

NYPIRG Reveals Bias In Brookhaven Tax Laws

By Karen Greenblatt

The New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) held a press conference revealing a property tax inequity in Brookhaven Town. Frank Domurad, NYPIRG's tax reform director and Jim Leotta, Stony Brook's project coordinator for NYPIRG presented the group's findings and recommended that the public demand re-assessment.

The study dealt with the assessment rate of all Brookhaven homes sold in 1980. They focused on 3,030 valid sales—eliminating sales made to churches and other cases which might bias the study. About 1,000 homes included in the sales file were not on the assessment role for the town. Either they were missing due to inefficient record keeping, or they were not paying taxes.

Included in their findings is the fact that two out of every three homeowners in Brookhaven are incorrectly assessed. The incorrect assessments ranged from a low of 2.02 percent to a high of 42 percent. The error rate was found to be 28 percent, three times what the state allows. It has also been discovered that people owning less expensive homes were generally being over-assessed and that seasonal residences were assessed at a lower rate. Another finding was that areas that have been experiencing a

rapid growth rate were found to be over-assessed.

Examples cited were of two homes worth \$36,000 in the same school district. One homeowner paid \$1,1456.16 in taxes while the other paid \$3,110.88. Another example was a home in Miller Place worth \$91,000 and a home in Mastic worth \$31,000 both paying the same tax rate of \$740.51.

NYPIRG recommended that Brookhaven town reinstate its program to re-assess all one and two family homes, and offer basic education on property tax to homeowners.

According to Domurad, "Lack of facility, funds, personnel are part of the problem in Brookhaven." However, he added, "Brookhaven is not much different than others that have not re-valued in five years."

The press conference was called in order to inform the public of a bill that will "be on Governor Carey's desk" Oct. 26. The bill would establish a small claims assessment review court for homeowners to receive fair, quick justice. NYPIRG suggested that all homeowners write to the Governor to urge its passing.

As Leotta and Domurad stated, "Homeowners assume they are getting a tax break. The system is made so that homeowners cannot challenge it."

WHO PAYS MORE ?



SELLING PRICE	
\$ 36,000	\$36,000
ASSESSMENT	
\$ 2,200	\$4,700
TAX: \$1,456.16	TAX: \$3,110.88
COUNTY, TOWN & SCHOOL TAX	

WHO PAYS MORE ?



SELLING PRICE	
\$ 91,000	\$ 31,000
ASSESSMENT	
\$ 3,800	\$3,800
*TAX: \$740.51	*TAX: \$740.51
*COUNTY AND TOWN TAX	

Part of NYPIRG's presentation of inequitable tax assessment in Brookhaven.

Stony Brook's Oldest Tradition Returns Thursday

Movies, Music and 150 Kegs of Beer Planned



Oktoberfest in 1979. It reigns as Stony Brook's oldest tradition.

By Craig Schneider

Public Safety has been notified, the 10 page facilities use forms have been filed, and a virgin liquor license is anxiously waiting. Oktoberfest is here!

For the past 11 years, Tabler Quad's mid-semester festival has been one of the biggest events on campus. Drawing 4,000 to 8,000 people a night, who drink over 150 kegs of beer, is what makes Oktoberfest Stony Brook's longest running tradition.

"It's a great thing," said the festival's chairman Mary Minowsky. "We've been working on this for five weeks, and this years going to be even better. It's a great feeling."

This Oktoberfest will have the added attraction of a Thursday night pre-party. Movies will be shown including "Breaking Away" and "A Clockwork Orange."

"The party starts at 9 PM and ends whenever," said Oktoberfest advisor, Gordon Harwell.

There will be German beer including Lowenbrau, Dinkelacher, and Becks light and dark. German food and an Um-Pah band. Happy hours will be from 9 PM - 10 PM, offering beer at half price.

In addition to these activities Oktoberfest will host two live bands. Crystal will appear Friday night and The Lines will appear on Saturday.

Don't go home this weekend.

Man Charged With Assaulting Police Officer

A staff member of WUSB, Stony Brook's radio station, was arrested yesterday morning, charged with a possible felony and two misdemeanors, according to a Public Safety officer who requested anonymity.

Arnold Pritchett, 23, was arraigned yesterday morning for allegedly knocking over a Public Safety officer (assault 2nd degree) when he drove away after being pulled over for going through a stop sign and ignoring their initial demands to pull over. He was also issued tickets for driving eastbound on a west-

bound lane, and resisting arrest (misdemeanors) and for going through a stop sign, and two red lights, failure to signal, failure to yield the right of way to the Public Safety vehicle.

According to an account by a Public Safety officer, Pritchett was returning home at 2 AM after his Monday evening show at WUSB, and was spotted by two Public Safety officers as he drove through a stop sign on campus.

The officers attempted to pull Pritchett over, but he drove off campus, disregarding them. Pritchett drove

southbound on Stony Brook Road, at which time, the officers radioed back to headquarters and requested additional assistance. The Suffolk County Police Department was then contacted.

Speeding down Stony Brook Road, Pritchett ignored the Public Safety vehicle's demands to pull over and made a right onto Route 347, Nesconset Highway.

At that point, another Public Safety car was called to help out. Pritchett was forced to the shoulder by the two cars.

When Officer Christopher Bergman got out of the patrol car and approached Pritchett's car, Pritchett suddenly pulled away, throwing Bergman to the ground, and bruising his left arm.

Bergman, with the assistance of the other Public Safety Officers on the scene, got back into the patrol car and continued to pursue him. When Pritchett was 200' west of Alexander Avenue, he made a 180 degree turn in his westbound lane and aimed his

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