



Welcome!

April is the month of new beginnings. The days are now longer than the nights; the crocuses and daffodils are coming up. This month we start our seeds, clean up from winter and if the weather allows, till our gardens. April is the season to plan and plant the seeds of what we hope to sow later in the year.

Therefore it is no surprise that a number of Bethel organizations are sowing some great things. From the historical society's Postcard and History Fair, to the BBA's panel on surviving the current economic climate and their work to spiff up town with new benches and hiking trails, Bethelites are pushing forward to improve the aesthetic, social and financial atmosphere of our beloved little town. It is a lot of work.... and they could always use your help. Please consider attending their meetings and events. If you can, volunteer and/or donate what you can. A little bit from everyone can make much more difference than a lot from a few. Together, we can sow the seeds of a bountiful future for Bethel.

A Reminder:

Geneva Gaiko has graciously volunteered to print and distribute hard copies of the Courier to local businesses who want them. If you would like her to drop some by, give her a call at: 234-9876.

I would like to encourage more of our citizens and friends to sign up to receive the newsletter electronically. To do so, just drop me an email at: Laurelin@sover.net

As always, I'd love to get even more submissions from town organizations, committees, businesses and individuals. Tell your friends and organizations! **The submission deadline is the 25th of every month. Please consider sending something in.**

Kirk White, Editor

Organization News:

Rotary Club Calendar

Rotary meets every Monday night from 6 PM to 7:25 PM in the Bethel White Church. Dinner is catered by Maybelle Dumont and costs \$11.

We are always looking for good speakers and topics of local, national and international interest. If you would like to come and tell us about your organization, club, company, hobby, or whatever else is your passion, please contact president Kirk White at 234-9670.

Bethel Historical Society

On May 23rd, the Bethel Historical Society will be sponsoring its Third Postcard and History Fair at the Whitcomb High School.

New addition to the Fair this year will be "The Bethel Antique Roadshow", plus a flea market outside of the school.

A variety of dealers will be on hand with postcards, stamps, ephemera, books, sports memorabilia, and other material.

Food will be available from Bethel sports boosters. There is no admission fee for this event.

Space is limited.

For information please call Nick Nikolaidis, 234-5064, evenings, or email at, nick@nikolaidis.com

The Bethel Historical Society's regular Meetings are on the first Monday of each month at 7 PM. Next meetings are:

Monday, April 6, 2009, 7 PM
Monday, May 4, 2009, 7 PM

Meetings are held at: Paradigm Consulting building, Main Street, Bethel.

Organization News:

Bethel Business Association

ANNUAL MEETING

Topic: "How Small Businesses Can Weather the Current Economic Climate".

We have assembled a fine panel of speakers for the Annual meeting this Wednesday, April 1, 6:30 to 8 PM at the WHS cafeteria.

The focus of the program will be helping small business survive the current economic down turn, as well as support and resources for potential new start-up business in the area. We will have Megan Cicio from Northfield Savings Bank, Bill Dunn from Mascoma Savings Bank and Bernard Villemaire from the Small Business Administration on the panel.

The BBA meets on the first Wednesday and third Thursday of every month at 6:30 PM.

Contact Rick Benson at 234-6440 for more information.

Minutes: Bethel Business Association meeting – 3/4/09

Chair Rick Benson called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. Secretary's report was accepted as submitted. Treasurer's report was accepted as submitted, noting a checkbook balance of \$3,184.04 and total cash of \$6,455.09.

Planning Commission survey: Carla Hodgdon discussed the Planning Commission's upcoming community survey, which will be done in preparation for updating the Town's plan. Updates must be done every five years, with the next one due in 2011. The survey will be funded by a grant, which the Commission will apply for in September. Carla wondered if the BBA would have any suggestions for business-related questions to add to the survey, and mentioned some of the changes to the survey that will be made since the last time it was sent out.

Home Show & Business Expo: Vice-chair Matt Washburn noted that arrangements are going well, and the event is on-track. The insert was placed in the Herald, ads have been running on 102.1, and it looks like 39 booths have been reserved this year, which compares favorably to last year's 32 reserved. One additional attraction is that the White River Ambulance service will have its new ambulance on display.

Annual meeting: Rick reported that a commercial lending representative from a local bank will be one of the speakers at the meeting, to discuss the options available to businesses. Other tentative speakers are yet to be confirmed, but a total of three speakers is expected. Meeting is on April 1, 6:30 p.m. at the school cafeteria.

Legislative Breakfast: The most recent one was cancelled due to bad weather. The next one, on March 23, will be attended by Governor Jim Douglas and take place at 245 Main St. (Paradigm Consulting).

Town Forest Trail: The Windsor County Forester was able to schedule a timber cruise of the property as a preliminary step to clearing a trail and harvesting some timber to clear views. Rick and Selectman Joe DeFreitas toured the property recently to get a clearer idea of its layout.

Benches downtown: Rick reported that Phil Paini quoted a very reasonable rate for constructing the benches, once the stone is secured and delivered.

Forward Festival pictures wanted: Bev Washburn has a good collection of Forward Fest pictures, and has compiled them into a photo album. She would like to fill in the blank years in the collection, including 1989 and '92 through '95. Anyone with pictures to provide for this effort can call Bev.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Jamal Kheiry
Secretary

Bethel Green Team

Report of Ongoing Activities

1) Energy Audit

Norm Etkin, CEM, BEP, CBCP, Program Director, performed a rigorous audit on the Whitcomb High School and Bethel Elementary buildings, with key recommendations and opportunities for savings. Full report can be seen at www.BethelSchools/Greenteam/EnergyAudit.

2) Recycling

Activity continues on the Elementary School. For more information contact Gregg Timmins, gregorytimmins@comcast.net

3) Green team Booth at the BBA Home show

The Green team had the opportunity to promote its message at the BBA Home Show on March 2nd, with its own booth. To illustrate its sustainability message, the team facilitated patrons with the opportunity to flavor local foods. The team also promoted the use of re-usable bags and re-usable filtered bottles as an alternative to plastics bags and purchasing plastic water bottles. Printed bags with the Green Team logo were offered, as well as re-usable filtered bottles. For more information on the benefits of using reusable bags and filtered water bottles, contact bethelgreenteam@gmail.com

Article Of Interest:

Thinking about Wild Chervil By Victoria Weber

We've had maple syrup season and mud season. Now the snow is leaving and as it goes we will see that Vermont's third spring season has arrived: Chervil Season. The season when it is easiest and safest to weed out wild chervil is from the time the snow melts until mid-June when the seeds form and any further disturbance will just sow more chervil plants.

Bethel is at the heart of the wild chervil infestation that began here in central Vermont, but is now encroaching on rest of the state. Therefore it is appropriate that a Bethel newsletter address this issue.

Working on any invasive plants is daunting and frustrating and yet incredibly important if we hope to avoid having our landscape totally homogenized down to just a few plant species – and ones which don't fit in with and feed our native insects and birds and animals at that.

I have been working with and thinking about invasive plants for long enough that I have come up with some ideas on how to manage our feelings about them so we can keep working on them. Following is an abbreviated version of these ideas. If you would like the longer version, including a **Resources page**, please email me at wdimock@sover.net. –Victoria Weber

Part 1 Psychological Aspect of Working with “Invasive” Plants

I live in Bethel where for about 12 years I have been involved with wild chervil (*Anthriscus sylvestris*). Years of weeding out chervil and other invasive plants, watching them spread and talking with people about invasives has given me time to notice the human nature side of the work.

Common feelings about invasives are of being overwhelmed and thinking it is hopeless to even try to prevent their spread. People also tend to demonize them and/or cast invasive plants as cancers, devils or aliens and to refer to work on invasives as a war or battle. I think we need to identify and then manage the way we think – and feel – about the invasive plants we are working with.

Several factors go into the mix of how we feel about invasives. First off Invasion Biology is a new discipline and work to check invasives is a new activity. It is unclear who is responsible for invasives, just what our goals are and what is actually achievable.

Second, Attitudes become affixed to us from our own experiences and - when we don't have our own knowledge - from headlines and ads. We unconsciously accept what others label for us.

Chervil continued.....

Ads and Headlines. Advertisers label herbicides with names like Arsenal, Combat, Vanquish, Chaser, Battleship, Confront, and Stalker. Sensationalist headlines like *Killer Algae, Mutants, Alien Invasion* and *Killer Weeds* conjure unconscious images from horror and sci fi movies.

Other labels like ‘criminals’, ‘thugs’, ‘demons’, ‘spawn of the devil’, and medical images like ‘diseases’, ‘plagues’, and ‘cancers’ imply that these organisms intend to do us evil. But plants which behave invasively are not evil. They are simply highly vital plants which out-compete native plants due to natural strategies and lack of limiting insects, animals and diseases which co-evolved with them but remained behind in their homelands.

Then there are the war terms – ‘onslaught’, ‘invasion’, ‘combat’, ‘attack’, ‘kill’, ‘battle’, ‘war on weeds’. These war analogies imply we can and must aggressively eradicate certain plants. The reality is that wars are almost never ‘won’. Wars on weeds that include heavy footed, slash-and-stomp-and-burn techniques lead to other invasions causing weed warriors to burn out, lose interest and stop trying.

Steady, long-term action works better. It is slower, but more effective in the long term. The Bradley Method is an example of an informed, strategic, long-term method that can work. (See Resources page.)

All these labels trigger fear, which keeps us tense, untrusting, and frozen. It seems to me that taking action is the antidote to fear-based paralyzing attitudes.

Remember that the ‘other plants’, the natives, are the real reason we are engaged in work with invasive plants. The actual task is to shift our focus from the invasive plants to the plants and ecosystems being displaced by them and to help them survive and thrive.

Over-Urgency. Another element that can turn people off and cause them to not take part in working on invasives is over-urgency when one person's zeal is viewed as hysteria. So watch how other people's delivery affects you and how your own level of urgency may affect others.

OVERWHELMEDNESS. Feeling overwhelmed is the most pervasive emotion connected with invasives, so we must address it head-on.

When you are overwhelmed how do you act? Frantically? Do you tell yourself there really isn't a problem, or it isn't serious enough to involve you? Or do you take no action, turn away, shut down, give up, ‘put your head in the sand’?

Chervil continued.....

It's important to realize that feeling overwhelmed is part of **Environmental despair, or 'eco-angst'**. Environmental despair is grief and the experience of loss – the loss of species, of diversity, of natural places, of possibilities. In our society there is a against experiencing grief, including environmental grief and despair. But it does not help to deny the feeling. Instead we need to consciously NOT run away from it or avoid it. We can utilize the excellent work of people like Joanna Macy and John Seed, the ritual called **Council of All Beings** and their book *Thinking Like a Mountain*. (See Resources page.)

We can also practice **planned persistence**. Taking steady, planned and persistent action is the antidote to fear, to feeling overwhelmed and to environmental despair.

**Remember:
Persistence Pays;
Action is the antidote to fear;
The tortoise won the race.**

Part 2

Invasive Plants: Techniques that do the work and also address the feelings we have about them

Overcome Procrastination and take Preventative Action

- Learn to recognize invasive plants.
- When you see them Act Immediately to remove them.
- Recognizing and stopping a new invasive plant before it is established is the single most effective thing any of us can do.

Choose where you will work

- You cannot work everywhere, so Identify areas that are top priority to work on.
- They should include individual plants or small patches. It is often more effective to weed out the single plant which will become a larger patch, rather than focusing on large, dense, well-established infestations.

Acceptance

- Accept that wild chervil – for example – will still exist despite your efforts, that it won't be eradicated.
- Recognizing this may help us identify areas we will keep 'chervil free', places we can call 'refuge areas'.
- We can succeed in keeping the refuge places we commit to chervil-free, and therefore we will not feel like failures for not keeping it from everywhere.

Chervil continued.....

Avoid Disturbance

- Don't remove natural mulch, open soil to light, or compact soil.
- Step lightly, act carefully.
- Try the Bradley Method
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Spend more time in Nature

- Pay attention to Nature's processes.
- Focus not on the invasive plants, but on the natives around them.
- Appreciate and enjoy the natives. Don't trample them.
- Ask the natives what will help them. To do this, simply pose a specific question in your mind and keep working. An answer will often pop into your head. Then do it. (That's the most important part – if you have asked you must follow through with whatever answer you are given.)

Focus on the process, not the outcome

- Enjoy the process. Enjoy the sunshine.

Make it social

- Arrange to work with neighbors or friends.
- Invasives are a non-political topic that most neighbors can agree to work on.
- Working with others will accomplish more and seem less daunting. You can also share techniques and teach each other.

Pace yourself

- Work at times of day that fit your own energy cycles.
- Work at the times and seasons that are most advantageous for results, for example early spring for wild chervil and garlic mustard and fall for woody shrubs

We are the only ones who can make a difference

- Consider the fact that there are things we can do about invasive plants.
- Consider the fact that no one else is going to do it. There is no 'they' who are going to do the work to keep invasive plants in check.
- Really, our own actions are the only things that can make real differences about plant invasions, and our actions will certainly make a difference in our feelings.
- If we don't try we will never know how much we can accomplish.

Chervil continued.....

Let others see your work

- I am energized and inspired when I see pulled chervil plants in a road indicating someone else has been working on wild chervil.

Planned Persistence

- Even before you begin, commit to:
 - Repeated treatments and on-going monitoring.
 - Schedule when you'll work.
 - Schedule yourself to keep at it.

My goal for myself is to take preventative and sustained action about invasive plants with inner steadiness so that I keep at it. And that is what I want for you too.

Business News:

Open House

Dandelion Acres Garden Center will be holding its annual Spring Fling Open House on Saturday and Sunday, April 18th and 19th.

Customers will be able to chat with reps from High Mowing Seed Company, Moo Doo, and Naturapatch - all Vermont companies. We'll also be offering face painting, free balloons, and those fabulous chair massages by a certified massage therapist. There'll be a drawing for a gift certificate, a free plant for everyone, lots of refreshments, and lots of exciting springtime garden specials. Hope to see ya'll there!

Please support your local Bethel Business Association members:

Automotive

Dean's Auto Service
Ted Green Ford, Inc.
Valley Motor Sales

Banks and Money

AM Turk Tax Associates
Grn Mtn Economic Development Corp.
Randolph National Bank
Mascoma Savings Bank
Northfield Savings Bank
White River Credit Union

Gardening and Flowers

Dandelion Acres
Purple Iris Florists

Health and Beauty

Kathy's House of Styles
Kirk White, Licensed Acupuncturist
Massage by Kathleen

Home and Building

Bethel Mills
Chuck Adams Builder
Control Systems Services, LLC
Eric Richardson Painting
Hutchinson's Interiors
Mills Hardware
Rural Appliance
Up Country Chimney Sweep
Vallee Improvements

Markets, Stores and Supplies

Bethel Central Market
Locust Creek Country Store
Logan Enterprises
Lukana's Dream

Restaurants and Caterers

Black Forest Cafe and Caterers
Cockadoodle Restaurant
Ketner's Second Cup Café
Toziers Restaurant
Travelin' Willy B's Catering

Professional Services

Ellis Music Co.
Eric Benson Appraisal Co.
Herald of Randolph
Mills Laundromat
Mountain View Technologies
My Little Jessie Press
Paradigm Consulting Co.
Ruth Clough, Attorney
Debra Leahy, Attorney
Spaulding Press
Washburn & Wilson Insurance

Local Industry

Power and Tel
Rock of Ages
Ultramotive Corporation

Friends

Jay Caruso	Chris Costanzo
Felicia Dieffenbach	Geneva Gaiko
Robert Gaiko	Carroll Ketchum
Ellen Nobile	Ola O'Dell
Richard Perry	Joyce Richardson
Margarete Viera	