



FARMINGDALE VILLAGE REPORT

GEORGE J. GRAF, Mayor

February, 2005

A Message From Village Mayor GEORGE J. GRAF



A few weeks ago the Farmingdale Community Summit hosted its Fourth Annual Farmingdale Reads presentation, and this year's guest speaker was Mitch Albom, author of **The Five People You Meet in Heaven**. The theme of his speech was this year's Reads' theme: Making a Difference. I send my congratulations and thanks to the Summit and especially its

Reads Committee for all of its volunteer work in promoting literacy in the Farmingdale community. Mr. Albom's remarks gave me reason to think about all the people who make a difference in Farmingdale, and what can be done to make an even bigger difference. The Summit is just one of the wonderful groups in this area that make Farmingdale a great place to live, work and play. The level of community commitment that exists in Farmingdale definitely sets it apart from other communities. We are fortunate to have them and they certainly do make a difference.

The Village administration itself has been assisted for years by volunteer committees, and we remain committed to assisting existing committees and forming additional committees, as needed, to further our mission to maximize the quality of life in our beautiful Village. As I have stated in my previous columns, I feel that our Main Street is not just a street in the heart of town. It is a very special place that is the face and calling card of our Village. It has retained a special charm and character that many towns on Long Island have lost over the years. It brings visitors and shoppers to our Village from

Massapequa and East Farmingdale and beyond.

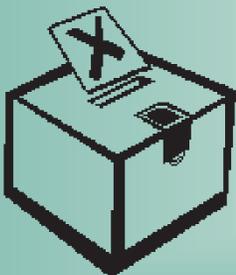
Much of the Village's unique charm is a direct result of the work of the Village Beautification Committee. This devoted group of community members is responsible for maintaining five major gardens throughout the Village, spearheading the planter box program and suggesting other ways to improve the esthetic quality of our Village. Village Trustee Ted Dorfmeister, our Gazebo Project Chairman, has recently been appointed the board's liaison for this committee. We are actively seeking volunteers from within and around the Village. The Committee will once again be holding their meetings at Village Hall. Please call Village Hall to find out when the next meeting is. I encourage you to attend and become part of this important group that helps put a beautiful smile on the face of our Village.



We are also in the process of forming a Traffic Safety Committee whose mission will be to identify traffic safety issues and bring them to the attention of the Village Board for prompt review and resolution. Another committee that we will be forming in the near future is the Redevelopment Committee. This group will look into ways to revitalize areas of the Village and will work with the Village Board to develop projects which will enhance our quality of life.

If you are interested in joining any one of these committees or would like more information, please call Village Hall at 516-249-0093 or come to our next Village Trustee meeting. You can make a difference!

Village Election- Important Dates



- 3/4/05-** the last date to register with the Nassau County Board of Elections to be eligible to vote
- 3/5/05-** walk in voter registration at Village Hall, noon to 5PM
- 3/8/05-** Last day for Village Hall to receive application for absentee ballots to be mailed to a voter
- 3/14/05-** Last date to hand deliver applications for Absentee Ballots to Village Hall
- 3/15/05-** Village Election Day

Polls Open Noon to 9PM- Village Hall

Answering Tough Questions

Mayor Graf writes a weekly column that appears in the Farmingdale Observer. The following column appeared in the January 21 edition.

It was a Friday afternoon and I was preparing for a meeting at Village Hall later on that day. I would be conducting a quick tour and then speaking to the group of forty or so about my duties as Mayor and the operation of our Village government. The open forum would allow my visitors to ask questions. I was pretty sure that someone from the local media would be there. I was still battling the remnants of the flu and had finished teaching class earlier in the day, but the thought of meeting with some of the Village's residents got my adrenaline flowing. I put on my best suit and headed to Village Hall.

The anxious crowd was already seated in the courtroom. I walked slowly towards the door and could already hear their raucous banter. They were waiting for me, just itching to start delving into the most personal aspects of my life. I have dealt with crowds like this before and I knew I just had to go in and be truthful and answer the best I could in the most simple of terms—terms that even a child could understand. I heard the whispering as I made my way to the dais. I welcomed the group and started to make my presentation. I was only a few sentences into it when hands were raised and questions yelled out. This was not going to be easy. With some help from the group leaders we were able to calm the ever growing impatient crowd, assuring them that all questions would be answered, no matter how long it would take. This seemed to appease them for the time.

I concluded my presentation and I knew that it was

time for questions. I planted my feet firmly on the floor, straightened my tie, bit my lip and slowly asked "any questions?" Well, it was like a steak being thrown into a lion's cage. It seemed like every hand in the room was up. Arms waving, feet stomping, I even saw two members of the audience actually standing on their seats. The leaders again interceded in calming the very anxious crowd.

I took the first few questions: "What does the Mayor do?" "How can you handle all of this?" "Why did you want to become Mayor?" "How long is your term?" All good questions. "I ran for Mayor because I wanted to be part of the government process. I wanted to make changes to policies that I and others thought needed to be made. I wanted a more open village government". Then the question from the floor that basically ended any sense of order for the rest of the meeting, "Can I bang the gavel?"

"Yes you can, all the Cub Scouts here will have a chance to call a meeting to order just like I do each Village Trustee meeting". That ended any interest in asking any further questions. All the scouts from Packs 57 and 601 banged the gavel, got their Village 100th anniversary pencils and went home knowing a little bit more about local government, and what a mayor does. I went home feeling very good about sharing my experiences and ideas with these very bright children, and thinking that the future of Farmingdale looks very promising.

Mayor Graf Attends Farmingdale AARP Luncheon



Mayor George Graf is shown here with Farmingdale AARP Chapter President Francis Hickey and Event Chairman Tom Sico at the recently held AARP luncheon at the Fox Hollow Inn in Woodbury. Mayor Graf, the guest speaker, spoke about the programs and services that the village offers to senior citizens and updated the group on many of the ongoing and upcoming projects that the village administration is working on.

Photo: Ed Cox

Senior Tax Exemption

The Village of Farmingdale, in our continuing efforts to assist our senior citizens, approved a resolution to increase the household income level to qualify more senior citizens for the Senior Real Estate Tax Exemption. The value used to qualify seniors for the benefit has not been adjusted for inflation since 1993. As a result of this board action, more Farmingdale seniors are now eligible to take advantage of this cost savings benefit.

To qualify for the exemption, the income of the resident owner or the combined income of all resident owners of the property must be less than \$31,500.00. The minimum reduction for those who qualify is 10% of their village real property tax bill. A 50% reduction in village tax can be had for those with less than \$24,000 in annual household income. The filing deadline for the next tax year is December 31, 2005.

To take advantage of this program, you may visit Village Hall to pick up an application, call Village Hall at 249-0093 to request that an application be mailed to you or visit our Village web site at www.FarmingdaleVillage.org and download a copy of the application.

Trustee Dorfmeister Attends Titan Award Dinner



Village of Farmingdale Trustee Ted Dorfmeister recently attended the Farmingdale Titans Youth Football organizations award dinner that was held at the Stuart Thomas Manor in Farmingdale. Pictured with Trustee Dorfmeister (center) is Tom Sabellico, (right) representing New York State Assemblyman Joseph Saladino, Titan President and Founder Robert Thompson and Titan players. *Photo: Ed Cox*

Farmingdale Bethpage Historical Society Swears in President



Village Trustee Ted Dorfmeister (left) congratulates Larry Jorgenson (left center) upon his swearing in as the President of the Farmingdale Bethpage Historical Society (FBHS). Also attending the installation dinner at the Weeping Willow Restaurant in Farmingdale were Deputy Mayor Joseph Rachiele (right center) and Village Historian Bill Johnston (right).

Northside's 4th Grade Class Welcomes Mayor



Mayor Graf was a guest of Mrs. Knispel's fourth grade class at Northside Elementary School. The Mayor discussed local government and the importance of community service.

Mayor Graf Attends Seniors Citizens of Farmingdale Holiday Party

Mayor Graf was on hand at the Senior Citizens of Farmingdale annual holiday dinner. The program, which the Village helps sponsor, is open to school district residents over 55 years of age. They meet three afternoons per week from 1PM to 4:30 PM at the Farmingdale Public Library. Call 516-753-0291 for more information. Pictured: Seated l-r: Rose Profeta, Treasurer, Helene Harvey, President, Adelaide Ketcham, Coordinator. Standing l-r: Dr. Larry Lembo, Mayor George Graf.



Local Cub Scouts Receive Certificates of Appreciation



Village Attorney Gregory Carman presented scouts from cub pack 601 with certificates of appreciation for their assistance during the Fifth Annual Sleepy Hollow 5K run. The event benefits the Little Village School which provides services to children and families in the Farmingdale School District and surrounding communities. Pictured with the scouts are l-r: Cubmaster Ted Phillips, Gregory Carman, Lina Carman, Assistant Cubmaster George Mauro



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Senior Citizen Taxi Discount

The Village during the past years has been able to assist its senior citizens through The Senior Taxi Discount Program, a joint effort between the Village and LI Yellow Cab. This program allowed seniors to obtain vouchers from Village Hall and then pay 75 cents for a cab ride, with the Village paying an additional 75 cents. However, due to substantial increases in operating costs, LI Yellow Cab informed the Village, at our November Trustees' meeting, that they were raising rates from \$3.50 to \$4.00, and would be eliminating the Senior Taxi Discount Program.

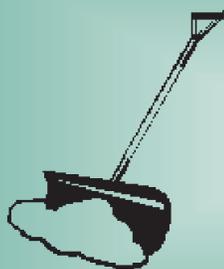
The Village Board listened carefully to the cab company's explanation that their annual insurance premiums increased \$2,000.00 per vehicle, auto parts and



tires have increased 40% and the cost of gas and oil is at an all time high. The proposed normal fare increase seemed reasonable to us. Saving the senior discount was a more complicated issue. While we recognized the company's position, we were determined to be able to offer our seniors a discount off the regular fare.

The Village Board negotiated terms that would enable the seniors in Farmingdale to continue to enjoy a reduced fare for rides within Farmingdale Village. The new fare for any senior (62 years of age and older) is now \$1.50. The Village has agreed to pay a subsidy to the cab company so that our seniors can still enjoy a reduced fare savings. We also eliminated the cost, expense and inconvenience of obtaining ticket books from Village Hall. The only requirement is for seniors to show the driver proof that they are 62 years old or older. The reduced fare is also good for rides to the following destinations outside the incorporated village: SUNY Farmingdale, Farmingdale Library, Wendy's and both movie theaters on Route 110.

The Village Board is pleased to be able to continue to make this reduced fare program available to our seniors within the Village, and thanks the LI Yellow Cab Company for working with the Village to preserve this valuable service.



Reminder

Village code requires all residents to clear their sidewalks within four hours after the snow fall ceases.

Code is not in effect between the hours of 9PM -7AM

Village of Farmingdale
361 Main Street
Farmingdale, NY 11735

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