

Town of Johnsburg Newsletter

Supervisor's Report

Short Takes

Chips Dips

As a result of the State's budget crisis, Town Supervisors from across Warren County have been advised to anticipate a 42% reduction in CHIPS funding. The CHIPS program is the economic engine that permits town government to undertake major improvements to roads such as paving and also helps purchase equipment

April is Key

The April meeting of the ORDA board in Lake Placid could mark a key turning point for the Greater Gore region as authority will be sought to install the new interconnect lift on the foot print of the old large T-bar. The new lift will bring thousands of skies to the edge of the hamlet of North Creek and will enhance tax revenues of the entire town. ORDA has purchased the lift and it is hoped that the April meeting will find the mountain's leadership committing to its operation next season.

Not to Be Taken For Granted

In the turmoil surrounding the state budget and deficit significant confusion has been created regarding grant programs that have been awarded but not yet funded. The Town of Johnsburg has several grants, including a technology grant, park grant and generator grant that may or may not be exposed. Town Hall is working in conjunction with Senator Little's office in an effort to get clarification.

Extravaganza Success

The Winter Extravaganza celebrated in Ski Bowl Park on the weekend of February 7 & 8 was a huge success. Young people from across town enjoyed free tubing, snow sculptures and contests, not to mention great skating at the town rink under the pavilion. A special thanks to the Ski Bowl Park Committee and particularly chairman Peter Olesheski for all the hard work on the event. Oh, and the chili was great!

Warren County Sales Tax Revenue 2008 % Change Per Town Basis

Town of Bolton	+1.0%
Town of Chester	+2.4%
Town of Lake Luzerne	-4.1%
Town of Queensbury	+1.1%
Town of Lake George	+2.5%
Town of Stony Creek	-0.4%
Town of Johnsburg	+11.00%

Warren County Sales Tax Revenue 4th Quarter 2008 Break Out

Town of Bolton	-9.0%
Town of Chester	-7.8%
Town of Lake Luzerne	-13.6%
Town of Queensbury	-8.9%
Town of Lake George	-7.69%
Town of Stony Creek	-10.20%
Town of Johnsburg	.00%

Economic Dichotomy

The seeming number of economic contradictions in this month's newsletter is staggering.

On the one hand our town continues to take the hit for the state's fiscal crisis with projected CHIPS decreases and granted funds facing uncertainty. The town board recently moved contingency funds to a not-for-profit group struggling to keep up with emergency demand for shelter and transport. The county's financial situation has created a cash flow crunch that has forced the board of supervisors to authorize borrowing to meet expenses.

On the other hand, as the above chart reflects, Johnsburg rises above all the towns county wide in the growth of sales tax revenues. Not only have new businesses like the Copperfield Inn opened or reopened creating jobs and other economic opportunities but a drive down Main Street on a Saturday evening shows a business community that is starting to thrive.

It seems to me that economically we may be a community in transition. That transition will only conclude if we can maintain momentum. (See economic on next page)

Youth Baseball & Softball Sign Ups

On Wed, March 4, Johnsbury Youth Athletics will be holding sign ups for boys and girls interested in playing youth baseball or softball, including majors and minors from 2:30—8 p.m. outside the JCS gym. Any boy or girl between 7-9 may sign up for minor's baseball. Any boys between 10-12 may sign up for majors baseball and any girls between 10-12 may sign up for majors softball. Children must turn 7 on or before April 30 to participate in minors or 10 years on or before April 30 to participate in majors. All children (even last year's players " are asked to sign up. Any questions, call Peter at 251-2390.

(economic, continued)

Key to this momentum is the ORDA board's upcoming decision to operate a new lift in the Ski Bowl.

Somewhere, someone is saying, "I don't ski," "the lift could be bad environmentally," "the town shouldn't change," "he haves still have more than the have nots," s "something in North Creek won't help Bakers Mills or Wevertown."

To the naysayer I would suggest that Johnsbury has something right now that most rural Upstate communities lack and that is hope.

At last week's town board meeting the board was presented with a six minute video produced by Matt Klippel and Adam Hyde that spoke about our community with energy and vibrancy. The movie will be shown in many venues. See it if you can.

The new lift will bring the mountain to our Main Street business district using the existing trail cuts from the Ski Bowl of yesteryear. This is not a new environmental threat, but rather a return to the state of affairs that existed here for much of the 20th century. The jobs that are being created now and will be in the future help local people continue to live here. The economic growth will expand jobs for our entire region. To be sure some of these will be laborer level and others will be managerial. These jobs may mean health insurance, savings accounts and spending power. And what about the argument that I want to live in the town we had in the 50s or 60s. In this instance, growth is about preserving the infrastructure and services that we have. In this instance growth is in many ways about preservation of lifestyle. Without some growth we will start to lose our quality of life. Imagine losing the nursing home or having to travel to Warrensburg to fill a prescription or Hudson Headwaters not being able to attract doctors to our region. These problems are not only real, they are all the more magnified by the recession.

The economic contradictions we see emerging I submit are signs that our community can fight its way out of this mess and be a model for other towns.

Town's all over the country are in need of a lift. With some luck and hard work, ours may be getting one.

Copperfield Reopens—50 Jobs Created

At an opening celebration in early February, the new ownership of North Creek's Copperfield Inn unveiled not only physical plans to update the Main Street anchor but also described in detail their commitment to the Greater Gore community.

Speaking for the entire ownership, member/manager Joel Beaudin described the Inn's mission statement as including a firm commitment to enhancing the quality of life for Johnsbury and surrounding towns. In the midst of the current economic crisis, Beaudin's announcement that the Copperfield will create some 50 jobs was welcomed by cheers and applause.

Importantly, Beaudin continued to outline the Inn's business plan as one that includes not just making a profit but also having a positive impact economically and socially on the region. Beaudin explained the Copperfield's intention to work in partnership with the business community, local government and not -for-profits to enhance the quality of life for residents.

In addition to jobs created Beaudin also announced that rooms were already booking for the coming summer season.

Physical changes to the facility are to include a significant expansion to Trappers Tavern and the addition of an Italian restaurant to replace the former Gardens.

Town, Gore & Depot Group to Celebrate Ski Train Anniversary

Our country was in the midst of a major economic crisis. The Federal Government was offering a bail out plan in an effort to stimulate economic growth and locally, a glimmer of hope presented itself in the burgeoning ski industry.

The similarities between today's headlines and those of 1934 are remarkable and present an amazing backdrop to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the first ski train in North Creek.

A cooperative effort between the Town, Gore and the Depot Preservation Association is underway to help celebrate this milestone and also to turn an eye towards the future of the ski industry in the North Country.

The celebration will extend from March 4 through 7 with events at Gore, the Ski Bowl, Tannery Pond Community Center, the Owens House and Train Station. For a complete schedule of events, please contact town hall at 251-2421 or Gore Mountain at 251-2411.

Good News on Snow

Though it seems like this winter has brought snow 8 days a week, the effort to keep the business district clear and safe has stayed on track. With continuing county assistance, as of this date, the town has not been forced to use the \$8500 allocated from bed tax to do street cleaning of snow banks.