

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor:

As my final days as Town Supervisor came to a close, I made the most of my time and orchestrated the passage of three vital policies aimed at making 2004 a more productive year.

The first action taken was to withdraw a proposal awarding a contract to a municipal planning firm for the upgrade of our 1969 Comprehensive Plan. Although our grant writer, Mark Blauer, and myself had worked on this project for over three years, and were finally ready to proceed, I felt it in the best interest of the town to leave this action to the 2004 town board. Through assurances given to me by both the Town and Village boards that the two groups were now ready to sit down and seriously discuss consolidation, I rescinded the action to award the bid. Those of you who know my position on consolidation will understand why I eagerly recognized the joint efforts being proposed. Duplication of services within the two municipalities is a luxury the Village of Ellenville can no longer afford. I look forward to reading of positive changes being adopted in this area.

The second act was to finally adopt an enforceable abandoned vehicle/junk car ordinance. For decades, our town has functioned with inadequate local laws. For years, our *Building Department* has been chastised for failing to do their duty when, in effect, they were never given the proper tools to work with. Come 2004, this department will be working with a new automobile ordinance, new environmental regulations, new beautification laws, an upgraded used-car ordinance. A lengthy review of our codes has closed many loopholes and I can confidently say that we finally have teeth in our regulations. There is still a new noise ordinance that will probably be enacted early in this year. I would also advise the review of our multi-family residence policy.

Why the needs for all these regulations? It sounds like bureaucracy gone amuck when, in reality, the simple truth is that some people just don't care, and their messes make our neighborhoods look bad. Some people love to make junkyards and pig pens out of their properties. They ignore weak summonses and have no pride in their properties or possessions. They are lazy and care less how their property looks. With our new rules in place they will conform, or else.

And finally, the Town has entered a long-term lease authorizing the construction of new hangars at the airport.

This is one of the few times in the past four years that a local resident or businessperson has come forward and actually made a formal proposal to invest in our town. Initial plans call for the construction of seven hangars as a starter with seven more to follow if the venture is successful. Thanks to Dwight Coombe and his partner at *Shawanga Aviation* for this welcome news.

It has taken the Town of Wawarsing four long years to get on its feet. Order has been brought out of total chaos, many things have been straightened out and we are finally on a steady course toward growth. It's been a tough road but worth it. To our new Supervisor and Town Board I say, "Keep Wawarsing Rising."

Dr. Richard Craft
*Former Supervisor
Town of Wawarsing*

To the Editor:

I am a recovering addict. I was born in Rochester, New York in 1966. I suffer from a disease called "obsession compulsion disorder." This disease is caused by drug and alcohol abuse.

For 20 years, I lived to use and used to live. I am a mother of two daughters, ages nine and three. During my active drug use, I lost guardianship of my children, and gained jail and prison sentences. I was irresponsible and headed down a road of self-destruction and pain. I was living in an illusion, an illusion of fast money, sex, and drugs. It wasn't until July, 2003, I found myself in Monroe County Jail's drug treatment court, facing a 1-3 year prison sentence.

"Road to Recovery" offered me an alternative to incarceration. *Samaritan Village*, which is located near Ellenville, New York, is a long and short term drug treatment program. The program offers behavior modification, attitude adjustment, and drug abuse counseling. By the grace of God, this program will give me the opportunity to further my growth and development for the betterment of my future and become a productive member in society, as well as a better parent.

My message to all the recovering and sick and suffering addicts in the world: with faith there is hope to obtain lifetime sobriety by having honesty, open-mindedness, willingness to change.

An addict
(Name Withheld; printed with permission)

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