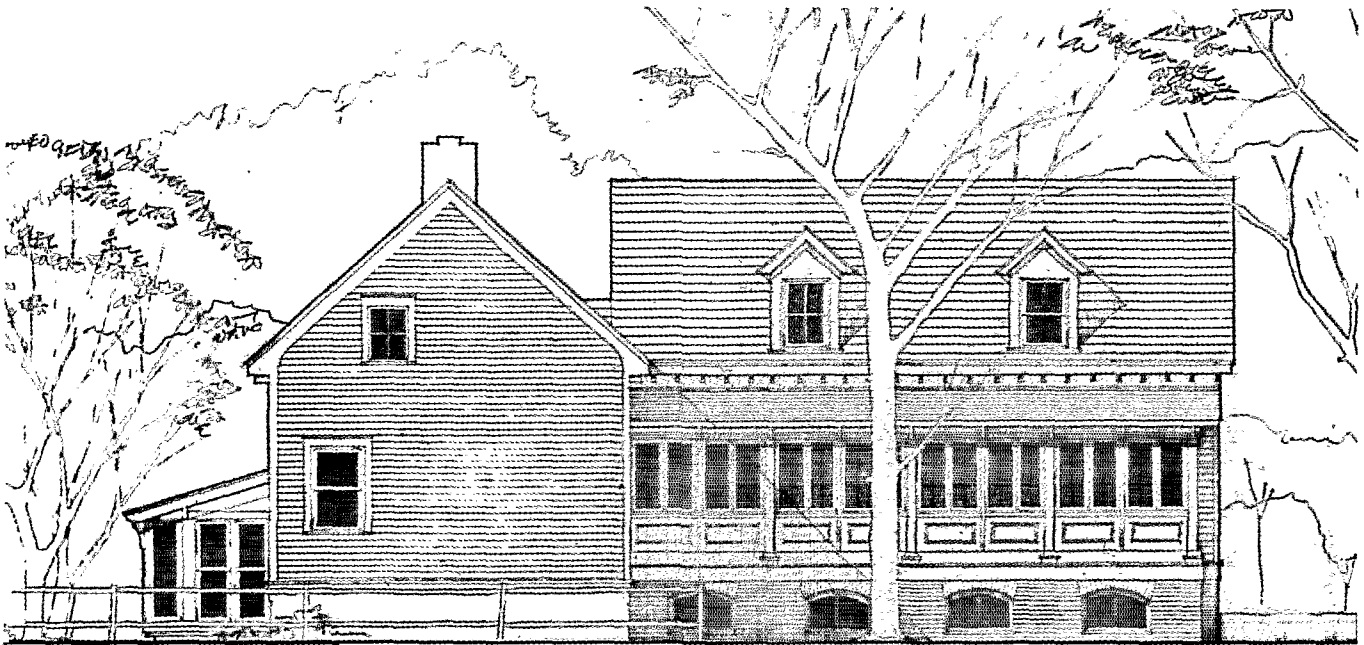


# 10964

The Palisades Newsletter

February, 1996 • No. 150



Courtesy of Michael Esmay

VIEW FROM OAK TREE ROAD



## Watch for the Opening of the “New” Palisades Free Library



**T**he renovation of the Palisades Library (over 103 years old and one of the oldest libraries in Rockland County) is finally being completed in spite of the severe winter weather. The library expects to open its doors sometime soon, so watch your mail for a flyer announcing the exact date.

The Library Trustees, along with Library Director Beatrice Agnew and architect Michael Esmay, have not only preserved and enhanced the historic character of the original building but assured that for the first time in the library's history the educational, informational, and recreational needs of our growing community will be met. The goals set at the beginning of the project have been fulfilled: preserve the original historic farmhouse section of the library that dates back to 1865; enlarge the Children's Area

to allow for study tables, computers, additional books and reference materials, and new space for story time and craft programs; create a new Reading Area for adults; centralize all technical services and administration in one common area; install a new cooling and heating system; increase overall seating capacity; provide complete access for the physically challenged.

This has truly been a community effort and all Palisadians who contributed are to be congratulated — especially the Trustees (Dan Martin, President, Larry Bucciarelli, Annie Gerard, Mathew Lonberg, Phoebe Rosenwasser, Mary Viviano, Robert Williams) and Library Director Beatrice Agnew and the staff, Marie Firestone and Johanna Lo, who worked tirelessly throughout the project.

# Building and Rebuilding the Library

The idea of expanding the Palisades Library was first raised as far back as the early 1970's. A decade later, as the collection grew and use of the library skyrocketed, it was raised again, more urgently. The Board of Trustees explored various approaches—buying another building, for example, or teaming up with the Community Center in the old school—but there were problems with all of them. Finally, in 1989, the decision was made to go forward and build on the existing site.

Fund-raising went into high gear, with a great response from the community. Michael Esmay, a veteran of many library renovations and expansions, was hired as the architect. Plans were drawn up, revised, modified, and downsized. The stipulations of the Historic Areas Board of Review were discussed. In the spring of 1995, Recam Corporation was selected as the general contractor and, finally, construction started.

As work began on the new wing, the Board also took a healthy look at the old building (the original mid-nineteenth-century Jordan house, plus the additions that had been made to it over the years). Much of what they saw was discouraging. But as problems surfaced, they were addressed. The building is now totally sound, with new lighting, a new roof, and a new heating/air conditioning system. Dan Martin, President of the Board, sums it up: "By enhancing the structure, we now have a totally new building all around." It cost more than was anticipated, but the Board feels comfortable with the financial picture and confident that this has been money well spent.

For the architect, the challenge posed by the Palisades project was "to get the most for the least." Developing the program that the Library Board dreamed of "would have needed another 1000 square feet." Working on such a tight site and relating to a historic building in a historic district also set this project apart from others.

For the contractors, the greatest challenge was the existence of four different levels in the old building and the fact that nothing was standard—not the ceiling heights nor the spacing of the joists nor the molding around the windows. Nevertheless, the new construction had to match. This meant constant adjustments, made as the work went along.

As with virtually all building and renovation projects, there were unexpected delays and difficulties. A major surprise was the discovery that the oldest section of the building was of post-and-beam construction, built without a single nail, and that many

of these hand-hewn timbers were completely rotten. Also unexpected was the determination that the ceiling of the circulation area, formerly the children's fiction room, needed reinforcement to bear the weight of the books on the floor above. (The load requirement of a floor in a library is three times that of a residence.) The wood-encased steel beams that were inserted provided an attractive solution to this difficulty. And of course the severe weather held things up: the landscaping was to have been done in December but has not yet been started.

Curiously, only one artifact was found. This was a rolled-up copy of the *Nyack Evening Star*, wedged in the basement wall of the Jordan house, where it had probably been used as a filler. Dated June 24, 1898, it cost 1 cent. The weather was "clear" and the Spanish-American War was in progress — "Extra: The Spaniards Flee ... Consternation in Madrid."

Meanwhile, the library's book collection (800 boxes) was being housed in Library Trustee Larry Bucciarelli's home and in the white building on the corner of Oak Tree Road and Route 9W. Henry Ottley, the owner of the Recam Corporation, bought the storehouse from the estate of Tippy O'Neill early in the project and most generously let the library use it for storage, free of charge.

With the end of the project in sight, all those involved—the Trustees, the Library Director and Staff, the architect, the contractors—agree that it has been a rewarding, hands-on experience. And that the result of all the months of work and thought is, in the words of Trustee Bob Williams, "a gem of a small library."

*Caroline Tapley*

**The Construction Team:** General Contractor: Recam Corporation. Owner: Henry Ottley, Project Manager: Randy Wittreich.

**Subcontractors:** William Widmer (electrical); Chief Plumbing and Heating (plumbing); Dover (elevator); Alpine Gardens (landscaping); Joe Diore (painting); Abbey Contracting (roofing); Air Master (heating, ventilation, air-conditioning); Ackerman Electric (alarm system).

# The New Palisades Library

## A Walk Through The Rooms

**A**s you enter the Library from Closter Road, immediately to your left is the **Circulation Desk**, the copier for public use, and the elevator; behind the desk are the "non-public" areas which include the Technical Services Stations, and the Library Director's office.

Straight ahead and down a few steps is the **Children's Room** and **Young Adult Area**; children's picture books are to the left, and on the right the Juvenile Fiction and Non-Fiction as well as the Young Adult collection. At the end of this rectangular space are paned glass doors leading to an outside area to be used for Children's Story Time in clement weather.

As you stand by the circulation desk, immediately to your right and up a few steps you will find the **Fiction Collection** in what was the former fireplace room. Here also are the periodicals and newspapers.

From here, if you walk to your left, you will enter the **Adult Non-Fiction Room** which is immediately above the Children's Room. The dormers, large window at the end of the room, and the bank of windows facing Oak Tree road provide wonderful light. This room has access to the elevator and tables will be placed against the row of windows for study.

Stairs leading up from the Adult Non-Fiction Room take you to the **Reference Area** where there is again access to the elevator; it will contain the Palisades Local History Collection, the Public Access Terminal (PAC), retrieval information equipment, and a reference desk where a reference librarian will be on duty.

### New Library Hours and Services

Upon opening, the library hours will be increased during weekends: Saturdays from 11 am to 5 pm and Sundays from 1 to 5 pm and Children's Programs and Story-time will resume with Martha Bosch. Library Director Beatrice Agnew announces there will be two staff members on duty at the library during all its open hours, a person at the Circulation Desk and a person trained to assist in reference needs at the Reference Desk.

### While The Library Was Closed

Construction on the library began in July 1995 and in August the library staff, Beatrice Agnew, Marie Firestone, and Johanna Lo, began to pack the library's book collection so that it could be moved for storage. Some 19,000 books filled 800 cartons all packed by how they came off the shelves—in Dewey Decimal order—and sensitive equipment was sent to the Ramapo-Catskill Library System in Middletown, N.Y. for safe-keeping.

In September, the library staff relocated to Marie Firestone's house on Swan Street where her dining room became the semi-permanent library office. Due to Marie's hospitality, Library Director Beatrice Agnew and the library staff had a central place from which to carry on the work involved with the construction and renovation: consultations with the architect, choosing and ordering shelving, carpeting, lighting, equipment, etc. Also, all the behind the scenes work involved in running a library—such as book reviewing, ordering, and preparing new books and entering them on the data base—insured that new books will be on the shelves when the library opens.

During this period, service to the Palisades Gardens on Oak Tree Road was continued by Johanna Lo, full-time staff person. Johanna paid regular visits to the home bringing a selection of large-print books she had chosen as well as books requested by the residents. This sometimes involved ordering books on inter-loan or traveling to other libraries.

### Library Staff

Beatrice Agnew, Library Director; Johanna Lo, Assistant Director; Marie Firestone, Head Clerical/Bookkeeper; David Beckman, Reference Librarian; Martha Bosch, Children's Programs; Caryn Zucker and Susan Kessell, Circulation Desk Clerks; Omid Nasab and Lori Warner, Pages.

*Carol Elevitch*



# Palisades Library Annual Meeting

**T**he 105th annual meeting of the Palisades Free Library was held on February 4 in the Community Center. Dan Martin, outgoing President of the Board of Trustees, assured those present that the newly renovated library is due to reopen within a month, pending a temporary certificate of occupancy. Palisadians can look forward to a grand reopening ceremony in the spring, once all renovations and finishing touches have been completed.

Dan expressed his thanks to all current Trustees, as well as to the volunteers in the Tappan Zee Thrift Shop in Piermont, which devotes a portion of its proceeds to the library. These volunteers include: Jocelyn DeCrescenzo, Jacquelyn Drechsler, Alice Gerard, Rita Norris, and Yuri Shigeura. He also noted that a biography of Mary Lawrence Tonetti, which was co-published by The Palisades Historical Committee and the Library, was on sale from Alice Gerard.

## **Guest Speaker: Thom Kleiner**

Thom Kleiner, newly elected Supervisor for the Town of Orangetown, commented on his familiarity with Palisades as a child growing up in New Jersey, and the uniqueness of our community. His talk covered the four following topics of immediate interest to Palisades: the Historic Areas; the composting facility on Route 303; police inspections and highway safety; and downsizing of the Rockland Psychiatric Center.

**Historic Areas.** Kleiner provided some history of the Historic Areas Board of Review (HABR), and noted that the Historic Areas Study Committee (HASC) was created to address some of the unresolved problems created by the application of historic laws. Prior to the expiration of the HASC's charter in 1995 it issued a report and recommendations. Kleiner urged the Town Board to act on these recommendations. To accomplish this, the HASC should be reappointed to consider issues and revisions to the law. He said that it was important to "...sustain the integrity of the Palisades area and meet the concerns of...those having difficulty meeting the requirements of the Historic Areas Board of Review." Among the most outstanding and contentious issues include those related to requirements of new homes to harmonize with other structures; and the need for alterations and repairs on homes older than 100 years to be consistent with existing structures.

Kleiner complimented Alice Gerard on providing the Town with a map of properties in Palisades' historic areas, along with the age of the homes. Once Tappan has completed a similar map, the Town can meet with the Concerned Orangetown Residents and the reconstituted Historic Areas Study Committee to determine its next steps. This effort should address the law's revisions; issues related to the use of 1918 as the benchmark year for designation of historic homes; and questions related to suitable materials in alterations and repairs, and achieving consistency between Palisades and Tappan.

**Composting Facility on Route 303.** There have been a number of complaints about the odor emanating from the compost facility on Route 303, which is operated by Organic Recycling. Noting that done properly the composting of grass and leaves should be odor-free, Kleiner provided information on the current investigation of composting at this facility. The President of Organic Recycling attributed part of the odor problem to the fact that their thrashing machine had broken down, thus not permitting enough oxygen to circulate. The company has dropped its plans for establishing a horticultural center and nursery on the site, and has no plans to expand. The Town has requested that Organic Recycling meet with Orangetown citizens before embarking on such an expansion.

**Truck Inspections.** The Orangetown Police has begun inspections of large commercial vehicles in excess of 19,000 pounds, in part as a response to concerns about trucks and safety issues along Oak Tree Road. In conjunction with the New York State and Clarkstown Police, Orangetown Officers have been stopping trucks and hauling them to Town facilities to perform inspections on safety features, as well as reviewing drivers' log books. Kleiner told the meeting that Orangetown is attempting to rewrite the law to permit Orangetown to recover the assessed fines collected for violations of state law, which are often between \$150 and \$1500. More importantly, he applauded the program's potential for improving safety.

On a related safety issue, money is being allocated for the construction of sidewalks along Route 340, scene of a recent, serious accident involving a first-grade student.

**Rockland Psychiatric Center.** This facility is currently downsizing with the ultimate result that a large

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# Palisades Bulletin Board

**Phil Bauman** rediscovered real cross-country skiing this winter by exploring the trails in Tallman Park and along the gas line west of 9W which makes good skiing because it is kept clear of trees. By using the gas-line trail he can also check for gas leaks.

Congratulations to **Jackie Hui** and **Aubrey Jennings** who were inducted into the Tappan Zee High School honor society in a ceremony held on February 6. To be admitted into the society, students must show high academic achievement and strong character and leadership. Also part of the requirement is service in a community organization as well as the in-school peer tutoring program.

**Max** and **Sam Seeger** were among the Palisades children who did a lot of sledding this

winter—and they recommend the hill at the golf course on 9W. Their sledding gear include a Flexible Flyer, a disc, and a kind of raft.

**Gerry Miras**, Palisades representative on the South Orangetown Board of Education, recently gave third grade students in Mrs. Stern's class at Schaeffer Elementary a talk about Chinese culture. The talk included slides taken during her four trips to China and the teaching of a smattering of the Chinese language and a Chinese song. Gerry is currently without a Chinese language teacher and asks anyone interested in taking on a pupil to call her at 359-1720.

Anyone interested in starting a **Children's Shakespeare Theatre**, please call Diana Green at 359-5035.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Regarding the 10964 December issue article titled "Palisades At A Crossroads," **Denny Berry** writes:

"In the 7 years that my family and I have been living in Palisades we have seen an amazing and for us, alarming growth in our small community. We live off Rte. 340 and witness on a daily basis the parade of very fast traffic through our residential area. I am repeatedly tailgated on Oak Tree Road after I turn off Rte. 9W as I slow down to the speed limit through the hamlet by those who would rather I race down that road.

In an effort to offer a suggestion aimed at slowing the ever increasing quantity of traffic traveling at speeds greater than the speed limit, I thought I would write the following suggestion for consideration. **SPEED BUMPS**. They would not make our community well loved by those who pass through it, but I think they would not bother most of us who live here knowing that the bumps would slow the traffic considerably. I have no idea if they are at all practical or costly or for that matter even legal. But I do

know they would slow the traffic.

I would also like to add that I am vehemently opposed to the widening of Rte. 340. In my view that would only facilitate heavier and faster traffic. If it is not as convenient to use that road as it is to use, say Rte. 303, then perhaps cars and trucks will opt for that route instead of our small Rte. 340. Please keep us apprised of when and where there will be discussion on how Rte. 340 will be reconstructed.

Lastly, I too would like to see more police presence in our hamlet, on Rte. 340 and on Oak Tree Road, to help catch speeders and to help prevent accidents.

Thank you for the great work you do on this community newspaper. I read it cover to cover every time it is published. I have learned much about the history of the area and the news of the community. I have been a silent reader, but a reader non-the-less, and now I would like to express my thanks..."



# Palisades Triangle Saved Again

On December 5, Reg Thayer received a call from Paul Prisco saying that the Orangetown Town Board had gotten a request from NYNEX for an easement enabling them to put a couple of unsightly structures containing telephone equipment on the "Palisades Triangle" — an historic, triangular patch of woods in the center of Palisades bounded by Route 9W (a state road), Oak Tree Road (a town road), and Closter Road (a county road). In the belief that the proposed structures might be illegal as well as a blot in the landscape at the "gateway to Rockland County," Reg dug out and reviewed his voluminous file on the Palisades Triangle (where it had been gathering dust in his attic). He also obtained from the Town a copy of the NYNEX request and reviewed the matter with his attorney, Martin Cornell.

NYNEX was seeking a permanent easement that would enable them not only to erect the structures on concrete slabs (5 ft. by 7 ft. and 10 ft. by 14 ft.) but also grant "the right, privilege and authority to construct, place, operate, replace, remove, repair and maintain service lines including buried cable, pedestals, conduits, manholes, poles and such crossarms, guys, stubs, anchors, cables, wires and fixtures" as NYNEX "may from time to time deem necessary upon, over, under and along the said land and the highways adjoining or upon said land" and the right to trim trees and roots. They followed up their written request with an oral presentation at a Town Board meeting on December 11, after which Reg was given the opportunity to speak against the proposal.

## Preserving the Triangle

Reg began his remarks by reminding the town Board of the 1978 events which led to the Town of Orangetown acquiring the "Palisades Triangle" — at the request of Palisades residents — as park land.

Before the acquisition, the triangle, except for a narrow strip running along Oak Tree Road, was placed on the market and there were rumors that an oil company was considering buying it and establishing a gasoline station on it, which would have been permissible under the zoning then in effect. Because for years many Palisades residents had hoped that the triangle might some day be acquired by the Town of Orangetown for preservation in its natural state as a town park, Reg and Dossi Thayer, as soon as they learned that the property was on the market, negotiated an option to buy it in order to prevent commercial development of the site and gain

time to explore the possibility of establishing a park there. Although the property had been appraised at \$70,000 in the early 1970's, they negotiated a six-month option to buy it for \$50,000 paying \$1,000 for the option, which would be applied to the purchase price if the purchase took place and forfeited if it did not.

Reg and Dossi then investigated possible sources of government funding of the purchase price for public park purposes but quickly learned that federal financing was not available in this instance. However, their friend and neighbor Nash Castro, then General Manager of the Palisades Interstate Park, put them in touch with New York State officials who said that the state could provide \$37,500 (75% of the \$50,000 purchase price) if they could raise the balance of \$12,500 (25%).

Learning from the Town Supervisor Joseph Colello that the town was unwilling to provide any money for this project, but would consider acquiring the property as park land if it could be done at no cost to the town, Reg and Dossi formed a fundraising committee and quickly raised not \$12,500, but \$17,000, mostly from Palisades residents.

In January 1979, the Town Board passed resolutions expressing a desire to acquire the land for preservation in its "natural state," and acknowledging that after being acquired with partial state funding, the land could not be subsequently alienated or disposed of without an act of the state legislature. Reg's letter, delivering a check to the Town in February 1979 for 25% of the purchase price, stated that it was for the purpose of acquiring the land and preserving it as a wooded park, and this purpose was referred to in a notation on the check. He still has the cancelled check and a copy of the letter.

After some bureaucratic delays, the Town took title to the property and the Palisades contributors all received pro-rata refunds as the \$17,000 they had donated was more than enough to cover 25% of the purchase price plus legal expenses, a survey, and a title search.

## Conclusion: December 1995

After reviewing the background information, Reg told the Town Board that the NYNEX proposal would clearly violate the spirit and intent of what the people of Palisades had in mind when they contributed 25% of the purchase price of the land and it would also

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# Richard Vickerman and the Tenneco Gas Line

If you plan to break ground, even to plant a tree, you **must**, it is a state law, call 800-962-7962, **three days before**. The organizations contacted through this number include Orange and Rockland, Tenneco, TKR Cable, NYNEX, MCI-ATS, The Sewer Dept. O & R lines are the ones most frequently hit by home owners and landscapers.

In November, 1995 Richard Vickerman of Route 340, Palisades, saved countless lives in Palisades and Tappan. Thanks to his long time involvement with developmental issues concerning our hamlet, he was aware of the placement of the transcontinental Tennessee Gas Pipe line "TENNECO" through Palisades. One day last November, Vickerman noticed a backhoe clearing a swath of Sparkill Creek, a federally protected wetlands, south of Oak Tree Road. Horrified to see the backhoe poised over the pipeline, Vickerman warned the driver. The driver ignored him so Vickerman raced home and alerted Town authorities. They were able to arrive and stop the back hoe before it hit the line. Had the pipe been hit, had it ruptured, much of Palisades and Tappan would have become a crater. This story was reported in detail in OUR TOWN on November 22, 1995 and alerted our community to two issues, both of which Mr. Vickerman has devoted much time towards resolving. The first concerns safety issues about the gas pipeline. The second issue concerns the fate of county and privately held land along the pipeline in Palisades.

Most of us are oblivious to events taking place beyond our property borders. Luckily our community is blessed with a handful of individuals who act as watchdogs on behalf of the community by informing themselves about events taking place all around us, events for which the rest of us have little time.

Richard Vickerman, one such person, was born and raised in New York City. Like his father his business was construction. He and his wife, Carole, also a New Yorker, moved to Palisades 35 years ago and raised their four children here. He retired a few years ago. Thanks to his profession which gives him considerable knowledge regarding issues involved in

local development and his retirement which gives him time, he has been able to focus his energies on Palisades.

Watching the rapid community growth, the Vickermans have become increasingly alarmed at the corresponding neglect of public services. "Nobody in the town seems fully aware of what is going on. Many people are political appointees and are not on the job long enough to realize what is where and what is what.

Politicians are concerned more about votes than fixing troubling problems." One of the Vickermans' concerns has been trucking. "We are a solution to New Jersey's trucking problems. Their trucks hit the electric wires all the time on Route 340. Heavy dump trucks, way in excess of the ten ton limit on Route 340, regularly use this street as a short cut to Piermont. We have no idea what this weight is doing to the gas line. We know that water mains break due to trucking, like what happened on Route 303. We can't just think

about today. We have to think of tomorrow. We have a unique community. We could do things like implement the Rails to Trails proposal to set a positive example for other communities."

I am sure we all appreciate that we live in a special place. We are surrounded by parkland, and historically Palisades had a small and to us special role in Colonial America and in the Revolutionary War. We boast many historic register houses and have over the decades attracted a fascinating roster of residents. We must not forget that those things which attracted most of us to the community, the quaintness, the history, the rural nature, are things which previous residents fought hard to maintain. They didn't just happen.

***"Had the pipe been hit, had it ruptured, much of Palisades and Tappan would have become a crater."***

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**Richard Vickerman: continued**

**Gas Pipeline**

Tenneco laid down the pipeline which connects the Gulf of Louisiana to Massachusetts and New Hampshire in 1955. At the time the pipeline was laid down, Palisades was a very different community. Now the population has increased, there has been a building boom, and a growth in local business. Many local residents are not even aware of the existence of the pipeline. Certainly officials at Orangetown Highway Department were not when they gave permission to the contractor to dredge the wetlands! New homes are placed on or near the pipeline. Residents, unaware of the gas line, or any of the other lines crisscrossing under the ground, risk grave danger just by planting a tree! Due to the age of the pipeline it was not covered by colored plastic which alerts diggers to the danger. The current line is not well marked. Perhaps it should be with some environmentally safe colorant.

Mr. William Goodfellow, District Foreman, of Tenneco, in Mahwah, N.J., replied to Vickerman's questions about the pipeline:

*What are the effects of the grossly overweight trucking on Routes 303, 340, 9W, Oak Tree Road and the Palisades Parkway, all of which cross the pipeline?* There is no danger — pipelines are designed to prevent mechanical damage when heavy equipment crosses by extra cover and other means.

*How often is the pipeline tested for leakage? What is the shelf life of the pipe, the welds or mechanical joints?* Indefinite shelf life. The last time it was tested for leakage, a hydrostatic test, was on August 4, 1986, for 8 hours. Intelligent monitoring was last used just prior to that test.

*What disaster insurance does Tenneco carry? Do we need specific insurance for our property?* Tenneco Energy carries public liability, usual and customary insurance for any incident.

*What does Tenneco contribute toward local taxes or training of our local fire department personnel?* In 1995, \$103,271.93 was paid. Public Awareness meetings are held annually. All local emergency response personnel and other officials are invited to attend.

*Why is Tenneco's easement not maintained?* Vickerman has noted 10-12 foot saplings along the line in violation of the regulations. Every three years, weather permitting, the lines are mowed. The last mowing was in December, 1995.

Some unanswered questions for our community include: Dump trucks have been using Rte. 340 to carry loads to Piermont. Rte 340 has a ten ton limit. The dump trucks routinely are 35 tons. What is to be done? What is the law regarding notifying residents who live along the line about regulations and digging? Shouldn't realtors be required to notify new

home buyers? There are inadequate hydrants in Palisades to meet fire needs, particularly if there is an explosion. Where was the Department of Environmental Conservation in regard to "Disturbance of Protected Streams" Vol. 6 New York Code of Rules and Regulations, Part 608? There is also some concern about terrorism and the pipeline.

Goodfellow went on to say that the pipeline in Palisades is 24 inches in diameter and has a maximum operating pressure of 867 pounds. Personnel are on call 24 hours a day at 201-529-3623 or 800-231-2800 to answer questions or to receive reports on any matter regarding the pipeline. If anybody sees any activity which could compromise the pipeline, call Tenneco right away — they are responsive to all calls. Also if the pipeline crosses your property make sure you are receiving yearly calendars and other notices from Tenneco.

Tenneco employs the following safety measures: weekly aerial (helicopter) inspections, continuous electric monitoring, continuous cathodic protection to deter corrosion, gas leak surveys, hydrostatic tests, intelligent monitoring (pigging), and use of an electronic probe that detects abnormalities.

**Park Land**

The second issue Vickerman has been concerned with is land owned both by the County and private owners in Palisades, located on either side of Oak Tree Road, through which the pipeline passes. When Vickerman was appointed to the Rails to Trails Committee by former Supervisor Pellegrini, he became informed about local environmental issues. Through the Rails to Trails Proposal, which still languishes unresolved, he learned of the three lots of land in Palisades.

The creek land linking Bergen County to Rockland County was being dredged as a part of the Bergen County mosquito control program. What residents in Northvale saw as a clogged brook, Orangetown saw as a federally protected wetlands, home to many wild birds and animals. Not only did we all nearly blow up because of the dredging, but, says Vickerman, the dredging had two disastrous environmental effects. First, it destroyed the nesting grounds of many birds who eat the mosquitoes. Second, silt runoff from dredging combined with the effects of the new building routinely clog up the bird sanctuary in Sparkill.

Vickerman suggests that the County land and the privately owned wet land in Palisades be turned into a park. Part of this land connects with the American Legion Land along Route 340. This would have three positive effects on our community. Firstly, it will protect a large piece of land from being developed — preserving our rural atmosphere. Secondly, the park could have an educational benefit: nature walks with tree and plant identification markers, and recreation

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# Mary Lawrence Tonetti

## Palisades Library and Historical Committee Begin New Series of Publications

**T**he Palisades Historical Committee and the Palisades Library are joining together to publish a book on the life of Mary Lawrence Tonetti. The text comes from an unpublished manuscript written by the artist Barry Faulkner after conversations with Anne Gugler, Mrs. Tonetti's oldest daughter. Copies of the publication were for sale for six dollars each at the Palisades Library's annual meeting on February 4 and will be available at the library once it opens. They can also be obtained by calling Alice Gerard at 359-4338 or Liz Finck at 359-1452. This is the first of a series of booklets on the past history of Palisades which the two organizations hope to publish in the next few years.

Mrs. Tonetti's father, Henry Lawrence, bought land in Palisades in 1870 after spending several summers with his family at a farmhouse near the river. At the time the community, formerly a busy river port, was suffering an economic decline as a result of the change from sail to steam and the building of a new railroad line. Henry Lawrence began to buy up the old houses



*Mary Lawrence Tonetti*

as their owners moved away, and Mrs. Tonetti continued the practice. She fixed up the old houses and built several new ones, in the process discovering a talent for architecture and landscape design. Mary and her husband François were both sculptors and knew many artists. She rented the houses she owned to her friends at a very reasonable price. One of her first projects was the pergola at the Waterfall, now destroyed.

As a result of Mrs. Tonetti's work, Snedens Landing, the Palisades area close to the river, became known during the 1930s and 1940s as a charming and affordable spot where a number of well-known artists lived for a time renting Tonetti houses. The houses are still here, although most have now been sold to other families. Mrs. Tonetti was a creative, colorful, character and her life, which makes a wonderful story, illuminates our architectural heritage and the past history of a part of our community. We have only printed 300 copies of this book,

and they are already selling like hotcakes. Get yours while they last!

*Alice Gerard*

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### **Richard Vickerman:** *continued*

grounds, providing a safe place for our residents to enjoy the outdoors. Thirdly, it connects with other protected lands allowing more sanctuary for our beleaguered wildlife.

Shouldn't saving land and guarding the gas line become a major focus of our community, perhaps through the Palisades Civic Association? By informing ourselves we can better protect our community

in the present. Right now we have a chance of preserving and enhancing our community for the future. Richard Vickerman's father raised him to believe that his role in life was to work hard to leave this world a better place. We should all follow his lead.

*Milbry Polk*

# Palisades Presbyterian Church

## Opportunities to Help

**Bosnian Student Igor Ibradic**, who arrived in January on a four-year tuition scholarship at St. Thomas Aquinas college in Orangeburg, is living at the dorm during his first semester and the church has pledged to raise \$3,000 for his room and board. Other churches joining in to help during his college career are the Nauraushaun and New Hempstead Presbyterian churches. Igor needs a place to live during the summer and thereafter, money for his books and personal expenses, and help with his transportation.

**Rockland Habitat for Humanity** is a project that builds houses for the poor in return for sweat equity. The Rockland chapter is new and needs many volunteers. If you have building skills, your help is needed. If you have none, they will show you what to do. Habitat is a great opportunity for helping hands-on. For more information, contact Mary Beswick (353-6654).

**The Midnight Run** is another hands-on project. They take food and clothing into the city several nights a week. Midnight Run would like people willing to go on the run itself, others to make sandwiches, and still others to sort clothing.

**Vietnamese Memorial Association** is a group who builds elementary schools in Vietnam as "living memorials" to the families and children lost in Vietnam's long wars. During January, Terry Anderson, who is

involved in raising money for this project, spoke at the church about his kidnapping in Beirut and about his life as a captive. You may donate by writing a check to the Palisades Presbyterian Church and marking it VMA.

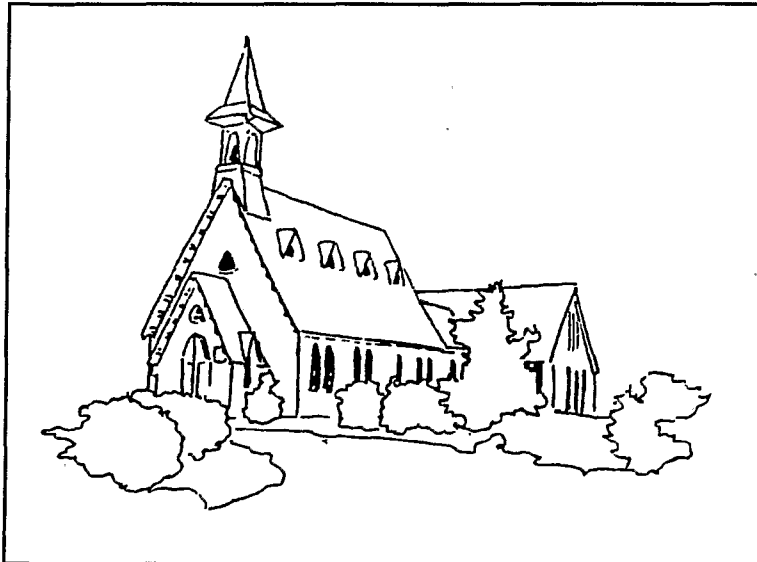
**Bread for the World** is a group that lobbies Congress about feeding issues—especially for children. Kathi Tiitsman, the church's link to this group, plans to hold

at least one letter writing session each quarter. There will also be a phone tree set up so that when food and feeding issues are going through Congress, letters, telephone calls and faxes can be sent to the appropriate legislator.

**The Food Pantry** is an activity carried on by the church to collect food which is given to needy families at Thanksgiving. Last year

1,000 pounds of food was collected for 330 families. The church's goal this year is to collect 2,000 pounds from church members and friends. If you wish to help with a check rather than food, make the check payable to Palisades Presbyterian Church and mark it for the "food pantry."

*[For further information about any of the above, call the church office at 359-3147 during office hours (9-12 on Tues., Thurs., Fri.) and speak to Church Secretary Priscilla Scott or call Pastor Laurie Ferguson at 359-7153.]*



# PALISADES ARTIST EXHIBITS AT BLUE HILL

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CONTEMPLATION,  
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**N**orman Galinsky, a resident of Palisades well known for his art and curatorial skills, will be showing works at the Blue Hill Cultural Center that reflect his growth and development as an artist over a period of 25 years. It is his first exhibition in New York State to be so extensive, and includes pieces that have never been shown publicly before.

Born in Charleston, West Virginia in 1942, Norman's natural interest and talent in art were recognized and encouraged, but it was achievements in science and math that dominated his early educational experiences. He was selected as a semi-finalist in the Westinghouse National Science Talent Search in his teens, and enrolled as a science major in the University of Cincinnati, earning a degree in chemical engineering in 1964. For the next six years he pursued a successful career in applied polymer research at Allied Chemical Corporation.

However, throughout school and career, art was a source of growth and inspiration. In 1966 he enrolled in the Art Students League in New York City as a student of George Tooker. His art work began to assume increasing importance in his life. By 1970 he had committed himself to a career in art, entering a graduate program at Columbia University, where he studied with such artists/critics as Philip Guston, Jack Tworkov, Dorthea Rockburne, Stamos, Malcom Morley, and others.

After earning his MFA degree in painting in 1973, Norman's first major solo exhibition was at the Jock

Truman Gallery (formerly Betty Parsons Gallery) in 1978. Over the years his work has evolved from representational (figurative and architectural) themes to abstract patterns energized by his math and science background to more organic, geometric forms inspired by his extensive spiritual interests, including studies of the Bible, meditation, various healing practices, and body energy work. His study and teaching of Tai Chi Chuan and other Taoist arts have especially influenced his most recent images, which encourage contemplation, introspection, and a healing perspective. His work is in such corporate collections as Astra Merck, Bank of America, IBM, Mobil Oil Corp., The Four Seasons Hotels, and Pepsico, as well as at Columbia University, Charleston Art Gallery and Museum, Spenser Museum of Art, and in many private collections.

*The atrium and lobby exhibition space in Blue Hill Plaza has been the site for art exhibitions since 1983. NORMAN GALINSKY, SELECTED WORKS: 1970-1995 is the fortieth in a series of changing exhibitions in the ground floor indoor garden area and public space. Exhibition hours are Monday through Saturday, 8 am-5 pm. Blue Hill Plaza may be reached by traveling west on Orangeburg road toward Pearl River.*

### ***Library Annual Meeting: continued***

parcel of land will become available for the local community. A State Task Force of 11 members, including at least 3 local representatives from the Town, is meeting on the best use of the site. Some suggestions include: a bioscience park, recreational fields, housing, and commercial uses. Kleiner urged community participation in this planning process.

### **Community Response**

Palisadians had a number of questions for the Supervisor. A good deal of discussion was generated about whether Orangetown property was to be reassessed at this time. Kleiner reported a Town Board 4 to 1 vote against participation in the county-wide reassessment — regarded to be against Orangetown's best interest. He said he would consider it, however, if the county could make a compelling argument on how such a reassessment could benefit the whole county, and not just certain towns. Various points of view were expressed by community members. The issue of whether reassessment would stimulate businesses to file fewer tax certiorari cases was unclear, with Kleiner noting that there is no guarantee that tax challenges will change.

Other questions for the Supervisor covered the way recreation space in Veterans Memorial Park is allocated; reconstruction and snow removal at the two bus shelters in Palisades; implications of downsizing at Rockland Psychiatric Center for residential development, and arrangements for patients released from the facility; the request from IBM regarding the extension of helicopter landing hours and flights (see box); the possibility for Town advertising of school bus laws, and the problem of motor vehicles passing a bus with flashing lights; traffic problems connected

with filming of commercials; and traffic related to the Rockleigh Office Park.

Dan Martin closed the meeting by requesting help with fundraising for the library, which now holds a \$150,000 mortgage that will require community support over the next few years. Purchasing furniture and technology is also expensive, and the community is urged to contribute any way it can and whenever it can. Finally, the results of the ballot vote were announced seating two new members on the Board of Trustees: Ellen Chayet Kidd and Lynne Maclaren Sandhaus. They replace outgoing trustees Dan Martin and Phoebe Rosenwasser.

*Ellen Chayet Kidd*

### **GOVERNORS' MEETING AT IBM**

The IBM request comes in part as a result of a planned meeting of United States Governors to be held at the IBM facility off Route 9W in Palisades on March 26 and 27. IBM is asking for extended landing hours and permission for night time flights (up to 10 p.m.), which require lighting. If you have an opinion about this issue, you may voice it either at the Planning Board meeting on February 21 (at 8 p.m. at the Greenbush School); or on February 26 at the Town Board meeting when the Town will approve or disapprove IBM's request. Let your representatives know how you feel, and look out for traffic on March 26 and 27!



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# School News

## FEBRUARY/MARCH EVENTS

**February 27:** Continuing Education Registration at TZ High School; 6:30-9 pm. **March 6:** Kindergarten Information Meeting at TZ Elementary; 7:30 pm. **March 22, 23, 24:** T.Z. High School Musical, *Hello Dolly*; 8 pm. Matinee on March 24.

## BUILDING UTILIZATION REPORT

On Dec. 4th, at a Regular Board of Education Meeting, the Building Utilization Study Team presented a report which recommended the following four plans out of twenty:

**Plan 5:** 1 Pre K-2nd (at William O. Schaeffer); 1 K-2nd (at Cottage Lane); 2 3rd-5th (at T.Z. Elementary & Orangeburg).

**Plan 9a:** 1 Pre K-2nd (at William O. Schaeffer); 2 K-2nd (at T. Z. Elementary & Cottage Lane); 1 3rd-5th (new at Orangeburg).

**Plan 13:** 1 Pre K/TK (at Palisades, Cottage Lane or T.Z. High School); 2 K-2nd (at William O. Schaeffer & T. Z. Elementary); 1 3rd-5th (at S.O. Middle School); create S.O. Middle School/T.Z. High School Campus.

**Plan 13a:** 1 Pre K-2nd (at William O. Schaeffer); 1 K-2nd (at T.Z. Elementary); 1 3rd-5th (at S.O. Middle School); create S.O. Middle School/T.Z. High School Campus.

*Note: Copies of the report, available at the district office, contain a brief overview of the 20*

*plans originally studied and a more in-depth look at the above four plans. The Board is considering a change in the present configuration due to current overcrowding and projected enrollment.*

## BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS

**February 19 Regular Meeting:** Report of Foreign Language Committee. **March 4 Regular Meeting:** Athletic Committee Report, Reading Recovery, Search & Teach. **March 11 Workshop:** Budget: Overview and District-Wide. **March 18 Regular Meeting:** Budget for Special Education and Elementary Schools.

**March 25 Regular Meeting:** Budget for Tappan Zee High School and South Orangetown Middle School.

**April Budget Meetings:** April 15 Workshop: public discussion on proposed budget. April 22 Regular Meeting: public hearing; Board votes on budget (meeting to be held at TZ High School Library).

**MAY 8: ANNUAL DISTRICT ELECTION ON BUDGET & TRUSTEES.**

*Note: All meetings are held in the South Orangetown Middle School unless otherwise indicated and begin at 7:30 pm. The Board of Education votes only at Regular Meetings; Workshop Meetings are used for information purposes.*

## Rockland Center for the Arts

**Palisadians Exhibit in March:** Among the artists exhibiting in "Rockland Connection - Today," the second part of a three part exhibit celebrating the Center's 50th anniversary, are: Robert Adzema, Norman Galinsky, Diana Green, Joan Hooker, Harriet Hyams, Grace Knowlton, and Judy Tomkins. The exhibit begins March 3 and runs through March 24.

**March Musical Events:** *March 9:* "Two's A Crowd Jazz Series", 8 pm. *March 16:* "Philharmonia Virtuosi", Classical Chamber Quartet, 8 pm.

### Sunday Workshops:

February 25 & March 3: Composition: Learn from the Masters; 12-4 pm \*

February 25 & March 3: Mandala: Quilting Workshop; 10 am-2 pm \*

March 10: Spontaneous Creativity with Monoprinting; 10 am-3 pm \*

March 10: Photography for the Beginner; 10 am-1 pm

March 10, 17, 24: The Art of Tilemaking; 1 pm-5 pm

March 17: Basket Making; 12 pm-4 pm

March 24: Ukrainian Easter Egg Workshop; 1 pm-5 pm

March 31: Raku Firing Workshops; 9 am-5 pm

*[Call the Center at 358-0877 for April, May and June workshops. Pre-registration required. \* indicates two-day workshops.]*

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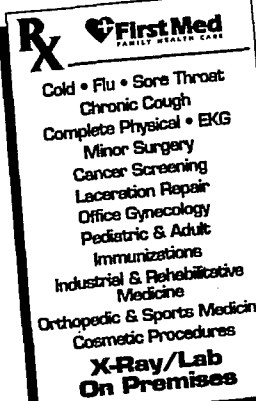
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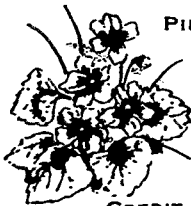
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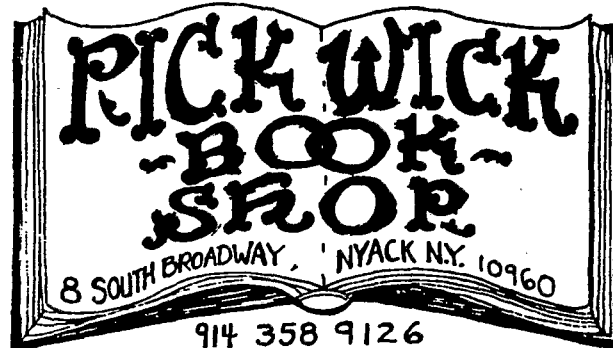
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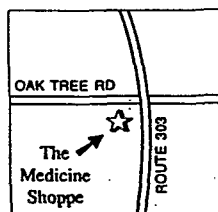
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### Contributions

for our publication were received from Denny Berry Barton and Steven Barton, Donald and Helen Fischer, Alice M. Haagensen, Gerry Miras, and Caroline and Donald Tapley. Many thanks for your support.

### *Palisades Triangle: continued*

appear to violate the state's prohibition against disposing of or alienating the property. Moreover, there might be a wetlands legal problem as there is a small stream running through the property and a small pond at or near where NYNEX wanted to place the concrete pads and structures. There is also a marshy area nearby. He concluded his remarks by telling the Town Board that if they took steps to grant the easement, he would initiate legal action to prevent it, and pointed out that his attorney expected that the legal action would be successful.

Prior to hearing Reg's remarks, the Town Board members expressed no opposition to the easement while the NYNEX representative was making his presentation. After Reg concluded, Supervisor Cassidy asked the Town Board members whether any of them wanted to grant the easement. None of them did. The NYNEX representative then stated that if he had known what Reg was going to say he would not have requested the easement. The Town Board did not formally vote to deny the easement, but Reg says he understands that NYNEX has been informed that the Town Board is not interested in proceeding with the NYNEX application.

In view of the foregoing, it appears that the Palisades Triangle is safe for the present. Certainly the moral of this story is that members of the community should attend Town Board meetings. We do not know what the outcome would have been if Paul Prisco, a Palisadian who lives off Rte. 340 and often attends Town Board meetings, had not called Reg about the NYNEX application and if Reg had not acted,

## About 10964

This community newsletter publishes news and information of interest to the people of Palisades. **10964** need your moral and financial support! Please send a contribution to **10964, Post Office Box 201, Palisades, New York, 10964**. With your help we'll be able to put **10964** in your mailbox five times this year from October through June.

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speaking against it on December 11 at the Town Board meeting.

*Carol Elevitch*

*Note: Reg has a large collection of papers pertaining to the history of the Palisades Triangle and the circumstances pertaining to the acquisition of the land by the Town. He plans to index them and offer them to the Palisades Free Library for permanent safeguarding and access by Palisades residents. This could be useful if the Palisades Triangle is ever threatened again and action needs to be taken.*