

INSIDE INSIGHTS

The Monthly Newsletter of the Sullivan County Manager's Office

August 2017

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The terminal at the County Airport near White Lake features a new roof, signage and paint.

"We've invested \$56,500 on top of the \$747,600 the Federal Aviation Administration and the \$166,500 the state has given us this past year to improve the infrastructure, and the generosity of Sullivan Renaissance has allowed us to 'freshen up' the terminal and grounds."

- County Manager Josh Potosek

Airport improvements continue

Nearly 50 years old, the Sullivan County International Airport in the Town of Bethel remains a valuable County facility, hosting 2,700 takeoffs/landings from April-June 2017, and the intent is to make it an even more useful aviation hub.

"We've invested \$56,500 on top of the \$747,600 the Federal Aviation Administration and the \$166,500 the state has given us this past year to improve the infrastructure, and the generosity of Sullivan Renaissance has allowed us to 'freshen up' the terminal and grounds," explains County Manager Josh Potosek. "And \$733,000 more from the FAA for lighting has just been announced."

The coming Resorts World Catskills casino and indoor waterpark are anticipated to attract guests who would prefer to fly in, and the airport will make an important first impression to them. In addition, the County is seeking to expand the use of the airport by business and industry, especially as New York metro area facilities reach capacity.

What we've already accomplished

- Installation of new wayfinding signage
- Replacement of runway lighting and installation of a backup generator
- Pavement condition study for use in future grant applications

Working harder on being better

If you've walked into the Sullivan County Government Center in Monticello lately, you may have noticed the fresh paint job and our redesigned logo.

Those are the first clues that something is afoot. Spearheaded by Deputy County Manager Dan Depew, the goal is to replace the overly bright colors of the doors and hallways with more muted, calming earth tones that match our logo's (and newsletter's!) greens and browns.

But this is more than cosmetic. By the time you read this, the Government Center will be replacing its sidewalks and inefficient, outdated boilers, heating/cooling system, and lighting with equipment that will save taxpayers money while helping the environment.



Refresh includes new paint and logo.



The Office for the Aging staff includes (but is not limited to), l-r, Darlene Farragher, Jane Bozan, Debi Allen, Meg Edwards, Judy Gerow, Lynn Williams, Cynthia Briggs, Caryn Mathews, Samata Horwitz, Barbara Panos, Francine Sunshine, and Kelly Solter. Missing from the picture are Elaine Finkle, Martha Scoppa and Al Patalano.

Departmental Spotlight: the Office for the Aging

The team that's ready to help

Debi Allen, director of Sullivan County's Office for the Aging, is clear and unequivocal: "Our seniors deserve to live independently in our communities for as long as they can."

And with 33 full- and part-time staff and several hundred volunteers, her Office fulfills that mission with more than 3,000 residents and taxpayers — scattered across 1,000 square miles — every year.

Debi joined the Office 33 years ago thinking it would be temporary. "But being here and watching families ignore their parents, after having lost mine when they were young, I couldn't stand that," she poignantly acknowledges.

So she remained, rose through the ranks, and now infuses that giving, caring spirit in everyone she oversees. The success of that ambitious attitude is reflected in an equally ambitious slate of programs.

Four Aging Services Specialists are on hand to fill out sometimes complex applications (including for the Home Energy Assistance Program, which provides heating fuel assistance). They are instrumental in arranging needed services and are available to do home visits for those who are unable to get into the office.

The Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) alone has 280 volunteers in 46 spots providing more than 45,000 hours of service to our senior citizens. Older adults utilize the Office's transportation services to enable them to gain access to needed, sometimes lifesaving services and maintain their dignity, independence, and ties to their communities. With a limited public transportation system, the provision of RSVP medical transportation services for the frail, homebound and isolated elderly makes this primary focus area crucially important. Without such volunteers, seniors could face more than loneliness but very serious issues from missing doctors' visits.

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The names of the Minisink fallen are inscribed on this plaque and read aloud annually.

Sullivan County Park of the Month: Minisink Battleground Park, CR 168, Barryville

A place of peaceful reflection

Walk the quiet forest of the Minisink Battleground Park, and you can easily imagine the unbroken wilderness that covered all of Sullivan County circa 1779. What’s more difficult to envision is the intense battle which raged between these trees and rocks that long-ago July.

Indeed, it’s rather stunning to read the signs which dot the County park’s moss-covered pathways, where tales of daring and triumph, defeat and tragedy are briefly told. For a few hours more than 200 years ago, this site was an unremitting scene of bloody, hand-to-hand combat.

Today, however, only wildlife and fellow visitors haunt this park, where stone memorials — several ancient, a few historic, and one brand new — pay silent tribute to the fallen of the Revolutionary War-era Battle of Minisink. This is a place of peace now, and it is open to all from 8 a.m. to dusk, free of charge.

You need not be a student of history to understand the significance of this spot, nor will you be asked to do anything other than enjoy yourself — walking the well-marked trails, picnicking outside or under the rentable pavilion, taking a break in the full-service restrooms, communing with nature.

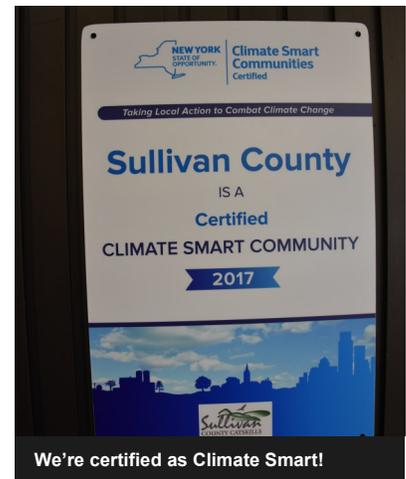
Located very close to the equally historic Roebling Aqueduct off the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway, this is a park well worth a visit.

State certifies us as Climate Smart

It’s official! Sullivan County is not only state-certified as a Climate Smart Community but as a Clean Energy Community.

“This means we’ve achieved multiple goals and met stringent requirements to proudly bear these designations,” County Manager Josh Potosek explains. “I’m very proud of our County staff, particularly our new Office of Sustainable Energy, for their dedication and focus on reaching these milestones.”

Earlier this month, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and NYSERDA joined with the County to celebrate the designation.



We’re certified as Climate Smart!

Thank you!

Sullivan County Manager Josh Potosek would like to thank all Government Center staff who participated in the fire drill.

The exercise proved the evacuation system and revealed ways to improve the process if a fire or other emergency occurs.

Got a question?

Try your legislator first, by calling the Sullivan County Legislature's office at 845-807-0435. They can direct you to your representative, who is elected to serve you.

Or look up who you're seeking directly, via the County's website: co.sullivan.ny.us

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A new name for a familiar place

Have you voted yet?

We're asking everyone to weigh in on which of these names they like best for the Sullivan County Adult Care Center:

- The Care Center at Sunset Lake
- Catskill Mountain Quality Care & Renewal
- Lakeside Quality Care Center
- Lake View Care Center
- The Lake House

Visit the County Manager's page at co.sullivan.ny.us to cast your vote!

Inside the incredible Office for the Aging...

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And there's the Nutrition Assistance Program, which handles not just the door-to-door Meals on Wheels initiative but also delivery of County-prepared, nutritious lunches to a dozen senior centers.

"Every day, there are meals being offered somewhere at a senior center," Debi affirms, noting these lunches are open to those under 60 as well. "We don't turn anyone away. In fact, we stress the socialization more than the meal!"

For the homebound, sometimes the Meals on Wheels driver is the only visitor they see. Any changes in their appearance, health, etc. are immediately reported to the Office.

Other outreach programs include Home Care, where those ineligible for Medicaid are provided non-medical services right in their home, like housekeeping, laundry, meal preparation, bathing and shopping.

"It's designed — as all of our programs are — to keep people in their homes as long as possible," Debi explains.

NYCONNECTS offers info and assistance to anyone of any age regarding long-term care services in the County, from skilled nursing to physical therapy, in the home and community settings.

The Caregiver Resource Center, located at Cornell Cooperative Extension's Liberty office, provides resources and support for those giving care to a loved one and those receiving it.

There's a "loan closet," where durable medical equipment such as walkers and wheelchairs are available to rent for free. Visitors to the Office can also obtain health insurance counseling, referrals to tax preparation services, even legal assistance from a practicing attorney.

The Office has a contract with the County's Transportation Department to provide drivers for in-county medical appointments, shopping trips to Monticello and Liberty stores, and delivering meals.

All programs provided by the Office for the Aging are based on donations, except for the EISEP Program (Expanded In-home Services for the Elderly Program, the aforementioned Home Care). Services are never denied due to the inability to donate.

"The range of services our Office for the Aging renders is astounding," says County Manager Josh Potosek. "And the way in which this talented crew delivers those services is nothing short of amazing. I am awed and deeply gratified by their commitment to meeting so many critical needs in our communities."

Debi is characteristically modest in her reply: "If we help just one person in a day, then I'm happy!"