

THE CHELSEA MESSENGER

Fall 2023 Issue



Christine Landes - Town Manager
Mike Pushard - Selectboard Chair
Jason Mills - Selectboard Vice Chair
Jake Soucy - Selectboard Member

From the Desk of the Town Manager:

Greetings from the Town Manager! As we enter the tax season, I would like to take a moment to explain how the mil rate is appropriated on your current bill. This year, for every \$1000 in assessed value, you will be charged \$17.76. For each dollar of that mil rate, \$.055 cents will be sent to Kennebec County, \$.289 cents will stay in town, and \$.656 cents goes to the school district. As an example, for a \$150,000 home in Chelsea with a \$2,664 tax bill, \$146.52 will go to the county, \$769.90 will stay in the town and \$1,747.58 will go to the school. As the town budget was analyzed and created for this current year, we quickly realized that municipal services to the taxpayers must stay the same or increase with little to no tax impact. To do so, we reduced the overall town budget by \$2,000 and used \$250,000 from the undesignated fund balance. The budget process will be starting again in January, so please volunteer to be part of the development of the annual town budget. Your input is appreciated and needed. The school and county budgets are a separate process from the town and each of you has an opportunity to learn that cycle by reaching out to your county commissioner or school board representative. I am sure they would be happy to explain.

Each quarter I hold a 'Chat with the Manager'. Different topics are chosen and attendees have an opportunity to ask questions. Please look for dates and times and join us for lively conversation as we nurture and care for Chelsea while encouraging growth to help with the tax base. As always, my door is open, and I look forward to chatting with you.

Upcoming Dates to Remember:

OCTOBER 07, 2023:	ABSENTEE BALLOTS AVAILABLE
OCTOBER 11, 2023:	1 st HALF OF FISCAL YEAR 2024 PROPERTY TAXES ARE DUE
OCTOBER 15, 2023:	2024 DOG LICENSES AVAILABLE
OCTOBER 28, 2023:	HARVEST FEST, 2:00-4:00 PM CHELSEA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
NOVEMBER 07, 2023:	ELECTION DAY
NOVEMBER 10, 2023:	TOWN OFFICE CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF VETERAN'S DAY
NOVEMBER 23 & 24:	TOWN OFFICE CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF THANKSGIVING
NOVEMBER 25:	ANNUAL PTA CRAFT FAIR/FREE SPAGHETTI DINNER/TREE LIGHTING

Town of Chelsea, 560 Togus Road, Chelsea, Maine 04330
(207) 582-4802
www.chelseamaine.org

Business Profile
by Marion Bowman

Chelsea Thrift & Gift

Their slogan is: "If we don't have it, you don't need it"



Chelsea Thrift and Gift, 270 Togus Road, Chelsea, is located at the corner of Windsor Road and Togus Road. This family-owned business started back in February of 2012 when Jeremy and Lisa Kalloch purchased the building with a vision of opening a thrift store to help the Community. After spending 3 months rehabbing the building, they opened the doors to the public on Memorial Day. Whether you are looking for antiques, knick-knacks, dishes, cookbooks, clothes, kid's items, or medical supplies, they have it all. Being a family-owned business, you will often see Crystal behind the register along with their daughters Deannadra and Ashley. They believe strongly in community, are members of Chelsea Grange

#215 and have sponsored community events like the Chelsea Summer Concert Series. Stop by and check out all the great deals. They are open Wednesday-Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., (207) 582-3589.

Chelsea Fire Department

By Josh Howe

Chelsea Fire Department currently has a roster of 29 members, which includes several new members. Chelsea Fire currently meets every Wednesday from 6:30-8:30 p.m. for training/meetings. We encourage anyone wanting to join, or see what the fire department is about, to join us on a Wednesday night.

The Chelsea Fire Department has responded to a total of 36 Calls and had 12 training nights between June 1st and September 1st. Calls have ranged from motor vehicle accidents to fire alarms sounding.

Motor Vehicle Accidents: 7

Fire Alarms: 5

Mutual Aid/Station Coverage: 6

Fires: 9

Service Calls: 9



Chelsea Elementary School PTA: Meets the 1st Tuesday of the month, 6:00 p.m., Chelsea School Library.
SVRSU #12 School Board: Meets the 2nd Thursday of the month, 6:30 p.m., Chelsea School Cafeteria.
Commodity Supplemental Food Program: Sign up and application assistance, 4th Monday of the month, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Chelsea Town Office. Food box pick-up, 2nd Monday of the month, 1:00-3:00 p.m., Chelsea Town Office.

Planning Board: Meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month, 6:00 p.m., Chelsea Town Office.

Chelsea Grange #215: Meets the 2nd Saturday of the month, 9:00 a.m., 230 Togus Road, Chelsea.

Chelsea Fire Department: Meets every Wednesday, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Hallowell Road Station.

Town of Chelsea History - In the Beginning

by Libby Doak

Although Chelsea was originally part of Hallowell, for the sake of clarity, I will be using the town names as they are now. In 1762, Pease Clark brought his family to Hallowell and is celebrated as the area's first settler. That ignores the Howard family who lived at Fort Western and Chelsea's own Jonathan Davenport. While it's true that the Davenport family came a few months after the Clark family, Jonathan preceded his family and built a dwelling to bring them to. Pease Clark brought his family to the wilderness. At that time the way to come to his part of Maine was by government supply ship. 3-4 times a year a supply ship sailed up the Kennebec River to deliver supplies to the Fort for later overland transport to Fort Halifax. The Clark family came on such a ship and in all probability, Jonathan sailed down on the same ship to fetch his family to their new home and back, with them, on the next ship. Within that year, 30 people were counted in this area, with $\frac{2}{3}$ of them on the East bank of the river. The Bullens, the Littlefields and numerous others joined the Davenports within months of their arrival and Chelsea was born. Although part of Hallowell, it was designated East Hallowell and as such had its own identity from the very beginning. How unique, patriotic, and prosperous that identity was, which we hope to talk about in future articles.

Age-Friendly Chelsea Community Garden

by Mary Szwec

Age-friendly Chelsea received a \$2,500.00 AARP Community Challenge Grant allowing us to create the Community Garden beside the Town Office. The start-up grant enabled us to purchase raised beds, a garden shed, plants, plant markers, bench, pop-up canopy, materials for signs and wheelchair accessible mats for the school's garden, allowing handicap students to participate. Both the sign and plant markers were created by our students and are proudly displayed in the garden.

Our Community Garden theme is:

***A place to gather and grow
To learn and share
To meet new friends***

In addition to the grant, there were donations from Maurice Soucy and Son's Lawncare, Longfellow's Greenhouses, Chelsea Heart and Soul, Henry Truman and many others who contributed time setting up the area: Joshua Howe, Michael & Zackary Szwec, Scott, Dot, & Brianne Grady and Marion Bowman.



Currently we are harvesting lettuce, tomatoes, peppers, radishes, various herbs (parsley, sage, chives) and soon beet greens and beets. Another part of the grant was to develop Garden Buddies where one generation shares their knowledge with another. Youth helped with thinning, watering, and will soon be collecting seeds for planting next spring.

A canopy and bench were recently added to the premises and that has made it very inviting. We hope you will stop by and relax in the garden area. So far, the produce harvested has been donated to the Chelsea Food Bank, but please feel free to stop by the garden and pick some fresh produce for yourselves. Next year we hope to expand the garden with more available beds for families to plant and harvest their own vegetables. Stay tuned for more information on how to sign up for that.

Dementia Inclusive Grant ~ Age-Friendly Chelsea

by Dot Grady

We received a \$500.00 grant to work towards becoming dementia inclusive. Our approach in Chelsea has been two-fold, to educate as well as become more dementia inclusive.



We purchased activity books, games, puzzles, and fidget lap blankets and created activity kits for dementia patients at the Togus Veterans Administration. We are also working on a program where volunteers from our community can play games with, read to, or take dementia patients for walks around the grounds of the Togus VA campus. If you are interested in participating, please call the Chelsea Town Office, (207) 582-4802 for more information.

Next, we utilized two existing programs to introduce the subject of dementia and becoming more dementia inclusive. The first was The Reading Connection, an intergenerational reading program. Anna, our towns summer intern read the book *Sometimes Even Elephants Forget* written by Kathleen Welch to students at our elementary school. The children were asked who had grandparents that sometimes-forgot things? Almost every hand went up. They were then asked what they learned from the story. One child said, “it was okay to forget things.” Another said, “I learned that my grandma still loves me even if she sometimes forgets to show me.” The second program we used was our monthly informational luncheon. We provided information packets and reviewed a section of *The Pathways to Well Being with Dementia*. This will be ongoing, and we will cover each section of the book. The next section will be covered at the November 2023 informational luncheon. We also asked attendees for ideas on becoming more dementia inclusive. If you have any suggestions, please reach out to the Town Office or message us on the Age-Friendly Chelsea Facebook page. There is information about dementia for residents to take in the Town Office and on the information kiosk at Butternut Park.

Chelsea Summer Concert Series

by Dot Grady

What a blast! Chelsea Summer Concert Series, 2nd Monday of the month, May through August. Great music was provided by Denny Breau, The Laura Hudson Project, Working Class, and Debbie Myers and was well attended. We would like to thank this season’s concert sponsors: ***Willett Family Construction, Chelsea Thrift & Gift, Chelsea 4Twenty, Chelsea Grange #215, Chelsea Historical Society and Chelsea Heart & Soul***. Due to their generosity, all concerts were free to attend. We also wish to extend our thanks to the following volunteers who helped set up and take down the event tent. Scott G., Bryan G., Brianne G., Chuck R., Joseph M., David W., Ernie C., Pat E., Ed C., Mike S., Zackary S., Mary S., Pat F. Marion B., and Lori M.

Chelsea Remembrance Day

by Chelsea Historical Society & Age-Friendly Chelsea

89 people gathered at Butternut Park for a day of fun, food, and music. All enjoyed a free lunch, live music by the Wild Horse Band, and buying items from local crafters who set up tables to sell their wares.

Select Board Meeting: 2nd Wednesday of the month, 6:00 p.m., Chelsea Town Office.

Age-Friendly Chelsea Meeting: 2nd Wednesday of the month, 11:00 a.m., Chelsea Town Office.

Age-Friendly Informational Luncheon: 3rd Thursday of the month, 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Chelsea Grange.

Chelsea Historical Society: 3rd Saturday of the month, 10:00 a.m., Chelsea Town Office.

Chelsea Grange #215

by Rick Grotton

Hello Chelsea Residents! My name is Rick Grotton, President of the Chelsea Grange, located on Togus Road and past President of the Maine State Grange. As a former resident, I am familiar with the town and am friends with many of the residents. The Grange sprang into existence in 1867 right after the Civil War to help farmers form a social club to create legislation to control prices since the railroads were a monopoly and charging their own prices. One of President Grant's Cabinet, Oliver Hudson Kelly, toured the ravaged South after the war and with some others, including his niece, Caroline Hall, formed what is known as the Grange. The rituals and traditions of the Grange today date back to that time. A password was needed to enter as railroad personnel wanted to know what the farmers were doing and how ideas that came from the Grange would affect them. One of the big attributes that came from the Grange was the RFD delivery service in 1916. Today, the State Grange and National Grange in Washington, DC are working on rural broadband service updates. Although many of Chelsea Grange's members are not farmers, we support agricultural issues, offer agricultural knowledge, participate in community events and are a family friendly organization. You will see exhibits at Pittston and Litchfield Fairs filled with our wares that have been made by members during the past year. Sewing, canning, veggies, knitting and other farm related items are displayed. Contests in baking, sewing, poetry, book reading as well as photography and art are offered by the State Grange organization. The Chelsea Grange has been in existence for a number of years and has always been a contributor to the residents and their needs. Some residents who are members of the Grange are also members of various other organizations in town, such as the Age-Friendly Committee, the Historical Society, business owners in town and town officials. We address the needs of the town and residents. The Chelsea Food Bank has welcomed many new families since it moved to the Grange Hall in 2021. Much of the proceeds of our fundraising events are given to the Food Bank to help them to help you. The Age-Friendly Committee holds free luncheons at the hall and plans events for the community. The Historical Society also has many very interesting stories of the town and our predecessors and ancestors. All groups, including the Grange, participate in the tree lighting ceremony in November. The Grange also provides all-purpose dictionaries to the third graders every year as well as Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets to needy families. We held a Grange poster contest at the school about 3 years ago to educate the older students on the Grange. Monetary prizes and a ceremony were held at the Chelsea School. Up until a few years ago, the hall entertained guests at the Sunday jam sessions. The hall was filled with music, laughter, and dancing.

The following is a list of our annual events to benefit the community:

April: Community Day for those who wish to make May Baskets for the residents of Togus. We encourage children to come and help and to even make a basket for themselves! The Veterans enjoy this treat every year.

July, August and September: We prepare for the fair exhibits.

October: Soup, chili and chowder day on the last Saturday. Look for ads pertaining to that event. Donations (monetary and dry items) will be accepted and will be donated to the Food Pantry. On Halloween, we will have our annual "Trunk or Treat" where small bags of candy are given to the children (and to adults). The members have as much fun as the recipients! I know I do!

November: Chelsea Grange members participate in the Christmas Tree Lighting services as well as sell baked goods; all for the benefit of the Food Pantry. Members also volunteer in getting the cafeteria set up for the dinner.

These are just some of the things we do to help the community. We are a small, driven group and are always looking for new members to keep our organization going strong. We have our monthly meetings every second Saturday morning from 9:00 am to about 11:30 am. Come and sit in and see how we operate. Membership is \$25.00 a year (that's \$2 dollars a month!). Tours are given. Come be a part of this family-oriented organization!

PTA News by Jennifer Brown: Did you know the Chelsea PTA meets the first Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the school library? This year's Harvest Fest will take place Saturday, October 28th from 2:00-4:00 p.m. Be sure to save the date! The 3rd annual craft fair will take place on November 25th from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Have you seen the Eagle Cards? We sell discount cards to many local shops for \$5.00. They are available for purchase at the school! There is still time to redeem the 2023 card before we release the 2024 deals!

Age-Friendly Chelsea Christmas in July Food Drive by Wilma Ware: We would like to thank everyone for donating to the Christmas in July Food Drive. 87 items were donated. Lynne, who runs the Chelsea Food Bank, said those items helped 15 to 20 families. THANK YOU! We plan to do another food drive in November. Check out the Age-Friendly Chelsea Facebook page for updates.

Sand for Seniors Program: Residents 60+ can call the town office at (207) 582-4802 and ask to be put on the list to have one bucket of sand (**when needed**) delivered to their home for use on stairs and walkways. Deliveries are made by volunteers and will start October 13, 2023, and continue until March 15, 2023. If possible, please return previous years' buckets to the town office.

Resident Sand Saturday: Volunteer's will again open the sand shed this season on the following Saturday's: December 2, 2023, December 16, 2023, January 6, 2024, and February 10, 2024, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Residents can get up to two 5-gallon buckets of sand for personal use. Must supply your own buckets. Dates subject to change due to availability and weather. Seeking volunteers to help, if interested, please call the town office at (207) 582-4802.

Together, we can make great things happen!

