

Hampden *Highlights*

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

Maneuvering Mayo Road

By Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly



Photos by Donovan O'Reilly and Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly



“It’s halfway done,” claims Public Works Director Chip Swan with excitement when talking about the Mayo Road reconstruction project that began June 1. The project consists of drainage, digging up old pavement, laying gravel, building a side walk on the interior side of the road, and the final pavement.

“The plan is to have the road completed by the end of September,” says Swan. To help this along, crews are working some Saturdays, and Mayo Road will be totally closed to traffic July 26 through July 30 and again August 23 through 27. Only Mayo Road residents can have access.

Swan admits the project got off to a rough start the first two weeks starting at the intersection of Mayo and Route 9 with hauling in equipment and the cross pipe work done there. But he says, “The contractor soon picked up the pace.”

“At the close of each day, a Public Works representative goes door to door with notices, and for the most part the homeowners are very patient and understanding,” says Swan. Something that is appreciated is the dirt portion of the road being kept watered down seven days a week, as needed, to avoid dust. In addition, the original price tag of \$2.3 million dollars for the Mayo Road reconstruction is looking more like it will cost \$1.8 million according to Swan.

Another interesting component of this project is the tar that is dug up is being recycled. “The material makes for great use on shoulder work on other roads,” says Swan.

Other road projects in town include: the Dudley Road that will be closed July 27 with a rain date of July 28, and Monroe Road will be down to one lane as cross pipe work is being done on both roads. ■

Holding the Line in Tough Times

By Susan Lessard

The municipal budget for the Town of Hampden for the 2010/2011 fiscal year was adopted on June 21, 2010, by the Hampden Town Council. The budget holds the line on expenses, contains no new positions, maintains current service levels, and continues to invest in the infrastructure and capital needs of the community. As presented, the budget should result in no increase from last year in the town's \$15.90 mil rate, despite a minor increase in the School appropriation and increases in the County budget that were passed on to the Town. Also affecting this year's budgeting were reductions in State funding of local revenue sharing, which for Hampden was an impact of nearly \$200,000, changes in the Homestead Exemption, and a 'push' of a payment from the State of the Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement into a subsequent fiscal year.

The Town was able to save funding in a number of budgets due to changes in operations. The changes in the operation of the transfer station that were initiated several years ago are now saving the Town nearly \$100,000 per year in disposal costs. The new boilers installed at the Town pool are saving nearly 50% in fuel usage over the old boilers – to the tune of more than 20,000 gallons per year. The change in hours at the municipal building to four ten-hour days is saving approximately 9% on fuel and electric bills at that facility as well. A change in standard offer electric rates for the Town accounts is also

resulting in reduced overall electric charges for the buildings and street-lights that we operate. In addition, the Town received a grant for over \$90,000 to replace the boiler system at the municipal building this year that will result in further oil savings in future years. The Town has also received a number of smaller grants through applications made by the Police and Fire Departments for equipment.

The Town Council continues to look for ways for the Town to operate more cost-effectively and for ways in which we might partner with other communities. Earlier this year, the Towns of Hampden and Hermon discussed ways in which Public Safety might collaborate and while it did not occur at this time, it opened the door for future discussions regarding not only Public Safety, but other service delivery.

Although this was a very difficult budget, the upcoming year will be even more difficult. In the next fiscal year, the school districts will feel the loss of substantial federal stimulus funds and that will likely translate to a higher fiscal burden to be borne at the local level. In addition, continuing fiscal 'holes' in the State budget could also impact local education costs.

In spite of these challenges, the Town Council will continue to work to keep property taxes reasonable, service levels high, and to insure that the Town of Hampden remains 'the Community of Choice in Central Maine'. ■

State Homestead Exemption Change ... What it Means for You

During the last legislative session, the State Legislature reduced the Homestead Exemption provided to all Maine residents who owned a primary residence from \$13,000 of value exempted from property taxes to \$10,000 of value exempted from property taxes. That change will result in an increased property tax bill for all those with Homestead Exemptions in the amount of \$47.70. That figure is arrived at by multiplying the town mil rate (\$15.90) by 3. Although the Town Council worked hard to pare expenses to offset other lost state revenues and hold the mil rate steady, it was not possible to also offset the exemption reduction by the State of Maine. ■

Thinking of Running for Local Office?

Nomination papers for the Municipal Election to be held on November 2, 2010, will be available from the Town Clerk beginning Wednesday, August 4, 2010. Open positions include M.S.A.D. #22 Board of Directors, Hampden Water District Board of Trustees and the At-Large Council seat vacated by Shannon Flavin. The remaining term for the At-Large Council seat is from November 2010 to December 2012. Candidates must collect between 25 and 35 signatures of qualified voters within the Town of Hampden. All nomination papers must be returned to the Town Clerk's office by 6:00 pm on September 2, 2010. ■

MAYOR'S MOMENT

By Mayor Matthew Arnett



Matthew Arnett

The Town Council has been working on a number of issues important to the community over the past several months. These include

finalizing the Town's Comprehensive Plan, preparing a municipal budget that holds the line on the mil rate for another year while maintaining current services, and updating local zoning and land use ordinances to conform to State requirements. Also under discussion by the Council and its subcommittees are consideration of a local dog park, revamping of procedures for town volunteer committees, and consideration of participation in a program to assist property owners with energy improvements to their homes.

As Mayor, on behalf of the Town Council, I would like to take this opportunity to thank former Town Councilor Shannon Flavin for her service on the Council from 2007 through June of 2010. She was a valuable and thoughtful member of the Council. Her dedication to good government and to the processes that support it will be greatly missed.

We appreciate input from our residents, and we continually work to find ways to engage the citizenry in helping the Town to plan for its future. Our email addresses are posted on the Town website at <http://www.hampdenmaine.com> – feel free to contact us with suggestions. Our meetings are the first and third Monday of each month, and all committee meetings are posted on the same Town website. ■

FROM THE DESK OF THE MANAGER

- **Tax Bills** for the 2010-2011 year will go in the mail at the end of August. The first half will be due by Wednesday, October 6, 2010, to avoid interest. It is estimated at this time that the mil rate will remain the same at 15.90 per thousand.



Susan Lessard

- **A reminder** to everyone that Children's Day is the third Saturday in August! This annual fun, family event is not to be missed! Mark your calendars for August 21st, and get ready for a day that includes a parade, children's activities, GREAT food – and fireworks!
- **Many thanks** to the volunteers from Maine Savings in Hampden for their work in revamping the rain garden in front of the Town Office. Last year when it was constructed on June 18th, there was an ensuing month of rain that never gave the garden a very good beginning. One section of the garden has been completely redone and the remaining two sections will be completed by the end of the summer. This garden passively treats storm water runoff from the paved parking areas of the Town Office as well as some from Western Avenue. It also serves to help meet storm water management regulations of the State and Federal government that are required of the Town.

- **Have you noticed the Gazebo/Playground/landscaping** adjacent to the Lura Hoit Pool? The Town received a grant last year for tree plantings in that area, and the Tree Board recently spent volunteer time replacing those plantings that were not doing well. The relocation of the gazebo from the Municipal Building to that location provides a

shady spot for those who are watching children on the play equipment or for those just enjoying the beauty of the landscaping.

- **And then there's the Pool...** While visiting the recreation area, take a few minutes and stop in at the Lura Hoit Pool right next door! The pool offers many aquatic programs from aqua aerobics to swimming lessons and family swims to private bookings for pool parties! This family-friendly, reasonably priced facility is a tremendous asset for the community.
- **Need a place to cool off and get some reading time in at the same time?** The Edythe Dyer Library is a great place to find the most current in reading material AND to enjoy the benefits of the air conditioning system that was installed at the facility a year ago. As a bonus - the Library is a public wi-fi site! ■

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, 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. We welcome your feedback. Edited by: Anne Gabbianelli O'Reilly and Susan Lessard • Layout and design by Val Williams Ireland

Hampden Public Safety

By Sgt. Chris Bailey
and Firefighter/Paramedic Joseph Dunton

Police - Fire - EMS
106 Western Avenue
Hampden, Maine 04444
Phone 207-862-4000
Fax: 207-862-4588

Summer is time for families to relax, enjoy the sunshine, and participate in outdoor activities. Hampden Public Safety personnel encourage families to be cognizant of certain hazards associated with the season. The following is a list of summertime safety tips:

Know your limits when consuming alcohol. Maine has a tough drunk driving law. A conviction can result in fines, license suspension, jail, and increased insurance premiums. Most of all, your life and the life of others are at risk.

Never leave your domestic animal in a closed vehicle on a hot day. The temperature can rise to over 100 degrees in a short period of time.

Always wear a helmet when riding your bicycle. A properly worn helmet can reduce the risk of head injury by 85%. By law, children under 16 years of age must wear a helmet when riding on a public way or public bike way.

Complete a property check sheet at Hampden Public Safety before leaving for vacation. We will check your residence while you're gone. Also request the post office hold your mail to prevent it building up in your mail box.

Be careful with campfires. All campfires should be contained and at least 50' from structures and combustible materials. A permit from the fire department is required if the fire is used for anything other than warming or cooking.

Be mindful of hot summer temperatures and their effects on the body. Drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after any strenuous activity. If you begin to feel ill, call for emergency medical services immediately.

Fireworks are dangerous and are the cause of many injuries. Approximately 55% of injuries are burns and 40% involve children under 15 years old. Sparklers including Morning Glories and paper/plastic caps are the only legal fireworks in the State of Maine. Visit the Maine Office of State Fire Marshal website for more information.

Use grills in well-ventilated areas outdoors. Never allow children to play with or be near a grill. Remember, a grill can retain heat well after it has been turned off. ■



Photo by Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly

MEET THE TOWN ASSESSOR

By Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly

What makes someone travel from Winslow to Hampden everyday for work? Well if you ask Kelly Karter, she'll tell you because, "I feel that Hampden is a good "fit" for me and I have some of the finest co-workers anyone could have." Karter came onboard this past winter as Assessor bringing with her some 20 years' experience working in municipal government.

Karter found it to be a smooth transition with the outgoing assessor working with her and "always available on the other end of the phone." One of the challenges that she has faced is learning the town. "I spend quite a bit of time out in the "field" and working permits, checking properties that may have been improved without permits, and checking new construction in general." She claims one of the best systems in place, is that the code officer, building inspector, and assessor all try to coordinate the final inspections in one visit. Karter says this makes it easier on the contractor or homeowner and the town office staff as well.

Karter became a Certified Maine Assessor in 1993 and Hampden is the third town she has worked in. "I also serve on the Maine Municipal Health Trust Board of Directors and am currently the Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors of Maine Savings Federal Credit Union."

She lives in Winslow with her husband, Danny, who is a Special Education Tech at Winslow High School, four cats and an Australian Shepherd. She and Danny are parents of three children who live in Providence, the Cape, and Portland. ■



Photo courtesy of Andy Laidman



Photo courtesy of Patti Lindemann

Hampden Academy Jazz Band and Show Choir

Students Perform at Magic Music Days and Disney Festival

A reflection by Ryan Armstrong

I can remember sitting in the band room in sixth grade playing tuba. I sat right next to Jack Swalec who played trombone. Together we'd always talk about going to Disney World for Jazz Band when we were in high school. We counted out the years and figured out that we would be going to Disney as seniors in high school - the best year to go. So for me personally, this trip had been in the back of my thoughts for about seven years. The trip finally came. The opportunity to play in Downtown Disney and on a national scale was easily the best once-in-a-life time experience I've had musically. From the performance stage to the theme parks, I'll never forget the many laughs and memories made during April school vacation week spent in Disney World. ■



Photo by Sheila Albert

Three Ways to Improve the Life of Your Trees

By Chris Packard, Chair, Hampden Tree Board

Trees are a great way to increase the beauty of your home and neighborhood and shade from intense summer heat. Having trees in your yard also increases the value of your home! So, if you have small trees in your yard or decide to plant one, you will want to keep in mind these basic rules of tree care:

1. Trees aren't weeds, don't whack them. Young trees have very thin bark. Don't hit the bark with your string trimmer or a mower. Most of the living tissue, particularly all the sap carrying tissues, lies directly below the bark. If the living tissues become damaged, the tree can become girdled and die. Girdled means that water won't be able to get to the leaves, and sap won't be able to get from the leaves to the roots. Even partial girdling can shorten the life of a tree and drastically slow the growth of young trees. Freshly damaged bark is also an entry point for fungus and pest infection. The best solution to these problems is to either trim tall grass at the base of your tree by hand, or better yet to create a 1'-2' mulch ring around the base of your tree so that no trimming is needed.

2. Mulch properly. Creating a two inch thick, two foot mulch ring around the base of your trees (but not touching the trunk of the tree) has several benefits, such as suppression of weeds which compete for nutrients and water with tree roots. Mulch also keeps trees from being hit by a mower or string trimmer, and mulch also conserves moisture in the soil. These benefits are all extremely important to young trees, but all that benefit can be lost if mulch is misapplied. It's very important to not "volcano mulch" your tree. "Volcano mulching" happens when mulch is piled up against the base of the tree trunk. Mulch is very good at staying moist, and this constant moistness on the bark of a tree (even an older established tree) can cause it to begin to rot and become infected by bacteria, fungi, and insect pests.

3. Prune them. It's important to prune away dead branches and those branches that rub on or interfere with other branches. Dead branches leave your tree open for infection by fungi and pest insects. Branches that rub each other can be really damaging to the tree's living tissue below the bark, and each time the wind blows the wound will be re-aggravated and create more damage. The best place to make the pruning cut on a living branch is just above the branch collar, the very short swollen section where the base of the branch meets the main stem. The best time of year to prune is when the leaves are off and trees and most tree pests are dormant. Experts typically agree that for most species of tree early spring, before the buds swell, is the ideal time for pruning. For many years people believed that pruned branch wounds should be painted or tarred to keep out disease and pests; however, current scientific studies indicate that there is no typically significant benefit to doing this. In fact, for many species of tree, covering a pruning cut is as likely to encourage disease as it is to keep it out - it's a lot like a human keeping a bandage on a wound too long, which can actually slow the healing process.

When in doubt about how to care for your trees, be it mulch, pruning, or anything else, give the town of Hampden a call! Hampden is a designated Tree City USA and has a volunteer Tree Board as well as a Town Forester who will be happy to answer any of your questions. ■



Members of Hampden's Tree Board celebrating Arbor Day in May with the planting of a tree on the grounds of the Lura Hoit Memorial Pool. This is the third consecutive year the Town has received Tree City USA designation.

Photo courtesy of Kurt Mathies

Calling all Seniors

The first Monday of every month is a chance for Seniors to enjoy games, trips, meals, bingo and speakers. The gathering begins at 11:30 at the Hampden Kiwanis Hall next to Irving. Coffee and tea and new friends are provided. Call Karen at 223-3937 or Emma at 862-3126 for more information. ■

BEAR Program Up and Running

The Business Expansion and Retention program (BEAR) reported on in the last issue has completed interviews with many local Hampden businesses and compiled a preliminary report with that information. The draft is being reviewed by the Town Council Planning and Development Committee and will be presented to local businesses in the near future.

The information gained from this process will be used to help the Town do a better job of identifying and correcting obstacles faced by business at the local level. ■

Lights, Camera, Action... Hampden Economic Development Team Video Available



Community and Economic Development Director Dean Bennett, with the assistance of New England School of Communication Intern Melissa Antononi, has

produced a video for use by the department in attracting business to the Town of Hampden. The video outlines the 'Development Team' concept used by the Town – and includes a testimonial from Angler's Restaurant owner Bud Hall about his experience in planning and constructing a business in Hampden. Call Dean at 862-3034 if you are interested in seeing the video. ■



Garden Club to Host a Farmers' Market at Harmony Hall

By Anne Bennett

A Farmers' Market will be held on Saturday, August 7, 8-11 AM, at the Garden Club's Harmony Hall, 24 Kennebec Rd. Several vendors will be there with locally grown produce, breads, etc.

The Hampden Garden Club members are offering this event to the community as we continue efforts to promote knowledge about and public usage of Harmony Hall. This is an integral part of the campaign to finance necessary repairs to this historic hall.

Mark your calendars to take advantage of this opportunity to support the local farmers, buy local products, and see Harmony Hall. ■

Habitat For Humanity... looking for new building location!

Habitat for Humanity of the greater Bangor region is looking for possible sites for another home to be built for an eligible family in this area. At this time, the Town does not have land that is available or suitable for such a use. However, if anyone has a buildable lot that they wish to donate to this very worthy cause – please contact Operations Manager Amanda Charette at 942-8977 or via email at: acharette@habitatbangor.org

THINK PINK and Let the Garden Grow

Team Denise Fundraiser

Do you want to help raise breast cancer awareness and beautify the Town Office at the same time?

Team Denise is currently accepting donations to purchase pink tulips and other perennials for a PINK GARDEN to be planted this September in front of the Hampden Town Office.

Any funds raised above the costs of the bulbs, seeds, and plants will be donated to the Komen Race for the Cure to be held on the Bangor Waterfront September 19th. The garden goal is \$3000. If you want to help with the Pink Perennial garden project, just ask any of the Town Office staff or call 862-3034 for more information. Deadline for donations is August 26th. ■

EVENTS

by Vivian Gresser

Hampden Historical Society's Heritage Days



Heritage Days will be held at the Kinsley House at 83 Main Road South in Hampden on Saturday, September 11,

2010, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. The society provides this event for the community to remember how things were done in our past. We have exciting exhibitors and presenters lined up for this event offering: spinning, rug braiding, tating, candle dipping, blacksmithing, outdoor cooking, butter churning, cider pressing and cedar shakes-plus more. Bring the children to help them realize how advanced we are today and to educate them on the past. The event is free and chili, hot dogs, drinks, and tasty cookies are for sale.

Hampden Children's Day

The Hampden Children's Day Committee invites all to this year's event to be held on Saturday, August 21, 2010. The day will start with a pancake breakfast at the Kiwanis Hall, road races, bike decorating contest, and of course the parade. After the parade, all sorts of events will take place behind McGraw School and in the gymnasium. There will be plenty of food to choose from and games for kids of all ages. To end the day there will be everyone's favorite fireworks. The Children's Day program will be available soon at several locations in town, but mark your calendars now for a day filled with fun. ■

Behind the Scenes at the Memorial Day Parade

By Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly

Each Memorial Day we stand by the roadside waving our flags and cheering on as the parade rolls by, but it's what's behind the scenes that deserve the cheers. For Charlie Gould, Senior Vice Commander of the VFW Whitcomb – Baker Post 4633, "it's challenging because you never know who will really show up to be involved; you know when they get there." For some 30 years Gould has had his hand in the parade and the cemetery service planning in some capacity; he says with a chuckle, "others can help too and step up at any time."

Resident Allison Berube has stepped up to the challenge for the past three years. Her help comes in the form of bright, shiny, attractive convertibles. "I know people like Jerry Pelletier, Gary Gilpatrick, and Harold Bouchard who willingly share their vehicles so veterans and auxiliary members can have a comfortable ride."

Berube says she offers this support in honor of her dad who was a Post member. She herself is an auxiliary member, admittedly not a meeting going member, but a helper. She says others can do the same. "It's important that the younger generation of veterans step up and help out to keep the VFW going," Gould echoes this sentiment saying, "Volunteerism isn't like it used to be and we really need people to help out."

You can call the VFW Post on Canoe Club Road at 862-2553 and leave a message or touch bases with Charlie Gould at 862-3581, and offer to help for next year. ■



Photos by Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly



Hampden Advocates Energy Efficiency Retrofit Program

By Shelby Wright, MGEA Community Outreach Coordinator

There's never been a better time to save money on your energy bills by weatherizing your home than now, and the Town of Hampden and the Maine Green Energy Alliance want to help!

Efficiency Maine has just announced a special summer rebate program that adds an additional \$1,000 to existing cash-back rebates for homeowners who lower their utility bills by 25% or more. Participating homeowners could receive up to \$5,500 in rebates and tax credits just for making investments that lower their energy bills if they act before Aug.31st. Every year it's costing Hampden homeowners more and more of their hard earned dollars to heat their homes. Right now, we have a unique opportunity to tap into a wide variety of programs and services, including rebates from Efficiency Maine and tax credits from the federal government.

Hampden has been working with the Maine Green Energy Alliance to promote an innovative energy efficiency retrofit program to increase weatherization efforts throughout the community. The money to help lower energy costs is out there and we're working hard to get it into the hands of the homeowner. For more information about the weatherization project or the rebate program, please send an email to me at shelby@mainegreenenergyalliance.org ■

TOWN OF HAMPDEN
106 WESTERN AVENUE
HAMPDEN, ME 04444

PERMIT NO. 201

POSTAL PATRON
HAMPDEN, ME 04444