

Vol. 31 Issue 2 – March 2024

If you have a news story or article for publication in
the next edition of
The Hermon Connection, please send it to:
ouellettel@hermonmaine.gov
Deadline for submissions: April 19, 2024

Duran School Students Participate in WinterKids

Article & Photos by: Melissa Davis

The students at the Patricia A. Duran School Participated in the 2024 WinterKids Winter Games. Students competed in a series of outdoor physical activity and nutrition challenges designed to help them be active in the winter and learn healthy habits. Each school was encouraged to involve volunteers, parents, healthy eating and active living organizations in their community, and hold a winter carnival to close out the month's events.

Schools applied for entry into the Winter Games, in hopes of earning the top prize-\$5,000! All elementary schools in Maine's sixteen counties were eligible to participate. This year, 22 schools reaching 3805 children and over 900 teachers and staff, competed. The Patricia A.Duran School represented Penobscot County in the games. Schools competing in the WinterKids Winter Games received a toolkit full of resources and incentives to help students earn points, including the brand new *WinterKids Learn Outside Guide*- an easy to use resource to help kids move, learn, and explore outdoors while meeting education standards.

To engage the community, the Patricia A. Duran School sponsored a family "Learn to Snowshoe Event," which is in its third year. Families were able to borrow snowshoes for the event, drink hot cocoa from the hot chocolate bar, and complete a story walk. This was a fun winter activity that we anticipate will continue to be an annual winter tradition.

WinterKids is the nonprofit organization that helps children develop healthy lifelong habits through education and fun, outdoor winter activity. The organization delivers innovative outdoor programs for families, schools, and communities. WinterKids' Major Community Sponsor is L.L.Bean. WinterKids' Supporting Sponsors are Agren, Central Maine Power, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, WEX, WMTW Channel 8 and Maine's The CW. The WinterKids Winter Games is also supported by Hannarford Snack Pals, Backyard Farms, Subway of Maine, Aroma Joes, Kittery Trading Post, and MMG Insurance. Learn more at [WinterKids.org](https://www.winterkids.org).



Hermon JROTC Cadets Support Winter Special Olympics

Article & Photos By: Cadet 2LT Aubrey Searway

The Hermon High School JROTC cadets helped change lives this past February as they left for Hermon Mountain, eager to help out at a local Special Olympics event. A handful of selected cadets would help the participants fit snowshoes, find their racing lane, or find motivation to do their very best on February twelfth.

The volunteers and organizers of the event rally around the olympians cheering and supporting them to do their very best. The day is filled with "Good jobs", "You've got this", and lots and lots of clapping. The feeling of warmth, happiness, and inclusion quickly spreads around the lodge that's filled with the laughter of olympians.

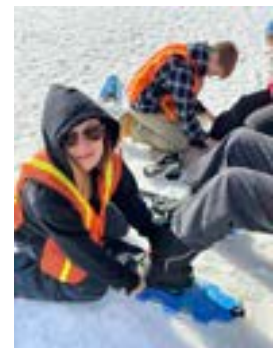
Bill Whitcomb, owner of Hermon Mountain says "The Special Olympics is our absolute favorite day of the year." He also says he's never had a more honest group of people than the olympians, and they love that we're here cheering them on and they remember us year after year when the same cadets come back. Bill Whitcomb also said "Everyone is here for the love of people."

Dan Scott is not only a father of an olympian but a supporter of the event year after year. I had the pleasure of talking to him regarding the Special Olympics and Junior ROTC's involvement. He believes that whomever came up with the idea of the special olympics was a very masterful thought. He says being a parent of a Special Olympian gets him into part of a very special group where these kids have to work much harder to achieve their goals. He also says that JROTC's involvement means the world to these athletes. "It's just so so so cool!" He believes that JROTC's involvement with the Special Olympics prepares young minds to think about things in an expanded context and think about doing things for the benefit of others and not just yourself. "It's a refreshing thing to see youth getting involved in something so big and really getting to see the world and participate in things for the better of the community."

The Special Olympics have been a national tradition since 1968 and there are no plans of stopping, according to leading volunteers of the event.

Cadets that were selected to volunteer said things along the lines of 'it was such an eye opening experience' to 'it was a lot of fun' also saying 'it was so heartwarming to see the community so united'. The volunteers agree that it was definitely a heartwarming experience to look out of the lodge and see our cadets helping, cheering and interacting with the athletes!

The Hermon JROTC cadets are planning to assist with this event for all future years to come, especially after seeing how rewarding it is to be there. The Hawk Battalion also plans to assist in the upcoming Spring/Summer games that take place in May.



PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

Article by: Rylee Cushman, Tax Assessor

The assessing office has mailed the annual business personal property declaration forms (706-A Requests)

The State of Maine has two business equipment property tax relief programs designed to reduce the burden of personal property taxes that businesses pay. The programs vary based on the date the property was placed in service in the state.

Business Equipment Tax Exemption Program (BETE):

For property placed in service after April 1, 2007, the Business Equipment Property Tax Exemption (BETE) program applies; commonly referred to as the "BETE" program. The exemption applies to most depreciable business equipment; however, certain items are excluded, such, vehicles subject to excise tax, office furniture, lighting, gambling equipment, and property located at a retail sales facility and used primarily in a retail sales activity. Retail equipment will continue to be covered under Maine's Business Equipment Tax Reimbursement program, (BETR) as discussed further below.

A BETE application **MUST be filed ANNUALLY** with the tax assessor by April 1 of each year, but an extension to May 1 is automatically granted. Further extensions beyond May 1 may be requested in writing to the local assessor. Filing the BETE application on time is critical, as property will be disqualified from the exemption for any year the report is not considered to be timely filed. The exemption application **MUST LIST ON THE APPLICATION** all eligible exempt property purchased after April 1, 2007, *each year*, not only in the year of purchase. There is no time limit on the number of years the exemption may be claimed, but the business or business owner must apply annually with a completed application and itemized list of personal property requesting exemption on. Applications should be returned to the Assessing office by May 1st, 2024

HOMEOWNERS, DO YOU QUALIFY FOR A PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION?

HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION: Hermon residents already receiving the Homestead Property Tax Exemption do **not** need to re-apply.

New Hermon residential property owners: Do you qualify for a homestead exemption? Go to the website listed below to download an application or pick one up at the Town Office; qualification requirements are listed on application.

<https://www.Hermonmaine.gov/exemption-forms-information/>

Applications should be returned to the Assessing office by August 31st, 2024

VETERAN EXEMPTION: Any residential property owner who is a veteran 62 years or older or the widow of a veteran who would be 62 years or older; served during a recognized war period and is **not already receiving** the exemption you may pick up an application at the Town Office or download at: <https://www.Hermonmaine.gov/exemption-forms-information/>

Application should be returned to the Assessing Office by August 31, 2024, with a copy of a DD214 or other official form verifying dates of entry and separation.

Please contact our office at 207-848-1010 option 1 or email us at Assessor@HermonMaine.gov for more information on the above programs or help with declaring your Business's Personal Property.

UPCOMING SPRING EVENTS



2024 SUMMER CAMP INFO
Information available at hermonrec.com

APRIL 1

APRIL 3

TODDLER STORY TIME
Hermon High School Library, 9:30-10am

PARENTS NIGHT OUT
Patricia A. Duran School, 5-9pm

APRIL 13

APRIL 16-19

VACATION CAMP
Patricia A. Duran School, 6:30am-6pm

SEA DOGS GAME
Hadlock Field, Portland ME



APRIL 18

APRIL 27

CHILDREN'S YARD SALE
Patricia A. Duran School, 8am-12ppm

For more information, please visit: www.hermonrec.com

Want to contribute to the Hermon Connection?

Have something you want to share with the community? If you have an item of interest pertaining to the Town of Hermon we want to hear about it! Submitting an article in the Hermon Connection is a good way for residents and organizations to share stories of interest with the community. If you would like to submit an article, please email it to Lindsey Ouellette at ouellettel@hermonmaine.gov. In order for Hermon residents and/or organizations to submit articles to be published in the Connection, the following criteria must be met:

1. The person submitting the article must be a resident of the Town of Hermon.
2. The organization submitting the article must be location within Hermon's geographic boundaries.
3. The organization has a lawful purpose which does not pose a threat to public order, to the safety of the public, or to the safety of any individual.
4. The organization does not have as its primary purpose marketing products of services or making a profit.

Please be aware that any articles and notices submitted by community members and community organizations may not contain offensive language, slander, advocate violence or unlawful activity, or pose a threat to public order or to persons or their reputation. When determining whether or not to submit an article, please be aware the deadlines for submission are approximately the 20th of February, April, June, August, October and December.

Once you have submitted your article, Town staff will be in contact with you to let you know if the article you submitted will be published. We look forward to hearing from you!

ELECTIONS

By Kristen Cushman, Town Clerk

On June 11, 2023, we will have a Municipal Election and State Primary Election.

The Town Council has two (2) seats, and the School Board has two (2) seats that will all expire June 30, 2024. 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.



Nomination papers will be available in my office on March 4, 2024. Candidates are required to obtain 25 valid registered voter supporting signatures. Those signatures are due back by 4:00pm on April 2, 2024.

On November 5, 2024, we have a General Election for the State of Maine and possibly a Municipal Election.

A colorful advertisement for a fitness program. At the top, it says "Spring SHAPE-UP ADULT FITNESS" in large, bold letters. Below that, it says "WITH ANDREA WHITE" and "2 SESSIONS AVAILABLE:". There are two boxes for the sessions: "SESSION 1 MAR. 7, 14, 21, & 28" and "SESSION 2 APR. 18, 25, MAY 2, & 9". At the bottom, it says "THURSDAYS 6:30 -7:30 PM", "\$30 PER 4-WEEK SESSION", and "PADS CAFE". The background shows people exercising.

State is spending a shocking amount on temporary housing for asylum seekers

The topic of housing is very much on the minds of Mainers struggling to afford homes or affordable rents in this time of every increasing prices. Homeless camps are now present in a growing number of Maine communities, not just major cities. That is why I am shocked to learn how millions of dollars of taxpayer money is being mismanaged at the expense of long time Mainers and pressing state needs.

The Maine State Housing Authority provided an accounting of \$55 million in expenditures associated with the Emergency Housing Relief Fund.

- Of that \$55 million dollar fund, \$35 million (63%) was spend on housing approximately 2,200 asylum seekers.
- The Transitional housing portion of the fund spent an average of \$56,000 per unit.
- \$1.2 million in Maine taxpayer dollars was spent on legal assistance for federal asylum claims.
- \$13.9 million dollars went to just one hotel providing temporary housing for 80 families
- Money has gone to building new, rent-free luxury apartments in Brunswick for asylum seekers.

These revelations are deeply troubling. The Mills administration continues to promote Maine as a destination state asylum for seekers and has proposed the creation of an Office for New Americans.

The Maine Housing Authority figures are just for temporary housing costs, not all the other human services required to support people with no means of support or ability to work.

Maine's General Assistance budget has grown 330% from \$13 million to \$43 million in 2023. With so many Mainers struggling to survive, these ongoing costs with place added burdens on taxpayers.

I support immigration, where people come here legally, then get in line with everyone else. All Americans were, at one time, immigrants. That is the strength of our country. I just believe that our homeless veterans, elderly and people struggling with mental illness should not have to go to the back of the line for services that our tax dollars support.

I want the Mills administration and legislative leaders to provide a plan for addressing this unsustainable situation going forward. I care about the people that are here, but attracting even more migrants without meeting pressing state needs is irresponsible.

I am interested in your thoughts on these and any other topics of concern to you. Please feel free to contact me at Jim.Thorne@legislature.maine.gov or call 207 287-1440 to share them, or if I can be of assistance with state matters.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent you in the Maine House. I love hearing your thoughts and concerns, and appreciate your input!



Sincerely, Rep. Jim Thorne

Programs for Senior Citizens in Our Community

HERMON RECREATION

Crafting Sessions

Looking for a fun and creative activity to do? Join us on the 2nd Tuesday of each month for a crafting session with Julie! You don't have to worry about bringing anything because all materials and instructions will be provided.

When: First Tuesday of each month, 12:30pm

Location: Boulrier Place

Cost: Free

Yoga Classes

Weekly yoga classes are offered every Thursday with Andrea! This gentle and beginner-friendly class is open to all seniors, regardless of experience or fitness level. Take the time to unwind, relax, and have a laugh!

When: Thursdays, 11:15am

Location: Boulrier Place

Cost: Free

Senior Social Events

Unwind and enjoy some friendly competition with us every Thursday afternoon. We'll provide snacks, coffee, and tea to keep you fueled up.

When: Thursdays, 12:30 pm

Where: Boulrier Place

Cost: Free

Luncheons

Come join us for an upcoming luncheon, where you can savor a mouth-watering meal and catch up with friends, new and old!

Check a monthly calendar for future dates.

Location: Hermon Town Office

Cost: Free

Our goal is to provide free and affordable programs for senior citizens in our community through the Hermon Rec Seniors group. If you're a senior citizen or know someone who is 50+ and would benefit from being part of our group, we'd love to hear from you! For more information on senior activities offered by Hermon Recreation and to register, please contact the rec office at 207-848-8014.



To view all monthly events, a calendar is available both online and at the Hermon Town Office.

Penobscot Snowmobile Club Update

Article by: Chuck Pace

Penobscot Snowmobile Club is located at 795 Bog Road Hermon, Maine. Our meetings are held the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 6:00pm. We love to see new faces at the meetings. Stop by and see what we are all about.

What a strange winter season we have been having this year. Our trails were all but done when we received the first wind storm. The club members got right back out and cleared up the many trees that were down. We were not done clearing up that round when mother nature delivered the next wind storm and many more trees were down. Then, we were blessed with another wind storm. It's been a season of clearing trails, many, many times. If you ride snowmobiles please consider joining a club. We can always use volunteers, helping out when you can. If you can find time to ride you should think about helping out as well.

Coming up this summer, we will be hosting the Kevin Call Junior Memorial Truck Pull. It is located right at the clubhouse on the Bog Road. While holding this event for the past several years, the Penobscot Snowmobile Club has been able to provide several \$1,000 scholarships to students attending a trade school in memory of Kevin Call Jr. He was a great member of our club. Kevin enjoyed participating in the truck and tractor pulling with his family.

We also hand out other scholarships for graduates of Hermon High School and love to give back to our community.



Hermon Cub Scouts Pack 25

Article & Photos by: Jeremiah Rancourt



Hermon Cub Scout Pack 25 is pleased to announce that their two Arrows of Light Alexander Rancourt and Ethan Dalessandro are crossing over into Scouts BSA on the evening of March 18, 2024 at the Mason Lodge on route 2. Both boys have spent several years in the Hermon cub scout program, honing their outdoor survival and community service skills while being good role models for younger scouts in the Pack. Highlights of the boys time in scouts includes two Nova science medals awarded to Alex and Ethan winning back to back Pinewood Derby first place awards. They will be joining the Levant Scout Troop to continue their journey. Congratulations!

DON'T MISS THE DEADLINE!



As set by the Town Council, all tax payments will be due in full by April 1, 2024

Interest will start accruing on April 2, 2024 at a rate of 8% annually on any unpaid taxes.

If you have any questions, please contact Michael Chamings, Tax Collector or call 848-1010 option 3 and ask for The Deputy Tax Collector.

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A stylized hawk head logo with a blue 'H' on its forehead.

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**APRIL
VACATION CAMP**

TUES. 4/16
MID SCIENCE
Lab/Science Experiments

WED. 4/17
FIELD TRIP
Polar Discovery Museum

THURS. 4/18
PJ & STAFF DAY
Dinner/Fun/Party

FRI. 4/19
PARENT DAY
Dinner/Meet

PADS
K-6TH GRADE
6:30AM - 6PM
\$35 DAILY
FOR BSA MEMBERS
\$45 FOR NON-MEMBERS

A colorful illustration of a rainbow umbrella with flowers at its base.

REGISTER BY 4/12
NO DROP-INS

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NEW THRUEN COMMUNITY