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MOUNT HOLLY CHIT CHAT

49/12

February 2024

PC Administrator Office Hours: Tues 2-3 pm or by Appointment 802-259-2391 administrative.officer@mounthollyvt.org

Church Listing on back page "Who's Got It Locally?"

Mount Holly Community Association – Contact MHC AVT@gmail.com

Mount Holly Museum-Open Jul & Aug Sat & Sun 2-4pm www.mounthollyvtmuseum.org 802-259-2460 ddevereux@vermontel.net

Mt. Holly NewsFlash Town email sign up at mthollynewsflash@gmail.com Check Out www.mthollynewsflash.blogspot.com

Town Library: In-Person with Mask Sat 9-1, Mon 9-1, Tue 1-5, Wed 2-4, P.O. Box 93, Belmont, VT 05730 Call 802-259-3707

Town Office Hours: Mon. to Thurs. 8:30 am – 4:00 pm Closed Fri. & Holidays Phone 802-259-2391

Town Treasurer's Office Hours: Mon 8:30 am – 12:00 pm Wed 12:00 pm – 4:00 pm and by Appointment 802-259-2391

Town Lister Hours: Tuesdays 10:00 am – 2:00 pm and by Appointment 802-259-2391

Town Garage: 802-259-3179

Burn Permits: Call Fire Warden ~ Jim Seward 802-786-3408 or 802-259-2211

TRANSFER SITE: Sat. 8 am – 2 pm & Sun. 9 am – 12 pm

February 2024



1 st	Fire Dept. Business Meeting, Fire Station		7:00 pm
	<i>Freedom Day President Lincoln Approves 13th Amendment Abolishing Slavery 1865</i>		
2 nd		<i>Ground Hog Day</i>	
5 th		<i>John Jeffries One of America's First Weather Observers b. 1744</i>	
6 th	Mt. Holly Community Association Meeting, Library	<i>40th Pres Ronald Reagan b 1911</i>	7:00 pm
	MH Snow Flyers Meeting via Zoom		6:30 pm
	Mount Holly Conservation Commission		7:00 pm
7 th	Mt. Holly PTSA Meeting, MH School	<i>Bobcat Season Ends</i>	6:00 pm
8 th	Fire Dept. Drill, Fire Station	<i>Boy Scouts Founded 1910</i>	7:00 pm
9 th		<i>9th Pres William Henry Harrison 1773</i>	
Sun 11 th		<i>Thomas Alva Edison Founder of General Electric Co. 1847</i>	
12 th		<i>16th Pres Abraham Lincoln b 1809</i>	
13 th	Com Guild Meeting, IOOF Hall, Belmont	<i>Mardi Gras</i>	9:00 am
	Select Board Meeting, Town Office	<i>Boston Latin School First Public School in USA 1635</i>	6:30 pm
14 th	LMHUUS Meeting,	<i>League of Women Voters Formed 1920 – Ash Wednesday</i>	6:00 pm
	ODD Fellows Meeting, IOOF Hall	<i>St Valentine's Day</i>	7:30 pm
15 th	Fire Dept. work night, Fire Stations	<i>Susan B Anthony Women's' Rights Leader 1820</i>	7:00 pm
		<i>Sinking Of The USS Maine 1898</i>	
19 th		<i>President's Day</i>	
20 th		<i>John Glenn First American to Orbit Earth on Friendship 7, 1962</i>	
21 st	Mt. Holly Town Library Meeting, Library, Belmont		6:30 pm
	Mount Holly Planning Commission, MH Town Office & Via Zoom		7:00 pm
22 nd	Fire Dept. Drill, Fire Station	<i>1st Pres George Washington 1732</i>	7:00 pm
23 rd		<i>Battle of Iwo Jima 1945</i>	
Sat 24 th		<i>Full Snow Moon</i>	
26 th		<i>Levi Strauss 1829</i>	
27 th	Community Guild Meeting, IOOF Hall, Belmont		9:00 am
	<i>US Supreme Court Upholds 19th Amendment For Women's Right to Vote 1922 ~ Battle of Java Sea 1942</i>		
28 th	ODD Fellows Meeting, IOOF Hall, Belmont		7:00 pm
29 th	Fire Dept. work night, Fire Stations		7:00 pm



* * * * *

Emergency Services

MH Fire Dept. Chief Bill Austin 910-915-5954	802-259-2700	911	Poison Control	(802) 658-3456
MH Fire Warden – Jim Seward	802-786-3408	802-259-2211	American Red Cross	802-773-9159
Ludlow Ambulance Service Non-Emergency	802-228-2880	911	Game Warden – Tim Carey	802-773-9101
MH Constable	NONE		Health Officer – Chad Farrar	802-342-1366
MH Animal Control	Cell text only 802-	H 802-	Vermont State Police	802-773-9101

Send ARTICLES to: Diana Garrow, 3379 Shunpike Rd., Mt. Holly, VT 05758 Phone 802-259-2314 or E-Mail to chitchat@vermontel.net Check out Mt. Holly Web Site www.mounthollyvt.org

“The views and opinions expressed in the enclosed articles are solely those of their authors and are not necessarily those of the Chit Chat, its staff, or its board of directors. The authors are solely responsible for the content of their articles.”

Donation Thank You's: Cindy Dilworth & Tump Chiari (Squeels On Wheels) * Wanda & Mike Spatzer * Stella & Vernon Beauchain * Richard & Linda Huck * Scott Crawford (Balsam Barn & Salt Ash Nursery) * Ted & Sue Crawford * Gail Beardmore (Engel & Volkers Okemo Woodstock) * Alice Perry * June Capron * Bob & Lynne Herbst * Michael Huck (Champlain Timber Craft) * Susan Starr-Adams (eXp Realty) * Jill Cannon * Benjamin Turco (Branch Brook Excavating) * Mary & Jeff Smith (Smith Maple Crest Farm) * Mount Holly Community Assoc. * Carol Pike * Kathy & Jim Heald * Matthew Harris & Laura Scheiber *



February Birthdays: 2nd-Justin Bussino (2004) 4th-Chris Charuk 6th-Candace Bussino 8th-Alyssa Collins * Debbie Pearce 9th-Emma Coldwell 10th-Amy Perrino * Jack Koponen 11th-Mary Desautels 18th-Andy Bolalek * Peggy Taylor 19th-Dennis Turco * Denise Turco 20th-Barbara Palotta 21st-Ben Veysey 22nd-Susan Horsman 25th-Meghan Garrow 27th-Mary Crawford



February Anniversaries: 17th-Lisa & Todd Bussino (1990) 28th-Andy & Teresa Bolalek

If you would like to add or remove yours or a family members birthday and or anniversary from the list please send the information to me at the above address or e-mail me at chitchat@vermontel.net or call me at 802-259-2314.

Local Post Office Hours

Mount Holly		802-259-2796
Window	Mon – Fri	8:00 am – 10:00 am
	&	2:45 pm – 4:45 pm
	Sat	7:30 am – 10:30 am
Lobby Hours:	Mon – Fri	8:00 am – 4:45 pm
Belmont		802-259-2790
Window	Mon – Fri	7:30 am – 9:30 am
	&	2:45 pm – 4:45 pm
	Sat	8:00 am – 10:45 am
Lobby Hours:	Mon – Fri	7:30 am – 4:45 pm
East Wallingford		802-259-2829
Window	Mon – Fri	7:00 am – 11:00 am
	Sat	7:00 am – 10:00 am
Lobby Hours:	Mon – Fri	7:00 am – 4:45 pm
Cuttingsville/Shrewsbury		802-492-3585
Window Hours	Mon – Fri	7:30 am – 10:30 am
	&	11:30 am – 2:30 pm
	Sat	8:00 am – 11:00 am
Lobby Hours	Mon – Fri	7:30 am – 5:00 pm
	Sat	7:30 am – 11:00 am
Ludlow		802-228-7436
Post Master: Dawn Howlett		
Lobby Hours:	Mon – Fri	6:30 am – 5:30 pm
	Sat	6:30 am – 11:00 am
Window Hours:	Mon – Fri	8:30 am – 5:00 pm
	Sat	8:30 am – 10:30 am
Wallingford Post Master Denise Young		802-446-2140



Mount Holly Chit Chat, Inc.

PUBLISHER: Mount Holly Chit Chat, Inc., a Non Profit Vermont Corporation; Federal 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt statuses

BOARD of DIRECTORS:

PRESIDENT: Dennis Devereux V. **PRESIDENT:** David Venter
SECRETARY: Terri Isidro **TREASURER:** Diana Garrow
DIRECTORS: Heather Garrow, Christine Pratt, Kevin Plew
MANAGING EDITOR: Diana Garrow
ASSISTANT to the EDITOR: Heather Garrow

SUBMISSIONS: Deadline is 22nd By 6:00 pm of each month for the following month. Send to chitchat@vermontel.net or mail to Mount Holly Chit Chat, 3379 Shunpike Rd., Mount Holly, VT 05758 **Phone 802-259-2314.** E-mail or mail articles on Town news, events, and issues; op-eds and essays; poems, jokes, recipes, nature observations, reviews, obituaries. Include name, address, and phone number. Anonymous articles will not be accepted. Mailed copies should be camera-ready, i.e., ready to be scanned into the paper. Contact the editor for further information. Contact the editor for inclusion in the coming month's announcements of birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, graduations, retirements, and other milestones.

PHOTOS: Color photos of events are required as they look great on the Town website.

LETTERS to the EDITOR: email; 300 word limit; include name, address, and phone number of person submitting article and are printed at editors' discretion. Letters are subject to editing for reasons of space and clarity.

DISCLAIMER: The views and opinions expressed in the enclosed articles are solely those of their authors and are not necessarily those of the Chit Chat, its staff, or its board of directors. The authors are solely responsible for the content of their articles.

ADVERTISEMENTS: Camera ready. Contact editor with questions, or to assist with ad creation (cost \$15).

RATES: Back Page: \$25 Per Listing for one year

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Third Page:	\$45	\$125	\$225	\$350	\$450
Half Page:	\$75	\$200	\$375	\$550	\$750
Full Page:	\$125	\$325	\$625	\$1025	\$1250

FREE ADVERTISING: Only Community and Non-Profit (501 c3) tax-exempt organizations may qualify for free advertising in the Mount Holly Chit Chat, subject to approval by the Board of Directors. Articles submitted for print which promote the sale of goods or services for financial gain will be charged the Chit Chat's set rate for advertisements.

CIRCULATION: The Mount Holly Chit Chat is delivered to every residence in Mount Holly and mailed to out-of-Town property owners as well as other folks with Mount Holly ties.

INTERNET: Each month's edition is published on the Mount Holly Town website: www.mounthollyvt.org

MEMBERSHIP IN CORPORATION: Open to all who live, work, or own property in Mount Holly and who make an annual donation of any amount.

The Annual Membership meeting is held on the Third Tuesday in September in the Mount Holly Town Office. The meeting includes the annual report and election of the Board of Directors

ORGANIZATION SUPPORT: The Mount Holly Chit Chat has been published each month since 1974 and has been supported solely by donations until 2006 when readership was expanded as a public service to all who reside, vote, or own property in Mount Holly. The Chit Chat is supported by donations, advertisements, and appropriation from the Town.

Mt. Holly NewsFlash: Mount Holly's Town email system. Primary attendant is Kevin Plew and backup attendant Stu Berry at stumberry1@gmail.com . Email items to mthollynewsflash@gmail.com www.mthollynewsflash.blogspot.com



February 2024 Mount Holly Chit Chat Inc.



James Ritchie

James Ritchie, 68, of Mount Holly, died on Monday December 11, 2023, at his residence, following a struggle with cancer.

He was born in Fair Haven, the son of Frederick and Pearl (Gould) Ritchie. He attended local schools.

James spent most of his working years as a carpenter.

He enjoyed hunting, fishing and working on Classic cars.

James is survived by his wife Linda (Decell) Ritchie of Mount Holly, sons James Ritchie Jr of Cuttingsville, stepsons Gordon Ritchie of Burlington and Joshua Stickney of West Rutland, daughters Laura Brileya, Kim Woitkowski, and stepdaughter Alyssa Simpson, all of Florida, and Misty Ritchie of Rutland, brothers Earl Ritchie of Benson, John and Larry Ritchie, both of Burlington, Gordon Ritchie of Proctor and Richard Ritchie of Rutland, sisters Mary Fish of Clarendon, Helen Lamb of Proctor and Joanne Ritchie of Rutland, 17 grandchildren and 18 Great grandchildren and several nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by a daughter Elizabeth Decell, brother Fred Ritchie and sisters Connie and Christine. Friends did call from 1 to 3 pm, Saturday December 30 at the Aldous Funeral Home, 44 North Main Street in Rutland. His remains will be scattered in a location significant to the family in the spring.



Gerald Campeau

Gerald Campeau, 72 of Mt Holly died December 25, 2023 at the Rutland Regional Medical Center. He was born on October 23, 1951 in Cornwall, Ontario, Canada, the son of Edgar and Annette (Cuerrier) Campeau.

Gerald attended St. Lawrence College in Cornwall, Ontario, Canada where he played Ice Hockey. He was a terminal manager for Consolidated Freightways in Rutland and Bellows Falls for many years, then worked for Shrewsbury Mountain School doing maintenance until his retirement in 2021.

He enjoyed building things. Survivors include his wife, Jane (Dufresne) Campeau, whom he married on July 31, 1993 in Massena, NY, two brothers Ronald (Elizabeth) Campeau and Gilles Campeau both of Canada, several nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his parents.

A celebration of his life will be at a later date. Arrangements are with the Aldous Funeral Home.



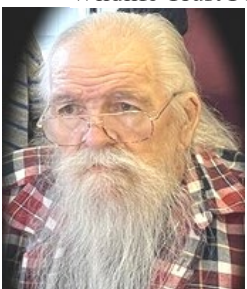
Arthur B. Scales

Arthur B. Scales passed away at Mountain View Center on Saturday, December 30, 2023, following a period of declining health. Born May 16, 1936 at home in Ludlow, Vermont, to George and Lillian (Rhodes) Scales. Arthur was one of six siblings and attended Black River High School before enlisting in the Navy, where he was stationed in post WW2 Italy. After the Navy, Arthur returned to Ludlow and married Sylvia (Saari) with whom he had two children. Working most of his life as a machinist, Arthur worked at General Electric, where he met his wife Frances, and later at Bryant Gear Shaper before working as a local carpenter in his retirement years.

From an early age, Arthur was known to have a fishing pole or rifle in hand, and took great pleasure in his time outdoors, often bringing home birds' nests and other wonders of nature for Frances to enjoy. He was a trapper and continued that hobby well into his eighties before his body could no longer continue with the physical demands of it.

Arthur was predeceased by his parents George and Lillian Scales and his first wife Sylvia, as well as his siblings Elmer (Bunky) Scales, James Scales, Eleanor Bickford, Janet Stewart, and Aurilla Manning. He is survived by Frances, his devoted wife of 35 years, his children Steven of Kenai, Alaska, and a daughter Sherry and her son Christopher of Ludlow, and Frances' children Tim (Susie) Blanchard of Danby, and Shawn (Kenny) Martell of Danby, along with 3 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

The family would like to thank the staff at Mountain View Center for their kindness, giving comfort and care in Arthur's final days. In lieu of flowers a donation in his name may be made to the Shriner's Hospital for Children or the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Trust Fund. A celebration of life will be held at a later date.



Gary E Pike

Gary E Pike, 75, of Mount Holly passed away January 8th at the Vermont Veterans Home with his wife and daughter at his side. Gary was born in Springfield to Donald and Emma (Clokey) Pike. He grew up and attended school in Ludlow, completing his final year and graduating from Springfield High School in 1966.

Gary served 4 years - or "364 days, but I didn't keep count", as he was fond of saying - in the US Air Force as a jet engine mechanic, traveling to several foreign countries including a TDY assignment at Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam.

On July 21, 1973 he married Carol Ann Hastings in Ludlow. Gary worked at several area businesses including machine shops at GE & Fellows Gear Shaper. He obtained his CDL and drove for Idlenot, Seward Dairy, HA Eddy/Irving & Ethier Trucking, among others. He also owned his own dump truck and was self-employed. Gary was a previous member of both the Ludlow and Mount Holly Fire Departments, and a past President and member of the Killington Sports Car Club. He enjoyed working on his own race cars to drive in Hillclimbs at several Vermont Mountains. Gary joined softball, bowling & golf teams in earlier years. He also enjoyed getting together with friends & family to play cards and was especially fond of trips to his grandfather's farm & to his brother's home in Maine for deer hunting season.

Gary is survived by his wife, his daughter Jessica Pike (Mark Revesz), his sister Sharon (Warren) Raymond, brother Robert (Cheryl) Pike, grandsons Myles and Marshall Revesz, brother-in-law Larry Rogers, several nieces, nephews & cousins. He was predeceased by his parents, nephew Jason Raymond & sister-in-law Sue Rogers.

The family would like to thank the staff at the VT Veterans Home for the compassionate care they showed to Gary and his family. A celebration of his life will be held in the Spring.

Bone Builders
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9:00 am
Odd Fellows Hall
For Weights and more information
Call Judy Nevin 802-259-2443



Elizabeth Anne Chase

Elizabeth “Beth” Chase of Mount Holly, Vt. passed away on Friday, January 12th, 2024 at the Rutland Regional Medical Center in Rutland, Vt. due to complications from a rare form of cancer. Her husband, Jeffrey Chase, was at her side. Beth loved her life, her job, and she lived her life with gratitude for all the blessings she received.

Beth was born December 3rd, 1979 in Bridgeport, Ct, the daughter of the late Dorothy (LaRoche) Tomkinson, and Victor DeMaria of Fairfield, Ct. She lived her first eight years of life in Westport, Ct. moving with her mom to Rutland Town, Vt. when her mom remarried in 1988.

Beth attended Rutland Town Elementary School where she made many life-long friends. From an early age she developed a passion for horses and riding her own horse, "Glance." Together, Beth and Glance, won many ribbons at events at Pond Hill Stables and elsewhere. In 1995 her parents moved to North Clarendon, Vt. where Beth attended Mill River High School. She was an avid member of the school's drama program and girls' basketball team. Beth was also a happy alumni of the “Gills Girls” team at Gills Deli in Rutland. Graduating Mill River in 1997, Beth attended Ithaca College where she got her Bachelor's

degree in Communications, in 2001.

After college Beth moved to New York City to work in the field of marketing. Then in 2004 she was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer and underwent a long, complex surgery. While recovering from the surgery she decided to make major life changes. These included moving out of New York and furthering her education. In 2007 she met her soon to be husband, Jeffrey Chase, and also graduated from Boston College with a Master's degree in Education. Her first job with her new degree was working as a Special Educator at the CASE Collaborative in Concord, MA where she could begin to follow her passion for helping children with special needs, a sentiment inspired by her physically challenged niece Cassidy.

Beth and Jeff moved to Mount Holly in 2009. Her first professional job in Vermont was teaching at Rutland Town Elementary School where she was delighted to be working side by side with some of the same teachers she had while she was a student there. Her extra-curricular activities included coaching Rutland Town's Middle School basketball team.

Beth and Jeff were married in July, 2010, at Church of the Annunciation in Ludlow, VT, and to the delight of both, their first child, Parker, came along 18 months later, followed two years later by a daughter, Thea. She eventually left Rutland Town Elementary School to work as a Special Educator at the Mount Holly Elementary School, where Parker and Thea became students.

During all this time, Beth never gave up her love of horses and she shared her passion with her daughter, actively volunteering and supporting Thea in Rutland County 4-H events and lessons at the Otter Creek Stables in Wallingford, Vt. She too continued to ride, take lessons and compete in equine events at the Vermont State Fair Grounds and at Otter Creek Stables, where she kept her horse, Zeke. She rode until May of 2023 when her illness forced her into retirement.

While Parker learned to ride as well, his greatest gift from Beth was to share in her insatiable curiosity and love of learning. She often said that her children were the best things she ever did, and that she always felt that given the right start in life that they would do amazing things. It was her passion to share as many of her life experiences and values as possible with Parker and Thea. She wanted above all to see that they were good humans with good values.

Beth is survived by her husband, Jeffrey T. Chase, her children Parker and Thea, her stepfather, Craig Tomkinson of Mount Holly, and father Victor DeMaria of Fairfield, Ct. Additionally she is survived by her sister, Terri DeMaria of Bridgeport, Ct. and stepsister, Breege Tomkinson of Los Angeles, Ca., as well as numerous other family members. She was predeceased by her mother, Dorothy Tomkinson, and stepsister Aubray (Tomkinson) Aubuchea.

A Catholic Mass will be celebrated at 11 a.m. at the Church of the Annunciation in Ludlow on January 27th, 2024 with interment to follow at a later date. In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to Rutland Regional Medical Center, Attn: Rutland Health Foundation, 160 Allen Street, Rutland, VT 05701 Arrangements are under the direction of Clifford Funeral Home in Rutland

***** Hall Rental in Belmont *****
The use of the Hall in Belmont is scheduled by contacting Carol at 802-259-2791, or at tcg2791@yahoo.com . You may also leave a message with Dennis at 802-259-2460, or at ddevereux@vermontel.net .



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Ludlow and Mount Holly School Upgrades

On Monday, Jan 8, Eric Lafayette, an engineer with Energy Efficient Investments Inc., presented the results of the firm's year-long examination of the Ludlow and Mount Holly school buildings and their recommendations at a public forum in Mount Holly. Members of the public offered their opinions and suggestions.

Mr. Lafayette emphasized that some components of both schools are old and need replacement. No major upgrades have been done at either school for more than 20 years. The Ludlow roof is leaking and has little insulation, with an R-value of 2.5 compared with code of R-40. The oil boilers are 50 years old, in need of constant repairs and terribly inefficient. Many aspects of the buildings do not meet current codes. In addition, the Mount Holly School is crowded, with the nurse's office on the stage, separated from the gym only by a curtain, speech, occupational and physical therapy in the cafeteria and music instruction in the gym.

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The major elements of his proposal include:

- Replacing the oil boilers at both schools with efficient wood pellet boilers with LP backup, and ventilation systems with electronic controls,
- Replacing the Ludlow roof and increasing the insulation from R-2.5 to R-40,
- Building a 2000 square foot addition behind the Mount Holly School with a nurse's office, space for special education and a music room
- Enhancing security by rebuilding the schools' entrances and vestibules to make them secure and visible from the office, replacing doors and windows, upgrading fire alarms and other improvements to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and other code issues.

The estimated cost of the proposals is \$9,268,045. Of that amount, \$3.6 million is for replacing the boilers, ventilation systems, controls and associated electrical upgrade at the two schools. Replacing Ludlow's roof will cost \$1.1 million. The Mount Holly addition will cost \$1.4 million. The remaining \$3.1 million will include fire alarms, secured entrances, asbestos abatement, ADA & code work, LED lighting, siding and windows. The work in Ludlow would cost \$5.1 million while Mount Holly would cost \$4.2 million. The work would be paid with a 20-year bond.

Following his report, members of the public offered comments and suggestions. Everyone who spoke supported replacing the old oil boilers, replacing the Ludlow roof and the actions to enhance security and bring the buildings up to code.

Some questioned the proposal for the 2000 square foot addition in Mount Holly, asking whether it needs to be that big and whether there are alternative ways to give the nurse a proper office and provide appropriate space for speech, hearing, occupational and physical therapy instruction. MHS Principal Craig Hutt Vater pointed out that they had already taken closets and converted them to instruction spaces and that there was no other space available. Others spoke of the importance of having appropriate space for these activities, saying that 2000 square feet is not unreasonable for a nurse's office, a therapy room, three small offices for individual instruction and a music room.

One sixth grade student made an eloquent appeal for support to give students better spaces for their work. Some residents highlighted that Mount Holly and Ludlow are in competition for young families and that the quality of our schools is often an important factor in their decisions about where to live. Administrators said that it can be difficult to hire qualified professionals and that potential employees consider the condition of school facilities in making their decisions about where to work.

Beardmore Excavating

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Robert Beardmore, Jr.
beardmoreexc@gmail.com

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On January 17, the Ludlow-Mount Holly Unified Union School District will consider adopting a warrant to ask voters to approve this bond in March. Additional public meetings will be held in the coming months to offer opportunities for residents to have their questions answered and offer suggestions regarding the work. If the voters approve, then work will begin this summer and expect to be completed in the summer of 2025.

Eric Lafayette's full report is available at trsu.org. Okemo Valley TV filmed the forum and it can be viewed at okemovalley.tv/videos. David Martin, Member Ludlow-Mount Holly UUSD School Committee



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Fletcher Memorial Library

Fletcher Memorial Library's, Love Your Library 2nd Annual Online Auction returns on February 2nd and ends on Friday, February 16th at 6 PM. New this year, the auction **will turn LIVE in the library**. All items will be displayed from 4-6 PM on the 16th for your in-person bidding pleasure. Online bidders are encouraged to bid high for any item they just cannot live without, or drop-in and join in the live bidding wars. Along with the ferocious bidding, we will have refreshments; you may learn about our library services, become a library member, and enjoy a lovely evening with friends and community.

This is the library staff's annual event. Over the course of 25 years, we have raised funds to enhance our non-budgetary services. The loaning Pass Program, Libby, Craft and Hobby, additions to and maintenance of our technology are but a few supported services.

Please support us in this year's auction by donating an item(s), cash or bidding. Items must be new, except for collectibles and antiques, limited only by your imagination. Questions, please call the library Monday – Friday 10 AM to 5 PM @ [802-228-8921](tel:802-228-8921). Donations may be dropped off during this same time or arrangements may be made.

Supporting and growing our library services takes a community. We very much look forward to your support. Have Fun with the auction.

Fletcher Memorial Library is an IRS designated 501 (c) 3 institution. All donations are tax deductible. We are not a Municipal Department; rather governance is by our Board of Trustees.

A link will be posted on our web site and by signing up as a bidder you may visit the pre-auction as items are added.

Bidding begins February 2nd
Fletcher Memorial Library /

88 Main Street / Ludlow, VT 05149 WWW.FMLNEWS.ORG

My Mount Holly Concerns

I have attended two meetings on the New Mt. Holly Town Plan. Both times the Belmont group were there in full force in support of the plan. I will agree that they have spent a great deal of time putting together their plan on what should be done at the Town's tax payer's expense. Most of the Town Plan is geared towards Belmont and what should be improved.

If I were considering moving to a new location I would certainly research to see that the Town provided all the amenities I needed such as walking paths through property owners lawns, municipal septic systems, senior housing and cultural activities. Why would you move to Mt. Holly in the first place? You should consider Rutland Town, where this new town plan is more suited. Those of us who were born here would never expect to have the Town provide all the services mentioned in the Town Plan and we certainly, wouldn't be interfering on people's rights to do what they wanted on their property with the amount of property taxes we now pay.

Then we come to the issue of an item, which will be on the ballot in March to have five Selectboard Members.

This Town has had nothing but conflict since the new Town garage was considered. We had a local insurrection. When the Selectboard didn't want to waste more money on additional studies and spend more money on the purchase of land elsewhere. The group of 11 sued the Selectboard, when they weren't getting what they wanted, but was best for the Town. Can you imagine suing the Selectboard in a small Town like Mt. Holly?

Then we move on to the chaos in 2019 – 2022. During this time frame we were dealing with COVID – thanks to Mark Turco and Jeff Chase some of us who don't have all the technology were able to attend Selectboard meetings at the Town garage. Everyone else was at home on Zoom. This still continues today, where organizations heads are home, while some of us attend in person.

To add more confusion we ran a couple years without a chair of the Selectboard. We had two good members of the Planning Commission resign after being insulted and two added to the Planning Commission with the expectation of changing the Town Plan to express more stern verbiage to assure Okemo didn't come on this side of the Mountain and less development in Town.

Then of course we went behind some elected Town Officials backs making decisions without consulting them but expecting them to do the work. Resulting in that person not running for office and the project costing the Town money.

Moving on today we have a new petition out to vote on Town Meeting Day to have a five (5) person Selectboard. Give us a break the (3) person board we have is doing a good job for the whole Town, not just a certain area. They want a five person board so they can control the Town and at which time start implementing parts of the Town Plan that they feel the Town should be doing. If you don't want this to happen Vote NO to a five person Selectboard.

I am so glad my father and all of his friends who did so much for this Town aren't here to witness the behavior of people and to see the changes they want to make, and the restrictions they want on land owners property. My father is probably turning over in his grave. For me at least I'm not going to be around that much longer to have everything I've worked so hard for be regulated by people who didn't grow up here. Christine Pratt

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Keith Hawkins
PRESIDENT

MT. HOLLY, VT

Preschool at Mount Holly School for the

2024-2025 school year:

Students who will be 3 years old on or before August 31st, 2024 will attend school Thursdays and Fridays from 7:45 am - 2:15 pm.

Students who will be 4 years old on or before August 31st, 2024 will attend school Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 7:45 am - 2:15 pm.

Aftercare may be available based on need until 4 pm.

If you have any questions, you may email the preschool teacher: Jenna.Laslow@trsu.org

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2nd Annual Online Auction

WHEN: February 2-16 @ 6 PM

WHERE: Fletcher Memorial Library

WHY: Staff's Annual Fundraiser

An End of Auction Event TBD

Your support enables us to add non-budgetary services, including our Pass Programs, audio & e-books, technology and more!

***** NEW THIS YEAR:** The auction will transition to LIVE in the library for item review & bidding on FRI. Feb 16th from 4-6PM ONLY ***

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Students who reside in Ludlow, Mt. Holly or other "Choice Towns" are invited to apply for 2nd semester as well. For more information, contact ESBR Chair Gary Blodgett at gblodgett@esblackriver.org or call 802-558-3147.

Dear Mount Holly residents:

I am writing in opposition to increasing the number of Selectboard members to five. As a former three-year chair of the Selectboard and with over two decades as Town Moderator I have participated in a significant number of meetings. The current Selectboard (assisted by a very talented Clerk) has and continues to serve the needs of our community.

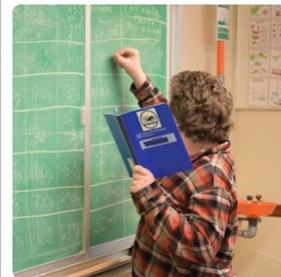
The need to increase the number of the Selectboard should be generated by members of the Selectboard (who unquestionably have the best perspective) and not by members of the general public. This increase was attempted several years ago (by Mount Holly citizens) and was voted down at the Annual Town meeting by the residents. To my knowledge this was the only attempt to increase the number of members. It is a shame that a few citizens are attempting this again and it is concerning that those circulating the petition did not have the courtesy to first state their opinions at a Selectboard meeting. If the majority of the previous and current Selectboard members do not believe this increase is necessary, then simply put, it is not.

You will see a letter from a person(s) supporting this expansion. Please remember that this letter comes from people who do not have any perspective regarding this issue. Attending meetings is a far cry from being a member of the board presiding over the meetings.

Lastly one must question the motivation of those who created this petition. Why circulate a petition without first sharing concerns with the Selectboard at a public meeting? Increasing the number of Selectboard members may be an attempt to increase our "government". It is not necessary, and I urge you to vote No. Sincerely, Ted Crawford

ESBR Merit Scholarships

The Expeditionary School at Black River (ESBR) is pleased to announce that they are offering 3 Merit Scholarships for the 2nd semester of the 2023-24 school year. The Merit Scholarship offers full tuition for students who qualify.



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Saturday, February 10, 2024
6:30 pm // Ludlow Town Hall
with guest performer Al Getler
comedian & ventriloquist

Celebrate 25 Years of William Raveis Vermont Properties

News from the Mount Holly Community Association (MHCA)

Welcome to the second month of the year and finally we have some winter weather. Have you gotten out to enjoy the winter wonderland? Although cold weather comes with mixed reviews, honestly is there anything more stunning than a fresh snow with blue skies and lots of sunshine? A year ago, last February MHCA was lamenting the brutally cold weather because our boiler was on the fritz and it couldn't have happened during a more inconvenient time (if there ever is one) - you remember the negative temperatures and even colder wind chills. We were traumatized and worried about bursting pipes. Fortunately, this February we are toasty warm thanks to our new unit and the generous MHCA membership; we could not have done it without your support!

Even though we do not have any activities scheduled for the next two months, it does not mean that we are in hibernation; in fact we are planning for the upcoming Spring Mud Fling Dance. This year we have a great Vermont based band who will surely inspire you to dance with their classic blues, Latin soul, and rock and roll music 🎵. Mark your calendars NOW for Saturday April 20th to dance the night away with Frydaddy. We guarantee you will have fun, especially if you bring some friends! More details to come...

Winter is a time when gardeners are busy looking at seed catalogs, imagining spectacular harvests, contemplating what colorful flowers they may add to our slowly changing weather zone. This means MHCA is exploring who might be interested in this year's Garden Tour on July 27th. We hope you might consider being a part of this fundraiser; if you are interested please reach out to Leah at mhcavt@gmail.com and she will gladly give you more information. Speaking from personal experience, it's a great way to get motivated to whip those gardens into shape and then enjoy how beautiful they look all summer long.

Last month we took a break from the 'Meet your MHCA Board of Directors' series to talk about volunteerism. We hope to have planted a seed about some of the many ways you can contribute to making our community vibrant and strong by staying connected and giving back. This month we return to our series with someone who has taken volunteering seriously. Pam McLaughlin has been a part of the MHCA Board for 2 years; she and her husband Pat have been a part of the Mount Holly community for over 12 years. As many of the flatlanders have, Pam visited Vermont, fell in love with its beauty, independence, and sense of community and decided life would be a whole lot better if she moved here. It's a common story for many of the Board members. Pam is the mother of three children and has eight grandchildren.

Pam and Pat both have their real estate licenses and although Pat continues to work full time in the field, Pam's real love has been working and volunteering with the elderly. Pam, who is hospice certified, has been an Activities Director (most recently at the Pines in Rutland) and shared that she is energized by helping keep people active and impacting their lives in positive ways. If you've met her you know she is like a ray of sunshine with her enthusiasm, energy and empathy. Not only that, but she also LOVES to cook and is well known for her desserts in particular; "baking is my happy place". MHCA is all about focusing on board members' strengths, and this past year Pam initiated the Pie Contest at Mount Holly Day picnic, which was not only delicious but a great success. When asked "what's something that folks might not know about you" she quickly responded "I went to school in Fargo, North Dakota on a running and track scholarship - as a long distance runner". And, although she majored in Fashion Merchandising/Business in college, she never had a job related to her education until recently when she started working part-time at 3 Graces in Ludlow. Our interview ended up in a roundabout way with three pieces of advice she has given her children - which seemed worthy of repeating...

1. Get a job you love - since you spend most of your life working.
2. Get a good mattress - since sleeping is the other place you spend most of your time.
3. Make sure you like who is next to you - referencing your choice in long term partners/marriage.

And that our friends... is the MHCA news for February. Make it a great month!

The Mount Holly Writers' Group

The Writers' Group will meet again on Monday, February 5th at 1 p.m. in the Mount Holly Library. I will spend some time on a group activity to black a scene. Thank you. connor@ohio.edu



MT HOLLY PTG FUNDRIASER!!

Dear Families and Community Members,

We are excited to announce that we will be fundraising with High Mowing Organic Seeds again this year to support our school, at a 50%+ profit Margin this is a HIGH performing fundraiser for us!!! Each student will receive a fundraising form that contains the varieties offered on one side, and an order form on the other side. Please make your selections on the order form, and return to the school with payments no later than **February 9th, 2024**.

High Mowing Seeds are 100% organic and non-GMO, so while you are raising money for your school you are also supporting a healthy community, and healthy planet. If gardening isn't your thing, consider purchasing some as gifts for the gardeners in your life. The seeds will arrive in perfect time to start indoors, or to direct seed in the spring.

Order Forms are available at the TOWN OFFICE.

Please include your name, Phone and email on the form. Please make checks payable to: **MT Holly PTG**, at time of ordering. For additional questions, please contact: **MthollyPTG@gmail.com**

As a reminder, all orders need to be placed directly with your student or at the town office. Thank you for your support!



Support for a 5-member Mount Holly Select Board

To the Mount Holly Community:

The Select Board has accepted a petition submitted by over 100 Town voters to increase the Select Board from 3 to 5 members. This question will be decided by voters by ballot on March 5 (2024 Town Meeting Day). Absentee ballots may also be used if you cannot attend in person.

If this proposal is approved on March 5, then a separate town-wide vote will be held at a later date to elect the new members.

We write to encourage you to vote yes on this proposal because of its many benefits:

- **Sharing the burden.** Running the Town isn't as simple as it used to be. Town governance, even in a small town like ours, is increasingly complex and demanding: multiple state laws and regulations must be followed; activities must be coordinated with multiple agencies and officials at state, regional and even federal levels of government; emergencies such as this past summer's flooding require immediate attention; and grants must be sought to offset costs. Our three Select Board members have worked hard to address the Town's needs, often at great personal cost and at the expense of time with family and career. It is clear that a larger Select Board would enable broader sharing of the ever-increasing workload of running the Town, reducing the demands on each member undertaking this vital office.
- **Lowering costs.** If we have any hope of replacing or improving our aging infrastructure (roads, bridges, storm water, fire/emergency facilities) without raising our property taxes, then we must apply for grants to help fund these projects. Yet, unfortunately, some grant opportunities have been missed simply due to not having enough hands to share the work. Adding two members is the least expensive way to increase the Select Board's capacity to manage its work and will pay for itself many times over by enhancing the Town's ability to apply for and receive all the grants we are entitled to. The alternative for many towns would be to hire grant writers and/or a town administrator to get the work done, and that would be far more costly and almost certainly require raising property taxes.
- **Adding resilience.** With 5 members, our governance would be more resilient in the event of sickness or absence of one or two members, and it would be easier for the Select Board to act if some members have a conflict of interest. It also would give Select Board members more flexibility to attend to personal and business matters without potentially leaving the town at risk.
- **Limiting our liability/Increasing flexibility.** With just 3 members of the Select Board, it would be a violation of the State's Open Meetings law for any two of them to discuss Town business without giving public notice and publishing a public record of the meeting. This is highly impractical, making it impossible to get anything done outside of a public meeting except by one person working alone. With 5 members, two members could work on issues and projects, and then report back to the full Select Board at a public meeting.
- **Increasing capacity.** By enabling two-member committees, a 5-member Select Board would allow for the Board's work to be spread among more people, who could collaborate to gather information and develop solutions for various issues, such as maintenance and upgrade of town facilities, traffic, housing, and emergency services. Adding capacity on the Select Board also relieves strain on the Town's staff. For example, Select Board members' work writing grant applications has allowed the Road Foreman to focus on managing employees and doing highway work.
- **Increasing participation.** Enlarging the Select Board would create the opportunity to bring additional expertise to bear on the issues facing the Town, and to get more citizens involved in governance. At present, one impediment to getting people involved is the daunting amount of work that's spread among too few people.

For these and other reasons, many of our neighboring towns have taken the step to create a 5 person Select Board, including Wallingford, Weston, Cavendish, and Ludlow, to name a few.

For the benefit of our Town, please **vote yes to increase the Select Board to 5 members.**

If you have any questions about this proposal or would like information on how to obtain an absentee ballot please contact me at fpdevine10@gmail.com. Signed, Francis DeVine (past Conservation Commission Chair)
Carol DeVine Abe & Kathy Leber Paul Nevin (past Selectboard member) Philip Blyskal & Gwen Gautach
Brett Wright (past Planning Commissioner) Steve & Barbara Hazelton Rhonda Rivers (past Selectboard admin)
Alexandra Yuster Russ Garrow (Emergency Mgmt.Coordinator) Joan & Alec McCallum David Martin
Cliff Hovey (spouse of past Selectboard member)



Reinbow Riding Center

Whew! December's mini-mud season left a lasting impression, and if you live on a rural road, dealing with frozen hubcap deep ruts on top of snow and ice, is like driving on a roller coaster. But after a week in the deep freeze, spring mud season is looking pretty good right now.

While the horses take a vacation, spending their days eating and taking snow baths, the rest of us spend our days looking for ways to raise funds, so we can provide our programs to individuals of all ages regardless of their ability to pay. Last month we had a nice surprise when a new and innovative program we initiated with Rutland Mental Health Services--Strengthening Families Through Horses--was spotlighted in a Vermont online newspaper--VT DIGGER. This is the link. <https://vtdigger.org/2024/01/11/community-care-network-rutland-mental-health-services-strengthening-families-through-horses/>

In the photo above program participants Mary and A.J., and of course Cutie, spend a little together time learning to communicate and enjoy each other's company. The goal of this program is to provide a unique therapeutic equine experience to area families who have experienced significant traumatic stress. By focusing on the Parent (or caregiver)/child relationship, our goal is to provide tools by which a healthy and mutually satisfying relationship can develop and be maintained. Horses help break down barriers that may exist between participants and open the door to a better

relationship.

As soon as the inevitable summer-preceding mud season comes and goes, we look forward to continuing the program this summer and would like to take the opportunity to thank the Vermont Country Store and the Vermont Children's Trust Foundation for assisting us in financing this program

At Reinbow Riding we strive to meet the needs of every individual that participates in our programs, mounted or unmounted. For more information about Reinbow Riding Center and our mission please check out our website: reinbowridingcenter.org and follow us on Facebook or Instagram @reinbow_riding_center. Contact us at programs@reinbowridingcenter.org or 802-236-2483 to inquire about programs and lessons. For information about opportunities to volunteer with us contact janetupton@reinbowridingcenter.org.

Increase the Select Board?

I was recently asked to sign a petition to increase the Select Board to five members from three. I asked what were the pro and cons and why should we change now. I never got an answer. I believe increasing the Select Board is a valid issue that requires a full discussion. However, I feel this year is not the time. At this year's town meeting we will need to discuss the potential 18% increase in the state school tax, the Ludlow Mount Holly proposed school \$9 million bond issue, the disbanding of the Rescue Squad, the almost \$100,000 increase in the town budget to replace them and causing around a 10% increase in property taxes, and the proposed town plan. With all the current issues, an increase in the Select Board will not receive the time for the discussion it deserves.

In fact, the only place I found a rationale for increasing the Select Board was in the proposed town plan (pages 43 & 44) where it states "...Historically the town has relied on a small number of volunteers to shoulder the burden. Due to economic and land use changes this no longer seems to be a sustainable approach. As a result, many communities like ours are looking for ways to get more help, such as hiring a grant rider/administrator, increasing the Select Board size, hiring a town administrator and pooling resources with surrounding towns."

This statement is built on the premise that the work load for the town will increase in a manner that the town could not handle with the present staff, or there will not be enough volunteers to handle the increased demands. But to increase the Select Board requires more volunteers, requiring a greater time commitment than volunteering for a specific project, committee or issue in which an individual has an interest. The town has a tough enough time finding three individuals that are willing to work for the town's best interest and not a specific agenda, finding five will be more difficult.

While the ideas raised in the town plan are laudable, they presume that we need to hire additional staff or increase the Select Board. It doesn't address the possibility that town staff or volunteers can be trained to write grants in their areas of interest or expertise. My impression is that the biggest impediment to applying for grants, is not writing the grants, but finding out about them in a timely manner. In fact, the coordination and paperwork for FEMA and State funding from this summer's flood is being done by the Town Treasurer (Elizabeth Karle) and the Town Road Foreman (Clinton Wooley) working as a team.

At the last Select Board meeting the comment was made that with five members we would only need three members for a quorum, in case Board members can't make it. But in the last six years I believe we have had only two meetings when there weren't three members present physically or via zoom. In fact, when Jennifer Mathews was on the Select Board and had to take care of her mother, she made meetings via Zoom. With more members how do we know that they will have the same commitment? They may not feel the need to make the time to address issues or attend meetings.

I spoke with two of the current Select Board members and asked if the current

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work load was too much; were they asked about increasing the Board and if they wanted to increase the Board and spread the work. They both said no. I got the impression from their responses that they felt it was easier for the three-member Board to coordinate and reach consensus, than it would be with five. It seems presumptuous to increase the Board without asking the current members for their input.

During the last flood, the Select Board, Town staff and volunteers pulled together and organized to make repairs of the damage in record time. In fact, special kudos should go to Jeff Chase, a Board member, and Clinton Wooley, Road Foreman, who coordinated the operation. And as mentioned above to the Town Treasurer and Road Foreman for coordinating all the FEMA paperwork.

While I feel the individuals who started the petition and signed it, want what they believe is best for the town, I do not believe they considered all the ramifications. I believe we should wait for the facts and not conjecture to support the change, and that we have time at a town meeting to discuss the change fully. For the above reasons I recommend we **vote no to increase the Select Board at this time**. Thank you, Stephen Michel

Town Plan – some misconceptions

Just like our annual Town Meeting, our Selectboard, Town officials, School Board, and numerous Town organizations, a Town Plan is another critical part of Mt. Holly's self-governance. We need all of these components if the Town is going to maintain control of its own future, especially during these changing and challenging times. Refinements to the Plan are part of the process, as we've witnessed over the past three years during the hard work of the Planning Commission and the input they received from Town residents. However, outright opposition to the Plan based on misunderstandings, misconceptions, and misinformation, should not be the basis for good decision making. Nor should we spend much time now wordsmithing the many years of PC hard work and the consensus that they reached.

Specifically, we would like to address what we believe are some major misconceptions expressed last week by those who question or oppose adoption of the Town Plan:

(1) It was stated at the public meeting that the town cannot afford to do all the "shalls", etc. because of the tax burden it would put on the Town, and thereby put further pressure on the affordability for families to live here. Where in the Plan does it require the Town to expend funds? It doesn't. The Selectboard makes those decisions. When a project or policy is brought to the Selectboard they will vote on whether to implement it and whether that expenditure is worthwhile. They will also decide if the expenditure fits within the Town's budget and/or if there might be an external source of funds, e.g., grants, fees or private donations (as with the Lake projects described below). The Selectboard will not commit to a project without first determining how it will be funded, and whether that source of funding, be it taxes or otherwise, is acceptable or necessary. The Plan doesn't take control away from the Selectboard and Town. It's the opposite. The updated Plan will give the Town legal standing to have a voice in decisions about our future; to have a voice in what the State and outsiders might try to impose on us. The Plan is a tool. Like any tool, it sits in a toolbox and you use it when needed... and we will need this tool!!

(2) Another area of misconception concerns the application for and use of Grants, though frankly, we're not sure why this subject is relevant for opposing the Plan (the Town uses Grants all the time, irrespective of a Town Plan). It was stated that Grants can cost the Town money, either because we have to hire people to write them (no we don't – the Selectboard will decide if hiring staff is worthwhile), and when the Grants expire we may have to carry the costs ourselves. No we won't. That decision is made by the Selectboard. A good example of this are the Nuisance Plant grants that the Town has received for both Star Lake and Lake Ninevah. For many years these programs received State Grants and the Town matched the costs with private funds and in-kind services. No Town funds were required. When Star Lake couldn't raise enough private funds for the match, the Town stopped applying for the annual grant. Period. Grants are an excellent source of funding (e.g., our annual highway paving). Let's not misrepresent their cost or effectiveness.

(3) Another comment at the meeting was that the Town Plan "foreshadows zoning... that it's an effort to move our Town toward zoning." We'd like to reiterate a reply to that statement made by another resident at the meeting... Mt. Holly has had a Town Plan for over 50 years, and we still do not have Zoning!! No, Town Plans do not birth Zoning.

Let's move ahead and approve this important document, and while we're at it, let's thank the Planning Commission for their 3 years of long hours and hard work. Ron Unterman and Dottie Finnerty

Notes from The Mount Holly Conservation Commission

In the coming weeks we plan to partner with the Mount Holly Conservation Trust to produce a comprehensive vegetative inventory of Star Lake. Such data will give us greater insight into management of the Lake, especially around the recreational area.

Working with the Rutland Solid Waste District, we also hope to provide more information and equipment for home composting as well as update signage at the Recycling Center.

And looking further out, toward spring, MHCC will ramp up its Ash Tree preservation program as well as seek to implement shade tree protections for some of the trees along town roads that not only enhance our town's scenic beauty but also provide important environmental and climate resiliency benefits.

Solid Waste Stickers ORDER FORM

Solid waste stickers are required on all bags disposed of in the compactor.

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Dear Selectboard.

This note is a response to the Draft Town Plan currently under consideration. The Conservation Commission has reviewed this document with some care. Our general reaction to this draft is very positive and urge the Selectboard to adopt this proposed plan. We comment below on areas which fall in the purview of Conservation Commission.

- Mount Holly has a large number of natural areas which need to be preserved for the benefit of the human inhabitants as well as the wildlife. Chapter VI of the plan outline well the types of regions and the rationale for preserving them. The accompanying maps show the location of many of areas as cataloged circa 2008. We note that the commissions in the process of updating these maps.
- The conservation commission would urge the inclusion of several specific open spaces which would augment Chapter VI para A.
- Although light pollution at night may not seem relevant to maintaining a rural atmosphere, it very much is a detractor from a rural atmosphere. We commend the Planning Commission for noting this and encouraging residents to be mindful. The sight of the Milky Way on a summer evening is truly awe inspiring and a reminder of the enormity of the Universe..(an educational experience for all which cannot be enjoyed in suburbia).
- Perhaps most importantly for the long term protection of our community quality and environmental sustainability are the Plan's inclusion of infrastructure management and improvements including transportation, flood prevention, and energy efficiency. These are all critical aspects of Climate Resilience vital to our town's secure future.

In conclusion, we, as residents of Mount Holly as well as members of the Conservation Commission, would like to emphasize how important it is to have a Town Plan which is in compliance with state requirements. The current plan, imperfect as it may be, does comply with the state requirements. We emphasize in the strongest manner that no plan or a noncompliant plan is not a responsible situation for the Selectboard to run the town. We would also note that the town plan does not oblige the town to do anything either legislatively, physically or fiscally. In addition, once adopted it can be updated.

Thank you for your continued efforts to maintain a Mount Holly for all of us to enjoy.

The Mount Holly Conservation Commission:

Philippe Crane, Chair
David Martin, Vice Chair
Philip Leonard, Secretary

Susan Presson
Peter Smith
Jean Marie Fitzgerald

Jim Corven
Megan Litwhiler



Senator Brian Collamore for Mt Holly Chit Chat, January 22nd, 2024

Greetings from the Vermont Senate!! On behalf of Rutland County Senators Terry Williams and Dave Week, I would like to offer the first report for the 2024 session of the Vermont Legislature. We just ended our second week of this session and there have not been any significant bills passed out of the Senate yet. As of this writing, we have not yet voted on the Governor’s veto regarding the expansion of the bottle bill. But by the time folks read this, we will have either voted to sustain his veto or have overridden it. We also will not have been able to hear the Governor present his budget for Fiscal Year 2025.

There are many important issues still to be reviewed by committees in both Chambers regarding housing, Act 250 reform, public safety bills and, for me at least, a renewed attempt to get military retirement pensions exempt from Vermont tax. Our vets are owed not only our thanks and respect but consideration when it comes to taxation too. Vermont is one of very few states that still tax even a portion of military pensions. The exclusion in Vermont is only for a not-so-generous \$10,000. To make matters worse, Vermonters cannot claim both the military retirement exclusion and Social Security income exclusion. These are only a few of the reasons Vermont is ranked by Kiplinger for 2023 as one of the worst states to retire to when it comes to taxes. There are bills in both the House and Senate that would fully exempt veterans and it is way past time to pass them.

I continue to worry about how much money was spent during the last session. The budget increased last year by 13%. It was easily the largest budget in the history of Vermont at \$8.5 billion. This increase included a new payroll tax to fund Childcare and DMV fee increases of 20%. I believe that Vermonters are already being taxed a lot. We will also be facing increased prices for heating fuel, propane and kerosene as the Clean Heat Standard goes into effect next year unless the legislature votes to repeal the bill. The Clean Heat Standard will add at least \$.70 per gallon of cost to heating fuel, propane, and kerosene according to calculations by Secretary Moore of VT’s Agency of Natural Resources.

Added together, these and other cost increases have added a significant increase to Vermonter’s pocketbooks. In fact, Governor Scott has projected an average increase of **\$1239.00 more per family per year**.

Also of concern is a bill from some legislators that will mean a pay increase for themselves which will be approximately \$5 million when fully implemented. I will not be voting for that bill.

We simply have no money left in the cupboard. The federal money is gone. We now must live within our means and that will be very difficult for many in the Legislature to accept. There are many very worthwhile and laudable ideas that would be wonderful to adopt, but the truth is the only way to do that would be to increase or create a new tax or fee to fund it. I will work to keep the budget as level as possible and I will not vote for any new taxes or fees.

I try to respond always to folks who have questions for me. If constituents have concerns or questions, you can email me at bcollamore@leg.state.vt.us

I also want to congratulate the Chit Chat on its 50th anniversary come March!!





Vermont Fish & Wildlife Green Mountain Conservation Camp Registration is Open

If you are 12 to 14 years old and want to learn about Vermont's wildlife and gain outdoor skills, consider attending one of the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's Green Mountain Conservation Camps this summer. If you are a GMCC alum, 16 or younger, consider coming back for another summer.



The one-week camp programs are held at Lake Bomoseen in Castleton and Buck Lake in Woodbury. Campers participate in hands-on learning about fish and wildlife conservation, ecology, forestry, orienteering, safe firearm and archery techniques, swimming, canoeing, fishing and more. Natural resource professionals come to the camp to share information on their programs and take campers out for field activities.

"Whether kids come alone or with friends, they are guaranteed to meet new people and form new bonds while experiencing Vermont's natural resources to the fullest," said Fish and Wildlife Education Specialist Hannah Phelps. "An important take-away message and common theme during the week is that conserving and managing habitat will help ensure Vermont will have fish and wildlife in the future."

"We would love to have all of the advanced sessions filled for campers who have already attended a basic session," added Phelps. "Advanced sessions are for campers who have completed a basic session in a previous summer and who are 16 years old or younger. Advanced sessions include more in-depth activities about backpacking, [camping](#), natural resources, and unique hunting and fishing techniques."

Conservation Camps open June 18 and continue until August 18. Tuition is \$250 for the week, including food, lodging and equipment, and financial assistance is available. [Information and registration](#) are available at www.vtfishandwildlife.com. For more information, contact FWGMCC@vermont.gov or call 802-522-2925.

"The Black River Rod and Gun Club will be sponsoring boy and girl between the ages of 12 to 14 years who wish to attend the coming Conservation Camp. To apply please either write or phone our Conservation Camp Coordinator, Mary Nortunen at 1405 VT Route 103 South, Mount Holly, VT 05758 or call 802-259-2412.

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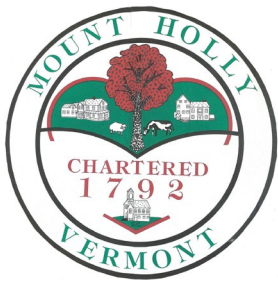
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Mount Holly Town News

The following Minutes of the Select Board and the Planning Commission are "DRAFT" until approved at their next meeting. NOTE: Most Select Board and Planning Commission meetings are covered by Okemo Valley TV. The videos can be viewed at their website, www.okemovalley.tv Computers with internet access are available at the Town Library.

Select Board Meeting Mount Holly Town Office January 9, 2024 6:30 pm

Attendance: Mark Turco, Diana Garrow, Caitlin Boyle, Carol A Garrow-Woolley, Elizabeth Karle, Christine Pratt, Billy Austin, Zena Gates, David Johnson, Jon McCann, Jeremy Gildrian, Amy Turco,

Gary Norton, Lori Norton, Tiffany Norton, Abe Leber, Glenn Kreig, Stephen Michel, Andy Schulz, Fra Devine, Brigid Sullivan, Andrew Tanger, June Capron, Peg Glezen, Phil Leonard, Jordan Ludwick.

To Contact Mt. Holly Town Road Crew, call the Town Garage at 802-259-3179

Regular Select Board meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm in the Town Office. Items to be included on the Agenda are due by Noon the Wednesday before the meeting.

1. **Call to Order** at 6:35 pm.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

3. **Consideration of any changes and/or additions to the agenda.** There are two additions: Fire Department Update, Sign Certificate of Highway Mileage.

4. **Approval of December 12, 2023 Minutes.** Diana Garrow made a motion to approve the minutes as drafted; Mark Turco seconded; unanimously approved.

5. Reports

a. **Highways & Transfer Station Update.** Road Foreman Clinton Woolley is unable to attend due to the snow storm. He did ask Treasurer Elizabeth Karle to share two quotes for town trucks to replace the truck that is in need of replacement. The Select Board will review.

b. **Town Treasurer Update.**

i. **Monthly Income and Expenses Report:** Elizabeth Karle noted that the flooding events in December may be designated as a FEMA flood emergency; she will keep the Select Board apprised. The biggest December spending item was for payments due to the state education fund. ARPA funds are transferred into the General Fund, as approved in November. The Town has started to receive delinquent taxes; a little less than half of what is due has been received. Otherwise, it's a quiet time of year.

ii. **Finalize and Approve FY '24 Meeting.** Mr. Turco noted he would move this item to the end of agenda.

c. **Lister's Report.** A preliminary report has been filed by the Listers. The appraiser is making progress on converting the Town's lister cards into CAMA [software] format. The state has released new CLA numbers, but the Town has not yet received official notice; almost every town in the state will be mandated to do a reappraisal.

d. **Planning Commission Update.** Planning Commission Chair Jon McCann noted that he is happy to meet with the Select Board members individually if they have notes or comments to share with the Commission regarding the Town Plan. Mr. Turco noted that he could meet Thursday at 3 pm; Ms. Garrow noted that she could meet Thursday at 1 pm, both at the Town Office.

i. **Municipal Planning Grant FY24 Accepted:** The state has granted the town the MPG grant for FY24, for the purposes of conducting a housing study grant. Jeff Chase is listed as the MAO/signer. Ms. Garrow made a motion to accept the FY24 MPG; Mr. Turco seconded; unanimously approved.

6. New Business

a. **Set Date to Sign Warning for Town Meeting Day and Election.** Town Clerk Carol Garrow-Woolley proposed signing the warning on Thursday, January 25 at 6:30 pm. Mr. Turco and Ms. Garrow agreed; the Clerk will confirm with Mr. Chase. The election is March 5, 2024.

b. **Geese Depredation Permit Request FY2024.** Ron Unterman requested permission to apply for a geese depredation permit for 2024. Mr. Turco made a motion to proceed with the geese depredation permit for 2024; Ms. Garrow seconded; unanimously approved. Mr. Unterman

noted that he would be eager to turn this role over to a new person.

c. **MERP Mini Grants:** The Town is invited to apply for the up-to-\$4,000 state grant; the funds can be applied to anything related to public outreach regarding municipal efforts for capacity building and active participation in energy resilience initiatives. Ms. Garrow made a motion to apply for the grant; Mr. Turco seconded; unanimously approved.

7. Ongoing & Old Business

a. **Opening for Transfer Station Attendant:** The Town has received one application for employment.

b. **Sign Certificate of Highway Mileage.** The Clerk noted that Mr. Woolley confirmed there are no changes to the Town's highway mileage; the Select Board will sign and submit the certificate with no changes. Ms. Garrow made a motion to sign the certificate of highway mileage; Mr. Turco seconded; unanimously approved.

c. **RFP for Auditors.** Ms. Karle noted that she will ask the current auditing firm to submit a bid for auditing services.

d. **Fire Department Update:** Mr. Austin noted that he wanted to address some rumored concerns about Fire Department spending on the annual Christmas party and award ceremony. He noted that the event included the Town highway crew, past auxiliary members, former MHVRS members, and the Select Board. Total event costs, including venue rental, catering, gifts for members, and awards, was \$5,023.60; Mr. Austin wanted transparency for the Town and residents regarding the cost of the event. He also expressed continued interest in the fire department taking over maintenance and use of the former MHVRS building; Mr. Turco noted that the Board would make a decision on this once all assets and supplies from the prior occupants had been turned over to the Town. The Clerk noted that the Town's attorney had drafted a follow-up letter to the MHVRS to request the final transfer of assets and materials.

8. Citizen Comments

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Mount Holly Listers Hours

The Listers are at the Mount Holly Town Office most Tuesdays 10:00am-2:00 pm or by appointment. Please call 802-259-2391 for any questions.

Mount Holly Town Office

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Monday, February 19th, 2024 for Presidents' Day

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a. Mr. Turco noted that the Town Clerk and Select Board had received a complete and properly submitted Voter-Backed Petition for the addition of a ballot item regarding the formation of a five-member Select Board for the Town. He confirmed that the ballot item would be put to voters on the Annual Town Meeting ballot in March. The Clerk confirmed that VLCT's staff attorney reviewed the petition, and confirmed that if the measure was approved by voters, the Town would be obligated to hold a special election for voters to select two additional Board members; the Board would have two vacancies until such time that additional Board members were elected by Australian ballot. Mr. Turco invited citizen comments on the issue.

i. Christine Pratt asked about projected cost to the Town for a special election; the Town Clerk noted that the cost would likely be between \$2,000-3,000 dollars. Ms. Pratt also asked whether the Select Board knew of the petition before receiving it; Mr. Turco noted that they were aware only via rumor, not through formal communication.

ii. Fra Devine noted that if there were five members of the Board, then two Board members would be permitted to discuss issues as a subcommittee, outside of a publicly warned meeting; he further noted that having a larger board would make it possible to reach a quorum even if two members were absent from meetings.

iii. Zena Gates noted that the cost of an additional election was substantial, especially given rising budgetary costs across the board.

iv. Brigid Sullivan noted that the issue could be discussed further from the floor of the Town Meeting; Mr. Turco agreed.

v. The Clerk noted that the petition was not signed by a lead petitioner, with whom the Select

Board could communicate regarding the petition; no lead petitioner was identified.

9. Announcements/Other Business

- a. Dog License Registration Deadline is April 1
- b. Town Plan Legislative Hearing January 16, 6:30 pm
- c. Town Office Closed on January 15 for MLK Jr. Day
- d. Town Officers' Consent Form deadline is January 29.



10. Review & Sign Orders

11. Executive Session: Title 1 V.S.A. S 313(a)(3) – personnel (if needed). The Clerk noted that there was a personnel item for the Select Board to discuss. Diana Garrow made a motion to go into executive session; Mark Turco seconded; unanimously approved. Upon further review, it is noted that the item was not of a nature that requires an executive session. The item regards a change in the wording of the overtime policy in the Town's Personnel Policy for highway employees. The overtime policy will be amended to indicate that highway employees may earn time-and-a-half overtime pay for any hours exceeding 40/week that are either worked or taken as holiday, vacation or personal time.

12. Adjourned at 7:45 pm.

*Note: Mr. Turco noted after the adjournment that he had forgotten to revisit the FY24 budget finalization agenda item. A new meeting was set for FY24 Budget Finalization for January 11, 3 pm, at the Town Office. Clerk will warn as a special meeting.

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Special Select Board Meeting: TOWN PLAN LEGISLATIVE HEARING Mount Holly Town Office 50 School St Mount Holly, VT January 16, 2024 6:30 pm MINUTES

The following minutes capture Select Board and citizen comments regarding the proposed Mount Holly Town Plan, which can be found at <https://www.mounthollyvt.org/planning-commission/town-plan/>

Attendees: In person: Mark Turco, Diana Garrow, Caitlin Boyle, Dennis Devereux, Susan Covalla, James Seward, Jon McCann, Stephen Michel, Barbara Hazelton, Steve Hazelton, Tracie Burns, Joe Galbraith, Bill Greene, Marcy Tanger, Andy Tanger, Francis DeVine, Abe Leber, Peter B. Smith, Kathleen Leber, David Johnson, Amy Turco. Via Zoom: Ted Crawford, Nancy Connor, Dan Connor, Lisa Kelley, Brett Wright, Jennifer Burrows, Phil Leonard, Mary Leonard, Alison Weintraub, Dottie Stanley, Andy Schulz, Faith Tempest, Brigid Sullivan, Katy Crane, Philippe Crane, Donna DeAngelis, Dotty Finnerty, Ron Unterman, Peg Glezen, June Capron, Craig Fortier, Maria Fortier, Nancy McKeegan.

1. Call to Order

2. Citizen Comments Regarding Proposed Town Plan

o **Brigid Sullivan** noted that at the planning commission's public hearing on the proposed Town Plan, it was suggested that the Town's successful block of the Wildlife Wonderland development in 1975 indicates that the Town does not need a strengthened plan. She noted that laws and conditions have changed greatly in the intervening 50 years, and that the State has told the planning commission that the current plan is inadequate to support the renewal of the Belmont Village Center designation, and that its weak language diminishes the Town's priority in securing grants.

o **Kathleen Leber** noted that the Town Plan needs to address needs that cannot be met by market forces; these needs include child care and affordable housing, which attract families, and volunteer services, which provide support to residents. She noted that private enterprise has not yet provided solutions for these needs and that government incentives are more likely to address them.

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- 2/10: 10am-12pm Community Snowshoe/Hike
- 2/27 7pm-8pm Virtual Speaker Series: Vermont Loons
- 3/12 7pm-8pm Virtual Speaker Series: Vernal Pools
- 3/23 10am-12pm Community Hike/Snowshoe
- 4/8 12pm-1pm Virtual Speaker Series: Bogs and Fens

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○ **Peter Smith** noted that there seem to be misconceptions about what a Town Plan is. He noted that it is not zoning and does not prohibit property owners from doing what they want on their land, as long as it is not big commercial development, which trigger's the state's Act 250 proceedings.

○ **Mr. DeVine** reiterated that the Plan expresses policy preferences and does not establish zoning laws. He noted that none of the items in the plan are enforceable against property owners, and none carry the force of law, but that if the Town does not adopt a revised plan, it will be subject only to the state's Act 250 proceedings regarding development, and not to its own policies.

○ **David Martin** thanked the Planning Commission for the hard work in presenting the plan. He reiterated that the plan is not zoning, nor is it an ordinance, and that the revised plan's policies would attract families to the Town.

○ **Stephen Michel** offered the suggestion that phrases that indicated "the Town shall" should be amended to read "the Town shall consider."

○ **Steve Hazelton** noted that despite prior concerns to this effect, there was not an overuse of the word "shall" to indicate action items in the plan; he said he presumed that the word "shall" was used only when there was a good reason from the Planning Commission.

○ **Mr. DeVine** noted that the Planning Commission's process to draft the proposed plan was a three-year process, which included opportunities for public comment and a community survey.

○ **Dennis Devereux** noted that he had concerns about the language in the Plan that indicates that the Town "shall," do certain items. He said this language seemed to reflect language from other nearby towns that have zoning laws in place. By way of example, he expressed concern about language re: "stone walls shall be maintained."

○ **Ted Crawford** noted a number of concerns with the plan, including that the Town Plan is not zoning, but that it foreshadows zoning; that the plan puts forth dozens of actions that the Town cannot implement; that there is too much emphasis on grant funding, which can place burdens on the town; that the 18% response rate to the community survey that informed the plan was not a significant response; that the plan aspires to do too much, and that the plan is not tangible and specific enough. He also wondered whether it was accurate to say that Mount Holly Elementary school teachers do not live in the town due to housing affordability, as opposed to preference.

○ **Mr. Smith** noted that "shall" language regarding stone walls does not affect personal property owners.

○ **Jon McCann** clarified that plan language is not considered in Act 250 cases unless it includes "mandatory language", i.e. "shall." This is why some action items are phrased with the word "shall."

○ **Barbara Hazelton** noted that the plan's proposals do not compel the Town to take these actions.

○ **Alison Weintraub** said she supports the Town Plan and respectfully disagrees with others' comments. She said the plan's adoption is a question of whether the town will make its own decisions, or have the state make decisions for the town. She is concerned about losing the Belmont Historic Village Designation.

○ **Steve Hazelton** asked a question re: how the plan was written. He asked whether items that were indented and italicized indicate action items, e.g. the item regarding stone walls on page 40. Jon McCann noted that action items are italicized and indented. If an item is not italicized and indented, it would be relevant only in the case of an Act 250 proceeding.

○ **Ted Crawford** noted that there is a one-year extension available for the historic village designation; if the Town Plan adoption is delayed, the designation would only be delayed, not permanently lost.

○ **Andy Schulz** noted that outside of Act 250 proceedings, none of what is stated in the plan as "shalls" happens unless the Select Board decides to pursue it. Likewise, the Plan is only a precursor to zoning if the Select Board decides to pursue zoning. By changing "shall" to "should" or "shall consider," he noted that the plan would give the state freedom to disregard the Plan in Act 250 proceedings involving commercial development. If "shall" is changed to "should," the Town is less likely to receive grants.

○ **Phil Leonard** noted that he lived in Arizona for many years, and that the Town would do better if there were a culture of planning in place.

○ **Mr. DeVine** clarified that the community survey was available to everyone in town via paper or electronic entry. He noted that getting a response rate over 10% is considered good; 18% of residents responding is very good, and responses from 38% of households is exceptional.

○ **Ron Unterman** commented that softening language from "shall" to "shall consider" will weaken the action items; he emphasized that the town plan gives the Town "standing" in Act 250 situations, and that he looks forward to the Town being able to control its own destiny and prevent an out-of-state developer from "moving in and bulldozing us".

○ **Dennis Devereux** was wondering about correcting small errors; Mark Turco noted that any typos or factual errors should be reported to the Select Board.

○ **The Clerk** noted that additional comments were submitted by several residents and town entities. Copies of all public comments received would be kept at the Town Office for review.

○ **Christine Pratt** asked where the historic stone walls are considered to be in Town. Dennis Devereux noted that these are the stone walls aligning the Town's early roads.

○ **Abe Leber** noted that if we are looking at 100% consensus on everything, we're not going to get that. In the interest of time, he urged the Select Board to

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“get it done” and approve the Plan.

○ **Mr. Smith** commented that stone walls are distinct to Mount Holly.

○ **Jennifer Burrows** asked whether the Town has an opportunity to adjust the plan in the future; Mark Tuco answered yes. She noted that she supported the plan’s approval.

○ **Dick Tilton** noted that the need for a Town Plan is real, and that he knows Mount Holly’s needs to be updated. He noted that at 91 pages, it is too long. He is afraid that too many people in town who are not as involved in municipal affairs will not be able to absorb a document of this length. He applauded the Planning Commission’s efforts, but said he feels the length is excessive.

○ **Diana Garrow** read a letter from Evelyn Tully Costa, which included comments regarding the posting of public land. Ms. Tully’s letter noted

that posting property is not about “access” to the land for everyone, but rather reflects landowners’ preferences about use of the land. She urged the Select Board to amend the section of the plan regarding posting of land to “reflect that posting property...is the highest level of conservation.”

○ **Dennis Devereux** asked whether the figure on page 80 needed to be corrected; David Johnson noted that the figure should be changed to 55% and “state grants” clarified to “state highway grants.” Mark Tuco noted again that any typos can be sent in to the Select Board.

3. Select Board Comments Regarding Proposed Town Plan. Mr. Tuco thanked the Planning Commission and said the Plan represents a lot of hard work. He noted that he does not think the Town can afford to implement many of the proposals indicated in the Plan. 4. Town Plan Adoption Process and Next Steps. The Clerk noted the legal process for adoption of the Plan. Mr. Tuco asked residents to submit any final comments or corrections by Friday and said the Board would decide to adopt or revise the plan at its next regular meeting in February.

5. Adjourned at 7:37 pm.

Planning Commission Town Office & Remote Electronic –Regular Meeting Minutes Wednesday November 15th 2023 7:30pm

Commission Members Present: Jon McCann (Chair), Jim Seward (Vice Chair), Andrew Seward, Andrew Schulz, Brigid Sullivan

Also present: Faith Tempest (Clerk)

1. **Chair called the meeting to order** at 7:39 pm

2. **Changes to agenda:** None.

3. **Approval of minutes**

a. The minutes of the regular meeting held on October 18th were approved unanimously.

4. **Reorganization**

a. **Election of officers:** For the position of Chair Commissioner Schulz nominated Jon McCann, seconded by Commissioner Andrew Seward. Elected unanimously. For the position of Vice Chair Commissioner Andrew Seward nominated Jim Seward, seconded by Commissioner McCann. Elected unanimously. For the position of Secretary Commissioner McCann proposed Commissioner Schulz, seconded by Commissioner Sullivan, elected unanimously.

b. **Adopt Rules of Procedure and Conflict of Interest policy:** Chair had circulated a proposed set of changes to make the language more clear and straightforward. The revisions also include a requirement for Commissioners to provide both email and phone contact information; this is in case of the need for an emergency meeting so that an announcement can be made through both channels. The draft also proposes that each Commissioner should attend at least one VLCT training session per year. Commissioner Andrew Seward asked if completion certificates should be provided. Chair noted this would not be necessary but that after a training, the Commissioner should share details at the next PC meeting. This way all PC members could benefit from a range of trainings.

5. **Reports & Announcements**

a. **Administrative Officer**

i. **BCR for Belmont General Store:** Following the discussions at the last PC meeting, Alissa Tilly has submitted a new BCR for the proposed changes to the Post Office. The BCR contained limited information so the AO has asked that Ms Tilly provide drawings for our records.

ii. **Flood Hazard Area permit application Bolalek:** Andy Bolalek has submitted a Flood Hazard Area/ River Corridor permit for the pedestrian bridge constructed on the Mill Brook at Tarbellville Road. Since this is the first such application under the Town’s bylaw, the AO will consult with Kyle Medash (Regional Flood Plain Manager) to ensure that the process is followed correctly.

b. **Planning Commission Chair**

i. The FY2022 Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) closeout documentation was accepted by the State and is now considered closed and the products final.

ii. Chair had prepared and submitted the 2024 MPG application; through this process he found that grant writers cannot be paid through the grant and noted that there may be a need to consider how this is addressed in the Town Plan since the Town utilizes grants for a significant proportion of expenditure. Commissioner Sullivan noted that the Town could put aside funds which could be drawn as and when grant writing is needed.

iii. The Select Board has discussed an EMS contract but nothing has been signed. The Town Plan language on this will need to be adjusted.

6. **Correspondence**

a. **Subdivision proposals:** None.

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b. Emails: one public inquiry regarding rules for construction and development. AO responded.

7. **Unfinished Business**

a. **Town Plan:** Chair noted that the public hearing preceding the meeting had produced a number of comments on the draft Town Plan. Chair had asked at the hearing that any additional public comments be made in writing or by email by the end of the week, and he also asked Commissioners to provide feedback based on the hearing. Chair will prepare a revised draft and circulate it before a special meeting to approve the next draft. Chair noted two issues on which changes would be required based on discussions in the Select Board – firstly the degree of responsibility of the Town to maintain Class 4 highways and legal trails, with the Select Board needing to make a policy relating to this. Secondly, references to the Mount Holly Rescue Squad should be removed. Chair asked the Clerk to make a file of all emails received and the minutes of the public hearing. Chair proposed a special meeting on November 29th to review the next draft; this should allow time to finalise the draft in time for submission to the Select Board in advance of their meeting on December 12th. All agreed.

8. **Public Comments:** None

9. **Upcoming meetings**

a. **Special meeting:** 29th November 2023 6pm.

10. **Meeting adjourned** at 8.30pm. For the Commission, Faith Tempest, Planning Commission Clerk In draft form until approved on December 20th, 2023

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Planning Commission Town Office & Remote Electronic – Special Meeting Minutes Wednesday November 29th 2023 6:00pm

Commission Members Present: Jon McCann (Chair), Jim Seward (Vice Chair), Andrew Seward, Brigid Sullivan, Andy Schulz (Secretary)

Also Present: Faith Tempest, Diana Garrow

1. Chair called the meeting to order at 6.05pm
2. **Changes to agenda:** none
3. **Approve minutes from Town Plan Public Hearing:** Commissioner Schulz moved to approve minutes with corrections to attendance; seconded Commissioner Seward. Motion approved, with Commissioner Sullivan abstaining.
4. **Unfinished business:**
 - a. **Town Plan**
 - i. **Discuss changes and approve plan:** Chair had previously circulated an updated version of the draft Town Plan with changes in response to comments received at the public hearing. There were editorial changes for consistency of language and adding hyperlinks to statutes. The draft has been revised to give further clarification of the structure and language used in the plan. Language has been added to address comments

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received at the public hearing and in writing to the Planning Commission, including issues related to Star Lake, clarifications regarding maintenance responsibilities for Class 4 highways and legal trails, updates to reflect the dissolution of the Rescue Squad, road safety issues on VT-103 at the blinking light, communications within the town, child care provision, night skies, and the consideration of option taxes. The chair walked through and invited discussion on each change. Commissioner Sullivan moved to approve the draft with the changes discussed during the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Schulz. Motion approved unanimously.

ii. **Discuss changes and approve report:** Chair noted that any amendments made to the text of the Town Plan have not had material effects on the content of the Report for neighboring municipalities and the State. Chair proposed amending the report to update the status on the process to reflect that the hearing has occurred and changes to the draft were made and approved in response to the comments received. Commissioner Andrew Seward made a motion to authorize such an amendment to the

Notice Dog Owners

Dog Licensing will begin Tuesday Jan 2, 2024 calendar year which must be paid by April 1st, each year. If your dog is no longer living please call the town clerk at 802-259-2391 so she can remove them from the list.

The registration fee remains the same and must be paid on or before April 1st, 2024

Male or female Neutered or Spayed = \$ 11.00 per dog
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The registration fee will increase after April 1st, 2024 to
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Open House at Mount St. Joseph Academy February 7th, 5 pm to 7 pm.

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report to clarify the process, seconded by Commissioner Sullivan, approved unanimously.

5. **Public comments:** None

6. **Upcoming meetings:** Regular PC meeting Dec 20th 7pm

7. **Adjournment** 9.00pm
For the Commission, Faith Tempest, Planning Commission Clerk In draft form until approved on December 20th, 2023

Planning Commission Town Office & Remote Electronic – Regular Meeting Wednesday December 20 2023 7:00pm

Commission Members Present: Jon McCann (Chair), Jim Seward (Vice Chair), Andrew Seward, Stephen Michel, Andy Schulz (Secretary) (by zoom)

Also Present: Faith Tempest

1. Chair called the meeting to order at 7.00pm

2. **Changes to agenda:** None

3. **Approval of minutes:** Commissioner Andrew Seward moved to approve minutes of the Regular Meeting of 15th November and the Special meeting of November 29th with a correction to the date of the meeting which had been incorrectly recorded; seconded Commissioner Jim Seward. Motion passed.

4. **Reports & Announcements**

a. **Administrative Officer:**

i. **BCR:** Tofferi Shunpike Road. 48'x34' garage

ii. **FHA/RC permit Bolalek Tarbellville Road:** AO confirmed that based on advice from the Regional Flood Plan manager the application was exempt from a permit as an access. The AO will sign off the application, inform the owner, and identify how and where the physical copy will be stored.

b. **Planning Commission Chair:**

i. Confirmed that the State has approved the MPG application for \$30,000 to undertake a housing study. Chair noted that it may be challenging to get the work done within these costs.

ii. **Belmont Village Center designation:** the Select Board has resolved that they want to renew, but not who should prepare the proposal. The proposal requires a newly adopted Town Plan, approved by the Select Board and RRPC. RRPC will need to discuss the Town Plan in committee followed by submission to whole Commission and the time this takes is unclear. Chair noted that the PC would not have to wait for approval to work on the Belmont Village Designation application, but will need to know what the final Town Plan will contain. Chair proposed that the PC start work on this in January. Commissioner Michel asked if the current Town Plan, which runs until 2025, would be sufficient, but Chair confirmed that the State has noted that the current plan is not sufficient to support a renewal application. Commissioner Michel asked if the RRPC is delayed in approving the Town Plan, are there any alternative approaches which would allow renewal of the Village Designation?

Commissioner Andrew Seward provided information on the renewal process. Applications are due at the beginning of the month when renewal is required, ie April. There is also a 6 month reprieve but during that time benefits (including grant priority and tax breaks for businesses) are suspended. The application also requires evidence showing the support of the Select Board. Chair noted that renewal is much easier than a new application, and suggested the PC discuss the particulars of the application in January.

5. **Correspondence:** none

a. **Subdivision proposals:** none

b. **Email / Other:** two public inquiries regarding zoning had been received, to which the AO responded.

6. **New Business**

a. **Planning Commission Annual Report:** the PC annual report for the Town's annual report is due on January 3rd. A draft had been prepared by Commissioner Schulz and the Chair. Commissioner Michel suggested that the report should also make reference to the work done on the Belmont Village Plan which was heavily influenced by the community survey. Commissioner Michel asked to remove the term "insufficiencies" of the current town plan in the report. Chair noted that the Select Board had asked that the new town plan be drafted to address insufficiencies, including very specific wording to ensure that the town plan is able to protect the town's interests. Commissioner Schulz proposed revised wording "insufficiencies under current legal standards". Commissioner Michel moved to approve the Annual Report with the change discussed, seconded by Commissioner Schulz. Approved unanimously.

7. **Unfinished business**



- a. **Town Plan status:** The Select Board has set a date of January 16th for the legislative hearing. Chair will speak to RRPC about the process from their side to clarify when it is likely that the Commissioners will review. The most uncertain element is if the SB wants substantial changes, which will then require a written response from the PC of the implications; if the content is changed significantly, there will be another SB hearing. At present it is unclear whose responsibility it is to make revisions, but possibly it will be sent back to the PC. The Chair will make inquiries to resolve this question.
8. **Public comments:** None
9. **Upcoming meetings:** Regular meeting 17th January 2024, 7pm
10. Meeting adjourned at 7:57pm For the Commission, Faith Tempest, Planning Commission Clerk In draft form until approved on January 17th 2024

Vermont Home Gardener: Seed Starting

February is too early to start most seeds indoors but not too early to get organized and ready for planting in March-April. Our growing season is too short for many plants like tomatoes, peppers, and many flowers to sow their seeds outdoors in the spring so we can get a jump start by starting them indoors and effectively extend the season. If we provide the right conditions of soil, light, and temperature our favorite plants can be ready to transplant in spring. Buying our own seeds also lets us select the best varieties for local conditions (not what commercial sellers do!) and to save lots of money. There is nothing more satisfying than seeing your own garden plants grow from seed to harvest so let's get started.

What to Grow? Easy, grow what you like! You can always buy young plants later but if you really like certain varieties it's best to start your own, at least for a few. I think it's worthwhile to start tomatoes, peppers, onions, broccoli, cauliflower, and some flowers because we have found certain varieties do better here and they're easy to grow. For example, we really like Amish Paste, Sun Gold, and Juliet tomatoes. King of the North sweet peppers produce well here and ripen in our short season.

We are limited by our short growing season of about 125 days between frosts (May 21 to Sept. 24) but we can extend the season by 6-8 weeks by starting seeds indoors. If we start too early the plants may get too big or lanky for easy transplanting. Late March or early April works well for most plants. Onions, petunias, and other slow growers need an early March start.

Seed Starting Basics. Seedlings need soil, moisture, warmth, and light. The best medium for seedlings is a good quality "starter mix" (not potting soil!) which is very light, porous, and drains well. The best mixes are soilless with coir (coconut fiber), peat, vermiculite, compost, and other light materials that contain beneficial microbes and drain well to prevent growth of disease fungi. Seeds contain their own initial supply of nutrients so will not need fertilizing for the first couple weeks. The containers you use can be plastic (little pots, 6-packs, etc.), peat or cow pots, or homemade. Remember to provide ample root space for growing seedlings (not egg cartons) and bottom trays for regular watering. If you start with very small containers or open trays you need less space but your seedlings will have to be "up planted" when they've outgrown their containers.



Warmth and light are essential for good plant growth.

I provide warmth with electric germination mats (available at local garden stores and online) because our house is too cool and germination will be better with a steady temperature of 75-80 F. Mats may seem expensive (\$25-30) but last many years and assure good seedling growth. A worthwhile investment for every gardener. South facing windows might seem adequate but cannot provide sufficient light intensity or hours of light in March or April. Artificial lighting with a fluorescent or LED utility fixture over a plant growing table works well and you can use it for seed starting or indoor plants for many years. Commercial light stands are very expensive but you can use [online plans](#) to build one from cheap PVC pipe. Make it taller so you can raise the lights as

your plants grow but keep your light source very close to your seedlings, no more than 1-2 inches above the top leaves. My stand (see image) accommodates up to 4 trays with germination mats under them.

Getting Started. Here are a few tips to help make your seed starting more successful. Before filling your containers, moisten the starter medium thoroughly so you don't have to water for a week or more. Fill each cell or container by gently packing the soil in with your fingertips and fill up level to the very top, leaving no depression or cavity on the surface. Soil will gradually settle down and any depression helps fungi grow on the surface resulting in "damp off" disease. If you keep your starting mix in a 5-gallon bucket you can fill each container *inside* the bucket, avoiding a mess of spilled soil.

Use a small, pointed stick or pencil to make seed holes, following the package instructions for depth. Sow seeds, usually one, in the middle and gently tamp covering soil. Once seeds are sown, label every container or pack. When things get moved, up-planted, re-planted, etc. those labels will be critical. Clear covers will hold in moisture and warmth but should be removed when half of the seeds have germinated. Ideally, watering should be done from below with room temperature water, never pouring water onto tiny seedlings but pour into a bottom tray for absorption, bottom up. Leave enough time between waterings to allow the surface soil to be just dry. Over-watering is the most common cause of seedling loss from damp off and root rot. (and house plant problems) Remember that the warming mats will help the soil dry out quicker.

Food & Exercise. Your seedlings will only need to be fed after they have grown their first "true leaves" that appear above the initial seed leaves (cotyledons) that emerged from the seed. Liquid fertilizer such as fish emulsion/hydrolysate is best but any soluble plant food diluted to half strength will do. Apply every 2 weeks until transplanting outside. **Exercise** your seedlings with a fan or your gently sweeping hands after they are 3-4 inches tall. Wind naturally exercises (flexes) plants to stimulate strong stems and a fan on low for 15-30 minutes twice a day will do the trick. This exercising reduces thin, weak stems of indoors seedlings we often see.

These are just the basics of seed starting. Watching for fungal diseases (too wet), bugs, and nutritional deficiency (light colored leaves) will keep you busy caring for your plants and learning from them. Expect some problems, failures even, but enjoy the successes of your own plants. If you have different ideas, please let me know! Jim Corven (mounthollygardener@gmail.com)

Rutland Regional Plan Survey Launched

Community Input Needed to Help Inform the Priorities of the Region

Beginning this week, the Rutland Regional Planning Commission will ask residents to participate in the Rutland Regional Plan 2026 Online Survey. Survey results will be used to guide policies and actions for the 8-year plan update, which is intended to help shape coordinated and efficient community economic development. The plan is a vision for the future with broad goals to facilitate that vision.

The survey is an important piece of the overall development process. Information collected will help inform a plan that features equitable policies to best serve the region's communities.

The survey will be complemented by several outreach efforts led by the Rutland Regional Planning Commission staff, including community open houses and pop-up events. As these activities are scheduled, they

will regularly be updated on the Rutland Regional Plan 2026 website: rutlandrpc.org/plan2026

"It is crucial that we hear directly from the residents we serve. We recognize that each of our 27 towns face a variety of challenges and that there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution," said Devon Neary, RRPC's Executive Director. "Our hope is that the community will share their thoughts with us so we can integrate those challenges and potential solutions into the 2026 plan update."

The survey will be open through March 31, 2024 and can be accessed through the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RutlandRegionPlan2026>

The Rutland Regional Planning Commission is one of eleven regional commissions serving Vermont municipalities. Regional planning commissions are a local resource for towns and, in a state without county governments, a critical link between municipal affairs and state government. More information about the Rutland Regional Planning Commission can be found at rutlandrpc.org.



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through
March 31, 2024

New Vermont Author Readies For Book Release, "War Tears"

Following many years of research and writing, John Swanson is finally able to see his book in publication. John, a resident of the Gables in Rutland, is pictured here as he explains some of his opus, "War Tears: A Journey from Vermont to Gettysburg", to fellow residents, Carol Freeman and Randi Majorelle, in the Gables' Library. The book is now

available as an eBook and paperback on Amazon's Kindle. In February it will be available as a hardcover book. Swanson, a retired historian and teacher, spent many years

conducting research at the Gettysburg Civil War Institute to gain a full knowledge of what the conflict was like from a participant's point of view. The culmination of his efforts is "War Tears," a poignant depiction of a Vermont boy's experiences during this tumultuous period. A proud Vermonter raised in the very region where the central figure of this narrative lived, Swanson brings a unique and authentic perspective to this rich tapestry of Civil War history.



SNOW REMOVAL REMINDER

The Mount Holly Select Board reminds residents that plowing snow into the public roadway is prohibited, per Vermont State Statute 23 V.S.A. § 1126a, as follows:

Title 23 : Motor Vehicles
Chapter 013 : Operation of Vehicles
Subchapter 011 : Miscellaneous Rules

§ 1126a. Depositing snow onto or across certain highways prohibited. (a) No person, other than an employee in the performance of his or her official duties or other person authorized by the Agency of Transportation (in the case of State highways) or selectboard (in the case of town highways), shall plow or otherwise deposit snow onto the traveled way, shoulder, or sidewalk of a State highway or a class 1, 2, or 3 town highway.

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Rotarians Thank Community for Support in 2023

The Ludlow Area Rotary Club thanks the residents and businesses of the greater Ludlow area for their support in 2023. Our club is a part of Rotary International which is one of the largest service organizations in the world. The mission of Rotary is to "provide service to others, promote integrity, and advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace." As a result of your support, we were able to spread this mission by supporting members of our community and beyond. Our annual Penny Sale and Chili Cookoff were hugely successful allowing us to support local projects and scholarships. We support local organizations such as Mountinside House with grants for needed projects.

It might be of interest to the community to know some of the ways we have supported this mission both locally and internationally. This year our neighbors both near and far were challenged by major storms. After July's torrential rain and

devastating flooding, Rotary became the fiscal agent for a collaborative effort with the OKEMO Valley Chamber of Commerce. In addition, we donated substantial money to the Ludlow Enterprise Fund, to Black River Good Neighbors and the Cavendish Family Fund. We quickly secured dehumidifiers that were distributed through the Ludlow Disaster Relief Center. Representatives of the club participated on the flood relief committee to assure financial help was distributed equitably.

To help with clean-up efforts after the flood, we contributed gear and a kayak to the Black River Action Team. Some members of the club went into the trenches, helping with clean-up efforts in homes and businesses. We also financially supported fellow citizens of our country who experienced devastating wildfires in Lahaina, Maui.

Outside our local area we provide support to Rotary International to help eradicate polio in the world. Rotary International is making great progress in this area and the world is 99% polio free. We also supported the Montreal Club in their efforts to bring water and sanitation to over 33,000 beneficiaries in Ghana.

We support an international student exchange program that places high school students in local homes for a year in a foreign country where they can immerse themselves in a different culture to promote world understanding. Annually, we provide scholarships to deserving graduating seniors from the communities we serve, Ludlow, Cavendish and Mount Holly helping them access post high school educational opportunities.

We are thankful for all the support from the area and wanted to share with you what your generosity can do. The Ludlow Area Rotary Club meets on Tuesdays at DJ's Restaurant in Ludlow. If you are interested in more information on the club or are interested in joining please contact Kevin Barnes, Membership Chairman at (802) 228-8877, to receive an invitation to a meeting.

New Author Muses About Writing Historic Book

Following an uploading of his new historical fiction novel. "War Tears: A Journey from Springfield to Gettysburg", John Swanson has finally seen his opus published in three formats: hardcover book, paperback version, and as an eBook. As he pondered the difficulties and stresses of publication, he mused about why he started writing the book in the first place.

"I guess 'War Tears' has been in my head as a thought for many years," commented John Swanson, author of the book. He indicated that it did not develop into actual consideration until he, with other members of the Springfield Arts and Historical Society, were preparing an exhibit on Springfield during the Civil War.

In reviewing a roster of Springfield men who had served during that conflict, he came across the name of Wheelock Veazey. Veazey was a new lawyer in Springfield who joined the 3rd Vermont Regiment. He was appointed commander of the 16th Vt Regiment due to his leadership of the 3rd Regiment. For his actions at Gettysburg, he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

John noted that he then conceived of the idea of a young Springfield farmer who, because of his admiration of Veazey, joins the local contingency volunteering to serve in the war.

As a historian and teacher, John began researching the Vermont participation in the war, using the U.S. Army War College in PA, the Gettysburg Civil War Institute, and Gettysburg College as primary sources. To this he added the records maintained by the VT Historical Society plus local records.

The result was the story of a young farmer who started as a fife player and ended as a seasoned front-line veteran, serving under Veazey's command.

While his intention was not to write a romantic novel, John did include "a bit of growing up" romance for the young hero along with the impact of the war on his farming family and neighbors.

As for whom he wrote "War Tears", John's simple explanation is "for everyone interested in learning what that war was really like". He does feel that our youth should read it to learn that the glamor sometimes ascribed to the Civil War was "anything but that".

"War Tears" is now available in all three formats at Amazon's Kindle Store.

John spent years teaching history and civics at Springfield's Riverside Middle School. He received his BS in Education from UVM with a MA in history from the same institution. Currently, John, in his retirement, is living at the Gables in Rutland. Ralph Pace

MOUNT HOLLY TOWN LIBRARY NEWS February 2024



Looking for something to enjoy as a family after a day on the slopes over President's Day weekend? How about coming to the library for a showing of the movie "HUGO"? Directed by Martin Scorsese, Hugo is the story of a 12 year old living in the walls of a train station in 1930s Paris, where he maintains the station's clocks. A skill he learned from his father, a watchmaker. Hugo discovers a mechanical man, made by his father and the adventure begins when he sets out to decipher the silent robot's cryptic message.

The show begins at 6:30 PM

SOME OF THE NEW ARRIVALS FOR KIDS:

Avi - Midnight Magic

Avi - Murder at Midnight

Taylor - How to Eat in Space

Epstein - Good Bye Stacy, Good Bye

Khan - Zara's Rules For Living Your Best Life

Ihimaera - Whale Rider

Krull - Born Reading: 20 Stories of Women Reading Their Way Into History

Mount Holly Town Library

26 Maple Hill Road

Belmont, VT 05730

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mthollylibrary@gmail.com

Fire and Rain

James Taylor smiles a lot these days. His “Mop & Glow” head of sparse hair contrasts with his 70’s image of “Head & Shoulders” long dark hair and his gaunt expression. His voice is the same. He was born in New England and raised in N.C. And the influence of both regions can be heard in his music.

With a psychedelic image of him on the cover of Time he exploded onto the music scene in early 1970 with the enigmatic song, “Fire and Rain”. The pensive song has three verses. The first, he says is about the suicide of a friend, Susanne. The second “about my addiction to heroin and arrival in the U.S. with a monkey on my back...and there Jesus is an expression of my desperation in trying to get through that time my body’s aching and the time is at hand...when I had to do it. **Jesus is what you pray when you’re in pain.**”

The final verse refers to a mental breakdown Taylor endured and his disappointments with life, describing them as “sweet dreams and flying machines in pieces on the ground.” That was a reference (not to a plane crash) but to Taylor’s original band Flying Machine, whose attempt at breaking into the recording industry had failed miserably. That caused him to wonder if his dreams of a musical career would ever come true. The song came to Taylor in three different portions. The 1st came in a basement in London. The second verse in a hospital room in Manhattan recovering from some hard stuff and the third was written in Austin Riggs mental hospital in Stockbridge MA. So it’s a sampling of a three month period of time in 1968. Each verse is followed by the same chorus, “I’ve seen fire and I’ve seen rain...”

The reality of crushed expectations had taken their toll, leaving Taylor with a sense of loss and hopelessness.

The psalmist David experienced hopeless despair, as he struggled with his own failures, the attacks of others, family issues and the disappointments of life. In Ps. 6:6 he said, “I am worn out with my groaning. All night I flood my bed with weeping and drench my pillow with tears.” The depth of his sorrow and loss drove him to heartache- but in that grief he turned to the God of all comfort. David’s own crushed and broken “flying machines” gave way to the assurance of God’s care, prompting him to say, “The Lord has heard my cry for mercy; the Lord accepts my prayer” (v. 9).

In our seasons of disappointment, we too can find comfort in our loving Heavenly Father, who cares for our broken hearts and binds them up with His own. Often He brings us someone to be a flesh and blood “comforter”. Apparently, when JT’s fellow songwriter, Carole King (who played piano on *Fire & Rain*), heard his line, “...times when I could not find a friend”, she wrote her song, “You’ve Got a Friend” for him. Pastor Glenn



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Monday, 2/12/24 Gilbert Hart Library
Klock Room
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Wallingford

Monday, 2/26/24 Shrewsbury Library
98 Town Hill Rd
Cuttingsville

Join your neighbors for fun afternoons of gaming - chess, checkers, mahjong, backgammon, Yahtzee, and more! Say NO! to cabin fever, bring a competitive spirit, and make new friends. It's FREE, and we'll supply the games. It's just another way for you to get to know your Green Mountain Neighbors!

Green Mountain Neighbors is an all-volunteer social network made up of people from the Vermont towns of Mount Holly, Shrewsbury, and Wallingford. Our goal is to provide community events and non-medical support services to help people enjoy their homes and communities while they age. Find out more about us and how you can become involved by visiting our website:

<https://greenmountainneighbors.org/>





Ludlow Ambulance Service Fun Facts:

LAS has two ambulances licensed at the paramedic level. A1 is a 2016 Ford F550 Horton built by Greenwood Emergency Vehicles. A2 is a 2022 Ford F550 PL Custom built by Vander Molen Fire Apparatus. We took delivery of A2 in May 2023 after a nearly two-year production time due to supply shortages fueled by the pandemic. Shortly after taking delivery of the new truck, we placed an order for a copy cat version of the ambulance in which we are expected to take delivery on in the end of 2024/early 2025 nearly two years after the order was placed. At that time, we will be increasing our



fleet from 2 ambulances to 3 to keep up with the increasing call volume and demand for ambulance service in our coverage area. In 2023 our ambulances traveled a combined 27,549 miles.

Meet the Members:

Mary Mancino, Paramedic, Training Captain

Mary has been involved in EMS since 2016 and employed with LAS since 2020. Mary has previously worked for EMS agencies in Utah and Colorado prior to moving to Vermont and working for Okemo Ski Patrol. Mary attended to New England EMS Academy in Manchester NH obtaining her paramedic certification in 2022. In 2023 she attended a Critical Care Paramedic program, graduating at the top of the class. Mary was promoted to Training Captain in 2022 and she oversees all department training, and new employee onboarding. In addition to working at LAS she is also a patrol supervisor for Okemo Ski Patrol.

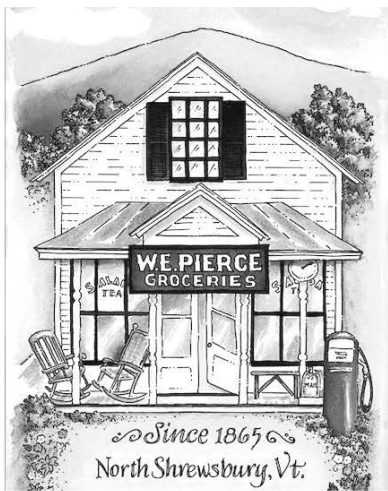


Michael Heiden, Paramedic

Mike has been involved in the Fire and EMS world since the early 2000s. He was a full-time firefighter in Florida before eventually finding his way to New England and working as a full time Firefighter for Brattleboro Fire Department for many years, in addition to working as an AEMT for Rescue Inc. Mike has been employed with LAS since 2021. He recently completed paramedic school through EMT Academy in Chicopee MA. In addition to working full time with LAS, Mike also owns and operates Outer Limit Health Club in Brattleboro VT.



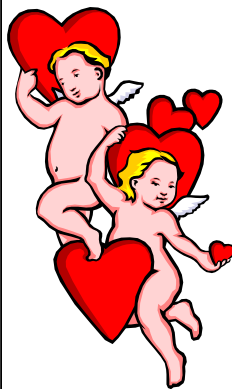
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Ludlow Ambulance Service
December 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023

Total Calls

December 2023: 98 Calls

December 2022- 100 Calls

Ambulance Calls

December 2023

- Ludlow 65
- Cavendish 9
- Proctorsville 6
- Plymouth
- Mount Holly 17
- Chester
- Shrewsbury
- Andover 1
- Reading
- Weston
- Londonderry
- Springfield Hospital/ Springfield
- Rutland Hospital
- Mount Ascutney Hospital
- **Transports**
- Springfield Hospital 46
- Dartmouth
- Landing Zone 1
- Mount Ascutney
- Rutland Hospital 14
- No Transports/Stand by Coverage 37
- Gill Home
- Cheshire Medical Center
- Home
- Valley Regional Hospital



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Kent Farm Road | Wallingford
 One-acre wooded parcel near Okemo
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 Don Eatmon Broker/Owner



Shriner Hospital For Children



Shriner Hospital for Children provides specialty care to children up to age 21 with orthopedic conditions, burns, spinal cord injuries, and cleft lip and palate, regardless of the family's ability to pay. All care and services are delivered in a family-centered environment.

To learn more about our services, or to refer a patient, visit www.shrinershospitalforchildren.org to locate a hospital near you. Or call 800-237-5055 in the U.S. or 800-361-7256 Canada – Past Potentate Bob Ferguson, Cairo Shriners, Rutland

Community Health Tip - Winter Wellness

Viruses pass more easily from person to person indoors, and cold, dry air can weaken resistance. Colds, flu, Covid and RSV are prevalent this year. These types of illnesses can be treated by a primary care provider, unless the symptoms are life threatening.

What you should know about RSV

Almost all children are exposed to RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) before age 2. For most, it's like having a cold. But some children, especially the very young, can become dangerously sick.

If your infant or toddler is having difficulty breathing, an increased rate of breathing or coughing fits that won't stop, these could be signs of RSV.

Prevention is the key

At Community Health, we offer the nirsevimab RSV immunization to all well children under 6 months of age. Check with your provider or pediatrician at Community Health. During an office visit providers can check for symptoms of RSV and other viruses. Contact us at 802-779-9169. If it's a medical emergency, please dial [911](tel:911).

Know Where to Go For Healthcare

Major winter storms can make transportation more difficult due to icy roads. So, plan ahead and knowing the right place to go when illness or injury occurs is important.

- **Community Health Primary Care** <https://www.chcrr.org> is for illness, injury, wellness visits, monitoring chronic health conditions and following up from hospital visits.
- **Community Health Express Care** (<https://www.chcrr.org/services/#express-care>) offers primary care for minor injuries or illnesses after hours or on weekends when your primary care provider is unavailable. Express Care Castleton and Rutland are open 8am-8pm daily.
- **Emergency Department** is the best place to go when illnesses or injuries are more severe or life threatening.

Learn more about Community Health on our website <https://www.chcrr.org>

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And request to be placed on the list. News item deadlines are 6 am & 6 pm

Also Check www.mthollynewsflash.blogspot.com

To see all daily emails of the NewsFlash compiled in one place for all community news and events.

Kevin Plew is the primary NewsFlash attendant and Stu Berry is backup attendant at stuberry1@gmail.com

Mount Holly Chit Chat Inc., 3379 Shunpike Rd., Mount Holly, VT 05758

The Mount Holly Chit Chat, a membership organization, has been incorporated as a non-profit organization in the State of Vermont, dedicated to providing all members of the Mount Holly community with information on Town events and issues. Membership is open to anyone who lives in, works in, or owns property in Mount Holly and who has made an annual membership donation. Membership donations help bring the Chit Chat to you every month.

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Who's Got It Locally?

Artists & Architects

Linden Eller Studio	www.Lindeneller.com	347-457-4648
Contemporary fine artist, illustrator, art educator		
Spectrum Photography – John Miller		802-259-3060
Stone Creek Workshops Pottery	www.stonecreekworkshops.com	802-259-2254
Birth & Postpartum Doula & Skilled Birth Attendant		
Summers Williams	summers@rootsinvermont.com	717-919-4455
	www.rootsinvermont.com	

Building & Repairs – General Work

AW Carpentry-Remodeling*Building* Local Lumber Available		802-259-3699
Home Maintenance – Ken Saccardo	call or text	603-401-8122

Burn Permits

Fire Warden – Jim Seward	Pager 802-786-3408	Home 802-259-2211
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Catering - Restaurants - Stores

Harry's Café, Trip & Deb Pearce III	www.Harryscafe.com	802-259-2555
Mojo Café – John & Jodi Seward	mojocafevt@yahoo.com	802-228-6656
Squeels on Wheels BBQ	www.squeelsonwheels.com	802-558-9489

Church Listings

Annunciation, Ludlow, Mass Sat 4:30 pm, Sun 9 am		
	Rev Thomas Mosher	abvmludlow@comcast.net 802-228-3451
E. Wallingford Baptist – PS 9:15-10:00 am SS 10 am, Worship 11 am		
	Pastor Kevin Miner	802-259-2831
First Baptist Church, Wallingford, SS 11 am Prayer Meeting Wed 7 pm		
	Pastor Dave Bentley	802-446-2020
Lighthouse Independent Baptist Church, Rutland SS 11 am & 3pm		
	Until May 11 am & 6pm	802-779-0300
Ludlow Baptist Church, 9:30 am SS, 10:30 am Music Fellowship,		
	11 am WS, 6:30 pm Evening PS, Wed 6:30 pm PM & BS	
	Pastor Jerry Scheumann	jfscheumann@gmail.com 603-439-0803
Rutland Jewish Center office@rutlandjewishcenter.org		
	Rabbi Shemtov	rabbishemtov@rutlandjewishcenter.org 802-773-3455
St. Patrick's, Wallingford, Mass Sun 11 am		
	Rev Msgr Bernard Bourgeois	christthekingprsh@gmail.com 802-446-2161
Village Baptist Church-Worship 9:30am, Coffee Hour 10:45 BS Tue 7 pm		
	jeremiah.c.johnson@icloud.com Pastor Jeremiah Johnson	760-845-6617
Wilderness Friends Meeting (Quaker) Sundays 10 am		
	Shrewsbury Library, Cuttingsville	802-259-2803

Cleaning Service/Housekeeper

Savannah - Cleaning Service	call or text	802-417-0913
Brazilian Cleaning Service- Tabita Souza 10+ years' Experience		802-855-3830
References Available Upon Request	tabitacleaning@gmail.com	

Electrical Services

Wirenuts Electrical LLC	bbates@vermontel.net	802-353-4376 802-492-3406
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Emergency Services

Ludlow Ambulance Service Non-Emergency #	802-228-2880	911
Stephanie Grover NRP Chief	Cell 802-380-2635	sgrover.las@tds.net
MH Vol Fire Dept. Chief Bill Austin	910-915-5954	911

Equipment For Hire & Snow Moving

Beardmore Excavating	beardmoreexc@gmail.com	802-342-3507
Flander's Excavating & Firewood		802-259-2147
Hawkins Excavation Driveways, Ditching, Septic, Ponds, Etc		802-558-3082

Farm Fresh Products

Mt. Holly Dairy-Aire Farm Raw Milk, Fresh Eggs, Baked Goods		802-259-2386
Plew Farm (meat, eggs, maple)	www.plewfarm.com	802-259-2250
1966 Healdville Rd, Mt. Holly		
Smith Maple Crest Farm LLC, Grassfed Beef & VT Maple		802-492-2151
2450 Lincoln Hill Rd, Shrewsbury, VT 05738	www.Smithmaplecrestfarm.com	
Sugar Hill Berry Farm	www.sugarhillberryfarm.com	802-259-2155

Fire Warden

Jim Seward	Pager 802-786-3408	Home 802-259-2211
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Firewood

Flanders Firewood Cut Split Delivered		802-259-2147
	Flanders.excavating@gmail.com	

Food Shelf

Black River Good Neighbor Services – Krey Kellington		802-228-3663
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Funeral Homes

Clifford Funeral Home		802-773-3010
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Garden & Landscape, Lawn Mowing

Belmont Country Gardens Quality Custom Stonework & More		802-259-2364
Kevin Smith, Garden Service & Lawn Mowing		802-259-3964
Salt Ash Nursery - The Balsam Barn – Scott Crawford		802-259-2146

Garage Mechanical

Belmont Motor Works LLC Harley Davidson & European MTC		802-259-3178
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ATV, Small Engine Repair, Chainsaw, Wood Splitter, Snowblowers & Welding		
William H Johnson Automotive Services		802-259-2498
2370 Healdville Rd. Belmont, VT		

General Contractors

Wright Construction Company	info@wrightconstruction.com	802-259-2094
Ted Stryhas Builder Inc.		802-228-7327

Health & Community Health Care Providers

Community Health – https://www.chcrr.org Medical, Dental, Pediatrics		
Behavioral Health –	Patient Access Center	802-779-9159
Express Care Rutland -		802-773-3386
Dr. Joseph P. Donohue – Chiropractic Care, Thrive Center		802-446-2499

Home Management Services

Belmont Country Gardens Property Management		802-259-2364
Mowing & Plowing Jon Lienhard		
Yankee Home Management, Keith Hawkins		802-259-3064

Maple Syrup

Green Mtn. Sugar House		802-228-7151
Plew Farm 1966 Healdville Rd, Mt. Holly	www.plewfarm.com	802-259-2250
Smith Maple Crest Farm LLC Grassfed Beef & VT Maple		802-492-2151
2450 Lincoln Hill Rd, Shrewsbury, VT 05738	www.Smithmaplecrestfarm.com	

Marketing & Promotional Services

Express Copy Inc., Don Reiser	H 802-259-2722	802-362-0501
	print@expresscopyinc.com	

Masonry

Farrand Masonry – Angus Farrand	farrandmasonry@gmail.com	802-417-1657
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Massage Therapy

Calm Moments Message Studio – Irene Berry		802-228-7772
Massage Therapy/Bodywork, Thrive Center of Green Mtns		802-446-2499
Lisa Donohue MA, LMT ~ Linda O'Brien MT		
		802-446-2499

Metal Fabrication

Wayne Jones Metal	www.waynejonesmetal.com	802-259-2521
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Mount Holly Email

Kevin Plew –	mthollynewsflash@gmail.com	802-259-2250
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Painters

Beardmore Painting	beardmorepainting802@gmail.com	802-353-9493
MRS Unlimited Visions LLC Interior/Exterior Painting –Melissa		802-259-3989

Plumbing & Heating

Master Plumbing & Heating Inc. John Diekel		
	admin@masterplumbingandheating.co	24/7 Emergency 802-975-0369
Tailored Plumbing	tailoredplumbingheating@gmail.com	802-417-1647

Real Estate Sales

Cummings & Co. Lisa Kelley	lisa@cummingsvt.com	802-345-6581
Engel & Volkers, Okemo - Woodstock	Gail Beardmore	802-975-0338
	Gail.Beardmore@evusa.com (Mobile)	802-236-5431
eXp Realty Sue Starr-Adams	susan_starr-adams@exprealty.com	802-236-8028
Kelley Real Estate, Don Eatmon, Owner/Broker	Office	802-228-5333
	realtor@KelleyRealEstate.com	

Don Eatmon	Don@KelleyRealEstate.com	802-228-5333
Ty Murray	Ty@KelleyRealEstate.com	Call or Text 802-777-8047
Alex Eatmon	Alex@KelleyRealEstate.com	Call or Text 802-345-7886
John Tolosky	John@KelleyRealEstate.com	Call or Text 802-356-5556
Bella Gambino	Maria@KelleyRealEstate.com	Call or Text 631-523-1050
Lorien Kelly	www.KelleyRealEstate.com www.OkemoValley.com	732-670-8001

TPW Real Estate, John Napier	jmn@tpw.com	802-228-9400 x 1309860-559-9334
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Roofing

Buddy Systems Roofing	Contact Buddy	802-259-3989
New Roofs/Roof Repairs & Replacement – Slate/Wood/Asphalt/Metal		

Security

Countryside Alarms – Mike Blas	www.countrysidealarms.com	802-259-2213
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Septic System Design

Belmont Septic Design – Kevin Hollebeek	C 802-733-2561 H	802-259-3898
	kevin@belmontseptic.com	

Therapeutic Riding

Rienbow Riding Center	Home 802-259-2282	Barn 802-236-2483
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Tree Services

G.M. Tree Tech & Landscaping, Greg McKirryher		802-259-8733
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Volunteer Services

Belmont/Mt. Holly Food Co-op, Tanger	H 802-259-2344	W 802-259-2899
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Woodworking, Cabinets & Furniture

Chesters Custom Woodworking	cw@vermontel.net	802-259-3232
	www.chesterscustomwoodworking.com	