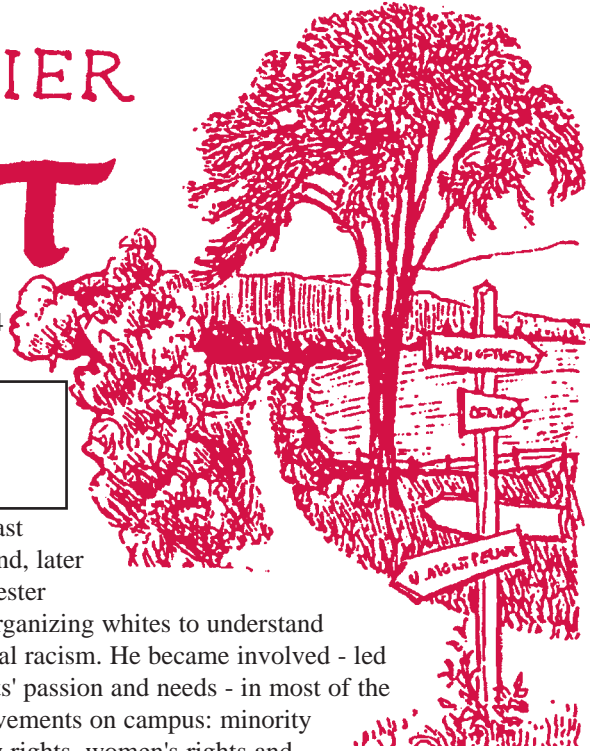


EAST MONTPELIER SIGNPOST

Volume XIV, No. 5

May/June 2004



DAVID CONNOR A WORKER FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Bob Rikken

David grew up in a "wonderful" village near Rochester, NY. He went to Cornell University on a full engineering scholarship, where he played football, enrolled in the R.O.T.C. program and worked in a fraternity. Lacking any interest in engineering, he spent a lot of time talking to other students about values, religion and ethics. At the fraternity where he worked he witnessed chronic abuse of alcohol and disrespectful treatment of coeds. He decided to leave Cornell, and enrolled in the Diocesan Seminary of Rochester to study for the priesthood. He was ordained by Bishop Fulton Sheen (of TV fame) in 1964, just as race riots were breaking out in Rochester's black neighborhoods. His first senior pastor forbade him to speak about the racial situation, but David, using the gospel of the Sunday, gave his first sermons on racial justice, racism and Christ's teachings in a manner his pastor grudgingly accepted.

David asked to be given an assistant chaplain's position back at Cornell and was sent there in 1966. He immediately shed his collar and the "Father" title and became involved with the major social issues of college life in the 60's. He took students to work sum-

mers in East Harlem, and, later in Westchester County, organizing whites to understand institutional racism. He became involved - led by students' passion and needs - in most of the social movements on campus: minority rights, gay rights, women's rights and especially the peace movement against the Vietnam War. David followed the students, marching, protesting, committing civil disobedience, counseling draft evaders, testifying in court, fasting and praying together. Along with his usual duties as a Catholic chaplain, he conducted ecumenical services with intercommunion, testified on behalf of choice concerning abortion before the New York State legislature and was selected by Cornell seniors to give an address at the 1970 Cornell commencement.

In 1971, David left the priesthood and helped start the Center for Religion, Ethics and Social Policy at Cornell. With a group of Cornell graduates, he also began a communal organic farm in Spencer, NY. For fourteen years, he and his "family" experimented with alternative institutions. They started the Alternative School in Ithaca, which is now in its 33rd year and thriving. They began The Learning Web, a community based experiential learning/apprentice program, also still thriving. David, with other chaplain colleagues, began the Pastoral Counseling Service of Tompkins County. Meanwhile, he married one of the members of the farm collective and they had a son, Ethan, in 1976.

After fourteen years of collaborative living, farming and various part-time jobs, the members of the commune went their separate ways. David sold the farm to a fellow chaplain as a retreat/meditation center. In 1985, now divorced, he married Ann Stanton and settled into a nuclear family with Ann, her son Jesse, and later that year, their newborn daughter, Nora.

Ann, a psychology professor at Wells College, was a friend of Mary Belenky from Marshfield, VT, co-author of *Women's Ways of Knowing*. Ann took her sabbatical working with Mary on women's issues, so she and David rented tarin chaplin's house next to the Old Meeting House Church in 1988. They decided to

Continued on Page 4.

TOP OF THE *SIGNPOST*

In case you were wondering, Jean Cate is not writing this. She is still the one who makes the *Signpost* happen but has asked to be allowed to part with some of the work involved. So we are going to take turns writing the Top of the *Signpost*.

Fourteen years is not a very long time in the grand scheme of things, but it is a very long time for a local newsletter to stay in business. They seldom last that long. The success of the *Signpost* can in large part be attributed to Jean's efforts. She has given many hours to shooing the rest of us along; setting up meetings, filling gaps in the staff, worrying about where the money is coming from and so forth. She leads, we follow.

I have been involved since 1992. When the original keeper of the mailing list took a job in another town, Jean went on a search for someone with a computer. Somehow, she found out that I had one and buttonholed me at Town Meeting to see if I

would take on that task. I do not regret accepting but was happy to pass the job along to Dawn Anderson after doing it for a few years. Not that she let me get out of it that easily; I then got the job of layout and design.

And so we go forward. A volunteer staff that has grown from five to fourteen. Adapting to technologies that have gone from articles that were hand-written on lined paper to computer-generated pieces that move from place to place via the Internet. Production has changed from paste-up on copy board to digital desktop publishing.

But one thing has not changed. Jean Cate is still the motive force behind the *Signpost*. We can take some of the load off her shoulders, but we still need her to light the fire in the boiler.

Dave Coburn

"Thank you" to these loyal supporters.

Conrad and Anne Ormsbee	Marion Palmer
Richard and Alice Angney	Lori Pinard
Roy and Joanne Bair	Lois McKnight
Doug and Renee Kievit-Kylar	Ann Kienzle
John Ordway and Molly Power	Linda and Douglas Royce

Please, consider joining this select group!

Contributions pay about 30% of the \$5,000 it costs to print and mail the *Signpost* each year. The auction at Rally Day brings in about half and the advertising and subscribers make up the rest.

Contributions help make possible the free delivery to every home in East Montpelier.

Any amounts — \$5, \$10, \$25, \$50 — are most welcome. Mail them to PO Box 184, East Montpelier, VT 05651.

The staff of the *Signpost*, and your neighbors, thank you!

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EAST MONTPELIER *SIGNPOST*

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

Do you have a son or daughter going to college, a mom or dad who are now living in Florida? Would they like to stay in touch with what's happening in Town? Send the *Signpost*! Or maybe it's you who are headed elsewhere. Subscribe for yourself.

New and renewal subscriptions are \$15.00 per year. Send payment with recipient's name and address to: PO Box 184, East Montpelier, VT 05651. Contributions should go to the same address. And we thank you!

BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE TOWN OFFICES

THE SELECTBOARD

Jessie Taylor



The Selectboard of any town is the business end of things. It is the legislative body for the town. Our town has a three member board. The members are elected for three year terms, each office

being staggered so only one member is up for re-election in any given year. We are fortunate to have a great board at present. Edie Miller, Tom Brazier and Martha Holden make up our Selectboard. Each of them has served on a number of other boards and committees for the town. They are all established East Montpelierites and are well acquainted with the workings of the town. Edie, the Chair, has been on just about every board and committee. She stated that about the only board she hasn't been on was the Planning Commission, yet she was on that board for the town of Stowe 35 years ago. She has been in public service ever since. Tom Brazier and his family are longtime residents of East Montpelier. Tom is currently the Fire Chief for East Montpelier. He has been involved with the Fire Department for years. Martha Holden was previously the zoning administrator. She is a product of the old East Montpelier one-room schoolhouse. And, her mom was the first woman to serve on the school board. So, as one can see, there is a lot of local history that comes with our Selectboard.

The Selectboard wears many different hats. As mentioned, they are the legislative body for the town. This part of the job consists of ensuring the proper legalities in the running of the town. Questions concerning the budget, allocation of funds, loans and other financial concerns pass by the board. For example, the road commissioner will run his recommendations for major road repairs and requests for new equipment by the board. Any situation that arises from other committees that is out of the ordinary, such as appeals to the Board of Adjustment, will be run past the Selectboard. Major zoning questions will be addressed as well as other issues that affect the town as a whole.

Tom Brazier put it very succinctly when he said that the board is working for the town of East Montpelier and therefore must always keep the best interest of the town in mind. This includes details as varied as investigating domestic disturbances,

approving new technology updates, determining payroll schedules and coordinating with the animal control officer.

The Selectboard meets regularly twice a month. I attended one evening just prior to Town Meeting. The three Selectboard members were present as well as Marlene Betit, town administrator, and Sylvia Tosi, Town Clerk. There was a brief amount of chit chat in the beginning and they were all very cordial to me. However, that was short lived as it was plain that it was time to get down to business. Old minutes were reviewed with care. Changes were made to some of the wording and terminology. When everyone was in agreement, the old minutes were put aside and then it was down to new business. For the most part it involved the upcoming Town Meeting. I was impressed with the way discussion was conducted. The group was obviously very comfortable. They each listened and gave input with ease.

Conducting these interviews has been a real eye-opener. I am duly impressed with the involvement and detail the Selectboard affords its duties. Once again, as with the Town Clerks, let us voice our appreciation for their dedication. We are fortunate to have them.

Please look for the third article in the series on the Town Offices in the next issue of the *Signpost*. It will feature Marlene Betit, our Town Administrator.



RALLY ON!

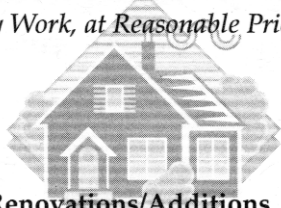
It's still spring, but not a bit too early to start planning for Rally Day - Saturday, SEPTEMBER 11. A few early birds met April 13 to get the ball rolling. We'll meet again Tuesday, May 11, and we hope for some new planners to help make this the best East Montpelier party yet.

Do you remember our small start in 1989? Rally Day has grown since then into a memorable town-wide celebration. Please join us in making it so. Call Rachel Senechal (223-0539) or Jean Cate (223-2951).

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attend services there on their first Sunday and were immediately attracted to the building, the congregation, the music and the minister, Hamilton Throckmorton. After a wonderful year, they went back to Ithaca, returning to Vermont frequently. In 1990 Ann applied for a position as psychology professor in the Vermont College Adult Degree Program. She was hired and they moved into the Barber/Badger house on the corner of Center and Bliss Roads. David got a job at the Lamoille Family Center in Morrisville where he is presently employed as co-director, overseeing 35 employees and 17 programs for youth and families in the Lamoille Valley.

When Hamilton Throckmorton left the Old Meeting House in 1996, the congregation asked David and Susan Cooke Kittredge to share the pastorate. Today he is the Associate Pastor, sings in the choir and serves the church in whatever way he can.

Two of David's passions are music and theater. He was a boy soprano in second grade, won a talent contest in fourth grade and has been performing ever since. He has done many community theater productions and starred in several Old Meeting House extravaganzas, including "Amahl and the Night Visitors", "Oliver" and "Fiddler on the Roof" - no one will ever forget his passionate portrayal of Tevye. His vocal range is legendary; his appreciation of music is huge, as is his library of recordings. "Music can help people find each other's souls - it can help the world reconcile its differences," he reflects.

David considers himself blessed to live in Central Vermont. He loves the inclusiveness of our values, the freedom to share disparate views (as in Town Meeting), the sense of community that draws us together on Rally Day, the educational opportunities and the general feeling of being connected to the earth. He especially loves the fact that so many talented people live here and are so willing to share their skills and gifts freely with others. David is one of those talented people who we are blessed to have as part of our community.

Now that spring is here you may see him, Ann and Nora, who is a freshman at Wesleyan University, and their two dogs, riding in his '67 Ford Galaxy convertible. "It's old and faded and patched with duct tape, like me," he says.

Bob Rikken and his wife Susan moved to East Montpelier from Cape Cod in 1991. They have two children, Ali, 11, and Adam, 9. Bob is an emergency physician at Central Vermont Hospital.

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PROJECT GRADUATION 2004

Project Graduation 2004 is a group of parents (and we would love anyone to join us!) planning an alcohol-and-substance-free celebration for the Class of 2004 following the graduation ceremony on Friday, June 18. This year, the chaperoned, all-night party will be held at the Racquet's Edge in Williston, where students will have use of the swimming pool, water slide, hot tub, climbing wall, and tennis/basketball courts.

Super Sounds Entertainment will provide a DJ for dancing, a hypnotist, games (robo surfing, video games, etc.), and lots more. The committee is also planning other fun activities (and surprises). In addition to parent and U-32 faculty chaperones, the Racquet's Edge staff will provide supervision of the use of the swimming pool, climbing wall and other areas of the facility. Students are required to ride the bus provided by Project Graduation both ways: leaving U-32 on Friday night (around 10 pm) and arriving back sometime early (around 5 am) on Saturday morning. In past years at U-32, most members of the senior class have attended Project Graduation and report having a blast! That is our goal this year, as well as providing a safe place for our kids to celebrate. This year there will be 23 graduates from East Montpelier participating in this event.

It is not too late to become involved in this year's Project Graduation. Please contact Jane Tolassi at U-32 (229-0321 ext. 2127) if you're interested.

Project Graduation is one of several organizations our town of East Montpelier supports through funding which is voted on at Town Meeting.

FOUR CORNERS SCHOOLHOUSE

The Four Corners Schoolhouse Association holds monthly meetings. All are welcome. The meetings are at 7:00 in the evening on the first Tuesday of every month. For more information call Rachel Senechal president, Hobie Guion vice-president or Paulie Coburn treasurer.

The Four Corners Schoolhouse Association maintains the schoolhouse and arranges for the usage of the space by local groups needing a place to meet. Elaine Manghi is the scheduler and the person to contact should you be looking for a place to hold a meeting.

At their last meeting, the Association accepted with regret the resignation of Paul Cate who has been a longtime board member and volunteer. Historian Marion Codling is researching Paul's records to see just exactly how long he has been involved with the Schoolhouse. Anyone care to hazard a guess?

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HAPPENINGS AROUND TOWN

The congregation of Old Meeting House was saddened to learn of the death of the father of Rev. Susan Cooke Kittredge. Alistair Cooke died at his home in New York City March 30 at the age of 95. He was a world renowned broadcaster, writer, and television host.

The members of the Old Meeting House were privileged to meet him on some of his visits to Vermont and to hear him in person when he participated in a Christmas Eve service at the church.

The people of East Montpelier extend their sincere condolences to Reverend Kittredge and her family.

MUSICAL EVENT AT OMH

The Old Meeting House is hosting another wonderful musical event on Saturday, June 5. Le Vent du Nord has been invited to play their "newly evolved, traditional Quebecois music" at the Old Meeting House. This band was originally founded by pianist and hurdy-gurdy player Nicolas Boulerice and fiddler Oliver Demers. In addition, they have been joined by step-dancer/accordionist Benoit Bourquet and singer guitarist Bernard Simard. They are a highly energetic unstoppable breath of fresh air from Montreal.

The details of time and price for this exciting event will be available by calling the Old Meeting House at 229-9593.

"PARISH HOUSE CAFE"

The Old Meeting House serves lunch every Wednesday at noon. Lunch is free, donations are appreciated. The hostesses for the lunches, and founders of the Parish House Cafe, are Jessie Taylor of East Montpelier and Vicky King of Montpelier. All are welcome.



CHURCH BELLS

Old Brick Church

Angelo Tillas, Pastor

Sunday Services at 10:00 am

Prayer Meeting Saturday at 10:00 am

Phone: 223-1232



Old Meeting House

Rev. Susan Cooke Kittredge, Pastor

Rev. David W. Connor, Associate Pastor

Worship - 9:30 am

Child care is available

Phone: 229-9593



Crossroads Christian Church

Rev. Bob Walton, Pastor

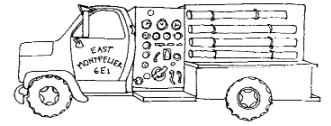
Worship and Sunday School - 9:30 am

Phone: 476-4843 & 229-9389

EAST MONTPELIER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The EMFD has already responded to 75 calls this year.

Many of our volunteers spend several weekends each year taking additional training to be sure



they're up to speed on the latest rescue and medical procedures. One such training was held at the end of March when a group spent the weekend in Burlington attending a conference at the Sheraton. There was a variety of lectures and hands-on training which was enjoyed by all.

The department would like to remind you to apply for a burn permit before doing any outside burning. Grass fires are always a problem at this time of year as they take off quickly. Outdoor fires should never be left unattended and a good water source should be nearby just in case. Contact Chris Reed or Bill George for permits. Happy spring everyone.

Robin Copping EMT-D, Chaplain, EMFD

RECREATION NOTES

The Recreation Board started the spring season with an Easter Egg Hunt held on April 3. This annual event has become a welcomed time especially for the many children who participated and made away with tidbits and trinkets.

On May 1, Green-Up Day in Vermont, the Recreation Board will be busy with a work day to get the field prepared for the busy sports season. There are plans to improve the fields and add some touches to make the recreation field an attractive and comfortable place in which to participate in baseball, softball and soccer. In addition to sporting events, the field is also the site for many family gatherings and outings. And let's not forget to mention the many activities that include our canine companions and their Frisbee catches that take place on our fields.

If you have any questions, or wish to use the field for a recreational activity (birthday parties, company outings, nature walks, etc.) please let us know.

Terri Conti - Chair

RETIREMENT PARTY FOR GLADYS COTE

Everyone is invited to the party on Sunday, June 13, at 2 pm at the Old Meeting House. She is retiring after 33 years of teaching at EMES, three at Calais and two in Michigan. Come and help her celebrate!

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MILESTONES

BIRTHS:

- ◆ Kolby Scott LaPerle, February 11, son of Nicole Marie LaPerle.
- ◆ Madison Marie Deyo, February 24, daughter to Luellen Marie McDonagh and Steve Craig Deyo.

MARRIAGES:

- ◆ Matthew John DeLorey to Katlyn Susan Laggner, February 29.
- ◆ Erik Canfield Esselstyn to Celina Robbins Moore, March 13.

DEATHS:

- ◆ Alice Marie Wright, February 19, spouse of Robert L. Wright.
- ◆ Eula Brown, March 7, mother of Maurice F. Brown and Robert H. Brown.

Selectboard

Edie Miller, Chair, Martha Holden, Tom Brazier

February 2, 2004

- > Tim Carver, representative to CVRPC, gave an update on affordable housing issues. The revision of the zoning regulations will include a review of growth areas and affordable housing needs.
- > Steven Jerome, representative to CVSWMD, presented the junk car removal program. A comprehensive survey of junk car removal needs will be prepared this spring.
- > Tim Meehan is unable to continue as a representative on the State Police Community Advisory Board.
- > Road Foreman Garand will review the Cookson right-of-way for next meeting.
- > There will be a hearing scheduled on the reclassification of Brazier Road.

February 16, 2004

- > The Selectboard signed a contract with the State Police for April '04- March '05.
- > Richard Czaplinski, sewage officer, met with the board to discuss applications, inspections, certifications, violations, regulations, annual maintenance and failed leach fields. The new state septic regulations were discussed, and Czaplinski recommended the board adopt the new criteria provided by the State. After reviewing town ordinances from four towns that comply with ANR regulations, Mr.

Czaplinski and Ms. Betit will work on a revised East Montpelier septic ordinance.

- > The board approved the Cookson right-of-way as a future public street with a permanent 60 ft. wide right-of-way and the need for a cul-de-sac.
- > The "Annual Certificate of Highway Mileage for the Town of East Montpelier" and "The Agency of Commerce and Community Development Financial Report of Program Income and Summary of Receipts and Expenditures" were reviewed and signed by the board.
- > Ms. Betit will provide a draft of a revision of the personnel policy for review.

March 15, 2004

- > The Selectboard discussed the status of Bridge #71 (Singing Bridge) reconstruction project. They are considering using the N. Montpelier maintenance garage as a staging point for emergency vehicles if Bridge #71 is closed. They might use a pre-fabricated bridge to speed up the process and reduce the time the bridge would be closed.
- > The Selectboard discussed Bridge #68 which has been delayed due to an error in the original ground survey. Mr. Williams will present two alternative plans based on a corrected survey, and he has requested a letter from the board indicating they have reviewed the status of both Bridges #68 and #71 and that the board will re-examine options for bridge construction.
- > The Selectboard approved the annual liquor license renewals for Dudley's and the Riverbend stores.
- > The board approved a Tax Anticipation Note for \$420,000.00 at 1.85% interest.
- > The board approved the following: Richard Czaplinski as Sewage Officer, Lyn Blackwell as Chair of the Funding Request Study Committee, Dennis Carver, Michael Dworkin and Austin Cleaves to the Conservation Fund Advisory Committee and Dean Monteith as Zoning Administrator.
- > The following businesses were granted excess weight permits: Lajeunesse Const., Gillespie Fuels, Hartigan Co., Giroux's Trucking, Ultramar, McCullough Crushing, Allen Lumber, Pouliot & Corriveau and Dubois Const.
- > Universal Contractors, Inc. will not receive the excess weight permit until the owner clears away mulch, bark and a utility trailer from town's right-of-way.

Planning Commission

Carol Welch, Chair

January 22, 2004

- > The commission voted to approve the preliminary site plan for the Merritt Subdivision after reviewing the modified plan for the proposed subdivision into four lots of the 43 acre parcel on VT14 North and Coburn Rd.. After reviewing the surveyor's finalized stamped and signed site plan, the commission voted to approve the final plan which must be recorded within 90 days.
- > The commission voted to grant the application of Stephen and Lisa Pratt to operate an auto and machinery repair business at 1731 US2.
- > Discussed Selectboard's request to add taking minutes to the Zoning Administrator's job description.
- > Discussed working with Calais planning commission and Burnt Rock on rewriting zoning regulations.

February 5, 2004

- > Based on subcommittee's recommendation, the secretary will schedule interviews with three firms to update the town's zoning regulations.
- > Commissioners discussed participating in the Northwest Vermont Project to study growth in US2 corridor, to identify projected growth at the local level and to use GIS mapping to estimate potential build out under a grant received by CVRPC.

February 19, 2004

- > Michael Crane of Crane Associates, LLC was interviewed for a planning consultant.
- > Commissioners voted to appoint Dean Monteith Town Zoning Administrator for one year.

Board of Adjustment

Richard Curtis, Chair

January 12, 2004

- > The board voted unanimously to elect Patrick Biggam vice-chair and Richard Curtis chair of the ZBA.
- > Diana Chace will complete her role as Zoning Administrator as of March 2004.

January 26, 2004

- > The board heard a request from Brad



THE TOWN WEATHERVANE



Washburn representing Louise Sylvain for the Matheson dimensional variance. After viewing the plans, the board made suggestions and recessed the hearing until 2/9/04, so Mr. Washburn can talk with the appellants.

- > The Noyes conditional use review was delayed until after 2/9/04.

February 9, 2004

- > The Mathesons have redrawn plans to meet the setback requirements for their site. Hearing was recessed until 2/23/04 to address the Conservation Area review.
- > The Planning Commission has interviewed the only applicant for the Zoning Administrator position.

U-32 Jr. Sr. High School

*Ginny Burley, Chair
Sue Chickering
East Montpelier Members*

January 21, 2004

- > Erin Keefe and Joe San Antonio presented the Community Connections program. The grant for the after school program for students and adults runs out this year, and the extent of the program for next year is yet to be determined .
- > Nancy Thomas gave a special education update. The special education child count has decreased. Focus will be on employment skills for students, a behavior specialist and options for meeting the needs of a variety of students.
- > The board voted to deny the '04-'05 leave of absence request of Ms. MacMartin; to allow a Sunday Matinee for the spring musical; to approve the resignations of Benjamin Willett and Chantal Boulanger; the appointment of Kit Walker as a long term substitute; one winter coach as presented and to accept the proposal from WCSU Executive Committee regarding the Central Office Facility.

February 4, 2004

- > The board reviewed ongoing building issues. There is still some roof work to be completed and a heaving in the sidewalk needs to be repaired.
- > There was a first reading of the Role of Religion in the School's policy. It was moved to a second reading.
- > The Harassment of Students policy was tabled pending research and feedback from Bonnie Johnson-Aten.
- > The board passed a motion to set the tuition for U-32 at \$10,018.00.

- > Denied tuition waiver for Catie Terhune to return to U-32 for her senior year.
- > Approved spring & fall athletic coaches.
- > The board voted to accept the resignation of Gregory Chamberlain.
- > The board approved the appointments of Theresa Cahill, Bob Minsenberger and James Robinson.

February 24, 2004

- > The software package for event scheduling is in operation.
- > Dave Bazis and Bill Dunn made the Technology Education presentation.
- > Discussed having a member of the Sheriff's Department in an identified police car at campus activities.
- > There was a second reading of the Role of Religion in the School's policy.
- > The revision of the Harassment of Students policy was tabled pending the outcome of a bill currently in the Vermont Legislature that would impact this policy.
- > Motion passed on the co-curricular advisor, the winter athletic coach and the appointment of Michael Lugo.

March 1, 2004

- > At a special meeting, the board voted to authorize Bob Rea and the Gossens Bachman firm to develop a comprehensive, final list and time line to attach to a previously approved letter about the completion of the building project.

March 10, 2004

- > The board will be structured as follows: Ginny Burley, Chair; Rob LaClair, Vice-Chair; the *Times Argus* as the newspaper for official postings; Rob LaClair, representative to the WCSU Executive Committee; Mark Berry and Rob LaClair representatives to WCSU negotiating committee; Rob LaClair to WCSU transportation committee; Dan Violette, Truant Officer.
- > The U-32 committees are: Finance: Chair, Stuart Savage, Rob LaClair, Ginny Burley; Policy: Chair, Mark Berry, Stuart Savage, Tom Williams, Kyle Magida; Curriculum: Chair, Ginny Burley, Allen Gilbert, Sue Chickering, Kyle Magida; Personnel: Chair, Rob LaClair, Mark Berry, Allen Gilbert; Co-Curricular: Chair, Tom Williams, Rob LaClair, Sue Chickering, Dylan Cate; Negotiations: Mark Berry, Rob LaClair.
- > Greg Gossens and Bob Rae provided a list of building repairs and the responsi-

ble parties for implementing the repairs, with August 1 as the goal for completion.

- > By the April 14 meeting, the board would like a Guidance Department review process outline, with some questions about how the department is functioning and meeting the needs of the community answered by June 1.
- > The board voted to eliminate the position of Director of Facilities & Operations as of June 30.

Elementary School

*Jan Aldrich, Chair 229-0406
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Brian Bishop 223-5332
{bbdbishop@adelphia.net}
Joe Buley 233-7970
{jbuleyjr@adelphia.net}
Matthew Curtis 223-7403
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Julia Haynes 223-1651
{julia@vsha.org}*

December 9, 2003

- > A special budget meeting was held to discuss revenues for special education, budget projections, staffing scenarios, the Common Level of Appraisal, per pupil spending, long range planning, the music program and the possibility of voting on the school budget at a later date in the year.

January 6, 2004

- > There will be a board retreat with Ray Proulx on 1/12/04 to focus on roles and responsibilities of the School Board, conflict resolution and best practices, to review board goals and write action steps for each goal.
- > EMES will host a visiting teacher from Thailand until the end of the school year.
- > The staff will work on action planning at their January in-service. The board and the community will be asked to participate in the future.
- > The special projects for this year have been paid. There were some unanticipated repairs that went over budget by about \$15,000.00. The board voted to approve the expenditures out of the fund balance.
- > The board approved the Admission of Resident Students Policy.
- > Volunteer drivers may transport students on field trips as long as they show proof of \$300,000.00 insurance coverage and a current Vermont driver's license.

Continued on page 8

February 3, 2004

- > The board watched student power point presentations on the new mobile computer lab named MILES (Mobile Interclassroom Lab for Every Student).
- > Bob Riggen was recognized for his work with the technology committee in purchasing the lab.
- > Tim Flynn reported on the math committee's work. According to test data, our 4th grade scores are a little behind the state's performance. As students go through the district their scores improve. The math committee will continue to provide math resources and professional development in this area.
- > There will be a board retreat with Ray Proulx to work on a school pledge to include language from the mission statement and a statement about "...a pledge of cooperation and collaboration." The staff and community will be asked to share in the process.
- > A draft of the '04-'05 school calendar includes a first student date of 8/25. This early date is strongly opposed by the board, but is based on an attempt to coordinate with the Barre Vocational School's schedule. There will be further discussion at the supervisory union level.
- > Ms. Christy and Ms. Knoedler are providing technology workshops before and after school for staff. There will be a Technology Fair on March 18 at U-32.
- > Bob Riggen was thanked for his service as a member of the board.

NEW ZONING ADMINISTRATOR NAMED

Since March, Dean Monteith has been East Montpelier's new Zoning Administrator (ZA). He comes to the job with prior



experience, as he is also the part time Zoning Administrator in Newbury. He lives in Peacham, which he thinks gives him an advantage as ZA. He said, "Not living in the community, I do not have

favorites or not-so-favored applicants so it is easier to be unbiased and just apply the regulations as written."

He has been impressed with the quality and knowledge of both the town's Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Adjustment members. He said, "Both groups have a keen interest in planning and zoning and have demonstrated that they have the common good of the entire community in mind when they form their plans and make decisions."

GREEN UP DAY IS COMING ON MAY 1ST

This year's Green Up Day falls on May Day, the ancient celebration of spring's renewal. While in Europe, the tradition is to go out into the countryside to collect flowers and branches, here in Vermont we can celebrate spring by going out with our neighbors to collect colorful beverage containers and blossoming trash from our roadsides! OK, it's not very romantic, but, as many folks who have participated in the past will tell you, Green Up Day is satisfying, social, even fun!



Here's how you can be involved: Plan in advance to clean up a roadside near your home. Speak with your kids and neighbors about joining you. You may obtain Green Up disposal bags at the Town Clerk's office or the Elementary School during the last half of April, or pick some up at the elementary school on the morning of May 1st. You don't have to use the "official" Green Up bags; any garbage bag will do.

Green Up Day will happen rain or shine. As you're Greening Up, separate out recyclable containers if possible, and empty any liquids out of them. If you find dumped items too big for you to transport, drag them (if possible) to a visible place on the roadside for later pickup. Bring your collected trash to the elementary school between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm on Saturday. Town trucks will be there during those times only to transport the booty to the landfill. Depositing trash in the school parking lot at other times is considered dumping.

Our goal is to clean up roadsides and public lands in East Montpelier. While Green Up Day may inspire you to clear out the old tires in your shed, please dispose of them on your own.

A sincere thank you goes out to all of the folks who helped set last year's Green Up Day record for both participation and miles of roadside cleaned up. Another spring has arrived and more trash is out there blooming, so come out on May Day and join in a medieval ritual with a Yankee twist!

For more information, contact the Town Clerk's office or Green Up coordinator Bill Merrylees at 223-4951; e-mail bmerry@together.net.

He was born and raised in South Dakota and has a Masters Degree in Geography/Planning. He said that planning and zoning work has always been one of the jobs he likes the best. "I enjoy working with people and helping the town ensure it grows according to the plan all residents adopted" Monteith said. The East Montpelier Town Plan was re-written through a series of public meetings by the Planning Commission and adopted by town residents in 2003.

Monteith's office hours are: Mondays from 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm and Thursdays from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.

THINGS OF NOTE



Date Glace

Irma Martin

Stone the dates and stuff them with peanut butter.

To make the glace: Boil 4 ounces of sugar and 1½ wineglass of water until the syrup candies. After the syrup is all melted, 2 or 3 pinches of cream of tartar are beaten in. Dip the dates with the aid of wooden toothpicks and place on a buttered plate to cool.

Irma grew up in the brick house off VT14 in Calais before the Legare Farm Market. She married Harry Bliss and they lived on Factory Street in North Village in the house now owned by Jane Eastwood. She was active in the church and the Friendly Circle.

RECIPES FROM THE COMMUNITY COOK BOOK

“Taste-Tested” with hints and up-date as needed

by *Paulie Coburn*

Paulie's Comments

4 ounces of sugar is one-half cup
1½ wineglass of water equals one cup
Boil for about 20 minutes.

Dave's Comments

Yummy!

Jean's Comments

These make great holiday gifts and can be stuffed with almonds or cashews in lieu of peanut butter.

The *Community Cook Book* was “sponsored” in the early 1940s by The Friendly Circle.

EAST MONTPELIER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Anne Ormsbee, V.P./Treasurer

In February, Dwight Clark and Bradford Lane, both long-time residents of East Montpelier, shared memories of growing up and working in the area: Bradford, on the family farm in the Horn of the Moon; Dwight, living with his grandparents in Marshfield and going to school there. Later he attended school in East Montpelier village and worked there as an adult. Bradford summarized his early life as “no bathroom, no water, no central heat”, and no travelling in the Spring. The family laid in 50 gallon drums of kerosene, 100 pounds of sugar, and flour by the barrel to save frequent trips to the city. He commented on the advances in travel and health care during his lifetime. Dwight remembered the Town Hall as a busy place with dances

and school exercises. He was sorry when the hall had to be torn down. When asked about how winters have changed, Bradford allowed as how winters WEREN'T worse “back then.” We thank these two gentlemen for their reminiscences.

In March, about 25 folks attended a program at the Vermont History Center in Barre. The staff gave a great tour of the building as well as a short talk about its history and what is planned for the future.

Just a reminder: the Vermont History Society Museum reopened on March 20 at the Pavilion in Montpelier with the new exhibit “Freedom and Unity: One Ideal, Many Stories.” It's worth a visit.

The Vermont History Expo will be held again this year at the Tunbridge Fair Grounds on June 26 and 27. It begins at 10:00 and runs until 5:00 both days. For more information log on to <http://www.vermonthhistory.org/expo/> or call 479-8500.



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TOWN NOTES

The East Montpelier Selectboard will host a discussion about the septic needs for the East Village area on Wednesday, April 28th, 2004, 6:30 p.m. at the East Montpelier Elementary School. All East Montpelier residents are invited to attend the discussion. If you have any questions please contact Marlene Betit at 223-3313 or eastmontpe@adelphia.net.

Sylvia has extra 2003 Town/School Reports on hand - anyone who would like one may come to the Town Office and pick one up. Back years are available too.

TAKE A TOUR OF THE KELLOGG-HUBBARD LIBRARY

Are you new to town? Has it been awhile since you've been to the Library? If so, we'd love to show you around. We have a new book section, audio books, magazines, internet access, a Vermont Room, interlibrary loans, a great Children's Library, friendly staff and so much more. Come visit us and we'll give you a tour.

General Information

Phones: Main Desk 223-3338 Childrens Room 223-4665

Website: www.kellogghubbard.lib.vt.us

- * Library Hours: Monday - Thursday 10 am - 8 pm (Childrens library closes daily at 5:30 except Thursday)
- * Friday and Saturday 10 am - 5:30 pm.



Dragon eggs & spiders!

The Rally Day Committee is happy to announce that Northstar Fireworks once again plans to donate a fireworks display for this year's Rally Day celebration on Sept. 11th. We are looking for donations and fund-raising ideas to help pay some of the Swenson

family's out-of-pocket costs. Please support the Second Annual East Montpelier Fireworks Fund — as a Donor, Volunteer, or Business Sponsor.

Be thinking about how you can help and watch for the contribution form in the July/August issue of the *Signpost*.

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FEED THE SOIL

by *tarin chaplin*



I went to interview Karl Hammer on the second day of spring. "Good thing it's spring," I said, noting the temperature barely a few degrees above zero, "because if it were winter, it'd be minus 26!"

Walking the two miles to Karl Hammer's farm on the County Road, home of the Vermont Compost Company, was a bit like the calm preceding the storm, or the simple opening to a very complex story. After spending over two hours with Karl, nothing seemed simple about this man, this farm or this business.

The 18 acre farm, built in the 1820s, has a long history. In the Cutler family for generations, it was bought by Victor Knapp in about 1907. He was "a pole walker" and had "spied it from the top of a pole." He moved the barn from across the road, put it on a new foundation, and with his wife kept a small herd of Jerseys until 1954. His son Louis, in a not unfamiliar departure of son from father, switched to Holsteins on the lower farmstead. That smaller house and barn burned down in 1931, and a new house was built inside the old stone foundation. The rebuilt barn, then owned by Victor's grandson Paul, burned down itself in 1952. Today only its stone foundation remains.

These two parcels have a long history of working together, and Hammer has continued the tradition, now managing the lower 29 acre farm owned by Don Pfister and working it with his own to support the needs of his vibrant business. Of the combined 47 acres, less than 1/2 acre lies in the town of East Montpelier.

Hammer was originally a vegetable grower who started experimenting with making potting soils in the late 70's and early '80s in Vershire where he still has a farm. For the next five or six years, he worked for a large company in New York State, plowing 300 acres, removing manure and composting. He's been in the composting business full time since 1987. In 1993, he developed a project at Lyle Haven farm in East Montpelier, where they had more cattle producing more manure than their own crops needed. He also began managing Ben & Jerry's waste ice cream and now works with Fairmont Farm's manure and

NECI food wastes, all of which are separated at source. These are the raw materials for what eventually become Vermont Compost products.

"What's the process that turns foul smelling manure into sweet compost?" I asked innocently. Although Hammer summed up the answer as "a series of microbial metabolic events, a succession of eating, digesting, dying, decomposing, birthing processes," I got lost in the ensuing 40 minutes as he went into what seemed to be a graduate level explanation. Karl maintains that when it comes to microbes, "our ignorance is much larger than our knowledge," and "it's not about science; it's about cooking," and "science is very primitive in its understandings of microbes." Karl was off and rolling, his lecture replete with words straight out of the ag/chem/bio textbooks.

So, simply put, what does his company do? They step into the natural process via selection, reaction and blending of materials; they control moisture content and nitrogen-carbon ratios. Vermont Compost makes most of their compost on Vincent Flats Road and at a dairy farm in North Hartland. On site at the Montpelier facility they:

- * raise poultry (a flock of 600), whose manure is combined with cow, mule and donkey manure, hardwood bark and hay (from local untreated hayfields) to provide the raw stuff of their compost products, and whose eggs, albeit not certified organic, are sold at Hunger Mountain Coop;
- * blend the horticultural and compost-based mixes;
- * grow about 1/2 acre of garlic and potatoes.

Karl contends that it all comes down to "feeding the soil," a phrase he trademarked. It takes anywhere from 60 days to 18 months for the raw materials to go through the transformative process that results in a plant grower's delight - rich, sweet compost. "Most of our business is potting soils for greenhouse operators." And fine soil relies on microbes, which Hammer maintains a huge respect for, "It is easier to fool people than plants; and it's easier to fool plants than microbes."

Next, given that he uses it on his logo, I had to ask about the donkeys (currently three, plus two mules). This initiated another lesson. Donkeys, a species of equines, can live for 60 years. A mule, on the other hand, is a hybrid with a jackass (male donkey) for a father and a mare (female horse) for a mother. "Why mules?" I asked. Compared to horses, they don't get sick or colicky, can carry more and are smarter.

How about the seagulls swarming out back? Seagulls, actually a state protected bird, commute daily from Lake Champlain. They fly up every morning, and every evening they shoot up the Winooski back to the lake. They come to Hammer's farm, as they do to the Central Vermont Landfill, for the food waste and "leave their poop behind."

Hammer is adamant about his beliefs. He knows that even the small city of Montpelier, with currently just two farms - his and Two Rivers - retains sufficient tillage and pasture resources to substantially feed itself. He says Montpelier has a three day

food supply - if the trucks stopped running, we'd be in trouble that fast. His goals for his business are multiple:

- * make structures and facilities to facilitate self-sustainability;
- * enhance the land's food-producing potential;
- * and make terraces that will contribute to soil and water management for future food production.

Although demands for the products continue to grow, he is not sure whether the company should continue to do the same. He says the business "needs to be a certain size to stabilize the labor force and pay it well."

With so knowledgeable a man as Hammer at the helm, it's no surprise that the company has enjoyed a 30% sales growth per annum over the last 10 years.

Vermont Compost has distributors as far west as Madison and Chicago and can boast that "most of Vermont's certified organic growers do their starts and bedding plants in our soil."

Is the company organic? While Vermont Compost products are labeled as "acceptable for use on certified organic production," the USDA's regulations hold that soil products are not certifiable as organic. But the company strives to be honest on this issue. They use canola-based oils in the machinery and get the raw materials from a very few sources they know well. These are companies that they can go to regularly and which are committed to not using pesticides and GMOs. "GMOs are ambient at this point," says Hammer. "Our foods and commercialized grains are full of GMOs." He's a strong proponent of GMO labeling and a GMO moratorium. "We don't want to homogenize our food and seed stocks. We need more diversity, not less, in every regard."

Karl Hammer is a man who knows a lot and whose knowledge of soils and microbes is as detailed as his take on current political, environmental and social issues...and he loves letting



that knowledge spill out to hopefully fertilize and keep growing our land, our food, our bodies and our minds.

tarin chaplin is a free-lance choreographer, writer, ritualist, and community organizer who has lived in East Montpelier since 1976. She lives in East Montpelier Center.

COMMITTEE MEETING CALENDAR

Selectboard	1st & 3rd Monday	7:00	Town Office
Planning Commission (PC)	1st & 3rd Thurs.	7:30	Town Office
Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA)	2nd & 4th Monday	7:30	Town Office
Conservation Fund Advisory Comm.	2nd Thursday	7:30	Town Office
U-32 Board	1st & 3rd Wednesday	6:30	U-32 High School
Elementary School Board (EMES)	1st Tuesday	6:30	Elementary School
Recreation Board	3rd Monday	6:30	Town Office
Revolving Loan Committee	At call of the chair	6:30	Town Office
Volunteer Fire Department	Every Tuesday	7:00	Fire Station, Templeton Rd.
Four Corners Schoolhouse Assoc.	1st Tuesday	7:00	Four Corners Schoolhouse

EAST MONTPELIER TOWN OFFICE

PO Box 157, East Montpelier, Vt 05651
Office Hours: M-Th 9:00-5:00 F 9:00-Noon
Phone: 802-223-3313

Clerk-Treasurer - Sylvia Tosi

email: eastmont1@adelphia.net

Asst. Clerk-Treasurer - Terri Conti

email: eastmont2@adelphia.net

Asst. Clerk - Ginger Hopkins

Town Administrator - Marlene Betit

email: eastmontpe@adelphia.net

(Mon.-Tue. 9:00-5:00, Wed. 9:00-12:00)

Chief Lister - Rosie Cueto

(Mon.-Fri. 9:00-11:30)

Zoning Administrator - Dean Monteith

(Mon. - 2:00-5:00 pm

Thur. 10:00 am-1:00 pm)

email: eastmont3@adelphia.net

EVENTS CALENDAR

April 28	Discussion of septic needs of East Village - see page 10	6:30 pm	Elementary School
May 1	Green Up Day - see page 8	All day	All over town
May 1	Recreation field green-up and spruce-up	9:30 am to done	Recreation field
May 11	Rally Day planning meeting	7:00 pm	Town Office
May 17	Historical Society - East Montpelier Quakers by Hilari Farrington	7:00 pm	Four Corners School
June 5	<i>Le Vent du Nord</i> concert of Quebecois music - see page 5	call 229-9593	Old Meeting House
June 13	Retirement party for Gladys Cote - see page 5	2:00 pm	Old Meeting House
June 17	Sixth grade graduation		EMES
June 18	Senior graduation at U-32 / Last day of school at EMES		U-32 & EMES
June 21	Historical Society	7:00 pm	Four Corners School
June 26-27	Vermont History Expo - see page 9	10:00am-5:00pm	Tunbridge Fair Grounds

Deadline for next issue: June 1, 2004 — to Dave & Darlene Grundy — 476-4300 {ddgrundy@aol.com}

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Inside: - Feeding the soil
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