

Town of Niles Newsletter

~2021~

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Town of Niles 5923 New Hope Road Moravia, New York 13118 Phone: 315-497-0066 Fax: 315-497-9952

Town of Niles Website: www.cayugacounty.us/portals/1/niles/

Town Highway Department: Phone: 315-497-2606

Town Clerk Office Hours: Tuesday 9am – 12pm Thursday 4pm – 7pm 2nd & 3rd Saturday 9am – 12pm

Court Hours: 1st & 3rd Thursday at 5:30pm

Town Board Meetings: 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:00pm at the Town Hall

A Word from the Supervisor

"Happy New Years Niles"

Another year has gone by and what a year it was. I hope this newsletter finds you all well! Thank you for your trust in me to get us through another year.

I am staying quite busy with concerns from the community that come up throughout the year. Hopefully some of these have been resolved. Do not hesitate to call me with any questions!

I continue to work with the Skaneateles Lake Water Shed and the Owasco Lake Water Shed. We want everyone in our Town to help keep our Lakes clean and a place to enjoy!

Please do not hesitate to call me throughout the year at 315-497-0066. Even though I am not in the office every day, I will return any messages within a day or two. Thanks for your patience and support. Let us hope 2021 will be a great year!

Joan Jayne, Town Supervisor



The Honorable Richard Winters with his wife Alberta Dar Winters

Supervisor Jayne presented the Honorable Richard Winters with a plaque for his twenty- nine years of service to the Town of Niles as Town Justice. Alberta Dar Winters was also recognized for her service as Court Clerk. Justice Winters will be retiring at the end of 2020. Thank you both for your service!

ENHANCED STAR PROGRAM (REMINDER)

Property owners currently receiving Enhanced STAR no longer need to reapply each year. The forms filed for the 2019 roll year allowed NYS to annually verify income (through IVP – income verification program) and let the assessor know which properties qualify for the exemption.

Property owners currently receiving Basic STAR that are now eligible to apply for Enhanced STAR have two options.

1. File application RP425E along with RP425IVP with your local assessor by March 1st. The first year applying, proof of age and income is also required.

a. https://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current_forms/orpts/rp425e_fill_in.pdf b. https://www.tax.ny.gov/pdf/current_forms/orpts/rp425ivp_fill_in.pdf OR

2. Opt to receive the Enhanced STAR credit CHECK by applying directly to NYS Department of Tax & Finance.

IMPORTANT: Enhanced STAR IVP does not automatically qualify property owners for the additional Aged exemption which they may also be eligible for if their annual income is under \$25,000. In order to qualify for the Aged exemption, property owners are required to submit a yearly exemption application (along with proof of income) to the Assessor by March 1st.

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Reminder about Changes to New Basic and Enhanced Star Application Administration

State legislation has changed how the STAR exemption/ credit will be administered for anyone applying for a new Basic or Enhanced STAR. Property owners applying for STAR tax relief after March 1st 2015 now need to apply for the credit directly through NYS Tax & Finance. The phone number to call to apply is (518) 457-2036 or apply online at www.tax.ny.gov

Key Dates

March 1 – Taxable Status date – All exemption renewal forms due back to the assessor by this date.

May 1 – Tentative Roll filed – After this date all current year assessment grievances must go through the Board of Assessment Review Committee including ratification of any reductions agreed to by the assessor and property owner.

May 27 – Board of Assessment Review (Grievance Night) 4:00-8:00 pm at the Niles Town Hall

July 1 - Final Assessment Roll filed

September 1 – School Tax bills mailed and available online https://gis.cayugacounty.us/webapp/tmo/

October 31 – Exemption renewal forms for the upcoming year are mailed to owners

January 1, 2022 – County/Town Tax bills mailed and available online https://gis.cayugacounty.us/webapp/tmo/

Board of Assessment Review

The Niles Board of Assessment Review will meet on Thursday May 27th, 2021 from 4-8 pm for the purpose of hearing property owners' grievances on their assessments or exemption status for the 2021 assessment roll only.

Grievance forms are available from the Assessor or the Town Clerk. They are available on the Town website (RP-524). Please have your paperwork filled out before meeting with the Board of Assessment Review.

Buy Local to Support Your Neighbors and the Town

The Business List is available to print or view from our website. Any new business wanting to be added or exiting business with changes to your status and/ or hours can contact the town clerk.

Garbage District Exemption

If your residence is seasonal or the property owner is over the age of 65 years you could qualify for partial exemption from the garbage district user fee. If you have already applied for the exemption and it has been granted, you do not need to reapply each year to continue receiving the exemption. The only instance where you would need to apply would be if circumstances had changed or if you are a new property owner seeking the exemption.

Garbage Exemption Form Link: http://www. cayugacounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/2692/ Application-for-Partial-Exemption-from-Garbage-District-Assessment-PDF

From the Planning Board

The Planning Board's responsibility is to ensure that all property, subdivisions, and add-ons comply with the Town's Laws. Therefore, any changes in property lines or changes of use must be approved by the Planning board. Also note that all new commercial construction or additions must obtain a site plan review.

In an effort to save you time and money, please contact the Planning Board Chairman, the Code Enforcement Officer or the Town Clerk before you start any project.

The Planning Board meets on the third Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm at the Town Hall. If you wish to reserve time on the agenda, please notify the Town Clerk one week prior to the meeting.

All standard Planning Board forms are available on the Town's website.

Planning Board Chairman, Terry Green

From the Dog Control Officer

I am looking forward to serving the Town of Niles as the Dog Control Officer for 2021! I have been a DCO for



fourteen years serving other towns and villages and also am manger at Country Acres Animal Shelter located in Homer, NY. For any dog related issues please call me at 315-224-3110. For any other animal/wildlife complaints or concerns I will try to help but can also refer you to the proper authority. We hope to host a rabies/immunization/microchip/ licensing clinic later in the year - check the website or call the Clerk's office for details. This is a great opportunity to catch up your cat and dog on those important vaccines. Did you know a dog license fee is cheaper if your canine friend is spayed or neutered? If you need low cost spay and neuter, I can give you information.

Zoning Board of Appeals

In Niles we have laws intended to protect the nature of our community. So if you are planning a change, such as constructing a new building, an addition, or even sometimes a renovation, it would be a great idea to check the town and NYS building codes, including setback and lot area laws of Chapter 164, Niles Codes (linked through the Town web site).

If you, or the Code Enforcement Officer, determine that your proposed project does not meet the minimum requirement, AND you would like to proceed, you will have to apply to the Town Board of Appeals for a Variance to the Town Laws.

The Variance application is available on line and at the Town Hall. Once the Town Clerk receives your Variance application, and the required fee, we will schedule a hearing for your appeal.

- 1. Will an **undesirable change** be produced in the character of the neighborhood or **detriment** to nearby properties be created by granting the variance?
- 2. Will the proposed variance have an adverse impact on the physical or environmental conditions of the neighborhood.
- 3. Can the benefit sought be achieved by **some other method**, other than a variance?
- 4. Was the alleged difficulty **self created**? *Happy Building!*

Senior Citizen Exemption Update

Cayuga County has raised the income limit which allows property owners over the age of 65 to earn more and still get the exemption. It works on a sliding scale with a maximum of 50% for incomes less than \$29,000 to a minimum of 5% for incomes less than \$37,400 a year.

EXAMPLE: A property owner could earn up to \$34,699 and still qualify for a 20% exemption on their county taxes. Discounts of 15%, 10% and 5% would be available to owners who earn less than \$37,400. These updates to the county law bring the county up to the income levels set by the state years ago and to hopefully keep more of our most vulnerable residents in their homes. To apply, please complete and return form RP-467 to the town assessor. Please visit tax. ny.gov for forms, questions, and instructions. If you require additional help, please contact the assessor.

Code Enforcement Office

Happy New Year and welcome to 2021! I hope that everyone enjoyed the holidays, despite the issues we have had to deal with due to recent events.

2020 was a challenging year with the pandemic and restrictions placed on non-essential construction early in the year. Building supply shortages and increased prices on many construction materials impacted many projects in Niles and other communities.

Despite recent events, 2020 was a busy year in the Code Enforcement Office. Building permits were issued for several projects, including 3 new single-family homes in the Town. The total estimated valuation for permits issued from January 1 – October 31, 2020 was \$3,470,927. New construction adds to the Town's tax base and increases the amount of sales tax the Town receives from Cayuga County to fund the Town budget.

Several projects were referred to the Niles Planning Board in 2020 for Site Plan Review to ensure that erosion control measures and proper drainage plans are implemented, especially in environmentally sensitive areas on or near Owasco and Skaneateles Lake. Projects were also referred to the City of Syracuse Watershed Inspection Department, Owasco Lake Watershed Department and Cayuga County Environmental Health Department for review and approval.

The Code Enforcement Officer enforces the NYS Property Maintenance Code and the Junkyard Law for the Town of Niles. Niles residents and property owners are fortunate that we have weekly town-wide garbage and recycling collection. In addition, for several months in 2020, the Town had dumpsters available at the highway barn to accommodate resident property clean up. More detailed information on garbage and recycling collection and clean-up for 2021 is in the Town Newsletter. Please take advantage of this service and help keep our Town clean!

Building permit applications are available on the Town Website and at the Town Clerk's Office. Not sure if you need a permit? Call or email with your questions before you begin your project at (315) 497-0066 – office or (315) 729-3921 – cell or nilescode@verizon.net

Code Enforcement Office Hours are held on Thursday from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. and by appointment (call ahead to confirm that the office is open due to pandemic restrictions). Please feel free to call me on my cell phone outside of office hours at (315) 729-3921 or email me at nilescode@verizon.net.

J. Patrick Doyle, Code Enforcement Officer

From the Desk of the Town Clerk/Tax Collector

Thank you Niles Residents for the opportunity to serve as Town Clerk. Patty Podolak will continue to serve as Deputy Clerk. Due to the Covid – 19 pandemic, the Clerk's Office has had to operate a bit differently this year. The Clerk's Office is currently open to the public, but I would like to encourage Town Residents to limit coming in to the Town Hall. Most business can be conducted via mail, phone, email, or by utilizing our drop slot located in the entrance of the Town Hall. Most forms and applications can be found on our website at www.cayugacounty.us/725/ Niles-Town and paper forms are located in the entrance of the Town Hall and available anytime. If you need to enter the Town Hall face masks are required and please follow social distancing guidelines.

The Town Clerk's Office will be open:

Monday – 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. (during Jan. & Feb. only)

Tuesday – 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Thursday – 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

2nd & 4th Saturday – 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Or by Appointment

The Clerk's Office will also be open:

Wednesday, February 10th from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m., which is the last day to pay a first installment on Town/County taxes and to pay without a penalty.

Wednesday, March 31st from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m., which is the last day to pay Town/County, taxes at the Town.

Please be advised that after March 31st all unpaid Town and County taxes have to be paid to the County. Please also note that you **CANNOT** pay your school taxes at the Town Clerk's Office.

The Clerk's Office will be CLOSED Thanksgiving and Christmas Weekends.

Thank you and have a happy and safe 2021!

Tina Weed, Town Clerk Patty Podolak, Deputy Town Clerk

Niles Senior Citizens

The Niles Senior Citizens usually meet on the second Wednesday of each month at Midlakes Church, unfortunately due to Covid 19 we have not been able to hold our meetings or enjoy the trips that were planned. Thankfully with a vaccine becoming available in the very near future, we are hoping to be able to resume our meetings in the spring. I have rebooked the trip to Nashville in August 2021 and to Lancaster September 29th-30th of 2021. I am also planning two day trips – possibly one to Letchworth in the fall.

We want to thank our town for their continued support to help fund the cost of the bus. Without their help these trips would not be possible – thank you so much!

I look forward to seeing everyone soon when the meetings resume – Lunch at noon with a dish to pass and your own table service. A meeting follows lunch. Stay well and see you soon!

Elaine Axton, Trip-Coordinator

Town Historian



2020 has been an interesting year from an historical perspective as I am sure you all have experienced. Here in Niles, we don't have the amount of

businesses that a village or town would have but we have seen the impact of Covid-19 affect those we do. I am thinking of the store in New Hope, New Hope Naturals, that has worked so hard to keep its doors open throughout this time, going from a counter on the porch to a socially distanced interior space. And the Town Hall, going from Zoom Board meetings to socially distanced chairs so they can meet in person and public attendance being held in the parking lot. We have all had to change the way we think and interact with people during the course of this pandemic. Here in Niles, we are lucky to not have been impacted that heavily with cases (as of this writing).

The Historian's office would love to capture any of your memories or comments regarding what you and your family experienced during this past year. This will be one for the history books! Please send comments to the Town Hall, Attn: Historian, or email me at Loriedew@aol.com.

Work has continued this year on indexing the scrapbook, newspaper collections and other items we hold in the historical office at the Town Hall. We have currently 14 books indexed and are trying to keep up with new weddings, articles and obituaries. The "Niles Obituary" book is currently 283 pages long! The work continues. Please keep the historian office in your thoughts as you clean out attics and basements. We would love period clothes, antique tools (no farm machinery!) and pictures (labeled with addresses or people's names).

Thank you for your continued support.

Lorie DeWitt-Antilla

West Niles Fire Department

We would like to take the time to thank all our volunteers for a successful year.

We would also like to thank the community for their continued support.

Our current officers are

Chief : Dave Glanville Jr. Assistant Chief : Doug Winters President : Greg Palmer Vice President : Jim Gettel Secretary : Phillip Auchampaugh Treasurer : Rich Winters

With any luck at all we are planning our annual clambake for May 2021, and our Annual Harvest Dinner for November 2021.

As always we are looking for new members. There are always jobs to do without going to the scene of a fire. To join please stop by the firehouse on almost any Monday night or ask at any of our functions.

The West Niles Fire Co is asking that everyone have one of our green reflective 911 signs in front of your home. It really saves us time in an emergency when minutes matter. For a small donation of \$12 we would be more than happy to get one for you. Applications can be found on the Town of Niles website.

> Please have a Safe and Happy New Year West Niles Fire Department!

ASSESSOR CONTACT INFORMATION & HOURS

Dana Merizzi – Town Assessor Phone: (315) 253-1033 Email: dmerizzi@cayugacounty.us

Kristy Gans – Assessor Clerk Phone: (315) 253-1502 Email: kgans@cayugacounty.us

County Office Building Hours:

Mon., Wed.-Fri., 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Niles Town Hall Office Hours:

First & Third Tuesday of the month, 10 am-1 pm appointments only OR call (315) 497-0066 during those hours.

New Hope Fire Department



New Hope Fire Department would like to thank our community for their continued support and participation in our events.

This has been a very difficult time for everyone with the COVID pandemic. We encourage everyone to practice social distancing. We thank all of the members

for their continued support during this difficult time. We encourage anyone not feeling well to stay home and quarantine for the proper number of days and if you are to call 911 tell the dispatcher if you are experiencing symptoms so that our first responder can come prepared.

Our "Famous" Chicken Barbeques are held on the third Sunday of every month beginning in March and ending in October. Please watch for the "Facebook" events to place your pre-orders or you may contact (315) 406-0262.

If you are interested in supporting us for any of the fundraisers please see a member.

Plans for a new and improved fire house are under way and moving forward. As many know, our current station is small and is starting to show its age. We are in process and working forward one step at time. Our building site in under progress at the tractor pull track if anyone would like to watch the progress. If you would like to donate to the process feel free to mail donations to the address listed above.

We are always accepting applications for new members, contact any member or come to our monthly meeting held the first Monday of each month at 7pm for more information on joining our team.

We would like to thank all of our officers for their continued support. Chief – Edward Raymond, Assistant Chief – Jeff Stanton, President – Donald Slater, Vice President – Jeff Stanton, Secretary – Judy Cuddeback, and Treasurer - Stefanie Raymond.

The department completed 2020 with around 200 alarms.

I would like to thank our community again for their everlasting support and participation. Together we will make 2021 a great year and look forward to seeing everyone throughout the year.

> Yours truly, *Edward Raymond, Fire Chief*

Three Town Fire District

The Three-town fire district is rarely in the news and we would like to take the opportunity to let the taxpayers know a little about the happenings in the district. The district is composed of the Town of Sempronius (in part) and the Town of Niles. We house three different departments which are New Hope, Sempronius, and West Niles. The district is led by the three Assistant Chiefs (New Hope Edward Raymond, Sempronius Tyler Bloodgood and West Niles David Glanville). We want to extend our deepest gratitude to all of the members of the community for their continued support over the years.

The district was originally formed in 1948, after a series of major fires on State Route 41A. The town of Moravia was originally included and later split to form their own fire district. We have had many advances since the early years. Each department currently owns their own fire house and The District pays each of them rent to house the fire trucks. Each department is responsible for the up keep and maintenance of their respective houses. New Hope Fire Department is actively fundraising to build a new fire house. Their goal is to do this without any taxpayer funding. To learn more about how you can help, please contact any New Hope member.

The district is awaiting the delivery of two new rescues. This will give us the ability to respond more rapid and through to the rescue calls in the area such as MVA and Sick persons. The new trucks will be housed in New Hope and Sempronius. These trucks are the third step to bringing the district up to the current state mandated requirements for fire departments and equipment.

We are continuing to participate in the State LOSAP program. Each member that meets the active firefighter standard within the district and also meet the state requirements will receive a reward that can be collected at the time of retirement.

The departments are always in need of new volunteers that are committed to the job. The requirement to be an active volunteer include completion of at least 40 hours of training every year, attend at least 6 meetings, and attend a percentage of calls each year. The commitment is high but so is the reward. If you are interested in joining please see any of the department chiefs.

The district hosts its monthly meetings on the third Monday of every month and will host a budget meeting on the 3rd Tuesday in October any and all are welcome to attend to find out the happenings of the district.

This has been a very difficult time for everyone with the COVID pandemic. We encourage everyone to practice social distancing. We thank all of the members of the community for their continued support during this difficult time. We encourage anyone not feeling well to stay home and quarantine for the proper number of days and if you are to call 911 tell the dispatcher if you are experiencing

Highway Department

In 2020 the Covid-19 pandemic has affected every way of life including the highway department. Our department has continued working safely with very few bumps along the way. With winter season upon us back up plans are being put together by all municipalities in case one of our employees, another town's employee, county and even state DOT employees become infected and have to be quarantined. If a municipal plow driver is quarantined it could affect the whole department and the way the plow routes are done and the timing of when a road gets plowed. You may see a different plow on your road because of shifting of routes to cover areas in need. Our goal is to get the major roads open first to get traffic moving and if we get a major storm added in, especially with wind, or a break down happens, the snowplow drivers will do the best they can to get all roads passable as soon as possible. Please be understanding of the situation and know we are doing our best.

This year we did have a 20% reduction in our CHIPS funding because of Covid-19 but we were still able to pave another .8 mile on Harter Rd. and build the base and chip seal all of Warne Rd. and .2 mile on Church Rd. Warne and Church Rds. were the last of the gravel roads that we do winter maintenance on and by making the road base solid and doing a hard surface double chip seal on them it will make snow removal and ice control much easier. We also continued with our preventive maintenance program by chip sealing another 9 miles of macadam road. Chip sealing each of our roads on a 3-4 year cycle has kept our road system in very good condition overall.

In closing I would like to take this opportunity to let everyone know I will probably retire sometime in the spring. I have dedicated my life to the town since 1988 with many sleepless nights and worked through some very stressful storms. The time has come for me to sit back and watch the show instead of being a part of it. I would like to say "Thank You" to you, the residents of Niles for supporting me over the years. Thank you to my highway department employees Roger, Derek and Rob and all the employees that have worked for me over the years. You are the back bone to make a great highway department function! Thank you to the highway superintendents and highway departments in Cayuga County that have shared services and personnel with me over the years. By working together as a whole, major projects can be completed in a timely matter. Thank you to our town officials for always providing the funds to make our

Our Garbage Hauler is: Casella Waste Systems, Inc. Phone: 315-781-6500

Office Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:30 am to 5:00 pm

Casella appreciates this opportunity to continue to serve the Residents of Niles for their garbage and recycling collection.

During the month of January 2021, Casella will be providing each resident a 96 gallon cart for weekly garbage service and a 65 gallon cart for recycling. A notice will be placed a week prior to actual delivery of carts. Carts will help eliminate unsecured materials blowing into neighbors' property.

Garbage Pick-up Regulations:

- o Garbage
 - All materials must be placed in the cart.
 - No lumber in excess of 48 inches.
 - No tree limbs, brush or lawn clippings.

Please make special arrangements with the hauler if more or bulky items.

- o Recycling
 - All recyclable materials must be placed un bagged in the cart.
 - Cardboard needs to be flat or cut into pieces that will fit in the recycling cart.
 - Items that CANNOT be recycled include plastic bags, clothing, food waste, scrap metal, batteries, electronic waste, medical waste, hazardous materials, toys, coated paper items, plastic wrap/films/tarps, ceramics or baking glassware.

Three Town Fire District continued

symptoms so that our first responder can come prepared. Thank you again to the members of the community for your continued loyalty and help supporting each department and the district.

Sincerely, Stefanie Raymond, Secretary/Treasurer

Highway Department continued

town highway system the condition it is today. I have seen many supervisors, council members and clerks come and go and I appreciate how all have worked together to make this town the greatest. I am very proud of the work we have completed over the years. Deputy highway superintendent Roger Slater will be taking over the highway department and I hope you all will support him the way you supported me. Again **"THANK YOU"**

2021 Clean-Up Days Mark Your Calendar!

Niles Town Garage in New Hope April through September Monday – Thursday 7 am – 3:30 pm

Clean – Up Days are a service for Town of Niles property owners. Its purpose is to provide a way for residents to dispose of junk and debris to keep their properties clean. It is for Niles residents and property owners only and out of town trash is not allowed. A tax map or proof of owning or renting property in the town is still required and a town representative may be checking. We ask business owners within Niles to refrain from bringing debris generated from their business operations. Please make separate arrangements for job site dumpsters.

The Covid-19 pandemic has forced a change to the town clean-up days going forward. All junk and debris will be brought to the New Hope site only, behind the Niles highway garage and it will be the resident's responsibility to unload it into the appropriate containers. Social distancing is required by wearing a mask and staying at least 6 feet apart when multiple vehicles are at the site unloading. The gate will be open for access to residents April through September on regular highway department work days, Monday through Thursday from 7am to 3:30pm (Closed Holidays). **Absolutely No Dumping around fence when the gate is closed – cameras are watching!**

No hazardous waste allowed. No junk cars, boats, cut up house trailers, etc. will be allowed. Excessive construction / remodeling debris will not be accepted – secure your own container for large home projects! Passenger car and small truck tires will be allowed but limited – No truck loads. No tractor or large truck tires. No appliances containing Freon will be allowed (refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners, dehumidifiers). There is a pallet for TVs and small electronic as well as a container for scrap metal and larger non-Freon appliances. Trees, brush and yard waste will be accepted and unloaded into the tree pile in the back lot.

In the past few years Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cayuga County has held collection days for hard to get rid of items and hopefully the program will continue in 2021. Some of the events are as follows: Hazardous waste, electronics, tires, small appliances with Freon (no refrigerators or freezers larger then dorm size). Go to www.cayugacounty.us and under the Government heading click Agencies and Cornell Cooperative Extension then to Events for more information about dates of collection in 2021.

If everyone follows the set rules this service will be available for years to come!

Town of Niles 5923 New Hope Road Moravia, NY 13118

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Niles Town Phone Numbers

1	Supervisor: Joan Jayne	
2	Council Members:	
i.	Steven Cuddeback	
i.	Clancy Edmonds	
i.	Bernard Juli	
i.	Joseph MacDuffee	
	Highway Superintendent:	
	Pat Steger	
1	Town Clerk:	
i.	Tina Weed	
	Town Deputy Clerk:	
	Patty Podolak	
	Town Justice:	
	Mary Jones	

Town Code Enforcement:		
J. Patrick Doyle		
Town Assessor:		
Dana Merizzi		
Dog Control Officer:		
Suzie Tracy		
Town Planning Board:		
Terry Green		
County Legislator:		
Charlie Ripley		
Town Historian:		
Lori Dewitt Antilla		
Niles Youth Group:		
Karen Porter		