

Town of Williamsburg Spring 2015



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Memorial Day Parade

Monday, May 25th 1:00pm
March from the
Williamsburg Fire Station
to the
Veterans' Memorial Park.

Annual Town Meeting, Monday, June 1st

Anne T. Dunphy School

1 Petticoat Hill Road, Williamsburg

Voters will be asked to consider 21 articles at the 2015 annual town meeting; two prior fiscal year articles, three capital planning articles which include a roadside boom mower, police vehicle, and fuel tracking system, fiscal year 16 budget articles to support government operations, replacement hoses for the Jaws of Life, a request to accept Massachusetts General Law Chapter 32B section 20 which authorizes the Town to establish an Other Post-Employment Benefit Liability Trust Fund

(OPEB) and a petitioned article requesting that the town accept Solar Circle as a public road. A complete copy of the Town Meeting warrant articles including the proposed budget and Capital Plan for FY16 can be viewed by visiting the Town's website at www.burgy.org.

Participate in your government: attend Town Meeting at the Anne T. Dunphy School on Monday, June 1st beginning at 7:00p.m.



2014 Annual Town Report Dedication

The Williamsburg Board of Selectmen is pleased to dedicate the 2014 Annual Report to Jeffrey S. Ciuffreda in recognition and honor of his 32 years of volunteer service to the Town.



Annual Town Reports

Thanks to the Meekins Archivists and the Williamsburg Town Clerk, the Annual Town Report Books are now available on line at

<http://www.librarysample.org/williamsburg/williamsburgannualreports.asp>.

The Town Clerk is looking for paper copies of the 1993 and 1994 Annual Town Reports. If you have a copy and wish to donate it back to her office, please contact her at 268-8402 or townclerk@burgy.org.

Williamsburg Cultural Council

In January the Williamsburg Cultural Council awarded over \$4,000 to local and regional individuals or organizations for cultural projects that benefit the community.

The recipients of grants for 2015 are:

- Williamsburg Historical Society for framing of historical photos;
- Todd Lynch for "Flotsam Weirs 2" at Meekins Library;
- Davis Bates, Storyteller, for "Celebrating New England" at Town Offices auditorium;
- "Concerts at 7" at Plainfield Congregational Church;
- Susan Farrell, "Singing with Susan" at Linda Manor;
- Ed the Wizard for May Day Celebration at Meekins Library;
- Moti the Stilt-walking Clown for Chesterfield 4th of July parade;
- Ashfield Community Theater's Summer Arts Program;
- Hilltown Families Web site edition of "Families Suggests";
- Hampshire Regional High School field trip for 8th grade World History students;
- Aimee Gelinis for beech tree education at Locke's Loop Trail;
- Hampshire Regional High School Spring Musical;
- Jonathan Keezing for "Heroes" puppet show at Summer Reading Kick-off at Meekins Library;
- Hampshire Regional High School for Otha Day's presentation of "Drum to the Beat."

E-mail to BurgyCC@Yahoo.com for information about these events; to share suggestions for cultural events; or if you would like to join our Council.

The next season to submit applications for grants will begin in the fall. Go to www.mass-culture.org for details.



massculturalcouncil.org

"Keep Farming in the Hilltowns" Update

Keep Farming in the Hilltowns recently held a lunch that highlighted locally grown ingredients for farmers in the towns of Ashfield, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg and Worthington. The purpose was to give producers the opportunity to network with each other and contribute input on current needs of farms and foresters in the Hilltowns.



Valuable input was provided about issues and opportunities facing local farms including the need for labor, affordability of land for beginning farmers, and the opportunity to expand

production given the strong demand for local farm products. Potential infrastructure that could be used collaboratively by area farms was identified, including commercial kitchens, cold storage facilities, and root cellars.

Keep Farming in the Hilltowns is a community effort to strengthen agriculture in the Hilltowns. Surveys of farmers, residents, restaurants, stores and schools are being conducted to understand better the supply and demand for local food in the region. To take the resident survey, please go to <http://www.hilltowncdc.org/keep-farming-initiative/residents-survey.aspx>

The project is sponsored by the Hilltown CDC in partnership with the Old Creamery Cooperative and town Agricultural Commissions through USDA Agricultural Marketing Service Local Food Promotion grant. Guidance is being provided by local planning consultant Melissa Adams using Glynwood's Keep Farming methodology that has been adapted for use in Massachusetts.

Williamsburg Senior Center

Located at the Town Offices in Haydenville. Hours M- W 8:30-1:30 & TH 8:30 -5:00
Now open later on Thursdays for increased availability and programming.

New Programs:

Chair Yoga: 3:45 – 4:45 Thursdays, \$10 if you pre-register, and \$15 for drop-in.

Creativity Group: 1:00 – 2:30 Thursdays, 3 – 5 participants needed to start group, call to sign up.

Day Trips: Monthly excursions to local venues, transportation provided. Call for more info.

Interested in joining or leading an activity for adults?

- Writing Group
- Art Classes, Crafting
- Easy Cooking for One, Sewing, Zumba or Movies.

Let us know, we want to know when and what you are looking for so we can make it happen!

The Summer Salad Program is back and will be even better this year!

We have purchased a CSA Farm Share from *Crimson and Clover Farm*.

Take a break from cooking this summer and eat more fresh vegetables!

This \$2 meal includes protein, bread from Bread Euphoria Bakery bread and a dessert!

Mondays, June – Aug, 11:45 Luncheon, To-Go or we can deliver to you locally!

Cooking Club volunteers create this meal at 9:30 and eat free.

Grandparents Support Group.

For Grandparents raising a child's or a grandchild's child

Starting Monday, June 15th, 3rd Mondays 1 – 2:30, childcare provided

Sponsored by The United Arc, for more info contact Pat Keith,

Program Coordinator 413-563-1981, patkeith@unitedarc.org

Senior Center Visioning Committee

The Council on Aging Advisory Board and Senior Center Director are gearing up to request that the Select Board designate an official town committee to plan for the future site and program model of our town's Senior Center. We will conduct surveys, research trends and growing needs, and develop a comprehensive plan for moving forward as an agency. Please call the Director, Marie Westburg, to express your interest in this proposed committee. Happy Spring!

Contact Marie Westburg at coa@burgy.org, 268-8410, or office 268-8407 to sign up for our monthly newsletter.

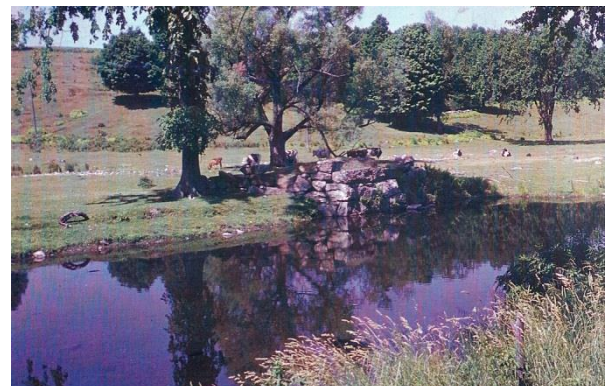
Like us on FB at <https://www.facebook.com/page/Williamsburg-senior-center>.



Conservation Commission

Williamsburg is fortunate to have a network of lovely trails and open space. The Williamsburg Conservation Commission has oversight for two town-owned properties: the Hall Conservation Area and the Briar Hill Conservation Area. Last year the commission contracted for the first of what we hope will be a series of inventories for these two parcels. We need to know the type and extent of native plants, birds, amphibians, invasive species, etc., on these properties so the commission can best manage the land.

The commission especially needs to know how folks are using these two conservation areas. Please drop a line to the Conservation Commission at the town offices or send an email to burgyconcomm@gmail.com to let us know your activities on the town's conservation lands.



Highway Department News

Well, winter is finally over! While we want to enjoy the warm months of spring, summer and fall, just some thoughts for next winter. Mailboxes that get damaged are most often from snow thrown by the plows as they travel along the roads. This is more common with high accumulations and heavy snow. Consider protecting your mailbox!

The highway crew, seasonal employees, and sub-contractors plow roads generally prior to midnight and beginning again at 4:00 a.m. We don't have a big enough staff to plow 24 hours a day. If you travel during the hours of midnight and 4:00 a.m. please be aware that all roads may not be clear.

The highway crew will be busy this spring fixing potholes on all the town's roads.



As part of the State's winter recovery program, the town has an additional \$28,522 which must be spent by June 30, 2015. Additional summer projects are sealing Petticoat Hill Road, Hyde Hill Road, and Briar Hill Road, installing a 1½" top coat on Hemenway Road, Conway Road, and Judd Lane, and hiring a firm to conduct the engineering of the Bridge Street bridge repair.

Mill River Greenway Making Steady Progress from Dream to Reality

The Mill River Greenway Committee (MRGC) continues to take great strides toward our goal of creating a pedestrian-bikeway connecting the villages of Haydenville and Williamsburg.

The trail's basic route has been drafted. The longest section would run along the river side of the Route 9 corridor, heading east from downtown Williamsburg, on a dedicated 10-foot path separated from cars by a landscaped curb. We are well along in discussions with the MA Department of Transportation to bundle the design and construction of this section into the next scheduled rebuild of Route 9, sometime within the next ten years.

The committee's vision is then to have the trail cross the Mill River on a new pedestrian bridge and traverse the Brassworks area floodplain terrace. We are working collaboratively with private landowners including Eversource Energy to develop this section, which we hope will also incorporate a new town park. The Mill River Greenway Committee is partnering with the Brassworks Reuse Committee to begin master planning of this exciting but challenging (in terms of both ecology and engineering) portion of the trail.

With construction slated to begin this summer on the MassCentral Rail Trail extension up from Leeds, the MRGC has focused much attention this winter on the connection along South Main Street in Haydenville. We have completed two engineering studies, using funds from a \$48,000 DCR Recreational Trails Program grant we received last fall, to follow up on residents' current concerns with traffic speed and visibility along this corridor. We will be working with the Williamsburg Highway Department to implement some of the initial recommendations (better signage, for example) over the months ahead. We have also studied the current trail dismount (fondly known as "the Goat Path") with a goal of improving the grade and reducing erosion in this sensitive, and beautiful, riverside location.

There is an open seat on the Mill River Greenway Committee, which meets the first Thursday of every month. We welcome your feedback, input, and participation in this very exciting project that will surely have a significant and positive impact on our community.

Junior Recruitment Day!

If serving your community and learning an exciting new skill set in a safe atmosphere sound appealing to you then come down to the Haydenville Fire Station, 16 South Main St, on Saturday June 21, 2015 from 10a.m. – 1p.m. The Williamsburg Fire Department will be providing demonstrations and have gear available to try to see if you have what it takes to join our team! We are seeking dedicated individuals ages 15-17 years old who are interested in learning and training in all aspects of fire and Emergency Medical Services. Information and FAQs provided for parents as well. Come down and see what the Williamsburg Fire Department is all about!

Anonymous Letters

The Board of Selectmen and most other boards and committees don't respond to anonymous letters. If you have a concern or thought please let us know who you are. We are then able to respond to you and provide information that we otherwise can't get to you!

News from the Library

We would like to enthusiastically welcome our new Kmit Programming Librarian – Susan Cornell. The part-time position, funded by the Chester Jon Kmit & Sandra Kmit Bernier bequest, was created to offer programming to children from birth to nineteen years of age. Evelyn, who died in 2007, loved children and left money so that the children of Williamsburg would use the library. She served as the Head Librarian at Meekins and as a gym teacher for many years. The bequest will ensure that the children have ongoing access to a knowledgeable children's librarian who will focus on programming that will be fun, model an appreciation of reading and learning, and promote the lifelong habit of library use.

Susan has planned many different programs, including a STEAMcraft drop-in craft event one Saturday a month that features some aspect of science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) while providing fun activities for kids from age 5 to 11. Her first drop-in craft was called "Winter Frozen Fun" and kids learned about how snowflakes form in nature and then they created paper snowflakes, mosaic snowflakes, and marshmallow snowmen. She has also started a tweens book club for kids in grades 4, 5, and 6. She is working on a Teen Facebook page and forming a teen advisory board. Tummy time for infants (and their adults!)

will also be scheduled. Some programs will meet on a regular basis; others will only meet a few times a year, such as info sessions for teens entering college.

From early literacy work with the very young, through Summer Reading Programs and library activities for the middle years, to offering teenagers an exposure to the world of great literature as well as the myriad of learning and recreational opportunities to be found at the public library, the Kmit bequest will fund a world of learning for the youth of Williamsburg. Keep an eye open for these activities on our Facebook page as well as our website at

<http://www.meekinslibrary.org/williamsburg>.



Silliness at "Helicopters,"
the second STEAMcraft event

Public Safety Complex

The Williamsburg Public Safety Complex Committee was created by the Board of Selectmen in October of 2013 to help the town identify the future facility needs of the Fire, Police and Emergency Management Departments with a focus on what is practical, affordable and necessary; to identify possible locations for a safety complex; to determine a preliminary design of such a building; and to help identify possible funding sources.



On April 3, 2014, the Committee met with the Board and delivered their report and recommendation to proceed to the hiring of a professional design company to study the feasibility and options of a safety complex building. Subsequently the Town raised \$40,000 for that study at the Annual Town Meeting. The study is intended to determine the suitability of various site options, determine the scope of the project, and estimate all costs for completion. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was published and the Board hired Drummey Rosane Anderson, Inc. (DRA) to conduct the study.



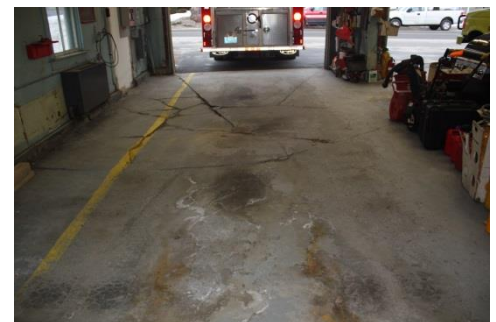
Since the hiring of DRA, the Committee with the architect's help and assistance, has been quite busy, meeting every month and completing tasks between meetings. During that time, the Committee has completed programmatic studies of the needs of the three departments, reviewed potential sites for the safety complex throughout the Haydenville/Williamsburg corridor, and created and reviewed flood zone maps for the studied areas. Our contract with DRA allows for

three different studies of sites and to date we have completed one study, siting the complex on the James School lot. We are in the process of preparing a short video for public presentations describing the need for new facilities with the help of pro-bono work by David Thorpe. We have met with the Highway Dept. Superintendent Bill Turner to evaluate the suitability of Route 9 water supplies, completed preliminary investigations into the tax rate effect for a baseline facility, coordinated our efforts with the Building Repurposing Committee and have had many conversations with town residents and people with expertise in this area.

In the following months the Committee will continue to meet and work on developing alternate sites for the safety complex. We are planning to host a number of conversations with groups throughout the town and conduct a larger open forum event to further solicit comments and input from residents. We are focused on collecting and incorporating all of the Town's residents' concerns and suggestions into the final design.

The Committee would like to extend to all interested citizens the opportunity to view the present facilities, meet with individual Committee members, attend our scheduled meetings, and ask questions of us on our progress. We always welcome any comments and assistance that might aid us in our project.

William Sayre, Chair
Denise Banister
Dan Banister
Jason Connell
Louis Hasbrouck
Dick Kisloski
Don Lawton
Peter Mahieu
Daryl Springman
Michael Wayne
Denise Wickland



Transfer Station Stickers

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

Stickers will be on sale in mid-May at the Transfer Station. Current price is \$60/year. New stickers are due July 1, 2015.

Williamsburg Fire Department Promotion

On Tuesday April 14th, the Williamsburg Fire Department held a ceremony never held before: The promotion of a female firefighter to Lieutenant. Robin Merritt was sworn in as the first female officer in the Fire Department. Robin has been an active and energetic member of the department since 2011. Since then she has graduated from the Fire Academy, became an EMT, and most recently graduated from nursing school and was hired by Franklin Medical Center. Her knowledge and experience in firefighting as well as in the medical field make her a valuable asset to the department.

Robin brings a sense of energy and enthusiasm which is contagious to the department. Her hard working and positive attitude is what makes her an ideal role model.

The Ceremony on April 14th began with Chief Connell addressing the assembled guests and fellow firefighters all dressed in their best uniforms. He spoke highly of her accomplishments and said he is truly proud to have her in the department.



The ceremony continued with Brenda Lessard, the town clerk, swearing her in. Her father had the special honor of pinning on her new Lieutenant badge and fellow firefighter and boyfriend Drew Morris pinned on her bugle pins. In the past fire officers used bugles to communicate directions during an incident and the bugles were worn around the neck to quickly identify officers. Today bugle pins are placed on the collars of fire officers' shirts.

Our fire department is growing and consists of hard working and dedicated men and women and is proud to promote Robin Merritt as the first female fire officer.

Williamsburg Fire Department – Rapid Entry Key Systems

The Williamsburg Fire Department would like to remind everyone of the following bylaw regarding entry key systems for any structure or property which is protected with a fire alarm system with automatic notification. If you have a fire alarm system with automatic notification and do not have a fire department key box, please contact the fire department to make arrangements for one. Also, there are a limited number of key boxes available to seniors and or disabled residence for little or no cost.

Fire Department Safety Regulations - Rapid Entry Key System:

1.) Definitions

- A. Fire Chief: Williamsburg Fire Chief or his designee
- B. Fire Department: Williamsburg Fire Department
- C. Fire Alarm System: Fire, heat or smoke detection system with automatic notification of the Williamsburg Fire Department or notification to the Williamsburg Fire Department through a third party notification service.
- D. Rapid Entry Key System: Rapid entry key system, which will include an exterior, secure key box and may include an interior secure key safe.

2.) Key System Requirements

- A. The owner of any structure or property which is protected with a fire alarm system with automatic notification of the Williamsburg Fire Department shall install a rapid entry key system for fire department use. The key box shall contain keys for the main entry, all areas covered by the fire detection system, hazardous areas, mechanical areas and any other areas required by the Fire Chief.
- B. The rapid entry key system shall be of a type approved by the Fire Chief. Installation shall be in a location approved by the Fire Chief.

A rapid entry key system shall be in place at the time of installation of any fire alarm system with automatic notification of the fire department, at the time any existing system is updated with automatic notification of the fire department or within one year of the adoption of this by-law by the Town Meeting.



Collector's Corner

With spring comes the winding down of the fiscal year. The final quarterly real estate tax payment for FY2015 was payable by May 4th. Payments can be made by mail, in person, or online at www.burgy.org. For those of you who do not escrow your taxes with your mortgage or may have paid your mortgage off, I know these quarterly tax payments can be a big bite all at once. You may not be aware that I am happy to accept partial payments in any amount any time for real estate and water/sewer bills. Of course, the goal is to have the payment made in full by the due date so that no interest or charges apply on any remaining unpaid balance. I would also like to caution those of you using online banking through your own bank, those payments you request require a paper check being issued and mailed to my office. By law, I am not allowed to accept postmarks and am not responsible for the mail service. If, however, you use the online banking through the town's website, payments are made electronically from your account to the town's account almost instantaneously. Also, since no coupon accompanies payments made from your bank, please be sure you provide the name the bill is under and bill number and type to be sure credit can be appropriately made. Law prohibits me from accepting partial payments for excise taxes, so if you are paying your excise through your bank's online banking, please keep this in mind as I would need to return your check if not paid in full. Once interest has accrued, payment is considered partial if the entire amount of the bill is not included – this is for excise payments only.

Many of you may not be aware that the motor vehicle excise bills are generated by the Massachusetts Registry

of Motor Vehicles with information they have in their records. They calculate the value of the vehicle according to the manufacturer's original list price. If you have a question on the value, please contact the registry. If an address change needs to be made, you need to do that with the registry – we do not have access to their records. Again, we cannot be responsible for the mail service if you do not receive your bill. If you sold, traded, or otherwise transferred ownership of the vehicle, you may be entitled to an abatement. Abatement applications are available on request from the Assessor's office or online and must be received within three years after the excise tax was due or one year after the excise tax was paid. You are not entitled to an abatement if you (1) cancel your registration and retain ownership of the vehicle, or (2) move to another Massachusetts city or town during the same calendar year. Please note that filing for an abatement does not stay the bill, and interest and/or charges cannot be abated. If your excise is not paid when due, you may also be barred from renewing your registration and driver's license. If you are in doubt as to your rights, consult the Assessors.

When real estate, personal property, water/sewer and excise bills are sent, a taxpayer's copy and a remittance copy are included. If you wish a receipt for payment of the bill, please bring both copies to my office. I will receipt your copy for you. If mailing your payment and wish a receipt, please include your copy of the bill and a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Happy Spring!!



Historical Photos

The Historical Society with funding from the Cultural Council will be hanging framed historical photographs in the Town Office building. Photos will be rotated so the display will be changing over time.



Water and Sewer Commission

The Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners would like to reassure all users that the water quality in Williamsburg is as safe to use and drink now as it ever was. The recent notices sent are requirements of the DEP when certain testing levels show bacteria in the water which is not harmful but is out of the normal levels. Temporary chlorinating in an extremely low dosage was begun and this has alleviated the findings. Should there ever be a time when water is not safe to drink and use, an immediate Boil Order Alert would be issued. That is not the case with recent notices.

In the past, the Commission has allowed residents to hike and/or walk dogs on the water shed property. Unfortunately, not all dog walkers are responsible and do not pick up waste from their pets. If this continues, the commission will be forced to make the decision to no longer allow walking dogs OR hiking on the property. For any use, vehicles should remain parked along South Street and not enter Roger Bisbee Way. This is to be sure that no vehicle fluids are inadvertently left behind to seep into the ground and thus the water system.

It has also been noted that with the water table up due to melting and spring rains, some residents are emptying their sump pits into the sewer system for drainage. This is not allowed per the water sewer regulations. This also increases the amount of sewer waste sent to Northampton for treatment and will greatly increase our costs which will require sewer rates to increase.

As most are now aware, the commissioners are in the process of changing all current water/sewer meters in town to updated new meters. Flat rate users are also being required to update and have these meters installed. If you have an existing meter, there is no cost to you for the change. If you are currently flat rate, with no existing meter, there is no cost for the meter but you will need to hire a licensed plumber to install it for you. Currently 43% of the accounts now have the new meters. The new meters allow us to help you monitor your usage and will indicate abnormal usage which will be extremely useful if you develop a leak somewhere. Small leaks quickly add up to large bills. Together we will try to prevent that as much as possible.

Meter readings for the spring billing are currently underway. Once bills are sent out, payments can be made by mail, in person Monday – Thursday 8:30-3:00, or online at www.burgy.org.

The Commissioners would like to thank Ken Taylor who recently resigned from many years on the board. His time and efforts have been appreciated. We welcome Donald Hultman to fill the vacancy until town elections. Donald will also be on the upcoming ballot for the remainder of the term. We look forward to working with Don and welcome his areas of expertise.

TOWN GOVERNMENT

Town Government Vacancies

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.

- Agricultural Commission Alternate
- Building Repurposing Committee
- Constable
- Council on Aging Advisory Board
- Cultural Council
- Field Driver
- Mill River Greenway Committee
- Open Space and Recreation
- Pioneer Valley Region Joint Transportation Alternate
- Planning Board
- Shade Tree Committee/Tree Warden
- Woodland Trails Committee
- Zoning Board Appeals Alternate

News from Hampshire Regional High School

The spring of 2015 has some fantastic events full of fun and learning for Hampshire Regional High School students and staff!

April 9-11, over 70 sophomores traveled to Washington DC to see many of the highlights of the beautiful city. Students enjoyed cruising the Potomac River, touring Capitol Hill, visiting Arlington Cemetery, and experiencing the Holocaust Museum. This trip is directly connected to the 10th grade United States History curriculum, and students were able to apply their knowledge from class to the historical sites they took in. The field trip is scheduled again for next year for the 10th grade class. Class advisors and teachers in the history department hope it becomes an annual trip that is accessible for all students.



At Hampshire Regional, students are empowered to flex their leadership skills to support our learning community in a variety of ways. In the month of March, the Wellness Club initiated a healthy eating community challenge in honor of National Nutrition Month. On April 15, Hampshire Regional's Gay Straight Alliance worked with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to bring an educational presentation to high school students about the importance of inclusion and acceptance of all people. Also in April, Hampshire Regional's Student Council hosted the Western Massachusetts Regional Spring Conference. Individual students are organizing walks at Hampshire to raise awareness for diabetes and hydrocephalus. The student newspaper, the Raider Report, is in full swing covering a number of national, local, and school-based topics. Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) is organizing a mock accident and a guest speaker to come to Hampshire to discuss the importance of positive choices during prom season. All of these activities are

student-led groups with teacher/staff advisors making a difference in our school and community.

May will be a busy month for Hampshire Regional. Many seniors will need to commit to a college of their choice by May 1. While some have had their top selection picked out for months, others will take up to the final day to make their decision. Students in the 7, 8, and 10 grades will take the Math MCAS on May 12 and 13. During this time, 9th graders will participate in guidance activities focused on college and career readiness, while juniors and seniors are allowed a late start to ensure a secure testing environment. However, they aren't totally off the hook: any junior or senior enrolled in an AP class will be taking AP exams during the month of May (and over 100 AP exams are taken at HRHS!). Hampshire Regional High School was given the prestigious recognition of being an AP Honor Roll School by the National College Board for the second year in a row. Being an AP Honor Roll School means that the school offers a variety of AP courses and students excel in their performance on the AP test.

Hampshire faculty and staff continue to work hard to offer a number of strong academic and extracurricular opportunities for all of our students. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have questions about our wonderful learning community!

Kristen Smidy, Principal

Did You Know?

If you buy wood,
Williamsburg Surveyor of
Wood/Lumber Alden
Bacon can tell you what a
cord of wood is and make
sure you are getting what
you pay for. Contact the
Town Administrator for
this free service at
268-8418

From the Williamsburg School

The school year is quickly moving along at the Anne T. Dunphy School! Although the winter felt quite long, it was filled with many rich experiences for our students. In early winter, our students in 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade took part in an artist-in-resident experience. For several weeks, students and classroom teachers worked with local story teller Motoko to create stories that included literary qualities included in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for each grade level. For example, fourth graders wrote stories including a protagonist and an antagonist. This spring, the students are working with our art teacher, Natalee Dias, and local artist Micha Archer to create collage-style illustrations for their stories. We are looking forward to sharing the complete books with our families later this month!



In March, we were so excited to welcome so many community members into our school for our first school musical, *Seussical, Jr.*! The event was a huge success and both of our shows sold all 300 seats! The students and staff/parent volunteers worked for many, many hours after school and the result was a performance of incredible quality! We are hopeful this can become an annual event!

This is the time of year that is often filled with celebrations of accomplishments, and field trips that are the culmination of units of study ~ it's a busy and exciting time of year! We are also enjoying watching our school grounds 'wake up'

after a long winter and are finding new ways to use our playground now that our sleds have been put away for the summer!



We continue to feel so grateful for the wonderful facility we have, and are so pleased at the ease with which we can open our school to our families for many events throughout the year.

As always, we are so appreciative of our supportive community, and the Williamsburg and Haydenville organizations that support us so much!

~Stacey Jenkins, Williamsburg Schools, Principal

A Brief Look Back: The Establishment of the Massachusetts Income Tax

Tony Rassias - Bureau of Accounts Deputy Director, from City & Town Newsletter

Introduction

The high cost of the Civil War and the rapid growth of cities thereafter increased public expenditures and strained the Massachusetts property tax system, especially in the taxation of intangible personal property. Taxation of personal property was vexing. Taxpayers concealed their ownership of it and even moved their property out of state to avoid payment. The problem plagued assessors around the country.

After considerable discussion and review by special commissions, a Constitutional amendment and other legislation on the matter, the old system of taxing intangible personal property was scrapped and a state income tax, in some ways similar to the one already in effect in Wisconsin, was approved.

Revenue from the new tax, to be distributed to cities, towns and districts, was projected to replace the loss of revenue from the old personal property tax. In 1917, the first year of implementation, the new tax raised about \$11.2 million, a significant jump when compared to the \$8.8 million raised the previous year under the old tax system.

On January 23rd, 1918, Tax Commissioner William D. Trefry gave his annual report for 1917 to Speaker of the House of Representatives Channing Cox. The Tax Commissioner began his report with a brief history of the state's early form of taxation after which he presented a summary of the new income tax law.

TOWN OF WILLIAMSBURG
141 MAIN STREET
PO BOX 447
HAYDENVILLE, MA 01039

PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
NORTHAMPTON, MA
Permit No. 141
ECRWSS

POSTAL CUSTOMER

Massachusetts Income Tax, Continued

The following are excerpts from his full report.

By the Commissioner

In 1634 there was enacted in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay the first general tax law in any American colony, and included in this act was a provision for the assessment of each man "according to his estate and with the consideration of all other his abilities whatsoever." From that date to the present there has been at all times upon the statute books of Massachusetts legislation providing in some form or other for a partial tax upon incomes, although the colonial faculty tax, as this earlier form was called, bears little relation to the modern income tax.

Under the law, therefore, as it had existed for many decades, the income of intangible property, although this class of property had rapidly grown in amount and importance, was not subject to taxation, but in theory the property itself was subject to the varying local rates. With no provision for a compulsory return of this or any other class of property, local assessors were peculiarly at a disadvantage in discovering it for taxation, and there was a great incentive to overlook this class of property, when the usual result of taxing it at its full value at the local rate was either to drive the taxpayer to some other more favorable community with a low rate of taxation, or even to force him to remove his domicile from the Commonwealth.

These two evil results of attempting to apply the general property tax to this class of property gradually assumed alarming proportions.

The movement for a reform was furthered in the Governor's inaugural in 1911, and after the determination that a constitutional amendment was necessary the proper amendment was enacted and ratified in 1915 by an overwhelming majority of the voters.