

The Arrowsic Arrow

Vol 17, No 2B Arrowsic, Maine March/April 2002



also on the web at www.gwi.net/arrowsic thanks to Larry Wilson and Great Works Internet

The Arrowsic Conservation Commission

Annual Spring Roadside Clean-Up

10 a.m. to noon on Saturday, April 27

(Rain date the next day)

Come to Town hall to pick up trash bags and claim a portion of roadway to clean.

Refreshments will be available.

Also, a reminder, if you have hazardous waste to dispose of at the BIW Earth Day event (see last week's Arrow), you need to call 443-8356 or 443-8357 by April 12 to pre-register

Fire Department News

Ike Heffron, Chief 371-9093 (after 8:30 am)

The Arrowsic Fire Department is looking at the possibility of reestablishing a **First Responders program**. In order to do this we need a core of volunteers who will be willing and able to train and be licensed as first responders and then be available to be on call for this service to our neighbors. This entails some work and time, but would also be fun and worth while. If you are interested in working toward this program please call Ruth Fatscher at 443-8603 in April. Thanks!!!

We had one call in January in Arrowsic for an accident and 4 AFD members responded. There were three calls in February, two Woolwich standby calls (with 5 and 6 responders), and one to Georgetown with 6 responding. We have several trainings coming up if anyone is interested in joining the volunteers. With conditions as dry as they are, we might need a lot of hands. On March 30, there was a training burn on Old Stage Road at 8:00 am. Woolwich is holding a woods fire training on April 10. Chief Ike Heffron will be running a woods fire training at our fire barn on April 13, and Georgetown is having a fire ground training on April 15.

Safety Tips from Chief Heffron:

As everyone knows, we are in a drought condition at this time, and I am concerned that the fire danger this year will be particularly high. Please clear a twenty foot radius around your house of all debris and brush. It is also a good idea to have a hose attached and ready. You must have a burn permit before you burn outside. You can get burn permits from:

- Chief Ike Heffron - 371-9093 (after 8:30 in the am)
- Donna Blanchette - 882-4118
- Mike Kreindler - 442-7443
- Sukey Heard - 443-6768.

Permits will not be issued if the fire danger is above category 2.

Let's take care of our town by following the rules for outdoor burning, and only burn if you have to. Thank you, Chief Ike Heffron.

Patten Free Library Announces Updated Web Site

New offerings at www.patten.lib.me.us. Connect to the Patten Free Library catalog from your home or business 24 hours a day. In addition to locating a book title you can check the monthly calendar of events, link to local organizations as well as selected search engines that are provided for one-stop

research, and even email basic reference questions to our Reference Department staff.

Patten Free cardholders can access their own accounts to view what they have checked out. They may also renew materials that aren't overdue or on reserve.

Logon and check out our new facelift. Let us know what else you would find useful on the site. Contact the library at pfl@patten.lib.me.us

ATTENTION REGISTERED VOTERS

Jean Kane, Registrar 443-4978

May 24, 2002 - Deadline for changing Party Enrollment if you plan to vote in the Primary Election.

June 11, 2002 - Primary Election at Arrowsic Town Hall.

10:00 AM - Polls open

8:00 PM - Polls Close

Qualified parties are Democrat "D", Republican "R", Green Independent "G" and Unenrolled "U". An unenrolled voter may enroll in a qualified party at any time, including election day, by completing and filing an enrollment application with the registrar. This is not considered a change of enrollment.

How long must a voter remain in a party?

Once a voter has enrolled in a party, the voter must remain in that party for 3 months before the voter can file an application for either a withdrawal or a change in enrollment.

If you have any questions, I can be reached at 443-4978 or e-mail me at jrkane@gwi.net.

From the Planning Board

Mary Hillery, Chair 442-8020

Results of 2002 Planning Board Survey (unabridged results available on town web site)

Approximately 260 surveys were mailed at the beginning of March to all home and land owners in Arrowsic. The intent of the survey was to see if the town is satisfied with the goals and view of the future contained in the 1989 Comprehensive Plan. Results indicate to the Planning Board that there is general agreement with the current Comprehensive Plan.

The 135 returned surveys are a 52% percent response rate, much greater response rate than most citizen surveys in other towns. A predominance of over-50 year olds (113) answered the survey, 45 of whom are retired. Only half the families of of the 73 school-age children in town responded. Eight seasonal residents responded, and the vast majority of respondents have lived in Arrowsic five or more years because, they said, "it's paradise," rural, family ties, close to the coast, quiet, peaceful, country living...

Seventy one are employed and 32 work at home. Two to one, respondents are satisfied with current zoning however several commented on continued need to protect open space and combat population density. A majority (91) support the current ordinance restricting business in Arrowsic to permitted home business, and 95 support the current home business permitting requirement.

From the list of possible home businesses that could impact adversely on neighbors, 101 support home businesses with restrictions and 101 are completely opposed to the raising of fighting cocks. The many comments under this list are reflected in the one that said, "Restrictions should be balanced with neighborliness."

Sixty nine said "no" and eight said "yes" to commercial growth. Eighteen want growth encouraged by a new commercial zone. Twenty-one would favor commercial growth if it significantly decreased property taxes however two comments cited the data that more commercial growth raises the tax burden on all. Seventy-six favor property taxing home businesses the same as all others, a few respondents citing the additional sales and income taxes that home businesses already pay.

Most residents are happy with the condition of Arrowsic roads. A large number of comments called Speed, Speeders and Speeding our greatest safety concern.

Sixty-four oppose the town taking over private roads, however many comments reflected concerns with safety of all roads, upgrading of private roads, over taxation of residents paying for private and public roads. Residents, presumably from Bald Head Road, seem to be divided 50 / 50 about paving or not paving Bald head Road.

A majority are pleased with municipal services. Town officers and committees will be interested in some of the comments about Town Hall hours, trash pick up, recycling et al.

Most said the Town Hall should not be upgraded for larger meeting facilities but several cited a need for improvements at Town Hall while maintaining the historical character of the building.

A majority want to see walking trails in town, less are willing to have the public cross their private property and a majority favor town purchase of land to protect open space. While some said they do not see a need for the town to provide recreational facilities, the most frequent citing of what recreational facility Arrowsic needs is water access and / or a town landing.

In conclusion many said in one way or another "don't fix what isn't broken" and "preserve the uniqueness of Arrowsic." The Planning Board takes these results as endorsing our present zoning ordinance with the occasional updates proposed at Town Meetings.

"The way of the Sage is to act but not to compete"
-Lao Tzu

**Next School Committee Meeting will be held on
May 2 at 5pm. Call 442-7527 for location**

Assessing Matters

In the State of Maine Laws relating to property taxation, Title 30 Section 702 reads like this, "Assessors of municipalities and primary assessing areas are not responsible for the assessment of any tax which they are by law required to assess; but the liability shall rest solely within the municipality for whose benefit the tax was assessed, and the assessor shall be responsible only for their own personal faithfulness and integrity."

It is this law which prompted Sukey Heard, Manli Ho, Nancy Brown Stump, Millie Stafford and Patty Olds to meet with the selectmen on April 8 to discuss inequities and inconsistencies which they have discovered while studying the property records at Town Hall.

Property assessment has traditionally been done in Arrowsic on a parcel by parcel basis, allowing each property to reveal its own merits (and therefore, value). When we hired Kevin McGillicuddy, he recommended a system of assessing by "neighborhoods" an approach many towns in Maine have adopted in recent years. And for many towns, this approach seems to work fine. Very simply put, the system states that any group of properties near to each other would share similar characteristics and therefore, similar values. So, for instance, the Old Stage Road is one "neighborhood." The Kennebec River properties from Bald Head to Whitmores Landing are another "neighborhood." And so on.

We discussed many examples of problems within this new system wherein similar values are applied to substantially different properties, and vice-versa. We have also found that the "system" itself has not been consistently applied. Nancy Brown Stump and Millie Stafford pointed out that in particular substandard lots' (less than 2 acres) values vary greatly within their "neighborhoods" and are not consistent with the colored reference map at Town Hall.

The Selectmen were not surprised by our findings. In fact, Larry Wilson and Michele Gaillard have been working on Saturdays to try and fix the problems that have been called to their attention by folks who have requested abatements, and by inconsistencies they have discovered along the way.

At the end of our meeting we all agreed to meet again and set up a schedule of workshops to determine what action the Town will take from here. The possibility of appointing an ad-hoc assessing committee to assist the selectmen in charting a course is under consideration.

Meanwhile, we would urge you to take a look at your property record cards (available at Town Hall) and alert the Selectmen if you find a problem.

**It's not too early to be thinking about Arrowsic Artworks!
Our annual November Exhibit/Sale is always more fun
with more artists! For more information, contact Phine
Ewing 443-9795 or Patty Olds 443-4764**

Do you have a DRY OR LOW WELL?

Information and help are available at

www.state.me.us/mema/drought/index.htm

or by visiting the Sagadahoc County MEMA Office at 752 High Street in Bath, or by calling MEMA at 207-626-4503 or 800-452-8735