
The Hermon Connection

Vol. 22 Issue 5 • September 2016

Hermon Heights Little Free Library Celebrates Literacy

Article & Photo By: Jess & Anthony Francis



Jess and Anthony Francis held a Grand Opening celebration for their Little Free Library on Sunday, August 7, and the library is now open to the public. "We want people to know that our Little Free Library belongs to the whole community," said Jess. "It's our hope that by having the first Little Free Library in Hermon, we can bring some more joy, a little more connection and a whole lot more books to our community."

Some of the best features of the Hermon Heights Little Free Library include:

- * No library card required
- * No due date: you can keep the book forever or gift to a friend
- * You can replace the book you take with a different book, perhaps one your child has outgrown or you have already read
- * It is a smaller version of a regular library, allowing you to choose a book quickly without getting overwhelmed with hundreds of book titles
- * You can visit as often as you like

Both adult and children books are housed in the Hermon Heights Little Free Library. The "librarians" didn't want to forget about their four legged visitors either - those patrons that are walking their dogs can hook them on the libraries dog hook - and they keep the dog treats freshly stocked. Visitors to the library are encouraged to sign the guest book with their name, a note, where they are traveling from, etc.

You may visit the official Facebook page: www.facebook.com/hermonhtslittlefreelibrary to stay current on theme weeks and contests. If you wish to donate to the LFL, contact the library through their Facebook page or simply drop off your donation at the Francis residence.

The Little Free Library nonprofit organization has been honored by the Library of Congress, the National Book Foundation, and the American Library Association, and Reader's Digest named them one of the "50 Surprising Things We Love about America."

Contact: Jess Francis

Telephone: 207-745-0701

Email: jess@lifehiccups.com

Town of Hermon
PO Box 6300
Hermon, ME 04402
207-848-1010
Fax: 207-848-3316

The Hermon Connection

If you have a news story or article for publication in the next edition of *The Hermon Connection*, please send it to:
scottwl@hermon.net
Deadline for submissions:
October 20, 2016

A Special Welcome
to our new
Town Manager,
Howard Kroll.

Mr. Kroll will start on
September 12th

FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

My tenure as your Town Manager will be ending on August 31, 2016. I have been working to complete several projects that I would like to close before I leave. The most important of these projects is the construction of a sidewalk and road improvements for a section of Route 2 from the Billings Road to the main entrance to Danforth's Plaza. After four years, the Town has finally received approval to seek bids for the project. There are three grants that make up the funding for the project. The first is a Federal Sidewalk grant in the amount of \$583,000 that will be used to construct the sidewalk and its amenities. The local match is 20% or \$116,600. A second grant from the Maine Department of Transportation titled Municipal Partnership Grant totals \$627,566 which requires a 50% local match or \$313,783. These funds will be used to improve the road shoulders and install a closed storm water drainage system. The third grant is from MDOT identified as a locally administered project in the amount of \$140,000. The grant requires no local match and will be used to improve the travel section of the roadway. The estimated construction cost for all three facets of the project is \$1,096,606.09. Bids will be accepted for the project on August 26, 2016. Hopefully, a bid will come in at or below the budgeted amount. If so, the contract will be awarded to begin work shortly after Labor Day. The completion date is scheduled as July 1, 2017. The local match for the project totals \$434,383. Local match funds were appropriated from Tax Incremental Financing Revenues which was approved at Town meeting and there will be no funds from real estate taxes.

The Council has selected Howard Kroll to be the new town manager. Mr. Kroll was offered a five year contract beginning September 12, 2016. He is currently serving as Manager for the City of Auburn, Maine. He previously served as Town Manager in St Agatha and in Milbridge. He also served as Assistant Manager in Brewer and in Auburn.

While waiting for the new Town Manager, the Town Council has been busy identifying goals they will be working with the new Town Manager to accomplish during the 2016-2017 fiscal year. Following is a list of these goals. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding any of the identified goals, feel free to contact the Town Manager at 848-1015 or any member of the Town Council.

TOWN COUNCIL GOALS 2016-2017

- Develop a wage scale for all hourly and salaried employees
- Update the 2017-2018 Capital Improvement Plan to include components of the Road and Street Improvement Plan, Economic Development Plan, Cemetery and Sewer Maintenance Plans, and the School Improvement Plan including the expansion at the Hermon Elementary School for both the School Department and Recreation Department
- Update the Road and Street Plan including safety improvements at the intersection of Route 2
- Adopt the Economic Development Plan and implement the goals and objectives outlined by the plan
- Establish a Recycling Committee to study the feasibility of expanding the recycling program post PERC 2018
- Implement the activities outlined by the 2016-2017 Capital Improvement Plan including conducting a space need evaluation for the Public Safety Building and Town Office specific to record storage for the Town Office and police office space for the Public Safety Building

- Complete an in house revaluation of all properties including update of the tax maps and property assessment cards
- Submit for voter approval proposed Charter changes
- Continue to foster and maintain a good working relationship with the members of the School Board, Hermon Rescue and the Sheriff's Office
- Continue to maintain a Public Safety Committee specifically to improve the Community Policing Program, Emergency Medical Services, and mutual aid for fire services with surrounding communities
- Hire a new fire chief
- Complete update of the website
- Continue to work with the City of Bangor to amend the sewer billing process to include funds for the maintenance and upgrade of the sewer system
- Continue to improve Jackson Beach
- Consider addressing the wetland issue on property adjacent to the high school
- Continue to maintain a recreation program that serves all citizens including senior citizens
- Continue to maintain reserve accounts for all departments for capital improvements in order to minimize sharp increases in the mill rate
- Continue to maintain a good working relationship with Ryder in order to encourage the registration of company trucks in Hermon
- Require the Town Manager to work with department heads and key staff to develop one year and five year goals for their departments
- Complete codification of all ordinances
- Develop a facility maintenance plan for the upkeep of all municipal buildings and facilities including annual inspection of all facilities by the Town Manager and provide staffing to carry out the provisions of the plan
- Obtain proposals for auditing services beginning with the 2016-2017 fiscal year and legal services beginning with the 2017-2018 fiscal year

It has been a pleasure working for the Town of Hermon during the last four years. Hermon has a lot to offer and has tremendous potential with both its continued residential and commercial growth. The Town needs to continue to maintain its low tax rate if it wants to continue to grow. I have no doubt the challenge can be achieved but will require continued effort by the members of the Town Council.

Thank you to all the citizens of the community for your support. I wish you all of the best.
 Roger Raymond, Town Manager

Charter Changes Proposed by the Town Council

Citizens of Hermon will be asked at the November 8th General Election to vote on several charter changes. Following is a list of the proposed changes and a short explanation why the Town Council is recommending these changes.

1. **Vote to Eliminate term limits for Town Council and School Committee members (Sections 2.02 and 6.01).**

Currently, members of the Town Council and School Board can serve up to three-3 year terms. The change, if approved, will allow members to serve as many terms as the citizens choose to elect them for.

2. **Vote to Eliminate the requirement for the Town Attorney to attend all Annual Town Meetings (Section 3.01)**

Currently, the Charter requires the Town Attorney to attend all Annual Town Meetings even if not needed causing unnecessary cost to the Town. The Town Council prefers having the attorney attend only if requested by the Town Council to attend.

3. **Vote to Include cost center format for school budget as set by the school board pursuant to Department of Education requirements (Sections 6.08 and 8.06)**

Currently, the Charter sets the school budget be submitted with four cost centers which is inconsistent with State Law. The change, if approved, will make the charter consistent with State Law.

4. **Vote to Amend jurisdiction of Board of Assessment Review by deleting section 7.04 (g), removing jurisdiction over appeals arising from all Ordinances of the Town of Hermon (Section. 7.02 b)**

Currently, the Charter gives jurisdiction for the Board of Assessment Review to review all appeals of the Town including Land Use. The change, if approved, will limit the Board of Assessment to hear only appeals that pertain to the assessment of value for tax purposes. Other appeals will be reviewed by a Board of Appeals with members appointed by the Town Council.

5. **Vote to Require one member of the Board of Assessment Review to be an attorney licensed to practice in the State of Maine and one member a Maine certified real estate appraiser or certified Maine assessor (Section 7.03)**

Currently, any citizen 18 or older can be appointed to the Board of Assessment Review. The Council is recommending that at least one member of the Board is an attorney licensed to practice in Maine and one member is either a Maine certified real estate appraiser or assessor.

6. **Vote to Authorize the Assessor to set the overlay as required by state law and to require the Town Council to adopt the tax levy by council resolution (Sections. 8.03 and 8.04)**

Currently, the Charter does not require the Assessor to set the Overlay as required by State Law. The Charter also does not require the Town Council to set the final commitment. If the proposal is accepted, the Charter will be consistent with State Law and the Town Council will have final say regarding the total amount to be raised from taxes and the Assessor will set the Overlay.

7. **Vote to Include the School Department when preparing the Capital Improvement Plan (Section 8.12).**

Currently the Town Charter requires the Town Manager to prepare a five year capital improvement plan which is adopted by the Town Council. The change will clarify that the School Department capital improvements needs are to be included as part of the capital improvement plan.

8. **Vote to Remove cap on amount of Reserve Account funds the Town Council may utilize to meet projected cash flow needs of the Town. (Section 8.14).**

Currently, the Town Charter authorizes the Town Council to utilize up to \$750,000 from reserve accounts to meet cash flow needs of the Town including the School Department. The change, if approved, will allow the Town Council to utilize as much from the reserve funds as needed to maintain the Town's cash flow in anticipation of payment of taxes.

9. **Vote to Prohibit immediate family members of a Town Councilor from employment with the Town of Hermon, except for seasonal municipal and school positions. Immediate family members include spouse, child, sibling, including step or half, in-laws and domestic partners. (Section 2.02 subsection b).**

Currently, there is no restriction prohibiting an immediate family member of a Town Councilor from working for the municipality. If approved no Town Councilor could have an immediate member of the family working full-time for the Town while serving on the Town Council.

10. **Vote to Authorize the Town Council to determine the total amount of School Budget to be submitted to the voters in the budget Validation Referendum. (Sections 6.08 and 8.02)**

Currently, there is inconsistency between State Law and the Charter regarding the role of the Town Council as it pertains to the approval of the School Budget. If the change is approved, the Town Council will assume its responsibility approving the budget as outlined by the Town Charter.

11. **Vote to Authorize the Town Council to appoint a Town Manager for a definite term (Section 4.01)**

Currently, the Town Charter requires the Town Manager to serve an indefinite term. The change, if approved, will allow the Town Council to set the term of office for the Town Manager.

Senior Citizen Community Meals

Where: Hermon Elementary School

When: 3rd Wednesday of each month

Time: 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Fee: \$3.00 per person

Reservations please:

Contact the Rec office at 848-4075

or email mthayer30@gmail.com



Wednesday - September 21

Spaghetti & Meatballs
Salad, Bread, Cookie

Wednesday - October 19

Chicken Pot Pie
Cranberry Sauce, Corn
Apple Crisp



Adult and Community Programming

2016 Fall Session

Registration
begins September 1

For a complete list of
classes and schedules,
visit

www.hermon.net

or email

mthayer30@gmail.com

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2017**

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the Morgan Hill Event Center, Fast Dogs
Entertainment and the Holiday Inn in
Bangor to bring you a great night of
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For more information visit us at
www.hermon.net

Bus Trip Shop Til You Drop!

When: October 7

Where: Ellsworth
(Reny's, LLBean & Marden's)

Fee: \$20.00 per person

Includes bus ride & snacks

Participants responsible for lunch

Leave Hermon Middle School at 9:30 and
return approximately at 4:00

Reservations please:

Contact the Rec office at 848-4075

or email mthayer30@gmail.com



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Tentative Schedule of Events

For more information - visit our website at www.hermon.net.

You may also find schedules at the *Hermon Town Office* and businesses within the *Hermon Community*!

Friday, September 9

Bangor Drive In - *Community Movie Night*
Hermon High School Golf vs. Foxcroft & Dexter
Hermon High School Football vs. Waterville
*Community BBQ - Suzanne Smith Elementary School - Levant

Saturday, September 10

American Legion - Community Pancake & Sausage Breakfast
Hermon Rec Youth Soccer/Flag Football Games
Hermon High School Boys Soccer vs. Presque Isle
Hermon High School Girls Soccer vs. Presque Isle
**Maine's Best Small Town's Parade* - Levant Village
*Levant Old Home Days - *Fun activities for all ages!*
*Street Dance - Fast Dogs Entertainment - Levant
*Fireworks - Levant

Sunday, September 11

Church Services
9-11 Remembrance Ceremony/Salute to First Responders
Pies & Politics in the Park - Candidates Forum
Washer Tournament
Timber Tina Show
Live Music - Prairie Dogs

Monday, September 12

Valley Satellite - *Customer Appreciation Day*
Hermon High School Boys Soccer vs. Orono
Hermon High School Field Hockey vs. Foxcroft
Hermon School Committee Meeting
Hermon High School Spirit Week - *Professional Team Day*

Tuesday, September 13

New Age Tanning & Spa - *Ladies Night Out*
Hermon High School Spirit Week - *College Day*
Hermon High School Girls Soccer vs. Orono

Wednesday, September 14

*Touch a Truck - Suzanne Smith Elementary School - Levant
Hermon High School - Powder Puff Game
Hermon High School Spirit Week - *Show Your Number Day*

Thursday, September 15

Children's Western Bike Rodeo with Live Music
Hermon High School Boys Soccer vs. Ellsworth
Hermon, Carmel & Levant Recreation Youth Soccer Night
Hermon High School Spirit Week - *Class Color Day*
Hermon Town Council Meeting
Hermon High School *Bonfire*

Friday, September 16

Hermon High School Spirit Week - *Hermon Team Day*
Hermon High School - *Hawk Head Scavenger Hunt*
Hermon High School Golf vs. PVHS & Greenville
Hermon High School Field Hockey vs. John Baptist
Homecoming Football Game vs. Old Town
Hermon Recreation Youth Football Night

Saturday, September 17

Danforth's to Dysart's 5K Road Race
Hermon Rec Youth Soccer/Flag Football Games
Hermon Rec Carnival Day - *Fun activities for all ages!*
Drug Free Communities Coalition
and Penobscot Sheriff Dept. - *Drug Take Back*
Street Dance - *The Allison Ames Band*

Sunday, September 18

Church Services

Events are Subject to Change

**Celebrating with our neighbors - Levant Old Home Days!*

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Down Home Supermarket

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'Bucket Brigade'
All donations received to benefit
Hermon's Neighbors Supporting
Neighbors Food Pantry



The Senator's Corner

By: Senator Geoff Gratwick

Here is a list of the five referenda on November's ballot so that you will have plenty of time to think about the issues. If you have any questions about details or implications I would be happy to talk with you. (home phone: 947-0637)

QUESTION 1: An Act To Legalize Marijuana. "Do you want to allow the possession and use of marijuana under state law by persons who are at least 21 years of age, and allow the cultivation, manufacture, distribution, testing, and sale of marijuana and marijuana products subject to state regulation, taxation and local ordinance?"

QUESTION 2: An Act To Establish The Fund to Advance Public Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education. "Do you want to add a 3% tax on individual Maine taxable income above \$200,000 to create a state fund that would provide direct support for student learning in kindergarten through 12th grade public education?"

QUESTION 3: An Act to Require Background Checks for Gun Sales. "Do you want to require background checks prior to the sale or transfer of firearms between individuals not licensed as firearms dealers, with failure to do so punishable by law, and with some exceptions for family members, hunting, self-defense, lawful competitions, and shooting range activity?"

QUESTION 4: An Act to Raise the Minimum Wage. "Do you want to raise the minimum hourly wage of \$7.50 to \$9 in 2017, with annual \$1 increases up to \$12 in 2020, and annual cost-of-living increases thereafter; and do you want to raise the direct wage for service workers who receive tips from half the minimum wage to \$5 in 2017, with annual \$1 increases until it reaches the adjusted minimum wage?"

QUESTION 5: An Act To Establish Ranked-Choice Voting. "Do you want to allow voters to rank their choices of candidates in elections for U.S. Senate, Congress, Governor, State Senate, and State Representative, and to have ballots counted at the state level in multiple rounds in which last-place candidates are eliminated until a candidate wins by majority?"

Additionally, one bond issue will be on the Nov. 8, 2016 ballot:

An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Improve Highways, Bridges and Multimodal Facilities. "Do you favor a \$100,000,000 bond issue for construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation of highways and bridges and for facilities, equipment and property acquisition related to ports, harbors, marine transportation, freight and passenger railroads, aviation, transit and bicycle and pedestrian trails, to be used to match an estimated \$137,000,000 in federal and other funds?"

With so many important issues on the ballot
we all will be making – or not making - significant, lasting changes.
Your vote is important! Thanks!!

From the Desk of State Representative Roger Reed

Since 2012, I have been honored to serve as your Representative from House District 103. My goal has been to connect with you and to keep you informed and updated.

As I review the Property Tax rates for 2016-2017 for District 103, I want you to know that Maine's legislators pay attention to the pressures placed on local municipalities and school boards as they set their annual budgets. Here are some legislative efforts that I supported that will help ease the local property tax burden:

Investing \$1 Billion in Local Education

Local school funding is one of the largest cost drivers of property tax in our district. The Legislature increased state funding for our public schools by \$98 million over the next two years as part of the two-year state budget and subsequent legislation. The state now pays a record-breaking \$1 billion toward public preschool through grade 12. I remain committed to finding the right balance between our future education needs and the challenges faced by those who pay property tax in this district and I welcome your thoughts.

Doubling the Homestead Exemption from \$10,000 to \$20,000

Maine residents who have owned a home in Maine for at least 12 months may qualify. The increased exemption was phased in over two years, with a current value of \$15,000. In 2017, the first \$20,000 of a homeowner's property value will be exempt from taxation.

Supporting Our County Jails

Our county taxes are part of our local property tax bill. Since the county jails ran short of funding, the state provided an additional \$2.5 million, which helped prevent an increase in local property taxes to help offset those costs.

Property Tax Fairness Credit

Formerly known as the "Circuit Breaker" program, the "Property Tax Fairness Credit" is available through the state for qualifying home owners and renters. The maximum credit amount is \$600, and two years ago the legislature increased the amount to \$900 if the taxpayer or their spouse is 65 years of age or older. To claim the credit, file Form 1040ME and Schedule PTFC for the tax year during which the property tax or rent was paid. Please call 207-626-8475 if you have any questions.

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Hermon 8th Grade Student Secures \$7,000 in Library Grants

Article & Photo By: Kendra Raymond



Pictured left to right are:
Anita Clark of The Bangor Savings Bank Foundation, Kaline Goodrich - HMS Librarian, Neily Raymond and Gerald Kiesman - HMS Principal.

Neily Raymond, a student at Hermon Middle School has written and been awarded, grants totaling \$7,000 to benefit her school library. A \$2,000 grant is from the Bangor Savings Bank Foundation and a \$5,000 grant is from The Stephen and Tabitha King Foundation.

Funds from the grants are being used to improve the HMS School Library, which was in need of new books, furniture, and shelving. At present, over 300 books have been purchased, with another order planned. Neily has also determined that student interest in easily accessible e-books was considerable, thus prompting a small purchase of e-books as well.

Neily has created a reading nook, complete with easy chairs, where students can relax as they enjoy the new titles. She also hopes to have a helping hand from the Gifted and Talented art students and their teacher, creating a wall mural featuring Fuller's quote, "Today a reader, tomorrow a leader".

Clean Slate Graphics of Orono generously donated a book plate design. This plate honors the donors of the grants, and will be affixed in the front cover of each and every book purchased with the grant funds.

When asked why she chose such an ambitious venture, Neily replied, "I just want HMS students to obtain the book titles they want right in their own school. I recognized an opportunity for me to give back to my school community, so I put my heart and soul into this process. It has been pretty time consuming, but very rewarding." Student interest in the HMS Library has already increased, and the overall atmosphere is full of energy, excitement, and anticipation of continued upgrades.

Morita's School of Dance 49th Season

207-848-5083
msdancestudio68@hotmail.com
moritasschoolofdance.net
2256 Route 2, Hermon, ME 04401



Registration, Thursday Sept. 8th, 4-6:30pm
Classes begin September 12th

Classes for Children 18 month through adults
Tap, Ballet, Jazz, Pointe, Hip Hop, Contemporary,
TRX, Acro, Tiny Tots, Couples Dance, Zumba, Yoga



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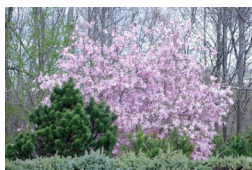
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May 26 thru October, rain or shine.
We accept credit, debit & SNAP cards!
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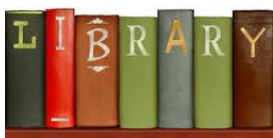
Ecotat Gardens and Arboretum

Hydrangea Wreath Workshop
Saturday, September 24, 9-11, \$20.00/person

Fall Workshop
Saturday, October 8, 9am - Noon
(rain date: Oct. 15)

Join us as we ready the gardens for winter.
We'll offer our thanks by serving you lunch.
Pre-registration requested: info@ecotat.org

Balsam Fir Wreath Workshop
Saturday, November 26, 9am, \$20.00/person



The Hermon High School
Library Media Center is open
to the communities of
Hermon, Carmel and Levant

from 2:15pm to 6:00pm Monday through Friday
when school is in session. We hope to see you
at the library. We have wifi and computer
access as well as many books.



HERMON FIRE AUXILIARY

Annual yard sale
Saturday, September 24, 2016

Hermon Public Safety Building
327 Billings Road
Hermon, Maine

From 8:00 am until 3:00 pm

**We are looking for items in good condition
to resell. (no electronics or mattresses)**

**Please call one of the people below to make
arrangements for drop off or pick-up.**

Mary DiBona - 570-6196

Ann Byers - 848-5067

Joanne Leonard - 848-5461

Vicki Gonyea - 848-5615

**PLEASE DO NOT DROP OFF ITEMS
AT FIRE STATION**