

December 19, 2023

Dear Quogue Residents,

The holiday season is upon us!

As you go about your last-minute shopping, please support all of our local merchants who are open and ready to help you with all of your shopping needs. The Quogue Shop, Homespun, the Quogue Flower Shop & Gardens, and Jen Going Interiors are open most days, as are the Quogue Liquor Store, the Quogue Salon, and the SFA East Spa. And please don't forget Schmidt's Country Market!

The Trustees voted this past Friday in support of two environmental initiatives for the upcoming year. First, the Trustees issued a proclamation confirming the Village's commitment to support various initiatives to save the monarch butterfly, which has suffered a precipitous population decline over the past 20 years. Our Village is on the monarch butterfly migratory path, and we can make a difference by recreating healthy habitats for these magnificent butterflies and other critical pollinators. In this regard, I recently signed the National Wildlife Federation's Mayors' Monarch Pledge confirming my personal commitment to support these initiatives. Stay tuned for more information about this in the coming months.

The Trustees also voted to approve retaining a consultant to work with the Village to promote and accelerate the installation of upgraded sanitary systems. Studies have demonstrated that nitrogen pollution from antiquated cesspools and septic systems is the primary contributor to the decline of the water quality in the surrounding bays and waterways. Quogue has a surface area of approximately five square miles but has over 17 miles of waterfront property. The Village has approximately 1,600 residences of which less than 100 have been upgraded to modern nitrogen reducing sanitary systems. The State and County have adopted a regulatory and financial assistance framework to incentivize homeowners to upgrade their systems, but the process can be complex and daunting. The Village will be working to provide detailed information on the benefits of this program. We will be proactively reaching out to homeowners and providing assistance to navigate the process. I sincerely believe that we can collectively make a huge difference to the quality of our surrounding waters. Again, stay tuned for more information in the coming months.

I am pleased to announce that the Trustees designated Mike and Marisa Nelson as the Village's 2023 Persons of the Year. Mike has served the Quogue Fire Department for more than 20 years and, through his skills as a firefighter and his numerous other contributions, was given increasing responsibilities serving as an officer for many years culminating in his role as Chief for the past two years. As most of you probably know, Mike also serves as Executive Director of the Quogue Wildlife Refuge, having been appointed to that position in 2000. Marisa has also been working at the Refuge for over 20 years, and has been the Assistant Director since 2006. Her contributions to the local community are not limited to the Refuge, and were recognized last year when she was honored as a Power Woman of the Year by Dan's Papers for her work to "make the East End the thriving and vibrant place it is to work, live and do business." Please join me and the Trustees in expressing our deep appreciation to Mike and Marisa for their tireless and continuing efforts to improve the Village of Quogue throughout the

years.

A reminder that the deadline for putting out leaves for pick up by the Village Highway Department was December 15<sup>th</sup>. Any leaves that are placed on the street after December 15<sup>th</sup> will not be picked up, and homeowners will be notified that they are responsible for their removal (or they will be fined). As I pointed out last month, you may also want to consider waiting until the spring to do the majority of your yard cleanup. This provides a winter refuge for a multitude of beneficial species of butterflies and other pollinators. It is less work for you and a positive contribution to our local ecosystem.

Here are a few upcoming events for your entertainment during the holidays:

The Quogue School Chamber Choir will be spreading some holiday cheer this Thursday, December 21<sup>st</sup>. They will perform a holiday concert for the Hampton Bays Senior Center at 11:00 am. After the concert and lunch, the choir will carol on Jessup Avenue starting around 12:30 pm. Please join the choir for a carol or two.

On Thursday evening, the Wildlife Refuge will be celebrating the first day of winter with a Winter Solstice Hike from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm. Next Wednesday, December 27<sup>th</sup>, from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm, the Refuge will celebrate the full moon with a hike through the forest to the North Pond. You can register for both events on their website at <https://quoguwildliferefuge.org/>

The Art Gallery at the Quogue Library is hosting an Artists' Reception this coming Friday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>, from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm, celebrating their current exhibit of paintings and photographs by local artists Marissa Bridge, Victoria Sartorius, Judy McDermott, Susan Leness Gilbert and Veronique Louis.

As always, the Quogue Library has daily programs for all ages. Please consult their website to check out the packed calendar of exercise, tech and other types of classes, arts and crafts activities, book clubs, games, movies and more. <https://quogue.librarycalendar.com>.

Sending you all my best wishes for the holidays and for a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Robert Treuhold  
Mayor, Village of Quogue