

Bee Editorial

Give the voters a say on Town Board size

Does the Town of Amherst need six board members, plus the supervisor? The majority of the Town Board doesn't care what your answer is.

With a mighty hand, the board voted "no" to Council Member Dr. Barry Weinstein's resolution to downsize the Amherst Town Board. Most of the board members who spoke against the resolution said the town needs all six of them representing the town and its residents. We don't say "all" because Council Member Deborah Bruch Bucki had questions about the possibility of the change and wanted more information. Thus she couldn't vote yes during Monday's meeting.

But we aren't sure how true the statements are that the town *needs* all those members making \$25,500 each year. (As a point of reference, Clarence board members make \$22,198, Cheektowaga members make \$19,587

and Town of Tonawanda members, \$ 19,467, according to Kevin Gaughan's report, "The Cost.")

Residents often say they don't hear back from members, don't have members show up at community meetings and don't feel those members are listening to them. Maybe the system can operate with four, if the six aren't doing their share of work.

The question right now isn't whether it should be four or six members, the question is, should the residents have been given the option to vote on a referendum in a future election? Yes.

Weinstein proposed the change after hearing from Gaughan, an attorney who says Erie County's government is too big. While Council Member Guy Marlette accused Gaughan's numbers of being somewhat inflated, we believe there are hard facts in his report that

scream change for Western New York governments.

According to Gaughan, his study revealed that "Erie County has more elected officials than any other like-sized community in America." With 439 politicians presiding more than 45 local governments, the Buffalo region has twice as many politicians as Indianapolis, five times more than Charlotte, N.C., and eight times more than the Baltimore region, according to the study.

We don't know for certain what's best — but the board and residents could have had months to present their statements and let the majority of the town residents decide.

By voting down Weinstein's resolution, the six board members spoke for Amherst's entire population, saying it's going to stay the same. By not giving voters a chance to decide, one thing is certain: there won't be change.

Spindle items



JESSICA FINCH

Associate Editor

• **ARTHRITIS CLASSES** — The Arthritis Foundation will hold an exercise program at Slim and Tone, 55 CrossPoint Parkway, Suite 106, Getzville. The class will be held from 10 to 11 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays, March 4-28. The Arthritis Founda-

tion has developed a gentle exercise program especially designed for people with arthritis. Exercises can be done sitting or standing and have a goal of increasing or maintaining flexibility and increasing endurance and strength. The cost is \$24.

• **JAM SESSION** — Kate Mikoley of Williamsville will play the drums along with other Girl Scouts as they perform with the jazz group Ladies First Big Band on Saturday, March 1 at the Tralf Music Hall to celebrate Women's History Month.

Mikoley, a sophomore at Williamsville South High School, has been playing the drums for eight years. Other Girl Scouts participating this year include Abby Fornes, piano; Susan Fimbel, alto saxophone; Leah Bartnik, keyboard; Emma Janicki, clarinet; and Michaela Scozzaro, tenor saxophone.

"This has been a dream come true for most of the girls," said Laurie Mahoney, director of fund development. "Many of the girls participate in their school bands, but not with the exposure that they receive every year with Ladies First Big Band."

The band will perform at 8 p.m. Saturday, March 1 at the Tralf Music Hall, 622 Main St., Buffalo. Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door. For more information, call Mahoney at 837-6400, ext. 247.

by ANDREA KIMBRIEL
Reporter

• **NEW ADDITION** — Let me introduce myself. I am the new Amherst lifestyles reporter, replacing Elizabeth Taufa who embarked on a visit to Europe on Sunday.

Because I recently moved to Williamsville from Batavia, I am especially excited to discover more about the

Amherst community in the coming weeks.

I have been working at the Bee Group Newspapers as a reporter for almost nine months and have enjoyed hearing the stories of area residents and sharing them with readers. Previously, I wrote for the Cheektowaga, Clarence, Lancaster, Depew and Ken-Ton Bees.

Last May, I graduated from Roberts Wesleyan College in Rochester with a Bachelor of Arts degree in communication. It is difficult to believe nearly a year has passed since I walked down the aisle to receive my diploma. I have been busy learning the ins and outs of municipal government, as well as meeting many dedicated volunteers and discovering by trial and error which roads in Erie County intersect.

Now that I've shared a bit of my background with you, feel free to introduce yourselves to me. Call 204-4920 with your feedback or story ideas or e-mail akimbriel@beenews.com.

Out of the Past

125 Years Ago March 1, 1883

Mr. Frank Elliott of Lockport, manufacturer of the Triumph washing machine, is introducing it in Williamsville and has appointed Mr. John Lorish of Getzville as agent. Several testimonials speak in the highest terms of the machine, and recommend it as a first-class washer, doing the work easily and thoroughly in every respect.

Mr. H.M. Long is putting up a two-story addition to his agricultural depot on Main Street.

The well drilled for Mr. John P. Snyder, opposite the post-office, was finished last week at a depth of 36 feet. Plenty of water.

The Town election is Tuesday.

Mrs. Jacob Wenner and Mrs. E.G. Cox of West Clarence are visiting friends in Williamsville.

Mrs. William Criqui of Harris Hill is suffering with lobular pneumonia.

"A fashionable lady, boasting of her new residence, said the windows were all of stained glass. 'That's too bad,' cried her mother. 'Won't soap and turpentine take the stains out?'"

"A little boy came to his mother and said, 'I should think that if I were made of dust, I would get muddy inside when I drink.'"

"Thousands of people who were once the victims of intemperance have quit drinking. They are for the most part, dead, however."

"'Doctor, examine my tongue,' said a giddy woman, 'and tell me what it needs.' 'Rest,' replied the doctor."

100 Years Ago Feb. 27, 1908

A pedro club with 12 members was formed at the home of Miss Cora Summers of Williamsville.

Mrs. Helen Chalmers Kingston, a former Williamsville girl, was acclaimed when she presented a Biblical drama, "The Holy City," at a local Baptist Church.

The Swormville Jockey Association is planning to hold a ball within the very near future.

75 Years Ago March 2, 1933

The two new cars for the Amherst Police Department were delivered Tuesday by Cecil B. Baker, from whom the cars were purchased. They are Plymouths of the latest two-door model, said to be the first of this type received in the Buffalo area. The next day, the men were seen painting the name of the department on the doors.

Two special movie performances will be given at the Glen Theatre Thursday and Friday of next week with half the proceeds being turned over to Amherst Chapter No. 555, Order of the Eastern Star. Tickets are only twenty cents.

The annual athletic banquet of the Williamsville High School was held in the cafeteria on the evening of February 21. The new athletic field adjoining the school building will be ready for football in September, it was announced.

50 Years Ago Feb. 27, 1958

The ice in Ellicott Creek at the flood control game is more than 23 inches thick, according to Arthur Wolf, Williamsville's superintendent of public works. He is fearful of an ice jam if there is a sudden thaw.

The blue and white Williamsville cagers won their 12th straight game by defeating host Frontier, 67 to 57, last Friday night.

A golden wedding anniversary couple, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Bainbridge of North Harris Hill Road, will be honored at an open house on Sunday, March 2 by their son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Bainbridge of Rensch Road, Getzville.

25 Years Ago Feb. 23, 1983

More than 100 residents of the Buffalo Presbyterian Home at 900 Delaware Ave., Buffalo, will move to the new Amherst Presbyterian Nursing Home at 200 Bassett Road this Sunday.

Long-sought legislation enabling New York State to buy an aerial truck for the Getzville Fire Co. to properly protect the State University at Buffalo's Amherst Campus has finally been approved. The contract was awarded Feb. 8 to Grumman Emergency Products.

The Williamsville East boys basketball team was defeated by Clarence, 54-52 in overtime.