



# BelleFair

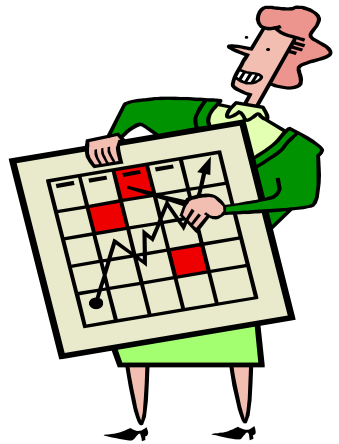
# Buzz...



## The Talk Around Town!

March, 2003

### Town Meeting Report



The Fireplace Room at the Meeting House was the setting for the town meeting on the budget Saturday morning, February 1st. Peter Schlactus, secretary of the HOA Board, called the meeting to order and accepted questions from the 40-50 homeowners in attendance. David Gelfarb, Budget Committee chairman, and Pat Romano, HOA president, explained why our monthly charges have gone up, and what steps have been taken to keep our expenditures down.

The main problem we have faced is the very unrealistic budget that Spectrum-Skanska left us with. They underestimated such things as taxes, landscaping, and the maintenance of amenities, such as the Meeting House and pool. They also left us with an impractical set of by-laws, which are very difficult and expensive to amend.

One issue that engendered much discussion was the cost of the shuttle bus. Although the fare has been raised, it is an amenity that is subsidized by all of us through our carrying charges. While some of those present thought we should do away with the bus altogether, others felt that it is an attractive part of our community and adds to the value of our homes. Pat Romano revealed that by the end of 2003, when Stone Gate is due to open, there may be an opportunity to share or shift costs, both for morning and evening station runs and for runs to shopping centers at other times of day. Recently, Bill Frohlich re-negotiated the existing bus contract, saving BelleFair some thousands of dollars of expense. For now we will continue the schedule as it stands, with the bus we have, at the new rates.

Landscaping is still a big issue. Some felt that we pay too much and get too little in return. One resident raised the question of whether full-maintenance homeowners could hire their own contractors. *(continued on p. 2)*

BelleFair HOA Committees	
Architectural Review Board	Pat Sanders Romano promano646@aol.com
Budget Committee	David Gelfarb dbgelfarb@hotmail.com
Communications Committee	Peter Schlactus jpschlac@optonline.net
Landscaping Committee	Pat Sanders Romano promano646@aol.com John Hawkins officerjch@aol.com
Meeting House Committee	Ellen Elmaleh elleneelmaleh@yahoo.
Village Liaison Committee	Mimi Raphael MiDitto@aol.com

Check Out BelleFair's New Website! [www.BelleFair.org](http://www.BelleFair.org)

Site Manager: Richard Kaufman  
American Leisure  
Assistant: Romaine Brown  
Office: Meeting House  
Hours: 7a.m. till close  
Phone: 690-1371  
Fax: 690-1143  
E-Mail: manager@BelleFair.org

Communications Committee:  
Peter Schlactus, co-Chair, Editor  
Mimi Raphael, co-Chair  
Carol Charitan Janet Edelman  
Marilyn Geiger Connie Sanders  
Cathy Zenenberg



Peter Schlactus mentioned that one of the aims of the new consortium of Rye Brook Homeowners Associations was to exchange information on management companies and landscape contractors.

The meeting closed with praise for our hardworking HOA Board. —*Mimi Raphael*

VOTE! VOTE! VOTE!



**O**n **March 18th**, make sure to cast your ballot for two of the three candidates running for seats on the **Rye Brook Village Board of Trustees!**

Far more important for BelleFair than who gets elected is the number of votes cast by BelleFair residents. That is an open record, since our voting district includes mainly BelleFair voters. A large turnout makes us a factor to be reckoned with in local politics. Our concerns and our requests will be taken seriously by the Board of Trustees -- those to be elected now and those who will soon be running for re-election. With that in mind, the three candidates for Village Trustee have been actively courting our votes. You may have had them knocking on your door recently.

The local Citizens for Sound Government group, which is not affiliated with any national party, has endorsed two candidates: **Robert Harris**, appointed to the Board of Trustees to serve out the term of the recently resigned trustee Jody Brackman, and **Paul Rosenberg**, a newcomer to local politics who is President of the James Way Homeowners Association. Trustee **Dean Stanton** is running for re-election on his own Independent Voice ballot line.

The three candidates addressed an informal gathering of representatives from a number of Rye Brook HOA's at a meeting on February 6th at the home of Jen and Peter Schlactus. The representatives of each attending HOA were given a chance to present major problems their homeowners face, and the candidates responded with how they would deal with these problems. One of BelleFair's concerns was King Street traffic and the entrance to Stone Gate. All three candidates expressed the view that to have Stone Gate traffic enter the facility by way of Reunion Road did not make sense. All three said they would favor having the present entrance to Stone Gate on King Street, opposite Sherwood Drive, remain the main entrance.

For this **March 18th election**, our polling place will be at the Bruno Ponterio **School on North Ridge Street**. But this is the last time: in future elections, we will cast our votes here at our own Meeting House.

Vote and let BelleFair's voice be heard!

—*Mimi Raphael*

Battered Mailboxes



BelleFair Banter:  
Congratulations!



**B**etween the snow plowing and other hazards, more than a few mailboxes are damaged. As a service to residents, the HOA has purchased a limited supply of additional boxes, poles, and fasteners and has them on hand. Homeowners can purchase the necessary pieces from the HOA at cost. Contact our Property Manager and let him know what you need.

**C**ongratulations to Jamie and Adam Wagner and their families on the birth of their twin daughters born on February 19th: Emma Paige weighing in at 5 lbs 6 oz and 17 inches long, and Carly Blair weighing in at 6 lbs 7 oz and 19 inches long. Emma and Carly join big brother Erik.

**C**ongratulations to Howard, Betty, Rachel, and Danielle who welcome with love Abigail Taylor Ochs "Abby". Abby was born on Friday, February 21st at 8:31AM. She was 7lbs 13oz. and 20inches long.

All of BelleFair would like to welcome our newest additions to the community!



## Bright Horizons Child Care to Open March 7th !

## Hilton Hotel Proposal for Anderson Hill Road *An Opinion*



**B**right Horizons @ Bellefair is pleased to announce that we will be opening our doors on **Monday, March 10th at 7:00 A.M.** We are offering exciting programs for infants, toddlers and preschoolers; encouraging them to become life long learners in a happy, safe and creative environment. Please call us for more information at: 914-935-0618. — *Celeste Zellin*

**R**ye Brook's Planning Board is preparing its recommendation to the Board of Trustees on a misguided plan to build a 145-room Hilton Garden Inn budget hotel on the corner of King Street and Anderson Hill Road. Since 1999, the project has been vigorously opposed by our good neighbors at Doral Green and, in light of all its problems (and the support BelleFair has received from Doral), our HOA should back Doral on this issue. Now is the time for BelleFair residents to get educated and involved.

The fight against the proposed hotel has garnered the support not only of BelleFair, but of the Arbors, King Merritt, King Street Homeowners Association, Purchase Environmental Protective Association and others. The reasons for this widespread opposition are many:

- 1) The company seeking to purchase the land and build the hotel, and the company selected to run the hotel once built, have been controlled by Sam Klein, the notorious hotel and nursing home operator. Mr. Klein pleaded guilty to charges of understaffing a nursing home he operated in Ossining. The facility was closed, and officials there admitted bilking \$400,000 from Medicaid. Since then, Mr. Klein has allegedly sold his interest in the Hilton development but may remain connected to the hotel operating company. Regardless, his partners remain involved and the whole project's credibility is tainted. Are these the kind of people we want the Village to permit to buy/build here?
- 2) Projected tax revenues are suspect. Similar facilities have generated much lower taxes than the developers claim.
- 3) Traffic impacts to King Street and our area.
- 4) Commercial intrusion into a quiet residential area.
- 5) The 15 acres of woodlands and wetlands is one of few remaining green parcels.
- 6) Should the hotel fail, the building could be put to an even less desirable purpose.
- 7) Unanswered questions about water supply and pressure to entire area.

Pepsi originally purchased the property in 1993, when a plan for a strip shopping center was being proposed by a local developer. Doral Board member Dick Hubert explains that at the time everyone thought Pepsi had stepped in to protect the parcel from development. Now Pepsi's motives seem to be to divest itself of the land for maximum profit and gain a source of less expensive lodging for employees and guests to its nearby world headquarters.

Doral is open to a smaller, more upscale facility and claims that developers are manipulating the numbers to downplay the financial viability of a smaller inn. In fact, the developers ignored Village Planning Board requests to model options for 100 and 75-room hotels. Their rationale was challenged by the Planning Board.

A petition against the proposed hotel plan can be signed at the Meeting House desk. Let us support our neighbors and help reserve this parcel for green space or development that will truly benefit our community. —*Peter Schlactus, writing as a private resident and not in his capacity as an HOA Board member.*



## BelleFair Needs Representation on Village Committees

Are you concerned about safety and traffic on King Street? Do you have kids who will need better playing fields for sports and recreation? Do you want to see the Village's few remaining woods and wetlands preserved? Should our elected officials avoid inappropriate conflicts of interest?

Many seats on important Village committees are coming up for review in April. And the Board would like to propose candidates from BelleFair to the Village. Important Village committees like the Traffic Committee, the Environmental Review Committee, the Recreation Committee, and the Ethics Board have had or will continue to have a real impact on our lives and community. For example, several of these bodies are helping to determine whether and how the Village will develop 29 wooded acres around BelleFair, and no one from BelleFair sits on any of these bodies.

Based on feedback from BelleFair residents that do sit on committees, most involve only moderate commitment with monthly meetings. If you are interested, please pass along your names to our Property Manager or any HOA Board member as soon as possible. A list of candidates needs to be in the Mayor's hands this month. BelleFair will only fulfill our dreams and expectations if we make it happen. The more people get involved, the easier it will be. Thank you for doing your part.

## By-Law Amendments to Be Proposed April 7th

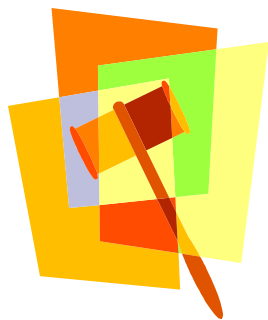
Capping a project that has spanned over two years and three Boards, the Board plans to offer a set of amendments to the By-laws for a community vote on April 7th. As promised at the last Town Meeting, a Town Meeting to air questions and discussion of the amendments will be held Saturday, March 22nd, from 10:00 am to noon at the Meeting House. At least a week prior to that, all residents will receive the complete text of the amendments.

The bulk of the amendments aim to improve community governance and relieve the community of unnecessary or unrealistic burdens related to insurance. For example, our attorney advises us that with these amendments in place we could eliminate the double insurance now held on most maintenance-included homes.

Over time, there has been a remarkable degree of consensus among Board members on the need to amend our By-Laws and the general shape that key amendments should take. We hope the community will ease the burden on future volunteer Board members by actively supporting this initiative.

Not every deficiency in the By-Laws is being addressed. In accordance with our attorney's advice, this set of amendments avoids topics addressed in the Declaration. There will be one amendment to the Declaration to eliminate the rather extraordinary provision stating that no amendment to the Declaration shall take effect until three years after it passes.

Prior to the distribution of the proposed amendments, feel free to direct any questions to By-Laws Ad Hoc Committee Chair Peter Schlactus via email at [jpschlac@optonline.net](mailto:jpschlac@optonline.net).

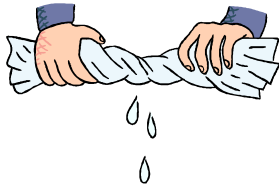


## Shuttle Bus Fare Rules Changed to "No Change"

An unanticipated consequence of changing the shuttle bus fare to \$1.50 from \$1.00 is the substantial additional time spent by our driver and our Property Managers in handling change. Effective March 1st, shuttle users should purchase prepaid bus passes by check at the Meeting House. The price for Bus Passes is \$30 for 20 rides. The fare for those who pay in cash on the bus is now increased to \$2.00 per ride. Day riders may pay the driver either by check or with exact fare in dollar bills.



## Flood at Meeting House



Prompt action by **Alana Jones**, Manager on Duty, saved our Meeting House from more serious damage on the night of January 20th. Alana was closing up at 10 PM when she heard water running and went to investigate.

What she found was a popped sprinkler head that was causing water to pour into the library. Firemen quickly responded, with at least four trucks and a chief's car, and the water was turned off before the damage spread further. Apparently a sprinkler head had been improperly installed when the Meeting House was built, and ice forming behind it in the extreme cold forced it out. Fortunately, the overhang of the shelves saved books in the library, although the computer may have suffered water damage. The overhead fluorescent light fixtures were spoiled and will have to be replaced. We are getting bids on additional insulation for the piping and submitting a claim to our insurance carrier.

A telephone call to Richard brought him here by midnight, and he spent the rest of the night sleeping on a massage table in the exercise room, to be on hand in case of further trouble.

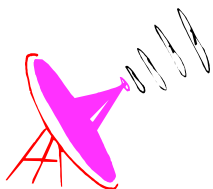
The staff of the Buzz joins all residents of BelleFair in offering our sincere thanks to Alana, Richard, and the Port Chester and Rye Brook Fire Departments for their actions in preventing what could have been a major disaster. —*Mimi Raphael*

## Snow Plowing: Excerpt from a Letter to Our Board From the Village



**R**e: Snowplowing: "I have discussed your overall concerns with the snowplowing operations with the department of public works. Please be assured that public works personnel were in BelleFair salting the streets on December 5th prior to 7:00 pm. It is beneficial to salt the streets prior to plowing. However, the Village is still gaining experience with the BelleFair public streets and I expect that you will see additional improvements with each storm. For instance, the conditions at BelleFair seem to be different than many other areas of the Village and the icy conditions may be forming earlier than other areas.. .the Police Chief is asking the patrol officers to check this area earlier when snow and ice conditions are expected. When the department of public works personnel are called in, they are now sending one truck up to BelleFair immediately due to the conditions mentioned earlier. Similarly, the public works crews will also pay close attention to the snow and ice conditions at the intersection of King Street and BelleFair Boulevard that is mentioned in your letter, as this is an area that needs special attention...Again, thank you for your concerns." — *Chris Bradbury, Rye Brook Village Administrator*

## Communications Committee Report



**T**his committee continues to make sure that BelleFair residents can share the information that binds us more closely together as a community. Since the new year, we have sponsored a "Town Meeting" on budget and finance matters, published two editions of the BelleFair Buzz newsletter, and completed a new update to the BelleFair Resident Directory. The BelleFair website, [www.BelleFair.org](http://www.BelleFair.org), continues as a useful resource. At the Meeting House, our volunteer-run community library provides ample choices reading. Finally, as needed, we distribute information via flyers or emails to the community. We have a vibrant and multifaceted communications network to be proud of.

**VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED!** Contact Peter Schlactus at 934-9015, or via email at [jpschlac@optonline.net](mailto:jpschlac@optonline.net).



**Board Member Bio:  
Mimi Raphael**

**M**y name is Miriam (Mimi) Raphael. My husband, Theodore Fishman, and I moved to BelleFair in November of 2000, but I am not new to the Port Chester-Rye Brook area, having lived here since 1953 with my first husband. Ted and I have, between us, two sons, three daughters, and (so far) eight grandchildren.

I have been an ESL teacher and a home and private tutor. I have taught around the world with Elderhostel and Global Volunteers. Most recently, I taught math on the Navajo Reservation in Utah and English in Xi'an, China and Ostuni (Puglia), Italy. In addition, I have done a series of crossword puzzle books for Simon & Schuster and am now a copyreader for the New York Times Crossword Puzzle Books, published by St. Martin's Press. In 1979, I won the national championship in the American Crossword Tournament in Stamford and continue to compete regularly.

I represent the maintenance-free homes on the HOA Board. Some issues affect these homes differently from other homes in BelleFair, and we need to have a voice. I would like to see more residents serve on HOA committees and join me on the Village Liaison Committee, which makes our views known to village officials while working with them on issues of common concern.

**ARB Alert for Spring**

**T**he ARB wishes to remind all residents that, with spring approaching, make sure to submit your ARB applications for permission to build/alter/plant/etc. in a timely manner to avoid having your projects delayed. — *Pat Romano*

**SELECTED SERVICES DIRECTORY**

<b>Ambulance:</b>	939-4700	<b>Newspapers:</b>	
<b>Beach (Rye Town):</b>	939-3075	Journal News	694-9300
<b>Alarm Permits:</b>	939-0668	Westmore News	939-6864
<b>Cablevision:</b>	777-9000	Sound Shore Review	694-3600
<b>Bus Service: County</b>	682-2020	<b>Police Department:</b>	937-1020
<b>Cafe (Cornerstone):</b>	933-0177	<b>Post Office (P.C.):</b>	939-0377
<b>Chamber of Comm.:</b>	939-1900	<b>Recreation Dept:</b>	939-3235
<b>Court (Rye Town):</b>	939-3305	<b>Rye: Town</b>	939-3570
<b>Daycare-Early Learn:</b>	761-1448	<b>Rye Brook: Village</b>	939-1121
<b>Electricity (ConEd):</b>	993-6900	<b>Sanitation:</b>	939-0668
<b>Elections General-Nov.</b>	939-3570	<b>Schools: Blind Brook</b>	937-3600
<b>Elections Village-March</b>	939-0111	<b>Senior Citizens:</b>	939-7904
<b>Elections: Board of</b>	285-5700	<b>Spectrum Warranty</b>	937-5555
<b>Fire Dept.:</b>	939-5144	<b>Tax Assessor (Rye):</b>	939-3566
<b>Hospitals: United Greenwich</b>	939-7000 203-863-3000	<b>Taxes: N.Y. State</b>	800-225-5829
<b>Library (Port Chest.):</b>	939-6710	<b>Tax Receiver (Rye):</b>	939-3558
<b>Metro North Rail</b>	800-522-5624	<b>Water (Aquarion):</b>	800-832-2373

**SHUTTLE SCHEDULE**

**Port Chester Station Pickup = Northbound Side**

<u>To Station</u>	<u>To BelleFair</u>
5:50 am	6:10 am
6:30 am	6:45 am
7:15 am	7:30 am
7:55 am	8:10 am
	M/Tue
	8:30 am
	W/Th/F
5:00 pm	5:30 pm
5:44 pm	6:11 pm
6:25 pm	7:00 pm
7:14 pm	7:55 pm

**MEETING HOUSE HOURS**

<b>Sun:</b>	9:00 am - 7:00 pm
<b>Mon:</b>	7 am -1 pm 3-10 pm
<b>Tues:</b>	6:30-12:30 pm 3-9 pm
<b>Wed:</b>	7 am - 1 pm, 3-10 pm
<b>Thurs:</b>	6:30-12:30 am 3-9 pm
<b>Fri:</b>	7 am - 1 pm 3-9 pm
<b>Sat:</b>	8:00 am - 7:00 pm

Always show your ID to the front desk staff. Bring guest passes along whenever you have guests.

**POOL HOURS**

	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>AM</b>	9-12	7-1	6:30-12:30	7-1	6:30-12:30	7-1	8-12
<b>PM</b>	12-7	3-10	3-9	3-10	3-9	3-9	12-7