



Illustration by
Dennis Puleston

Fire Place

BROOKHAVEN VILLAGE ASSOCIATION, INC.

Fall 2015

Organized-1906

Incorporated-1944

Sunset Salute at Squassux Landing



Marty VanLith

On June 28th, the BVA held a Wine and Cheese Sunset Salute at Squassux Landing in honor of outgoing President Frank Miller. The event is held in June to recognize outgoing BVA Directors and Officers and to introduce the community to newly elected officials. The party was well attended by hamlet residents of all ages. BVA Vice President, John Knapp, presented Frank with an antique map of Brookhaven to thank him for his time serving the hamlet. Councilwoman Connie Keperth honored Frank for his work on local issues such as the Landfill Liaison Committee and the repair of the historic bridge on Beaver Dam Road. We look forward to seeing everyone at the next Sunset Salute in 2016.

FALL CLEAN-UP: OCT. 17TH

See back page for more information

Dockmaster Report Fall 2015

It is hard to believe the end of another season is upon us. It was one of the nicest summers I remember, and I do not recall one that seemed to have as many boaters participating. The BVA Board, Andy Lovito (Squassux Chairperson), and I have tried to make Squassux as pleasant and accessible as possible. For this year, green fly traps, extra road covering, a resurfaced large boat dock, five new docks, and a replaced launching ramp dock have made the marina an even greater asset to the boaters and the Brookhaven Hamlet community in general.

The docks held up pretty well, and I urge you to contact me immediately if you suspect any weakness in your ramp or dock. Also, since dock width is at a premium, please do not hesitate to inform me of a larger boat acquisition. It is difficult in the summer to find larger slips. Every slip is always paid for, and many are even double booked to increase revenue for the Association. If you plan to retire from boating, or plan a hiatus from it, please let me know early so I may release your slip to someone else.

Fortunately, we had very few losses due to theft this year. A small sailboat engine was taken prior to the guards being on duty, and an attempted theft of an outboard engine was thwarted due to its being heavily bolted through its transom. If you have a small engine, they are easy pickings if not cabled or locked securely. I am surprised that more rods and reels do not disappear from boats as they are prominently displayed in rocket launchers or rod holders on the gunwales. Either lock valuables up or remove them from your boat altogether for safety.

The security service begins to wind down in October, and usually ends on or after Halloween. Water is shut off around November 1st, and ALL boats are to be removed by November 15th. Anyone wanting to extend the season MUST move his/her boat to the river and expect to walk in from Beaver Dam Road as the locks will be changed for the winter. Also, there is no guard service, water, or night lights at that time. Please let me know so I can help monitor the boats if there are any issues.

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Living and Working in the Hamlet

There are a variety of reasons why people like living in Brookhaven. Beginning this fall Fire Place will feature residents who recently returned to Brookhaven to start a business or who decided to stay here and pursue a career. Congratulations and a big thanks to Valerie Nolan, Bev-

erly Allan and Tammie Mentzel, three Brookhaven business women who are living and working in the hamlet. If you have a similar story to tell, or know someone who does, please contact us through the website to share your story. -Ellen Clyne

Beverly Allan Returning to the South Shore

Beverly Allan is a graduate of Bellport High School and the School of Visual Arts who grew up on the south shore. Her grandparents lived in Bellport and her family lived in East Patchogue. She recently relocated to Brookhaven where she hosts art shows at her home.



Patrice Casanova

Why did you decide to return to this area?

I lived in the city and abroad for 27 years. I started renting out here to be near family. Each year it became harder and harder to go back to the city. I also wanted nature in my life on a daily basis. When I got my dog, Tootsie, it didn't seem fair to keep her in Brooklyn all the time. So Tootsie

is a big part of the reason I moved to Brookhaven!

Are you enjoying the change from city life?

Absolutely. It's been easy to meet new and interesting people here. People are open and welcoming. Brookhaven is a diverse community with artists, farmers, people who work on the water and people who work to preserve the land and open space & really enjoy their surroundings. The life style is an antidote to the current fast-paced ways of the world. It's possible to distance yourself from technology but not feel isolated. There's an old fashioned easy pace of life that I find appealing.

What led you to hold an art show in the hamlet?

I worked in the art business for most of my life. Recently I decided to take a break. I was looking for a home for my art collection which includes some big works. After

I finished renovating my house and was installing the works I realized that the space was really conducive to showing art work. The space and the light upstairs was incredibly beautiful. I didn't need all the living space for my personal use, so I reached out to an artist whose work I collect, Rodney Dickson, and asked him about having an art show in my house. It was an unusual request for someone of his stature to consider having an exhibition on the second floor of a house on a dead end street but he agreed and was thrilled! We exhibited his sketchbooks and drawings.

What was the response from the community?

A cross section of the community attended and gave great feedback. They loved talking with the artist about his work and life. Rodney and his wife enjoyed meeting the community and they want to come back! We are planning another show of his paintings. I also had an exhibition for our local artists----Artists of the Hamlet which included: **PATRICE CASANOVA, NICK DE PAOLO, DAVID EBNER, HUGO GUINNESS, MICHAEL INCE, KATE MADSEN, THADDEUS O'NEIL, ELLIOTT PUCKETTE, BARRY ROCKWELL, MAYA SCHINDLER AND GARY SCHNEIDER**

When is the next show and how can people find out about it?

Contact me by email to be put on the list(info@beverly-allan.com). I send the invitations by email. I don't have a set schedule but am usually 'open' on Saturday's 11-3pm. I'm very fortunate to be doing something I'm passionate about in a community that is supportive. My goal is to keep things fun and avoid this becoming a job or a business that I have to do, but rather keep it as something I love to do.

What do you do when you're not hanging art shows in your house?

Having Squassux Landing and access to the water here is fantastic. It's a great place for kayaking. I love walking and biking the dirt trails around HOG Farm and shopping at the local farm stands.

Valerie Nolan

Continuing The Family Business



Ellen Clyne

Valerie Nolan is majoring in Retail Business Management at Suffolk County Community College. Her studies dovetail perfectly with her work at Deer Run Farms where she helps manage the farm stand. The Nolan family has been in the farming industry for over 100 years. Valerie is continuing in the family business, bringing innovative ideas to the business while maintaining the long tradition of family farming on Long Island.

Why did you decide to go into the family business?

I was born to do this job! My family has been farming for over 100 years. My father is a 4th generation farmer and my brother, Samuel, and I are 5th generation. It's truly a family affair with everyone on deck at all times. It can be hard work but we all lean on each other and make it work.

What are some of the challenges?

The long hours. There are days when my dad starts work at 4:00 am and is still on the tractor at 11:00 pm.. Sometimes you just can't wait till the next day to get things done. Everything is weather dependent. I start here at 6:00 am setting up the farm stand which opens at 9:00 am. In the evening everything gets put away and stored under the right conditions to keep it fresh. Every-

thing we sell is as fresh as it can be, whether it's from our farm or one of the other local farms we support. It's all grown on Long Island.

How did you first get interested in farming?

Farming has been in my family, and my blood forever. Our parents never forced my brother and I to work on the farm, but we just fell in love with it and began working at a very young age. My brother has his degree in Plant Science and works on the farm full time. I started working at age 7. I loved being at the register when I was little. Eventually my tasks expanded to filling in the bins and cleaning the farm stand. Providing customer service came as I got older.

What do you enjoy about you job?

It's a nice life, difficult but very rewarding. To know that we're feeding the community and that they support us is very important. We see families return. It's nice to connect with the customers over the years. Some stop and talk about how they came here years ago, and like to visit and share memories. They remember me and my family. The continual support of our customers is very important to us because it helps preserve farmland. I can drive a tractor, move pipe, weed and plant crops. I've done a lot of dirty work over the years. I'm a farm girl! I love the outdoors and don't mind getting my hands dirty.

Do you think being located in Brookhaven makes a difference?

Yes! This is a beautiful, quiet town, where many generations have family land and family businesses. Farming is an important part of Brookhaven. Everyone knows each other and often, the farm stand becomes a meeting place for people. People like to stop in and say hi. We have local customers, as well as others who come from as far west as Manhattan, and as far east as Montauk.

Do you have a favorite place in the hamlet when you were younger?

The Brookhaven Library, and I still go there. A few of our customers work at the library, and we have donated to the library's summer reading program.

A lot of young people like to leave home and go away to college. Did you consider that option?

I knew I wanted to attend Suffolk County Community College because I wanted to be home so I could work in my family business. My 13 years of working on the farm, plus my degree brings it all together for me. In class I find things that directly correlate to my job and vice versa.

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Tammie Mentzel

It's Only Natural

Tammie Mentzel moved to Brookhaven hamlet last year. She and her husband, Bo, own and operate the health food store It's Only Natural, located in Bellport. They purchased the store from longtime Brookhaven residents, Nick and Lillian DePaolo. Tammie is a graduate of Bellport High School. Her son Costa began Kindergarten at Brookhaven Elementary School this fall.



Tammie Mentzel

Why did you and your husband decide to move to Brookhaven?

Honestly, we were in the midst of some major decision making... we knew we wanted to start a small business either from scratch or something existing. We had explored a few opportuni-

ties from Nassau County to Montauk, but for one reason or another they all fell through. The obvious decision would be to live fairly close to where you work, and at the time we were both working about an hour commute West. With no solid business opportunities to narrow the options, we scoured the listings and found nothing we could agree on. Just when we both started losing hope, my friend told me about this charming little house in the hamlet. We went to look at it and fell in love. I've always loved the hamlet. I was on the cross country team in high school and we ran through the hamlet daily, the narrow country roads lined with trees older than any residents still makes me want to lace up the old running sneakers.

Does owning a business help you connect with the community?

Absolutely! More than we probably ever expected. Our first experience with this was when Lil & Nick gave us directions to their house to talk about the business and we realized we lived just a stone's throw away from each other. When we first took over, it seemed like every other customer walked in to introduce themselves as our neighbor. We had lived in the hamlet for a solid six months before we took over It's Only Natural and had really only met the neighbors on our block, now we are

happy to know so many more not just as neighbors, but on a personal level. We really felt the warmth of the community with all of the visits and well wishes that came with the arrival of our daughter in September.

Is the hamlet a good place to raise a family?

The hamlet is an amazing place to raise a family. We actually just had a conversation looking back on all the searching we had done before settling on the hamlet, and we couldn't imagine ourselves anywhere but here. Our five year old Costa, learned how to ride his two wheeler with no training wheels this summer and now rides his bike up to the elementary school. Our one year old, Atlas, heads straight for the back door after breakfast and wants to be outside all day, he loves feeding our backyard chickens and mowing the lawn with DaDa. We feel so blessed to be surrounded by trees and wildlife and down-to-earth neighbors, rather than pavement and traffic and a sea of faces we don't recognize as neighbors.



Tammie Mentzel

What makes Brookhaven special?

When I was growing up in East Patchogue, the houses on my block were my neighbors, the rest of the houses were people who lived in my neighborhood. In the hamlet there's a more earthy definition to neighbor, you could live a mile away from someone in the hamlet and you would still consider them your neighbor, because it's not the geographical location that makes them your neighbor, it's the fact that they are more neighborly. Our neighbors offer their pool to the neighborhood kids, call the store when our chickens have escaped the coop, and walk into the backyard completely unannounced just to say hello. It's rare to find neighbors in this day and age that feel like an extension of family, but that's what we have here. extension of family, but that's what we have here.

Virginia Brown Scholarship Awards

The Scholarship Award Committee had the pleasure of reading through an excellent group of essays. This year's winner of the \$2000 scholarship, Dan Smith, is attending SUNY Binghamton and is majoring in Business. This year's winner of the \$1000 scholarship, Annika Johnson, is attending Messiah College in Pennsylvania and majoring in Education. It was a pleasure awarding the scholarships to these

fine young people. The essays are included in this newsletter and we hope everyone enjoys them as much as the committee enjoyed them.

Janet Quirk
Virginia Brown Scholarship
Committee Chairperson

Dan Smith Winner, Virginia Brown Scholarship 2015

Growing up, I never realized the amount of pride I would have one day in the community that I live in. Residing in Brookhaven since my pre-kindergarten years, I have spent my entire childhood within the Hamlet, enjoying every moment that it has granted me. I now understand exactly what it means to be a member of a community; to me, it is perhaps an extension of my own family. Above all, however, I am most thankful for the memories that Brookhaven has given me as I prepare to strive for success in college.

The annual Memorial Day parade has offered me the greatest sense of community I have ever felt. Up until age twelve, I would watch the parade go by from my cousin's lawn on Beaver Court, the same property where my friends and I hosted our 2007 WiffleBall World Series. My favorite part of the parade had always been when the marching bands would go by. As the music played right in front me, I would become intrigued by the percussion section every year. Snares buzzing and bass drums roaring, I knew that one day I wanted to be a part of this exciting show. In sixth grade, I was finally given a chance to this when my middle school band was invited to play in the parade itself. Since that experience, I have continued to play in the parade every year, and I smile at my younger cousins as I pass by Beaver Court. The commemoration continues at the cannon, and I am honored to play the Star Spangled Banner for all the Brookhaveners watching. I know that wherever life takes me, my sense of community will ensue, as I will forever be grateful of Memorial Day in Brookhaven.

Another great aspect about Brookhaven town is the access to Squassux Marina, located just a bike ride away on a bright, sunny day. Ever since I was a child, I would spend the majority of my summers on my family's twenty-two foot Sea Ray, cruising the Great South Bay. Before Hurricane Sandy caused the breach on Fire Island, my family would enjoy Old Inlet, the beach created specifically for Brookhaven residents. Still today my family appreciates the bay, as we all take turns water-skiing around our local paradise. Carmans River, also, offers many exciting opportunities to engage in. One specific

memory I have transpired just last year on a beautiful day in August. During a spontaneous excursion, six friends and I traversed up the river on two kayaks to Indians Landing, where we had fun exploring the land. On our way back, we searched nearly every waterway extending from the river, relishing the great day we were presented with. Squassux truly is a landmark for our entire community, and without it, Brookhaven would not be the same unique town that I take pride in today.

As I plan to attend college next fall, I will further develop the sense of community that Brookhaven has instilled in me. Whether it is through music, service groups, or anything else, I know that I can find a place to contribute to the environment that I live in. Most importantly, my undergraduate education will prepare me for the career I am most fascinated in: becoming an actuary. I was only first introduced to actuarial science a few years ago, on a brisk Thanksgiving Day at my grandparent's house on Chapel Avenue. Knowing I always had an aptitude for mathematics, my grandpa, Pop, suggested actuarial science as a prospective field I would be interested in. After spending the next week researching about actuaries, I learned that Pop was onto something; I learned that I wanted to become an actuary. Obtaining a degree in business will place me on the most direct path for success in the field. Eventually, I would like to pursue an MBA degree so that I can achieve the highest level possible within my profession.

No matter what my future entails, Brookhaven Hamlet will forever be the source of my roots. I will always remember marching in the Memorial Day parade, which accounts for some of the most rewarding moments I have experienced. Likewise, I will look forward to returning to Brookhaven during holiday breaks to visit both family and the hometown I grew up in. At the end of each school year, I will certainly be rushing home to take the Sea Ray out on the Great South Bay once again. It is with all my gratitude that I have the honor of being able to call Brookhaven my home.

Annika Johnson

Winner, Virginia Brown Scholarship 2015

Reflecting on my past, growing up in the hamlet, and cherishing the last few months before I'm off to college, I truly understand the impact that this close knit community had on me growing up. I have a clear understanding as to the direction I would like to take with my future. The Hamlet has given me insight and assurance that the role of a positive educator who make kids feel excited to learn is what I would like to pursue. Personally, I was a child who would much rather read a book or enjoy the beauty that nature offers. Having a brother just two years older than me, my parents always encouraged us to engage in the activities that Brookhaven Hamlet had to offer. I vividly remember my first educator, Ms. Deb from the Brookhaven Free Library who surely made learning fun. At the age of two I would attend story time, finger painting and sing alongs which was where I reached my first stepping stone for my love of education. As I continued to learn and grow through our unique library, I also had multiple opportunities to volunteer for numerous activities and functions that took place there. Similar to how Virginia Brown was never tired of learning, my ultimate goal in life is to change the way children feel about going to school; I want them to wake up and be excited to come learn. I want them to have the creative ways of learning that I experienced through the children's staff at our library. Education is at a major turning point and I am concerned for the direction in which it is heading. I believe that my upbringing in the Hamlet has shaped me into a positive role model, as somebody that will be beneficial to the future.

It was not just the library that shaped my early years of learning. The nature that surrounds us has so many opportunities for learning as well. I've learned the importance of caring while petting Jen Puleston's animals, moving turtles off Old Stump Road, observing tides move in and out quickly at the inlet, and the aspect of respect as I gathered litter on jogger rides with my mom. I have also learned the desire to strive for excellence from my encouraging family members,

neighbors and educators surrounding. In particular, my pursuit with the piano and oboe has taught me that dedication and hard work always pays off. Fortunately, I have had many opportunities to play piano for the Old Southhaven Church; the pride that I feel once I have perfected a piece of music is such a rewarding feeling. I truly made the best of my high school experience being the Vice President of the Class of 2015 and captain of Varsity Lacrosse and Varsity Volleyball. I was a member of Math Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society and National Honor society. As an AP Scholar, I graduate number 9 out of 355. My personal favorite club to be a part of throughout high school was Athletes Helping Others; Many athletes worked together to give back to the community. I would never trade the memories made and learning experiences gained throughout my education at South County Schools. As I reach my next stepping stone in life I will attend Messiah College where I will earn a degree in education.

If somebody asked me to say how Brookhaven Hamlet made me feel in one word, I would not hesitate to say "proud". The healthy activities such as canoeing in Carman's river, going for runs in Jen Puleston's trails, paddle boarding and exploring the new inlet have created so many memories with friends and family that I couldn't imagine living without. I strongly believe in the importance of exercise for young children and the impact nature has on one's character. Having four siblings younger than myself I have continued to pass on what my parents taught me and the importance of learning. It is without a doubt that I was fortunate enough to grow up in the Hamlet and I wouldn't trade it for anything. Brookhaven Hamlet is such a rewarding environment for families to grow. It is the family boat rides, simple walks around the beautiful town and the appreciation of the serene environment which shaped my family into what it is today. I hope that one day I can raise a family in the Hamlet which will allow them to understand the importance of a healthy childhood, just as I did.

Valerie Nolan...*(continued from page 3)*

Although there are one or two farmer friends at school, I feel it is important to raise awareness of agriculture on Long Island because it is something that is often overlooked in school.

Are there any projects or ideas that you've brought to the business?

I've worked on the decor and introduced family photos so everyone can learn about my family's history. I think it shows our commitment to the farm as well as our customers. I feel it's a great way for everyone to get to know the people behind the counters, and to learn more about our story. We're members of the Long Island Farm Bu-

reau, which helps advocate for the farming industry on Long Island. Our customers love the Grown on Long Island tee shirts, as well as our hand painted giftware, geared towards Brookhaven Hamlet and it's rural appeal.

Anything else you're planning for the future?

Yes. In addition to going to business school, I have also attended culinary school. Having Celiac Disease has altered my way of eating, as well as cooking. I would one-day love to introduce my own line of gluten free products, in the hopes that I would be helping others who are gluten free in the community.

The Squassux Chairman's Report

This summer at Squassux was both an enjoyable and productive experience for me. It was nice to see all of the people enjoying the basin in such a pristine setting.

It is my continued objective to further improve the infrastructure at Squassux. This will include bringing in more stone to improve our parking and roadway. The additional stone should minimize the dust and erosion at the basin. We are investigating the upgrading of our electrical system. The idea is to better meet the needs of the boaters and to make the operation of the ice-eaters more dependable. We will continue to build new docks as needed and repair all others to make them safe. I believe the flytraps made a significant difference in decreasing the amount of flies and their nasty bites.

Hopefully, the coming fall will continue to bring nice weather and active boating. As winter approaches, volunteers are needed to help install the ice-eaters. This is one of many tasks, that when done by volunteers, saves all of us money and keeps the cost of running our marina down.

If you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns, please attend the B.V.A. meeting held every second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Post Morrow Annex on Bay Road.

Sincerely,
Andy Lovito
Chairman
Squassux Committee

Dockmaster Report... *(continued from front page)*

The ice-eaters will be installed early in December as always, and the marina will be closed for the season at that time. We will publish the dates closer to the time in the hope of attracting volunteers. Thanks to those who have helped out in the past like Jeb, Lech, George, Ulli, Harley, and so many others.

Finally, look over the Rules & Regulations from time to time to help the Board in running the marina smoothly.

With the increase of people walking around the marina on nice days, please respect and obey the 5 MPH speed limit within the facility.

Andy Rubin
Dockmaster

BVA Membership Application

Membership in the BVA helps support our projects in the neighborhood. Please consider joining or donating to one of our dedicated funds.

New Membership Application – Resident membership in the Brookhaven Village Association is open to residents of Brookhaven Hamlet, as defined in the BVA Bylaws. To become a member, complete this form and send it, along with your annual membership fee to:

Brookhaven Village Association, P.O. Box 167, Brookhaven, New York 11719

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Member Fee (\$15 annually): \$ _____

Dennis Puleston Environmental Fund: \$ _____

BVA Tree Fund: \$ _____

Virginia Brown Scholarship: \$ _____

Historic Cemetery Restoration: \$ _____

Visit our website at: www.brookhavenvillageassociation.org

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The BVA Board meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Post Morrow Annex, 16 Bay Rd. Meetings are open to the public.

Visit our website at: www.brookhavenvillageassociation.org

*Brookhaven
Village Association*

**ANNUAL
FALL CLEAN UP**

OCTOBER 17TH, 10:00 AM

*Meet at the Brookhaven Fire Department
Join us as we spruce up the hamlet!*

Bags and gloves provided

Matthew Petheram
Chair, Quality of Life Committee

Fire Place

*A Community Newsletter from the
Brookhaven Village Association*
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