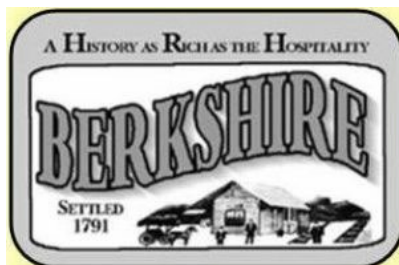


# Berkshire Town Newsletter

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Berkshire Community  
Association  
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POSTAL  
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## BERKSHIRE TOWN OFFICIALS

### **Town Board Members:**

**Supervisor,** Keith Flesher 607-343-3260

Heidi-Lynn Cardone 607-372-3096

Roger Howland 607-657-2763

Fraser Williams 607-657- 2742

John Stoughton 607-657-2501

### **Town Board Meetings:**

Berkshire Town Hall 18 Railroad  
Avenue 607-657-8678

Monthly Board Workshop - 2nd  
Tuesday of the month at 5:30PM

Monthly Board Meeting - 3rd  
Wednesday of the month at 7:00PM

**Town Attorney:** Nicholas R. Canizio 607-642-8500

**Bookkeeper:** Velvet Lyke 607-657-8678

**Town Clerk:** Annette Thayer 607-657-8647

Berkshire Town Hall, 18 Railroad Avenue, Tax Collector, Records  
Management Officer and Registrar of Vital Statistics. Office Hours:  
Tuesday 6:00PM to 8:00PM - Thursday by appointment - Saturday  
9:00AM to 11:00AM

**Highway Superintendent:** Karl Spoonhower 607-657-2705

**Town Justice:** Dawn Olson 607-743-5729

**Court Clerk:** Rebecca Randall 607-657-8090

**Town Court:** 1st & 3rd Mondays – 4:00 till 5:30PM

**Town Assessor:** Mike Maxwell 315-391-8323

**Dog Control Officer:** Denise Liske 607-339-6566

<https://www.facebook.com/berkshireDCO>

**Code Enforcement Officer:** Chance Spoonhower  
[berkshirecodeny@gmail.com](mailto:berkshirecodeny@gmail.com) 707-744-9383

**Planning Board:** Adrian Biscontin, Chair 570-445-0400. Meeting:  
1st Tuesday each month at 6:30PM.

**County Planning Board Rep.:** Tim Pollard, 607-657-8210

**Town Historian:** Penny Magnus 607-657-8123

### **BERKSHIRE POST OFFICE HOURS OF OPERATION**

#### **RETAIL WINDOWc**

Monday - Friday	8:00 AM - 11:30 AM
	12:30 PM - 3:00 PM
Saturday	9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

#### **POST OFFICE LOBBY**

Monday - Friday	7:30 AM – 5:00 AM
Saturday	7:30 AM - 11:30 AM

**SUPERVISOR'S NOTES:** Hello residents of Berkshire! We have made great progress on Creekside Park. We are looking forward to having the pavilion and park available for residents to use for special occasions and celebrations. Stay tuned for information regarding reservations. We would like to thank all of those that have donated time, effort, materials, and labor to make this project possible. We are updating the Town website. When finished we will have a modern and user-friendly site. It is budget time. This year the Town will be seeking the maximum increase in taxes that the NYS Comptroller's office will allow. This will be an approximate raise of 4.2% over previous years. The reason for this raise is the cost of contracting out ambulance service for the Town. The board has not raised taxes for many years, but we do not have a choice with the high cost associated with the EMS contract. We will be holding a budget meeting in the very near future and encourage you to attend for more information and to voice your opinion. As always, I thank you for allowing me to serve you and invite you to attend our regular board meetings on the 3rd Wed. of each month at 7PM, or to contact me at 343-3260 with any concerns, questions, or comments.

*Keith Flesher, Town Supervisor*

**BERKSHIRE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT NEWS:** We are ready for winter, but I hope we do not get as much snow as we have had rain. We stockpiled plenty of sand back in the spring and early winter and our snowplow equipment is all in good shape. We are looking to replace our aging pickup with something slightly larger (maybe a 1 ton) to better handle the snowplowing chores. The excavator is working again, but like so many things these days, having trouble getting parts we need to get it back in top shape. Repaired the bridge understructure on Jewett Hill and fixed the troublesome culvert problems on the south section of Ford Hill. I want to thank you for your unwavering support over the last 21 years as your highway superintendent. I am proud of everything my team and I have accomplished and the amount of money we have saved our town's residents over the years. The time has come for me to pass the torch on to the next generation and enjoy my time in retirement. As of December 31, 2021, I will officially retire from the town of Berkshire. Be sure to vote in the next election on November 2. It is important to make your voice heard and remember that every vote counts. *Karl Spoonhower*

**BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY HALL:** Activity at the Community Hall is rapidly returning to pre - Covid levels. Youth activities such as cheerleading, and school sports practices are using the second floor almost daily. The library has also resumed some children and family activities in the Hall and the Helping Hands Food Pantry continues their busy distribution schedule. Tioga Opportunities is restarting some of their counselling programs and use by individuals and groups is increasing. Although the Hall is virtually fully functional, the Berkshire Community Association continues to seek improvements. Some of the projects being considered are the installation of solar power; improved insulation and new windows for the second floor. It is truly exciting to see this historic treasure rise from the brink of destruction after 55 years of abandoned neglect, to a unique, attractive, and functional facility available to the residents and organizations of Berkshire and surrounding areas. Consider getting involved in and helping your community by becoming part of this worthwhile, exciting venture. Being active in BCA requires very little of your time and seeing the results is truly rewarding. For more info contact Fraser Williams, ph 607-657-2742, email [fraserw1937@gmail.com](mailto:fraserw1937@gmail.com) or Skip Hartwig ph 607-657-8418, email [skhartwig@frontiernet.net](mailto:skhartwig@frontiernet.net), or any of the [BCA Directors](#). *Fraser Williams*

**TAX ASSESSOR NEWS:** The renewal exemption notices will be going out by the end of the month for Agriculture and Senior Citizens. The Senior Citizen is for property owners over 65 whose income is under a total of \$24,000 a year. This income included all Social Security/Pensions/Annuities etc. Also, all property owners who turn 65 before 12/31/2022 need to file for the Enhanced Star before 3/1/2022. The income limit for Enhanced Star is \$90,000 a year. I will post on the renewal forms when I will be in the office, please wear a mask to keep all of us safe. If you have any questions, please call me or text at 315-391-8323 or [maxwellappraisal1954@gmail.com](mailto:maxwellappraisal1954@gmail.com). Exemptions for Agriculture and Senior will be mailed out in late October with dates and times when I am available in the office. *Mike Maxwell*

#### **DOG CONTROL OFFICER: WINTER HEALTHY DOG TIPS**

- Outdoor Sheltering - A doghouse should be 2" from the ground, waterproof and size appropriate - the dog needs to be able to stand up, lie down and stretch out without touching the sides or roof but not too large that it can't retain its own body heat. Please be sure to have a windbreaker on the entrance during the winter months. It is recommended to utilize wood homes versus plastic homes as it is more weather resistance as well as straw or wood shavings since blankets and beddings tend to hold the moisture which decreases a dog's body temperature.
- Food & Water - Access to water should always be provided as well as adequate food - dogs will need more calories in the winter to accommodate for their increased need for body heat.
- Ice - Keep the hair trimmed between their paws to reduce the risk of ice retention which increases their risk for frostbite and hypothermia.
- Salt - It's recommended to keep the dog off the sidewalks, driveways, and roads whenever possible where salt is utilized to melt ice - preferably walking them on the grass or snow to prevent chemical burns to their paws. These toxic chemicals can be ingested by the dogs licking their paws - prevention is achieved by wiping the dog's paws when coming back inside.

**TIOGA CTY HEALTH DEPT & STRAY HAVEN RABIES VACCINATION CLINIC SCHEDULE** November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (Time To Be Determined) @ Stray Haven - 194 Shepard Road, Waverly, NY **LOST/FOUND DOGS** - If you have lost or found a dog - please contact the Berkshire Dog Control Officer ASAP 24/7 @ (607) 339-6566. The DCO can aid by being a contact for any potential sightings and sharing information as you search for your dog. Keep in mind that most individuals that retrieve a lost dog contact the Dog Control Officer immediately - so let's bring your dog home quickly & safely before transport to Stray Haven should happen. AND please remember to license your dog & affix their ID tag to their collar - especially in emergency situations this will allow for immediate identification and initiated contact of the owner - as well as it is mandated by the Town of Berkshire Local Law. **Happy Holidays to All The Fur Babies Out There & Their Families!!** *Denise Liske, Dog Control Officer 607-339-6566* <https://www.facebook.com/berkshireDCO>

**TIOGA COUNTY RURAL MINISTRY:** Dear Friends of Tioga County Rural Ministry (TCRM), I am writing this note to let you know that as of November 1, 2021, I will no longer be directly working for TCRM. This decision was made by me reluctantly due to an increase in responsibility in my personal and professional life. If you noticed I wrote directly working for the Ministry as I hope to

continue being available to help with TCRM projects in our Northern Tioga Territory, either directly with the Ministry, or, through the 1<sup>st</sup> Congregational Church of Berkshire where I currently pastor. I have enjoyed helping folks in our region through the ministry in financial aid, sneaker and snow boot distributions, Spring clean-up, Car repairs, etc. etc., and in some form hope to continue doing as such. Much of what I accomplished here in Newark Valley, Berkshire, and Richford would not have been possible if it were not for being able to partner with folks like you, either by directing those in need to me, or, by helping me and TCRM directly with the differing outreaches we did, especially with the sneakers and boots. My leaving in no way affects the desires and goals of Tioga County Rural Ministry in continuing to reach out to those in need in Northern Tioga County. Be advised November 1st my contact information through TCRM will no longer be active. If you need to reach TCRM, please call Alycia Anthony, Human Service Aide at the main office in Owego @ 607-687-3021. In closing I would like to share a couple stories about how I (TCRM), partnering with you, was able to help a little girl get a much-needed pair of glasses. Not an expensive investment nor hard to arrange, but it made all the difference in this girl's life, her family, and for her education. Another situation was when we were able to help a divorced mother of 2 children with a baby on the way keep her house warm. These are just 2 memories I will carry with me as I look fondly back on my journey with Tioga County Rural Ministry. Thank you, and God Bless, *Paul M. Kunik* (MY number at the 1<sup>st</sup> Congregational Church is 607-657-2677

**NORTHERN TIOGA NEIGHBORS NETWORK:** NTNN Lives On! Northern Tioga Neighbors Network will continue providing transportation to Northern Tioga County's seniors and those who need a ride to a doctor's appointment, pharmacy, or grocery store. Thanks goes out to your neighbors who stepped up and volunteered to be on their Board of Directors! The newly appointed Board is as follows. Kate Krasileva (Berkshire), President; Jamey Remaley (Newark Valley), Vice President and Public Relations; Janice Merrill (Richford), Treasurer; Noah Hendricks (Berkshire), Archivist/Records. John and Barbara Schwartz and Dick Harrington retire from Board membership but remain involved in an Advisory capacity. We need more Board members, please volunteer to help! If you can attend a monthly Board meeting, had your COVID-19 vaccination, and have a concern for the well-being of elderly and others who need transportation in our communities, please contact KateKrasileva@gmail.com or leave a message at 607-657-2823. NTNN continues to require at least 3 days advance notice to secure a ride, and to follow our COVID-19 Policy – vaccination and wearing a mask during transport. NTNN is NOT for emergency transportation. To volunteer to be a driver (mileage reimbursed), or to schedule a ride, please leave a message at 607-657-2823 and someone will get back to you. The Spirit of Volunteerism is alive in Northern Tioga County!

#### **BERKSHIRE HISTORIAN:**

The Historian's Office, located on the second floor of the library, is the place to learn about the people and places that shaped our town. We recently added a large worktable, two chairs, two laptops, a printer/copier and Ancestry.com to our space thanks to a grant from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation. Contact



Penny Magnus, Town Historian, at 607-657-8123 for information or to donate items for our historical records.

**BERKSHIRE FREE LIBRARY:** There is a lot of autumn in the air at the Library. Hard to believe that our summer program flew by so fast. We were proud that our children read over 20,000 minutes (333 hours) this summer and we gave out over 300 “grab and go” activities and books for home. Thank you to the Tillers and Toilers for all the summer flowers. What a fun summer! We thank all our supporters that have contributed to our fundraiser so far. By supporting the Library, we can continue to support the community. Our average book circulation is a 1,000 books a month which translates into about \$35,000 of free community resources each month and \$420,000 per year in just books. Wow! Not bad when you can access these free resources with your library card. Your library card will also get you access to [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com), Heritage Quest online, digital books, audiobooks and more. You can apply for a card at the Library or online. Call for more information. 607-657-4418. Children's Storytime continues Tuesday mornings at 10:30 AM and our Craft group meets at 11:00 AM on Thursday morning. Additionally, check out our Library website ([www.berkshirefreelibrary.org](http://www.berkshirefreelibrary.org)) for information on our Ancestry Workshop coming in November. Please call or email for more information. Happy Fall! [berkshirefreelibrary.org](http://berkshirefreelibrary.org) Facebook Berkshire Free Library 657-4418 *Fran Miller, Director*

**EVERGREEN CEMETERY:** Evergreen Cemetery will be closed to vehicular traffic for the winter sometime in early November. Lot holders will be able to park on Lock Road and walk to their plots until the cemetery is reopened next spring. Lot holders are encouraged to clean up plots before cold weather, utilizing the barrels provided. We want to thank Brett Welch and his crew for the great mowing job done this year, especially with the challenges presented with so much rain. *Maurice Stoughton, President*

**CODE ENFORCEMENT:** Code work in the town has been steady this fall. If you plan to update or install new heating systems before winter, check with me if you have any questions or concerns or to pick up a permit. I've been busy with finishing up the New York State Code Enforcement Officials training. This online training has been 6 weeks in total. This training has been very educational to understanding the depth and reasons for code in 2021. The safety of your home, businesses and community is important. *Chance Spoonhower*

**BERKSHIRE RECREATIONAL COMMITTEE:** An Update A lot of progress has been made since our late report. Two of three sections of the walkway, the center and southern loops, were installed by David Black's crew in late August. Now the Berkshire Creekside Park is beginning to look like a real park! And residents are already taking advantage of it, some walking, some jogging, others biking and skateboarding, and others with strollers and wheelchairs. There have even been people launching their kayaks into Owego Creek from the park.

Brett Welch has been mowing and Chance Spoonhower did some tree and brush



trimming on either side of the park entrance. This will make the area look neater and will also allow better coverage for the surveillance cameras installed on the Town Hall. The railroad cars

have been removed for the same reason. Additional cameras are being installed on the pavilion. The security system has been provided by a generous donation from Dennis Whitaker. The BRC also had a rock picking session in October to allow Brett to mow at a lower level. The southern section was completed, but the rest is to be done at some later date.

As for the pavilion, Jeremy Frederici ran electricity to the pavilion and Skip Hartwig completed the electrical work with outlets at the near and far corners. Topsoil was added and grass seed planted around the pavilion. Charcoal grills will be installed in the spring. The forms for the park benches have been purchased and the benches will be installed as soon as suitable areas have been identified and prepared. The BRC has installed various signs—donated by members of the BRC—reflecting park rules as approved by the Town Board. Everyone should note that the walkway is not designed for motorized vehicles and are therefore prohibited.

An area within the southern loop is being designated as a wildflower meadow. The area has already been marked off and seeds will be planted soon, to be ready to germinate in the spring. Eugene Hodge and Lorraine Slate have also donated toward this project.

The Tioga County Senior Citizen Foundation has awarded the Town a \$5,000 grant to go toward the northern and final loop of the walkway. A grant application has already been submitted to the Floyd Hooker Foundation for additional funding, and another application to the Mildred Faulkner Truman Foundation will also be submitted before this month's deadline.

As the BRC moves ahead to make the park a place for everyone to enjoy, volunteer work and funding will be necessary. Contact *George Lohmann* ([tiogactc@gmail.com](mailto:tiogactc@gmail.com) or 607-657-8037) if you would like to contribute money or labor.

**TOWN OF BERKSHIRE WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT:** The Berkshire town website is undergoing some exciting updates! We want your input: tell us what you want from the website, send us your photos of Berkshire for consideration (high resolution only please), tell us what questions you have when you visit the website. And if you're a business, please respond and let us know that you want to be listed. Email responses to all of these to Fraser Williams at [fraserw1937@gmail.com](mailto:fraserw1937@gmail.com) *Kate Krasileva*

**HELPING HANDS FOOD PANTRY:** Holiday box time is now upon us! There is one box being distributed on November 20 (just in time for Thanksgiving) and one on December 18 (just before Christmas). Pick-up times are assigned at time of sign-up. We are taking sign-ups for both boxes. If you or someone you know could benefit from these food boxes, and live-in zip code 13736 or 13835, please call so we can help your family.

In the past, packing boxes was a huge community effort with many, many helpers. With the restrictions placed upon us due to Covid-19, if anyone wants to help with packing boxes, they need to call ahead to find out what time they can help. We plan on packing boxes using two or three separate time frames on the Friday before each pickup. And this year, we also may need volunteers to do some local deliveries on the Saturdays that the boxes are distributed. Please call **Joan** at 607-657-2501 or **Emily** at 607-657-8158 if you can help us.

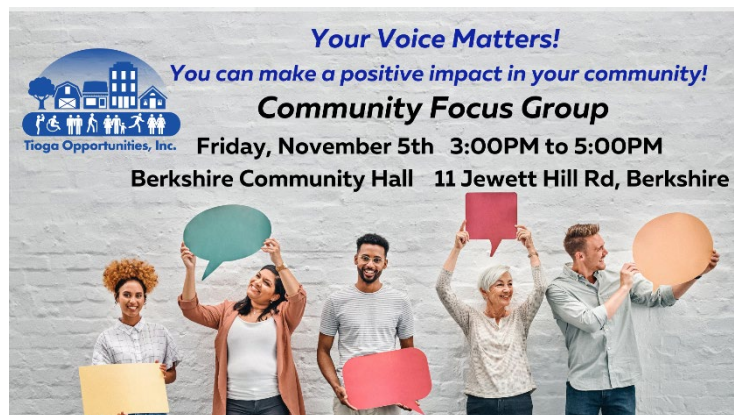
Regular hours remain in effect: Monday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30 and Thursday afternoons from 2:00 to 4:00.

**BERKSHIRE HAPPENINGS:** I will pass on any everchanging local news and items of interest that I become aware of. If you wish to disseminate information that would be significant, important, or informative to folks in our area, let me know and I can pass it on. I

send out info via BCC emails to about 230 area email boxes. If you are not receiving the "Berkshire happenings" emails and wish to be added to the list, or change your email address, let me know at [skhartwig@frontiernet.net](mailto:skhartwig@frontiernet.net). **Skip Hartwig**

**BERKSHIRE FIRE DISTRICT NEWS:** It has been very busy and productive time for the district. The long-range planning committee finished its report for the District (copies will be available at the Berkshire Library, Town Hall and Fire Station or email ([berkshirefiredistrict.ny@gmail.com](mailto:berkshirefiredistrict.ny@gmail.com)). Our purchase of a new computer and software is allowing us to get records up to date. We are still trying to work with Richford and Newark Valley to explore options for ambulance service. The county is doing a study on ambulance service within the county. In September, voters approved the district to purchase a new tanker/pumper that should replace our current 1991 pumper and 1993 tanker. This truck will carry a large volume of water and equipment to act as a pumper as well. We are in the process of getting specifications so we can go to bid for the truck. In October we adopted the budget for 2022. The new budget is \$155,981.00. This is a \$3,965.00 increase over last year. This will allow us to continue to replace outdated gear and equipment. The annual election of fire district commissioners will be December 14, 2021. There are 2 commissioner seats open, 1 for 5 years and one for 3 years. The 3-year treasurer position is also open. If you are interested, submit a letter of intent to run by November 24, 2021. All registered voters in the Berkshire Fire District are eligible to vote. *Jim Simmons Chairman*

**BERKSHIRE PLANNING BOARD:** After completing the review and update of the Site Plan Review Law and Subdivision Law, the Planning Board is continuing to work researching and writing a local law to regulate solar energy equipment. The board also has written the Marijuana Regulation Local Law, which would make on-site consumption and dispensary sales illegal in Berkshire. This law has been reviewed by the Town Board and is scheduled for a second public hearing. The Planning Board continues to meet on the first Tuesday of the month, at 6:30pm in the town office building. Residents are welcome, and the board is always looking for more dedicated individuals. For more information, contact Planning Board chair Adrian Biscontini at [adrian.biscontini@gmail.com](mailto:adrian.biscontini@gmail.com)



**Your Voice Matters!**  
*You can make a positive impact in your community!*  
**Community Focus Group**  
Friday, November 5th 3:00PM to 5:00PM  
Berkshire Community Hall 11 Jewett Hill Rd, Berkshire

The poster features a group of five diverse people (two women and three men) of various ages and ethnicities, each holding a large, colorful speech bubble. The background is a light, textured wall. In the top left corner, there is a logo for 'Tioga Opportunities, Inc.' featuring a stylized house and people icons.