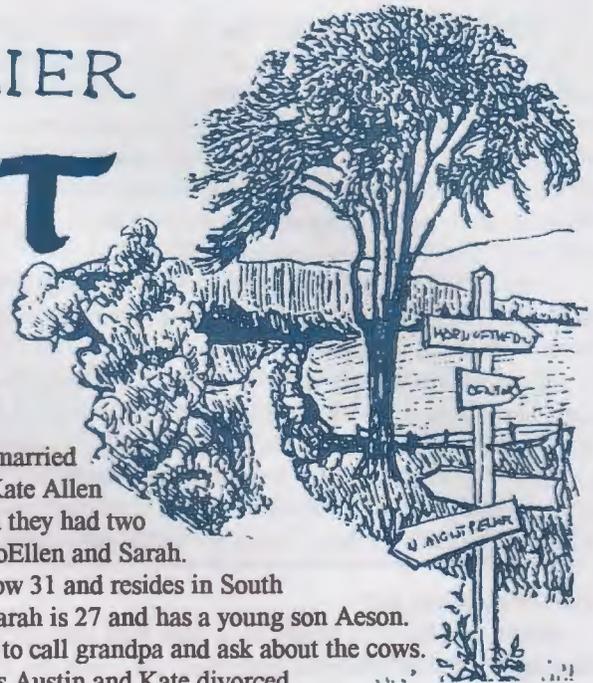


EAST MONTPELIER SIGNPOST

Volume VIII, No. 4

March/April 1998



Austin Cleaves: Deep Roots and a Love for the Land

As you drive past the East Montpelier Elementary School and turn onto Lyle Young Road, your eyes are drawn to the neat farmstead comprised of modern and historical buildings known as Fairmont Farm. This farm has been in family ownership since 1788. The man with a quick sense of humor who has carried on his family's agricultural heritage is none other than Austin Cleaves.

Austin's mother Kate and father Paul were from Barre and Montpelier respectively. Paul Cleaves' family, the Fosters, were early settlers of East Montpelier. Austin was born and raised in West Springfield, MA, as his father had set up his dental practice in that city. From the age of 14, Austin began coming to visit Lyle and Kate Young, his great aunt and uncle, at their farm, the present Fairmont Farm. From the age of 14 through college, he spent all of his school vacations helping Lyle and Kate tend their 30 milking cows, harvest hay and assist with maple sugaring.

From his early years at the Youngs, he decided to make a career of agriculture. He graduated from UVM in 1962 with a B.S. degree in agriculture. Upon graduation, he moved to East Montpelier and continued working for the Youngs.



Austin married the former Kate Allen in 1964, and they had two daughters, JoEllen and Sarah. JoEllen is now 31 and resides in South Carolina. Sarah is 27 and has a young son Aeson. Aeson loves to call grandpa and ask about the cows. In later years Austin and Kate divorced.

In 1966, through the generosity of Lyle and Kate Young, Austin took over management of the farm. Over the years he made many improvements to the buildings and the land. He expanded the herd from 30 cows to 40, eventually to 80. Austin has always prided himself on having a neat, clean operation. Over the years he has received many awards for milk quality and production. That tradition continues today.

During our visit, I asked Austin to provide some insight into what East Montpelier was like when he first moved to town in 1962. He feels the most visible change is the decline in the number of farms. In 1962, there were 50 farms in town shipping milk. Today there are only seven!

In those days, it was not unusual to see a line of stake-body trucks along Route 2 in front of Buttrick's Creamery (now home to the Creamery Store and East Montpelier Home Center) preparing to unload 40 quart milk cans for processing from area farms. He says, "From Dudley's Store to my farm, I would pass six farms, all of which were making a living from the land. Today there are none. From another perspective, though, the seven remaining farms in town today produce more milk than the 50 did in 1962."

I asked Austin what he thinks the future for agriculture holds. He feels we will continue to see further consolidation of fewer but larger dairy operations to take advantage of economies of scale. But he did not write off the smaller farms either. He feels these farms can survive by producing niche or specialty food products. "I think it is exciting to see diversified farming operations prosper in our town such as the Cate Farm (organic vegetables), Carver's Tree Farm, Merritt's Winooski Valley Apple Orchard and the Morse and Bragg Farms (maple, fruit and vegetable products) to name a few."

(Continued on page 2)

Top of the Signpost

In a whimsical mood the other day, I was comparing my life to a giant garden. It is made up of so many pieces, some sturdy and prosaic like potatoes and onions, others frilly exotics like arugula. My backyard garden has a great many flowers mixed among the vegetables, and my life is no different. Should I go on and consider the weeds which grow there, too? And such elements as lime, fertilizer and compost? They're all part of that patchwork that I love and love to work in.

I know that the garden of my life is made up of essentials and nonessentials, and what a good time to consider them. Many Vermonters discovered during our January ice storm what is truly essential. Living without heat, electricity, and water must have seemed the ultimate test, but living without people and the services they provide is impossible. We in this area were incredibly lucky to miss the brutality of that storm, but its lessons reached us all. It made me think about the services which we so readily take for granted here in our small town.

I happen to think we have road care and fire protection quite as wonderful as any place in the state. Did you know that five members of our Fire Department joined the volunteer crews helping clear the ice and fallen trees in Grand Isle after the recent storm? Others wanted to go but stayed to cover our own needs. Bravo, Chief Jon Winston and all the volunteers who serve us! Road Foreman Mike Garand and his crew, Anthony Williams and Jason Buck, take such good care of our highways both during storms and in everyday maintenance. Gadabouts that we are, we want our road network to always be ready and waiting for us.

Thank you, Firefighters and Road Crew. You are high on my list of essentials of a good life. In my garden your services may be the stalwart potatoes, onions, and carrots but we couldn't live without you!

Jean Cate

(Continued from page 1)

Austin and the Hall family have been long time friends, often sharing equipment and even barns over the years. In 1992, Austin joined John and Donna Hall, their sons Stuart and Richard and their wives Robyn and Bonnie in forming Fairmont Farm, Inc. Austin said this type of farm partnership is becoming more commonplace as farms are forced to streamline. Austin explained they wanted to farm here in town but also wanted to have time off as well. The decision was largely quality of life as well as economic. Today all employees and owners have scheduled time off. "For me it was a dream come true to create a modern dairy facility that will be well positioned for the 21st century."

The modern barns are home to nearly 600 Holstein milkers. The farm ships approximately 5000 gallons of fresh milk everyday to Booth Brothers in Barre. It takes many tons of corn and hay to feed these animals. During the cropping season, crops will be harvested from nearly 1200 acres of land. This has necessitated the rental of good farmland in town. "As I work some of this land, I reflect on the families who once farmed this land and toiled countless hours in the old barns which stand as a symbol of an earlier era. Many of these people were my friends and neighbors who provided for their families from this very land. It gives me great pleasure to see their land continue to be utilized for agricultural production."

During Austin's 36 years in town, he has served on the selectboard for 12 years and planning commission for four years. He was also a representative to the Central Vermont Solid Waste Board and believes we should take care of what we discard in a responsible manner within our own community. He was disappointed that the Central Vermont Solid Waste District was unable to convince voters of the benefits of siting a lined landfill within East Montpelier.

We visited about how town meetings have changed over the years. Austin really appreciates the enthusiasm and ideas that new residents bring to our town. "I think it is healthy that

residents question how things are done in their community, just because we have done it that way for years does not always make it right."

Austin finished our visit by explaining that he is proud to live in a town where a significant amount of farm and forest land have been conserved while an outstanding recreational trail system has also been established for generations to enjoy. Austin's wish for the future is that residents will honor the town's agricultural heritage and respect the land that has been set aside for conservation. "We are blessed to live in such a beautiful community."

Bruce Chapell

Bruce Chapell, his wife Janet and sons Ryan and Seth live on Templeton Farm and are friends and neighbors of Austin. Bruce works for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

TOWN MEETING POTLUCK

For the third year we will share a potluck lunch on Town Meeting day. People seem to enjoy the congeniality in the midst of doing the town's business. And since people bring their best recipes, we are guaranteed a bountiful meal. Each family should bring a hot dish, salad, bread, OR dessert. Plan on four servings for each member of your family - for example, bring salad for 8 if there are two of you. This assures that there is plenty of food.

Please bring your food to the cafeteria window when you arrive. We'll give you a ticket showing how many people you brought food for. If you absolutely cannot bring food, call 223-2951 by Monday and plan to eat with us anyway. Your ticket will cost \$3.00 which helps pay for butter, milk, coffee etc.





MILESTONES

Births

- >Angela Pauline Biron; born October 7, 1997, daughter to Robin & Jeffrey Biron.
- >Field Hudson Leonard; born October 22, 1997, son to Caroline C. Leonard.
- >Raequel Autumn Pratt; born November 13, 1997, daughter to Lisa Jo & Stephen Pratt.

Deaths

- >Blanche P. Mascitti, October 29, 1997, wife of Paul I. Mascitti.
- >George Harvey Fitch, November 23, 1997, husband of Barbara C. Fitch.
- >Robert R. Lashua, December 2, 1997, husband of Margery Lashua.
- >Edward R. Hanson, December 9, 1997, husband of Nancy Hanson.
- >Joanne S. Johnson, January 11, 1998, wife of Douglas Johnson.

Land Transfers

- >Ann B. Danforth to Leonard Rivers and Vicky Dupont; 23.4 acres, County Rd.
- >Roy and Joanne Bair, Trustees to Ellen Hill; dwelling on 75 acres, Templeton Rd.
- >Helen Louise Hamilton Allen Estate to Nancy Webb, Kate Allen, Beth Allen, George C. Allen, Lynne Hidding Allen, Timothy Allen; 2 apt. dwelling on 4.3 acres, VT Rt. 14 in E. Village.
- >Ellen Urman to Bruce R. Satterlee; dwelling on 7.3 acres, Barnes Rd.
- >Donald G. Cote to Michael B. & Anita Cote; Furniture Barn, US Rt. 2 east.
- >Joyce, David & Dan Cheney to Putnam & Susan Clayton; Easement, Horn of the Moon Rd.
- >Putnam & Susan Clayton to Joyce, David & Dan Cheney; Easement deed, Horn of the Moon Rd.
- >Donald G. Cote to Fairmont Farms, Inc.; 72 acres, US Rt. 2 east.
- >John T. Graves to Malcolm R. Graves; dwelling on 89 acres, US Rt. 2 in E. Village.
- >Charlotte E. Staples and Marilyn S. Wingerski to David Epstein and Elissa Best; dwelling on 12 acres, Lyle Young Rd.

RECREATION BOARD

- >Anyone willing to donate a good and sturdy picnic table for the rec field, please contact a Recreation Board member.
- >The spring swim lessons are now being planned (sometime in March, we think!) and the summer swim lessons are scheduled for June 22 through July 3, unless we have too many snow days.

Mark your calendars. Robyn Hall is coordinating this effort. >We are looking for new people to join the Recreation Board. We meet the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. Please join us!

>For people who want to sponsor a sport (like the flag football that occurred last fall) or an event, we are developing an application form to submit to the Recreation Board.

BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

Gene Troia, Chair

Oct. 27, 1997

>Ron Koss and Carley Claghorn sought dimensional variance to divide 10 acres of 128 acre parcel on Taylor Rd. Recessed.

Nov. 1, 1997

>Site visit to Koss-Claghorn property.

Nov. 10, 1997

>Reconvened hearing on Koss-Claghorn proposal. Not approved because criteria not met.

Dec. 8, 1997

>Richard and Carole Casavant sought conditional use permit to construct single dwelling on each of two lots about 1 1/2 acres each in commercial zone. Permit granted with conditions.

>Discussed changes to BOA bylaws.

TRAIL NEWS

We are pleased to announce that the "Sparrow Recreational Trail" has now been completed and is open for year-round use. Views from the "Sparrow Farm" are spectacular any time of the year, and the trail down to the Montpelier swimming pool will thrill everyone, especially skiers. Our thanks go out to the many volunteers who worked on the trail and to the land-owners whose generosity made it all possible.

Progress continues on the Montpelier-Wells River railroad bed, with a major cable bridge over the Winooski River planned for next summer. Volunteers for this important project will be needed. If you are interested in joining our work bees give me a call at 229-0734.

Sandy Woodbeck, President

LISTERS

Rosendo Cueto, James Goodall, Steve Sinclair

East Montpelier Listers are in the process of correcting the Grand List for 1998. They are making visits to all properties, especially those with new building permits, where changes have been made. If you are not home, they will leave a notice that they have been there and what structure they have looked at. They appreciate your cooperation, as it makes a difficult job a little more enjoyable when homeowners are helpful and courteous.



THE TOWN WEATHERVANE



SELECTBOARD

Edie Miller, Chair, Tom Brazier, Tim Meehan

Nov. 5, 1997

>Discussion of proposal to store, during remediation, about 600 yards of gasoline contaminated soil from a Sunoco gas station in Waterbury Center on Fair Road. Further discussion will follow State comment.

>Steve Phillips presented plan for development road off Route 14. Wants road accepted by Town.

>Selectman Brazier reported on ongoing discussions about formation of regional ambulance service.

Nov. 19, 1997

>Approved annual request of EM Gully Jumpers to use portions of town highways to connect trails.

>Members of Citizens for Clean Compost reviewed their concerns about the proposed City of Montpelier sludge compost facility. Selectperson Miller said zoning questions should be directed to Planning Commission which held the public hearing and granted permit. Planning Commission is elected and does not report to the Selectboard.

>Discussion of 1998 budget.

Dec. 2, 1997

>Voted to hold advisory vote by Australian ballot on Town Meeting Day regarding the proposed Montpelier sludge compost facility.

>Bill Bryant reported on site meeting with AOT District engineers on Phillips development road. Selectboard wants input from Road Foreman Mike Garand.

>Frank Pratt present to discuss ongoing plans for regional ambulance service.

Dec. 3, 1997

>Public Hearing for the completion of the Fairmont Farm community development grant. Richard Hall reported project has gone well and is now complete. Goals of grant to protect groundwater, retain 13 jobs and add 3 new ones and to increase the number of milking cows by 40 have all been met.

Dec. 17, 1997

>Road Foreman Mike Garand reviewed 1998 budget proposal.

>Selectboard approved purchase, from 1997 summer operations funds, of 1,000 gallon polytank and spreader for use of liquid calcium chloride.

>Awarded 1998 contract for liability coverage to VLCT Property and Casualty Intermunicipal Fund (PACIF).

>Bill George presented Fire Dept. budget.

>Hope to complete in Jan. Capital Improvement Program and Budget for five years.

>Accepted resignation of Gary Bryant from Planning Commission. Vacancy on Cemetery Commission because of death of George Fitch. Also a lister vacancy. Will leave open until Town Meeting.

January 7, 1998

>Met with State Representatives Donny Osman and Elaine Alfano to discuss issues of mutual concern: Route 14 Winooski River bridge replacement, impact of Act 60 on East Montpelier, H576 introduced by Osman and Alfano about holding local referendums for projects such as proposed sewage sludge composting facility.

>Reviewed concerns about proposed Phillips Road.

>Approved contract with Central Vermont Humane Society.

>Determined wording for Warning Article for Town Meeting on proposed sludge facility.

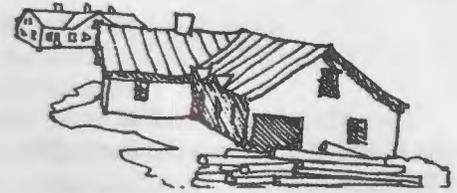
>Approved "permanent loan" of 25 chairs from Municipal Building to Four Corners Schoolhouse.

January 13, 1998

>Appointed Frederick Strong to fill vacancy on Cemetery Commission through 1998 Town Meeting.

>Set dates for Pre-Town Meeting Forum and Forum on proposed sludge composting facility.

>Worked on budget.



PLANNING COMMISSION

Doug Johnson, Chair

Nov. 20, 1997

>Approved request by Dave Pickel and Dave Pickel, Jr. to subdivide a 1.8 acre lot for a family member from 13.76 acres on Route 214.

>Approved sketch plan review for a 5-lot subdivision for Ginny and Robert Bragg on Route 14N.

>Irving Deutsch feels permit for composting plan at Packard Industrial Park should not have been issued by the Planning Commission but should have been presented to the Board of Adjustment for a Conditional Use Permit. Commission asked Mr. Deutsch to provide them with list of questions.

December 4, 1997

>Final plat review on 3-lot subdivision on Towne Hill Road by Hawkins family. Approved site plan.

>Approved preliminary and final plat review for one-lot subdivision on Horn of the Moon Road by Howard Stone Jr. and Brian Stone.

>Approved preliminary and final plat review for one-lot subdivision on Route 214 by David and Frances Pickel.

>Sketch plan review of one-lot subdivision on Cummings Road by Harry and Dorothy Morse to deed 1.5 acres to Roberta and Sherwood Morse to bring current 1.82 acre parcel into compliance.

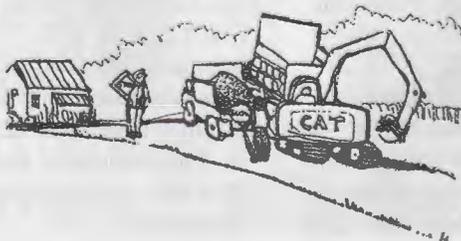
>Agreed to forward letter and packet from Mr. Deutsch to Town Attorney for advice.

>Preliminary and final review of one-lot subdivision on Cummings Road by Harry and Dorothy Morse approved.

January 8, 1998.

>Washington Electric requested permit to construct 10' x 12' building behind existing office building to house alternative power in times of power outages. Approved.

>Approved request T & M Sports to move business south of existing building to garage on LaPerle property.





**EAST MONTPELIER
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

*Jan Aldrich, Chair, Richard Curtis, Cheryl
Rus, Loring Starr, Nancy Thomas*

December 4, 1997

>Charged Fran Weinbaum, with a committee, to investigate inclusion of teaching languages at EMES.

>Prepared timeline for Principal Search Committee.

December 15, 1997

>Reviewed list of volunteers for Principal's Search Committee and approved selection of committee members; board, staff, parents, and central office.

January 8, 1998

>Agreed to advertise ten days in area newspapers for principal's position.

>Agreed to pay \$60 a day for substitute teachers for 1998-99 school year.

>Will ask three high school students to provide child care for children during Town Meeting.

>Approved budget for 1998-99 school year.

U-32 BOARD

*(Chair, Peter Bluhm), Ginny Burley and
Tony Klein, East Montpelier members*

November 18, 1997

>Reviewed proposed budget.

>Hired Rosie Laquerre as principal's administrative assistant.

>Supported Joanne Greenberg's Advanced Placement English proposal.

December 5, 1997

>Approved concept of "school to work" proposal with staffing determined later.

>Reviewed first draft of budget.

December 16, 1997

>Appointed Andy Shapiro representative of the board with a fact-finding mandate for Act 250 hearings on proposed sludge plant.

>Reviewed second draft of budget.

>Thirty five students auditioned for New England Music Festival. Four quartets will be asked to sing at next meeting.

January 6, 1998

>Tara Chaplin and father, Mark Chaplin, present. Tara achieved 800 (a perfect score) for her SAT Math score. Presented commendation from U-32 Board.

>Agreed to fund strings program.

>Approved budget for 1998-99 school year.

FOUR CORNERS SCHOOLHOUSE

Weston Cate, President

Planning is underway for 1998 programs at the Four Corners School. In addition to the local organizations and groups who regularly use the facility, plans are in the works for a spring bird and wild flower walk, plant and book sales, a memory hour on Rally Day, and the possible formation of an East Montpelier Garden Club. An organizational meeting will be held April 22 at 6:30 p.m. at the schoolhouse.

**EAST MONTPELIER FIRE
DEPARTMENT**

Chief Jon Winston, President Bill George

The East Montpelier Fire Department responded to a total of 217 calls in 1997 as compared to 218 in 1996. Even though the number of fire related responses was less, 41 compared with 62 in 1996, there was one fatal fire and a dramatic increase in fire losses. In the town of East Montpelier, the department responded to 23 fire related calls, 68 emergency medical calls, 3 carbon monoxide detector activations, 36 motor vehicle accidents, and 13 fire alarm activations. In the town of Calais, the EMFD responded to 12 fire related calls, 32 emergency medical calls, 2 carbon monoxide detector activations, 6 motor vehicle accidents and 4 fire alarm activations. The remaining 18 calls were mutual aid calls to surrounding towns.

The members of the East Montpelier Fire Department would like to thank the citizens of East Montpelier and Calais for their continued support during the past year.

**EAST MONTPELIER
CEMETERY COMMISSION**

Elliot Morse, Chair

Sept. 27, 1997

>Discussed, amended and adopted regulations for Cate Cemetery. No known living lot owners. Burials in new lots will be limited to cremations.

Dec. 29, 1997

>Expenses for 1997 stayed within budget. Will prepare budget for 1998.

Jan. 12, 1998

>Adopted budget for 1998-99 fiscal year.

>Voted to request \$500 from town. Sales of cemetery lots have been high so do not need to ask for more.

CHURCH BELLS

OLD BRICK CHURCH

Rev. Marcheta Townsend, Pastor

Worship and Sunday School - 11 a.m.

>Community Koffee Klatsch continues on the first Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in the Sunday School Building.

Everyone in the community is welcome.

>The traditional Christmas Tree lighting and hanging of bells was held Dec. 14th. \$175. donated for bells was given to the Twin Valley Seniors group for their Meals-on-Wheels program.



OLD MEETING HOUSE

Rev. David W. Connor and Rev. Susan

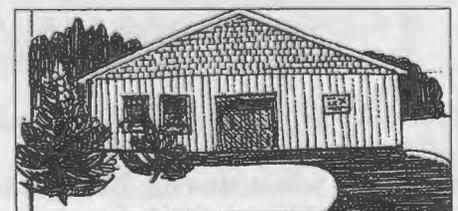
Cooke Kittredge, Joint Pastors

Worship and Sunday School - 9:30 a.m.

CROSSROADS CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Rev. Bob Walton

Worship and Sunday School - 9:30 a.m.





1998 TOWN MEETING COUNTDOWN



TOWN MEETING INFORMATION

Child Care at Town Meeting

The Fourth Grade will provide child care in the morning from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. There will be a charge of \$2.00 per child. There will be adult supervision at all times. They will also hold a small silent auction from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Both activities are fund raisers for their trip to the Boston Science Museum.

Names to be printed for the Australian Ballot:

Moderator	Martin K. Miller
Selectboard (3 years)	Edith Miller
Lister (3 years)	Earl Montague
Auditor (3 years)	no candidate
Trustee of Public Funds (3 years)	Sylvia M. Tosi
Town Law Agent (1 year)	Dennis Carver
Town Grand Juror (1 year)	Tim Carver
First Constable (1 year)	Dennis Carver
Second Constable (1 year)	Earl Montague
Cemetery Commissioner (5 years)	Frederick C. Strong
Planning Commission (3 years)	Tim Carver
(vote for no more than three)	David Sparrow
	Carol A. Welch
Planning Com. (2 of 3 years)	Dave Hudson
Planning Com. (1 of 3 years)	no candidate
School Director (3 years)	Cheryl Rus
School Director (2 years)	Nancy Thomas
U-32 School Director (3 years)	Virginia "Ginny" Burley
To be voted as part of the U-32 District elections.	
U-32 District Clerk (1 year)	Rebecca S. Reed
U-32 District Treasurer (1 year)	Florence Young
U-32 District Auditor	Peter Hood

Town and School Forums

Special Town Forum: Sat., February 21, 10-12, to discuss sludge composting facility.
U-32 District Forum: Tuesday, February 24, at 7:30 p.m. U-32 Auditorium. The U-32 Annual Meeting is a short meeting held at 6:30 p.m. before the forum. All voting is done by Australian Ballot on Town Meeting Day.
Town Meeting/Elementary School Forum: Thursday, February 26, at 7:00 p.m. Elementary School (EMES). Discussion of all articles and the budget will take place at the forums. You will be able to meet the candidates for office.

Town Meeting: Tuesday, March 3, beginning at 9:30 a.m. EMES.

Elementary School Meeting: Tuesday, March 3, beginning at 1:00 p.m. EMES.

Items to be voted by Australian Ballot:

Voting booths will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. for items to be voted by Australian Ballot:

U-32 District: All articles on the Warning. U-32 Ballots will be handed out with Town Ballots on Town Meeting Day.

Elementary School: Moderator and School Directors only.

Town: All officers

Town Budget - Article 5

Dump truck and equipment - Article 6

Capital Reserve Funds - Article 7

Composting Facility - Article 13

Come and participate in Town Meeting and the School Meeting. There will be a Pot Luck Dinner at noon.

You can request absentee ballots to be mailed by the Town Clerk's Office. Voters may also come to the Town Clerk's Office to vote. Absentee ballots must be returned by Town Meeting Day - either delivered or by mail (Town Office phone 223-3313).

THANK YOU TO THESE LOYAL SUPPORTERS!

David & Karen Blosser	Susan Page
Philip & Donna Leno	Marguerite Ferris
Tim Carver Family Tree Farm	Malcolm & Diana Fielder
Kevin McCollister	Mabel C. Wright
Richard Copping	Erica Zimmerman
The Nist Family	Fred & Joyce Jacek
Carmi & Phyllis Duso	Albert & Elizabeth Jerome

The *Signpost* welcomes contributions. Any amount would be gratefully received - \$5, \$10, \$25, even \$50. Send your donation to Anne Sherman, The *Signpost*, RFD 1, Box 80, East Montpelier, VT 05651. All new contributors will be recognized in the next issue.

Open Everyday 8:30am to 6:00pm

We Ship Anywhere

"A Quality Family Farm Shop"

Vermont Handicrafts
Gifts
Vermont Cheese
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Maple Products

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1 mile north of E. Montpelier Village on Rt. 14 (follow signs)

BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE FURNITURE BARN

Due to the high volume of sales, the mattress supply was nearly exhausted and so Mike Cote was off picking up another load. His wife Anita very willingly agreed to talk with me about her husband and the Furniture Barn. Anita says she never minds talking about Mike and his dedication to satisfying his customers.

Don Cote opened the Furniture Barn in 1978 on Route 2 in East Montpelier. Mike worked right along with his father from the time the business began. Don showed him the "ropes" to owning and operating a business and the financial know how necessary to succeed. Since the first day of operation, the Furniture Barn has offered very reasonable rates on furniture. Mike has kept the overhead down and, thus, passed the savings on to his customers who return time after time.

In the late 1980's, the Furniture Barn was struck by lightning and the second story of the barn was destroyed. Mike wanted to continue the business and his dad virtually turned the business over to him to run. After the damaged portion of the barn was repaired, Mike reopened for business and continued to run the business on his own until his marriage in 1992. In November, 1997, Mike and Anita officially took over the business as owners.

Over the years, the family-run business has grown and changed from a small inventory to a large inventory, offering a wide variety of furniture and name brands. The selection at the Furniture Barn ranges from bunk beds to king size beds and mattress sets; living room furniture, kitchen tables and chairs, along with accessories, dining room sets and hutches. They have even added futons to their inventory which is a hit with the younger crowd.

From 1992 to 1993 Mike even operated a discount grocery store in the basement of the Furniture Barn, which he really enjoyed because it offered groceries at a discount price and he felt he was helping people, plus he enjoyed getting to know the customers. Anita said he liked working there as much as working in the furniture part of the business because of the chance to chat more with the customers. When someone comes into the furniture portion, they usually know what they want and are very serious about their purchase and you deal with a customer in a different way.

Mike is a very "people oriented" individual — always aiming to please the customer. If he doesn't have the item you are looking for, he will always go the extra mile to get just what you want. Mike says the best part of his job is saving people money, knowing furniture dealers and their products to assure the best buy for the customer and seeing a satisfied customer.

Mike was born and raised in East Montpelier. In 1992 he and Anita were married and are the parents of 4 children: Marshall age 6, Trevor age 4, Maranda age 2 and Derrick 4 months old. They live in a small house behind the Furniture Barn, which, in the older days, was the meat market for Delair's Meats and has been made over into a house.

Mike has always been very active in men's basketball and plays on a Barre team in his time off. In the past, he has coached and sponsored a Furniture Barn team. Guess Mike will have to put his experience into coaching the youth basketball teams at East Montpelier Elementary School with Marshall getting into school, and pass his knowledge on to the next generation.

Because the Furniture Barn is open 7 days a week and is run by both Mike and Anita, there is not much time for hobbies or recreation. There never seems to be a good time to sneak in a vacation when you run a family-operated business. They are hoping for a few days off in April to attend a large family reunion in Florida — but only time will tell.

Because of Mike and Anita's friendly personalities and willingness to please their customers, people from as far away as Waitsfield, Hardwick, Eden, Barton and White River Junction return time after time and will say it's worth the drive!

Mary Anne Cerasoli

Mary Anne Cerasoli lives near the Furniture Barn with her husband Joe. She runs a typing service out of her home.



COMMITTEE MEETING CALENDER

Selectboard	1st & 3rd Wednesday	7:15	Town Office
Planning Commission	1st & 3rd Thursday	7:00	Town Office
Zoning Board of Adjustment	2nd & 4th Monday	7:30	Town Office
Conservation Fund Advisory Comm.	2nd Thursday	7:30	Town Office
Volunteer Fire Department	Every Tuesday	7:00	Fire Station, Templeton Rd
U-32 School Board	1st & 3rd Tuesday	6:30	U-32 High School
Elementary School Board	1st Thursday	6:30	Elementary School
Recreation Board	3rd Monday	7:00	Town Office
Town Clerk's Office Hours	Mon-Thur: 9-5, Friday 9-12		Town Office
Zoning Administrator	Tuesday & Thursday	1-2:30	Town Office
Four Corners Schoolhouse Assn.	3rd Wednesday	7:30	Four Corners Schoolhouse

Meeting times are subject to change.

EVENTS CALENDAR

Feb. 21	Town Forum on sludge composting facility	U-32 auditorium	10:00 a.m. to 12 noon
Feb. 21	Voter Registration	Town Clerk's Office	10:00 a.m. to 12 noon
Feb. 24	U-32 Forum	U-32 Auditorium	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 26	Town pre-Town Meeting Forum	Elementary School	7:00 p.m.
Mar. 3	Town Meeting	Elementary School	Begins as 9:30 a.m.
Mar. 21	Rabies clinic	Australian Ballot voting	7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Mar. 21	Dog Licensing	East Village Fire Station	8 a.m. to 11 a.m.
		Town Clerk's Office	8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

EAST MONTPELIER SIGNPOST

Published six times a year, mailed out free of charge to all residents of East Montpelier.
Subscriptions mailed out of town for \$10 a year. Business card ads: \$15/issue or \$75/year.

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