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Members of the Chappaqua Holiday Tree Committee in front of the big spruce. L-R Michael and Lisa Brown, chairpersons and owners of the tree; T. Michael Layton, co-chairman; Robert Stafford, secretary; Cathy Westlake, public relations director and Peter Westlake, treasurer.

'Holiday Tree Committee won't let its Christmas lights go out

Because a group of Chappaqua residents want to make the 1980 holiday season a little bit better, the big pine on Quaker Road will once again show off its lights.

Since 1963, the tree in back of a duck pond, has sported some 500 lights. But because of wiring, the pine has become a fire hazard and the lights could not be lit this Christmas. That's how it seemed.

But the Chappaqua Holiday Tree Committee isn't about to let the tradition fade away. Cathy Westlake, the committee's publicity director, said the group wants to raise enough money to completely refurbish the tree. "Not just for this year, though," she said. "We want the wiring to be fixed permanently."

"It's a real holiday tradition," she continued. "It's a breathtaking thing to see when the tree's lights reflect off of the pond."

In 1963, Mrs. Westlake said, Mrs. Margot Pustilnik decided to trim the tree, which is on her property, as a Christmas treat for her son. As the years went by, the Chappaqua Chamber of Commerce, Greeley high school students and various private citizens also took part in decorating the pine.

After Mrs. Pustilnik move, the tree's fate hung in the balance, and although the tree's new owners, Michael and Lisa Brown, lit the tree last Christmas, it just wasn't the same.

"We didn't get the tree lit until right near Christmas," Mrs. Westlake, a neighbor of the Browns, said, "This year we want it to shine for the whole season, both Hanukah and Christmas."

Fixing the tree will not be a cheap undertaking. Mrs. Westlake said the committee hopes to raise around \$5,000 to replace the bad wiring, as well as

to absorb the cost of electricity. That figure, she added, will also provide some money for the future.

So, while there are still 111 shopping days until Christmas, the six-member committee is launching its crusade now. Besides Mrs. Westlake, committee members include, co-chairpersons Mr. and Mrs. Brown, and T. Michael Layton; Peter Westlake, treasurer; and Robert Stafford, secretary.

Varying sized buttons will be handed to those who give money to the fund. The committee will also man a Community Day booth, Sept. 13, to encourage

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International exchange students

Thirty Chappaqua teenagers compare notes on life abroad

by Susan MacCarthy

"They talked to me so fast! and they weren't too patient with me either!" remarked Steven Bernstein, son of Dr. and Mrs. Robert Bernstein of Glen Terrace, thinking back on his recent visit to France.

"I used to look at people who were different and say, 'Oh, weird!' but now I can appreciate them more," reflected Matthew Lunetto, son of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Lunetto of Pine Cliff Road.

After nearly a full summer of travel and living abroad, some thirty Chappaqua teenagers, all participants in this year's "Experiment in International Living" program sponsored by the Chappaqua International Exchange were reunited last Tuesday night, Sept. 2 for a few hours of tale swapping at the home of newly named program

Flood project set for completion in 1981

by Rhonda Stearley

After 35 years of maneuvering with the federal government to get a flood control project, Chappaqua residents and business people may breathe a sigh of relief. This summer, the Army Corps of Engineers began rechanneling the Saw Mill River to protect the village from its erratic and costly flooding.

New Castle Town Engineer Irma Baron estimated the project's cost to be \$2.5 million, of which Chappaqua will pay approximately \$500,000. The Corps has slated the project's completion for June, 1981.

But downstream in Pleasantville, where two-thirds of the project is being built, the story is different.

Angered by the project and a U.S. district court judge's July ruling allowing it to be built, the village's more than 30 Washington Avenue homeowners "don't intend to give up," said their lawyer, James T. Buckley. Mr. Buckley is a Pleasantville resident and a village Board member.

The judge granted the Pleasantville coalition 60 to file an appeal on his ruling. Should the group file to stop the project, a judge could require a bond of up to \$1 million to compensate Chappaqua for losses resulting from the delay.

"In all probability, a notice of appeal will be filed, although I don't know whether it will be for a stay," said Mr. Buckley.

If the Washington Avenue group decides not to file for a stay, Mr. Buckley said it will continue to fight for damages in the New York State Court of Claims. Along with the Washington homeowners, plaintiffs include the Ad Hoc

Committee to Save the Saw Mill River, the Pleasantville Homeowners Association and the Federated Conservationists of Westchester County, Inc.

Bitter struggle

The project has been the subject of a bitter struggle between Chappaqua and Pleasantville since 1976, when Pleasantville parties initiated action to halt the project. Chappaqua, a community whose shopping district has been flooded many times, says it needs the project to insure its economic well-being. Pleasantville, on the other

hand, says the project will not only result in environmental damages, but that other solutions to Chappaqua's problem have been overlooked.

At the heart of the conflict is the Army Corps of Engineers' flood control project study. Corps researchers concluded the best alternative for the two villages would be to realign, deepen and widen the channels of both the Saw Mill River and the Tertia Brook, a tributary.

Beginning at the railroad bridge in Pleasantville, the

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Second home for retarded delayed; N.Y. State wants to buy house only

by Rhonda Stearley

It will be several months before New Castle opens its second home for retarded people, tentatively slated for Mrs. Richard D'Alton's house, 600 Bedford Road.

Although the Westchester Developmental Disabilities Service accepted Mrs. D'Alton's offer to sell her home, it doesn't want the whole 5-acre package, with 2.5 acres in Mt. Kisco. Therefore, she said, the service wants her to pay to subdivide her property.

The mother of a 25-year-old retarded son, Mrs. D'Alton said she'd heard of the search for the home last fall. Partly because of her concern for the retarded, but mostly because she can no longer afford her property—she called the County agency to see if it wanted to buy.

"After they (town officials) reassessed my house, I decided I'd have to move," she recalls "I simply cannot afford the new taxes." And now, she said, she's caught in a Catch-22 situation.

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Schools to open with two new directors and two fewer principals

by Carol Ettlinger

Chappaqua schools will open on Sept. 8. After an uproar last year over administration reorganization, the district seems to have calmed.

The chief feature of the reorganization was a five-year plan under two directors. Director of Pupil Personnel Services and Director of Elementary Education. They are being administered by Miss Mary Cain and Mr. Robert Haigh, respectively.

The causes of the disturbance was that changes were alleged to have been made during the summer, and that during the same period the position of assistant principal in the elemen-

tary and middle schools was abolished and interns were hired as replacements.

One hundred parents attended a School Board meeting to demand the assistant principals be reinstated. They believed discipline would become a problem without them. One parent said that Bell Middle School had always been difficult to manage, and when it seemed finally to be workable under the supervision of the assistant principal, the board created a management problem that could destabilize the middle school. The meeting lasted two hours but the demand was not met. The interns have no academic or

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Candidate for County Judge

Interview with James Cowhey

by Rhonda Stearley

Stating that the judiciary has overstepped its original function, James C. Cowhey, Republican contender for the Westchester County judgeship, said the nation must return to the separation of powers concept.

Mr. Cowhey said, "It's not a court function to set the philosophy of life. Rather it's a legislative duty."

Hoping to implement his standards after the Nov. 4 election, Mr. Cowhey is one of four candidates running for two

county court judgeships. Along with fellow Republican J. Radley Herold of Scarsdale, he is vying for the seat with two Democrats, Judge Carmine Marasco of Ardsley and Jules Bloch of Eastchester.

Judge Marasco is a county court judge. Gov. Carey appointed him to fill the seat of Judge Theodore Dachenhausen, Jr., who was appointed to the state's Supreme Court. The other seat is open as a result of Judge John Couzens'

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