



OUR MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of this newsletter is to present factual information on local issues, actions and concerns of the citizens of our town. We will strive to address current updates from our Republican representatives on town, county and state levels.

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TAXES – VOTING BUDGETS – EDUCATION

By J.S.Blessinger-Neary

Everyone is overburdened with taxes at this time. Why? The simple truth is incompetency in government and our growing dependency upon it.

The people don't get to vote on the State Assembly or the State Senate budgets. The people don't get to vote on Congress' expenditures. The only budget voted upon is the local schools' budgets. So, who gets the brunt of our general displeasure with the economy.....the schools.

Upon hearing a Town Board member in Clermont request a letter be sent to the local school boards to inform them that they should carefully review their spending and budget in these tough times shows how little they know about it. Having been an educator for over 38 years, I felt it an insult to insinuate that the schools were not totally concerned and fiscally facing as much difficulty as the rest of the population -- and for the same reason.

Attending Red Hook School Board meeting on March 11th, I heard and saw the desperate efforts being made to maintain the excellent standard of education while trying to lower costs to the supporting citizenry.

The first fact everyone should be made aware of is that our state aid to education (government) has reduced the amount given to Red Hook Schools by \$1.1 million! I would like to see the Town Board try to balance a budget that has just lost that much revenue.

Teachers' contracts have not been renewed, therefore it cannot be said that their "raises" or "benefits" have added to the problem. In addition, they have been asked to accept the yearly incremental "step" increase. The administration at Red Hook is exceptionally focused on doing the most good for the children. How do we know this? The proof is with the Superintendent, Mr. Paul Finch, who has offered to take a pay freeze to help cut the budget. Even with both these facts, the cut from the state and the rising costs to maintain a safe and healthy environment for children will cause a rise in the tax levy.

Again, in an objective to save the tax payers' money, the Red Hook School District proposed the following:

To be eliminated:

1. The 4:15 bus.
2. One K-2 teacher.
3. One sixth grade teacher.
4. One Special Education teacher.
5. One Reading teacher.
6. One teacher Aide.
7. 8/10th of English Secondary Language position.
8. 5/10th of Music position.
9. 5/10th of Social Studies position.
10. Five Teaching Assistants
11. Assistant Varsity Coaches
12. One Library clerk
13. BOCES technician
14. 5/10th of Dispatcher position.
15. One Custodial worker.
16. One Astor Counselor.
17. One Cape Counselor.
18. One Senior typist.

In addition to this there will be reductions in Arts and education, Music, Integrated employment, Professional Conferences, Supplies, Equipment and building budgets. Special Ed will be back to the district.

All of the above is in bringing a possible need of a 13.8% increase in the tax levy to a possible 5% or 6.5% increase. Superintendent Finch has put up a separate web address for any input from the public. You may access that by going to Budgetviews@RHCS.org

The following page shows a comparison graph of the three school districts shared by Clermont residents. It was taken from an article in the Hudson Valley Magazine.

	Median Household income	District Enrollment-School Size	% Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	% Eligible For free or Reduced price lunch	% Who go To 2 or 4 year College	Average SAT scores Critical reading/math/writing	Per-Pupil Expenditures	% Adults with BA	% Reading Proficiency	% Math Proficiency
Red Hook CSD Red Hook Sr. H.S.	\$49,617	D-2,318 S-745	0.8	5.5	91	559 / 536 / 536	\$14,232	37.1	86.3	91.7
Pine Plains CSD Stissing Mountain H.S.	\$44,147	D-1,280 S-449	2.7	14.1	82	N/A	\$17,046	27.0	82.4	83.3
Germantown CSD Germantown Central	\$43,025	D-606 S-606	1.6	11.9	90	585 / 545 / 565	\$16,247	21.7	74.3	77.8

I also wish to express my thanks to Superintendent Finch, Business Administrator Martin, Asst. Superintendent Sturges, and all members of the RHSD Board of Ed. in their support of my efforts to install an optional installment tax payment plan.

In visiting the Taconic Hills School District Board meeting to request a similar letter concerning installation of an optional installment payment of taxes, much of the same difficulties in budgeting and cuts of staff and services were found.

TAKE HEART AMERICA: HEALTH CARE IS ONLY ONE BATTLE IN THE WAR TO RESTORE LIBERTY IN AMERICA

By John Wallace



Take heart freedom loving Americans. The Health Care bill is only one battle in the long war to restore our freedoms and liberty. Make no mistake, the 'Gang of Three' (Obama, Pelosi and Reid) will keep pushing additional individual pieces of their American Communist Manifesto on us. They will be pushing Amnesty for Illegal Aliens, Cap and Trade, and gun legislation, before the elections in November of 2010.

We must continue the fight for Liberty and Freedom and resist each and every piece of legislation in every legal way that we can. When Election Day comes in November, we will oust many of the leaders and followers of the Democratic-Communist politburo in the House and Senate and our battle will turn from defensive actions to offensive actions.

We have learned from experience, that we cannot count on the federal courts to stop attacks on our Liberty as they often rule that the ordinary American citizens have "no standing" in their courts. The federal courts are also part of the problem and just as corrupt as our legislative and executive branches of government.

Once we take control of the House of Representatives and possibly the US Senate in November of 2010, we will be able to cut off all funding for the nationalization of our Health Care system. Without the funding, there will be no nationalization of our Health Care system. We will also be able to cut off funding of other unconstitutional agencies and programs of our government.

So take heart freedom loving Americans and let us remember that at critical moments in the history of this great country, only a few generations of Americans have been given the honor and privilege of defending Liberty and Freedom in their maximum hour of mortal danger. In 1776, our Founders' generation was given that honor and privilege. The generations that lived through World War I and World War II were also given the honor and privilege of defending Liberty and Freedom in their darkest hours. In all these critical moments in our history, brave Americans stood as one against Tyranny and our Liberty and Freedom were preserved.

Today in America, our Liberty and Freedom are once again in their maximum hour of mortal danger, just as they were in 1776, 1917 and 1941, and we are now the generation that must stand up against Tyranny as one united force and be prepared to act.

This is our time!!

This is our critical moment in history!!

We have not only been given the honor and privilege of defending Liberty and Freedom in their maximum hour of mortal danger, but our Founders told us that it is also our sacred duty to do so, not only for ourselves but for our

children and our children's children. Do not lose heart over the loss of one battle or even several battles, for there is no doubt that freedom loving Americans will win the war to restore Liberty in America.

I pray to God that we will be successful.

GOD BLESS A FREE AMERICA!!!!!!

John Wallace, www.TeapartyRep.com

Health Care –Democrats Short-Sighted

By J.S.Blessinger-Neary

Life is neither easy nor perfect. When things were tough we grew up with the sad and hard rule that “Sometimes you must sacrifice a few to save many”. As hard as it is to accept, the truth remains that when trying to save all, all could be lost. A political cartoon in an earlier edition of this newsletter pointed out that truth in showing many in the water with a ship going down; yet if the lifeboat tried to take all on board, the lifeboat also would sink, losing all.

This President cannot see nor accept this fact. He is short-sighted to the long term effects of his actions. He has bullied and bribed his Democratic Party of whom many were gutless and/or brainwashed into following his lead. Don't fool yourselves into believing it was loyalty. Loyalty of these representatives belongs to the people who elected them, not the President!

So now, economically hurting, we the people will be taxed out of our livelihood, possibly to the extent of this country's ruination. And to what end? Will this Health Care program truly help the masses? The answer is NO!

Now will now be a flood of people, feeling entitled to health care, going to overworked, under paid doctors. Now, instead of going to a doctor when seriously ill, people will go for a splinter or a headache. Why? Because they are entitled!

The Democrats keep telling of “sad stories” about poor unfortunates who couldn't afford health insurance. Although these situations are indeed terrible, I too can relate a true story about a man who had health insurance. Back in the 1950's, purchasing health insurance was not a common place thing. There was an insurance company that was very affordable, took on many customers, but had only a limited amount of doctors that would accept the plan. This man purchased this insurance and provided it's coverage for his workers. He was usually in good health, but just before a planned hunting trip with his friends, he was feeling unusually tired and lethargic. He decided to get his health checked. After waiting almost two weeks for an appointment, he related that the doctor he saw looked s tired as he and only spent a short time in the examination. He informed the man that he probably had a slight virus in his system and that he could indeed go on the hunting trip without concern. Upon returning home, he looked and acted so different from his usual robust self, that his wife suggested they see a semi-retired doctor her family visited for years, even though he was not on the plan. They would have to pay, but she felt it was necessary. Upon examining the man, the doctor immediately hospitalized him. The diagnosis was that his spleen was swollen, filled with blood. If he had fallen, been bumped hard in that area while on the hunting trip, it would have burst and he would be dead. That man was my father. He had Chronic Lymphatic Leukemia.

How many people under this Health Care mandate will not even get to see a doctor in time? Don't kid yourselves; they will then push for a “public option” to “correct the situation”. That will lead to a worse problem. With that in place, the government, not your doctor, will deem if you are “worth” receiving treatment. This will be decided by a mathematical equation – cost of treatment vs. patients probable number of years of life remaining.

Doctors have already begun to refuse Medicare patients because they are not reimbursed sufficiently to cover costs.

Nostradamus predicted that this country would be too great to be destroyed from without (by enemies/war), but should beware of it's vulnerability to be destroyed from within.

Being compassionate and doing for others should be a personal responsibility/choice – not a government enforced policy. Democrats compassion will end up sinking the lifeboat...“Sacrificing ALL to save a few”.

“The democracy will cease to exist when you take away from those who are willing to work and give to those who are not.” Thomas Jefferson



FROM THE DESK OF:

Albert L. Wassenhove

**HUDSON VALLEY NATIONAL PARK STUDY PROPOSED BY
CONGRESSMAN MAURICE HINCHEY (D. Ulster County)**

A study has been proposed by Representative Maurice Hinchey to look at the “resources” to create a national Park “unit” for the Hudson River Valley area from the northern boundaries of Saratoga/Washington Counties to the New York City and New Jersey lines. The National Park area would encompass the entire extent of twelve counties (including Columbia) with a total population of 3, 050,311. The bill authorizing the study is known as H.R.4003 Hudson Valley Special Resource Study Act, and was the subject of a hearing held in Washington, D.C. on January 21, 2010.

Carol W. LaGrasse, President of Property Rights Foundation of America testified at this hearing and asked if I would bring this subject into focus of *The Watchful Eagle* readers. It has been my honor to share the podium with Carol and other distinguished speakers from across the nation at the last two national conferences in 2008 and 2009 respectively. Folks, I have the greatest admiration for the dedication of this stellar leader and champion of property rights that are guaranteed under our constitution.

As President, LaGrasse points out this study bill could represent the culmination of two decades of work by Mr. Hinchey to preserve the Hudson Valley. Just like the Hudson River Greenway created by the New York State Legislature in 1991 when Mr. Hinchey was Chairman of the assembly Environmental Conservation Committee, the area under consideration includes expanses of land that extend far up into the mountain ranges on both sides of the river. This is hardly part of the Hudson River Valley, and far more extensive than the title of the bill indicates. Carol LaGrasse feels the deception and vague language in this study is deliberate. If allowed to go forward full tilt this will have dramatic impacts on economic growth and only lead to further land control implemented by further government regulations.

Folks, I am convinced that the commercial and industrial importance of the Hudson River Valley continues to this day despite the fact any reference to this has been omitted in favor of much language given to habitats for rare species, trails and other “warm and fuzzy” social criteria. Sounds like an echo from that resident down in Taghkanic that would like to tear out the deep water port in Hudson. Major manmade facilities located south of Albany and north of New York City give testimony to the fact that the Hudson River continues to be a working river. Each year approximately 300 deep-water ships and over 1,000 tugboat powered barges haul their cargo over its waters.

PRFA President LaGrasse summed up her recent comments on this issue by stating “The deception and negative potential implications of this vague, ill-thought, unbounded bill are more than ample reasons to reject the Hudson River Valley Special Resources Study Act.” *Eagle* readers, I couldn’t agree more with this statement of truth!

Albert’s “Tidbits of This and That”

Recently, if you’re a reader of the Register-Star, you would have questioned the front page story that broke the news that perhaps we should host the terrorist trial in Hudson since NYC didn’t want it! The upper echelon of the Board of supervisors held a meeting to “float” the idea as this might be a short term stimulus to our economy and advance tourism. Folks, I don’t know if you laughed when you read it or if you’re laughing now, but what deep thinking genius hatched this latest episode to put all of us in the crosshairs of a bulls-eye? The Columbia County Courthouse isn’t even handicap accessible let alone suited for such a trial of a wartime combatant!

“SAVE PINE HAVEN – PHASE II”

The first meeting of the Veterans Care & Resource Center proposed for the existing Pine Haven facility will be held on March 25, 2010 at 7 p.m. in the Conference Room at Pine Haven. James Keegan, former Supervisor of Claverack is serving with me as Vice Chairman along with other distinguished volunteers including Holly Tanner, Columbia County Clerk; Gary Flaherty, Columbia County Veterans Counselor; Jack Hallenbeck, former head of Columbia County Honor a Vet and Korean War Veteran; Mike Johnston, Claverack Town Councilman; Vince Wallace, Retired Major, New York Army National Guard. This meeting will serve as a mechanism to establish a framework to move this proposal forward before representatives of the Veterans Administration are invited to visit the facility.

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UNITED NATIONS MAY CONTROL OUR FISHING

Dick Nelson had an eye opening column entitled "Anglers Await Task Force Report" in the Register-Star March 13-14, 2010 issue. In part, here's what he said..."this latest asinine objective targets recreational fishing, and should President Obama sign off on it, your favorite trout stream and/or private bullhead pond could fall under the jurisdiction of the United Nations." Hard to believe? You bet it is! Property rights, sovereignty; it's time folks that the Tea Party takes center stage. We're losing our country that others are dying for on the battlefield. If I haven't caused you to rally yet or stirred your passion, I'll be back at it again next month.



LINCOLN DINNER

Columbia County Young Republicans held their annual Lincoln Day Award Dinner on Tuesday, February 23rd at Kozel's Restaurant in Ghent. Despite the severe snow storm there was a good turnout.

This year's honoree was Donald R. Kline. Mr. Kline has served as Councilman, as Town Supervisor from 1982 to 2005, as Deputy Chairman of the Board of Supervisors from 1990 to 2005, and as Commissioner of the Board of Elections. As The presenter said of Mr. Kline, "He certainly exemplifies the qualities of a Lincoln Republican – quiet reserved, thoughtful and strong in conviction and sense of community.

Donald Kline (center) accepts the award.
Greg Fingar, Republican Committee Chair (left) and President of the Young Republicans, Austin Sullivan (right).

SALAND AND MOLINARO HOST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ROUNDTABLE

Released on March 24,2010

Legislators discuss what New York can do to help Columbia County businesses(Senator Steve Saland and Assemblyman Marc Molinaro discuss Hudson Valley jobs)Senator Steve Saland (R,I,C, Poughkeepsie) and Assemblyman Marcus J. Molinaro(R,I,C, Red Hook) today held an Economic Development Roundtable discussion at Columbia-Greene Community College. Approximately 25 local business leaders joined Senator Saland and Assemblyman Molinaro to discuss such topics as what the State can do for its businesses; what tools the State currently provides are working and what can be improved; and what else the State should be doing to help businesses create jobs and expand.

"The key to New York's economic recovery is helping businesses grow," said Senator Saland. "When New York's businesses are healthy and thriving, they create jobs. When people are working they access fewer government services, and sales and income tax revenues go up – the State prospers when business prospers."

"New York taxes and regulates our small businesses too much, making it increasingly more difficult for them to survive," said Assemblyman Molinaro. "With the highest unemployment in generations and too many businesses leaving our state, we must do all we can to provide relief and get our economy growing again. These roundtable discussions are an important way for us to hear from our business leaders and galvanize our message of reform. Albany leaders have to understand that business as usual has gotten us into this mess and they need to lead, follow or get the heck out of the way!"

Saland and Molinaro said the roundtables presented a forum that they would continue to utilize throughout the Hudson Valley to solicit community input. The current economic climate required sensible, creative solutions to help local businesses and taxpayers they agreed.

RECOGNITION WAS GIVEN

Clarence Speed, Mayor of Philmont, and the Village Board declared January 2010 as "APPRECIATE WASSENHOVE MONTH" in the Village of Philmont for the efforts of both Mr. and Mrs. Albert Wassenhove on behalf of their efforts to save the Pine Haven Nursing Home.



CHUCKLES CORNER:

(We again apologize that our "cartoon" is not funny ---- but it is a sign of the times.)



Why do you think they call them "BILLS"?