

Town Topics

by Supervisor Richard Craft

An air of optimism grips the Town of Wawarsing as we look forward to 2003. For those in government, time moves along at a measured speed of hurry-up-and-wait. For those on a town or village level, the process means deadline submission and corresponding months of inaction, with occasional burps of life.

After several years of hard work and waiting, I can report to you a number of positive things that have just happened or are scheduled to be completed in 2003.

After a court battle ranging over many years, the case of the *Bruno Junkyard* suit against the Village of Ellenville and the Town of Wawarsing has been dismissed. We are trying now to recoup some of our legal fees from the insurance companies.

The painful conclusion of the *Napanoch Water District* process has been achieved. As soon as Mother Nature cooperates, the Town will notify Napanoch citizens to complete their hook-ups. Thanks to the timely investments of Federal loan funds by our Town bookkeeper, Napanoch Water District residents have been spared water taxes for the past five years.

In addition, a more balanced repayment schedule has been put in place to show more equity between operations and maintenance and assessments. New water will mean better water pressure, fire protection (remember Daniels Store), lowered fire insurance rates, higher property resale values, and pure water all residents can now draw from their faucets.

The next to come... new facilities at the **Transfer Station**. New storage areas for equipment, recyclables, employee comforts, and more attractive surroundings are now in place. Add to this, the final closure of our landfill cap, and its accompanying balance due payment, and once again we're ahead of the game.

Come early spring, construction of new sidewalks will begin in Napanoch. Slated to extend from *Peters Market* to the **Napanoch Fire Station**, this project, four years in the making, will include turn-of-the-century lighting, a grass mall and planting of Couse Dogwood trees, compliments of the *Shawangunk Garden Club*. A special-member item of \$65,000 sponsored by Senator Bonacic, more funds recently added by DOT, plus an enhancement fund of

\$25,000 from the Catskill Watershed Corporation, will allow us to add special planters, seating, and other decorations under the able guidance of the newly-reorganized *Napanoch Public Interest Group*. It will also enable us to complete the project as initially outlined. A new Senior Citizen housing complex is still planned for Napanoch, as is a new restaurant for the Nordland property.

This puts Napanoch in the enviable position of being beautiful and rejuvenated. We must not forget that fifteen houses were totally renovated during the past three years, thanks to a grant. All we need now is an anchor store at the mall.

The total renovations of the **Kerhonkson Pool** are slated to be completed and the pool open by summer. In an unprecedented agreement with the Town of Rochester, both towns will split the cost of renovation/operation/maintenance. It is estimated that improvements may run as high as \$90,000. I commend Rochester for their worthwhile commitment. We both benefit.

Plans call for renovations at the **LHJ Airport** and **Lippman Park**, the occupation of our **Day Care Center** (former Napanoch School), and the beginning steps for a new sewer district in Napanoch. The looming potential presence of casino gambling, and the needs of the Town in the light of its presence, will keep the town officials busy all year. The year 2003 will be an exciting year.

I would like to thank all the employees of the Town of Wawarsing for their assistance during this past year. The Highway Department has maintained our roads with pride in performance. Our various departments at **Town Hall** continue to show the professionalism for which they are noted. The Building Department, which operated short-handed for a good portion of the year, will be properly staffed during 2003, including enforcement of newly-adopted regulations.

And finally, I'd like to thank our town councilpersons for the long, hard hours spent on town business in general and their various liaison positions. Thank you, Deputy Supervisor Gus Hull, Theresa Hyatt, Arnie Ryan, and Ray Lux.

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