

# ST. GEORGE NEWSLETTER

May 2024

## Town Office Bulletins

### Election News

**The dates for this year's Town Meeting & Election are May 13 & 14, 2024.**

**The Town Meeting Election will be held in the big meeting room on Monday, May 13, 2024. The polls will be open from 8am to 8pm.**

**The Town Meeting will be held on May 14, 2024 at 7pm in the St George School gym.**

**Absentee Ballots will be available Friday, April 12, 2024. Ballots will need to be returned to the Town Office by the close of polls Monday, May 13**

For more information about the items to be voted on please visit:

<https://www.stgeorgemaine.com/home/news/town-meeting-election-may-13-14>

#### Town Ordinance Alert

The Town of St. George approved a new Land Use Ordinance on May 8, 2023. Section 1323 and Section 1324 of the new ordinance pertains to Campgrounds and Individual Private Campsites.

When the ordinance was enacted, it gave a one year allowance for the compliance of any campers that existed prior to the new ordinance. The year grace period is now up and the Town of St. George is looking for compliance to this ordinance.

If you have a camper on a private campsite in St. George, for less than 90 days, you need to comply with all the items in Section 1324. If the camper is on site for more than 90 days, you need to comply with all the requirements for residential structures, such as septic systems, egress windows in sleeping rooms and setbacks.

Sincerely,  
Terry Brackett  
CEO/LPI St. George

# TOWN CALENDAR

Town website: [www.stgeorgemaine.com](http://www.stgeorgemaine.com)

School website: [www.stgeorgemsu.org](http://www.stgeorgemsu.org)

## May 2024

- May 1** Resilience Committee 5 PM
- May 2** Conservation Commission 4 PM
- May 6** Select Board 7 PM
- May 7** Comprehensive Plan 7 PM
- May 13** Town Meeting Referendum Polls open 8 AM to 8 PM
- May 14** Town Meeting – St. George School Gym 7 PM  
Senior Luncheon 11:30 AM
- May 20** Select Board 7 PM
- May 27** Memorial Day – Town Office Closed
- May 28** Planning Board 7 PM

# Parks & Recreation News

## SENIOR LUNCHEON

**May 14** Pulled Pork, Cole Slaw and Local Musical Group for entertainment!

**Next luncheon is June 4**

## Spring Recreation News

**Little League and Farm League practices are underway! Games begin in early May and continue through most of June. Stop out and support our young ball players!**

**The tennis/pickleball courts are now open for play!**

**P&R News:** to get regular recreation news, sign up for our email list on the town website

The St. George Fire Department meets every Wednesday at 7:00 pm at the Tenants Harbor Fire Station.

## TOWN INFORMATION

**Town Office:** 372-6363 **Fax:** 372-8954

**Hours:** Monday-Friday 8 am-4 pm

**Transfer Station:** 372-6451

**Hours:** Tue through Sat 8-4

### Select Board & Assessors

|                     |          |
|---------------------|----------|
| Van Thompson, Chair | 372-8000 |
| Randy Elwell        | 372-0602 |
| Steve Cartwright    | 372-6534 |
| Jane Conrad         | 372-6621 |
| Wendy Carr          | 372-0645 |
|                     |          |

# Conservation Commission

## Trails

### Yuck! It's Still Mud Season

**Tips for protecting the trails in town during Mud Season.** Start by avoiding the impulse to walk around muddy areas to keep feet dry. Walking on the edges of trails beats down the vegetation, widens the trail and causes damage to both the trail and surrounding environment. Trails that are over saturated are vulnerable to long term damage from soil compaction and erosion with every footstep, making it harder for vegetation to grow and leaving rocks and roots exposed.

Trails that are better for mud season:

- Fort Point
- Meadow Brook
- Clark island
- West side of Town Forest to Jones Brook

Trails to avoid during mud season:

- East Side of Town Forest
- Les Hyde (School)
- Bamford

**Fort Point Trail:** The trail may be closed for short periods of time this month to perform remedial work and repair the winter storm damage. Please respect these temporary closures to allow the work to proceed efficiently. We are planning an "Opening Celebration" after the repairs are completed. Once finalized an announcement will be posted on the Town website.

### To Mow or Not to Mow??

Yes, it's No Mow May month. By not mowing you are helping the environment by not disturbing the ecosystem that is coming alive in your lawn. The downside is that by the end of May you could have some fairly tall grass to mow. If you check on the internet you will find some mixed opinions on this practice.

There are many factors to consider in addition to the mowing challenge. Are you applying any type of lawn treatment? How large of an area are you mowing? Is your grass a thick turf with little else growing in it? In these cases, it's better to mow.

Another concern is the long-term impact. Here the opinion is to ask the bigger question: how much of your yard is insect, pollinator, and bird friendly? It turns out that you have a much bigger environmental impact addressing these areas than by not mowing your lawn in May. Reducing the size of your lawn and adding plants and shrubs that are pollinator and bird friendly will have a much bigger impact.

One of the leading experts in this area is Doug Tallamy, who has written several books and given many talks on this issue. Here are some steps he gives to help you Rewild your lawn:

**1. Shrink your lawn.** Tallamy recommends halving the area devoted to lawns in the continental United States—reducing water, pesticide and fertilizer use. Replace grass with plants that sustain more animal life, he says: “Every little bit of habitat helps.”

**2. Remove invasive plants.** Introduced plants sustain less animal diversity than natives do. Worse, some exotics crowd out indigenous flora. Notable offenders: Japanese honeysuckle, Oriental bittersweet, multiflora rose and kudzu.

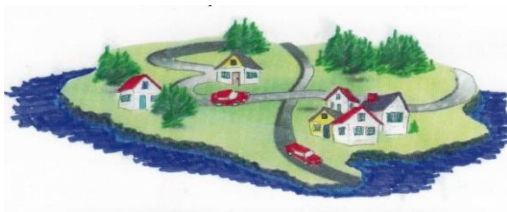
**3. Create no-mow zones.** Native caterpillars drop from a tree’s canopy to the ground to complete their life cycle. Put mulch or a native ground cover such as Virginia creeper (not English ivy) around the base of a tree to accommodate the insects. Birds will benefit, as well as moths and butterflies.

**4. Plant keystone species.** Among native plants, some contribute more to the food web than others. Native oak, cherry, cottonwood, willow and birch are several of the best tree choices.

**5. Welcome pollinators.** Goldenrod, native willows, asters, sunflowers, evening primrose and violets are among the plants that support beleaguered native bees.

An excellent Smithsonian article featuring Tallamy covers this topic extensively. Here’s the link: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/meet-ecologist-who-wants-unleash-wild-backyard-180974372/>





## **We'll Take You to PT!**

Tis the season, for knee replacements, shoulder surgery and the like. Which means, multiple physical therapy appointments. We know you have family and friends who will help get you there, but so will we! Why not spread the rides out between all of us and get yourself up and walking in record time!

All St George residents are welcome to use this service and donations are welcome at any time, but not required. So, unburden your family and friends and give us a call.

If you need a ride, call us. If you'd like to drive, call us. If you want to donate, send a check to PO Box 172, Tenants Harbor, ME.

Call 691-7069

[ridesinstgeorgeme.com](http://ridesinstgeorgeme.com)



## Town Tech Tip

### By Bill Batty

#### St. George Peninsula Internet Options, Installment Two

In last month's article I mentioned that I would be covering what Internet options are available to people here on the peninsula, and which ones you would want to consider for your network needs. In that first article we discussed various terms that get thrown around in marketing materials. The more you understand what those terms are, the better shopper you will be—because you will understand if you're comparing apples to apples, or Apples to PCs (so to speak). We talked about the difference between speed, bandwidth, and latency. Your ideal Internet connection would be high speed, high bandwidth, and low latency.

Fiber Internet, and its introduction to our area, is the catalyst behind this series of articles. Many are asking about all the Fidium ads in their mailboxes. The St. George Message Board on Facebook gets frequent questions about this new system.

Fiber optic cables (or frequently called just "fiber") are thin—very thin—cables made of glass. The cables plug into a fiber "transceiver" which converts the digital information from your computer into pulses of light. The light flashes on and off, working in binary, zeros or ones, on or off. Since we are talking about light, and specifically the *speed* of light, fiber Internet is *very fast*, and is the ideal solution for the consumer on the peninsula.

It is high speed. In fact, it is light speed! Current routers and switches and hardware used to run a fiber network can't run as fast as the cables themselves. The bottleneck on a fiber network isn't the speed of the fiber cable; we just can't make (yet) hardware fast enough to max out the fiber cables.

It is high bandwidth. You will not have to worry about whether your fiber connection will support all the computers, laptops, tablets, phones, smart TVs, Roku, and WIFI refrigerators in your house. The other hardware on your network (like your router) will bog down well before a fiber connection gets full.

Latency. Remember that from last month? How long does it take the connection to get moving? That is latency. When you turn a light on, how long does it take the light to reach your eyes? I suppose it depends on how far away your eyes are from the light, right? In one second, a pulse of light can travel the distance equal to going around the Earth about 7.5 times. Light gets moving fast; it has low latency. Of all the connections available to consumers, fiber has the lowest latency.

High speed + high bandwidth + low latency = an ideal Internet connection. There is one thing missing from that equation though: price.

For the past dozen years or so I have used a cable Internet connection at my home. When I first got the connection, I had a 10 megabit connection for download speed, and a one meg connection for upload. (Slight rabbit trail here. Most Internet connections are asymmetrical: your download speed is faster than your upload speed. Most consumers bring more data INTO their machines than they send OUT of their computers. Receiving email is downloading; sending email is uploading. Watching a clip on YouTube? Downloading. Putting a clip ON YouTube for others to watch? That's uploading. Most people do far more downloading than uploading. Fiber connections generally offer symmetrical connections; they upload as fast as they download.) When Time Warner was sold to Spectrum, my speed jumped from 10 megs down (which was working fine for a family of five and all our devices) to 100 megs. Then from there it jumped to 300 megs! And for that 300-meg connection I was paying about \$75/month.

When Fidium became available to me in downtown Spruce Head, I *didn't* change immediately. "But Bill," you say, "you just explained how fiber connection is the ideal. Why didn't you switch?" **Price.**

At the time, Fidium was offering a 12-month promotional deal on their 50 meg symmetrical (upload and download speed are the same) connection. At that point, I was still on the 100-meg cable plan. For the first 12 months, I would indeed be saving money by switching to Fidium. *After* that first year, though, I would have been paying *more* for a *slower* connection. Yes, I would have had faster upload speeds, but I didn't care about that. Yes, I would have had better latency, but for what I was doing (watching TV and browsing the Internet) latency was not a concern. So I didn't switch.

Recently, though, the pricing structure of Fidium has changed. Now Fidium is offering a 300 meg down (same as my cable plan had been), 300 meg up (much faster than the 10 meg I had been getting) for \$45 for the first year. After that one year is up the plan jumps to \$65—but that is still less than the \$75 I was getting from Spectrum. So now I have made the switch.

What are my impressions of my new fiber Internet connection? I wasn't *unhappy* with my previous connection, so I haven't noticed too much. My bank account DOES like the lower price. Just yesterday I uploaded a video to YouTube, and that was MUCH faster than my previous connection. (But honestly, I don't upload videos frequently. I wouldn't have switched just for that.) Overall though, based on the lower price, I am glad I switched. If fiber Internet is available at your location, I suggest you consider switching too.

Next month, we'll look at cable Internet connections.

## **Town Budget Committee Opening**

In St. George the Budget Committee provides oversight and a third viewpoint (with the town manager and Select Board) in building the town's budget each year. Would YOU like a say? Stalwart committee member, Dave Percival, is stepping down after a long period of valuable service and we need a new member as well as an alternate. Some financial experience is useful, but not absolutely necessary. Committee members commit for three years and alternates commit for one year. If you are interested in serving, please be in touch with the town office.

**Town of St George  
PO Box 131  
Tenants Harbor, ME.  
04860**