse talent, it may well be the organization that finally gets the creek cleaned up.

For those who do not know, the creek is a much larger body of water than what is seen in Sparkill and Piermont. It is a bi-state creek nine miles long. The creek's headwaters are in Tackamack Park on Clausland Mountain in Orangetown. In the clean waters on Clausland, small creatures thrive that are typically found only in the pristine waters

of the Catskills. From Clausland, the water cascades down to South Greenbush Road, turns south and follows a path along Route 303, travelling down to Northvale, NJ. It then horseshoes back and flows into Sparkill, the Piermont Marsh and the Hudson River.

Laurie Seeman, a West Nyack resident and water environmentalist, is the Alliance's founder. Back in 2002, she started a summer day camp program called the Strawtown Art & Garden Studio (www.strawtownstudio.com) as "a place where children 7 to 12 could grow and flourish through artful discovery of the natural world," according to the camp's website. The first studio

was located at the base of Hook Mountain on the Hudson River. Since then, the Studio has moved to different locations and its programming has been largely shaped by the land and water features of each site.

During the summer of 2010, the Studio was in the Udelco Building on Greenbush Road in Orangeburg, not far from the headwaters of the Sparkill Creek. "We adopted a section of the creek on South Greenbush Road that ran behind the old cemetery and beautified it," said Laurie. "I was in the creek with my summer waterways education program children in August 2010 when one of them said to me, 'Laurie, this water smells really nasty; you need to tell the adults that the kids know what they are not doing.' It was at that moment that I saw that I needed to do something about the Sparkill Creek. I needed to take up the cause to clean it up."

Laurie called John Lipscomb, boat captain of Riverkeeper (www.riverkeeper.org). This is a group dedicated to protecting the Hudson River and its tributaries. John visited the camp and brought along his river monitoring equipment that tested for enterococcus, a bacteria found in the human gut and in waters with sewage. He tested the waters of the Sparkill Creek. Acceptable levels of enterococcus in water are 65 parts per 100 milliliters of water. Remarkably, his tests showed a level of 1,285 parts per 100 milliliters.

Laurie discussed the captain's findings with Margie Turrin of Lamont-Doherty laboratories in Palisades. "Margie had worked on Sparkill Creek issues in the past. She pointed me in the

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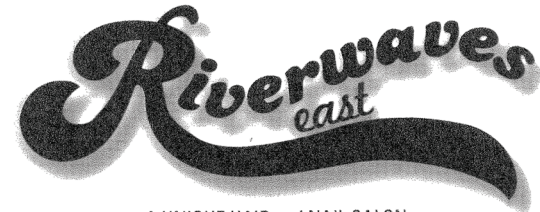


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direction of Larry Vail and Greg Mercurio, two people who had been active in trying to clean up the creek. They led me to others. At the group's first meeting in October 2010, there were 17 people. These were not 17 people simply interested in attending a meeting, but rather people dedicated to finding solutions for the creek," stated Laurie.

Other early supporters of the Alliance included Connie Coker, Rockland County Legislator, Chris Sanders, Mayor of Piermont, among others. Laurie offered a special thanks to her partner at the Strawtown Studio, Joanna Dickey, for her great assistance.

"Our group is in the diagnostic phase right now to see what we can accomplish," said Laurie. Thanks to Riverkeeper, the group was able to begin testing for enterococcus

almost immediately. It monitors the whole creek for the bacteria on a regular basis. Another initial effort is to undertake macro- invertebrate testing of the waters to see what small creatures live in the waters. Rockland County Department of Storm Water holds a half day annual training for citizens to teach them how to monitor the health of local streams. Rockland is one of the only counties in New York State that offers such training. Members of the Alliance have or will take this training.

"Our goal is to put a team together this winter to reach out to the community, increase our numbers and identify ways in which people can take action," said Laurie. Laurie can be reached at (845) 558-0877.

~Ron Derven

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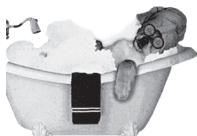
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Piermont For Runners And Walkers

Let me first warn you that I'm a little crazy when it comes to exercise. And living in Piermont makes exercise easy. Go out the door, and you're on your way for a walk or run. The roads are relatively traffic-free, the trails and paths closed to all motor vehicles. And then there are the views: spectacular at almost every juncture.

There are hills for the physically fit, mountain trails for those with the ability to navigate rocks and boulders, and of course the Piermont pier - flat with panoramas of the Hudson and beyond. As we go into winter, the leaves and color are gone, but there's a unique opportunity to look deep into the woods, something that can't be done during the summer.

So here are four of my favorites, with added options for the energetic. I'll give time estimates for each with the assumption that you're moving at a 15 to 16 minute per mile pace (this is exercise, after all). But there's no rule to walk fast, and you'll see a lot more if you slow down. We'll start from Village Hall.

1. Tallman Mountain State Park. (45 minutes). If you're looking for solitude, try this in the early morning quiet of winter. It's probably my favorite. Go south on Piermont Avenue; then turn left after crossing the bridge onto the unpaved path. At the end (about a quarter mile), take the roadway to the right and walk up the hill. Continue straight at the traffic circle and take the first left. After a few hundred yards, turn right onto the bike path. Continue about a mile and a half to Route 9W. Retrace your steps to the starting point. Highpoint: The tops of the trees over the path to 9W form a canopy effect, a kind of cathedral. The effect is more pronounced when the leaves are out, but you'll notice it during the winter too, especially if the branches are covered with snow.

2. Tallman for the energetic. (55 minutes). Proceed as in Walk 1, but at the traffic circle, make a sharp right at the steps onto the steep, uphill hiking trail. At the top, go right and follow the circular road to the downhill road that brings you back to the traffic circle. Turn right and follow the directions in Walk 1 to Route 9W and back. Highpoint: At the north end of circular road, walk over to the bench overlooking the panoramic view of Piermont and the Hudson. Option: If you're a masochist, look for the marked hiking trail to the right just after you enter the path by the bridge. It goes directly up to the bench overlooking the Village. Be careful.

3. The Rail Trail. (35 minutes). If you're looking for variety, this is your walk. Going south on Piermont Ave, take the first right (Tate Avenue) and walk up the sharp hill to the stairs on the left. Take them to the path and continue upward to the road (Ash Street) which you'll cross (watch for the cars) to the station. Take that path (the old Erie Railroad line was here) northward to the bridge over the gorge into Grand View. Option: Continue almost three miles to Nyack. Retrace your steps back. Highlights: Interesting houses to the west, great views of the Hudson to the east.

4. Hills. (50 minutes). Here's my nomination for best workout. Start the same as you did for The Rail Trail, but turn left on Ash Street just before the station. Continue uphill and take the first left (Piermont Place). Take the next left (VFW Way) and circle around to the short downhill paved path to Ash Street. Turn right and continue downhill. Proceed straight at the switchback to Hudson Terrace (great

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views and houses to the right). Proceed about a quarter mile to Ritie Street and turn right. Walk downhill and turn left on Piermont Avenue. Take the next left (Hester Street) and walk up the sharp hill to the end where you turn right on Orchard Street and wind your way down to Piermont Avenue. Turn right and proceed a quarter mile to Bay Street. Turn right and go up the hill. Turn left and continue south on Hudson Terrace and Ash Street to the path across from the station. Return down the path to the village.

Obviously, all this is only a sample of Piermont's great walks. I barely mentioned the Pier because it's so familiar. A highlight sometimes comes in the fall, though it's probably too late for now. If the air is significantly colder than the water, banks of fog roll in from the north,

So get out and explore. The exercise is great, the views even better. Who knows? You may even become an addict like me.

~Richard Benfield

The Front Line

Piermont Police Say Check Car Before Winter

The Piermont Police are reminding village residents to check their cars and other vehicles in November before the winter driving season arrives. "Last year we had quite a bit of snow," said Police Chief Michael O'Shea. "Folks need to make sure that they have adequate levels of anti-freeze in the car, that their snow tires have proper air pressure, and that they are prepared with a snow shovel, flashlight and other necessities in case they get stuck."

With the holiday shopping season here, Chief O'Shea also warns shoppers not to place their wallets or pocketbooks on store counters and leave them unattended. He also recommends that shoppers remove all valuables from cars and always lock the vehicle. While this might seem obvious, the Chief says that 60% of the property crimes occur through unlocked doors and windows.

The Piermont Police Department has obtained a four-wheel-drive Chevy

Tahoe SUV through a grant, thanks to the work of Silvia Welch, the village grant writer, and Detective Brian Holihan, who both did a tremendous job on this project, according to the Chief. "We have been getting more and more weather emergencies in the village in recent years and the Tahoe will be very effective in reaching people during the winter," he says.

Chief O'Shea also notes that the village received a grant for bullet-proof vests in which the federal government will pay 50% of the cost of the new vests. "This type of vest is guaranteed for five years and as they break down we have to replace them. The good news is that now the village will get half that money back. The village has a policy that all patrol officers wear a vest when on patrol. These vests save lives. Silvia is a long-time resident of the village. She has helped us in so many ways and we thank her," says the Chief.

continued on page 15

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From The Library

Conversation overheard at the library desk: "How old are you?" ... "Three!" ... "Three! And when are you going to be four?" ... "When I'm bigger!"

This fall the library has been busily scheduling many new programs for the coming months that will serve our children now and as they get bigger! Nancy Russell, the new children's librarian, has introduced a second session of the weekly toddler story time in an effort to accommodate more children, as well as a monthly preschool Story and Craft program, a monthly Pajama Time program for all ages and a monthly Children's Book Club for grades one through five. In addition, there will be three special events in December – a Winter Craft program, a Fancy Nancy Party and a DIY Crafts/Painting program. A Teen Club is also being explored. Add this all to the popular art classes with Alexis Starke and Music Together with Catherine, and we now have a full complement of programs for the younger set. For more detailed information about scheduling and registration requirements, please visit our website at www.piermontlibrary.org.

Some new services for adults have also been added, thanks to the Friends of the Library. Universal Class and Transparent Language Online are both now available through the library's website. Universal Class is an online learning service offering our patrons access to a growing catalog of over 540 courses. With real instructors, video-based lessons, a collaborative learning environment, graded lesson tests, certificates of achievement and Continuing Education Units available for selected courses, students enjoy an engaging and measurable learning experience. Transparent Language Online is a research-based and experience-driven language-learning program that provides an effective, fun and engaging experience for language learners of all levels. Over 80 languages are available, including Chinese, French, Greek, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Latin, English for Spanish speakers and English for Arabic speakers. Take a look and let us know how you like these new services!

The Annual Gift of Art Show and Sale opens on Sunday, December 4, from 2-4 p.m., with a gala reception and live music generously donated by the Heyhoe Woods Quartet. Local artists, many of whom have shown at our monthly art exhibits, will be donating a part of the proceeds of any sale of their work to our programming budget, so in giving a gift of art to someone this year, you will also be giving a gift to the entire community. The show will continue throughout the month, although purchasers may remove pieces at any time to give as gifts. It's a good idea to get in early to see all that is available.

By the time you get this Newsletter, the library will be preparing to upgrade to a new circulation system called Symphony, which offers even greater capabilities for access to materials than we now enjoy. Library staff began training workshops in early October. The look of your online catalog will change, but instructions will be available to help make your transition to this upgrade easier. The go-live date is at present December 8. Stay tuned.

And on Sunday, December 18, from 2-4 p.m., journalist Robert Samuels will be here to introduce his new book, *Blue Water White Water*. Described as "...a true, horrific story that keeps readers glued to the page," the book tells of his struggle to survive in one of America's top hospitals. Bob, who is PCA President, will read from the book and answer questions from the audience. Copies will be available for purchase and signing, and refreshments will be served. (For more information, see Joan Gussow's article in this issue.)

For information on upcoming First Friday films and other library programs and projects, please check our website regularly: www.piermontlibrary.org

The library is open Monday through Thursday from 10 to 8, Friday from 12 to 5 and Saturday from 12 to 4. For more information, please call (845) 359-4595, and visit our website and /or Facebook page.

~Grace Mitchell

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**The Front Line** continued from page 11

**Christmas Tree Recycling Has Two Dates—  
Jan. 4th and Jan. 18th**

Tom Temple, Supervisor of the Piermont Department of Public Works (DPW) say: "Our Christmas Tree recycling program will have two separate dates, Wednesday January 4th and Wednesday January 18th," says Supervisor Temple. "Residents may leave there trees on the edge of their property on these dates. We ask that all ornaments and lights be removed from the tree prior to the collection date. We wish all of you a happy and safe holiday season and a Happy New Year!"

**Fire Department Looks for Volunteers**

The Piermont Fire Department is constantly looking for new members to join its ranks. Anyone who is interested in joining the Department should come to the firehouse on any Monday evening between 7-9 pm.

~Ron Derven



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