

# Town of New Lebanon

www.townofnewlebanon.com

November 2016

## A Letter from the Supervisor

I cannot believe I have been in office for almost a year already; the time goes by so fast. When I wrote to you for the last newsletter, the tennis courts were still under “re-construction.” They were finished in August and are being well used. We plan to resurface the basketball court and repair the pavilion floor in 2017 and there may be some other smaller projects in the park as well. The “Ukulele & Brew Festival” was well attended and we hope to continue this event annually and (Continued on Page 2)

The General Election is Tuesday, November 8, 2016 at the Immaculate Conception Church, 732 US Route 20. The polls are open from 6am – 9pm. On the ballot this election are the Offices of: President of the United States, US Senator, US Congressman, 3<sup>rd</sup> Judicial District State Supreme Court Justices (2 seats), State Senator, and Assembly Member.

## HEAP Applications open 11/14/2016

The Heat Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) for the 2016-17 season will be accepting applications starting on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016. You can pick up an application at the New Lebanon Town Clerk’s Office. You must bring the completed application to the Department of Social Services, 25 Railroad Ave, Hudson, NY (open M-F from 8am – 4pm) along with proof of residency, ID for all household members, proof of income for a one month period, and a current fuel or utility bill. If you need assistance applying you can contact Columbia Opportunities (if under 60 years old) at 828-4611 or Office for the Aging (if over 60 years old) at 828-4258. You can also contact the Department of Social Services at 828-9411 ext. 5 with any questions. You can also apply online at [www.mybenefits.ny.gov](http://www.mybenefits.ny.gov). For more information about HEAP, go to <http://www.ny.gov/services/apply-heap>.

## Town Government



Supervisor – Colleen Teal  
supervisor@townofnewlebanon.com  
518-794-8889

### Councilmembers:

Chuck Gerald  
cgeraldi@townofnewlebanon.com

Dan Evans  
devans@townofnewlebanon.com

Mark Baumli  
mbaumli@townofnewlebanon.com

Kevin Smith, Sr.  
ksmith@townofnewlebanon.com

Town Clerk – Tistrya Houghtling  
townclerk@townofnewlebanon.com  
518-794-8888

Did you know that the Town Clerk’s office maintains an email database that receives all board meeting agendas, meeting minutes and other important documents and updates? If you would like to be added to this database please send request with your email address to [townclerk@townofnewlebanon.com](mailto:townclerk@townofnewlebanon.com). Your email address will not be shared.

Regular Town Board meetings are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month at the New Lebanon Town Hall, 14755 State Route 22, New Lebanon, NY, 12125

Mailing Address:  
Town of New Lebanon  
PO Box 328  
New Lebanon, NY, 12125

## Letter from the Supervisor Continued:

expand it with some type of “music in the park” program. Watch for more on this topic in the Spring edition of the Newsletter. When we sent out the last newsletter, I had been advised that the paving of the 20/22 corridor had been tentatively scheduled for August. That much-needed improvement to our town has been done and it is such a welcome change. I was avoiding driving on the corridor because it was in such bad shape; now it is truly delightful to drive on the smooth surface. I have received many inquiries about the painting of the white lines. DOT has advised me that the painting has to be completely redone, so they will not be coming in to simply finish the white lines but to completely repaint the whole corridor.

We are still winding down with the sign enforcement as well as other zoning enforcement but the main strip in town already looks so much better. As we have worked on zoning enforcement, we have found more areas of our zoning law that need amending. We are working on these amendments with the Building Department, the Zoning Re-write Committee, and the Town Attorneys. The Zoning Re-write Committee includes members of the Town Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Planning Board; however, before the Town Board enacts any amendments, we will solicit the input of the full Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals as well as hold public hearings to hear from our public. I would hope by early 2017 to have something for consideration. Some of the problems are found when we try to administer the regulations, some when we try to enforce them, and others when applicants try to move through the process and we become aware of things that simply do not make sense or are too cumbersome. The goal is to have a set of regulations that are reasonable, clear for everyone to understand, and are applicant, administration, and enforcement friendly. When any one of these components is missing, the whole process becomes bogged down and that is not the intent.

Several public forums were held by the Zoning Re-write Committee and the Conservation Advisory Council to solicit public input on solar arrays, both private and for profit, to determine where we wanted to go with this as a community. We received some great input including suggestions, concerns both for and against regulations, questions (including where they should be allowed or prohibited, what types of conditions should we consider putting on them, what types of rules should we have for decommissioned arrays, regulating commercial for-profit arrays versus arrays for on-site use), and more. Currently, the Zoning Re-write Committee is using this information to draft a proposed law. Once a final draft has been crafted, it will be reviewed by the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, and the Town Board. Finally, we will hold public hearings to hear the public’s opinion of the proposed law. I believe that our zoning regulations should be under continuous review; technological, industrial, and other changes can alter what needs to be included in our zoning even if simply to list it as a “permitted use” in certain zones. Additionally, even with the best of intentions, nothing is ever perfect. Once we enact amendments, we need to be sure they are working as we planned and are not cumbersome to the applicant, the administrator, or the enforcer.

We still have not received any interest from any of our youth to serve on a Youth Committee but I am not giving up. I strongly believe that they should be the ones guiding us in the types of programs, activities and events that they would like us to provide for them. So, we are still looking for High School students

interested in serving on this committee. Anyone interested can contact me, our Town Clerk Tistrya Houghtling, any of our Town Board members, or any of our Recreation Commission members.

The Steering Committee for the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the Incorporation of the Town of New Lebanon (aka NL200 Committee) has had several meetings and they have a lot of fun ideas for our celebration in 2018. If you have ideas, historic information or would like to be part of the planning, please let me know. I am very excited about this event and see it as a way to really engage all of our businesses, organizations, residents, and visitors in our community for a whole season (maybe two seasons) of fun activities.

Another historic tidbit: I find Columbia Hall one of the most intriguing pieces of our history; I would love to have seen it in its heyday. Columbia Hall was opened in 1794. It towered 300 feet above the valley. At its largest, it could accommodate 400 guests and had a dining room that could seat 400 diners. It had a three-deck piazza with a two-mile promenade. Some of the famous people that visited Columbia Hall included John Quincy Adams, Martin Van Buren, Daniel Webster, Henry Longfellow and Marquis de Lafayette, as well as ambassadors from Spain, England and France, and that is only a few of them. The Hall was often filled to overflowing with wealthy patrons from New York and the South who had come to bathe in the miracle waters. There were two major events that contributed to the closing of Columbia Hall. One was the Civil War, that crippled the southern aristocracy patronage, and the other was the closing of the Lebanon Springs Railroad. In 1926, the Hall was demolished, having survived 134 years. (There is a photograph of Columbia Hall in its heyday at the Town Hall behind the Town Board bench, feel free to stop in and see it. It was quite impressive!)

As a result of the information we obtained at the two public hearings on the sidewalk project and a review of the input we received in 2013; the Town Board voted not to proceed with the project and to submit a “no build” determination based on public opposition. Since the determination was made based on public opposition, the Town will not need to pay back the federal or state funding we received to plan this project. At this point, we are working with DOT and Creighton Manning Engineering to process the necessary paperwork to officially close this project. I have been assured that this decision will not negatively affect any future administration if they should decide to pursue a sidewalk project.

The 2017 Tentative Budget has been completed and is posted on the town’s website. The Board must hold a public hearing for the LVPA budget and the 2017 Preliminary Budget, both of which will be posted on the Town’s website. This Public Hearing must be held no later than the Thursday following Election Day (this year November 10<sup>th</sup>); please watch the public notices and website for the date and time of the Public Hearing.

The 2017 Tentative Budget provides for an overall increase in spending over last year of \$4,774 and an increase in the amount to be raised by taxes of \$324. It also provides for repairs to the basketball court and the pavilion, as well as partial funding for a new mower for the park which is anticipated to be purchased in 2018. It provides funding for new highway radios if the Town opts to switch to high-band frequency along with emergency services. There is also a significant increase in legal fees as we work on zoning enforcement and zoning amendments as well as fixing some other prior administrative problems. We have put our technology repurchase program back in place and we are working on long-term asset plans for all of the town’s assets (park, highway, town hall, etc.) that will allow us to perform maintenance, upkeep and replacement in a manner that keeps the budget stable.

As I promised, there is still a lot going on. Most of what we have been able to accomplish so far has been done through collaborative efforts and everyone's input is greatly appreciated. There are so many people in our community who are engaged in activities that make our community a better place and to each and every one of them I say "thank you". Please always feel free to share your ideas, suggestions, or concerns with me as well as reaching out to me if there is an area in which you would like to get involved. As always, thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your Town Supervisor.

Warmest regards,

*Colleen*

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## Tilden Monument Restoration

The Lebanon Valley Historical Society and the Cemetery of the Evergreens, with the support of the Town of New Lebanon, have begun a project to repair and preserve the burial site and monument of Samuel Jones Tilden.

Born in New Lebanon, Tilden was educated as a lawyer, worked for the railroads for many years, and was the Governor of New York State 1875-6, fighting corruption and heading up the Democratic Party. He ran for President in 1876, won the popular vote, but lost to Rutherford B. Hayes by one vote in the Electoral College, in a very shady example of backroom dealings.

His burial place has been repaired and restored a number of times over the years and is in need of attention once again. The Lebanon Valley Historical Society (LVHS) has established a committee to lead a multi-year project to repair the monument, with a goal of completion before the Town's 200th anniversary in 2018. The current committee members are LVHS Vice-president Deborah Gordon, Town Historian Kevin Fuerst and Doug Banker, a trustee of the Cemetery of the Evergreens. They are currently working to obtain estimates for the cost of repair, which will then determine how much money must be raised to complete the work.

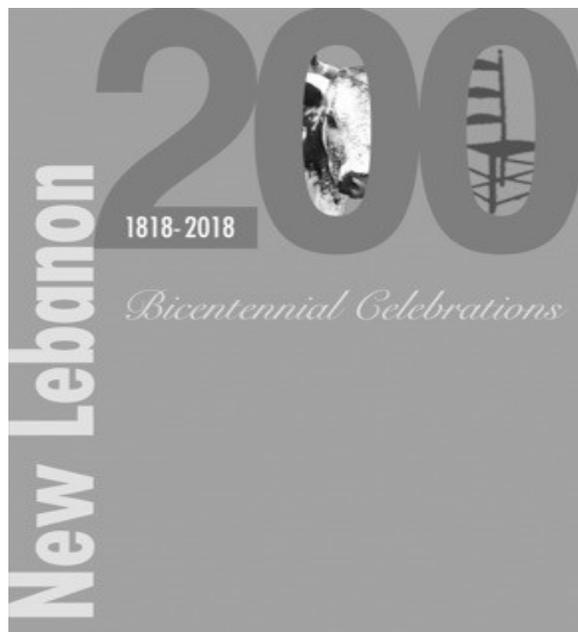
If you wish to help with this project, including pledging a donation, or want more information, please contact the committee by email at [info@lebanonvalleyhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@lebanonvalleyhistoricalsociety.org) or by telephone at 518-794-9764.

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## Holiday Season Gift Donation Program

The Town Clerk will be spearheading a Holiday Season Gift Drive for families in need in our community. If you are a family in need living in New Lebanon, please contact Tistrya Houghtling at the Town Clerk's office at 794-8888 or [townclerk@townofnewlebanon.com](mailto:townclerk@townofnewlebanon.com) or stop by her office M, W, Th, or Fri between 9am and 5pm. She will be making a list of specific gifts needed, distributing the list to people wanting to donate, collecting the donations, wrapping them up and delivering them to the families in time for the Holidays. She will be working with Charlie's Pantry to ensure that all of the families in our community are provided for this Holiday Season. Drop off locations will be at the Town Hall and the New Lebanon Post Office. If you would like to volunteer to help in any way (ie – donating items, wrapping gifts, etc.) please contact Tistrya.

## Bicentennial Celebration Plans Underway



The bicentennial of the Town of New Lebanon's incorporation is coming up in April 2018. The Town Board has asked Grow the Valley, Inc. to coordinate a series of celebratory activities that will span several months, under the banner "NL200." The focus of these special events will be to remind us of our heritage, stimulate growth and community development but most of all to have fun!

Grow the Valley has formed a Steering Committee whose job is to enable every interested person and entity in town to play a part in planning for and making these events happen. Would you like to be a volunteer for NL200? Do you have any good ideas for it? Please contact Ted Salem at [growthevalley@gmail.com](mailto:growthevalley@gmail.com).

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## Another Bit of New Lebanon History

The first town board meeting was held in the home of Isaac Everest on Tuesday, April 6th, 1819. The following eight items were voted on and accepted:

1. That the sum of four hundred dollars be levied on the taxable inhabitants in the Town of New Lebanon for the support of the poor in said town for the ensuing year;
2. That no horned cattle should be lawful commoner that exceeds two years old;
3. That no sheep be considered lawful commoner;
4. That all natural male sheep running at large between the 10th day of September and the 10th day of November may be castrated at risk of the owner;
5. That all natural male swine running at large that are sufficient for damaging sows for fattening may be castrated at risk of the owner;
6. That geese should not be considered lawful commoner until well yoked;
7. That every man's rear yard shall be his own pound for horses, cattle, sheep and swine found trespassing and the owner thereof shall be subject to the same laws and penalties as though a town pound was erected;
8. That the next annual town meeting shall be held at the house of Isaac Everest in the Town of New Lebanon on the first Tuesday of April next at 10 o'clock A.M. on said day.

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## From the New Lebanon Library

The New Lebanon Library is offering two special programs for the holidays: Bells and Motley Consort-- Holiday Music Folk Traditions, on December 16 at 6:30, and a Community Holiday Celebration with DBX2 and a visit from Santa on December 23 at 6 pm. Please check our website –

[www.newlebanonlibrary.org](http://www.newlebanonlibrary.org) --for information about the variety of other programs for all ages and interests that are always on offer at the Library.

## From the Broadband Committee

The New Lebanon Broadband Committee, chaired by Doug Banker, has been adjusting their focus as things at the County and State level have shifted significantly in the past few months and they have been wonderfully adaptive to the changing environment. The Supervisor has asked them to monitor the upgrading and expansion that is required of the merger of Charter and Time Warner into Spectrum and she hopes that the local broadband committees in other towns will help with the monitoring of upgrading and expansion occurring in their towns. A significant portion of the County is served by Charter and will be effected by the merger requirements. Additionally, both G-Tel (Germantown Telephone Company) and Mid-Hudson Cable have been awarded funding through the New NY Broadband Program – Phase 1 and these two providers combined serve a substantial portion of the western side of the County. The NYS Public Service Commission put very specific requirements into their approval of the Charter-Time Warner merger that specifically address Columbia County. The funding through the New NY Broadband Program is public funding, so in both of these cases, we have an opportunity to “oversee” their activities which we would normally not have with private companies.

Connect Columbia is still conducting their survey to collect data on current internet service providers and their coverage areas. If you have not already completed the survey, please take a couple minutes to complete it – there is a Residential Internet Survey and a Business Internet Survey. They can be accessed through Connect Columbia’s Facebook page (search “Connect Columbia” on Facebook), Connect Columbia’s website (<http://connectcolumbiacounty.com/>), or through a link on the town’s website ([www.townofnewlebanon.com](http://www.townofnewlebanon.com)). The surveys provide us with data that we can use to improve the broadband situation in New Lebanon and Columbia County. While the results of the surveys are not surprising to us, to have the data to support what we know, helps us in our “fight” to improve our situation. We have not seen any significant changes yet; however, there is a lot of attention and activity on this topic and the Supervisor is convinced that we will be seeing significant improvements in broadband service soon.

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## The Town Seal

Every town has an official corporate seal. Are you familiar with the New Lebanon Town Seal? Here is a copy of the seal: What are the components and what do they mean? There is a compass to symbolize direction, a book to symbolize knowledge, and a torch to symbolize vision. These were the qualities that our forefathers had in mind for the Town of New Lebanon. In New Lebanon, the Town Clerk has sole possession of the Town Seal. Town Law requires ordinances to be stamped with the town seal but there are many other documents that the Town clerk stamps including vital records (birth, death and marriage records), resolutions, minutes, correspondence, etc.



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## From the Assessor’s Office

Exemption season is coming. Exemption renewals will be mailed to you the first week in December. Please make sure to read the insert for dates and times to bring in your renewals.

## Office Closings this Holiday Season

This Holiday Season, the Town Clerk's Office, Town Supervisor's Office and Building Department will be closing on Thursday, December 22<sup>nd</sup> and re-opening on Wednesday, January 4<sup>th</sup>. The Assessor's Office will be closing on Friday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> and re-opening on Monday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>. We will be doing some much needed painting in the offices during that time.

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## For Our Seniors

Did you know that New Lebanon has an advocate for Seniors? Phyllis Hulbert is the New Lebanon Representative to the Columbia County Office for the Aging and she works to connect seniors with a host of services to improve quality of life and independence. Phyllis is also the liaison between the Office for the Aging, the Town Board, and the Lebanon Valley Senior Citizens and she is doing a phenomenal job. Some of the assistance includes rides for seniors, events, services, assistance with paperwork, Medicaid, food stamps, hospice care, Meal on Wheels, just to name a few. If you need assistance, know of anyone who needs assistance, or just have questions, please contact Phyllis Hulbert at 794-7995.

The Lebanon Valley Senior Citizens meet the first and third Friday of each month with a few exceptions. The meetings are held at 1pm in the New Lebanon Town Hall meeting room, 14755 State Route 22. Anyone 55 years of age is eligible to join. If only one member of a couple is 55, both are eligible to join. Come check them out – you'll meet new friends, enjoy interesting speakers, great trips, and refreshments at each meeting. Yearly dues are \$10. For more information please contact Pat Burnell at 794-7084.

The next five meetings are as follows:

November 4<sup>th</sup> at 1pm at the Town Hall – collecting food for Charlie's Pantry

November 18<sup>th</sup> at 1pm Thanksgiving Dinner at the White Stone Restaurant in Ghent – RSVP to Arlene Schell 915-1478

December 2<sup>nd</sup> tentatively at 12pm at The Immaculate Conception Church Hall – NLCSD chorus will entertain – Xmas cookies, punch and election of officers

December 16<sup>th</sup> at 1pm Xmas Dinner at Jackson's in Old Chatham – RSVP to Arlene Schell 915-1478

January 20<sup>th</sup> at 1pm at the Town Hall – BBQ Chicken & Ribs and Homemade Soup

For more information on the Lebanon Valley Senior Citizens and other services offered to Seniors, please go to our website at [www.townofnewlebanon.com/lebanon-valley-senior-citizens/](http://www.townofnewlebanon.com/lebanon-valley-senior-citizens/).

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## Charlie's Pantry

Charlie's Pantry is located behind the Immaculate Conception Church at 732 Route 20, New Lebanon. They are always accepting food donations for families in need here in our community. If you would like to donate food, there are drop boxes located outside of the pantry and at the New Lebanon Post Office. If you are in need of food, the pantry is open on Tuesdays from 3-6pm and on Saturdays from 10:30am – 1pm and by appointment. In addition to regular food donation, they are collecting Thanksgiving food donations in the month of November. There will also be a giving tree during the holiday season where you can sign up to provide gifts to a child or family in need in our community. If you are a family in need, for more information, or to volunteer, please contact Peter Quinn at 794-0544.

## New Lebanon Constitution Study

The New Lebanon Constitution Study is held on the first and third Monday of each month at the New Lebanon Library. Session begins at 7 pm and ends promptly at 8:30 pm. ALL are welcome and we encourage high school students to attend and give us their ideas, interpretations, and points of view! Instructor is Mark Rowe, a Marine Veteran and long-time student of the U. S. Constitution. Classes resume on November 7, 2016 and there is no charge to attend. For more info, contact the NL Library or JJ. Johnson-Smith at [PactJJ@gmail.com](mailto:PactJJ@gmail.com).

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## From Mountain Road School

Mountain Road School Announces Fall and Winter Events:

Harvest Celebration and Sharing of Soup- Tuesday November 22 5:30 pm

18<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Fair December 10, 2016 from 11 am to 4 pm- A delightful family tradition for the holiday season! Join Mountain Road School for fantastic food, games, music, crafts, and a host of local vendors with great gifts for everyone on your list!

Mountain Road School is a small, progressive, independent school in New Lebanon, NY serving preschool through eighth grade. Small class sizes and multiage groupings form the foundation for its educational philosophy. On that foundation Mt Road builds a community that embodies a culture of compassion, inspires critical and creative thinking, learns and teaches responsively through emergent curriculum, develops resilience by cultivating a clear and steady approach to challenges, and nourishes the reciprocity between the human and natural worlds.

Mountain Road School is located at 4565 County Route 9, New Lebanon/East Nassau, NY 12062. For more information, contact the school at 518-794-8520, email [info@mountainroadschool.org](mailto:info@mountainroadschool.org) and at our website at [www.mountainroadschool.org](http://www.mountainroadschool.org).

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## From The Abode

At a recent Annual Abode Village Meeting, we made several announcements that we would like to share with the greater New Lebanon community. First and foremost, the Abode will be clarifying its identity and mission as an Eco-Sufi Village – focusing on the harmony between spirituality and ecology. With hundreds of acres of land, a mountain, a pond, a farm, and a residential community, the Abode offers the perfect laboratory for learning what spirituality and ecology share and how each can mutually enhance the other.

In distinguishing the Abode as an Eco-Sufi Village, we are more clearly describing the diverse and energetic elements that encompassed our campus. This description will allow us to celebrate the individual components of the Abode, while tying them together into a collective, cohesive modern identity. Overall, “the Abode: an Eco-Sufi Village” is an organic expression of what already exists here, and a call to the outside to come explore how we live, work, and worship.

The Eco-Sufi practice will be manifested in a four-week rhythm, exploring an individual element each day of the work-week, and encompassing activities within the Abode campus: farming, cooking, service, hospitality, etc. The Abode will host an active calendar of activities in coming months, and will be rolling out elements of our Eco-Sufi and operational initiatives. Weekly activities include classes, meals, and Universal Worship services. Classes are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:00pm, while Universal Worship takes place on Sunday at 11:00am, with brunch following the service. For more information on the Abode, or to subscribe to our mailing list, please visit [www.theabode.org](http://www.theabode.org).

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## From Shaker Museum | Mount Lebanon

Shaker Museum | Mount Lebanon may have closed for the season at the historic site in New Lebanon, but there's plenty to look forward to:

Join us at the recently opened The Shaker Bar in Hudson, New York on Saturday, November 19 to mingle with staff and friends while viewing a show of new photographs taken at the North Family this year by New York City-based photographer Benjamin Swett titled "Shadows of the Shakers." The Shaker Bar is located at 119 Warren Street, and opens at 5PM Saturday nights. Proceeds from sales of the photographs partially benefit Shaker Museum | Mount Lebanon.

*Shake It Up Sunday* returns on Sunday, December 4 with a brunch and discussion led by Rachel Urquhart, author of *The Visionist*. She will curate a selection of readings to frame the discussion. The readings will be sent to program participants in advance. Location and other details are to be determined, so check our website and follow us on social media for announcements about this special program. *Shake It Up Sunday* is a programs series that explores through group discussion some of the radical ideas developed by the Shakers in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

A new Chair of the Board, Paul Cassidy, was unanimously elected by the Museum's Board of Trustees at its September 24, 2016 meeting. Mr. Cassidy replaces Jeff Daly, who had served as Chair since 2008. Read more at <http://shakerml.org/blogs/press>

Our museum store is always open online - browse books, gifts, and more at <http://shakerml.org/collections/all>

Check for updates on news, upcoming programs and events, and more at <http://www.shakerml.org/>

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## Quilting Group

We have a quilting group that meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at the Hall of the Immaculate Conception Church on Route 20. We are looking for quilters to join us. We start at 5:30pm on Wednesdays. It is a great social opportunity for us to exchange ideas and inspire one another with our projects. We all bring our sewing machines and projects that we are working on.

We are welcoming beginner quilters to expert quilters. We are hoping to see some new faces so please come and join us.

Any questions, please call Irene Marcello @ 396-6517 and leave word and I will return your call.

## Meeting Dates

Town Board meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm

Planning Board meets the third Wednesday of each month, as necessary at 7:30pm

Zoning Board of Appeals meets the first Tuesday of each month, as necessary at 7:30pm

Zoning Re-write Committee meets the fourth Tuesday of each month, as necessary at 6:00pm

Recreation Commission meets the third Tuesday of each month, as necessary at 7:00pm

Lebanon Valley Senior Citizens meet the first and third Fridays each month at 1:00pm

All of the above meetings are at the Town Hall, 14755 State Route 22, New Lebanon, NY, 12125.

If you are interested in serving on any of the various Boards and Commissions, please contact the Town Clerk at [townclerk@townofnewlebanon.com](mailto:townclerk@townofnewlebanon.com) to see if there are any openings.