

Steuben County Newsletter

November / December 2018



FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S DESK....

As the weather cools, Steuben County and many municipalities find themselves again focused on finalizing our budgets for 2019. Based on our initial workshops, the County looks to reduce the tax levy for the third year in a row. We've benefited from a growth in sales tax and interest earnings, but are always weary of State mandates that may become a local cost in the future, namely Raise the Age and indigent defense reform. More detail on the 2019 County budget will be provided in the next edition of the newsletter.

In the meantime, please find important updates below, and I wish you and yours a great holiday season.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joseph Hauryski".

Joseph Hauryski
Chairman
Steuben County Legislature

Planning Department

Steuben County Planning Department Annual Fall Training

The Steuben County Planning Department invites you to attend a four part training intended for Town and Village Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board members. Attendees of this training will receive all four credits towards their annual continuing education requirements. Additionally a light dinner will be provided. To find out more information about the event AND to register please visit

www.eventbrite.com/e/steuben-county-planning-department-annual-fall-training-tickets-51723415127

When: Thursday, November 15th 2018
Time: 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Where: Steuben County Office Building Annex (new building)
20 E. Morris St., Bath, NY 14810
RSVP: by Tuesday November 13th, 2018

Office for the Aging

In every community survey that we do across the county, older residents indicate that the primary service they need to successfully aging in place in their own homes is transportation. In a rural county larger than the state of Rhode Island, can you imagine trying to get to your medical appointments, the grocery store, or other essential services if you can't drive?

Project Care is a volunteer driver program under the Office for the Aging that serves residents age 60+ in the greater Bath area (towns of Avoca, Bath, Bradford, Prattsburgh, Pulteney, Savona, Urbana, Wayne, and Wheeler). Our volunteers primarily transport individuals to medical appointments, but also provide transportation to essential services, shopping assistance in the village of Bath, friendly visits and reassuring phone calls to those living alone. We are always in need of caring volunteers that would be able to provide rides/services to our older residents. Do you have an hour or two a week to assist an older neighbor in need?

Faith in Action provides similar services in the rest of the county and the Institute for Human Services Volunteer Transportation program provides long-distance rides to medical appointments outside of the county.

Call NYCONNECTS at (607) 664-2322 to discuss your specific transportation needs or call Kathy Burns at (607) 664-2298 if you would like more information about volunteer opportunities with Project Care.

Public Health

There are two additional counseling resources for children now available in the county:

Noyes Mental Health & Wellness

<https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/noyes/healthcare-services/mental-health.aspx>

They offer individual, group and family therapy for adults, children, and families in a friendly and open atmosphere. Here you or your family member will receive care tailored to your specific needs from a multidisciplinary team of professionals with backgrounds in psychiatry, psychology, social work, and counseling. They address issues including: Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder behavioral problems, stress management, anger management, grief and loss, trauma, life transitions, depression and anxiety, mood disorders, marital and family problems, chronic pain and health issues.

Referral Process: Anyone may call the clinic to request treatment.

Financial Concerns: Noyes Mental Health Services is dedicated to providing treatment regardless of ability to pay and accepts most insurance plans as well as Medicaid and Medicare. Clients who don't have insurance may be eligible for services at a reduced fee through the Noyes Financial Assistance Program. Additional information about financial assistance is available by calling (585) 335-4316.

Child and Family Services Center

<https://www.alfred.edu/about/map/child-family-services-center.cfm>

607-871-2229

CFSC (Child and Family Services Center) provides individual counseling for all ages, as well as family therapy, play therapy, marriage counseling, and group counseling. Additionally, evaluation services are available for children and adolescents (age 3-21) in the following areas: psycho-educational, behavioral, ADHD, developmental delays, and autism spectrum.

Child services are provided from a family based approach that involves both parents and children.

Fees for services are determined on a sliding scale, no insurance billing is done. Fee ranges are minimal and can be negotiated. Clients with Medicaid or NYS Child Health Plus are not charged a fee.

Youth Bureau

The Youth Bureau teamed up with the Department of Social Services and members of an advisory committee to hold a ***Steuben Vulnerable Youth Summit***, on Tuesday, October 30th, at the First Presbyterian Church of Bath.

Attended by approximately 115 participants, the summit was the county's initial event to raise public awareness about the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), as well as runaway/homeless youth, and those exploited for labor. Summit participants represented twelve school districts in the county, as well as over 20 agencies, including youth agencies, healthcare, mental health, law enforcement, clergy, and other stakeholder groups.

In addressing the crowd, Sheriff Jim Allard recalled thinking what many others believe – that sexual exploitation of children can't happen in Steuben County. "As a patrol officer, that's what I thought," Allard said. "I've come to realize I should have looked more closely at those (kids). I only looked at the criminal aspect of their behavior, such as trespass, disorderly conduct, not at the underlying aspect of why they behaved like that."

Allard was one of several panelists representing services and county agencies on the front line of human trafficking of children under the age of 18, including the departments of Social Services, Probation, Public Health, Community Services, County Attorney, the Youth Bureau and law enforcement.

Sexual exploitation occurs when an individual is forced to perform sex acts in exchange for something of value, such as drugs, food or a place to stay. Similarly, labor trafficking occurs when an individual is forced or coerced to work in exchange, or for little or no pay. And drug abuse is often part of the equation. "If there is drug abuse in your community, there is human trafficking in your community," Allard said. "It's as simple as that."

Homeless or mistreated youth are especially vulnerable when it comes to human predators who promise survival and safety in return for sex, panelists said. In addition, many youth simply believe it's accepted behavior or a job like any other.

Deb Kuehner, founder and director of The Potter's Hands Foundation, a 12-bed safe house for exploited women, served as the key note speaker for the summit, reinforcing the message of all of the panelists that trafficking of youth does indeed happen in the county, and can often be unnoticed "in plain sight". Kuehner shared experiences from victims she has worked with, and provided a brief overview of signs that indicate a child may be being exploited.

The summit marked a year-long effort by the task force to set the groundwork for a successful campaign to end abusive exploitation and help runaway and homeless youth.

Recognizing the problem is the first step toward stopping the problem, county Vulnerable Youth project coordinator Lisa Baker said. "A lot of people believe it just can't be happening here. Well, it is," she added. "We're working on telling people what it is and what they can do to stop it. Our first priority is the safety of our children."

The event was supported by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services.