

Bee Editorial

Delay in sewer construction leaves residents at risk

For the sake of the homeowners in parts of Clarence and Amherst, let's hope the pause in the Harris Hill Pollution Abatement Sewage Works Corporation plan doesn't last too long.

When sewage is backing up into one's home, or a septic tank is failing, time is the enemy.

In Amherst, residents dealing with overflow and back-up issues dread the summer and the threatening forecast, "heavy rains expected," because that means their homes are at risk for collecting raw sewage. Heavy rains fill the already full line, leaving sewage with nowhere else to go, but back.

The Harris Hill section of Clarence still has septic tanks, failing septic tanks. Should they become inoperable the cost of replacement lies in the resident's wallet. Should the plan for a secondary Peanut Line system go through, the residents could be switched to the sewer

line instead of using the old septic tanks.

Erie County has identified environmental problems, dating back to the 1990s. Yes, more than a decade ago. We can see delaying a proposed memorial, a new Starbucks or the redesigning of Town Hall for 10 years but sewage problems? Not a chance.

The lines are at capacity and another line needs to be built. The Amherst and Clarence town boards need to come to an agreement for the sake of their residents who are dealing with a very disgusting problem. And Erie County should have had the "framework" for this project ready before taking it public.

Now the project sits, waiting for public officials and county and town workers to review it, again. Then, hopefully, a request for proposal can be posted before any more homeowners have to wonder when is the next time they will be bailing sewage from their basement.

The experts have stated that there is an environmental problem concerning sewage. They said they need to move forward, need to fix the problem. Now all of a sudden they decide to wait and reflect on what is being proposed.

Thomas J. Whetham, Erie County deputy commissioner for the Division of Sewerage Management, said solutions started being evaluated in 2002. For five years they have tried without success to find a solution. Construction of a sewer line would be needed because obviously the amount of sewage isn't going down any time soon. Capacity is capacity.

We would hope that knowing a problem exists the municipalities involved would push for a solution for the sake of the residents who are the ones suffering from the back-and-forth debate over money, construction and development.

Spindle items



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• **HARD FACTS** — Throughout the day I receive e-mails that have nothing to do with Amherst. Many times they are from a mass e-mail list from places around the country. When I received one such e-mail from Poughkeepsie, I

figured it was just more junk mail. Well junk is truly the operative word here. According to the e-mail from Gilman Ciocia, a provider of federal, state and local tax planning and preparation services, America's Tax Freedom Day fell on April 30 this year. The company wrote,

"This means that Americans are working entirely for the government from Jan. 1 until the end of April and that they will not realize their net income until April 30. This year, Americans will spend 120 days working to pay various taxes: 79 days for federal taxes and 41 for state and local taxes."

Well I guess the good news is I didn't read this in January, but in April when I had completed my tax burden.

• **BRAVO** — My grandmother has seen a lot of musicals and plays in her day. From Broadway to high school shows, she loves the theater. This past Saturday she said she saw the best performance of the many she had seen at the Lancaster Opera House, "The Pajama Game." The musical is being performed by the Opera-Lytes, operating under the Amherst Community Church. I have to agree with her, but I am basing this on only the three or four shows I have seen there. Her declaration of "the best" car-

ries a lot more merit. It was also great to have good second-row seats.

The show was simply fantastic. The first act was a bit too long for my liking, but entertaining all the way through. There was also a familiar name in the cast, Laura Grinnen, a John F. Kennedy High School graduate, and more importantly, a former Bee intern. During my tenure as Cheektowaga Bee editor, Grinnen was assigned to work with me in Cheektowaga for the summer she interned. She did a great job as a dancer and ensemble member in the musical — talent you don't see in someone sitting at a desk.

The Opera-Lytes delivered a funny, upbeat show that had my grandmother and me humming, "Seven and a half cents" all the way home. Although not a traditional musical, it had catchy tunes and some memorable lines. For tickets visit www.lancopera.org. For information on the Opera-Lytes, e-mail operalytes@hotmail.com.

• **THROUGH YOUR EYES** — The University at Buffalo is looking at some new angles on its campuses — literally. The university has launched "Framing UB," a yearlong photo and video contest for students, faculty and staff. Participants are to submit digital images and brief commentaries of their favorite, and not so favorite, places on UB's North and South campuses and at the new State Center for Excellence for Bioinformatics and Life Sciences on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. The contest Web site is, www.buffalo.edu/ub2020/plan/. The entries will compliment the data gathered from building-by-building audits and other studies conducted in conjunction with the development of a master plan for UB. The contest is open through April 2008. Winning submissions will be posted on the site on a continuing basis. A final exhibit of the best of the best will be held next spring. Some of the images may become part of the master plan.

Out of the Past

125 Years Ago May 4, 1882

Gustavus J. Mueller, after a four-week illness, quietly and peacefully went to rest Thursday evening, April 27, 1882. He was 22 years and 23 days of age. He was a beloved member of the Rough and Ready Fire Company and the Royal Templars of Temperance.

Last week, Mr. Charles Ernst sold a 1,430-pound cow for \$74.00.

Two young men from the Village went fishing last Sunday and were drawn into the water, either by the strength of hard cider or some other disturbing influence.

This is the season of the year for setting out young trees. Parties wishing to buy either ornamental or fruit trees will do well to give Mr. David Long a call at the Williamsville Nurseries.

"At a town meeting, a taxpayer arose to protest against building a new schoolhouse in a certain part of town. 'What's the good of it?' he asked. 'They are an ignorant set down there anyway.'"

100 Years Ago May 2, 1907

The Buffalo & Williamsville trolley line may become part of the electric railroad which the newly-incorporated Buffalo, Rochester & Eastern proposed to build from Troy to Buffalo.

75 Years Ago May 5, 1932

The men of the Methodist Episcopal Church are making elaborate preparations for the annual Mother and Daughter banquet, which will be served at 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 12 in Wesley Hall.

The annual good roads meeting to consider the northern portion of the town will be held at the Getzville fire hall on Monday, May 9, opening at 2:30 p.m.

Lawrence Kramer, a member of one of the oldest families in Amherst, passed away Thursday, April 28, 1932, at the age of 35 years. He was attacked nine days ago with acute appendicitis and was removed to a Buffalo hospital, where death occurred.

The Blocher Home family enjoyed fully the entertainment arranged for them by Mrs. Charles P. Rogers one evening last week. There were splendid numbers by M.J. Lovejoy, vocal soloist, with his son, Addison Lovejoy, as accompanist, Arthur Cobb Jr., who performed with the chimes, and Prof. Oliver Loud, who sang.

Dr. Rockwell, president of the State Teachers College, visited Williamsville High School for the first time on Monday.

Williamsville High School opened its baseball season last Friday afternoon by crushing Clarence under a 13 to 2 score. The boys in blue were aided by six miscues on the part of the Clarence lads.

50 Years Ago May 2, 1957

The severe injury of a seven-year-old boy last Sunday afternoon as he attempted to cross Main Street near Garrison Road again emphasizes the need for more traffic signals in the Village of Williamsville. Some time ago, the state investigated the need for signals at Mill and Main and Los Robles and Main and determined traffic did not warrant installation of signals there.

A momentous change will soon take place in the lives of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene J. Rathgelber of Williamsville. Mr. Rathgelber, better known as "Gene the Taylor" has sold his shop at 5687 Main St. and the couple will move to Clearwater, Fla.

25 Years Ago April 28, 1982

"Twenty years — looking ahead" will be the theme of the 20th anniversary of the Amherst Senior Citizens Center.

Amherst Councilman Harold J. Collier, turned down last week for appointment to the County's Environmental Management Council, yesterday described the action as a "Democratic knife in the back."

George Klein and Regina B. Keaton, members of SS. Peter and Paul Church, will receive the lay award of St. Joseph the Worker this Saturday.