

Community Update

A Bi-weekly Report on the City of Olean



City is at work to reopen Alder Street crossing

Smooth passage will soon be restored at the north end of Alder Street, where drivers have been forced for months to take a detour around Johnson Brook near Prospect Street.

This location sees frequent pedestrians, some of whom attend regular food distribution events at a nearby church. These patrons and general foot traffic have also had to alter their routes, sometimes through back yards and driveways of nearby residents, to avoid traversing the stream bed.

Mayor Linda Witte said the structure that was removed last November was taken out because the sides and base were unstable. Replacement had to be postponed once but is now under way and will be completed in early August.

Public Works Department Director Tom Windus said the rip rap from the stream bank has been removed, culverts (the large black tube seen above) have been placed in the creek bed and back-filling is under way. Guard rails are being installed and instead of a paved surface workers will spread milled pavement.

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Junior League is second in state ball title competition

The Olean Junior League is holding out for the state baseball crown after losing first place during a tournament series July 27-30.

The Junior League held second place after a Monday morning loss to Franklin Square in Dix Hills.

The team of 13-14 year-olds was greeted at the city line at about 8:45 p.m. upon their return to Olean Monday, July 30.

They were led to the Municipal Building by an escort of city police and fire vehicles. They were congratulated by Mayor Linda Witte and about 100 well-wishers on a temporary stage facing North Union Street.

Good luck Junior League!

Bond Rating upgrade by Moody's Investor Services will cut borrowing costs!!!

The city's bond rating has been upgraded from A2 to A1 by Moody's Investors Service, Mayor Linda Witte announced July 27.

The notice was issued to the City Auditor Fred Saradin on July 19 and ushers in more favorable interest rates for an upcoming long-term refinancing of \$9.25 million in Bond Anticipation Notes.

The improved rating in the city's former A2 status, assigned in 2011, will also have a positive affect on the city's underlying \$25.6 million in outstanding parity debt.

"We have worked hard to get here," said Mayor Witte of the Moody's upgrade, the second such upgrade during her term in office.

The move reflects the city's improved financial position, including four consecutive surpluses, said Moody's disclosure notice. The city's above-average fund balance and its manageable debt burden were noted as strengths, along with challenges facing the city in the form of below-average wealth levels and above-average unemployment.

"We have been buoyed by our recovery from past financial losses, a lower debt burden, a solid fund balance and excellent fund management," said Mayor Witte. "This is excellent timing. It will really help our interest rate and save taxpayers money, since we regularly renew our Bond Anticipation Notes (BANS) to turn the debt into long-term bonds."

Mr. Saradin, who will take steps in the next two weeks to convert the \$9.25 million BANS, described the upgrade as "significant."

"It will aid in lowering the interest rates we would incur in future borrowings and lower costs to our taxpayers," said Mr. Saradin.

He said Friday the administration hopes to replace the \$9.25 million Bond Anticipation Notes with long-term 20-year bonds in a couple of weeks. These will bear average interest rates of 2.5283 percent.

"Mayor Witte and I thought it would be wise for the city to convert our existing BANS into a long-term note in view of the attractive interest rates offered, and not gamble that rates will be lower in 2013," said Mr. Saradin. "These rates may not be seen again and according to our bond consultants, if we wait and rates increased by just ½% it would cost taxpayers more than \$500,000 in additional

interest expense over 20 years."

"I would like to thank Mr. Saradin, department heads and our Common Council for helping our city and righting our financial ship," Mayor Witte added.



Excavations of pavement and road base continue westward beyond Letro-McIntosh-Spink Funeral Home on the East State Street Project.

Announcements:

The next yard waste (free) pickup will continue on the last Wednesday of each month through September. The next date is August 29. For more information about yard and lawn waste, street sweeping parking regulations, etc., visit the Public Works page at www.cityofolean.org.

On Saturday, Sept. 8. Mayor Witte will judge the Rib Cook-Off contest in the Swine Wine & Craft Festival. The event is an annual United Way fundraiser in War Vets Park. Home brewers, wine makers, and rib cook-off teams will compete for prizes. Register at www.uwcattco.org.

Pay tickets, water, sewer bills on-line! The Online Bill Pay & Customer Service option is up and running on the city's website for a \$3 fee. Go to www.cityofolean.org and click on "The Online Bill Pay & Customer Service" button from the menu on the right side of the home page. At the online payments home page, choose between water/sewer bill payment and parking ticket payment options.

Water and Sewer bill payers register and set up a password, then view transaction history and chart water consumption through by billing date. Parking ticket payers simply search for the citation number or vehicle info. (This destination can also be reached by typing this into your browser: <https://www.municipalonlinepayments.com/oleanny/utilities>.)



Wednesday, July 25, was a transformational day in Lincoln Park at the Grand Army of the Republic Memorial. This team of volunteers from Cattaraugus-Allegany BOCES, spruced up the area around the monument. Seen here, (l-r) Bayley Morrison, Jenny Skiver, Kylie



Koch, Kristin Schmick, Josh Boskin and Kathy Chase. (Note: Lila Ervay was outside the camera view.) The group spent the morning at the monument and then had lunch at one of the picnic tables nearby.

Landscape gets a facelift surrounding Revolutionary War veterans' monument

This summer, city workers dropped off a large pile of mulch that will be used in the renovated flower bed at the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) monument, a prominent landmark in Lincoln Park.

An energetic group of volunteers was organized and on July 25 they created a clean new spot for updated perennials.

The energetic group, based at Washington West Elementary School, was led by BOCES teacher Kristin Schmick. Mrs. Schmick and Jenny Skiver of BOCES helped her two students, Kylie Koch and Josh Boskin, arrange the summer volunteer project through Lila Ervay. Mrs. Ervay is co-chair of the Mayor's highly successful Neighborhood Preservation Committee.

Other volunteers were Bayley Morrison, Kathy Chase and the intrepid Lila Ervay. They used some pretty sophisticated tools, pulling up weeds, removed old, rotted landscaping fabric, and even digging out the weeds that have established themselves in the cracks of the sidewalk cement!

By 11 a.m. the flower bed dirt had been completely sifted and softened up for planting of new shrubs and flowers by another crew that is expected to arrive soon.

Three greenhouses have been asked to contribute this greenery.

City Parks workers Chris Kenyon and Pat Driscoll helped the group get started and emptied trash barrels as the group worked. Fran Mahar at the Service Store provided lunch.

The BOCES crew moved on Thursday to volunteer for the Greater Olean Area Chamber of Commerce's Santa Claus Lane effort.

The Grand Army of the Republic monument was erected in honor of those Union Civil War soldiers Oct. 16, 1938 by the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

The veterans of the Union Forces of the Civil War got together in 1866, calling themselves the Grand Army of the Republic. Its members were those who served in federal service in the Army, Navy or Marine Corps, and included at least one female member. The last member died in 1956 and at that time the Grand Army of the Republic ceased to exist. The Allied Orders of the Grand Army of the Republic were then formed to preserve the memory of the men of the Grand Army of the Republic.



Page One Photo Feature: This lovely view (upper right, Page 1) greeted Mayor Linda Witte and hundreds of 5K walkers who participated in the Corporate Challenge June 27.

Progress Report



Above, work is under way to place a special surface on the former skate park adjacent to the William O. Smith Recreation Center. Stay tuned for new recreational opportunities. Below, the finishing touches at the East State Street sewer upgrade work is completed, including a new railing, retaining wall and landscaping.



How can the city help?

By Mayor Linda Witte



As your Mayor I continue to have an Open Door Policy. You can contact my office at 376-5615 with questions and complaints. Please stop in and pick up a 2012 City Directory for phone numbers of the Department Heads and Alderman. Information is also available on the city's website, www.cityofolean.org.

Adopt-a-Planter 2012

The redwood planters on North Union Street are blooming to welcome you, you and you for a stroll on N. Union St. Which ones do you think are most colorful or unique, in the best condition and overall design?

Why not take a stroll through the business district and pick your favorite arrangement?

Neighborhood Cleanup Needs You!

The Neighborhood Preservation Committee's recruitment efforts have been quite successful. Volunteers are always needed. If you have some time to volunteer, call Casey Jones at 372-3772.



Another successful "Blitz Day" 2012

On July 28, the annual Rebuilding Together effort brought an estimated 100 volunteers out to spruce up, paint and rehabilitate four homes: 1308 W. Henley St., 216 N. 12th St., 532 Third Ave. and 547 Four Mile Road in Allegany. Applications are taken each year from homeowners who need the work done. Wayne Cooper, president of the Olean Chapter of Rebuilding Together, is the coordinator.