Study Examines Taxes, Drilling
By Eric Banford

The Tompkins County Council of Governments (TCCOG) was formed to improve communication among local governments, hoping to share knowledge and save money by tackling large—issue—issues together. Preparing municipalities for gas drilling has been a focused effort lately, and TCCOG’s Assessment and Land Valuation Subcommittee recently released a white paper “urging New York State to refrain from issuing drilling permits until it can capture appropriate taxes and fees and allocate them to cover costs to all levels of government, based on sound policy and verifiable data.”

“We looked at the system of taxation in New York,” says Tompkins County Legislator Carol Chock, subcommittee chairwoman, “and came up with a few key principles. Taxpayers shouldn’t be responsible for expenses or risks of the gas drilling industry. The entire system needs to be fair, equitable and accurate, and needs to cover local and state costs.”

“The mere fact that a gas well’s assessment is based on self-reported figures is mind-boggling to me,” says Jay Franklin, director of assessment at Tompkins County Department of Assessment. “I’m sure most people in the state would love to self-report their assessed value.”

Franklin is concerned that the tax burden of drilling be shared fairly. “For my office, the most important factor is that there is an open and transparent process to both monitor gas production but also to review the unit of production value (UPV) methodology. This was created in the late 1970s; the world is a much different place now, and all the input variables should be reviewed,” he says.

“Sweat and toil for a long time” to get the work we do is clean and for the community.

According to Chock, there is an approved gas meter to measure production, but that is all that is in place. “There is no one who checks where the meter is installed, the accuracy of the meter, or the reported output numbers. It is all self-reported by the gas industry and affects everyone in three ways: It affects individual landowners who have leases, since royalty checks depend on accurate readings. Also, local property taxes are impacted. And if a severance tax is put in place, it is impacted there as well,” she says.

Ithaca Biodiesel Builds Local Base
By Anne Marie Cummings

Ithaca Biodiesel Cooperative (IBC), a volunteer, cooperative-run organization, has launched its March membership and fundraising drive, an effort to increase membership, increase awareness of renewable energy and raise $100,000 from the community. It is the organization’s largest open-ended fundraising drive since it was established formed five years ago.

A turning point for IBC came in February 2011, with the death of Meghan Murphy, co-founder and president of the organization, and the sale of the property in Enfield where IBC’s micro-refinery was located. Since then, six new members of the board and one founding member have come together to re-define IBC’s mission, which is to meet all legal and industry standards in producing high-quality and affordable biodiesel, using waste vegetable oil, on a much greater scale for the community.

According to McKenzie Jones-Rounds, president of IBC, funds raised will help pay for a containment dike, large storage tanks, biodiesel processors, a canopy for vehicles and a pump—two of the latter being what Jones-Rounds calls “a dream” for IBC. The bulk of the funds raised, however, will go toward obtaining a new location. Two sites are currently under consideration.

The first location is vacant building, once a bookstore, along South Elmira Road. The second is land in Dryden. “Both locations have attractive qualities, but one would require building from the ground up.” Jones-Rounds says. “Fortunately, we have received support from the Ithaca Town Board for the existing building along South Elmira Road, yet, since October 2011, we’ve had to explain what we are doing and assure them that the work we do is clean and extremely safe.”

Please turn to page 16
Avi Miner knows the Trumansburg Farmer’s Market inside out. As a high school student, he worked at the consignment stand that Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) operates there. After graduating from Oberlin College, he returned to manage the market’s youth program, and this year he’ll serve as the market’s manager.

Miner’s new duties include making sure the daily operations run smoothly and acting as the point person who handles questions from the vendors, the community and market customers. He’s excited to see his career grow along with the popular, open-air village market.

“I’ve seen the farmer’s market grow from four vendors hidden under the willows to one of the fastest-growing markets in the small towns surrounding Ithaca,” he says. He attributes the market’s success to strong community support, observing that the pavilions built by local volunteers indicate how important it is for residents to have easy access to fresh local produce and products.

Miner plans to spend most of his first year on the job learning how the various components of the market work. One of his goals is “making sure we stay the course and solidify our identity as a strong, small-town market.”

In addition to having a new manager, the Trumansburg market will be guided by a nine-member board of directors that will include community members and market vendors. Q. Cassetti, described by Miner as “an enormously talented graphic designer who knows publicity inside out,” is leading the board.

The group’s focus is on promoting local farmers and the foods they produce through a variety of means, including a Facebook page, updating the farmer’s market website to make it more accessible and by distributing rack cards in key locations around the community. The new board wants the Trumansburg Farmer’s Market to embrace the community and is developing ways to make it easier for people to use food stamps at the market.

Cassetti, who owns the graphic design company Lucky Stone Partners, is doing some pro bono branding work for small agricultural businesses in the vicinity to help them define “how our area looks and feels.” The new board and manager also plan to increase the promotion of special events at the market. Miner says their hope is to get even more locals and tourists to come to the market to shop or eat by advertising the musicians who are performing each Wednesday. They also plan to have a table at the market where members will distribute information, talk to the public and sell reusable produce bags.

Cassetti credits the previous market manager and board of directors with doing a “tremendous job” of positioning the Trumansburg stands include organic, pasture-raised, grass-fed meats, produce, herbs, fruits, dairy and eggs, flowers, and value-added/ornamental products like honey and bread. And there are always supper vendors for those who don’t feel like cooking and craft vendors for anyone who wants to do some shopping.

The farmer’s market opens for the season on June 6 with about 32 vendors. It’s held every Wednesday from 4 to 7 p.m. in the village park.
Court Decisions on Home Rule Reviewed

By Patricia Brhel

At the meeting of Residents Opposed to Unsafe Shale-gas Extraction (ROUSE) on March 7 in the Brooktondale Community Center, Helen Slottje, an attorney and member of the Community Environmental Defense Council, discussed the recent victories for those opposed to hydraulic fracturing.

The two recent lawsuits that were filed in favor of municipalities both hinged on one issue: Does a town have the legal authority to pass a law prohibiting gas drilling? Slottje said, “In both the Middlefield and the Dryden law suits, it was decided that every town in New York State does indeed have such land use authority. New York State Law ECC&23-0303(2) is clear. It states: ‘The provision of local zoning statute does not prevent a municipality’s authority, through the exercise of its local zoning power, to completely ban operations related to the oil and gas production within its borders.’”

In the Middlefield case, which was decided on Feb. 12, the judge concluded that the town had the authority to completely ban fracking operations due to the language of the statute. Slottje also addressed the issue of whether a town without zoning must make its decision based on need, as they become vacant. In the case of Gernatt Asphalt Products, the Court said, ‘The submission that a site agency, in place.”

With her long experience in this field of law, Slottje discussed the difference between regulation and banning an activity. She stated, “Neither the plain reading of the statutory language nor legislative history would lead this court to conclude that the phrase ‘This article shall supersede all local laws relating to the regulation of the oil, gas and solution mining industries’ was intended to abrogate the constitutional and statutory authority vested in local municipalities to limit regulation affecting land use.” Slottje also addressed the issue of whether a town without formal zoning could pass a ban. “Zoning is a way of dividing up a town so that a law can be passed pertaining only to one portion of a town. A town without zoning must pass a law which is relevant to the entire town. They don’t give up their ability to ban an activity because they are without zoning. They just can’t make a law specific to only one portion of their town,” she said.

She went on to explain, “A judge must make his decision based on three things: a reading of the actual law, a look at legislative history and a look at previous court decisions. In the Middlefield case, which was decided on Feb. 12, the judge said, ‘Nowhere in legislative history is there any suggestion that the legislature intended—as was argued by Anschutz—to preempt local government jurisdiction over roads or the rights of local governments under the real property tax laws.’”

The tax levy limit as determined by New York State calculations for 2012-13 is 3.11 percent. The budget proposed by Brown assumes only a 2.4 percent increase. The remaining unbalanced budget of .71 percent may be used in future years, irrespective of state limits.

In planning for 2012-2013, the district was tasked with balancing a $1,398,763 decrease in federal jobs money and a $1,187,205 increase in debt service costs for capital projects. To offset these costs, the district is using savings achieved through controlling hiring by scrutinizing positions, based on need, as they become vacant.

Welcome to Marathon’s 42nd Annual Maple Festival

It’s A Family Affair & Spring Celebration!

March 24 & 25
Saturday & Sunday
Quality Crafts, Maple Mobile Race, Pancake Eating Contest for Charity.

On Interstate 81 — Exit 9
For more information on events in Cortland County call 1-800-859-2227

March 19 3
Shinagawa Enters Race for Congress

Tompkins County Legislator and hospital administrator Nate Shinagawa has announced that he is running to be the Democratic candidate for the proposed 23rd Congressional District in New York. He serves on the board of the Tompkins County Industrial Development Agency and Community Development Corporation. He has also served on the boards of the Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport, Lifelong Senior Center, Greater Ithaca Activities Center and the Finger Lakes International Dragonboat Festival. He holds both a bachelor’s degree and master’s degree in Health Administration from Cornell University. He resides in Ithaca and has lived in the community for ten years.

The proposed 23rd Congressional district includes all of Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, Tompkins and Yates counties and part of Ontario and Tioga counties.

City Begins Street Cleaning Operations

On Monday, March 19, the Department of Public Works will begin street cleaning operations. This work will move throughout the city during the next five weeks.

Residents who park on the street should watch for street signs and check on their cars daily from March 19 to April 20. If you will be away during this time, please make other parking arrangements for your vehicle. People in need of long term parking arrangements can call the City Chamberlain’s Office at 274-6580 to inquire about the availability of long-term parking permits in the parking garages or find information at www.cityofithaca.org/departments/chamberlain/index.cfm#LTP.

The full schedule of the street cleaning program can be found on the city’s website: www.cityofithaca.org.

Spring Softball & Baseball Signups

Dryden Kiwanis will have its annual, in person, sign ups for Spring Softball & Baseball at the TC3 Field House on the following dates: Thursday, March 22, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Practices are to start in early April. Games will start April 30. Applications can be mailed till March 30, 2012. Please visit www.drydenkiwanisonline.com for additional information.

Ithaca to hold Spring Sports Conference

The Ithaca City School District will hold a spring sports conference in the Ithaca High School gym on Thursday, March 22 from 6:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Superintendent Luvelle Brown, a presentation by athletic trainer and strength conditioning coach Chamberlain’s Office at 274-6580 to inquire about the availability of long-term parking permits in the parking garages or find information at www.cityofithaca.org/departments/chamberlain/index.cfm#LTP. The full schedule of the street cleaning program can be found on the city’s website: www.cityofithaca.org.

Spring Softball & Baseball Signups

Dryden Kiwanis will be having it’s annual, in person, sign ups for Spring Youth Softball and Baseball at the TC3 Field House on the following date: Thursday, March 22, 2012 from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Applications can be mailed till March 30, 2012. Please visit www.drydenkiwanisonline.com for additional information.

IHSS to hold Spring Sports Conference

The Ithaca City School District will hold a spring sports conference in the Ithaca High School gym on Thursday, March 22 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. The conference will include opening comments from Superintendent Luvelle Chamberlain’s Office at 274-6580 to inquire about the availability of long-term parking permits in the parking garages or find information at www.cityofithaca.org/departments/chamberlain/index.cfm#LTP. The full schedule of the street cleaning program can be found on the city’s website: www.cityofithaca.org.

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Men means Maple Syrup at Cayuga Nature Center

While Mother Nature contemplates spring, the Cayuga Nature Center is preparing for its annual Maple Festival March 24 and 25. Tasteful sweetness of maple syrup will be abundant, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with an all-you-can-eat breakfast including local sausage and apple crisp. Live music from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. as well as crafts and games for kids, animal programs, maple syrup demonstrations, a self-guided hike along the Sugarbush Trail, and various local vendors will keep you entertained while you digest.

Admission is $12 for adults, $7 for children (ages three to 12), and free for children two years old and under. Proceeds benefit the Nature Center’s mission and programming. The Nature Center’s Maple Festival is part of the New York State Maple Producers Weekend.

The music lineup features Kenny T. & Wildfire, Technicolor Trailer Park, Mutsu, Drew Minson and Ironwood.

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Families Tackle Wind Turbine Challenge

By Sue Smith-Heavenrich

Cornell’s “Exploration Station” was packed to the walls on Saturday, March 10. That marked the kick-off for a month-long “Catch the Breeze” wind turbine design contest, and 125 children and their parents showed up to get advice, grab a snack and test out their ideas.

“That was far more than we expected,” says Erin Marteal, executive director of Ithaca Children’s Garden, of the turnout. And while she had to scrounge for extra turbine hubs (rubber balls) halfway through the introductory workshop, Marteal is gratified that so many people showed an interest in wind energy.

You don’t need a machine shop to turn parts out for a working turbine: cereal boxes, plastic cake covers and slats from old venetian blinds will work. Making something that turns in a breeze is only part of the challenge, Erik Herman tells the young designers. “But your turbines will have to do work. The test will be how fast they can lift a weight.”

Herman, education and outreach coordinator for the Cornell Laboratory for Energy and Environmental Sciences and Education (CLASSE) holds up a rubber ball and wooden skewers. These are the essential components to a working turbine: a hub and axle. The advantage of a rubber-ball hub is that you don’t have to bolt turbine blades onto it; you can poke bamboo skewers into the ball and tape or glue them in place. Another advantage is that it’s easy to move blades closer together or farther apart.

Herman reminds families that turbines aren’t built in a day. “Designing and creating prototypes is an iterative process,” he says. “You design it, then you try it, then you go back and do it again.”

Within a half-hour, the first turbines are ready for a wind test. The testing equipment is just as low-tech and recycled as the building materials—a coacktail and a fan. Herman slides the turbine into a straw, so it moves freely, mounts it on the testing device and then tapes a length of white ribbon to the end of the axle. He ties a washer to the ribbon and then has the young “design engineer” test her turbine using a fan.

The blades turn, falter, then catch the breeze, turning the axle and winding the ribbon. “Oops!” says Herman when the ribbon falls off the end of the axle, dropping the weight. “We need to figure out how to fix that.”

Testing and heading back to the drawing board seems to be the theme of the day for many families. Eight-year-old Carys Banford spends a long time working out how to attach venetian blind slats to her hub. She thought the curved slats would catch the wind. “But they’re too flat,” she says. “I need to figure out how to angle them.”

Ten-year old Molly Rider cuts four blades from boxes and tapes them to wooden skewers that she poked into the hub. She tests angles and finds one that works well. But later, when she gives her turbine a “run test” around the parking lot, a blade falls out. Her dad jokingly refers to it as a structual malfunction, to which Molly replies, “I think I’ll hot-glue them into the hub.”

Town of Enfield councilperson Ann Rider had heard about the challenge, I felt that our community needed to be involved,” Rider says. She plans to host turbine design sessions in Enfield, and hopes to continue them to get more families involved. And, if she can work out the details, maybe score a field trip to the future wind farm. Meanwhile, she and her team have a few kinks to work out before their turbine is ready to haul weight.

The wind turbine challenge is a collaboration between the Ithaca Children’s Garden and CLASSE’s outreach program, Xraise. Lora Hine, director of the Children’s Garden, says the idea came to her one day while she was weeding the Children’s Garden.

“I encountered to me that a wind turbine would really accent the garden,” she says. Hine and Erik Herman had been working on a simple wind turbine design that would power a small radio. “We’d planned to build and distribute some of these wind turbines throughout the community in an effort to promote renewable energy sustainability and innovative thinking, and to promote the Xraise program,” Hine explains.

When Hine mentioned her idea to Erin Marteal at the garden, Marteal immediately saw ways that a turbine could enhance the garden’s community education program. So late last summer, Hine, Marteal and others erected a wind turbine and installed educational signs in the garden for visitors to see and hear.

“The wind turbine has experienced a few bumps in the road,” Hine admits. It seems that high wind speeds usually result in failure. As a result, she and Herman will continue to modify and refine elements of their turbine throughout this spring—a perfect opportunity for families to see that even the so-called experts have to had back to the drawing board sometimes.

And it’s not just the turbine design that’s got Herman perplexed. He and Hine are still figuring out how to fairly test the turbines for the Earth Day Catch the Breeze competition. They need a steady wind source, so that means fans. But whether they run a long extension cord to an outlet or power the fans with a solar or bike-powered generator has yet to be decided.

On the day of the competition judges will be looking at how fast a turbine can pull a weight up a given distance. “But how much weight can these turbines lift?” Herman asks. “That’s one of the things we’ll find out.”

Turbine judging will take place on Earth Day, April 22 at 1 p.m. in the Ithaca Children’s Garden. Families may pick up “regulation” hubs and axles at Cornell Cooperative Extension, 665 Willow Ave. (ask at front desk). The contest winners will be announced on May 12 at the Ithaca Children’s Garden during Open House (1 p.m.) and turbines will be displayed in the garden for more information contact the children’s garden at 272-2262.

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March Means Maple Syrup at Cayuga Nature Center

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Lasagna Dinner

for the Benefit of Boy Scout Troop 24, Dryden
Saturday March 31

1st seating 5pm • 2nd seating 6:30pm

Adults $9 • Children $5 • Under 5 years are Free
At the Dryden Veterans Memorial Home 2277 Dryden Rd, Rt 13
Vote New Heights Party

As a supporter of the Deer Popula-
tion Management Program in the
Village of Cayuga Heights, I am
very troubled at the efforts to
stowaway what is a well-reasoned,
scientific approach to addressing
a serious environmental and public
health problem.

As a frequent attendee at Village
meetings, I have great admiration
for the members of the current
Board of Trustees and the Mayor
for their patience, intelligence, and
empathy when continually being
bombarded with questions from a
hostile audience many of whom do
not live in Cayuga Heights. I have
often wondered about the impact
of climate change, war, and a major
economic downturn this issue has
become the primary focus for so
many intelligent people.

With our recent mild winter the
deer population has thrived and
will become even more numerous
living in the substantial feeding
fields of Cayuga Heights unless
this plan finally moves forward
after 13 years of deliberation. I
courage all voters in Cayuga
Heights to vote for the New Heights
Party to ensure that the plan is
implemented.

Barbara B. Eden
Ithaca

TCAT, Village Cooperative

The Village of Cayuga Heights
administration has done a reason-
able job facilitating alternative
transportation (e.g., TCAT has
recently added a new bicycle traf-
ic) in an active community.

That is my assessment, as a long-
term member of the TCAT Riders
Advisory Group. That also is the
sense from TCAT riders who get on
and off and pass through the
Village on the way to school, work,
shopping, recreation, meetings and
medical appointments.

Keeping peace — between Village
residents who think there are too
many buses, and residents who
are happy to have safe, convenient
bus stops near their homes and des-
tinations—has not been easy. The
Village’s current administration
opened a dialogue with TCAT offi-
cials, expressing the concerns of
some residents that Route 30 im-
ered, compromises were reached,
and the dialog continues.

Routes operated through Cayuga
Heights by TCAT (a national-
award-winning system) keep cars
off the streets. The Village
returned the favor by installing
safer bus stops and more visible
pedestrian crossings. The ongoing
planning process should highlight
access to all transportation
options—for all—no matter how we
choose to get around.

H. Roger Segelken

Letters Policy

Tompkins Weekly welcomes letters
to the editor. In order to run letters
in a timely fashion, they should be
no longer than 300 words. Letters
should be e-mailed to wrols@twcny.
rr.com, or mailed to P.O. Box 6404,
Ithaca, NY 14851. Please include name,
address and the best way to reach
you for confirmation.
Health Dept. Reports Increase in Pertussis

Pertussis, or whooping cough, is a highly contagious disease involving the respiratory tract. It is caused by a bacterium that is found in the mouth, nose and throat of an infected person. Pertussis can affect anyone at any age but it is particularly harmful to children and infants who are too young to be vaccinated.

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) reports an increase in pertussis activity around the state, and Tompkins County is no exception. In 2011, there were 13 cases of pertussis in the county. In 2012, to date there are nine cases. Pertussis is cyclical in nature. In 2009 and 2010 there were a total of three cases; 25 in 2006; five in 2007 and 48 in 2008.

Karen Bishop, Supervising Community Health Nurse at the Tompkins County Health Department, warns that complications from pertussis may include pneumonia, middle ear infection, loss of appetite, dehydration, seizures, and episodes of brief cessation of breathing. Infants are particularly at risk from older siblings, parents or caregivers who may be harboring the bacteria.

The incubation period is usually 5-10 days but may be as long as 21 days, she said. Three infants in New York State died of pertussis complications in 2011.

Bishop noted that pertussis begins with mild cold symptoms including sneezing, runny nose, low-grade fever and a mild cough. Within two weeks, the cough becomes more severe and is characterized by episodes of numerous rapid coughs followed by a high pitched “whoop.” Coughing episodes may persist for two to three months and are more frequent at night.

“Because pertussis is a bacterial infection, it can be treated with antibiotics,” Bishop said. She urges anyone who may have these symptoms to call their physician immediately. The health department has kept local physicians apprised of pertussis incidence in the County, she added.

Pertussis is spread person to person through close contact with respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. “If people are exposed in this way and develop symptoms,” Bishop said, “they should stay home from work, school and social gatherings to avoid exposing friends and extended family, until they are medically evaluated and treated.”

The single most effective way of preventing pertussis is maintaining the highest level of immunization in the community. Children ages two months to six years should receive all age appropriate doses of DTaP vaccine which includes a booster dose between the ages of four and six years. Children seven years of age and older, adolescents, and adults should receive a different pertussis containing vaccine—Tdap—a one time dose that will ensure ongoing protection.

Tdap and DTaP vaccines are available at local health care provider offices or at the Tompkins County Health Department. Call 274-6616 for an appointment.

Basic respiratory hygiene, including hand washing and covering coughs and sneezes and antibiotic treatment for those diagnosed with pertussis, are crucial in controlling the spread of pertussis in the community.

For more information go to www.tompkins-co.org/health.

Submit your question to Street Beat. If we choose your question, you’ll receive a gift certificate to GreenStar Cooperative Market. Go to www.tompkinsweekly.com and click on Street Beat to enter.

Humanistic Passover Seder

A secular approach to Jewish Life

WWW.KOLHAVERIM.NET

Saturday, April 7
12:00 noon, Foundation of Light
391 Turkey Hill Road, Ithaca

Humanistic Haggadah with Meal
(reservations required)

Contact us: 607.280.1701 holidays@kolhaverim.net

GreenStar Community Market

Every Saturday in March from 11-2
in The Space @ GreenStar

Local Produce and Meats
Local Honey and Maple Syrup
Handmade Crafts

Artisan Breads, Pastries and Cheese Locally Processed Foods
Ready to Eat Food

Paving the way for your business since 1946.
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Our jobs are quoted, not estimated!
To find out how we can help call (607) 272-3600
Asphalt Paving • Drainage • Water & Sewer Lines • Excavating • Grading • Concrete Work
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The Leader on experience, the leader on service.

Tompkins Weekly March 19 7
Storytellers Take the Spotlight at Lot 10

By Rebecca Potter

“Can’t it wait ‘til the next period!” the preteen’s father yelled during an all-important hockey game. Later, receiving her news, the father immediately “turned off the television, made milkshakes and tried to impart what it meant to be a woman.”

This was the climax of the story told by Katie Foley that won the first of a monthly storytelling series, “Trampoline Thursdays,” hosted by Lot 10 on Cayuga Street. The inaugural theme: “In the beginning.”

Raunchy, silly, wandering and poignant, the storytelling was nothing short of Chaucerian. Anticipation built upon opening the black door to Lot 10’s lounge and finding that the trail of people entering would be filmed as they ascended the stairs to pay the small fee for participation built upon opening the black door to Lot 10’s lounge and finding that the trail of people entering would be filmed as they ascended the stairs.

“FLEFF continues to use sustainable new ways, interfaces, and forms — about the environment and sustainability.”

The theme of this year’s festival is, “Microtopias.” “Micro” means small; “utopia” identifies imaginary, cooperative systems of harmony. FLEFF 2012 will explore how cooperative systems of harmony, as well as other vigorous new ways, interfaces, and forms — about the environment and sustainability.

The inaugural theme of this year’s festival was “In the beginning.” New ways to improve their surrounding environments.

The event will repeat next on April 12 with the theme, “The X Files.”

Environmental Film Festival Marks 15th Year

Beginning Sunday, March 25, and running through Sunday, April 1, the 15th annual Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival (FLEFF) at Ithaca College will offer a week of forums, music, films and multimedia events aimed at rethinking and recreating our roles in our communities and world.

Sponsored by the Office of the Provost, FLEFF 2012 will take place on the Ithaca College campus and Cinemapolis cinema downtown. “FLEFF continues to use sustainability to encourage interdisciplinary thinking and international ways of thinking about the challenges we face together in the personal, economic or aesthetic realm,” said Tanya Sanders, assistant provost of special projects, the festival engages interdisciplinary dialogue and vigorous debate. It links the local with global, and it showcases Ithaca College as a regional and national center for thinking differently — in new ways, interfaces, and forms — about the environment and sustainability.

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Beginning Sunday, March 25, and running through Sunday, April 1, the 15th annual Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival (FLEFF) at Ithaca College will offer a week of forums, music, films and multimedia events aimed at rethinking and recreating our roles in our communities and world.

Sponsored by the Office of the Provost, FLEFF 2012 will take place on the Ithaca College campus and Cinemapolis cinema downtown. “FLEFF continues to use sustainability to encourage interdisciplinary thinking and international ways of thinking about the challenges we face together in the personal, economic or aesthetic realm,” said Tanya Sanders, assistant provost of special projects, the festival engages interdisciplinary dialogue and vigorous debate. It links the local with global, and it showcases Ithaca College as a regional and national center for thinking differently — in new ways, interfaces, and forms — about the environment and sustainability.

The theme of this year’s festival is, “Microtopias.” “Micro” means small; “utopia” identifies imaginary, cooperative systems of harmony. FLEFF 2012 will explore how cooperative systems of harmony, as well as other vigorous new ways, interfaces, and forms — about the environment and sustainability.
Deep in the Parent Trap

By Nicholas Nicastro

★★★ We Need to Talk About Kevin. Written by Lynne Ramsay and Rory Kinnear, based on a novel by Lionel Shriver. Directed by Lynne Ramsay. At Cinemapolis starting March 23.

According to recent studies, 20 percent of American women don’t start planning their pregnancies until after the age of 35. Instances of male infertility are likewise up because more potential fathers are putting off the big plunge. The delay is usually blamed on the demands of career or education. But all that seems more like a symptom than a cause, the consequence of a larger shift in priorities toward personal fulfillment—the notion that one needs to perfect oneself before venturing to procreate. At its cruelest, it’s women who are afraid to lose their career and not be able to be a mother, builds to a steady crescendo to a climax. As the terrible twos give way to even more terrifying teens, Kevin’s ironic pleasures that permutations of directions. Alternatives like Ashley Judd or Vera Farmiga, for instance, would have been similarly intelligent, authentically American and more obviously sympathetic. But Ramsay doesn’t want Eva to be automatically sympathetic. Kevin, after all, is a reflection of her, of her dread at the prospect of compromising her life. As Ramsay clearly shows, Eva is dejected by Kevin’s arrival virtually as soon as she leaves the delivery room, long before he can do much more than burble and suck. Swinton is not so much a mother here as the Thin White Duke, a figure so otherworldly and androgynous as to be beyond the need for mere mortal reproduction. And indeed, it’s one of Kevin’s ironic pleasures that Miller plays Kevin with more feminine silkiness, more bewitching bitchiness than Swinton ever could if their roles were reversed.

There were many times in this film when I wanted to yell at the screen, to tell Eva to show some wit, some trace of creativity in dealing with Kevin and his deliberately soiled underpants. To adapt a phrase, it takes a heart of stone not to laugh at a child’s self-defeating spite. But, of course, I was missing the point: Eva is a modern martyr on the cross of procreation, and it isn’t in the nature of a martyr to relieve her burden with clever tricks. Her part is only to suffer.

Follow Nicholas Nicastro on Facebook at "Books by Nicholas Nicastro.

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★★★ Excellent
★★ Good
★★ Fair
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BusinessWeekly

Gear Exchange Shop Opens its Doors

By Nick Babel

Downtown Ithaca welcomed a new sustainable enterprise to the area last week with the opening of the Old Goat Gear Exchange. Located one block from the Commons at 320 E. State St., next to Mayer’s, Old Goat provides quality new and used outdoor gear using the buy/sell/trade model.

The store is seeking spring and summer gear, including hiking, biking, camping and paddling equipment and clothing. The Old Goat will be accepting consignments of big-ticket items like kayaks, canoes and bikes. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on Friday with Ithaca Mayor Svante Myrick.”

The Old Goat’s hours of operation are Tuesday to Thursday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. For more information on the growing businesses in downtown Ithaca, contact Evan D. Williams, office manager. Downtown Ithaca Alliance, at 277-8679 or send an email to info@down towntihs.com.

Education Technology Day Returns to Ithaca College

Now in its 22nd year, Educational Technology Day at Ithaca College annually offers an opportunity to learn about — and drool over — the latest computer and communication hardware and software. The 2012 show, which is free and open to the public, will take place on Thursday, March 22, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Emerson Suites and adjoining areas of the Campus Center.

The largest multi-platform, multi-vendor technology event for higher education in upstate New York, Ed-Tech Day also attracts plenty of interest from the K-12 education and business community. Visitors may talk directly with major computer and technology vendors, explore educational applications and develop a strong and loyal following, given the value they can deliver to their customers,” Frost Travis says.

Ferguson, too, is confident the new business will do well. “The Old Goat should be very popular for area residents,” he says. “Over the past several years there has been a national trend, that is also clearly evident here in Ithaca, focusing on the growth of pre-owned goods and apparel stores.”

“The fueling of the sluggish national economy, pre-used stores have appeared to consumers of all incomes. The Old Goat is an excellent example of local entrepreneur-ship stepping up to fill this very real market niche. Outdoor recreation, camping, hiking, and kayaking are important to many of our residents and certainly many of our visitors. Old Goat will be well positioned to serve these folks,” he said.

Ferguson went on to compliment Travis on his hard work in bringing this new business to Ithaca. “This prospect came to downtown thanks to the hard work of building owner Frost Travis. The DIA will work with Old Goat on marketing and promotion and on becoming integrated into the downtown business community,” he says.

Travis thinks this new business will help spotlight new and older businesses that have become staples of the Ithaca Commons. “We are excited to welcome a new business into the downtown business community and into our building. Downtown Ithaca is open for business and shopping. Please come rediscover old friends like Jillian’s Drawers. You won’t be disappointed,” says Frost.

The Old Goat is just the latest in a long line of new businesses that have been popping up in downtown Ithaca. “So far 2012 is shaping up to be an excellent year for new businesses in downtown Ithaca. Old Goat is the fifth new business so far this year, and we expect to see more businesses as spring and summer approach,” Ferguson says.

The Old Goat’s hours of operation are Tuesday to Thursday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. For more information on the growing businesses in downtown Ithaca, contact Evan D. Williams, office manager. Downtown Ithaca Alliance, at 277-8679 or send an email to info@down towntihs.com.

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I am a community member that is now the proud owner of 13 shares of BOWF. Even though I already own a solar electric system, which my home, I am delighted by the opportunity to help others in my community with this renewable energy supply. And of course, the prospect of making a healthy return on my investment is definitely part of my decision to invest in BOWF.

I'm looking at a future that is increasingly threatened by the rising costs of fossil fuel extraction and the escalating impacts of climate change. Not to mention the global casino that is rebuilding its house of cards. Though I am doing the best I can with what I know, I am not in a position to mitigate risk from these threats, I know that this must be augmented by helping reduce the risk my community faces. The wind farm is one way our community can buffer itself from the high costs of fossil fuel (both financial and environmental), while funneling some of the profits back into our local economy.

We can't predict the future with absolute certainty, but it seems likely BOWF will be a success. I attended one of the informational meetings that the BOWF team held in January, and learned enough to be satisfied that we are on the right track together.

Five years of wind data from the site verifies there is an economically viable supply of wind energy. The environmental impact studies have found no pressing issues. A nearby transmission line will reduce the cost of connecting to the grid. The town government is pleased about the revenue-sharing model that will reduce local taxes. Neighbors will also be offered financial compensation.

And while coal- or natural gas-derived electricity has an unfair advantage by not paying the true full cost of its production, wind power is approaching parity in the market. Finally, the team that has been assembled, including Juhl Wind Inc. and Val-Add Service Corp., has experience in both developing wind energy and using a community ownership model.

One of the themes I've been thinking about lately is “Resilience is Resistance.” If we don't want to be victimized by an unfair and exploitative forms of global capitalism, we must create our own economy based on shared ownership and responsibility. Why should we let large corpora-tions and foreign interests own our wind farms? They would not be as likely to respond to local con-cerns, and there certainly is no reason to let them garner all the profits.

Yes, it means we have to take some of the risk ourselves, and at a time when we may be feeling more vulnerable than ever. But when we accept the risk and the work of becoming more self-reliant and resilient, we also become more powerful in our own right, more capable of saying no to bad deals, more able to take care of our own people.

If you want to join me as a co-owner of BOWF, contact project manager Marguerite Wells at 607-279-3030. She is organizing webinars for interested folks, which detail the plans for the wind farm. There are probably only a few more weeks before they reach their goal, so don't procrastinate if you want to be an early supporter (there's a $5,000 mini-mum investment at this stage). We'll together put your money where your values are right here in Tompkins County.

Gay Nicholson lives in Lansing.

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TCAT's UAW Employees Approve Contract

TCAT’s bus operators and maintenance team, represented by the United Auto Workers Local 2300, overwhelmingly ratified a two-year contract agreement on March 9, following several months of negotiations.

The previous three-year contract expired Sept. 11, 2011. After the UAW-represented work force twice rejected the contract in both September and November, negotiators from both sides finally were able to craft and communicate an agreement acceptable to UAW members and TCAT management.

“I am surprised and pleased that the TCAT bargaining team and custodian are adequately compensated for the hard work and professionalism they demonstrate day in and day out,” said TCAT General Manager Joe Turcotte in a statement. “We hope the passen-gers, and the community as a whole, can rest assured that all TCAT employees operate as a unified team in providing a critical service to the TCAT service to the community.”

“Despite a less-than-robust fis-cal climate—and at a time when most Americans are paying more for health care—we worked togeth-er to create a fair and solid contract to the very best of our abili-ty,” Turcotte noted. “I applaud the hard work of the negotiating team representing both union and management.”

In 2011, TCAT broke ridership records for the fifth year in a row with nearly 4 million annual trips. According to the latest data available for 2012, ridership is up by 8 percent.

“I am delighted that our UAW members ratified the contract as they are critical to TCAT’s suc-cess,” said Pam Macksey, TCAT Board of Directors Chairperson, in a statement. “We now need to focus on making sure TCAT’s financial future is on solid ground so that TCAT can continue to thrive and grow.”

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Longview to Host Career Fair

Longview, an Ithaca Community, will hold a Career Fair on Thursday, March 22, from 4:30 to 7 p.m. Longview staff will be conducting interviews on-site for resident aides, per-sonal support assistants, certified nurse aides, home health aides and housekeepers, as well as a variety of dining services positions.

Interested individuals are encouraged to call 375-6000 to reserve an interview space, but reservations are not required. Job-seekers should bring copies of their resume and will be required to complete an application.

Longview, an Ithaca Community, is located at 1 Bella Vista Drive, Ithaca, south of Ithaca College on Route 11.

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19 Monday

Baby Storytime, 10:30-11:00am, Tompkins Co. Public Library, Main St. Branch.  Infants & toddlers welcome!  Recommended ages are 0-3 years.  Storytime is free and open to the public.  Call 461-3761 to register.

Breastfeeding for the Health of It, 1:00pm-2:00pm, Dr. Scott Tassone, Executive Director of the Northern Tier Cultural Alliance.  Trumpeter Frank Campos will join gypsy swing all-stars and ir-\n\nnee.  Info., 288-4040 or www.jazzercise.com.

Beautification Brigade Volunteer Training, 4:30-6pm, CCE-Tompkins Education Center, 615 Danielson Rd.  This orientation will encourage you to understand the scope of the work, the values of our program and the organizational mission.  Bring a pen or pencil to take notes or bring a calculator to do the math.  If you have already completed volunteer training, please come to practice your skills.  More info. 273-3435 or email stjoan@cornell.edu.

Past Traumatic Stress Disorder Meeting, PTSD, Tompkins County Public Library, Campus Conference Room, 950 Danby Rd., Ithaca.  The project is seeking donations of small jewelry, dresses, jewelry and purses that are in new or "like new" condition.  Free Library, 27 Auburn Road, Lansing, Play American Softball.  For more info. call (607) 272-7000.

Tompkins County Community Calendar...
Brown University and his Ph.D. from Northwestern University. He then moved to Ithaca in 1981.

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26 Monday

Baby Storytimes, 10:30-11am, Tompkins Co. Pub.

card Catalog Services Center, Ithaca. Join us to learn about

how to find, renew and borrow materials. Ask a

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• fax: 607-347-4302

• write: Tomkis Weekly PO Box 6404, Ithaca, NY 14851

For Rent

Newfield Horizon

Apartments are available from February 2nd-March 30, 2012 Ithaca Festival Applications are Being Accepted for the 2012 Ithaca Festival of the Arts, March 15-18. Applications are due by February 2nd. For complete contest rules visit: www.ithacaarts.org. For information contact: 607-277-0147. Email: ithacaarts@tc.umn.edu.

The State of the Art Gallery, 225 E. State St., Center Ithaca, open 10am-10pm Wednesday-Thursday, 10am-6pm Friday-Saturday, 10am-4pm Sunday. Features new member and juried exhibitions. Visit www.stateoftheartgallery.org or call 607-277-0147. Email: stateoftheartgallery@cornell.edu.

Women’s Opportunity Center Retail Center Training Program and women’s clothing boutique at 110 N. Franklin St., Ithaca. Open Wednesday-Saturday 10am-3pm and Sunday 10am-2pm. For information call 607-366-6666.

Newcomers and visitors are encouraged to shop the extensive inventory of gently used clothing, shoes, and home goods. Shop local, shop green, support the community, and help others. Proceeds benefit the Women’s Opportunity Center. For more information, call 607-277-0147.

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Employment

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The Family Society 1201 N. Tioga St. (old Fall Creek Cinema building) For healing and wellness of the body by Tai Chi Thai Chi Classes Monday–Saturday, Toast Tai Chi Classes Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 9am–10am, and 10am–11am. Email: info@familysociety.org. For information: 607-277-0147, Email: seishihonbu@verizon.net.

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Study
Continued from page 1

isn’t in effect an unfunded mandate on municipalities,” she says. “It takes a long time before you see money from severance taxes, and we’re seeing costs already, working with an attorney and an engineering firm to set up road use agreements. If you look at Pennsylvania, they are drilling and capping some wells, waiting for gas prices to get better. In the meantime, you have all of the damage from thousands of trucks coming in,” she adds.

The white paper recommends a severance tax rate of between 8 and 12 percent to cover known costs, as well as “new efforts such as establishing new open data bases of drilling violations and accidents (not available through the DEC now), health assessments (not yet conducted), tracking of health problems, independent studies to monitor water quality and so on.”

“Currently, New York State only recovers expenses through the local ad valorem property tax,” Chock says, “which does not come to us ad valorem property tax,” Chock says. “Any changes should be done through a fair, open, transparent process with input from experts and citizens alike.”

Don Barber is co-chairman of TCCOG and supervisor of the Town of Caroline. As a town supervisor, he notes that New York Conservation Law states that towns have control of assessments related to gas drilling. “We discovered that we actually have none,” he said. “We invited bankers, real estate brokers and attorneys to talk with us and learned there were irregularities with lease filings, problems with mortgages, property insurance, title insurance. It was a can of worms that needed to be looked at.”

The Town of Caroline conducted an analysis of expected well production with current UPV and discount factors. “There is the potential for millions of dollars,” Barber says.

Another issue is how long it takes to receive any money. “The fastest we would ever receive money is three years,” says Barber. “Way after local impacts are being felt. Taxpayers would have to pick up expenses long ahead of when revenues come in, which led us to question this whole tax structure. When can local government receive any funding from this industry? Taxpayers should not foot the bill for an industry already making billions of dollars.”

TCCOG is hosting a public meeting on Thursday, March 22, from 5 to 6:30 p.m. in the Borg Warner Room at the Tompkins County Library to present their findings and answer questions. “We’re hoping to attract officials who need to make decisions about their municipalities,” says Chock, “to come and learn and see what other towns are doing and what other solutions they have found.”

“New York needs to have mechanisms in place to cover all costs. “New York is quickly proceeding to think about how to change the system,” Chock adds. “Any changes should be done through a fair, open, transparent process with input from experts and citizens alike.”

Continued from page 1

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TOMPKINS COUNTY

Biodiesel
Continued from page 1

board members have visited local restaurants, collected their vegetable oil from fryers, filtered it by removing food particles and then sold it to customers in five-gallon buckets. The cost is $4.50 per gallon for biodiesel and $3 per gallon for waste vegetable oil.

Making biodiesel requires more time and effort than refining waste vegetable oil. Biodiesel is a plant-based oil (vegetable oil, sunflower oil, or peanut oil) mixed with methanol and lye. According to Laura Moore, biodiesel pump.

The second tank is because waste vegetable oil cannot be used in a diesel tank and puts waste vegetable oil into a diesel vehicle’s engine starts with diesel fuel, and once the fuel lines are warm enough, the car switches from the diesel tank to the waste vegetable oil tank. “The reason for the second tank is because waste vegetable oil cannot be used in a standard diesel tank,” McKenzie explains.

McKenzie explains that often, when people hear the word biodiesel, they think waste vegetable oil, and that in order to use biodiesel they must convert the fuel tank and fuel lines in their car. “Diesel engines were meant to run on peanut oil, not petroleum oil,” she says. “And since diesel engines are well suited to plant-based fuel as oil, diesel cars can be converted with an added fuel tank that runs on waste vegetable oil.”

She notes that she has added an extra fuel tank to her family’s car. She puts diesel, or biodiesel fuel, in the diesel tank and puts waste vegetable oil in the second tank. The vehicle’s engine starts with diesel fuel, and once the fuel lines are warm enough, the car switches from the diesel tank to the waste vegetable oil tank. “The reason for the second tank is because waste vegetable oil cannot be used in a standard diesel tank,” McKenzie explains.

Brian Buchman, the only founding member still on the board, fuels his car and truck with one tank containing a blend of biodiesel and diesel, and an added tank containing waste vegetable oil. He also heats his home with a blend of biodiesel and fuel oil. Buchman says that IBC’s customers have been diesel-fuel car owners, farmers with tractors and generators and homeowners interested in heating their homes with biodiesel.

Biodiesel can also be used for school and public buses, large moving vehicles, ambulances, fire, ploes, and snow plows, trucks, and 16-wheelers,” he adds.

Finding a new location has been a challenge for IBC. but they are thinking ahead. Joe Fisher, an IBC board member who’s been heavily involved in biofuels during his adult life, says the IBC is searching for partnerships with gas stations in town interested in adding a biodiesel pump. “We are also interested in starting a dialogue with farmers interested in growing soy beans, canola or sunflowers that can be converted into fuel,” he says.

At a time when gas prices are inching their way to $4 a gallon, IBC couldn’t be more convinced that Tompkins County deserves locally-made biodiesel and waste vegetable oil fuel.