

A Time to Honor our Veterans

Veterans Day is this Saturday, and I consider it to be one of the most important days of the year. On Friday evening, the Clarence Cub Scouts will again be hosting a community-wide Flag Retiring Ceremony at the Main Street Town Park. The event starts at 6:30. If you wish to retire your flag, it can be dropped off at our Parks Department office prior to the ceremony. On Saturday, November 11th at 11:00 a.m. at the Main Street Town Park, Legion Post 838 will be holding a ceremony for Veterans Day, followed by the Clarence Rotary Club's ceremony at 11:30 a.m., honoring 16 new Veterans added to the Clarence Veterans Memorial Honor Walls.

There are now over 600 Veterans on the Clarence Veterans Memorial Honor Walls, each with their own unique stories of how they've served our country and why they are special to our community.

As always, thank you, Veterans, for serving our great country. Thank you for your sacrifices, courage, and ambition to serve. Let's hope that with current events in the world, our active service men and women do not have to be activated again in foreign lands. May God Bless our veterans, and God Bless America.

The preliminary budget was submitted to the Town Clerk, and a Public Hearing will be held at the next Town Board meeting on November 8th to adopt the budget after public input. The 2024 preliminary budget represents no change in the General Fund Tax Rate from the 2023 Adopted Budget. The rate is the same as last year's \$0.734 per \$1,000 assessed valuation. Most homes will be paying around \$350 for the Town General Fund Tax.

Again, as in previous budgets and during my tenure as Clarence Supervisor, there is no pay raise for myself and the Town Board members.

The Town Board is committed to running a fiscally conservative government and keeping our tax rate at one the lowest of any Town or Village in Erie County. The 2024 Budget is again below the New York State Tax Cap of 2 percent. Other Towns in Erie County are not only over the Tax cap but have raised their tax rate by almost 20 percent. Thank you to our Department Heads and Fire Companies for coming in within my budget requests.

As mentioned in previous columns, the Town of Clarence has hired a consultant to review the feasibility of forming a Garbage District for the Town. The consultant brought information forward that savings of around 50 percent could be possible with better service if the Town contracted with one service provider. State and National waste management requirements will not be getting any easier in the future. Now is the time to make the change to one service provider. The Town Board will be meeting with the consultant next month to review the preparation procedures to receive proposals for a Town-wide Garbage District.

Highway Superintendent Jamie Dussing has many leaf crews working long days after our first frost and snowfall to make sure all the leaves are picked up before the real snow comes in a few weeks. All leaves and brush should be stored on your property, not the street. Leaves placed in the street present a public safety hazard to vehicles and pedestrians. This is the last month for brush pickup. The brush should be kept separate from your leaves. Special thanks to our Highway Department for always doing a phenomenal job keeping our roads clean and safe for all.