



Whitcomb Hall “Rebuild A Hall” Campaign

On Friday, November 22nd, members of Swanzy’s Whitcomb Hall Committee accepted a \$4,000 check from Gomarlo’s Food & Circus and the Shurfine Neighbor 2 Neighbor program, bringing total donations to close to \$30,000! The donation will be used to fund improvements at Whitcomb Hall with the goal of re-opening the building for use, once again, as a community center.



Pictured from left to right: Jennifer Gomarlo, Ann Bedaw, Lee Dunham, Nancy Carlson, and Mike Gomarlo. Photo courtesy of John Bridges.

Whitcomb Hall was given to the Town in 1916 by George Whitcomb with the intent that it be used as a community and civic center. That use continued until the building was closed in 1988 due to life safety concerns. The Whitcomb Hall Committee hopes to complete renovations to the first floor within the upcoming year and to (hopefully) have the full building open in time for its 100th anniversary in 2016.

The Whitcomb Hall Committee has been actively fundraising during the past year. The Committee held a very successful chicken BBQ fundraiser in August (with over 250 people in attendance and blessed by beautiful summer weather). The Committee is now selling 2014 “Then & Now” calendars, featuring before and after photos of historic properties throughout the Town. Calendars are available at Town Hall at a cost of \$10.00. These make great gifts! Stop by Town Hall and see Sara Carbonneau to pick up your copy. If you would like to make a donation to the “Rebuild A Hall” Campaign, checks can be made payable to the Town of Swanzy - please put Whitcomb Hall Campaign in the memo line and send to the attention of Sara Carbonneau, Director of Planning and Community Development at Town Hall, PO Box 10009, Swanzy, NH 03446.

The Whitcomb Hall Committee is also looking for photographs or written recollections of events held at Whitcomb Hall. If you have memories or photographs to share, please contact Lee Dunham at 352-4184.

Remember to “like” us on Whitcomb Hall’s Facebook page!

SWANZEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

As previously reported in SwanzeY Uncovered, the Committee's 2013 primary objective was promoting business development in SwanzeY's Revenue Development District in contemplation of completion of Safford Drive's extension through to Route 12 during the first half of 2014.

The North SwanzeY Revenue Development District comprises about 350 acres of developable, properly zoned property, most of which has been land-locked and without commercially acceptable utilities. This problem is solved by the Safford Drive extension providing access and critical water and sewer services. FastRoads' new on site high capacity broadband services only enhances the desirability of the properties.

EDAC members will continue to interact with the Board of Selectmen and other Town committees as well as pursue our own objective to better market and promote good business development within SwanzeY.

To that end, during the past year EDAC:

- Engaged Arnett Development Group to guide the Town in better 'branding' and marketing of the District.
- Obtained better mapping of the District through a generous in-kind contribution by Brickstone Land Use Consultants, LLC.
- Added three relatively large contiguous commercial/business zoned lots to the marketing area.
- Added new Town 'Business', Industrial Park/TIF District and EDAC pages to the Town website.
- Worked to provide, on a timely basis, promotional materials upon completion or near completion of Safford Drive's extension.
- Was proactive with other Town staff and committees to complete the road extension.
- Submitted a recommended warrant article enabling the Revenue Development District to expend tax increment funds for necessary capital expenditures associated with adequate water pressures in the district. This is an essential business requirement.

Work will continue in 2014 and beyond. Special events are planned as Safford Drive's extension nears completion. Please take a moment to visit the Business Page of the Town's website at: <http://www.town.swanzeY.nh.us>.



Swanzey's Own Lee Dunham Featured in Keene Sentinel Article

On December 7th, Swanzey's own Lee Dunham was featured in the Monadnock Spotlight section of the Keene Sentinel. Lee serves as the Town's Public Works Director, is a Whitcomb Hall Committee member, a volunteer fire fighter, and a docent at the Swanzey Historical Museum (in addition to a myriad of other volunteer activities). Lee is responsible for the Swanzey Old Photographs Facebook page, where you can find hundreds of old photographs of Swanzey and its citizens. Lee has tirelessly devoted hundreds (if not thousands) of hours to the community. Thank you Lee!

Carbonneau elected to NH Planners' Association Executive Board

In November, Planning & Community Development Director Sara Carbonneau was elected to the Executive Board of the NH Planners' Association (NHPA). Sara is also a member of the NHPA's Legislative Policy Committee and serves as NHPA's secretary. She is also a member of Southwest Region Planning Commission's Brownfields Advisory Committee.

Earlier in the year, Sara was honored as the 2013 NH Professional Planner and in October was appointed as the first Director of Planning and Community Development in Swanzey. Congratulations, Sara!

Opportunities to Serve Your Town

Have you ever thought about running for elected office or signing up as a volunteer for a Town Board or Committee? The filing period for elected offices begins on Wednesday, January 22nd and ends on Friday, January 31st 5 p.m.

The elected positions available are as follows:

Selectmen - one position, term to expire 2017

Town Moderator - term to expire 2016

Library Trustee - one position, term to expire 2017

Supervisors of the Checklist - one position, term to expire 2020

Trustee of Trust Funds - one position, term to expire 2017

Zoning Board of Adjustment - two positions, terms to expire 2017

Sewer Commission - one position, term to expire 2017

Planning Board - two positions, terms to expire 2017

There are also a number of appointed positions available. If you have an interest in recreational programming or economic development, open space protection or Old Home Day festivities or more, there is a committee that could use your help. Please contact Sara Carbonneau (352-7411 ext. 108) or Town Administrator Shane O'Keefe, (352-7411 ext. 107) for further information and a list of available positions.

WELCOME!

You may have noticed a couple of new faces at Town Hall.

At the end of July we said goodbye to Amy Bush, who had held the Assessing Coordinator position since November 2012, and welcomed Coleen Birmingham. Coleen comes to Swanzey with eleven years of previous experience working in a municipal tax assessor office. When you are at the Town Hall, be sure to stop in to say, "Hello".

In September, we welcomed Edna Coates in the new position of Human Services and Resources Coordinator when Sandi Page retired from her position at Town Hall. Sandi can still be seen around Town Hall every now and again as she continues to work with the Sewer Department and the Sewer Commission.

What is on the Town's Website?

The Town's website www.town.swanzey.nh.us provides a wealth of information about your Town government. Minutes from the various Boards and Committees are posted on the site, as well as phone numbers, mailing addresses, board and committee information, documents, employment postings, application forms, etc. The on-line calendar provides a list of meetings and Town-sponsored events. News articles detailing current projects can be found on the home page, as well as a section providing notices of public hearings. If there is additional information that you would like to see on the Town's website, please contact Coleen Birmingham at cbirmingham@town.swanzey.nh.us or at 352-7411 ext. 114.

Swanzey Partners with Southwest Region Planning Commission (SWRPC) on Route 12 Corridor Study

In 2014, Swanzey will participate in the Route 12 Corridor Study. Over the course of the year, SWRPC and the Corridor Advisory Committee will conduct the study evaluating the Route 12 corridor from Route 101 in Keene to the Massachusetts state line. The study will include traffic analysis at various locations and an inventory of data which will describe the physical characteristics along the corridor. The intent of the study is to develop an improved understanding of assets and issues relative to transportation, land use and related matters, and to develop a schedule of possible local capacity and safety improvements. The goal is to develop a comprehensive strategy for the development and use of the Route 12 corridor, which will be available for state and local decision-makers. Swanzey representatives to the Corridor Advisory Committee are Selectman Ken Colby, Public Works Director Lee Dunham, and Director of Planning & Community Development Sara Carbonneau. Should you have any questions or comments about the study, please contact Sara Carbonneau at 352-7411 ext. 108 or via email at scarbonneau@town.swanzey.nh.us

Free Skating

Courtesy of the Swanzey Recreation Department, Swanzey residents may skate for FREE at the Cheshire Ice Arena from 10:30am to 12:20pm on the following dates:

Monday, January 20, 2014
Monday, February 24, 2014
Wednesday, February 26, 2014

Rental skates will be available. ENJOY!

Hunting and Fishing Licenses

Effective January 1, 2014, the Swanzey Town Clerk will no longer be issuing hunting and fishing licenses.

Alternate locations to purchase a license are:

Gomarlo's Food and Circus
Route 10, West Swanzey

Sam's Outdoor Outfitters
Route 12, North Swanzey

Region 4 - Fish and Game Department
Keene

Online at: <https://www.nhfishandgame.com>

Important Dates to Remember

January 14th - Budget Hearing - 7pm
Town Hall

February 4th - Deliverative Session - 7pm
Monadnock Regional High School

March 1st - Deadline to file for property tax abatement and property tax deferral.

March 11th - Town Meeting-Official Ballot Voting - Christian Life Fellowship Church

April 15th - Deadline to file for elderly tax exemption, Veteran's tax credit, and/or Current Use for 2014.

Rail-Trail Work Continues

The Ashuelot Line Rail-Trail Improvement project has been on-going since 2010. In Phase I, the Town of Swanzey partnered with the City of Keene to upgrade a section of the trail in Keene and Swanzey along Matthews Road. Funding for Phase I was through a NH-DOT Transportation Enhancement grant, with local matches. Funding for Phase II-a, a 1.5 mile segment in Swanzey (north of Eaton Road), relied on private donations (\$107,500.00) and a NH Recreational Trails grant for repairs to the historic stone box culvert (\$14,832.00). In the Spring of 2014, the Town plans on finishing Phase II-b (grading, ditching and placement of stone dust), bringing the trail improvements all the way to Pine Street. In addition, plans to continue trail improvements another half mile southerly to Homestead Avenue are in the works. Work on this section is a bit more challenging and will include survey work and drainage improvements in the area of the Christian Hill Road bridge. The Kingsbury Fund generously donated \$2,500.00 towards survey costs and the Town is awaiting a decision on a \$25,000.00 Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant Program application.

If you are interested in assisting on this project or would like additional information, please contact Project Coordinator Bruce Bohannon at 357-3340 or at swanzeyec@swanzeypd.com or Sara Carbonneau at 352-7411 ext. 108.

Rail-Trail Awareness Day

On June 30th, the Swanzey Open Space Committee sponsored the first annual "Rail-Trail Awareness Day." Over the course of 2 hours, 50+ bicyclists, walkers, dogs and children stopped by the tent to hear the recent history of the trail improvements, say hello and enjoy refreshments. In addition, Bruce Bohannon was honored for his tireless dedication to improving the trail system. Hopefully this will become an annual event sponsored by the Open Space Committee. Stay tuned to the town website at www.town.swanzey.nh.us, for updates.



Photos courtesy of David Hoitt

Open Space Committee

Beautiful exploratory hikes, a parade with Jesse and James, Rail Trail Awareness Day, Timber Harvest Walk/Talk, more new trail boxes and maps, a planned park in West Swanzey's future - the Swanzey Open Space Committee has been busy this past summer and fall!

Since pictures are worth a thousand words...
ENJOY!



Learning more about Timber Harvesting from Jeff Snitkin, Logger and Forester at Swanzey Open Space Committees' Timber Harvest Walk/Talk for Swanzey residents



Researching Dickenson Forest to make trail maps for Swanzey



Hiking a little known open space gem in Swanzey - the Page Parcel



Rail Trail Awareness Day



Getting to know you..."at Old Home Days

Protect Our Bridges

Swanzey's covered bridges are important to the community. Not only do they serve as a way for crossing the rivers in town, they also provide economic and aesthetic value.

When a bridge is damaged, it hurts the community. Detours (when bridges are being repaired) are annoying - at best. When extensive damage is done, bridges could be closed for weeks or even months. Often a bridge is damaged and no one takes responsibility or they have inadequate insurance - resulting in unplanned costs to the Town.



Three of the town's covered bridges (Cresson, Thompson and Carlton) are posted for a 3 ton weight limit and are limited to passenger cars (defined as "any vehicle legally authorized to operate on public highways with a gross vehicle weight of 3 tons or less when loaded including motorcycles, cars, pick ups and other light trucks"). For reference, the average Ford Explorer weighs 2.5 tons - not loaded. Only the Slate Bridge in Westport is rated for 15 tons.



In addition, Cresson, Thompson and Carlton bridges do not allow anything "in tow" regardless of weight or height. This means NO flat bed trailers, box trailers, camping trailers, equipment such as chippers and tree spades or any other types of equipment that may be towed.



The Town has a covered bridge ordinance that provides for penalties for violating the ordinance. Violation of the height or weight limits is subject to a \$100.00 fine. The first offence for violating the "nothing in tow" restriction is \$50.00 - subsequent offences are \$100.00.

If you observe someone damaging the bridge, please call 352-2869 and report the incident. (As always, if it is an emergency, please dial 9-1-1.) Please include the type of vehicle and license plate number (if at all possible). If you are aware of someone who consistently violates the ordinance, please contact the Swanzey Police Department at 352-2869. The Police Department will contact the person to make sure that they are aware of the provisions of the ordinance.

Thank you for your assistance in protecting these important assets.



Noise Ordinance to be considered by Swanzey voters

A new ordinance has been drafted to address the issue of excessive noise in the community and the Board of Selectmen will place the question of its adoption on the Town Meeting Warrant. The draft ordinance is available by contacting the Town Administrator's office, will be posted on the Town's web site soon, and will be on the ballot for consideration at the March 11th Town Meeting vote. The "Statement of Purpose" of the ordinance is as follows:

It is declared to be the intent of the Town of Swanzey to protect, preserve and promote the health, safety, welfare, peace and quiet of the residents of the Town of Swanzey through the reduction, control and prevention of noise, and to establish standards that will eliminate and reduce unnecessary environmental noise throughout the community.

Further, the ordinance provides that "it shall be unlawful for any person to make, permit, continue or cause to be made any noise which annoys, disturbs, injures or is likely to endanger the comfort, repose, health, peace or safety of others within the town limits". There are specific prohibitions on some types of noise late at night, such as loud construction and amplified music, and unnecessary noises from motor vehicles, such as excessive horn honking and engine revving. At the same time there are a number of specific exemptions from the ordinance, such as for emergency and maintenance vehicles/equipment, public gatherings and religious purposes. Temporary special permits are also provided for for situations that may arise where there is a substantial public purpose or where there would be an undue hardship, as long as they are not inconsistent with the purpose statement previously mentioned.

There are also provisions for enforcement, including the potential for fines and even enhanced fines for repeated violations.

Everyone is encouraged to become familiar with the noise ordinance provisions and cast their vote at Town Meeting.

The Nurse Is In



The second Thursday of each month
1:00pm to 2:00pm
Swanzey Town Hall

Have your blood pressure checked.
Ask the nurse about high blood pressure,
cholesterol, and other health concerns.

The Nurse Is In clinic is one of the Wellness
Programs offered by



HCSservices.org

1-800-541-4145