

# VILLAGE OF PHOENIX NEWSLETTER

## VILLAGE BOARD & ADMINISTRATION

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Caleb Sweet

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### DPW Crew Leader

John Kerfien

### Police Chief

Martin Nerber

### Historian

Barbara Dix

Winter 2023



## Message From The Mayor

Hello neighbors!

Welcome to a new year. I'm hoping everyone had a happy holiday season. Looking ahead, let's all be mindful of other motorists, pedestrians, and our DPW crew who do their best to keep our streets and business areas clear of snow and ice. They do a great job in our quaint little village, and should be applauded for all their efforts.

At this time, I would like to announce that in the upcoming election in March, I will be stepping down as mayor. In the six years that I've been involved with the board the village has made some wonderful transformations, as well as the addition of some new businesses. We took the village through the pandemic and helped some needy families along the way.

It has been an honor and privilege serving the village where my ancestors roamed, worked and socialized over the past 200 years. I thank you for the opportunity.

Enjoy the village and be kind!

Mayor Caleb Sweet





# Police Department News

Just a quick update on what your police department has been up to:

As a Village Police department we try to stay in touch with our residents and do so through community programs. This past fall we again trick or treated with about 25 adults and children in an effort to offer them a safe environment. I feel this was a success and am happy to continue this yearly. We also started the camera program last year and we really didn't have a large response so I am posting this again below in hopes more citizens will realize how important it is to share your videos with the police department.

I would like to announce a new program we have launched in an effort to help keep our Village safe and solving crimes more efficiently. We would like to invite our residents to register their in home security camera systems to include ring door bells. This is certainly not any instance of big brother and we are not asking to have access to your links or footage, it is simply a program to let us know where the cameras are to assist us in solving crimes. Technology is our friend and awareness is half the battle. Please send me an email at Phx9150@aol.com if you would like to participate in this program, I would need your address, location of the camera's, with specific points of view they would capture (direction). Village trustee Brian Borchik has offered to help install new ring door bell systems to any resident that may be interested, please let us know.

On December 20th we recognized two of our officers and three community members at a ceremony held at the Sweet Memorial Building. Officer Brian Fortino received (first ever recipient) the Charles Moyer Community Service award for his commitment to programs such as Shop with a Hero and other worthy events. Officer Hunter Nerber was honored for his heroism for surviving a critical incident that took place in November. Also honored were David Dingman (The Medicine Place), Geoffrey Raponi (Fulton Walmart) and Jimmer Szatkowski (Chick-fil-A) for their ongoing dedication to our village in support of our programs.

December 20, 2022 the village board changed the overnight parking hours from 0200-0600 to Midnight to 0700. This took effect immediately to assist our DPW in keeping the streets clear to be able to efficiently remove snow, please help them out by not parking on the village streets between those hours.

Our crosswalks have caught a lot of attention lately, citizens are noticing that motorists are not stopping for pedestrians

attempting to cross at or in these crosswalks. We listened to those complaints and have been monitoring and issuing tickets for those violations. The village board has also become actively involved by improving the crosswalks with new signage and warning lights on Culvert Street. We ask that you help us keep our citizens and visitors safe by paying attention to our vehicle and traffic laws in our village. We also hosted one of our most successful and well received Shop with a Hero programs partnering with nearly every police agency in Oswego County, including the Oswego Youth Bureau and the United Way. We were able to help approximately 65 children for the holiday season.

We still have some challenge coins left that are for sale for \$10 each, the proceeds go to our community programs such as CHOOSE, KIND, and Shop with a Hero. They can be purchased at The Medicine Place on Main Street.



Chief Marty Nerber



## Message From Trustee Griser

Hello Phoenix!

We've been blessed with a mild winter to this point, but I would like to acknowledge the amazing efforts of our DPW crew, who are always on top of any winter-related weather. The roads are always cleared for our residents, and most importantly, for the school buses. Great job, gentlemen.

I'd also like to congratulate the Village of Phoenix for being awarded \$4.5 million via the NY Forward Grant. This is a wonderful opportunity for the village to grow and provide new and exciting things to the community. Stay tuned as we move forward with the implementation process!

Paul Griser, Trustee



## Code Enforcement Update

Older neighborhoods especially need to rely on code enforcement to make sure that houses and buildings are maintained sufficiently to keep up property values and also to keep pace with new technologies and safety research.

While property owners often think that the way they take care of their property is their own business, the major impact that neighboring properties have on one another's value and enjoyment means that building maintenance and safety becomes the business of everyone in the neighborhood.

When you hear someone loosely talking about code violations and why the Village is not enforcing the codes, the first question to ask yourself as a neighborhood leader is whether the Village actually has adopted by ordinance a code that would cover the offending situation. If so, you might have a clear path toward making property owners accountable for maintaining their buildings (both the main building or house and any garages, storage sheds, and such). You also may have a way to deal with some ugly or inappropriate things people keep outdoors, although I must warn you that codes often does not address some of the worst aesthetic decisions that people make!

If your neighbor leaves their old sofa on the porch, and you don't like it, that doesn't necessarily mean it is a code violation. Your particular code would have to speak directly to the situation. Although there's a bit of personal judgment on the part of the inspector involved, it doesn't stretch far. Codes do not necessarily address everything that you might find offensive aesthetically. I hope you can appreciate that what you may think is an old sofa might be considered a quirky porch chair by your neighbor. In the end, codes will not address anything and everything you might find offensive, but we certainly strive to maintain a basic standard.

I mention these issues because of the things that I hear from time to time. We live in a nearly 175 year old Village of approximately 900 homes and a population of roughly 2,300 residents. Nearly all structures in our Village could be cited with some type of a code violation. After receiving this newsletter, I will strongly campaign to survey our Village for specific areas of concern such as, missing or non-color-contrasting house numbers, trash cans left by the road or visible from the street, trash put out to the curb too early, furniture, carpet and large piles of household items left by the curb, unlicensed vehicles, parking across the sidewalks and not keeping your sidewalks clear of snow and or debris.

Having this article in front of all residents is my way to say that based on what I have heard, this is what is going to happen and code violations will be written as opposed to what has generally been practiced as a "friendly reminder" letter. I realize we all have different situations, capabilities and means of performing some tasks, so should you have an issue with my plan moving forward, please feel free to contact me in my office at the Sweet Memorial Building or call my direct number at 315-695-1307.

Administrator Jim Lynch 

## Message From Trustee Borchik

Hello fellow village residents. It's been nearly a year since you elected me as a Trustee and what a year it has been. As part of my duties as Trustee I was very lucky to have been chosen by the Mayor to work as liaison with both our parks and police department. I'm proud of the things that have been accomplished in that time.

I've been blessed to be able to work closely with the Bridge House Brats program, being made an "Honorary Brat" at the end of this past summer. I don't think I can properly express my feelings on what an amazing program we have right here in our home. If all goes as planned, I'll be doing some more fun things with them this coming summer. We are also starting to work on long term planning for this program to make sure it is here for many years to come.

My work with our Village Police Department has been nothing short of eye opening and fulfilling. I've learned of so much more of what our police do other than what we see on the streets. The community service aspect of what our men and women do is enough to bring tears to your eyes. I was extremely honored to have been asked to be part of both Shop With A Hero and our CHOOSE programs Christmas meal delivery to seniors. I have always had tremendous respect for our men and women in uniform. I've learned how much actual behind the scenes work and training happens that the general public has no idea about. I'm extremely proud of each and every one of our officers in what they do every day.

Finally, I'm honored to have been able to serve the residents of Phoenix over the past year and I look forward to continue to be able to do so in the future.

Brian Borchik, Trustee 

## Village Awarded \$4.5 Million Via NY Forward Grant

The Village of Phoenix is pleased to announce it was awarded \$4.5 million through the NY Forward Grant. After three years of applying, the village's hard work paid off during a special announcement held in Homer, NY. New York Secretary of State Robert Rodriguez presented the village with the award. Stay tuned as we move forward with the implementation of plans that are sure to enhance the quality of life within our village.



A special thanks to our team who worked on the application process, which included: Administrator Jim Lynch, Grant Writer Kristy LaManche, Mayor Caleb Sweet and Trustees Paul Griser and Brian Borchik.



## Message From Village Administrator

The Village Administrator is an appointed position that reports to the Village Board. The main function of the position is to oversee the day-to-day operations of the Village through a wide array of different responsibilities established in the code or by job description. As Chief Administrative Officer, the position works with the Village Board to implement policy directives they establish while also assisting in setting long range goals and objectives. Generally, the position serves as the primary public information officer for the Village as well as looking out for its economic interests and monitoring county/state/federal issues. Furthermore, the position serves as the Personnel Officer for the organization overseeing various human resources functions with assistance from Department Heads and other related staff members.

In this article, however I choose to write about the benefits of community service and volunteering one's time and how it will change or ultimately grow our community and guide us to fulfilling our overall comprehensive plan and long term vision for years to come.

Our Village has quite an array of small organizations that need some assistance with making these programs and groups stay sustainable. Here are some reasons why I think getting involved will benefit YOU and OUR community...

### Volunteering connects you to others

One of the better-known benefits of volunteering is the impact on the community. Unpaid volunteers are often the glue that holds a community together. Volunteering allows you to connect to your community and make it a better place. Even helping out with the smallest tasks can make a real difference to the lives of people, animals, and organizations in need. And volunteering is a two-way street: It can benefit you and your family as much as the cause you choose to help. Dedication your time as a volunteer helps you make new friends, expand your network, and boost your social skills.

### Volunteering helps you make new friends and contacts

One of the best ways to make new friends and strengthen existing relationships is to commit to a shared activity together. Volunteering is a great way to meet new people, especially if you are new to an area. Volunteering also strengthens your ties to the community and broadens your support network, exposing you to people with common interests, neighborhood resources, and fun and fulfilling activities.

### Volunteering increases your social and relationship skills

While some people are naturally outgoing, others are shy and have a hard time meeting new people. Volunteering gives you the opportunity to practice and develop your social skills, since you are meeting regularly with a group of people with common

interests. Once you have momentum, it's easier to branch out and make more friends and contacts.

### Volunteering as a family

While it might be a challenge to coordinate everyone's schedules, volunteering as a family has many worthwhile benefits. Children watch everything you do. By giving back to the community, you show them firsthand how volunteering makes a difference and how good it feels to help other people and animals and enact change. It's also a valuable way for you to get to know organizations in the community and find resources and activities for your children and family.

Just a few groups and committees that could benefit from your unique resources, guidance, manpower or whatever your skill set might be:

- Bridge House Brats
- Phoenix Tree Advisory Committee
- Phoenix Community Garden
- Phoenix Rising
- Phoenix Area Food Pantry
- Village Neighborhood Watch
- First Responders Memorial
- Sweet Memorial Building Committee
- Locktoberfest...and more!

Interested individuals can contact me in my office directly at 315-695-1307 or email me at [jlynch@villageofphoenix-ny.gov](mailto:jlynch@villageofphoenix-ny.gov) and I can help direct you to the group where you think your interest and skills will best be put to great work!

Hope to see you all at some of our Village Board meetings!

Administrator Jim Lynch 

**Village of Phoenix**  
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