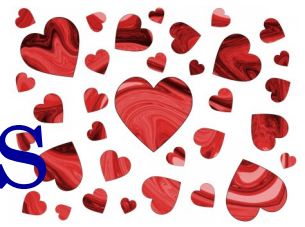




Whitefield News

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February 2022

Meet our new Fire Chief, Jesse Barton

By Sue McKeen

At 31 years old, new fire chief Jesse Barton has a lot on his plate. He hit the ground running when he was hired on December 7th to fill the vacancy left by recently retired Scott Higgins. I sat down with Jesse at the fire station to talk about who he is and his plans for the department.

Jesse grew up in Whitefield so he's a local boy who knows the town, its roads, and its people. He is a self-employed carpenter, father of three small children and lives in Whitefield with his wife Samantha. Since we all know carpenters are at a premium, you can imagine Jesse is a busy guy with his added responsibilities as fire chief, which is often a full-time job itself.

He told me he has been part of the department for 17 years. He first became interested in firefighting at 14 when he joined the Explorer's program. He explained this is a program for kids who are out of 8th grade and under 18. They train with the fire fighters, go to fire scenes, and learn all about firefighting. Jesse says he would like to start up the Explorers program again as this may get kids interested at a young age, like he was. He said if they offer the program, he knows it's sometimes difficult for kids to get to programs after school as many parents aren't willing or able to transport them.

We talked about the Department, where they are now and what Jesse would like to see for the future. He said, "As with all departments volunteers are a big concern and in fact have been for a long time. People do not want to commit the time to the training, meetings and being available to go when the calls come in. The average age of our volunteers is 40 with some recently retired folks joining

in the last couple of months." Jesse told me they average seven firefighters per call at night, but during the day it's a different story as volunteers are working out of town and not available. This explains the steep increase in using mutual aid, a common problem throughout the five towns who share firefighters and is in fact a common problem for most volunteer fire departments.

In going forward Jesse hopes to increase his volunteers. He said, "Right now we have 14 volunteer firefighters and seven who make up the communications team." He said he is taking a look at the existing equipment and trucks.

When I asked Jesse why he would take on such a responsibility, he said, "I do it because I like helping people. I've been with the department for 17 years and I like the whole group. I want to be able to guarantee to our town that someone will be available and responsible for fire station duties." He made it clear he wants to be sure a

trained firefighter will show up at your house when that call goes out.

While we talked, I heard the static of calls on the radio several times, his phone pinged, and messages were left. Jesse Barton is a busy guy with broad shoulders.



Happy Retirement PJ

By Dolly Burns

The new year brings a new smiling face to the Whitefield Post Office. If you've been into the post office since January 1st, you may have noticed that our most helpful and friendly PJ is no longer here. PJ retired and her last day was New Year's Eve. For many of us who frequented the Post Office, PJ was always so nice and helpful in resolving our mailing quandaries.

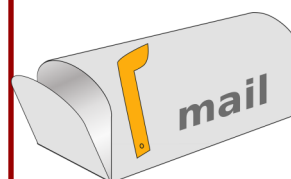
During the summer months, I always appreciated PJ's green thumb. She took great care in planting the window boxes and they overflowed with beautiful petunias. The colorful blossoms certainly made the drab building look much nicer!

PJ did a lot at the post office, and that's a huge understatement! Much like the 'Energizer Bunny', PJ just kept on going. We all appreciate the long hours and dedication that she put into her job. She will certainly be missed.



On her last day, PJ told me that she would be back around town visiting the library and Sheepscot General. I was happy to hear that. I hope see her around, as I'm sure many others would too. I truly enjoyed our chitchats over the years!

PJ's replacement comes from the Coopers Mills Post Office; Sarah McCrimmon is the new Postal Clerk. She has filled in here before, so that's helpful. I am confident that Sarah will take over nicely. If you're so inclined, stop in and introduce yourselves, I'm sure she would appreciate that.



Happy Retirement PJ, you deserve it! Put your feet up and relax and enjoy working in your flower gardens or just doing nothing at all!

Town News

After two months of weekly meetings, the Select Board has finished putting together the budget for FY22-23. The 9-member budget committee has gone thru it thoroughly and has given their recommendations. Most budget lines were recommended by both the Select Board and the Budget Committee. I want to THANK the Budget Committee Members for their volunteered time. David Hayden-Chair, Kathleen Goetzman-Secretary, Barbara Mayer, Christopher Delisle, Charles Vaughn, Mike McMorro, James Mclean, Anthony "Tony" Marple and George Hall. They had a lot of great questions and input regarding the budget lines. The total budget being presented to the Town at the Annual Town Meeting on March 19th is \$1,700,525 this is only an increase of 8%. At our next board meeting, the board will decide on what the revenues will be to help offset that total amount with revenues to reduce the taxation total. Last year's revenues were \$481,600. We are back to our regularly scheduled meetings every other week, starting February 1st.

Nomination papers are in and on the ballot for the Municipal Election, which is held the 3rd Friday of March, are Keith Sanborn, Seth Bolduc for Select Board – 2 seats, Glenn Angell for Planning Board – 1 seat and Kathleen Goetzman for RSU #12 School Board – 1 seat, all of which are 3-year terms. Absentee Ballots will be available starting on February 3rd, if you wish to vote early or are unable to make it to the polls on election day. You may call in to the town office or stop by the town office during regular business hours for a ballot.

Dog Licenses for 2022 were due by January 31st, 2022. A Late of \$25.00 per dog is applied starting February 1st, per state statute Title 7 CH 721 §3923-A. License and recording fees. Friendly reminders were sent out to unlicensed dog owners on January 7th. Thank you to those that have responded, either by coming in and licensing their dog(s), by calling in and letting us know you no longer have your dog or the dog has moved. We ask that you do contact the town office if your dog has moved or has passed so we can keep our list to date. An unlicensed dogs list, as of February 1st, will be sent to the Animal Control Officer who will then be in touch with those owners.

Again, if there is anyone out there that needs sand for their walkway or driveway and is unable to get the sand/salt shed, please contact Yolanda at the Town Office. We have a group of volunteers that are willing to bring buckets of sand to those unable to get out.

The Town Office will be Closed on Monday February 21st, in observance of Presidents Day.

Sincerely,
Yolanda Violette, Administrative Assistant, Town Clerk & Treasurer

Whitefield library opens for business

Despite the cold temperatures outside, the atmosphere inside the cozy renovated library space was full of warm compliments and elbow bumps as the Whitefield Library opened for the first time in over two years. There were smiles all around as over 60 books were taken out by several of the 141 new patrons. Amanda Cooley, Vice President and Community Engagement Officer and Gail Conley surprised us with a nice donation from Kennebec Savings Bank. A grand opening will be planned for later in the spring when conditions permit.



Emma Nelson and her daughter Addie checking out books on opening weekend at the library. Photo by Sue McKeen

Book donations are once again being accepted. If you are interested in donating books go to bookdonations@whitefieldlibrary.org. Volunteers are always welcome and anyone wishing to volunteer can go to volunteers@whitefieldlibrary.org. The library is open for the winter months Fridays and Saturdays from 10:00 to 2:00. See you at the library!

"Toward a town map of Whitefield"

This artwork by Natasha Mayers currently hangs in the town office where it offers a bright spot of color on the north wall. Natasha tells us she first



showed it at the new Portland Museum of Art in 1984, where it was located in a primo spot in the big exhibition space and push pinned to the brand new walls. Because it was unframed, the Museum protected the piece by roping it off with velvet ropes. She told us, "The drawings were done on location of 25 different places in town, lots of roads to carry the eye through the work." The medium is paint stick on rag paper and was completed in 1983.

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Whitefield Historical Society



VALENTINE'S DAY, 1913.

This card was sent from Lloyd in Gardiner to Miss Marjorie Clark of Coopers Mills, wishing that "you were out here."

WHS Postcard Collection

The Annual Spring Plant Sale Fund-raiser for Knox-Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District has launched!

Knox-Lincoln Soil & Water Conservation District's 2022 Spring Plant Sale Catalog is now available in print and online! Plants are available for pre-order, either online or by mail through Tuesday, April 19, 2022. This year we are offering curbside pick-up of your orders on Friday, May 13 and Saturday, May 14 and "Cash and Carry" on Saturday, May 14 at Union Fairgrounds. Quantities are limited so order early – and often – for the best selection!

This annual spring fundraiser provides more than 180 varieties to choose from: bareroot fruit trees and berries for the home orchard and garden; native conifers, deciduous trees, shrubs and vines for conservation, wildlife, and landscape enhancement; and native, organic, Maine-grown perennials and herbs in 1-gallon pots for pollinators. The proceeds of this fundraiser support our youth and adult conservation programs throughout the year.

We are dependent on volunteers to help pack orders and distribute to customers. Volunteers receive some perks as a thank you for helping with our largest annual fundraiser. If interested, please contact louisa@knox-lincoln.org.

Don't wait to place your order- visit <https://www.knox-lincoln.org/spring-plant-sale> to download a catalog or to shop online; call 596-2040 or email julie@knox-lincoln.org to receive a catalog by USPS - and, think spring!

Select Board Corner

December 22– January 18

By Bill McKeen

Below are issues of likely interest to the residents of Whitefield from the Select Board meetings December 22 through January 18th. For a complete description of the issues before the Board each meeting, please click this link:

<https://townofwhitefield.com/agendas-minutes/> to go to the Town website and read the Select Board minutes.

The Select Board and the Budget Committee have finished their budget recommendations.

The Roads Committee has begun work on a new ten-year plan for maintenance of our roads which also includes gravel roads.

The Select Board has joined the Lincoln County Hazzard Mitigation Plan. The plan will address any issues that might be impacted by natural disasters such as hurricanes, flooding, and forest fires.

A town report cover design showing a full moon rising over the Town House along with a picture of the town office as approved.

The town report will be dedicated to our former Fire Chief Scott Higgins.

Kristina and Dana Rogers, Jr. have been hired to shovel and sand the walkways at the fire station, Historical Society and town office.

An ad hoc committee will be formed to search for projects that might qualify for ARPA funds.

Nomination papers have been turned in at the town office for Keith Sanborn & Seth Bolduc running for Select Board, Glenn Angell, Planning Board and Kathleen Goetzman, School Board.

The Select Board voted to present to the Town at the Annual Town Meeting an article for the Road Commissioner position, to go from an elected position to an appointed position.

Whitefield has a Skating Rink!

By Lise Hanners

I think this story shows the strength of our small community from start to finish. The Select Board received a request from children at Whitefield School to help them find a place to ice skate. This Fall, my husband and I were doing work on our house with local builder Haskell Padgett, who I knew was deeply involved with sports for his kids. I asked him if he would be willing to work with a small group of people from the school and community interested in setting up an ice-skating rink. The rest, as they say, is history.

Haskell figured out what materials we would need, put together a design, and worked with volunteers to get the job done. Whitefield residents quickly stepped up to donate money and materials for the rink, the Whitefield Fire Department came to deliver 4,000 gallons of water, and the rink is today a reality. Because of the layer of ice and snow already on the field, volunteers leveled and scraped the site and created a small berm around the edge to hold water, instead of using plastic as planned. But we'll have what we need for next year! Skaters can park at the Recycling Center (being careful to stay out of the way of recycling on Saturday mornings) and walk to the bleachers to put on skates. We are collecting used ice skates for school children so please drop donations at the school or Town Office. Thank you to everyone involved and get outside and ice skate!



FEBRUARY 2022 COMMUNITY EVENTS CALENDAR.

- 1st **SINGING CIRCLE** at Inn Along the Way in Damariscotta, on Tuesdays 1-3 pm <https://www.innalongtheway.org>
SELECT BOARD at 6 pm Central Fire Station
KINGS MILLS UNION HALL MONTHLY MEETING 7pm Union Hall
 Public is welcome
- 3rd **SENIOR MEN'S GROUP (ROMEOS)** 10 am Sheepscot General
- 4th **WHITEFIELD FOOD PANTRY**, 150 Grand Army Road, 10-2 pm
WHITEFIELD LIBRARY Open 10-2
- 5th **WHITEFIELD LIBRARY** Open 10-2
- 7th **ROADS COMMITTEE**, Central Fire Station, 4:00 pm
COOPERS MILLS FIRE DEPT. All are welcome. No obligation. 7 pm
KINGS MILLS FIRE DEPT., 7 pm
- 8th **SINGING CIRCLE** 1-3 pm
- 10th **SENIOR MEN'S GROUP (ROMEOS)** 10 am Sheepscot General
RSU 12 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING 6:30—9:00 pm
- 11th **WHITEFIELD LIBRARY** Open 10-2
- 12th **WHITEFIELD FOOD PANTRY**, 150 Grand Army Road, 10-12 pm
WHITEFIELD LIBRARY Open 10-2
- 14th **WHITEFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY**, Town House, 10:00 am
WHITEFIELD MUNICIPAL FIRE DEPT., Fire Station, 7 pm
- 15th **SINGING CIRCLE** 1-3 pm
SELECT BOARD at 6 pm Central Fire Station
- 16th **PLANNING BOARD**, Town Office 7:30 pm
SINGING CIRCLE 1-3 pm
- 17th **SENIOR MEN'S GROUP (ROMEOS)** 10 am
 Sheepscot General
- 18th **WHITEFIELD LIBRARY** Open 10-2
- 19th **WHITEFIELD FOOD PANTRY**, 150 Grand Army Road, 10-12 pm
WHITEFIELD LIBRARY Open 10-2
- 21st **WHITEFIELD LIBRARY & COMMUNITY CENTER BOARD MEETING**
 10 am at the Whitefield Firehouse.
- 22nd **SINGING CIRCLE** 1-3 pm
- 24th **SENIOR MEN'S GROUP (ROMEOS)** 10 am Sheepscot General
- 25th **WHITEFIELD LIBRARY** Open 10-2
- 26th **WHITEFIELD LIBRARY** Open 10-2
WHITEFIELD FOOD PANTRY, 150 Grand Army Road, 10-12 pm

*Happy
Valentine's
Day*

Whitefield Planning Board

The planning board met on Dec. 15th and 22nd. The actions taken by the board as well as work on the Medical Marijuana Ordinance Working Session Notes are very long and therefore we included a link to view the minutes.

For more information go to the town website at <https://townofwhitefield.com/agendas-minutes/> and read the Planning Board minutes.

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Deadline for newsletter submissions is the 15th of the month. whitefieldtownnews@gmail.com
 Whitefield Newsletter Committee: Cheryle Joslyn, Kit Pfeiffer, Sue McKeen, Tony Marple, Christine Lapado-Breglia, Lise Hanners & Debbie Rogers.

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