

Hampden *Highlights*

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PINE TREE LANDFILL – FROM ACTIVE TO CLOSED

By Susan Lessard

For more than 36 years, 358 Emerson Mill Road has been home to a landfill of some type. Started in 1974 by Tom Sawyer for disposal of municipal solid waste in Hampden and the region, the site was once a gravel pit. Over the years, the landfill received state and local permission to expand and in that process, the nature and type of waste accepted was changed – and the manner in which the landfill was constructed changed with technology as well.

Purchased by Casella Waste in 1996, the facility ended its ‘life’ as a special waste landfill with a limited list of acceptable waste that included construction and demolition debris, contaminated soils, ash, and front end process residue from incinerator operations in Orrington and Biddeford. The final ‘capped’ elevation will be 320 feet.

The last waste delivery to the facility was on Thursday, December 31, per the closure agreement negotiated between the facility, the Town, and the State Department of Environmental Protection. The final ‘cap’ on the last third of the landfill will be constructed in the first half of 2010. The final result will be a constructed ‘hill’ covered with grass and other non-root-invasive vegetation. The use of drainage stone and ‘ridges’ as part of the design is to control the impact of water run-off from the hill itself.

What Next?

Odors, Traffic, Construction

Odors relative to the facility should cease to be any kind of a problem once the final third of the landfill is capped and covered (mid 2010). The

closure plan includes the installation of gas collection lines that will feed the gas-to-energy facility on-site. This facility utilizes the odorless methane for electricity and ‘scrubs’ off the hydrogen sulfate (source of the rotten-egg smell that used to be a significant problem at the site). The ‘cap’ will eliminate odors at the site which currently can migrate up through permeable cover material to the air.

With the closure of the facility and completion of the final cover, traffic to the site will be dramatically reduced. Since the transfer construction and demolition site at the facility will remain in operation, there will be some traffic, but it will be significantly lower than the current volume.

The final construction phase at the facility will occur primarily in the first

half of 2010. As part of that construction, there will be both truck traffic and the possibility of odors. The installation of gas lines for collection requires excavating ‘old’ waste and depending on atmospheric conditions, those odors can migrate off-site.

Construction & Demolition Debris - Individuals

The facility is currently licensed to accept construction and demolition debris from individuals and that will continue. The material deposited there will be hauled away for disposal at another site – most likely the Juniper Ridge Landfill in Old Town. That operation will physically be located on the same part of the site where such activity currently occurs.

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Photo courtesy of Pine Tree Landfill

Landfill *from page 1*



Photo courtesy of Pine Tree Landfill

Gas-to-Energy

Also located on the site is the gas-to-energy facility that utilizes landfill gas to generate electricity that is sold to the energy grid. That facility will continue to be in operation for approximately the next twenty years. The Town is exploring the feasibility of becoming a Community Energy Supplier in order to utilize the energy created at the site to offer Hampden residents a 'green' alternative to the standard electric offer from Bangor Hydro. By mid-2010, we should have more information on the likelihood of that program moving forward.

Not only does the gas-to-energy plant provide a 'green' method of handling the methane created by the decomposing waste, it insures that there will be a company presence at the site on a daily basis post-closure.

Who's Watching?

Monitoring

The Landfill owners are responsible to the Department of Environmental Protection as part of the closure plan of the landfill for the monitoring and remediation of environmental damage that has occurred at the site as a result of its use as a landfill, and overall monitoring of conditions relevant to that damage. Those items include water quality on site, methane migration, leachate treatment, settlement monitoring and more. The statutory time frame for remediation (correction) of issues is currently 30 years, however if condi-

tions have not improved enough to be considered as 'successfully remediated' that time period can be extended by the Department of Environmental Protection.

Town's Role

The Town will continue to monitor these factors related to the site as well through the work of technical consultants with specialties in landfill construction and monitoring and water quality. These consultants have been in place for many years and provide an expert level of independent review for the community in regard to this site. The Town also has a board called the Hampden Environmental Trust Board of Trustees who meets as needed to review the information from the technical consultants and to make recommendations for investment of the Hampden Environmental Trust. The Trust contains approximately \$3.6 million dollars and is dedicated for 30 years post closure to addressing any environmental emergency that might occur as a result of the landfill's location in the community. That trust was established many years ago and funded initially from Tom Sawyer's operation of the facility and then from Casella Waste after they purchased it in 1996. No contributions from the facility owners have been required for a number of years since the fund reached the amount defined as part of the original Trust documents. Interest continues to accrue on this fund and minimal amounts are used from it to pay for water quality review by the technical consultants of the Town. Once the thirty years post closure have passed, the fund becomes available for the Town's use for items other than those that are landfill-related.

Host Community Benefits

Individuals

Since 2002, the owners of many residential properties within a

certain distance from the footprint of the landfill have received financial benefits from the owners of the landfill. Negotiated as part of the Host Community Benefit for the 2001 expansion of the landfill, these benefits included annual property tax rebates, property owner protection plans (related to sale of a home), and bottled water in some instances (although no offsite testing has shown environmental damage to private wells). These benefits will cease at the end of the current fiscal year. Once the facility is closed, under Maine law there is no further requirement that a waste facility provide host community benefits.

Town

The Town has received Host Community Benefits since 2001 in the form of a per-ton fee for all tons of waste that have gone into the facility. In order not to become dependent on the funds in our operating budget, the Town Council set a policy that required that 50% of the money be set aside for future use, that some of the funds be used for capital reserves for eventual equipment and infrastructure replacement, and that some be used for projects that were deemed to be necessary and in line with the Comprehensive Plan of the community. As a result, the Town has not built a dependency on these funds for operations and the mil rate will not be impacted by the loss of these funds. For the Town itself – the last Host Community Benefit check will be based on waste delivered to the facility during December 2009.

The funds utilized since 2001 have contributed to many projects for the town without the need to borrow money. These include the rehabilitation of the Town Pool, construction and paving of the former dirt lot adjacent to the soccer field by

continued

the pool, construction of a playground at that site, funding of town long term reserves in the amount of \$800,000, donation to the startup of the Challenger Learning Center in the amount of \$25,000, the construction of the community room portion of the Public Safety building, sidewalk installation as part of the Route 1A north rebuild project, and the upcoming Route 1A middle section rebuild project (from R&K Variety to Mountainview Drive) as well.

The Next Chapter in the Story

This landfill has had a long and sometimes controversial history in the community. Its location and expansion created a good deal of anxiety and concern for many years. The closure and long-term monitoring and remediation of the site are the next phases of the 'life' of this landfill. The Town will continue to work with State environmental staff and the facility owners to insure that the site achieves the required 'successful environmental remediation' required under the law.

I would encourage anyone with additional questions or concerns related to the closure of this facility to call me at the Town Office at 862-3034. ■

FROM THE DESK OF THE MANAGER



Susan Lessard, Town Manager

Manager. We work with property owners to develop payment plans that can help get you back on track.

DOES FIDO HAVE A LICENSE –

Have you licensed your dog? An additional \$15 fee for this applies after January 31st!

SECOND HALF DUE DATE JUST AROUND THE CORNER –

The second half of property taxes is due by April 7 to avoid interest.

TAX TROUBLES? – Are you having trouble paying your taxes? If so – please stop by and talk with Cheryl Johnson, the tax collector or myself as the Town

Manager. We work with property owners to develop payment plans that can help get you back on track.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – The Town Council will be holding public meetings over the next several months to discuss the draft of the Comprehensive Plan that has been developed. Please check our website at www.hampdenmaine.com for dates and times. YOUR input is important in this process! ■

Give Your Vehicle a Gift

By Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly

Now that Christmas is over and the gifts have been put away, it's time to give your vehicle a gift, a 2010 Transfer Station decal. All residents using the transfer station must have a decal displayed in the windshield of their vehicle. Decals may be purchased at the Town Office for just \$5.00. Be sure to have your current vehicle registration handy at the time of purchase to make the transaction an easy one.

Be sure to get the gift for your vehicle because after January 31, any vehicle not displaying a 2010 decal will not be allowed to enter the Transfer Station. The Transfer Station located on the Canaan Road is open for disposal of Hampden Residential trash only, Wednesday, Thursday & Friday - 10 am to 6 pm and Saturday & Sunday - 8 am to 4 pm. The second and fourth weekends of the month, demolition debris is accepted. ■



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 Annie 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: Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly and Susan Lessard • Layout and design by Val Williams



Donation Drop Off – Hampden Neighborhood Food Cupboard

The Town Office is a convenient drop off location for the Hampden Neighborhood Food Cupboard. There is a plastic tote in the lobby in which we collect donations of non-perishable food, household, and personal care items. Some of the most frequently requested non-food items are soap, laundry detergent, dish soap, feminine hygiene items, diapers, wipes, toothbrushes, toothpaste, cleaning supplies, paper towels, and toilet paper. Thanks for your donation. ■

Pay Using Debit

By Janie Pitcher

One of the biggest complaints to come across the counter at the Town Office used to be that the Town did not accommodate the use of debit and credit cards. We were constantly being told that we needed to come into the new age.

After careful consideration, some debate, and a lot of research, the Town decided that some of what our customers were telling us made sense for us to try. After all, most of us use debit cards on a daily basis.

On June 19, 2008, the Town implemented the use of the Debit Card. For a fee of \$1.50 (that covers the Town's out-of-pocket cost for offering the service), customers can now pay with their debit cards. Their use has grown steadily since that time and we are happy to report that we have had no problems with this process since its inception. Some customers have had trouble distinguishing between the debit card and its 'cousin' the credit card, but that is easily solved when we remind them that the debit card is the one that requires a 'pin' number at the time of use.

We will not be implementing the use of credit cards in the foreseeable future. Credit cards are much more costly to process and that cost would have to be passed on to the consumer. We will, however, continue to evaluate as many options for our customers as possible. If regulations or costs in regard to the use of credit cards changes, we will revisit the issue. ■

MAYOR'S MOMENT



Photo by Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly

As I write this column in the middle of December, I am filled with gratitude and admiration for all of you who contribute to the well being of Hampden—employees of the Town and the School District, employers and workers in local businesses, volunteers who serve on town boards and committees, officers and participants of civic groups, scouting, and a myriad of school and community activities.

For many of our residents, the last year has been difficult due to the recession, for others there have been difficult bouts with illness and sorrow with the passing of friends and family members. We pray for all that the coming year will see the beginning of recovery in the economy and the opportunity to celebrate successes in education, career, service, and family.

We in town government will continue to be diligent in seeking to provide high quality town services at reasonable costs to tax payers. We will be prudent in expenditures but also ready to support wise development in our business and residential communities.

One of the important tasks in the coming year will be the completion and implementation of Hampden's Comprehensive Plan. Many of you have participated in the drafting of a major revision to the plan—a process begun two and half years ago. There will be many opportunities for you to become better informed about the Comprehensive Plan, to comment on its provisions, and to help shape changes in town ordinances and planning procedures that reflect the common interests, needs, and desires of our citizens.

We also look forward to the continuing construction of the new high school and eventual decisions concerning the re-use of the current Hampden Academy buildings and properties. We are grateful for the diligent efforts of teachers and administrators who have created an excellent school system and who have worked hard over many years to gain approval and funding for the new high school.

Hampden has a bright future and we hope you will continue to be a highly engaged citizenship. We on the Town Council welcome your suggestions and encourage your involvement in town governance and civic activity.

Matt Arnett, Mayor

Water Works for Everyone

By Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly

Whether you have gray hair or are just cutting teeth, there is a program for you at the Lura Hoit Pool. "I knew I couldn't walk in the winter time," says Bill Anderson as he makes his way into the water for his new-found routine of Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 11:30 Gentle Aerobics. "I think it's fantastic and I'd recommend it; I'm getting more exercise than if I were walking," says the retired teacher who also mentions how much he likes the instructors.

Lillian Rogue of Dixmont enrolled in the Gentle Aerobics class ten years ago because her doctor recommended a water workout for her Osteoporosis. "I hate to miss a class because it's so much fun," she says in between socializing with others like Julie Harris who likes the convenience of the pool from her Hermon home, claiming, "You can't beat the price." There is even a husband and wife team enjoying the class, which Pool Director Darcey Peakall says, "offers a good warm up, toning and stretching, and getting your heart rate to the level of each person's comfort zone."

Water Tots is a class designed to help build more comfort with the water for the two and three year olds while mom or dad join along. For Carley Andrews of Bangor, it's an extension of the previous class. Mom looks on while her husband is in the water with Carley. Wearing a smile Amy claims, "It's Tony's bonding time with his daughter."

For the Runco's, the Saturday morning venue builds confidence for the adults as well as the kids. "We want our boys to be exposed to the water," says Nick sitting sideline with his son, Thomas who just completed Preschool swim class, while watching his wife Sam in the Water Tots class with William. The Runco's have enrolled both their boys since infancy saying, "We love it!"

Peakall says the Water Tots class is designed to "take away the child feeling overwhelmed. They are learning the language of what they will hear in the Preschool class and that helps." It's worked for Kimberly Severance of Brewer who is a regular at the pool with her children. "This is more structured and one-on-one, and my children have learned a lot." She goes on, "Our goal has been to help them learn strokes and feel comfortable in the deep end, and the classes have met all our expectations."

For her son Brandon, the deep end is fun as he can dive down and collect rings. "I feel like a fish; I just like the water."



Photos by Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly



A fun time for all at was had at the annual Halloween Open House all thanks to: Hampden Recreation Department, Public Safety Department, Edward's Family Shop N' Save, Coldbrook Equestrian, Hampden Academy's Key Club, ATA Karate, Liberty Mutual Insurance, and many more hands that made the evening a success.



Third Annual Susan Abraham Swimathon

By Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly



Some 70 swimmers took to the lanes in the Third Annual Susan Abraham Swimathon at the Lura Hoit Pool last month, easily the biggest turn out to date. Hampden Academy Swimmers, their coaches, seven faculty members, graduates, and members of the community all participated.

The past two years the fund raising swim supported the Susan G. Abraham Memorial Endowed Scholarship, which provides swim lessons to children in the SAD 22 district who otherwise would not have such an opportunity. Because of the success in years' past, the funds are now targeted for The Susan Abraham Senior Swimmer Scholarship, which provides funds for two college-bound athletes as well as the ongoing financial needs of the HA Swim Team.

Because these swimathon's are so successful, the funds will also go to support our community's Special Olympics Swimmers with gear to wear at their competitions. Sam Manhart, assistant coach, says, "This has become a very special occasion for our swim team. It's an annual opportunity to honor Susan's memory, to come together in competition with camaraderie and friendship."

Coach Jason Snyder says, "I love this event. It's a workout, a meet and a party all in one. Susan was with us when we started this team, and we'd like to think she still is."

If anyone in the community is interested in swimming in next year's Susan Abraham Swimathon or if anyone would like to support the Susan Abraham Senior Swimmer Scholarship or the Hampden Academy Swim Team, contact Assistant Coach Sam Manhart via e-mail at smanhart@sad22.us. ■



The Friends of the Edythe Dyer Library Bookshop is officially OPEN

By Jane Jarvi

Every Tuesday morning and the first Saturday of the month, the Bookshop, housed in the basement of the library, will be open from 9:30 to Noon. Every month will have highlighted features and specials.

Through the generous contributions of gently used books from our reading community, the shelves are overflowing and ready for patrons to peruse. A wide variety of genres and topics are highlighted throughout the store, as well as audio and visual materials.

As the Friends develop opportunities to support the functions of the Edythe Dyer Library, we will continue with the Spring Book Sale in May, refresh the portable book-sale cart housed in the kitchen, and collect cell phones and ink cartridges.

Any person interested in joining the Friends organization, please leave your contact information at the front desk. Due to space limitations, the bookshop is not handicapped accessible. ■

Planting Pumpkins to Help the Library Grow

By Stephanie Duron



Winners of the contest left to right are Abby Lyons and Hannah Tash

Photo by Teri Briggs

Hampden Girl Scout Troop 199 teamed up with the Hampden Garden Club to raise money for the purchase of gardening books for the Edythe Dyer Library. Julie Urban, of the Hampden Garden Club, approached the troop last year with an idea of a pumpkin growing contest for the younger girls in Girl Scouting. With Julie's help, Troop 199 met with Daisy and Brownie troops in May to teach them how to properly plant pumpkins. Then on October 24, the little girls brought in their pumpkins for a contest, games, crafts, and pumpkin decorating. The fee for the workshop and contest helped raise enough money for the purchase of several gardening books for the library. Troop 199 members who worked on this project were: Olivia Duron, Paige Rainford, Katelyn Lyons, Sammi Brown, Abbie Hutchinson, Alex Urban, Laura Doyon, Shelby Brown, and Roxy Withers. ■



Photos courtesy of Denise Rocker and Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly



Public Works is Happy to Report to You What is Happening in Hampden

By Public Works Director Chip Swan

- A couple of construction projects are underway making for more traffic on Western Avenue at Route 202. The new Hampden Academy ground work, being done by Sargent Corp and a new Rite Aid by J T WINTERS has brought on a lot of truck traffic. As you have seen, the trucks operating off the road track mud and dirt back onto the road, and crews have been trying very hard to keep Western Avenue clean.
- A new Dunkin Donuts will be moving into town next spring at the former Big Apple convince store.
- Jeff Rawcliffe is planning a self-serve car wash at the former Bickford Auto Body.
- Maine DOT plans rebuilding RT1A from R&K Variety to Mountain View Drive.
- The Town of Hampden plans to put out a bid for work on rebuilding the Mayo Road in March of 2010 with spring construction planned.
- The plow crews have been busy plowing and sanding the roads. ■

MAYO ROAD RECONSTRUCTION BOND ISSUE PASSES...

By Susan Lessard

The local bond issue for funding the reconstruction of Mayo Road to include underground drainage, sidewalks, and improved travel lanes passed in the November election.

The next step in the process is a public meeting in which all Mayo Road abutters and any other interested persons can look over the design plans and get answers to questions about timing, construction, and traffic impacts. This meeting will occur sometime in January – so make sure you check the town website at www.hampdenmaine.com for the date.

The project will be put out for bid in March of 2010 and construction will be done during the 2010 construction season. This project will provide increased safety for pedestrians and drivers and will be done in time to accommodate the changes in traffic patterns that may occur when the new high school opens in 2012. ■



Photo by Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly

A RELUCTANT GOOD-BYE TO OUR LONG-TERM ASSESSOR

By Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly

When Vivian Gresser joined the staff at the town office as a part time employee, she was a stay at home mom. Twenty-four years later, and a few jobs later, Gresser is now going to be a stay at home Nana. But if you know Vivian, she won't be idle much.

Vivian served as Tax Assessor for the Town of Hampden for the past seventeen years. She began as part time secretary to the Code Enforcement Officer in 1985. "I was lucky that I could work from the time the school bus left in the morning until it returned in the afternoon," says Vivian.

Throughout the years, she worked as Sewer Clerk, Health Officer, Wellness Coordinator and Assessing/Code Enforcement Officer, not to mention her hard work on various community organizations and committees.

"Vivian's calm and quiet professionalism helped many irate people understand the nature and rationale for their property valuations over the years. She has been the epitome of the term 'team player' and was a tirelessly hard worker both professionally and as a member of the multitude of local groups of which she is a member. The Town is in the fortunate position of having an up-to-date valuation base thanks to Vivian's work. This insures that the tax distribution among property owners of all types is fair and equitable," says Town Manager Susan Lessard.

Vivian says, "I have enjoyed working for the town and with all the staff throughout the years. I will miss all my friends here, as well as helping the home owners of Hampden to better understand how their taxes are determined, but I'm not far away and hope to visit often."

At the time of this article, the town is in the process of finding a new assessor. Vivian has agreed to work with the new person for the start of the new-year to facilitate a smooth transition. ■

Hampden's Tree Lighting Ceremony 2009

There was just a enough snow and plenty of chill in the air for the Christmas tree lighting and party at the Town Municipal Building.



Photos courtesy of Doug Kesseli and Annie Gabbianelli O'Reilly



Early Birthday Wishes!

An early happy 105th to Nana (Edna Bragg), a long time Hampden resident who moved in November to Phillips-Strickland House in Bangor. Her granddaughter, Susan Hall writes, Edna was fortunate to live at Roe Village for 17 years. She would like to thank the people there for their caring friendship and support. She has been the oldest citizen in Hampden since 2003. The people of Hampden have always been very kind and supportive throughout the years. She grew up in Hampden as well, with her son and her granddaughters graduating from Hampden Academy. We are sincerely thankful for so many wonderful friends and memories.

Edna's birthday is April 1.

Photo courtesy of granddaughter Susan Hall





Help for Hampden Fund – DONATIONS NEEDED!

The Help for Hampden Fund is an emergency needs fund that was established in 2004 to provide emergency assistance to those in need in the SAD 22 communities of Hampden, Winterport, and Newburgh. The fund is an essential part of a 'safety net' of services provided under the umbrella of the Hampden Neighborhood Food Cupboard.

Since it was established, over \$10,000 has been raised for the fund through annual walkathons and other fundraising events as well as donations from local churches, community groups, and individuals. Assistance is most frequently requested for heating fuel, but other needs include help with electric bills, car and furnace repairs, and rent. We currently assist more than 25 needy families.

With the arrival of cold weather and the current economic situation, we anticipate more requests for services this season. Calls for help have already begun. Your donation can help a neighbor keep warm this winter. Donations may be sent to Help for Hampden, c/o Hampden Congregational Church, P.O. Box 9, Hampden, ME 04444. ■

Calling all Seniors *By Kurt Mathies*

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. Then, the third Monday of each month, Seniors are encouraged to bring their brown bag lunch and be ready to enjoy cards, board games and lots of socialization. It all begins at 11 and again at the Kiwanis Hall. Coffee and tea and new friends are provided. Call Karen at 223-3937 or Emma at 862-3126 for more information.

TOWN OF HAMPDEN
106 WESTERN AVENUE
HAMPDEN, ME 04444

PERMIT NO. 201

POSTAL PATRON
HAMPDEN, ME 04444