

## Mayor's Message

With the wind and rain that we have experienced recently, I wanted to take another opportunity to express my gratitude to the members of our departments. No matter what the conditions, they respond to fire calls, flooding, trees and wires down, traffic incidents and so much more. To the **Menands Police, Fire and DPW**, I thank you.

The **Summer Concerts in the Park** and **Annual Village Picnic** were well attended (even during the rain). It is a nice way to get together with neighbors and friends while listening to great music from local talents. Thank you to the **MFC** for their weekly commitment to food and beverages at the concerts and to the **MFC, MFC Auxiliary, Seniors, Youth, MPD, DPW, Library, PTA, Clerk Handershan, Village Board, Colonie EMS, MFD, Dianne MacFarland, Michelle Esposito, Bill Foley, Bill Garvey, and Jim and Jimmy Grenier** for your participation and help with the Village Picnic. Without everyone's support the picnic would not be a success each year.

Congratulations to the **2019** graduates of all grade levels on their academic accomplishments. Congratulations as well to **Menands School** teachers **Robyn Marinstein, Agnese Andrews and Donna Putnam** on their retirement. Having served the students of **Menands School** for **30+ years** each, their commitment and dedication is commendable.

After months of construction, **Menands School** is back open following a major renovation. Best wishes to the students, administrators, faculty and staff for a successful school year. With classes back in session, please be mindful of stopped school buses, the students getting to and from the bus stops, as well as people crossing roads in **Menands**, particularly as the daylight hours shorten.

**Pay It Forward Together** held their **Annual Prom Closet**, that provides opportunities for high school students to attend prom. They are currently offering school supplies at the **Back To School Closet** to ensure every student has what they need when school starts. Thank you to **Carol Darmetko** and her committee for coordinating these and other events to assist those in need.

With summer winding down, there was no shortage of community events happening in **Menands** the last few months. Part of what makes **Menands** so special is the sense of community so I thought it would be nice to highlight some of the events and the people behind them.

The **Summer Youth Program** had fun activities and exciting field trips for the kids. Thank you to **Youth Director Brianna Coughlin** and her counselors for another great season.

The **Menands Seniors** continue with their weekly gatherings, as well as wonderful trips. New members, 55 and older, are always welcome. The trips are listed in the **Menands Activities**. For more information about membership contact **President Diane Leonard** at 518-465-3771.

Congratulations to **President Paul Nylín** and the **Menands Jr. Baseball League Board of Directors** and coaches on another successful season for the kids. Their hard work and dedication brought the league back up and running and is seeing an increase in the numbers of players. Great news for the future of baseball in **Menands**.

The **Menands Police and Fire Departments** hosted a **Community Night**, full of fun activities and safety information, including fingerprinting and ID cards. Together with **NYS Police, Albany County Sheriff's Office, Colonie PD and AAA**, the event was a huge success. Both **Chief Lacosse** and **Chief Steurer** hope to make this an annual event.

**Empower Ethiopia's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Summer Mingle** was held at **Il Faro Restaurant** in July. Proceeds of this event benefit the street children in Ethiopia. Congratulations to the **Bouniconto/Hayes Family** for their hard work and dedication in making this yearly event a great success for a wonderful cause.

Before becoming a finalist on **American Idol**, **Madison VanDenburg** performed at the grand opening of **Kris's Mid-City Tavern** in March. Having had an opportunity to meet **Madison** on a couple of occasions both before and after the show began, it was exciting to follow her on a national limelight after seeing her play in **Menands**.

The **Mohawk Hudson Humane Society** held their **500 Pet Celebration** in August. The event offered discounts in pet adoptions, vendors with pet supplies of all kinds, food, music, and more in support of our four-legged friends.

I had an opportunity to tour another business in **Menands** in August. **Thrive Fitness & Wellness** relocated their fitness center from 381 Broadway to **21 Simmons Lane** in April of this year. The new location has expanded the workout space from 900 sq. ft to **5000 sq. ft**, which will accommodate more people, while maintaining small class sizes and personalized fitness plans. Co-owners **Derek Gelato**, a personal trainer for 13 years and **Brandon Gallagher**, who holds a **BA in Human Biology** from **SUNY Albany**, strive to improve their client's quality of life through physical fitness, nutrition and stress management. An interesting story Derek told me during the tour was regarding one of their clients, Jim who is a 70-year-old powerlifter. Jim and Derek started working together 3 ½ years ago on general fitness, when Jim was unable to sit down and stand back up without difficulty. Jim regained his strength and improved his quality of life, being able to do everyday tasks, hiking and other things. Jim now enters competitions, with the most recent being the **USAPL Northeast Regionals** in Connecticut on July 28<sup>th</sup>. Here, Jim **Back Squatted 286 lbs., Bench Pressed 186 lbs. and Deadlifted 385 lbs.** placing **1<sup>st</sup>** in his age division and weight class. Congratulations to **Jim** on this remarkable accomplishment and best wishes to **Derek and Brandon** on the success of their business, with thanks for selecting **Menands** as their place to call home.

Upgrades to the **Nature Trail** will begin soon, made possible in part from a **\$125,000 SAM grant** received with the assistance of **Assemblyman Phil Steck**. We are excited for the outcome and look forward to a ribbon cutting for the community to see what the trails have to offer. Additional funding has been made available to the Village to continue upgrades to our parks. Thank you to **Assemblyman Steck** for bringing these opportunities to **Menands**.

Work continues with the **Village Comprehensive Plan** and is expected to be completed by the end of this year. I am grateful to **Chazen Companies** and the volunteer members of this committee (**Kerry Wroblewski, Jerry and Nancy Ruppert, Bill Nevins, Aileen Nicoll and Dr. Maureen Long**) for their dedication to this project.

The Village was awarded a **technical assistance grant** through **CDTC/CDRPC**, to assist with exploring food options in **Menands**. The grant consists of **\$10,166** award with a local match of **\$2,541** for a total of **\$ 12,707**, to identify options to increase food accessibility. The **Food Committee** continues to meet to gather information to establish strategies, potential partners, or activities designed to provide greater accessibility of food options in our Village.

**Military Banner** orders have started to come in, with the first couple hung proudly along **Broadway**. This is an ongoing program and we look forward to displaying more banners of our military heroes. Thank you to **Diane Foley** for her efforts with this project.

Due to issues with the approval process with the RR to pave and stripe on **Simmons Lane** near the tracks, the **Quiet Zone** project is further delayed. Our engineers are continuing to work on the proper permits and hope to have things in order next summer to finally get the **Quiet Zone** in place.

I look forward each year to the **Fall Display** on the island along **Broadway**. This year is no exception. Soon enough the vibrant fall colors will be on display.

The second annual **Village Garage Sale** will be held on **Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup>** at the **Capital District Reginal Market**. See **Menands Activities** for details.

See the **Menands Activities** for information on more upcoming events in the Village. There is something for everyone year-round.

Until next time,

**Mayor Meg**