

Conversation with the Mayor January 15, 2009

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Time for the Winter Laundry List

I have not consulted the Farmer's Almanac in a very long time, but my guess is that it would tell us we were in for 'a good old fashioned winter'. Simple observation would lead one to that conclusion. The thing is, a winter like the one we are in the midst of isn't always good. It can create all kinds of inconveniences and dangers. We cannot control the weather, but we can control our preparation for it and our response to it. For example: See that your sidewalks are cleared and salted. In the village it is the responsibility of the property owner, commercial and residential, or the first floor tenant to keep sidewalks clear. An individual lease may call for other provisions, but that is the exception. The village crews clear the handicap access at the street corners and, when there is time and manpower, the streets that are the major routes to the three schools. The owner's responsibility does not disappear if the owner is away. Snowbirds should make arrangements for clearing sidewalks, not only for neighbors' safety but to reduce liability. And like having your mail pile up, a walk that is never shoveled tells people the house is empty. Residents out of the village for shorter periods frequently make arrangements with a neighbor to do so. And while you are shoveling, be sure that the hydrants in your neighborhood are accessible. No one wants the fire crew to have to shovel them out to attach hoses.

Why doesn't the village do it? Manpower. We don't have the people. Hiring additional workers would impact the village tax rate.

Under the category of FYI - Main Street and Canandaigua Street, NYS Routes 31 and 21 respectively, are plowed by state trucks, and as with our own village trucks, on occasion the timing is not right. You have shoveled and the plow, moving snow from the road to the curb, puts some of it back. It is an annoyance, especially with repeated storms, but that is part of the package for living in western NY in the winter. A final thought, please don't snow blow sidewalk or driveway snow into the street. It complicates driving and parking and is probably just going to be back in your driveway when the next plow comes through.

I saw a bumper sticker that really resonated with me the other day. It read 'Carlton A Community of Civility'. Perhaps that was so because of a number of calls received in the Village Office of late. I choose to think that the individuals on the

other end of the phone line had been experiencing a particularly bad day. That's quite possible with the economic situation as it is, but the old adage about the comparative merits of honey and vinegar is true. A reasoned, polite request for information or registering of a complaint is as effective, if not more so, than yelling, swearing, or threatening. You should know also that the women in the Village Clerk's office are not responsible for decisions made by the federal government or New York State, both of which have great impact on what and how we do things, or the Village Board itself. Everyone involved in village government is doing the best he or she can for the benefit of the people who live here. We want it to be the best place possible for all our residents and merchants. We live here, too. Let's work together rationally and with civility.