



August 3, 2012

Tug Hill Times

Tug Hill Times is published semimonthly by the Tug Hill Commission for its board members, staff and associates, and the local representatives of the region's communities.

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Over 40 Attend Oneida Hills UMP Meeting

Local municipal officials, recreationists, land owners, and others attended the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's public meeting on the Oneida Hills Unit Management Plan on July 19 in Steuben. Comments from attendees included the need to prevent vandalism at old cemeteries on the state forests, how the state can increase harvesting on these lands, and the importance of maintaining and improving recreational trails throughout the area. The UMP will guide management actions for the Unit to help achieve the goals of providing healthy, sustainable and biologically diverse forest ecosystems. Any person or group who would like to mail input or comments on the future management of this unit can contact Senior Forester Mary Kay Allen at NYSDEC, 225 North Main Street, Herkimer, NY, 13350, or send an e-mail to r6ump@gw.dec.state.ny.us. For additional information call (315) 866-6330. **Public comments must be received by September 28 to be incorporated into the draft UMP.**

Riverfest Cancelled

Due to low water levels in the Black River, the Lewis County Chamber of Commerce has CANCELLED RiverFest 2012, originally scheduled for August 4th.

Please help us pass this disappointing news on to anyone that may have been considering attending.

Pre-registered Participants will be contacted directly and all monies refunded.

Any and all questions, should be directed to the Lewis County Chamber of Commerce office, (315) 376-2213.

Grant Available for Playground Equipment

KaBOOM! is a national non-profit dedicated to saving play for America's children. Their mission is to create great playspaces through the participation and leadership of communities. KaBOOM! recently announced a new grant opportunity to increase access to playgrounds at the fraction of the cost of a new build. Joint use agreements allow local governments to partner with local school districts to open school recreation facilities to the public during non-school hours. The \$15,000 Joint Use Grants can be used to support the opening of at least four playgrounds and are available to communities with populations less than 100,000. The grants are part of Let's Play, a community partnership led by Dr. Pepper Snapple Group to get kids and families active nationwide. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until all grants are awarded. Please follow the following link to access an application: <https://jointuse.myreviewroom.com/>. **The final deadline is Friday, August 31, 2012 at 3:00 PM ET.**



Invasive Species Field Reports Available Online

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The St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Invasive Species Management (SLELO PRISM) has completed several field surveys so far this season in different areas of its area (all of Tug Hill included). Those reports are available on its website at <http://www.sleloinvasives.org/field-reports/2012-field-season/>. Of particular interest are the reports on Whetstone Reservoir (no invasive species found) and Oneida Lake (including Three Mile Bay, where water chestnut was found). There has also been significant Giant Hogweed control completed this field season throughout the area.



Mohawk Valley Regional Sustainability Plan

A plan is being developed in response to Governor Cuomo's award of a Cleaner, Greener Communities (CGC) program to develop and implement smart growth plans for regional sustainability. The program is being funded by a \$1,000,000 grant through NYSERDA. There are several opportunities for individuals, companies and municipalities to get involved. The Mohawk Valley Regional Consortium is looking to populate the following working groups. The focus areas are Energy, Transportation, Waste Management, Water Management, Land Use/Livable Communities, Economic Development, Governance and Climate Change Adaptation. Based on the results of a survey that was circulated to early members of the MVR consortium we have elected to add an Agriculture/ Forestry working group as well .As the process moves along, the planning team will be looking for input from experts across a wide range of fields, as well as ideas from community residents. There will be opportunities for interested parties to contribute through public meetings and for some as members of a working group. If you are interested or know someone who may be interested in serving on one of these committees, please let your circuit rider know or contact Ray Durso at Genesis who is the coordinator for Oneida County at 792-7187 or by email info@TheGenesisGroup.org.

Local Governments Facing New Fiscal Reality

State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli recently issued a report on the stress of local government finances facing New York municipalities and school districts. The study found that nearly 300 local governments had deficits in 2010 or 2011 and more than 100 had inadequate cash on hand to pay their current bills. The analysis warns that some municipalities and school districts have become increasingly vulnerable to unanticipated expenses such as emergencies, mandates and unexpected spikes in the costs of goods and services. The report is based on an analysis of data from 4,000 local governments and recent audits.



Although cities seem to be most at risk – due to population loss, declining or stagnant property assessments, high poverty rates and older and decaying infrastructure – the analysis shows all local governments have been impacted by shortfalls in expected revenues since the onset of the Great Recession. All told, local governments suffered an actual decline in revenues of more than \$400 million during the recession. The result has been reduced spending on public safety, health and recreational programs, garbage collection and transportation.

DiNapoli urged local governments to institute effective multi-year financial planning processes to identify structural imbalances between revenues and expenditures, and use excess fund balances for immediate needs such as paying off debt. For a copy of the report visit: <http://www.osc.state.ny.us/localgov/pubs/fiscalrealities2012.pdf>

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Thank you!



Lewis County Leadership Academy

2012-2013

The Program

The Lewis County Chamber of Commerce is accepting applications for the 2012-13 Leadership Academy. From the day long retreat in September through the monthly full day sessions through May, class members participate in discussions, site visits, role-playing exercises and analysis on issues of community concern, such as education, human services, and economic development. Class participants will learn critical skills, including collaboration, visioning, consensus building, and creative problem solving in addressing the needs of our county. The location and format of each session is different. Benefits of the Lewis County Leadership Academy:

For the Employer

- Develops increased leadership and problem solving skills that can be used for greater organizational effectiveness.
- Develops a county network that can help with business solutions. During the course strategic alliances will be formed.
- Provides greater understanding of the county that can be applied at place of employment.

For the Individual

- Provides experience in team building, group dynamics, collaboration, public speaking and critical thinking.
- Participants will become aware of the county's continuing needs, challenges and resources.
- Builds relationships with diverse colleagues for individual, business and community problem solving.
- Participants will explore and strengthen personal leadership competencies.
- Builds confidence and motivation to become involved in promoting positive change for Lewis County.

If you're interested in applying for the 2012-13 Academy please see the application at the Chamber web site at: <http://www.lewiscountychamber.org/>. The deadline to register has been extended to August 10, 2012.

Dr. Joel Howard to Give Presentation at Lyons Falls

On August 08, 2012, at 7:00 pm, Dr. Joel Howard, CEO of Applied Biorefinery Sciences, is scheduled to give a presentation on a possible prototype biorefinery at the former Lyons Falls paper mill. The presentation will be held at the Fellowship Hall (Gorham Street entrance) of the Forest Presbyterian Church; which is across the street from the former Lyons Falls paper mill. He will be discussing at length the biorefinery process. All are welcome. For more information, please contact the Village of Lyons Falls Mayor, Katie Liendecker, at (315) 348-8744 or pliendec@twcny.rr.com.