One, This, That, Their, There

butternut valley group to meet sun saturday, december 6, 2008 8:10 am a group of otsego county citizens has formed the butternut valley alliance with an intention to introduce several initiatives. the bva describes itself as a nonpartisan advocacy group **THAT** encourages the preservation and protection of environmental qualities, farming and cultural heritage, economic viability, open space and village charms of the watershed **THAT** encompasses the valley. the group plans to meet at 1:30 p.m. sunday at the new lisbon town hall. robert eklund, a member and spokesman for the group, said the alliance began with a cluster of 20 to 25 people who met at the friedman home. he said carla hall friedman \_ a direct descendant of early settler gen. jacob morris \_ helped found the group with her husband, ben. they invited people throughout the valley communities whom they believed could be influential and help preserve the rural character and lifestyle, eklund said. ``the butternut valley is a treasure **THAT** needs to be nurtured," said carla friedman in a media release. ``we believe the butternut valley alliance can play a vital role in preserving the character of **THIS** valley while ensuring its economic viability and otherwise maintaining its attractiveness as a place to live and to visit," she added. eklund, of morris, said **THERE** are about 60 members. the bva was not formed because of the recent popularity of gas drilling, according to eklund. he said the group is made up of people who have many concerns about the future of the valley. ``we are not anti-anything,'' he said. ``we are all pro-butternut valley.'' eklund said the group foresees more pressures on the valley. he said the group's goals include addressing environmental concerns \_ especially as they relate to the butternut creek and watershed; encouraging job growth; educating the public about local farmers and **THEIR** products; preserving scenic landscapes and open spaces; and revitalizing village centers. **ONE** of the group's key concerns is keeping the younger generations in the area, eklund said. ``most of our children end up leaving because **THERE** is not much to keep them here,'' he said. according to eklund, the group will be announcing initiatives, such as the designation of state highway 51 and county road 16 as a "scenic byway," which he said will strengthen the local economy through tourism and recreation. he said the bva will also introduce a watershed protection program. ``i think the organization is something you will hear a lot about in the near future, and i believe **THERE** will be a lot of good **THAT** will come out of **THIS** ,'' eklund said. the bva meets monthly on sunday afternoons, typically toward the middle of the month, eklund said. the group is open to the public.