

The Athenian

Volume 12, Number 9

Sponsored by Grafton Cares

MAY 2022

Let Summer Begin!

With mud season behind us and with the hope that being outside in the fresh air will contribute to COVID's decline, what better reason to get out of the house and enjoy what summer has to offer?

With warm weather comes change. It will be interesting to see how the Select Board operates with two new members. Plus, Grafton Cares is starting up its Wednesday Lunch again at the Chapel building in Grafton.

In addition, there is much to read about in this issue, such as The Meetinghouse annual plant sale and another chapter in the Perlman Diary. So read on...

- Dennis Hunt

Select Board Meeting Tidbits

In addition to news in other pieces below, here are a few things from the April Select Board meeting that might be of interest:

- Grievance Day has been set for the end of May. The exact date has not as yet been posted.
- Emergency exit signs are done at the former school building, and some drywall repair has begun in the assembly room.
- Krista Gay, new school board member is on the Supervisory Union policies committee where they are working on a flag policy for the entire SU. The new policy will likely only allow federal and state flags to be flown on the flag poles.
- The Board created a Town Meeting Time Advisory committee. Wichee Artu will chair the committee. Krista Gay and Sherry Maher also volunteered. They will report to the board by the September meeting.
- Janet Perry reported that Matt Perry purchased a whole pallet of underdrain pipe. The Town crew did a big clean out, are getting a Jersey barrier for the gas tank, have ordered needed signage for inside the shop, and are getting a cabinet for combustibles and a disposal can for used rags. Still needed from the OSHA inspection list is a breakaway hose and nozzle for the gas tank. Also, they have set up the



One of a Kind - Wild Shepherd Farm

mulch pile outside the gate where sand had been previously for use of townspeople.

- There are three 2-drawer safes in the utility room that will be removed. New window coverings are needed, and a quote is being sought for putting down a vapor barrier under the Town Office floor.

- Sherry Maher

Summing Up the Special Meeting Vote

As you may have heard already, Article 1 at the Special Meeting on April 26 was defeated. The vote was a tie – 45 YES, 45 NO, and so the Article was defeated because it did not receive a majority of votes. Thus, we will have a 5 person Select Board until at least March 2023 should it be put before the voters again at that time.

As for the votes for the 2 new board seats - Sandi Capponcelli and Harold Noyes took the 2 seats with 60 votes each. Krista Gay had 50 votes, 12 votes were left blank, and 16 votes were cast for a handful of write ins.

- Sherry Maher

NOTES FROM THE SCHOOL BOARD

On May 24th the Annual WNUESD School District Meeting will be held at 7 PM at the Grafton Elementary School. [NOTE – See School District Warning below.] I urge all town folks to come out for this meeting as there are important discussions to be had regarding the 9 articles that you will be voting on. The decisions that come out of this vote will guide us through the final steps of our school district becoming a union school without Westminster.

Also, the audit for 2021 has been completed and shows a surplus. This surplus, using an appropriate formula, has been divided between Athens-Grafton and Westminster. How to use our portion of the surplus will be part of the night's discussion. Please review the Warning for this meeting and give me a call if you have any questions. Remember our children are the future of our town. Let's do our best to give them the education

that will best prepare them for the future. To do this your school board members need to hear from you.

Save the date, May 19th from 6 to 7 PM for the Grafton Elementary School Spring Concert. Come support the children.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.
- Lynn Morgan

School District Warning

The legal voters of the Windham Northeast Union Elementary School District are hereby notified to assemble at the Grafton Elementary School in Grafton, Vermont and meet to act on the following articles approved by the School Board of the WNUESD. The meeting will be held at the Grafton School on Tuesday, May 24th at 7:00PM.

Article 1: The election of a Moderator to serve for a one (1) year term, or until the next Annual Meeting of this District.

Article 2: To elect a Treasurer to serve for a one (1) year term or until the next Annual Meeting of this District.

Article 3: To elect a Clerk to serve a one (1) year term or until the next Annual Meeting of this District.

Article 4: Shall the voters of the WNUESD modify the Articles of Agreement to remove all references to the Town of Westminster as of July 1, 2022, in compliance with the State Board of Education's Rule allowing the formation of the Westminster School District and empowering the elected Board of that District to resume full operational authority of the schools and properties located in that town?

Article 5: Shall the voters of the WNUESD approve the disposition of its current fund balance as of July 1, 2021 as identified by the auditor of the District to be \$1,412,876 according to the formula recommended by the WNUESD and Westminster Boards: the formula is a grant of \$1,062,546 to the school district of Westminster and \$350,330 to be retained by the WNUESD for the purposes of tuition reimbursement, future reductions to the tax rate beginning in 2024, and physical improvements to the Grafton Elementary School?

Article 6: Shall the Voters of Athens and Grafton, being the voters of the WNUESD after July 1, 2022, modify the Articles of Agreement to add two additional District School Board members, elected by the District as a whole, with the provision that one new member shall reside in the Town of Athens and the other new member shall reside in the Town of Grafton? These members shall serve one term beginning July 1, 2022 until the next Annual meeting.

Article 7: Shall the Voters of Athens and Grafton, being the voters of the WNUESD after July 1, 2022, elect one additional member from the Town of Athens and one additional member from the Town of Grafton to serve beginning July 1, 2022 until the Annual meeting of the District, in conformance with Article 6, above?

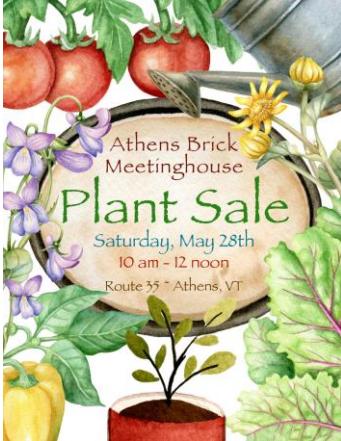
Article 8: Shall the Voters of Athens and Grafton, being the voters of the WNUESD after July 1, 2022, authorize its Board of Directors to sign a long-term lease for the Grafton Elementary School and accompanying lands for no less than 55 years with the Town of Grafton, so as to qualify for federal ESSER renovation grants?

Article 9: Shall the Voters of the WNUESD act on or consider other matters to be brought before the voters assembled in this meeting?

- Jack Bryar

Annual Meetinghouse Plant Sale and More

Our 1817 Brick Meetinghouse will be the site of the 5th Annual Plant Sale fundraiser on Saturday, May 28th from 10:00 to 12 noon. We look forward to seeing many of our friends and neighbors on the Meetinghouse lawn at this annual event come Memorial Day weekend. You'll find a variety of perennials, annuals and vegetable seedlings, as well as delightful garden related raffle prizes. Experienced gardeners from the Athens Area Garden Club will be there to answer questions and offer gardening advice. And hopefully it will be warmer than last year!



Anyone bringing plant donations please have them labeled and drop them off between 8AM – 9:30AM or contact one of these committee members for other arrangements – Ginger – 869-2405, Pam – 869-2557, Sherry – 869-2141.

Unfortunately, the Meetinghouse may not be open for tours as usual, but that's actually good news! The façade project to restore all of the windows, repair all the exterior woodwork, and give the Meetinghouse a fresh coat of paint is FINALLY about to begin. It's been a long and frustrating process, but we are grateful for the support we have received to fund this project. The project is in part being supported by a grant administered by the National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

Members of the Meetinghouse Committee are collaborating with the Brookline Meetinghouse Committee on some fundraising efforts this summer. They are also holding a plant sale on May 28th, so after you visit us, swing down their way to support that beautiful building and your garden. We are also joining forces for an I-91 Welcome Center day on August 19th. We'll be putting out calls for donations, so if you're interested in contributing baked goods, beverages, etc.

for that rest stop fundraiser, please get in touch. Other fun collaborative events are being considered so stay tuned.

- Sherry Maher

Grafton Cares Update

It is with great excitement that Grafton Cares will on Wednesday, May 4, at noon, revive the community luncheons which have been suspended for more than two years due to the plague. As before, it will take place in the Chapel, free to all, although donations are gratefully accepted. And how to begin again? By featuring the same meal that preceded our closing--Lynn Field's delicious Chicken Parmesan!

We are hoping to hear soon from the wonderful cooks--both individuals and organizations--that in years past have volunteered to take on preparing a featured luncheon offering once a month. Grafton Cares will cover the cost of purchasing the food. Our thanks go out to MKT, ever-so generous for immediately promising a cake on the last Wednesday of every month to honor those who have celebrated a birthday during that time.

Yes, COVID is still with us, so we simply ask that people who are feeling symptomatic or who may have recently been exposed to someone who has the virus wait until they test negative before joining us.

Our activities during the past month include Meals on Wheels to 11 customers, \$325 in gas cards for medical appointments, 1 ride to a medical appointment, delivery of 1 welcome bag and 1 sunshine basket, delivery of 3 baby blankets from our knitters, and 1 wheelchair loaned out and 1 returned.

We are hoping to see many of you at a Wednesday lunch. Until then, all the best. - Bill Toomey

Over 45? Take the “Age Friendly State” Survey!

Vermont’s demographics are changing, and one in four Vermonters are now over the age of 60. Are Vermont’s communities ready and able to meet our changing needs and wants as we all age? What will it take to ensure all Vermonters have the opportunity for financial security, health and wellness, social connection, affordable housing, transportation and more?

The State of Vermont, AARP, the Community of Vermont Elders, and the Vermont Association of Area Agencies on Aging are hoping to address these questions as they work together to create “EnVision Vermont: A 10 Year Action Plan for Aging Well.”

Your voice matters for this vision. If you are age 45 or older, we invite you to take this survey and tell us what’s important to you as you age, share your experiences, and let us know how well our communities



are supporting older Vermonters right now. The results of this survey will help us see where we’re doing well as a state and where we need to improve to be a more age-friendly state.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete the survey. All of your responses will be kept entirely confidential. This survey takes about 20 minutes to complete. You may take it online at <https://bit.ly/3N2aADP>, or, if you prefer, we can send you a paper version. Simply call the HelpLine at 802-885-2669.

- Thom Simmons

Food News You Can Use

Below is a list of local sites where food assistance is available at no or little cost to you. Please get the word out to your friends and neighbors about these programs as we go through these uncertain times.

Grafton Community Church Food Pantry. The food pantry at the Church is sponsoring free food pickup at the Church during the week. Staples such as pasta, tomato sauce, jam, oatmeal, and sometimes even frozen meat if available. Call Mary Feder at the Church at 843-2346 or email her at graftonchurch@gmail.com and leave your name and phone number to arrange a pickup time and please wear a mask. Delivery can also be arranged.

Townshend Community Food Shelf. This long-time food shelf is open and providing food to those who need it. They have limited fruit, vegetables, milk, frozen meats, and fresh bread. They also have canned food, pasta, rice, and shelf stable proteins. They are located in the Townshend Church and are open every Monday from 6pm to 7:30pm. Masks requested but not essential. If you have questions call 365-4348.

Everyone Eats—Newfane. This program benefits our communities in several ways. It financially supports area restaurants and their employees, as well area farmers and other food producers. And we get to eat nutritious meals! Meals are prepared by the Newfane Country store and distributed every Thursday from 4:30pm to 5:30pm in front of the Newfane Congregational Church. All meals are free and there is a onetime registration at the site or call Jeryl at 802-348-7173. Deliveries can also be arranged.

Meals On Wheels. Senior Solutions in Springfield, VT sponsors a Meals On Wheels program for seniors and those with disabilities. Grafton Cares provides pickup and delivery three times a week, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Sign up is straight forward. Call Senior Solutions Senior Helpline at 800-642-5119 for all the particulars and enjoy having meals delivered to your door in Athens and Grafton.

Veggie van Go. Free food is available for the month of May on Thursday the 26th from noon to 1pm at the Newfane Congregational Church on West Street. The purpose of the program is to help people obtain fresh fruits and vegetables to sustain a healthy lifestyle. All are welcome and no proof of eligibility is required. This program is sponsored by Grace Cottage Family Health & Hospital and the Vermont Food Bank.

Multiply Your EBT Benefits at a local Farmers Market. Do you have 3 Squares VT/SNAP benefits? When you use 3 Squares VT/SNAP or P/EBT benefits at a local farmers market, you'll get up to \$10 match in Crop Cash. That means \$10 in EBT buys \$20 of local food! The Brattleboro Area Farmers Market opens Saturday, May 7th. Look for the opening of the Townshend Farmers Market on Friday May 27, the Putney Farmers Market on Sunday May 29, and the Greater Falls Farmers Market on Friday June 17. Look on this directory nofavt.org/find-organic-local-food/farmers-markets for farmers markets details. Or call the Senior Help Line at Senior Solutions 802-642-5119 for more food information. — Dennis Hunt

Weather Emergency Committee Drill



Members of the Athens Weather Emergency Committee gathered on Saturday, April 30th for a dry run of our emergency protocols. We talked through scenarios that might arise, requiring the emergency shelter or otherwise assisting neighbors to remain safe during and following a severe weather emergency. Wiche Artu and

Bonnie Hitchcock hitched up the trailer and brought it from the Town Garage to the church where members of the committee sorted through items in the trailer, set up a few cots for practice, and scoped out how the church basement would be organized should we need to open it as an emergency shelter.

And it's time to update our volunteer list, our first "go to" resource short of opening the shelter. So look for a mailing from the committee sometime soon with our volunteer and medical needs surveys. Any questions, contact one of the committee members who are: Cheree Alsvig, Wiche Artu, Don Capponecelli, Bonnie Hitchcock, Sherry Maher, Lynn Morgan, Tim Stevenson and Tina Taylor.

— Sherry Maher

Library Corner

Smiles and Gratitude

Big thanks to Pat Mack for pitching in to help out with the library trash and recycling, when our regular helper



was out of town, and also for repairing one of the Lucy Daniels' plaques. MaryAnne Donald donated cheese and crackers for The Page Turner's Book Group, as well as tissues for the library, and we thank her for these thoughtful contributions. We are also very grateful to Russ Campbell for all his work developing a library program to present his African Grey Parrots to an appreciative Zoom audience last month. Many thanks to Bri Grady for keeping us in beautiful blooms for the circulation desk and sweets for the candy dish at the library. And finally, a huge shout of gratitude to the six donors who made it possible for the library to purchase a Next State Bandwagon Concert Series Pass for library patrons to borrow. See more details about this exciting new opportunity below.

New Summer Offering

Thanks to the generosity of six individual donors in Grafton, our library will be offering a Next Stage Bandwagon Summer Series Couples Pass on a first, come, first serve basis to library patrons. The Next Stage Bandwagon Summer Series is a family-friendly outdoor cultural performance series running from early May through mid-October. More than 20 performances ranging from a diverse group of musical styles, circus arts, dance, and theater will take place at ballfields, farms, and parks throughout Windham County. Kids under 12 always get in for free, and a dedicated play area will be available at all shows. This pass will be available at the library for check-out for individual concerts and will admit two adults and any children under 12 for free. Pack a picnic and enjoy the Vermont outdoors and a wonderful performance without doing damage to the pocketbook! Details about borrowing the pass are available at the library and on our website. Information about the Bandwagon Summer Series Schedule with details about each performance can be found on the Next Stage website (nextstagearts.org), and we will post notice of each concert on the library Facebook page.

Programming Schedule

Spanish Group on Zoom, Tuesdays, 11:00am-noon

Page Turners Book Group, Tuesday, May 5, 12:30-1:30, Hybrid, in person and on Zoom

— Michelle Dufort

Master Gardeners Offer Jumping Worm Webinar

Gardeners interested in learning about the invasive jumping worm pest are invited to attend a May 14 webinar hosted by the Southeast Chapter of the University of Vermont (UVM) Extension Master Gardener Program.

The webinar called, "Jumping Worms. Why Worry? What Can You Do", will feature UVM's Dr. Josef

Gorres as its presenter. It will be held remotely via Zoom on Saturday, May 14, 2022 from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. Registration is free; donations will be accepted to support garden education programming offered by the Southeast Chapter of University of Vermont (UVM) Extension Master Gardeners.

Closed captioning will be available. To register, please visit <https://jumpingworm.eventbrite.com>

Jumping worms are invasive earthworms hailing from far eastern Asia. Their major mode of spread is with horticultural goods but other mechanisms are also suspected vectors. These earthworms can damage deciduous forest ecosystems and, recently, have also been linked to plant damage in gardens and horticulture. This talk will introduce the biology of these earthworms, the history of the invasion and suggest possible ways to manage them.

This event is in collaboration with the Rockingham Free Public Library. For more information please visit: www.uvm.edu/extension/mastergardener.

- Sarah Edelman



Nature Museum Update

As summer approaches the museum is offering a number of programs of interest.

Saturday, May 7th. "Beaver Pond Exploration with Vermont Fish and Wildlife."

Saturday, May 14th. "Spring Tree Identification."

Saturday, June 11th. "Wild Medicinal Walk."

For more information on any of these programs and other news about the Nature Museum call 802-843-2111 or info@nature-museum.org

- Dennis Hunt

St. Luke's Organist & Plant Sale

Effective immediately, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, the gray church at 313 Main Street in Chester, VT, seeks an organist. The position is salaried and part time at approximately 6-8 hours per week. (However, the church is also interested in securing the names of a few musicians willing to substitute on an occasional Sunday 10 AM service.)

The annual Chester Plant Sale is scheduled for Memorial Day weekend, 9:00-3:00 Friday & Saturday, and 12-3 on Sunday

For more information contact Lillian Willis: lbwillisct@comcast.net or 802-875-1340.

- Lillian Willis

Entries From Two Weather Journals

April and May can be months of frustrations waiting for nice, warm weather to arrive. In mid-winter, April is a mental oasis with beautiful, sunny skies as temperatures rise, along with light wind. That's what you think!!!

April 29th, 2009: "Very windy yesterday afternoon with hot temperatures. Big cold front came in—feels like winter." Temps 86.4 to 39.4.

April 28th, 2012: "Sunny, windy and cold. Where did the warm weather go? Windy all day." Temps 44.4 to 29.3.

April 28th, 2022: "Windy Hill is living up to its name. Extreme wind and downright cold. Where is spring?" Temps: 51 to 34.

- Dennis Hunt

As we all wait impatiently for warm spring weather, I looked up my weather records for my yard for the last 17 years. There were only 5 of those years that did not have a frost in May. The last frost ranged from May 6, 2011 to May 27, 2013. So I guess we can expect the freezing is not over for us this month. As for rainfall amounts in May, there was quite a range, from 9.4 inches in 2017 to 1.2 inches in 2018. However, the overall average came to 4.5" which seems about normal for our region, although it has been quite a feast-or-famine kind of thing!

- Treah Pichette

Thoughts To Ponder

Winter is past and thoughts of spring and summer keep our minds active and excited. Not everyone is willing to give up memories of winter.

"Spring is the time of year, where it is summer in the sun and winter in the shade." -Charles Dickens

"Spring is when you feel like whistling, even with a shoe full of slush." -Doug Larson

"In the spring I have counted 136 different kinds of weather inside of 24 hours." -Mark Twain

-all quotes selected by Dennis Hunt

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Select Board Meetings: 3rd Thursday 7:00 PM

Budget Committee: 2nd & 4th Tuesday 7:00 PM

Meeting House Committee: 2nd Monday 10:00 AM

School Board: 2nd Thursday 6:30 Grafton School

Do you have a news item for The Athenian or a favorite family story to share? Or would you like to be on our email list and get the newsletter in your inbox?

CONTACT US at theathenianvt@gmail.com.



TRASH PICK-UP: MAY 2, 16 & 30

RECYCLE PICK-UP: MAY 9 & 23

CHARLES PERHAM JOURNAL MAY 1863

- 1 Went to Saxtons River today brought Ella home. In the evening took her home I had a good time.
- 2 In the forenoon helped father tag his sheep. In the afternoon I practiced some
- 3 Stayed to home all day today. Jesse come up here today.
- 4 Stayed to home all day today. Father went to the MeetingHouse meeting today. Mr Ball does not work today.
- 5 In the morning practiced some worked some. In the afternoon practiced some worked some. Sarah and Harry was here today.
- 6 Had a very good practice today. It has snowed all day today.
- 7 Had a pretty good practice today. A very stormy day today. In the evening practiced.
- 8 Went to Saxtons River today carried ----- down. Had a nice time today.
- 9 Worked in the forenoon in the afternoon practiced. Ella come up here a little while in the evening. Went down to the Dodges Bill was there.
- 10 There was meeting only in the forenoon. Mother and I went to prayer meeting got to see Ella.
- 11 Father went to Brookline. I had a pretty good play today. Mr. Ball did not work today.
- 12 Mr. Ball did not work today. I had a very good practice today.
- 13 Helped father get out manure this forenoon. In the afternoon practiced some.
- 14 In the forenoon I practiced in the afternoon I went to Saxtons River and took the tenth lesson. Carried mother down to -----.
- 15 Had a good practice in the forenoon. In the afternoon helped mend fence for father. Ella come up here this afternoon. In the evening went home with her had a good time.
- 16 Did not practice much this forenoon mended fence for father. In the afternoon worked for Mr Dunshee to help mend fence he gave me .50 cents.
- 18 practiced this forenoon. Helped father mend the Dunshee fence in the afternoon. School began today. I have worked hard today.
- 19 This forenoon I practiced. In the afternoon father went to Post. I helped Mr. Ball shovel manure.
- 20 Played some today. Alvins folks was here today. In the evening went down to the Dodges to see the leaches for the first time.
- 22 Practiced all the forenoon. In the afternoon helped father plant corn. In the evening --- Smith come up here.
- 23 Practiced some and worked some. Ralph had our horse to go to Cambridgeport today.
- 24 Father and I went to meeting today. Sermon was preached today. I played for the singing.
- 25 This forenoon I helped father. In the afternoon I had a very good practice. In the evening Ella come up here for a little while.
- 26 Mother and I went to Brookline today. We went up on the hill had a nice time to see all the folks
- 27 Worked some today and practiced some. In the evening went down to the Dodges went on a walk with Ella.
- 29 Did not have a very good practice today. Worked SOME
- 30 Worked some and practiced some. In the evening went down to Mr Dodges for awhile.
- 31 Started to go to Saxtons River with Albert but did not go.

- Transcribed by James Trimble