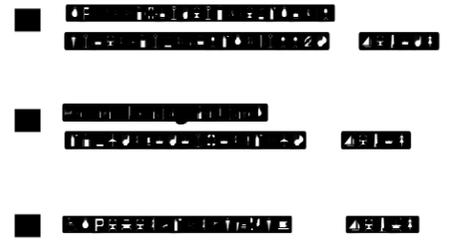




# LANSING COMMUNITY NEWS



Serving the Town and Village of Lansing, Cayuga Heights, King Ferry & Genoa  
 "Not quite paradise, but a nice place to live."  
 March 13, 1997 ♦♦♦ Vol. II No. 11



## Village Trustees Discuss Senior Transportation & Youth Services

By Matthew Shulman

After a hiatus of six years, Lansing Village Trustees may reinstate funding to assist Gadabout provide subsidized transport to senior citizens and handicapped riders.

Speaking at the Trustees' Mar. 3 meeting, resident Sorel Gottfried described Gadabout's current service to village seniors and businesses and urged the Board to reconsider its funding policy. The Village of Lansing last contributed \$3,000 to Gadabout in 1991.

In the first 10 months of 1996, Gadabout provided transportation services for 2,665 calls originating in the Village of Lansing, according to Executive Director Judy Willis. Of these, 819 were wheelchair calls. These figures do not include return trips to the village which Willis "conservatively estimates" at another 700-1000 rides.

If the Trustees' discussion is indicative of their intentions, an allocation to Gadabout may well be included in the forthcoming budget. In addition, the Trustees expressed interest in conducting a needs assessment to know what the village needs for its senior population.

Phil Dankert updated the Trustees on the intermunicipal Recreation Partnership concept. The program is now in the first year

of a new three year cycle, said Dankert. "We're getting to the point that we can analyze recreational programs and fees for cost effectiveness (to the village)," said Dankert. The village is particularly interested in seeing programs developed for its girls. "It's a question of equity," concluded Dankert.

### Comprehensive Plan

Trustee John Caren updated the Board on progress in updating the village's Comprehensive Plan. The descriptive portion of the plan has nearly been completed and the committee will soon be preparing the section on recommendations that will chart village policies into the foreseeable future.

Once the draft is completed and reviewed by the Trustees a series of public hearings will be held to generate feedback and public input. If all goes as planned, the Comprehensive Plan may be passed by the end of June.

In other business, the Board was told that Time Warner continues to refuse to pay past due fees until a new cable franchise agreement is signed. "There had been an agreement, but it expired in 1990," said Mayor Donald Hartill. "There is no relation between a future franchise contract and past due funds." The Board intends to make another amicable attempt to secure payment.

## Town Board Considers Requests To Expand Initial Sewer Service Area

At the Town Council's regular meeting last Wednesday, Board members responded to requests made by several residents at the Sewer Advisory Committee's Feb. 25 informational meeting by instructing Town Engineer David Herrick to prepare designs and cost estimates to include the Buck Road, Sharon Drive, Franklyn Drive and Maple Drive residential neighborhoods and to the site of the Portland Point marina project being developed by the Pinney family in the proposed sewer district's initial service area.

If the additional cost of extending gravity feed systems to the residential areas reduces the project's unit cost, these areas may be added to the project.

Extending connector lines from Portland Point to carry sewage to the proposed treatment on the present Cargill property would require a pumping station. Noting that such a facility could eventually be used as a collection point for sewage from future service area expansions to homes south of the Asbury Creek, the Board asked Herrick to design the connector with adequate capacity to meet future needs. Once the cost of this alternative is known, cost-sharing of the connector line with the Pinneys may be explored.

The Board also entertained two requests. NYSEG engineer John Marabella

requested that the 60 percent industrial use water surcharge be reduced to 25 percent in light of NYSEG's having installed 8 miles of piping to Milliken Station that benefit town residents and increase fire protection.

Board members were sympathetic to NYSEG's logic, but expressed reservations about changing the rate structure for a single industrial user.

"We'll be willing to take a look (at the request)," said Councilman Jeff Cleveland, who marked his return to the Board after recuperating from surgery, "but we need to be sure that we treat everyone fairly." Town attorney Richard John explained that from a legal point of view, "We'll need a uniform policy for all industrial users."

Residents Emma and Don Harner also came before the Board to question why their historically commercial Auburn Road property had been classed as residential when the contiguous residential properties had been classed as commercial on the proposed zoning map. They told the Board that their property had served since before the turn of the century as a general store, railroad station, factory, hardware store and construction company. Board members replied that they'll review the proposed map before making any decision on zoning but said they concurred with the Harners' assertion.

## A Gift For Mechanics - A Passion for Steam

To see Montgomery "Monte" May fiddle with an oil, wood of coal-fired steam engine is to see a man who is patiently possessed by a passion for the mechanical ideal passed down by his dad.

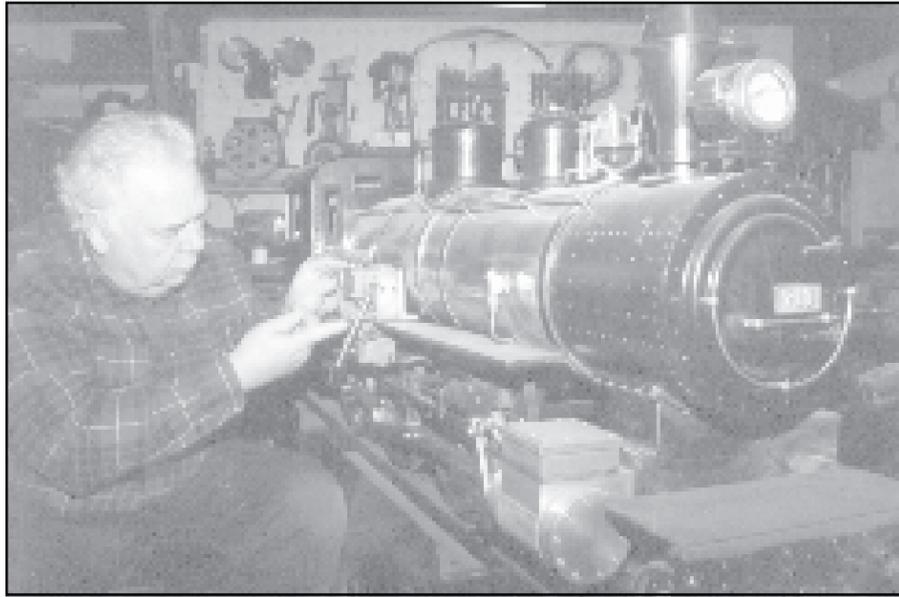
When Monte had to choose between receiving a birthday cake or a gasoline engine for his seventh birthday, there was no hesitation. "They tell me that I had a workbench at three, but I don't remember that," recalled Monte last week from his office at Wheaton's Heating and Air Conditioning which he runs with daughter Patty Van de Bogart.

Young Monte mounted his gas engine on a cart and ran a flexible hose into mole holes in his mom's vegetable garden. "Wasn't that terrible?" he grinned.

"My parents gave me the right to go out and try things on my own," said Monte. At 13, he had his first car. "I couldn't drive it, but I took it apart and put it together several times." At 15 he put together a previously non-functioning cement mixer and by 16 was being paid to pour foundations. And as a high school senior, Monte ran a radio repair shop from the basement of the family home.

Monte went to the University of Missouri to study electrical engineering but did poorly. The result was four years spent in the Navy as an electronic technician responsible for maintaining all the electronics gear on a small craft. "I wouldn't go back in the Navy for \$10 million dollars," said Monte who received radiation exposure during nuclear tests in the Pacific, "but I wouldn't take a million for the experience I had, either," he said.

Now motivated, Monte returned to college on the GI bill and supplemented his \$126 a month allocation by buying and selling military surplus on his way to a degree



**STEAM FEVER** - Monte May adjusts the boiler feedwater pump of this 4-6-0 10-wheel, 1 1/2" scale, 7/16" gauge, oil-fired, live steam engine. This style of locomotive doubled as a freight and passenger work-horse, plying America's rails just after the turn of the twentieth century.

in electrical engineering.

Then the bug bit. Nobody knows exactly where or how, but Monte became infected with a lifelong addiction: collecting and restoring engines. "I like to see how things work," Monte tried to explain. "Nothing ever happens 'til somebody makes something."

The initial symptoms were mild enough. Just a small collection of 20 or more Maytag washing machine engines - vertical mounts, horizontal mounts and twin mounts - housed in a big army surplus tent in his back yard. Monte still smiles at his bride's tolerance.

Fast forward to Ithaca, raising a family and operating Wheaton's Sheet Metal and Wheaton's Heating. Slow the reel 15 years ago while on vacation at an Indianapolis engine show. Click "STOP" at the sound of a steam engine on display.

"I fell in love with the sound," remembers Monte. "Steam engines talk to you. Each has a different sound and its own personality, puffing when loaded; swishing when unloaded." There was nothing to do but sell the collection of "hit and miss" gasoline engines (named for their "k-chuck, k-chuck, bang" sound) and start anew.

Monte's since built scores, if not hundreds, of stationary steam engines and tinkered with dozens of large 1 1/2" scale, 7/16" gauge model steam railroad engines.

Of course, he has a collection of each.

Each stationary steam engine is representative of an individual's conception of how to convert the pressure of steam into rotating mechanical energy, explained Monte. He finds it enjoyable to look at an engine and try to envision why the designer chose a particular application or aesthetic approach.

It's been done in so many ways said Monte, pointing to vertical, horizontal, twin and triplex engines in his collection. "There's real genius here," he nodded in wonderment.

"When we look at our forefathers, we have an unbelievable legacy," reflected Monte. "This doesn't diminish modern technology, but all we do today is based on the capital of their accomplishments. We owe them a debt we can never begin to repay."

Monte's never built a steam engine from scratch. "Locomotives take a lot of time," he explained. "Between 5-7,000 hours is not uncommon to build one." But he does repair wood, coal and oil-fired steam locomotives in his North Triphammer Road workshop and runs them on a special track in western New York.

Monte laments the gentrification of society he sees all across America and right here in Lansing. "In our desire for zoning and aesthetics, we inadvertently prevent kids from trying and succeeding (or failing) in the manual arts. Many never get to discover if it's something they enjoy."

We extend our condolences to the May and Mettler families on the loss of Leslie May Mettler who succumbed to a long illness this week.



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