

The Hermon Connection

Vol. 27 Issue 2 • March, 2020

Hermon Hawks Win The Class B North Girls Basketball Championship



Team members are: Allie Cameron, Sadie Campbell, Charlotte Caron, Faith Coombs, Ashley Cote, Sydney Gallop, Maddie Lebel, Grace Page, Paige Plissey, Christa Rogers, Megan Tracy, Elizabeth Wyman

Coaches: Chris Cameron, Shawn Good, Jason Coleman, Liza Muth

Congratulation Girls!

Town of Hermon
Howard Kroll *Town Manager*
333 Billings Rd, Hermon, ME 04401
Tel: 207-848-1010 Fax: 207-848-3316
krollh@hermon.net, www.hermon.net

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: April 20, 2020

From the Town Manager



CONGRATULATIONS! I want to take this opportunity to commend the Hermon High School Cheering Squad on winning the State Championship AGAIN! A lot of hard work and dedication went into their preparation and planning and it has paid off! WELL DONE! I also want to take a moment to recognize all of our student athletes who are doing great things in both the classroom and field. Your efforts are noticed and you should be proud of representing your school and town.

SPRING IS ON THE WAY Once the winter season is 'really' over (probably June!) the Town will start to prep for spring and summer operations including sand removal from streets/roads/shoulders, cleaning up cemeteries and preparing athletic fields for play. If you have any questions on damage you think was caused during the winter please call Ralph Shaw, Public Works Foreman, at 848-1010 to have him review the damage with you.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FY2021

Hermon Town Council has approved a Capital Improvement Plan for the Annual Town Meeting on Thursday, June 11, 2020. Here are just a few of the projects we plan on for the summer of 2020:

Repairing Billings Road from Fuller Road to Union Street. This is a joint project with MDOT that is sharing the cost equally. The project will include ditching, tree removal, culvert replacement and paving.

Repairing a section of Black Stream Road from Fuller Road to the bridge. This section of road needs attention in drainage, ditching, shoulder repair and paving. This is going to be a phased project over a few years due to the road being local and the cost is the responsibility of only the Town.

Pave Logistics Lane- this is a new road recently accepted by the Town Council due to the major investment made by Mathews Brothers. This will include ditching, drainage and pavement.

Replace all the windows at Hermon High School- All the windows at Hermon High School need to be replaced with more energy efficient and safer models. Not to mention they are rotting, allowing heat to escape and need to close which some can't.

Replace the industrial dishwasher at Hermon High School- the industrial dishwasher at the High School is in need of replacement. Repair costs and obsolete parts are challenges.

Replace the boiler at the Patricia A. Duran Elementary School- The boiler is over 25 years old and is in need of an update especially when school staff relies on the system to heat the school and has challenges to start.

Renovating a classroom to a Laboratory room at Hermon High School- School Department officials have indicated that with the growing demand for advance science courses adequate classrooms are needed. The high school has identified an existing classroom that would be easily renovated to meet that demand.

Replace the basketball backboard systems at the Recreation Facility- The basketball backboard systems need to be replaced due to the wear and tear on them. While we can't stop people from dunking on these rims a system that will not allow the rims to be lowered will be installed.

Town Office painting, security system installation and window repair- The Town office needs to be painted as well as windows repaired throughout the facility and a modern security system needs to be installed to protect all who work and visit this facility.

OTHER NEWS:

ROAD POSTINGS- Each town road has been posted for weight limits- we strictly enforce the law on these since the roads are important to our resident's safety and travel. While we understand heavy trucks need to get to various locations passing over Town of Hermon roads above 32 degrees is not allowed. Please obey the law- everyone pays for these roads!

FY2019 AUDIT RESULTS- The Town of Hermon, including the School Department, recently had its financial statements audited by RKO (Runyon, Kersteen and Ouellette, Certified Public Accountants). During the audit RKO reviewed all of our financial transactions and policies and determined the Town is in extremely good financial condition due to excellent procedures and oversight from our Finance Department led by Rachel Grass, Finance Director and Wendy Wiles-Scott, Bookkeeper. I want to personally thank them for their attention to detail and job well done!

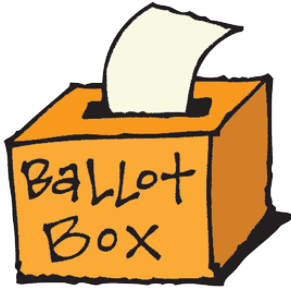
BUS GRANT- The School Department recently submitted a grant application for the replacement of a school bus from the Maine Volkswagen (VW) Settlement Funds Application and was awarded a grant of **\$82,380**. Superintendent Gary Gonyar anticipates the purchase and delivery of the bus some time in May 2020! Congratulations!

ELECTIONS- By the time you read this the Tuesday, March 3rd presidential primary will have come and gone. The next election will be on Tuesday, June 9th for all other elected positions and finally the presidential election on Tuesday, November 3rd. If you are interested in serving as a ballot clerk or just to be involved please contact Town Clerk Kristen Cushman at 848-1010. We need both Democrat and Republican registered residents to serve.

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION- If you haven't received your homestead exemption for your home please contact Josh Berry, Assessor, for the application and any questions you might have regarding eligibility. Josh can be reached at 848-1042.

TRANSFER STATION- The Transfer Station is scheduled to reopen on April 25, 2020. This date is subject to change depending on the condition of the road at the Transfer Station. It will be open on Saturdays from 8:00AM to 4:00PM. Don't forget to purchase your yearly sticker.

ELECTIONS:



Elections will be here before you know it. On March 3, 2020 we have a Presidential Primary in addition to a Special State Referendum. On June 9, 2020 we have a State Primary for offices other than President in addition to our Municipal Elections.

The Town Council has two seats and the School Board has one seat that will all expire June 30, 2020. If you are interested in serving your community and would like more information about what serving as an elected official in Hermon is about, do not hesitate to contact me at (207)848-1010 or cushmankl@hermon.net.

Nomination papers have been available in my office since February 24, 2020. Candidates are required to obtain 25 supporting signatures. Those signatures are due back by 5:00pm on April 3, 2020.

On November 3, 2020 we have a General (Presidential) and potential State Referendum Election.

Kristen Cushman, Town Clerk

Does A Stitch In Time Save Nine?



Should the government spend money now to save it in the future? Should we fill a pothole with gravel and skim coat it or should we regrade, put in culverts, and fix the road properly for the long haul? Should we spend money on preK for all kids so that they will grow up to be productive tax-paying adults or avoid taxes now? Invest in preventative health care even if we reap the benefits only in 20 or 30 years? Prevent environmental pollution today or clean it up tomorrow after it begins to hurt?

On the other hand, how do you feel when you get your paycheck and see all those deductions? You know that they are likely to be used for worthy purposes but wouldn't you prefer to spend the money yourself? But then again you probably don't want to buy yet another set of rims because of that pothole. We in Augusta are under enormous pressure to leave as much of your hard-earned income in your pockets as possible and not spend it for you, not to raise taxes. Political fortunes rise and fall depending on how we answer these questions.

As a legislator I view one of the requirements of my job is to look at the big picture. I want to be sure that we spend your money and mine wisely, as little as possible, but with a long-term perspective. In general, I am willing to spend \$1.00 today to save \$5.00 tomorrow. Governor Mills' \$126 million supplemental budget announced in late January attempts to thread the needle between too little and too much: it allocates more funds for the disabled, child abuse case workers, and the State Police. It invests in community colleges, apprenticeship programs, and Career and Technical Education Centers to prepare a workforce for tomorrow. In these relatively good economic times we should be saving as well; her budget puts another \$20 million in the rainy day fund, bringing it to its highest balance ever.

You be the judge of whether the allocations in the Governor's supplemental budget are balanced, reasonable, and wise. I'd like to hear from you.

Geoff G (geoff.gratwick@legislature.maine.gov)



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Hermon Student wins 2020 Girls Rock Award!

Submitted By: Sarah Fagg



Morgan LaRoche, a student at Hermon High School, is one of five young Mainers who will receive awards at the Hardy Girls Healthy Women's 13th annual Girls Rock! Awards on March 27. The awardees from all over the state were nominated by their communities for their personal, academic, athletic, and humanitarian work. Morgan was chosen for STEM-gineer.

Morgan is an award-winning inventor and a health advocate. As a Type 1 Diabetic, Morgan tests her glucose daily, which can be a frustrating process given that testing strips are very sensitive and results can be skewed if the strips make contact with dirty fingers prior to use. In response to an assignment from her Science teacher, Morgan developed a Blood Glucose Test Strip Dispenser that inserts the strip directly into the monitor, eliminating contamination hazards. The device won first prize at the Maine Invention Convention in March 2019. She went

on to compete at the national event where she won one of three Young Visioneer awards and placed 2nd in the eighth-grade category. Morgan is currently seeking a patent for her device so it can be scaled for wider distribution. She also uses her voice to educate her peers about the severity of type 1 diabetes. She has personally endured bullying since receiving her diagnosis and believes that sharing her experience can open doors to more compassionate conversations about the disease.

Congratulation Morgan!

If you would like to attend the Girls Rock Awards Ceremony on Friday, March 27, 2020 at the Waynflete School in Portland, Maine, tickets can be purchased at: <https://hghw.org/events/girls-rock-awards-2020/>



Hermon Student Named Voice of Democracy State Winner

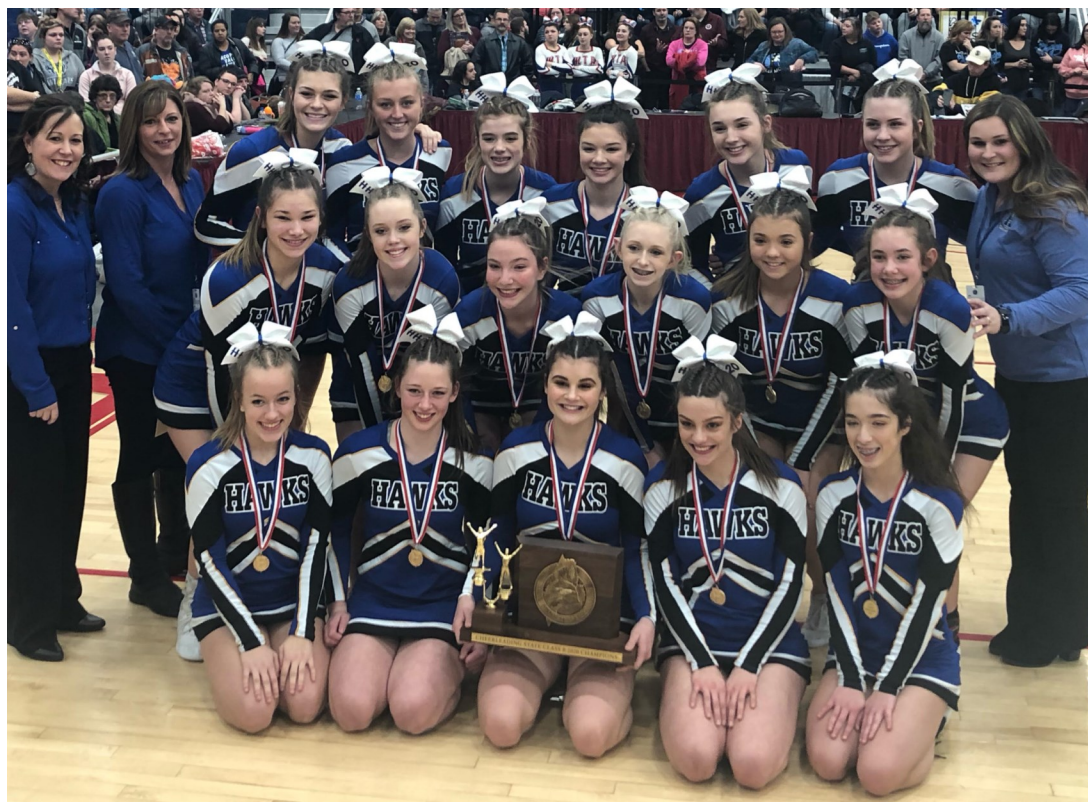
By Kendra Raymond



Pictured Left to Right:
Vincent "BJ" Lawrence - VFW
National Commander
Neily Raymond
Chris Robison - VFW
Department of Maine

Hermon High School Senior, Neily K. Raymond has been named the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Voice of Democracy State Winner. Neily was selected as the District 4 finalist, representing VFW Post 1761 in Bangor. Recently at the Voice of Democracy Awards Banquet in Winslow, Neily was awarded first place out of the eleven Maine districts. Neily's audio essay to the prompt, "What Makes America Great", brought tears and solemn silence to the room. As the Maine VOD representative, Neily was presented with a check for \$750. She will also receive an expense paid trip to Washington DC in late February where she will compete with other state representatives at the national level. While in DC, students will receive a tour of the city, may have an opportunity to meet the President, and enjoy a double-decker boat tour on the Potomac, complete with a DJ and pizza! Every state finalist will receive at least a \$1,000 scholarship, with the chance to compete for incrementally higher awards, up to \$30,000, which will be awarded at the culmination of the week. In addition, Neily will also receive another expense paid trip to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania in June to attend the Spirit of America Youth Leadership Program. Neily is the granddaughter and great niece of WWII veterans who both served overseas, and the great granddaughter of two WWI veterans.

Hermon Hawks Win Their 4th Consecutive B State Championship



Alana Berube,
Jasmine Boulter,
Brooklyn Brown,
Allyson Coxson,
Kalley Curry,
Cali Cyr,
Madison Despault,
Megan Dorr,
Hailey Gogan,
Madison Higgins,
Riley Perry,
Alexis Raymond,
Lyndsee Reed,
Michaela Saulter,
Madison Smith,
Caitlin Whitehouse,
Torria Wittmer

Coaches: Kristie Reed, Kaitlinn Turner, Christina Paradis



Mr. Basketball Semifinalist

At the McDonalds Senior All Star Team press conference on Saturday, February 15th, Hermon Senior Isaac Varney was one of ten players in the state to be named a Mr. Basketball semifinalist which is Maine's highest individual basketball honor.

Congrats Isaac on your selection!

Thanks for all the great basketball over the last 4 years.

In addition to his being named a semifinalist. On Saturday, January 18, 2020 against Caribou, Isaac became the 7th boy in school history to score his 1000th point.

IRS Scam: The latest senior scam: Avoid & please report!

An IRS scam that targets seniors has been revolving around the Town of Hermon along with other neighboring towns. Callers claiming to be from the IRS telling intended victims they owe taxes and must pay using a pre-paid debit card or wire transfer. The scammers threaten those who refuse to pay with arrest, loss of a business or loss of a driver's license.



The callers who commit this IRS scam fraud often:

- Use common names and fake IRS badge numbers.
- Know the last four digits of the victim's Social Security number.
- Make caller ID appear as if the IRS is calling.
- Send bogus IRS emails to support their scam.
- Call a second time claiming to be the police or DMV, and caller ID again supports their claim

The truth is the IRS usually first contacts people by mail about unpaid taxes and **NOT** by phone. The IRS won't ask for payment using a pre-paid debit card or wire transfer. The agency also won't ask for a credit card number over the phone.

If you receive a suspicious call like this and don't feel comfortable, **PLEASE** make contact with the Penobscot County Sheriff's Office (**945-4636**). We are more than happy to answer any of your questions and we do not want anyone, including our seniors to be defrauded. Please do not become a victim.

Code Enforcement Department

Planning Board Meetings

Meeting Times: 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the Month at 6:30 PM in the Public Safety Building

The Planning Board meetings are now live on the public access channel. If you are unable to make it to the regularly scheduled meetings I encourage you to tune in on the Tuesday nights we hold our meetings. Check the Town Calendar (Top Left) on the www.hermon.net website to see when we will be meeting. We only hold meeting when we have agenda items to discuss.

The Planning Board plays a vital role in the development of the town, ensuring all new uses and developments are complying with the town's Land Use Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan. Board members Edward Marsh (Chair), Shannon Giles (Vice Chair) Sherry Andrei, Josh Pelletier, Jaylyn McCue, Marylyn White and Brett Danforth deserve a round of applause for the time they have put in to serving this very important board.

Assessing Department

Homeowners - do you qualify for a property tax exemption?

Homestead Exemption: Hermon residents already receiving the Homestead Property Tax Exemption in the amount of \$20,000 in your 2019 tax bill do not need to reapply. The exemption will stay with you property year to year and the exemption will be increased to \$25,000 for this tax year.

New Hermon residential property owners or residents who have relocated from a Hermon owned residential property to another in Hermon will need to apply for the homestead exemption. Go to the website listed below to download an application or pick one up at the Town Office to see if you qualify. The exemption amount for this tax year will be \$25,000. All applications must be returned to the Assessing office by April 1, 2020.

www.hermon.net/exemption-forms-information/

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Hermon partners with MaineDOT and Federal Highway for safety projects and road improvements...

The MaineDOT's *Partnership Initiative Program* has helped Hermon meet its goal of improving our transportation network! Since 2016 the Town Council, Town manager and staff have worked together with the Federal Highway, MaineDOT and the department's safety grant teams to deliver exceptional roadway improvement projects for Hermon's residents.

These programs are proactive, flexible and cost effective for both participating municipalities and the State of Maine. Working together with government leaders who run these programs has benefited economic and community development, public safety and critical infrastructure in the Town's right of way. Hermon has been actively and aggressively improving its "State Aid" roadways by accessing cost sharing programs. These programs allow local input regarding methods and arranging priorities for maintenance and infrastructure improvements which causes the dollars invested to be maximized to their full potential.

A five year report showing total grant amounts and Hermon's share for each are listed below for review. By partnering with the State of Maine DOT and Federal Highway Administration, Hermon has been able to accomplish a substantial amount of highway maintenance in the last five years providing good quality roadways that support local commerce and regional connectivity. These projects simultaneously provide a basis for strong infrastructure systems and utility coordination for our residents and the central Maine region.

Every town department contributes with input or administrative responsibilities in order to make good roadway projects come to fruition! The Town Council and manager also play a critical role in the process and have supported road project planning with suggestions and guidance in order to provide good end results. Working together with contractors, staff and Council support, Hermon has been able to set a standard of excellence when it comes to investing our tax dollars for the greatest possible return saving money in the long run when it comes to our roads.

The MaineDOT Municipal Partnership Program, Federal Highway Safe Route to Schools Grant and the MDOT Highway Safety Program have helped the DECD office in Hermon accomplish one of our identified goals of improving critical infrastructure in an efficient and cost effective way.

Since 2016 improvements to "State Aid" and federal highway systems have totaled over \$6,400,000 dollars. Hermon's share for the period 2016 through 2021 equals \$1,766,246.

Scott Perkins - Economic and Community Development



2015 "Intersection Project" at Hermon Corner

MaineDOT Municipal Partnership, Business Partnership and Safety Grants

<u>Year</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>Award</u>	<u>Status</u>
2016	Fuller/Klatte Road MPI	\$960,423	50% match – complete
2017	Coldbrook/Newburgh	\$1,211,548	50% match – complete
2017	Traffic Signal – Dysart's	\$325,000	10% match—awarded
2017	Route 2 Sidewalk	\$1,395,566	80% match – complete
2018	Coldbrook to I-95 CPR	\$341,546	100% MaineDOT
2020	Billings Road—Union St.	\$515,154	50% match – awarded
2020	Hammond Street– BPI	\$158,700	100% match-awarded
2020	Annis/Route 2 Safety	\$1,126,000	100% State & Federal
2021	Billings Road – Route 2	\$325,000	50% match – FY 2021

**Questions? Contact the Hermon DECD office at
848-1010 or sperkins@hermon.net**

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Reminder:

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April 1, 2020

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April 2, 2020 at a rate of 9%
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