

Water testing may end soon

Lack of funding could shutter Ad'k
Lake Survey Corp. at end of year

By JUSTIN A. LEVINE
Outdoors Writer

RAY BROOK — The long-run-
ning field operations of the Adiron-
dack Lake Survey Corporation are
likely to cease at the end of the year
due to a lack of funding.
Beginning in the 1980s, ALSC

began collecting water quality sam-
ples from around the Adirondack
Park. Since then, it has conducted
what is likely the largest, most com-
prehensive inventory of water quality
data the Adirondacks has seen.
However, a lack of funding, com-
bined with concerns about the Trump

administration, means the corpora-
tion's eight full-time field staff mem-
bers are likely to be out of work as of
Dec. 31.
Willie Janeway, interim president
of the ALSC board, said the organiza-
tion should be proud of its work.
"The Survey Corporation has had a

great run collecting data that has guid-
ed policy and legislation at the state
and federal level," Janeway said on
Tuesday. "It became the very founda-
tion of successful reductions in acid
rain.
"There has been an effort to repro-
gram most of the money away from

the acid rain work that the survey cor-
poration has done for decades and put
that into climate change.
"But as of this point, there is no
funding for any of those staff to do any
of this work after December 31st."

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Woolly pigs

shrug off the snow



Woolly pigs, a Hungarian breed known as Mangalitsas, root in the ground at Kate Mountain Farm in Vermontville.
(Enterprise photo — Glynis Hart)

By GLYNIS HART
Staff Writer

VERMONTVILLE — Once near-
ly extinct, a woolly pig that originat-
ed in Hungary is thriving on a small
farm in the Adirondack Park.

The Mangalitsa pig, which stands
out for its curly white hair, was devel-
oped in the mid-19th century for its
hardiness and rapid growth, but with
the rise of refrigeration in the mid-
20th century, economies of scale in
pig farming began to crowd out such
specialty breeds. By 1991 there were
only 200 of the pigs in Hungary.

However, a changing food culture
that values small local farms has
picked up the Mangalitsa and blessed
it. A Spanish company bought the last
of the breed and began promoting
them, and then other countries took
notice. Since the first Mangalitsas
arrived in the United States in 2007,
the hardy hobby-farm pig has become
a favorite with chefs for its fat. Gour-
mets contend that it's the fat in meat
that gives it flavor, and the well-mar-
bled meat of the Mangalitsa is flavor-
ful, indeed.

"I call them land seals," said Aaron
Caiazza. With his wife Kelly Cerialo,
Caiazza runs Kate Mountain Farm,
where they raise Mangalitsas as well
as other pigs, turkeys, ducks and
chickens.

"They produce something like a
six-inch layer of back fat," said
Caiazza. Although he provides the
pigs with shelters for the winter, on
their own they rarely put themselves
inside. The cold doesn't bother them,
he said.

If you go shopping on the internet,
a pound of Mangalitsa bacon runs
around \$16 a pound, with lesser cuts
going for \$8 a pound. Chefs prize the
meat as "the Kobe beef of pork"
because of its tenderness and flavor.
Natural food enthusiasts laud its
health benefits because, when the
pigs are raised on a natural diet, Man-
galitsa pigs produce monounsaturated
and polyunsaturated fat high in
omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids.

"This is a natural environment for
pigs," said Caiazza. Caiazza leads a
tour of the farm with a bucket of corn
to toss to the 40 or so pigs. Groups of
pigs, separated by age, root in differ-
ent pastures. Mangalitsas and other

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Farming inside the Blue Line

breeds, mainly Berkshire, are mixed
together.

"They don't see well. They don't
sweat, so they need the shade of the
trees," he said. "The trick is to treat
them — to treat all animals — with
respect. They're just bossy some-
times."

One far pasture has only four pigs
in it, including Happy, a Berkshire
boar kept for breeding. Happy lives
up to his name, coming to Caiazza for
a scratch and a pat. Fortunately,
Happy, who probably clocks in
around 300 pounds, isn't aggressive.
Caiazza and other pig farmers, who
trade stock in order to maintain genet-
ic diversity, keep an eye on the pigs'
temperaments as well. If a sow or a
hog is aggressive or difficult to han-
dle, that one goes to bacon rather than
breeding.

At Kate Mountain, the pigs are
doing what pigs like to do best: root-
ing in the soil.

"We rotationally graze so we can
densely control their impact," Caiaz-
za explains. They'll set up an electric
fence around new pasture and let the
pigs at it, "ideally, for five days."

The pigs eat everything they can
find, shoveling up the soft black soil
with their busy snouts, and girdle the
trees. Caiazza lets the trees dry stand-
ing for firewood. When the pigs are
moved to the next spot, the one they
were in begins to turn green. Because
the pigs are fed whole grains, seeds
survive the digestion process and
begin growing grass and other plants
once the pigs move on.

Although the main purpose of rota-
tional grazing is parasite control, it
has multiple benefits. The foraging
pigs eat a natural diet of wild plants
supplemented by feed. Chickens
come in and clean up behind the pigs,
eating bugs and seeds, so the chick-
ens are foraging and healthy as well.

A side effect is that wildlife appre-
ciate the cleared grassy areas, too.
Although the farm has had "a little bit
of a fox problem," the freely roaming
poultry seem to be holding their own.



Happy, a Berkshire black boar, greets Aaron Caiazza, proprietor
of Kate Mountain Farm in Vermontville.
(Enterprise photo — Glynis Hart)

'The trick is to treat them — to treat
all animals — with respect. They're
just bossy sometimes.'

Aaron Caiazza, Kate Mountain Farm

Caiazza notes that a moose likes to
wander through from a nearby pond:
"It's in his pathway." White-tailed
deer come in to graze the cleared
areas.

"The goal is to make the property
productive," said Caiazza. Kate
Mountain Farm is entering its fifth
year with 9 acres under cultivation
and a new greenhouse for growing
vegetables. With typical farmer cau-
tion, Caiazza anticipates an "official"
opening next year, when they plan to
put a sign out on State Route 3. For
now, the only way to find the farm is
to look for the greenhouse.

Most pork sold in the United States
comes from pigs slaughtered around
four months old. For commercial hog
farmers, rapid growth is a money-
maker: more meat for less feed. Pigs
raised by huge commercial growers
like Smithfield grow rapidly due to a
combination of genetics, corn and
soy-based feed, plus a growth stimu-

lator, ractopamine. Naturally raised
pigs take more time to gain full
weight, with the Mangalitsas being
"finished" around 15-18 months.
Although they don't require a lot of
feed, the added time for growth
means Mangalitsas eat up to 40 per-
cent more.

Although the limited availability of
certified organic feed means Kate
Mountain can't certify its pork as
"organic," the farm is currently
applying for a humanely raised ani-
mals certification. They do some
meat processing on the farm, but
most goes to a certified slaughter
facility in Ticonderoga.

Meanwhile, local chefs already
know about the Kate Mountain Farm
pork. Along with other locally
sourced products, Mangalitsa pork
can be found on the menu in Saranac
Lake and Lake Placid at Fiddlehead
Bistro, Bitters & Bones, Big Slide
Brewery and Top of the Park.

Electric
rates
spike in
Tupper

By AARON CERBONE
Staff Writer

TUPPER LAKE — Elec-
tric customers in this village
will see a spike in their usual-
ly low rates this month as the
municipality has exceeded its
annual allotment of hydro-
electric power.

The village boasts low
electric rates due to a deal
made with the New York
Power Authority but when
residents use more electricity
than they are allotted the vil-
lage must buy more from
alternate suppliers.

The village board approved
a motion to purchase more
electricity at the Oct. 18 vil-
lage board meeting, temporar-
ily raising the rate for the
approximately 3,300 cus-
tomers serviced in the village
and town.

Superintendent of the elec-
tric department Marc Staves
said the electricity will come
from a variety of different
sources on an open market.

This purchasing of extra
electricity is common but
usually during the winter
months when customers are
using up more electricity to
heat their homes.


"We do this every year,"
Maroun said.

Trump talks
contrast
with quiet
tribute to
Kelly's son

By LAURIE KELLMAN
and ROBERT BURNS
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — It's
known as some of the saddest
ground in America, a 14-acre
plot of
Arlington
National
Cemetery
called Sec-
tion 60
where many
U.S. person-
nel killed in
Iraq and
Afghanistan
are interred.
On Memorial
Day this
year, Presi-
dent Donald
Trump and
the man who
would be his
chief of staff
visited
Grave 9480,
the final resting place of
Robert Kelly, a Marine killed
Nov. 9, 2010, in
Afghanistan.

"We grieve with you. We
honor you. And we pledge to
you that we will always
remember Robert and what he
did for all of us," Trump said,


Trump


Kelly

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‘We haven’t left the farm together in seven years.’
Sara Burke, Atlas Hoofed It farm, Sugarbush

Planted with livestock



Sara Burke counts all the pigs daily at Atlas Hoofed It farm in Sugarbush. (Enterprise photos — Glynis Hart)

Couple provides pork and beef to local homes and restaurants

By GLYNIS HART
Staff Writer

SUGARBUSH — It’s 12 degrees below zero, and Sara Burke is counting pigs. Several dozen of them have stampeded to the fence for feeding time, and she can barely be heard over their squealing.

“I count so that if one turns up missing, if it’s sick or doesn’t come for food, we can find out quickly,” she said. The pigs are separated by size and age group into different pens, and they charge around with an endearing cheeriness, sniffing out the feed they like best: One pig cleans up a bunch of bananas while others go for grapes. Sara feeds the pigs out-of-date fruits and vegetables from local grocery stores, saving money on feed while providing a fresh diet.

The whole Burke family is involved in feeding time: Dustin, 11, and Brooke, 9, go in the chicken house to feed chickens and collect eggs while their father Dan fills the water buckets for the animals.

Ag-irondack

Farming inside the Blue Line

Even in subzero weather, the chickens lay eggs. The eggs will freeze if the hens don’t sit on them, but when you get an egg out from under a hen “it’s nice and warm,” said Dan. “You can hold it in your two hands and feel the heat inside it.”

There are two horses, around 65 pigs, and 25 cows at Atlas Hoofed It farm in Sugarbush. All the animals have sturdy shelters to protect them from the weather. Since Sara and Dan bought the farm 11 years ago, they’ve put all their profits back into it.

The farm has an old Atlas missile silo in the center, which they haven’t yet figured out a good use for, but thanks to the military engineering of the site, the farm roads are exceptional: wide and flat. The Burkes took inspiration for the farm’s



Sara and Dan Burke started small, with two pigs for their own consumption, and now raise up to 80 pigs a year and 25 cattle.

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Fire claims Saranac Lake home

By AARON CERBONE
Staff Writer

SARANAC LAKE — Firefighters battled a blaze at 15 Canaras Ave. for nearly five hours Thursday night and this morning.

Though the firefighters were able to put out the blaze, which is believed to have been caused by a chimney fire, the house near the corner of Petrova Avenue was deemed unlivable. Starting in the basement, the fire damaged all three floors of the house, with smoke and water damage on the first floor and fire damage on the second.

Saranac Lake Volunteer Fire Department members arrived on the scene at 9:41 p.m. with five trucks and 16 members, and began to fight the fire in double-digit-negative temperatures alongside 17 members and two trucks from the Lake Placid fire department, and 11 members and one truck from the Bloomingdale fire department.

Members and a truck from the Paul Smiths-Gabriels fire department stood by at the Saranac Lake station while the fire was extinguished.

The owners of the house, Patricia and Timothy Stark, were not able to be reached by press time. It is unclear what their current living arrangements are.

Cold closes airport, aids Ice Palace

By AARON CERBONE
Staff Writer

SARANAC LAKE — Continuing subzero temperatures are halting the flow of flights at the Adirondack Regional Airport, preparing Lake Flower for Ice Palace construction and giving the village Department of Public Works a change of pace.

Airport

At the Adirondack Regional Airport in Lake Clear, the runway has iced over, preventing planes from taking off or landing. The airport’s broom truck stopped working during the freezing snap.

Airport Manager Corey Hurwitch said the airport is trying to sweep and plow down the edges of the ice to open the runways as soon as possible, but he is unsure when planes will be able to fly through again.

“We’re also a little bit at the mercy of Mother Nature; it’s too cold for us to do some of the things that historically work,” Hurwitch said. “Normally we’ve been able to wet sand and freeze the sand to the ice, but we think that the sand is freezing before it even comes in contact with the ground.”

Ice Palace

Dean Baker, who coordinates the construction of the Ice Palace for the Saranac Lake Winter Carnival, said the ice in Pontiac Bay on Lake Flower is currently 8 inches thick, just shy of the 12-inch minimum needed to cut blocks for the palace. He hopes to start cutting by Jan. 18, but a thick layer of snow is hindering the ice’s growth. Baker will need to bring one of the tractor-mounted snowblowers or four-wheeler plows onto the bay to clear the powder off.

Using an 11-inch circular saw from the 1930s mounted on a sled, Baker and a team of volunteers will score around 22,000 2-by-4-foot bricks.

READ ON:
Winter weather makes High Peaks skiable **Page A3**
Deep freeze prompts concern for the homeless and old **Page A15**

LaValley: Big Tupper ski price was overstated

By AARON CERBONE
Staff Writer

TUPPER LAKE — Some skiers anticipating the reopening of the Big Tupper Ski Area, scheduled for the start of the 2018-19 season, were shocked to hear the lift ticket prices would be 80 percent the cost of a Whiteface ticket, but developers now say the prices will be much lower.

An article reporting on the reopening last week included information from mountain caretaker Cliff Lemere on that ticket price; however, resort real estate official Jim LaValley said Lemere was not up to date on the latest pricing discussions. The anticipated price for the fully operational mountain, LaValley said, is likely to be closer to \$35 to \$40 a day, comparable to rates at Titus Mountain Family Ski Center near Malone.

“We’re very sensitive to the local pricing structure. We’re going to want to provide a pricing structure that is extremely attractive to bring people back to Big Tupper,” LaValley said. “Is that going to be at, or well below Titus? This is the sort of bantering we are doing right now.”

LaValley said the developers have also considered price incentives for local skiers and students with perfect attendance.

Big Tupper is part of the Adirondack Club and Resort development, which this year got some traction on selling housing lots around the ski center and starting to build a



Chair 2 at Big Tupper Ski Area will open at the start of the 2018 season with lift tickets projected to cost around the same as at the Titus Mountain Family Ski Center. (Enterprise photo — Aaron Cerbone)

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Frozen pipes

Saranac Lake’s Department of Public Works has been busy plowing roads and dealing with equipment slowed by the cold temperatures. When they aren’t out braving the cold to plow streets and perform repairs, department Superintendent Jeff Dora said DPW workers are trying to do more indoor work now, catching up on long-needed organization and getting a jump-start on a bench-building project slated for the spring.

Dora said though they have received several calls about frozen pipes, they have not been faced with many frozen pipes busting so far this winter.

“Stone seems to absorb that cold faster than a concrete foundation, so they’re finding that the pipes are froze right where it comes in the foundation,” Dora said. “The best thing to do is take a small space heater and just apply heat to that location, and heat that rock up so that it lets it thaw out.”

Couple provides pork and beef to local homes and restaurants

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name from the missile silo, and from the novel by Ayn Rand. According to their website, “Atlas Shrugged” is one of their favorite books.

They didn’t start with a plan when they bought the farm 11 years ago. Sara, a chemist, is currently pursuing a nursing license through North Country Community College. Dan is a carpenter and all-around fix-it guy — his system for keeping the water hoses from freezing allows them to disconnect the hoses from the taps quickly, and store them on the side of the fence so that the water drains out. In the future, they hope one of them can stay home to work on the farm, but for now they both keep working.

“The horses were our gateway animal,” Sara said. Chores over, the family relaxed in the warmth of the woodstove inside the farmhouse.

“The idea started as a homestead. We bought two pigs and named them Pork and Beans, and friends were like, ‘Hey, raise me a half a pig.’”

“We thought piglets were extraordinarily expensive, at 40 bucks,” said Dan.

“We bought four more that first summer,” said Sara. “It’s just kind of grown from there.”

“Pat Clelland sold us his Highland cow herd from up in Duane,” said Dan. “We were like, ‘If we’re feeding pigs, why not feed cows?’”

“It went from a homestead raising meat for friends and family to now,” said Sara. Their CSA (community supported agriculture) has about 25 active subscribers and offers a monthly minimum share of \$50.

“You get to pick what you want in the CSA,” Sara said. “It’s non-traditional. We do mostly beef, pork and eggs. We ask people to limit taking things like bacon —



Highland cattle at Atlas Hoofed It farm in Sugarbush wait for the Burkes to rotate them into a different pasture. All the animals on the farm get plenty of room to roam.

(Enterprise photo — Glynis Hart)

that’s in the fine print. You can take what you want, but leave enough for others.”

Another non-traditional aspect of the farm is that the Burkes deliver the meat to their customers, rather than having them pick it up at the farm.

“I play meat lady and Dan plays meat man,” said Sara. “It’s quicker to drop off than have people come out — then you have to stay home on the farm all day for when they can come.”

Like the other young farming couples profiled in the Enterprise’s Ag-ironhack series, the Burkes work all the time. They love what they’re doing, and they’re committed to bringing up their children on the farm. Raising livestock, they’ve

found that their products are in high demand. They don’t advertise, and they’ve never had enough free time to go to the farmers market on Saturday morning. “Mostly, people come to us,” said Sara.

Caring for the animals ties them to the farm. Not only is there regular feeding and watering to be done, but a crisis can erupt at any time. Once, a moose walked through the farm, taking down seven fences in one day — which freed most of the animals. Although they have friends who could, theoretically, do chores so they can go on vacation, they’d have to train them how to do everything.

“We haven’t left the farm together in seven years,” said Sara.

However, unlike crop farmers, raising livestock carries an emotional risk. Before they got the pigs, Sara was a vegetarian. If they were going to eat meat, they wanted to make sure it was raised in a humane manner, and the farm stays true to that value.

“We try to make sure the animals have good lives,”

she said. “And we say ‘thank you.’ We thank the various animals when it’s dinner time.”

One of their breeding sows, Josephine, is 16 years old. Although they name some of the animals and get attached to them, they don’t skirt the reality of farm business. When they had to end the career of a favorite boar so they could introduce more genetic diversity, “I had

tears in my eyes when I dropped him off [at the butcher’s],” said Sara.

And although they try to make sure every animal on the farm contributes, it’s no longer clear what the horses do for their keep, since the Burkes have been too busy to keep using them for logging. It’s a hard life, but not all of it is hard.

“I like it when the animals have all been fed. The chick-

ens are in, the pigs are pig-piled, the cows are fed. I like to see the animals at peace,” said Dan.

As part of the Wild Center’s Saturday features of local farmers, Sara and Dan Burke will give a presentation at the Wild Center in Tupper Lake from 1 to 3 p.m. on Jan. 6. They’ll be serving sausages from Atlas Hoofed It farm.

Big Tupper

(Continued from Page A1)

road to some of the lots.

Construction on a road leading to the lots has slowed during the winter months but will continue through the spring when crews are able to work more in better weather.

Though Big Tupper has not formally been open since 1999, the 100-member-strong volunteer group ARISE operated the recreation center from 2009 to 2014, cleaning the trails and maintaining the machinery. ARISE set one-day lift ticket prices at \$25, drawing Tupper Lakers of various economic classes and tourists looking for a rare cheap ski vacation. Due to a lack of snow and a subsequent lack of funding, ARISE ended its annual fundraising for the ski area in 2014, much to the disappointment of Tupper Lakers and skiers across the Tri-Lakes area.

Lamere said it is unclear who will run the mountain in 2018.

The Big Tupper Ski Area, which cost at least \$130,000 for maintenance and diesel annually while operated by ARISE, will be funded by the sale of the Adirondack Club and Resort’s “great camp” luxury housing lots.

LaValley said Chair 2 is expected to open in 2018, servicing trails on the right side of the Mountain including Logger, the Snowboard Park and Sugar Loaf. Chair 1 is to be rebuilt through the

2018 summer. Chair 3, which is surrounded by ledges that don’t receive much powder, may open in 2018 if weather provides adequate snow.

“I love Big Tupper but \$72 dollars is a bit steep unless the whole mountain is open and functional again,” Brian DeBadts of Malta commented through Facebook on the news of the mountain’s reopening. “I fondly remeber [sic] the days when the Town owned it and season passes for high school students were \$100.”

According to LaValley, when the payroll and maintenance costs rise with the mountain’s number of lifts, employees and amenities, ticket prices will have to follow.

“Obviously, as they grow, adding snowmaking and all this other stuff, the ticket grows with that,” Elliot Day, who worked as a lift operator under ARISE.

Day said he currently picks up a Whiteface season pass every year but will trade that in for a Big Tupper season pass instead next year. He wants to work again at the mountain his father Peter had owned, along with Leroy Pickering, until 1999.

“I’ll probably want to go ski Whiteface every once in a while, but I wouldn’t be skiing anywhere else if I’m working at the mountain [Big Tupper],” Day said. “Big Tupper has a unique terrain. The features of the mountain are great.”



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