

Dear Reader: Taxes and Roads are the winners in the latest Arrowsic Conversation Starting competition. Folks who've never spoken out in public before can be heard in the homes and streets and Town Hall of our fair community. This issue of the Arrow is dedicated to all who choose to exercise their right to free speech, and their implicit right to be heard. My hope is that any who care to may speak their mind on town issues with full confidence that they are being listened to. These are important times for our town, and everyone's opinion counts. (This is not a campaign speech.)

As long as we have items of interest to print, there will probably be an Arrow every month or six weeks until Town Meeting in June. This is the time to start thinking about what's coming up.

Speaking of which: There are two new ad hoc committees forming in town. The first is entitled The Ad Hoc Committee for Assessment Investigation. It was conceived at Town Meeting last year when the warrant article to see if the Town wanted to elect a board of assessors separate from the board of selectmen was thrown out. Although there was no action on the article, it generated a lot of discussion.

I am convinced that assessing practices require a person or board dedicated specifically to assessment in Arrowsic. Once a job that required 4-6 hours every week or two in the Spring, assessing now requires a few hours a week all year because of the increase in property transfers, general maintenance of the files, and state mandated property visitations. In addition, the State is demanding a closer look at water frontage and raw acreage. Higher values on these properties would remove some of the tax burden from those residents who own smaller parcels. The list goes on, and it has been a difficult task to try to get Ted, Fred, and me in the same place at the same time to do this work. As a result, much of it has been done individually, contradicting the principles of a working **board**.

The Assessment Investigation Committee has been formed to look into alternatives to the current method of assessment in Town. Some alternatives are hiring a professional assessor, electing a board of assessors, or simply appointing a clerk to assist in the paperwork. The committee members will research these alternatives, and bring the results to the town, along with recommendations for action. If you wish to be involved, call Karen Robbins 442-7533 or Patty Olds 443-4650, and talk to our answering machines if we're not there. We will get back in touch with you. The next meeting is Monday, Feb. 1.

ROADS, ROADS, ROADS

In November, the selectmen held an open meeting to answer questions about roads. Many residents on Old Stage Road got together beforehand and came to the meeting with a list of action items they wanted implemented in the Old Stage Road work. There was much concern with the disparity between what they had anticipated in road work and what was actually being done.

Some of the items they requested were: maintaining Old Stage Road as it's always been at 1 1/2 lanes, no more cutting of trees, reflectors on Sullivan's Hill, warning signs before the descent, a comprehensive plan for short and long-term work, a cost report to date, and projections for completion. There was a request to halt road work until there could be further discussion. After the meeting, I learned that all the road money has been spent and nothing more can be done on Old Stage Road until more funds are appropriated.

Calendar

Selectmen meet on Feb 2, and March 1 & 15 at 7:00PM. Workshops will be held most Tuesdays at 5:00.

Planning Board meets Feb 8 & 22, and March 14 & 28 at 7:00 PM

The Conservation Commission meets Feb. 23 at 7:00PM

The Fire Department meets at the **fire barn** on Feb 3 & Mar 2 at 6:00PM; and Feb 13 & 27 and Mar 12 & 26 at 9:00 AM; and at the **Town Hall** on Feb 17 & March 16 at 7:00 PM.

The Ladies Auxiliary of the Arrowsic Volunteer Fire Department meets on the first Thursday of each month beginning in April at 7:00 PM at the Town Hall.

School Board meetings- call Kathi Kahrl for time and date 442-8497

Ad Hoc Committee for Recycling- call Jeff Mann 443-6174 for date and time.

Naturally Better Coop- next ordering meeting is 7:00 PM Wed, Mar. 23 at the Town Hall.

Pickup for that order is 9AM Sat, April 2. Call Karen Pare at 442-7925 for details if you'd like to get in on this order.

****Ad Hoc Committee for Tax Assessing** Investigation meets Feb 1. Call Karen Robbins 442-7533 or Patty Olds 443-4650 for details.

****Ad Hoc Committee for Roads** meets Feb. 4 at 7:00PM at the Town Hall

** These committees are just being formed, there will be a bit more about them elsewhere in this issue.

As a follow up to that meeting, Jeff Houle came to answer questions on Dec. 15. Mr. Houle is a recognized authority on municipal law, and represents many towns in the mid-coast area. There is a verbatim record of the meeting. If anyone would like to see it, contact me. Here are some highlights:

-there are no legal obligations for the Town to have its roads meet subdivision standards, and in fact if a developer comes in, he is generally expected to help in the cost of improving a town road if his project is to have an impact on the roads.

-a subdivision application can be turned down based on the inadequacy of a Town way leading to that potential subdivision.

-the Town's only obligation is to make the roads **safe** (the tricky part is defining what is safe). Mr. Houle makes these definitions by imagining that there is a jury of 12 reasonable people, and asking what they would decide in any given circumstance.

-it is common for a town to have an advisory board to the Road Commissioner, or raise money to ask the advice of an engineer.

- the decisions always come down to how much money the Town has to spend and what they have to spend it on.

This last point is an important one. The voters have the ultimate say in Town road policy, because the voters appropriate the money. The second new ad hoc committee is forming in town to study the ways a town makes road decisions. This will include the option of a single road commissioner vs. a board of road commissioners. Potentially, this committee could offer assistance to the selectmen in setting this year's road budget. Mr Houle during the Dec. 15 meeting suggested itemizing the road budget in the warrant. This would allow for some work to be voted on and completed this year, while other work could be voted against, and put on hold until the next year. If anyone is interested in being part of the committee, or acquiring more information, please come to the next meeting, at the Town Hall Thurs. Feb. 4 at 7:00PM.

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Carol Dresser has volunteered to serve on the School-Community Liaison Council (SCLC) at Morse this year. Arrowsic, Georgetown, Phippsburg, West Bath, and Woolwich share an out-of-town seat on the Council rotating alphabetically each year. The Council is comprised of 15 student members, 7 faculty members, and 8 community members. It's purposes quoted in part from the by-laws:

-Developing better communication and working relationships among students, faculty, and the community for the betterment of all.

-Ensuring involvement of greater numbers of students in school and community affairs.

-creating a powerbase whereby the 3 constituencies each can find it possible to initiate action.

-Giving recognition to the need that segments of the communities have for each other.

-Suggesting a workable model of representative democracy. (continued)

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If any community members wish to have items of business brought before the Council or want more information about the SCLC, please call Carol at 443-6239 preferably after 7:00PM. Meetings are held twice a month and are open to anyone wishing to attend.

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many residents called over the holidays to make sure to send special wishes to our dear friends George the mailman and Bill the school bus driver for taking such good care of Arrowsic

The following people have vehicle registrations due in these months:

JANUARY 1988

AINSWORTH, CAROL A
 BARTER, RICHARD A
 BRASSARD, DONALD
 BRAWN, CHARLES W
 CAMPBELL, ELIZABETH A
 CARLTON, CELIA
 CARLTON, FRANK R
 DAVIS, NANCY A
 DUBE, HELEN S
 ELWELL, G KAY
 ELWELL, KIMBERLY
 ELWELL, RICHARD H
 GALUZA, JAMES J
 HEATH, RALPH
 HUTTON, RABYRNE
 KAHRL, FRED J
 KENNEY, VIVI
 KINGSBURY, BEVERLY A
 MCDONALD, FRANKLIN JR
 RICHARDSON, M DEAN
 SHULTZ, ROBERT E
 SPERLING, ALICE
 TARA, JOZEF
 TEXTOR, KENNETH J
 WARNER, JOHN W III
 WHITE, JOHN L SR

FEBRUARY 1988

AMES, HAROLD
 APPEL, JAMES M
 APPEL, JAMES M
 BALLARD, ROBERT A
 CAMPBELL, SHERMAN JR
 CARLTON, DALE
 CARLTON, DALE
 CHANDLER, ELIOT
 COWLEY, MATT
 CROCKER, DAVID
 DIBERT, PATRICIA
 DUNN, SALLY
 ELWELL, RONALD C
 FOSTER, PRUDENCE E
 FRYE, EUGENE
 FRYE, EUGENE A
 GALUZA, JAMES J
 HAINES, JESSE
 HALL, VICTOR
 HEATH, RALPH
 HOFFMANN, ROBERT
 HOGAN, WARREN
 KAHRL, FRED
 KNIGHT, MILDRED
 LOVEITT, WILBUR F
 MACMAHAN, JOSEPH
 MCLUER, PAULINE A
 MITCHELL, ROBERT
 MORRISON, HOWARD
 MOUNT, PAMELA
 MOUNT, PAMELA A
 NODINE, ANNIE
 ORR, EDWARD M
 ORR, EDWARD M
 PACKARD, PHILLIP
 PINETTE, ALFRED
 PINETTE, JAMES A
 REYEN, DAVID
 SCOTT, BRIAN D
 SHUFELT, ERNEST
 SHUFELT, ERNEST
 SHUFELT, ERNEST
 SHUFELT, LESLIE
 SIMMONS, CYNTHIA
 STAFFORD, GEORGE
 STORER, ELIZABETH
 SULLIVAN, CATHER
 SULLIVAN, JOHN
 SWEARINGEN, RICH
 VITELLI, ELOISE
 WHITE, JOHN L SR
 WINWOOD, JOHN D
 YOUNG, I BENJAMIN

Notice

All dogs must be licensed as of January 1 of this year. Maine state certificate of Rabies vaccination is required, as well as proof of spay or neuter if you apply for the discount given to spayed/neutered animals.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Fire Department Air Pack Training Feb 3 and 24 at 7:00PM at the Town Hall.

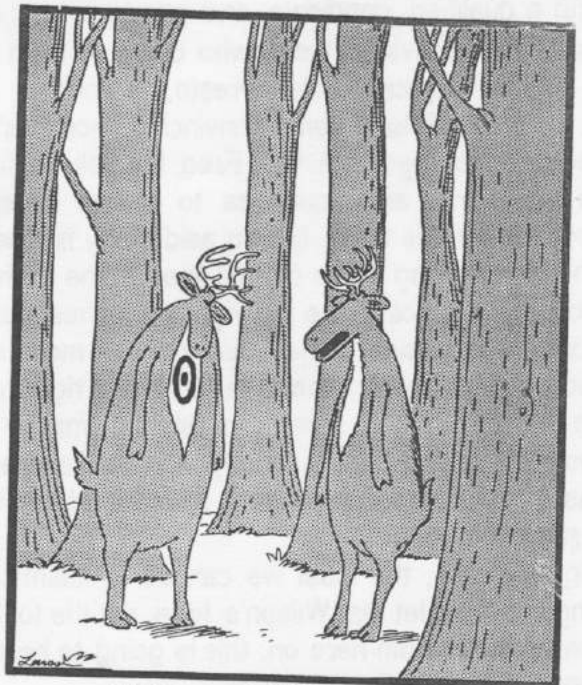
Democratic Party Caucus will be held February 28 1:00-3:00PM at the Town Hall

Thanks for your support:

The Brennans
Nancy Brown Stump

All comments, opinions, suggestions cartoons, poems, articles, etc. are welcome. Send to The Editor (Patty Olds) Town Hall, Arrowsic.

Also, be thinking about what you'd like to see on the cover of the Town Report this year. Thanks



"Bummer of a birthmark, Hal."

To the Editor:

I happen to think Ms. Wilson is wrong-headed about almost everything she writes about the town, and townspeople of Arrowsic. The people who attend town meeting, for instance are not "laid back residents" willy-nilly spending tax money. And if the people at town meeting are "perpetuating the system" by voting to continue meeting on a Tuesday evening, the system being perpetuated is, after all, democracy. Would Ms. Wilson suggest something else? I think not.

I could go on disagreeing with her letter for a long time. No big deal: people disagree. What is absolutely inexcusable about her letter, however, is its abusive, scurrilous tone. Whatever Ms. Wilson thinks about the selectmen- and the first selectman in particular- she has no cause to be insulting or libelous. That she has never taken the time to go to a selectmen's meeting to ask questions and voice her concerns openly before writing her disagreeable letter makes its tone even harder to fathom. (You don't need an agenda to complain to the selectmen, by the way)

While it's hard to respond to her every complaint about town government- they seem to run from the babysitting shortage to the population explosion- several need to be addressed. First, she makes what I read to be a criminal accusation- that the selectmen are improperly assessing taxes and are doing so intentionally. If she has evidence, she should go directly to the Attorney General's office. If not, she owes the selectmen- at the least- a formal apology. And she better learn to be careful; in some places, people sue over stuff like that.

Second, Ms. Wilson urges all of us "serfs" to replace Fred. Fine. If you don't like Fred's style, replace him. Find a qualified candidate and convince him or her to run. Then convince those who come to town meeting to vote for your candidate. Presto, it's done.

I, for one, will take some convincing, however. I have had my disagreements with Fred, but believe firmly that he has done, and continues to do, an exceptionally good job for this town. (As an aside, any first selectman who isn't making some people mad some of the time is probably not doing the job right.) He has done more work on Arrowsic's behalf, and done it more diligently and conscientiously, than we have any right to expect. He is headstrong, sure- we should maybe elect a complete pushover? Anybody who thinks Fred will be easily replaced is completely ignorant of what it takes to run this town.

In any case, the least we can do is maintain a civil tongue. If we let Ms. Wilson's letter set the tone for our conversation from here on, this is going to be a lot less pleasant town to live in.

Sincerely, Jay Sperling

LETTERS

Dear Arrow Editor,

In regards to Jay Sperling's interpretations of my comments about our tax assessments... I did NOT say the selectmen intentionally make improper assessments or that they are dishonest. What I said was that our methods of assessing ourselves is unprofessional... Elected officials should expect to be criticised by their constituents, even on good days! Fred himself has readily admitted to a "management style" that hasn't allowed for much discussion or participation (my translation was feudal, or autocratic). In any event, I do want to state clearly that I make NO criticism of Fred in any personal sense, or in his roles as a decent person, hard worker, fine fellow. I feel that he deserves all credit for hard work and good intentions. No question about that... I think we need officials who have demonstrated the ability to solicit and value input from others, are able to delegate authority and workload. Concensus management should be the way in a democracy.

By the way, I do understand those who take exception to my blunt way of putting things. Like Fred, I have been accused of lacking diplomacy. I plead guilty, and suspect this may be a trait Fred and I share. My husband often asks me to please, just once, call a spade a garden implement!

Sign me, S. Wilson,
rabblrouser.

(the preceding was printed in part, anyone who would like to read the rest can contact the editor)

Patty,

How about putting a thank you note to all the people who have decorated the outsides of their houses for Christmas (for those of us who drive by to enjoy) in the next Arrow.

The lights on the tree at the Town Hall have been festive- thanks! The lighted tree at the north end of the island has welcomed people as they cross the bridge for a few Christmas seasons now. There are lots of other residents who have made driving Arrowsic roads festive and colorful for a cheerier Christmas season.

Thank you! Sandy Weiss