Covid Concerns Bring Changes

MEMORIAL DAY OBSERVANCE — "We will not have the traditional Memorial Day ceremony. Hopes are to resume in 2022" — Theresa Grella

FOURTH OF JULY: While we are unable to safely host events on the 3rd of July, including fireworks, or events on the town green on the 4th of July, we are pleased to announce that we will be hosting a "reverse parade" at Souhegan High School on the morning of July 4th from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m... READ MORE

Amherst Elections to Vote on Budgets & Offices, June 8th

AMHERST -- Deliberative Sessions were rescheduled to May 3, 4 and 5 to review and finalize budgets and warrant articles. On June 8th the polls at Souhegan High and Mont Vernon Village School will be open... READ MORE

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LETTERS

28 Letters to the Editor in this Issue!

Amherst Citizen’s "e-newsletter"
Amherst School Board

Update on Amherst School District Ballot Items

To the editor:

With Voting Day fast approaching on June 8th, we wanted to quickly review what is on the ballot for the Amherst School District.

Budget Information: The delay in voting this year has allowed the board to further refine the proposed operating budget. The most important needs of our schools have been clarified and we have been able to evaluate the budget using firmer numbers. After the Board arrived at a proposed operating budget in February, our partners on the Amherst School District Ways Means Committee felt more could be done to reduce costs. That, coupled with ongoing board discussions, led the board to successfully make a motion to reduce the proposed budget by $150,000 at the May deliberative session. This cut was accomplished by eliminating much of the proposed technology budget.

Between the proposed budget and the default is $300,160. The gap between proposed and default includes: two new teachers (salaries and benefits) at AMS for $199,852; $50,300 for increased utilities; $9,642 for new chorus risers (current risers are a student safety hazard); $12,700 for a “School Zone” safety beacon on Jones Rd.; and $34,116 in various other items such as small maintenance repairs at the buildings, security camera and radio replacements, and increased custodial supplies.

We are aware of the significant increase to this year’s default budget. The change is due to items outside our control like special education expenses, rising health insurance costs, and a mandated increase to the New Hampshire Retirement System. This retirement program is provided for in RSA 100-A and is available to any full-time district employee, at the employee’s discretion. As with past years, this budget has been reviewed carefully by elected and appointed officials and is the collective best efforts of everyone involved.

The board voted 5-0 to approve this new proposed operating budget and the Amherst School District Ways Means Committee voted 4-2 to support this budget.

Facilities Warrant Article: Last year, the Board asked voters to begin funding the Capital Facilities Expendable Trust Fund as a separate warrant article. This is part of a multi-year plan to set aside funds to maintain our existing facilities with a relatively stable impact to taxpayers. An expendable trust helps avoid drastic swings in taxes from year to year. This year, you will again see a separate warrant article for up to $500,000. No further taxes will be used to subsidize this warrant article, as it will be funded by any surplus revenue we have left at the end of this fiscal year.

This fund acts as a savings account and will be used to repair or replace big ticket items in our buildings such as roofs, HVAC, parking lots, etc. If, in the future, voters approve significant construction and renovation at any of our buildings, some of this money can be used to offset the cost of a bond. The board voted 5-0 to approve this warrant article and the Amherst School District Ways Means Committee voted 6-0 to support this article.

Additional Warrant Articles: This year, voters will find two additional warrant articles on the ballot. The first is a five-year tuition agreement with Mont Vernon. The new tuition agreement has a new cost distribution formula that makes budgeting easier for both districts. The second warrant article is a five-year lease agreement with the SAU for the Brick School. This lease agreement is the same as in prior years, with the only change stating that the SAU is responsible for all maintenance to the building. The board voted 5-0 to approve these warrant articles and the Amherst School District Ways Means Committee voted 6-0 to support these articles.

Policy Season Starting: We are beginning our annual review of policies. The list of policies to be reviewed can be found on the Policy Committee section of the SAU website.

Remember that you can always reach out to the board regarding any concerns either at public comment or by emailing asb@sauf39.org. All emails to the board are considered public record and added to our board minutes.

Starting Dates and School Start and End Time: The change in school start times approved by the board this spring resulted in the need for impact bargaining and slight adjustments to the school calendar and school end times. The full school calendar is now available on the SAU website. It is important to note that school will now start on August 31st. The start and end times of our schools are as follows: Clark-Wilkins: 7:45 am to 2:25 pm

A.MS: 8:30 am to 3:24 pm

Joint Facilities Advisory Committee Update

May was a quieter time for JFAC, but some important transitional moments in the life of the school construction projects still occurred. The most consequential news was the official hiring of a new architect to lead the project. The school board unanimously approved JFAC’s recommendation to hire Banwell Architects. Based in Lebanon, N.H., Banwell has a long history of municipal, educational, and commercial construction success in New Hampshire and Vermont, and the board is excited to begin our partnership with Banwell. Banwell is currently compiling information, reviewing documents and plans, and further refining costs to begin the next phase of the project this summer. As more news is available - including updated diagrams, costs, etc. - the information will be shared at board meetings and at the JFAC website, JFAC.SAU39.org.

At the JFAC meeting in May, the Clark School exploration subcommittee presented their findings from numerous meetings with myriad community groups in April and a survey shared with attendees and community groups. The committee also presented their findings to the board of selectmen and will also present at the June 15th meeting. The recording of the JFAC meeting is available on the SAU 39 YouTube page and on the JFAC Facebook page at Facebook.com/JointFacilities.

The next installment of the video series from the JFAC public relations subcommittee is being produced and will be available in early June at the same channels mentioned above. The video is focused on the priorities behind a new school project as well as a look at long-term costs of our current facilities and what other options were explored. For further updates, visitJFAC.SAU39.org and Facebook.com/JointFacilities.

Upcoming Meetings:

June 8- Voting Day

June 10- JFAC Meeting 6pm

June 14- Amherst School Board Meeting 5:15 p.m.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Kuznia, Chair
Tom Gauthier, Vice Chair
Terri Behm
Jost Conklin
Ellen Grudzien

MORE LETTERS
SAU 39 and Transparency

To the editor:

It would be a great travesty to our SAU (especially its teachers) to not applaud them for their outstanding commitment to educating our children throughout the last 18 months, otherwise known as covid. Congratulations goes out to those within the SAU and the taxpayers who navigated unchartered waters safely.

Having followed the board meetings in the town of Amherst, I believe I have a good reading of its goals. Hence, priorly one goal is to educate our children, goal two requires the SAU’s integral efforts to be responsible to its citizens. Overall, these two goals can be challenging.

Education is a complex science; many variables and philosophies are in play. Obviously, readers place trust in elected officials, school boards, therefore, relying on them to make choices benefiting residents and educating their children.

However, there exists obstacles to residents who make inquiries and valid recommendations that are ignored. There are critical issues, the foremost being transparency within our school district.

Transparency is a double-edged sword, likened to the devil you know is better than the devil you do not know. But damned if I do and damned if I don’t. The SAU would like citizens to be able to find answers to their questions. Yes, answers to inquiries are offered – masked in rhetoric. A maze/labyrinth can be frustrating.

There are two questions for the SAU that have been ignored: First, what is the “Equity Project” being created in the SHS? Second, why are meeting minutes of the project not being published for the citizens to view?

Right To Know?

Lastly, our citizens, employers of the SAU, demand to have their suggestions heard to benefit the education of its children. If that cannot be done through the board meetings, what do its members propose? The proposition is transparency.

Marilyn Gibson,
Amherst

Amherst Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Supports Warrant Article 32

To the editor:

Amherst’s most popular pedestrian infrastructure project, the Souhegan/AMS School Campus Sidewalk, is on the town ballot this June 8th. Article 32, the “Capital Reserve Fund for Amherst Multimodal Facilities” would raise $75,000 for this project. Both the Board of Selectmen and the Ways & Means Committee have voted unanimously to support this article. The proposed project would seek to construct a “multimodal sidewalk” along Boston Post Road with direct connections to Souhegan High School and Amherst Middle School, providing much-needed infrastructure that would provide a year-round facility for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other modes that are entirely separate from the roadway. It would provide a dedicated space for students and others to access the area safely and without contending with traffic on one of Amherst’s highest-volume roads. The fund enables the town to pursue federal, state and individual grants which often require a local contribution.

Amherst has lost out on grant opportunities in the past because it has not raised such funds. By establishing a fund with this warrant article, our aim is to reduce infrastructure costs as well as our reliance on taxpayers whenever we can in the future, with our priority work towards the Souhegan/AMS School Campus Sidewalk. Amherst BPAC appreciates your consideration in supporting this article.

Respectfully,
Chris Buchanan, Chair
Richard Kaltenberg, Vice Chair
Tom Christensen
George Bower
Christopher Shenk
Judy Shenk
Patrick Daniel
John Harvey
Wendy Rannenberg
Jared Harder
Carolyn Mitchel
Simon Sarris

ASD Budget Up 23% in Five Years

To the editor:

It’s shocking, but it’s true. The Amherst School District (ASD) budget will have increased 23% in five years. In fiscal year 2017, the budget was $24,597,380. The proposed budget for fiscal year 2022 is $30,429,664. This is a 23.7% increase over five years, which averages out to about a 4.3% increase, or a $1,166,496 increase, each year for five consecutive years. Is this acceptable? Is this sustainable? Has your household income increased 23.7% in the past five years?

I have served on the ASD Ways and Means Committee for the past four years. For the record, this letter is a reflection of my own views only, not of the Ways and Means Committee as a whole. This year’s proposed budget is $1,443,547 larger than the current budget, which is an increase of 5%. I have decided not to support the proposed ASD budget this year. I believe that this disturbing trend of large budget increases year after year needs to stop.

You may have heard that increased costs to the NH Retirement System (NHRS) is one reason that the budget increase is so high this year. This is true. What you may not have heard is that nearly every ASD employee is a member of NHRS. This is very unusual. This is very unusual because it is very expensive. Many NH school districts limit the number of employees eligible for NHRS membership as a way to keep costs down. Unfortunately, ASD chooses not to do this.

You may have also heard that the proposed budget is a 1% increase to the default budget calculation amount. This is true as well. But a percentage point above default should not be used as some sort of benchmark or validation that spending is being kept within reasonable limits. I understand that making significant budget cuts can be difficult and unpleasant, but that is part of the school board’s responsibility when budgets become too large.

I believe ASD is a good school district, and that the ASD school board has good ideas and intentions. But the school board needs to do a better job of reigning in spending.

Jeff Candito
Amherst

Recreation Commission Supports Article 33 – BUCK MEADOW

To the editor:

As you head to the polls on June 8, please consider voting YES on Town Warrant Article 33. It is a multi-year (3) request of $50,000 for matching grants to go towards building two full size rectangular fields and one smaller practice field at Buck Meadow. There are future plans to install a playground, picnic areas, and other amenities in this facility. This warrant article is for fields only. Through the thoughtful planning and work of the Recreation Director and staff, a grant of $40,000 was awarded from the Bean Foundation to assist in updating the Clubhouse. The Recreation Department plans to offer space for meetings, gatherings, and senior programming in this space. As part of a strategic funding plan, the Recreation Commission supports this thoughtfully crafted and long-term plan for Buck Meadow.

Sincerely,
Patrick Daniel, Chair
Wendy Rannenberg, Vice Chair
Stephen Amani
Katie Button-Holt
Maria Daly
Lisa Eastland
Shannon Gascoyne
Paul Levesque

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Sincerely,
Patrick Daniel, Chair
Wendy Rannenberg, Vice Chair
Stephen Amani
Katie Button-Holt
Maria Daly
Lisa Eastland
Shannon Gascoyne
Paul Levesque
Panasiti Thanks Town for Support

To the editor:

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve you as one of your selectmen for 9 of the 24 years I have been a resident of Amherst. As my term expires, I would like to say “thank you” to the many people (too numerous to name) who have nurtured, supported and voted for me during my selectman tenure. Amherst is absolutely one of N.H.’s best towns in which to live and raise a family.

Successfully managing a town requires hard work, dedication and great volunteers. If someone asked me if I had any regrets or if I would do anything differently, then how would I answer? I could honestly say that of all the decisions made and all the budget items discussed, I can only think of one thing I wish I would have done differently. I do wish I would have showed more support for our Planning Board.

Up to now the Planning Board has been chosen by the Selectmen. Going forward, board members will be elected by our townpeople. I honestly believe that is the wrong choice and one that is not good for Amherst.

The Planning Board is one of, if not, the most significant board in any town. When we selectmen appoint members to the board, we base our decisions on that person's ability and performance, present and past, concerning planning and town development. It should not be a popularity contest based on personality or politics. It should solely be based on experience, talent, and their abilities to understand and interpret city, town and state regulations.

This past year, due to several resignations, the selectmen had to reorganize the Planning Board. We chose William Stoughton, Christopher Yates, Arnold Rosenblatt, Tracie Adams, and Christy C. Houpis. I am pleased to say, each of these members will be running for board positions in our June election.

So please join me in supporting these candidates for the Amherst Planning Board:

- William “Bill” Stoughton, Christopher “Chris” Yates - 3 years term
- Arnold Rosenblatt - 2-year term
- Tracie Adams, Christy C. Houpis - 1 year term

Each of these individuals are experienced planning board members who will continue to properly apply the planning rules and regulation. They are respectful of others and will be attentive to the views of applicants, abutters and all others who might appear before the board.

Again, Thank you all for your support and for your consideration of these candidates for Amherst Planning Board.

Reed Panasiti
Amherst

Rosenblatt Has Experience and Understanding of Planning Board

To the editor:

Please vote for Annie Rosenblatt for a two year term on Amherst’s Planning Board.

A long time member, Annie has the necessary experience and understanding of the town and it’s zoning ordinances to be an outstanding member. As the chairman this year, she skilfully guided a relatively inexperienced board through some complex applications, ensuring that the rights and concerns of both the public as well as the applicant were respected and upheld.

She is the only candidate who has an extensive institutional knowledge of the planning process. Please cast your vote for him. He will serve the town well.

Cynthia Dokmo
Amherst

Paris Will Be an Asset on School Board

To the editor:

I am pleased to write in support of Victoria Parisi for the Amherst School Board. I have had the pleasure of knowing Victoria for nearly 10 years and I know her to be an outstanding advocate for all things centered on the children of Amherst.

She is organized, well respected, fair minded, very knowledgeable and has years of involvement in a great variety of school related activities. She will be a great asset to the Amherst School Board. Please vote for Victoria Parisi.

Sue Ruggiero
Amherst

Re-Elect John D’Angelo to BOS

To the editor:

As Town elections draw near I ask you to trust me once more with another term as selectman. It is an honor and a pleasure to have served as your selectman for the past three years. Thank you!

I am pleased with the progress we have made on controlling the budget, consolidating the Fire and EMS departments, refurbishing the police station, rebuilding our bridges, broadening recreation offerings for all age groups, acquiring the Buckmeadow Conservation and Recreation area (using zero taxpayer dollars), and developing and following a seven-year road improvement plan.

We have made progress on returning some of the excess funds in the town’s unassigned balance to the voters, but there is more work to do, here and elsewhere. I remain committed to openness and transparency in town budgeting and operations. I look forward to the next three years of progress.

I hope I can count on your support on June 8th.

Thank you!
John D’Angelo
Amherst

Danielle Pray Seeks Seat on Board of Selectmen

To the editor:

Hi, my name is Danielle Pray and I am a candidate for a position on the Amherst Board of Selectmen.

My husband, Steven, and I relocated to beautiful Amherst just over 10 years ago with our two children. After 20+ years working in the legal field, I became a stay at home mom to our two young children. I am a law school graduate and also continued my legal studies and earned a Master of Laws degree.

I am running for Selectman to continue my dedicated service to Amherst. I first began volunteering in Amherst through an appointment on the Capital Improvements Plan Committee in 2014. This committee reviews and makes recommendations to the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen on priorities for funding of requested capital improvement projects. I have served on this committee for 6 years. In 2018, I was appointed an alternate member on the Zoning Board of Adjustment and then, in 2019, elected by Amherst residents as a regular member. I currently serve as Vice Chair. I am also presently a member of the Ways & Means committee, having served two years in this position which reviews the town budget as proposed by the Selectmen.

Through my education, knowledge, and experience in town affairs, I have the qualifications to continue serving Amherst as a Selectman. My familiarity with the town’s budget through my work on the Ways & Means committee has prepared me for the most important role of the Board. I have had the pleasure of regularly attending all Selectmen meetings for over two years now and the knowledge learned along the way has prepared me to seamlessly make the leap from citizen to Selectman.

In addition, from my experience on the zoning board and my legal knowledge, I have become wholly equipped to manage and understand the land use and zoning policy issues that have recently challenged Amherst. I will work with the land use boards in town to advocate for updating our zoning ordinances to reflect the vision outlined in our upcoming master plan. Amherst is a unique town in many ways and I am an advocate for maintaining these beneficial characteristics for the enjoyment of all residents.

My volunteerism doesn’t begin and end with town events and happenings. I have also served in various roles in local charitable and youth organizations. I will bring a strong service-oriented perspective to the role of Selectman coupled with the education, knowledge and experience required to succeed in this position.

Please visit my website at www.DanielleforAmherst.com to view my goals and priorities and contact me via email at pray4ht@gmail.com with any issues or concerns you may have. I respectfully ask for your vote on June 8th and look forward to serving the residents of Amherst.

Thank you,

Danielle Pray
Amherst
Parisi for Amherst School Board

To the editor:

In our annual town elections, every vote counts. Your vote has the power to shape the future of our town and schools.

I am writing in support of Victoria Parisi for Amherst School Board. I have known Victoria for the past seven years. We met as committee chairs within the Amherst PTA and have since worked together serving our schools and town in a variety of ways.

As PTA President for four years, I watched Mrs. Parisi lead the organization successfully. Under her leadership we experienced an increase in membership and an increase in opportunities for our schools through banner fundraising campaigns. She helped shine a spotlight on the need for increased social and emotional programming for parents and students, using her position to bring programs to both. Her leadership resulted in action.

As a member of the Amherst Ways & Means Committee, and most recently the Chair, I have watched Mrs. Parisi work for an orderly and transparent budgeting process. She consistently advocates for budgets that are appropriate to meet the needs of all learners, while taking into account the burden on the taxpayer.

As Vice Chair of the SAU 39 Joint Facilities Advisory Committee, she is actively doing the work of engaging with residents to arrive at public school infrastructure solutions that will meet the needs of our town.

A few key things that I have observed over the years: Victoria Parisi is prepared. She always does her homework and arrives prepared to meetings with ideas and solutions. She also remains open to other points of view. She listens. She synthesizes facts, opinions, and data and takes decisive steps to make things happen. She is action oriented. She is not only a capable leader but also a collaborative team player. She does not pander to any particular party line or special interest, she works hard for all and gets things done. She is an independent and critical thinker.

I believe that the Amherst School Board will benefit greatly from someone with her keen ability to listen, analyze, ask critical questions, and get results.

I hope you will join me at the polls on June 8 to support this qualified and capable candidate.

Kindly,
Shannon Gascoyne
Amherst

Victoria Parisi – Candidate for the Amherst School Board

To the editor:

I am writing to endorse Victoria Parisi for the Amherst School Board. In my position as Office Manager at Wilkins Elementary, I had the opportunity to work with Victoria for several years as both an engaged parent, and her in her role as PTA President. In my opinion, Victoria is the perfect candidate for Amherst School Board. She is creative, smart, professional, and clearly passionate about our schools, and our students. Victoria has consistently displayed the leadership qualities I strongly believe would benefit the families and children of Amherst.

Please join me in supporting Victoria for the Amherst School Board on June 8, 2021

Kathy Johnson
Amherst

Victoria Parisi is Committed to Our Community

To the editor:

I’ve come to know Victoria Parisi over the past years and in the past two years I’ve had the opportunity to work alongside Victoria as part of the Joint Facilities Advisory Committee.

What I’ve observed about Victoria over the years is her commitment to our community. From her countless volunteer activities such as a girl scout troop leader for the past 7 years. Victoria also served as the PTA President and most recently her service as Chair of the Amherst’s Ways and Means Committee. A few phrases I would use when describing Victoria Parisi: Dedicated to our Community, Results Oriented, Objective, Balanced and Fiscally Prudent.

Victoria and her husband Mike were drawn to Amherst because of the town’s strong history for quality education. From the moment they moved to Amherst, they’ve been DEDICATED to our COMMUNITY. The Parisi’s have always given of their time and resources freely and have become deeply respected members of our community.

Victoria has proven to be RESULTS ORIENTED which can be seen by the increased revenue and membership of the Amherst PTA, while maintaining their many great traditions. Her OBJECTIVE and BALANCED approach strengthened relationships between the PTA and administration. Under Victoria’s leadership, the PTA awarded thousands of dollars in the form of grants to Amherst teachers and most recently funded our greatly needed outdoor classrooms.

As a community member and leader of the PTA, Victoria has directly influenced the Amherst School Board on some of their key decisions related to community needs for a social and emotional curriculum. As a three year member of the Ways and Means Committee, Victoria has a deep understanding of how the community tax revenue is spent and all the interconnected obligations of Amherst. Victoria knows first hand that our schools are the largest expense for our community and she is equip to ensure your tax dollars are wisely administered.

Victoria’s diversity of experience would be a valuable asset to ensure our schools remain FISCALLY PRUDENT and better understand school budget impacts to the community at large.

I will vote for Victoria Parisi on June 8th 2021 and I’m excited to see how she will continue to positively affect our community!

Sincerely,
Brian Coogan
Amherst

Support for Parisi

To the editor:

Please join us in supporting Victoria Parisi for the Amherst School Board. Victoria has been very community focused since moving to Amherst. She is open-minded; willing to engage on many levels, and puts in the time to understand the issues in depth. While Victoria has 2 kids in the Amherst School System, she is not afraid to point out our deficiencies and advocate for change. We believe she will be a welcome addition to the ASB who will advocate for the education of the kids, hold the Administration accountable as needed, and keep the taxpayers in mind during the process.

Bob & Jennifer Grunbeck
Amherst
Silvia is a Candidate for Planning Board

To the editor:

I am running for the 2-year term on the Amherst Planning Board. I am asking for your vote because I am dedicated to the town of Amherst and, if elected, will represent our citizens vigorously in a fair and collaborative manner.

My family and I have made Amherst our home for twenty years. From the outset, we have been committed to our community. Over the years, I have volunteered on numerous town and state boards, charitable organizations and coached youth sports.

You can have confidence I will serve the town well for three reasons. First, my education and work experience in engineering, investments and real estate has prepared me to evaluate, examine and render decisions on complex issues that require a broad perspective combined with in-depth knowledge.

Second, I will take an objective approach to every project. I will make decisions by understanding the facts, the relative laws and ordinances and the unique character of Amherst, including its rural nature and historic significance.

Third, I will work collegially with all parties. I will listen to fellow board members, stakeholders and citizens to inform my decisions. Thank you for considering my candidacy for the 2-year term on the planning board. I am confident that I will help Amherst remain an excellent place to live.

Sincerely,
Thomas Silvia
Amherst

Vote for Bill Stoughton

To the editor:

My name is Bill Stoughton and I’m running for a three year term on the Planning Board, and I respectfully ask for your vote.

Last year, I was appointed by the Board of Selectmen to be the Conservation Commission member on the Planning Board.

I’ve worked hard over the past year to ensure that developers follow the rules, especially those that protect our water. I worked with town officials, engineers, lawyers and my fellow Planning Board members to revise our stormwater regulations so that we can preserve water quality and replenish our wells and aquifers with clean water.

I’ve also worked to ensure that developers are providing real benefits to the town when they make promises to get more building lots. When they have done so, I have supported their applications. When they have not complied with our rules, when they have not balanced development with preservation of the rural look and feel of our town, I have voted to deny their applications, as our ordinances require.

My background helps make me an effective representative for you. I am retired after a career that began as a Naval officer and nuclear engineer. I monitored shipyards building our nuclear submarines to ensure the reactors they installed worked properly. After my military service, I became a lawyer dealing with highly regulated and complex government contracts, representing clients across the country.

As a Planning Board member, I’m comfortable getting into the details of the highly technical hydrogeological studies, stormwater reports, and traffic studies that are part of developers’ applications. And I’m equally comfortable listening to developers’ lawyers and asking the hard questions that need to be asked.

This year we are electing six Planning Board members instead of just the two we will elect in future years. The new Board must be effective from its very first meeting. I ask you to consider experience when voting for all of the Planning Board vacancies. We are fortunate to have candidates who have served effectively on the Board, come prepared, act respectfully and professionally, and have the best interests of the town in mind.

It is a privilege to serve our town as a member of the Planning Board. I respectfully ask for your vote on June 8 so I can continue working for you.

Bill Stoughton
Amherst

Vote for Rosenblatt’s Leadership and Stability

To the editor:

I am running for the Amherst Planning Board for a two year term because I want to continue to contribute to the town. I have lived in Amherst for 33 years and have served on the Planning Board for over twenty years including serving as Chairman for the past year. During this past year, which has been a particularly challenging one for a number of reasons, I have tried to provide some level of leadership and stability to the Board.

I hope to continue to serve on the Planning Board and ask for your vote. Thanks.

Arnie Rosenblatt
Amherst
To the editor:

I have known Victoria for a long time and can attest to her service and dedication to this town. She has been involved with the schools ever since she moved to Amherst and has worked tirelessly in many roles, such as PTA President, Chair of Ways and Means for Amherst School District, JFAC Vice chair, Chairman of Souhegan 2.0 Sub Committee , and the Clark School Exploration Committee Chair. I think it speaks volumes when a candidate volunteers so much time and effort to something they care about, and Victoria cares about our schools. She gets her point across clearly, she’s not afraid to ask questions, and she can make tough decisions, especially when they are fiscally responsible. Local knowledge is so important, and she knows our schools inside and out, as well as many of the folks associated with them.

I think Victoria Parisi would be a fantastic asset to the Amherst School Board.

Lisa Montesantito
Amherst

Victoria Parisi for Amherst School Board

Souhegan High Student Supports Victoria Parisi

To the editor:

My name is Bailey Burke and I am a senior at Souhegan High School. I would like to submit a letter expressing my support for Victoria Parisi’s candidacy for the open position on the Amherst School Board. Below is my statement on Mrs. Parisi’s candidacy. I have known Mrs. Parisi for six years as an active leader in the Girl Scout community and a trusted member of the Amherst PTA. I believe that she is the best candidate for the open position on the Amherst School Board because she always puts the needs of others first.

She is dedicated to making the Amherst community a better place which is evident in her involvement with the Amherst School District Ways and Means Committee and the SAU 39 Joint Facilities Advisory Committee. I admire her dedication to helping others and I encourage you to cast your vote for Victoria Parisi on June 8th as I believe she will be a valuable addition to the Amherst School Board.

Sincerely,

Bailey Burke
Amherst

Parisi Has Served Amherst in Many Ways

To the editor:

We are fortunate to have someone running for our open Amherst School Board seat with the level of dedication and caliber of Victoria Parisi. Victoria has served our town in various capacities over the years, including Ways and Means, PTA, and Facilities Advisory committee to name a few.

Her platform and stance on key issues is available in prior letters to the editor and on her page, and I highly recommend checking it out. Victoria does not come to the board with an agenda- she will listen to the parents, students, administrators, and taxpayers to understand different points of view. She is incredibly collaborative, and goes into situations with an open mind. She is action-oriented, but in a thorough and thoughtful way. She will bring a conversation that is stuck "admitting the problem" to an actionable focus, and is not afraid of change when change is needed.

Being both a taxpayer and a parent, I want someone on the School Board that will have the long-term interests of not only our school, but also the long term interests of our town and our taxes. Simply put, Victoria is frugal. Frugal can be defined many ways, and I am specifically using the definition: A frugal person is someone who cares about the cost AND quality of an item. Frugal people practice conscious spending. She was part of the Ways and Means Committee that did not support the school budget as originally proposed (a bold move), but our taxpayer wallets should be thankful for the thorough nature of the review that led to the recommendation (and the ultimate reduction of the school operating budget). This is not to say that Victoria will only vote for the least costly option; I am supporting her because I know her vote will be a thorough, well-researched, and balance perspective on the long term value of any expenditure.

See you at the polls!

Kimberly Koch
Amherst

Support Victoria Parisi for Amherst School Board

To the editor:

I would like to encourage our town to vote for Victoria Parisi for the one open position on the Amherst School Board on June 8th. I have personally worked with and seen Victoria immerse herself in so many aspects of the educational system for several years. She has served as PTA president, Amherst School District Ways and Means Committee Member and Chair, and on the SAU 39 Joint Facilities Advisory Committee. She has repeatedly showed her dedication to the school system by her consistent voluntary attendance at most Amherst School Board meetings over the last 5 years. As a fellow mom, I have witnessed her efforts and opinions regarding quality education, while also balancing realistic budgetary constraints. Unfortunately, due to many of the school districts’ aging facilities, the important and hard decision of how to fix the failing infrastructure needs to start now. Victoria is knowledgeable and committed to figuring out the most viable long-term plans for our community, children and educators. I am thankful Victoria is stepping up to support the Amherst Community by running for the one open seat on the Amherst School Board. I trust Victoria to make crucial decisions that will balance educational needs and fiscal responsibility.

Shelley Quinn
Amherst
Support for Danielle Pray

To the editor:

Our delayed town election is coming up June 8. It is late this year, but no less important. Do not pass up this opportunity to cast a vote for Danielle Pray for Board of Selectmen. Danielle is all about service to the community and doing what is best for Amherst families. She has already donated countless hours of her time to improve our town — Zoning Board, Town Ways and Means, Capital Improvement Plan Committee, as well as serving as President of the Amherst Lions Club, an organization dedicated to community service. She knows the issues affecting our town and I mean in detail. Thanks to Danielle I know more about planning and zoning rules and regulations than I ever did before. She is an excellent communicator and collaborator and a strong proponent of open and transparent government. These are all the qualities that we need on our Board of Selectmen. Please join me in casting a vote for Danielle Pray on June 8.

Mark Vincent
Amherst

Danielle Pray for Selectman

To the editor:

I fully support Danielle in her candidacy for Board of Selectman. She has proven over the last years that she cares about Amherst and has given countless hours of service in town. She is a member of the Zoning Board of Adjustments and of Amherst Ways and Means and serves as Chair of the CIP committee. She is hardworking, knows Amherst, understands budgets and RSAs, and is wonderful at community outreach, which she has done by informing citizens of town meetings and events and keeping everyone up to date on many issues. I believe Danielle can offer creativity and fresh ideas, and we would be lucky to have her as a Selectman in Amherst.

Lisa Montesanto
Amherst

Support Danielle Pray with Your Vote

To the editor:

I wanted to encourage my fellow neighbors in Amherst to vote. I would also like to ask you support Danielle Pray with your vote for Amherst selectman. I have known Danielle for several years. She is a mom, an involved, active member of local civic groups and a person who cares about Amherst and its future. She has served in a number of local committees and groups. She has the smarts, leadership skills and integrity to bring to our town’s challenges going forward. Please support her with your vote.

Bill Loscocco
Amherst

Please Vote Danielle Pray for Selectman

To the editor:

I hope you will join me and many others who will be voting for Danielle Pray for a Selectmen seat on June 8th. Danielle has a unique mix of dedication to the town, interest in how it works and a steady desire to put 100% into her efforts.

Danielle has been an incredible public servant on both the Zoning Board of Adjustment and on Ways and Means for some time now. In addition to those duties, she somehow finds time to attend many other meetings to include Selectmen, Planning Board and others. Faithfully attending any one of these meetings on a regular basis is a big commitment. Attending many of these meetings on a regular basis is a huge task! Danielle does this.

The Selectmen play the biggest role in town of any board in setting how much each of us pays in property taxes. Danielle’s experience on Ways and Means convinces me that she will be careful and thoughtful in this regard if elected. Now is not the time to elect a candidate that does not have any town budgeting experience. Fortunately, Danielle Pray has that experience.

Danielle knows a lot about how this town works. She is ideally and uniquely qualified to serve on the Board of Selectmen. Hopefully, you will agree with me that her track record of involvement in town affairs, her years of experience and her thoughtful consideration of issues makes her an excellent candidate for Selectmen.

Tom Quinn
Amherst

Danielle Pray Will Be an Asset to the Amherst Select Board

To the editor:

Her experience on Amherst boards- Zoning Board of Adjustment (2018 to the present; current Vice Chair), Amherst Ways and Means Committee (since 2019) and the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Committee (since 2014; most recently as Chair) coupled with the dozens and dozens of hours she’s spent attending Selectmen and Planning Board meetings gives her the experience she needs to hit the ground running. She’d be the only lawyer on the board, allowing for clear and direct collaboration with town counsel when necessary. Amherst needs her and John D’Angelo to be elected to the 2 open seats. With all due respect to the young, new-to-town candidate, Amherst needs experience in this position. Additionally: It would be nice to add a woman to the all-male board. Regardless, she’s clearly being the best candidate. Please join me in voting for Danielle.

Sincerely,

Jim Hendrix
Amherst
Let’s Keep Amherst, Amherst

To the editor:

Over the next several years, Amherst’s future will be shaped by the decision making of key boards. Whether we retain all that we love about this special community will depend particularly on the actions of our Planning Board.

Planning Board members will confront a potential raft of development – with the prospect of hundreds of new homes built on land that contributes to our rural character. If the legal processes and deliberations under which development can occur are mismanaged or ignored, Amherst may well devolve into an over-built, congested suburban sprawl of the sort we too often see around us.

Also, the Planning Board will be leading the community-wide creation of a ten-year master plan that, at a minimum, will need to reflect our collective vision for Amherst and the initiatives and investments in land use to achieve that vision.

Successfully fulfilling these responsibilities will depend upon Planning Board members who:

- Understand and are rigorous in applying the statutes under which they operate;
- Engage effectively with one another and with all their constituents;
- Think clearly – both tactically and strategically – in balancing the rights of residents with those of developers;
- Subordinate their personal preferences for the greater good; and
- Engage residents and businesses in shaping and supporting a vision for Amherst’s future.

Fortunately, there are several Planning Board candidates running for election in March who bring all of these capabilities to the table. They are:

Tracie Adams, Christy Houpis, Tom Quinn, Arnie Rosenblatt, Bill Stoughton, and Chris Yates.

They have already demonstrated their abilities and commitment to the town through their effective service on the Planning Board and/or the Master Planning Steering Committee.

We believe their service on the Planning Board will be key to keeping Amherst Amherst.

We will definitely be voting for them. We hope you will, too.

Respectfully,
Carol Akillian, Mike Akillian, Caroline Boyd, Cyndi Carr, Jim Hendrix, Angela Horner, Nye Horner, Elisa Lutz, Steve Lutz, Dawn McGuire, Frank Montesanto, Lisa Montesanto, Lauren Primmer, Lou Primmer, Heather Ramm, Robert Ramm, Jamie Ramsay, Scott Stimpert, Theresa Stone, Doug Tricario

Tom Quinn Runs for Planning Board

To the editor:

My name is Tom Quinn and I am running for the Amherst Planning Board next month. I have lived in Amherst for approximately 35 years. I grew up here and am now raising a family here. Amherst has been, and still is, a special place to me.

Most of my lifetime work experience and education has revolved around construction and real estate. I grew up in a family construction materials business, earned a civil engineering degree and currently assist with running the family businesses and several other real estate related entities. I am also a licensed NH real estate agent. All of these experiences are very helpful in understanding the topics and details that come before our Planning Board.

I became involved in town development issues and Planning Board issues a few years ago when several very large, high density developments were proposed near me. While I am not against development, over the years of living here I have seen firsthand how too much development too fast can have some negative impacts. Some of my bigger concerns relate to growing class sizes in our smaller and older elementary schools, increases in traffic and decreases in pedestrian safety, open space and, more generally, on the rural nature of our town.

Over the past two years, I along with many likeminded friends in town, have achieved much to help solve what we saw as problems from the outside of the process. We:

Pushed for, and the BOS finally implemented, impact fees on development. Developers now help pay for capital improvements that will be needed to accommodate the growth in town going forward.

We passed the citizen petitions last year that eliminated the Integrated Innovative Housing Ordinance in town – the single greatest contributor to, and enabler of, these large high density projects.

We passed a petition to change the Planning Board from an appointed board to one that is elected. It was, and is, hoped that an elected Planning Board would be a more accountable board.

The Planning Board we have today is different than the one we had two years ago. It is now a much more thoughtful board in my opinion. The current members that are running for election have my full support. I hope to join this board next month to lend specialized skills and provide a resident focused viewpoint. If you agree with me that smaller, less impactful development may be better development for the neighbors, the town and the local environment, I would ask for your vote on June 8th.

Regards,
Tom Quinn,
Planning Board Candidate 2021
Amherst
What Does a Changing Climate Mean to the Wildlife in NH

I took in my bird feeder in early April after reading a Facebook post that someone had seen the “Amherst Bear.” I left out a small piece of suet, which I wanted the woodpeckers and bluebirds to finish up. Unfortunately, the bear got it first — all gone for the season. The bear easily took down the suet feeder. Fortunately, my post was not copied.

Black bears typically hibernate from mid-December to the end of March or beginning of April, sustained on the stored-up energy in their bodies until the warm spring temperatures jostle them awake. There is some debate, among scientists about whether or not bears truly hibernate. Some scientists prefer to describe their winter sleep as “thetargy” or “torpor.” The bodies of so-called “true” or “deep” hibernators, such as rodents or bats, drop to near-ambient temperatures and their metabolic rates plummet to almost nothing within a few hours. The light sleep of bears is likely a survival mechanism, as bear dens can be in surprisingly exposed locations: scratched into hillsides, in rock crevices or hollow trees, under brush piles or downed trees, or even in open areas of the forest floor. Sleeping bears seem to be able to sense the presence of intruders, and they are able to wake up very quickly in order to defend themselves.

Climate change has changed over time, and plants and animals have adapted, evolved, or gone extinct as a result. The big concern about our current changing climate is the rapid rate of this change. Scientific data has shown that this is due to our reliance on fossil fuel products that release greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere when burned. Climate is one of the factors that influences plants and animals (including humans) that live on Earth.

Climate change over time will affect all the ways we enjoy the natural resources of New Hampshire, such as wildlife watching, hunting, fishing, fall foliage viewing, and other types of nature tourism; thus, we need to adapt as well.

The rapid rate of change observed in our climate is already affecting plants and wildlife, including bears, in New Hampshire. There are already noticeable changes such as increased flooding, extreme fluctuations in precipitation (including rain, snow, and ice events), shifting habitats, and species that are unable to adapt. Biologists are keeping a close eye on wildlife as these changes unfold. Some of these species include moose, brook trout, and North Atlantic right whale. The White Mountain Flirtihya, a butterfly that lives only in the high altitudes of the White Mountains, as the name implies, is one of the most sensitive species affected by changing climate. Predicting what wildlife population numbers and assemblages will be in the future in New Hampshire is difficult but scientists from NH Fish and Game and Vermont’s Center for EcoStudies are just two organizations studying the effect of climate on wildlife.

Unfortunately, with a shift in climate in the Northeast, scientists and wildlife professionals are seeing cases where black bears are waking up earlier, sometimes before adequate food sources are available. Without reliable food sources in the wild, bears then turn to residential areas, looking for food at feeders and garbage cans. Researchers at the Hubbard Brook Research Foundation, UNH, examined 100 years of winter temperature and precipitation data collected from weather stations across the forested regions of northeastern New America, revealing we are losing the cold, we are losing the snow, and winters are getting shorter. Trends are bad news for winter outdoor recreation in the backcountry, and also bad for wildlife and their habitats.

Shifting climate not only impacts bears but birds, too. Overall, roughly one third of NH’s breeding species of birds are in decline. Reasons for declining population numbers are many, an overarching trend continues to be habitat loss, particularly for shrubland and grassland birds, as well as for many forest species of birds that migrate to the tropics during the winter months. Climate change causes changes in sea level impacting our seaweed, coastal birds, increased loss of habitat from fire affects forest birds and changes in vegetation as climate warms affect marsh and wetland birds. Invasive species, either animals or plants, driven by warming climate can endanger the biodiversity of our insect predators and invasive plants are not conducive for shelter or food for birds. Lakes and ponds can become polluted through excessive runoff and nitrogen from lawn fertilizers, affecting not only fish but waterfowl as well.

Bears enjoy honey from bees. Birds support the production of flowers and plants which bees pollinate to make the honey. It’s all connected.

When the climate changes, bees are impacted as well as bears and birds. Bears are an essential component of agriculture and without them many fruits and flowers simply would not be in existence today. Multiple organizations in NH including 4-H, have projects to help us both better understand the bee population in NH and what can be done to assure bees and their habitats stay protected, productive and healthy.

Many people want to create pollinator-friendly gardens to support numerous kinds of native bees, as well as honey bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and other pollinators, including birds. Planting a diverse mix of flowering native plants that provide a sequence of blooms from early spring to late fall will have the largest impact. Even a small patch of the right flowers can help, as it adds to the larger landscape in which the pollinators live and search for food.

Bears, birds, and bees need our help. The Amherst Conservation Commission has developed and implemented a Forest Management Plan that proposes solutions to assure we can have thriving wildlife populations and continue to see our bears, birds and bees. Individuals and families can help by carrying out one or more of the Acts of Green. The list below of Acts of Green is not a requirement. You can choose to try one of these changes at any time. One is not more important than another. Taking action is what counts. You can do it at your own pace but try one. Practice coexistence and avoid attracting bears into neighborhoods, with food items, especially bird food and excess garbage.

Learn more about Amherst Warrant Article # 22: Open Space Acquisition Bond. This article, to be voted upon by the town on June 8, 2021, would authorize the Town to appropriate up to $6 million to purchase land and easements for conservation purposes to protect and limit the kinds of future use. This warrant article has the support of the Board of Selectmen and the Town's Ways and Means Committee. Over 91% of respondents in a recent Amherst Master Plan Survey supported preserving open space.

Support state parks and federal land like the White Mountain National Forest to assure that habitats are conserved. These lands are prime habitat for bears.

Advocate for “smart growth,” balanced development with natural resource protection by considering the size and shape of the development, the density of the development, housing choices and/or its connectivity to abutting lands, all of which can lead to sustainable communities, assuring open space and continuous natural habitats.

To learn more, you can go to one of these resources: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wYK556Fb0A
https://www.nature.org/EN/US/State/NE/state-capital/ne-ri-nature-economy-reads-ne-year
https://www.nature.org/EN/US/State/NE/state-capital/ne-ri-nature-economy-reads-ne-year
https://www.nature.org/EN/US/State/NE/state-capital/ne-ri-nature-economy-reads-ne-year
https://www.amherstconservation.com
https://www.amherstconservation.com
Recreation

Amherst Parks & Recreation

Active Seniors
- Adult Co-Ed Softball Pick Up League
- Bocce Ball Summer Throw Down!
- Stearns-Davis Community Garden

Activities for All Ages
- Baboosic Lake Town Beach-Information, Beach/Boat Passes, and Boat Storage 2021
- Stearns-Davis Community Garden

Adult Classes
- Strength and Power Group Exercise Classes

Outdoor/Environmental Ed @ PMEC
- School Education at PMEC
- Virtual Field Trip to PMEC - For Educators & School Groups

Youth Seasonal Sports
- Amherst Rec Lacrosse
- Baboosic Lake Swim Team
- Baseball, All-Stars
- Baseball, Spring
- Cheer Camp
- Softball, Spring
- Tennis Lessons for Youth

Baboosic Lake Happenings
- Baboosic Lake Swim Team
- Baboosic Lake Town Beach-Information, Beach/Boat Passes, and Boat Storage 2021

Camps
- Camp Babuck
- CIT's: Counselor in Training Program
- Mini Camp at Outdoor Discovery
- Outdoor Discovery Summer Camp

Camps, Specialty
- Cheer Camp
- Eagles Basketball Camp
- Girls Empowerment Week
- Next Level Basketball Camp for Boys (gr.3-9)
- Tweens Without Screens

Adult Sports and Fitness
- Adult Co-Ed Softball Pick Up League
- Bocce Ball Summer Throw Down!
- Paddleboard Yoga
- Strength and Power Group Exercise Classes
Life Scout Thanks Community for Eagle Scout Project Support

Amherst Lion Club has donated in honor of the 44th Amherst Citizen of the Year. The Amherst Lions are the local service club for the 44th Amherst Citizen of the Year. These individuals should maintain good citizenship through their yearly endeavors and actions to help make Amherst the great community it is today. This year the award will be presented virtually. We look forward to live streaming the presentation. More info to follow.

(Nominee Form)

Signature of Nomination:

Address of Nomination:

(At least two letters of recommendation encouraged)

[Image of a certificate]

Amherst Lion Club 2021 Amherst Citizen of the Year

Nomination Form

The Amherst Lion Club is excited to announce the 44th Amherst Citizen of the Year. These individuals should maintain good citizenship through their yearly endeavors and actions to help make Amherst the great community it is today. This year the award will be presented virtually. We look forward to live streaming the presentation. More info to follow.

Last year due to the pandemic, the 2020 Citizen of the Year was awarded but not presented. It will be awarded along with the 2021 award.

Past Citizen of the Year honorees are:

1987 Dr. Lawrence Zampelli
1988 Dr. Raymond Curran
1989 Mr. Frederick G. Boggs
1990 Mr. Joseph W. Sullivan
1991 Mr. Robert L. Cregan
1992 Mr. Philip M. Oldenburg
1993 Mr. Richard C. Williams
1994 Mr. John F. Joseph
1995 Mr. John P. Reilly
1996 Mr. Richard J. F. Lawrence
1997 Mr. Armand B. Mitchell
1998 Mr. Thomas J. Black
1999 Mr. Arnold F. Blum
2000 Mr. Robert M. Sturtevant
2001 Mr. John F. Joseph
2002 Mr. John C. Ross
2003 Mr. James A. H. Smith
2004 Mr. John F. Joseph
2005 Mr. John F. Joseph
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2020 Mr. John F. Joseph
2021 Mr. John F. Joseph
2022 Mr. John F. Joseph

AAUW Scholarships to: Molly Atkinson and Delaney Facayes

American University of Women
Southern NH Branch News

American University of Women’s National board promotes excellence through education in various fields.

Molly Atkinson, daughter of Kristin and David Atkinson of Amherst, will be attending Barnard College in New York City majoring in Neuroscience and Cognitive Science. Delaney Facayes, daughter of Michelle and Michael Facayes of Amherst and recent graduate of the University of Virginia, will be attending the University of Virginia School of Medicine.

The American University of Women is a non-profit organization that supports women and girls in education and professional development.

AAUW Scholarship: How to apply:

1. Gather all required materials and meeting a deadline.
2. Submit the completed application and any required supporting documents.

AAUW Scholarship Deadlines:

- Fall 2021: October 15
- Spring 2022: April 15

For more information, visit the AAUW website:

www.aauw.org

Scholarship Application:

www.aauw.org/scholarships

AAUW Scholarships are awarded based on academic merit and financial need.
Wood Flower Fundraiser

There’s a rumor in our town that makes me think, “the way things have to help us stop and remember. A wood flower planted in your garden or placed in a vase can do that. Remember loved ones—vets, classmates, and special days—be inspired or uplift your own work or projects.”

The Amherst Lions Club Wood Flowers Fundraiser is back by popular demand. We offer the original Garden Giants flowers, plus Daisy and lily with choice of colors Red, Blue, White, Yellow, plus new colors Maroon, Coral and Pink. The flowers include evergreen and unique flowers and the bag is 8 x 10 inches.

This year we are adding an Amherst Flag and a cute lodging in your garden should you desire it. A 4x6 sided and a 3x5 sided. The lodging is $10. There will be a baggage area at the rear of the building on Indian Road.

The proceeds from the sale of our wood flowers, flags and lodging will directly benefit the Amherst Lion’s Club. The proceeds from the sale of the flags and flowers will benefit the Lion’s Club. The proceeds from the sale of the flags will benefit the Lion’s Club.

Help us to continue to fund local charities. To order online or to mail your orders to our website, please visit our website at amherstlionsclub.org/flowerfundraiser.

Thank you for supporting the Amherst Lion’s Club Charities.

JUNE 2021
Candidates Running for Office
Town of Amherst and School Districts (SAU39)

Town Elections
June 8th 2021
Amherst, NH

* Incumbent
** Currently an appointed member

2 Selectmen – 3 Yrs
John D’Angelo* Raymond N. Kong
Danielle Pray

1 Town Treasurer – 3 Yrs
Elizabeth Overholt*

1 Cemetery Trustee – 3 Yrs
Lisa Eastland*

2 Library Trustees – 3 Yrs
Nancy T. Baker*
Michael Enriquez

2 Zoning Board Members – 3 Yrs
Timothy Kachmar
Douglas H. Kirkwood*
Tracy Lee McNirl

1 Trustee of The Trust Funds – 3 Yrs
Lori Mix*

2 Planning Board Members – 3 Yrs
William R. “Bill” Sloughton**
Craig Urquhart
Christopher “Chris” Yates**

2 Planning Board Members – 2 Yrs
Peter Hansen
Robert Kula
Thomas Quinn
Arnold Rosenblatt**
Thomas Silvia

2 Planning Board Members – 1 Yr
Tracie Adams**
Eugene C. Anctil
Christy C. Houpis**

School Elections
June 8th 2021
Amherst & Mont Vernon, NH

* Incumbent
** Currently an appointed member

1 Amherst School District Board Member – 3 Yrs
Victoria Parnis
Jason White

1 Souhegan Cooperative School Board Member (Amherst) – 3 Yrs
Tony Labranche
John Glover*

2 Mont Vernon School Board Members – 3 Yrs
Sarah Lawrence
Peter Eckhoff

1 Mont Vernon School District Moderator – 1 Yr
Peter King

1 Mont Vernon School District Clerk – 1 Yr
Autumn Grebe

1 Mont Vernon School District Treasurer – 1 Yr
Lyn Jennings

Reverse Parade Planned for The 4th Of July Celebration:
While we are unable to safely host events on the 3rd of July, including fireworks, or events on the town green on the 4th of July, we are pleased to announce that we will be hosting a “reverse parade” at Souhegan High School on the morning of July 4th from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.

Read the Committee’s Statement here

Click any Ballot Image to view/download a combined PDF file
Warrant Article 22, Open Space Acquisition

**ARTICLE 22: Open Space Acquisition Bond**

What is this? Faced with increasing development pressure and a desire by town residents to protect open space, water resources, and the rural aesthetic of the town, the Amherst Conservation Commission (ACC) has proposed a $6 million bond warrant article to enable purchase and conservation of open space in town.

How important is acquiring open space to maintaining the rural feel of Amherst? The amount of protected open space in southern New Hampshire towns is strongly associated with the “rural feel” of each locality. The most recently released data provides a snapshot of Amherst in comparison to several of its neighbors:

- Bedford: 8% conserved
- Merrimack: 9%
- Amherst: 14%
- Hollis: 32%

**Warrant Article 32 - Pedestrian Safety for Souhegan & AMS Students - June 8th Election**

The Town of Amherst's most popular pedestrian infrastructure project, The Souhegan/AMS School Campus Sidewalk, is on the town ballot this June 8th. Article 32, the "Capital Road "Rebuild for Amherst Multimodal Facilities" would raise $75,000 for this project. Both the Board of Selectmen and the Ways & Means Committee have voted unanimously to support this article.

The proposed project would see a multi-model sidewalk in wider sidewalks, without legal restrictions on bicycling along Forest Road, with direct connections to Souhegan High and Amherst Middle School, finally providing much-needed infrastructure for student access. This route is already heavily utilized by students, athletes, and visitors of our schools and recreation facilities, but we do not have infrastructure currently exists for that use, those who walk along this route do so in the street, competing with large volumes of fast moving cars along Forest Road.

**Verification of Voter Checklist**

New Hampshire law requires that the Supervisors of the Checklist for the Town of Amherst will hold a session for re-registering voters who have not voted in the past four years must re-register to remain on the checklist. The Supervisors are sending notice letters to these voters at the address the voter provided when registering.

The Supervisors of the Checklist for the Town of Amherst will begin the session for re-registering voters who have not voted since April 1, 2017, accepting applications for new voter registration, accepting requests for the correction of the checklist, and or change of political party affiliation on: Date: Monday, June 14 2021 Time: 7:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Location: Amherst Town Hall – Clerks Office

Voters may check party affiliation online: https://app.sos.nh.gov/Public/PollingPlaceSearch.aspx

Applicants for registration who possess proof of identity, age, citizenship, and domicile should bring that proof when they come to register. Qualified applicants who do not possess proof or who do not bring proof with them may still register if they sign an affidavit attesting to their qualifications for identity, age, and citizenship, and or domicile. Applicants may also register during normal Clerk office hours.

Virginia (Teague) Early

AMHERST – Virginia (Teague) Early died peacefully Tuesday, May 4, at the age of 72, from lymphoma at her Amherst home with her family. Born on New Year’s Day 1949 in Lowell, MA to John F. Teague and Mary Q. (Sullivan) Teague, “Ginny” was the youngest of three daughters and raised in Lowell’s Belvidere neighborhood.

A 1966 Academy of Notre Dame graduate, Ginny received a teaching degree in 1970 from Lowell State College. At college, she met her future husband, Robert E. Early, at nearby Lowell Technical Institute. The two were engaged on Christmas Day 1971 and married on Aug. 5, 1972. They moved to Amherst, NH, in 1975 and raised three children.

Ginny’s teaching career spanned 45 years in various capacities and retired from Nashua’s Infant Jesus School in 2015. After retirement, Ginny and Bob traveled in their RV, wintered in Florida and explored the country. She enjoyed line dancing, reading, traveling and playing with her grandchildren. Ginny was a devout Catholic and a long-time parishioner of St. John Neumann Parish in Merrimack, where she was an active member of the SJN Faith Sharing Group.

She is survived by her husband of 48 years; son Robert J. his wife Anna and daughter Julia of Burns ville, NC; son Brian J. his wife Juliet and children Casper and Cleo of Kittery, ME; daughter Deborah M. Dionne, husband Timothy and children Ryan and Emily of Amherst, NH; two sisters and a brother-in-law Mary Bethel Bater of Littleton, MA and Patricia and William Kern of Springfield, MA; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Please consider donating to the St. John Neumann Food Pantry or charity of choice in her memory.

SINCEGIVE: Friends and family are invited to a memorial wake, on Monday, May 10, from 4 to 7 p.m., at the Smith & Heald Funeral Home, 63 Elm St., Milford, and to a funeral mass at St. John Neumann, 708 Milford Road, Merrimack, NH on Tuesday, May 11 at 11 a.m. Burial will follow at Meadowsview Cemetery on Foundry Street, Amherst. To share a memory or offer a condolences, please go to www.smith-heald.com

Joseph J. O’Connell

AMHERST – Joseph J. “Pat” O’Connell, 75, longtime resident of Amherst, NH died peacefully on May 28, 2021 at Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Boston, MA, after a short illness. He was born in Brooklyn, NY on April 20, 1946, the son of the late Joseph J. and Eleanor H. (Kroeger) O’Connell.

Pat was a graduate of Conard HS in West Hartford, CT class of 1964. He attended Southern Connecticut University for 1 year before enlisting in the U.S. Marine Corps. He served in the Vietnam War, was awarded the Purple Heart, and honorably discharged with the rank of Sergeant in 1969. Upon his return home, he earned his bachelor’s degree from New England College, graduating Magna Cum Laude in 1973.

He and his wife, Bonnie, lived in West Hartford, CT for 2 years before making their permanent home in Amherst, NH for the past 43 years.

Pat was employed as a sales representative with National Manufacturing for most of his career. He was exceptionally loyal and dedicated to his profession, earning multiple awards and recognitions for his outstanding sales and performance. Pat loved his customers, and made many lifelong friends throughout his years with the company.

Outside of work he was an avid sailor and enjoyed many years of cruising with his family along the New England coast. Winter was filled with family ski trips in NH, Maine, and Utah. His other interests were coaching youth hockey and girls lacrosse. He loved to support high school football, and attended most of the local games. Pat was a communicant of St. Elizabeth Seton Church, Bedford, NH.

Besides his loving wife of 45 years, Bonnie (Boudou) O’Connell of Amherst, NH, he is survived by his daughter, Maura O’Connell (Sweeney) and her husband, Jordan of Arizona, and two granddaughters, Londyn and Emery.

There are no calling hours. A memorial mass will be held on Friday, June 4th at 11am at St. Elizabeth Seton Church, 190 Meetinghouse Road, Bedford, NH. In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be made to Catholic Charities NH at www.cc-nh.org. Arrangements are in the care of Smith & Heald Funeral Home, 63 Elm Street, Milford, NH. To share a memory or offer a condolences, please go to www.smith-heald.com

Wayne Oliver Lynch

Wayne Oliver Lynch, a former resident of Amherst, NH for many years, passed away in his home in Exeter, NH on May 18, 2021. He was 82 years old.

He was born in Springfield, MA in 1939, the oldest of seven children of William E. Lynch and Constance Weeks.

Wayne graduated from Springfield Classical High School and from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst in the class of 1960. His work career spanned five decades in executive positions, ending at Mattel Toys.

He was very active in Amherst, NH town affairs for many years serving on the town Ways and Means Committee and on the Planning Board. He is survived by his wife, Stevia; his daughter, Kara; his son, Stephen; daughter-in-law Susan, and granddaughter, Iris. He is also survived by his sisters, Beverly Frisby, Bonnie Taylor, Charlotte Hurston, and Jocelyn Pope – all of Springfield, MA.

He will be deeply missed by all.

Funeral arrangements are private. A memorial service will be held at a later date. Donations may be sent to St. Jude’s Children’s Research Center: 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105 or online.
Class of 2021 Has Their Prom!

AMHERST – Despite the many challenges this past 14 months, the Senior Class of 2021 made the best of every situation. They still held many of their school traditions and activities, from playing team sports, to enjoying Souhegan's Fang Fest (aka Spirit Week), Senior Proms, and of course – remote in-class learning. And now, it's YOUR TIME to celebrate! Email your Prom and Senior Portraits to: news@amherstcitizen.com for our Graduation Edition coming in June...

SAU #39: Dana Curran Appointed as Dean of Faculty Effective 7/1/21

AMHERST & MONT VERNON, NH – May 6, 2021 – Superintendent of Schools, Adam Steel, appointed Ms. Curran at the Souhegan Cooperative School Board Meeting on May 4, 2021. The Souhegan board unanimously elected her for a two-year term with a starting salary of $110,000.

Curran joins Souhegan High School with several years of World Language Program Director and teaching experience in the Bedford Public Schools of Bedford, MA.

Adam Steel, Superintendent of Schools for SAU #39:

“Dana stood apart from the other candidates due to her excellence as an educator, and also for her ability to connect and build relationships with students and colleagues. Ms. Curran’s leadership as the new Dean of Faculty will add to the already strong and innovative team at Souhegan High School.”

Dana Curran on her appointment:

“I recognize this opportunity to serve the students, faculty, and community of Souhegan High School as an extraordinary moment for me as an educator. The school's commitment to an academic and social culture that is founded on respect, trust, and responsibility is inspiring. I look forward to being a part of an ongoing tradition of excellence while we innovate and continue to support the mission of student-centered learning.”

Mike Berry, Souhegan High School Principal:

“Dana Curran is a strong educator and has proven that she is an impactful school leader. As we look to improve our craft at Souhegan to provide a quality educational experience for students and families, it is clear that Dana’s experience, skillset, personality make her an appropriate and exciting match for Souhegan High School.”

Caroline Mastergeorge, Junior at Souhegan High School:

“Dana seemed the obvious choice as she is outgoing and demonstrated what I would see as the unique Souhegan personality. [In our second meeting,] not only did she remember me but she remembered one of my passions, Best Buddies. Dana will fit very well in this community and will build beautiful connections with not only the faculty but the students.”
Local Student Graduates from Fordham University
NEW YORK CITY, NY — Kirk Coleman, of Amherst (Souhegan High School Class of 2017), graduated with her B.A., in cursu honorum, cum laude, from Fordham University, on May 22, 2021.

Local students named to University of Utah Spring 2021 Dean’s List
SALT LAKE CITY, UT – The University of Utah congratulates more than 8,700 students who were named to the Spring 2021 Dean’s List. To qualify, students must earn a GPA of 3.0 or higher in at least 12 graded credit hours during any one term.

Local students named to the Spring 2021 Dean’s List include: Quade Bell of Amherst, whose major is listed as Pre Chemistry BS.

SNHU Announces Winter 2021 President’s List
MANCHESTER, NH — It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Winter 2021 President’s List. The winter term runs from January to May.

Full-time students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above are named to the President’s List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits; undergraduate day students must earn 12 credits in fall or spring semester, and online students must earn 12 credits in either E1W & E2W, E3W & E4W, or EWS & EWE.

SNHU Announces Winter 2021 Dean’s List
MANCHESTER, NH — It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Winter 2021 Dean’s List. The winter term runs from January to May.

Full-time students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 are named to the Dean’s List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits; undergraduate day students must earn 12 credits in fall or spring semester, and online students must earn 12 credits in either E1W & E2W, E3W & E4W, or EWS & EWE.

Nazareth College Student Amber Schaffer of Amherst Ears Spring 2021 Dean’s List Honors
ROCHESTER, NY — Nazareth College is proud to announce that Amber Schaffer of Amherst, NH has been named to the dean’s list for the spring 2021 semester. Schaffer is studying Public Health.

A student’s grade point average must be at least 3.5 or above, and they must complete 12 credit hours of graded work that semester in order to be included on the dean’s list at Nazareth.

University of New Hampshire Announces May 2021 Graduates
DURHAM, NH — The following students graduated from the University of New Hampshire in Durham over the weekend of Saturday, May 22 and Sunday, May 23, 2021.

Student who received the honor of summa cum laude graduated with a GPA of 3.85-4.0; students who received the honor of magna cum laude graduated with a GPA of 3.65-3.84; and students who received the honor of cum laude graduated with a GPA of 3.50-3.64. Students are only graduated after the Registrar’s Office has certified that all degree requirements have been successfully completed. A traditional, in-person commencement ceremony will be scheduled at a future date yet to be determined.

FROM AMHERST:
Alison Bowman graduated with a MEd degree in Secondary Education
Faith Freman graduated Summa Cum Laude with a BS degree in Nursing
Thomas Robinson graduated with a BS degree in Wildlife & Conservation Biology
Michael Mancini graduated with a BS degree in RMP: Program & Event Management
Matthew Ladd graduated with a BSEE degree in Electrical Engineering
Peter Ahonen graduated with a BS degree in Health Management & Policy
Ely Marciano graduated Summa Cum Laude with a BA degree in Philosophy
Shawn Latulippe graduated Summa Cum Laude with a BA degree in English/Journalism
Trace Hennes graduated with a BS degree in BusAd: Finance
Jonathan Arment graduated Cum Laude with a BSME degree in Mechanical Engineering
Norman Gagnon graduated High Honors with a AAS degree in Forest Technology
Christine Landwehr graduated with a EDS degree in Educational Admin &Supervision
Ethan Rottloff graduated with a BA degree in Econ: Global Trade &Finance
Kate Maniglo graduated Magna Cum Laude with a BA degree in Business Admin: Accounting
Brendan Cray graduated with a BS degree in RMP: Program & Event Management
Grace Mortimer graduated with a BA degree in Theatre: Design/Theatre Tech
Emily Watson graduated with a BS degree in Biology
Seth Gunter graduated with a BS degree in Business Admin: Finance
Emma Rockstrom graduated with a BS degree in BusAd: Accounting
Kristen Cooley graduated with a BA degree in English
KeeIan MacKenzie of Mont Vernon, NH graduated Cum Laude with a BA degree in Spanish
Jacob Claire of Mont Vernon, NH graduated with a BS degree in BusAd: Finance

Local Students Graduate From College of the Holy Cross
WORCESTER, MA — Holy Cross celebrated nearly 750 bachelor of arts degree candidates at its 175th Commencement held in person on Friday, May 21 on the College’s Fitton Field. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, a career diplomat and Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, delivered this year’s address virtually to the Class of 2021 and received an honorary degree.

Seth Learned, of Amherst was among the students receiving degrees.

Bob Jones University Students Named to Dean’s List
GREENVILLE, SC — The following students are among approximately 665 Bob Jones University students named to the Dean’s List for the Spring 2021 semester. The Dean’s List recognizes students who earn a 3.00-3.74 grade point average during the semester.

Madeline Peters, a Freshman Interior Architecture and Design major from Amherst, achieved this distinction.

Bob Jones University Students Named to President’s List
GREENVILLE, SC — The following local students are among approximately 665 Bob Jones University students named to the President’s List for the Spring 2021 achievement during the Spring 2021 semester:

Emily Hubbard, a sophomore public health global health major from Mont Vernon. To qualify for the President’s List, students must earn a 3.75 or higher grade point average for the semester.

Local Students Graduate From College of the Holy Cross
WORCESTER, MA – Holy Cross celebrated nearly 750 bachelor of arts degree candidates at its 175th Commencement held in person on Friday, May 21 on the College’s Fitton Field. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield, a career diplomat and Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, delivered this year’s address virtually to the Class of 2021 and received an honorary degree.

The following local student earned his degree: Seth Learned, of Amherst, 03001

Local Students Graduate From St. Lawrence University
CANTON, NY — More than 450 members of St. Lawrence University’s Class of 2021 earned their degree following the University’s Commencement ceremonies, held Sunday, April 18, at Newell Field House in Canton, New York.

Emily R. Grudzen from Amherst, NH, graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor of Arts degree in environmental studies. English Grudzen attended Souhegan High School.

Sophia Alusya A. Nikolentz from Amherst, NH, graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in environmental studies.

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Daland Memorial Library

Library Reopening

The Library Trustees have updated the current service plan and opened the library building to full capacity. Masks will still be required in the building for ages 2 & up for the protection of our smallest patrons who are yet to be vaccinated. Masks are not required outside the building or under the programming tent. The trustees will continue to review and update the policy as needed.

Tails & Tales: Summer Reading Program Registration Day

Saturday, June 5th 8:00am-1:00pm Meet us under the white tent to sign the kids up to spend all summer with Miss JoKn having fun at the library. Register your children ages 0-18 for a summer full of crafts, programs, local field trips, and READING! Log all the books you read this summer and you could win awesome PRIZES! Registration required. Space is limited for some activities. Come early for the best selection! Can't make registration on Saturday, June 5th? No worries! Stop in the library during open hours to sign the kids up until Friday, July 2nd. Free giveaway to all registered children!

Teens & the Arts

The library is offering a special 5 week arts program for this summer. Teens grades 7th grade and up are invited to register to work with a different Mont Vernon Artisan each week to learn about the art of jewelry making, pottery, landscape painting, woodworking and illustration. Teens can sign up for as little as one or all of the classes. Each class will produce a finished art project. Space is limited.

Registration opens on Saturday, June 5th from 8am-1pm in person at the library. Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the Jack and Dorothy Byrne Foundation and funds administered by the NH State Library and the Institute of Museum Library Services. Questions? Call Miss JoKn (673-7890).

Adult Book Clubs

The Daland Memorial Library offers 4 Adult Book Clubs. There is no attendance requirement for either group – attend meetings that are of interest. Books are available to borrow at the library. New members always welcome!

If you have any questions about book clubs, please call the library at 673-7888.

Morning Book Discussion Group – Meets the 1st Monday each month at 10:00AM by ZOOM. The group reads a mix of contemporary fiction and non-fiction titles.

Monday, June 5th: “Cruising to Safety” by Wallace Stegner

Just the Classics Book Club – Meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM by ZOOM. This book group is focused on reading classic titles selected by group members.

Thursday, June 17th: “Midsummernight” by George Eliot

Black Books Matter – Meets the 2nd Thursday of the month at 6:30 PM by Zoom. This is a newly formed book club that will focus on books by black authors and race relations.

Thursday, June 10th: “The Vanishing Half” by Brit Bennett

Cookbook Club Summer Edition – Pick up a copy of the original “Barefoot Contessa” by Ina Garten, choose a recipe to cook, and join us for a potluck meal under the tent in the backyard of the library on Monday, June 21st. The library will set the table and take care of all the dishes. Bon Appetit!

Election Day Bake Sale

The Friends of the Library invite you to treat yourself after voting on Tuesday, June 8th in the Mont Vernon Village School MPR. Look for our open table starting at 7am, full of individually packed cookies, bars, quick breads and cakes. Proceeds to benefit the Daland Memorial Library.

Thank you for your support.

Mont Vernon Residents Asked to Support Warrant Articles

At this year’s Mont Vernon Town Meeting on June 12th, Mont Vernon residents can support progress toward both a new library and a new cemetery. Warrant Article 02 would allow the Select Board to finalize design of the public access way for both projects and Warrant Article 03 would contribute to the Library Capital Reserve Fund created in 1988.

The Town purchased the tract near Carleton Pond in 1997 as the future home of both the library and cemetery. Article 02 would allow the Select Board to follow up on work undertaken by the Library and Cemetery Trustees and finalize the design of the public access way. Having a final design will position Mont Vernon to take advantage of federal infrastructure grants that may result from bills under consideration in Congress.

Article 03 would contribute to the Library Capital Reserve Fund (LCRF) established in 1988, reducing the amount of any future bond. The Sophia G. Daland Trust (Trust) has once again generously committed to match the appropriated funding. The Trust has supported the current library for more than a century - funding its construction AND paying for all routine maintenance and utility costs. In addition to contributions to the LCRF valued at over $200k, the Trust has pledged to contribute an additional $855K to the new library project. Once the new library is completed, the Trust will continue to pay for all utilities and maintenance for the new building. As you may be aware the town purchased the existing building in 2018 to serve other town administrative purposes since the new library is complete.

The Mont Vernon Library Charitable Foundation is conducting a Library Capital Campaign to further minimize future town funding needed to complete the library building project. The Foundation already has raised over $1M toward the project. For more information, visit https://www.mvlc.org/

See you all at Town Meeting!

Sincerely,
Mont Vernon Library Trustees
Cindy Raspiller – Chairperson

Mont Vernon Cemetery Trustees
Lou Springer – Chairperson

The Sophia G. Daland Trust
Anne Dall – Chairperson

Summer Session: Hooks and Needle

The Friends of the Library will resume hosting the handwork group called Hooks and Needles for adults on Friday June 11 from 12 pm to 2 pm "under the tent". This is an opportunity for adults from beginners to the experienced to work on their projects, to share their handwork with others, or to share favorite patterns/web sites/or local material resources. Folks in attendance may be able to get help with handwork stumbling blocks. This drop-in, informal opportunity will occur on the second Friday of each month. The remaining summer session dates are July 9 and August 13. Fall session dates will be publicized at the end of the summer.

The library will open for patrons at 2 pm for additional handwork resources or reading/movie resources to check out.

If your project is collecting dust dig it out and join us! For further information contact the Daland Library Director: 603-673-7888 or dalandlibrary@comcast.net