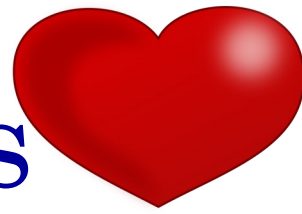




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# Whitefield News

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Published Monthly

February 2017

## Next Month... Town Meeting

**Town Meeting will be held on Saturday, March 18th.**

**Balloting will be held on Friday, March 17th.**

In March we will be voting on several municipal positions. There are two openings for selectman, three-year-terms; one opening for road commissioner, three-year-term; three openings for planning board; two-year-terms; and one opening for RSU school board, one-year-term.

For more information call 207-549-5175.

## Should We Stay or Should We Go (The Snowbird Dilemma)?

(submitted by The Birdwatcher)

Anticipation! Last January we had six "plowings" before the end of January. This year we are already ahead of that by two (maybe more by the time this goes to print). As I sit in my warm kitchen, the white flakes of snow piling up outside, I hear the town plow truck grinding up the hillside one more time this afternoon. It is one of those Maine days that begs us to stay off the roads, to wait until "It" stops before even thinking about scooping out a path to the vehicle and sweeping off the windshield. The weatherman says that winter storm Decima will unload 5-6 inches of snow in Whitefield, and then leave us with severe icy conditions. I know our "plowman" won't push down our driveway until this is all over. So...bake some cookies and enjoy some tea time! I could be somewhere (anywhere) south of here, and missing all of this!

Many of our Whitefield neighbors are missing this. My guess is "missing" isn't the correct word choice, but they just are not here witnessing the wonders of winter in Whitefield. I know this because their driveways won't look like mine after the storm...they will not get plowed out. No tracks in. No tracks out! They have made tracks for warmer, sunnier, more physically pleasant regions, and who would blame them? I'm just too lazy to go through all of that preparation and planning.

I do have to applaud them for taking on such a huge undertaking. Their "to-do" list is impressive, to say the least. I had to sit down just to read through one neighbor's mountainous pile of sticky notes. She starts "getting ready" as soon as

the first leaf hits the ground in the Fall. To prepare for her winter roost, this Whitefield Snowbird has to do something with her pets, mail, phone, cable, utilities, heat, water, prescriptions, variety of billings, and even securing her chimney so certain critters don't use it as a winter condo. Obviously, since she has done this for a few years, she also has a very organized suitcase filled with all of her tax information.

Some folks get 'outta' Dodge (Whitefield) early, others leave us right after Thanksgiving, and yet some just have to stay until all of Santa's presents have been opened on Christmas morning. But once the trek has begun, our Snowbird neighbors know exactly where they are heading, and they leave us with a merry "toot toot" as they grind it into gear to head down I95 before wintah' gets too bold.

When I asked one of our "migrators" how it was for him when he got the notion to fly off during the "deep freeze" months, he told me about the reactions he got from family and friends. He said his Dad scolded him with, "If you can't stand the winters, you don't deserve the summers." Pretty harsh! Then it was his friends and neighbors who said, "Oh winter! I can hardly wait for a nice wood fire with a pot of tea, a purring cat curled in my lap and a nice book while the wind howls and the snow a blowing". This "migrator" **Continued on Pg. 2.**



## "Whitefield Produces"

(submitted by Bill McKeen)

The Whitefield Economic Development Committee is interested in helping all businesses in Whitefield grow. A strategy to help that effort would be to design a "Brand" for our town; one that would "put our best foot forward" to promote the products and services in a positive way. Since Whitefield has a large number of talented people involved in micro and small businesses, we could promote our assets with the brand "Whitefield Produces". We produce products, services, and the arts such as: *Farmers, Artists, Crafters,*



*Musicians, Writers, Trades People Services, forest products, gravel, contractors, auto dealers, etc.*

We could build a website and design a Facebook page which could then be linked to the town website, *Friends of Whitefield*, Sheepscot General's website, and others. We could write up a feature on one business per month for the town Newsletter, then forward any feedback to individual businesses. The social media would also provide an ongoing vehicle to continue a two-way communication with Whitefield businesses and the Economic Development Committee. The brand could also be used for Whitefield product labels, t-shirts, signs and may promotional purposes. (See report on Page 3)

*Snowbirds cont. from Pg. 1* concluded that for some, any notion of finding a warmer place than Whitefield in the winter was indeed an alien thought. "Besides, what would you do there - shuffle board, golf, canasta .... just give me the old Superette, thank you very much!" teased one of his dear friends.

A "not-so-young-anymore" Snowbird informed me, "We didn't travel when I was a kid. We heard of people who went to Florida, but for many years we never actually knew any. Then it started, people who "got a retirement" would rent a trailer in Florida for a few weeks or even a month - just imagine it!" However, it was a brave visit to South America to reunite with an AFS student that made these two old Snowbirds want to become "travelers". They were hooked, so travel they do...EVERY winter. I think the count might have been 7 trips to South America and travels to 15 countries...are there that many countries?

One long-time Whitefield nonagenarian (she's 92, I think), told me she is "downsizing her life and NEXT winter she is going to head south"! She thinks it's about time that she did a little traveling and getting out of the cold for the winter would be great. I think it took her quite a long time to come to that conclusion. Another "over 70" lady said her Florida sister called and asked her "down for the winter, but she wouldn't even think of doing that! She tried it once." And that's that!

It was a rather well-versed Whitefielder who said, "Today in Whitefield there are people who travel every year to Florida, Mexico, Southeast Asia, Europe, Hawaii, the Caribbean and other distant ports. Today in Whitefield some people deliberate very long and hard before going to Augusta to the annual Agricultural fair in January." He seems to be quite right. If you decided to stay put this winter, MAYBE I'll see you at the fair. If you are one of our adventurous neighbors who shuffled outta town til the pot holes melt, we'd love to hear from you. Send us postcards. Tell us stories about your wintah! We'll dig our way to the mailbox and get back out on the roads. We'll be keeping an eye on your place, and marking off the calendar until we see the fiddleheads, start swarting the blackflies and notice your porch light on. Have a safe wintah!



## Summary of recent Select Board activity

(submitted by Tony Marple)

**Marijuana** The Board is proposing a ballot question for a six month moratorium on the implementation of marijuana retail sales and social



clubs. While the moratorium would have no impact on marijuana possession, it would allow the town to review State marijuana regulations which will take months to develop. Then the town could consider the need, if any, to create local regulations. The Board itself has taken no position on these issues, but will be seeking input from the townspeople. The moratorium proposal will be discussed and voted on at the March Town Meeting. Meanwhile, the state legislature is considering a one year moratorium. If that moratorium is enacted we will not need our own.

2016 Town Meeting  
Photo by Debbie Rogers

**Sand and salt** As you well know, ice has been a big problem on roads and driveways this year. The sand shed for citizens has been used very heavily. This is an important service for people in town, but there has been some abuse. Town policy, as posted at the site, limits sand to four five gallon buckets per household per storm. Out of town and commercial uses are prohibited. People have observed trucks being fully loaded; sometimes by non residents. Please comply with town guidelines and report abuse to the Town Office.

**Town Office improvements** The Board and the Budget Committee are considering options for upgrading the Town Office. Issues that need to be addressed include air quality, insulation, lighting, carpeting, and the layout of the front desk. The office also uses a very old oil burner for heat which can be replaced by an efficient heat pump using power from the new solar panels. The scope of work and cost is still under evaluation, but our preliminary cost estimate is about \$25,000 which we propose to take out of surplus if approved at Town Meeting.

**2018 budget** The Board and the Budget Committee are working on the 2018 budget. While there are a handful of line items that need to be finalized, it looks as though the proposed budget will be flat. Because we had a significant surplus in 2016 and in recent years, we plan to reduce our surplus to lower the tax burden. However, we do not yet know what the RSU 12 budget will be at this time, nor do we know our share of the Lincoln County budget.

**Flaggers** Following a driver complaint, the Department of Labor has found that some town road projects have been out of compliance with OSHA due to the absence of flaggers. The budget will include money for flaggers along with some new training requirements.

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## Whitefield Historical Society "Just Yesterday"



1956 photo of the East River Road (Rt 218) from the Walter Kennedy farm (later Rufus and Alice Percy's Treble Ridge Farm) north to the Henry Water's house and Frank Morse house (on right) after a late season March 16th snowstorm with high winds and lots of drifts.

(Courtesy Whitefield Historical Society, Glendon Jackson Collection)

Photo courtesy WHS

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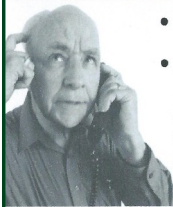
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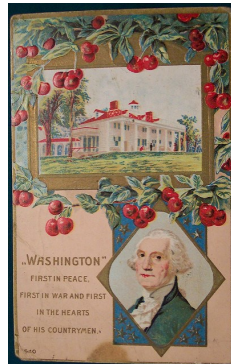


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## Economic Development Committee report

(members: Louie Sell, Sue and Bill McKeen, Tony Marple, Ben Marcus, Karl Richards, and Dennis Merrill)

After surveying participants at last year's Town Meeting, the Whitefield Select Board established an ad hoc Economic Development Committee last summer. The committee's objectives flow from its mission statement: "to encourage the creation of new and the growth of existing businesses in Whitefield while maintaining the town's rural character and other aspects of its quality of life."



To get started the committee sent questionnaires to all existing businesses in Whitefield and distributed a separate questionnaire to Whitefield citizens through this newsletter. Reliable high speed internet, followed closely by taxes and land use regulations, were the most important factors local business people cited as affecting their plans. The disappointingly small number who replied to the committee's citizen questionnaire also highlighted internet access and taxes. Both groups stressed the importance of preserving Whitefield's rural character.

The committee has also been looking into the infrastructure in Whitefield and nearby areas. Committee members attended meetings on how rural areas in Maine and elsewhere in the US have cooperated on high speed internet. This is not something a small town like Whitefield can do by itself, but working with neighboring communities on a county or regional basis may make it possible to create mechanisms to expand access to high speed internet; which has enormous implications for economic development in the twenty-first century. Committee members are also looking into other aspects of infrastructure such as three-phase electric power and natural gas that can be important for local businesses.

The committee is also exploring ways that the town can "put its best foot forward" to promote the products and services its many talented people already create in small businesses, agriculture, services, and the arts. Committee member Bill McKeen is working on a "brand" that will exemplify what Whitefield produces.

Other possible activities include creating a "Whitefield Produces" website and Facebook page, doing feature articles for the town newsletter on Whitefield businesses, and enlisting social media to enhance communication among town businesses.

Economic development can bring many benefits to a community; including jobs and income to current residents, attracting new people and resources, and expanding the town's tax base. Yet the committee also recognizes that unmanaged economic development has the potential to undermine Whitefield's rural way of life.

The committee plans to make a report to the Select Board before this year's town meeting. This can serve as a starting point for a discussion on economic development which has important implications for Whitefield's future.



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## FEBRUARY 2017 COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

- 1st** **ARLINGTON GRANGE MEETING**, Call 549-3491 for more information
- 2nd** **SENIOR MEN'S GROUP**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
- 3rd** **WHITEFIELD FOOD PANTRY**, St. Denis Hall, 1-3 pm  
**FAMILY GAME NIGHT** at Sheepscot General. Open to all ages. Games are provided but you are welcome to bring your own. There is a game host who can help you learn a new game too! 5:00 pm-8pm
- 4th** **YOUTH XC SKI CLINIC**, Midcoast Conservancy will hold the annual Kids XC-Ski Clinic for kids ages 4-14. The clinic will start Saturday, January 7 and run each Saturday morning until February 11. The clinic is the perfect setting for skiers of different levels to gain confidence and enjoy HVNC's trails. Instructors use fun, non-competitive methods to get the skiers out on the trails having fun each week.
- 5th** **FAMILY CROSS COUNTRY SKIING** In partnership with the Wiscasset Community Center, Family Days events will offer a chance to do some cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing. Sundays from January 15th til February 12th, from 9am -11am, try out skiing and snowshoeing on the trails around the community center. Equipment will be provided for anyone who doesn't have skis or snowshoes. Play in the snow, then warm-up by the fire: a great way to enjoy the outdoors!  
**FAT BIKE DEMO DAY** Give your skis and snowshoes a rest and take to the trails on a fat tire bike at Midcoast Conservancy's Hidden Valley Nature Center from 10 am to 2 pm. A selection of fat bikes from Bath Cycle and Ski will be at HVNC for anyone to try on the extensive trail network there. Fat bikes, essentially mountain bikes with extra wide tires, were originally designed for riding in snow and sand and are a growing trend all over Maine. Their ability to handle most trail challenges and conditions make them especially fun to ride.  
 To register, go to [https://secure.lglforms.com/form\\_engine/s/x0peWpRmnbHq17lgzqFO3A](https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/x0peWpRmnbHq17lgzqFO3A)
- 6th** **COOPERS MILLS FIRE DEPT.**, All are welcome. No obligation. 7 pm
- 7th** **KINGS MILLS FIRE DEPT.**, 7 pm
- 7th** **WHITEFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY** meeting 1:00 pm
- 8th** **SELECT BOARD**, Fire Station, 6
- 8th** **TREE GROWTH SEMINAR** Midcoast Conservancy, 36 Water St, Wiscasset, Mort Moessewilde to do presentation. PR will happen in conjunction with similar events in Rockland Feb 16 and Waldo County (location TBD). Hildy Ellis, Waldo/Knox SWCD will be helping with PR. 6:30pm – 8:30pm
- 9th** **SENIOR MEN'S GROUP**, Sheepscot General, 10 am  
**FULL MOON OWL PROWL AT HVNC**, Meet at HVNC gate ready to leave at 5 pm. We will be guided along a trail where owls are apt to be found, calling and listening. No matter, it will be a magical night, ending with a warm fire at the barn. Moderate walk – 30 minutes each way. Dress warmly, wear shoes with good grips or bring snow shoes (HVNC has snowshoes to rent by reservation), bring hiking stick, snack, drink and flashlight Birding enthusiast Jodi Telfair will lead the hike. To register, go to [https://secure.lglforms.com/form\\_engine/s/PrtUCXmkjvcngSBcpnAlQg](https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/PrtUCXmkjvcngSBcpnAlQg)
- 10th** **RSU SCHOOL BOARD MEETING** Chelsea School, 6:30 pm  
**SELECT BOARD**, Fire Station, 6 pm
- 11th** **YOUTH XC SKI CLINIC—SEE FEB. 4TH**
- 12th** **PUBLIC SUPPER**, Knights of Columbus donation only Ham supper at St. Denis Hall 5 pm
- 12th** **WHITEFIELD ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (WAA)**, Whitefield School, 6 pm
- 13th** **WHITEFIELD MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPT.**, Fire Station, 7 pm
- 14th** **WOMEN OF WHITEFIELD**, Sheepscot General, 10 am  
**SELECT BOARD**, Fire Station, 6 pm
- 15th** **PLANNING BOARD**, Fire Station, 6:00 pm
- 16th** **SENIOR MEN'S GROUP**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
- 17th** **OPEN-MIC NIGHT FEATURING NICK BENNETT**, Sheepscot General, 7-9 pm
- 18th** **DRUMMING CIRCLE**, Sheepscot General, 6:30 pm. Open to the public, all ages welcome.
- 21st** **SELECT BOARD**, Fire Station, 6 pm
- 23rd** **SENIOR MEN'S GROUP**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
- 24th** **WASHINGTON TO MOSCOW BOOK LAUNCH FOR LOUIS SELL** at Sheepscot General 5:30 pm
- 28th** **WOMEN OF WHITEFIELD**, Sheepscot General, 10 am  
**SELECT BOARD**, Fire Station, 6 pm

*Do you have an event? Contact [whitefieldtownnews@gmail.com](mailto:whitefieldtownnews@gmail.com)*

*Deadline for newsletter submissions is the 15th of the month. Email [whitefieldtownnews@gmail.com](mailto:whitefieldtownnews@gmail.com)*

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