

The Litchfield Sodalite

Vol. XX No. 5

A Newsletter for Litchfield, Maine

May 1, 2020

All activities and meetings may be postponed until after the Covid 19 Pandemic has passed. Please call your contact for each specific activity or meeting for more information.

Historical Society Of Litchfield Trivia Quiz

May question: Which political party, the Federalist or the Jeffersonian, was supported by early Litchfield leaders such as James Shurtleff? Why did they support this party? **April question:** Most early Litchfield Settlers supported "Quieting Acts" in the Massachusetts legislature. Why? answer: These acts lowered the cost of the land that settlers would have to buy from the Proprietors. To read more about the history of Litchfield go to WWW.HistoricalSocietyofLitchfieldMaine.org

SMITHFIELD PLANTATION

Hey all you students out there from Carrie Ricker School - we are sorry to be missing our field trips with you this spring. As you probably already know, Cami Wilbert from Friends of Cobossee Watershed has been busy putting together outdoor activities for you. She will be presenting a lesson on the vernal pool. For Forestry Day, or just for fun, we would like to suggest that you go out to Smithfield, walk the trails, and try to answer the following questions: How many kinds of trees can you find? 1. Draw or take a picture of a place where you think a creature has been sheltering for the winter. 2. What can you see in the vernal pool? Are there any living creatures? 3. Are any animals active at the marsh at the end of the spur trail? If so, can you name them? 4. Do you see any animal tracks? If so, what kind of animal do you think made the tracks? 5. Did you read the signs along the trail? What was your favorite joke? 6. Was the trail well marked and easy to follow. If not, please explain. After you walk the trail and answer the questions you can mail them to: Smithfield Plantation Trustees Litchfield Town Office 2400 Hallowell Rd. Litchfield, ME 04350 Or, email responses to c112a3y4@gmail.com. There will be a reward for entering and a grand prize for the best detail. If you draw a picture, write a story or poem, or take a photo we will post it on the Smithfield website.

LITCHFIELD FOOD BANK

We've learned a LOT of folks in Litchfield don't read the Sodalite to get current, factual information, so feel free to share information about the Food Bank with them. We are here to help Litchfield residents who need it. The application process takes 30 seconds if you write fast, 45 if you don't. You'll need proof of residency like a current utility bill in the applicant's name. Drive through food distribution minimizes contact with staff. Weekly visits can be on Wednesday, 4 - 6 PM or Thursday, 10 AM to noon. Questions, call Rayna 557-2680. Do you get your groceries "To Go" in paper bags with handles? We'd love them! Single use plastic bags get used again by us! Virus doesn't live beyond 24 hours on them. We'll hold for a week before using, just to be sure.

Senior Center

The Litchfield Senior Center is still closed until further notice. We will be open again as soon as it is safe to do so. Please check the Town of Litchfield web site or call the Senior Center phone 215-4595 or 441-9005 for changes in our status.

The following are the normal operation hours and programs, which may or may not be available due to the shut-down and guidance on gatherings:

The normal hours are Monday & Friday 8:30-4 and Wednesday 8:30-12, subject to change.

The Center is closed on May 25, Memorial Day.

Tai Chi at 8:30 on Mondays. Gentle physical exercises and stretches, sometimes described as meditation in motion. "A gentle way to fight stress"-Mayo Clinic

Line dancing instruction Mondays at 9:30 for beginners and advanced.

Aerobic exercise classes on Wednesday and Fridays at 8:30.

Music practice for the Carol Bailey String Band is on Wednesdays at 10.

The Feldenkrais method awareness through movement class with Lindsay Nelsen (268-4569) is at 9:30 on Fridays.

Cribbage or Unlucky 7's games for fun on Mondays at 11 and Fridays 10-12. Bring a lunch and stay for games on Mondays in the afternoon & on Friday cards or games.

The Senior's Advisory Committee meeting is at 10 a.m. on Thursday May 21.

Because of the Covid-19 virus and stay at home orders, RoadRunner trips have not been set up - please check with the Senior Center for any trips that may be able to be scheduled. Book club meeting, making cards with Anne Thompson and the Potluck lunch have also not been scheduled at this time.

Reminder: Exercise equipment available for use 8:30-4 Monday and Friday; 8:30-12 Wednesday.

Please stop in to the Senior Center located on Academy Rd. next to the Libby Tozier Elementary School for more information, a cup of coffee or tea and check out our books (paperback & hard cover), puzzles or work on the 1000-piece puzzle. We also have some interesting items on our donation table, check them out.



LITCHFIELD ACADEMY THRIFT SHOP

We continue to be closed in response to Covid-19. We will accept gently used, clean clothing 30 days after the "official" end of the Pandemic. You've got time to clean out your closets. Thanks for your patience.

LITCHFIELD TRANSFER STATION

The "Snow Birds" have started arriving! The Transfer Station had the busiest weekend so far this year.

To date we have issued 1040 new Transfer Station permit stickers. Please advise your "Snow Bird" neighbors to bring a phone bill or other bills to the Transfer Station that show their Litchfield address so we can issue them a Transfer Station permit sticker. Please be advised that May third starts our "Open Sunday" schedule. This will cover the summer to the end of August. **JOB NOTICE:** we are looking to hire two people to help us with the operation of the Transfer Station during the summer months. Last but not least: **MORON ALERT!** I hate to beat a dead horse but we are still having people putting items in the wrong containers. People are still putting glass, tin and cardboard in the "Plastic" container. We will start next with a remedial training class. We will provide a training Instrument (coloring book) as well supplying a writing instrument (crayons). Please be advised there will be a test at the conclusion of this training session.

LITCHFIELD BROADBAND COMMITTEE

Broadband internet is a critical utility similar to electricity and clean water that is needed to provide daily services to our homes and businesses. As we are quickly learning in the age of COVID-19, broadband is essential to providing vital links with the outside world and maintaining connections to our loved ones when we need to isolate ourselves in our homes. Our present patchwork of cable TV, phone company DSL, and high-latency satellite services here in Litchfield provide incomplete coverage, with many homes and businesses getting substandard or no service at all. To address this, Litchfield has formed a broadband committee to assess our needs and formulate a plan to implement high-speed internet services to all households and businesses in our town. It is a significant challenge for each small town to do this. We will be actively seeking out neighboring communities to partner with in the coming weeks. Bundling our needs with those of nearby towns will result in a lower cost on a per town basis. The state agency ConnectME was formed to help support community broadband efforts. It has proposed a State of Maine Broadband Action Plan (available at www.maine.gov/connectme) that calls for the state to invest at least \$30 million per year for five years to meet a goal of having high-speed internet access available to 95% of Mainers by 2025. This would fund 25% of the cost needed to accomplish the goal, with other funds coming from the federal government, municipalities and the private sector. The Legislature is presently considering two measures to begin funding this plan: \$15 million from the general revenue fund surplus and \$15 million in a bond. Please ask your legislators to support this effort. Thank you.

UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

Dear Residents - During these challenging times, postal employees are working hard to ensure residents stay connected with their world through the mail. Whether it's medications, a package, a paycheck, benefits or pension check, a bill or letter from a family member, postal workers understand that every piece of mail is important. While service like this is nothing new to us, we need our communities' help with social distancing. For everyone's safety, our employees are following the social distancing precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local health officials. We are asking people to not approach our carriers to accept delivery. Let the carrier leave the mailbox before collecting the mail. With schools not in session, children should also be encouraged to not approach a postal vehicle or carrier. If a delivery requires a signature, carriers will knock on the door rather than touching the bell. They will maintain a safe distance, and instead of asking for a signature on their mobile device, they'll ask for the resident's name. The carrier will leave the mail or package in a safe place for retrieval. We are proud of the role all our employees play in processing, transporting, and delivering mail and packages for the American public. The CDC, World Health Organization, as well as the Surgeon General indicate there is currently no evidence that COVID-19 is being spread through the mail. With social distancing, we can keep the mail moving while keeping our employees, and the public, safe. Keith Greateon; Postmaster - Litchfield - U.S. Postal Service

Town Clerk's Corner

The Town Office will remain closed to foot traffic until the Stay-at-Home order is lifted.

Customers may still call us during normal business hours.

You may still re-register vehicles/boats/ATVs online, by mail to the town office or in person through our drop box. For vehicles, please include a copy of your valid insurance card, the current mileage and answers to the two questions 1) Is your registration or privilege to register under suspension; 2) Are you required to file a SR-22 form? If you wish to register a recently purchased vehicle please call us.

- Property taxes may be mailed-in, or you can use our drop box next to the front door. Please include the address or account number of the parcel for which you are paying taxes.

And for ALL submissions, please include your phone number so we may contact you if necessary. Payments may be made by check, credit card, or cash. Thank you for your cooperation. We will do everything in our power to assist you during this time.

The town website, LitchfieldMaine.org, is a good source of the latest information about the current availability of services. Also, please check our new Facebook page "Town of Litchfield, Maine" that will provide information, updates and links.

Please note the final payment of your 2019 property tax was due on April 15th. (Just in case you might have overlooked it.)

Our Annual Town meeting and elections will NOT be held in June. Governor Mills has moved state elections to July 14th. Our Town Meeting will likely be the following Saturday. We will update this information as soon as we know.

Municipal Election: Tuesday, July 14th, 2020 8 am – 8 pm

Annual Town Meeting: Saturday, July 18th, 2020 10 am
Please note these dates are subject to change per COVID-19, Governor Mills Guidelines, and the decisions of the Select Board. We will keep you updated.

Candidates for Municipal Election: - Elected Offices:

If you are considering running for an elected position, please call the Town Office. Positions open for this coming year are on the: Board of Selectmen (1) Budget Committee (3) Litchfield Academy Trustees (2) RSU#4(1)

Absentee ballots may be requested up to 90 days prior to the election and will be made available 30 days prior. Absentee ballots may be brought to the Town Office up to the day of the election, and to the polling place ON the day of the election. Note this may change per Governor Mills guidance

2020 ATV Registrations-You may register and re-register ATVs at the Town Office beginning May 1st. Re-registrations may also be done online.

Woodbury Attendant Positions – Job Notice

Applications are being accepted for attendants at Woodbury Pond Park, though we do not know at this time when it will open. Applicants must be over the age of 18, applications are available on our website.

Rental Owners Listing—Owners of rental properties who wish their information to be made available to potential renters can provide their contact info to the town office.

The Town Office will be closed on Monday, May 25th, for Memorial Day.

Upcoming meetings: Select Board meetings will be available by video conference or dial-in, check the website for the link prior to each meeting. Other meetings may be also be available by video conference.

Planning Board – TBD Budget Committee – TBD

Select Board – Monday, May 11th, 6:30 pm

May Community Calendar

1 Fri	Town Office, closed Transfer Station, 8a.m.-4p.m	17 Sun	
2 Sat	Transfer Station, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Academy Thrift Store— Closed	18 Mon	Historical Society— 1:30pm; Town Office
3 Sun		19 Tue	Lit. Fire Assoc & Regular Meet-Cancelled
4 Mon	Lit. Recreation Comm. (Cancelled) Order of the Eastern Star (Cancelled)	20 Wed	Food Bank-4p-6p; 491 Richmond Rd
5 Tue	Lit. Fire/Rescue Officers Meeting-Cancelled	21 Thur	Food Bank-10a-12p; 491 Richmond Rd
6 Wed	Food Bank-4p-6p; 491 Richmond Rd	22 Fri	Town Office, closed Transfer Station, 8a.m.-4p.m
7 Thur	Food Bank-10a-12p; 491 Richmond Rd	23 Sat	Transfer Station, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Academy Thrift Store— Closed
8 Fri	Town Office, closed Transfer Station, 8a.m.-4p.m	24 Sun	
9 Sat	Transfer Station, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Academy Thrift Store— Closed	25 Mon	Memorial Day—Town Office Closed  Selectman Meeting-Please check Town web-site for rescheduled date and time.
10 Sun		26 Tue	
11 Mon	Selectman Meeting, 6:30pm; Town Office on line-See Website for more information	27 Wed	Food Bank-4p-6p; 491 Richmond Rd
12 Tue	First Responders Meeting –Cancelled	28 Thur	Food Bank-10a-12p; 491 Richmond Rd
13 Wed	Food Bank-4p-6p; 491 Richmond Rd	29 Fri	Town Office, closed Transfer Station, 8a.m.-4p.m
14 Thur	Food Bank-10a-12p; 491 Richmond Rd	30 Sat	Transfer Station, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Academy Thrift Store— Closed
15 Fri	Town Office, closed Transfer Station, 8a.m.-4p.m	31 Sun	
16 Sat	Transfer Station, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Academy Thrift Store— Closed		

BOX HOLDER

Contents:
 1. Historical Society, Senior Center Corner
 2. Town Manager/Clerk's Report
 3. May Calendar
 4. Newsletter Deadline

ECRWSS
 PRSRT STD
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Litchfield, ME
 Permit #2

The Litchfield Sodalite
 Litchfield Town Office
 2400 Hallowell Road
 Litchfield, ME 04350
 Tel.: 207-268-4721 FAX: 207-268-2196
sodalite@litchfieldmaine.org
www.litchfieldmaine.org
 Open: Mon.: 8:30 a.m.—7:00 p.m.
 Tue.—Thu.: 8:30 a.m.—6:00 p.m.
 Closed: Every Fri.

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The Litchfield Sodalite

Conservation News

Calling all farm and woodland owners: free invasive plant management plans available. Farm and woodland owners and operators in five Maine counties may be eligible to receive a free invasive plant survey and management plan, prepared by a natural resource professional from the local Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). Staff of SWCDs serving Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln, Somerset, and Waldo counties are looking for landowners or operators who would like to learn more about the invasive plants on their farms and woodlands.

Impacts of invasive plants: Invasive plants like Asiatic bittersweet vines, thorny multiflora rose shrubs, sprawling Japanese barberry, and others can create dense tangles in forests, wetlands, and fields, crowding out native plants and young trees. Along forest edges and hedgerows, thickets of invasive shrubs can reduce the area of productive fields. Some invasive plants create habitat for ticks, cause skin rashes, or are harmful if eaten by livestock. **Identify harmful plants and get guidance on management:** Many farmers and woodland owners know that invasive plants are present but aren't sure what to do about them. Others may not know how to recognize invasive plants. Having a site visit and survey from the local SWCD is a chance to talk with a natural resource professional, learn to identify harmful plants, and get guidance on how to manage them. Survey data also help scientists understand invasive plant distribution in Maine because data are contributed to the online mapping tool [iMapInvasives](#), the central repository for invasive plant data in Maine. **Free, thanks to funders:** This service is free to farm and woodland owners or operators thanks to a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS) administered by the [Maine Natural Areas Program](#) in the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. The project is also funded in part by the [Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund](#), in which proceeds from the sale of a dedicated instant lottery ticket are used to support outdoor recreation and natural resource conservation. Space is limited and landowners/operators must meet basic USDA – NRCS eligibility requirements. Site visits will be conducted during the growing season, but sign-ups are open. **Management assistance:** Participating landowners and operators are encouraged to act on the management plans they receive by implementing invasive plant treatments. Treatment funding may be available by applying to the USDA NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program through the [local USDA NRCS office](#). **To learn more and sign up for a free survey and management plan, please contact the Soil and Water Conservation District for Kennebec County: Dale Finseth at dale@kcsxcd.org or 207.621.9000** Also see our town website for information on native and

June Issue Deadline:
 May 22, 2020, 5p.m.
 Deliver material in any of the following ways: **E-mail**
(sodalite@litchfieldmaine.org) U.S. mail to:
Town Office, 2400 Hallowell Rd. 04350
Hand deliver to: Town Office, 2400 Hallowell Rd

