
The Arrowsic Arrow

News Around and About Arrowsic

Volume 29, Number 4

November 2015

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ARROWSIC FALL FESTIVAL
Gather with neighbors to celebrate the season!
November 15th
1-3pm
Arrowsic Fire Station

- Free blood pressure screening
- Games
- Crafts
- Touch a Truck
- Story Time

Sponsored by the Arrowsic Education Committee

Fall Festival: November 15 at the Fire Station

The Fall Festival will take place November 15, 1:00-3:00, at the Fire Station. Please volunteer to help make this a fine community event. Provide a snack, bring a game, guide a craft, share a feat, offer a challenge. Older children/teens are welcomed to help run activities. Contact: Camille Kauffunger, 844-4737, camillekauffunger@gmail.com

Town Clerk: Election November 3

The election is Tuesday, November 3. Poll hours are 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Come try out the new voting booth! The ballot has three state referenda – a Citizens’ Initiative on financing elections and bond issues on funding senior housing and funding transportation infrastructure.

<http://maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/upcoming/index.html>

Arrowsic will also vote on the School Board of RSU1.

<http://www.rsu1.org/News/1231#sthash.ky3PjTPK.99vKdT6N.dpbs>

Dog tags for 2016 and snowmobile registrations are available.

Solid Waste/Recycling Committee: Schedule

Pick-up schedule for both trash and recycling for the remainder of 2015:

Friday, November 13

Friday, November 27

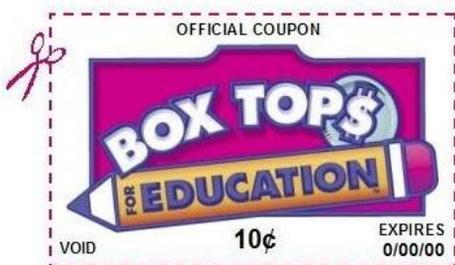
Friday, December 11

Thursday, December 24 (pick-up changed to Thursday, due to holiday)

A notice with the 2016 trash/recycling schedule will be e-mailed to the town by mid-December and posted on the town website. Copies will also be available in the Town Hall and Recycling Shed.

Questions? Contact: Paul Schlein, pschlein@gmail.com, 443-3209

Education Committee: Collecting Box Tops



Many of our Arrowsic children attend schools that raise money with Box Top coupons for extra classroom supplies, snacks for children in need, and other special funds. Your contribution of coupons is appreciated! Please put them in an envelope in the Town Hall mail box anytime or take them inside during office hours to put in the collection box.

Arrowsic Accolades

Bob Kalish was inducted into the Maine Press Association Hall of Fame on October 17, 2015. <http://www.boothbayregister.com/node/60240>

Christopher Parker (child of Craig and Denise Parker) graduated from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland with a BA in Mathematics in May 2015.

Wendy Ulmer has published a fourth children's book, *One Green Tree, Ten Chickadees* (Book Bridge Press). http://www.wendyulmer.com/?page_id=130

Kid Express: "We Dwell with Animals"

We dwell here with a busy bunch of animals--there is always some little out of the way happening in or without the home. We have 16 hens who adventure over the domain outside the building and two cats who rule their roost (rather sofa) indoors. Our cats have been with us since we departed from Japan almost six years ago, and we have one female and one male. Our lady, Coco, never bites and is the softest shorthair I have ever known, while Nimitz is a little more rowdy but sweet as well. Outdoors we have hens who fight like roosters, a crippled hen who's believed to possess magical powers, and a prim little hen who tucks up her feet when she jumps. We love our 'girls' as well and swing with them, train them, and see-saw and bike with them.

Ruth Anna Hart, age 10



A Portrait of Fancy,
the Magical Hen

Jane Ellen Hart, age 8

Solar Energy: Local Solarize Initiative

There are a number of "Solarize" initiatives popping up in this area. Freeport and Brunswick are in the midst of their own initiatives, and details can be seen on those towns' websites. Now a "Solarize Mid Coast" initiative is about to be launched out of the Mid Coast Economic District (MCED) in Damariscotta. It would include 22 municipalities, including all those in Sagadahoc County. MCED would use the prospect of many customers in an area to negotiate a bulk

purchase discount with one or more solar companies. In addition, a substantial federal tax break is available for people installing solar. This federal tax break will run out at the end of 2016, and future funding of this tax incentive is uncertain. MCED expects the installations will be completed by the end of 2016. Look for announcements about the launch of this project within the next few weeks, in the newspapers, on the town website, and in flyers at the town hall. For more information, contact Scott LaFlamme at slaflamme@cityofbath.com or at 443-8372; or Bill Najpauer at 370-6045. In order to assure the federal tax break, prompt action is a must!

Lyme Disease: Update and New Resource

October is the peak season for adult deer ticks in Maine and Lyme disease is a serious concern. Health Officer Kathleen Mary has created a new resource for Arrowsic residents. On the Arrowsic website, you will find a comprehensive article addressing transmission, prevention, detection, and treatment of Lyme disease with up-to-date information from the International Lyme and Associated Disease Society (ILADS), a nonprofit international multidisciplinary medical society. The article, full of links to other resources, can be accessed by going to the Arrowsic website and clicking on “Health Information” from the list under “Arrowsic Places” on the right side of the home page. http://www.arrowsic.org/uploads/lyme_disease.pdf

Further updates are coming. Since 1983, a long-term forest ecosystem study has been conducted in Arrowsic’s Holt Research Forest (HRF) by faculty and staff of the University of Maine and funded by Maine TREE Foundation based in Augusta. Jack Witham, longtime resident HRF scientist will share a summary of findings related to small mammal populations, ticks, and Lyme disease soon.

Alewives: Fall Monitoring

As most Arrowsic residents know, the Conservation Commission monitors the spring arrival of alewives in Sewall Pond. Many volunteers participate in this program to maintain the stream connecting Sewall Pond to the Kennebec River, monitor Sewall Pond conditions, and to trap and count all alewives as they pass under the culvert into the pond. This ongoing effort has brought a greatly improved understanding of the role that the culvert, stream, and pond play in fostering this ecologically important migration. The data gathered provided much of the scientific basis for the development and installation in 2014 of the new culvert that will insure solid alewife migration potential for decades to come.

We know that the juveniles leave the pond at some point and head down the Kennebec to the ocean where they will grow to maturity and return to spawn in the pond of their birth after 4 to 5 years. But how many leave our pond, when do they leave, and under what conditions do they leave? In order to answer some of these questions the Conservation Commission decided to monitor the fall outmigration.

With anecdotal evidence that the juveniles leave in fall at times of tidal inflow to the pond, we surmised that the outmigration might be greatest around the times of full moon high tides.

Accordingly Karen Robbins, our alewife guru, organized an effort to monitor the outmigration during the September and October high tides.

At this writing the first monitoring session with dates clustered around the September full moon has concluded with very preliminary results. We have confirmed that the juveniles don't leave when there's a nice easy outflow from the pond to the river. They wait for the tide to rise providing a flow of water into the pond, and they then swim against the flow and head for the Kennebec. They seem to need just the right inflow—too strong and they can't make it—too low a flow (or outflow) and they don't appear interested. It's possible that waiting for an incoming flow provides the best possibility of a full and navigable stream to the river. Their movements are occasionally unpredictable, and they are easily spooked making our attempts to quantify the outmigration difficult so far. Stay tuned.

To volunteer for either the spring or fall monitoring programs please contact Karen Robbins (robbinco@gmail.com), the point person for our alewife research or Phine Ewing (phineewing@gmail.com), Conservation Commission Chair.

-- Submitted by Ralph Pope

Broadband: Joint Arrowsic-Georgetown Group and Survey

On September 17 about 40 residents from Arrowsic and Georgetown met to explore options for improving access to fast and reliable internet service for both communities. Participants shared frustrations with current levels of service and discussed business implications of substandard internet service. Many reported added business costs, such as renting an office in Bath to conduct video conferencing and data transfer. Several noted they would telecommute, have home-based businesses or a larger client base if better internet service were available. Property managers and realtors reported the difficulties of selling or renting properties when high-speed internet service is unavailable. Other issues included the impediments to offering or enrolling in on-line courses, or taking advantage of remote medical monitoring.

The meeting then addressed obstacles to improving internet service. A key problem is referred to as “the last mile conundrum.” Fiber optic cable runs along Route 1, the “middle mile.” Extending access to it down the “last mile” to residences in Arrowsic and Georgetown is the challenge. The cable that runs along Route 1 was built by the 3-Ring Binder Project. Because it was funded by public resources, it is designated as open access (meaning the network's physical infrastructure is available for rent to any company that wants to sell services to the public, allowing for more competition than if each provider is required to build their own network to compete). The builder (Maine Fiber Company) leases space to other service providers (like GWI) at competitive rates. Fairpoint extended fiber optic cable almost the full length of Arrowsic and Georgetown. This was also funded in part with public resources, via a grant from the Maine Schools and Libraries Network, and is therefore open access. That cable is about 90% underutilized. The only direct connections are Georgetown School, GHS Library, and Richards Library. Expanding access to the Fairpoint cable would require additional switching stations and equipment, additional cable (to reach premises or other sites), and fees to Central Maine Power for rights to attach cable and

equipment to poles. The cost just of running the cable is estimated at \$30,000 per mile – hence the conundrum.

Many Maine towns are trying to upgrade their broadband access. New coalitions, businesses and funding possibilities are emerging. Maine Broadband Coalition is an informal federation of public policy professionals, educational institutions, businesses, non-profit organizations and individuals concerned about Maine’s economic future. (www.MaineBroadbandCoalition.org). Tilson Technology is a Maine-based company working with several communities to plan and launch broadband strategies. Redzone is a Maine-based company providing LTE wireless broadband access through existing cellular network. Jim Davis of Arrowsic introduced the possibility of building a cell tower on his property and renting space to companies such as Redzone. ConnectME is Maine’s grant funding authority for broadband upgrades (<http://maine.gov/connectme/>). It has money for planning as well as physical upgrade projects, although to be eligible a project must result in broadband performance of 10/10 – meaning 10 megabits/second download and 10 gigabits/second upload. (In Arrowsic today, DSL performance is roughly 2.5 mps down and < 1mps up, but varies depending on time of day and distance from switch.)

Following the discussion of problems and challenges, those attending the meeting then formed several teams. The Technology Team is preparing an infrastructure baseline and evaluating technology options for broadband upgrade. The Planning Team is exploring support for the project planning. The Communications and Outreach Team is tasked with building broad support for an upgrade, as high adoption rates are critical to potential funders. The Internet Needs Survey Team is undertaking the first essential task of assessing the range and depth of broadband needs in Arrowsic and Georgetown. A survey has been developed and is now available online at <http://survey.ag-broadbanders.org/> Paper copies of the survey are also available at both Town Halls.

The next meeting of the Arrowsic-Georgetown Broadband Group is November 19, 2015 at the Georgetown Historical Society Building, 20 Bay Point Road, Georgetown.

-- Submitted by Amy Smith

Mill Pond Preserve: “One Less Road, One New Trail”



Mill Pond Preserve is a 51 acre nature preserve on Old Stage Road owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy. It might be small, but it's nestled against a fairly extensive area of conservation land that includes Maine TREE's Holt Forest, the state's Kennebec Estuary Wildlife Management Area, the Town's Sewall Pond Conservation Area, and TNC's Flying Point Preserve across the Back River in Georgetown. Until recently, visitors could park along Old Stage Road and walk in on a gravel road that crossed the salt marsh upstream of Mill Point and out to the point just south of the old mill dam. The road led to a small, privately owned house originally associated with the saw mill that ceased operation in the late 1940s. In May 2013, TNC purchased the house and by July of 2013, the buildings were gone, the road no longer

needed for access to the house. This presented an opportunity to restore the salt marsh by removing the old road.

On all but the highest tide, the road acted like a dam, preventing the incoming tide from moving to the upper marsh. Old timbers and rocks beneath the bridge created a 4-foot high dam in the tidal creek. The primary dilemma with removing the road was how to get hikers across the marsh to the existing trail system. Maine TREE generously allowed TNC to construct a trail around the head of the marsh through Holt Forest.

In December 2014, TNC hired a contractor, Linkel Construction, to remove the bridge and road. The equipment arrived on a bitter cold Monday with just enough time left in the day to allow an archaeologist, Norm Buttrick, to document the timber structure beneath the bridge. All projects requiring a wetland permit had to go through Maine Historic Preservation Commission review and they were interested in finding out if the timbers under the bridge were part of a very old mill dam. The contractor removed the rocks and earth on top of the timbers, and each log was measured and plotted on graph paper. What may have been an old mill dam turned out to be cribworks for an old road, just one more piece of Arrowsic history.

The bitter cold weather turned to driving rain over the next four days as the contractor used an excavator and a special tracked dump vehicle to dig up the road and haul it to several disposal sites on the preserve. Nearly 300 cubic yards of gravel was removed and deposited in several cellar holes and a dug well near the hiking trail. The rest of the material was used to enhance two vernal pools that were created when the road was originally built. The contractor constructed a small parking lot for preserve visitors along Old Stage Road. The last bit of work was done this past May when volunteers, including our Arrowsic neighbors, helped dig 300 small plugs of vegetation from the salt marsh and transplanted them in the old road bed. By the end of the summer, the thriving transplants covered 40% of the old road bed. The restoration work was funded by the Maine Natural Resources Conservation Program that provides funding for wetland conservation and restoration.



And while the restoration project improved the health of the salt marsh, the new trail provides one more great hike in Arrowsic. The trail starts on the old road before heading south towards Holt Forest. The old logs from the cribworks mark the intersection to the new trail which takes hikers along the marsh edge. The marsh trail eventually intersects with the shore trail which

heads east to the Back River and eventually loops north to the old house site and old road. The entire hike is 1.5 miles long and the trail is marked with yellow blazes. A new sign that shows the trail on an air photo was installed this summer. The preserve is open dawn to dusk. TNC and Holt Forest ask that you leave your pets at home due to ongoing wildlife research. Enjoy your visit and if you have any questions, feel free to contact Nancy Sferra, nsferra@tnc.org

-- Submitted by Nancy Sferra

Wildlife: Bear Sighting on Mill Island

The sun was just coming up as I headed to work from our house on Mill Island. It is not uncommon for me to catch a deer by surprise and watch, in amazement, as it darts from the field into the woods and out onto the marsh. But on the morning of June 25th I saw something that definitely was not a deer. It was big and round, and very, very black. Startled by the sound of my car, it bounded across Mill Island Road and was down in the woods on the edge of the marsh in a split second. I stopped my car and peered into the woods, unable to believe what I had just seen - a black bear on Mill Island! I turned the car around and headed home to tell my husband what I had seen. As I drove in our driveway, on the edge of where the woods open to the lawn, I saw the bear again, and again it ran away quickly, across the backyard and into our neighbor's woods. Neighbors have since reported that one contractor also saw the bear on Mill Island, and that another saw bear scat. To my knowledge, however, no one has seen the bear since late June.

-- Submitted by Sally Caras

Collection: Nonperishable Items for People in Need

An "acts of kindness" community effort is underway to collect nonperishable items to be delivered prior to Thanksgiving to area families in need. Nonperishable items can be dropped off at the Town Hall during regular Wednesday and Friday office hours, November 3 Election Day, and November 15 Fall Festival 1pm-3pm. Items can also be placed inside the Recycling Shed in a covered bin that will be labeled. Please email Arrowsic's Health Officer Kathleen Mary, to submit names of families who might appreciate a donation: kathleenmary.med-law@msn.com. Thank you in advance for your support.

-- Submitted by Kathleen Mary

Disposal of Kitty Litter

The Solid Waste/Recycling Committee is always searching for ways to make our island a bit greener. Recently a resident asked for suggestions as to how to make kitty litter disposal more environmentally friendly. Twenty years of cat ownership has afforded me the title of "crazy cat lady," so who better to research this topic than myself? When my mother visits, she customarily asks if I have found a good litter. She has even carted new products up to Maine from Connecticut for my three kitties to sample. I needed to get to the bottom of this question, once and for all.

My first call was to the animal shelter. I asked if there was any way to compost kitty litter. I was reminded of the diseases and parasites that fester in kitty litter, thus making it an unwelcome addition to our compost piles or even a hole in the backyard. Agreed. Much to my dismay, the answer would not be so simple.

At our area's largest pet store, I found a clay litter in a plastic bin that you buy once and refill for a fee. The idea of decreasing plastic waste is always appealing, and such an option is great for folks interested in this type of conservation. Another produce that was highly recommended was a recycled newspaper product called "World's Best." I have never spared the coin for this product, but the premise is good. It was recommended at more than one store that I visited.



America's Choice makes a wood-based product that is technically used as pet bedding. The pellets, also known as "Woody Pet," is a great fit for my needs. The waste is biodegradable, and it is much lighter than clay. With "Woody Pet," the litter box does not seem to hold odors the way it would with clay, and my cats are happy. I tried wood pellets (heat fuel) which are quite similar in consistency to this animal bedding, but they do not absorb liquid as well as "Woody Pet." The best part is the price. At Ames Supply it costs roughly \$7.00 for 1 cubic foot bag – a fraction of what a box of clay litter costs.

Unfortunately, it is not recommended to recycle or compost kitty litter. Given the product choices and their effectiveness, I would recommend trying "Woody Pet." From a costs perspective, the waste is lighter and thus costs less to dispose of for the town. Any time you change litter, please make the change slowly. Our finicky felines don't like sudden changes! All the best to you and your kitty!

-- Submitted by Katie Smith

2015 Town Meeting: Summary and Highlights

Arrowsic's Town Meeting took place this year on June 17, with 79 town residents in attendance. Here are a few highlights gleaned from the official minutes and edited for the purposes of this newsletter. The need for a new Fire Department minipumper was one of the main topics discussed (see Article 9 below and details in the May 2015 *Arrowsic Arrow*: <http://www.arrowsic.org/arrow/arrow5-15.pdf>). The complete meeting minutes can be accessed at http://www.arrowsic.org/selectmen_minutes/town_meeting2015.pdf.

- Town budget: \$843,163 (2014: \$823,108, 2000: \$459,171)
- Eloise Vitelli elected as Moderator; Linda Warner reelected as Town Clerk; Bill Savedoff reelected as Selectman; Mary McDonald reelected as Treasurer; Liz Rollins reelected as Tax Collector; all unopposed.
- Town salaries: \$41,478 (2014: \$37,751, 2000: \$24,750)
- Under Article 9, Fire Protection and the need for a new minipumper. Select Board member

Bill Savedoff spoke on behalf of the Select Board, stating that the Board recognized the need for a new minipumper, but they also thought this presented a good opportunity to review the overall needs of the Fire Department. Savedoff said, at that time, the Select Board did not support Fire Chief Chris Cummings' recommendation to buy a new minipumper, and instead decided to form an eight-person ad hoc committee to investigate the Fire Department's long-term needs. Chief Cummings expounded on the need for a new minipumper, saying the current one was very old, in need of repairs, and was currently out of service. Malcolm Persen spoke on behalf of the Ad Hoc Arrowsic Fire Department Committee. He said committee currently meets every two weeks and will present its proposals to the Select Board at the end of the year. He said the committee is looking for input, and residents are welcome to attend the meetings.

Residents' comments and questions:

- Chip Krantz asked if the Fire Department had looked at used minipumpers. Chief Cummings said they had, and finding one that fits Arrowsic's specific needs is difficult.
- Phil Favro asked if the minipumper is the first line of attack? Is it a main piece of equipment? Cummings replied that it was. Favro also asked which apparatus responds the most and Cummings replied that the tanker and the minipumper are both used equally.
- Jeremy Blaiklock stated that we also do Mutual Aid, and the minipumper is requested by Georgetown for this purpose.
- Fred Hill asked how much money the town has in surplus. The Board replied \$350,000 and they like to keep about \$250,000 on hand before tax money starts coming in in November.
- Tim Harkins asked if the minipumper breaks down, do any surrounding communities have one to help us out? Cummings replied that Phippsburg has a similar one they use for brush fires.
- Ken Hnottavange-Tellen asked if monies are exchanged with Mutual Aid? Cummings said since we provide Mutual Aid, we don't have to pay Bath or any other towns, and Arrowsic also doesn't charge other towns.
- Paul Schlein asked whether the town needs to repair the minipumper now anyway. Cummings said our Mutual Aid agreement helps us out.
- Jim Davis asked if we would be financing or paying cash? Savedoff replied that Arrowsic has not borrowed in the past, although it could. He added that paying cash would mean taxes would have to increase by 9% for two years.
- Article 13. The Arrowsic Scholarship Fund. \$3,600 was approved. Current fund balance: \$44,593.00. Balt VonHeune, one of the 2015 scholarship recipients, thanked the Scholarship Committee for his award. Emily James and Alex Beveridge were also recipients.
- Article 15. Town Roads. \$74,790 was approved for general maintenance and repair of Town Ways and other Properties for the ensuing year, including snow removal. This amount goes toward the total budget of \$172,690, the rest being paid by town excise taxes and the MDOT Block Grant. Road Commission Chair Jim Stump said that they would be paving parts of Old Stage Road and Indian Rest Road, but they would not likely do "fill crack" again. He also said that Charlie Collins (Maine Moss) did a great plowing job the previous winter. Discussion ensued regarding the intersection of Route 127 and Route 1, with the conclusion that MDOT had decided no changes would be made, since it was not considered a significant problem.

- Article 16. Recycling and Solid Waste. Paul Schlein spoke on behalf of the Solid Waste and Recycling Committee. A new, comprehensive brochure, *User's Guide to Recycling in Arrowsic*, was included with the *Arrowsic Annual Report*. He said the recycling/composting survey, sent out to about 170 residents the previous winter, received 104 responses, about half of town households, giving the Committee excellent information to work with. He said the emphasis in 2015 would likely be on composting, where, if done effectively, the town could realize significant savings. He announced that the town had signed a three-year contract with Casella (Pine Tree) for recycling and solid waste, with fees of \$25/ton for recycling and \$70/ton for trash, and another one-year contract with RC Rogers for trash and recycling pickup, with no increase in fees.
- Article 21. Town Capital Improvements Fund. \$10,000 was appropriated from surplus for various projects. Current fund balance: \$31,583. Select Board chair Sukey Heard said that upcoming projects included the Town Hall kiosk, floor, and bathroom.
- Article 23. \$3,400 (2014: 1,500) was approved for assessing expenses. Heard explained that the increase was for new tax maps.
- Article 24. \$10,000 was approved from surplus to add to the dedicated fund for the future revaluation of town properties by a licensed assessor. Total cost is estimated to be \$35,000 and the current fund balance is \$20,000. Heard said there will be a bidding process for the assessor for the revaluation.
- Article 34. Expenses for the Conservation Commission. A video, created by Charlie Hudson, of the new alewife culvert at Sewall Pond, was shown to meeting attendees (<http://kennebecestuary.org/the-cool-little-culvert>).
- Article 36. Expenses of the Local Emergency Management Agency. Heard reported that LEMA director Pauline McLuer had resigned and thanked her for many years of service. (See August 2015 *Arrowsic Arrow* regarding the appointment of Brian Carlton as the new director. <http://www.arrowsic.org/arrow/arrow8-15.pdf>)
- Article 37. Miscellaneous Expenses of the Education Committee. Camille Kauffunger, new chair of the committee, said their \$250 budget would be spent for potential mailings and minor expenses. She stated that Arrowsic had 41 students in the public schools and the committee was working toward representing all of these students. RSU1 board chair Tim Harkins offered to speak with anyone who had interest in the school district. He discussed the Reapportionment Committee which had been charged with reorganizing the school board. Harkens, Heard, and David Howe were all working on this committee. He said the district was also progressing on the plans for a new high school.
- Article 38. \$11,716 was approved to fund 24 non-profit organizations. Jessica Tyson, from MCM Community Action, explained that her organization provides services to low-income people across Maine. In answer to Nancy Brown Stump's question asking at what point did the town's General Assistance not provide assistance vs MCM Community Action, Select Board member Michele Gaillard responded that Arrowsic does not apply for state reimbursement for General Assistance and this frees up the town to respond to all requests, regardless of state limitations
- Article 50. Collection of all Watercraft Excise Taxes in a dedicated Water Access Fund. Current fund balance: \$71,676. Malcolm Persen asked for clarification of what the fund was for. Conservation Commission chair Phine Ewing responded that the commission was looking for town water access, and the fund would go toward purchasing or developing land. Jeff Galuza asked what was done being to accomplish the goal of finding water access.

Ewing replied that the commission had an ongoing search for property, and once found, it would have to be voted on at Town Meeting or at a Special Town Meeting.

- Article 59. The 2016 Town Meeting would be held on Thursday, June 16, 2016, at 6:30 PM. Malcolm Persen asked why the meeting was being changed to Thursday and Heard replied that there was a primary and an RSU1 budget election on Tuesday, and moving the meeting to Thursday would give the workers an opportunity to recover.

--Submitted by Paul Schlein

Letter to Arrowsic: “Democreate”

When my Yoga teacher speaks of “practice” she’s speaking of a word that is a verb and a noun. She is speaking of rocking Happy Baby or holding Bridge for another ten counts. She is talking of inhaling into Side Angle Warrior, balancing as Tree or stretching into a Five-Pointed Star. Democracy, I think, is like that; it is as much a verb as it is a noun. And as a verb, it “democreates” with practice.

In 2007, we elected Heather Baker Arrowsic Town Clerk at Arrowsic’s Annual Town Meeting, and she was elected by a majority of the registered voters who were residents of the town and attending the Annual Town Meeting. She was elected in the same manner Clerks have been intended to be elected as indicated in the Town’s Annual Reports. But then in 2008, no one ran for the office of Town Clerk. Twice, Clerks moved out of town before their term ended. Consequently, three of Arrowsic’s Town Clerks have had first terms that were initiated by an appointment of the Selectmen. Though a Special Town Meeting was called to elect a Town Treasurer on June 30, 2009, no Special Town Meeting was called in 2008, 2013 or 2015 to elect the Town Clerk. Then in the years following their appointment, both Clerks ran in uncontested bids for office. Leaving me, like the poet Dylan Thomas, with “...all about the wasp but why.”

I believe there is much to be appreciated in the authority of the Selectmen. They are intelligent and hard working people, attending at length to the various needs of our busy town. Sixty-three of the seventy-two official town positions are appointed by the Selectmen, giving them a great deal of leverage in shaping the character and direction of Arrowsic. For that reason, and with respect for our democratic system of checks and balances, it makes sense to elect our Clerk as we elect the other eight elected officials, by the fullest body of the town. I think we made a mistake in 2008, 2013, and again this year, when the Town Clerk was appointed rather than elected democratically at a Special Town Meeting. We list the position as elected. We print it as such boldly in the Annual Report. By deeming other elected officials as elected, we imply their broader responsibility, not to the Selectmen but to the Town.

I write this letter intending no ill will, but in hopes we can find ways to improve on what is never over practiced or over “democratized”. Please know that I am grateful for the goodness of my fellow citizens; I am grateful, too, for the beauty of our golden green town. But it is more than gratitude that links me to fair process, even if it can never be finally achieved, but always tried.

I am sincerely,
Nancy Brown Stump

Arrow Committee: Thank-you to Quinn Blaiklock



The Arrow is a community newsletter produced quarterly. For the past ten years, Quinn Blaiklock has been responsible for its production. We are deeply grateful to Quinn for her excellent efforts for all these years.

Arrow Committee: Nancy Brown Stump, Bob Kalish, Paul Schlein, Amy Smith. *All welcome.*
Arrow Production: Amy Smith (amybluefeet@gmail.com)