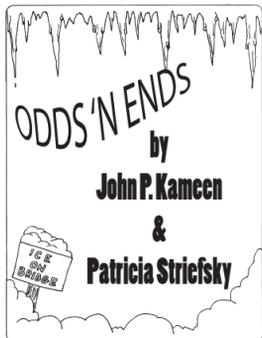


# THE FOREST CITY NEWS



**We offer our sincere condolences to the family of Mr. David St. Ledger, a former local teacher, who died last week after an illness. His obituary is on page 5. He was one of the most respected and loved FCRS faculty members, having served here for over 25 years as a teacher of government. He was a "tough" professor but conveyed his subject to students in a most understandable and respectful way. His love for his students and their respect for him were mutual. While he was teaching, and even after his retirement, he kept track and kept in communication with many of them. If you were a parent of a student he would always ask about them if you met him. He wore a suit and tie from back in the days when that was the norm. I am sure the family would love to hear from those students, or others, influenced by his teaching. His wife, Mary, can be reached at 1495 Amherst Ct., Mechanicsburg, PA 17050.**

**See a Tribute to Dave St. Ledger** on page 2 of this edition by Bill Clark.

**Forest City Borough generously accepted the Main St. Christmas decorations from GFCBA but they will need public donations to pay the electricity and maintenance. Fortunately NEP Telephone, as it has done for many, many years continues to install them at no cost. Council cannot use its own funds to pay the costs involved so donations will be needed. You can send them to Forest City Borough, Christmas Lite Fund, P. O. Box 63, Forest City PA 18421.**

**Also notice the Gazebo at Kennedy Park was beautifully decorated for the season by the Borough Street crew Bob Tedesco and Wally Miller. Looks great coming into town. Also the town clock by the Borough Building was taken down and repaired by a clockmaker in Scranton. It has since been re-installed and is now lighted by at night. This also was done by the street dept. Bob and Wally.**

**Forest City Council will re-organize Tuesday, Jan. 2nd with a new mayor and two new council members. That meeting was changed due to the New Year's holiday. Our best to new Mayor Tammy Rogalski and new Council persons Amy Bean and Tracey Lazier. Councilman Nick Cost is expected to be named Council President replacing William D. Orasin who did not seek re-election. The public is invited to attend the meeting and all meetings. They are held the first Monday of every month and are open to the public. At the beginning of each meeting the floor is opened to the public to make comments on local issues.**

**Unfortunately the Rail Trail will remain closed to all users, including snowmobilers, until at least the Spring due to the ongoing construction.**

**SEE OUR DINING GUIDE ON PAGE 7 WIN \$20.00 GIFT CERTIFICATE**



## FAREWELLS ON AGENDA OF FC COUNCIL

It was valedictory time as three Forest City officials said their good bys and final words at the Dec. 6 Council meeting. This was their final official meeting as the Jan. 2nd Council session will be the bi-annual re-organization meeting.

### MAYOR WILCOX

Mayor Pauline Wilcox, who chose not run as a result of moving from Forest City, gave her last annual "State of the Borough" address. In her 15 minute address, she listed the town's major issues of 2017, as well as the accomplishments during her six years in public office, two on Council and four as Mayor.

She highlighted her work as head of the police department which is the principal duty of the mayor. This included major remodeling of the police office in the Borough Building; installation of technical improvements to document police actions; the addition of three vehicles to the police fleet; and the hiring of Police Chief Jim Johnson.

She thanked the members of Council and all Borough employees for their hard work and dedication, and wished the new Mayor, Tammy Rogalski, a successful tenure.

She received an ovation from those attending as well as a bouquet of flowers from local business woman Maryann Corey.

### COUNCILMAN PEARSALL

Councilman Ed Pearsall, who also is leaving, also wished his best to remaining Council members and Borough employees. He said he decided not to run for re-election due to family commitments including spending more time attending activities of his 9th grade daughter. He said he did not

realize the time needed to be a Councilman. He reflected that his work hours kept him from some of his duties, but he was happy and proud of his work on the Parks and Recreation Committee.

Pearsall said he felt more people are involved in the community now than when he started on Council. He urged people, "Don't complain—Get involved." He said Council makes tough decisions and they do their best.

He also received an ovation from those attending.

### PRESIDENT ORASIN

President William D. Orasin affirmed that his leaving was not a happy moment. He said he has always been dedicated to the community and attended Council meetings for years before he got on Council. He said he became Councilman because he saw the town losing its uniqueness and wanted to bring it back.

He also noted many things that the public doesn't understand about Council. He said that resulted in being shouted at by residents and business selfishness. Being bashed by Facebook and having people turn their faces away from him were not things he appreciated. Orasin said he feels that more support is needed to squash the negativity.

Finally he said it is not the end of his local involvement. He said he needed a break, as his job takes him away from town daily from 7AM to 6PM. He said he enjoyed his time on Council despite the fact that it is a ton of work.

The retiring President of Council received a standing ovation which he directed back to his fellow Council members, and Borough employees.

## Herrick passes resolution prohibiting a casino in the Twp.

Passage of the 2018 budget and a request to change ALS providers were among the items discussed at the Monday, December 4 meeting of the Herrick Township Supervisors.

### LINES PAINTED

Lines for no passing were painted on Route 171 near Larry Cassidy's house after several near miss incidents occurred.

### 2018 BUDGET

The 2018 budget was passed with \$259,994 for both assets and expenses. The 2 mil tax rate stays the same.

### RESIDENT REMEMBERED

The supervisors remembered Lowe Lake resident and planning commission member Don Edwards, who passed away last month. Supervisor/Secretary Nancy Harvatine said she attended his viewing and left a note of thanks with his family for his years of service. Edwards was also a regular fixture at the monthly meetings. The township will now have a vacancy to fill on the planning commission.

### NO CASINO

The supervisors passed a resolution prohibiting a category 4 casino from locating in the township. Supervisor Elliot Ross said the resolution had to be passed by December 31 or the township would have no control over the choice to put it there. He said they can always rescind it if they want.

### POLICE FINES

The township received \$793.81 in state police fines.

### COUNTY ASSESSMENT

The county assessment office sent the township figures

for the year: the township has \$38,303,400 in real estate value; assessed occupation value of \$95,800; # of occupation taxables 290 and # of per capita taxables -362.

### ALS PROVIDER

Next was the discussion on changing the designated ALS (Advanced Life Support) provider for the township. Belcher said Lackawanna County is designated right now with Cottage Hose being the primary ALS provider. Right now, there is no control over who comes. Cottage can come from Dunmore or Carbondale. Barnes-Kasson and Montrose also have ALS units. Belcher said it comes down to response time and asked that Barnes-Kasson be named first. A resolution would have to be passed to do so.

Pleasant Mount Emergency Services Fire Chief Don Evans agreed. "Cottage has 2 locations but they could be sitting anywhere," he said. He echoed Belcher's statement on response time and stated a 10 minute difference in response time could make a serious difference.

It was asked if Barnes-Kasson showed up, where would the patient be taken. Evans said wherever the patient wanted to go locally. Ross said they should pursue it and the supervisors voted in favor of the resolution naming Barnes-Kasson as the designated ALS unit.

The reorganization meeting will take place on Tuesday, January 2 at 7pm, followed by the regular meeting.

## GFCBA Christmas Party at Elk Mountain



*The Greater Forest City Business Alliance held its 2nd Annual Christmas Party on Wednesday, December 6 at Elk Mountain Ski Resort in Union Dale. Over 40 people were in attendance and enjoyed food and drink provided by Elk Mountain. Winner of the basket of cheer was Jean Rulif of the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau.*

## Emmett stays Board Pres.

Mary Emmett was re-elected President of Forest City Regional School Board at the Dec. 7 re-organization meeting. Joann Sterchak was picked as vice president.

New Board member Brian Piatak, Brown Dale, was sworn in along with re-elected directors Fred Garm, Bill Heller, and also Steve Ursich, who had filled the seat of Lorne Powell.

Director Ursich was named Board rep. to CTC Board until 2020.

The resignation of Marianne Lewandowski, former Board secretary, was accepted. She was thanked for her almost 40 years of service as a secretary in the business office. She has been using up her leave time the past months.

Diane Bailey was hired as a fixed term teacher to the end of the present school year at Step 1 Bachelor degree at a pro-rated base salary of \$48,556.

Pres. Emmett and Board member Dr. Henry Nebzydowski gave emotional tributes to late faculty member Mr. David St. Ledger. Ms. Emmett said he was a scholar who was a real tribute to education, while Dr. Nebzydowski said he had been a great influence on his children and the school.

## Forest City Budget passed; Some items questioned

At the Dec. 4 Forest City Council meeting the 2017 budget was passed with no changes from the tentative budget approved in Nov. There will be no millage hike.

Prior to passage local resident Jason Obelenus questioned several budget items including \$100,000 for capital construction. Pres. Orasin said the money, if needed, would be used to solve structural issues to preserve the Borough Building. He said the money was accrued over the years from a ½ mill put into the Capital Improvement fund. He said KBA Engineering will be making a final report on exterior issues such as brickwork, roof, gutters and water issues in the basement. He said the money is available if needed.

Obelenus also questioned the salaries of \$34,390 and \$33,735 for the two Borough secretaries and if they were necessary. Pres. Orasin said their work is necessary for Borough matters. Sharon Vannan is both Borough secretary and treasurer. Cindi Stone is both assistant Borough secretary and secretary treasurer of the town's sewer fund.

An expenditure of \$92,000 for Public Safety in the budget, Obelenus was told, was a match for a grant to put sidewalks on the east side of Main Street if a

grant can be secured.

Obelenus also questioned the town's law regarding inspections of rental units. Secretary Cindi Stone said the town inspects 30-40 properties a year. Obelenus said none of the rental units in the Main Street fire had smoke detectors and wondered what the criteria was for inspections. Pres. Orasin said the inspections are conducted by Code Inspections Inc., Dushore, and he didn't say what the criteria were. Obelenus suggested this was something the town should look into.

## Breakfast with Santa in Thompson Dec. 17

The Thompson Hose Co. will hold a Breakfast with Santa on Sunday, Dec. 17 from 8:00am - 11:00am at the Hose Company.

Children 12 years and under Eat Free & can get a FREE Picture with Santa. Thirteen and up is \$10.

Menu includes All You Can Eat Buffet of: Pancakes, Sausage, Sausage & Gravy, Biscuits, French Toast, Scrambled Eggs, Home Fries, Apple Sauce, Coffee, Tea, Juice.

## A Message From Main Street

Local merchants are the caretakers of our towns and institutions. Online sellers and chains are not.

It is evident to Americans in small towns that we've lost our sense of community. Even locally our town leaders call attention to how our town has lost its uniqueness and how they want to try and bring it back. It didn't happen all of a sudden but we have allowed our community to die and we've all helped to let it happen.

It is natural to want to save a few dollars when we make purchases, and small town merchants will admit that they can't supply all the mercantile needs of everyone, nor can they match the low prices of online sellers, chains and big box stores. Let's face it—A merchant can't buy a dozen of an item at the same price a chain can buy a hundred or a thousand dozen.

The online sellers and chains take from our small town merchants and give back little if anything. Where do our students, our churches, our organizations and our fundraisers go when they need prizes and donations? They come to us. Just look over the lists of donors of any fundraiser, and area businesses will be the majority. And let's face it, many who walk in our doors for donations have never been in our establishments before.

Local merchants are the caretakers of our towns and institutions. They live in our area and support their local families, as well as our area churches, schools, organizations and institutions. Chains and big box stores help their shareholders.

It takes decent incomes to keep their local stores in operation and pay local people who work for them. They help maintain the decent appearance of our downtown. Just look what happens when a building goes vacant and is not maintained. The deterioration sets in motion a sad chain of events.

For example, our Council felt obligated last year to hire a Main Street coordinator to try and help our dwindling number of local businesses as well as try to entice other businesses to come and occupy some of our vacant storefronts. This was something done for many years by the local merchant's association.

So, we don't ask you to buy everything in our town or in our area small businesses. If something is over-priced we don't ask you to buy it. But realize that it cost you money to drive 40 miles round trip to pick up an item or items to save you a few dollars.

Just ask yourself this-- Is it worth throwing away your whole community to save a few dollars?

*The Forest City News office will be closed from Monday, December 25 thru Monday, January 1. Office will reopen on Tuesday, January 2. There will be an edition on December 27. There will be no January 3 edition. The next edition will be Wednesday, January 10. For ads or news for the January 10 issue, please leave a message at 570-785-3800 with phone number or drop it in our mail slot and we will contact you. You can also send an email with the information to fcnep@nep.net*