

# Town News

## Bulletin Board

### Amherst Garden Club Evening Meetings

Are you interested in learning more about gardening but are unable to attend daytime meetings? New this year will be evening meetings open to present and new members as well as interested visitors. Meetings will be held the second Thursday of each month at Parkhurst Place, 11 Veterans Rd., Amherst, at 7:00 PM and are open to the public.

Members who find they can only attend evening meetings will have the opportunity to be involved in club activities such as the plant sale and civic gardening and will receive the newsletter.

### Amherst Farmers Market Through mid October

The Amherst Farmers Market is open Thursday, from 3-6 p.m. in the parking lot of Bedford Fields - Amherst, formerly known as Ponemah Farms Garden Center, at 42 Route 101A.

### Nashaway Chapter of the NH Audubon Society

Enjoy the last bits of summer with the Nashaway Chapter of NH Audubon. Join a nature walk to look at plant adaptations at Ponemah Bog in Amherst, NH on September 13. The walk begins at 9 am and last 1 1/2-2 hour. Children are welcome. Meet at the parking area off Rhodora Drive, off of Stearns Road in Amherst. For directions, go to <http://merrimack.wildnh.com/ponemahbog/> For more information, contact Jack Gleason at 673-3177 or westonpond10@gmail.com.

On Wednesday September 17 at 7pm, The Nashaway Chapter of NH Audubon will show the award winning film: Ordinary Extraordinary Junco: Remarkable Biology from a Backyard Bird with Dr. Jeanne-Marie Maher as host. Juncos are little gray songbirds affectionately known as snowbirds, but for scientists who study these birds, the Junco is a rock star. This program takes place in the downstairs theater room of the Nashua Public Library and is free. Registration is not necessary. For more information, contact Richard Maloon 424-5621 or richard.maloon@att.net.

On Sunday, September 21 from 8am to 2pm, the Nashaway Chapter of NH Audubon will visit the Raptor Migration Observatory at Miller State Park, (Pack Mo-nadnock), in Peterborough to watch for migrating hawks. Under the right weather conditions, thousands of hawks can be seen. Bring a chair, binoculars, lunch, and drink. There is a fee to get into the park. This trip begins in Nashua at the Exit 7 Park & Ride, on the hill behind the Fireside Inn & Suites. The public is welcome. To register for the trip or for directions to meet the group at the destination, contact Field Trip Coordinator: Richard Bielawski 429-2537 or rbielawski@mac.com. For info or directions to Observatory, [www.nh.audubon.org/locations/raptor-observatory](http://www.nh.audubon.org/locations/raptor-observatory).

### Open to All Southern New Hampshire Women

The Amherst Area Newcomers Club has been an active social organization in the area for 45 years.

The club is open to all women in the Souhegan Valley, regardless of how long she has lived in the area. We hold monthly general events on a wide variety of topics along with smaller special interest groups which cater to socializing with others of similar interests. The club is a great way to meet new people, get to know the area if you're new, or cultivate a new passion. We currently host interest groups for crafts, knitting, bunco, walking, charity, lunch, poker, healthy eating and golf.

For information and a calendar of events visit: [NHNewcomers.com](http://NHNewcomers.com)

### Amherst Juniors Open for New Members!

Our mission is civic needs, educational advancement and those less fortunate. Our goals are achieved with the assistance and generosity of businesses, organizations and individuals.

We are in need of women with motivation and dedication to join us in growing our mission even further within our surrounding communities.

Please email us at [memberships@amherstjuniors.org](mailto:memberships@amherstjuniors.org). Our website is [www.amherstjuniors.org](http://www.amherstjuniors.org). Call Barb @ 508-783-3686 or Karen @305-3046 for more information. Join Us!

### Photographers Forum Camera Club Competition

Photographers Forum camera club will resume its meetings on Monday, September 15 at 7:15 p.m. at Bishop Guertin High School in Nashua. This is a competition night with three categories: Assigned: "Colors of Summer" Challenge: "Summer in Motion" and Open. All prints should be submitted at 7:00. We are an informal club offering educational programs for all ability levels and the opportunity to meet people with similar interests. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month. Dues are \$35 a year for individuals, \$60 for dual families and \$15 for full-time students. For more information go to [www.photographersforum.org](http://www.photographersforum.org) and [www.facebook.com/photographersforumcameraclub](http://www.facebook.com/photographersforumcameraclub)

## Great Buys at the Fall Rummage Sale September 26 & 27

AMHERST – Looking for great bargains on fall and winter clothing? Would you like to get a head start on Christmas décor that is very reasonably priced? The Woman's Association Fall Rummage Sale is renowned for good quality, neatly sorted and organized merchandise. Clothing, jewelry, toys, games, books, linens, towels, small household items, home and holiday decorations, dishes, vintage and antique items and tools can all be found at the Congregational Church of Amherst.

The Rummage Sale starts at 5:00 to 7:30 pm on Friday, September 26. Hours on Saturday, September 27 are 9:00 to noon. On Friday, items are individually priced. On Satur-

day, the price is \$5 per bag. The rummage sale is a longstanding tradition of the Woman's Association and is a wonderful opportunity to find good and varied merchandise at very reasonable prices. Proceeds from the sale help the WA support the church and local charitable organizations, including the Holiday Toy Store, Anne Marie House, Camp Allen, SHARE, Bridges, NH Prison Ministry and the Goffstown Women's Prison garden.

The Congregational Church of Amherst UCC is located on the village green at 11 Church Street in Amherst. Additional information is found at [www.ccamherst.org](http://www.ccamherst.org)

### Historic Amherst

## Adultery Leads to Jail A Tale of the County Gaol in Amherst

BY KATRINA HOLMAN

Who was the man, convicted of adultery, who was clad in a light-colored serge coat, red waistcoat and new leather breeches when he escaped on a November night in 1774 from the county "gaol" at Amherst in company with a brunette woman, also convicted of adultery, wearing a green gown and red quilted petticoat? What can we learn from their story about local mores and the legal process on the eve of the Revolutionary War for Independence?

### Criminal Conversation

The legal action that landed Molly Foster and Jonathan Fish in Amherst's jail began in March 1773, when Obadiah Parker, a "gentleman," brought a complaint against them before one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of Hillsborough in the Province of New Hampshire in New Ipswich. Lt. Obadiah Parker (1730-1816) was a selectman of Mason, N.H., the founding father of Mason and very active in town affairs. The accusation was that Jonathan Fish of Mason, a married man of "the age of discretion," and Molly Foster, a single woman then residing in Mason and "being of the age of 14 years & upwards," lodged with each other on 20 Nov. 1772 in a lascivious and unlawful manner and had Criminal Conversation, lying in the same bed being both stripped of their common wearing apparel; and also on the next night lodged in naked bed with each other and had carnal knowledge of each other's body; and furthermore on the night of 22 Nov. Molly in like manner as aforesaid did go naked into bed to Fish who was then & there lying naked and continued in the same bed with him the whole night – all which doings were highly criminal against the peace and the good & wholesome laws of the province. (I've merged the two complaints into a single summary. Well, they wouldn't be proper legal documents if they weren't redundant, would they? The originals of these particular documents of Hillsborough County Court Records are now in modern file 8098 of N.H. State Archives; in-

dexed.)

Although their actual ages were not given, the complaint makes clear that the two individuals are old enough to be accountable for their actions. Despite 21 being the age of majority back then, evidently a girl of 14 would have been old enough to be charged and punished for adultery. This was also the age when orphaned girls had a right to choose their guardian, as opposed to having to accept the one appointed by the court, which was the case for children under 14.

The complaint resulted in a warrant for Fish and Foster to be brought before a magistrate along with two witnesses for a hearing, and two days later each was apprehended by a different constable of Mason in readiness for a trial. In April 1773, our subjects, imprisoned for "criminal conversation" with each other, were being held in his Majesty's gaol in Amherst, along with eight other prisoners: seven men for debt (two of them, a shop-joiner and a cordwainer, of Amherst), and a yeoman of Hollis for homicide, as gaoler Amos Fisk reported to the Court of General Sessions of the Peace. The indictments were handed down after a trial at his Majesty's Superior Court of Judicature held at Amherst for the County in September 1774. The jurors concluded that Jonathan Fish late of Mason "not having the fear of God before his eyes but being moved & seduced by the devil ... did consort with one Molly Foster late of Mason, a single woman," and Fish being a married man had carnal copulation with Molly by & with her free will & consent, in breach of his marriage vow & covenant, & then & there Fish & Molly "did commit the crime of adultery against the peace of our lord, the king, his crown & dignity & in evil example to all others in like case offending." Such behavior in the hinterlands of the Colony would surely



Former stone gaol (built 1793 and 1811) & County House (built 1772) in Amherst, N.H. Photo taken 1890 on Old Jailhouse Road, looking north. Courtesy of Historical Society of Amherst.

not disturb the king in England, but that was standard legalese, meaning that it was harmful to society. On the reverse of the indictment document are the notations that Jonathan Fish and Molly Foster, each being arraigned at the bar, pleaded that they would not contend with our Lord the King but submit themselves to his grace. (Hillsb. Co. Court Records, file 8134.)

The sentence was not recorded in the same files with either complaint or indictment (and I ran out of time to further dig in the archives). But I did find the tally of expenses, which were charged to them as losers in court, including the complainant's travel expenses in attendance before the justice and 40 miles travel to April 1773 sessions charged to Molly; and complainant's travel to Sep. 1774 trial and 40 days attendance at court charged to Jonathan. Both defendants were charged the same amount for travel and attendance at the jury trial for 2 days by 3 witnesses. But Molly was charged for additional fees and expenses, including 4 other witnesses' travel and court attendance for one day each and 3 witnesses' travel and court attendance 4 days at the April court session. So Jonathan's court costs amounted to 4 pounds 8 shillings 6 pence and Molly's charges came to 10-11-5. (The inequity should raise feminist hackles!)

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### AMHERST RECREATION DEPARTMENT

4 Cross Rd, Amherst, NH 03031  
603 673-6248  
Peabody Mill Environmental Center  
66 Brook Road  
603 673-1141  
[www.amherstrec.org](http://www.amherstrec.org)

The fields are full again, but fall is so much more than soccer and football.

We hope you find many ways to enjoy this beautiful season!

### Adult Programming

#### The Technical Aspects of Running- Improving your Mechanics

If you have never had any formal coaching or training, you likely do not know how to practice running or understand the technical aspects of the sport that will increase your efficiency and make your runs more enjoyable. This 8 week program will emphasize developing the fundamental elements of running: proper biomechanics, strength, speed endurance, and range of motion. Each week there will be a classroom session to introduce and discuss the elements of running and a weekly technical run. We have 5 signed up now- Join them!

**Who: Adults**  
**When and Where: 9/23-11/13 Tuesdays and Thursdays**

Tuesday runs 7-8:30 and Thursday meetings 6:30-8, Rec office, 4 Cross Rd.

## Fall Programs and Events

### Knitting Classes for Beginners

Those who have taken classes with Sandy Zielie continue to return for her depth of knowledge and gentle manner. This three week series is for the adult who has never knit or the knitter who is looking for support in returning to the craft. All supplies are included.

**NEW** The project for "Beyond Beginners" is the Bus Hat, photo on the website. We have a dedicated group of 8-10 participants of varying abilities- come join us!

**Who: Adults**  
**When: Wednesdays 4:30-6:00 9/10-9/24**

**Where: Amherst Recreation Office, 4 Cross Road**

### NEW Sit and Knit

We will hold two weeks of drop-in knitting for all comers in-between our knitting program. This program is free of charge and open to all 16 and up. Stay for 30 minutes of the whole two hours!

**Who: All 16 and up**  
**When: Wednesday 10/1 and 10/8 4:30-6:30**

**Where: Amherst Recreation Office, 4 Cross Road**

### NEW Tai Chi

We are thrilled to offer two levels of Tai Chi with certified instructor Susan Flanagan. Tai Chi is a low-impact exercise which has been

proven to improve muscle strength, flexibility and balance. You may choose to attend either class once or twice a week.

**Who: Adults**  
**When: 9/9-10/30 Tuesdays and/or Thursdays**

**Tai Chi Easy™ 3:00-3:50**  
**Where: PMEC, 66 Brook Road**

### NEW LOCATION Zumba Gold®

This popular low-impact exercise with Camy Opre will get you moving! For those who love to dance with easy to follow steps and great instruction. Multiple registration options.

**Who: Adults**  
**When: Mondays and/or Thursdays 3:45-4:30 9/8-11/6**

**Where: Clark School Multipurpose Room**

### Family Programming

#### Wet and Wild Fun Runs

The Amherst Recreation Track and Field team will host two dates for their Youth Fitness Challenges. Bring the whole family down for a great experience at beautiful Freestyle Farm! Please see our website for more details.

**Who: Any aged 6 and up**  
**When: Sunday September 14 and Sunday September 28**

Registration begins at 9:30, the 2.5 miles at 11:00 and the 4.0 mile course 12:00

**Where: Freestyle Farm LLC, 188 Mack Hill Road**

### NEW Fall Family Fun Days

Come to PMEC for our new monthly event! Make a craft, learn a skill or just have fun with organized games! New themes and plans every month.

September 27th – Interpretive Trees: come hike some trails on the Joe English Reservation and learn to identify different trees here in NH. We will be collecting different leaves to preserve and take home to help identify trees in your own backyard!

**Who: Families and Individuals**

**When: 9/27 1:00-3:00pm**

Cost: \$4.00 per person, with a family maximum of \$20.00

**Where: PMEC, 66 Brook Road**

### NEW Family Studio Night

It's all about creativity and Imagination at Family Studio Nights at Amherst Middle School! Art Teacher Brandie Pettus will lead these hands-on studio-based workshops where grown-ups and children work together to craft amazingly fun works of art! Grown-ups and children ages 3 to 103 will explore a variety of media and techniques.

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## PARKHURST PLACE

11 Veterans Road, Amherst, NH 03031

### Features:

- Beautiful Country setting
- Non-profit independent living community for Seniors
- Large function and activity rooms
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### Services:

- Regular health screenings and clinics
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- Wellness and exercise programs

### Come Visit Us!

From Wal-Mart in Amherst, head west on 101A (Amherst St) 1 mile. Take right on Veterans Rd. 1/4 mile on right.

For more information and current special incentives, contact Vera at Stewart Property Management, P. O. Box 10540, Bedford, NH 03110 (603) 641-2163

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