

Editorial

More than just another day

Yesterday, was the 65th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor — the event that spurred most Americans to support entering World War II.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt called it “the day that will live in infamy.”

But how infamous is it more than six decades later?

Who among us stopped and thought about the 2,403 American citizens who lost their lives in that attack. There were also 1,178 military and civilian wounded during bombing and strafing of the naval base.

According to the United States Navy, 181 Japanese planes took off from six carriers in the Pacific Ocean at 6 a.m. The planes descended on Oahu shortly before 8 on that Sunday morning.

The attack took less than two hours but had a lasting impact on the country’s history, a generation of young men and women and even the world.

We all live with the effects of that attack, but not many people take the time to remember that day and those who lost their lives.

We must heed the past and to listen to the stories of earlier generations to ensure the day that once lived in infamy does not become just another day on the calendar.

Two bids too much

The idea of having bidding two proposed designs for the public safety building has merit.

But, as Rick Sicard, of the Ashburnham Firefighters’ Association noted, “based on our luck so far,” what happens if bids for both designs come in over budget?

Then, voters may face two different questions at the ballot box — which would be asking for disaster. Voters who support the construction of the public safety building would have to pick one design, which would split the vote, and both would fail.

This attempt at a building can’t fail, for the sake of the town and for the fire department.

On the face of it, a single proposal has the best chance of passing.

Editor's note: The staff of The Community Journal wants to add their congratulations to the Oakmont Varsity Football Team.

Letters to the Editor

Trustee advocates against recall

To the Editor:

As a voter in the Town of Ashby, you have a choice to make regarding the future of the Ashby Free Public Library. This choice really comes down to whom you, the voter, trust to act in the best interests of the library and the town as Library Trustee. I offer a brief summary of why I am participating in this election and why I think that I and the other incumbent trustees are the better choice for this office.

I believe that libraries are a fundamental building block of education in our society. They are open to anyone regardless of age, income, interest or handicap. They offer access to the wealth of information and entertainment available in magazines, books or the Internet. They are an important partner with the schools for the education of our children and the continuing education as well as recreation of adults. The library can be a center for the community to come together, with meeting space available to all. The Ashby Free Public Library can at last serve all these needs and, with the continued stewardship of a dedicated volunteer Board of Trustees, expand the possibilities as we go forward.

I have been a member of the Library Board of Trustees since 2001. I have invested much time and energy into the accessibility and expansion project and intend to see it through to ultimate completion, closing out the punch list items and securing the necessary financial foundation for the future of the institution.

Public response to the new facility has been overwhelmingly positive. Patronage is up significantly and groups are starting to use the facility for meetings and gatherings. The story hour is back with renewed popularity and increased attendance, the Girl Scouts are utilizing the space for meetings and some classes have started. We are making steady progress in cataloguing the materials and hope to be fully “on line” soon. There has been a terrific increase in the volunteer base helping out wherever possible to make the library a better resource. The trustees have recently hired a new director and with the library assistant already in place and a robust volunteer base, we are poised for a bright future.

There is still much work to do to complete the punch lists and finish some of the restoration work in the original building. We need to close out the building project by working with the project manager and bonding company to ensure the town gets all the work we are entitled to or is compensated for the work left undone.

The question is who are the best people to make sure the job gets done. Who will be more committed to the task — I believe that it will be those who have so much of themselves invested in the project already and have demonstrated a can-do attitude. If you feel you need more information or have questions, please visit www.ashbylibrary.org and contact me, or come to the next board meeting at 7 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 11 at the library and meet all the trustees.

I’d greatly appreciate your support on Tuesday, Dec. 19. Please vote against the recall proposition for all three of the trustees and watch what we can do to make the Ashby Free Public Library an institution the Town of Ashby can be proud of.

Matt Alfond
Ashby

Submitting Letters to the Editor

By e-mail: editor@thecommunityjournal.com
— subject line: Letter to Editor

By mail: The Community Journal,
Letter to Editor, P.O. Box 67,
Ashburnham, MA 01430

Resident speaks out against upcoming recall election

To the Editor:

I live in Ashby and every few years I become motivated enough by an issue to get involved. Among these issues have been the town vote on passing a historic district and the vote to give a landowner the ability to house the excellent new post office in the historic Wyman Tavern, rather than putting up an ugly box on the edge of town. In each case, these excellent projects met with vitriolic resistance from the “nay” crowd, despite having no cost to the taxpayer.

Another such issue has now arisen that warrants your action and vote. The good people of Ashby, with much help from volunteers throughout town, recently built an excellent modern addition to the Ashby Free Public Library. Now a small mob has decided to try and put a torch to the project. Motivated by their dislike of the siding due to cost cutting, their view being ruined or anger over the dismissal of an employee, they have petitioned to have several members of the Library Board of Trustees removed. Rather than accepting the decisions of the Town Clerk and Registrars of Voters on the petitions, the petitioners have challenged these decisions in court, costing the Town tens of thousands of dollars in legal expenses.

On Tuesday, Dec. 19, there will be a town election regarding this recall effort. I urge you to come out and vote against the question of recall for each of the library trustees that this tantrum has managed to recall.

Libraries (and actually reading books) are relevant, as evidenced by the new library projects in Groton, Lunenburg, Leominster and host of other local communities. I for one intend to use the Ashby library with its current hours and capable staffing (I’ve been going to Leominster and Townsend libraries for years since Ashby was inadequate). Let’s not let this excellent project get derailed.

Thank you,
John Okerman
Ashby

Thanks for support at auction

To the Editor:

On behalf of the Ashburnham Conservation Trust we would like to thank the many merchants in our community and in surrounding communities who so generously donated to our silent and live auction held at Cushing Academy on Nov. 19, 2006. We would also like to thank the many individuals who donated their time and talents to make this auction a huge success. And lastly, we would like to thank those people who supported this event thru their attendance and purchases. The afternoon was a great community event and the funds raised will be well spent conserving our open areas so that they may be enjoyed by all.

Sincerely,
Paul and Lois Somers
Auction Coordinators

JOURNAL POLL QUESTION

When should a recall election be held?

- ~ When voters are not pleased with the actions of the elected officials.
- ~ Only when an elected official has committed an illegal or unethical action.
- ~ Never.

Cast your vote online at
www.thecommunityjournal.com



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