

Letters & Opinion

Proposal to Offer Full-Day Kindergarten in Amherst Fiscal Year 2016

To the editor:

A proposal to implement full-day Kindergarten in Amherst will be presented as part of the FY2016 Amherst School District proposed budget at the Amherst School Board meeting on Thursday, November 20, 2014. The meeting will start at 6:30 P.M. in the library media center at Souhegan High School. As part of the information gathering process specific to the full-day Kindergarten proposal it would be greatly appreciated if Amherst residents could access the site listed below to complete a brief survey that solicits community opinions and feedback specific to the topic of full-day Kindergarten in Amherst.

This on-line survey will be accessible until Sunday, November 16, 2014 at: <https://surveymonkey.com/r/Amherstfulldayk>. Your participation in the survey will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Gerard J. St. Amand, Principal
Clark-Wilkins School

Response to: "These Questions Need to be Answered"

To the editor:

On behalf of the Amherst Police Department, I would like to clarify some potentially harmful assertions made by a resident in the last edition of the *Citizen*. In that article, the writer suggested that the citizens of Amherst were paying for intensive, extra policing efforts at the Wal-Mart Superstore. That is simply not the case. As mentioned several weeks ago, the Amherst Police Department recently began utilizing a Field Office located within the Wal-Mart Superstore. The project was the result of a collaborative effort between police department staff and two prominent community business leaders: Tony Tiner, the Wal-Mart Manager; and Jack Reed, a local business owner and an Amherst resident of 30+ years.

The new Field Office provides officers and investigators with an alternate location to complete reports, take meal breaks, make follow-up phone calls, hold meetings, and process low-risk criminal offenders who are detained for shoplifting or other offenses on store grounds.

As outlined in the October 14-27 edition of *The Amherst Citizen*, the intent of the Field Office is to maximize our taxpayers' resources. Specifically, the use of this office keeps our South District patrol officer in their sector to prevent repeated trips back and forth to police headquarters in the center of town, and improves overall police response efficiency to citizen calls for service in the South District. Walmart benefits from the police department's random presence at the store, which in turn will likely further benefit the police department and our town with a reduction in shoplifting and other store incidents which consume valuable taxpayer resources (not merely dollars, but time which is better spent by our officers along our residential streets and within our neighborhoods).

At the very least, the use of the Field Office will reduce the amount of time that our officers spend processing detainees who would otherwise need to be transported back to the police station for booking. Aside from a few standard office and computer supplies from within the existing police budget, the facility cost the town nothing (donated office furniture, donated interior construction, and donated office space...all with no cost to our taxpayers whatsoever). I hope that this clarifies any misconceptions, and I encourage any residents with further inquiries to contact me at 673-4900 or e-mail me directly at mreams@amherstnh.gov

Mark O. Reams
Chief of Police
Amherst



Thank You for 7th Successful Year For The Nike Re-Use A Shoe Drive

To the editor:

Thank you everyone for our 7th successful year for the Nike Re-Use A Shoe Drive! A very big thank you to our new sponsor, John Nolan of Able Moving & Storage here in Amherst! Nike takes the used shoes and recycles the rubber soles into playing surfaces for underprivileged communities. What better way to clean out your closets and give something back in return! Thank you to Souhegan High School and Amherst Middle School for allowing us to collect the shoes in the schools. This was one of our most successful years yet! See you next year and remember to save those used athletic shoes for us!! Drew D'Auteuil, Souhegan 2017

Jennifer D'Auteuil
Amherst

Souhegan Community Council Is Off To A Good Start

To the editor:

The Community Members of Community Council at Souhegan High School have decided to report regularly to citizens this school year. Few residents of our greater school community know about this unique organization, so our purpose is to better inform you who live in the Amherst/Mont Vernon school district. Most schools have what is often called a Student Council, but at Souhegan High School it is truly a Community Council, with multiple stakeholders. It has considerable power.

To begin, the Souhegan Community Council is composed of 48 members. It breaks down as follows: Students - 30 members, plus one. The first twenty students are elected by fellow students at each grade level at the end of the school year; in the fall 10 at-large students are elected by the Council. The one extra is that member of council who is elected Moderator. This position is similar to Student Body President. There are 10 faculty/staff members, plus one. These are elected by fellow members of the faculty and staff; the plus one represents the administration. Community Members are elected by or appointed by the School Board, and there are five community members, plus one. That one represents School Board.

This year Council is off to a good start. The moderator, for the first time in several years, is a young woman, Natalie Nelson, who is quickly learning how to conduct a well-run meeting. The most amazing thing to know about Council, school year 2014 - 2015, is that there is an equal number of male and female members. That's including all 48 members -- 24 and 24. It may be a first.

As the year progresses, we hope to send out many interesting reports. Meetings are usually held each Monday after school. Interested citizens are always welcome to attend.

Respectfully submitted,
Community Members:
Leslie Formby
Rick Katzenberg
Mary Lou Mullens
Jane Nilles
Christine Redd
Nan Stearns



Carved pumpkin outside the Warren's Carriage Road home

A Wonderful Amherst Halloween

To the editor:

A wonderful Amherst Halloween this year and it is easy for me to say, it is one of the reasons I love living in Amherst and specifically the village. It was exciting to see all the creative costumes and in some cases, complete families in a costume theme! I was so impressed with how polite the kids were, remembering to say thank you, and parents also taking time to thank home owners for welcoming trick or treaters. A fun, safe event that brings are community together. Thank you to the Brownie Troop 20066 for collecting and delivering candy to villagers and to the Boy Scouts that set up food sales for hungry husbands arriving straight from work! Thank you also to the Police Department for their presence and keeping us safe.

Marti Warren
Amherst

Statistics on Policing at Walmart

To the editor:

I received the following statistics regarding Amherst policing of WalMart on 101A. It's good news, and a little bit bad, too.

The demands made on the town are far less taxing than I imagined. On the other hand, the numbers are rising steadily and significantly.

From 1013 through 9/30/14, our department responded to 200 various calls for service at WalMart. Giving appropriate weight to the nature of the call (i.e., more vs. less time-consuming), I approximated the total hours spent (x) the average officer wage to arrive at an estimated cost of \$4,431.11.

The majority of that figure (\$3,702.66) is attributable to the 141 shoplifting cases that we handled during that period.

For the sake of comparison, we handled 124 in 2012, 87 in 2011, and 66 in 2010.

William D'Alessandro
Amherst

SCHEDULED MONTHLY MEETINGS

Conservation Com.	2nd Sunday	7:00 p.m.
Cemetery Trustees		
Historic District Comm.	3rd Thursday	7:00 p.m.
Library Trustees	3rd Monday	5:00 p.m.
Planning Board	1st & 3rd Wed.	7:30 p.m.
Recreation Commission	2nd Tuesday of Mo.	7:00 p.m.
Selectmen	2nd & 4th Mon.	6:30 p.m.
Zoning Bd. of Adjustment	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m.
Heritage Commission	2nd Thursday	7:00 p.m.

Contact Town Hall to confirm meeting places and times: 673-6041. Most of the above meetings are held in the Town Hall, 2 Main Street, Amherst.

Library Trustees at the Town Library, 14 Main Street
Cemetery Trustees meet at the Highway Barn, 22 Dodge Road.

*The meetings are open to the public.

Letters To the editor:

The Amherst Citizen is eager to serve as a community forum. We welcome your letters, opinions, and commentaries and make every effort to run them in their entirety. We do reserve the right to edit. The views and opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the position of the staff of *The Amherst Citizen*.

Please direct your letters, views and commentary to the Editor, *The Amherst Citizen*, P.O. Box 291, Amherst, NH 03031-0291, or e-mail your submission to: news@amherstcitizen.com. We will attempt to run your letter as submitted (space permitting) providing it is signed and phone number is included.

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