

# Steuben County Newsletter

January / February 2019



## **FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK....**

As we kickoff 2019, Steuben County is busy confronting many important initiatives. The Legislature, Public Defender, Sheriff, District Attorney, and County Manager are working diligently on a plan for counsel at first appearance, which must be implemented sooner than anticipated. This will be a fiscal burden for the County, but we are developing strategies to mitigate the impact and improve public safety.

Like you, we also await the presentation of proposed budgets by the Governor and State Legislature. As always, we will watch for any issue that harms local municipalities and our residents.

In the meantime, we hope for a mild winter and a prosperous New Year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Joseph Hauryski".

Joseph Hauryski  
Chairman  
Steuben County Legislature

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## **Social Services**

The Department of Social Services extends a sincere thank you to all who assisted in bringing Christmas gifts from Santa to those less fortunate children across Steuben County. We would like recognize the Town and Municipal Highway Superintendents Association of Steuben County as well as the following businesses along with their patrons and many, many community members who donated: The Office Bar, Bath; The Liberty Street Pub, Bath; The Crooked Lake Ice Cream Company, Hammondsport; and The Shoe Department, Hornell.

Giving to children is the little miracle we hope for every Christmas season. Communities within Steuben County went above and beyond to provide much needed support to families who need it. You have warmed the hearts of children along with the staff who work with them. Thank you for your generosity and we wish you a Happy New Year.

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## **Southern Tier Central Regional Planning & Development Board**

The Southern Tier Central Regional Planning & Development Board will hold its annual conference on Thursday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at Corning Community College. This is a great event to network with municipal partners and fulfill training obligations of various offices. Please save the date and be on the lookout for invitations.

## **Sheriff's Office Updates**

- The Sheriff's Office wishes Captain Christopher Hand a healthy and happy retirement after serving the residents of Steuben County for over thirty years. Captain Hand worked his last shift on December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and was recognized by all in a ceremonial walkout.
- Deputies and Correction Officers began EMT training in December, with a projected graduation date of June 2019.
- The Sheriff's Office participated in "Shop with a Cop" in Erwin, Bath, and Hornell in conjunction with our school resource officer program, supplying Christmas presents to over 35 children and their families in Steuben County. Many thanks to the Deputies Association for their charitable support of this program.
- No Shave November netted a donation to the Steuben County Cancer Services program in excess of \$2,000. Again, many thanks to the Deputies Association and the Corrections/Dispatch/Court Security Unit for their charity and support.
- Finally, we at the Sheriff's Office wish everyone a safe and healthy new year in 2019!

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## **Office for the Aging**

Making ends meet is a year round struggle for many in our community and the New Year is the perfect time to take stock of your finances to make sure you are maximizing your benefits. The Steuben County Office for the Aging has a long history of helping people figure out their eligibility for programs that can ease their budgets.

Early in 2019, we will be creating a **Benefits Enrollment Center** through which you can be screened and apply for multiple programs that will stretch your budget. This Center will coordinate the work of many agencies and providers to deliver expert advice in a timely manner. Sadly, we know there are many people who are unaware or who have not taken advantage of all to which they are eligible. Help us find you!

Watch for more information from the Office for the Aging in the near future to learn how you can get a free, no-obligation screening to improve your financial outlook!

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## **Real Property Tax**

*Reminder to new home buyers:* If you have purchased property that is your primary residence, you may be eligible for the School Tax Relief (STAR) Credit. Eligible new homeowners will receive the STAR savings in the form of a check directly from New York State but you must register with the New York State Tax Department to receive the STAR credit check. You can register 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at [www.tax.ny.gov/star](http://www.tax.ny.gov/star).

Property owners without access to a computer can register by phone weekdays from 8:30am to 4:30pm at 518-457-2036. If you own your home and it is your primary residence and your income is \$500,000 or less, you're eligible for the Basic STAR credit. If you are 65 or older with an income of \$86,300 or less, you may be eligible for Enhanced STAR credit. Visit the New York State Tax Department's website noted above for details on information required to register for the STAR credit. Property owners can also contact Steuben County's Real Property Tax Service Agency at 607-664-2373 for information.

## **Youth Bureau**

### **January is National Human Trafficking Awareness Month**

Throughout 2018, the Sexually Exploited Youth (SEY) Advisory Committee worked to raise the awareness of the trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) in Steuben County. Through funding received from the NYS Office of Children & Family Services, the County's SEY Initiative provided training for the most critical stakeholders and began its public awareness campaign, highlighted by the Vulnerable Youth Summit attended by over 110 community representatives in October.

In 2019, the County's anti-trafficking initiative will begin using the name "Safe Harbour", and its coordination will transition from the Youth Bureau to the Department of Social Services. The coordinator for the initiative will continue to be veteran DSS director Lisa Baker.

While the primary goals for Safe Harbour in 2019 are to continue the emphasis on training and public awareness, the month of January – designated as National Human Trafficking Awareness Month – provides the opportunity to begin 2019 with a significant public awareness campaign. As planned, key components of the campaign to begin in January include:

- Two billboards on I-86, featuring the message "Human Trafficking Exists" and information to obtain help;
- Plastic yard signs that correspond with the billboards, with intentions to distribute throughout the county;
- Magnets that correspond with the billboards/signs, to be distributed through public events, and discretely made available in targeted locations where victims of trafficking might see them;
- "Stopping Child Sexual Exploitation" info booklets that will be distributed to schools, medical offices, service agencies, churches, and other public locations, as identified;

In addition to the awareness campaign, CSEC training sessions will be held in January and throughout the year as possible, and the committee is planning to make a prevention curriculum available for school districts or youth programs that want to incorporate it into their planning.

Additional information, as well as resources such as those listed above, are available by contacting Steuben County DSS Project Coordinator Lisa Baker at 664-2100, or the Youth Bureau at 664-2119.