

## Conversation with the Mayor November 20, 2006

Vicky Daly

### Here We Go Again

For whatever reason the Village government's year runs from December through November. Why? I have no idea; it just does. That, of course, is not our budget year, which starts in June and ends in May. Regardless of the logic, or lack thereof, of the timing, it is what it is and so, we are coming to the end of another year. That means It is time to look back over the last twelve months to see where we have been so we can plan where we want to go in the future.

Throughout 2005 - 2006, we have maintained our goals of making Palmyra an even better place to live and to work and to bring outside money and investment into Palmyra. The two are inextricably intertwined for our benefit. Garlock's decision to remain in Palmyra and the building of a new facility is a positive for the community. New businesses have chosen to open here; others have expanded. The Village has championed the call to rescind or amend the change in assessment policy which will increase property taxes for New Yorkers across the state while enriching for-profit landlords. With the other Canal Communities in Wayne County, Palmyra sponsored and was well represented at a workshop session for retail merchants. The availability of low interest loans for new and expanding businesses continues, as does matching grant money for facade paint, signage and pigeon deterrent. (I suspect we are the only community in the area to do the last, but it is certainly a help to local merchants).

We have had businesses close. Each closing has a different story behind it. We miss the people and their wares and wish them well. The Village, with the help of Dick Kirchhoff, Ron Oates, the Wayne County IDA, and the many local people who, as individuals, promote Palmyra, continues to seek appropriate businesses. In January, we will meet with the Palmyra Town Board to brainstorm Economic Development in Palmyra. It will be an open meeting on Thursday, January 11, 2007 in the Fire Hall at 7:30. Come and be part of it.

2005 - 2006 saw many good things happen in Palmyra - the Wetlands Nature Trail in Aqueduct Park; the Palmyra Mural in the Market Street Parking Lot; the addition of more beautiful flower pots on Main Street thanks to the Garden Club; the interpretive signage from the Erie Canalway National Heritage Commission at Port of Palmyra; the presence of *The Sam Patch* and *The Colonial Belle* in the marina during Pageant. The visit of Senator Hillary Clinton to Palmyra has to be noted as a high point as well. It not only put us on the map; it put us on *Nightline*. Wyatt Doremus' *Fifteen Miles on the Erie Canal, Palmyra to Pittsford* for WXXI was another high point. None of these took taxpayer money. All of these were the result of the generosity of volunteers. We do a tremendous amount with the help of our friends.

We have just received word from the NYS Canal Corporation that both of our grant applications have been approved - restrooms at the Port of Palmyra and improvements to

the terminal wall and a boat launch to the east. This can be a great boon to Palmyra, Wayne County and the region. It means a lot of hard work to get from paper to launching the first boat, but we should be able to make it happen working together. This undertaking will open up the waterfront so more boaters will have access to our shops and restaurants. It will allow boaters to overnight at the marina, thereby spending more time here. It will enable the boat owners of Palmyra to launch their boats here on the canal, not having to trailer them to another town. It was a community effort that got us to this point. It will be an even greater community effort to make it happen. Stay tuned for developments.

We cannot end the year without saying goodbye and thank you to Fred Celentano, senior member of the Village Board. First appointed by Mayor Jim Elliott, Fred continued to serve the people of Palmyra with Mayor Peter Wilson, Mayor Bob Gunkler and your current mayor. He also served as Acting Mayor between Peter Wilson and Bob Gunkler. Fred's length of service to Palmyra is noteworthy and much appreciated. We thank him and wish him well.