

The PUTNAM COUNTY COURIER



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Sifting Through the Sands of Time

Courier Archives

111 Years Ago  June 9, 1905

PATTERSON ESCAPES FIRE

*Hall's Blacksmith Shop Afire;
Discovered In Time*

The Patterson News reports a narrow escape which our neighboring village of Patterson had from another conflagration in the following article:

"About two o'clock on Wednesday morning Alex Hall chanced to wake up, and glancing out of the window saw a bright light. On getting to the roof he discovered the blacksmith shop to be on fire. Without stopping to dress he hastened to the shop and on opening the door found flames creeping through the cracks in the floor about his anvil and the anvil block nearly burned up.

He yelled fire and ran to the well and without question he drew and threw at least half a dozen pails of water quicker than any man half his age could have done it. After a time two or three of the neighbors were aroused, but by the time they got there the flames were under control. The origin of the fire is a mystery, but it is thought a spark must have dropped between the cracks during the day and lay smouldering for some time.

It was fortunate that Mr. Hall discovered it as he did, for the chances are had it been five minutes more headway it would have been beyond control, and the probabilities are that the entire block to Sloat's corner would have gone up in smoke. Would it not be a good time now to discuss the question of a village water supply? Of course there is no use of doing anything, but it should be thoroughly discussed at least once in three years."

WORD of the WEEK

Wisenhimer \ WYE-zun-hye-mer \
NOUN: *smart aleck*

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Putnam Valley Library Tries Again

The Putnam Valley Library is going to try again to get the referendum passed this year after last year's failed attempt that had to be withdrawn because of substantial errors in their figures. They will be coming around to your homes and businesses with their petitions to be signed so they can get it on the ballot for November's election. This referendum will be to increase their funding, through our taxes, and take the decision of how much is budgeted away from our elected Town Board. They will be asking for \$320,000 with a promise not to increase this for three years. Our current allocated amount of our taxes through our Town Board is \$292,222 for the Library. While the

increased number is important, the referendum itself is even more important and detrimental. Taking the control and the decision of how much our taxes are, and how they are spent, away from our elected officials -- the Town Board -- is monumental. We need the experience of the Town Board to watch over our hard-earned tax dollars, not an unelected Board where the taxpayers have no clue as to their background and experience with budgets and running a library.

Most importantly, the current board members will NOT consider having the Library Board be elected officials with the proper background and skills needed. This leaves us taxpayers with no accountability for our tax dollars. If the referendum is passed and the Library Board

decides on how much of our taxes will go to the Library's budget, then that board should be vetted and elected by the taxpayers.

There will be a meeting at the Library on June 14, 2016, at 7:30 p.m. I urge all of you, your neighbors and friends to attend. Our voice and opinions must be heard.

We also should contact our Town Board members to insist that our Town Supervisor Sam Oliverio recuse himself from any and all library issues since his fiancée is Priscilla Keresey, the President of the Putnam Valley Library Board.

Before you know it, there will be another \$48 million "service" we will be paying. Those of you who know the history of our school campus, know what could happen, especially with a board that is

NOT elected by the taxpayers.

I also urge everyone to go to the library and take a look at the books, computers, what programs and services are provided, and the disrepair of the property. All of this should have been corrected long ago and with ample funding from the taxpayers and the large dollar amount in their reserves, a sure sign of mismanagement. Last year they could not get a simple calculation correct which forced them to withdraw their attempt to get this same referendum on the ballot.

Do we put our faith, trust, and taxpayer money in this self-appointed board?

Dan Vera
PUTNAM VALLEY

Zika Virus Action Plan Underway in Putnam

By ERIC GROSS

The warm weather has arrived and since Putnam County has already reported its first case of Zika virus, local health officials met with town supervisors across the county last week to coordinate efforts for mosquito education and control.

Acting Health Commissioner Dr. Michael Nesheiwat said Putnam's Zika confirmation resulted from a resident who had traveled outside of the United States. Dr. Nesheiwat said his de-

partment was working with local physicians and the New York State Department of Health to monitor and test residents who recently traveled to Zika-affected areas.

The latest initiative will provide towns and villages with mosquito control kits complete with instructions on removing standing water, mosquito larvicide tablets called "dunks" and mosquito repellent.

County Executive MaryEllen Odell explained that "control efforts are only as successful as our public

outreach and education. Removing mosquito breeding sites around the home by eliminating water is the first recommendation and our best line of defense. Number two is avoiding bites."

Dr. Nesheiwat noted that "symptoms of Zika infection are usually mild. Male travelers without symptoms do not require testing. However, all pregnant women -- with or without symptoms -- who have traveled to a Zika-affected region should be tested, because of a link to microcephaly or other birth

defects."

Dr. Nesheiwat has suggested that residents who have traveled to an area with Zika infection should contact their personal healthcare provider who will work with the Putnam County Department of Health to facilitate the proper testing procedure through the NYSDOH laboratory at Wadsworth Center. Wadsworth is one of only three state laboratories in the country equipped to perform the screening and confirmatory tests of Zika antibodies and other related viruses.

Tax Break: Will The Fifth Time Be The Charm?

By ERIC GROSS

After four rejections in the NYS Assembly, Putnam lawmakers are hoping that local shoppers will be getting a tax break this fall on back to school clothing and footwear.

The legislature Tuesday evening authorized County Executive MaryEllen Odell to file a Home Rule message with the State Legislature declaring the period of Aug. 15 through Aug. 24 as a sales tax free holiday.

In a message to the lawmakers Odell said the legislation would give a "much needed tax break to parents of school aged children. This is not about a sales tax exemption but rather helping local merchants as well as families preparing to send their children back to school by shopping locally which is the very message Governor Cuomo has been delivering regarding economic opportunities in New York."

The measure was introduced by State Senator Terrence Murphy in the upper

house who said by "providing shoppers with a back-to-school tax holiday will not only give parents a break but will bring consumers to local business in Putnam."

*'Hopefully, this will be the year when
Albany allows our request
to come to fruition.'*

GINNY NACERINO

State Assemblyman Steve Katz introduced the bill in the lower house.

Odell explained that the underlying objectives of the proposed exemption were to "promote small business growth while encouraging residents to shop Putnam. Such an exemption will reduce revenue for a short time but the countervailing benefits are in the long term in the best interests of the county and its taxpayers and outweigh any concern."

Following the meeting, Legislature Chairwoman Ginny Nacerino of Patterson described her colleagues' action as a "wonderful incentive to give families a little break when

purchasing school clothing and shoes. Hopefully, this will be the year when Albany allows our request to come to fruition."

Legislator Carl Albano

of Carmel agreed: "Back to school time results in many expenses for families. Saving a little bit here and there is always good while a tax break will help to stimulate the local economy as well."

Legislator Toni Adonizio of Kent believes the temporary sales tax reduction will keep local residents from "crossing the border into Connecticut or heading up to Dutchess or down to Westchester for back to school purchases."

Legislator Barbara Scucimarra of Garrison predicted the sales tax free holiday would give "local businesses a shot in the arm. The initiative must be approved this year."

Bill Nulk, President of the Putnam Chambers of Commerce, concurred: "Giving consumers a tax break will incentivize them about thinking of shopping in Putnam while creating an attitude that Putnam is pro-business."

Under the proposed legislation all clothing and shoe sales for items costing up to \$110 would be exempt from the county portion of the sales tax bill.

Shoppers in Putnam pay 8.38 percent sales tax on their purchases with 4 percent going to the state, 4 percent to the county and the remainder to the MTA for station maintenance at Putnam's five railroad stations—Brewster, Southeast and Patterson on the Harlem Line and Cold Spring and Garrison on the Metro-North Hudson Division.

Commissioner of Finance William Carlin said while the county will take a "small hit" during the exemption, officials believe "such tax immunity will spark buying and economic growth from Cold Spring to Carmel."

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