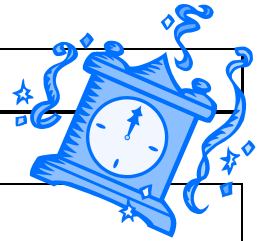
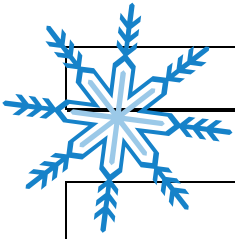


# STETSON PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWSLETTER

December 2009 - January 2010

*Stetson's Community Newsletter since 1988*



## Selectman's Corner

*Submitted by: Don Carroll*

Well, here we are on the threshold of another winter. After a mediocre summer and a fairly decent fall, we are ready to commence the annual ritual of plowing, shoveling, driving, etc.

I'm sure everyone knows most of the do's and don'ts of safety practices for winter driving, be it autos, trucks or off road vehicles such as ATV's and snowmobiles. All of them cross a road at some point, please don't try to beat the oncoming traffic across the road. You never know what the circumstances of the car, driver or road surfaces are at any given time, so wait and be safe. Another problem that crops up every winter is the practice of plowing or shoveling snow into the roadways. On a cold night, the plowed or shoveled snow becomes rock hard, which in turn makes it a safety hazard to traffic and our plows. Also, there is a State Law against this practice which is punishable with a fine and liability for any accident or damage it may cause.

After that great segue into plowing, please give the plow drivers a break. A lot of our roads are quite narrow and the trucks are quite large. With a plow and a plow wing, there is not a lot of room for passing. Also, during a snow storm, the visibility from a high cab looking over the equipment in the front of the truck is a lot more difficult than a car at road level. So if you are passing a plow give it all the room you possibly can. Remember they are plowing for your safety with your tax money, so give them your cooperation.

One last item on plowing is the subject of mail boxes. Every year we have a few irate people whose mailbox gets wiped out by a plow. Most of these are found to be set closer than the prescribed distance away from the road. It has been our policy to replace damaged mailboxes (not the posts). However, by law we (the town) is in No Way liable for damages to boxes on posts. Contrary to popular belief, the drivers do not try to destroy mailboxes, but sometimes it's unavoidable for various reasons. If yours becomes a victim, please call me or the Town Office to vent. The plow drivers have enough stress. If you need help locating or relocating your box, contact the Town Office.

Finally to a different subject. We are still looking for names of veterans to be included on our war memorial. I know there are more of you out there. Please contact the Town Office if you or a family member should be included. Also on the subject of the memorial, we would like to express our sincere thanks to Marlene Webber who single handedly planted over six hundred bulbs at the site. I'm sure it will be a spectacular sight next spring.

We are still looking for citizens to serve on the planning and appeals board and the parks and recreation committee.

Have a safe and happy holiday season and be careful out there this winter season.



# Stetson Historical Society

*Submitted by: Brenda Clark*

Hello from the Historical Society. It has been a busy year for the society. We have all the window shutters made and are planning on putting the decals (thanks to Sign Services) on soon. The bake sale last spring was well received. Our first (we hope to have more in the future) bean-hole-bean sale with various breads, rolls, and pickles was a huge success. We sold everything we had. Thanks, Rod, for making 3 year old beans taste so good. Also, a sincere thank you to some of the best cooks in the country (you know who you are) who furnished the excellent baked goods and fudge for both our sales.

The crew with the Penobscot Community service came for a week in June. They finished roofing the museum and also built railings and steps for the front porch. Looks real nice.

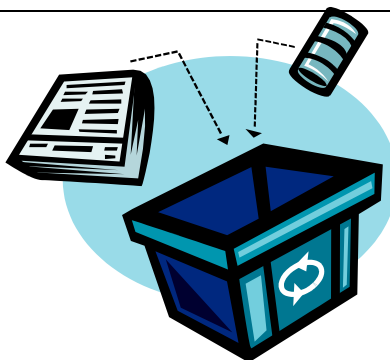
We will receive funding from the Sebecooscook Valley Chamber of Commerce soon. This is the third year we have participated. The big finale is the "Sparkle" event. The Historical Society would like to thank each of these folks who have donated to the "Sparkle Event" on our behalf: Sign Services, Inc., and Leighton Machine for buying ads in our booklet. Also, thanks to Stetson Subs N' Variety and Bellefleur Fuels @ Stetson Subs N' Variety for the gift cards, Ruth Shepardson for the two sets of Raggedy Ann and Andy dolls, Donald Piper for the flag holder, Suzanne Trussell for a Maine lighthouse picture, Foss Farms for a green house item, Beulah Butler for an afghan, Judy Young, Delores Butler, and Connie Merrill for a wine basket, and Judy Young for a baby blanket. We also received gifts from the Muffler King and Jazz the Salon in Newport. Without these folks these events could not take place. The "Sparkle Event" helps out several different organizations in several towns. Once again, "Thanks". Some of us attended the event and had a wonderful evening.

Our calendar sales have done very well this year. Extra calendars are for sale at the Library, store, and town office.

We have had many items donated this year and we are so happy with the way the Historical society is growing. A lot of hard work has been done by our members.

Attending our last meeting were Charles and Janet Leighton, Sandra Lovejoy, Julie Brownie, Connie Merrill, Sally Eells, Beulah and Delores Butler, and Bub Curry. Our next regular meeting will be in April 2010.

Until next year, have a Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year from all of us.



## Roadside Recycle Dates 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the Month

December 8

January 12

## Stetson Public Library

*Submitted by: Kay Marcoux*

On Tuesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, the Friends of the Stetson Public Library held their annual meeting. The Officers of the Board will stay in office for another year. They are: Chair, Mary Annette; Secretary, Susan Foss; and Treasurer, Dolores Butler. Members of the Board are: Becky Anderson, Laurie Arena, Dolores Butler, Suzanne Trussell and Kay Marcoux, Librarian.

Three of my volunteers have had to leave us: Ethan Arena, who is attending U. Maine; Amy Butler whose job prevents her from being on the board and volunteering and Sylvia Camandona who has moved away. Three great people and we wish them the very best. Coming on board are two new faces: Heather Norris and Gerri Stewart.

The Book Sale was a wonderful success due to the DVDs. Even with the damp weather, people turned out in record numbers.

I want to thank Sue Foss, Mary Annette, Isaac and Nathaniel Davis along with the two "dollies for getting the books set-up inside the library for the sale. Thanks, Denny, for bringing and returning the tables that we used for the books. The DVDSs were displayed inside the library. To Becky Anderson for helping in the re-boxing of the unsold books.

Also, thanks to Dolores for taking care of the library so those who wished to check out books could, and to Laurie Arena for taking over so that I got to go home for lunch. The leftover paperbacks were taken into the Penobscot Jail for their library, thank you Don Carroll. I hope that I haven't forgotten anyone or misspelled anyone's name.

**New books:** (*This is a partial listing.*)

Have A Little Faith.....Mitch Albom  
The Last Song.....Nicholas  
Sparks

**Christian books:**

The Winter Man.....D. Palmer  
The Missing.....Bev Lewis  
A Measure of Mercy.....Lauraine Snelling  
Shades of Blue.....Karen Kinsley

I have given my resignation, as Librarian, to the Board effective May 1, 2010.

## Stetson Parks & Recreation

*Submitted by: Steve Ferris*

First, a Big Thank You to all the adults and kids that made the Baseball and Soccer seasons a success. Thank you to our Coaches, Tammy Buswell and Jake Cleaves with Farm League, Kirsten Hepler with doing T-Ball, and Jim and Connie Crocker with doing both Pee-Wee and Youth Soccer. Everyone did a great Job. Next a Congratulations to Stetson Black for making it all the way to the District Championship Game.

Now I would like to ask everyone for help. I am holding Parks and Rec meetings the first Wednesday and sometimes the third Wednesday of every month. I would love to see many of you get involved. The reason I have been doing 2 per month was in case some of you could not make the first, you might make the third. Unfortunately, I have, to this point, had no one show up. Upcoming events that need planning are setting up and running a Christmas Party, and Stetson Day 2010. I would love to have as much feedback about these as possible. If you are interested in making this coming year fun and exciting for our town, or just have an idea for something fun we can do for the kids or even the adults, please come to a meeting, e-mail me @ [stetsonparksandrecreation@yahoo.com](mailto:stetsonparksandrecreation@yahoo.com), or call me at 735-8484. Also check out the Facebook page I set up and become a fan.

**Upcoming Meetings and Events:**

December 2--Parks and Rec Meeting 6PM Stetson Meeting House Basement  
December 19-- Christmas Party 2PM--4PM Stetson Meeting House Basement  
January 6--Parks and Rec Meeting 6PM Stetson Meeting House Basement  
January 20--Parks and Rec Meeting 6PM Stetson Meeting House Basement

Thank you for your help and support.

*Steven Ferris  
Parks and Recreation Director*

## Stetson Volunteer Fire Department News

*Submitted by: Kim Tracy*

### Holiday Safety Tips 2009

We are entering the most joyous of Holiday seasons, so we at Stetson Fire Department hope that with several timely tips we all can have a safe and happy holiday.

#### Safety and Your Tree

- Natural trees should be cut at a slight angle at the base and placed in water.
- Place tree away from source of heat.
- Use only non-flammable decorations.
- Use only lighting that has been approved by a national testing laboratory.
- Inspect lights for frayed wire or other defects before using.
- Do not leave lights on unattended.
- Candles should be kept out of reach of children and animals that might knock them over and placed on a non-combustible surface.
- If your tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. You can tell if the tree is dry when the needles start to fall off the tree and on to the floor.

Give a gift of life this season, keep your friends and family safe from harm, and buy them a smoke detector. If you already have a smoke detector please do the following:

- Be sure that your detector is maintained and working properly.
- Please remember a smoke detector will only last for 6 years.
- You have to change the batteries in your smoke detector every 6 months. Easy ways to remember is when you change your clock for daylight savings you change your batteries.
- Test your detector weekly.
- Have a smoke detector at each level of your home and in all bedrooms.
- Make sure your family has a home fire escape plan (EDITH) and that you practice it at least twice a year.

The Town's Fire Warden (Duane Leighton) would like to remind everyone that once the snow flies, anyone wishing to burn still needs to obtain a fire permit. To assist citizens when a permit can be obtained, he has taken ownership of changing the fire danger sign on Smokey the Bear, so it is now updated more often.

Starting with this newsletter, and from now on, I will no longer be writing the articles. I have been writing for this newsletter for over 6-years and I think it would be beneficial to present another person's view. Erin Hartley, who is our secretary, will be writing our future articles. With our department rising from the grave, so to speak, starting this month we will introduce all the new fire department members with a brief bio of everyone. So along with the "old timers" here are the new members:

*Continued on page 5*

# Stetson Volunteer Fire Department

## “Who We Are”

**Amy Mitchell:** Stetson native. Is a senior at Central High School. She participates in many activities including the Golf Team, Bowling Team, Yearbook Staff, Prom Committee, and the Drama Club. She is currently the only Junior Fire Fighter on the team and acts as the departments Dispatcher.

**Nancy Watson:** Stetson native. She is a returning member after an 8-year absence, but has switched from EMT to Engineer

**Shane Tyrell:** Orono native, but now lives in Stetson with his wife Teresa and three kids, Zach, Kacey, and Kamryn. Currently works for the Mountain View Youth Development Center and has been there for 12 years. He is an Interior Fire Fighter in training.

**Chad Hartley:** Stetson native. Graduated from Central High School in '06. Currently lives in Stetson with his girlfriend Courtney Parkins. He is the Department Manager for Hardware at the Palmyra Walmart. He is an Interior Fire Fighter in training.

**Bronsen Hartley:** Stetson native. Graduated from Central High School in '06. Works as the Dock Manager for Monson Transport. He is an Engineer in training.

**James Ryan:** Bangor native. Graduated from Bangor High School in '04. Currently lives in Stetson with his fiancée Erin Hartley. He works full time for the Maine Air National Guard, working on KC-135's. He is an Interior Fire Fighter in training.

**Erin Hartley:** Stetson native. Graduated from Bangor High School '04. Currently lives in Stetson with her fiancé James Ryan. Works full time for the Maine Air National as the Maine State Honor Guard Assistant NCOIC. She is currently the Secretary and an EMT in training.

When you meet one of these people, please thank them for their sacrifice, because without them the department might not even exist today.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Kim Tracy-Fire Chief*  
*Erin Hartley-Secretary*

## History of Stetson, Maine

*Submitted by: Charles Leighton*

*The following is the twenty fourth in a series about the early history of the town of Stetson. Most of the information contained was gleaned from early town and county records, plus highlights from "History of Stetson, Maine (1800-1931)" by Lilla Woods Daniels.*

### *Part 1*

One hundred years ago, the small town of Stetson, Maine was home to what was, and still is, the world's record for a pair of oxen, both by size and weight. Even today there are occasional rumors or claims from various places (mostly areas of the former U.S.S.R.) of animals that are equal to, or larger than, our renowned bovine. Upon closer examination, none of them have proved to have any validity, or even come close.

The following article was written by an unknown author over 50 years ago. It covers some of the basic facts about Mr. Rand and his famous animals. I will go into more detail in Part II next time.

"The Largest Oxen in the World, Bred, Raised,  
Owned and Exhibited by R. S. Rand, Stetson, Maine"

So read the sign above the exhibition tent at the Stone and Austin Museum, Boston, October 1906. A good-sized pair of oxen usually weighs around a ton. But the Rand animals represented almost 10,000 pounds of ox flesh on the hoof.

Nine thousand eight hundred pounds, to be exact! This was the weight officially established in public weighing ceremonies, conducted everywhere the animals were exhibited. A. Granger, usually the first to weigh in, tipped the scales at 4,800 pounds, while his brother ox Mt. Katahdin registered an even 5,000 pounds.

Named for the two biggest things in the State of Maine, its largest fraternal order and its highest mountain, the oxen were on the exhibition road for over five years. They traveled all over the northeastern states, southeastern Canada, and were exhibited in Madison Square Garden among other leading showplaces. Hundreds of thousands of people crowded to see the incredible oxen that stood six feet, two inches and had girths of over thirteen feet. This two-to-one proportion between their height and girth made them look even larger than they were.

"Looking at them up close was like looking at a coal-black mountain with a flat top-an animal mountain," one man recalls. "Folks used to say, 'Anybody can make a mountain out of a mole hill, but it took A. S. Rand to make one out of an ox."

Rand took full credit for the size of his prodigies. "That was my intention. I bred them for size – a thoroughbred cross between a Holstein and a Durham. They were big calves when they were born, and I set out to see just how big I could make them."

As it turned out, the “mountain” angle wasn’t the problem. The cattle did not require special diets, nor enormous quantities of food. They just grew. The real problem was getting them to do anything else; specifically, to exercise. They soon became too large for farm work, and absolutely refused to exert themselves.

Finally, Rand hit upon the idea of putting their daily water supply at the foot of an eight foot flight of stone steps, and their box-stall tie-ups at the top. This daily jaunt, together with the walking they did while on tour, kept them in condition year-round. They traveled in a special boxcar and walked from the stations to the exhibition sites. Usually the trip was a colorful, daytime parade through the main street. Alphonso S. Rand – handsome, silver-haired, twirling his goad like a baton – marched ahead of his prized animals. Mt. Katahdin and A. Granger, their black coats satin smooth, and horns and hooves polished, stepped smartly along behind him as if they enjoyed the spotlight.

Within five years, Rand had made an outstanding financial success of his giant ox venture. He won top honors and awards in national and international competitions, and had even received a tentative proposal from a big fair in Great Britain. Then, one August just a week before the oxen were due to appear at the opening of the Bangor Fair, Mt. Katahdin died from natural causes.

Considering Mt. Katahdin’s soft and lustrous coat, almost like fine plush, and the perfect condition of his skin, Rand resolved that he could manage to keep his show running. Rand knew that a good hide in the hands of an expert taxidermist could be made into a specimen that could fool the animal’s own mother. Turning the hide over to S. L. Crosby firm of taxidermists in Bangor, he commissioned them to mount the world’s largest ox for \$175.00.

Within a few months, the two-and-a-half-ton ox was mounted and bolted to a platform on wheels. For a brief time, until his death in 1910, Rand exhibited the deceased Mt. Katahdin alongside the live and hefty A. Granger. The oxen were never exhibited after Rand’s death. A. Granger lived out his seventeen years on the Rand farm, and Mt. Katahdin was later destroyed in a barn fire. Even today, people still ask about the famous oxen and are inclined to be skeptical as the people of an earlier generation as to the weight, dimensions, and the very existence of the gigantic pair.

*Caption reads:*

*Largest Oxen in the World  
Right-Mt. Katahdin and left-Granger,  
Their combined weight 9800 pounds.  
Bred and owned by Mr. A.S.Rand, of  
Stetson, Maine.*

