

SELECTMEN'S NEWSLETTER SPRING 2014

Are you recycling? If so, are you doing it on a regular basis? The reason for our query is that recent data indicates that Lyme's recyclable recapture rate is dropping, not by an alarming rate, but the downward trend is cause for concern. State law stipulates that towns must provide curbside pickup of recyclables if their pounds per person recapture rate falls below the statewide average. Our voluntary 24/7 arrangement at the Town Garage has us comfortably above that figure, but we should be doing better, especially if we wish to avoid another costly state mandate at some point in the future.

This segues conveniently in to part two of our recycling message. As mentioned, our recycling facility at the garage is open all the time. Its central location and convenience are the principal reasons why Lyme has had such recycling success in the past. However, a disturbing trend has developed over the past couple of years. People are increasingly taking advantage of the fact that the operation is not supervised, leaving all manner of items which not even remotely pass muster as recyclables. The large, easy to understand sign at the end of the ramp explicitly lists what is acceptable and what is not, which leads us to believe that some of our fellow residents simply don't care and are taking advantage of the situation. Without going through a lengthy list of what can and cannot be recycled, here are some of the key items which are not acceptable: plastic bags, styrofoam (even if pieces have a recycling triangle & number on them), shredded paper and plastic feed bags. Household electronic devices and computers go to the landfill on Brush Hill Road, along with batteries, waste oil and antifreeze. Household Hazardous Waste goes to the regional HHW facility on Dump Road in Essex which is open on selected Saturdays from early spring to mid-fall. Recycling questions are welcome and can be answered at the Town Hall.

If this illegal dumping situation cannot be rectified by means of more considerate resident participation, the town may have no other option than to hire staff, limit access, or move the entire operation to a more controlled location. That would not benefit any of us and would be a huge step backward for recycling in Lyme, but the situation is out of hand. Hopefully, more conscientious behavior of the part of folks who have been treating this privilege too casually will obviate the need for such draconian measures.

This past winter was extremely hard on our local roads. As a result, the town is undertaking a more ambitious oiling/chip sealing program than usual this summer to repair damage caused by numerous snow storms and frequent plowing. The following are slated for treatment: Cove Road, Ely's Ferry, Grassy Hill, the west side of Mt. Archer to Tantomorantum Road, Old Grassy Hill, Selden and Town Woods Roads. When the schedule is firmed up, dates and times will be posted on the town's web page. Please remember that these are estimates subject to weather and other

variables. We apologize in advance for any inconvenience people may experience while the work is underway.

The Library/Town Hall project is entering a busy time with winter weather issues at long last behind us. We anticipate moving in to the new Town Hall office space by the end of June if our schedule holds and restoration of the old Meeting House is already underway. The town has received approval for a grant from the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation to refurbish the old church ceiling. The new Library will be an impressive facility. The mechanical systems are virtually all in place, IT and power components are being installed and siding and trim work should begin shortly. Most important, the project remains on budget.

For those who did not attend the Annual Budget Meeting last month, the selectmen would like to take this opportunity to announce that Carolyn Bacdayan has been appointed to fill the long vacant position of Town Historian which has been open since the passing of Hiram Maxim. Carolyn has been the de facto historian for some time now composing themed Lyme history pieces for the Town Report for a number of years. She is also the person primarily responsible for creation of the town's public archives presently housed at the Hamburg Public Hall, but slated for relocation to a dedicated section of the new Library upon its completion.

Other staff changes are also in the offing. Linda Bireley is stepping down as the town's Open Space Coordinator at the end of this month. Linda was the first person hired to fill this position which the town created several years ago as Lyme's open space holdings began to dramatically increase along with management responsibilities and the need to coordinate strategies with other land conservation/preservation groups. She has essentially written the job description during her tenure, coordinating volunteer groups, overseeing maintenance projects, running the hunting program and countless other tasks. We believe her legacy will be in good hands under the stewardship of Wendy Hill, a long time Lyme environmentalist who has been transitioning in to the job over the past several months. Thank you Linda and good luck Wendy.

Finally, the Board of Selectmen has begun to explore clean energy options which might be of benefit to Lyme residents. We will be applying for the next opportunity to sign on as a partner town with the Clean Energy Finance and Investment Authority which will, among other things, make property owners eligible for the CT Solar Lease Program. This would permit homeowners to install solar photovoltaic systems at no up front cost, making monthly lease payments instead with an option to purchase related equipment after five years. We also anticipate signing on to CL&P's Energize CT program which can provide funding for energy audits, rebates for Energy Star appliances and installation of energy efficient lighting systems.

As always, questions and comments are welcome. The selectmen also wish one and all a safe and enjoyable summer.