

The Arrowsic Arrow

News Around & About Arrowsic

Volume 36, Number 2
Summer 2022



Marsh with Bridge by Jackie Johnson (oil tetraptych)

A Lifetime on Arrowsic Island: Mildred Doughty Knight Episode #3

After the four children were grown and on their own, Paul and Mildred began to travel—to Florida to visit her sister, Jean, taking a cruise, and attending Maine State Music Theater performances.

Paul was diagnosed with stage 4 colon cancer in 1989. At the time, he was still working at BIW, but couldn't continue working due to treatment. Although he wanted to die at home, Paul passed at the Bath Hospital in January 1990 at age 62, and Mildred's life as a widow began.

Various adventures included a trip to Ireland with Ethel Elwell and a five-week trip down the East Coast with Lillian Gowan to spend time in Key West, visiting family and friends along the way. In Key West, Mildred and Lil ate, drank, and sang karaoke! Mildred says that Lil was a wonderful travelling companion. The blueberry festival in Machias was a favorite destination and an Amtrak trip to Montana—alone—to visit Paul's sister was a wonderful trip.

Mildred enjoyed eating out at restaurants, playing Bingo, and walking the track at the YMCA when at home.



Lil's death in about 2007 ended their travels together, but Mildred continued her adventures. She visited her sister, Jean, in Florida and was encouraged by Jean to start a job to fill her time.

When she returned to Maine, she took a job at Walmart as a greeter and worked there part-time for eight years. During those years she got to know Jim Haught and Larry Kieft at the Galen Moses House in Bath and began helping them out, which she did for thirteen years until they sold the bed & breakfast.

Mildred's four children had twelve children between them, two of whom died young. Additionally, there are fourteen great-grandchildren and five great-great-grandchildren. Her son, Dick, died in 2016, and her daughter, Sherry, in 2020. (***Knight**, cont on p 8*)

Town News and Notes

Primary Election

The town returned the following results in the elections held June 14th:

Republican Primary

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|---|-------|---|
| • Governor: | LePage | 8 | blank | 3 |
| • Representative to Congress | Thelander | 7 | blank | 4 |
| • State Senator | Brackley | 8 | blank | 3 |
| • Representative to the Legislature | Tetrey | 7 | blank | 4 |
| • Register of Deeds | Moore | 9 | blank | 2 |

Democratic Primary

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|----|-------|---|
| • Governor | Mills | 74 | blank | 1 |
| • Representative to Congress | Pingree | 74 | blank | 1 |
| • State Senator | Vitelli | 74 | blank | 1 |
| • Representative to the Legislature | Hepler | 73 | blank | 2 |
| • County Treasurer | Eaton | 69 | blank | 6 |
| • District Attorney | Irving | 68 | blank | 7 |

RSU1: Budget Validation

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----|----|----|----|---------|
| • budget validation | yes | 82 | no | 7 | |
| • continue referendum process | yes | 60 | no | 22 | blank 7 |

Steve Bonine New Town Treasurer

Steve Bonine is the newly elected treasurer for the town, succeeding Brett Jenson.

Steve is retired and has lived with his wife, Eileen, in Arrowsic since 2016. He grew up in Delaware and has a Bachelor of Civil Engineering degree from the University of Delaware. He worked for 36 years with DuPont and has a broad background in financial and organizational roles that will serve him well in his new duties.

Eileen and Steve golf, ski, and hike. He also cycles and Eileen enjoys music, knitting, gardening, and chasing the deer away from her flowers. They have five adult children spread around Maine, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and NYC and look forward to many years of living and contributing here.

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Rachel Strachan New Town Tax Collector

Rachel Strachan is the newly elected Tax Collector, succeeding Jon Biehler. She has lived in Arrowsic since 2009 and has always admired the kindness and spirit of helpfulness in our small community. She is excited to be a part of that in this new role.

She will continue to serve by appointment at the Town Hall and looks forward to meeting everyone.

Town Administrator Needed

The Select Board managed to fill a few of the town positions but they are still looking for an administrative assistant to replace Sheila, who needs to step down due to health reasons. The job requires approximately 10 hours a week and is somewhat flexible. Much of the work can be handled remotely as well. Please reach out to Sheila or Deedee for more information (sheila.spear@arrowsic.org or deedee.jorgensen@arrowsic.org).

Waterfront Access Committee

The Select Board is appointing a Waterfront Access Committee to review the town's goal of providing access for its citizens, formulate criteria for determining suitability of any property, and developing a formal process the town can use to evaluate proposed sites in the future. The committee currently has a Chair, Michele Gaillard, and one member, Bob Ater. Please contact one of your Select Board members if you are interested in volunteering.

Deposit Bottle Bin at Town Hall

The Arrowsic Fire Department collects returnable deposit cans and bottles to raise money for the department. Residents can leave them in the recycling shed but should be sure that the bottles and cans are returnable. Wine and liquor bottles are the most confusing. Returnable bottles either have a Maine sticker on the bottle or a note on the back label that shows that 15¢ deposit has been paid. If not, they should be placed in the biweekly curbside collection.

Nurse's Notes

“What a long, strange trip it's been.....”

Hello from Christine Woodman R.N., local health officer. I'd like to remind folks that preventative medicine is the best medicine. Please consider making those appointments for health screening that might have “slipped through the cracks” during our continued Covid pandemic. We've been so focused on Covid that I suspect many of us have delayed such care as colonoscopies, mammograms, and the like.

If your physician's office has a ‘patient portal’ through the internet, it is a wonderful tool to use for communication. Many of my patients find more rapid response to their inquiries through this computer system; by advocating for ourselves, we become healthier.

Take good care and stay focused on your health and that of those around you. Despite ‘Covid burnout’ we're all doing our best for each other.

—Christine Woodman, Local Health Office

The Arrowsic Arrow is Arrowsic's independent newsletter, produced through the efforts of volunteers. Articles, notices, stories, poetry, photographs, and artwork are all welcome. Contributors are welcome to contact the editors to discuss possible contributions. Notices should be limited to 100 words. Past issues of the Arrow can be found at www.arrowsic.org.

The newsletter is published three times a year in March, July, and November. The Arrow is primarily distributed via e-mail to all those on the Town of Arrowsic email list or on paper to those who are unable to access them online. The town covers any costs for paper and postage. The Arrowsic Arrow Editorial Group is Bob Kalish, Sharif Elmusa, Karin Sadtler, and Tom Spear. Contact: Tom Spear, tspear@wisc.edu, 386-1475.

Town Meeting

After two years of COVID 19 restricted meetings, townspeople gathered at 6:30 on Thursday night, June 16th, for the usual annual town meeting, bantering in good humor with speakers throughout the night.

After electing Eloise Vitelli as Moderator, voters reelected Barbara Boyce as Town Clerk and DeeDee Jorgensen as a member of the Select Board. Steve Bonine and Rachel Strachan were newly elected as Town Treasurer and Tax Collector respectively.

In discussing the usual warrant items, Fire Chief Dale Carlton noted the increasing cost of replacements and equipment for the new brush truck. He also urged people to only leave deposit bottles in the recycling shed for the AFD to redeem.

Elliot Harkins thanked the town for his student scholarship to attend the University of South Carolina.

Katie Smith, Chair of the Recycling and Solid Waste Committee, noted that 'left behind' notices were being placed on bins containing inappropriate items for recycling. Current information on items for recycling and pickup times are on the town web site. A new recycling shed is being planned to include a swap shop like the fabled 'Georgetown Mall'.

Malcolm Persen, Chair of the Properties Committee, explained that the committee was in the fourth year of a ten-year plan to maintain and rehab town facilities. This year they built out the Fire Barn to serve the new Arrowsic Broadband Authority, while next year, they will be waterproofing the basement and updating the electricals in the Town Hall.

In a new item on the warrant, townspeople approved allowing the town to develop a dedicated fund for road maintenance to allow funds for paving to be held over from one year to the next to facilitate orderly scheduling and cost containment.

The Select Board plans to appoint a Waterfront Access Committee to develop criteria for assessing suitability of any property and a formal process to evaluate proposed waterfront access sites.

Finally, in another new item, the town voted to participate in a new state Community Resilience Partnership with Georgetown, Phippsburg, Westport, and Woolwich, to develop projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help communities adapt to climate change.

The Conservation Committee will be reviewing our current activities and conducting community workshops throughout the year to assess our needs, develop plans, and apply for state funding in the future.

Town government runs on willing workers. Throughout the meeting, calls were made for people willing to serve as Town Administrator and Animal Control Officer, while volunteers were requested for the Fire Department, Education Committee, Conservation Commission, and the *Arrow*.

The Annual Town Report was dedicated to the memory of Dick Elwell, a stalwart town citizen, for his modest and ceaseless work on behalf of the town and its citizens while often neglecting to charge for his services, evoking fond remembrances throughout the meeting.

Having completed its tasks for the year, the meeting was adjourned at 8:07. A good time was had by all.

—Tom Spear

Climate Resilience Workshop

Whether it's purchasing homeowner's insurance or putting on a seatbelt, there are many ways we all prepare for the unexpected in our daily lives. It shouldn't be any different with climate change. We know the climate is changing and that our community is already experiencing some of the effects, from flooding roads to drought to an uptick in ticks, to name a few. And while we can't flip a switch to reverse, let alone stop, the changing climate, we can prepare for it.

This is the idea behind [climate resilience](#), defined as “the ability to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to hazardous events, trends or disturbances related to climate.”

If we do nothing, we will be reacting and responding for generations—an expensive strategy that will whittle away at our collective quality of life. If we are proactive now, we can better protect this community that we all love so much.

Why is this important now?

At our 2022 Town Meeting, we passed [Article 57](#) to help Arrowsic plan for a changing climate.

The Arrowsic Climate Resilience Group (Conservation Commission plus additional volunteers) is organizing this work, which will allow Arrowsic to become part of the [Community Resilience Partnership](#).

The program was set up under the auspices of the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future. Most important is that communities that join the Partnership are eligible to apply to the State for grants to fund projects that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and/or help communities adapt to climate change.

The group is currently gathering information from town committees and officials.

The next step is to hear from you. Your knowledge and ideas are critical to ensuring that the projects pursued address the needs of the entire community. Concerned that your road is flooding more often? We want to hear from you. Worried that the pattern of droughts is increasing the risk of wildfire? What about long-term power outages following severe weather events? Let's talk! All are welcome, whether you have lived here for generations or only months.

Want to learn more?

- [Self-evaluation document](#) provided by the State as a tool to help us begin organizing our approach to increasing resilience. There are no 'wrong' answers.

- List of possible Community Actions—all which could qualify for no-matching grants to towns.
- The [Maine Climate Council](#) has developed extensive resources that we can use along with hosting occasional workshops.
- [Sagadahoc County Hazard Mitigation Plan](#) was approved by FEMA and is awaiting formal adoption by each municipality. Sections of the plan can be downloaded.
- [Climate Resilience Toolkit](#) offers information from across the U.S. federal government in one easy-to-use location; compiled by NOAA.

Please come to the workshop at 6:30 p.m. on August 16, at the Fire Barn, and help plan for Arrowsic's climate future!

—The Arrowsic Climate Resilience Group

The flyer is titled "Help Keep Arrowsic Above Water" in white text on a teal background. Below the title is a photograph of a flooded road. To the left of the photo is a map of Arrowsic with a green dot. Text on the flyer includes: "When: August 16, 2022 6:30 - 8:00 PM", "Where: Arrowsic Fire Barn", "All residents and all ages are welcome to join the conversation and help set priorities for carbon reduction and climate resiliency here in our town!", "Refreshments will be provided as we brainstorm, chat, and chew!", "Sponsors: Governor's Community Resilience Partnership and the Arrowsic Conservation Commission", and logos for "KELT", "New England Environmental Finance Center", "Cape Bay Estuary Partnership", and "COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PARTNERSHIP".

Arrowsic Students Compete at Odyssey of the Mind World Finals in Ames, Iowa

After two years of doing a virtual version of Odyssey of the Mind, teams were finally able to compete in person this year. The team from Woolwich Central School, made up of fifth-graders Asa Merrick, Charlie Bachman, Georgia Leeman, Jacob Lichman-Paul, Lillian Newman, and Olive Stead, met every Monday after school from January through April.

Odyssey of the Mind is a world-wide program where teams of up to seven students (from kindergarten through college) select a problem from five categories: vehicle, classics, technical/performance, performance, and structure. The solving of the problem is student led; there is no parent or adult help allowed other than guidance and mediation from a coach.

These problems cannot be solved in ten minutes, or even ten hours. They take time to orchestrate, and this is where students spend the bulk of their time preparing to compete.

The Woolwich team selected the performance problem, Life is a Circus! The team wrote a humorous original script, designed and built a set representing a circus, and made costumes, paying attention to the specific rules and guidelines.

They focused on learning how to think on their feet and respond to problems as a team using brainstorming, negotiation, and most importantly, creativity. Their hard work led them to compete at the state level, where they won second place for their division, earning them an invitation to compete on the world level with hundreds of other teams at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa.

Individual teams from four countries came together to perform their solutions and celebrate Odyssey. The

Woolwich team stayed in the dorms, ate in the dining hall, and enjoyed campus amenities such as an indoor pool, bowling alley, botanical gardens, and creamery.



Charlie, Jacob, Georgia, Asa, Olive & Lily performing their long-term problem (photos by Anita Lichman)

Hundreds of teams might attempt to solve one problem, and each solution presented to the judges was unique. Teams were judged on their ability to include all required elements and on the ingenuity and creativity with which they do so.

The team performed their unique solution to the problem in a large lecture hall on a stage they had never seen or practiced on. While nervous, they put on a wonderful performance that had the audience laughing and left the judges impressed.

The teams also each completed a spontaneous problem, where they were tasked with solving a problem as a team without any preparation, which they did successfully. (*Odyssey cont on p 7*)

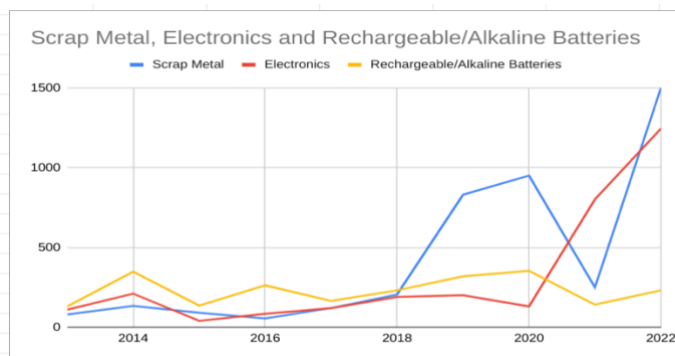


Students Trade State Pins

The Recycling Committee Needs Your Feedback!

Thanks to Arrowsic residents, recycling has continued to increase, and we see more and more items brought to the recycling shed. This is great news, and it shows our town's commitment to the environment! It does mean, however, as many of you have probably noticed, that we have outgrown the existing shed, and it is time to consider expansion. The ARSWC has been assessing the town's needs and options which would not only allow our recycling efforts to continue to grow, but also to add a swap room.

What is the recycling shed used for? There are many materials that are not part of the curb-side single-stream recycling program, but are often recyclable through other, less convenient, outlets. The ARSWC constantly works to identify these items and research outlets for them. Although the list is growing all the time, it currently includes scrap metal, assorted electronics, batteries, CDs/DVDs, corks, prescription bottles, and miscellaneous plastic caps. Below is a graph showing the recent increase in the amount of some items collected (in pounds).



A swap room? We would like residents' feedback on adding a swap room to the recycling shed. A swap room would help to keep still-useful items out of the trash or recycling stream. This would not be offered in replacement of Goodwill, Restore, or the annual scholarship yard sale. It would be offered mostly for things which do not quite fit those needs. Examples would be a lighting fixture, a small appliance, or leftover screws from a DIY project.

Planning for the future. ARSWC has been soliciting input and considering options for expanding the recycling shed. We have been working with the Properties Committee to integrate the new shed into plans for the town center, and we recently held a workshop to gather ideas from residents. We welcome

any additional input as we work to finalize plans and apply for grant funds from the Maine DEP later this year.

All this growth in recycling means we could also use more volunteers at the shed!



If you have thoughts or ideas on this project that you would like to share with the committee, or would like to volunteer to help, please contact John Hinds at 751-1550, arswc@arrowsic.org.

—Submitted by the Recycling and Solid Waste Committee

Odyssey cont from p 6) Wacky hats, light ups, costumes, original scripts, and songs were popular at the World Finals Tournament. But nothing was as popular as pin trading. Each state brought their own pins and participants traded pins to build their collections

Three of the six Woolwich team members were from Arrowsic, and they are grateful for the strong showing of support they received from fellow islanders. For a team competing for the first time, the group accomplished more than they expected, and they are already asking when they can start working on next year's problems.

To get involved in Odyssey of the Mind at Woolwich Central School contact Anita Lichman (parent volunteer coach & coordinator) at anitarlichman@gmail.com.

—Anita Lichman

Arrowsic Broadband Authority

Arrowsic Broadband Authority has made continued progress, albeit complicated at times since our last report in March 2022.

The initial ‘make ready’ surveys have been completed by Consolidated Communications, Central Maine Power, and Axiom/Hawkeye Fiber Optics, representing ABA.

The make ready process involves surveying, planning, and preparing the existing power and communication poles and lines to accept the new ABA broadband fiber lines. Under rules administered by the Maine Public Utilities Commission, the two utilities are compelled to follow a specific timeline to conduct the make ready process, which should take six to seven months. Once done, the actual construction process would normally take 6 to 8 weeks.

Given the substantial price increases of fiber and equipment and labor costs, our overall project investment has increased by \$200,000 to \$400,000. As the USDA funding is fixed at \$1,208,508, ABA needs to fund the increased cost.

Accordingly, we have been exploring alternative funding from Sagadahoc County, which has ARPA funds available, and State of Maine entities Connect Maine and Maine Connectivity Authority. To supplement these grant funds, ABA would finance the balance via a bank term loan and some town equity.

It is important to note that this ‘Maine Funding’ substantially reduces capital and administrative costs and shortens the timeline for the project by as much as nine months. The reduced time also reduces price increases.

Under the terms of the USDA loan, we will be able to fund estimated make ready costs budgeted at \$186,600 but now estimated at \$130,000 and repay the USDA debt with the new money from the state and county. There is no penalty in prepaying the USDA loan on 30 days advance notice.

Finally, the entire ‘Requests for Proposals’ competitive bidding process would be simplified and shortened resulting in lower prices and acceleration of the construction timeline.

To accomplish the change in funding, a special Town Meeting will be necessary, probably in August or September. We anticipate an early sign-up letter be sent to all homeowners in August.

Our best estimate to ‘light the new fiber network’ is late spring/summer 2023.

ABA team: Don Kornrumpf (Chair ABA Commission), Don Hudson (Commission member), Sukey Heard (retired Commission member), Ken Hnottavange-Telleen, Will Neilson, Stan Lane, Mike Loviska, Jon Schau, Alex Schwartz, and Jeff Stoebe

—Don Kornrumpf

(Knight cont from p 1) As the years passed Mildred spent more time at home working on her hobbies—knitting mittens, crocheting Afghans, making quilts, reading, and putting together jigsaw puzzles.

On May 14, 2022, Mildred turned 90 years old and was the guest of honor at a surprise birthday party. Although she had some health issues, she continued to live at home alone, enjoying visitors and phone calls.

Sadly, Mildred’s health declined rapidly after her birthday and she died at Midcoast Medical Center on Sunday, June 26, 2022. Her obituary can be found at: <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/mildred-knight-obituary?id=35460782>.

Previous episodes of Mildred’s story can be found in the last two issues of the Arrow at www.arrowsic.org.

—Denise Parker

Community News

Andrew Cotter and **Jenna Howard** have moved into their new home on Newtown Road with their cats Emma and Delila. Andrew is a civil rights attorney and Jenna works in the Maine Legislature. They are both Mainers: Andrew grew up in Portland, and Jenna was raised in the Downeast region. They note: 'We're excited to be joining the wonderful community of Arrowsic and looking forward to meeting more of our neighbors in the months ahead.'

Mildred Knight, 90, died June 26th. Born in Bath, Mildred lived on Preble Point all her life. She was predeceased by her husband, Stewart 'Paul' Knight, son Richard Knight, daughter Sherry Guerette, and grandsons Eric Knight and Jarred Knight. She is survived by her son S. Paul Knight, Jr. of Portland, daughter Cheryl Crocker of Brunswick, ten grandchildren, fourteen great-grandchildren, and five great-great-grandchildren.

Mildred enjoyed sewing, knitting, and crocheting, jigsaw puzzles, gardening, and travel. Her life on

Arrowsic has been recounted in the current and previous two issues of the *Arrow* by her neighbor, Denise Parker.

Jacob Lichman-Paul completed elementary school at Woolwich Central School and will continue in middle school there for grades 6-8.

Emily Martin has been appointed to the Dean's List at the University of New England.

John L. White Sr, 83, died June 20th at his home on Preble Point. Born in Gardiner, John served as a radioman in the Navy and worked at Augusta Mental Health Institute for 40 years. He enjoyed sailing, gardening, motorcycling, playing guitar, camping, and Ham radio. He was predeceased by his ex-wife Maxine Morton and his wife Lesley White. He is survived by his daughters Mona and Sheri, son John Jr, stepson Ted Pelletier, nine grandchildren, and ten great-grandchildren.

No Respect

This morning, as usual, I asked Alexa what the day's weather would be. And, as usual, she began "In ARROW-sick it is ...".

Well, few others can pronounce our town's name properly, either, and sometimes "Aroostic" puts us way up in The County, or our location on the "Kennebunk, isn't it?" River puts us on the other side of Portland.

Our weather isn't our own, either. Alexa and most of the other weather sources get our temperature and forecast from the Wiscasset airport. You can check that out.

The Fed-Ex deliveryman does not approach our house in a happy mood. "You REALLY need a zip code!" he

complains. "Look," he says, holding out the package. "Bath! It says Bath!"

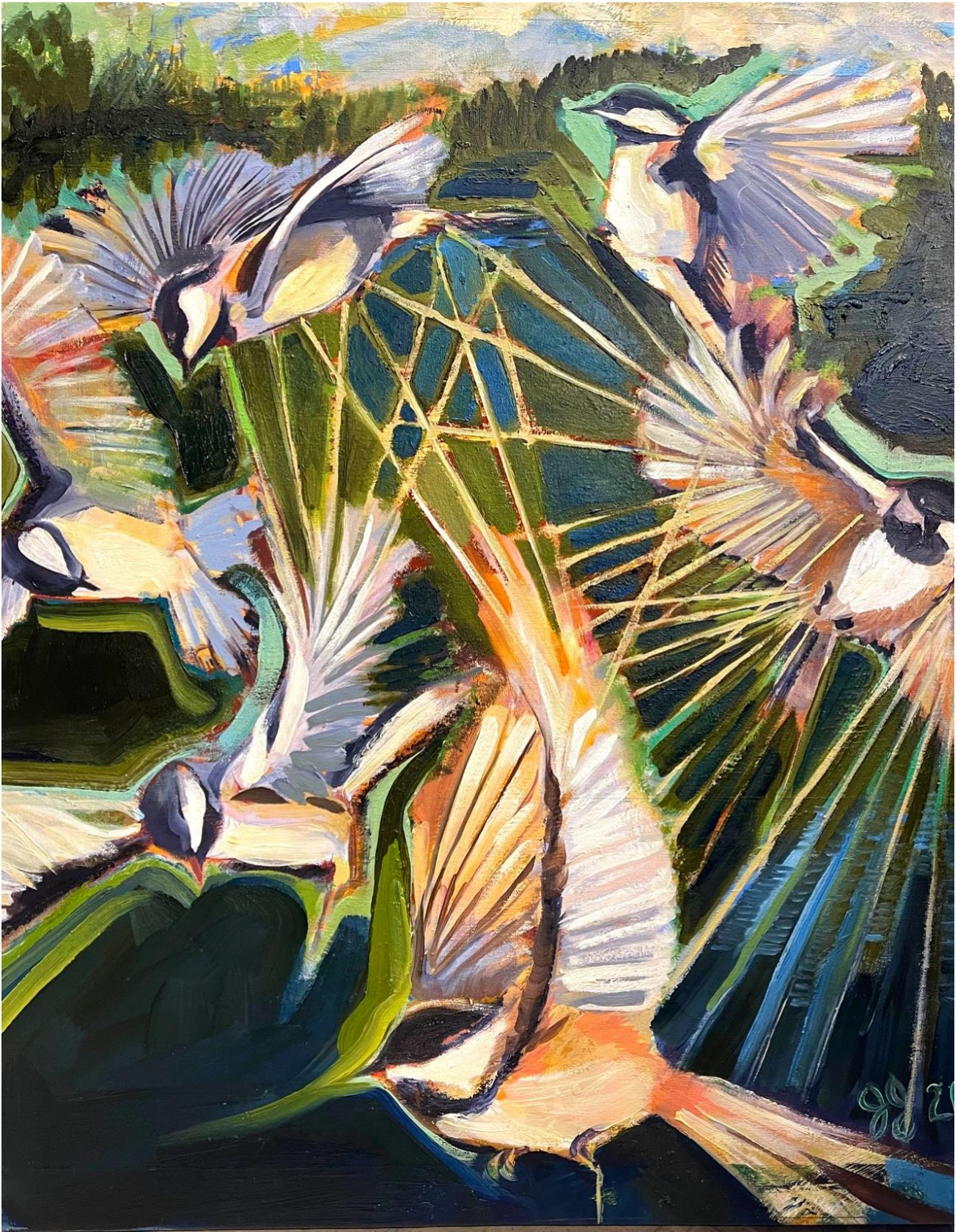
Indeed, we have no zip code and must shelter under Bath's. This fact causes trouble when we fill in forms online, as well as for delivery persons. Woolwich has a zip code AND a post office. Georgetown has TWO zip codes and a palatial post office. We have nothing.

As I'm sure you are aware, people even in contiguous towns do not know where Arrowsic is, or even that we exist.

But really, I think we like it that way ... don't we?

—Paul Kalkstein

Featured Artist — Jackie Johnson



Tumbling Chick-a-dees by Jackie Johnson (oil)



Trout Water by Jackie Johnson (drawing)

Artist's Statement

My work may be described as illustrations and oil paintings of abstract imagery. I find inspiration in what I have seen or experienced in the woods and waters around me.

I paint endangered species, such as the Rusty Patch Bee; or those that could very well be endangered sooner than we think, which was my inspiration for the Tumbling Chickadees.

Using traditional materials and processes, I attempt to render, on a large scale, the small structures of delicate plants and animals with the hope that the viewer might look closer at how complex these creatures are.

My paintings are expressive and conceptual. When I'm finished with a painting, I often see that I have also created an environmental narrative about the violence we have visited upon nature.

—Jackie Johnson

Parallel to the Season

By Sharif S. Elmusa

My body says: walk.
The sidewalk signals this is the route.
Traffic lights, row houses, mini gardens.

The crocuses, little roosters
heralding the spring's resurrection
in purple, white and yellow,
taunt the totalitarian
green of the ivy,
their predator's greed

The fig tree, artfully pruned,
hard fruits punctuating the branches—
is debonair, a fashion model
posing for the picture.

A half-broken statue,
in the hollow of its hand
an outcast blade of grass,
head bent: *I'm in a delicate mood.*

I move parallel to the season,
one step at a time.
To each their own trail,
squawks the squirrel,
a puffed-up acrobat,
flowing along the telephone cables,
flying to the trunk of an oak tree.

The immodest azalea—
beauty born of pain—
prods us not to dawdle
on the way to love.

A man suddenly stops me,
and, grinning, like someone who knows
he won't be disappointed, he asks,
Are you Pedro, the poet from Guatemala?

On the bumpy pavements
I stumble on words.

'Parallel to the Seasons' originally appeared in the Maine Sunday Telegram, 'Deep Water: Maine Poems' section, edited by Megan Grumbling. Copyright © 2021 by Sharif Elmusa, appears by permission of the author. (<https://www.centralmaine.com/2022/05/08/deep-water-parallel-to-the-season-by-sharif-s-elmusa/>)

May 1972

By Paul Schlein

Yellow flowers in the night
with long stems to hold their blossoms high
to sing their brilliant colors to the world
they show themselves and breathe the air
they need the night as well as day—
with petals closed, they rest—they sleep
to conserve their strength—to gather more
to sing their song of color.

What Music!

Even at night, their voices are heard—
their song is heard most clearly.

A yellow chorus, piercing darkness,
lighting my path.

The Sun may have set hours ago, but many more have risen.

On the way to the tropics two final observations before departing from our icy home

On the way to the airport, our driver, Pete, remarked that there was a “heavy dew” outside, although I could not see it. He added that the tire tracks along the highway were looking black and shiny.

“They’ll be going off the road in places,” he said twice. “It’s foggy out there.”

“Ice fog,” I said, with the temperature having dropped 6 degrees, to 14, since we left our house.

I wondered out loud, although I still wasn’t really seeing anything, if the plane would need deicing.

“Oh, yes,” said Pete. And it did.

As we pulled up to the drop off point near the large revolving door, Pete, looking toward the shrubbery at the edge of the sidewalk, exclaimed “Look, a mouse!”

I looked but expected to see nothing. Low and behold, a mouse darted out, dashing, most deliberately, along the pavement.

With dozens of cars letting people off, all heading for that door, the mouse (or was it a vole, questioned my wife Mona), with a clear destination in mind, stopped at the outer edge of the fast-spinning door, where the upright frame and door constantly meet—a veritable guillotine, I thought. “Crazy, absolute madness,” I said to myself. “There’s no way it will survive.”

The mouse waited, carefully observing, ready to spring at the optimum moment.

And then, suddenly, with split-second timing, it dashed around the corner of the doorframe, right into a section of the door, behind two people that had just entered, running ahead of the door, as it quickly turned.

And then it was gone, into that vast structure and the unknown. No one else had noticed this little being and, hopefully, no one would.

Its mission, in entering this most inhospitable environment? Oh, it must be all those lovely crumbs and morsels of food strewn everywhere along the carpets and under the benches, just waiting to be consumed!

The three of us laughed wholeheartedly but were equally dumbfounded at what we had just seen. Never, ever, would I have guessed, except perhaps in some fantasy world, that a tiny, oh-so-vulnerable mouse would do, so deftly, what it had one.

My parting comment to Pete, as he offered his best wishes for a good trip, was “I see the makings of a children’s book in this.” And he smiled and agreed.

A keen observer of our world was Pete.

—Paul Schlein

Launching the Virginia



—photos by Tom Spear