

Conversation with the Mayor - February 1, 2010
Vicky Daly

Some things to think about

As I was walking out the door en route to the Village Board meeting, my husband asked if I expected a long meeting that evening. The answer was yes; we had many things to talk about. Our board talks a lot and that's good. We talk, listen, discuss, analyze, consider, compromise, and then reach what we believe to be the best decision for the village. That's why you so rarely see split decisions on village matters. We work things out and, as a result, all board members are well versed in what is going on in the village. That's good for everyone.

That meeting did have several major items of discussion. High on the list was the topic of consolidation of ambulance services within the towns and villages of Macedon and Palmyra. A committee made up of representatives of all four communities has been researching the options of consolidation. Usually, consolidation is a money saving strategy. In this case, we are looking at service. Palmyra today is not the same village I moved to in 1960 – not better or worse, just different, as is the rest of the world. Way back then, before the big box super stores, Palmyra was a self sufficient village and the streets were alive with people during the day. Employees were allowed, often encouraged, to become volunteers within the community and released during the work day to help – at no cost to them. No more. It just doesn't happen. As a result, volunteers are in short supply.

So, thank the people who do volunteer, who take time out of their busy, busy lives to do for their fellow residents. They are very special folks. But, because life is different, there are not enough of them and as the community ages, the need for ambulance volunteers continues to grow. That is exactly why we are looking into consolidation. Have decisions been made? No. Before anything can happen, a configuration has to be determined and everyone involved has to agree to it. This is too big a decision to make without thorough discussion and consideration.

Very soon, if not already, you will receive your census questionnaire. Please fill it in and return it. The information, all kept confidential, will have an impact on our state, county and village. It is anticipated that New York, once the most populous state in the country, will continue to shrink even if everyone completes the form. When that happens, we lose representation in the House of Representatives, where seats are based on population as determined by the census. Ignoring the census form just increases the shrinkage. Whatever information is derived from the 2010 count is used until the next count in 2020. The census results impact us in another way. Many of the federal grants are geared for low/moderate income communities. According to the 2000 census, the Village of Palmyra is not low/mod. We are seen as too wealthy to qualify for too many grants. We know better but cannot prove it. In 2000, too many people did not bother to fill in the census forms. Let's not have that happen again this year

On an entirely different note, please add these dates to your calendar: On Thursday, February 18, Cynthia Howk, conference organizer for the Landmark Society of Western New York, will be in the Village Hall at 7:00 PM to talk about the upcoming conference on April 24th and the relationship of preservation to economic development. Come, ask questions, and meet

one of the most knowledgeable preservationists in Western New York. There is no fee for this talk.

Curling returns to Palmyra on Sunday, February 21st, noon to 3:00 PM at the Port of Palmyra marina. Bundle up, come on down and let the members of the Rochester Curling Club show you how it is done. You will even have a chance to try it yourself. This, too, is free. If you have a chance stop in the Village Hall and see the curling display Mary Piccola has put together for us.

While you are there, stop in and pick up your tickets for the Pirate Ball, Saturday, March 20th, 6:00 PM, at the VFW. Tickets are \$25.00, \$30.00 at the door. There will be music for dancing and listening, a buffet dinner, silent auction and raffle. Pirate garb is welcome but not required. The dinner is a fundraiser to support Pirates of the Erie Canal Weekend, August 7 and 8. It is great when one good time facilitates another.