



ROME READER

February, 2024

Town of Rome Newsletter



Rome Vision Statement:

Our vision is for a rural and diverse community that values and protects its many human and natural resources. To be a town that prioritizes conservation, provides for quality education, encourages recreational and cultural opportunities, and recognizes the need for compatible development while maintaining a strong sense of community for all its residents and visitors.

OUR FIRST ROME NEWSLETTER

From the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee, we are pleased to share our first Rome Newsletter. During our committee work we realized we need to share town news in a more robust way. We hope you enjoy our first

newsletter and support the ongoing very minor expense needed for it to continue.

Thank you for being involved in our town decisions, activities and so much more. Every voice counts. All are

welcome at town committee or other board meetings. If you would like to participate in our Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC) monthly meetings, they are held on the 4th Tuesday from 5-7 PM.



Every voice counts.

MARCH ELECTION ACTIVITIES

Polls will be open from 8 AM to 8 PM on Tuesday, March 5, 2024, at the Rome Community Center for the presidential primary election for both the Democratic and Republican candidates. This year the state of Maine has changed voting to a semi-open primary. Individuals who are unenrolled in a political party can vote in the primary for either the Democratic or Republican candidate. Please come and exercise your right to vote. Absentee ballots are available through the town office.

March Elections and Annual Town Meeting

Municipal elections will be held on Friday, March 8, 2024, from 12 PM– 8 PM, at the Rome Community Center. Voting will be for all selectboard positions, RSU #18 representative, tax collector, treasurer, town clerk and road commissioner.

List of candidates includes:

- 1st Selectperson** - Kelly Archer, unopposed
- 2nd Selectperson**—Larry DiPietro, Jr., unopposed
- 3rd Selectperson** - Robert Hudson, unopposed
- Treasurer** - Tammy Lyons, unopposed
- Tax Collector** - Tammy Lyons, unopposed
- RSU #18 Representative** - Andrew Cook, unopposed
- Road Commissioner** - Carroll Bubar, unopposed
- Town Clerk** - Barbara Brickett and Julie Morrison

Annual Town Meeting will be held on Saturday, March 9 beginning at 10:00 AM at the Rome Community Center. There are numerous warrant articles to be voted on including some new proposals. Please come and have your opinion heard, meet your neighbors, and support democracy at the most basic level! Refreshments will be available.

ROME READER

WELCOME TO THE ROME READER

This is the first edition of the Town of Rome Newsletter. We hope to provide you with 3 issues a year—February, June and October. We welcome ideas, suggestions,

and volunteers—feel free to submit them to the town office. Thank you to Mary Kerwood and Elaine Eadler—members of the newsletter committee and members of the

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (CPIC) for organizing this first edition. Please support our efforts by approving our funding article on the warrant at our annual town meeting.



LOGO CONTEST UPDATE

by Barbara Russell

What a great selection of art we had responding to the logo contest! 26 entries in all! The themes and ideas were awesome. From hand drawn designs to photo collages they were remarkable. The

submissions all related to the activities, sights and all the things we love about living in Rome. So many to choose from and yet, alas, we had to come down to a choice of one. Part of the assignment was to make sure there were no copyrights

on any of the material used and that it would be easily reproducible.

This logo design will now be used on town letterhead, our NEW newsletter, and various other areas where we want to the world to know we are here!

I would like to thank the local businesses who donated some of their products or services for the prize basket : Sticky Diamond, Harvest Thyme at Rome Farm, Trees to Please, Sheila Foss' Avon, and Stony End Farm.

Thank you to the sponsor of our first newsletter:





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Rome Recreation Committee

Socialize, Educate and Recreate

Volume 1, Issue 1



The Rome Recreation Committee works to provide social, recreational, and educational events, activities, programs and facilities for residents of all ages and abilities in the most inclusive environment possible.

Over the past few years, improvements have been made at the Rome Town Beach, a nature trail has been added, erosion control mix and rip rap have been installed to help prevent erosion and two picnic tables are on site. Plans to improve the steps to the water are scheduled for this spring.

At the Community Center, we have a new ¼-mile walking track, great for walking, pushing a stroller, riding small bikes and snowshoeing. We also have a beautiful pavilion with electricity and public wi-fi where we have held a family movie night, a taekwondo class, and a bar-

becue. This pavilion is for use by residents so please feel free to hold a birthday party or family picnic. For use by all are all kinds of equipment in the “Equipment Bin”, a big plastic bin outside the side door of the building. In it are whiffle bats and balls with rubber bases, jump ropes, basketballs and soccer balls, sidewalk chalk, youth lacrosse sticks and balls, cones for making up your own games, a pickleball net and paddles and balls (easily set up on the court painted on top of the basketball court), and 2 pairs of adult and 2 pairs of youth snowshoes for use on the walking track in the winter. If there is anything else you would like us to add, let us know. We are looking for a donation of a small “balance bike”. If anyone has one their kids have outgrown, please let us know!

The Committee organizes an annual Trunk-or-Treat,

where folks bring their cars and open their “trunks” offering a basket of treats for the kids. We would love more “trunks” for this event. This year we made a haunted trail for the kids as well on the new walking track. Great fun was had by all.

Last summer we held a barbecue for the second year in a row and plan to continue that popular event. Watch for details in the next newsletter! We also organized a Chili and Karaoke Night where lots of local talent of all ages participated for a great social evening. We will do this again!

At any point in time, if you have any suggestions for the Recreation Committee, or you would like to become part of this enthusiastic, but often short-handed group, please contact

Upcoming events:

February 11, 2024 - Snowman Contest, hot dogs and warm drinks, possible bonfire

April 20 or 27, 2024 - Earth Day Road Clean Up, followed by a barbecue

Date TBD, May 18th - Public Dinner (or barbecue), theme to be determined

Also plans for creating a Community Garden, including an accessible raised bed, where residents can sign up for a plot

Julie Morrison at the Town Office:
BMV@romemaine.com
207-397-4011, or stop by!

Sandy Shute, Larry DiPietro, Barb McCosh, Chelsea Sucey, Larissa London, Phyllis Kirouac

ROME READER

PLUMB-CRAZY: An article to educate, excite, and roll your eyes at

(a wizard of OZ throwback that admittedly doesn't roll off the tongue very well...sorry)

If you read the Annual Plumbing Inspector Report this year, you'll already know that there was a fairly major update which occurred to the State Subsurface Wastewater Regulations in 2023. While my Town report already touched on a few of these changes, I left out the best one just so I could share it here with newsletter readers!

Honey Pots, porta-ploppers, turd-missiles. Whatever you call them, portable toilets are as commonplace in Maine as pine trees and chickadees. Drive around anywhere, and you're sure to see them in use at construction sites, fairs, festivals, campgrounds, and even gas stations. Considering all the regulations around plumbing and septic systems though, have you ever stopped to wonder what kind of regulations surround porta-johns? Probably not, because you're an uncultured heathen....

Well worry-not dear reader, because I'm here to demystify these plastic poo-palaces, and let you know just when they are (and are not), allowed.

Officially referred to as a "temporary portable toi-

let" by the code, porta-johns were somewhat ignored in previous iteration of the regulations. In fact, out of the entire 117 pages that made up the 2015 Subsurface Wastewater Regulations, portable toilets were only mentioned twice! The first was in the definitions section, which defined them as:

"a prefabricated toilet designed for temporary use, typically at social functions, work sites, outdoor gatherings, etc. No plumbing permit or site evaluation is required."

The other mention was in the "alternative toilet" section. An "alternative toilet" is a permanent device meant to treat or store human waste. Examples of "alternative toilets" would be a "pit privy" (an outhouse with a pit to poo in), a vault privy (an outhouse with a watertight chamber to poo in), an incineration toilet (a poo cooker, yum!), and a composting toilet (what hippies call 5 gallon buckets). Alternative toilets are used as part of a "limited" or "primitive" system, with the other part of the system being a grey water field.

Temporary portable toilets were mentioned under the alternative toilet section simply to say that they were NOT alternative toilets, since they were NOT for permanent use.

That's it. Two measly mentions in the entire code, with no real guidance on what "temporary" meant or where they could be used. As a result, porta-johns popped up all over the place, with little resistance from LPI's due to the vagueness of the regulations.

The 2023 update changed this. In 2023, the following section was added regarding port-a-johns:

"Temporary portable toilets are allowed for use for a maximum of seven days. Any use of temporary portable toilets for more than seven days, other than at construction sites, must receive written approval from the appointed LPI. If placement for use of the temporary portable toilet is intended for longer than seven days and associated with the Department's Health Inspection Program operation, then it must be approved by the Department's Health Inspection Program"

Boom! Unless you have a construction site, honey pots can now only be used for 7 days!! Otherwise, you'll either need to get approval (in writing) from the LPI, or put in a legit alternative toilet.

Furthermore, if you are licensed by the department of health (restaurants, convenience stores that serve food, campgrounds, etc.), you'll have to get the department of health to approve the portable toilet as well!

I can hear the blowhards now...."Gol' dang gubermment....try'n to tell me what I can do with my porta-john!"

Let me be the first to say that I whole heartedly agree that there are numerous situations (other than construction sites) where having a portable toilet for more than 7 days is fully warranted. Trail heads and boat launches are two which readily come to mind.

That being said, let me also be the first to state that there are many situations which definitely should not use port-a-johns as the long term go-to solution! For example, if you have a permanent food establishment, and you provide your customers with only a porta-john for "sanitation", you are disgusting, and no one likes you. Likewise, if you eat at these establishments, you are basically eating with poopy fingers. How do those wings taste now? Mmmm, mmmm, finger lickin' good!

(continued on page 5)



Pit privies, porta-johns and vault toilets, oh my!

Our Loons in Winter



Chick in winter plumage along with its parent. Note that the parent is beginning to exhibit early molting below the beak.

Our loons will spend the winters on the open ocean. This exodus begins as early as mid-August for some birds, and stretches to November for others. Adults with chicks, unsurprisingly, tend to stay later. The cut-off date, and when lingering birds find themselves in trouble, is when ice first skims over the water. This is because loons need a considerable amount of open water to act as a runway in order to take flight. They're strong fliers once airborne; some loons migrate thousands of miles to their wintering grounds, resting on lakes along their path.

Loons, like many animals, use climate cues to determine the correct time to migrate. This poses an issue as warmer and more variable temperatures become the norm. For instance, a warm fall followed by a cold snap could leave loons trapped in the ice. Or, abnormally cold temperatures earlier on could induce a premature migration.

The birds that face the largest hurdles are the chicks. If they do manage to survive the summer, they must migrate, often alone, to the coast. While many chicks reach a comfortably large

size with time to spare, the last chicks hatching at the end of July and even the first week of August will be considerably smaller. If a loon chick isn't mature enough to fly by the time the lakes freeze, it won't survive.

Once on the ocean, chicks will remain there for the first 4-5 years of their life, until they reach breeding age. Then, they'll migrate back to the general area of the lake they hatched on.



Brynne Robbins,
2023 Belgrade Lakes
Association/Colby
College Loon Project
Intern

(continued from page 4)

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that porta-ploppers are meant for semi emergency bathroom use at short term or seasonal locations. If instead, you use these as your daily bathroom abode, perhaps NASA is not the career for you.

Well, since successfully angering at least half of the folks reading an article is a prerequisite to a good end-

ing, I think this might be my cue to start wrapping it up...

Thanks for reading folks, and watch out for those long-term porta-ploppers!

Respectfully Submitted:

Andrew Marble

(outgoing) Rome Code Enforcement Officer / Licensed Plumbing Inspector / Health Officer / 911 Addressing Officer



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Check out the

NEW TOWN LOGO

Thank you to all who participated in the contest for the new town of Rome's logo. This design will now be used on town letterhead, our NEW newsletter, and various other areas where we want to the world to know we are here! More inside.

Here is our winning logo:

