

UP IN FLAMES

Motorist pulled from car just in time.

A3



BEAUTIFICATION

Critters against litter around town.

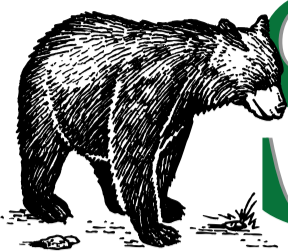
A9



LAKELAND TOPS WM

Gilligan throws a complete game versus rivals.

B1



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RINGWOOD

EPA OKs cap and recycling center option

BY HOLLY STEWART
Staff Writer

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has formally given the green light to the borough's plan to build a new recycling center on top of the O'Connor Disposal Area, located within the Ringwood Mines Superfund site.

In an April 16 press release, the EPA said that the borough had satisfied the criteria set forth in their June 2014 final cleanup plan that would permit the recycling center to be constructed atop O'Connor once a permeable cap is installed over most of the 12-acre site.

The EPA presented a plan to fully clean up O'Connor in 2013, including the removal of 166,000 tons of contaminated fill material. The excavated lot would have been covered with topsoil and replanted with flora. At the same time, borough officials presented the EPA with a proposal to build a new recycling center on top of it. In promoting the idea, they cited concerns over the destabilization of the site from ATV usage and the road above it from excessive excavation.

As a result, the EPA included two possible plans for remediation for O'Connor in their June 2014 Record of Decision (ROD) for the site: Alternative 5A represented complete excavation, while contingency remedy Alternative 4A would recommend site grading and the installation of the perme-

able cap before the recycling center was built.

Because federal law favors Superfund sites being redeveloped into useful properties, EPA officials were compelled to develop a contingency remedy that would permit the capping of the contaminated soil rather than removing it.

Executing that plan would also significantly lower the cleanup costs to be paid by both Ford and Ringwood - from an estimated \$32.6 million for the full excavation to \$5.4 million for the cap solution.

The ROD listed three specific items that the borough had to provide to the EPA by Dec. 30, 2014 in order for the contingency remedy to be considered: Detailed engineering plans for the new recycling center; financial assurance showing that sufficient funds are available for its construction; and assurance that the construction would be completed in the same amount of time or less than the implementation of Alternative 5A. All three criteria were received by the deadline.

Drawings of the planned recycling center prepared by Engineering and Land Planning Associates of High Bridge are available on the EPA website (www.epa.gov), as is a notarized letter signed by legal counsel for Ford Motor Company dated Dec. 18, 2014 indicating that Ford will cover the \$1.5 million cost to build the recycling center. A third document comparing

SEE EPA, PAGE A7

BLOOMINGDALE

Flood mitigation remains in limbo sans DEP signoff

BY DEBORAH WALSH
Staff Writer

Left high and dry by the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) before, borough officials cannot predict when the borough's long-planned flood mitigation project will be approved.

At the April 7 Borough Council work session meeting, Jack Miller, who chairs the borough's flood mitigation committee, asked the governing body for an update on the borough's request for DEP approval on flood mitigation work designed to alleviate downtown flooding. The work will occur in the Sloan Park area.

Mayor Jonathan Dunleavy said the borough's engineers just finished a revised hydrology model as requested by the DEP. Every time the DEP asks for additional work, it means added costs to the borough, he said.

Dunleavy has given up on predicting a timeframe for approval. There have been times in the past when DEP officials have led the borough to believe approval was imminent, yet approvals were not

forthcoming and the DEP requested more information, he indicated.

"We are at the DEP's mercy. The objector threw us a large curveball. We keep plugging away, doing what they (the DEP) ask," he said.

Dunleavy assured Miller that the borough has been in contact with all relevant DEP officials about the borough's fervent desire to get the project approved and underway as soon as possible. Last June, the DEP stunned the borough when it rejected its flood mitigation application after endless submittals and two years of attempts to comply with the DEP's requests.

At the time Dunleavy explained that the DEP had a certain number of days to make a decision on an application and informed Bloomingdale a couple of days before that date that it was declining the borough's application, which allowed no time to make revisions. Dunleavy, who said the DEP had the borough's submissions and 100-year flood model for

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CONTRACT DISPUTE



STAFF PHOTO BY JOE SARNO

Nurses aides and members of 1199 SEIU, United Healthcare Workers East, picketed in front of the Wanaque Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation on Thursday, April 16 to protest the lack of a working contract. The following day, Wanaque Center administrator Rowena Bautista issued a written statement that read, "We will continue to work towards a mutually beneficial collective bargaining agreement with 1199 SEIU. We believe the best place to resolve any union issue is through good faith negotiations across the bargaining table."

WEST MILFORD/LINCOLN PARK

Galella awarded one of first commercial drone licenses

BY DAVID M. ZIMMER
Staff Writer

A new commercial enterprise is buzzing around North Jersey skies.

In a process he described as painfully arduous, West Milford resident Frank Galella and his Lincoln Park-based company Next Generation Aviation Services (NGA) recently gained federal approval to commercially operate unmanned aircraft systems (UASs).

The exemption is among the first of its kind in the nation, according to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) records. With it comes great opportunity as well as responsibility, Galella said.

"Anybody can probably do this (operate multi-rotor UASs) when everything's working, but you have to be prepared for those times when something doesn't work," he said. "To get in the first 100 (approved exemptions) is something we are extremely proud of and we are serious about doing things the right way."

Though not new to Galella and his colleagues at NGA, UASs or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) are just started to gain popularity in the consumer realm. Colloquially known as drones - presumably for their audible resemblance to a hornet's nest - they are known for delivering missiles and spy cameras to distant locales. But they also have a variety of uses outside of national defense, like capturing million-dollar action scenes for feature films. Amazon is developing them for package delivery purposes.

Part of the appeal, Galella said,

is that UAVs represent an emerging market with untapped potential. They are much more inexpensive to fly than helicopters, can operate under a variety of weather conditions, and can easily go where people cannot or will not go, he said.

Tapping potential

Currently, aerial photography for construction mediation and real estate purposes are big draws for UAV work, Galella said. Building inspections, land surveys, and news coverage via real time streaming are other possibilities.

Not to be confused with toys, NGA's UAVs are marvels of aviation design. They are built using lightweight alloys and carbon fiber and feature complex engineering, including piloting software that allows for controlled, nearly-autonomous flight.

Consumer UAVs, which are expected to become significantly more popular in the next year, can be bought for roughly \$1,500. A skilled hobbyist could build his or her own for significantly less, Galella said, but the devices scale accordingly. Professional-grade rigs with a carbon-fiber frame, eight rotors, retractable landing gear, and a gimbal allowing for separately-controlled camera movement and operation - like Galella's custom raw carbon and red autonomous UAV - can cost \$25,000 to \$100,000.

Currently, NGA builds bespoke UAVs based on application, whether it be for tasking high-definition images or managing indoor flight through the use

SEE DRONES, PAGE A5



STAFF PHOTO BY JOE SARNO

The one-off unmanned aerial vehicle has retractable landing gear in order to give the controllable camera unobstructed, 360-degree views. It also buzzes like a pack of bees and can travel at speeds of up to 40 miles per hour.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOE SARNO

West Milford's Frank Galella uses a controller to pilot an unmanned aerial vehicle in his backyard. The black box in front of him contains a screen displaying the view from the vehicle-mounted camera as well as pertinent information, such as speed, altitude, and - most importantly - battery life.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF FRANK GALELLA

This shot of Oak Ridge Reservoir is one of several taken by Frank Galella's custom unmanned aerial vehicle, which he was recently given federal approval to fly commercially. The vehicle comes with two controllers - one for piloting the craft and the other for taking pictures - to ensure the pilot can fly without distraction.

DRONES

FROM PAGE A1

of sonar. They can be programmed to follow flight paths drawn on digital maps and return to a designated landing spot in the event of a loss of contact with the controller, Galella said. All of them are tested at secure, remote locations before being subjected to real work application, he added.

"You can do all the work you want on the ground but nothing proves a UAV actually works except flight," Galella said.

Pioneers of flight

For now, commercial exemptions for UAVs are only available to those holding a private pilot's license and affiliated medical clearance. Galella said his history as the owner of Lincoln Park Aviation, a sales and service center

based at Lincoln Park Airport, certainly helped in the four-month application process that garnered NGA its 333 exemption from the FAA.

Named for the section in the 2012 FAA reauthorization act that regulates commercial operations for drones under 55 pounds, the exemption is designed to act as a stand-in of sorts and bring order to a burgeoning sector of civilian flight. Permanent rules to regulate small UASs have been proposed by the FAA but could take years to finalize, as the proposal has just recently become open to public comment. Galella predicts the rules will eventually be adopted and instead of formal flight training at a cost of \$15,000 to \$20,000, commercial UAV pilots will only have to undergo a tailored certification program at a fraction of the cost.

The exemption granted to NGA allows the company to

"conduct research and development; training; aerial photography for real estate and construction firms; to assist first responders; and to enhance public awareness of UASs (unmanned aircraft systems)," according to a April 9 letter from John Barbagallo, acting deputy director of the FAA's Flight Standards Service.

Galella said the latter may provide particularly important. There is already a stigma surrounding drones and hobbyist pilots are not necessarily making things any better, he said.

"Right now, there are two ends of the spectrum - the commercial pilots and the hobbyists," Galella said. "A hobbyist may be talented in piloting multi-rotor devices but most of them don't understand air space restrictions. Commercially, we need to abide by airplane rules."

"The best thing we can do is educate them," he added. "The

more people that know how to do this the right way, the better it will be for everybody."

Used safely, drones grant their users new perspectives - especially when streaming images in real time - Galella said. Used in an unsafe manner, however, and they become deadly multi-pound projectiles. For that reason and others, the FAA had only granted 157 section 333 exemptions as of last week. Hundreds more are pending.

It is a give and take with the FAA to get that exemption, Galella said. Per the FAA's process, NGA essentially had to develop its own regulations and prove its value in order to become a pioneer in commercial UAV operations.

Galella said running Lincoln Park Aviation and Highland Aviation Insurance Agency alongside his wife Tammy is his day

job. Still, he relents that the UAV operation is taking up an increasingly large slice of his time.

So, for now, NGA is flying

under the radar. But that may not last for long.

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STAFF PHOTO BY JOE SARNO

West Milford's Frank Galella prepares his custom unmanned aerial vehicle for flight. The vehicle, one of many owned and built by Galella, is designed to capture high-resolution images.



STAFF PHOTO BY JOE SARNO

Frank Galella, president of Next Generation Aviation Services of Lincoln Park, makes some minor adjustments to his custom unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) in his in-home UAV lab.

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