

The Athenian

Volume 15, Number 4

Sponsored by Grafton Cares

DECEMBER 2024

Home for the Holidays

The weather forecasters told us that we would have a Thanksgiving storm, which suddenly changed many holiday gathering plans. Were you stuck at home for the holiday when plans were to visit elsewhere? Or were you home with all the food and no friends and family to share it with? Regardless, we hope you had a delicious and joyful holiday. Other local community happenings included the 5th Annual Tree Lighting at the Meetinghouse with snow on the ground and hot cider enjoyed by all who came out. And the Community Center was again the setting for a Kid's Christmas Shop, where new and gently used items were available and Elfie made a visit! And more holiday happenings are in store, so read on. - *Sherry Maher*



renovations from Jon Saccoccio. There is no funding for this project as yet.

- In October Sherry Maher and Ginger Maciejowski attended a Preservation Trust VT retreat on Grand Isle about accessibility for historic buildings. They are waiting to hear back from Jon Saccoccio on ideas and cost estimates for accessibility at the Meetinghouse.

- The Board signed the MERP grant agreement for \$375,410 which was awarded to

the town for renovations to the Town Garage. Lengthy discussion followed around bids for the job components. Don Capponcelli offered to assist and will investigate a scenario where the town would be the general contractor for the project. He could oversee it on the Town's behalf, and will bring information back to the December meeting.

- Discussion about the town applying for a FEMA Mitigation Program ensued. The Board approved applying for Hazard Mitigation funds and enrolling in the National Flood Insurance Plan for the town.
- Budget issues included replacement or repair of the small town truck, a new roof for the town office, and highway employee's salaries and benefits.
- There was a heated discussion around the topic of a replacement culvert at Butson Circle. It was proposed that if the parties involved would purchase the culvert, the town would put it in. Two board members recused themselves from voting on the issues and three board members voted. The three votes were two for and one against. Board members believed that Janet Perry should have recused herself because of her relationships with people involved. The Board agreed by a vote of 3 to 1 that a public reprimand for Janet was appropriate. Nonetheless, (For more information on this topic please refer to meeting minutes on the Town of Athens website athensvt.com.)

- *Ginger Maciejowski*

Select Board Meeting Tidbits

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

- During public comments, road culvert issues were discussed per request of Ben Picz. Hannah Regier was congratulated on a successful event for Bull Creek Common Lands with Roger Haydock at the Community Center.
- Hannah stated that the town has received \$95,000 from FEMA for last year's damage to Reed Rd. Reimbursement from Grants in Aid have also been received. The Board voted to have Hannah pay Bazin Brothers as soon as the bill is received to expedite the reimbursement from the state. Amber Stevens says that more funds should be coming from FEMA as they have increased their reimbursement from 75% to 90%.
- The Board would like to have the road foreman attend selectboard meetings at least once a month to present information and answer questions regarding road work.
- Hannah states that there is now a complete design and cost estimate for the Community Center

Grafton Cares Updates

November was a rather busy month for us, during which we provided the following: Meals on Wheels to 9 customers, 8 rides to medical appointments, \$125 in gas cards for travel to medical appointments, 2 sunshine baskets, and 2 welcome bags. In the medical equipment department, we loaned out 1 raised toilet seat, 1 walker, 1 shower seat, and 1 wheelchair. Returned to us was 1 hospital bed.

Community meals have been well-attended, and we take great pleasure in the spirit of these events. Our meal schedule for December will be reduced by half because of the holidays. There will be no dinner on Friday, December 6, as the Chapel will be undergoing preparations for the Xmas Bazaar. Also, on Wednesday, December 25, there will be no lunch. So, what will take place is this:

Lunch at 12 noon on Wednesday, December 11

Dinner at 6 p.m. on Friday, December 20

Surely, there will be a special festive atmosphere for this pre-Christmas dinner. We hope that lots of friends and neighbors will be there. All community meals take place in the Chapel and are free of charge. Donations are gratefully accepted.

Should anyone have questions, please call either Kate Bova at 802-869-1527, or Bill Toomey at 802-843-2397.

We wish you all the best of health during the holidays and beyond.

- *Bill Toomey*

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony:

Grace Cottage Rehabilitation Facility

The public is invited to a ribbon-cutting ceremony for Grace Cottage Family Health & Hospital's new Outpatient Rehabilitation Services building on December 18 at noon. Immediately following the ribbon cutting, a one-hour Open House will be held to give attendees an opportunity to tour the new facility located in the Heins Building at 133 Grafton Road in Townshend. Many of Grace Cottage's physical and occupational therapists will be available during the Open House to greet attendees and to answer questions. The newly-expanded space for Grace Cottage's Outpatient Rehabilitation Department has been created in response to a significant increase in demand for occupational and physical therapy services. "We've grown from seeing an average of 34 patients a day to working with as many as 70 people a day," said Crystal Mansfield, Grace Cottage's Senior Director of Rehabilitation Services.

The newly renovated 5,137 sq. ft. facility has 11 treatment rooms (including specific rooms designated

for specialized treatments) and a large Rehab gym with a variety of equipment. A new ramp and stairway have been constructed along the back of the Heins Building.

"We are so pleased and proud that our physical and occupational therapists are being recognized far and wide for their expertise and skills," said Olivia Sweetnam, CEO of Grace Cottage Family Health & Hospital.

- *Alysabeth Simon*



December Library Corner Smiles and Gratitude:

As our annual appeal letter will soon be arriving in your mailboxes, we want to thank you for your past and present support for the Grafton Public Library. Donations for the library's annual appeal represent nearly twenty percent of the yearly budget of the library. Your generous contributions provide necessary funding for library programs, services, and building maintenance. We are very grateful for your ongoing and vital support and hope you will keep us in mind again for your year-end giving.

What's Happening @ the Library

We begin December with the 2024 Gingerbread House Extravaganza, a part of the Grafton Village Holiday Festival. We are accepting gingerbread houses the week of December 2-6. (contact the library for submission forms and more information) Show time will be on Saturday, December 7 from 10am to 4pm, along with a Silent Auction of the houses that have been donated to the library. Display your gingerbread house creation, visit us to marvel over the culinary masterpieces, and bid on a house to take home for the holidays. It's a heartwarming and joyous way to start the season. We also will have our yearly visit from Santa around 11:30—after the dog parade around the village. Join us for a holiday read-aloud, candy cane, and photo with Santa Claus!

Mid-month, Storyteller Extraordinaire Bill Toomey returns for a Grafton Library tradition. Bill's unique holiday stories are available only at this time of the year—an ephemeral treat not to be missed. For several years we've held this program on Zoom to make the gathering available to as many of Bill's devoted fans as possible. Registration is required, and the program will not be recorded.

Spanish Conversation Group and the Nature & Books Discussion Group are scheduled for December as well, and will continue into the new year.

And of course, wonderful books continue to line the shelves for your reading pleasure, in the new year and beyond.

The library wishes you and your family a happy, healthy and peaceful holiday season—filled with good books and great community.

December Library Programming

- Nature & Books Discussion Series on Zoom, Wednesday, December 4, 6-7:30pm, *Brave the Wild River*
- Spanish Conversation Group, Tuesdays, 11am to noon on Zoom, Advanced Beginner Level.
- Gingerbread House Extravaganza, Saturday, December 7, 10am-4pm, Silent Auction of Houses
- Santa Visit and Storytime, Saturday, December 7, 11:30am (ish)
- Bill Toomey's Holiday Stories on Zoom, Sunday, December 15, 6:30pm

- Michelle Dufort

Holiday Happenings Nearby

- Dec. 7th Christmas in Grafton - the full schedule is posted at the end of this newsletter.
- Dec. 8th 3rd Annual Yulefest in Saxtons River starts at 2:30 at Main St. Arts. See schedule below.
- Dec. 14th - Holiday Family Social - Carols by Candlelit in the historic Brookline Meetinghouse. 5pm at 632 Grassy Brook Rd. . All voices are welcome to this free event with cookies and hot cider. Dress warmly!
- Dec. 14 - Bellows Falls Parade of Lights - 5:00

Grafton Elementary School PTO

Thank you to all who joined us for an amazing community feast at GES. We served around 120 students, staff, families and community members! Things like this aren't possible without the continued support of this amazing community. A special thanks to our sponsors The Saxtons River Market, Springhill farm, Smitty's, MKT Grafton, The Grafton Inn and the Windham foundation. Also thank you to all those who donated through the sign up genius or sent in cash donations. To the Families, Staff, community members and students, to those who cooked, baked, volunteered time or helped in any way, these events don't happen without you.

We are a small PTO and community but we are mighty. The things we can do and experiences we get to have are so special!

We also have an exciting announcement. The GES PTO is bringing back the Apple pie bake sale! The students will prepare 20 apple pies to be sold at the town hall during the Holiday celebration on December 7th. We will be set up at the town hall at 10am till we sell

out!

Parent volunteers and staff will be working with students the night before to prepare amazing pies just for you. If you would like to join us or would like to donate any ingredients or pie pans please reach out to Krystal Webster via the Facebook page or email info.gespto@gmail.com. Also Sarah at GES is happy to help if you would like to reach out to her as well.

As we get into the holiday season, everyone at the PTO would like to express our heart-felt gratitude for ALL of those who played a part of making this year such a success for our students at our amazing little school! We wish you all the best in the new year. We can't wait to see what 2025 brings!

- Krystal Webster



Reed Road Weather Summary

We here in New England are always getting a surprise from Mother Nature, and November certainly gave us that with a big Thanksgiving snowstorm! But we have continued our drought in spite of a couple of days of much-needed, moderately heavy rain during the 3rd week. Temperatures were wide-ranging as well up here on the hill.

High temp. : 75.0 degrees

Low temp. : 19.7 degrees

Precip. : 3.2 " rain / 9 " snow

- Treah Pichette

Thoughts to Ponder

"May and October, the best-smelling months? I'll make a case for December; evergreen, frost, wood smoke, cinnamon."
— Lisa Kleypas

"Kindness is like snow—it beautifies everything it covers."
— Kahlil Gibran

"Winter forms our character and brings out our best."
— Tom Allen

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

Select Board Meetings: 3rd Thursday 7:00 PM

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

Planning Commission: 1st Tuesday 10:30 AM

Meeting House Committee: 2nd Monday 10:00 AM

School Board: 2nd Thursdays 6:00 Grafton School

Not on our email list? Get the newsletter in your inbox.

CONTACT US at theathenianvt@gmail.com.



TRASH PICK-UP: DEC 2, 16, 30

RECYCLE PICK-UP: DEC 9, 23

Charles Perham Journal November 1873

- Transcribed by James Trimble

1. Mr. Cobb came here after part of his sheep, he drove home 67. Went and helped him get his horse. Mr. Ball here after Rye. Let him have two bushels.
2. Went to Meeting. In the evening went down to school to a meeting.
3. Have been getting down pine logs. In the evening went over to John Oaks after the babys cradle. Frank Oaks here after apples. Let him have 11 ¼ bushels. Called it \$2.25.
4. Have finished getting down the pine today. Broke the cart axel. In the evening went down to George Eagers.
5. Shelled a bushel of corn this morning. Have been to Saxtons River to the Mill. Went to see Mr. Wiley about the oxen. Wallace came after the Rye gave him about two bushels.
6. Have been picking up stone in the forenoon. Wallace has been helping me. Jim More came today. Went a hunting with him over on the Westminster hills. Mr. Thompson here after his sheep. John Oak and wife here to see the baby. Elizabeth(his wife) received a letter from ----- . George Eager here.
7. In the afternoon went with Jim hunting did not get a thing. In the evening went over to John Oaks after a stick for cart axel. Cold and looks like a snow tonight.
8. Found the ground covered with snow this morning. Mr. Whitney has been here working to put in cart axel. Jim goes away today.
9. Have been down to the post office. Called to Merrills. Mr. Allen here after his colt.
10. Have been down to the mill twice drewed 4 logs. Banked up the shed and the back side of the house. In the evening wrote to ----- Windsor.
11. Have been down to the mill this morn. Fixed the south end of the sheep shed and the back of the barn.
12. Found the ground all covered with snow the morn. Went and got the sheep. Finished bringing in the corn. There is 113 bushels of good sound corn. Went down to James Eagers after his ladder.
13. Mr. Cobb came after his sheep today. Went and helped him find them. He drove home 58. Making in all drove home 188. Settled up with him and he gave me a note for \$69.00. Wallace here to buy a lamb.
14. Went over to Twitchells after my sheep that got away.
15. Have been to Saxtons River to the mill and to Mr. Osgoods auction. Got the old mare shod.
16. To home all day. It has been snowing all day. Jim Eager and wife here after Mrs. Bennetts sheep. Commenced to give the cattle meal today.
17. Have been down to Jim Eagers after scalding tub. Went over to James Eagers to get him to help.
18. Very stormy all day. Put the bit on Nelly colt today.
19. Killed the old hog today. Jim Eager and Ralph Whitney helped. Received letter from Henry Allen by way of Jim Eager.
20. Have salted down the hog today. He weighed 496 lbs. In the evening Jim Smith was here and he told us that William Smith died this morning about 5 he was hurt yesterday about 3. Gave Jim Eager \$1.00. Put away town money \$30.00.
21. Have been to Saxtons River to mill and got a barrel of flower.
22. Have been down to Jim Eagers and bought 2 tons of hay for \$15.50. In the afternoon went and carried Elizabeth and the baby to see the Dr. but did not find him.
23. To home all day.
24. Snowed all day have not done much.
25. Have been down to Jim Eagers twice after hay. Brought home 1264 lbs. Paid him towards my hay \$5.50.
26. Got home but one load today 646 lbs. In the afternoon went to Saxtons River to mill. Got a 100 lbs. of meal from G. Perrys got it charged for \$1.60 per hundred weight. Gave Jim Eager on the hay \$5.00
27. Thanksgiving day. Got in two loads of hay today. Making in all got some 3137 lbs with the chain. Have bargained away the Ranney oxen today to Mr Hollis Wyman for \$150.00. They are to be mine until they are paid for. Did not get home with the last load until dark. Snowed most all day. Snow has come now about 40 inches.
28. Broke into the wood lot this morn. Went to Cambridgeport to see Dr. Chapin about the baby.
29. Have been up to Grafton to see about getting Nelly broke. Got the oxen to use until Saturday. He wanted 25 dollars for the month or 15 dollars for the week. Called to Charles Whites.
30. Have been down to Brookline to carry Mr. Ranneys yoke home. Paid him for what was due for his oxen \$35.00.



GRAFTON VILLAGE

Holiday Festival

Saturday, December 07, 2024

Santa Arrives at 11:30am

Christmas Wreath Sale 10:00 - 3:00	Grafton Dog Parade 11:15
Christmas Tree Sale + Raffle 10:00 - 3:00	Necklace/Bracelet Making 12:00 - 3:00
Mercantile Festival Sale 10:00 - 5:00	Christmas Bazaar, Hot Soup + Treats 10:00 - 3:00
Choose & Cut Christmas Trees 10:00 - 4:00	Holiday Ornament Making 1:00 - 2:00
Winter Crafts & Project Feeder Watch 10:00 - 4:00	Grafton Inn Indulgence Tour 12:00 - 5:00
Cider, Cookies, & Festival Sale 10:00 - 4:00	Make a Holiday Cheeseboard 2:00 - 3:00
Gingerbread House Extravaganza 10:00 - 4:00	Grafton Inn Bar Bites 2:00 - 4:30
Plummer's Sugarhouse Tours 10:00 - 4:00	Community Fire w/ S'mores 4:00 - 5:00
Spin the Wheel! @ MKT: Gift 10:00 - 6:00	Grafton Inn Dinner Service 5:00 - 9:00
Phinney's Phriends 10:00 - 3:00	Live Music: Peter Miles @ Phelps Barn 6:30 - 9:00
Cookie Decorating @ MKT 10:00 - 12:00	



*Christmas in Grafton is made possible by
the Grafton Promotional Association and generous sponsors.
Find more Grafton events in 2025 - visitgraffonvt.com*

Yulefest

Third Annual Saxtons River Village
Townwide Festival

Yulefest Celebration
Sunday, December 8



- 2:30 - Yule Log @ MSA
- 2:30-5:30 - Artist Marketplace @ MSA
- 3:30 - Holiday Concert @ MSA
- 4:00 - Meet with Santa @ 24 Main
- 5:00 - Tree Lighting @ 24 Main
- 6:15 - Narrow Shoulders Concert @ 24 Main

The Yule Log is a whole tree specially selected. The large end is lit and as it burns the log is moved through the fire and kept alight for 12 days, giving light during the darkest time of the year.

MSA - Main Street Arts 24 Main - 24 Main Street

