

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Officers and Committees

Of the town of

ASHFIELD MASSACHUSETTS

For the year ending 2012



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This year's Town Report is dedicated to
Lester & Nancy Gray Garvin

Nancy and Lester Garvin are two of the outstanding citizens of Ashfield who have generously volunteered their time and talents for the benefit of Ashfield for many years, as did Nancy's parents Frances and Charles Gray.

Lester Everett Garvin graduated from the University of New Hampshire with a degree in forestry in 1952 and then went on to secure a Master's degree in Wildlife Management at the University of Massachusetts. While there, he studied aerial photogrammetry and assisted in the development of a method for thematically mapping forests and land use. It was at the University of Massachusetts where he met Nancy. After four years of active duty in the Navy and another 20 years in the naval reserves, Lester retired in 1980 with the rank of Captain.

Nancy Evelyn Gray attended Sanderson Academy, McDuffy's School for Girls and then in 1957, graduated from the University of Massachusetts with a degree in Zoology. Later she furthered her education and secured a Master's degree in Biology Education. For 21 years she taught high school science in Concord and then in Ayer, MA. In 1993, Nancy was a semifinalist for the Massachusetts Teacher of the Year award. Lester and Nancy married in 1957 and have three children; Cynthia, Peter, and David.

Lester has served several terms as the Chair of the Ashfield Conservation Commission. Working with the Ashfield Trails Committee, he has applied his mapping skills in producing quality photogrammetric graphics with trail overlays. He has also spent countless hours serving with the management team in the renovation and ongoing operation of the Ashfield Community Hall.

Nancy was a founding member of the Ashfield Agricultural Commission and has served on the Town Hall Building Committee, the Ashfield Historical Commission, and as secretary of the Ashfield Historical Society has spent countless hours preserving records. Her knowledge of town history is extensive and invaluable. Visit the Town Hall on most Thursdays and you will find Nancy in the vault wearing white gloves while tirelessly sorting through volumes of the old, musty town records. Her mission is to preserve the integrity of these records and protect their writings for the benefit of future generations.

Together Lester and Nancy care for and manage nearly 150 acres of farm land, some of which has been in Nancy's family since the early 1800s. Along with all of their community work, they still find time for maple sugaring, extensive gardening, beekeeping, and forestry/wildlife management. Always working tirelessly on their property or giving their all to the town, they are a truly gracious couple. Thank you, Lester & Nancy.

Government Contact Information

GOVERNOR

Deval L. Patrick

Massachusetts State House, Room 360, Boston, MA 02133
617-725-4005 or 888-870-7770

STATE SENATOR

Benjamin Downing, Pittsfield

Massachusetts State House, Room 413F, Boston, MA 02133
617-722-1625
benjamin.downing@state.ma.us

REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT

Paul W. Mark

Massachusetts State House, RoomB2, Boston, MA 02133
617-722-2460
paul.mark@mahouse.gov

Elected 2012

Stephen Kulik

Massachusetts State House, Room 238, Boston MA 02133
617-722-2460
Stephen.kulik@mahouse.gov

U.S. CONGRESS

Representative John W. Olver

1027 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-5335
www.house.gov/olver

Elected 2012

Richard Neal

2208 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-5601
www.house.gov/neal

U.S. SENATE

Senator Scott P. Brown

317 Russell Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-4543
www.scottbrown.senate.gov

Elected 2012

Senator Elizabeth Warren

Russell Office Building 2 Russell Courtyard Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-4543
www.warren.senate.gov

Senator John F. Kerry
218 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-2742
www.kerry.senate.gov

FRANKLIN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Linda Dunlavy, Executive Director
12 Olive Street Suite 2 Greenfield, MA 01301
413-774-3167 ext. 103 lindad@frcog.org

Town Officers

ELECTED POSITIONS

One-Year Terms

<i>Moderator</i>	Stuart Eisenberg
<i>Tree Warden</i>	Thomas Poissant

Three-Year Terms and Term Expiration

Select Board

Doug Field, Chr. (resigned Nov. 12, 2012)	2013
Paulette Leukhardt	2014
Ronald Coler	2015

Board of Assessors

Sandy Lilly, Chr.	2013
Wayne Gardner	2014
Peter Wiitanen	2015

Finance Committee

Ted Murray, Chr.	2013
Janet Rogers	2013
Tom Schreiber	2014
Ricki Carroll	2014
Tom Carter	2015

Mohawk Trail Regional School Committee

Karen Sullivan (resigned Nov. 2012)	2013
Helen "Poppy" Doyle (appointed Nov. 2012)	2013
Emily Robertson	2015

Board of Health

JoAnne Ostrowski	2013
Duncan Colter, Chr.	2014
Susan Clark	2015

Constables

John LaBelle	2013
Elizabeth Lesure	2013
Warren Kirkpatrick	2015

Park Commission

Nina Coler, Chr.	2013
Emmet Van Driesche	2014
Maryellen Abbatiello	2015

Sewer Commission

Robert Abbatiello	2013
Todd Olanyk	2014
Nancy Hoff, Chr.	2015

Five-Year Terms and Term Expiration

Planning Board

Sarah Holbrook	2013
Michael Fitzgerald, Chr.	2014
Alan Rice	2015
Ken Miller	2016
Lauren Preston-Wells	2017
Brittany Martin (assistant – appointed)	2013

Library Trustees

Caroline Murray	2013
Renee Rastorfer	2014
Nancy Intres	2015
Virginia Wiswell	2016
Marcine Eisenberg, Chr.	2017

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Town Office Staff

One-Year Terms

Assessors' Clerk	Jenn Morse
Assistant Municipal Clerk	Lynn Taylor
Executive Administrator	Mary Fitz-Gibbon
Town Clerk (two year term- 2013)	Ann Dunne
Town Collector (two year term – 2013)	Laura Blakesley
Treasurer	Laura Blakesley

One Year Terms

Town History Editorial Board

Phyllis Kirkpatrick, Co-Chr.

Donald Robinson, Co-Chr.

Tom Carter

Dave Fessenden

Stuart Harris

Harry Keramidas

Martha Tirk

Green Committee

Mary Quigley

Jen Williams

Brian Clark, Chr.

Town Website Committee

Juliet Jacobson, Chr.

David Kulp

Paullette Leukhardt

Virginia Wiswell

Tree Committee

Harry Dodson, Chr.

Susan Todd

Doug Cranson

Laura Bessette

Tom McCrumm

Tom Poissant-Tree Warden

Johanna Pratt

Wired West

David Kulp – Ashfield Delegate

Street Light Committee

Ricki Carroll

Nancy Hoff

Anne Yuryan

Municipal Lighting Plant

David Kulp - Manager

Town Hall Building Committee

Stuart Harris, Chr.
 Doug Cranson
 Nancy Garvin
 Grace Lesure
 Mary Quigley
 Donna Scott

Telecommunications Committee

David Kulp, Chr.
 Doug Cranson
 David Newell
 Andy Smith
 Betty Stewart

Three-Year Terms

Agricultural Commission

Robyn Crowningshield	2013
Steve Gougeon	2014
Johanna Anderson-Pratt	2014
Alan Surprenant	2014
Amy Klipenstein (resigned Nov. 2012)	2015
Tom McCrumm, Chr.	2015

Zoning Board of Appeals

Stuart Harris, Chr.	2014
Alan Surprenant	2014
Anne Yuryan	2014
Mollie Babize	2015
Kit Nylen	2015

Conservation Commission

Lester Garvin, Chr.	2013
Brian Clark	2013
Willis Thayer	2013
Phil Lussier	2014
Dave Fessenden	2015
Brittany Martin (assistant)	2013

Council on Aging

Wayne Wickland, Chr.	2013
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Cultural Council (2-term limit)

Abbot Cutler	2013
Harry Keramidas	2013

Andrea “Dre” Rawlings	2013
Linda Taylor	2013
Dawn Fessenden, Chr.	2016
Wesley Fleming	2017
Andrew Kinsey	2017

Historical Commission

Steve Gougeon, Chr.	2013
Mollie Babize	2013
Nancy Garvin	2013
Gerard McGovern	2013
Tristan Romer	2015

Personnel Board

Ricki Carroll	2013
Paullette Leukhardt	2013
Priscilla Phelps	2013
R. Dave DeHerd	2014
Beverly Chow	2014

Positions Appointed annually

Registrars of Voters

Muriel Cranson
Susan Gambino
Nancy Intres
Ann Dunne, alternate

Fire Chief/Forest Warden

Delmar Haskins

Police Chief

Patrick Droney

Health Agents

Claudia Lucas
Carl Nelke

Emergency Manager

Doug Field

Highway Superintendent

Thomas Poissant

Animal Control Officer

Warren Kirkpatrick

Inspector of Animals

Kim Reardon

Field Drivers

David King
Roland Townsley

Fence Viewer

Alden Gray

Surveyor of Wood & Lumber

Ramon R. Sears

Frederick W. Wells Trustee

Molly Robinson

Carl Nilman Scholarship Committee

Sheila Graves

Other Resources

Ambulance Service

Mike Rock, Highland Ambulance Director

Building Inspector Program

James Hawkins, Building Inspector
James Slowinski, Wiring Inspector
Andrew French, Plumbing & Gas Inspector

Veterans' Agent

Leo Parent

Burial Agent

Thomas Graves

Superintendent of Schools

Michael A. Buoniconti

Report of the Select Board

Historically the pages inside the front cover of our Town Report have been used by the Select Board to explain the progress and accomplishments of the past 12 months. Unfortunately, that is not the case this year. Since our last annual town meeting, our beautiful community of friends and neighbors has been, at best, bogged down in a state of malaise and at worst, under siege.

Our local challenges have been well published and reported in every local newspaper and radio station. Accusations of Open Meeting Law violations and other wrong doings helped Ashfield make unwanted and painful headlines.

Commencing in March and continuing today, accusations submitted by Suzanne Corbett and others, roll into the office by email, snail mail, everything so far but sheriff's service. Some of these complaints, although already addressed, are still being pursued by these same residents with the state Attorney General's Office. Although the Select Board has been high profile during these times, other selfless servants (volunteers) who serve on our Board of Health and others must occupy much time and effort to reason with what many feel are the unreasonable.

Between the Open Meeting Law complaints and an 800% increase over the previous year in Public Records requests, our community has paid a high price.

- 1) Financial- Use of Town Counsel has exhausted our budget for the fiscal year 2013 with higher appropriations needed for the balance and an even higher expenditure will probably be necessary in 2014.
- 2) Staff- Our Town Hall Staff was budgeted to complete day to day tasks for Ashfield with an eye to improving our future situations (grant applications, etc.). As it happened, many day to day tasks are left on the shelf as good employees do their best to shovel through the bureaucratic renderings that these complaints and requests force us to manage on a statutory timetable.
- 3) Volunteers- Loss of many good and honest people, both elected and appointed. The most high profile was the unfortunate resignation of Doug Field, from the Select Board, on November 12. A true son of Ashfield, Doug has spent all of his adult life in public service to Ashfield. In all his positions, Doug has not only performed outstanding service but has inspired others to do the same. He cited in his letter of resignation that "Over the last year and a half, I have tried to help out Deb Nicholson and Kachina Yuryan and have had nasty emails, Open Meeting law violations and been ridiculed for that. At this time I see no end to all of this." His resignation left the Board with no Chair.

With the remaining members very much at odds, a special election was held on Feb. 2 to fill the Select Board vacancy. This resulted in the election of Tom Carter, who was unanimously made chairman on Feb. 6. At this writing, the Select Board is focusing on the real business of Ashfield, which centers more around service than conflict.

Financially the town has coasted through 2012 without large damage from Super Storm Sandy or other natural disasters. Hurricane Irene's 2011 damage, as of this writing, still has us in the precarious position of having approximately \$205,000.00 unfunded liability, as Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency has yet to approve or pay for the state's share of clean-up. The board was able to procure a new Fire Rescue truck, Police cruiser and Highway Department pick-up as voted by the Town Meeting.

Looking forward, some challenges we hope to address are our evolving school populations and expense along with the current vehicle we use to educate our children. We also need to update Town Hall information systems for better access and protection of vital information. We must also meet the challenges of maintaining roads and other essential services in continually uncertain financial times.

It is no coincidence that our town of Ashfield flourishes because of the devotion of the inhabitants. The Ashfield Select Board extends its sincere thanks and appreciation to all of the numerous volunteers for their time and talents while serving on boards, committees and many other tasks performed by unsung heroes. Only with the help of these people, many of whom have continued to serve for many years, have we maintained the many detailed and necessary functions of our town.

In closing, our Town of Ashfield will reach the milestone of 250 years incorporated in the year 2015. On the internet at www.youtube.com you can see a video recording of the 200 year anniversary parade celebration that took place in the year 1965. If you take a moment and look at this proud historical moment in our town, perhaps, you may see yourself during the parade, remember friends, or enjoy a smile.

Respectfully Submitted,
Thomas Carter, Chair of Select Board
(elected February, 2013)

The Agricultural Commission meets monthly on the second Tuesday of each month, and any Ashfield resident who is interested in agriculture in Ashfield is welcome to attend the meetings. Work continued on updating the Ashfield farm guide. This brochure, available at Town Hall, Fall Festival, the Farmers' Market and at local farms in town, is a guide to the many farms and quality farm products in Ashfield.

We again had a display at the annual Fall Festival to educate both residents and non-residents about agriculture in Ashfield. A poor growing season in 2012 resulted in fewer entries for our giant pumpkin and tallest sunflower contest. The Ag Commission continued effort in 2012 to link up landowners who have un-used pasture land with farmers that are in need of additional grazing land for animals, making a win-win situation for all.

At the present time, the Ag Commission has no budget and receives no funding from the town. Expenses that we have incurred have been borne by the members themselves, or by minimal grant funds. We have established an Ashfield Agricultural Fund, where monies can be donated for the use of the Ag Commission to support local agriculture, or to conserve valuable agricultural lands. Ashfield has a Right to Farm Bylaw. Copies are available at Town Hall or from the Ag Commission.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom McCrumm, Chair
Joel Arsenault
Steve Gougeon
Johanna Pratt
Robyn Crowningshield
Alan Suprenant

2012 Ashfield Animal Control Report

This year was unusually busy for animal control. According to state officials, this was caused by a warmer than normal winter with little to no snow. Many animals appeared earlier than usual and the food chain was under severe shortages. At this point I believe we are getting back to normal.

In February a little known animal disease, Lepton, was identified. This disease can affect fur bearing animal animals and can also be transmitted to humans. It is not as serious as rabies, however, still should be treated with respect. A veterinarian can administer inoculations for pets to prevent Lepton. Humans can contract this disease only by contact with the urine of an infected animal. If a human does get exposed to Lepton, it is very treatable by a physician.

In the past, the state of Massachusetts had outlined many suggestions and guidelines for animal control, care and the treatment of animals. In October 2012, the state passed many new laws making the guidelines now law. Fortunately, Ashfield has actively been abiding by these rules and regulations and we are not in any violation of the new statutes. I will be attending classes to stay informed of any further changes.

As a reminder, all dogs six months and older must be licensed by April 1 of each year. In order to obtain a dog license, an up-to-date rabies certificate must be presented to the Town Clerk. This can be done in person, by mail, drop box in front of the Town Hall, or on a computer. Cash, check or credit card can make payment. Cats six months or older are also required by state law to have an up-to-date rabies shot. In addition, Ashfield has a year round restraining order. Dog owners are fully responsible for all damages done by an unrestrained dog.

I want to thank all the people and organizations that have supported and assisted me in performing my duties as the Ashfield Animal Control Officer. Anyone having questions or concerns can reach me at 628-3811. Lost and found notices are posted at Neighbors Store and the Post Office.

Dogs Confined	10
Dogs Placed	10
Cats Confined	4
Cats Placed	4
Other Animals Confined	1
Animal Bites	3
Phone calls	1903
Mileage	44
Labor	717 hours
Fines Collected	0

Expenses \$621.92

Respectively submitted,
Warren Kirkpatrick, Animal Control Officer

The total value of property in Ashfield, as of December 2012, was \$220,389,397, with 92.45% of the property classed as residential, 2.72% commercial, 1.07% chapter lands, 0.43% industrial, and 3.33 % personal property. All classes are taxed at the same rate. The town's budget is \$4,009,552.50. When revenues from other sources, such as state aid, are subtracted, the total to be raised by taxation is \$3,229,351.26. The tax rate for FY 2013 is \$15.09 per \$1,000 of value.

The BOA is charged only with determining values of property based on fair market value. The actual amount to be raised by taxation each year is voted at Annual and Special Town Meetings. Attendees vote to adopt or modify numbers presented by the Select Board with recommendations from the Finance Committee. Once the town votes a budget, the BOA must then determine a tax rate that will raise that sum based on town-wide valuation, and also what share of that sum each citizen will pay based on the value of property they own. If town wide value goes up from one year to the next, the tax rate will go down based on a similar budget. If the budget goes up and town wide value is stagnant or declining, the tax rate rises accordingly.

Values in Ashfield and throughout the Commonwealth are determined according to Department of Revenue (DOR) reviewed and certified practices. The most important factors in standard valuation are size of property (acres for land and square feet for structures) adjusted for quality/condition/encumbrances and any other documented influences (examples could be a plus for broad views or a minus for seasonal road access). Additional individual adjustments to value and/or actual tax bills may include factors such as placing eligible land in Chapter encumbrance or various reductions and credits for documented income and disability. Annual fully completed applications are required to be eligible for these individual adjustments, and failure to submit the required information by the prescribed date will result in removal of the adjustment.

The town's values must fall within a very tight range of actual comparable sales. Since there are few annual sales in Ashfield (usually around a dozen), the BOA consultant (Mayflower Valuation), working with DOR and the BOA, incorporates some consideration of additional evidence in surrounding towns. Every third year, DOR gives extra scrutiny to this process - the triennial revaluation for Ashfield was completed in 2011.

In order to avoid unreasonable short-term changes (except due to new construction or disasters), the BOA works on a three-year average of comparable values. Market trends up or down are thus evened out. Though sales have been slower in Franklin County during the recent downturn, values have held reasonably steady compared to other regions of the state.

For most residents, the actual value of their property changes relatively little year to year when markets are stable. Changes in your actual tax bill result primarily from changes to the town budget that must be raised from taxation.

We are required by the DOR to complete cyclical inspections on each property once every nine years. This winter we had Mayflower Valuation inspect numerous properties. When the inspector arrives at your property he/she will present you with a signed letter from the BOA stating the cyclical inspection. If you're not at home he/she will leave the letter for you. The inspection includes measuring the outside of all buildings. If possible, the inspector will set up an appointment with you to inspect the inside of all buildings. The inspector's car will have an "Ashfield Board of Assessors" sign. It is your responsibility to ensure that your property card is correct. The assessed value on your property card is what you are taxed on. If you have questions about your assessed value or if you want a copy of your property card to review please contact Jenn Morse, Assessors Clerk in Town Hall by phone (413-628-4441 x 6) or by email assessors@ashfield.org.

We would like to thank Mark Graves for his many years of service on the BOA. We also want to thank Jenn Morse for her professionalism and dedication.

Summary of Monies Raised by Taxation and Receipts

	FY10	FY11	FY12
Total amount to be raised	\$4,138,174.60	\$4,097,522.50	\$4,009,913.78
Annual tax levy	\$2,993,733.60	\$3,098,561.51	\$3,229,351.26
Total property value	\$221,102,925.00	\$222,278,461.00	\$219,833,306.00
Tax rate per \$1,000	\$13.54	\$14.69	\$15.09

Respectfully submitted,
 Sandra Lilly, Chair (term expires 2013)
 Wayne Gardner (term expires 2014)
 Peter Wiitanen (term expires 2015)

Board of Health

It was another slow year for construction in 2012. Five perc tests, three septic system permits, six repair permits and 13 Title Five inspections were done.

Our agent Erin Kirchner resigned on March 8, 2012 stating she felt harassed beyond her ability to cope. Her honesty and integrity were constantly being questioned. The board advertised immediately and received replies in June. Two agents were hired in July. Carl Nelke from Conway is doing our Title Five work. Claudia Lucas from Southampton is handling our other needs.

Susan Clark was appointed to the board to fill out the unexpired term of Cynthia Scott who resigned. Susan was elected for a three year term at the annual election in May. Susan has done a superb job of wading through all the document requests.

The board voted to participate in the grant funding from the FDA for assistance in food inspections. The grant hasn't been received but will be put to use once it has been.

The board received three Open Meeting Law complaints and 19 document requests in 2012. These complaints were by Suzanne Corbett, Deb Nicholson and Sherrill Jourdan.

The board would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the nurses and volunteers who staged a successful flu clinic in November. We dispensed 112 of 120 doses.

Respectfully submitted,
Duncan Colter, Chairman
Ashfield Board of Health

Ashfield Burial Ground Association

Supplement to Town Clerk's Report

Burials in Ashfield Cemeteries

January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012

Name	Date of Death	Date of Burial	Cemetery
Holly Smith Pedlosky	04/05/2012	04/21/2012	Plain
Dorothy (Morse)Hathaway	02/12/2012	04/30/2012	Plain
Beulah (Bushy) Geryk	02/26/2012	05/17/2012	Plain
Wallace R. Kelley	12/28/2011	05/19/2012	Plain
Mona (Pichette) Linehan	02/23/2012	06/16/2012	Plain
Donald Fitzgerald	12/10/2011	07/14/2012	Hill
Doris (Guilford) Streeter	07/13/2012	07/20/2012	Plain
Idella (Schreiber) Schmidt	07/12/2012	07/21/2012	Plain
Dorothy (Sandy) Moreau	07/29/2012	08/04/2012	Plain
Stephen W. Greenman	07/18/2012	08/11/2012	Plain
Francis H. Doughty	07/10/2012	09/08/2012	Plain
Laura (Gardner) Stockwell	09/17/2012	09/21/2012	Plain

Respectfully Submitted,
Tom Graves
Burial Agent

Ashfield Conservation Commission 2012 Annual Report

Conservation Commissions in Massachusetts have regulatory responsibility stemming from legislative passage of three acts; Wetlands Protection Act, Riverfront Act and Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Act. We review applications for activities within resource areas, conduct site visits, advertise and hold hearings, and issue or deny permits allowing activities. We also have the responsibility to review Forest Cutting Plans prepared under the Forest Cutting Practices Act. Our budget is driven by fixed costs relating to scribe services for our twice-a-month meetings and membership in the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissioners which keeps us current with changes or proposed changes in our regulatory responsibilities. Our variable costs are determined by the number of permits we process which entail legal ad fees for hearings and certified mailing costs for mailing determinations; these fees are paid by the applicant and are returned to the town's General Fund. This year we had three Request for Determination of Applicability Hearings, one Notice of Intent hearing and conducted 12 site visits. The Department of Environmental Protection issued procedures for processing Emergency Certifications for restoring flooding impacts from Tropical Storm Irene.

In the past, applicants for building projects met with individuals, such as the Chair of the Conservation Commission, for sign-off permission in order to proceed with the project. This year the Commission worked with the Franklin County Building Inspection Department to initiate their online permitting system. The primary obstacle to the process is the need to have a plot plan with the application showing where the building activity will take place. Conservation Commission jurisdiction is based on distance to wetland resource areas and permanent streams.

The Commission continues to work with the Board of Health on the resolution of beaver problem issues. The Board of Health Agent can issue a permit to remove beavers if the flooding caused by the dams impacts wells, septic systems and residences,

In addition to the regulatory responsibility cited above, we assist applicants with Chapter 91 Licensing. Because Ashfield Lake is more than 10 acres it is by definition a "Great Pond" which requires that all new docks and anchored floats be licensed. We review and sign off on applications for land conservation efforts of organizations such as The Franklin Land Trust and The Trustees of Reservations. We support the preservation of habitats for rare, threatened and endangered species. We have concerns about the impact of invasive species and how we as a commission can pursue programs to halt their advance.

Lester Garvin, Chair

Brian Clark, David Fessenden, Philip Lussier, Willis Thayer

Council on Aging

Last year was good this year however was much better, with many more volunteers.

The senior luncheons are gaining in attendance up this year by 10%, with a very successful meet and greet and with many available programs and services explained and offered to those present. Thanks to the local police departments, sheriff's departments, and several others for programs on safety and scams. An exercise class is meeting on a regular basis at St. Johns Corner here in Ashfield. Some of the van maintenance has already been done. The remaining work will be done by the time you are reading this report.

Thank you to all the committees and volunteers.

Sincerely,

Franklin Wickland, Chair

Ashfield Cultural Council - 2012 Annual Report

In 2012 the Ashfield Cultural Council partially or totally funded the Ashfield Photographers Calendar; Winter Tracking and Scarecrow Making Workshops; the Ashfield Town Band; Chamber Music in Ashfield; Eventide Singers Hospice Choir; and several poetry projects among many others. We hope everyone had a chance to enjoy many of these offerings.

For 2013, the Cultural Council received \$3,870 in funding from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. That plus the \$695 remaining balance from 2012 minus \$120 for administrative costs gave us \$4,445 in total to allocate to 2013 projects.

On December 3, we met as a committee to review the 48 applications received. We were able to approve 26 projects. We always wish we had enough money to fully fund each eligible proposal. With the current economic situation we are lucky to still be funded. Hopefully, the amounts we provide can help bring these great projects to fruition.

Here are the titles of projects you can look forward to in 2013: Remembrance of our Past; Life in a Wheelchair; Exploring Stream Ecosystems; Healing Through Sound; Summer Arts Program; Colonial Arts Program; Clay Classes for Children & Teens; The Patsy Cline Era; Concerts at 7; Legacy of Rural Music, People & Place; Dancing through the Decades; Ashfield Trails Interpretive Signage; Hear That Whistle Blow; Eventide Singers Hospice Choir; Classical Symphonic Educational program; Hilltown Spring Festival; Collected Poets Series 2012 Season; TEDx ShelburneFalls Conference; Ashfield Community Play Production; Ashfield Sketchbook Project; Mohawk 'Palooza'; Canoeing the Connecticut; Community Exhibits at The Art Garden; Ann Hutt Browning Poetry Series; Pothole Pictures Film Series; and Mohawk Folk Rock 2!

Applications for Cultural Council support are due on October 15 of each year. It is important that a venue be previously arranged when applying. For further information on the Massachusetts Cultural Council programs and the Ashfield Cultural Council visit www.mass-culture.org. Current members are Dawn Fessenden (Chair) Dre Rawlings (Treasurer), Linda Taylor (Secretary) Harry Keramidas, Abbot Cutler, Andrew Kinsey, Helene Leue, and Wesley Fleming.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Taylor
Secretary

It is my pleasure to give the townspeople my report as your emergency manager for the year.

The town and county had one major hurricane this year. Although Ashfield didn't get too much damage, we still had to open our emergency operation center at the fire station.

This year I received a grant from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency to purchase a shelter kit, which includes blankets, folding cots, flashlights, and pillows to be used at our shelter (Sanderson Academy) when we have to open up our shelter.

Our one call phone system is working out very well. If you haven't gotten the calls and would like to be on the list, please call me at 413-628-3343. For people who don't know about the system, it is so that the Emergency Manager, Town Clerk and Administrator can call one number and it will ring every home phone and cell phone that is listed in Ashfield to tell people of a major storm coming. This system is not just for an emergency, it can be for anything that is going to go on in town. If you would like something to be put out, email ddfild1@verizon.net.

Every quarter of the year I go to Mass Emergency Management Agency Region 3 for an update on what is happening in the state and country.

I want to thank everyone who helps out in an emergency in Ashfield.

Douglas Field
Ashfield Emergency Manager

In 1985 it was “voted to amend the bylaws with respect to the Finance Committee as follows: The Town shall elect a five-member Finance Committee whose members shall be elected for three year terms and shall hold no other elected or compensated position while serving as members of the Finance Committee. The members of the Finance Committee shall serve without compensation and shall consider all articles for all town meetings and report its recommendations before each meeting or vote.”

From January through March, we met weekly with the Select Board to receive and comment on budget requests from various departments, boards, committees, and commissions within the town. After all budgets had been submitted, the Finance Committee reviewed and analyzed all data submitted. We then made our recommendations with respect to the town’s FY2013 budget at annual town meeting in May. Similarly, we made recommendations regarding various warrant articles as presented at subsequent special town meetings.

In joint meetings of the Select Board and Finance Committee the frequency of audits was discussed. Although our outstanding indebtedness for the highway garage would normally require the town to have complete audits every year, the USDA, via RDA, has granted waivers permitting small towns to have an audit every two years. Accordingly, it was recommended that the Select Board request such a waiver from USDA, and subsequently the waiver was granted.

The Finance Committee recommended to the Select Board that a policy of conducting audits on alternate years be continued. Moreover, it was recommended that, starting with the selection of an auditor for 2014, the town do so on the basis of competitive proposals, and that after about every five audits we again seek competitive proposals so that we could change auditors, if and as appropriate. In this way, we hope to ensure that we have “fresh” reviews of the town’s finances on a recurring basis.

Respectfully submitted,
Ted Murray (Chair)
Tom Schreiber
Ricki Carroll
Tom Carter
Janet Rogers

Fire Department

First of all the firefighters would like to thank the town for backing

us up for a new, small rescue-type fire truck. The truck is still being constructed and will be available this spring.

The Fire Department had another busy year, with emergency calls. Medical calls were second to any other town in the Highland Ambulance region.

The Fire Department has a new EMT, Jacob Niquette. Also, Firefighter Niquette and Lt. Mike Purcell took a 40-hour class on school safety, five Saturdays in a row. Other training outside of Ashfield was paid by a donation to the Fire Association.

We had 48 permits given out this year, 15 for new propane tanks, 13 for smoke and CO alarms, and seven new oil tanks and miscellaneous permits. A lot of homes sold this past year.

There were 161 calls in 2012, six less than last year.

71 fire calls

90 medical calls

Saturdays and Fridays were the busiest days

12 noon to 9 p.m. were the busiest times.

Respectfully submitted,
Delmar Haskins, Fire Chief
Ashfield Fire Department

Cooperative Building Inspection Program 2012 Annual Report

Dear Residents of Ashfield:

As you know, your town receives building, plumbing, gas, and wiring inspection and zoning enforcement services through the Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program (FCCIP), a 31 year old shared service housed at the Franklin Regional Council Of Governments (FRCOG). We thank your town for your continued participation in the FCCIP, which allows small towns to have access to professional staff and state-of-the-art technology.

2012 was a busy year for the program. We issued 2,043 permits, including a significant number of insulation upgrade, solar array and wood/pellet stove permits. 24 new dwelling units were constructed in participating towns. The number of permits and fee revenues were higher in 2012 than in the previous year.

Our new online permitting program went live on July 1, 2011 and has issued 3,472 building, electrical and plumbing/gas permits since then. The program allows you to apply, pay for, and track the progress of any permit online, saving you time and visits to our office in Greenfield. The program has 1,719 registered users. You can find it at www.frcog.org under the Franklin County Cooperative Inspection Program. Our website also includes helpful information on inspection requirements, permit costs, and contractor licensing.

Along with the rest of the FRCOG, at the end of April 2012 we moved our offices from the courthouse to the second floor of the new John W. Olver Transit Center. If you haven't visited us at our new location yet, we hope to see you soon.

In FY2012, the FCCIP processed the following permits for Ashfield:

Residential	96
Commercial	5
Sheet Metal	1
Electrical	37
Plumbing	10
Gas	28
Cert of Inspection	15

We would like to remind all residents of the importance of applying for permits for work done. Building, Electrical and Plumbing/Gas permits are required by law and are an essential step in ensuring the safety of our communities. Please feel free to call our office with any building or zoning questions at 774-3167, extension 2.

James D. Hawkins
Building Commissioner
jhawkins@frcog.org

James Cerone
Building Inspector
jcerone@frcog.org

Tom McDonald
Electrical Inspector
electric@frcog.org

Andy French
Plumbing/Gas Inspector
plumbing@frcog.org

Green Community Committee Annual Report for 2012

Norm Russell, then Select Board chair, formed this committee to pursue funding through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Green Communities

Initiative. The Green Communities program offers grant money for cities and towns to invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy technology. This grant money benefits the town by improving our buildings and cutting energy costs long term, as the energy needed to run the buildings is reduced. We applied to be a Green Community, which included an in-depth analysis of how we are currently using energy as a town, as well as a proposal to cut the town's energy use by 20% over five years. The proposal was successful, and we were granted \$141,025.

Subsequently, we have worked on putting our energy-reduction plan into action. Thus far, we have contracted energy audits on the Town Hall, Fire Station, Town Garage, and Belding Library, as well as assisting the Wastewater Treatment Plant in conserving energy, and we have made some small energy efficiency improvements. Those improvements include installing more efficient lighting fixtures in the Town Hall, Fire Station, Library, and Town Garage; and replacing the aged refrigerator in the Fire Station with a new Energy Star model. We also began investigating the possibility of installing photovoltaic panels to generate some of the town's electricity. We are in the process of replacing water heaters in the Town Hall and Belding Library with on-demand water heaters' and deciding on the best places for bike racks in the village. Longer term, our primary focus is tightening up building envelopes and replacing some heating systems where necessary. This should provide us the best return on our investment, since heating costs make up a large percentage of our energy use.

Respectfully submitted,
Brian Clark
Mary Quigley
Jennifer Williams

Annual Report of Highland Ambulance EMS

Operations. Highland Ambulance is the primary ambulance service provider for the towns of Ashfield, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield

and Williamsburg. Highland also provides primary back-up in the town of Worthington in support of Hilltown Ambulance of Huntington. Paramedics are on duty at Highland’s station in Goshen from 6 a.m. until midnight seven days a week. During the midnight to 6 a.m. time period, Highland EMT’s are assisted by Paramedics from other ambulance companies when the service of a Paramedic is required. Highland’s active roster consists of 36 members including 12 Paramedics and 24 EMT’s.

Donations and Grants. In March Highland dedicated a new ambulance generously donated by John April of Goshen in memory of his father and grandfather. In May Highland received a \$20,000 grant from FEMA for an “Active Shooter” program. This program provided area EMT’s and police with training regarding emergency response when there is risk in an active shooting situation. In December we were awarded a \$77,000 Assistance to Firefighters Grant from FEMA. This grant will provide for the purchase of cardiac monitors for each of our ambulances. These monitors will replace our existing monitors and offer enhancements compliant with current technology.

During Fiscal Year 2012 we received \$39,944 in donations. We are grateful for the level of support we receive from the community.

Emergency Responses. During 2012 Highland responded to 616 emergency calls. These are broken down by Town as follows:

Ashfield	100	Chesterfield	68	Cummington	67	Worthington	29
Goshen	62	Plainfield	77	Williamsburg	199	Other	14

Out of these responses, 366 required advanced life support services of a paramedic.

Community Involvement. Highland provided support to our communities including:

Ambulance Coverage for Community events including the Junior Olympics held in Chesterfield, Chesterfield 4th of July Parade, the Cummington Fair and the Ashfield Fall Festival.

Safety Day programs at New Hingham School and at Sanderson Academy.

A flu shot clinic for area first responders and EMT’s.

CPR training. Training is offered on the third Thursday of each month.

Information is available by calling Highland Ambulance at 268- 7272.

Cash On Hand June 30, 2012

Operating Funds	\$ 4,125.94
Memorial Fund	17,678.58
Dresser Fund	2,726.59

Cummington Funds	1,328.95
Highland Funds	<u>6,955.14</u>
Total Cash On Hand	\$ 32,815.20

Respectfully Submitted,
Highland Ambulance Board of Directors
Ashfield Patricia Thayer
Chesterfield Spencer Timm
Cummington James Drawe
Goshen Donald Boisvert
Plainfield James Pilgrim
Williamsburg Christopher Smith
At-Large Francis Dresser
At-Large Bernard Forgea
At-Large Douglas Mollison

Highway Department

Winter was relatively mild resulting in some much needed cost savings. During the winter we rebuilt the front end of the backhoe.

Chapter 90 resurfacing work was done on portions of Watson Road, Bullitt Road, Creamery Road, Spruce Corner Road and Baptist Corner Road.

Gravel overlay projects were done on John Ford Road and Dyer Road.

Repairs continue in many locations town wide as a result of Tropical Storm Irene. We continue to work with FEMA and MEMA to receive the funding to support these repairs. Repairs will continue during the summer of 2013.

During the fall we resumed work on the Belding Park Restoration project. I believe we have completed our portion of this project.

I would like to thank the Select Board, Town Hall staff and all of the various departments and committees for your support.

To Jack Clark, Curt Pichette, Alan Taylor and Richard Turner – Thank You for all you do.

Respectfully submitted,
Thomas G. Poissant
Highway Superintendent

Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative Annual Report for FY 2012

The Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative (HRMC) was created 24 years ago and includes the towns of Ashfield, Chesterfield, Cummington, Goshen, Huntington, Middlefield, Plainfield, Westhampton, Williamsburg and Worthington. The HRMC was created by a group of dedicated volunteers from each member town who had the vision to seek a regional solution to help small towns with volunteer local boards that had a desire to protect the environment, become more sustainable and manage the expensive problem of rapidly rising solid waste disposal costs.

In the past 24 years the HRMC has created cost saving recycling and sustainability programs. The past year has also been one in which the HRMC and the Hampshire Council of Governments continued their partnership by working closely together on sustainability and green energy development issues. In fact the HRMC Administrator splits his time, spending half of each week being Administrator of the HRMC and half of each week being the Sustainability Director for the Hampshire Council of Governments.

What programs does the HRMC help with?

The HRMC contracted Administrator, Eric Weiss, helps your town manage disposal recycling and sustainability programs, including;

- Solid Waste Disposal and Hauling Contracting
- MRF Household Recycling and Hauling and Contracting
- Electronics, Paint, Propane Tank, Tire, and Clothes Recycling Programs
- Organizing and Managing the Annual Regional Household Hazardous Waste Collection
- Providing Sustainability and Recycling Outreach and Education efforts
- Assisting local Boards with DEP Compliance Related Issues
- Assisting with monitoring transfer station efforts costs and activities
- Advocating on behalf of the towns with State Legislators
- Exploring new green energy and sustainability programs and grants
- Assisting member towns in becoming Massachusetts designated “Green Communities”
- Coordinating sustainability activities and green energy program development in cooperation with the Hampshire Council of Governments
- Exploring zero waste issues on behalf of member towns

Who manages the HRMC?

- Two residents (appointed by your towns Board of Selectmen) from each of the 10 member towns serve on the HRMC Board which is responsible for the management and oversight of the HRMC.
- The current Chairman of the HRMC is Joe Kearns from Middlefield, the current Vice-Chairman of the HRMC is Donna Gibson from Williamsburg and the current Treasurer of the HRMC is Tom Martin from Westhampton.
- The HRMC has an annual assessment which is approved by each town at their annual town meeting. The annual assessment is based on population and the amount of tonnage handled at your town's transfer station. The total (for the 10 towns combined) annual assessments are currently \$39,487.56. After two years of budget reductions the HRMC has level funded its assessment budget for two the past two fiscal years in a row.
- The HRMC also receives grant and recycling revenues to supplement its budget and many efforts on behalf of its member communities. The HRMC continues to be a very successful effort for the Hilltown region. It has become a program which local boards of Selectmen and Health and Energy Committees have grown to depend on for sound technical assistance and guidance on recycling and sustainability issues.
- The HRMC works closely with local officials in every one of its member towns by providing information and important technical assistance to the towns.
- We also help your towns obtain access to the resources needed for the management of successful solid waste, recycling, sustainability and green energy (solar) programs.

Last year the HRMC helped the 10 member towns:

- Recycle 1083 tons of material
- Save \$73,644 in disposal costs
- Save 6001 tons of greenhouse gas emissions
- Earn over \$49,472 in recycling revenue.

We look forward to continuing to assist your town during this upcoming year. If you have any questions about recycling or have a waste disposal problem, please call us at (413) 268 – 3845 or (413) 687 – 3356 or email us at hrcm@crocker.com right away.

Eric Weiss

Administrator, HRMC, Sustainability Director, HCOG

Ashfield Historical Commission 2012

The Ashfield Historical Commission is responsible for community-wide historic preservation planning. We have ongoing projects, such as the inventory of historical properties and the updating of our historic properties inventory forms. We also take on shorter term projects as they present themselves.

Our meetings are usually the fourth Thursday of the month and we invite people with ideas or questions about the historical preservation of our community to attend.

Respectfully submitted,
Steven Gougeon, Chair
Mollie Babize
Nancy Garvin
Gerard McGovern
Tristan Romer

Volume 3 of the History of Ashfield –covering the half-century from 1960 to 2010 – is currently being written, by residents of the town (and a few close neighbors).

During the past year, many new and old friends have joined the effort, swelling the ranks of contributors. Some have already completed their contributions; others are just beginning to work on specific topics. Some are working in collaboration with others.

As we move toward our target date of 2015 for publication, townspeople are doing research and writing drafts about the many fascinating events and trends, challenges and changes, as well as the enduring values and centuries old practices that make up our life together in this special place. The town’s vibrant history has not been spared controversy, along with its many triumphs.

Stepping forward to take on the job of telling these stories and collecting photographs, videos and other kinds of evidence are an increasing number of brave volunteers – many without any previous experience of writing for publication. We have been heartened by this growing response.

We are also deeply grateful for financial support to our annual appeal, which has enabled us in recent years to meet our costs without adding to town expenditures.

Editorial Board members:

Phyllis Kirkpatrick and Don Robinson, co-editors

Tom Carter, Liz Castro, Dave Fessenden, Stuart Harris, Harry Keramidas

Hawlemont Regional School District

INTRODUCTION

Until 2012, public school districts in Massachusetts were held accountable by a system governed by the Federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Under that system, schools were classified as having either “Met Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)” or “Not Met AYP.” In 2011, as the Federal NCLB AYP requirements in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics approached the unrealistic goal of 100%, 81% of Massachusetts schools and 90% of Massachusetts districts failed to meet AYP. These percentages made no sense, because Massachusetts is widely regarded as having one of the more rigorous public education systems in the nation. As a result, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) applied for, and received, a waiver to NCLB AYP during the winter of 2012.

NEW STATE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

In 2012, a new Massachusetts accountability system replaced the Federal NCLB system, including several key changes. The NCLB goal of 100 percent proficiency was replaced with a new goal of reducing proficiency gaps by half by 2017. AYP was replaced with a new performance measure (the Progress and Performance Index, or PPI) that incorporates student growth and other indicators, including science and dropout rates. Schools and districts are now classified into one of five “Levels,” with Level 1 signaling strong performance and Level 5 signaling unacceptable performance.

Student growth is now an important component of the accountability system. The Student Growth Percentile (SGP) measures how much students gain from one year to the next relative to other students statewide with similar MCAS test score histories. Science is included in the accountability system as well as ELA and Math. A new "High Needs" subgroup is tracked, which includes students in a school or district belonging to at least one of the following individual subgroups: low income students, students with disabilities, English language learners (ELL) and former ELL students.

CLASSIFICATION LEVELS

Eighty percent of schools are classified into Level 1 or 2 based on the cumulative PPI for the "All Students" and “High Needs” groups. For a school to be classified into Level 1, the cumulative PPI for both the "All Students" group and “High Needs” students must be 75 or higher. The Cumulative PPI combines information about narrowing proficiency gaps, growth, and graduation and dropout rates over the most recent four-year period into a single number between 0 and 100.

Annual PPI is a measure of the improvement that a group makes toward its own targets over a two-year period using up to seven indicators: narrowing proficiency gaps (ELA, Math, and science); growth (ELA and Math); the annual dropout rate; and the cohort graduation rate. The Cumulative PPI is the average of a group's annual PPIs over four years, weighting the most recent years the most (Current Year PPI 40%, Current Year-1 30%, Current Year-2 20%, Current Year-3 10%). If a school does not meet both of these requirements, the school is classified into Level 2. A school may also be classified into Level 2 if it has low MCAS participation rates for any group (between 90 and 94%).

Schools are classified into Level 3 if they are among the lowest 20 percent relative to other schools in their grade span statewide, if one or more subgroups in the school are among the lowest performing 20% of subgroups relative to all subgroups statewide, if they have persistently low graduation rates (less than 60% for any subgroup over a four-year period), or if they have very low MCAS participation rates for any group (less than 90%).

The lowest achieving, least improving Level 3 schools are candidates for classification into Levels 4 and 5, the most serious designations in Massachusetts' accountability system. In general, a district is classified into the level of its lowest performing school, unless the district was independently classified into Level 4 or 5 as a result of action by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ACCOUNTABILITY DATA 2012

MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Classification: Level 2

- Because all schools within the District, including BSE, were classified as Level 2 schools, Mohawk exited Level 3 status, which is a positive consequence of the 2012 MCAS results.
- Within these results, there was a substantial increase in the number of students who performed at an Advanced level in ELA, Math and Science.
 - Increased percentage of students Advanced in ELA from 11% to 15%.
 - Increased percentage of students Advanced in Math from 21% to 26%.
 - Increased percentage of students Advanced in Science from 7% to 12%.

MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL MIDDLE-HIGH SCHOOL

Classification: Level 2

- After two years of very high performance (2011 PPI 89 and 2010 PPI 96), the Middle-High School's 2012 MCAS results declined.

- Within these disappointing results, there were some bright spots.
 - Increased percentage of students Advanced in Math from 24% to 31%.
 - Increased the Student Growth Percentile in Math from 48 to 56.
 - Increased percentage of students Advanced in ELA from 14% to 18%.
 - The 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate increased from 76% to 79%.
 - The Annual Drop-Out Rate declined from 4% to 2%.

SANDERSON ACADEMY

Classification: Level 2

- In 2012, the students performed very well in ELA, but the Math and Science results declined.
- Outstanding performance in ELA:
 - All Students rating is Above Target with a CPI of 93.3.
 - Increased percentage of students Advanced from 16% to 26%.
- The Math scores declined, but the CPI is a strong 86.6.
 - 67% of the students were Proficient-Advanced, greatly exceeding the State's 59%.
- The Science scores also declined, but the CPI is a very respectable 82.5.
 - 55% of the students were Proficient-Advanced, exceeding the State's 54%.

THE YEAR AHEAD

In 2012, the Mohawk and Hawlemont School Districts made substantial progress toward achieving their educational goals, which is reflected in the new Massachusetts accountability system. As is always the case, there is room for growth. During 2013, both the District Improvement Plans and School Improvement Plans will be significantly revamped in order to facilitate this growth. Within these efforts, I look forward to the introduction of Professional Learning Communities, Learning Walkthroughs, and the New Educator Evaluation System. There is a great deal of hard but exciting work in front of us, and I am very confident that our educational teams are up for the challenge. Indeed, the future is bright for our students!

Respectfully submitted,
Michael A. Buoniconti
Superintendent of Schools

**Annual Report of the Principal
Mohawk Trail Regional High School**

The connection between our school and our community is vitally important. Partnerships with our community provide students with enriching and authentic learning experiences, such as the Archaeology course in which students worked with a local archeologist on the excavation of the Sanford Tavern site at Hawley's Old Town Common.

Mohawk students demonstrate initiative, extending what they learn beyond the classroom. This past spring students launched a composting program in our school cafeteria, significantly reducing the amount of waste that enters landfills. For the first time Mohawk students participated in the Model Congress that is held each year at American International College (AIC) in Springfield and they were honored with the "School Spirit" award recognizing their active participation in the legislative sessions. Members of the Varsity M club refurbished trophy display cases throughout the building and made regular visits to the elementary schools to serve as Reading Buddies for younger students. Students in the Vocational Integration Program (VIP) work with the Meals on Wheels program every week, helping to sort and distribute food.

Community organizations support our school through their generous efforts. The tenth annual Doug Turner Walkathon was held in October; over the past decade this event has raised over \$100,000 for Mohawk athletic programs to date. In March the Mohawk Music Association organized a Mohawk Alumni Concert, with graduates from across the decades performing along with current students in a celebration of music. Through the generosity of civic and community groups as well as contributions from private citizens, Mohawk seniors were awarded scholarships totaling in excess of \$100,000 and students who have graduated from Mohawk were awarded more than \$50,000 in scholarships this year.

This year also saw important improvements to the physical plant of our school, as windows and the roof were replaced for greater energy efficiency. During this past year Mohawk completed its decennial self-assessment for NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) accreditation, culminating in a site visit by an evaluation team in late September-early October. With the addition of a Curriculum Director position, staff professional development has become a priority; faculty are increasingly collaborating through Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), which provide a structure for focused work such as book discussions, peer observations, and curriculum writing.

At the midpoint of the 2012-2013 school year, enrollment in grades 7-12 is 511. The seventh grade has 82 students and the eighth grade has 86. There are 85 students in the ninth grade, 93 in the tenth grade, 70 students in the junior class,

and 89 students in the senior class. Six students are enrolled in our post-graduate program.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn R. Dole
Principal

2012 was another productive and successful year for students and staff at Sanderson Academy. It was a year that saw generally strong academic performances from students, some staffing changes, and work continuing on a number of significant mandates from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Our enrollment on the last day of 2012 was 117 students in grades K-6, a reduction of nine students from the previous year. The number of students at each grade level were as follows: 17 children in kindergarten, 12 children in first grade, 16 children in grade two, grade three had 21 students, fourth grade had 20 students, fifth grade had just 12 students and 19 students were in our sixth grade class. There were 85 students from Ashfield and 25 enrolled from Plainfield. We had 7 students who were classified as “school choice” students due to the fact that they were accepted from towns other than Ashfield or Plainfield. All classes are grouped heterogeneously.

The faculty for the 2012 – 2013 school year consists of seven full-time classroom teachers, one special education teacher, one full-time reading teacher, and one full-time math interventionist. The math interventionist position was expanded to full-time for this school year. Specialists providing services in our school include a psychologist three days per week, a full-time speech/language pathologist, a full time nurse, and occupational and physical therapists, each for one half day per week. We have part time Art, Music, and Physical Education teachers who provide students with one hour of class time weekly in each subject area. We also have a part-time library manager and six other paraprofessionals. In June we said good-bye to Judy Dabkowski, who retired. Cheryl Edgerly, a veteran teacher from Amherst, has replaced her. Kare Marshall moved into the math interventionist position and Ashfield resident Krissy Schreiber has been hired to teach sixth grade.

The Spring of 2012 saw Sanderson Academy students again performing well on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Achievement System (MCAS) tests. In the three areas assessed, English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science and Technology, our students performed at levels, which were similar to or better than the performances of other students in our District or State, but when compared to our own previous scores, our students showed some decline in the areas of Mathematics and Science. The staff has carefully reviewed these results and has made adjustments in our instructional programs.

2012 again saw a great deal of time devoted to addressing numerous new state mandates. Our school and District have begun using Professional Learning Communities as collaborative study forums to help us implement the new Curriculum Frameworks (Standards) in both English Language Arts and

Mathematics while expanding our use of research-based instructional practices. We are also preparing for next year's implementation of a new and comprehensive, statewide educator evaluation system.

Thank you citizens of Ashfield and Plainfield for all you do to support your community school!

Respectfully submitted,
Budge A. Litchfield M.Ed.
Principal

The District Standards and Indicators adopted by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) have shaped the School Districts' Improvement Plans (DIP) and directly impact the quality of our student services.

The Districts have demonstrated proficient performance on many of the state indicators including Time on Learning, Leadership and Governance, Educational Access and Continuity, and School Safety. The Superintendent's Office has identified indicators requiring focused attention: (1) Aligned, Consistently Delivered, and Continuously Improving Curriculum and (2) Strong Instructional Leadership and Effective Instruction.

To revise and align its curriculum to the new state curriculum frameworks, the Districts have invested in a significant increase in professional development time. Full and half-day sessions for staff training are spread across the calendar so that staff can focus on the use of a web-based curriculum writing tool that will allow for a standard format and accessibility across all grade levels. By applying the Standards of Effective Instruction and principles of Universal Design, considering the needs of a diverse student body, the Districts will be poised to deliver a rich educational program to all learners.

Students identified with disabilities continue to receive the services defined by their Individual Educational Programs but interventions are not limited to that population of students. The elementary schools and the middle school are improving student learning and increasing inclusion of disabled students by providing tiered instructional delivery to all students as they need them. This starts with a rich core instruction with multiple means of learning and expressing understanding. Subsequent instructional interventions are informed by the regular collection of progress monitoring data. The high school is examining how instruction can change to support a diverse student body in all classes and provide additional time and support for students who have academic or behavioral challenges. District leaders have participated in regional DESE trainings in the use of the MA Tiered System of Supports which includes academic interventions and social and behavioral interventions that provide a continuum of service options based on student performance. These institutional improvements and the protections provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act will continue to complement and support our students in their educational experiences.

Patricia Bell
Director of Pupil Personnel Services

Mary Lyon Foundation 2012 Annual Report

Our Spring Lyonnaise celebrated excellence in local education with displays of student work from all schools and dramatic presentations by students

from Heath and Mohawk. Awards included the Spirit of Adventure Award presented to NASA astronaut Cady Coleman by the foundation's honorary advisory board member Senator Stan Rosenberg; the Mohawk Outstanding Alumni Award was presented to Northampton Mayor David Narkewicz '84 by Mohawk Principal Lynn Dole who also presented a certificate of commendation to senior Francesca Maroney. Drama director Jonathan Diamond presented the George Needham Business Award to Mo's Fudge Factor, and the Pat Kerrins Award was given to Jean Bernhardt, Administrative Director of the MGH Charlestown Healthcare Center by Sarah Kemble, MD. School committee chairperson Bob Aeschback presented a certificate of appreciation to teacher Shelley Schieffelin.

This past year we initiated a fundraising campaign and extensive work bee for the Rowe Elementary School which was struck by lightning on August 4. Truckloads of new and used school supplies, books and equipment were donated, and countless volunteers assisted in the relocation of the Rowe School to the nearby Hawlemont Regional School. Cash and stock donations of \$5,000 were raised for the purchase of items lost in the fire.

Grants were gratefully received from the US Brookfield Foundation for the Harper Gerry Student Assistance Fund, from the Myrtle Atkinson Foundation and Recorder to support our programs in the schools and community and from MassHumanities and the Rowe, Leyden and Charlemont/Hawley cultural councils for the highly successful Hilltowns History Conference and Fair held October 13 at the Colrain Central School. The history conference featured humanities scholars Dr. Michael Coe and Prof. Leonard Richards, vendors, live music, children's activities, re-enactors and 17 concurrent workshops. All school district staff were given free admission and professional development credit.

The annual Community Spelling Bee held November 8 raised \$7,000 for our mini-grant program; competing for the grand championship were 25 teams of three adults. The grand champion winning team was the FRCOG COGITators comprised of Phoebe Walker, Rachel Stoler and Kimberly Naoke MacPhee sponsored by Blackmer Insurance Agency.

In other matters we established a Vanguard brokerage account to accept gifts of stock and launched an e-newsletter along with a revitalized web site www.marylyon.org. The annual special education conference was held in March at Deerfield Academy for 700 western Massachusetts educators, and the Gift Catalog or wish list of school supplies garnered \$4,000 in cash and in-kind donations with major support from Goodnow's Chip 'N Putt and Keystone Market.

Board members are George Dole, Marion Taylor, Hugh Knox, Karen Fairbrother, Sharon Hudson, Suzanne Conway Lagreze, Beth Bandy, Stefan Kostka, Jim Pilgrim, Amy Love, student representatives Molly Walsh Warder and

Lydia Morris. Along with about 60 volunteers our part-time staff includes Sheila Damkoehler, Gina Sieber, Lynn Nichols, Josie Tetreault and Jill Connolly.

Susan Samoriski, Ed.D.
Executive Director

Carl H. Nilman Scholarship Fund

The fund was established under the provisions of the will of Carl H. Nilman for the purpose of providing scholarships. Recipients shall reside in the school district and be graduates of the Mohawk Trail Regional High School who desire and are deemed worthy of post high school education or training and who are in need of financial assistance.

This year the Awards subcommittee read 81 applications, 34 were from seniors and 47 from previous graduates of Mohawk. \$29,750.00 is to be awarded using

30% for seniors and 70% for graduates. The Committee feels that seniors have multiple scholarship opportunities from other sources while graduates have far fewer resources. 24 scholarships totaling \$9,150.00 were awarded to seniors (70% of applicants). 42 scholarships totaling \$20,600.00 were given to graduates (98% of applicants.) The awards committee is Sheila Graves (Ashfield), Marge Porrovecchio (Charlemont), Eric Sumner (Heath), Michelle Hillman (Colrain) and Marion Scott (Buckland).

From 1991 – 2012 a total of \$779,225.00 has been awarded in scholarships. Mohawk seniors have received \$240,475.00 and \$538,750.00 has been awarded to Mohawk graduates.

A new formula for determining what percentage of the funds should be distributed as scholarships has been established by the School Committee and the management firm of Bartholomew and Company.

Co-chairs of the Committee are Marge Porrovecchio and Robin Hartnett. The Finance Committee is composed of David Engle, Marion Taylor and Jim Pilgrim. Other members of the Committee are Paula Consolo, member at large from Buckland, Jonathan Diamond from Heath and Rebecca Bradley.

We wish to thank David Purington who has served as liaison between the School Committee and the Carl H. Nilman Scholarship Committee.

The Mohawk community owes a debt of gratitude to Mr. Nilman for his foresight in supporting higher education for the students of the Mohawk Trail Regional High School. The committee members are honored to bring the wishes of his will to fruition.

Students of any age who are graduates of Mohawk (and were living in the nine town area at the time of graduation) are encouraged to apply for scholarships to help meet their continuing education needs. Call the Guidance Office at Mohawk for information regarding requirements and deadlines.

Respectfully submitted,
Marion E. Scott, Secretary

Annual Report of the Fred Wells Trustees

Funds available for the fiscal year 2012/2013 are \$208,761 (which includes unused scholarship money from 2010/2011 that was reallocated to the scholarship fund)

EDUCATION: The Trustees received 246 applications and approved 237 students to receive \$180,748. This amount includes the two \$1,000 scholarships in honor of Ralph and Hilda Haskins. The Trustees spent many hours on

the selection process to ensure that as many students as possible could receive scholarship aid.

HEALTH: Four (4) programs were approved totaling \$17,600.00:

Community Action-WIC Program

\$5,000.00

Community Health Care Center

\$4,700.00

Franklin County Home Care Corp.

\$5,500.00

Hospice of Franklin County

\$2,400.00

AGRICULTURE: An amount of \$10,413 was allowed by the Trustees for payment:

Franklin County Agricultural Society

\$6,414.00

Heath Agricultural Fair

\$2,791.00

Shelburne Grange Fair

\$1,208.00

Respectfully Submitted,
Molly Robinson

Ashfield Park Commission 2012 Annual Report

The year 2012 started at the Belding Memorial Park with dog waste issues. Signs are now posted in two places for people walking their dogs in the park to pick up after them. It continues to be an issue, however.

A very successful work bee was held on April 28, with record attendance. Besides our regular adult volunteers we appreciated the Ashfield Cub Scout Pack with their leader Tom Moore and other parent leaders, and Lauren Preston-Wells brought adults and students from Sanderson's Mediation Team. A lot of trash was gathered, leaves were raked, brush cut, and a picnic lunch was enjoyed. We

celebrated Pat Thayer's nine years of service on the Commission. Thank you, Patty.

The budget continues to be a challenge – no weed-whacking, no new sand, although money was asked for and granted for it. Life guard hours took priority as it was a hot, dry summer. We continued with the same wonderful life guards; Geordin Soucie, Andre Chaput, Judy Delaney, with a new addition of Molly Donahue as a substitute. Marybeth Mizula aided Angie Baranowski in another successful year of swim lessons in July. There were 35 students enrolled.

Emmett Van Driesche made repairs to the dock as some of the boards needed replacing. Many thanks go to Justin Lively for the use of his equipment to rip and plane the locust boards. Emmet and Doug Cranson repaired the chain link fence at the tennis courts.

The big event for our Commission was the demolition of the old highway barn by Todd Pease. The Highway Department finished grading and seeded the field below the old barn. The renovation of the upper park is almost complete with only some tree planting to be done in the spring!

As always we wish to thank Doug Cranson for winterizing and opening the plumbing at the bath house and for brush hogging the wilder open spaces at the park. Also our gratitude goes to Tom Poissant and the Highway Crew for their work on creating a new usable green space at the upper park on Main Street.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nina Anderson Coler
Maryellen Abbatiello
Emmet Van Driesche

Personnel Board

This year the Personnel Board reached its full complement of five members. Joining our ranks were Beverly Chow and Priscilla Phelps. The central and ongoing focus of the Board is updating and revising the Ashfield Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual. We have found this to be a much needed but time consuming project. We hope to have this enormous undertaking completed by spring 2013.

In addition to updating the Policy and Procedures Manual, we updated the online Employment Application form. The Board also created a new employee timesheet to better assess the number of hours needed to perform the

responsibilities of any particular town position. Another project was developing a new form and procedure for administering annual employee performance reviews. The goal was two-fold: 1.) to make certain each employee knows what his/her job is; and 2.) to see if the actual job description is accurate.

Finally, after updating the Executive Administrator's job description, the Board conducted a search for someone to fill the position permanently. It had been an interim position for more than a year. After holding preliminary interviews, we submitted the names of two candidates to the Select Board for final interviews.

Our future goals include completing and distributing the updated Employee Policy and Procedures Manual to each town employee. It is the Board's intent to make the manual available to the public online at the town website.

Respectfully,

Dave DeHerdt, Chair

Paullette Leukhardt (Select Board liaison)

Ricki Carroll (Finance Committee liaison)

Priscilla Phelps

Beverly Chow

Ashfield Planning Board Annual Report 2012

The planning board provided a sounding board for citizens with concerns and questions about land use in our town. In most cases we were able to provide answers or direction for them.

Ashfield had a moderate amount of property boundary changes. As usual no subdivisions were proposed. No special permits were requested in 2012.

Our long term planning efforts focused on wind turbine development. The result of our study was that by the end of the year we had decided to recommend waiting for more information before making any bylaw proposals to the voters. We plan to follow this issue as it evolves.

In the meantime we are helping to finalize Ashfield's Open Space and Recreation Plan.

We are also discussing senior housing, internet access, and town center planning.

The Planning Board meets the first and third Wednesdays of each month. The public is welcome.

Respectfully Submitted
Michael Fitzgerald, Chair
Alan Rice, Clerk
Ken Miller
Sarah Holbrook
Lauren Preston Wells

Police Department

The police department continues to operate in as efficient a manner as our current budget allows. We still rely on the Massachusetts State Police to cover town for a significant number of hours weekly, in excess of half the time on a weekly basis. I do not believe that this is optimal for our town. As reported last year, the staffing at the state police barracks in Shelburne Falls is stretched thin and response times may suffer through no fault of theirs. I believe in fairness to that organization, Ashfield needs to increase our own coverage.

Personnel

The police department is fully staffed as authorized by the select board. We continue to also have three auxiliary officers on staff. Diane Wilder was promoted to the rank of Corporal; however my preference would be to restore the

prior rank of sergeant. The department has moved forward from events of the past and I believe that the town should as well. In light of our heavy reliance on the state police, I believe a second, nearly full-time, officer with the rank of sergeant is necessary, however my desire to promote Corporal Wilder to this position is not contingent on the second full time position being approved. This position would be primarily an evening position to cover town during those hours and part of the weekend. This will allow increased coverage and greater local accountability. This will be a 35 hour/week position, which will not require attendance of this officer to the full-time academy. This will also give us additional coverage during the evening hours, and allow us to have an officer at Sanderson for approximately 5-6 hours per week. The school principal has agreed to give us office space at the school to be shared by both the police, as well as the fire department should they desire it. This will increase security and safety at that facility.

Vehicles

The department took delivery of the 2013 Ford Interceptor in August and it is a tremendous upgrade from the Taurus and the Explorer. The officers truly enjoy driving a modern, safe police vehicle. The vehicle has received compliments on the design with regard to the graphics and if you've seen it I'm sure you would agree. This vehicle is all wheel drive, which allows us to hopefully use it in all but the heaviest snow.

As an aside, I would implement a standard replacement schedule for cruisers, buying a new one every 2-2 ½ years and keeping them for 4 to 5 years respectively. This would allow for the department to keep a fleet of low mileage, reliable vehicles. The Ford Explorer is six model years old currently and following the above schedule would require replacement in 2014 to keep on the every 2 to 2-1/2 year replacement cycle. Fortunately the Explorer is not being used as a primary vehicle, so mileage and wear and tear should be kept to a minimum until that time. Still, vehicles at this stage in their life require additional maintenance, especially given the climate in this part of the Commonwealth. We recently had to spend nearly \$500 in repairs to this vehicle for a wheel bearing issue. Costs such as this will continue to accrue as the vehicle increases in age. All maintenance has been performed on the vehicles as appropriate; they have had their state inspections and are legally registered.

Computers

As reported last year, we continue to experience issues with our computers. To quote our I.T. person, the system is being held together basically

“with rubber bands and glue.” There is a distinct possibility (according to the expert) that this system could experience a crash, which would compromise our records system.. This is obviously not acceptable. One of the computers recently “crashed” and had to be replaced, which resulted in a substantial hit on a very limited budget. Likewise, the computer used for firearms applications recently was rendered useless by a virus. Fortunately we were able to appropriate a computer from upstairs to replace it, however there was extensive cost involved with having the old computer diagnosed. I have put a new server in the budget last year and I am putting in the same request this year. In addition, the chief’s computer is old and requires replacement. I would also recommend that the town implement a regular program of computer replacement in order to maintain compliance with current technology.

Other Equipment

We were able to purchase new portable radios this year due to leftover funds in last year’s budget. In addition, with the move of our offices downstairs we were able to acquire a mobile radio to assist with communications issues within the new office space. We also purchased two new Glock 22 .40 cal pistols to replace older weapons that were not serviceable. I would like to purchase one additional portable radio in order that all officers have a personal radio. For accountability purposes I would also like to acquire an in-car video system to record all officer interactions with the public. This is for the purposes of reducing liability and increasing officer accountability. This request is not driven by any overall concerns or problems but rather from the standpoint of being proactive.

Training

A major source of liability in police departments falls under training, or more specifically the lack thereof. While I have consistently tried to find training at little or no cost to the department, resources are somewhat limited. The Commonwealth refuses to implement measures to assist in the area of police training, which is unfortunate. I would like to see a greater commitment from the Select Board to the issue of training as far as providing appropriate funding to accomplish this. Currently, only two or three classes can strip our entire training budget. This year, I had to utilize funds from our ammunition line to fund a training class for me to attend put on by the FBI and the Department of Justice. Fortunately we had a reserve of ammunition left over from last year so this will not be an issue. The state recently mandated 40 hours of training on an annual basis for officers, including firearms qualification, first responder, defensive tactics and legal update. This is a major source of liability for the department and

the town. In light of the incident in Newtown, CT, I am seeking active shooter training for our officers. This is an important area of training.

Miscellaneous

We are pleased with the move to our new office. The space is professional, clean and an outstanding space in which to conduct business. Having dedicated areas for the chief, officers, and the firearms clerk is a tremendous improvement and helps to create a more efficient workspace for all. In addition, we are now able to segregate our records and evidence functions in a separate room which will help when or if we decide to seek certification through the MPAC. We have received innumerable compliments over the new office and I would like to thank the Select Board for allowing us to make this move. With that being said, this is still a less than ideal space for continued operations. I am hopeful that a more suitable location can be found.

2012 was a year of continuing transition for the Ashfield Police Department and I believe that we have put steps in place that will serve the department and the town well as we move forward. We have conducted numerous community outreach programs such as National Night Out and this will continue. I believe that we have turned the corner and worked toward restoring community confidence in our department, but there is still much to be done. I would like to thank the Select Board for their confidence in me and my staff, as well as the residents of Ashfield for your support.

Patrick Droney
Chief of Police

Sewer Commission

The treatment plant reports another year of untroubled operation. We continue to meet the permit and mechanical systems functioned without major mishap.

Our permit was slated to expire next year, and plans were underway to complete an engineering study required for renewal. However, we learned in October that recent legislation has extended our permit for an additional four years, meaning that we won't be up for renewal until 2017. The engineering funds appropriated last year will be returned to the enterprise fund until they are needed at the new renewal date.

Heating costs for the marsh greenhouse continue to be an area of serious concern. We are working with the Green Communities Committee to reduce the heated area to 25% of the floor area in the marsh. At present, the engineering design is almost complete, and the project should be going out for bid prior to the

annual town meeting. The work will be primarily grant funded and we expect the savings to be substantial. We have every hope that these improvements will be in place before the next heating season.

We would also like to report that the treatment plant weathered the Fall Festival better than ever. We thank the Festival Committee for their cooperation in directing the public to porta potties and the public for their help and understanding.

We have worked to increase our surge capacity in light of the problems experienced after hurricane Lee. We have received DEP approval for this plan and have restored some of the unused solar tanks to operating condition. Fortunately, the treatment plant did not experience any high flow events in 2012 so the plan has not been tested.

We hired a new assistant operator in April. We are happy to welcome Michele Novak from Conway. Michele shared the assistant position with her daughter, Rebekah, for the remainder of 2012. She has recently taken over the position entirely and is providing staffing on weekends and holidays as well as a few regular hours each week. Rebekah will continue to be available to help out in emergencies. We would like to thank both Rebekah and Michele for their reliability and dedication in keeping the plant running this spring under trying circumstances.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Hoff, Todd Olanyk, Robert Abbatiello

The Senior Center located at 7 Main Street, Shelburne Falls

2012 was a transition year for the Senior Center. The first half included six months of Colrain's participation in the Consortium followed by six months of settling in as a Consortium primarily serving three towns. During the year, service units for each of the four towns increased dramatically. Services which include transportation, a meals program, outreach, social, recreational and health services were administered by our professional staff and conducted with the help of more than 100 volunteers. The report to the Executive Office of Elder Affairs for fiscal year 2011 showed that a total of 552 people age 60 and older from the four towns were served a total of 13,831 times. The breakdown by town was as follows:

Ashfield: 82 seniors, 1,838 times

Buckland: 181 seniors, 3,594 times
Colrain: 84 seniors, 1,932 times
Shelburne: 205 seniors, 6,467 times

We were pleased that new Council on Aging members stepped forward and were appointed from each of the towns, giving representation and advocacy to residents. Each Council on Aging has started new initiatives to get to know the elders in their communities and share information about what is available for them. Together the board members have worked cooperatively to establish new guidelines and plans for the future of the Senior Center. A new three town Consortium Agreement was also developed by the Selectboards. It includes updated procedures and protocols to clarify various situations that arise. All of this groundwork has provided a strong structure and support network for the Senior Center.

2012 also saw a change in staffing. After almost four and one half years of service to the Consortium, Jamie Godfrey resigned from the Director's position. Program Director Cathy Buntin took on his duties for the interim period of March through August when she was appointed as Director. Leanne Dowd was then hired as a part time Activities Coordinator in late November.

We also said goodbye to Therese Fitzsimmons, our Neighbor to Neighbor Coordinator when the program's Community Block Grant ended. Thanks to many volunteers and supporters, the Center has remained active and continues to grow to meet and engage the increasing number of wonderful elders in our communities. We are here, working together to support each other.

If you are interested in joining us for an activity, larger community effort or gather information for a loved one, please contact myself or our staff at any time. You and our West County neighbors and friends are always welcome.

Respectfully submitted,
Cathleen Buntin, Director

Town Clerk Report

When compiling the statistics for 2012, I decided to check the 1912 Town Report for comparisons.

Vital Statistics -1912

Births 16

Marriage 10

Deaths 10

John M. Sears – Town Clerk

Vital Statistics- 2012

Births 18

Marriage 6

Deaths 13

Elections 2012:

Local Election, May 5, 2012

1,266 Reg. Voters

337 Ballots Cast

26.6% turnout

State Primary, Sept. 6, 2012

1,196 Reg. Voters

326 Ballots Cast

27.25% turnout

Democrat: 289 Republican: 37

State (Presidential) Election

1,361 Registered Voters

1130 Ballots Cast

83% turnout

Ashfield Residents: 1,640 (as of Dec. 31, 2012)

Registered Voters: 1,350

437 Democrat

92 Republican

808 Unenrolled

13 Political Designations

A total of 391 dog tags/licenses were issued in 2012

Records Preservation:

Town records # 5 - The Deed of Pews and Division of Fences 1827-1849 volume was preserved by Kofile Preservation. The cost per book is \$1712. approximately, made possible by donations to the preservation fund

I am very grateful to all our election workers who attend election training and continue to do a terrific job running smooth elections.

As Election Warden, Nancy Gray Garvin takes care of all complex issues and concerns surrounding the voting process on Election Day. Her professionalism and attention to detail contributed to an uneventful but very busy Presidential Election.

Thank you to all our ballot counters who hand count/tally the ballots, and stayed to the end (11:30 p.m.) , and to Trish Libby, Ashfield Postmaster who not only rushed local absentee ballots to meet deadlines, also called me when absentee ballots arrived later in the afternoon.

Phil and Doreen (Nolan's Neighbor's) and Peg Allen (Countrypie Pizza) generously donated the lunch and snacks on the day of election.

Small town stuff that makes a difference! I am truly grateful.

Thank you,
Ann Dunne
Town Clerk

Town Accountant Report Fiscal Year 2012

FY2012 General Fund Revenues Budget to Actual Summary:

	Budget	Actual	Variance
Revenues:			
Taxes	3,375,243	3,384,849	9,606
Licenses and Permits	22,000	23,821	1,821
Intergovernmental	249,642	258,106	8,464
Charges for Services	67,000	74,538	7,538
Fees and Fines	1,500	1,385	-115
Unclassified	30,000	80,956	50,956
Transfer from other funds	8,069	5,755	-2,314
Investment Earnings	1,000	1,644	644
Total Revenues	3,754,454	3,831,054	76,600

FY2012 General Fund Expenditures Budget to Actual Summary:

	Budget	Actual	Variance
Expenditures:			
General Government	307,273	245,558	-61,715
Public Safety	232,540	191,295	-41,245
Public Works	548,126	481,453	-66,673
Community Services	143,328	118,776	-24,552
Education	2,295,450	2,292,977	-2,473
Insurance & Fringe Benefits	186,459	132,330	-54,129
Unclassified	103,322	98,639	-4,683
Debt Service	163,066	154,014	-9,052
Total Expenditures	3,979,564	3,715,042	-264,522

Ashfield Special Revenue Funds FY 2012

	Beg Balance	YTD Revenues	YTD Expenses	Balance
<u>Highway Funds</u>				
MA Highway-C90 FY08	0.00	0.00	-212,241.09	-212,241.09
<u>Revolving Funds</u>				
Wetlands Protection Fund	4,334.11	560.00	-255.00	4,639.11
Dog Revolving Fund	6,548.06	2,668.00	-149.54	9,066.52
Youth Comm Revolving Fund	366.00	0.00	0.00	366.00
		0.00		
Library Fees Revolving Fund	3,561.45	2,425.70	-2,000.00	3,987.15
Swimming Program Rev Fund	434.46	2,100.00	-1,291.01	1,243.45
<u>Other Special Revenue Funds</u>				
Tree Committee Donations	0.00	8,713.41	-6,677.50	2,035.91
Flu Clinic Donations	0.00	1,386.00	0.00	1,386.00
Sanderson Barn-Ins Donation	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Con Comm Clerk Donations	77.87	0.00	0.00	77.87
Human Relations	12.87	0.00	0.00	12.87
Record Preservation	7,325.01	0.00	-244.41	7,080.60
Police Donations Fund	372.37	0.00	-97.79	274.58
O'Donnell Donations	101.34	0.00	0.00	101.34
Steeple Donations	2,336.82	0.00	0.00	2,336.82
Town Hall Restoration Fund	6,478.93	7,481.32	-1,207.82	12,752.43
Ambulance Donations	995.24	0.00	0.00	995.24
Grant Program Income	10,312.25	15,591.55	-4,011.00	21,892.80
Cultural Council Donations	431.22	0.00	0.00	431.22
Septic Repair Program	74,715.48	108.84	0.00	74,824.32
Belding Endowment-Library	2,028.10	363.56	0.00	2,391.66
Library Investment Earnings	2,367.02	9,743.13	-7,836.71	4,273.44
J Donald Art Fund	483.97	0.00	0.00	483.97
Belding Endowment-Park	1,134.88	0.00	-362.01	772.87
K-9 Support Fund	58.87	0.00	0.00	58.87
Library Donations, Fundraising	20,251.23	6,424.60	-7,183.24	19,492.59
Town History Fund	11,505.67	5,180.40	-5,617.90	11,068.17
T H Floor Preservation Fund	4,401.54	0.00	0.00	4,401.54
MIIA Loss Control Grant	-464.04	0.00	0.00	-464.04
Historic Commission Donations	457.73	-190.00	32.97	300.70
WMRLS Grant	689.52	0.00	0.00	689.52
Agricultural Comm Donations	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Town Hall Employee Fund	81.61	0.00	-62.25	19.36
<u>State & Federal Grants</u>				
Comm Policing Grant	56.35	0.00	0.00	56.35
Bulletproof Vest Grant	-3.34	699.00	0.00	695.66

Gov Highway Safety Grant	-1,346.00	1,854.96	-832.00	-323.04
Homeland Security Grant	321.65	0.00	0.00	321.65
FEMA Storm Emergency Funds	42,394.66	182,021.05	-697,672.15	-473,256.44
Council on Aging Grant	3,500.00	3,775.00	-3,500.00	3,775.00
Library State Aid	22.66	1,116.66	-2,239.30	-1,099.98
Cultural Council	4,467.99	3,870.00	-5,555.67	2,782.32
Fire Gear Federal Grant	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Failed Septic System Grant	10,064.08	0.00	0.00	10,064.08
Fire Dept SAFE Grant	105.48	450.00	-3,866.11	-3,310.63
Volunteer Firefighters Grant	389.26	0.00	0.00	389.26
Fire Dept Safety Equip Grant	441.59	0.00	0.00	441.59
EDS Grant	-319.96	0.00	0.00	-319.96
Agricultural Innovation Gr	592.15	0.00	0.00	592.15
MAPHO Minigrant	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Forest Fire Grant	0.00	1,991.84	0.00	1,991.84
W Mass Homeland Security Grant	-480.00	0.00	0.00	-480.00
	60,206.57	195,778.51	-713,665.23	-457,680.15
<u>Enterprise Fund</u>				
WWTP Fund	147,131.20	117,403.30	-133,089.49	131,445.01
<u>Capital Projects</u>				
Capital Project-Highway Garage	1,640.43	0.00	0.00	1,640.43
Capital Project - Highway Truck	5,834.65	0.00	0.00	5,834.65
<u>Trust Funds</u>				
Mary Priscilla Howes Fund	12,948.02	76.36	0.00	13,024.38
William Hathaway Fund	41,505.96	192.84	-50.00	41,648.80
Susan Howes Fund	8,013.97	33.54	0.00	8,047.51
Major King Fund	18,741.35	83.85	0.00	18,825.20
Eliza Miller Fund	35,802.87	167.68	0.00	35,970.55
Whiting Street Fund	10,451.34	50.31	0.00	10,501.65
Henry Taylor Fund	19,813.61	108.98	0.00	19,922.59
Salmon Miller Fund	37,791.05	201.23	0.00	37,992.28
Fred Cross General Fund	58,019.67	282.62	-1,500.00	56,802.29
Other Cemetery Fund	1,250.00	0.00	0.00	1,250.00
Mabelle Jordan Fund	42.26	0.21	0.00	42.47
Fred Cross Library Fund	5,000.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00
Fred Cross Cemetery Fund	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	2,000.00
Belding Endowment-Park/Library	20,522.38	0.00	0.00	20,522.38
Mary Morrill Elwell Fund	5,006.31	24.38	0.00	5,030.69
Stabilization Fund	117,069.97	20,643.48	0.00	137,713.45
Capital Stabilization	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<u>Agency Funds</u>				
Custodian Fees	11.04	0.00	0.00	11.04

Retirees Health Ins	3,519.65	7,847.60	-11,110.32	256.93
Off Duty Police Detail	-461.50	26,512.00	-26,512.00	-461.50
Firearm ID Cards	1,950.00	2,450.00	-1,700.00	2,700.00
Fire Dept Fees	0.00	1,215.00	-1,290.00	-75.00
Collector's Demands	1,504.00	3,960.00	-4,135.40	1,328.60
Collector's MLCs	0.00	1,680.00	-1,525.00	155.00
Deputy Collector's Fees	110.00	3,445.00	-4,163.41	-608.41
Water District Fees	-120.60	50,891.06	-50,884.31	-113.85

Town Hall Building Committee

Early this year the committee received a request to limit the use of fragranced products in Town Hall. A sub-committee produced a comprehensive document stating that a significant percentage of the U.S. population has some chemical sensitivity. Those with heightened sensitivities may become very sick when in contact with an assortment of fragranced products. The building committee, after consulting Town Counsel and with much discussion, chose a shorter format to state guidelines for use of fragranced products in the Town Hall. The committee will send a final recommendation to the Select Board early in 2013.

We have had storm/screen units installed on the historic office windows to protect the fragile glass and to save energy. We began a fundraiser in late 2011, by selling tote bags with a Town Hall logo designed by Beverly Duncan. Our goal is to purchase and install additional storm windows. We grossed \$560 by the end of 2012.

The Green Communities Action Committee, working extensively with an energy consultant, has received an audit of the energy use/loss in Town Hall. The Town Hall Committee is working with them on recommendations and plans for insulation, air seals, and HVAC improvements.

The Town Hall south yard (an unencumbered part of the Town Common purchase) had some very large trees leaning close to the building. A few were dead and one substantial broken limb was in contact with the upper story. We had the area within 60 feet south of the fire station and Town Hall mostly cleared, stumped, and seeded to allow for efficient upkeep and to reduce the moisture which was adversely affecting the building. Most of the work was accomplished with volunteer labor and equipment.

We have done a major revision of the Town Hall Use Policy. While it is necessarily lengthy, our intent is to promote respect for this historic building and provide for the extra expense and maintenance incurred by its use for public events.

Volunteers painted and redecorated the former police offices to provide a meeting room and office space. The lifts no longer require keys. Volunteers refurbished the bell timer.

Our Town Hall building was commissioned in 1812 as a Congregational Church, finished in 1814, moved to its present location in 1857, and purchased by the town in 1870. It has undergone many changes: removal of the raised pulpit and raised box pews, filling in the horseshoe balcony to make a second floor, and changing the front stairs, exterior doors and front steps. The vault building (with slate roof), a south extension, stage and offices were added, and the double

outhouse became a boiler room. The lifts, updated restrooms, and new entrance have increased comfort for employees and the general public. Plans for 2013 include improving the crawl space, the interior air quality, and the boiler, installing a new lighted exterior posting board, and painting the exterior. Much of this work will be done without significant cost to the town.

The Building Committee looks forward to a celebration of the Town Hall 200th Anniversary in 2014. We ask that anyone with ideas, time, and willingness to help with this celebration, please contact us.

Respectfully submitted,
The Town Hall Building Committee
Stuart Harris, Chair

Members:

Doug Cranson, Nancy Garvin, Grace Lesure, Mary Quigley, Donna Scott

Town Tax Collector

	Real Estate Balances As of June 30, 2012	Personal Property Balances As of June 30, 2012	Motor Vehicle balances As of June 30, 2012
2012	\$85,442.00	\$2,224.00	\$17,837.00
2011	\$43,597.00	\$1,024.00	\$2,975.00
2010	\$23,338.00	\$750.00	\$2,328.00
2009	\$8,114.00	\$282.00	\$0.00
Prior years	\$20,620.00	\$582.00	\$5,314.00
Totals	\$181,111.00	\$4,862.00	\$28,454.00
Grand Total	\$214,427.00		

All payments are due on the quarterly system. With due dates as follows: 1st quarter - August; 2nd quarter - November 1; 3rd quarter - February 1 and 4th quarter - May 1. To keep postage to a minimum only two mailings are done with two quarters in each mailing.

Respectfully submitted,
 Laura Blakesley
 Town Collector

Town Treasurer

Reconciliation of Treasurer's Cash

Balance of Cash as of June 30, 2011	\$1,387,808.61
Cash Received:	\$4,373,873.18
Cash Disbursements:	\$4,909,356.68
Balance of Cash as of June 30, 2012	\$852,325.11

Balance consists of:

Peoples United Bank

General Fund Checking	\$70,568.06
General Fund-CD	\$1,875.48
Payroll Account	\$39,898.15
Fred Cross-Library Trust Fund	\$5,000.00
Fred Cross-Cemetery Trust Fund	\$2,000.00
Consolidated Trust Fund	\$172,958.57
Septic Repair Program Account	\$74,972.64
Stabilization Fund	\$137,713.45
Capitol Stabilization	\$0.00
Cemetery Trust Funds	\$1,250.00
Mabelle Jordon Trust Fund	\$42.47
Mary Morrill Elwell Sands Memorial	\$5,030.69

Peoples United Bank

Fred Cross Trust Fund	\$58,302.29
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M.M.D.T

General Fund	\$234,294.66
Mary Priscilla Howes Trust Fund	\$13,190.56

Bank of America

General Fund	\$29,858.32
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Unibank

General Fund	\$5,295.07
General Fund-online Banking	\$73.70
General Fund-online Banking	\$1.00

Total	\$852,325.11
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Report of the Trustees of the Belding Memorial Library

Conventional wisdom says: “If it isn’t broke, don’t fix it.” Conventional wisdom also says: “Just when things are running smoothly, something breaks.”

After many years of struggling with a non-operational lift, a successful capital campaign raised \$5000. to finally have the library accessible to everyone. The trustees celebrated with a tea party at which Ruth Craft and Ted Murray, who were so important in this process of achieving our goal, rode in the lift’s maiden voyage. Just as yet another milestone in our Long Range Plan was accomplished, the septic pump broke. The trustees are grateful to Raymond Gray for his prompt response in coming to our rescue.

In looking to the future, the trustees are turning their attention to ways to make the library more a part of the fabric of the community. In 2014, the Belding Memorial Library will celebrate its 100th anniversary. Although Milo Belding might scarcely recognize his gift to the town, the trustees feel he would be justly proud that his generosity is so valued.

As always, there are a number of people to thank for a successful year. The quiet generosity of the Friends continues to be a steadfast support which enables us to acquire things not in our budget. Grace Lesure of the Historical Society is filling the display case with interesting items from their collection on a regular basis. Although Paul and Janet Swem are sadly missed in town, Paul continues his computer wizardry for us at no charge. Our neighbors the Carters, and Ashfield Hardware, continue to exemplify what community is all about.

Our director, Anne Judson, Sherry Scott, and Irene Branson, who is now a part of our regular staff, continue to strive to make the library a place for all to use and be welcomed.

And lastly, my fellow trustees Caroline Murray, Renee Rastofer, Nancy Intres and Virginia Wiswell continue to wear many hats. Whether spreading piles of donated mulch from Roberts Bros., completing and filing State forms, updating library policies, or pruning trees, their energy and good humor are unfailing. I am lucky to work with them.

Respectfully submitted,
Marcine Appel Eisenberg
Chair, Trustees of the Belding Memorial Library

The town Website Committee is responsible for supervising and maintaining Ashfield's town website with current information about the town's departments, committees, and community organizations. Committee members respond to requests from town officials to post or change information on the site. Committee members are also on call to provide training to any town official who requests it

In this past year, the majority of town committee members have begun to regularly use the website to post meetings and minutes. Some also update and maintain their own pages. Going forward, the committee would like to challenge the town to further improve the website to make it a contender for the Massachusetts' Municipal Association top small-town website in the state award next fall. The committee meets on an as needed basis. The current committee members are Juliet Jacobson, chair, David Kulp and Charlie Heath, service provider from TownWebsites. In early 2013, the Website Committee is merging with the Telecommunications Committee to create one group that will be called the Technology Committee.

Zoning Board of Appeals

After a few years of no cases, the Board heard one in 2012.

The appeal was to allow an accessory structure (carport/storage space) within the front setback. Ashfield Zoning Bylaws require a 25 foot front setback for structures. Due to the small narrow property, another building, a significant slope, a very mature cherry tree and a water way, there proved to be no other sensible location. The structure would be at least 30 feet from the traveled way and on an inside corner thereby minimizing risk to the landowner and the public.

The Board approved a Variance which was not appealed.

Section 10 of Mass General Laws Ch 40A deals with Variances to Town's Zoning Bylaws.

The critical wording in Section 10 that must be satisfied is: *“The permit granting authority shall have the power after public hearing for which notice has been given by publication and posting as provided in section eleven and by mailing to all parties in interest to grant upon appeal or upon petition with respect to particular land or structures a variance from the terms of the applicable zoning ordinance or by-law where such permit granting authority specifically finds that owing to circumstances relating to the soil conditions, shape, or topography of such land or structures and especially affecting such land or structures but not affecting generally the zoning district in which it is located, a literal enforcement of the provision of the ordinance or by-law would involve substantial hardship, financial or otherwise, to the petitioner or appellant, and that desirable relief may be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and without nullifying or substantially derogating from the intent or purpose of such ordinance or by-law.”*

Respectfully submitted,
The Ashfield Zoning Board of Appeals
Stuart Harris, chair
Mollie Babize
Kit Nylen
Anne Yuryan, associate
Alan Surprenant

