

Civil War reenactors coming to town

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will be highlighted. The 11th New York will be on hand with its artillery, possibly including its three-inch ordnance, the big cannon. Mortars and a mountain howitzer may also take part in the action.

On Saturday the reenactors will stage a Civil War battle at 2:30 p.m., and on Sunday the battle will start at 12:30 p.m. Following the final battle a closing ceremony and memorial service will close the weekend.

On Saturday evening reenactors will lead a guided twilight tour through the encampment, where visitors will be able to visit with and observe soldiers and their families cooking dinner on the campfire, and portraying camp life of the 1860s. The camps will be open to the public from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, and then again beginning at 9 a.m. Sunday.

Melony Barber a specialist in apothecary and geneology will be set up to offer her perspective on the war.

Danny Reandeau will also be on hand to discuss geneology and prisoners of war.

Mr. Gilbert has expressed a deep interest in incorporating the arts into the reenactments. To that end this year's Enrichment Days will include the "Gotta Dance" Studios of Massena presentation of the Battle of Gettysburg performed as an interpretive ballet. There will be a performance by the ballet company at 1 p.m. Saturday, and a second performance at 5 p.m. Saturday. "This is a nice step toward showing people that there is more to the Civil War Reenactment than what happens on the battlefield," according to Sgt. Gilbert. "Civil War reenactors are focused on teaching about the period, the arts and music of the period, and in helping to memorialize the men and women who were involved in the Civil War as an instructional aid."

On Saturday evening the public is invited to join in a traditional cotillion. A cotillion is an instructional dance, and anyone can join in and you don't need period dress or anything to do it. Refreshments will be served and music will be provided by Bear Strings of Long Lake, Jackie and John Mallory, of The Bear Strings musical group will also provide music throughout the day on Saturday and Sunday morning and will give discussions on the music of the period for guests who stop by.

Other special guests this year will be Pete Gilbert's parents, Pete and Kathy Gilbert of Ogdensburg who are also reenactors. The elder Mr.

Gilbert is a carpenter and casket maker, while his wife plays the role of a soldier's wife of the period.

Stuart Burnett will be on hand to share his museum of Civil War artifacts with students and visitors all three days.

Although the Civil War Enrichment Days are free and open to the public, donations are gladly accepted by this not-for-profit group to be used in keeping the programs running in the future.

Donations of baked goods and fresh produce are also needed and gratefully accepted during the weekend.

In an interview this week Pete Gilbert described how he became a Civil War reenactor 20 years ago during the 125th anniversary of Gettysburg. Much earlier as a sixth grade student he had found a book about the Civil War intriguing

and from that time on read everything he could get his hands on about the Civil War.

Eventually he decided he wanted to teach and reenact that history in a different way, and became interested in seeing the reenactors in action. At Gettysburg that year, he first approached the Union soldiers and asked if he could join them. That request fell "on deaf ears," so he went to the Confederate soldiers and asked them. They said "there's a uniform over there in that tent and the battle starts in 20 minutes." He said "okay, but I don't even know what to do." They told him "that's okay, we'll teach you." And his life as a reenactor began.

His interest also goes beyond that, to the family history, which shows that his great-great-grandfather, James Farden was a corporal in the 106th New York from St.

Lawrence County during the Civil War, as was his brother John Farden. James, who was mustered in at the age of 20, was wounded at Cold Harbor and Fisher Hill, and earned his corporal stripes at Cold Harbor after all of his non-commissioned officers were killed in battle. He himself had his ear shot off, but returned to active duty soon after. He was wounded again at Fisher Hill where he lost 40 percent of the use of his arm and would spend the rest of the war in a Pittsburg hospital.

Becoming a reenactor gave Gilbert a way to teach history in a different way. "We don't teach history from a book. Many people know very little about the War Between the States, and this is my own way to try to make them aware of what happened 145 years ago," he said.

NYCOM counsel says village dissolutions don't produce expected cost savings

Editor's Note: the following is an excerpt from an article which appeared in the May-June issue of the New York State Municipal Bulletin, the publication of the New York State Conference of Mayors. The article, entitled "Village Dissolution: Understanding the Costs and Benefits," was written by NCOM General Counsel Wade Beltramo.

"Local government consolidation. Few words are banded about more these days in the halls of New York's capital. Lawmakers, editorial boards, and state commissions are all preaching about how New York has too many local government entities. New York's high property taxes and perceived inefficiencies and redundancies in providing local government services are generally the impetus for these calls for local government consolidation, discussion of which invariably turns to village dissolution.

"Many people question, 'Why do we need village when we have towns?' Unfortunately, this question is often the result of a lack of understanding of the differences between villages and towns, particularly in how they function and the services that they provide. Generally, even the smallest of villages is characterized by a more densely populated area than the surrounding towns. In addition, the village provides services such as water, sewer, police, fire, lighting and sidewalk maintenance which the towns generally do not.

"Thus village dissolution usually requires multiple special improvement districts to be formed to provide the same services that one previously provided. And while there may be some villages in New York for which dissolution may marginally increase efficiency, for most villages, dissolution will not necessarily result in a significant increase in efficiency or lower costs. Even in those instances in which village costs may be lowered, the question has to be answered: how much do village residents value their autonomy, self governance,

and their ability to control their own local laws, particularly zoning and other land use regulations.

"Unfortunately many villages and taxpayers are being put through the expensive, time-consuming dissolution process as a result of a few residents circulating dissolution petitions, with relatively few villages choosing to dissolve. In 2006, the Village of Wellsville went through the process, ultimately voting down a proposition to dissolve the village. In January 2007, the Village of Windsor voluntarily formed a committee to study dissolving the village. Although Windsor's study committee found that dissolving the village would result in nominal savings for village taxpayers, it nonetheless recommended that the village not dissolve because the cost-savings were insufficient to justify the village residents' loss of local control. And in March 2008 alone, three villages actually had dissolution propositions on their ballots. After spending months of staff time and thousands of taxpayer dollars developing dissolution plans and reports the residents of the Villages of Macedon and Speculator rejected village dissolution plans while the residents of the Village of Pike voted to dissolve the village, effective December 31, 2009 (the Village of Pike has approximately 300 residents and offers its residents no public municipal services at the present time).

"In most instances, propositions for village dissolution are voted down because the dissolution plan reveals that village dissolution will not achieve the significant cost savings that the dissolution proponents assumed. However, this lack of

cost savings is frequently not realized until after the village dissolution study is completed. In addition, the relatively minor cost-savings are deemed not worth the diminution of village residents' voting power regarding 'village' issues.

"In contrast to village dissolution efforts, the desire among New Yorkers to exercise local control is evidenced by the creation of three villages in New York in the last three years alone: Sagaponack (2005), South Blooming Grove (2006) and Woodbury (2006).

"Despite the desire of New Yorkers to control the formation and abolition of their own villages, the state's Commission on Local Government Efficiency and Competitiveness recently recommended that state law be amended (a) to require villages with populations under 500 residents to conduct affirmative votes of village residents in order for the village to remain in existence and (b) to lower the minimum number of signatures that are required to initiate the dissolution process. These recommendations would be extremely costly for New York's already overburdened property taxpayers, and while they may result in the dissolution of some villages, if recent trends are any indication, the only result would be to waste the time and money of many of New York's villages and taxpayers, without increasing either efficiencies or cost savings."

DOT meeting

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department representatives questions on an individual basis. People are encouraged to ask questions and make comments. All written comments will be collected at the meeting or may be mailed to the office to become part of the record.

According to Mr. Curtis, the purpose of the October 1 meeting is to obtain comments regarding the proposed project from individuals, groups, officials and local agencies. The department is specifically soliciting comments on the development of alternates for the project and comments on the project's social, economic and environmental effects.

A formal public hearing pertaining to the project will be held in the near future.

Inquiries about the project can be directed to Yasser A. Ibrahim, P.E. Job Manager, by calling (315) 785-2539 during weekdays between 7 a.m. and 3 p.m., or by e-mailing yibrahim@dot.state.ny.us.

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00 Chevy Tracker 4WD - Well Equipped, 89,000 miles.....	\$6,500.....	\$4,695
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02 Volkswagen Jetta Wagon 1.8T - Excell. Cond, 52,000 miles.....	\$10,150.....	\$9,895
01 Dodge Gr. Caravan Sport - Excell. Cond., 66,000 miles.....	\$7,575.....	\$7,295
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