

# Hampden *Highlights*

Quarterly Newsletter, Town of Hampden • Issue 19, October 2010

## A Subject of Interest For the Entire Community

### — MAYOR'S MESSAGE —

### Hampden Academy Re-use: Let's Get Going!

By Matt Arnett

**A**fter holding a three-community reuse visioning workshop in January, 2008, and spending the better part of two years and \$20,000 developing a mixed use plan for the current Hampden Academy

**T**his edition of the Hampden Highlights Newsletter contains four articles related to the subject of the re-use of the old Hampden Academy property when the new high school opens in 2012. We recognize that the property is owned by RSU#22 and that the final decision-making authority in regard to its eventual use rests with the School Board.

*That said – it is a subject that we believe needs and deserves a robust and public discussion by all involved parties – and there are more involved parties than the School Board. The taxpayers of the three communities of the district have a significant interest in what occurs at that site due to funding concerns and possible impacts to property taxes – and the residents of Hampden have an interest because that site lies in the very heart of the community. It is our hope that the open and public discussion of the long term use of this site results in a referendum vote so that all registered voters have an opportunity to express their preference.*

Susan Lessard, Town Manager

property when the new building opens in 2012 the Board of Directors of SAD22 (School Board) has decided to switch directions and take two more years to seek an educational use for the property. The Town Council is concerned that such a switch in directions will lead to further delays and more expenses that will further burden local taxpayers.

On September 14, the Hampden Town Council and Town Manager met with our counterparts from Winterport and Newburgh to discuss our concerns, and ultimately to summarize our concerns in a letter to the School Board. You will find a copy of that letter elsewhere in this newsletter. As you will see, the municipal officials of Newburgh and Winterport share our concerns.

The Town Council believes that most citizens of Hampden want a timely redevelopment of the Hampden Academy property as a vibrant and dynamic village center with a mix of public, commercial and residential uses that will create jobs, add to the tax base, and make Hampden an even more attractive community in which to live. This is not a task that the School Board is equipped or authorized to undertake; it is a task that the town is equipped and authorized to do.

There is a well-developed tradition in Maine that when a school is closed because a new school has been built to replace it at a different location, the School Board transfers the old buildings and property to the town in which it resides. (See the articles, "What the Law Requires," and "What Others Have Done"). The Town Council believes that our School Board should honor this tradition.

The Town Council believes that spending two more years trying to find an expanded educational use for the current property is not in the best interest of the citizens of Hampden, Winterport or Newburgh. We believe the current redevelopment plan is a good start and the School Board should push forward on that basis. Let's get going! ■

Town of Hampden  
106 Western Ave  
September 27, 2010

Town of Winterport  
P.O. Box 559  
Winterport, ME 04496

Town of Newburgh  
2660 Western Avenue  
Newburgh, ME 04444

September 27, 2010

Mr. Timothy Pease, Chair  
RSU #22 School Board  
24 Main Road North  
Hampden, ME 04444

RE: Concerns regarding vote to retain Hampden Academy property

Dear Chairman Pease and RSU #22 Board Members,

The purpose of this letter is to discuss the concerns of the municipal officials of the SAD #22 member communities of Hampden, Winterport, and Newburgh in regard to the recent School Board decision to retain the current Hampden Academy property once the new high school opens.

On Tuesday, September 14th the Town Councils/Boards and their appointed Managers met at the Victoria Grant Center in Winterport to formulate a response to your decision to retain the soon-to-be-vacated Hampden Academy site. The School Board and administration were also invited to attend this meeting and Superintendent Lyons attended.

While officials of the three municipalities that comprise RSU #22 recognize that the School Board was within its legal rights to take the action that it did in making the vote to retain the property, they do not agree with the contention of the Superintendent made at a meeting in Hampden on September 7th that the municipal officials of the three communities have no 'right' to question or express concerns over that decision because they have no legal interest in the decision. As the entities that are assessed annually to pay costs associated with the operation of the District, actions taken that may increase those costs or that appear to be different from what was previously promised are certainly within the purview of those officials.

I have attached the list of twenty four concerns that were cited during the meeting in Winterport. While these items are cited separately, there are in essence, five major areas of concern.

Cost, Condition, & Timing - One overwhelming concern of all in attendance is related to the cost of continuing to retain ownership of the old site once the new high school has been opened. A majority of the campus is not in a fit condition for occupancy by others and is a traffic nightmare – hence the need for the new academy at a different site. The School administration has indicated that it has a two year planning window to 'find' an educational use for the property. In reality – that is far too long a time period. If there is to be any hope that the academy property not be a fiscal albatross around the neck of the District for a period of time after closure – its disposition has to be in a 'ready-to-go' state at the time the new high school opens. Failure to do that will have no recourse other than for member municipalities to pay for the cost of upkeep on the old facility for an unknown period of time.

Mission & Legal Standing– Although the School Board has indicated that it is retaining the property for educational purposes, none have been defined, and the District is seeking funds for a feasibility study to 'find' a purpose. It is of concern that this vote to retain was taken with no plan behind it to support it. It is our understanding that there was no legal requirement that decision be made at this time. Discussion at the September 7<sup>th</sup> meeting in Hampden with administration and School Board Representatives indicates that the District is really seeking a way to make the former academy site into a funding source for the District or its attendant 501(c) 3. The Municipal representatives have serious concerns about changing the mission of the District to one that includes economic development strategies.

*continued on page 4*

# What Happens to Property When Schools are Closed? What Others Have Done...

In seeking to find what is common practice at the time of a school closing, the Town obtained a list of schools from the Maine Department of Education that were closed from 2005 – 2010 due to new construction or consolidation. In order to insure that we were comparing apples to apples, we looked only at school closures that occurred in school districts. According to the Department of Education, there were 43 school closures from 2005 -2010 in School Districts. Contact with each of the communities in which those schools were located revealed the following statistics: *continued on page 5*

## FROM THE DESK OF THE MANAGER



Susan Lessard, Town Manager

### TAX DUE DATE –

OOPS! -Tax Due Date for the first half of property taxes was October 6, 2010

### GOODBYE TO LIEUTENANT PIPES –

Long time Fire Department Lieutenant Ray Pipes has resigned to accept the position

of Fire Chief for the Town of Hermon. Ray has been an exceptional employee for the Town and will be greatly missed. A good-bye luncheon was held for Ray on October 18th

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN APPROVED AND ADOPTED! –

On October 4th the Town Council formally adopted the 2010 Comprehensive Plan for the Town. This has been a work in progress for several years and is the foundation on which all local land use regulation decisions are based. Over the next year or so, the Town will be reviewing all ordinances to insure that they are consistent with this plan. Residents are invited to participate in that process. You can view the adopted plan on the town website at [hampdenmaine.gov](http://hampdenmaine.gov)

**COUNTDOWN TO COMPLETION –** The Mayo Road rebuild project is scheduled to be completed by the end of October. Thanks go to the residents of the road who have lived with the construction throughout the summer and fall –

and to the travelling public who has been impacted by it as well. The addition of sidewalks to this road will greatly increase the 'walkability' of the four-mile-square.

**SIDEWALK GRANT –** The Town has applied for a grant to either complete the remaining several hundred feet of sidewalk from outer Western Avenue to Mayo Road or to add sidewalk on the interior side of Western Avenue from the intersection of Route 202 to Mayo Road. With the construction of the new high school within the Four Mile Square area there will be considerably more pedestrian traffic on Western Avenue. The Town wishes to insure the safety of the students and other residents who will be using that area.

**NEW BOILERS INSTALLED –** The Municipal Building had new, more energy efficient boilers installed this month. They were paid for by a grant through the Public Utilities Commission and Efficiency Maine. It is estimated that we will be able to reduce our fuel usage for building heating by more than 30% with the new boilers.



### 2011 Dog Licenses Available October 18th

It's that time again! Dog licenses will be available at the Town Office beginning October 18, 2010. All dogs over the age of 6 months must be licensed by January 31, 2011 in order to avoid the \$25 late fee. The license fee is \$6.00 for spayed or neutered dogs and \$11.00 for male/female dogs. Please bring proof of current rabies vaccination and spay or neuter certificate if applicable. ■

**Hampden Highlights** is published quarterly by the Town of Hampden, and its success depends upon a community-wide effort. We ask you to please forward news, notes and tips about friends, neighbors, colleagues — or yourselves — to Anne Gabbianelli O'Reilly by emailing: [Anne.OReilly@umit.maine.edu](mailto:Anne.OReilly@umit.maine.edu), drop off at the Town Office, or mailing to *Hampden Highlights*, Town Office, 106 Western Avenue, Hampden, ME, 04444. You can find *Hampden Highlights* on the Web at [www.hampdenmaine.com](http://www.hampdenmaine.com). We welcome your feedback. Edited by: Anne Gabbianelli O'Reilly and Susan Lessard • Layout and design by Val Williams

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**LETTER** *continued from page 2*

At the present time there is nothing in law that allows for a school district to be in the economic development business. Legislation would have to be enacted to allow that and it is unclear as to whether that would garner sufficient support at the local level – or at the state level – for passage.

Public Perception – It is the contention of the Municipal officials of the three communities that during the development and ‘selling’ of the new high school project and the attendant re-use investigations conducted by WBRC with the communities of the district that there was never a public discussion or indication that the District would seek to retain the old property. It was the belief of all that it would follow the ‘normal’ course of the law in regard to disposition of closed schools and that the re-use ideas put forward by those in the visioning sessions would give direction to the eventual use of the property in the Town of Hampden.

Transparency – It is of concern to the Municipal officials of the three communities that the desire to retain the property and find ways for it to provide a funding stream to the District may move this from a public process subject to voter approval to one in which a 501(c)3 is making funding decisions for augmented programs. As a further means of providing transparency to this process, it is the belief of the municipal officials of the three communities of the district that the School District should hold a referendum vote in all three communities before determining a course of action related to the retention of the old Hampden Academy site.

Need – The ideas that an educational purpose may be found for the old Hampden Academy site and that there may be a way to change the law to allow a school district to use other properties under its ownership for economic development are not related to a need that fits the K-12 student population in RSU #22. It is the contention of the municipal officials of the three communities that the new facility being designed has the capacity not only for expansion at the current site – but capacity in terms of time availability to serve more than K-12 educational ideas as well.

Further, the ‘one campus’ concept that located the new high school adjacent to the other schools already in existence may be augmented by additional land owned by the Town of Hampden that is adjacent to school property. If there is real concern about the need for additional land for school construction in the future – that is the logical location for it – not the former academy site. No exploration has been done with the Town of Hampden about the possibility of ‘swapping’ land to address such a concern.

The municipal representatives of the three communities will be reconvening to discuss this subject further on Tuesday, October 26<sup>th</sup> at the Victoria Grant Center in Winterport. It is our request that the RSU #22 School Board consider the questions and issues that have been raised by the communities and respond to them in writing before that date.

Thank you, in advance, for your consideration of these questions. While there are clear role differences between school and municipal officials – we are all responsible to the same electorate for our funding. The upcoming year is going to see further funding constraints at both the educational and municipal levels from the State. It is necessary that we find ways to work cooperatively to insure that impacts to the taxpayer are minimized.

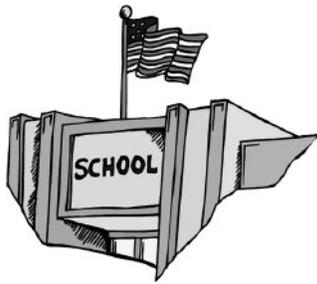
Sincerely,

Letter authorized by the unanimous vote of the Hampden Town Council, Winterport Town Council and agreement of the Newburgh Board of Selectmen

cc Superintendent Rick Lyons  
Asst. Superintendent Emil Genest.

## What Others Have Done

from page 3



- 34 School Properties were offered to the host community at the time that the school was closed
- 1 School Property was returned to the private property owner from which it had been leased
- 2 School Properties had new school construction on the same site
- 4 School Properties were retained by their respective Districts for use for Adult Education, Alternative Education, or housing for School Administrative Offices
- 1 School property has been retained by a School District with no current plan for use. The host community in which it is located indicated that it was their expectation that the Town would have first refusal on the property when the School District had no K-12 use for it. Annual maintenance costs for the closed but unused building(s) are approximately \$50,000 per year.
- 1 School remains in place and owned by the School District. The expectation at the time of the new school opening was that the school would be demolished so that the District would not have maintenance costs for it. That has not occurred and the host community is concerned.

In speaking with officials from these communities, what became very clear is that each of them saw their situation as 'different' for some reason. Whether it was due to the means in which the School District acquired the property or the way the property had been used over time – each had a story to tell. However, what is also clear is that despite these different stories, the vast majority of closed school properties are offered to the host community in which they are located when they no longer have a K-12 educational purpose. It is what is proscribed in law – and it is what happens in practice. ■

## What the Law Requires

What the law requires when a school is closed as the result of the construction of a new school authorized by the state department of education is contained in M.R.S.A. (Maine Revised Statutes Annotated) title 20-A, part 3, Chapter 202, §§ 4101-4104.

What both school district attorney Robert Nadeau of Drummond/Woodsum, Portland, Maine and town attorney Thomas Russell, Bangor, Maine, agree is that under the provision of Maine law, (1) the property remains under the control of the School Board until they decide to dispose of it. (2) The School Board cannot sell or transfer the property to a third party without first offering to transfer it to the town in which it resides, (3) the School Board can offer to transfer it to the town in which it resides. The receiving town may or may not choose to accept it. If accepted, the receiving town can be required to pay any remaining debt on the property, and can be required to pay the district the fair market value of the property minus the town's apportioned share in the building. (4) The School Board, under certain conditions, can also demolish the buildings and retain the site for other educationally related purposes.

According to an opinion developed by school attorney Nadeau in December, 2007, what this means is that the school board is not authorized to sell, lease, or develop the property for non-educational purposes. If it wishes to sell the property it must first offer to transfer the property to the town. Since Hampden's share of local expenses for SAD22 is roughly 65%, the town could be required to pay the district about 35% of the fair market value of the property if the board of directors chose to offer to transfer the property to the town and the town agreed to accept the transfer. This payment would be used to defray budgeted expenses of the district and would be credited to the three towns according to the cost sharing formula in effect at the time of the transfer. ■

***CORRECTIONS...CORRECTIONS...CORRECTIONS...CORRECTIONS...***

October 21, 2010

To All Residents –

This page was inserted in the newsletter after it had already been printed in order to correct two inaccuracies in the article below relating to the School District's authority to take certain actions. Our apologies to you, the reader – and to the School District for this error. The highlighted part of the Corrected Version of the article shows the changed language.

In addition, the School Board formally approved a response to the letter from the municipal officials of the three District communities on Wednesday, October 20, 2010. That letter may be viewed on the Town Website at [www.hampdenmaine.gov](http://www.hampdenmaine.gov) in the same article on the front page that contains the original newsletter link. The letter will be printed in its entirety in the next printed version of the newsletter as well. Again – our apologies.

Sue Lessard, Town Manager

**What the Law Requires – Corrected Version**

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# Meet the Candidates

The Hampden Town Council Communication Committee held two candidate forums this fall for local School Board and Council and Water District races as well as State House District 39 and State Senate District 33 candidates. The sessions were aired live on September 25th and October 12th and have been rebroadcast on Cable Channel 7 since that time. They will continue to air until the elections. The Town has also aired interviews on Time Warner Cable Channel 7 with the candidates for Governor that were done by the Maine Municipal Association.

Communications Committee members Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly, newsletter editor, and Heather Seavey, producer from WLBZ 2 in Bangor did a fine job of moderating both candidate forums. We appreciate their willingness to volunteer their time to do this each year for the Town!

Each candidate for office was given the opportunity to submit a 50 word-or-less statement for the newsletter about their candidacy. We encourage you to watch the forums, read the candidate statements, do your homework - and VOTE on November 2nd!

## STATE SENATE DISTRICT 33

**SHERMAN LEIGHTON (D)** – I am running for State Senate in your district. As your Senator I will listen to the people of Hampden and help them with their needs. I think it's time to change. We don't need 2 more years of the same. We need to work together. Thank you.



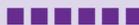
**DEBORAH PLOWMAN (R)** – Thank you for the trust you placed in me by electing me to 3 terms in the Maine Senate. My goal has always been to make commonsense, sensible votes in the Senate. With your vote I will continue to provide that kind of representation for Hampden in the Maine Senate.

## STATE HOUSE DISTRICT 39

**ANDRE CUSHING III (R)** – I enjoy serving as your State Representative and believe that my twenty-five plus years experience as a small- business owner coupled with my work for civic organizations and Town Councils is experience useful in serving my communities. Thank you for the honor and the chance to continue serving you in Augusta.



**CAROLYN RAE DODGE (G)** – My 13 years of college in Behavioral Science and Public Administration and design of and residence in an alternative energy home provide me the skills to introduce post-partisan decision-making to implement efficient and effective ways to use our tax dollars creating real solutions. I'm listening and I hear you...



**SHELBY WRIGHT (D)** – Shelby Wright is a community outreach coordinator, grant writer and enthusiastic volunteer for community enhancing projects. A dedicated and tireless advocate for the Hampden community, she is an independent minded, results oriented leader with a "can do" attitude who will take her common sense approach to Augusta as your representative.

## TOWN COUNCIL CANDIDATES 1 POSITION AVAILABLE FOR A 2 YEAR TERM

**ANDREW COLFORD** – I have lived in Hampden for ten years and am a professional firefighter with the Air National Guard. I served as Town Councilor from 2004-2008, ending my term as deputy mayor. I pioneered tarring of all unpaved roads in Hampden. I would like your vote to return to the council.

**JAMES FEVERSTON** – I bring to the council a willingness to listen and be responsive to our citizens and work toward maintaining Hampden's reputation as a great place to live and work while reducing the tax burden on homeowners without compromising the safety or well-being of our community. I respectfully request your vote.



Town Council candidates Kristen Hornbrook, Andrew Colford and Jim Feverston

**KRISTEN HORNBROOK** – “It’s the duty and responsibility of every citizen to take a turn to serve. I’m ready, and I’m listening to you! I will never vote to increase the tax burden on Hampden residents. It will be my honor to serve you as your Town Councilor. I appreciate your vote.”

## SCHOOL BOARD – 2 POSITIONS AVAILABLE FOR 3 YEAR TERMS

**PETER BUZZINI AAMS®** – Peter is: a Financial Advisor for UBS; Vice Chair of Maine Discovery Museum; Cub Scout den leader; Little League coach; and soccer coach. A Hampden resident with his wife, Cynthia, and children, Alexandra and Robert, both at Weatherbee school. A fiscal conservative with a life-long passion for excellence in education.

**CINDY MITCHELL** – For the past six years on the SAD#22 board, I have successfully advocated for better budget planning and innovative educational opportunities. Our children deserve the best education we can afford. I would like to continue to commit my enthusiasm, energy and experience to SAD#22 for three more years.

**TANYA PEREIRA** – I am running to give back, and continue the tradition of excellence in MSAD #22. My unique skill set in economic development and community involvement will make me an excellent member. I graduated from HA in 1994; Trinity College in 1998. My daughter Sophia is in 2nd grade at McGraw.

*continued on page 8*



School Board candidates Tanya Pereira, Cindy Mitchell and Peter Buzzini



Candidate Don Darline for Water District Trustee,

## SCHOOL BOARD – 1 POSITION AVAILABLE FOR A 2 YEAR TERM

**RICHARD MOORE** – No comments submitted.

## SCHOOL BOARD – 1 POSITION AVAILABLE FOR A 2 YEAR TERM

**ROLAND NAROFSKY** (Registered Write In Candidate) – I am running to contribute to my community. My experience in budgeting, small business ownership, and financial services management are strengths that will help me work to elevate the importance of education in our community in a fiscally responsible manner. I am looking forward to being part of the solution.

## WATER DISTRICT TRUSTEES – 1 POSITION AVAILABLE FOR A 5 YEAR TERM

**DON DARLING** - I'm running for a seat on the Hampden Water District Board of Trustees to fulfill an interest in public service. Our community calls for citizen participation in managing the many facets of daily life in our town, and this position is an opportunity for me to do my part.

**SHAMROCK MARSH** - To speak practically and as a citizen, unlike those who call themselves no-government men, ask for, not at once no government, but at once a better government. Let every man make known what kind of government would command his respect, and that will be one step toward obtaining it." ("Civil Disobedience", Henry David Thoreau)

# GIRL SCOUT GARDEN PROJECT

Several Girl Scout Troops from Hampden have created a Think Pink Garden at the intersections of Patterson Road, Canaan Road and Meadow Road near the transfer station. Brownie Troop 232 planted pink perennials early this past summer in the grassy area at the intersection. Cadette Troop 526 kept it weeded and clean throughout the summer. Senior Troop 199 constructed, painted, and put up a sign to mark the area. The girls wanted to create the garden to honor all the residents of Hampden who have fought breast cancer. They hope that the garden will also remind people to support breast cancer research. The girls would like to thank their leaders Teri Briggs and Stefanie Duron, as well as two very helpful fathers, Jason Lyons and Bobby Duron.



Troop 232 Planting the Garden: Annika Witt, Abby Hamel, Emily Briggs, and Grace Rishton. (Not pictured: Sidney Brown and Denali Eyles)



Troop 199 building the sign: Annie Hawkins, Olivia Duron, Laura Fairman, Katelyn Lyons, Page Rainford and Bobby Duron. (not pictured Sammi Brown and Alex Urban)



'Think Pink' Garden photographed by Olivia Duron

## Pink Perennial Donations Needed

The Town will be planting its 'pink' garden in front of the municipal building this fall. Cash donations for the project have fallen short of expectations and we are looking for the donation of 'pink perennials' from community members. If you are cleaning out your gardens for the winter and have some extra bulbs – please give us a call at the Town Office and let us know. We will be happy to provide them a new home in the Pink Garden in front of the Municipal Building! ■

## Hampden Garden Club

The Hampden Garden Club sponsored its 5th annual Garden Tour on July 20 for which seven local homeowners opened their gardens for the public to enjoy. Each of the areas seen were unique — from magnificent to rustic to charming, each one a different style, all very colorful.

Hampden is fortunate to have so many residents take pride in working on beautiful gardens, many of which cannot be seen by the casual passerby. These hidden treasures are truly a labor of love.

The Garden Club members once again want to thank those homeowners who work so hard and willingly shared their creative areas with the public. Also, thanks to those who "toured", as the funds raised help the Club with their projects of town beautification and maintenance of Harmony hall. ■

# Sustainable Homes Hampden Sponsors Energy Audit of Historic Hampden Academy Building

**O**n a rainy October afternoon, the Hampden Academy “1843” building received a professional energy audit thanks to a new committee dedicated to improving the overall energy efficiency of Hampden and its residents.

Sustainable Homes Hampden, a community led ad hoc committee, is working with the Maine Green Energy Alliance to provide community outreach and guidance to homeowners in an effort to reduce energy consumption and associated costs town wide.

The committee chose the historic site in order to raise awareness about the benefits of weatherization and overall energy efficiency.

“Though the future use of the 1843 building is uncertain, the town will have to maintain the heat to that building or risk damaging it,” said Lee Landry, SHH Chair. “By making it as energy efficient as possible, we will be helping to preserve an iconic town landmark and saving residents money.”

The energy audit was donated by Laurie Osher, a local BPI certified auditor who works with the Maine Green Energy Alliance. Once an audit report is received, SHH will be working with town officials and the school district to decide how to proceed with the recommended improvements.

The committee hopes to continue to solicit donations of materials and help from qualified professionals where needed and organize a volunteer effort for the actual weatherization project to be scheduled at a later date.

SAD #22 Assistant Superintendent Emil Genest said the school district was excited to participate. “The energy audit conducted on the 1843 Hampden Academy will be a valuable tool for needed energy upgrades in the future,” adding, “The building will always be the center of our community.”

Sustainable Homes Hampden and representatives from the Maine Green Energy Alliance have regularly scheduled meetings to discuss home energy usage and how homeowners can take advantage of Efficiency Maine rebates and federal tax credits by making energy efficient improvements to their homes. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 29th at 6:30 p.m. in the Public Safety Building.

For more information please contact Shelby Wright @ 592-6432 or [Shelby@mainegreenenergyalliance.org](mailto:Shelby@mainegreenenergyalliance.org) ■



## *Town Council, School Officials Propose Cross Country Course on Town Land in Four Mile Square*

Under the leadership of Principal Ruey Yehle and Athletic Director David Shapiro of Hampden Academy, members of the Hampden Academy Boosters Club and the Services Committee of Town Council chaired by Jean Lawlis are developing a proposal to construct a cross country track on sixty acres of town land adjacent to Reeds Brook School near the sight of the new high school. A three-kilometer course has been roughed out on the property. Hampden Academy student athletes in cross-country running and skiing would use the course. It would also be open to the public for hiking, skiing, and snowmobiling at all times not conflicting with scheduled athletic events of the Academy.

Goodwill Riders Snowmobile club, Penobscot Valley Ski Association, the Hampden Academy Boosters and the Hampden Recreation staff are cooperating in the planning. The SAD22 Educational Foundation staff is seeking grant funding to cover the roughly \$100,000 needed to build the track. If approved, the school and the town under a memorandum of agreement will jointly operate the track.

Mayor Arnett, a member of the Services Committee commented, "I see this as one of many activities in which the town and school work side by side to advance projects that mutually benefit the town and the schools. This track will be part of the community trail system; it will provide residents and visitors with an expanded opportunity for hiking, skiing and snowmobiling as well as support the athletes and children of SAD22." ■

TOWN OF HAMPDEN  
106 WESTERN AVENUE  
HAMPDEN, ME 04444

PRESORT STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
HAMPDEN, ME  
PERMIT NO. 201

ECRWSS

POSTAL CUSTOMER  
HAMPDEN, ME 04444

**Public Safety  
Corner**  
By Sgt. Christian Bailey

## Hampden Public Safety Police - Fire - EMS

106 Western Avenue • Hampden, Maine 04444 • Phone 207-862-4000 • Fax: 207-862-4588

**I**t's hard to believe another school year is upon us. Hopefully families have taken time to relax and enjoy the beautiful summer weather. The beginning of a new school year is a great time for parents to discuss with their children basic safety precautions. Even though Hampden is a safe community, the most vulnerable time for children is going to and from school or school-related activities. The following is some back-to-school safety tips:

- Teach your children to always take a friend when walking or biking, and stay with a group while standing at the bus stop. Make sure they know which bus to ride.
- If your children are old enough to walk to school, travel the route with them, pointing out landmarks and safe places to go if they're being followed or need help. Teach your children they should not take shortcuts and always stay in well-lit areas.
- Young children should not walk to and from school, even in a group. Parents should always provide supervision to help

ensure their safe arrival. Make sure supervision is also provided at the bus stop.

- Teach your children not to accept a ride from anyone unless you have given permission ahead of time. If anyone follows them in a vehicle they should turn around, go in the other direction, and run to a trusted adult who may help them.
- Teach your children to never accept money or gifts from anyone unless you have given permission ahead of time.
- Make sure the school has current and accurate emergency contact information on file for your children and confirm names of those authorized.
- Always know where your children will be. Teach them to check first before changing their plans before or after school. Teach your children to never leave school with anyone unless they check with you or another trusted adult, even if someone tells them it is an emergency.

Have a great school year. ■