

“State of the County
January 4, 2013

“Thank you to my wife for her continued support while I serve as a Town Supervisor, County Budget Officer and now Chairman of the Board of Supervisors. Thank you to my fellow Supervisors for the confidence that you have placed in me by electing me to serve as your Chairman. It is truly my privilege to serve in this capacity.

“Five years ago when I became Budget Officer, the County was starting on a path that would lead us to some difficult financial times. We had a plan to get better and needed time to accomplish our goals. Sometimes things got testy but we as a group held together, made it through the hard times, and created a better future for the County as a whole. It was the County as a group, Employees, Department Heads, Administrator and his staff, and the Supervisors, that made it happen.

“Let’s take a minute to look at some of the achievements we accomplished last year:

- No short term borrowing for cash flow purposes in 2012.
- Improved efficiency in Office of the Aging Meal Site program. Moving the Warrensburg site to Countryside Adult Home has increased utilization of that facility. The Towns have stepped forward to achieve more cost savings with the program and no senior was left without a meal.
- The IT Department and Purchasing departments undertook the copier/printer project which resulted in standardization of copiers and a reduction in costs and equipment which will lead to significant savings in the future.
- The Administrator’s Office along with the Budget Team took on the task of multiyear financial planning. We now have a better picture of the County’s future financial position. Our budget discussions have begun earlier than in the past and resulted in a more transparent budget process. We continue to meet the State goal of a 2% Tax Cap without depleting our fund balance in which many other communities are doing.
- We successfully purchased, installed and opened the Warren/Washington County Fire Training Facility.
- The Westbrook/Gaslight Village Project is starting to take shape with the Environmental Park on the south side of the parcel. Rebuilding of the Beach Road is another project that will protect Lake George for future generations.
- More special events, such as the Big Apple Circus, are starting to use the Gaslight Village property. With assistance of Occupancy Tax funds and co-sponsorship by the Town of Lake George, The Village of Lake George and Warren County we have made this event a success.
- We are looking to clean up tax delinquent properties with environmental issues with the use of Brownfield initiatives. This could possibly place these properties back on the tax rolls.

- Warren County took the lead on prohibiting the sale of synthetic marijuana which has had many devastating effects on our youth.
- Warren County has also partnered with the Environmental Groups to attack invasive species which are threatening Lake George's future.
- We continue to see growth in sales and mortgage taxes which are signs that the economy is slowly recovering.
- We successfully reached a collective bargaining agreement with CSEA which charts the course for the future of some of the County workforce while considering the public's ability to pay for these services.
- We are preparing for the County's Bicentennial celebration in 2013 which will be discussed later on in detail.
- The consolidation of dispatch services with the City of Glens Falls have been going smoothly which is a testament to the Employees of the Warren County Sheriff's Department Communications Center.
- I am proud to say that Warren County remains one of five counties in New York State that has not increased sales tax above 7%.

"Goals for 2013:

- Completion of the multi-year planning process to address projected deficits and develop cost cutting measures along with revenue generating initiatives.
- Continue to work with the Town of Corinth, Saratoga County and Iowa Pacific Holdings to open the rail corridor to carry freight on the railroad line. This relationship is greatly exceeding Iowa Pacific's initial expectations. North Creek is seeing a rebirth of some of its businesses. (Think Snow)
- Formation of an Employees Wellness Committee to improve the health of our employees and evenly produce reduced health insurance premiums to the employees and the County.
- Address the shortage of Court space within the Municipal Center.
- Continue to support, educate and develop regulations that will adequately address the threat of invasive species to our lakes and other bodies of water within the County.
- Work on allocating more funding for improvement of the County Road System.
- Continue to work on sustainable mandate relief from the State.
- Completion of negotiations with the remaining collective bargaining units in the County which currently do not have contracts.

- Finish privatization and expansion plans for the Westmount Skilled Nursing Facility.

“We welcome back Ron Montesi, a new Town Supervisor and former County Supervisor from Queensbury. Supervisor Montesi will find working with this group to be both rewarding and challenging. We have a great team here and we look forward to his contributions.

“I am appointing Stony Creek Supervisor Frank Thomas as Budget Officer, Bolton Supervisor Ron Conover as Finance Committee Chairman and Glens Falls Ward 3 Supervisor Bud Taylor as Personnel Committee Chairman.

“We are not without challenges for 2013. I know we will continue to work together as a team to find solutions to our problems regardless of party affiliation and make Warren County a better place to live and work. I can not do it alone. Our employees as well as the decisions made by this Board of Supervisors will make the difference.

“Respectfully submitted
Kevin B. Geraghty, Chairman
Warren County Board of Supervisors”