

Town News

AMHERST TOWN LIBRARY

Amy Lapointe, Library Director
14 Main St., Amherst NH
Phone 673-2288 Fax 672-6063
email: library@amherstlibrary.org
web http://www.amherstlibrary.org
Mon-Thu, 9:30 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Fri & Sat, 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Sun, 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Closing at 5:00 p.m., Nov. 26
Closed Nov. 27 and 28

Children's Programming at the Amherst Town Library

COME TO STORYTIME AT THE LIBRARY!

SESSION 2
Starts Nov. 3 and runs to Dec. 12
(no storytimes Nov. 27 and 28)
Baby Listeners (newborn-2yrs.)
Fridays at 10:30
Caregivers present

Our "baby" group offers an opportunity for babies and their caregivers to gather for rhymes, songs and puppets. Emphasis is on traditional rhymes that reinforce language patterns and provide for parent/child interaction. A simple book or two intended for this age is generally highlighted.

Toddler Time (2 and 3-yr. olds)
Tuesdays at 10:00
Caregivers present

Toddler Time is for our 2 and 3 year olds who are just beginning to discover the joy of books and stories! We mix it up with simple rhymes, songs, and puppets to appeal to a toddler's attention span. Each session concludes with a simple craft for the caregiver and child to create together. Come and join us, we have lots of fun!

Book Bunch (3-6 yrs.)
Wednesdays at 10:00
Thursdays at 1:00pm

Our "Book Bunch" storytime is designed for the longer attention span of the preschool-kindergarten set. These action-packed 40 minute programs include a wide variety of books, finger plays, and songs. At the conclusion of each session, caretakers are invited to come in and assist their children with a simple craft.

NEW THIS FALL!
Pajama Storytime! (ages 3-6 yrs.)
Mondays at 6:30pm

This is a 'Book Bunch' for the after-hours set! Put on your 'jammies' and head on down to the library for some stories and fun. Then it's home to brush your teeth and hop into bed. The perfect program for working families, or for those kids who like a little 'nightlife'! All groups meet once per week for six-week sessions



which run from September until June. No registration is required.

For more information, please call 603-673-2288 and ask for Miss Sarah or Miss Sue. For up-to-date information concerning library programs and events, please visit our website, www.amherstlibrary.org and click on Calendar of Events.

COMING SOON: FAMILY GINGERBREAD HOUSE WORKSHOP

Tuesday, Dec. 9 at 6:30pm
Saturday, Dec. 13 at 2:00pm

Come to the Children's Room for a Holiday Gingerbread-house construction party! We'll provide the space, the graham crackers, the frosting and the music--you bring a bag of candy to contribute to a pot-luck supply. Then, we'll build some beautiful houses!

All ages are welcome with a parent who will help to make the gingerbread house.

Registration is required at www.amherstlibrary.org. Please sign up for one day only.

At this time, both workshops are filled, but there is still room on our waiting lists.

Come-and-Build

Friday, December 12
3-4:30pm

iPads and apps are great, but sometimes, children just need to build something with their own hands! Come on down to the Children's Room, and let your child explore our collection of building materials. We have plastic tubes, marble racers, blocks, cars, magnetic shapes, mobilos, and lots of Legos! Let's see what we can build!

For kids ages 4 and up. No registration is necessary.

Make-it/Take-it Craft

Come to the Children's Room any time during the week of December 15-21 and create a SNOWMAN GIFT BAG!

HOLIDAY STORIES WITH MISS SUE AND MISS SARAH

Tuesday, Dec. 16 at 3:45. Come and join Miss Sarah and Miss Sue for a special holiday storytime. We'll share some stories, sing some songs, and complete a simple craft together. Get in the holiday spirit here at the library! No registration necessary.

It's About Conservation

A Friend Lost

By BRUCE B. BECKLEY
CONTRIBUTING WRITER



It happens. Sometimes we have to end a friendship when the relationship becomes overbearing. That happened this week to a sour gum tree with some ground-line, chain saw pruning. One of these trees behind the house had become too large for the space.

This tree species is also known as tupelo or sour gum in different parts of the country. The fruit, small red berries, is favored by black bear and 30 species of birds. The density of the branches would shelter flocks of little peeps, especially robins, blue jays, and wax-wings but none ever nested there. The leaves, leathery green in summer, treated us to brilliant deep burgundy colors in autumn.

But our backyard friend was cutting off much of the horizon and view of the back lot – it had to go. In its 49 years, the tree had grown to be 40 feet tall and just as broad with tightly interlaced branches. These will work into firewood but the trunk chunks are a different story. It is just this characteristic that led Donald Culross Peattie to write in A Natural History of Trees:

"To the Black Gum, as a timber tree, the pioneers said anathema with every abhorrence. For its fibers are not only interbraided but cross-woven. It is as easy to split across as lengthwise – that is, it can't be done at all, even with a wedge and sledge. As our ancestors were a nation of rail splitters, they left the Black gum pretty much alone. But precise-

ly because nothing can split it, Black Gum was worked into handles of heavy-duty tools. It has been used for gunstocks and pistol grips. It is in favor for scaffolding, chopping bowls, and floors of factories which receive the hardest usage."

The largest and oldest black gum trees in town reside in a Joe English Reservation swamp where the oldest is estimated to be over 400 years old. How our colorful friend came to grow in our dry field is a wonderment. To my knowledge, there are no other tupelo trees growing within a mile of here. One of those little peeps must have enjoyed gum berries for lunch as it traveled and passed the seeds on its way through Grater Woods.

A Grant Lost
The Amherst Conservation Commission, with the support of the Board of Selectmen, applied for a \$135,000 grant from the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program to be used towards purchase of an easement over 82 acres near Joe English Reservation. The LCHIP Board of Directors rejected the grant application. The ACC now will seek other funds to complete the transaction or use and deplete the balance in the ACC Conservation Fund which in past years was supported by land use change fees.

Minecraft Club at the Amherst Town Library

Come and join fellow Minecraft players on Wednesday afternoons 4 - 5:30pm starting November 5th. Meetings will be in the Johnson room. Space is limited to 15, so registration is required.

This will be an adult moderated, child centric club. All ages are welcome, as long as they are willing to cooperate with older and younger members.

Club members will engage in structured and unstructured col-

laborative play, sharing tips and tricks on different topics (to be decided by the group) each week. For example, learn how to:

- Jump super high, or run super-fast.
- Build booby-trapped temples.
- Build Redstone based devices.
- Make a tesla tower.

What secrets will you share with the group?

Players are requested to bring their own laptops with an active Minecraft license. The library has 3 laptops available for player use but these must be reserved in advance. Please indicate if you would like to borrow a library laptop when registering. Please direct any questions to Kim Ayers at 249-9108, kimberlyayers@comcast.net

► Envision the Future of the Village continued from page 1

2. To engage more residents in a strategic planning process for the town.

Some topics to be covered include:

- Roadways, traffic flow, parking, walkability and overall public safety;
- The mix of utilities and how/where they are located/delivered;
- Preserving the historical nature of the area (buildings and landscape);
- Balancing the mix of residences and businesses;
- Attracting more people to the village, the common, and environs.

The first step in this process will be gathering feedback from as many Amherst residents as possible regarding their views of the village (what they like and what changes they might like to see over time). Tools the committee is using to obtain input are:

• A visual preference survey (take it at www.amherstnh.gov/village-plan) that helps people explore and express their views on a number of different aspects of the Village.

• Public outreach sessions (the first public session is planned for Tuesday, December 2nd at the Town Hall from 6:30pm - 8:30pm. Additional public sessions will also be scheduled into January).

• House meetings in which residents across Amherst can invite friends and neighbors to discuss the Village and its future through discussions facilitated by members of the committee. Anyone who would like to host a house meeting should contact Mike Akillian at makillian@amherstnh.gov.

The outreach and information gathering process is scheduled into January, at which point the committee will review the major topic

areas identified and create a number of proposed strategic initiatives to address those topics along with proposed costs and timelines. These ideas/initiatives will then be shared with residents for their feedback.

The committee will use resident feedback to determine which strategic initiatives get combined into a proposed Village strategic plan to be presented to the Board of Selectmen in May or June of 2015.

The Village Strategic Planning Committee meets on the second Wednesday of the month at the Brick School at 6:30pm and residents are invited to attend.

Starting in 2013, the BOS launched a strategic planning process through which all town departments began to tie annual operating plans and budgets to broader strategic departmental plans. The BOS is using the Village planning process as a way to engage more commissions, boards, and committees, as well as residents, in the process.

Amherst Town Library – Information Session:

The Health Insurance Marketplace

AMHERST – Health Insurance Marketplace Information and Open Enrollment Assistance at the Amherst Town Library is being provided through a certified Marketplace Assister from the Servicelink Resource Center for Hillsborough County.

The sessions are scheduled for Tuesdays, beginning November 11, and continuing through Tuesday, February 10 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. in the Archives Room of the Amherst Town Library. These sessions will begin with a formal presentation from 4:00 to 4:30 p.m. by Bokyoung Mun, a certified Market-

place Assister, and follow up with a Q & A session from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. If you are planning to attend the formal educational session, please register. During the Q & A time, "drop-ins" are welcome.

Bokyoung holds a Bachelor's degree in Health Care Management and a Master's degree in Business Administration with a Certificate in Health Care Administration from Plymouth State University. During these scheduled sessions Bokyoung will assist people in completing and submitting an eligibility application for health coverage; assist people with enrollment; re-

view eligibility determinations for enrollment in health coverage; educate people about eligibility and enrollment through the Marketplace; and, assist consumers in applying for exemptions or appeals.

All sessions at the Amherst Town Library are free and open to the public. To register, please sign up by calling 673-2288, emailing library@amherstlibrary.org or by visiting the library website at www.amherstlibrary.org and selecting the "Community Services" tab, then click on drop down "Sign-Up for Programs."

► Leave it Alone continued from page 1

how special our town is precisely because its historic buildings and landscapes are so well-preserved. In Amherst, we don't seem to need "amenities" and "destinations" to have "fun." We have the depth to enjoy and appreciate things for their intrinsic value.

But, how did Amherst manage to remain so well preserved? And, who exactly is it that deserves our thanks for keeping it so?

Amherst was settled 279 years ago in 1735. For only 93 of those years, it was a "shire town," during which it experienced the boom of residential development and industry that came with the distinction of being the capital of Hillsborough County. Amherst lost its shire town status in the 1860s when industry moved to the mill towns of Nashua and Manchester, and was followed quickly by the county courts. We have now been a quiet, residential community for more than 150 years.

In the 1960s, the principal east-west road (Route 101) went right through Amherst's village and traffic was threatening the serenity of our then 100-year-old bedroom community. State representative Orson Bragdon pushed the idea of a limited-access Route 101 bypass. He worked at least a dozen years for its passage, and saw it finally constructed in 1973. Had Orson Bragdon not prevailed, we would have 18,000 cars driving through the village every day!

After the nation's bicentennial in 1976, Robert Crouter, with the backing of the Amherst Historical Society, spearheaded a six-year effort to list Amherst's village on the National Register of Historic Places.

The application was approved on August 18, 1982. Crouter and his team's efforts complemented the earlier adoption of an Historic District by Amherst's voters in 1970, and ensured (they hoped) that the village would forever maintain its historic charm.

There have been threats to the village, too, caused by unfortunate lapses of judgment by our own leaders. For example, in the 1980s, the Selectmen decided the village needed more parking. They proposed paving over the small common directly in front of the historic Col. Robert Means mansion to create a 42-space parking lot! Fortunately, the proposal met with stiff resistance and was soundly defeated by the voters at town meeting.

So, the answer to the above questions is that Amherst's village has been preserved by a mix of good luck to have had "progress" pass it by, and because of the tireless efforts of selfless, caring citizens. But, ultimately, it's the voters that deserve the credit for passing laws to protect the village, and defeating proposals that would have harmed it. Such proposals unfortunately seem to surface about once per generation.

From a development standpoint, ironically, not one of the historic buildings in the village was designed by an architect. Nor were the streets laid out by engineers. Nor were the common areas planned by landscape designers. The best of Amherst's village was designed by its property owners and their craftsmen, and it has evolved incrementally and voluntarily. Consequently, our village does not look

planned and forced. This is what we recognize as the "character" that the Historic District Commission has done such a good job (on the whole) of preserving for 44 years.

There has also never been a "strategic plan" to define a "holistic vision" for Amherst. It would be a conceit to claim that planners could create—let alone improve—a village such as ours through a European-style, top-down, regional-planning approach.

Amherst did, however, experiment once—and very directly—with economic development, but the effort failed. In the 1860s, in a desperate attempt to attract tourists to replace the industry that was fleeing to Nashua and Manchester, Amherst's citizens voted to spend \$4,000 in tax funds toward the \$20,000 needed to build the Amherst Hotel. The hotel opened in 1869, managed to operate for a few years, but burned to the ground in 1876. It was never rebuilt.

Fifty-one years later, in 1927, Lois Lilley Howe, the first woman Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, visited Amherst. Writing later about her visit, she remarked, "The village has the advantage of its defects. The trolley car has avoided it and it has not a tea room, nor a gift shop, nor a hot dog stand. Hence it is that it has kept its charm." It is noteworthy that 87 years later, we could make exactly the same statement.

(Bill Veillette lives in the village. He is executive director of the Northeast Document Conservation Center and a former executive director of the New Hampshire Historical Society.)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
SOUHEGAN REGIONAL LANDFILL DISTRICT

A Public Hearing concerning the proposed budget for the Souhegan Regional Landfill District for the calendar year 2015 will be held on Thursday, December 4, 2014 at 7:00 P.M. in the Conference Room of the Amherst Public Works at 22 Dodge Road, Amherst, NH.

A meeting will be held directly following the Public Budget Hearing for the purpose of voting final approval of the 2015 Souhegan Regional Landfill District budget and to transact any other necessary and appropriate business.

A copy of the proposed 2015 Budget is publicly posted in each participating Town Hall.

Assessments to the participating towns:

	Amherst	Brookline	Hollis	Mont Vernon	Total
2014 Assessments	\$330,477	\$162,272	\$269,120	\$81,311	\$843,180
Proposed 2015 Assessments	\$332,121	\$166,746	\$272,358	\$85,625	\$856,850

Bruce Berry, Chairman
Debra Quinlan, Administrative Assistant

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