



Newsday / Daniel Goodrich

Paul Michael Henry, a property tax reduction consultant, in the office at his home.

# Property Tax Fighters

## *Reduction consultants are on the increase*

By Collin Nash

STAFF WRITER

When Cynthia Giugliano bought her four-bedroom colonial in Nesconset nine years ago, she was paying about \$3,000 in property taxes.

By last year, her property tax bill had risen to \$7,400. So when word spread that identical homes on her block got big assessment reductions through a tax reduction consultant, she figured it would be relatively easy for her to get her \$7,400 tax bill reduced.

After weeks of effort, her protest was denied.

So she sought help from the same tax consultant her neighbors used — and eventually got her tax bill slashed by \$1,400.

Giugliano is among the legions of Long Islanders turning to tax reduction services, a nascent but sprouting cottage industry.

"I don't think the average person can do this," Giugliano said about appealing assessments. "It's very time-consuming and not worth the aggravation."

The firm that helped her — in exchange for half of the first year's reduction — is run by Paul Mi-

chael Henry, a Greenport entrepreneur whose pioneering role in the rapidly developing industry began when the property taxes on his farm house soared from \$6,000 to \$11,000.

Instead of moping, he protested — only to run into a bureaucratic brick wall. But he persevered, and months later his determination paid off to the tune of \$2,000-plus in property tax reductions.

"It struck me how many people there were like me with no inkling they were eligible" for tax reductions, said Henry. That experience prompted him to open Tax Reduction Services Inc. in his Greenport home.

Today, with Nassau County facing a court order to reassess and most officials acknowledging that the patchwork assessment system on Long Island is antiquated and inequitable, growing numbers are following in Henry's footsteps.

And many homeowners like Giugliano, spurred on by escalating taxes and a crippling economy but daunted by the paperwork and time required to challenge assessments themselves, are turning to

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