

Volume 43

Issue 5

Established 1975

# THE Rowe Goal Post May 2024



#### Town Clerk

Submitted by Kevin Balawick

The focus of this month's town clerk article will be the upcoming Annual Town Election. The Annual Town Election is scheduled to take place on Saturday, May 18th, from 10 am - 2 pm. If you prefer to vote by mail, ballots must be requested in writing. Applications for vote by mail are available on the town website on the town clerk page and outside the town clerk's office. If you email me or leave a message on my voicemail I can mail you the vote by mail application. Applications for vote by mail should be mailed to the town clerk or placed in the dropbox outside the entrance to town hall by 5pm on Monday, May 13th.

The secretary of state's office sent out vote by mail applications for all state and federal elections in the fall. Those applications included a check box to vote by mail in "all elections." Because it was not clear that "all elections" did not include the Annual Town Election, anyone who selected to vote by mail in "all elections" on that form will receive a vote by mail ballot for the Annual Town Election.

All vote by mail ballots must be received by the town clerk's office by the close of polls at 2pm on Saturday, May 18th in order for the ballots to be accepted.

The following offices and candidates will appear on the ballot, all terms are for three years unless otherwise noted. Please note that I accidentally omitted from previous articles some of the offices that will be on the ballot. The list below reflects the complete list of offices and candidates up for election:

Board of Assessors - Ellen Miller (i)

Board of Health - Herbert Butzke (i)

Board of Selectmen - none

Cemetery Commission - Jay Williams (i)

Finance Committee - Marilyn Wilson (i)

Finance Committee - Wayne Zavotka (i)

Finance Committee - none (1 year unexpired term)

Library Trustee - Catherine Snyder (i)

Park Commission - Hannah Poplawski (i)

Planning Board - Kevin Balawick (5 year)

Planning Board - Matthew Stine (4 year unexpired term)

School Committee - Matthew Stine (1 year unexpired term)

School Committee - Beth Balawick



photo by Meredith Sokol

# Assessor's News Submitted by Rick Williams

#### Recent Property Transfers (Apr 2024)

Further details may be obtained by researching the specific deeds at the Franklin County Registry of Deeds website at masslandrecords.com/franklin

SIMPSON, ELIAKIM H of Rowe, MA for consideration of \$1.00, grant to SIMPSON, ASHLEY R of Franklin, VT, property located at 24 Brittingham Hill Rd (Map 407 Lot 7) (Bk 8297 Pg 169)

Assessor's Meetings and Office Hours

Assessor's meetings are held in person on a roughly monthly basis (as posted) at the Town Hall. Christine Bailey (Assessor's Administrative Assistant) has posted office hours on Wednesdays (8am to 1pm) and Thursdays (8am to 1pm). Christine can be reached in the Assessors' Office at 413-339-5520 x104, via fax at 413-339-8585 or via email at assessor@rowe-ma.gov. For additional information please also refer to the Assessor's page on the Town website at rowe-ma.gov

#### Assessor's News

Submitted by Rick Williams

#### Projected FY25 Tax Rates and Average Single-Family Tax Bill

Projected tax rates and resulting average single-family tax bill—should all articles pass at the FY25 Annual Town Meeting—are provided below. Prior years' figures are listed for comparison. Rowe utilizes a split tax rate to shift some of the tax burden from Residential to Commercial-Industrial-Personal taxpayers. The split tax rate is determined by selecting a Minimum Residential Factor (MRF). The MRF is selected by the Board of Selectmen with input from the Board of Assessors at the Classification Hearing in the Fall.

The FY25 projections are based on last year's total town property valuation of \$496,831,321. FY25 is an Interim Update Year and real estate property values are expected to remain fairly stable. FY25 projected tax rates are based on using a maximum allowed MRF shift of **0.5**.

	<u>FY22</u>	<u>FY23</u>	<u>FY24</u>	FY25 (projected)
Tax Rate - Residential	\$5.33	\$5.18	\$5.01	\$5.29 (+5.6%)
Tax Rate - Com/Ind/PP	\$8.69	\$9.48	\$10.18	\$11.38 (+11.8%)
Avg Single-Family Tax Bill	\$1,397	\$1,370	\$1,355	\$1,431 (+5.6%)

**Note**: To calculate your estimated **FY25 tax bill**, divide your property's total valuation by 1000, then multiply by projected FY25 residential tax rate above. Your current property valuation can be found on your FY24 tax bill <u>or</u> from the FY24 property value listing on the Assessor's page on the town website (rowe-ma.gov) Further details may be obtained by researching the specific deeds at the Franklin County Registry of Deeds website at masslandrecords.com/franklin



photo by Sue Williams

#### **Comparison to Other Towns**

The following table compares last year's **(FY24)** residential tax rates, average single-family home values, and average single-family tax bills for some of our neighboring towns, and for Weston—the highest town in MA. [Data source: MA DOR Municipal Databank]

<u>Town</u>	Residential <u>Tax Rate</u>	Average Single Family Home Value	Average Single Family Tax Bill
Hancock	\$ 2.79	\$ 330,534	\$ 922 (lowest in MA)
Rowe	\$ 5.01	\$ 270,558	\$ 1,355 (2 <sup>nd</sup> lowest)
Florida	\$ 7.59	\$ 214,738	\$ 1,630 (3rd lowest)
Monroe	\$ 11.36	\$ 144,434	\$ 1,641 (4th lowest)
Erving	\$ 9.22	\$ 249,635	\$ 2,302 (5th lowest)
North Adams	\$ 17.14	\$ 206,794	\$ 3,544
Colrain	\$ 18.98	\$ 220,506	\$ 4,185
Shelburne	\$ 13.26	\$ 336,253	\$ 4,459
Heath	\$ 20.43	\$ 221,054	\$ 4,516
Hawley	\$ 16.80	\$ 269,915	\$ 4,535
Charlemont	\$ 20.70	\$ 245,460	\$ 5,081
Ashfield	\$ 14.61	\$ 360,046	\$ 5,260
Buckland	\$ 17.56	\$ 308,806	\$ 5,423
Greenfield	\$ 20.39	\$ 276,377	\$ 5,635
Weston	\$ 11.12	\$ 2,198,601	\$ 24,448 (highest in MA)

#### **Board of Health**

Submitted by Christine Bailey

It is that time of year again when all residents will be able to purchase their FY25 dump tag for use at the Refuse Gardens. The new FY25 tags will go into effect on July 1, 2024. The yearly price remains at \$25.00! This includes your FY25 hang tag and 52 bag of stickers. Please note: After September 1, 2024 the price will be raised to \$50.00 (except new residents relocating to town).

You may continue to purchase your tag and stickers with cash, personal check or money order made out to the <u>Town of Rowe</u>. Also, Rowe has instituted an online form of payment which is on the Home Page of the Rowe Website. In addition, look for our annual letter forthcoming to each resident detailing on how to purchase your dump tag.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 413-339-5520 x105 or in person at the Town Hall on any Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm.



## Rowe Town Library News Submitted by Molly Lane, Library Director

**HOURS:** Tuesday 10-5 Wednesday 12-8 Thursday 3-7 Saturday 10-3

The Rowe library is developing a Strategic Plan to identify priorities for services and programs over the next 5 years. We would like to find out what your needs and interests are. We will use this information to guide decisions for specific library goals and activities. This survey is voluntary and all ages are welcome to fill it out. Please feel free to skip any questions you prefer not to answer. Whether you use the library or not, your input is valued. Please find the Survey online at the town website under the library tab, on our Facebook page or you can pick up a hard copy at the town hall or the Library.

#### Programs:

Book Chat - May 16st 4:30 pm "The Second Life of Mirielle West" by Amanda Skenandore

## Saturday May 18<sup>th</sup> @ 10-12 p.m- 6th annual Plant Swap drop off plants, containers, seeds and pick up what you find.

The Anti-Social Sci-Fi Book Club- no meetings, no commitments. Send us your recommendations and we will post them for other sci-fi readers to find their next great read

Kids: After school simple science @ 4pm - Thurs May 2<sup>nd</sup>, Wed May 8<sup>th</sup>, Thurs May 23<sup>rd</sup>

After school Fairy houses - Wednesday May 15th @ 4pm

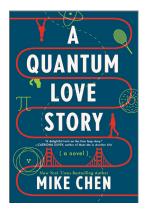
Yarnia Crafter's Time -@ 1pm crochet, knitters, embroiderers, needle point, and other crafts. Join us in a common space to work on your projects with other crafters. First Tuesday of the month is beginner friendly time. Someone will be happy to help you learn a new fiber skill this day.

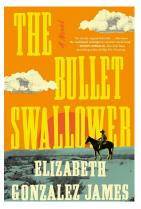
Library Trustee meetings are held @ 10am on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month. All town residents are welcome to attend.

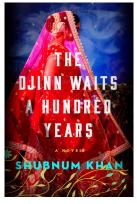
Contact the library if you would like to be put on our email notifications for programs Rowelibrary@gmail.com

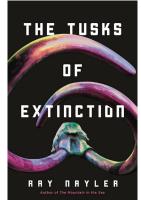
#### Some New Books:

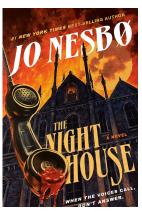
#### Adult Fiction:

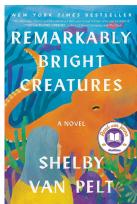




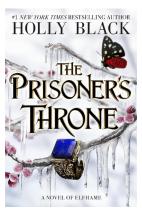












Graphic Novel:





#### Kids:







April at the Rowe School usually means three things: family conferences, lots of work in and out of the classrooms, and vacation. Conferences were the first three days of April this year, and were well attended. Many of the conferences in the 3/4 and 5/6 classes were student-led, where the students shared their progress and interests. All the classes have been working on a variety of academic and artistic projects, I encourage you to check out the Rowe School Community Facebook page for so many great pictures of the students and their work. The classes are getting outside as much as possible, especially the 3/4 class in their outdoor classroom at the top of the hill behind the school. We observed a solar eclipse, MCAS started in April, as did baseball at Hawlemont, and we had a delicious Spaghetti Supper.

May will mean more schoolwork, inside and outside the school. Both the 3/4 and 5/6 classes will continue the MCAS tests with Math tests in May, and the 5th grade will also take the Science MCAS. The Rowe 5th and 6th grade class will be attending Nature's Classroom on the Cape this year. Town Meeting is happening on Monday, May 13. Every year we appreciate the support shown by the Town of Rowe for the school at Town Meeting, allowing us to offer a high-quality academic, social, emotional, and physical education to the Rowe students. If you have questions on the budget before Town Meeting, please call me at the school.

Before you know it, June will be here. We will be having some of our traditional end-of-the-year activities like the Talent Show and Field Day. Graduation is scheduled for Tuesday, June 17, and the last day of school for students is also that Tuesday. We're already looking forward to, and planning for, the 2024-2025 school year. If you have questions or concerns, please call me at 413-512-5100. You can also email me at wknittle@roweschool.org. I look forward to hearing from you.

Hello Rowe residents,

Allow me, Steve Lattanzi aka Pickleball Stefano to introduce myself. My wife, Diane & I grew up on Long Island & spent the last 33 years living and sweltering in Phoenix AZ.

We purchased the house @ 544 Tunnel Rd which was the former residence of the Lenth Family. We fell in love with the house and the Town of Rowe immediately. We purchased Oct 2022 moved in May of 2023.

The people we have met so far have been a pleasure and to spend time with. Part of that time has been spent on the new and incredible Pickleball/Tennis courts found at Pelham Lake Park. We are both avid Pickleball players. Steve aka PB Stefano has with the blessing of the Park Commission been enlisted to help grow the Rowe Pickleball community.

We invite anyone who is interested in learning about this fun & social game to join in.

A tentative schedule is ... Mondays & Wednesdays 5pm to 7pm Fridays 9:30am to 11:30am Saturdays 9:30am to 11:30am

We currently have 3 painted courts and I will be taping off an additional court.

Paddles, balls and 3 nets are available during Park hours and are located in the equipment box installed in the court entry area.

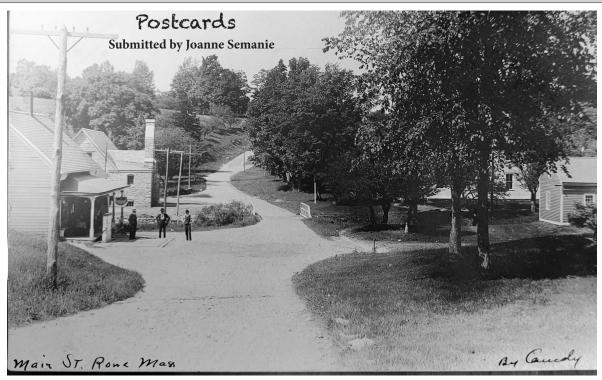
I am also planning a play & social event on Friday May 10 that will include food & drink, Pickleball and Cornhole. 12 noon to 6pm has been discussed.

I want to thank the members of the Park Commission for allowing me to spearhead the creation of a Pickleball community.

For a town of this size to have this within their borders is unheard of. I consider Pelham Park Lake the Crown Jewel & a Point of Pride in the Town of Rowe. How lucky we all are to live in such a great place.

I can be reached almost anytime to help instruct, advise and, or play. It's the most fun you can have with a paddle in your hand. Dink Responsibly!

Thank You! Stefano PickleballStefano23@gmail.com 602-321-2035 413-399-5351





Current home of Alan Bjork



Before the advent of digital photography and sharing instantly any and all of your vacation photos there was the picture postcard.

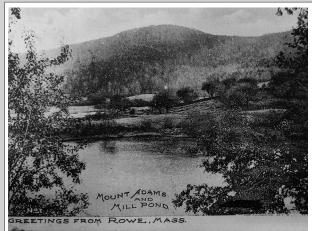
Unitarian church (now gone), on Ford Hill Rd. near junction of Middletown Hill Rd.

They were in use as early as the 1880s. They were inexpensive to purchase, the images were great and they were cheap to send.





The museum has many, many postcards of different parts of town. Many of them were sent to people who had grown up here and when they returned they brought those precious saved postcards of the place they called home. This month we share some of them.









View from Rowe Camp looking towards Henry Dandeneau's house

#### \*\*Let it be Spring from the ROWE COUNCIL ON AGING\*\*

In April the COA held its monthly Third Thursday Coffee Morning, which was a great success with a few members of the Lifepath team joining us for a presentation and informational gathering. There was a light lunch served with homemade bread from the oh-so-talented Kelle Quist and cornbread from our very own amazing Town Administrator Brooke Shulda and turkey chili from our Town Nurse Rachel Lewis- YUUUMMMM ladies and thank you!

Our May Third Thursday Coffee Morning will be held on Thursday May 16th from 10am-12noon. You can expect a unique craft of 'modge-podge' plates (yea we didn't know what it was either) and A DELICIOUS YOGURT BAR!

Walking Club with Kelle Quist and Rachel Lewis is a new addition to our 'get moving' initiative. The walking club will run each Monday in June starting Monday June 3rd at 10am. The walk will be an hour long of moderate intensity so make sure to bring good walking shoes. Don't forget bug spray/bug net and a water bottle. MEET AT THE TOWN HALL! No need to sign up- just show up!

Do you have any suggestions? Please feel free to reach out to Donna, Rachel or Brooke at the Town Hall with any ideas/suggestions for future events. We would love to hear from you! Or better yet- stop by the 3rd Thursday Coffee morning to see some of your COA members and many other inspirational residents who come share their amazing personalities and stories!

Help your neighbors in West County! Call Susan White, Volunteer Resources, LifePath 413-773-5555



Rhubarb

photo by Sue Williams



#### **Rowe Woods Walk**

May 2, 2024, 5:30-6:30 pm

Pelham Lake Park

Meet at the town beach to car pool to the Davis Mine parking area.

Town forester, Alex Barrett, will explain Rowe's Climate-Smart Forestry Operational Plan to address forest health threats and climate vulnerabilities identified in the 2022 Forest Stewardship Climate Plan. This project aims to demonstrate how innovative forest stewardship practices can promote healthy, climate-resilient forests.

We invite everyone to come take this opportunity to find out more about this planned project. There will be a short walk from the parking lot along the Davis Mine Loop Trail.

submitted by Laurie Pike

#### **Lifeguard Training**

The Pelham Lake Park department is looking for Red Cross certified lifeguards for the 2024 summer season. The Park offers a competitive wage with area swim facilities. Red Cross Lifeguard Training will be offered at the Greenfield YMCA in May of 2024. More information about the course can be found at the Greenfield YMCA's website. If you or someone you know is interested you may contact the Park Commission for further information about the position.

#### LifePath is Here for You! COME JOIN US to Help Your Neighbors! Help Us Recruit Volunteers from the Rowe area to help your community!

#### Visit www.lifepathma.org & Fill Out LifePath's Volunteer Application Online or Call 413-773-5555 and ask for Volunteer Resources

Help People through our Grocery Shopping Volunteer program!

Neighbors Helping Neighbors is a great way to get paid for what you already do helping a neighbor...

Our Rides for Health volunteers help people EVERY day get to and from medical appointments in the Greenfield area

Every week, our **Meals on Wheels** program brings a cheerful hello, and a hot meal to over 550 individuals who live alone. (LifePath reimburses mileage and offers a small stipend to our volunteer drivers–you can commit from one day to five days a week!

Helping someone feel less alone managing their money challenges, and also to pay their bills is what our **Money Management** volunteers do!

Our recent Healthy Living Workshop offers free workshops for anyone in person and virtually!

Phone Pals volunteers provide comforting calls from the comfort of your home.

All are welcome to join our Rainbow Elders Network of Support!



'Lifepath informational session at Rowe Town Hall April 18, 2024'

#### Avoid being a Hitch for a Tick

Spring is here and so are ticks! Ticks can transmit diseases to humans when they bite; the longer a tick remains attached to the skin, the higher the likelihood that it may spread bacteria that cause tick-borne illnesses.

In 2023, over 250 ticks from Franklin County were tested for tick borne illness. Lyme disease was found in ticks from 65% of Franklin County towns. Two other tick-borne illnesses, babesiosis and anaplasmosis, were found in ticks from 25-30% of Franklin County towns.

Although only deer ticks (aka black-legged ticks) can transmit Lyme and anaplasmosis, other ticks should be avoided because they can transmit less common diseases.

Luckily, there are many things we can do to prevent tick-borne diseases:

When outdoors, stick to hiking trails, wear light-colored clothing (to see ticks)
and tuck in loose ends.
Make a habit of checking yourself, your children, and pets for ticks after coming inside. Think like a tick: ticks often hitch a ride after physical contact with haveless places and entire them were
with brushy plants—start by checking feet, ankles, legs and groin, then work your way upwards.
Use tick repellents. DEET can be used on skin. Pre-treat clothing, including socks and shoes, with permethrin ( <u>not</u> to be put on skin). Permethrin is
invisible, odorless and stays effective in fabric through many washings. Using
both repellents together is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control
(CDC) and the Department of Defense (DOD).

Want to identify a tick? Send a photo to Tick Encounter (tickencounter.org), to learn about the tick and your risk level.

-Submitted by the Town Nurse



#### -Vitamin Joy-

One of the most important goals in life should be feeling and expressing joy. I propose a column devoted to raising joy in ourselves, our family, town and further. We welcome all stories you would like to share that inspire joy and kindness that you have experienced. Please submit your stories, ideas, lists, recipes, or memories to:

adminasst@rowe-ma.gov

This months submission is from Beth Balawick

My family and I hiked recently at Pelham Lake Park. It was a gorgeous spring day and we felt grateful for it. Teddy, our four-year-old son, leapt from rock to root to puddle crowing that it was the "best day ever". He began to list all the other things for which he was grateful - me, his dad, his grandparents, his cousins, his aunts and uncles, his friends, his teachers. All people. As we hiked on through the rustling pines and bare deciduous varieties, I thought about everything that makes those people possible - the soil and plants and bugs and trees and currents. I happen to be writing this on Earth Day (April 22), and I am grateful for those things that make all the laughing, running, teasing, creating, collaborating, and loving possible.

# Gardening For Beginners

Peas don't like too much water.

Potatoes don't like tomatoes.

Potatoes don't like cucumbers.

Potatoes and cabbage are friends.

Do not plant beans with onions or beets.

Beans love carrots.

Beets love onion, cabbage, potatoes.

Tomatoes love carrots, peas.

Cabbage does not like radishes.

Carrots and onions do well together.

Marigolds can help repel pests.

Thesproutinghomestead



Pickerel frog

photo by Claudine Poplawski

#### May Birthdays

- 1 Sarah Hettlinger
- 1 Laurie Sutherland
- 2 Eliakim Simpson
- 2 Ashley Boyd
- 4 Evelyn Dandeneau
- 4 Jennifer Rice
- 4 Kelley Prendiville
- 6 Caitlyn Semanie
- 6 Kelle Quist
- 6 Thomas Danek
- 7 Morghan Jolly
- 7 Morgan Roccio
- 8 Lisa Miller
- 9 Hailey Larned
- 11 William Cowie
- 11 Steve Lattanzi
- 12 Robert Beaumier
- 13 Richard Polhemus Jr.
- 14 Timothy Bjork
- 14 David Dvore
- 16 Sarah Stine
- 16 Sa Rea Smith
- 16 Sierra Upton
- 16 Diane Cowie
- 18 Jessica Albrecht
- 19 Janet Cowie
- 19 Camden Cousineau
- 20 Deborah Lively
- 22 Julie Shippee
- 23 Richard Grieco
- 24 Izaya Paige
- 25 John Packard
- 25 Geoffrey Cirinna
- 25 Thomas Houghtaling
- 26 Edwin May
- 26 Barbara Gottesman
- 26 Bill Baker
- 27 Jennie Sutherland
- 27 Benjamin Sherman
- 31 Michael Laffond
- 31 Abigail Lively

## **Town Departments**

The Town Hall is Open Monday-Thursday 8:00am-4:00pm (413) 339-5520

Position/Dept.	Ext #	Email Address	Hours
Town Administrator	100	townadmin@rowe-ma.gov	Mon-Thurs 9am-4pm
Admin Assistant	101	adminasst@rowe-ma.gov	Mon-Thurs 9am-4pm
Town Accountant	102	accountant@rowe-ma.gov	By Appointment Only
Town Clerk	103	townclerk@rowe-ma.gov	Tuesday's 6:00pm-8:00pm
Board of Assessors	104	assessor@rowe-ma.gov	Tues-Thurs 8am-1pm
Board of Health	105	boh@rowe-ma.gov	Tues-Thurs 8am-1pm
Treasurer	106	treasurer@rowe-ma.gov	Mon, Wed, Thurs 9am-4pm
Tax Collector	106	collector@rowe-ma.gov	Mon, Wed, Thurs 9am-4pm
Town Nurse	107	nurse@rowe-ma.gov	Mon, Wed, Thurs 8am-4pm
DPW	111	dpwhighway@rowe-ma.gov	Monday – Friday 6:30a-2:30p
Fitness Center	149		Mon,Wed 9am-11am/4pm-6pm

# **Emergency Services**

Position/Dept.	Ext #	<b>Email Address</b>	Hours
Fire Chief	112	firechief@rowe-ma.gov	Thursday's 2pm-8pm
EMD	112	firechief@rowe-ma.gov	Thursday's 2pm-8pm
Police Chief	113	policechief@rowe-ma.gov	Wednesday's 5pm-8pm

# Town Library (413) 339-4761 rowelibrary@gmail.com

Days	Hours
Tuesday	10am-5pm
Wednesday	12pm-8pm
Thursday	3pm-7pm
Saturday	10am-3pm

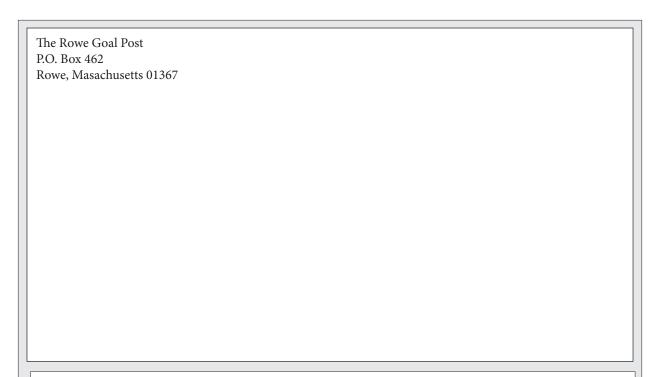
## **Transfer Station** (413) 339-0216

boh@rowe-ma.gov

Days	Hours
Wednesday	7am-10am & 4pm-7pm
Saturday	8am-2pm
Sunday	8am-Noon

#### **Elementary School (413) 512-5100**

Name/Position	Ext.#	Email
Principal, Bill Knittle	1	wknittle@roweschool.org
Secretary, Laurie Laffond	2	llaffond@roweschool.org
Nurse, Lydia Brisson	3	lbrisson@roweschool.org



#### The Rowe Goal Post

Available on the Town's website (https://rowe-ma.gov/p/64/Rowe-Goal-Post) the first of every month with paper copies sent out by mail the first week

Published by the Board of Selectmen 'in the interest of information exchange between all departments and all Rowe citizens.'

All submissions for the next issue are due by the 25th. Any articles received after this time cannot be guaranteed that they will appear in the next issue.

Please e-mail all items to: GoalPostEditor@gmail.com

Please send only high resolution images (do not resize).

If you have a question about your subscription or want to make a change to the mailing list, please contact the Town Administrator at:

(413) 339-5520 x100 admin@rowe-ma.gov

Seasonal residents MUST notify the Administrator of any change in address.