



The Quamphegan

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Newsletter for the Town of
South Berwick

August, 2004

A note from the Library Advisory Board

At one of the "Tell Us What You Think" public input sessions, one man wrote, "This library will really be an architectural centerpiece in our town for years to come. Do it right!" The groups that have been working on the plans for the new library ARE working to "get it right."

As most people know, the location for the new library has been changed to the Cummings Mill area on Norton St. Right now the interior plan is complete, but there are 2 exteriors that are being considered. The exterior views have been available for public review on 3 occasions since May and people have been asked for their comments. Chances are the final plan will be a melding of the two plans that people liked the most.

What will South Berwick's first full service library offer? Space! Enough space for both children and adult fiction and non-fiction, periodicals, a multi media and historical area, plus workspace for patrons and staff. It will have computer stations with high speed internet access. There will be parking and meeting space for general community groups usage, as well as for library events.



The plan right now allows for green space, with trees and benches, and includes space for future expansion. The library will be within walking distance of the downtown area and adjacent to the two new medical facilities and the Community Center.

The Capital Fundraising Committee is hard at work. Additionally groups are organized to sell:

1. Personalized bricks for the Library's entrance.
2. "Put your child's art on your holiday cards" Christmas/Holiday cards.
3. "How Many is a Million?" Penny Collection.

The Capital Fundraising committee will be sending letters out to solicit pledges. This same group is also looking to secure funds from both public and private foundations. The total funds needed for this project will have to be a combination of local funding and private sources.

BUT...

Some folks are way out in front! Local craftspersons/businesses are already promising their skills and products toward the building of the new library and the grounds. The call will soon go out to others, but without being asked there is a local skilled woodworker who has promised to make the circulation desk, a stained glass artisan who will make a one of a kind window, and an area door and window company is donating the exterior doors!

In addition, York Hospital has offered to assist with the site plan, a valuable tool we will need to move forward with our fundraising.

When the exterior design is completed, the plan is to send a special mailing to all South Berwick homes to keep people up to date.

The Palesky Proposal

As you may be aware, Carol Palesky and the Maine Taxpayers Action Network have secured the necessary signatures to place their tax cap proposal on the November ballot. The Palesky Proposal scales back assessed property values to the 1996 level, allows for certain interim adjustments for construction and sales, and imposes a property tax cap of 1% or 10 mils on that 1996 base, with an allowance to cover some pre-existing debt.

The Palesky Proposal is entirely excerpted from California law - it was known as "Proposition 13" - and contains dozens of provisions that do not coincide with Maine law. In fact, not only are the provisions inconsistent with state law, they are often in direct conflict with themselves, the Maine Constitution or both. Therefore, it is very difficult to do an exact analysis of the potential impact to municipalities.

Under the "likely" impact analysis, which assumes that large segments of the proposal will be deemed unconstitutional, the municipal revenue loss for South Berwick in fiscal year 2005 would be about 1.7 million, representing a 25% reduction in property tax revenue.

Since the Town is mandated to pay the school and county assessments, the entire revenue loss must come from a reduction

in Town services. In fiscal year 2003, the Town's budget was 4.2 million dollars (in round numbers.) A reduction of 1.7 million dollars, representing a 40% reduction in the Town's budget, would leave 2.5 million dollars for all Town services.

If required by the voters to meet the intent of the Palesky referendum, the Town Manager and Town Council will need to develop a budget that accounts for a loss of 1.7 million dollars. The Town budget currently funds police, fire (including hydrants,) road work, snow plowing, parks, welfare administration, building permits and inspections, planning, library, transfer station, emergency medical services, animal control and general administrative services (tax assessing, collecting, treasurer, etc.) It is unclear at this time if any of the reduced or eliminated local municipal services will be picked up by the county or state government.

The South Berwick Town Council, the Eliot Board of Selectman and the SAD 35 School Board plan to host a forum to discuss the local effect of this referendum and will soon announce the time and place.

Please be an informed voter.

Library Events

Monday, August 23rd
2 pm
"Super Cold Science"
for grades 1 through 8

The Boston Museum of Science brings this program to the Library to close out the summer. Please plan to join us!

Registration for fall story time for 4 year olds and lap time for two and three year olds will be held on September 1st at the Library. Please call Annmarie Townsend, the Children's Librarian for more information at 384-3308.

Our book discussion group meets the first Wednesday of the month at 7 pm at the Library. The library has copies of the books. Please call Charline Parsons, Librarian at 384-3308 for more information.

Benefit Concert

Saturday morning, November 13th Sammie Haynes McCarthy will again delight audiences with her songs for young children. The proceeds from this event will benefit the Great Works Regional Land Trust. Please set the date aside. For more information please check our website at www.gwrlt.org

Are you ready for an emergency?

Make sure emergency personnel can find you in the case of an emergency. The South Berwick Firefighters Association is selling reflective address markers for your home. These markers can be attached either vertically or horizontally to your mailbox or other post at the end of your driveway.

The cost for one marker is \$12.00. Please call 384-3300 x 111 to place your order.

From the Fire Chief

Fire permits are only issued to burn clean wood, brush, grass and leaves. Clean wood means no plywood, pressure treated, particle board, laminated finishes and no wood with lead paint.

Any wood from construction or remodeling must be inspected by a Fire Department Officer before a permit will be issued.

The South Berwick Firefighters Association Annual Fund Drive will take place in October during Fire Prevention Week. Money raised through this fund helps to purchase new equipment for the Fire Department. Your continued support will help us be one of the best equipped departments in the area.

Counting House Park Challenge Grant

Kennebunk Savings Bank has generously offered the Town of South Berwick a \$7,000 Challenge Grant. The purpose of this grant is to encourage residents and other businesses in our community to make contributions toward finishing the park on Liberty Street. If we are able to meet our goal, this park will contain benches, a picnic table, a carry-in boat launch, walkways, plantings and a small play area for families.

In order to meet this challenge the Town is soliciting donations. Kennebunk Savings Bank will match each dollar raised for this project. The deadline for donations to meet the grant is December 31, 2004. So we don't have much time. Please consider making a donation toward this beautiful waterfront setting so our residents may enjoy this park for years to come.

For more information, please contact the Town Manager's office at 384-3300.

Hazardous Waste Collection

Saturday, October 9th from 7 am to 10 am the Transfer Station will be hosting a Clean Harbors Hazardous Waste Collection Day. Flyers outlining the program will be available at the Transfer Station and at Town Hall. FMI call 384-3309.

Fall Transfer Station Hours

Just a reminder that beginning September 11th the Transfer Station will resume its regular operating hours.

Wednesday 12 pm to 6 pm
Saturday and Sunday 7 am to 5 pm

Food Pantry

The South Berwick Food Pantry is up and running on Ross Street at the old Rescue Barn. Thanks to many concerned residents, the South Berwick church community, South Berwick Rotary and other interested friends, the goal of an improved facility has become a reality.

The Food Pantry hours are:
Thursday Evenings 6-7:30 pm
1st & 3rd Friday 10-11:30 am

Please call the First Parish Federated Church at 384-4091 if you have an emergency need.

Lend A Helping Hand

The South Berwick Volunteer Network, a volunteer organization providing local residents with transportation to medical appointments, urgently needs drivers to meet the growing need for service. If you are able to help, please call 384-3311 and leave a message. A volunteer will return your call to provide more information.

Persons needing medical transportation should call 384-3311, at least 24 hours prior to the time of their appointment. Wheelchair van service is available thanks to a grant from South Berwick Rotary.

Hot Summer Nights

Every Thursday evening this summer our downtown has been filled with music. The fourth annual Hot Summer Nights Concert Series sponsored by York Hospital and South Berwick Medical Services was a big hit, even with the rain. There is still one evening of music left, so if you haven't had a chance to come downtown on Thursday evenings head down this week (8/26) for the Hoot Night hosted by Dan Blakeslee at 6 pm on the lawn at Central School.

In addition to thanking York Hospital and South Berwick Medical Services for their sponsorship, the Town would like to thank local volunteers Nicole St. Pierre & Rachel Martin for organizing another great season of entertainment and Chip Harding for all of his technical expertise.

Stormwater Pollution

Stormwater pollution is the water from rain and snow melt that carries with it a plethora of pollutants such as soil, fertilizer, pesticides, oil & gas products and pet waste. Stormwater pollution is the major source of pollution in many of our State's waters. To stop this pollution we all need to be aware that what we do in our yard and with our automobiles and our pets ends up in our water. For more information, check out this website:
www.thinkbluemaine.org



Nomination Papers

Nomination papers for Town Council and School Board are available from the Town Clerk beginning Monday, August 12th. They must be returned by Friday, September 17, 2004 by 5 pm.

Scooter News

Got a new scooter? Most "scooters" do not need to be registered. However, did you know that a person must possess a valid driver's license to operate a motorized scooter on a public way?

Call the business office at 384-3300 for more information.

Tax Bill Note

The current tax bill does not reflect prior outstanding taxes. Please call Deputy Tax Collector Beverly Hasty at 384-3300 for balances due on tax liens and personal property tax.

Community Chorus

Please join your own Community Chorus at South Berwick for its annual holiday concert weekend!

12/3 8 pm St. Michael's in S. Berwick
12/4 8 pm Holy Trinity in Newington
12/5 TBA Strawberry Banke Stroll

Tickets \$10 adults, \$8 Seniors/Students

Please consider becoming a singing member of the chorus. Rehearsals are Monday evening 7-9:30 pm at the Federated Church in S. Berwick. Rehearsals begin 9/13/04. (no audition, experience preferred)

Concert info: 603-692-3513
207-384-4224
Singing Info: Dr. Harry Moon
207-384-7059

Recreation

Fall programs

- Pee Wee Soccer signups will be held at Town Hall on Tuesday August 31st from 9-10:30 am and 5-6 pm.
- Mad Science flyers will be available at Central School and the Middle School following the start of school.
- Attitash Bear Peak Ski Program flyers will be available at the Junior High, High School and Town Hall later this fall.
- Friday Night Junior High Ski Program at Gunstock and King Pine; flyers will be available at the Junior High during Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences.

Call the Recreation Office for more information on these or other programs at 384-3306.

Exercise your right to vote on November 2nd! The polls in South Berwick are open from 6 am to 8 pm on the third floor of Town Hall. Handicap accessible!