

The Athenian

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APRIL 2025

Take Solace in Nature

Now that winter is pretty much in the rearview mirror, it's time for all of us to get outside. Don't rush to clean up all that leaf litter though, as all our native pollinators haven't come out of hibernation yet! But start wandering around outside to look for emerging wildflowers, newts and other amphibians. Did you know that simply spending time among the trees can improve both your mood and your health? If nothing else, spending time in nature gets you away from screens and the 24 hour news cycle, and you are breathing in oxygen rich air. And in this region we are blessed with many wonderful places to explore and breathe in that great forest air. Remember Earth Day is coming!

-Sherry Maher



Photo credit- Susan Peters

vehicles unable to see around the corner. It was agreed that Sandi Caponcelli would speak to the landowner.

- A few issues regarding the Community Center building were brought up, one being the lack of lighting and the other being the need for handicapped parking and improving the ramp. Grant funding will be looked into for parking and lighting as well as ADA access.

- The draft town plan is complete and is on the town website. There will be an informational meeting on the Town Plan on April 22 at 7 pm at the Community Center.

- Several appointments for town officials were made. Hannah Regier declined being reappointed for another term on the Budget Committee. A motion was made to appoint Dennis Mirante to this committee and David Bemis immediately called for an executive session, "for the appointment, employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee, provided that the public body shall make the final decision to hire or appoint the public officer or employee in open meeting and shall explain the reasons for the decision during the open meeting." Following the executive session, David recused himself. Krista yes, Janet, Sandi, Denise no. There is still an open seat on the Budget Committee and no health officer.
- A second executive session was called by Sandi to evaluate an employee or officer which ends at 10:14. No decisions were made and no motions were needed.
- There was a discussion about the computer at the garage being "dead." Matt Perry's Town hotmail address is on Sandi's laptop. There is an iPad being set up to share with the listers. A motion by David

Select Board Meeting Tidbits

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

- Ellen Mirante proposed a task list be reinstated for following up on issues brought up at selectboard meetings.
- Discussion was had regarding the truck left on Mill Hill Rd. and getting it removed.
- Sherry Maher read a response to her inquiry from the Secretary of State's office that the date for town meeting does not need to be on the agenda each year.
- A dog problem on Brookline Rd. was addressed.
- Don Capponcelli brought up new ideas for the town garage renovation. An informational meeting is planned for the middle of April.
- Long discussion about trimming done to trees in front of a property on Brookline Rd and possible need for more trimming as there have been larger

to buy a Chrome book for Matt that was not seconded or voted on.

- Krista reviews the To Do list for Board members.

As usual, meeting minutes and recording can be found on the town website: athensvt.com.

- Ginger Maciejowski & Sherry Maher

Athens Town Plan Information Meeting

The Athens Planning Commission is holding a public information meeting for the proposed Town Plan Draft at the Community Center on Tuesday, April 22nd, at 7:00 PM. The Town Plan Draft is available to view on the town website, and limited hard copies will be available at the town office. Please read over the document prior to the public meeting and come with your questions and/or comments. We will not be going over the draft line by line.

- John Oberling

Notes From the School Board

Following the March elections the SU board and all the district school boards held their reorganization meetings. Those of us on the Athens Grafton School Board are grateful to our district voters for their support. Our budget passed and all our board members up for election were reelected.

We have maintained a full School Board. The Superintendent, Andy Haas, also expressed his gratitude to the voters throughout the SU for passing all the district and the SU budgets.

The Athens Grafton Board is made up of Krista Gay, Mark Berman and Lynn Morgan of Athens and Cathy Siano-Goodwin, Hardy Merrill and Rachel Plummer of Grafton. After our reorganization votes the following elections and appointments were made: the Chairperson is Lynn Morgan, the Vice Chair is Hardy Merrill and the Clerk is Racheal Plumber; our regular board meetings will be the 2nd Thursday of the month and any alternative meetings will be the 4th Thursday of the month, both at 6:00 PM at the Grafton School Library; the Reformer and the Shopper will be used to announce School Board functions and activities.

On April 29 at 5 PM Grafton Elementary School students will showcase their art. We hope many will come out to support our students. The school has recently lost its night time custodian. Anyone interested in this position can check with the school to find out details and how to apply.

The SU board meetings will be the 3rd Wednesday of the month and any alternative meetings will be the 1st Wednesday of the month, both at 6:00 PM at the Bellows Falls Union High School. **The Reformer** will be used to announce board functions and activities.

As always, please contact me if you have any questions or concerns. If I can not answer you I will bring it before the board and get you an answer. 802-869-2227
lynn.morgan@wnesu.org

- Lynn Morgan

Grafton Cares News

April! We've been here before and know the drill, so why get our hopes up? Tennis, anyone?

We had a good month in March, in that all community meals were well-attended, and the weather was accommodating. The meal calendar for April is as follows:

Friday, April 4, dinner at 6 p.m.

Wednesday, April 9, lunch at noon

Friday, April 18, dinner at 6 p.m.

Wednesday, April 23, lunch at noon

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

In March, we provided Meals on Wheels to 8 folks, then 7, then 5, as we were saddened to lose 2 customers to the inevitable end of our mortal existence. One other customer, who was inaccessible for a few muddy weeks, will be returning to us this month. We also provided 1 ride to a medical appointment, \$225 in gas cards for travel to medical appointments, 1 sunshine basket, 1 welcome bag, and 1 lap rug from our knitters. In the medical department, we loaned out 2 walkers and 1 cane.

Wishing you all the joy of crocuses and daffodils.

- Bill Toomey

Join the Windmill Hill Pinnacle Annual Meeting on April 26, 2025

Join us on Saturday, April 26, at 4 p.m. for our annual meeting at Main Street Arts in Saxtons River (35 Main Street). Light refreshments will be served, and all are welcome to attend. Our featured speaker will be Jim Shallow, the director of resilient and connected lands protection for The Nature



Conservancy's Vermont chapter. Jim will talk about

“Protecting Biodiversity: Keeping Southeast Vermont

Connected.” We’ll also share news on our conservation work and present the annual Volunteer of the Year award to recognize one of our many dedicated volunteers.

The Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association stewards more than 2,800 conserved acres in Athens, Brookline, Grafton, Rockingham, Townshend, and Westminster, Vermont. These publicly accessible lands include 28 miles of hiking trails and a wildlife sanctuary. For more information: WindmillHillPinnacle.org

- WHPA Newsletter

Athens Green Up Day - Help Needed

There are still two road sections needing volunteers: 1) Mckusker Rd -.88 miles and 2) one section of Reed Rd. -.72 miles. Green up is officially May 3 but can be done any time between April 26 through May 4. If you are able to do one or a part of one of these routes please contact me at 802-869-2227. Thanks.

- Lynn Morgan

April Library Corner

Smiles and Gratitude:

Your library is moving steadily closer to the annual appeal goal for this fiscal year, but there is still a distance to go. \$2,000 more is needed to meet the targeted goal. If you are able to help, please consider donating. We thank you all for the many ways you support the Grafton Public Library.

Many thanks to Tania Evans for continued donations of nearly new books for the collection and the book sale room. If you haven’t visited the book sale room for a while, it’s a great place to purchase a good book at a bargain price and also benefit the library.

Library Programming

We have two programs scheduled back-to-back for you in mid-April.

First, 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. Please contact us if you are interested.

Second, just in time for National Poetry Month, we announce an Afternoon of Poetry with poet Nancy Richardson. Nancy will host a gathering of poets, potential poets, and appreciators of poetry. All are welcome to read a favorite poem, or their own work, and to spend a few moments commenting on the poem. Listeners are most welcome too! Nancy has published

four books of poetry and has been awarded star reviews by Kirkus. Her debut poetry collection was named one of the 100 best Indie Books of 2018 by Kirkus Reviews. Registration is not required, but RSVPs are most appreciated. Refreshments will be served.

April Library Programming

Nature Camp; Books Discussion Series on Zoom, Wednesday, April 23, 6-7:30pm, The Light Eaters: How the Unseen World of Plant Intelligence Offers a New Understanding of Life on Earth by Zoe Schlanger
Spanish Conversation Group on Zoom, Tuesdays, 11am to noon
Siber Sled Dog Program, Saturday, April 12, 1-2pm, Registration required for this in-house program.

An Afternoon of Poetry, Sunday, April 13 th , 3-4pm—RSVP appreciated for this in-house program.

- Michelle Dufort



Chester Annual Tree & Shrub Sale Order by April 9

Spring is officially here, and Chester Townscape's 2025 Tree and Shrub Sale has begun!

This annual event offers good-size, proven trees and shrubs at below regular, nursery retail prices to help people beautify their properties; but hurry, because orders must be made and paid for before April 9. These are the six selections offered this year: Snow Showers Weeping Cherry Tree; Firelight Tidbit Hydrangea; Spice Baby Viburnum carlesii; Oso Easy Ice Bay White Rose; Sunny Boulevard St. John's-wort; and Potentilla Happy Face Orange.

All specimens are low maintenance, hardy, and feature multi-season interest. Most are native and sport beautiful blossoms. All appeal to pollinators and/or birds. Any one of these plants would also make a wonderful present for Mother's or Father's Day, birthdays, anniversaries, housewarming celebrations or other special events. Proceeds from the sale support Chester Townscape's charitable civic projects, such as the floral pots and bridge boxes that beautify the town for residents and visitors.

Buyers do not have to be Chester residents; but they do have to preorder and pay before April 9 and then pick up the plants, likely in early to mid May, from Main Street in central Chester. To be emailed the informative order form that gives details about the plants, their prices, and where to send the check, contact Lillian Willis at lbwillisct@comcast.net. or 802-875-1340.

- Lillian Willis

News from the Nature Museum

Join us for our annual Earth Day Celebration & Open House at The Nature Museum! There will be day-long opportunities for nature-themed exploration, play, and creativity for everyone to enjoy, as well as free programs throughout the day.

During our programs we'll meet live raptors with our friends from the Vermont Museum of Natural History, have a chance to view the daytime skies through a solar telescope with the Southern Vermont Astronomy Group (conditions dependent), and learn more about identifying trees on our grounds with our museum educators. All day activities include a bioblitz, seed ball

making, scavenger hunts, and nature-inspired craft making.

Reed Road Weather Summary for March 2025

March came in like a lamb this year with unseasonably warm temperatures. According to state meteorologists, the first 3 weeks were almost 8 degrees above normal. Then we went out more like the proverbial lion with a nasty ice storm. Hopefully, April will bring us proper spring, daffodils and peepers! I haven't put out my rain gauge yet, so the precipitation amounts here are approximate.

High temp. : 60.4 degrees

Low temp. : minus 2.2 degrees

Precip. : 4" snow / 3" rain

- Trea Pichette



Thoughts to Ponder

"April is the cruelest month breeding lilacs out of the dead land, mixing memory and desire, stirring dull roots with spring rain."
- T.S. Eliot

"No winter lasts forever; no spring skips its turn. April is a promise that May is bound to keep, and we know it."
- Hal Borland

"The sun was warm but the wind was chill / You know how it is with an April day / When the sun is out and the wind is still / You're one month on in the middle of May."
- Robert Frost

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: APRIL 7, 21

RECYCLE PICK-UP: APRIL 14, 28

Charles Perham Journal March 1883

Transcribed by James Trimble

- 1 To home all day. Mrs. Woodard here. Burt brought up sap buckets.
- 2 Have been up home. Carried up the sap buckets. Brought home ½ cord of little wood.
- 3 Have been up home to get out wood. Did draw down a load of wood for Herbert a ½ cord.
- 4 To home all day. Only went down to Herberts.
- 5 Have been and got two loads today and drew home. Mr. Woodard and wife here. In the evening went down to Herberts to fiddle.
- 6 Town Meeting Day. Have been and got one load and drew home and get one load of all split Birch to draw to the River. A very snowy day.
- 7 Have not done much today. A very cold and blustery day. Sent for the sap spouts today. Sent for the cords today with 1.30.
- 8 To home all day have split some wood. Went over to see Mr. Thrashers horse. Mr. Thrasher and Susan here in the evening.
- 9 Have been to Bellows Falls for the old bill. Mrs. Woodard here.
- 10 Have been to River with load of split wood for Warner. Came home in the storm and a hard one. My sap spouts came today. I get up with Mr. Hall in the evening.
- 11 To home all day. Have been asleep almost all day.
- 12 Have been breaking out the road today. Henry and Minnie here.
- 13 Have been looking for colts to pasture. Emily Baily 9 to 11 yearlings. Henry Cobb 6 of 8 yearlings. Mr. Woodard and wife here.
- 14 Have not done much today.
- 15 Have been up home today and got a load of wood. Elizabeth(his wife) and Alice(his daughter) went out to Ranneys today. James came today.
- 16 Have been with a load of wood to Warners. In the evening went down to Herberts to fiddle.
- 17 Have been with Mrs. Woodard to Saxtons River to get a barrel of flower. Went and got a load of wood drawn. In the evening went down to Heberts to fiddle.
- 18 To home all day.
- 19 Have been to Bellows Falls to get the clapboards. James goes away today. Traded him the breech gun for a rifle. Took the sewing machine back and traded revolver for a shot gun.
- 20 Have been out to the foot of the hill and got a load of little wood. Mr. Woodard and wife here. In the evening went down to Herberts to fiddle.
- 21 Have been out and got the rest of the clapboards and paid 3.75 for sawing. Went out to foot of the hill and got a load of little wood.
- 22 Have been up home and got a pine log and ¼ cord and drew home.
- 23 Have been to Grafton to get a log sawed and paid my taxes. Drew home a load of shavings.
- 24 Have been up home and drew ½ cord to -----.
- 25 Have been down to Daniels today.
- 26 Have been up home and broke a road into the sugar lot. Drew down 40 feet and put on so there was for Cushing.
- 27 Have been sawing and splitting wood all day.
- 29 Have been sawing and spitting wood all day.
- 30 Have been up home and carried up 176 sap spouts.
- 31 Have sawed wood today some. Mr. Woodard and wife here.