



Whitefield News

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On March 17th.

Volume 4, Issue 9

Published Monthly

March 2017

Whitefield Town Meeting

Balloting will be held on
Friday, March 17th 4-8 pm.

Town Meeting will be held on
Saturday, March 18th 10 am.

Two open seats on the
Select board (three year terms)

Bruce Mathews
Charlene Donahue
Bill McKeen

One opening for Road Com-
missioner, 3 year term:

David Boynton

Three openings on Planning
Board, 2 year terms:

Marianne Marple
Glenn Angell

(No one took out papers for the
third opening)

One opening on RSU School
Board

(No one has taken out papers)

Coopers Mill Dam project update

by Andrew Goode, Atlantic Salmon
Federation

Since the Town vote last March, the Coopers Mill Dam Project has made significant progress. The project involves three components including new fire hydrants, removal of the dam, and enhancement of the town-owned property to preserve and interpret its history and improve public access and recreation.

The watershed experienced a tremendous drought in 2016. In late August, the flows coming through Coopers Mills fell to 5 cubic feet per second (cfs) compared to a more normal summer flow of 25 cfs.

These flows were the lowest in the 70 years that discharge has been recorded in the watershed. As a result, the existing dry hydrant intake and fishway were inoperable for four months extending well into October.

The low water did allow engineers to collect more detailed information (ledge, sediments, channel location) on the conditions in the area where the new hydrants will be located which has helped in the design of the fire protection system. In January, the designs for the hydrants, dam removal, and site enhancements were given to the state and federal agencies for review.

The Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF) always anticipated constructing the project in either 2017 or 2018, during the July 15th -



September 30th in-water Photo by Tony Marple

work window. The biggest influence on this schedule is the time it takes to receive the necessary state and federal permits. Permitting consultations began last summer.

Since then, required studies have been conducted and application packets for the regulatory agencies have been in preparation. The various agencies involved include the Maine State Historic Preservation Commission, Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Department of Marine Resources, Department of Environmental Protection, Natural Areas Program, NOAA Fisheries, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Army Corps of Engineers. The word 'streamlined' is not a word we would

Continued on Page 2

Series on Volunteering Who is the Whitefield Lions Club?

by Cindy Lincoln

We are your friends, neighbors, relatives, teachers, and acquaintances. The Whitefield Lions Club was founded in 1953 and includes the towns of Whitefield, Jefferson, Windsor, and Somerville, Maine. Currently, we have 86 members. However, we are always looking for new members to join our club.

The Lions Club is the world's largest service club organization. There are 46,000 clubs and 1.4+ million members. We're also one of the most effective. Our members do whatever is needed to help our local communities. Everywhere we work, we make friends. Our work helps children



who need eyeglasses, seniors who need hearing aids, and folks who don't have enough to eat.

Many have heard of the Lions Club, but perhaps don't really know what we do. We are a group of volunteers serving our communities, meeting humanitarian needs, encouraging peace and promoting international understanding through Lions clubs.

Here is a synopsis of what your local club does on an annual basis: Railroad/Dollhouse Show, Relay for Life, Yard Sale, Windsor Fair, Golf Tournament, Harvest Dinner, Kids Christmas, Fruit Baskets, Gun Raffle, donate pies to the Hospice Pie Sale, collect eye glasses and cell phones, work with the local food

banks, and award scholarships to graduating seniors. We participate in the Peace Poster and Speak-out contests with local high school students who have at times gone on to

Continued on Page 2

Dam Cont. from Pg. 1 associate with this permitting process, but the agencies all believe it is an important project for the town and river. Construction of the third dry fire hydrant was started in the log yard at the north side of the Route 17 bridge over the North Branch of the river last summer. Even in August, during the drought, there was six feet of water above the bridge; where the former bridge abutments act as a hydraulic check to impound water upstream. The fire lane was constructed last summer, and the hydrant will be installed in July, 2017.

There is a lot going on in other parts of the watershed as well. Downstream, at the Head Tide Dam in Alna, a citizen committee and the Selectmen have proposed that voters at the March Town Meeting accept ASF's proposal to remove the right abutment and deteriorating gate structure and build a new platform over to the spillway as part of a project that also has a significant historical preservation/interpretation component, as well as public safety and access benefits.

Upstream, ASF is purchasing the Branch Mill Dam at the top of the West Branch in China this spring. In advance, we are working with the current owner and his restoration company to take down the deteriorated mill while saving the working interior pieces that can be reused at another mill. We anticipate constructing a fishway and creating a public access ramp at this dam over the next three years. To help implement these projects, the Atlantic Salmon Federation, the Nature Conservancy, and the Midcoast Conservancy have created a new three-year Habitat Restoration Specialist position in the watershed. We anticipate investing over \$2 million comprised of federal funds, mitigation funds, and mainly private donor funds.

Lions cont. from Pg. 1 win the district contests. These students make us very proud.

Whenever our Lions Club gets together, problems get smaller, and communities get better. That's because we help where help is needed – in our own communities and

around the world – with unmatched integrity and energy. Do you want to learn more about our club and get involved in your community? If you are interested in hearing more about the club or coming for a visit, please contact Club President, Cindy Lincoln at Cindy442@aol.com or 207-242-2477.



Marijuana Legalization Questions

By Bill McKeen



Maine has a new law making the use of recreational marijuana legal. While possession will be legal statewide, there are many questions that may arise in regard to production and retail sales in municipalities:

QUESTION: How does the law affect Whitefield?

The act gives towns like Whitefield substantial control over commercial marijuana activities. At some point, Whitefield voters will need to decide whether to prohibit, limit, or zone commercial activities in our town. If the voters decide to prohibit, then no planning needs to be done. If the voters decide to limit, then planning must be done. We do not have any zoning in Whitefield, so we cannot currently control location, but we may control other activities through our development ordinance and planning board efforts.

QUESTION: How do we control these activities?

The state will accept license applications for approval and then forward them to the municipalities for their approval. There are five classes of licenses for commercial activities: social clubs, retail sales, testing labs, and manufacturing and cultivation. Social clubs may sell marijuana and serve it for on-premise consumption. Retail stores can sell marijuana to the public. Testing labs will test for purity, potency, heavy metals, etc. Manufacturing is the process of converting marijuana into usable forms. Cultivation is the process of growing it for wholesale sales.

QUESTION: What options do Whitefield voters have?

The State has recently extended a moratorium on commercial marijuana activities until February 2018. Until that deadline approaches, no town action will be necessary. At that point, probably in the late fall of 2017, the Town will hold informational sessions, hearings, and a special Town Meeting. Whitefield voters will be able to choose whether to prohibit or limit any of these five classes of licenses. Prohibition can be reversed at a later date by town vote. Limits or regulations may include fire code, life safety, security, banning certain products, access to premises, etc. These decisions will be made by the voters.

QUESTION: What timeframe do we have to work in?

The original act called for all of this to be done in 9 months. In several western states the process took well over a year. The Maine Legislature passed LD 88 that fixed some loopholes and extends time for municipal planning until February, 2018. Therefore, a local moratorium vote will not be needed at the March 18, 2017 Town Meeting. A local moratorium toward the completion of State rule making could extend planning time a few months beyond that. If the town votes to impose a moratorium, it would need to be done prior to February 2018.

The Board of Selectmen welcomes your questions or comments about this important new law and how it may affect our community.

Bruce Mathews, CPI
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Whitefield Historical Society "Just Yesterday"



Voting @ the Whitefield Annual Town Meeting c1950 (Emma Chase about to place her ballot in the box with Cornelius Bushnell looking on). The original 1843 Town House was moved July 17, 1989 from its location near the intersection of Dexter Lane and Townhouse Road to its new home on Balltown Lane and Townhouse Road. It is now our Historical Society with our town office in the daylight basement. If you would like to see the 1950 video clip of this Whitefield voting day, you may log into: <http://vimeo.com/86622891> (courtesy David Chase)

With great appreciation of service to the Town of Whitefield

By Tony Marple

The Board will lose two outstanding members whose terms end after town meeting. Sue McKeen completes a three-year term and has served earlier on the board as well as on the Planning Committee. Her close connections with the community and long record of volunteerism are exemplary. Recently she established a new Economic Development Committee for the town to consider ways to improve the business climate, increase the tax base and provide employment, while preserving the town's rural character. No doubt Sue will remain active in other volunteer activities to benefit the town.

Dennis Merrill, who completes his second three-year



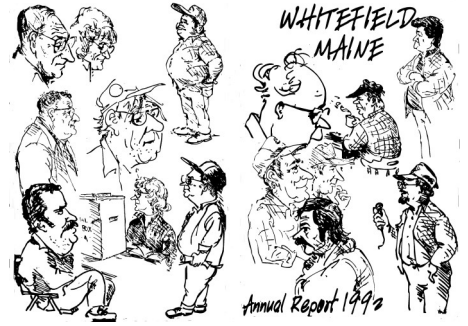
term in March, has been an administrative workhorse for the town during his tenure, while often serving as a town handyman as well. In particular, Dennis established the Road Committee that has significantly improved the Town's planning for road maintenance and improvement. His energy, intelligence, knowledge base, and commitment to Whitefield will be sorely missed. Thank you to both Sue McKeen and Dennis Merrill.

It's Town Meeting time again

By Debbie Rogers

In Maine, the town meeting system originated during the period when Maine was a district of Massachusetts.

Most cities and towns operate under the town meeting form of government or a modified version of it. Maine annual town meetings traditionally are held in March.



March 18th is the Whitefield town meeting at 10:00 am at the Whitefield School. Throughout history, town meetings are a way for individuals to address issues and finances in the town. It is also a way, in the digital age, to converse with our local officials and residents. We are very lucky to have this opportunity and would encourage all residents to attend.

First, get your town report at the Town Office. The town report includes updates on the different official groups in the town including the Select Board, Town Office, Fire Departments, Planning Board and project updates. Also included is the budget for the past year and the new budget proposal. All tax payers and tax amount are all listed in the report as well.

For the Town meeting, a list of warrants is included to be voted on the day of the meeting. Each warrant will be approved or rejected and is eligible for discussion by any resident. This is one of the most important parts for your participation in the event. Not only do you have the opportunity to ask questions from the Board and the Town representative, you are also able to let other residents know about issues that may be important on a given warrant item.

All in all, the annual Town Meeting is a part of our democracy that is one of the best ways to have a voice about your town and its elected officials. Please join the discussion and come to the Whitefield Town Meeting.

Whitefield Town Balloting – Friday, March 17th, 4-8 pm at the Whitefield Fire Station

Whitefield Town Meeting – March 18th 10:00 at the Whitefield School

Pay Attention! It's Independence Day

This exhibit is in partnership with Natasha Mayers, the USM Galleries, and Artists Rapid Response Team [ARRT].

The Whitefield 4th of July Parade is an annual celebration of free speech, featuring provocative and timely statements from a group of artists and activists in the community. The exhibit, *Pay Attention! It's Independence Day* showcases photos and original artwork from the last decade and a half of unique parade themes.

Now - March 31,
opening reception is
March 28th
Michael Klahr Center,
UMA, Augusta
Admission is Free
Donations Gratefully
Accepted



MARCH 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
JOHNSON HALL ROAD SHOW 6-7:30pm Sheepscot General Store A "friend making event " presented by Mike Miclon of Johnson Hall Center For Performing Arts in Gardiner. Coupled with Sheepscot General Store's "pizza night" this is a family event with entertainment and door prizes.
- 5th **SNOWSHOEING AND BRUNCH** The snowshoe will explore the 130-acre protected farm property on Damariscotta Lake. After the snowshoe, attendees will convene in the farm house for a discussion with Maine Farmland Staff Anna Witholt Abaldo and Caroline Ginsberg, and Midcoast Conservancy's Director of Water Conservation, Garrison Beck, about the importance of farmland protection and its impact on the water quality of our local lakes and waterways. To RSVP, call 207-338-6575 or email caroline@mainefarmlandtrust.org.
- 6th **COOPERS MILLS FIRE DEPT.**, All are welcome. No obligation. 7 pm
- KINGS MILLS FIRE DEPT.**, 7 pm
- 7th **SELECT BOARD**, Fire Station, 6
- KINGS MILLS UNION HALL BOARD MEETING** - Public Welcome 7 pm
- 9th **SENIOR MEN'S GROUP**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
RSU SCHOOL BOARD MEETING Chelsea School, 6:30 pm
- 10th **MODIFIED: BIGGEST FOOD FIGHT OF OUR TIME-GMOS** book signing + reading by Caitlin Shetterly at Sheepscot General.
- 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**, Sheepscot General, 7-9 pm
- 18th **DRUMMING CIRCLE**, Sheepscot General, 6:30 pm. Open to the public, all ages welcome.
- 19th **WHITEFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM** The Scammon Map Mystery, 2:00 pm, Townhouse.
- 23rd **SENIOR MEN'S GROUP**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
- 24th **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
- 26th **6TH ANNUAL LIBERAL CUP BIATHLON**, Midcoast Conservancy will host the sixth annual Liberal Cup Biathlon at Hidden Valley Nature Center in Jefferson. All ages and skill levels are encouraged to participate! Racers can compete individually or in teams of four, and everyone is encouraged to compete in costume. Register at <https://www.raceit.com/Register/?event=38925>
- MAINE MAPLE SUNDAY** Maine Maple Sunday is a long standing tradition where Maine's Maple producers open their doors to their sweet operations for a day of educational demonstrations, tours, fun family activities and samplings of syrup and other great maple products. Along with local syrup producers open houses, Sheepscot General is hosting a Sunday Brunch from 9-1 pm
- 28th **WOMEN OF WHITEFIELD**, Sheepscot General, 10 am
SELECT BOARD, Fire Station, 6 pm



Do you have an event?

Contact whitefieldtownnews@gmail.com

Deadline for newsletter submissions is the 15th of the month. Email whitefieldtownnews@gmail.com

You can receive the newsletter by email by signing up at www.townofwhitefield.com/Newsletter.html

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