



Whitefield News

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Aunt Gin's: Whitefield's newest restaurant

by Cheryle Joslyn

If you haven't been to Aunt Gin's yet, you better put that at the top of your New Year's list. You won't be disappointed! Aunt Gin's, Whitefield's newest restaurant is ready to help you bring in the new year with family and friends and delicious dining. Owner, Steve Dumas, will be planning a special lobster casserole, and a lightly smoked prime rib; in addition to the many other creative dishes on the menu. Spacious and attractively decorated dining, comfortable seating, superb service, modern bar, and festive atmosphere will make you want to return often in 2016.

Steve (a Whitefield resident) and Wyatt Shorey have been in the food industry for more than 20 years with their successful enterprise, *Steve Dumas Catering*. They have won praise from many clients catered to over the years, as well as winning the 1st place award from the Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce Expo in 2014 for their "unbelievable display of delicious confections". The transition from the catering business (which he continues to maintain) to the restaurant business was just a natural one for Steve. He always had an overriding interest in food. From cherishing his grandmother's many cookbooks to being inspired by his Aunt Gin of Norridgewock who always had something delicious on the stove, Steve is



Aunt Gin's Restaurant (Photo courtesy of Steve Dumas)

continuing the wholesome hospitality that only serving home-cooked food can bring.

Opening in August, Aunt Gin's has undergone the usual "unexpected" challenges that go with most new businesses, but one would never notice once you step inside to experience the "warm and delicious" smells of this welcoming atmosphere. Steve enjoys personally greeting his customers while his professional and dedicated restaurant staff attends to each patron's requests. Customers enjoy the reasonable prices, the fresh home-cooked food expertly served as well as the daily specials that are a notch above. **Continued on Pg. 2**

The Family Guide to Getting Outside in Winter

by Andrea Lani

After the holidays pass and Arctic air settles over the land, it's tempting to want to curl up by the fire with a cup of hot cocoa and hibernate until spring. But if you did that, not only would your kids start pole-vaulting the furniture, you would also miss out on the many natural wonders of winter.

It doesn't take much, besides determination, to get out in wintertime, but proper clothing is essential. Avoid cotton and dress the whole family in layers, starting with a thermal base, insulate with a fleece or wool sweater and pants, and top it off with a coat and snow pants, hat and mittens. Don't skimp on footwear—wool socks and a pair of warm, water-proof boots can mean the difference between a great day and a miserable one. Keep in mind that babies in backpacks or sleds don't generate as much heat as you do carrying or pulling them and will need extra layers.

Once outside, let your kids take the lead. From catching snowflakes on their tongue to building snow forts, they have a natural instinct for what to do with the white stuff. If you start to get cold or bored watching them have all the fun, hop on a sled or build a snowman.

Winter can be a wonderful time to discover some of nature's mysteries. Try catching snowflakes on black paper or cloth. Look at them through a magnifying glass and note how temperature and humidity affect the size and shape of the flakes. After a fresh snow, take to the woods on snowshoes or cross-country skis and look for animal tracks. What story are the tracks telling about the animals' activities? If you hear a chickadee nearby, make a "psh-psh-psh" noise and see if the birds come in closer to check you out. Notice if any of the chickadees' winter companions—nuthatches, woodpeckers, titmice—are among the flock. Challenge your children—and yourself—to find one natural object for each color of the rainbow. Winter may seem all gray and white, but when you look closely, you'll find it full of color. When you start getting out and enjoying all winter has to offer, you might find that the season passes a lot more quickly than it did from beside the fire. It might even end far too soon.



Photo submitted Andrea Lani

Auntie Gin's continued from Pg. 1
 "Nothing frozen or pre-prepared and no microwave allowed on the premises, so that means everything is made in house, to order," Steve proudly assures his clients. His organic produce, meat, fish, beer, roasted coffee, etc...are predominantly locally sourced from area vendors and farmer's markets whenever available.

Aunt Gin's employs 34 area folks and has plans for expanding in the summer with an ice cream stand, an outside deck, and hosting a farmer's market on the property. Aunt Gin's, located on

Rt. 17 in Whitefield, about a mile west of the Windsor four corners, is open Monday-Wednesday from 11am - 8:00pm, Thursday 8am - 8:00pm (serving a scrumptious breakfast menu...you'll HAVE to try their famous warm Blueberry Bread Pudding with every meal!), Friday 8am-9:00pm, and Saturday/Sunday 7am - 9:00pm. They also have a large separate dining/banquet room dedicated the "Windsor Room" for your next family or social gathering, school event, fundraising event, or business meeting.

Aunt Gin's will be open for Christmas and New Year's! They will offer a dinner with your choice of turkey, prime rib, or ham, and that special lobster casserole with all the popular sides AND desserts! Please call for holiday reservations to assure seating (549-4600), and be sure to stop by Aunt Gin's often in 2016! You'll be glad they have located in Whitefield. (PS: Have you ever tried Fresh Dill Pickle Chips? It's on the menu. Now, that sounds interesting!)



Aunt Gin's Restaurant Photo by Cheryle Joslyn

A Young Deer Hunter's Story

by Colby Northrup

Before this year I had only been deer hunting 5 times and shot 3 deer; a 6 point, 9 point, and a 7 point. This year I had gone hunting about 15 times and had just seen does. On November 25, that changed. That was the day I shot my fourth deer.



Gramp, (Randy Northrup), proud dad (Matt Northrup), and "The Hunter" (Colby Northrup) - Nov. 2015 (photo courtesy of Northrup family)

My grandfather (Randy Northrup) and I went out to the treestand in the afternoon. We had been sitting there for a half an hour when a few does came out into the field. We watched them feed and play in the field for a while. All of a sudden, we heard something behind us in the woods. I knew it was a buck because I heard it grunting and scraping bushes. I got my .243 Wssm rifle up and looked at where I thought it would come out of the woods.

When the buck came out, it was walking towards the does and wouldn't stop when my grandfather grunted. I knew it wasn't going to stop, so I got steady and shot it at about 100 yards. It ran, but never left the field. My grandfather and I were pretty excited when we walked up to it and saw how big it was!

We called my dad, and he, my mom, and sister came out with the four-wheeler and wagon to get it. When we got it to the house, we took pictures and then brought it up to be tagged and weighed. It had 9 points and ended up weighing 188 pounds.

This was the best way to end a long hunting season, and I'm already excited for next year. As I am writing this, I'm leading the deer pool at Country Corners with only a few days left in muzzle-loading to go.

Arlington Grange THANK YOU!

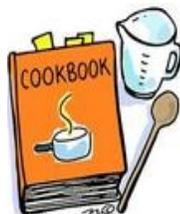
The members of the Arlington Grange would like to extend a heartfelt Thank You to Steve Smith for the installation of their new septic system. The grange would not have been able to afford this much needed upgrade from the old outhouse without Steve's generosity in giving his expertise, time and equipment at no cost to the grange. Whitefield is truly a wonderful place to live and folks like Steve Smith make it that way!!!

St. Denis Whitefield food pantry cookbook!

The Whitefield Food Pantry Cookbook is now available at the Superette, Sheepscot General, Elmers Barn, Rideouts and the Alna Store. The book offers 525 recipes from area homes.

All proceeds for the cookbook will benefit the Food Pantry.

Each hardcover 3 ring style book will cost \$20.



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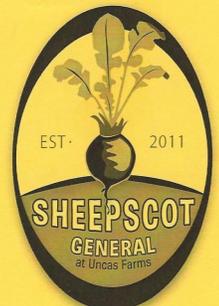
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Whitefield Pre-K off to a great start

by Joshua McNaughton (Principal)

Photo of Roland Kennedy cutting ice (circa 1947). The location is unknown. There were a few ideal locations to cut ice in Whitefield during winter, however, such as Weary Pond, Little Dyer, and the Basin at Coopers Mills. There were quite a few ice houses and cellars storing ice blocks for refrigeration throughout the long winter into late spring. Roland's family farm was at the site where Treble Ridge Farm (owned by Rufus and Alice Percy) now sits.



Photo from Glendron Jackson collection: courtesy of the WHS

Whitefield School opened its doors this September to a new Pre-K program. This full-day program currently has 15 students enrolled.

Planning and preparation for the arrival of our Pre-K students started during the 2014

-15 school year.

Through the help of grant funding and collaborations with Mid-Coast Head Start, a space within our elementary wing was transformed to suit the needs of four year old



Photo courtesy Whitefield School

learners. Changes included adding a bathroom and office space to a room previously used by kindergarten students. The changes did not stop there, new fencing was added to our new playground and work was done in the corridor outside the classroom to meet building codes specific to Pre-K programs.

To staff this new program, Mid-Coast Head Start provided us with teachers, Teresa Blachet and Jennifer Chapman. RSU 12 provided support staff, Marlo Young. This dynamic team is off to a great start and has become a delightful addition to our faculty.

The goal Whitefield School has had from day one was to provide a genuine school experience for these young learners. To do this we started by providing staff support on each bus run, both morning and afternoon. This allowed our Pre-K students door to door transportation; the same as we provide our K-8 students. Pre-K students receive the same lunch as all other students do. They attend our assemblies, participate in our Positive Behavior Intervention System, and have access to our library, music and art room, as well as the gymnasium for activities.

Pre-K staff Marlo Young describes the program as "a positive and enriching experience for our youth" as well as "a HUGE jumpstart for them developmentally and socially!" During a recent "special lunch" I joined our Pre-K students and staff for their daily family-style meal. I was greeted at the door with smiles and hugs. As I sat in a tiny chair at a very short table, I witnessed pure joy and excitement as students served themselves lunch. During our time together we shared stories about our favorite daily activities and what we "love about school". As you can imagine the response varied from "lunch" and "nap time" to visiting the library and coloring in the art room. One child perhaps said it best, "We love coming to school". My simple response echoed the sentiment of the Whitefield School staff and K-8 students. "We love having you here!"

Recent Select Board Activity

- Town Audit: the Town's accounting firm, Berry Talbot and Royer, presented the financial results for the fiscal year ended 6/30/15. Whitefield's net assets increased by \$98,000. The two largest reasons are a favorable expense budget variance and a large increase in excise taxes. The Select Board and the Budget Committee will be considering these and many other considerations in the preparation of the 2017 budget. Overall, the Town's finances are in very good shape.
- Homestead Exemptions are a valuation credit for a homeowner's principal residence and are set by State law. The exemption will be increasing in 2017 to \$15,000 per residence from the current \$10,000 and will increase further to \$20,000 in 2018. This is a significant benefit to taxpayers and has no impact on Town tax revenue.
- The Maine DOT has announced quite suddenly that the State-owned bridge on the Howe Road, considered beyond repair, would close on December 4th. The Fire Department and our plowing contractor, David Spicer, are making plans to adjust to the new reality.
- Residents with property on Clary Lake attended a recent Board meeting to discuss the impact of the reduced lake level on their property values. The Town assesses lakefront property at a fraction of that assessed by surrounding Towns; but nonetheless, the Board recognizes that a significant impairment has taken place. The board will further discuss the issue and take action on the requested abatements in time for the April 2016 valuation.
- The board voted to hire Darlene Beaulieu as Tax Collector. Darlene is a very capable individual with extensive experience in town finance and operations.
- Fire Chief Scott Higgins will be notifying residents of the need for driveways to be 12 feet wide and have 14 feet of vertical clearance to ensure timely fire and rescue response.
- The Alna Select Board has asked Whitefield to consider an agreement to keep Bailey Road open in the event of a local gravel company wanting to have the road discontinued. In exchange, Alna will plow the seg-

ment of the road in Whitefield. Alna will be proposing an inter-community agreement that will have to be approved at town meetings in both towns.

- (Notes extracted from Approved Select Board Meeting Minutes courtesy of Tony Marple (Select Board Member). More complete information can be obtained online at <http://www.townofwhitefield.com/SB%20Minutes%202015.html>, or by request of the Approved Minutes at the town office.)

JANUARY 2016 COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR

- 1st** **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**
Whitefield Food Pantry, St. Denis Hall, 1-3 pm
- 2nd** **Annual Kid's Cross-Country Ski Clinic**, Excellent instructors will lead participants through fun games, and lots of exploring in order to learn the fundamentals of xc-skiing ages 5-12. *Limited scholarship positions available. FMI: write to andy@hvnc.org, or call 200-8840. Every Saturday until Feb. 6th
- 4th** **Coopers Mills Fire Dept.**, All are welcome. No obligation. 7 pm
Kings Mills Fire Dept., 7 pm
- 5th** **Select Board**, Fire Station, 6 pm
- 6th** **Arlington Grange Pot Luck & Meeting**, 6 pm pot luck, 7 pm meeting.
Whitefield Historical Society meeting 6:30 pm
- 7th** **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
- 10th** **Whitefield Athletic Association (WAA)**, Whitefield School, 6 pm
- 11th** **Whitefield Municipal Fire Dept.**, Fire Station, 7 pm
- 12th** **Women of Whitefield**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
Select Board, Fire Station, 6 pm
- 14th** **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
RSU School Board Meeting Chelsea School, 6:30 pm
- 15th** **Open-Mic Night**, Sheepscot General, 7-9 pm
- 16th** **Adult XC-Ski Clinic** Saturday 1/16, 12-2:30 or Sunday 1/17, 12-2:30
 It's never too late to learn a new skill. Join a great set of instructors for a fun afternoon on snow! Bring your own skis, or rent a set for the day.
 Event Fees: Members - no rental \$ 15.00 Non-members - no rental \$ 20.00
 Members - with rental \$ 27.00 Non-members - with rental \$ 32.00
 FMI: write to andy@hvnc.org, or call 200-8840.
DRUMMING CIRCLE, Sheepscot General, 6:30 pm. Open to the public, all ages
- 17th** **Adult XC-Ski Clinic** See Above
- 19th** **Select Board**, Fire Station, 6 pm
- 20th** **Planning Board**, Fire Station, 6:00 pm
- 21st** **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
Public meeting on Coopers Mills dam options, The Coopers Mills Dam Committee will be presenting its findings regarding options and recommendations for the Coopers Mills dam on January 21st at 7PM in the school gymnasium. The options include:
 1. Do nothing
 2. Repair the dam at Town expense
 3. Remove the dam and create public access along with historical and environmental displays at the dam site, fully funded by the Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF).
 There is an important water source for the fire department behind the dam. There are engineering proposals for alternative sites within the river with some redundancy. These options, which would also be funded by ASF, deserve your careful consideration along with fish passage, historical, community and financial considerations.
 We encourage you to attend. Tony Marple
- 26th** **Women of Whitefield**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
Select Board, Fire Station, 6 pm
- 28th** **Senior Men's Group**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
- 31st** **5th Annual Liberal Cup Biathlon at HVNC Expected to Sell Out**, On January 31st Hidden Valley Nature Center (HVNC) in Jefferson will host the fifth annual Liberal Cup Biathlon. All ages and skill levels are encouraged to participate! Registration fees range from \$10 to \$25. More details and registration information available online at <http://hvnc.org/biathlon-2/>. Registration is limited, and spots are filling quickly. Don't delay! If you're not interested in racing, please consider volunteering! If you're interested contact Andy (andy@hvnc.org, or 207-200-8840).



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