

The Athenian

Volume 15, Number 7

Sponsored by Grafton Cares

MARCH 2025

Spring is in the Air?

We often get to this time of year and find ourselves yearning for warmer temperatures and signs of spring. Looking out now at over a foot of snow, it doesn't seem that we will see that soon. We have had snow cover on the ground since Thanksgiving Day and may not see bare ground for quite some time. However, in the midst of all of this, the birds are feeding regularly at the feeders bringing beauty to our windows, and delight to our ears outside. The snow conditions are also perfect for outdoor sports right now with excellent snowshoeing and xc skiing. Temps are becoming more moderate making it easier to heat our homes as well. Enjoy the beautiful white landscape a little longer...but get ready for mud season!
- Ginger Maciejowski



question was raised by this writer as to whether that article needs to be on the warning every year, or only if a group of voters submit a petition to change it, or if the Selectboard wishes to change it.

- Sherry Maher

Select Board Meeting Tidbits

In addition to news in other pieces below, here are a few things from last month's regular Select Board meeting that might be of interest:

- There was discussion around an issue of a hemlock hedge on the Brookline Rd. which was obstructing the view of the road. After discussion it was agreed that Hannah would trim back the hedge.
- A motion was made to order the fuel injector pump for the chipper and have it installed if not over \$600. All in favor.
- Board of Civil Authority needs to appoint poll workers for 2025
- Discussion was had regarding development in floodplains and what the legal impact is on the town.
- Ober Rd. project was discussed including the status of the grant application.
- Don Capponcelli was hired as the Construction Project Manager for the town garage project to be paid \$30/hour as a temporary town employee just for this project.
- A motion was made to sign weight permits for Newport Sand and Gravel and Carroll Concrete. All in favor.
- Two executive sessions took place during this meeting as well.

NOTE - There have also been 2 Special Selectboard meetings and 1 Emergency meeting since January 30. Minutes and audio recordings of these meetings can be found on the [Town of Athens website](#).

- Ginger Maciejowski

Town Meeting Summary

Fifty voters attended the Athens Town Meeting Monday, March 3rd at 6 PM, and all business was dispensed in just under an hour and a half. The suggestion to move from calendar year to a fiscal year came up but was not on the warning so no further discussion was held. After questions and discussion, the budget as presented in the Town Report was amended to add an additional \$5,000 to the equipment fund for a total budget of \$759,729.42. It narrowly passed in a paper ballot by 26 to 23 with \$585,729.42 to be raised by taxes. Questions were asked about the \$77K surplus, and the purchase of a new truck. All other articles passed readily on voice vote, however, Athens voters rejected the BFUHS budget article with 25 YES and 43 NO.

All those who were running for positions on the separate Australian ballot were re-elected with a total of 70 voters participating.

Those present at Monday night's in-person meeting voted to hold the 2026 Town meeting again on the Monday before the first Tuesday in March. The

Athens Local Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Athens Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) is in preliminary draft form and is now out for public comment. LHMP documents natural hazards potentially impacting Athens and gives general information about them. Some examples of hazards profiled in the plan are flooding, extreme winter storms, drought, wildfire and invasive species. The LHMP benefits the town in a variety of ways. Increasing the town's reimbursement from the state in disaster events, eligibility for mitigation grants, potentially making the town and its residents better prepared for natural hazard events and providing a series of mitigation actions the town can take. Please submit comments on the draft by 3/11/25 for consideration. Comments can be submitted to mgm@windhamregional.org or by calling 802-257-4547 ext. 110.

- Mike McConnell

[NOTE: the LHMP Draft is posted on the Home page at www.athensvt.com/]

Notes from the School Board

The following excerpts are from the presentation given by the principal, Angela Cartier, at the February 13th Grafton Elementary School board meeting.

Celebration of Learning

This week, we held a school-wide Celebration of Learning, where K-6 students shared their work and achievements from the first module of our EL Literacy program. More than just a showcase, this event gave students the opportunity to reflect on their learning, personal growth, and the challenges they've overcome.

We heard about tools and work, learning challenges near and far, and stories of human rights. K/1/2 students proudly presented their "magnificent things" through informational writing, 3/4 students shared audiobooks and reading contracts, and 5/6 students performed original monologues inspired by Esperanza Rising. Some 5/6 students even stepped in to help their classmates who were still recovering from illness, demonstrating incredible teamwork and support.

It was a meaningful celebration of hard work, perseverance, and creativity—such great work all around!

Appreciation

MKT: Grafton - allowing our PTO to sell Valentine's Chocolates on their counter at the store.

Grafton Library for sharing our GES Weekly - since this has begun, our newsletter seems to be reaching more people based on the number of views accessed by email.

Grafton Inn for inviting us to their Ice Bar. We were able to raise over 300 dollars for our Students Activities Fund.

Grafton Inn, Windham Foundation and Grafton Ponds - letting us use their facility free of charge for Winter Sports. Throwing us a pizza party in a couple weeks. In addition, the Ponds gave each of our families a free pass for the entire winter.

GES PTO for consistently working so hard for our students and our school. Everything they do is noticed by our community and appreciated greatly.

Morgan at the Town Office is always available and the town office is generous to allow us to put announcements on their bulletin boards.

Mary Feder at the Grafton Community Church is accommodating when we practice our drills and access the food shelf.

Please contact me at lynn.morgan@wnesu.com if you have any questions.

- Lynn Morgan

Grafton Cares Update

Looking back, Grafton Cares had a great month in February. Amazingly, none of our community meals had to be cancelled due to difficult weather, and our attendance has been wonderful. Great food and great folks--it just doesn't get any better.

Here's our meal calendar for March:

- Friday, March 7, dinner at 6 p.m.
- Wednesday, March 12, lunch at noon
- Friday, March 21, dinner at 6 p.m.
- Wednesday, March 26, lunch at noon

All meals are held in the Chapel and are free and open to all. Donations are gratefully accepted.

In February, we provided Meals on Wheels to 9 customers, 4 rides to medical appointments, \$225 in gas cards for travel to medical appointments, and 1 sunshine basket. In the medical equipment department, we loaned out 2 walkers, 1 shower stool, and 1 hospital bed.

We wish you all a joyful and healthy spring. March and mud be damned!

- Bill Toomey

Grace Cottage Awarded \$1Million Grant

Grace Cottage Family Health and Hospital has been chosen as the recipient of a \$1 million grant to help with the construction of a new primary care clinic building through the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC)'s Catalyst Program. The NBRC is a Federal-State partnership for economic and community development in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York. Each year, the NBRC provides Federal funds for critical economic and community development projects throughout the Northeast.

"We are so pleased and excited about this \$1,000,000 Catalyst Program Grant from the Northern Border Regional Commission for construction of our

new primary care practice building,” said Grace Cottage CEO Olivia Sweetnam. “In granting us this award, NBRC is validating and supporting what our community knows – the 14 practitioners in our primary care clinic are providing over 30,000 patient visits per year in two homes built in the 1840’s, and we’re bursting at the seams! We have the architectural plans in place and fundraising is progressing quickly for a 23,000 sq-ft. building to ensure that people in our rural area will get the excellent care that they need and deserve, and which they have come to expect from Grace Cottage!”

- *Alysabeth Simon*

Wild Goose Players present “Matilda the Musical!”

“Matilda” is the multi-award winning musical inspired by the classic novel by Roald Dahl. With book by Dennis Kelly and original songs by Tim Minchin, Matilda the Musical describes how some circumstances necessitate rebellion. Directed by David Stern and Hallie Flower, this production is a must see for all ages! Winner of over 100 international awards, Matilda is the story of an extraordinary girl who, armed with a vivid imagination and a sharp mind, dares to take a stand and change her own destiny. Although the novel may have been written for children, this production is sure to enthrall young and old alike.

Performances of Matilda, the Musical will be from April 4th to April 12th (Thursdays and Fridays at 7:30 pm, Saturdays at 2 pm & 7:30 pm, Sundays at 2 pm). Shows will take place at the Bellows Falls Opera House, Bellows Falls, VT. The running time of Matilda is approximately 2 hours and 10 minutes, including a 15-minute intermission. For more information call 802-376-4761, or go to wildgooseplayers.com.

Tickets can be purchased at Bellows Falls Opera House.

- *David Stern*

A Call for Photos!

Can you help The Athenian by sending us your best photo of the month? We have been lacking in pictures lately, and thought why not enlist our readers? You can send them to theathenianvt@gmail.com. We aim to get the newsletter out by the first Friday of the month from September through June. Thanks!

- *Sherry Maher*

March Library Corner

Smiles and Gratitude:

Thanks to a number of donations received in February, your library is moving closer to the annual appeal goal for this fiscal year! Because of this most recent support, the library is now 84% of the way to the amount budgeted—which translates into a little less than

\$3,000 needed to meet the targeted goal. If you haven’t yet made a contribution and are able to do so, please consider donating to your community library.

Many thanks to the Windham Foundation for once again plowing the library driveway during an active winter season and to library volunteer Pat Mack for handling the library trash and recycling each week. Both parties donate their services to the library and we are extremely grateful to them for helping the library’s bottom line with these donations of services in kind.

Library Programming

We are excited to announce a new offering in early April! The Siber Sled Dog Team will be arriving for a unique, educational, and interactive experience. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet the dogs, learn about the work and dedication it takes to be the Siber Sled Dogs team, and even take photos with the huskies in the sled. Join us for a soft, furry, hands-on experience for all ages. This program requires registration and it is going to fill up quickly. Please contact us if you are interested. We want to allow as many people as possible to attend and meet the team, but there are space limitations. This program is made available by an anonymous directed donation for library programming.

We also continue with our on-going programs in March (see below for the schedule) and welcome all newcomers to both Spanish group and the Nature & Books Discussion series.

March Library Programming

Nature & Books Discussion Series on Zoom, Wednesday, March 26, 6-7:30pm: Birding to Save the World by Trish O’Kane

Spanish Conversation Group on Zoom, Tuesdays, 11am to noon, No Spanish on March 4, Town Meeting Day

Looking Ahead to April Programming

Siber Sled Dog Program, Saturday, April 5, 1-2pm, Registration required for this in-house program.

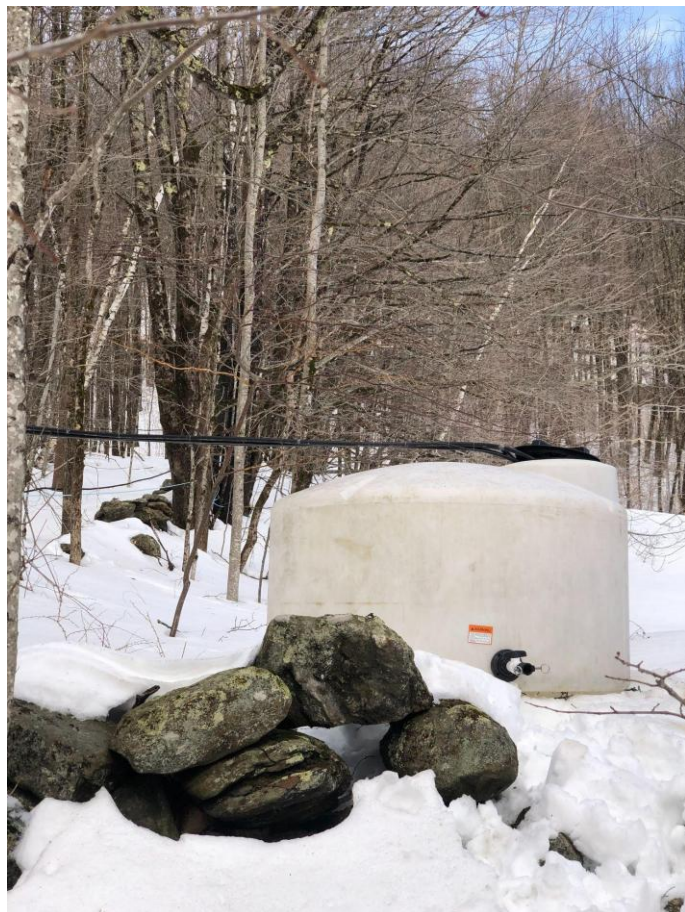
- *Michelle Dufort*

Main Street Arts Presents Once In the Time of Trolls

Once in the Time of Trolls is a comedy that folds together four classic Norwegian Folktales: East of the Sun & West of the Moon, Gudbrand, The Squire’s Bride, and The Three Aunts. In this witty and charming piece, “Happily ever after” takes on new meaning as Katrina goes in search of her Prince, held captive by an evil Troll Princess in a dreary castle east of the sun and west of the moon. Katrina’s journey brings her to the homes of three wise women who share hilarious stories. Will the guidance from the three wise women and a boost from the Four Winds be enough to help Katrina

defeat the Troll Princess and rescue the Prince? The play is performed by youth ages 9-13.

Main Street Arts is located at 35 Main Street in Saxtons River, Vermont. Main Street Arts has a ramp, elevator, and accessible bathrooms. For more



information, visit mainstreetarts.org.

- Ashley Storrow

The Nature Museum

As we turn toward the end of winter and look forward to melting snow, we hope you'll join us at The Nature Museum for some exciting new programs for both adults and kids. Spring Vacation Camp and Summer Camp registrations are open, and we have scholarships available for any family with financial need. Explore these options on our website: How to Love a Forest on March 5th; Nature at Night Series begins March 13th with Lunar Eclipse & Constellations; and Mysterious Mustelids on March 27th.

We are very excited to share that the Pavilion Project is entering its final phase. The timber frame is up, and we need your support for the finishing touches that will make this new outdoor learning environment accessible and welcoming. Our next newsletter will have a lot more

information about the project's progress and opportunities for making a gift. Stay tuned!

The Museum is open Fri, Sat, Sun from 10-4. The Magic Forest Playscape is open to the public every day. For more information visit www.nature-museum.org

- The Nature Museum

Reed Road Weather Summary for February

Snow was the word for the month as we received plenty to make up for earlier deficits. The cold continued with a warm up towards the end of the month which allowed our resident maple syrup producers to get working! The sun gets higher in the sky, the birds are doing their spring calls, and spring is on the way. Get ready for mud season now!

High temp.: 51.8 degrees

Low temp. : -8.7 degrees

Snowfall: approx. 32"

- Treah Pichette

Thoughts to Ponder

"I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples."

- Mother Teresa

"We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color."

- Maya Angelou

"I know there is strength in the differences between us. I know there is comfort, where we overlap."

- Ani DiFranco

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

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: MAR 10, 24

RECYCLE PICK-UP: MAR 3, 17, 31

Charles Perham Journal February 1883

Transcribed by James Trimble

- 1 Have been to Bellows Falls with $\frac{1}{2}$ cord of wood for Mr. Wheeler. Called to Pages. In the evening went up to Deens and paid Albert 100 toward a gun of George Pages.
- 2 At home in the forenoon. In the afternoon went up home and got a load of wood.
- 3 Stormed all day have not done much today.
- 4 To home all day.
- 5 Have been and carried Aunt Nancy up to Merrills.
- 6 Have been about home all day. Mr Woodard and Wife here just night. Went to Saxtons River with a load of wood for B Walker.
- 7 Stormy today have not done much.
- 8 To home all day have not done much. Elizabeth(his wife) has been into school today.
- 9 To home in the forenoon. In the afternoon went to Saxtons River. School Finished today.
- 10 Have been up home and met Mr. Woodard and wife. Came back and took a load at the foot of the hill and let Mr. Cushing have it. There was .70 due.
- 11 Have been up to Frank Remmies with Ellen and Herbert. Headache today. In the evening Herbert and George Eager here.
- 12 Have been about home today. Commenced to saw wood today. In the evening went down to Herberts to Fiddle.
- 13 Wrote to J.R. Halcomb Cleveland Ohio. Herbert has been sawing wood. I have been splitting. Clark bill is due 9.62 paid 2.24 due 7.38.
- 14 Got started to go up home and met Mr. Woodard and wife. Came back and went up just at night and got a load for Herbert.
- 15 Have been splitting wood today. Herbert sawed. In the evening went to the dinner.
- 16 Have been up home and got $\frac{1}{2}$ cord of wood and drawed home. Get it down with the oxen.
- 17 Started to go out the home place but found hard traveling so came back. Mr. Woodard here.
- 18 To home all day. In the evening wrote to the American Steam Card Works, and Clinton Brothers company. Ellen here in the evening. I went to church with Mr. Hall.
- 19 Went up home today and took the oxen to get out wood and will stay all night.
- 20 Have been getting out wood today and came home tonight. Drawed home a load of little wood. Went with Elizabeth and Ellen to Grafton to the ---- Eatery.
- 21 Have been to Saxtons River with Elizabeth and Alice(his daughter). Mr Woodard and wife here.
- 22 Have not done much today did not feel well.
- 23 Have been up home getting out wood with the oxen. Will stay all night.
- 24 Came home tonight. Drawed home a load of all Yellow Birch.
- 25 To home all day. Just at night went up to Frank Remmies and had my hair cut.
- 26 Have been up to Willard Whites to his birthday party.
- 27 Have sawed $\frac{1}{2}$ cord of wood today. Nancy Ginny and family here in the afternoon and the evening.
- 28 To home in the forenoon received letters. In the afternoon went to Saxtons River with a load of wood for Mr. Warner.



SECOND ANNUAL

Easter Egg Hunt

RAIN OR SHINE

RAIN OR SHINE



APRIL 19, 2025

1 PM - 3 PM

ATHENS COMMUNITY CENTER

28 BROOKLINE ROAD

ATHENS, VERMONT

*EGG HUNT*BASKET

RAFFLE*CHOCOLATES*POTLUCK

