



March Calendar

- 5 & 19** Village Board Mtg.
- 13 & 27** Planning Bd. Mtg.
- 14** Zoning Bd. Of Appeals
- 7** Cons. Advisory Comm.
- 13** Recreation Advisory
- 21** Visual Environ. Bd.
- 28** Trails Comm.

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Croton Historical Society Presents "The Masses"

Sunday, February 19th, marked the opening of a new exhibit at the History Museum on the first floor of the Municipal Building. Organized by the Croton Historical Society, The Masses, 1911-1917: The Croton Connection, is the first multi-media exhibit at the museum. The Masses was a monthly magazine published from 1911 to 1917 that covered art, culture, literature and socialist politics. Croton artists and writers were its foremost creators.

Eight Croton residents were instrumental in publishing this early political, literary and art magazine. The second editor, Max Eastman, was its major creative force. He, along with Floyd Dell, Crystal

Eastman, Boardman Robinson, John Reed, Louise Bryant, Robert Minor and Lydia Gibson Minor were Mt. Airy Rd. residents.

The Masses' impact, as a socialist magazine, contributed to the realization of its strongest causes - women's suffrage, birth control, worker's rights and benefits. Others such as economic injustice, war opposition and the use of free speech are still subjects of debate today.



Covers of The Masses on display
At Croton History Museum

Influential contributors and supporters include Carl Sandberg, Amy Lowell, George Bernard Shaw, Upton Sinclair, Dorothy Day, Pablo Picasso, John French Sloan, George Bellows, Eugene Debs, Sherwood Anderson, Louis Untermeyer and others. Cont'd on p. 2

Village Budget Time

On March 20th, Village Manager Abe Zambrano, as Chief Operation and Budget Officer, will deliver the administration's proposed or tentative budget for Fiscal Year 2012/2013. While the process of developing the tentative budget has been under way for several months, the announcement of the proposed budget will start a period of review and adjustment by both the Board of Trustees and the public.

The FY 2012/2013 Village budget is the first budget prepared under the New York State Tax Levy Cap. The Tax Cap created a ceiling for all local governments (and school districts) whereby property tax levies cannot exceed 2% of the previous year's levy.

The total tax levy is the amount of the budget raised by property tax revenue. The NYS Tax Cap limits this increase to 2%. This is not the same as the Tax Rate which is based on the total assessed value of property in the Village - the rate that each property owner must pay in taxes based on \$1000 of their assessed valuation to cover the amount of the total tax levy.

Under the guidance of Village Treasurer Bullock and Manager Zambrano, Village department heads have been developing their budgets for the coming fiscal year. The process began with the mid-year budget review last December. The mid-year review shows, six months into the current fiscal year, revenues and expenditures as compared with the amounts anticipated. Cont'd on p. 3



Summerfest Gets Quality of Life Award

The Hudson Valley Gateway Chamber of Commerce (HVGCC) awarded Croton's annual Summerfest event its Quality of Life Award at the 31st Annual Awards Dinner on Jan. 28th at the Mansion at Colonial Terrace. HVGCC's Quality of Life award is given yearly to a firm or organization that has made a significant contribution



Summerfest Parade

Photo Credit Michele C. Petitt

to the Gateway community, that cultivates collaborations and partnerships for the betterment of the community, fosters economic opportunity, and facilitates community involvement in its own organization.

Croton's Summerfest, held on the first Sunday of June for over 25 years, was recognized for bringing the Croton community together in a celebratory way. Local merchants, the Fire and Police Depts., local preschools, dance schools, non-profit organizations, cheerleaders, regional bands and the Village's DPW and Recreation Depts. all contribute to the yearly event. Dr. Greg Schmidt and representatives of the participating organizations were on hand to accept the award. Proclamations were received from Assemblywoman Galef, Peekskill Mayor Foster, Cortlandt Supervisor Puglisi, Senator Ball and the County Board of Legislators.

Spring Recreation



The annual **Spring Window Painting** decorating event is coming soon! Participants may begin painting windows April 2 and must be completed by April 6. This is not a contest but a fun event for the entire family. Flyers will be available in mid-March at participating stores. Pre-registration is required. The windows will be assigned by the Recreation Dept.

Lunch with the Bunny. The Spring bunny will be back this year to have lunch with the lucky families who sign up for this yearly event. The lunch will be on Sat., March 31 in the Community Room of the Municipal Building at 12 noon. The registration deadline is March 26. The cost per family is \$10/res; \$12/nonres.



NOTE: Summer camp forms will be available March 1 in the Recreation Dept. and at the Library.

Croton Seniors News

After a busy winter, Croton's Seniors Club will be heading into Spring starting with their annual St. Patrick's Day luncheon on Fri., March 16th. The catered luncheon is open to all Senior members. Village and School District residents who are 60 or older may join the Seniors Club at an annual fee of \$6 res/\$12 nonres. Meetings are Fridays at 11 am in the Community Room of the Municipal Building. Free blood pressure screenings are available on the first Friday of each month. In addition to a full schedule of activities including trips, classes and special events for club members, the Senior Recreation program provides a monthly shopping trip to Jefferson Valley Mall and a local shopping bus, twice a week, going to ShopRite, banks and the Post Office. This is available for all Village and School resident seniors, regardless of Senior Club membership.

Attend a meeting or contact Valerie Nolan, Senior Coordinator, at 271-5804 for info on becoming a member or to register for the shopping trips.

Spring Forward, Fall Back



"Spring forward, fall back" is an easy way to remember what to do with your clock as Daylight Savings Time (DST) arrives again. DST begins this Spring on Sun., March 11 so prepare to set your clock to "spring forward" one hour. DST will last until November 4, 2012.

The Masses, cont'd.

The exhibit will include a continuous presentation of visual images shown on a large screen monitor at the museum. It will include the history of The Masses, biographies of the Crotonites who contributed to it, representative samples of political cartoons and illustrations. Also being showcased is every cover of the magazine from 1911 to 1917 as well as very rare original copies of the magazine, portrait photos and first edition books written by the principals.

The Historical Society thanks contributors Michigan State University, the Taniment Library of New York University and resident Cornelia Cotton in preparing The Masses exhibit. Exhibit hours are 9am to 5 pm, Mon., Tues., Thurs. and Fri.



Village Budget cont'd.

This information helps determine some base information for the 2012/2013 budget.

While departmental budgets account for much of the Village day-to-day operational expenditures, the calculation of expected revenues is equally important.

The largest share of Village revenues comes from the property tax it levies. This amount is based on total assessed valuation of property in the Village. The total taxable base varies from year to year. Last year it was \$43,979,195. New construction or building improvements add to the taxable base. Reductions in individual tax assessments, as a result of tax grievances filed by property owners, will result in lowering the total taxable base. Slightly over 60% of the Village's revenue in the 2011/2012 adopted budget was from property taxes - the tax levy. (Other revenue sources accounted for the remaining 40%.) Most significant among these is the revenue from the Village-owned train station parking lot (\$2,750,000 was projected). Another \$1,159,000 comes from the County Sales tax (\$990,000) and various franchise taxes paid by utilities in the Village. Various fees and interest amounts make up the remaining revenues. Some of these revenue sources are anticipated to rise for the coming fiscal year.

A significant area of expenditures that extends across all departments is the amount of the Village's contribution to the NYS Retirement System for pensions and its health insurance for Village employees, current and retired. In 2011/2012, the Village budgeted \$3,743,872 for these expenses which also includes Social Security and Medicare payments, worker's compensation, unemployment insurance, life insurance and dental insurance.

In the weeks following the announcement of the Tentative 2012/2013 Village Budget, the Board of Trustees will be meeting in numerous work sessions to review each budget account in detail. Residents are encouraged to attend these sessions. A Public Hearing will be held on the proposed budget on April 9 as well. The actual numbers in the tentative budget will likely change during the budget reviews and in response to public comments. The final adoption, which must be done prior to May 1, 2012, is scheduled for Monday, April 30, 2012.

Fields Closed Reminder!

With nice weather coming, please remember that Village playing fields remain closed until their protective covers are removed. Closing the fields ensures a better surface in the warmer months ahead.

Water Infrastructure Update

Contracts for the engineering design work for water main replacements in both the Wolf Rd./Cook Lane and Truesdale/Harmon areas were approved by the Village Board at its Feb. 21 meeting. Both areas have been identified as priority areas for water main replacements. Two necessary preliminary steps for these improvements - the development of a computer model for the Village's entire water system, as well as the surveying of both these priority areas, are currently underway.

Nine proposals were received in response to the Village's RFP. Chazen Companies was awarded the design work for the Wolf/Cook area for \$22,000. WSP Sells was awarded the design contract for the Truesdale/Harmon area for \$65,430.

Street Lamps Refurbished

Street lamps in the Upper Village area have been missing for several months. They were removed as a safety measure after one fell over. Installed 25 to 30 years ago, the street lamps have deteriorated and become unstable due to corrosion of their poles, metal bases, and the bolts that secured them to the ground bases. In all, twenty eight street lamps were removed.

Research and study by DPW's Martin Gariepy considered the options of replacement versus refurbishment. Two of the old lights were refurbished by the manufacturer to determine feasibility, costs and visual aesthetics. One of the sample refurbished lights is shown in the picture to the left. A retrofit of the lamp globe was also done to convert it to induction lighting - the most efficient lighting with lower wattage.



The picture to the left also shows an empty planting barrel placed on a temporary wooden platform where a pole was removed and a "cobra head" light fixture that was temporarily installed on the utility poles to provide light. The wooden platforms and barrels were placed where lights were removed to protect

the base area of the lights and to prevent pedestrians from tripping over the platforms.

Pennsylvania Globe Gaslight, Inc. of Connecticut will perform the work. Five existing poles in Dobbs Park will also be retrofitted as part of this project. The total cost is \$75,310.35 for the refurbishing and retrofit plan. The option of changing the poles and using different light options - either high pressure sodium or LED lights would have been as much as \$60,000 more.

Published for the Residents of the Village of Croton-on-Hudson

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Croton Conservation Advisory Council

The Village's Conservation Advisory Council has added "Croton" to its name and will now be known by the acronym CCAC.

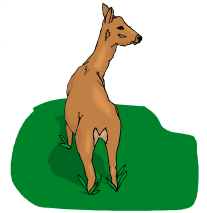
In addition to its new name, the CCAC has developed a series of programs on Green Living. Four presentations will be held in the Spring and more are planned for the Fall. Each of the programs will be held at the Croton Free Library on a Tuesday from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. Admission is free and refreshments will be served.

Feb. 28: Gardening Solutions to Soggy Back Yards presented by Jan Johnsen. The presentation will present beautiful ways to deal with seasonal stormwater runoff and soggy conditions in your garden and yard.



March 27: Protect Your Yard from Deer presented by Bruce Laemmel and Laura McKillop. The presentation will be on plants for a deer resistant garden, deer fencing and other solutions.

April 24: Invasive Plants: What They Are and What to Do presented by Meredith Taylor. Invasive plants are wreaking havoc in our backyards, nature preserves and parks. The presentation will cover the Top 10 Priority Invasive Plant species in NYS and how to manage them.



May 22: Croton's Woodlands Under Siege! with Brendan Murphy. The presentation will address the threats to our forests and woodlands and what can be done about them.

Got A Question?



News reports have said that the Village may receive reimbursement for its costs associated with both Hurricane Irene in late August and the Halloween snowstorm? Is this true?

There is good news and bad news. The Village will receive reimbursement money for costs incurred as a result of Hurricane Irene. However, FEMA has determined that costs associated with the late-October snowstorm did not reach the threshold of losses to qualify for reimbursement. This is a County-wide determination - not just for Croton-on-Hudson.

The Village Manager and staff have been meeting regularly with FEMA officials to determine the "projects" that qualify and to provide documentation of the costs. They are also developing estimates for repairs and replacement of infrastructure and equipment. (FEMA refers to all the costs related to a specific situation as a "project").

Based on these meetings, eighteen projects have been submitted to FEMA to date for a total reimbursement

of \$131,000. Other projects are still to be submitted but have yet to be completely documented.

The single largest project was for debris removal after Irene. Some 336 tons of debris were removed by the Village's DPW at a cost of \$42,000 in labor and \$8,000 in disposal fees. Another major project was the Croton River search and rescue of five rafters in the aftermath of the storm. The Village has documented \$15,600 in labor costs associated with the rescue as well as losses of equipment that must be replaced. Another \$19,300 is attributed to the washout of the culvert at Dailey Drive.

Under the FEMA program, accepted projects will be reimbursed at 87 1/2% of the total cost. The Village will be responsible for 12 1/2%.

Some big projects that are still to be submitted are significant repairs to the dam in the Croton River at Black Rock Park, estimated to be at least \$75,000. Repairs to the washed out culvert to the Water Dept. offices and replacement of the bridge over the culvert is another project not yet completely evaluated or submitted.

Path of Hurricane Irene

