



The Quamphegan

Spring 2016

General Information

Business Office Hours

- Monday: 9-4
- Tuesday: 9-4
- Wednesday: Closed
- Thursday: 9-6
- Friday: 9-1

Library Hours

- Tuesday: 10-5
- Wednesday: 10-9
- Thursday: 10-5
- Friday: 1-5
- Saturday: 9-1

Transfer Station

- Wednesday: 7-6
- Saturday: 7-6
- Sunday: 7-12

Subscribe to News

Residents can stay informed about events and meetings that are occurring in town simply by signing up for e-mail alerts on the Town of South Berwick webpage. At the bottom of any page select "email subscriber", complete the form and submit it.

Upcoming Events

Earth Day Clean Up

April 23rd

Library Book Sale

May 5-7th

Well Water Testing

May 7th

Hike Through History

May 25th

Annual Town Meeting

May 31st

Primary Election

June 14th

Strawberry Festival

June 25th



From The Manager's Desk

Another Maine winter is upon us, and I feel that our roads continue to be some of the safest in the area due to the commitment of our highway crew. Their long days and extra effort deserve recognition. Please remember that they are out there working on the roads when you wouldn't even consider going outside.

The Young Street Senior Housing project is complete and people are moving in. This centrally located project by AVESTA Housing brings an opportunity for seniors to remain in South Berwick. The project concept was just starting when I became Town Manager 5 years ago and it is great to see it reach completion. Seniors have the ability to walk into Town for shopping, mail, and other needs. The seniors will likely benefit us as volunteers in the community. I would like to welcome those that are moving in from our community or from other communities.

We continue to work on the 67 miles of Town roads. In the past four years we have worked on 19 miles. I get questions regularly about "why not my road?" This is not easy to answer as there is still approximately \$4,000,000 of work that needs to be completed. We make our choices based on the facts of usage and construction. A road that is heavily traveled may cost \$200,000 to fix this year, but if left to another year the cost could increase in increments of \$100,000 which lessens our financial viability for repairs in future years. Please continue to support us in our efforts to "catch up". Also, the Maine DOT project on Rt. 236 should start this Spring.

After 9 years of serving on the Town Council, Jean Demetracopoulos decided to step down. Jean always looked at the big picture and had the best interest of all residents in mind. My thanks for her help through my early years here. I would like to welcome Tom Chase as our new Town Council member.

We have multiple positions open for residents to participate in town government. Becoming part of one of our many boards is a good way to get introduced to how things work within municipal government. Check with the Town Clerk if you are looking to get involved. Often Town Council members serve on various boards before they get elected to the Town Council. Please look at the Town website at southberwickmaine.org for information on open positions.

Our audit for the fiscal year 2015 has been completed and I am again proud to say we are in great shape. The Town departments returned over \$200,000 dollars to the undesignated account. This equates to 3.6% of our operating and capital budget. We have consistently delivered a 3% plus or minus budget for the last five years by spending your dollars wisely. I look forward to your input as we move forward with the next budget. It's our town so let's make it the best it can be. Stop by my office and share your thoughts. Come to Town Council meetings and speak to the issues. Join a board and get involved. Have fun while you become engaged in our activities.

Respectfully,

Perry A. Ellsworth

Homestead Exemption Update

In 2015 the 127th Legislature made changes to the Homestead Exemption, increasing it to a \$15,000 reduction in value from the prior \$10,000 adjustment.

Homeowners currently receiving the Homestead Exemption do not need to do anything, the change will automatically apply to your property.

Application forms for the Homestead Exemption as well as the Veteran and Blind Exemption are available at Town Hall or online at maine.gov/revenue/forms/. Applications for the program must be filed with the Assessor's Office by April 1st.

Library News

The Library is joining the Maine Infonet Library System thanks to a grant from Kennebunk Savings. The Infonet will allow members to easily access the collections of other libraries in the State and have items shipped to the South Berwick Library for distribution. The grant money will be used to begin the process of re-barcoding the collection and issuing new cards in preparation for the new system.

The Friends of the Library are putting the finishing touches on the donor recognition signs which feature the work of local artist Julie Parker and will serve as a thank you to the generosity and support received during the building project.

Elections

The 2016 Presidential Primary Election is Tuesday, June 14th. Are you ready?

If you are new to South Berwick or have not voted before, you will have to register. Since this is a presidential election year, high voter turnout is expected. Everyone is encouraged to register early. ID and proof of residency will be required.

Stop in to the Town Clerks office to register to vote!



Free Tax-Aide

Free tax help is available to low and moderate income tax payers.

- February 5 to April 15, 2016
- Fridays, 11 am to 3 pm
- South Berwick Community Center
- 71 Norton Street

AARP Tax-Aide will provide free tax preparation and e-filing. You do not need to be an AARP member or retiree to use this service.

By appointment only, please call 207-384-3310.



Volunteer Network

The South Berwick Volunteer Network (SBVN) is in need of one or two schedulers to back up the current schedulers. You will need a home computer and a few minutes a day.

Additional drivers are always welcomed to help provide free transportation to non-driving South Berwick residents so they can access the first rate, and in some cases, life-saving medical services available in our area.

If you are looking for a volunteer opportunity for a few hours a month, or if you need transportation to a medical appointment, please call (207)384-3311.

Holiday Thank You

A great big THANK YOU to York Hospital, the South Berwick Food Pantry, local businesses, students and staff of Berwick Academy and the many individuals in our community who made this past holiday season a special one for families in South Berwick. Over 50 food baskets were given out during Thanksgiving and Christmas, and we were able to provide gifts to over 70 children this Christmas as well.

Your thoughtfulness means the world to families in your community who may have gone without.



Online Services

Did you know that you can watch Town Council and Planning Board meetings online?

Visit southberwickmaine.org and click on the "Online Services" button. Next click on the "Town Hall Streams" link.



This will take you to the page where you can view meetings. You have the option to watch meetings live or you can click on a specific meeting and view past meetings online.

Strawberry Festival

Work has begun on the 41st Annual Strawberry Festival. It will be held on Saturday, June 25th (rain or shine).

The Committee is now accepting applications for volunteers, artisans and non-profit groups. Information is available at southberwickstrawberryfestival.com.

Recreation Sign Ups

Check out the Recreation Department's New & Improved on-line sign up program on the Town's website.

You will find this new system a very user friendly way to register for all programs.

Community Chorus

Come out to see the spring concert "Within These Walls"

April 9, 7:30 pm
Portsmouth Immaculate Conception Church

April 10, 3:00 pm
Our Lady of the Angels Church



Well Water Testing

The annual well water testing program will be on May 7th and test kits are available at Town Hall.

Return kits to Town Hall between 9 am and 12 noon. The basic test will be \$50.

Rally Around The Flag

The OBHS is proud to report the new flagpole outside of the Counting House has been installed and they hope you enjoy it.

Community Garden

The Community Garden, located on Willow Drive, has been a vital part of our town for 18 years and new members are always welcome.

Contact Mimi Demers for information at mimiandray@gmail.com.

