

The Piermont Newsletter

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FALL 2010

Tough Decisions On Sharing Lie In Wait

With costs for local government rising as revenue declines, Piermont like other villages, towns and school districts across the state has no alternative but to look for ways to save money—a lot of it.

One way to do this is to share services—police, public works, village courts, property assessments, clerical help. Years ago, Nyack got rid of its police force and Orangetown now patrols that village. Short of taking that bold move, Piermont could make cooperative agreements with Grand View, South Nyack, Palisades and other neighboring villages.

The good news is that New York State has supported these kinds of moves—with money for studies and occasionally for implementation. In fiscal 2005-2006, Albany enacted the

Shared Municipal Services Incentive grant program, administered by the Department of State, which in its first three years awarded 161 grants totaling more than \$30 million. Mayor Christopher Sanders said he attended a workshop on this program but that the state currently has suspended funding.

The State Comptroller's Office offers has also offered money—up to \$1 million a year for several years—to villages that turn over their governmental functions to towns.

The bad news is that declines in tax revenues and the property values are putting villages and towns in worse and worse financial shape. State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli says Rockland is the worst hit county in the state. Unless Piermont's trustees take major, imaginative steps to control

costs, property owners are likely to be in for continued significant tax hikes.

With one exception, Piermont's Board of Trustees has long resisted the idea of sharing services, - especially police services. The exception is that Piermont does provide Grand View with fire and ambulance services for a fee.

The Village is currently involved in sensitive arbitration with the police union over a new contract, so nobody from Village Hall wants to say much about sharing services at this time. Police salaries and benefits consume almost 30 percent of the village's \$4.8 million budget.

However, there is support among some to initiate talks later this year with Grand View and South Nyack regarding the sharing of police services and garbage collection. Whether that could extend to a merger of the municipal courts is not known.

Advocates of shared sharing and consolidation of services, including Governor Paterson, have long maintained that the presence of numerous tiny governmental units—each with its own set of employees doing the same jobs as workers in neighboring towns and villages—leads to high costs and high taxes. The poster child for this is New Jersey, which has 566 municipalities, 611 school districts and the highest property taxes in the nation. But even in the Garden State numerous towns do share services to varying degrees.

With the financial squeeze on taxpayers getting worse and worse in New York State - and especially in Rockland County—the pressure to adopt this means of budget tightening may well become irresistible.

~Richard Benfield



Story on page 3.

President's Corner



One of the last pieces of the old Piermont disappeared this summer under shiny blacktop and fancy curbing. I'm talking about the North Parking Lot, the one next to the new library and across from the firehouse. Can you gentrify a parking lot? It seems we did.

The lot was unquestionably old Piermont, a leftover from our village's mill town days. Workers parked their cars here, except when the fire department took it over for its annual carnival. That was a summer party for all of Rockland County. They filled the lot with rides, games, food stands and happy sounds.

Until this spring the lot remained unchanged. Its surface was cinders and rocks. It didn't even have painted lines telling you where to park. When there was a flood tide, it flooded. Piermonters who parked there overnight

worried more about storms than boat owners did. More than one car had to be towed to a junkyard after drowning in brackish Hudson water. Despite its elaborate new drainage system, no one is foolish enough to guarantee it will never flood again. However, it does seem to shed water quickly. Critics say the new lot has fewer spaces than the old but more may be freed late this fall. That's when the Village Board may have the rowing club move its boats permanently to the grassy knoll between the lot and the river.

The parking lot upgrade is just the most recent change to disorientate us old-timers. In the last 30 years Piermont's Tappan Zee High School came down and most of its factory buildings did too. Up went a mixture of condo apartments and town houses, rental apartments, stores and more parking lots. At our insistence, developers gave us the library property, Flywheel

Park and the wonderful North Shore walkway.

What else did we gain from these changes? Quite a lot, actually. Remember, without Piermont Landing we never could have replaced the taxes the factories had paid. Another often overlooked benefit is the 21 units of affordable housing on the second floor of the bike shop and creamery building.

A Piermont Rip Van Winkle would be amazed if he woke up today. He'd find a wine bar had replaced his favorite boilermaker joint. He'd wonder what happened to all of Main Street's empty stores. Hey, Rip, we filled them with boutiques and restaurants, restaurants and more restaurants. The parking lot had been one of the last reminders of the old Piermont he would have recognized. Now it's gone too.

~Bob Samuels

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The
Turning Point

A logo for 'The Turning Point' featuring the text 'The Turning Point' in a stylized, gothic font. Below the text is a detailed illustration of a basket overflowing with various flowers and greenery.

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Editor: **Bob Cone**
Contributors to this issue: **Richard Benfield, Fred Burrell, Ron Derven, Margaret Grace, Grace Mitchell, Bob Samuels, John L. Sullivan**

Advertising: **Charlene and Dick Stern**
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Piermont's Usha Wright: Giving Back To A Needy Land

Earlier this year when Usha Wright of Piermont was named president and chairman of SHARE--the Society for Resources and Hospital Exchange-it was a strong vote of confidence in her leadership abilities and her commitment to the group's goals. It was also an extraordinary personal challenge for her to replace her predecessor in that position, Dr. Martha M. "Bobby" MacGuffie, the prominent Rockland County plastic and reconstructive surgeon, who has treated many a Piermonter over the years.

"SHARE is a not-for-profit organization that includes doctors, paramedics and others, which helps children and communities in the east African nation of Kenya," she said. "Dr. MacGuffie co-founded it in 1987 with Dr. Renée M. Brilliant, a pediatric hematologist, of Grandview. Over the years, SHARE has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars, built schools and hospitals and cared for orphans and widows in that country."

Dr. MacGuffie was drawn to Africa in the 1980s to the most aids-racked section of the continent. She knows only too well the utter tragedy of the disease. Mother of eight, she lost two young sons to aids who had received blood transfusions before the blood supply was cleaned up. SHARE's efforts are focused on the village of Mbita, which is in the Nyanza Province of Kenya. This area of Kenya is considered by many to be "Ground Zero" of the worldwide aids epidemic. There are many widows and orphans in this region.

Ms. Wright has a passion for helping others but her interest in SHARE goes beyond that. She was actually born in Kenya. She is of Indian descent and over the years many Indians with a trading heritage settled throughout East Africa. When she was two years old, her father died and her mother, brother and sister were forced to share one room in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya. But she and her siblings were bright and went through school on scholarships. She had an opportunity to take the SATs, that test widely used for getting into college. She achieved an 800, a perfect score, on the math section of the test. She was encouraged to apply to American colleges. Thanks to U.S. colleges and a foundation in Nairobi, Ms. Wright's college was paid for, with the exception of air fare to the U.S. It took her an additional year after high school working at a bank to put together enough money to buy a plane ticket to New York.

In her new position in SHARE, Ms. Wright wants to build on Dr. MacGuffie's accomplishments: "A key program



of SHARE is its Orphan Sponsorship Program," she said. "Through this program, an individual or family donates \$500 a year to get an orphan educated and to keep them safe. The orphans come from all over Nyanza Province. Almost 1000 children have gone through the program. We have 50 orphans who we need to get into the program. Twenty of those need sponsorship immediately. SHARE also has an emergency medical training program, medical clinics and a community improvement program as well."

To help widows in the area, SHARE purchased land and created a tea farm. It also purchased a solar oven and launched a bread baking business.

SHARE is off to a strong start this year. Ms. Wright and two other members of the group recently returned from a trip to Kenya. Before leaving for the country, they were able to obtain about \$200,000 worth of surplus defibrillators, which they donated to medical facilities in Kenya. The group also created a partnership with Marist Brothers, which runs a boarding school in Kenya where 30 of SHARE's orphans live. SHARE raised money to buy another solar oven-about \$14,000. Marist will use it to create a new bread baking business and will hire SHARE's students so that they can learn about business and learn a trade. Visit www.shareafrica.org for more information.

~Ron Derven

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Blue Crabs From Piermont. And They're Delicious



Photo by Fred Burrell

Ray Holmes, the Crab Man, is the last in a long line of Piermont's commercial fishermen. He is strong and hardy at the age of 68. The days he crabs, he's out on the water by 5 am. He stands in rubber boots on the floor of his large, flat bottomed rowboat as he tours his traps. He grabs a buoy and pulls a dripping rectangular wire cage with its tangle of crabs, claws and flippers.

He tries to empty the feisty mess into a bushel basket. The crabs cling to the wire trap and tightly grip each other. Wearing heavy gloves, Ray duels the blue claws with a pair of long tongs. Occasionally a crab misses the basket and falls on the floor of the boat. It's no place to go barefoot.

By 8 am he will have harvested two or three bushels of full-sized blue crabs. In the early morning light, he's baited and re-set his traps in the shallow waters of the Tappan Zee.

"It's a cleaner Hudson. The crabs are thriving," Ray said. The New York State Health Department gives a positive bill of health to Blue Crabs caught in the Hudson. They say it

is safe to eat the meat of up to six crabs a week—that's two dozen a month. The Health Department advises against eating tomalley, the 'green stuff' or consuming the water the crabs are cooked in.

Ray's father taught him to crab when he was twelve. Ray would walk in the shallow waters off the Piermont shore, carrying a net with a long handle. Spotting a Blue Crab, clinging to a piling, he would scap it up in his net and stow it in a bushel basket floating behind him in an inflated inner tube.

Ray's been fishing commercially on the Hudson for 40 years. "I've seen 'em come and seen 'em go," he said. His roots go deep in Piermont. He was born in the Village. His mother called him Ray-Ray, a nickname that stuck. He gave himself the name Crab Man. Ray was in the last graduating class out of the old Piermont High School. He's been married to his wife, Lois, for 48 years. Ray was Superintendent of Piermont's public works department for 8 years, and served as a part-time police officer in the Village before he retired. He continues to be a very active member of Empire Hose.


Ray used to fish for shad with Dink Hardy, the father of Piermont's former mayor, Dennis Hardy. Dennis, himself, was the last of Piermont's shad fishermen, leaving Ray Holmes as the last Piermonter to commercially plumb the waters of the Tappan Zee for its riches.


In the spring of this year, when the forsythia were in bud, and the first shad begin their run up the Hudson River shad fishing in the Hudson abruptly ended. On March 18, the DEC closed both commercial and recreational fishing in the Hudson for the once mightily plentiful fish.


Kathy Hittala, a fish biologist with the DEC in New Paltz, said the shad population was severely depleted by over-fishing. "It may take three, five, possibly more years for the shad to come back," she said, "and it might be fifteen years before it comes back as a vigorous fishery,"

Dennis quit shad fishing some ten years ago. "We all worked fulltime jobs and took our vacations as the forsythia came out

continued on page 15

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Piermont Cop Busts Bronx Gang

A Piermont police officer stopped a Bronx-based gang cold. It had been on a check-cashing spree at banks and businesses all over Rockland, Westchester and New York City. The trouble was the checks were forged. Piermont Police Chief Michael O'Shea says the skilled detective work of 45-year-old Patrolman Cyrus Kerr, a veteran of both the New York City and Haverstraw police departments, halted the gang. He blew the case wide open, says the Chief.

It all began last New Year's Eve afternoon when a 29-year-old Bronx woman came into the M&T Bank. She wanted to cash a check for just under \$1,000. There was something about the woman and the check, which was seemingly from a Pennsylvania used car dealer, that roused teller's suspicion. The teller asked the woman to wait. Then she quietly called the Piermont police. Unfortunately, by the time officer Patrick Gaynor arrived the woman had grown nervous and fled.

Patrolman Kerr was just coming on duty then. Chief Gaynor immediately

sent him over to the bank. He knew Kerr was an experienced investigator, having worked for the NYPD in both narcotics and an organized crime division. It was part of a joint FBI taskforce investigating the Mafia crime families. Kerr quickly learned that the woman had left papers behind, identifying her as 29-year-old Roody Pierre-Louis. To make sure the woman wasn't using false identification, Kerr showed bank employees a photo array. They said Pierre-Louis and the check-casher were the same person.

The officers next checked Pierre-Louis's background. He discovered that she was due in Clarkstown Justice Court on an unrelated fraud charge. When she emerged from court, Kerr, dressed in civilian clothes, stopped her. He told her that he wanted to speak to her. He brought her to an empty room in Clarkstown police headquarters that he had arranged for in advance.

He soon convinced her to confess and become a cooperating witness. She told him that the gang members drove young women like her around to cash



Photo by Margaret Grace

bogus checks. They paid her and the others \$20 each time they did it.

Chief O'Shea said that Kerr's work closed three cases and is the basis for an ongoing criminal investigation with other law enforcement agencies.

~Bob Samuels

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The Front Line



Police Department:

The Police Department has acquired the truck formerly used by the Fire Department as an emergency rescue vehicle, that has been replaced with a more modern facility. Sporting a new interior and paint job, the recycled vehicle will serve as a mobile command center for the department, according to Chief Michael O'Shea. Specifically, it will be used for monitoring special events in the village, for DWI checks on drivers and for enforcing local traffic rules on commercial vehicles.

The Piermont Police department reminds the residents of the village that they can now participate in the Nixle network and stay connected to the Piermont Police for important community-related bulletins via email or text message. Nixle is a Community Information Service built on the most secure, reliable, and high-speed distribution platform, ensuring that you receive trusted and immediate, geographically relevant information. Information is immediately available over your cell phone by text message, by email, and over the web. Police Chief Michael O'Shea points

out that the department has already set out notices using Nixle of street closings, as well as a neighborhood alert when a rabid raccoon was spotted in Piermont.

For more information, and to sign on to the Nixle network, go to www.nixle.com, and enter Piermont's zip code to identify our community.

Highway Department:

From Tom Temple, Public Works Director: The Fall Leaf Pick-Up Program will start the week of October 4th and continue through the week of December 6th. We ask that all loose leaves be put to the properties' edge. Please do not block the sidewalks with leaves as this creates an unsafe condition for pedestrians. We ask that all leaf piles are kept clear of rocks, sticks and other debris that can cause blockages in our equipment. All leaves that are to be bagged should be placed in biodegradable bags that are available at the D.P.W. Garage on Piermont Avenue. Bags can be picked up during normal business hours. We do not accept leaves that are in plastic bags. Any questions you can

call (845) 359-1717.

Fire Department

This year the following members celebrated milestones in the Piermont Fire Department. Lawrence Goswick 65 Years, Jake Miraglia 60 Years, Ray Holmes 50 years, and Daniel Goswick 25 years.

Also the Fire Department welcomed some new EMT's this past year. Hope Goswick, Terry Sullivan, Santina Peralta, Samantha Mounier, Donna Hardy, Mike Chadwick, Kerry Pickford, Scott Sirota, John Dowd, Kate Wooley, Kathleen Limandri, Joe Hauser, and Sandra Gurash.

We are constantly looking for new members to join the ranks of the Fire Department. Anyone interested just stop by any Monday evening between 7pm and 9 pm.

~Margaret Grace

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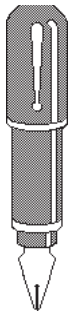
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Reader's Write

To the Editor,

I attended three public meetings in Piermont recently. One was the final PBA arbitration meeting, where I learned, according to Trustee Silverberg, (who presented the Village's financial position with great care and painstaking detail) that we village residents pay the bulk of the cost of maintaining our police force, and the other costs of running the Village. Other Rockland municipalities receive a much higher proportion of their income from commercial properties. The Village takes in @ \$60,000 per annum from sales tax revenue. This is hardly a dent in our annual budget, and unfortunately, this is partly because we do not receive all of the tax revenue that our commercial businesses generate. The rest goes to the County and State. However, we homestead taxpayers do provide, and pay for, access to the pier, the Hudson River, 2 popular bicycle routes, and several parks with beautiful places to sit and enjoy the views and social scene. Our roads are meticulously maintained by our excellent highway department workers, and kept safe for residents, NYC commuter and private bus companies to use 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This is almost as expensive as our private police force. We Piermont residents are effectively subsidizing the tourists' enjoyment of Piermont, which also helps the local businesses.

At the July 13th, Village Board Meeting, the Mayor and Trustees discussed whether or not to continue to rent space



to the Piermont Rowing Club for boat and equipment storage in the newly built parking lot adjacent to the Library and Parelli Park. The Trustees thought that the 8 parking spaces displaced by the Rowing Club were too valuable to waste on the rowers, who pay an annual rent of \$2,500. I was told that the beach near Parelli Park, and the new parking lot improvements were in fact paid for in part from funding granted to the Village with the help of the rowing club, and the fact of their presence here, and their use of the river access we provide. This discussion was continued at the August 10 Village Board Meeting, and this time, the rowing club and their supporters filled the room. Mayor Sanders read a letter from Scenic Hudson expressing support for Piermont keeping the rowing club crib where it now sits, and for encouraging public access to the Hudson. Several

continued on page 13

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Water Water Everywhere

When we get our bill from the water company, we can't help but smile because the amount is really low—about \$15 for the last half-year. The reason, of course, is that we have a well that supplies our water, so we don't have to rely on the utility except in cases of dire need.

We moved into Franklin Street oh so long ago, and found an odd structure in the basement—a concrete cylinder about a yard in diameter plunging into the earth beneath the basement floor. It was obviously a hand-dug well, but it was filled with rubble and useless as such.

With the aid of a friendly neighbor and copious amount of beer, we managed to dig the rubble out and reached bottom at about 10 feet. Immediately water began seeping in. We installed a Sears shallow-well pump, had the water thoroughly tested for both bio-organisms and heavy metals by the county health department (a procedure that we keep doing every year) and got a clean bill of health. In fact, our specs outdid those of the public utility in



terms of purity.

That was over 30 years ago, and with the exception of a drought that occurred about 10 years ago but hasn't happened since, we have been enjoying our water for every use, from drinking to washing the dishes, showering and watering the lawn. Recently, I consulted with Mike Frey, the owner of Hudson Valley Well Drilling, about the significance of wells such as ours in an age where natural resources are becoming scarce.

"Hand-dug wells like yours aren't recognized as an asset if you're selling your house," Frey said, because banks don't trust their purity. They are often

called ground-water wells, a name that conjures up images of contamination (though not as much as surface-water wells, the next step upward). Frey's well-drilling is to conventional depths of 100 feet or so and this is the typical shallow-water well.

But Piermonters are in a unique position if they are as lucky as we are to be living on top of a spring where a minimum of digging can result in a lot of water. And after living on "the hill" for a long time, we are convinced that not only are there many such springs hereabouts, but that they can and should be easily tapped. What can be easier than digging a 10 foot hole in the ground and lining it with a piece of pipe?

Recently our house that has become too big for the two of us, and we are looking to smaller quarters and warmer winters. But nothing in the future will beat the treat we have enjoyed all these years of endless amounts of cool, sweet Piermont water.

~Bob Cone

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At The Library

The next time you're walking past the library, make sure to stop and take a look at the new "Rain Garden" in the front of the building on the northeast corner of the property. The rain garden is a demonstration project initiated by landscape architect Stephanie Garber of the Rockland Audubon Society and described in some detail in the accompanying insert. The project has been in the works for a couple of years, and the timing for its completion was perfect in terms of the work being done on the north parking lot. The garden helps absorb rainwater runoff from the street and is an appropriate compliment to the efforts of the village to control flooding in the parking lot. It was brought to successful completion by the cooperative efforts of many agencies and individuals, and will soon have a beautiful new sign to tell you all about what it does, thanks to the Friends of the Piermont Library.

Another new addition of which we are justly proud is a collection of *PCA Newsletters* published from 1966 through 2009 that has now been bound into four large volumes and will be available for reading at the library.

Due largely to the efforts of library volunteer Carolyn Kent, who put in countless hours copying and organizing back issues, and patrons who brought in copies from their own collections to help fill in some blanks found in ours,



Drawn by Remo Barone

this project was finally wrapped up over the summer. The collected *Newsletters* provide a unique record of the various personalities, political issues, and social/economic changes that have helped form Piermont over the last half century, providing a picture of a vibrant and close knit small community grappling with the pressures of late twentieth century development. It's good reading for new residents as well as those who've lived through most of this history themselves! We also have boxes of duplicate back issues that are up for grabs. Because of limited storage space we can no longer hold on to all of them, so please call if you have any interest in taking some home.

This summer we added four study carrels adjacent to the bookstacks to provide more quiet space for computer use. Many thanks to the Friends of the Library for their assistance in funding this addition.

UPCOMING

IN THE GALLERY

September - RIVER DAWN - Photographs by Lisa Forman. September 2-29. Artist's Reception, Sunday, September 12, from 2-4 p.m. All welcome.

Images of the Hudson River at dawn, a time when the world is still, quiet and serene, predominate in this show. Piermont photographer Lisa Forman uses a muted palette and presents her images in stunning antique frames. The exquisite images evoke a sense of the new day, new beginnings, and new opportunities. Relatively small in size, they depict large spaces filled with peace and natural beauty.

October - Drawings by Remo Barone. October 1-29. Artist's Reception, Sunday, October 3, from 2-4 p.m. All welcome.

Remo Barone was born in Italy in 1937. The son of an ornamental iron worker, he took classes in design as a young man and developed a love of the renaissance mas-

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## At The Library

continued from previous page

ters. He lived for several years in Rome soaking up the work of Michelangelo, Leonardo and others, before moving to the U.S. in 1955. Here he went to work with his father at Florentine Craftsmen, a well known wrought iron design company in Manhattan, and learned his craft from the artists there. Many years later, after moving to Rockland, Barone returned to his true love—working with the pencil. His pencil drawings are detailed representations of local people and places, focusing in this show on the Piermont area.

November - FIRST LIGHT TO TWILIGHT - The golden light of early morn is transformed by the hand of the setting sun. Fine art digital prints of Piermont and environs by Michael Garber. November 1-30. Artist's reception, Sunday, November 14, from 2-4 p.m. All welcome.

Michael Garber is intrigued by the subjectivity of light. He is drawn to objects as they are transformed in

changing light. His images reflect the nuances of light diffused by clouds, mist and atmosphere as dawn passes to dusk then to dark. Recent exhibits include landscape photographs at the Corner Frame Shop, Nyack, NY, in March 2010, and Portraits of a Dying Man at the End of Life Conference, White Plains, NY, in November 2009.

### FIRST FRIDAY FILM SERIES

Friday, October 1, 2010, 7:30 p.m.: FRESH (2010). With special guest author, food educator (and Piermont Trustee) Joan Gussow. Directed by Ana Sofia Joanes. "A brisk indictment of industrial farming and its devastating toll on our soil, health and livestock" (New York Times) leavened with case studies that prove people can and do make sustainable, environmentally friendly methods work. This fascinating documentary will lead to a round-table discussion chaired by Joan Gussow on our food, our farmers, and

our way of eating.

Friday, November 5, 2010, 7:30 p.m.: ONCE (2006). Simultaneously one of the most charming, captivating love stories ever, and probably the most realistic look at how songs are written, recorded, played, lived in, and loved, ONCE (made on a shoestring - only \$160,000! - and in a hurry) took the world by storm. Anchored by the completely natural, winning performances of real-life musicians (and non-actors) Glen Hansard, a veteran Irish singer/songwriter, and Markéta Irglová, a 19-year-old Czech singer and pianist, ONCE won the Oscar for Best Original Song, and launched a successful career for the two as a duo. If you haven't seen this humble, wonderful film, don't miss it! (If you have, you'll be there!)

Friday, December 3, 2010, 7:30 p.m. THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG (LES PARAPLUIES DE CHERBOURG) (1964). A soaring, glorious musical fantasy, "Les Parapluies" is a classic

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film now beautifully restored. Jacques Demy elevates the basic drama of everyday life into a soaring opera full of bittersweet passion and playful charm, featuring a timeless performance from Catherine Deneuve. The film, like its glamorous star, is ageless. An enchanting film for a special time of year!

**ART CLASSES:** Alexis Starke's popular art classes for children will continue in the fall, beginning on Tuesday, September 14, with a class for children in grades 1 through 3, and Wednesday, September 15, with a class for those in grades 4 and up. Both classes will start at 4:30 p.m. Students will create imaginative art projects with a variety of themes. Projects will include drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, crafts and mixed media using a variety of materials and techniques suited to the age group. Students will be intro-

duced to various artists and art historical periods. Creativity is emphasized in a relaxed setting. Registration is required. Please call for more information.


**SPECIAL FOR CHILDREN: PUPPET SHOW - MARSHALL KATZMAN'S** Fantasy Puppet Theater presents the classic tale "Aladdin's Lamp", on Saturday, October 16, at 2 p.m., in the children's room. Fantasy Puppet Theater made its debut at the Ark in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in the summer of 1973. Katzman has since toured the U.S., performing at museums, nightclubs, libraries, camps, major armed forces installations and for many municipal recreation departments. He has produced a television documentary, and in 1990, performed Sergei Obrostov's puppet play entitled "Mortal Danger" at the Bruno Walter Theater, at Lincoln Center. Fantasy Puppet Theater has received funding from the New

York State Council on the Arts and Con Edison. Katzman received his M.A. in Television and Radio production from the University of Michigan and was a fellow at Princeton University. He is now retired from teaching full time at Bergen Community College and will be pursuing his work with the puppet theater. The show is free and open to all, but space is limited. Please call to register.

**STORYTIME:** No registration is required for the weekly storytime for toddlers on Mondays at 11 a.m. Just come on in and have a great time with Agnes and Judy. This is a wonderful opportunity for children and caregivers to get to know one another and discover how much fun a visit to the library can be.

**MUSIC TOGETHER:** Moon River Music Together with Catherine will  
*continued on next page*

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**At The Library** continued from previous page

continue on the third Wednesday of the month at 11 a.m. Catherine believes that all children are musical and that you can nurture the musical growth of your child regardless of your own musical abilities. Come and see how it's done! These classes are above all fun - for children and caregivers alike.

**FRIENDS' CRABFEST:** The Friends' ever popular Annual Crabfest will be held this year on Saturday, September 11, at 12:00 p.m., at the Goswick Pavilion on Ferry Road. Admission is \$20.00 for adults, \$18.00 for seniors, and \$12.00 for children. The menu includes

blue claw crabs, hot dogs, corn on the cob, beverages and dessert. Beer and wine will be available for purchase.

**BOOKSALE:** The Friends of the Library will hold a large book sale on Sunday, September 26. All proceeds go to help the library with programming, furnishings, and special events.

**FACEBOOK PAGE:** In addition to our website, [www.piermontlibrary.org](http://www.piermontlibrary.org), the Dennis P. McHugh Piermont Public Library is now on FACEBOOK. Follow the link at the top of the library's home page at: [www.piermontlibrary.org](http://www.piermontlibrary.org).

Please be our friend and help spread the word!

The library is located at 25 Flywheel Park West, and is open Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. We offer wireless internet access, several computers for public use at no charge, and a copy machine, printer and fax machine which are available for a small charge. Please call 845-359-4595 for more information.

~Grace Mitchell



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**Letters To The Editor** continued from page 7

residents spoke in support of the rowers staying where they have been since 1999. The Mayor and Trustees seemed almost embarrassed by the tempest they created, but were not willing to hear everyone who wanted to speak about the issue. The Trustees have been trying to find an alternate spot to dedicate to the rowing club, but it has become obvious that none of the other options are desirable in terms of the rowers' needs, and the visual impacts. It seems to me that if we Piermont residents are subsidizing the tourism in our Village, we ought to make some choices about which kind of tourism we wish to encourage. Non-polluting recreational boating should be our first priority. The rowers create beauty, teach harmony, and teamwork. They have zero negative environmental impact on the Hudson. Their presence here helps us get grant money.

We can argue about whether the tourism is worth the damage it does to our collective finances, but shouldn't we take the high road and give priority to non-polluting recreation such as the Piermont Rowing Club, who pay rent and attract funding? Less fortunate land-locked villages provide resources for recreational eating, drinking and shopping. Piermont is unique mostly because of our abundant river access and vistas. We should continue to pursue funding from Rockland County, New York State and the Federal Government to help us maintain access to the Hudson River, and make sure we earn that money and stay true to it's purpose. Not for cars, but for people who want to get into the Hudson and row together.

Elyse Knight



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~John L. Sullivan

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**Blue Crabs From Piermont**  
continued from page 5

and the shad started running," he said. But it became difficult to work. "It was hard to find a marina that would let us land the shad and keep our nets when they were out of the water. Asked if he would go shad fishing again, Dennis said "I think I would. I'm 53 years old. But if it were commercially viable, I'm pretty sure I would." Then he reflected, "We never made a lot of money. It was for the love of it."

These days, Ray fishes commercially, but only to catch bait for his traps. Ironically, he has to buy a license to catch the silver, shining moss bunkers, but he doesn't need a license to catch the crabs themselves. Blue crabs are a delicacy to Piermonters. The Friends of the Library hold their very popular Crab Fest every September. It's a treat the Village looks forward to. Ray said he doesn't catch enough crabs for the Crab Fest. But he has plenty to sell to individuals this time of year. "They look very good now," Ray said, "They're nice crabs, definitely." Ray sells them, a dozen at a time, from his house in Sparkill. They cost \$16 for the twelve. Phone Ray first at 845 359-2638 to make sure he's got 'em and that he's in to sell them to you.

~Fred Burrell



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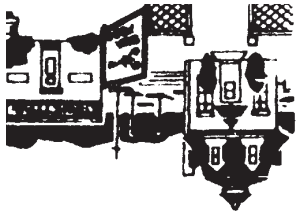
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