

THE BALLARDVALE GAZETTE

NEWSLETTER OF THE BALLARDVALE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

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BallardVale, Massachusetts

Spring-Summer 2022

The Dogs of Pole Hill

Our BallardVale neighborhood is as diverse in dogs as it is in people. I see Labrador retrievers (yellow, black, chocolate), golden retrievers, shepherds, a boxer, poodles, spaniels, mixed breeds, and so-called pocketbook dogs! I see people walking throughout the neighborhood with their dogs. And not just on sidewalks.

Out of 365 days a year, I probably walk the trails in Pole Hill over 500 times...how's that? Well, in nice weather I take my dog along the trails at least twice a day. Even with that frequency, rarely do I encounter others. During the pandemic, the number of people enjoying the woods increased but is now back to many of the regulars: same people, same dogs. I am not complaining. I love having the woods to myself, but it is always nice to bump into others and their dogs enjoying this slice of woods in our BallardVale backyard! The dogs love it too!

Of the dogs I encounter in Pole Hill, I know many of their names, their "hoomens" not so much! The dogs and their personalities shine in the woods. There is a black lab, Derp, who is a strong boy. He comes to say hello, then goes about thrashing through the

woods happy as can be. A yellow lab pup Murphy, cute as a button, is learning the trails. There is Abbot, a yellow lab. He loves to lie down before greeting other dogs and their "hoomens" but only for a second as there are woods to run through and a river to swim in. There is Bri, now solo as she runs along never far from her "hoomens," surely missing her friend Rosey, but running with her in spirit. There is the ever-sweet Halo, another beautiful black lab, always

greeting me, waiting for her cookie. There is Red, who I think looks like a deer with his red color and white spots, as he gracefully jumps through the woods.

These encounters with dogs are brief, each dog and human just saying hello, getting some fresh air and exercise, and enjoying moments in the woods. The dogs I'm sure get a much-needed rest when they get home, giving their "hoomens" a break to do people things!

I can tell the change of seasons in Pole Hill when I see the dogs. It is either spring (mud season), summer (swimming in the Shawsheen River), fall (hunting season, wearing orange collars and vests), or winter (following animal tracks in the snow). Whatever the time of year, it is good to see the dogs and their "hoomens" enjoying Pole Hill. A dog is a very special companion and no matter where you walk, know that your dog loves your company.

— Teresa Padvaikas



Abbot the Lab, happy and muddy from a romp in the Shawsheen River.

Fire Station Dedication

It's official — the ribbon was cut in November and the new Ballardvale Fire Station has been dedicated. The facility is named for the late William T. Downs, longtime Andover fire fighter, former fire chief and Select Board member, and active town volunteer. According to Andover Preservation Commission Chair Karen Herman, many organizations and groups contributed to the design — and completion — of the station project, in addition to the BVHDC and the Commission. Architect Craig Gibson, a member of the Commission, created the design. Staff members from the Fire Department, Facilities, and Town Building Committee, their architects, the town manager, community members, and many others helped to refine the design and move the project forward. The result is impressive and Ballardvale now has a fire station that should serve the community well for many years to come. Plans for the vacant lot next to the fire station are not yet finalized, but they include parking spaces for the playground as well as meetings and events at the station. Design plans for the other side of the station, the intersection of Clark Road and Andover Street, will soon be ready for review by the BVHDC.

BVHDC Opportunity

The BallardVale Historic District Commission is looking for some new members. The group meets monthly, usually on the first Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. For information, contact Diane Derby: derby01@comcast.net.

A Neighborhood Invitation

You are invited to join a growing number of neighbors in the Ballardvale Andover Community group on Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/588290905279590>

The group is the brainchild of Ashley Olsen, who lives on Clark Road. "I started the Facebook page to try to connect the Ballardvale community a bit more and get to know our neighbors," she said. "If anyone has trouble finding the group, they can always email me at AshleyLynnOlsen@gmail.com.



The tree lighting is the profile picture for the Ballardvale Andover Community Facebook group.

Tree-Lighting Organizer Needed

A popular neighborhood tradition is in danger. The annual tree lighting needs a new organizer(s), or it will be no more. The event, which takes place on the first Sunday in December, can count on many veteran volunteers who know how it all works. Last year's organizer, Anna Kantzios, is unable to lead this year but will provide and work at the kids craft table once again. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity to contribute to a much-appreciated community event, contact Diane Derby, derby01@comcast.net.

Share Your Vale Stories

Barbara Burke is extending an open invitation to everyone who grew up in Ballardvale. Here is her message:

I grew up in and have resided in the Vale nearly my entire life. In 2021 I organized Ballardvale Day. During that lovely day, I had the chance to chat with many people and realized that there are so many stories from the past and present that I'd love to hear and share about Ballardvale.

[Creating videos] is a very interesting and accessible way to share our individual and common experiences in Ballardvale. I'd like to share the stories at the next Ballardvale Day on September 24, 2022. A YouTube channel will be created so that more people can hear them. If you'd like to participate, please email me:

barbaraburkerealtor@gmail.com.

FAQs

Ask the BVHDC (BallardVale Historic District Commission)

We are thinking about installing solar panels. Is this the kind of change that needs approval from the BVHDC?

Yes. Like most things visible from a public way, solar panels need to be reviewed and approved by the BVHDC. We're both fans of energy efficiency and fans of houses looking like they reflect the style in which they were built. When possible, it would be helpful to put the solar panels in a location that's less visible from the street. But the Commission understands that's not always possible.

Go Paperless!

As an email subscriber you'll be among the first to receive the *BallardVale Gazette* — complete with **color photos** — while saving money for the town. Just send your name, street address, and email to Karen English: kfeenglish@gmail.com

Questions? Suggestions? Feedback?

If you have a question for the BallardVale Historic District Commission or a suggestion for a topic you'd like to see covered in a future issue of the BallardVale Gazette, please contact the editors:

Karen English / kfeenglish@gmail.com

Joe Halpern / joehalp@gmail.com

BallardVale Historic District Commission

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CALENDAR

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| June 1 | BallardVale Historic District Commission Monthly Meeting
Meeting held virtually — 7:00 p.m. |
| July 6 | BallardVale Historic District Commission Monthly Meeting
Meeting held virtually — 7:00 p.m. |
| August 3 | BallardVale Historic District Commission Monthly Meeting
Meeting location TBD — 7:00 p.m. |
| Sept. 7 | BallardVale Historic District Commission Monthly Meeting
Meeting location TBD — 7:00 p.m. |
| Sept. 24 | Ballardvale Day
Ballardvale Playground and Ballardvale Green. — Hours TBD |