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Pawling voters approve 2011-12 school budget

by **Bette Tani** | Staff Writer

Pawling residents went to the polls Tuesday, May 17, and approved the proposed \$35,832,259 budget by a margin of 117 votes, however they rejected the proposition to purchase three new buses by a mere 14 votes.

Also on the ballot were four candidates Christine Walters, Laura Vitro, Harvey Matcovsky and current board trustee Robert Hill vying to fill three school board seats. Elected were Walters with 988 votes, Matcovsky with 839 votes and Robert Hill who received 922 votes. Vitro lost by only 15 votes receiving 824.

According to election officials Pawling has 5,377 voters in the district. A total of 1,581 budget ballots were cast, which represents just under 30% of eligible voters.

School Superintendent Joseph

Sciortino said he was very happy with the results and grateful to the people of Pawling.

"I want to thank everyone very much for their support and want to reassure them that we know their concerns and are working hard to address them and maintain our programs," he said.

But added that with new state regulations handed down just this week the challenges are still great.

"July 1 we have to start implementing new requirements the state just issued which is going to cost us money with no help from the state or federal government," Sciortino said.

"The only way to fund these programs is through tax dollars. The state keeps saying they want tax relief, but the cost of these mandates only increases the taxes," he added.

With the rejection on the proposition to buy new buses, the district will

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ON IT'S WAY: Pawling Town Supervisor David Kelly (lower right) thanks Operations Manager Bill Cody of Clancy Moving and Storage for their help in shipping donations to storm ravaged Tuscaloosa, AL, while driver Gary Birdsall prepares to load the truck.

PHOTO SUBMITTED

Pawling donates a truckload to Alabama

by **Bette Tani** | Staff Writer

The campaign to collect donations for the Town of Tuscaloosa, AL in just a week's time has been declared a bigger success than anticipated.

In an initiative organized by the Pawling Town Board as "Pawling NY Friendship Week," the board asked the community to make donations of food, clothing, personal items and cash if they chose, in an effort to help the residents of Tuscaloosa who were

hit hard by recent deadly storms.

Town Supervisor David Kelly said the idea came about because he wanted to do something to help. So after contacting two towns in Alabama and learning Tuscaloosa was in dire need the town chose to designate their donations to them. Kelly enlisted the support of Clancy Moving and Storage in Patterson, who jumped at the opportunity to help.

"We could not have done this without the support of Clancy who were on board right from the beginning," Kelly said. "They donated free

boxes, bubble wrap, pallets and the use of PODS should we need it for storage," he added.

According to Kelly he has learned of many groups and organizations throughout the country wanting to help, however, they have no way of transporting the donations.

"Without Clancy this would not have been possible. We owe them a great deal of gratitude," Kelly said.

Kelly also attributes the success of this project to the people of Pawling.

"We are sending an entire truck-

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Swamp River water quality forum coming up

by **Bette Tani** | Staff Writer

The Housatonic Valley Association will be hosting a forum on the water quality of the Swamp River, Saturday, June 4. The event which is free will discuss how Dover & Pawling citizens as well as municipal leaders provide on-going groundwater and watershed protection and how cooperation between townships can save resources, time and money.

Dr. James Utter from Friends of the Great Swamp (FrOGS) will speak about the results of a water assessment done on the water in the Swamp and some of its tributaries, while Dr. William Schlesinger, Cary Institute and the Housatonic Valley Association will present the findings of a seven month

study of the base line water chemistry.

The effects of road salt on the swamp will be presented by Stuart Findlay, Cary Institute, including strategies for reducing road salt usage, and Barbara Kendall of Kendall Stormwater Management Services will explain the new NYS DEC Stormwater Manual and MS4 requirements for municipalities. Other guest speakers include the Mayor of Wappinger Falls Matt Alexander, and David Strayer of the Cary Institute of Eco-Systems Studies.

The event which will be held at the Inn at Dover Furnace, located off Dover Furnace Road between 9:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Due to limited seating reservations are requested and can be made by contact Tonia Shoumatoff at (845) 789-1381 or via email at tonia@hvatoday.org.

Dover holds public hearing on Dover Knolls project

by **Bette Tani** | Staff Writer

The Dover Town Board held a public hearing, Wednesday, May 11, on the first phase of construction, known as Phase 1A for the Knolls of Dover project in Wingdale. This phase includes "a neighborhood of 140

housing units and adaptive reuse of the former storehouse and power plant buildings located on the west side of Route 22," Project Coordinator Kathleen Schibanoff said.

Schibanoff said the developer, The Benjamin Companies, is looking to market both buildings on a commercial level. She cited such uses as an artists' loft, grocery store and other

merchants, but added approval of the project is needed in order to attract tenants. In addition, the buildings would have to be refurbished, something Schibanoff said would most likely be done by the developer.

In attendance at the public hearing was Sen. Greg Ball who publically lent his support to the project, praising

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(845) 855-7014

mailbox@pawlingpress.com

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News

Katz announces grant for Pawling Free Library

Assemblyman Steve Katz (R, I-Yorktown) is pleased to announce the New York State Library has awarded Pawling Union Free Library a \$20,646 grant to help the library become more energy efficient.

"Our libraries have become the centerpiece in our communities, offering a variety of free programs and services in addition to book borrowing and reading programs. As our libraries

look to make the most of every penny in their budgets, becoming energy efficient is an important step and I am please that Pawling Union Free Library has been awarded this grant to help them toward that goal," said the assemblyman.

Through the 2010 State Budget, the New York State Library was appropriated \$14 million in capital funds for construction grants to be

awarded to libraries across the state. In total, 177 construction grants have been awarded.

Libraries interested in applying for construction, or other grants, through the New York State Library should visit the state library's website at www.nysl.nysed.gov to learn more, find applications and obtain assistance in submitting their grant proposals.

BUDGET APPROVED

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

also have to make some changes to accommodate the need. According to the superintendent when school buses hit a certain point and need to be replaced the Department of Transportation (DOT) takes the vehicles off the road, reducing the fleet. Sciortino said without the three new buses, routes will have to be changed and in some cases buses will be more crowded and routes will be longer.

"We will have less buses but the same amount of children to transport. So things will be a little different this September," he said.

Other school districts in the area

also passed budgets on Tuesday including Dover. Voter turnout was low, as it generally is according to School Board President Kathleen Schibanoff, but the \$28.9 million budget was approved 322 to 191.

"I don't know why we get such a low turnout, but the budget usually passes first time around and I'm grateful it did this time as well," she said.

"I'm very grateful to the people of Dover for their support and trust, but I am still deeply concerned about what is down the road because we are being asked to provide more but are receiving less and less in aid," Schibanoff added.

Like Sciortino, the 20-year school board veteran said the overwhelming mandates passed down to local school districts are such a financial burden

she is fearful of how schools will operate effectively without aid.

"Without funding in education to meet these requirements, programs and schools are going to suffer. The burden is being passed down to the taxpayers and I don't know how much more people can take," she added.

Dover also elected two school board members for two open seats. Penny Dye and Russell Infantino were uncontested and re-elected to five-year terms. Both have served on the Dover School Board for ten years, according to Schibanoff.

Of the 17 districts in Dutchess County who voted May 17, all but one budget was passed, and that was Pine Plains.

ALABAMA

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load to Alabama. That's amazing, and is representative of the kind of people who live here," he said.

Over all 10 4 x 4 foot pallets were filled four to five feet high, according to Kelly, which included five pallets of new and used clothing alone, shoes, bedding, food, toiletries, socks, underwear, pajamas and cash donations.

Kelly said one local business owner donated \$500 cash.

"One of the most moving experiences was when the children came in with their food donations," Kelly said. "One little girl brought in a brand new toy she'd never played with and asked if we could send it so someone who needed something to play with. It was just amazing how generous everyone was."

The donations which were sealed and loaded on the truck Monday, May 16, are expected to arrive in Ala-

bama by the end of this week or early next. Logistics, according to Kelly, are being coordinated by Clancy Moving and Storage and the receiving point in Tuscaloosa.

"At least one-quarter of the items were brand new with tags on them," Kelly said.

"The success of this is beyond definition, and I am overwhelmed by the generosity and support of this community. The entire experience has been very heart-warming."

DOVER KNOLLS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the developer for their commitment as well as their willingness to invest millions in the community. Ball talked about how his parents met while working at the former Harlem Valley Psychiatric Center (HVPC), the site for the proposed development, but added "now the facility sits as blight on the town."

Paul Palmer, employed by Dover Knolls last summer when they trained and hired 16 local residents for asbestos removal and demolition

work said during the meeting, "I have nearly 30 years experience in the construction industry and I have never seen a more comprehensive site plan."

Palmer added he too, has seen a positive impact on the local economy because local vendors and service providers have been used.

The Subdivision Application for Phase 1A and the Overall Site Plan Application were submitted in January 2011. Since that time the town board's technical consultants have been reviewing them. The plans were also sent to the Dutchess County Planning Board and the Dover Planning Board for their comments.

The process for the project began with a Zoning Amendment Application in 2005. That application required approval of a master development plan and design guidelines for the entire site, as well as an environmental review known as SEQRA. That process was completed in May 2010, Schibanoff said.

Currently the Dover Town Board, Town Engineer Joe Berger and Town Planner AKRF are reviewing the applications. Schibanoff said she expects the board to vote on them at their June 29 meeting.

The Pawling Press publishes weekly. Unsolicited submissions of content are welcome, but we are not responsible for their return. Submissions should be sent to submissions@pawlingpress.com or The Pawling Press, P.O. Box 412, Pawling, N.Y. 12564. Letters should be sent (with the writer's name, address, and daytime telephone number) via e-mail to letters@pawlingpress.com or to the address above. All content must be received by Tuesdays at 5 p.m. All letters become the property of The Pawling Press and will not be returned. Calendar listings should be e-mailed to events@pawlingpress.com.

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