

January 2008 Edition

The Talk About Town...

News and Notes from the Town of Brownville

Members of the Brownville Community,

As a School Board Member of MSAD #41, I would like to express some of my knowledge concerning the School Consolidation Law. It is being said that the law will save us as taxpayer's money but in reality this is based on guesses by politicians and bureaucrats. What could happen for towns such as Brownville may be loss of control over local school budgets, higher taxes, small school closings and loss of local school board governance. The consolidation law attacks the future economic viability of small communities such as Brownville.

When I moved here in 1998, I was drawn for many reasons with the biggest one being that my children could go to a small caring elementary school. What I like is that a higher percentage of children are involved in co-curricular activities, fewer discipline problems, small classrooms, caring teachers, lower drop out rates and the fact that I have a great parent-teacher relationship with the teachers at their school.

I for one do not want to lose these things. Perhaps as parents and community members we can all contact our legislature and let them know how we all feel - even if you don't agree with me. Surely then the Politicians can try to make better decisions based on community input as to how our schools should be managed.

I feel that I need to make you aware of the Petition For Referendum Repeal of The Consolidation Law is being circulated by the Maine Coalition to Save Schools. If you are interested in signing this please call Marie McSwine @ 965-8819 or Vaughn Clapp @ 965-8474. For more information on the Consolidation Law you can visit maine.gov. This will affect all of us one way or another. Let's just hope this will not affect our children.

I would like to wish all of you Happy Holidays!

Respectfully,

Marie McSwine
Board Member MSAD #41

2008 TOWN BUDGET

We are gearing up to start the major work on the municipal budget. The final budget that is passed at Town Meeting in March will be one of the factors that determines your 2008 local property taxes. Residents are encouraged to participate in the budget process—input to Selectmen and Budget Committee members will shape the final budget. For specific dates of budget workshops, check out postings at the Town Office and on the Town's website.

Generally speaking, staff will work on the budget from now until the Manager's Budget draft is presented in early-January. Selectmen and the Budget Committee will hold budget workshops in January with final budget recommendations by mid-February. All of these workshops are open for the public to attend. If you are unable to attend the meetings, you are still welcome to review budget documents at the Town Office and talk with Selectmen, Budget Committee members, and the Town Manager.

The final budget will be approved at Annual Town Meeting on March 19, 2008. This is your final opportunity to establish the level of services provided by the Town...and, in turn, your property tax rate. In our town meeting-Selectmen-Town Manager form of government, voters have the ultimate say over the municipal budget. Get involved, learn about the budget process, and give your input!!

Keep in mind that your local property tax is based upon school and county services as well as the municipal budget. For example, in 2007 the municipal budget was 31.6% of your total tax bill—with the school receiving 60.6% and Piscataquis County 7.7%.

Street Lights

Just a reminder to folks that we do pay for the street lights whether they are working or not, so if you see street lights out, please contact the Town Office as soon as possible so we can get them working again!



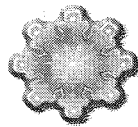
DOG LICENSES



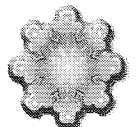
If you have a dog that is at least six months old, state law requires that they be registered with the Town before January 1st of each year.

The 2008 registrations cost \$6.00 for a spayed or neutered dog and \$11.00 for a dog that has not been spayed or neutered. You must show proof of current rabies vaccinations in order to license a dog.

**LATE FEES WILL BE CHARGED AFTER
JANUARY 31st**



WINTER IS HERE!!



Just a couple of reminders for the winter season:

- As you remove snow from your driveway, please remember that it is against the law to plow it across or dump it into the travel way.
- Please do not plow snow over or around fire hydrants. The Fire Department's response to an emergency situation will be significantly slowed if our firefighters have to stop and shovel out access to the hydrant.
- Also, if you are on town water or sewer, if possible, please do not plow the snow away from your service lines. Often times, the snow will provide some insulation from the cold temperatures and help to keep the pipes from freezing.
- The plow trucks are out...although we make every effort to avoid items in the town's right-of-way, we inevitably damage mailboxes that are placed too close to the roadside or are affixed to solid posts. Town policy is that we will not fix or replace items that we may damage in the course of plowing if they are located within the town's right-of-way. We have a mailbox design at the Town Office that limits damage by plow trucks.