

Town of Williamsburg Spring 2014



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Open House

Haydenville police and fire department and the Williamsburg Fire Department buildings will be open to the public

Saturday, May 31
10:00am to 12:00pm.
Tour the facilities!

Annual Town Meeting, Monday, June 2

Town Office Building at 141 Main Street, Haydenville

Not at the Anne T. Dunphy School

Voters will be asked to consider 24 articles at the 2014 annual town meeting; two prior fiscal year articles, three capital planning articles which include a highway truck and fire apparatus, fiscal year 14 budget articles to support government operations, the medical marijuana by-law and a request to accept M.G.L. Chapter 59, Section 5N, which would allow the Board of Selectmen to establish a program for veterans to provide services in exchange for a reduction in real property tax obligations. A complete copy of

the Town Meeting warrant articles including the proposed budget and Capital Plan for FY14 can be viewed by visiting the Town's website at www.burgy.org.

Participate in your government:
attend Town Meeting at the Williamsburg Town Office building on Monday, June 2nd beginning at 7:00p.m.



School Building Renovation and Addition Project

The Anne T. Dunphy School Renovation project is in its final stages of completion and it is exciting to imagine the administrators, teachers, staff and kids filling the building at the start of the 2014-2015 school year. The project began in April 2013 with a very aggressive time schedule targeting substantial completion within a year. Due to the long winter, challenging site, and many unforeseen building conditions, the final completion and finishing touches on the building will be done over the summer. This will be a busy time with administrators moving in,

teachers organizing their classrooms, and final punch list items being completed; therefore, the building won't be open to the public until the fall.

A special celebration, including a ribbon cutting and community open house, is being planned for September 6, 2014.

More details about the Event will be provided by a town-wide call and via the town's website at <http://www.burgy.org> Stay tuned...



Williamsburg Cultural Council

The Williamsburg Cultural Council is part of a network of 329 Local Cultural Councils serving all 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth. The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC), a state agency, which then allocates funds to each community.

In 2014, the Williamsburg Cultural Council was allocated a total of \$4,250 from the MCC for grants to individuals and organizations to promote cultural projects that benefit the community. Projects eligible for grants may be in the arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences.

In December of 2013 some of the local grants awarded by our council were:

Hampshire Regional High School for their musical; Gregory Maichak for his painting class at Meekins; Haydenville resident Todd Lynch for his Flotsam Weirs project; Friends of Williamsburg Libraries for Hilltown Winter Concerts; Williamsburg Elementary School for a school trip; Council on Aging for "Cross Generation Conversations"; Meekins' Summer Reading Program; and Roger Tincknell and Richard Clark for separate presentations for the Council on Aging.

For more information on the Williamsburg Cultural Council, visit the council's web site at <https://www.mass-culture.org/Williamsburg> or e-mail BurgyCC@yahoo.com.



massculturalcouncil.org

The members of the Williamsburg Cultural Council are: Mary Dudek, Chairperson; Michele Morales Wolk, Secretary; Charles Dudek, Treasurer; Catherine Corio, and Sean Mallari.

What is the Hilltown Resource?

The Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative (HRMC) was created 22 years ago and includes the Towns of Ashfield, Chester, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg and Worthington. The HRMC was created by a group of dedicated volunteers from each member Town who had the vision to seek a regional solution to help small towns with volunteer local boards who had a desire to protect the environment, become more sustainable and

deal with the expensive problem of rapidly rising solid waste disposal costs. This created important environmentally beneficial cost saving recycling, explored zero waste issues and developed long term regional and town based sustainability programs.

The HRMC website address is www.hrmc-ma.org

The Williamsburg Representatives to the HRMC Board are currently Rusty Luce and Paul Wetzel.



Burgy Farmers' Market

On behalf of the Burgy Farmers Market committee and vendors, we want to let the Williamsburg and Hilltown community know that the Burgy Farmers Market will not continue into the 2014 season. A lot of thought went into this decision. After evaluating sales and customer volume from last season, it was decided that there are not enough interested vendors to support a sustainable market at this time.

Farmers are making plans to sell their products through other outlets for the 2014 season. Please consider supporting them and other area farmers by buying local farm products through the many outlets we are lucky to have around - such as farmers markets in Florence, Ashfield and Northampton, The Williamsburg Market, The Cummington Creamery, The River Valley Market, farm CSA's and farmstands.

Thank you for your support.



Town Sign Boards

If you have information to place on the Town Sign Boards located at either end of the town along Rte. 9, effective June 1st you may email them to signs@burgy.org. If you don't use email, you may call the town offices at 268-8400 or drop off a written notice at the Board of Selectmen's Office. Glen Goebel will be taking over posting notices ~ Thank you. It is with heartfelt appreciation that we thank Ellie Loomis for her many years of volunteering and posting information on the signs in a timely and efficient manner and our thanks to Larry West who took over temporarily this past winter and spring.

Transfer Station Redemption Shed News

The Shed volunteers wish to thank all who regularly contribute redeemable bottles and cans, the proceeds of which are used to support and maintain the Williamsburg Public Gardens. Please note that only containers that are redeemable in Massachusetts can be recycled at the shed. We cannot accept wine, liquor, water, fruit juice or other non-redeemable containers. The volunteer staff sorts and packs containers and redeems them at Pat's. Proceeds are held in the Williamsburg Beautification Fund at the Florence Savings Bank.

We will soon have new signs to indicate bins to use for aluminum cans, plastic soda bottles, and glass beer and carbonated beverage containers. The

floor will receive a drainpipe and crushed stone to prevent puddles during heavy rains and ice during winter.



The funds are responsible for the flowers in containers at the Vet's Park, the Market, and Angel Park, and have been used to purchase benches. Recently, a contribution was made to

help support the Dunphy School children's agricultural program.

Remember, leave only redeemable containers and place all other containers in the large green recycling bins. Thanks for your continued support for the Public Gardens.



Nick Dines - For the Bottles and Cans Redemption Group!

A major portion of Town Government operates through the dedication and commitment of elected and appointed volunteers. It is through the sharing of their time, energy, expertise and skills that we function so well and accomplish all that we do and we need YOU! Please consider getting involved in your town government. Below is a list of vacancies that need to be filled. To learn more or if the position or committee you are interested in is not listed, please contact the Board of Selectmen's office at 268-8400.

- Animal Control Officer
- Conservation Commission
- Council on Aging Advisory Board
- Field Driver
- Open Space and Recreation
- Pioneer Valley Region Joint Transportation alternate
- Planning Board
- Shade Tree Committee/Tree Warden
- Technology

TOWN GOVERNMENT

Conservation Commission Reminder

If you live within 100 feet of a wetland or 200 feet of a perennial stream, any project that will alter the landscape (tree removal, installing a deck or shed, etc.) requires a state wetlands permit such as a request for determination (RDA) or a notice of intent (NOI). This permitting process ensures you stay in compliance with state regulations and protects the rivers and wetlands of our town. The RDA is an efficient and inexpensive route for applicants to determine whether or not a proposed activity – a simple project within 100 feet of a wetland – will likely alter a wetland or resource area. A NOI should be filed when work will occur in a wetland resource area, or when the project, due to its proximity or scale -- such as house construction, major landscaping, or residential or commercial developments -- is likely to alter a resource area. When a project has been completed, a request for certificate of compliance form should be submitted to the commission.

If you have any questions about the process of filing the appropriate forms, please contact a member of the Williamsburg Conservation Commission. You can find Conservation Commission contact numbers and various forms by going to our town website: www.burgy.org. Click on Boards and Committees, select Conservation Commission, and select from the options in Additional Links.

Shade Tree Committee

What Is New and Old With the Tree Committee?

During the past year the Tree Committee/Tree Warden has worked hard to protect our valuable community trees, while insuring safety along our roadways. The tree warden operates under State Law Chapter 87 and Chapter 40. The Tree Warden is currently composed of 3 members. There were at one time 7 members. More work was completed when the committee was larger. We urge and welcome citizens to observe our monthly meetings and consider joining our committee.



The Tree Committee will be doing a tree survey in early May. If you are concerned about a town tree please mark the tree with a plastic ribbon and contact the tree committee at 268-7979. National Grid will be trimming branches from the wires in town starting in May and finishing next January. NG does many hours of work in Williamsburg to try to make sure that we have electricity to our homes and businesses.

Williamsburg Public Safety Complex

Does Williamsburg need a new Public Safety Complex?



Since this past October, the Williamsburg Public Safety Complex Committee has been meeting to try and figure out the best answer to this question. In order to help us and the town decide on the important issues concerning this project, we will be

asking the town to appropriate \$40,000 at town meeting to go towards a Feasibility Study. A study will begin the process to help answer the questions of where, how much and how big. We do know now that our current facilities for fire, police, and emergency management are inadequate, substandard, wasting money and potentially dangerous.

To provide an opportunity for Williamsburg citizens to ask questions and tour our present facilities, **the Committee is sponsoring an open house** at the *Haydenville police and fire department building* and the *Williamsburg Fire Department*

building on **Saturday, May 31 from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm**. We hope all will come to see for themselves and to ask questions directly of the committee and department personnel.



For more information, please contact: Charlene Nardi, Administrator, 268-8418
Jason Connell, Fire Chief, 268-7233
Denise Wickland, Police Chief, 268-7237
William Sayre, Chair, 268-7485

COA News

Come on Down to the Williamsburg Senior Center,
Where it's All Happening!

If you are 60+, you are eligible for our Senior Center programs and offerings. You may be surprised to see that we are not a bunch of old folks in rocking chairs, there is a lot going on! Come and meet your neighbors!

Some programs offered by the Williamsburg Senior Center are:

- Congregate Meals
- Free Breakfast Program
- Monthly Bread & Soup meals
- Smith Voc. Take-Home-Meal Program during the school year
- Brown Bag Program
- Senior Van
- Osteo Exercise at Williamsburg Cong. Church
- Intergenerational Yoga Class
- T'ai Chi Classes
- Easy Walking in the Auditorium
- Silent Meditation Group
- Cards, Crafts & Puzzles
- Entertainment
- Outreach

- Companion Program
- Medical Drives
- Podiatry, bi-monthly
- Blood Pressure Clinic
- Veterans' Services
- Monthly Newsletter, Blog & Facebook Page
- AND Much More...

For information or to sign up for any of these programs, call 268-8407.

The Council on Aging Advisory Board is looking for members. If you are interested in being a voice for elder needs, you may be able to help us out. All ages welcome. 2+ hours per month commitment. Call Marie Westburg at 268-8410.

The Senior Center is looking for more medical drivers! One of our most important programs is Medical Rides. Would you like to become a driver and help get your neighbors to their appointments? Drivers can earn \$15-30 per appointment. We are looking for dependable drivers, 21 and over, with their own car and up-to-date driver's license to apply. All drivers are CORI checked. Please call 268-8407 to apply.

Transfer Station

Summer hours 9am to 4pm, Wed and Sat.

Stickers will be available on May 15th. Current price is \$60 /year. New Stickers are due July 1, 2014.

The Board will be discussing a possible price increase for 2016 if the hauling rates are increased (hauling contract will be up for renewal this summer). The Board plans to survey residents for their ideas on the current fee structure: Should we go to a pay by bag system? Could we increase our rate of recycling? (Currently about 40%) to reduce the amount of household trash.

Ideas for food composting

Anyone who is interested in being on a subcommittee to discuss food composting can contact Helen at liz9@comcast.net. We plan to make a visit to transfer stations in Northampton and Greenfield who currently accept food waste at their facilities to get ideas. Time and date to be announced.

Thanks to all who take the time to recycle and also to those who donate to the return bottling efforts led by Nick Dines. Not only do you save the Town money for hauling costs but also the money that is generated from the bottles helps to beautify the Town's Public Spaces.

Kudos to the students of the Helen E James 2nd grade class who are currently recycling plastic bags and looking into making this a bigger Town wide project.

Summer Reminders

Tick season has started and everyone should be mindful of ways to prevent tick bites and associated Lyme disease. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has very useful information that is available online at www.mass.gov/dph/epi. Brochures are also available at the Meekins Library.

Rain barrels can be ordered thru the Great American Rainbarrel Company and will be delivered on May 31st at the Transfer Station. To order go to www.greatamericanrainbarrel.com click on Williamsburg

News from the Board of Health

News from Hampshire Regional High School

The 2013-2014 School Year has been a great one! I am excited to share some of the highlights from Hampshire Regional this spring.

This March, Hampshire Regional debuted its spring musical, the Sound of Music, starring seniors and Williamsburg natives Emma Cook as Maria, Shelly Nardi as Louisa von Trapp and Gina Wetzel as Sister Sophia. The musical was a huge success and sold tickets to a near full house for every performance.



Hampshire is proud of its visual and performing arts department for offering students a variety of opportunities to show off their artistic skills such as participating in band, jazz band, chorus, chamber singers or enrolling in classes such as ceramics, graphic design, ink and paint, photography, and Advanced Placement Art. In the 2014-2015 school year, art may be added to the 7th grade program while still maintaining its 8th grade course.

Students prepared for their AP exams and MCAS exams scheduled for mid-May. Last year, Hampshire Regional High School was given the prestigious recognition of being an AP Honor Roll School by the National College Board. Being an AP Honor Roll School means that the institution offers a variety of AP courses and students excel in their performance on the AP test. Hampshire Regional is able to offer high quality programs in every department to ensure students are college and career ready when they graduate. Students were not just involved in rich and engaging lessons within the walls of Hampshire; they also ventured outside of the school for several diverse learning opportunities. Students across every grade level went on field trips to places such as Smith College, UMass Amherst, the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, New York City, Boston, Quebec,

Spain and other unique destinations to focus on Environmental Science, American literature, college planning, and contemporary art.

Because of the efforts of students and staff working collaboratively at Hampshire Regional, we have improved our cafeteria offerings to include a salad bar and specially featured meals, started the work to create a community garden in one of our courtyards, placed in a state-wide robotics tournament led by parent volunteer Sue Froehlich, and raised awareness and funds for a number of different non-profit organizations. I'm so proud of our community's ability to come together to engage students in a number of ways beyond our strong academic and athletic programs.



Hampshire is looking forward to celebrating the Class of 2014 at our graduation ceremony at John Greene Hall on June 6. We are also planning for our sixth graders to transition to Hampshire Regional by planning a number of fun and community-building transitional activities. There is never a dull moment at HRHS!

Kristen Smidy, Interim Principal

Veterans' Services News

If you are a veteran or the surviving spouse of a Massachusetts's veteran and your total monthly income is less than \$2,429 (couple) or less than \$1,805 (individual) a month then you may be eligible for Chapter 115 assistance.

You can speak with your veteran's agent, Tom Geryk, during the office hours below or call 1-413-587-1299 or 1-877-821-0128.

Veteran Agent hours:

Mondays - Williamsburg 11:30a.m. to 1:30p.m.

3rd Tuesday - Williamsburg 6 to 8 p.m.

Williamsburg Police Department

The Williamsburg Police Department has two CPS (Child Passenger Seat) Technicians. These technicians inspect and install child car seats and booster seats free of charge. The Police Department was awarded a grant and was able to purchase some car seats that can be issued to eligible families from the Hilltowns. Keeping your children safe in the car is extremely important and we are pleased to be able to offer this service to not only Williamsburg residents, but to anyone who needs it. To have a seat checked or to inquire about the seats available to the public please call the Police Department at 413-268-7237.

Two members of the Williamsburg Police Department were able to

attend the EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) course. This training was paid for by a grant which was obtained by Highland Ambulance. Officer Sabrina Willard and Officer Jason Soukup both completed the classroom and practical portions of the program and are in the process of taking the written exam which is the last step of the certification process. Congratulations to both officers for all their hard work.

The Williamsburg Police Department now has a permanent Drug Collection Box. Williamsburg is among 17 police departments in the Northwestern District with permanent boxes, where people can safely dispose of unwanted prescription drugs, getting them

out of the wrong hands and out of the environment. Anyone wishing to safely dispose of medications (including prescription medications, over the counter medications, pet medications, and vitamins) may do so "no questions asked". The box is accessible Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings from 6pm-10pm during office hours or any other day of the week by appointment. To make arrangements to drop off unused medications please call the Williamsburg Police Department. This service is available to anyone and is not limited to Williamsburg residents so share this news with your family and friends.

Happy Spring!
Chief Denise Wickland

What do you think would be the best use for Williamsburg's old Town Hall, the building of faded elegance that sits between the Grange Hall and the Veterans Memorial? Should the building be renovated for town use? Should it be sold for development into offices or commercial space? Should it be taken down? The Williamsburg Building Re-Purposing Committee would love to have your suggestions, and is offering prizes for the most thoughtful and practical ideas received. Please email your thoughts in care of the town administrator to townadmin@burgy.org or mail them to the Building Re-Purposing Committee at the Town Office, PO Box 447, Haydenville 01039.



Repurposing Committee

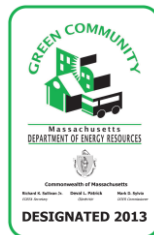
Though a beautiful Greek Revival building, the Town Hall is not in good repair. By some estimates, it would require more than \$350,000 to renovate the outside, repair the roof, install a heating system and upgrade the plumbing and electrical systems.

Yet, the building holds an important place in the town center and the town's history. Built in 1841, it is a central part of the streetscape and features prominently on the Williamsburg Town Seal. Over the years, it has been used for meeting space, offices and classrooms. Since the 1970s, the building has housed the Williamsburg Historical Society's collection of artifacts and memorabilia and been open to the public for limited hours between May and October.

Please, feel free to share your thoughts with the committee on future uses of the building. Did we mention, there are prizes for the most practical, thoughtful suggestions?

ENERGY COMMITTEE

The Energy Committee has been actively involved in promoting efficient energy management practices at the Town offices and facilities. The Committee has advised the Select Board, the Water and Sewer Commission, and the Board of Assessors on the technical aspects of proposed solar photovoltaic (PV) installations on private and public land. The Committee concentrated its efforts on two major programs: the Massachusetts Green Communities program and the Solarize Massachusetts program.



After we successfully achieved Green Community status, we worked to develop projects for funding, using the \$142,975 grant awarded to the Town under a Green Communities grant. We considered energy audits at the James School and Meekins Library, LED street lighting retro fit, a solar PV installation at the Dunphy School, and a home energy efficiency incentive. After checking with the Select Board and the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) regarding the projects that were acceptable and in the Town's best interests, we decided to apply for a grant to use a portion of the funds for level two energy audits at the James school and the Meekins Library. We will be considering future projects to be funded by the balance of the grant.

In December, Williamsburg (partnering with Whately and Chesterfield) was selected to participate in the Solarize Massachusetts program. Upon our selection, the next task was to choose one company to install all of the residential and business solar electric panels in the three towns. Seven companies were competing and our Energy Committee, representatives of the other of towns, and the Clean Energy Center, of the Massachusetts DOER thoroughly evaluated each proposal. After a comprehensive review, we chose RGS Energy.



In February, the Williamsburg Solarize Team, composed of Energy Committee members and volunteer residents, conducted a successful Solar 101 information session at the Town Offices attended by over 60 residents and business owners. This was followed by a "Meet the Installer" event in March, when over 100 interested residents had their questions answered about the program, and learned about the benefits and costs of installing solar panels. The deadline to sign up for Solarize Williamsburg is June 30, 2014. If you have any questions about the program, send an e-mail to solarizewilliamsburg@gmail.com. If you would like a representative from RGS Energy to meet with you, go to <http://rgsenergy.com/WWC>.

The members of the Williamsburg Energy Committee are: Kim Boas, Chairperson; Gerald Mann, Robert Stinson, Mary Dudek; and Charles Dudek, Secretary.

Smoke & Carbon Monoxide Alarms

The Williamsburg Fire Department responds to numerous Smoke and CO alarms throughout the year. Many of these alarms turnout to be false due to a malfunctioning and faulty detector. Common causes for faulty detectors are dead or low batteries or dirty detectors. Simple maintenance will help prevent false alarms from happening. Batteries should be changed twice a year; this includes batteries in hard wired detectors. Also the detector should be vacuumed or blown out with canned air every time you change your batteries, or more frequently if located in a dusty environment.

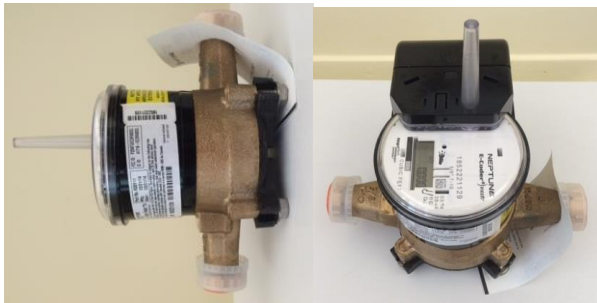
It's also a good habit to mark the date on the detector indicating when it was installed. Remember Smoke and CO detectors have a life span of 7 years.



Water and Sewer Commission

The Water and Sewer Commission has changes in the works. Walter "Sam" Kellogg, who was instrumental in starting the first town Water Department which later became the Water and Sewer Commission, has retired after many long and dedicated years to the town. Please join us in wishing him well in his retirement and thanking him for his many years of service. He will be greatly missed.

As most of you know, your water meter has a device wired to it that is attached to the outside of your house. Currently, the commissioner needs to walk to this unit, touch a reading machine to the device to obtain the reading for your water and/or sewer usage, record that number, and finally bring it back to the town office to be entered into the billing software. The Commission is in the process of purchasing and installing new meters for every water and/or sewer user. All accounts will be required to have these new meters.



The new meters are "radio read" meters. It will allow a water commissioner to drive down your street and the signal for your meter will transmit electronically to the reader. The reader is then put into a dock connected to the computer and the information is then downloaded directly. Not only will this allow readings to be done much more quickly, it will eliminate the problem of adverse weather slowing things down and take much wear and tear off the commissioner who now has to climb through bushes,

under decks, avoid dogs and do lots and lots of walking.

The Commission is excited about the information that will be available from these new meters. It will benefit both the commission and you as users. With the new meters, it will be possible to tell whether you have a leak and whether that leak is intermittent or continuous. They will also tell the time of day that leak is occurring and usage by day for the previous 90 days. And, because weather and time are not deterring issues like they are now, it will enable the commission to read the meters in between billing cycles to check and see if homes are showing signs of leaks so that the town can notify you and save you from having a huge bill for water going through your meter but not being used because it is due to a leak. Water usage is your responsibility and adjustments are not made for excess usage due to leaks or breaks, but we want to help you prevent that from occurring.

There is no additional cost to you for this change if you currently have an existing meter. However, it should be noted that if the plumbing leading to that meter is very old or not in good repair, you may need a plumber in to repair the pipes or shut off valves and this would be at your expense. If you are currently a flat rate user and do not have a meter – this includes those of you who only receive sewage disposal services and do not currently have a meter – you will be required to hire a licensed plumber to install the meter. Your plumber can contact the commission to make arrangements to receive the meter when he is ready to install it.

The Commission would also like to remind you that ANYTIME you have plumbing work done that in any way would involve the meter, you must notify the Water/Sewer Commission. The meter is town property and only the town should be authorizing or working with this meter.

Williamsburg Libraries June 2014 Events

June all month

- ~ Work in progress on the Mill River Terrace Garden at Meekins. Please see Nick Dines for more information and visit Meekins to see the garden model and plans
- ~ Art in the Hawks-Hayden Room -- **paintings, watercolors and giclées by Rey Milici of Haydenville**. Milici is known for vibrant, realistic paintings of landscapes, neighborhoods and coastal waterscapes. A reception for Rey Milici will be held on Saturday, May 21st from 1-3 PM in the Hawks-Hayden Room.
- ~ 6th grade peace posters in the Bacon Rotunda

June 10th Tuesday, 7 PM Calvin Coolidge's Williamsburg Connection, a talk by Susan Well, author of "*Calvin Coolidge at Home in Northampton*" a Part of the "Lives of the Valley" series. The story of how Williamsburg businessman, John Lyman and his family influenced the future president. Rides for local people available, call Daria at 413-538-6489

June 14th Saturday, from 12-5 a really big party! **Community Day at Meekins** a once in 30 years celebration of two town treasures—retiring director, Lisa Wenner, and the Williamsburg Libraries! Visit meekins-library.org for more information.

Williamsburg Libraries Continued...

June 15th Sunday, 2:00 PM *An Auditory History of the Piano* a talk by **Marvin J. Ward**, music critic for three different music websites, and a volunteer at the Meekins Library. Ward will describe the development of the instrument from its beginnings to the present day in the major centers of piano building, and play samples from some recordings from a CD collection to illustrate. Hawks-Hayden Room.

June 19th Thursday, 6:30 -8:30 John Heffernan, Technology teacher at the Williamsburg Schools will talk about his new book, *Elementary Robotics: Sustaining the Natural Engineering Instincts of Children* in the Hawks-Hayden Room.

June 28th Saturday, Summer Reading Program sign up starts at 1:00! Kick-Off performance --world storytelling for all ages with nationally acclaimed veteran storytellers Eshu Bumpus and Motoko at 2 PM. Treats and treasures after. SRP themes Children-Fizz, Boom, Read! Tweens and Teens- Spark a Reaction! And Grown-ups- Literary Elements- Join the fun all summer at Meekins

Anne T. Dunphy: A Pioneer in Public Education

Williamsburg has the distinction of being the only community in Hampshire County with a public school named for a woman who actually taught in the public schools – a distinction many townspeople, and the Board of Selectmen, would be reluctant to lose.

Anne T. Dunphy was a pioneer in public education, highly regarded by her colleagues and much loved by her students. She was one of the first women to serve as a high school principal in Massachusetts and one of the youngest. She was appointed principal of Williamsburg High when she was only 28, in 1918, a time when few women held high administrative posts in public schools and two years before passage of the 19th Amendment that gave women the right to vote. She remained principal for 38 years, while continuing to teach Latin, making her one of the longest serving principals in Massachusetts history.

During her tenure, she initiated a number of innovative programs and consistently worked to encourage young people's potential, wherever it lay. She inspired many Williamsburg High graduates to go to college and helped find money to cover their costs. Her commitment earned her great affection from generations of students. In 1939, her 25th year of teaching, the high school year book carried a dedication that summarized the feelings of many students and adults in Williamsburg: To our beloved principal ... in appreciation for her outstanding achievement, her inspiring friendship and encouraging advice ... Miss Dunphy's main interests have always been the welfare and success of her students."

In the early 1950s, Williamsburg was divided over whether to invest in a new elementary school. The Helen E. James School was crowded, serving both high school and elementary students but the cost of the new school worried many frugal townspeople. However, when the idea was floated to name the school after Anne, people rallied to support the project. The opening of the new school in 1955 was attended by more than 300 people and included a talk by the state's Lieutenant Governor, who commended Anne for her commitment to public education, which he called the "arsenal of inspiration for the free world."

Anne was a local girl whose accomplishments continue to inspire. Born in Haydenville in 1890, she was the

granddaughter of Irish immigrants who settled here in 1856. She was the daughter of a millworker who, like his father spent more than 40 years at the Haydenville Brassworks. She knew the toll factory life took on workers and saw education as a path to opportunities beyond the mill.

In 1909, Anne enrolled at Smith College, at a time when Irish Catholics were far more likely to be cooks or domestic staff than students. She graduated in 1913, later earning a masters' degree in classics. Instead of leaving the area like many of her classmates, she returned to Williamsburg to join the staff of the James School.

Perhaps because of her family's years of factory work, Anne recognized the role of organized labor in gaining workers better conditions and more respect in the work place. She was active in the National Education Association and the Massachusetts Teachers Association and was instrumental in forming a teachers association in the Hilltowns and served as its first president.

Anne died a few months after the opening of the school which bears her name. A newspaper story at the time captured her accomplishments which remain an inspiration to educators and town officials. "The place our school has earned as one of the leading small high schools in the state, particularly its scholastic attainment, is due – more than any other cause – to Miss Dunphy's ideals, executive ability and determination that taxpayers' dollars should be used to give Williamsburg students the best that money can buy."



From the Williamsburg School Committee

As renovation of the Anne T. Dunphy School winds down, The Williamsburg School Committee, in response to inquiries from members of the community, has been asked to consider changing the name of the school. We believe this is a decision that must have town-wide input to ensure open and transparent decision-making, if a name change is to be considered. In order to better understand the perspectives of Williamsburg residents, the committee invites you to give us your thoughts, ideas, and opinions on the name of the new school building. The school committee is conducting an electronic survey to households in Williamsburg. The online survey may be accessed directly at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LLZS3FD> or on the Town's website at <http://www.burgy.org> under Town News. Paper surveys will also be available at town offices and the Meekins Library. We hope you'll take time to complete the survey.

The Committee recognizes that this is an opportune time to strongly define our school, and convey its mission accurately to our town, as well as the wider community. The name of the school is an important part of that identity. The committee has received input that favors retention of the current name, and from those that see this as an opportunity for change with ideas ranging from an entirely new name to more nuanced changes. Thus far, the following considerations have emerged:

- A name that accurately reflects our school identity and mission.
- Both schools (Helen E. James, and Anne T. Dunphy) will be permanently consolidating into one elementary school.
- The new building will be approximately 75% new construction.
- The new building will include defined community spaces and, as such, will have a strong and vital purpose as a community center.
- A name that distinguishes itself, and identifies the town, among the vast array of educational choices in our area.
- Recognition of the historical importance and continuity of maintaining the current name, and the social, emotional, and cultural connection to Anne T. Dunphy. Below is a short biography of Anne T. Dunphy, written by Ralmon Black of the Williamsburg Historical Commission.

Miss Dunphy was born in Haydenville in 1890, daughter of Margaret (Kennedy) & Thomas Dunphy, Brassworks Foreman and School Committee member. She completed Haydenville High Schools and was graduated from Smith College, Class of 1913. She came on the Williamsburg High School staff the first year it was opened and there taught Latin, Civics and History through all of her career. She was so outstanding as to be appointed Teaching Principal at age 28, the post she would hold 38 years. Anne T. Dunphy held the highest regard for the disciplines of formal education and encouraged every student to leave the halls of Burgy High, a well prepared candidate for higher education. She passed away, still holding the office in 1956, leaving this Earth and a host of sorrowing, respectful townsfolk whose lives had been much affected by hers.

Animal Control Officer Needed

The Town is seeking to fill the position of Animal Control Officer (formerly Dog Officer) beginning July 1, 2014. For more details regarding the responsibilities and compensation, please contact the Board of Selectmen's office at 268-8400 or selectmen@burgy.org.



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News from the Williamsburg Schools

It is difficult to imagine that we are nearing the end of the 2013-2014 school year, and nearing the end of our time at Helen E James School. Our school community is proud that we have been able to provide the same kinds of high quality experiences during this consolidation in spite of the occasional challenges with space.

As we look toward June and all of the field trips and school activities that will take place, it seems fitting to be graduating one last class from the Helen E. James building, as the building celebrates its 100th anniversary this very year! We are hoping to infuse some of that history, and perhaps pieces of the very first graduation, into the celebration of our 6th grade students this June.

The level of excitement that is building in our school community leading up to the transition to our new building is nearly indescribable! We are already looking forward to the first day of school in 2014-2015! And we look forward to being able to welcome the entire community into the building at an Open House event on September 6th.

As we approach the last month of our consolidation at Helen E. James, we are ever grateful to be part of a community that has allowed our students the opportunity to continue to participate in important educational experiences. We appreciate the spaces and support provided to us by the Williamsburg Grange, the Williamsburg First Congregational Church, and Meekins Library.

The staff and students continue to benefit from this very supportive community. We so appreciate the time that our parent volunteers, PTO, School Committee, and School Council members graciously provide to enhance our students' school experience.



Students in Mrs. Korpita's 2nd grade parade down Main Street

~Stacey Jenkins
Williamsburg Schools, Principal