



The Quamphegan

From the Manager's Desk

By the time you receive this newsletter, John Schempf will have begun his duties as our Town Manager. If you have not had an opportunity to meet John, please stop by the office during regular business hours and introduce yourself. John comes to us from Los Osos, California and has also served as a Town Manager in Vermont. Prior to his municipal work, John was a Captain in the Coast Guard. We look forward to working with John for the betterment of South Berwick.

Our winter overtime budget was spent plowing storms through the end of January. At the Town Council meeting of January 26 the Town Council's consensus was to wait until winter has passed before authorizing a Special Town Meeting for any winter overrun. The Town has taken several steps to minimize the impact of the winter on the highway budget. These include: delaying our call out to road crews, reducing the number of sidewalks plowed after storms, performing the majority of snow cleanup on regular time and sending the crew home early when an evening storm is expected on a regular workday. We will continue to do our best to minimize the overrun while being mindful of our obligation to the community to clear our roads and keep the downtown accessible for our businesses.

The Kittery Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (KAMPO) obtained funds to perform a Traffic Feasibility Study for South Berwick. During the initial meeting of the Steering Committee in November the members identified interested parties or stakeholders to this study. An initial stakeholder meeting was held on December 1st and an email list has been developed for communication purposes. This study will look at every opportunity available to the Town to alleviate traffic and improve safety for a walkable downtown. If you are interested in receiving upcoming notices of the meetings please email treinauer@smrpc.org.

The implementation of Pay As You Throw has gone well in its first month. Most residents are finding the approach is workable and already see the difference in the amount of trash they are throwing in the hopper. Our local merchants have been pleased with the influx of customers looking to purchase bags.

The Town Council will begin to review the Manager's budget during workshops in March. These workshops are open to the public and are posted on the Town's website. A full schedule will also be posted on the bulletin board at Town Hall. If you do not have access to the internet but would like to be advised of the schedule, please contact me at 384-3300 x 113 and I will be happy to send you a copy of the planned schedule.

Congratulations and thanks to everyone who participated in the fuel fundraisers held this year. The Soup Dinner at Spring Hill and the Auction at Wadleigh Gardens were both very successful. There are many community members to thank for these efforts. From the organizers and the hosts to the residents who came and participated, thank you to all! These events have raised over \$14,000 for fuel assistance in our community.

As my contract as Interim Town Manager ends, I would like to say thank you to the community. Many of you have offered kind words and solid advice. I am proud to serve this community and thank the Council for the opportunity. I look forward to being part of the new opportunities for the Town that lie ahead.

Sincerely,
Roberta Orsini

<p><u>TRANSFER STATION HOURS</u></p> <p>Sunday 7 am to 12 pm</p> <p>Wednesday 7 am to 6 pm</p> <p>Friday 7 am to 12 pm</p> <p>Saturday 7 am to 6 pm</p> <p>Please make a note of these hours for your convenience.</p> <p><u>Committee Openings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Library Advisory Board, 1 position, meets 1st Monday of each month at the Library ◆ Zoning Board of Appeals, 1 position, meets as needed at Town Hall, evenings ◆ Conservation Commission, 1 position, meets 3rd Wednesday of each month at Town Hall, evenings. <p><u>Shoetown Playground</u></p> <p>The Town of South Berwick was awarded a grant by the Strawberry Festival Committee to place a porta potty at Shoetown Playground this year. Please join us in thanking Strawberry Festival for this and numerous other grants provided to our community each year.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">School Board Budget Timeline</p> <p>Mar 14 (Sat) Budget Workshop with Admin Staff (Superintendent's office)</p> <p>April 1 (Wed) Budget Workshop</p> <p>April 15 (Wed) Public Input on Budget</p> <p>May 6 (Wed) Public Input on Budget - S/B approve budget</p> <p>May 8 (Fri) Sign Budget Warrant (Superintendent's office)</p> <p>May 20 (Wed) Consolidated Warrant & Ballots to Town Clerks (at least 7 days prior to Budget Meeting)</p> <p>May 22 (Fri) Budget mailed to voters (optional)</p> <p>Jun 2 (Tue) District Budget Meeting (no more than 10 calendar days prior to referendum)</p> <p>June 9 (Tue) Budget Referendum (single yes/no question plus adult ed, capital reserve and expend other non-local funds raised)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Meetings are held at Marshwood High School unless otherwise noted</p> <p style="text-align: center;">~~~~~ Senior Center ~~~~~</p> <p>The South Berwick Senior Center at 71 Norton Street continues in its endeavor to enrich the lives of all area adults age 50 plus. There are a variety of services and activities available at the Center. A noon meal is prepared and offered three days a week. Guest speakers give periodic presentations on health, legal and financial issues of interest. Services provided at the Center include a foot care clinic and blood pressure checks. A variety of exercise classes are offered on a daily basis, in addition to line dancing every Wed. & Thurs. A variety of trips are available. For a list of current trip offerings, visit the Town's website, click on Social Services then Senior Center Newsletter.</p> <p>For more information on any event please call 384-3310 or email us at seniorcenterassist@yahoo.com. Everyone is invited to stop by and tour our wonderful Center.</p> <p>We are searching for the Oldest South Berwick Resident. We are aware of one resident who is 98. Do you know someone this age or older? If so, please call 384-3310.</p>
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EMA

South Berwick Emergency Management Agency is looking for volunteers to become fully trained as CERT Members to assist during the next disaster. We are looking for residents that can respond at a moments notice to assist with computers (inputing data) texting (to get messages out when other means of communication fail), helping set up shelters as needed and staffing them; phone operators (making & receiving calls from concerned citizens as well as calling other agencies to update status) and to help as needed getting supplies, cook or fill in for various jobs to give response crews a rest period. We can use your help, but you will need to be fully trained and certified. The training is free and provided by York County EMA, Maine EMA, So. Berwick EMA and the American Red Cross. If you are interested and want to make a difference for your community please email Blain Cote, Director of EMA at 2075804590@pager.ucom.com or sbdfirereports@yahoo.com.

Library

As with other libraries across the country, the downturn in the economy has increased the demand for local library services. We are seeing a significant jump in the number of books people are checking out and the use of our computers. Thanks to budgeted funds and a grant from the Friends of the Library, our technology has been boosted by replacing staff and public access computers. We have recently added wireless capability, which is available at no charge to patrons. In a short time library patrons will be able to download audio books from home on their personal computers.

The Library is open Mon. & Wed. from 1 to 8, Tues. & Thurs. from 10 to 5, Fri. from 1 to 5, and Sat. from 9 to 12:45

The Library Advisory Board has 3 new members- Peter Howell, Lori Medige and Angela Walters. There is still one position that needs to be filled. Other members are Elaine Pridham, Sandy Agrafiotis & Brian Dowd. Their service to the Library is greatly appreciated.

Recreation

The Recreation Dept. offers many programs during the winter months and encourages everyone to take it outside, be active, have fun and make friends and commitments to a healthy life style in 2009.

Thank you to the Eliot Baptist Church for their beautiful gym space for our first indoor soccer program with Coach Catalina Bakas & Tracy Martin. Thank you to Kennebunk Savings Bank for their continued and appreciated program support. Thank you to the Strawberry Festival Committee for their 100% funding of our Wildlife Adventure programs.

Look for current and upcoming programs: Pre-school Adventures, Hawk Challenge, Indoor Tennis Lessons at Berwick Academy, Snow Tubing, Wildlife Encounters, Easter Egg Hunt, Pee Wee Soccer, Recreation Day Camp & Adventure Camp and the Reddy Family Chiropractic Strawberry Run.

Consider becoming a Recreation Committee member. For more information contact Sharon Brassard, Recreation Director, at 384-3306.

Four ways to say "Hello Spring" from the Conservation Commission

What's in your water? Well water testing. Basic test for \$50.00. You'll save **\$15.00**. Add arsenic test for \$15.00. You'll save **\$10.00**. Kits are available at the Code Enforcement office at Town Hall. Return to Town Hall by Saturday May 9th, 9-12 am.

Live on the cleanest street in town: Take part in our Earth Day Adopt a Road Clean Up on Saturday, April 18th. Participants must sign up by Friday April 17, 5 P.M. to avoid a disposal fee at the Transfer Station. To sign up call 384-3300, ext. 336 or send an email to prnel@comcast.net.

Do you like to canoe or kayak? "Salmon Falls River Trip" brochure, an updated guide to paddling our town's rivers, is available at Town Hall, local businesses and historic homes in So. Berwick and on the Town's website.

Save water: Mow high, water wisely and make your lawn healthier and cheaper to maintain. Visit www.thinkbluemaine.org.

For more information about these topics and the work of the Conservation Commission, please call 384-3300, ext. 336, or send an email to prnel@comcast.net

Strawberry Festival

Don't forget the South Berwick Strawberry Festival will be on the 27th of June, 2009. As always we welcome your volunteer efforts the Friday before for the hulling of the berries, as well as the needed help on Saturday in the strawberry tent. Non profit groups will soon be receiving a letter requesting your attendance at a meeting to discuss coordination and organizational issues. Please have a representative attend this very important meeting. Looking forward to seeing you at the festival for a day of fun.

Community Garden

It's not too early to plan for the upcoming gardening season! There are a few 4 x 10 garden plots available in the South Berwick Community Garden, located near the soccer fields on Willow Drive. All So. Berwick residents are invited to join; priority is given to those who have held a plot previously and those who do not have space to garden at home. For more information call Mimi Demers at 384-5258 or mimiandray@zwi.net.

Tax Club Applications

The Tax Club allows property owners to pay their taxes in eight (8) equal payments with a payment book that the Town will issue once an application has been approved. The first payment will be due September 15th, 2009.

Applications can be found on the Town's website or they can be picked up at the Town office. You must apply annually. Applications must be returned by August 30th, 2009.

Homestead, Veteran's & Blind Exemption applications must be in by April 1st.

Please join the Old Berwick Historical Society for FREE public local history events this spring. ALL WELCOME!



• **Peering Through the Veil of Time: Early Views of the Piscataqua By John Samuel Blunt (1798-1835) Feb. 26 - 7:30 pm at Berwick Academy** - Rare views of our region by a Portsmouth born artist, Deborah M. Child

• **A Summer Walk Down Main Street, USA - March 26 - 7:30 pm at the South Berwick Town Hall** - Joe Doiron & Paul Auger discuss local and national events that led to the 1924 summer KKK rally and cross burning in Sanford.

- **Shoals & Tidewater: Thaxter's Island Garden to Tysons' River Garden - Apr. 23 - 7:30 pm at Berwick Academy** - Nancy Wetzel presents stories and vintage photos of turn-of-the-last-century gardens at the Isles of Shoals & Hamilton House, South Berwick.
- **Tour of Quamphegan Landing - June 6 - 1:00 pm at Counting House Museum** - Discover the small but colorful neighborhood of South Berwick's old "Upper Landing" and cotton mill.
- **Living History Presentation - July 18 - All day - Counting House Park** - Visit a Native American and French encampment that might have existed here in the late 17th century.

Community Chorus at South Berwick to Perform Handel's Messiah with Chamber Orchestra



On Palm Sunday weekend (April 4 and 5, 2009) the Community Chorus at South Berwick will be performing the Easter portions of Handel's timeless "Messiah" (Parts II and III). For this special event, the 60 voice chorus will be singing with a full chamber orchestra and soloists. Come hear this masterwork, including the triumphant "Hallelujah" chorus and stirring "Amen". Performances will be Saturday, April 4, 8 PM at First Parish Congregational Church in Dover; and Sunday, April 5 at 3PM at Christ Episcopal Church in Exeter.

Social Services

Thanks to the dedication and hard work of local volunteers, there are a number of resources available to So. Berwick residents, including the Food Pantry, the Volunteer Network Transportation Program and the newly created Special Fuel Fund.

As the economy continues to falter, many of our residents are being affected. If you find yourself in need of help, there are several options. By calling 211 or login on 211maine.org,

you can obtain a listing of resources. Residents may also call the Social Services office at 384-3310 for information about any of these programs.

TAX/RENT REFUND

Residents have until June 1, 2009 to file for a refund based on income and taxes/rent paid in 2007. Applications are available at the Town Hall or Community Center.