

YORK



T o w n News



December 2008

Town web site:
www.townofyork.org/

York Town Board meets every 2nd Tuesday of the month, 8 pm
e-mail: townboard@townofyork.org

Chairman: Dan Reeson
chairmanreeson@townofyork.org
608-523-1331

1st Supervisor: Dan Truttman
supervisortruttman@townofyork.org
608-527-5089

2nd Supervisor: Steve Hermanson
supervisorhermanson@townofyork.org
608-523-4513

Clerk: Nancy Anderson
yorktownclerk@townofyork.org
608-523-4529

Treasurer: Nathan Ula
treasurer@townofyork.org
608-523-4308

Assessor: Wayne Damrow
608-876-6704

Plan Commission meets every 1st Tuesday of month, 8 pm

Chair: Curtis Moen
608-527-2261

H. Sean Shilling
608-523-1125

Kelly Hermanson
608-523-4513

Don Anderson
608-523-4039

Heidi Hankley
608-523-4095

What do you want to see in your Town newsletter? Send your news to
YTN Editor: Carrie Czerwonka
yorktownnews@gmail.com

AGRICULTURE PLASTIC COLLECTION STATUS

21 NOVEMBER 2008

—MARK MAYER, GREEN COUNTY UW-EXTENSION AGRICULTURE AGENT

Green County farmers responded to another opportunity to dispose of waste agriculture plastic from silo bags, wrapped bales, milk house soap and acid containers, and plastic twine during a recent two-week period at the Green County Landfill. Twenty-nine producers from 13 of the 16 townships in Green County brought in 31,420 pounds of used agriculture plastic during the recent November collection program. The plastic was compressed into bales weighing approximately 2,300 pounds each. (see **AG PLASTICS**, page 2.)



THE DEAD OF GREENS PRAIRIE CEMETERY LIE BENEATH PRECIOUS PRAIRIE PLANTS

—MARILYN JAEGER

All grasses and 120 “compass plants,” whose leaves point only north and south, won the day at a hearing before Judge James Beer at the Green County Courthouse Wednesday, September 17. Petitioners, who were in the courtroom and represented by the county attorney, sought to have the Greens Prairie Cemetery in the Town of York mowed on a regular basis, in respect for those buried there. (see **CEMETERY**, page 3.)

NOVEMBER ELECTION

—NANCY ANDERSON

The presidential election is now history, but what an election it was. Our voice in York was heard as it was around the country when we voted 342 for Obama/Biden and 180 for McCain/Palin. At this time last year we had 474 registered voters, but when the polls closed on November 4th, we had 600 registered voters with 543 actually casting their votes. That was 91% of all registered voters. Great job, citizens of York! (see **VOTE**, page 2)

AG PLASTICS (continued from page 1)

Based on the success of the 2008 collections programs, Green County would like to offer another Ag plastic collection program in the spring of 2009. Unfortunately, we were just informed today that the company (AGSI) we had partnered with to take the Ag plastic has dissolved, and that some of the former partners are currently trying to restructure the business under a new name. AGSI was the only company in the area that was willing to take used Ag plastics. Until another company can be secured to take the plastic we will not be able to schedule any further collections in Green County.

The first collection program last March garnered over 50,000 pounds of plastic from Green County farmers. The latest collection brings the total amount of used Ag plastic collected in the county to over 40 tons, which equates to approximately 82 cubic yards of landfill space that did not have to be used for the plastic disposal.

Editor's note: Even though burning agriculture plastics is illegal, many farmers have been doing so for years due to the cost of disposal, and the fact that the plastic could not be recycled. York Town began setup for town recycling of ag plastics, but now there is no option to continue because of AGSI's closing. When we are able to do this again,

Thank you, election staff!

VOTE (continued from page 1)

I don't want it to go unnoticed that we have a very dedicated staff minding the polls. They all attended training in preparation for elections, allowing the day to go smoothly for you. Thanks to Audrey Klosterman, Marilyn Lokken, Sue Watrud, Beverly Jensen, Dorothy Peterson, Marilyn Jaeger, and Stephen Van Hout for the valuable service they provide to our Town.

York does not have a policy for early voting, but if you have a concern that for some reason you might not be able to vote on an election day, I am able to help you by issuing an absentee ballot. Keep this in mind for future elections. While we did have 48 absentee ballots issued for this election, some overseas from the UK, Norway, Iraq, and New Zealand, and others temporarily out of state, the majority of these ballots were simply from local citizens with commitments out of the area on that day, and a few with health issues that would have made it difficult to appear in person. If you find yourself in a situation for future elections, please do not hesitate to contact me, and I will be happy to make arrangements for you to vote by absentee ballot.

Once again, citizens of York, thank you for showing your pride by doing your civic duty and turning out in impressive numbers on election day to show support for your candidates.

there will an update on the town web site, and an e-mail alert will sent out to town residents on the e-mail list (to sign up, contact Nathan Ula). The DNR's recommendation is "for now, send any plastics you cannot recycle to the landfill, rather than burning or burying them on your land." To read about the effects of illegal burning, view the DNR web site, <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/wm/recycle/newpages/agplastics.htm>. For more information about this collection effort, contact Township Chairman Dan Reeson.

NOTES FROM THE TREASURER

—NATHAN ULA

Property taxes: Once again this year you can pay your property taxes online using a credit card. Another option is to pay with an electronic check (debit) from your checking account. An advantage to paying by e-check is that you get confirmation of your payment and can print a receipt immediately. Both of these payment options are available through the secure county web site (www.co.green.wi.gov). A link to this will be provided on the town web site

(www.townofyork.org). A listing of the 2008 tax roll will also be posted there. Collections at the York Town Hall will likely be on the last Saturdays of December and January to coincide with recycling center hours. Anyone mailing their payment and wanting a receipt must include a SASE or the necessary postage. Escrow checks exceeding taxes due will be accepted and the overpayment refunded to the taxpayer. Any two-party checks need to be endorsed by the taxpayer. Dog license fees remain unchanged: males and females, \$9; spayed and neutered, \$4; multiple dog fee of \$35 for up to 12 dogs and \$3 for each additional. A copy of rabies vaccination records is required to be on file before a dog license will be issued.

What is a mil rate and how is it determined? A mil rate is basically the dollar amount of tax per \$1000 of assessed value. When all levies have been set (see **TREASURER**, page 3)



Postville Blacksmith Shop in the late 1800s. The blacksmith at anvil is Andrew Tompson. The Tompson family lived above the shop. Photo courtesy of Bob Bergman.

Award-Winning Projects Made at Historic Business

Postville Blacksmith Shop

N8126 Postville Rd.
Blanchardville, WI 53516
608-527-2494

Gates, Railings, and
Subcontract Forging

Local Flavor

Postville Blacksmith Shop has been in business since 1856. It is the last business remnant of the hamlet of Postville which had a store, mill, post office, cheese factory, and harness shop. The original owner was Norwegian Andrew Tompson, who ran it for 50 years, eventually selling to Swiss immigrant Carl Blaser in 1910. Carl sold to Bob Bergman in 1969.

The shop today does farm repair, ornamental ironwork, manufacturing, and gunsmithing. There are five employees—Terry Suthers, Lucas Suthers, Dieter Wiegang, Dennis Novinski, and Bob Bergman. The shop has forging, fabricating, and machine shop equipment, and specializes in custom projects. View the project gallery and read more about the history of the business and Postville at www.postvilleblacksmith.com.

CEMETERY (continued from page 1)

The cemetery has been in existence since the early 1800s, with 102 marked and unmarked graves. Seven Civil War soldiers and their wives are buried there, and one veteran from the War of 1812. There have been no burials there since 1920, and no immediate survivors are known in the area. The 1¼ acres belongs to the Town of York, with a small portion owned by the county. Eighty years ago a cemetery association made a concrete fence to keep cattle out of the plot. In 1992 New Glarus resident Kim Tschudy wrote an article for the Capital Times entitled "Native Grasses Thrive in Postville Cemetery." At that time, there were three members of the cemetery association: Elmer Ott, Andy Aslakson, and Lyle Klosterman. Klosterman is the only member remaining.

Greens Prairie Cemetery is the last of a 5000-acre prairie of native tall grass in the county. Prairie Enthusiasts, led by John Oschner of the Town of Sylvester in Green County, spoke on the witness stand urging preservation of this ancient history. Mowing, like animal grazing, would forever destroy the unique grasses, the compass plant, and the wild quinine which is an endangered species present there.

Oschner spearheads a burn of Greens Prairie every May, so that by Memorial Day veterans' graves are honored by the American Legion with flags and visitors can easily find the graves. While most visitors to the cemetery come to see the native prairie, a few visitors seek genealogical information. Both facets are vital.

Judge Beer summarized with the fact that the state requires that local governing bodies maintain cemeteries, but he admitted that the state does not give direction on what "maintain" is. As long as an association of seven members has now been formed, and a policy developed to maintain and preserve the prairie while recognizing those buried there, that will make sure the association is perpetuated, this would suffice. New markers, signage, a map of gravesites, removal of noxious weeds and trees, and regular burning are part of the policy. The Association is to work with Keith Ingwell, County Veterans Services Officer, to restore or replace markers on graves of veterans.

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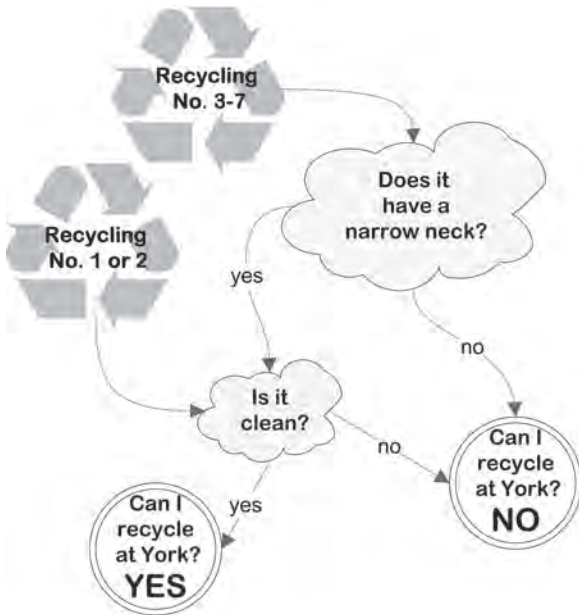
RECYCLING QUESTIONS? ASK KAREN

— CARRIE CZERWONKA

Karen Hughes is our new Recycling Center Supervisor. Household recycling criteria has not changed since last year, but I've been asked by many people about plastic bags from retail and grocery stores. These No. 2 bags ARE still recyclable! They need to be clean, however. See Karen if you aren't sure. Plastic shape is important, and the recycling rules still apply: anything No. 1 or 2 is recyclable, at any shape. No. 3-7 is recyclable only if it has a narrow neck. ("Target" bags are No. 4 and have no neck, which make them landfill material at York. Target might have a collection box in their stores.) All forms of paper (office paper, envelopes, tagboard, cardboard) are acceptable, if flat. Egg cartons (or anything that comes in contact with eggs) and motor oil containers are not recyclable in York. Hazardous materials like dry cell batteries, fluorescent light bulbs, electronics, and medical waste cannot be disposed here (York does not take these items in the weekly collection; some can be taken to the Town Cleanup or the County Clean-Sweep Days, or you can buy a kit on the Waste Management recycling site, www.thinkgreenfromhome.com). Need more info? See last year's newsletter, available on the York web site, or contact the Waste Management customer service in Madison. Thanks for your efforts! ♻️



Karen demos the town's new billboard. Post your business card here!



Household plastics: Which ones can I recycle here in York? Karen can be contacted at klhughes@tds.net



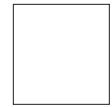
Wayne Bue, Town Patrolman, strikes a pose. Ever wonder how York's steep banks get mowed? Here's the secret -- rented weaponry. Thanks Wayne, for all that you do for York!

TREASURER (continued from page 2)

by the state, county, township, schools, and vocational districts, a mil rate is computed for each by dividing the amount levied by the total assessed value. Residents of York have one of three mil rates, depending on which school district they reside in. The mil rate seen on the tax bill is the state mil rate + the county mil rate - the county sales tax mil rate + the township mil rate - the school tax credit mil rate + the mil rates for the school district and vocational district in which the taxpayer owns land. Typically, as assessed value increases the mil rate decreases.

This table shows the impact of the residential revaluation that was completed in 2008. The Town experienced 4.6% new growth for the period, but most of the increase in assessed valuation was due to the state-mandated revaluation. The Town levy increase was also 4.6%, and the mil rate for York decreased by 11.7%.

	2008	2007
Assessed valuation	\$88,684,652	\$76,192,493
Town levy	\$210,850	\$201,575
York mil rate	0.00234	0.00265
Total mil rate per district		
New Glarus Schools	0.01766	0.02001
Pecatonica	0.01931	0.02050
Argyle	0.01837	0.01984



WHAT IS A CONSERVATION EASEMENT?

—HEIDI HANKLEY

A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a qualified land trust or government entity that permanently limits certain uses of the land in order to protect specified conservation values such as agricultural land, wildlife habitat, or other natural features. Conservation easements are a flexible tool because they allow landowners to continue to own, use, sell, or transfer their land while still protecting the agricultural or natural values of the property. Conservation easements offer permanent protection because they run with the land not the owner, and the land trust assumes the legal right and responsibility to enforce the terms of the easement with current and subsequent owners.

Although some easements are purchased from landowners, most conservation easements are donated. When donating an easement, the landowner and land trust or government entity work together to decide what restrictions are needed to protect the land's conservation value while considering the personal and financial desires of the landowner. By donating an easement, the landowner gives up the specified rights, for example, the ability to subdivide and develop the land, but continues to enjoy all the other rights of ownership. Conservation easements do not require public access to the property, and easements can cover just a portion of a landowner's property. Most land trusts require that a stewardship endowment be set up with each easement agreement to cover the expenses of monitoring, enforcement, and legal defense of the easement terms.

A conservation easement donated to a qualified conservation organization can be treated as a charitable tax deduction as long as federal tax code requirements are met. The value of the donation is the difference between the full market value of the land without the conservation easement and the value after the restrictions of the easement have been applied. This value is assessed by a qualified land appraiser. Donating an easement may have other benefits, including income tax deductions, reduced property taxes, and reduced estate taxes.

Conservation easements are a flexible tool that can help preserve the agricultural lands and rural character of our town. More information can be found by contacting the organizations provided at right.

American Farmland Trust
www.farmland.org
202-331-7300

Gathering Waters Conservancy
www.gatheringwaters.org
608-251-9131

Natural Heritage Land Trust
www.nhlt.org
608-258-9797

Editor's note: Conservation easements are being considered as part of York's land use plan. To learn more, attend a Plan Commission meeting, first Tuesday of each month at the town hall, 8 pm.

