

RIVERHEAD NEWS-REVIEW

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Leaf bags might be required

Deal would end the town pickup

BY TIM GANNON | STAFF WRITER

Will curbside leaf pickup become a thing of the past in Riverhead unless residents collect their leaves in bags?

Maggio Sanitation, whose garbage carting contract with the town is up for renewal, has proposed taking over the entire leaf pickup operation in the town, relieving the town highway department of that responsibility and saving the town labor and equipment costs.

Company president Vinny Maggio told the Town Board at its Thursday work session that his company would either give or sell — depending on what the town wants — paper leaf bags to residents, similar to what is done in Southold Town.

Residents would collect their leaves in the paper bags and leave the bags at the curb, instead of piles of loose leaves. Maggio would collect the bags and dump the leaves at the town's yard waste facility on Youngs Avenue in Calverton, where they would be composted to make topsoil.

Mr. Maggio is proposing to pick up the leaves for four weeks in April and four weeks in November. Unlike plastic bags, the paper bags could be shredded and dumped with the leaves, he said.

Currently, about half the town's residents place their leaves in their own plastic bags, which are picked up along with bulk items by Maggio; the rest pile their leaves loose at the curb, officials said. Highway Superintendent George Woodson said it costs about \$400,000 in man hours townwide to pick up leaves left at the curb, and it takes about four or five weeks to get the job done.

In addition, Mr. Woodson said, leaves are now falling later in the season than in

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BARBARAELEN KOCH PHOTO

BOILING OVER ON THE RIVER

TEA Party organizer Mary Meyer delivers a speech at the tax day protest last Thursday in downtown Riverhead. Ms. Meyer, co-founder of Suffolk 9-12 Project political action group, is also running for a Riverhead school board seat. **See page 2 for TEA Party coverage and page 14 for school board candidate profiles.**

Desperate flood victims: Fed loans not a real option

Fundraisers might be the only way for some to recover

BY VERA CHINESE | STAFF WRITER

Horton and Osborn avenue residents whose homes were destroyed in last month's flood will not be receiving government grants, though they and other Long Islanders will be eligible for low-interest loans to repair homes and replace waterlogged

cars and other belongings.

But paying back the money, even with low interest rates and over many years, might not be an option for those with poor credit histories or living on an already tight budget.

James Pace, who lives at 177 Horton Ave., noted that some of his neighbors were retired and on fixed incomes

and a new loan payment every month would be a crippling burden.

"I don't see how that could work," he said, adding that flooding in his basement has caused about \$25,000 in damages, including a ruined furnace. "Their lifestyle would have to change."

Governor David Paterson an-

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