

# Blackwater River Watershed

By Tina Cotton

## Andover Conservation Commission

Towns have arbitrary political boundaries, but the natural resources of each overlap. A river and its drainage area can cover many towns, and each town has the potential to pollute the river for towns downstream.

Ken Grossman, the chairperson of the Wilmot Conservation Commission, attended an early summer meeting of the Andover Conservation Commission to see if our town might be interested in joining their group in taking periodic water samples from the Blackwater River for testing water quality. As a result, Peter Southworth and Ryan Murphy have been sampling the river this summer.

Ken agreed that periodic meetings of the Conservation Commissions of

towns within the Blackwater watershed might provide an informal forum for sharing current issues and activities that might translate into ideas, knowledge, and more effective programs for all. Depending upon the outcome of the first meeting, a group may be formed for future informal conferences. In a similar fashion, Andover has already joined Franklin's original Webster Lake group to form the Webster/Highland Lakes Watershed Partnership.

The first Blackwater River watershed meeting is scheduled for September 27 at 7 PM in the science room at AE/MS. Conservation commissions or representatives from New London, Wilmot, Danbury, Salisbury, and Webster have been invited, and the meeting is open to the public as well.

## Fenton from page 8

ten to people, keep your cool, and think about what makes sense for the whole town. One of the things I found early on is that when people come up and talk to you as a selectman, they're not talking to you as an individual. They perceive you as "the Town," and you need to perceive that at this point you are "the Town."

I also think it's very helpful to have financial experience. If you have some understanding of numbers, I think that's helpful. And if you have the ability to listen, then you can put to good use what you hear. You also have to be willing to stand up and say, "I don't know" and go find out.

**AB:** What has been the most rewarding aspect of your job as selectman?

**DF:** What gives me the greatest satisfaction is having spent all this time at this and having people still come up to me and say, "Hey, you're getting it pretty near right, don't give up, keep going." That to me is the pay.

I go way back to when my grandfather and my dad were on all these boards and they used to say, "If you're going to do it, do it the way you think is best for the town. Stand on it, and don't back off, and people in the end will say, 'Good job.'"

**AB:** Has anything "crazy" come up during one of your terms, something that might get a chuckle out of people?

**DF:** Well, one year at Town Meeting there was a motion on the floor to expand the Board of Selectmen to five members, and the Board got up and stated our position that we thought it was difficult enough to get three people to run. Expanding it to five was really going to compound the problem because of the time involved.

We got all through and somebody in the back of the room stood up and said, "I totally agree. Three jackasses up there is enough!"

**Margie Fenton (Dennis's wife):** [just coming into the room] This has been a family joke for ages!

## Board Of Selectmen Facts

The Selectmen meet twice a month,

on the first and third Mondays, in the lower meeting room at the Town Hall. Meetings are open to the public. Each selectman's term is for three years, with one of the three selectmen up for election each year.

When asked if a person could be a selectman and hold a full time job as well, Dennis said, "Absolutely, I did it for years with a full time job. That's one of the reasons we now have a Town Administrator." Here are just a few examples of jobs held by selectmen, current and past: attorney, construction worker, engineer, accountant, plumber, electrician, painter, computer technician, and USDA administrator.

The budget season, September through January, is the busiest time of year. Preparing the Town Budget takes the most time. There are many meetings with the Budget Committee and talking to other towns around the state, neighboring towns, and towns of the same population as Andover.

Dennis's last words of wisdom for future selectmen: "Don't think you can do the whole job alone," and "You must have a little humor."

If Dennis' stories and insights have heightened your interest, stop by the Town Office to get more information.



TOWN of ANDOVER

**THE TOWN CLERK & TAX COLLECTOR'S OFFICE**

will be closed on

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2**

**for the Labor Day holiday**

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# Board Of Selectmen

July 17

*Condensed from approved minutes*

**Present:** Chairman Dennis Fenton, Selectman Andrew Guptill, Town Administrator Mark Stetson. Selectman Roger Godwin arrived shortly after the meeting opened.

The Board met with Road Agent John Thompson who told the Board that Steele Henderson has agreed to mow the roadsides again this year. The price has yet to be negotiated.

Thompson reported that his crews spent time fixing minor washouts caused by the recent downpours. He also told the Board that the end of Keyser Road is again a problem and that the abutters have opined that the catch basin should be removed and the culvert relocated to alleviate future problems. Through Thompson, they have asked the Town to participate in the project. The Board asked Thompson to estimate the cost of the work involved prior to making any decisions.

The Board then met with Pat Cutter, representing the Andover Historical Society, who sought and received permission from the selectmen, after consultation with Thompson, to remove a small amount of pavement patch from immediately above the railroad rails on Cilleyville Road and adjacent to the Historical Society's museum in Potter Place. This will facilitate use of the Society's hand pumper car on the entire

See Selectmen on page 10



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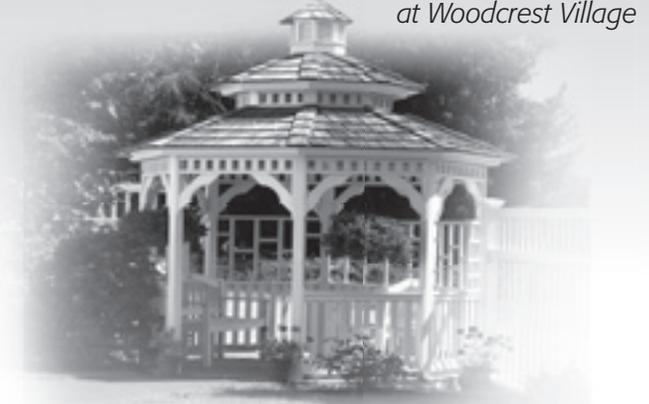
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