

EAST MONTPELIER SIGNPOST



Volume XXII—Number Five

May-June 2012



Evelyn Dixon and Juju

TERRY J. ALLEN

Wash'nWag: Big or Small, We Groom Them All

by Maggie Rebmann

A dreamy-eyed Border Collie was in the tub up to her ruff in suds when I walked into Wash'nWag. Evelyn Dixon, owner and operator of the dog grooming salon, leaned over the tub smiling as she worked. I was reminded that someone once said, "Anybody who doesn't know what soap tastes like has never washed a dog." We chatted about Border Collies until the final rinse.

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Green Up Day: A Great Vermont Tradition

Saturday, May 5

Roadside trash drop off - EMES: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Free volunteer lunch - EMES: 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.



Greening up Guyette Rd., 2011

TERRY J. ALLEN

*"I wake up in the morning asking myself:
'What can I do today; how can I help the world today?'"*

— Julia Butterfly Hill, environmentalist

Join your neighbors and friends for the annual Green Up Day, rain or shine, on Saturday, May 5. Let's do our part to clean up East Montpelier and remove unsightly trash along our town's beautiful roads and on our public lands -- discarded bottles and food wrappers, tires and furniture. You'll be surprised at the amount of trash you can remove in just a couple of hours, and how much more beautiful our town will look at the end of the day! If you come across oversized items that are too bulky to transport, drag them, if possible, to a visible place on the side of the road for later pickup. As you gather trash, please try to separate recyclables.

Bring all collected trash to the elementary school between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Depositing trash in the school parking lot at any other time is considered illegal dumping.

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Top of the Signpost

by Joe Buley

As the snow melts and the buds swell, the annual emergence of the household pets' winter deposits come into view, and we all get to play hopscotch around the perimeter of the house for a few short, soggy weeks. So much biomass...I am indeed a rich man. The arrival of such early mild weather has me marveling at the greenhouses and their spinach and salad greens. We once again have managed to harvest from September through to early spring with no supplemental heat. The best part is that the spinach and greens taste better during the winter than they do in the summer.

Now we start to focus on the summer season and the promise of many, many tomatoes. Thanks to some excellent help, I was able to put things in motion many months ago that will benefit operations this season. We are about to see if all that preparation and forethought will lead to a better season and a better quality of life. Ultimately, quality of life is what this is all about. Stop and smell the compost, roses, cucumbers, spring herbs...you get the picture.

The same could be said for relationships with the town of East Montpelier, its residents and institutions. Each year I meet more people in town and deepen relationships with people I've met in years past. Likewise, I understand where the town as a whole is headed. Whether I'm previewing a section of the Town Plan or chatting with a neighbor about issues facing the planning commission, I'm working our roots deeper into the community. Now that we're headed into our twelfth summer here in East Montpelier, it feels like our past efforts are starting to pay off; keep your fingers crossed for the growing season too.

—Joe Buley runs Screamin' Ridge Farm and Joe's Soups from the home on Dillon Road that he shares with wife, Lori, and daughters, Annik, Olivia, and (on breaks) Nikita.



Paulie's Recipe: Bean Croquettes

2 cups baked beans
2 cups whole wheat bread crumbs
2 tablespoons butter
1/2 cup tomato soup
1 teaspoon salt
1 small onion, minced fine
Form into croquettes.
Bake in a hot oven till brown.
Add more bread crumbs if too soft to mold.

These make a delicious meat substitute for hot weather.

My comments:
I used canned black beans instead of baked beans. Bake 20 minutes on sheet pan at 450. Heat the remaining half of the soup and pour over the baked croquettes. If you like, sprinkle with grated cheese.

—Community Cook Book of Friendly Circle, No. Montpelier

Election Results

The results of the Town Meeting Day elections for local officers are as follows: Town Clerk, Terri Conti; Town Treasurer, Don Welch; Selectboard, Seth Gardner & Steve Sparrow; Lister, Ross Hazel; Auditors, Dave Grundy & Sally Longhi; Trustees of Public Funds, Terri Conti & Don Welch; First Constable, Sandy Conti; Second Constable, Paul Haynes; Cemetery Commission, Pauli Coburn; Planning Commissioners, Mark Lane, Jack Pauly & Jean Vissering; EMES Directors, Flor Diaz-Smith & Priscilla Gilbert

In addition the Selectboard has made the following appointments: Rachael Grossman, town service officer; Sandi



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ALEX BROWN

Conti, first animal control officer; Elliott Morse, second animal control officer; Carol & Don Welch, VT Police Community Adv. Board; Ben Winters, Recreation Board; Frank Pratt, CVRPC Transportation Adv. Committee; Charles Johnson, Conservation Fund Adv. Committee; Ginny Callan, CVSWMD; Bill George, Emergency Management Coordinator.

Town/School Meeting Update

by Bruce Johnson, Selectboard Chair

Town Meeting 2012 brought a significant change to the town's governing structure with the offices of town clerk and town treasurer split for the first time in living memory. Three-term Town Clerk Terri Conti and new Town Treasurer Don Welch are working together to ensure a successful transition.

The first order of business was to work within the budget to fairly compensate Don while maintaining the cohesive front office arrangement that is so appreciated by townspeople and the business world. Small shifts in both the FY12 and FY13 budget lines allowed us to offer Don a stipend equivalent to \$500/week while keeping Terri's stipend stable. We also left untouched the multi-purpose assistant job handled so capably by Denise Brown, although, by agreement with Don and Terri, that position will now be considered a town employee covered by the town's personnel policy rather than simply a clerk or treasurer appointee. By the time you read this, Don should be happily ensconced in a newly configured office with his own



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computer and telephone, sharing space with the zoning administrator. The procedural evolution in organization structure from a clerk/treasurer methodology to a clerk and treasurer arrangement may take some time to fully integrate, but in the end the town will benefit from the change. The Selectboard truly appreciates the effort and positive approach Terri and Don are bringing to the office each day.

In response to the decision at Town Meeting to table the article concerning whether the town should continue to offer tax abatement contracts to commercial farmers, the Selectboard has created the Farm Contract Study Committee. The committee will report on their work and seek public comments before the end of 2012, leaving time to craft a 2013 Town Meeting article on the basis of the report and public reaction. Committee membership is diverse. If others are interested in joining this group, please contact Bruce Johnson at 223-3313 x204.



Congratulations to the EMES grades 3/4 girls' team, which won the championship this season against Williamstown by a score of 13 to 8.

Front Row (from left to right):

Ginger Knight, Payton Gariboldi, Claire Obeldobel, Jenna Mekkelsen, Emily Ehret, Molli Brown, Cady Burgess, Maia Castonguay

Back Row: Eliza Garland, Jordon Pryce, Assistant Coach Monica Urquhart, Averie Brown, Holly McEathron, Arianna Hawkins, Coach Jillian Zeilenga

Wash'nWag, continued from page 1

gently lifted the collie down and led her into the drying room where eight dogs waited in generous-sized cages. Two damp Welsh Springer Spaniels seemed to be enjoying the warm air being blown through large hoses aimed in their direction. Today Evelyn had nine dogs including a Golden, the Welsh Springers, a Springer Spaniel, two Border Collies, two poodle crosses, and a Chihuahua. Four haircuts; others just baths. "Big or small, we groom them all," she said. "That's our motto."

Evelyn, whose family moved to East Montpelier about eight years ago and who graduated from U-32, bought Wash'nWag in 2010. She was trained in grooming techniques by the former owner of the business, Tonya Spaulding. Wash'nWag is located in East Montpelier Village at 3070 VT Route 2.

"What do you appreciate most about dogs?" I asked. "Everything," she answered, "Their personalities, gestures, the way they're always happy. I love all breeds. I was always the family caretaker of our animals," she told me. "We had large dogs, and I had show horses all my life. I now have three horses, two St. Bernards, two cats, and chickens." When I asked, "What's the most fun part of the business?" Evelyn answered, "Working with a just-rescued dog in desperate need of grooming. They are totally happy when they're picked up."

Every day at Wash'nWag is different from the day before. "It's not like working in an office," she added. Looking at nine dogs stretched out comfortably in their cages and Evelyn's satisfied smile, I got the sense that this is hard work, and you have to love it to succeed. Evelyn, who is in her early twenties, told me, "Although I'm young, I take my job to heart. I'm here to take care of an owner's dog, to make their pets feel good and look their best."

To that end, Wash'nWag is open Tuesdays through Fridays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and occasionally on Saturdays. Appointments can be made several days in advance to reserve space. Evelyn can be pretty flexible with timing depending on the number of dogs waiting to be groomed on any given day. Most dogs arrive in the morning and stay at least until noon or until the end of the day, but a pick-up time can be pre-planned. It takes around two hours to groom, and each dog is walked around noon. A whole grooming package consists of a bath, haircut, nail

trimming, and ear cleaning. Any part of this process can be chosen separately. Evelyn uses the Espree dog grooming product line exclusively because it has natural ingredients that are hypoallergenic, tearless, and soothing for sensitive skin. There is tea tree oil shampoo for a flea bath, cedar shampoo for biting insects, aloe instant relief shampoo for arthritic dogs or elderly pets, and a special shed shampoo that releases the undercoat. Dogs leave Wash'nWag smelling like peppermint, lavender, cucumber, chamomile, rainforest, allspice or red poppy. You will be happy to know that skunk baths are offered as well. Wash'nWag maintains high standards of cleanliness and has never had a case of kennel cough.

As I was closing our interview, I looked up and saw many rolls of colorful ribbons hanging on the wall. "What are these for?" I asked. "Every dog goes out with a ribbon," smiled Evelyn. Henry Ward Beecher said that dogs are "the gods of frolic." I could see in her eyes the pride and joy this gracious and dedicated young entrepreneur takes in her work and in her clients, now asleep under dryers, looking and smelling really, really good, and dreaming of frolicking.

--Maggie Rebmann lives in East Montpelier with her husband, Rick; her daughter, Araceli, a student at U32, two dogs; a cat; and two pet goats.



TERRY J. ALLEN

TERRY J. ALLEN

Remembering Sylvia

by Pauline Coburn & Barbara Ploof



A 49-year resident of East Montpelier, Town Clerk and Treasurer for 23 years, a presence at Rally Day and Town Meetings, Citizen of the Year in 2005, wife, and mother of five – seems like most of us in town have memories of Sylvia Tosi in many aspects of town life. Here are some memories from two of us.

Paulie Coburn worked with Sylvia for 18 years as Assistant Town Clerk and Treasurer. Paulie remembers how important Sylvia felt it was to speak pleasantly with everyone and especially to listen to them. If a question was asked, but the answer was not known, she would find out the answer and get back to the person. She was never a gossip and "...held us all to a high standard," Paulie said. Sylvia enjoyed the variety of tasks in the office and both she and Paulie felt lucky to have jobs close to home that they really liked. Sylvia was practical, and though not necessarily a techie, she moved forward with copiers and computers in order to do the job better. She was a calm and deliberate problem solver. At the same time, she liked to have fun and

created a pleasant atmosphere at the office, relying on her own skill with crafts and imagination to decorate for the seasons. Paulie remembers a still-green Christmas wreath that Sylvia decorated with red hearts on Valentine's Day. She also organized potlucks at Christmas time for the town employees including the road crew as well as various elected officials and committee members.

When Sylvia retired in 2006, she continued to write up the "vitals," as she called them, and the land transfers for the *Signpost* "Weathervane." She had helped with the *Signpost* since its inception in 1990, the only member of the *Signpost* staff who had worked on it continuously over its 22 years of publication. In recent years she helped us with the planning and the editing of each issue, arriving at each meeting with little loaves of nut bread to share. She also reminded us of the things Jean Cate had said about her vision for the town newsletter. Sylvia's assignment consistently arrived on Barbara Ploof's computer a couple of days before the deadline or sometimes earlier if she knew she would be away when the material was due. She took special care in the notices of deaths to mention those in East Montpelier who were closely related to the people who had died. In addition, Sylvia was always interested in the Historical Society's display that Anne and Conrad Ormsbee create in the Town Office window, and would write a little about it to put in the *Signpost* if there was room. She was a careful proofreader and sometimes caught an extra "I" in names she had written. "Oh, there's my heavy finger again," she'd say, characteristically making light of her own ailments.

We certainly will miss Sylvia as part of the *Signpost* staff, just as we all will miss her as part of our town. It won't be the same without her.

*--Pauline Coburn of Daggett Road and Barbara Ploof of Barnes Road
feel privileged to have worked with Sylvia.*



Sylvia with exercise buddies at Strong Living

Town Offices

PO Box 157, East Montpelier, VT 05651
Phone: 802-223-3313
Office Hours: Mon–Thurs 9 AM–5 PM
Friday 9 AM–12 PM

Town Clerk: Terri Conti
eastmonttct@comcast.net

Town Treasurer: Don Welch
eastmonttr@comcast.net

Town Administrator: Bruce Johnson
eastmontadmin@comcast.net

Zoning Administrator: Dina Bookmyer-Baker
eastmontza@comcast.net

Collector of Delinquent Taxes: Karen Gramer
karengramer@comcast.net

Fire Permits: EMFD 225-6247

First Constable/Animal Control Officer:
Sandy Conti 479-3169

2nd Constable: Paul Haynes 223-1651

Listers: Rob Chickering, Putnam Clayton, Ross Hazel
223-3313 x206, eastmontlstr@comcast.net

Health Officer: Dave Grundy 476-4300

Service Officer: Rachael Grossman
223-3177

Selectboard

Bruce Johnson, Chair
savage1@pshift.com

Carl Etnier Steve Sparrow
Seth Gardner Casey Northrup

Planning Commission

Rick Hopkins, Chair, 229-4375

Development Review Board

Richard Curtis, Chair
rcurtis841@comcast.net

U-32 Jr./Sr. High School

Ginny Burley gburley@u32.org
Emily Goyette egoyette@u32.org

Elementary School

Rubin Bennett, Chair
rbennett@thatitguy.com

Andrea Colnes Priscilla Gilbert
Stephen Looke Flor Diaz-Smith

State Representative

Tony Klein, 793-6032
twk@tonyklein.com

Town Weathervane

MILESTONES

Births:

- Ryan Jonah Young, son, born Dec. 7, 2011, to Michelle "Spunqi" & Marc Young
- Jacob Matthew Dunkling, son, born Mar. 5, 2012, to Krystle & Jordan Dunkling

Marriages:

- Amy Lorraine Cooper & Chad Ryan Niquette, Feb. 11, 2012
- Janice E. Crossan & David E. Lambert, Mar. 10, 2012

Deaths:

- Sylvia Menard Tosi, died Feb. 16, 2012, former Town Clerk; spouse of Donald Tosi and mother of EM resident Lori Tosi Mekkelson
- Ann L. Kienzle, died Feb. 23, 2012, mother of Christine Zahm
- Norman Colvin Rice, died Feb. 20, 2012, spouse of Catherine Rice

Property Transfers:

- Vermont River Conservancy to Town of East Montpelier, 5+/- acres, off Coburn Rd.
- Joyce George to Harvey George, 2.9 acres & 2-family dwelling, Quaker Rd.
- Nancy W. Winings & Jeffrey B. Winings to Sarah E. Swift, 2.7 acres & dwelling, North St.
- Mary Duprey to Victor Duprey, 4.5 acres & dwelling, Haggett Rd.
- Carolyn Barney & Robert Barney to Jo Ann Velander & David Barney, 1.0 acre and dwelling, VT14N
- Susan W. Hawkins & Hugh M. Hawkins to Rodney Nobrega & Donna Nobrega, 3.17 acres, Old Farm Rd.
- Kim Watson to Robert Watson, 1.0 acre & 2-family dwelling, US2 village
- William George & Julie George to Theodore G. Hedges & Son, Inc, easement, RT14
- Jenny Marie Coburn to Peter Edward Carriere, mobile home, Sandy Pines Tr. Pk.
- Joshua A. Larose & Kate E. Larose to Jessica Crotty, mobile home, Sandy Pines Tr. Pk.
- Paul Cate & Sandal Cate to Paul Cate, Sandal Cate, Austin Cate & Logan Cate, 72.7 acres & dwelling

EAST MONTPELIER SELECTBOARD

February 6, 2012

Motions Passed:

- to approve the Certificate of Highway Mileage for the year ending February 10, 2012
- to authorize Selectboard Chair to sign GMP Streetlight System Conversion Agreement
- to authorize the Chair to sign the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Application
- to approve the Excess Weight Permit for Agri-Mark, Inc. dba Cabot Creamery

- to roll over the Loan Conservation Fund CD for another 5 years
- to authorize Seth Gardner to sign off on the tax refund warrants next week

February 20, 2012

Motions Passed:

- to have the Road Foreman order the Mack Chassis with Tenco equipment for \$145,642, contingent on financing
- to lower the weight limit on the Coburn Road Bridge to 16,000 lbs. and to set the weight limit during mud season to 24,000 lbs. to comply with state regulations.
- to approve amended Certificate of Highway Mileage for the year ending February 2012
- to approve the request of the EMFD to transfer \$7,955.54 in unallocated 2010 Existing Capital Account funds to the EMFD General Capital Reserve to be spent as needed by the department, following all the stipulations and restrictions that are applied to the current capital monies collected from the EMFD ambulance revenue
- to use the Municipal Building for the EMES bond vote May 22, 2012 from 7a.m. – 7p.m.
- to recommend to the Vermont Department of Health the appointment of Dave Grundy as the Town's Health Officer
- to approve the Excess Weight Permit for Marlin Environmental dba Hartigan Company, with inclusion of 16,000/24,000 lb. weight restrictions

March 5, 2012

Motions Passed:

- to resolve to accept the former Soule property put forth in the warranty deed from the Vermont River Conservancy
- to authorize the Chair to fill out and sign the Baystone Financial application Option 1 for financing the new plow truck
- to authorize the Chair to sign the State of Vermont Park 'N Ride Grant Agreement
- to approve the access permit for the Hawkins' subdivision as recommended by Road Foreman
- to approve the Excess Weight Permits for Pike Industries, Scott A. Brown Trucking, GK Bisson Trucking LLC, Central Vermont Solid Waste Management, Allen Lumber Co., McCullough Crushing, Johnson Artesian Well Drilling, Huntington Homes, Inc., Engineers Construction, Inc., and United Natural Foods

March 12, 2012

Motions Passed:

- to approve the liquor licenses for Plainfield Hardware and C.P. Dudley store
- to nominate Bruce Johnson as Selectboard Chair

Town Weathervane

- to nominate Seth Gardner as Selectboard Vice-Chair
- to authorize Seth Gardner to sign payroll and payroll vendor warrants
- to authorize Casey Northrup to sign payroll and payroll vendor warrants in Gardner's absence
- to adopt the Selectboard Rules of Transaction as presented
- to pay Don Welch, Town Treasurer, a stipend of \$7,000 for FY2012 and \$26,000 for FY2013 at the rate of \$1,000 per pay period
- to appoint Rachael Grossman as the town service officer
- to appoint Sandy Conti 1st animal control officer
- to appoint Elliot Morse 2nd animal control officer

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD

February 7, 2012

Motions Passed:

- to adjourn the hearing on the appeal by John Sanfacon on the Notice of Violation issued by the Zoning Board of Authority. There will be a deliberative session at the 2/21 DRB meeting.
- to recess the hearing on the change-of-use permit Application #11-063 for Rubin Bennett. Mr. Bennett plans to use the commercial building at 1970 VT14 South as a special events space as well as a professional office space for Mr. Bennett

February 21, 2012

Motions Passed:

- to close the evidence-taking and consider in deliberative session a proposal by Rubin Bennett to allow the use of a vacant space in an existing warehouse for specific events and for a business office in a commercial building at VT14 South
- to close evidence-taking on Application #12-001 proposed by T. Wayne Clark
- to give preliminary plan approval of the subdivision proposal of T. Wayne Clark as presented with the condition that access permits are obtained
- to continue the hearing on 3/20 of the Application #12-003, a proposal by Hugh Hawkins to create a 2-lot subdivision on Towne Hill Road
- regarding the Bennett Application #11-063: to approve the application for change of use/ mixed use with the conditions as follows:
 - all applicable permits obtained
 - events no more than 4 weeks in a row, maximum 12 events in a year
 - special event activities between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. shall be done in a manner that does not create a noise nuisance for neighbors and

the hours of operation may be adjusted by the DRB if chronic complaints occur

- to deny the appeal of John and Phyllis Sanfacon and uphold the ZA's Notice of Violation of 11/11/11
- to accept the change to Rules of Procedure and Conflict of Interest Policy

PLANNING COMMISSION

February 2, 2012

- There was a discussion of the Town Plan with regard to Business Activity/Economic Activity, Water Supplies and Aquifers. At the next meeting there will be a review of: Wastewater Disposal, Solid Waste Disposal, Social, Services, and History Excerpts.

February 16, 2012

- The committee reviewed the drafts of proposed chapters for the Town Plan.

March 1, 2012

- The committee reviewed the draft proposed chapters for the town plan.

March 15, 2012

- Reviewed the 2nd draft of revised Town Plan chapters dealing with Land Use and Zoning Regulations
- Reviewed the reports of the Zoning Administrator and the DRB

EAST MONTPELIER BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS

January 9, 2012

Motions Passed:

- to accept the proposed budget of \$3,295,273.00 for FY13
- to authorize the Transportation Committee representative and the Superintendent to award the student transportation bid

February 20, 2012

Motions Passed:

- to approve the consent agenda as presented
- to set the tuition rate for EMES at \$12,484 for FY2012-13
- to accept with regret the resignations of the Spanish teachers: Jennifer Donovan and Bridget Suarez Kalmar
- to approve hiring Judy Bancroft for the position of a reading teacher (.5FTE long term substitute)
- to amend TruexCullins Contract re: Additional Services-Pre-bond Meetings for EMES

February 27, 2012

A Special Meeting to review Power Point slides for the Town Meeting presentation on the building proposal, the assistant principal position, and the equalized student process.

March 12, 2012

Discussed how to present the materials about the EMES renovation at the upcoming public meeting.

U-32 SCHOOL BOARD

February 1, 2012

- Senators Ann Cummings, Bill Doyle, Anthony Pollina, Representatives Janet Ancel, Tony Klein and Peter Peltz were in attendance and invited school board members to ask them questions. Topics included school funding, tuitioned students from outside the district, cuts in the budget which result in teaching positions being cut, special education, school choice, school consolidation, student performance gaps, and the rising tuition costs at UVM.
- The following reported to the Board: The Policy Committee, Curriculum Committee, Negotiations Committee, and the Facilities & Capital Budget Committee, Student Representatives, and the Administrators' Report.

Motions Passed:

- to approve the NEASC schedule proposal
- to approve a Leave-of-Absence Request
- to accept the resignation of James Carrien, Special Education para-educator
- to approve the board orders for general budget and the athletic officials

February 15, 2012

- Executive session on student matter

Motions passed:

- to approve \$46,000 roof payoff from fund balance account
- to approve \$20,000 transfer to NEASC account from fund balance account
- to approve \$309 tuition bill-back amount for FY11
- to approve principal's recommendation on student matter from executive session but shorten by 2 days

March 7, 2012

Motions Passed:

- to accept the Board reorganization as described: regular bi-monthly meetings to be held on the first and third Wednesdays of the month @ 6:00 p.m. Official postings will be in the *Times Argus* and the town clerk's office
- to approve athletic coaches & volunteers
- to accept with regret the resignation and retirement of Chris Ditmeyer at the end of the school year
- to approve board orders for the roof note payoff, general spending, and food services.



Host Chinese Students for Two Weeks

This summer our local communities will host a group of ninth grade students from China. These students will be housed in pairs with local families. They will spend daytime hours at Montpelier High School along with a group of our area students and evenings and weekends with their host families. This will be the second of these exchanges coordinated locally by Community Connections; last summer's host families reported it to be an incredible experience! The dates for this summer's visit will be June 23 to July 7, 2012. If you are interested in learning more about being a host family please contact Bill Merrylees at Community Connections, 223-3456 or bmerrylees@u32.org

Fire District Passes One-Time Tax

By Steve Gilman, Chair EM Fire District No. 1

At the March meeting Fire District members approved a one-time tax of \$20 per customer connected to Crystal Springs water system. This will give the Fire District some operating capital for expenses anticipated at the various stages of the upcoming feasibility study.

The Fire District loan application to the State of Vermont for funding this study was recently approved. The Fire District will now be able to work with a local financial institution to obtain short-term financing in anticipation of reimbursement by the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation and Vermont Municipal Bond Bank for the cost of the feasibility study. Things are now moving forward with what we hope will ultimately be the purchase of the water system. Upon completion of the study in about seven months, a third-party appraisal of the water system will be done, and we will embark on final negotiations of a purchase price with the owner.

As always, we welcome Fire District and community members to our regular meetings, held the second Wednesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. in the Emergency Services Facility.

Please visit our website for more information at www.emfiredistrict.org.

Town Vote on EMES Renovation May 22 Information Meeting May 14

by Flor Diaz-Smith, Chair, EMES Facilities Committee

The final plans for bringing EMES up to code and its learning environment up to date are complete, and now it's time to vote! After almost two years of careful planning and extensive input (from residents, teachers, school staff, and our architects) the EMES School Board is putting forward a comprehensive and cost-effective project that meets three key goals:

- Provide a safe and healthy structure
- Meet the needs of today's teaching and learning initiatives
- Improve our building's energy performance

Draft plans and options were revised repeatedly to assure each goal was achieved for the least cost. At the same time, a long-term maintenance plan is being developed to assure this investment will be cared for and serve us well for years to come.

This plan fixes numerous code violations, including handicap accessibility for our kids and residents. It makes space in the building for 4th-graders, now in temporary classrooms. It adds proper space for preschool classes! Did you know every dollar you invest in preschool and early education can save the taxpayer \$13.00 in future cost? Studies show that kids who attend preschool transition better into kindergarten, become better citizens, earn more, pay more taxes, and commit fewer crimes.

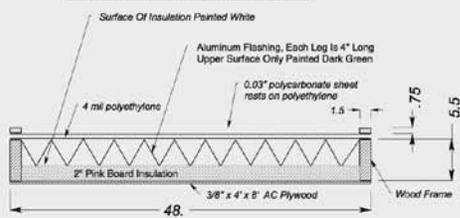
The plan includes a gym that will provide a safe place for sporting events, and it will allow a full-time space where our kids can be moving and learning healthy habits through physical education. The current auditorium/multi-use room will promote collaborative learning projects and the updated up-to-code kitchen will run much more efficiently for students and community meetings. The project also addresses many obstacles the school presents in trying to prepare our students for their future in a world that is changing dramatically.

As *Signpost* readers know, there has been virtually no major work done on EMES since the "new" wing was built in 1989. With that bond now paid off, it's time to reinvest in our town's most valuable assets—our kids and our school. This proposal balances the need for an improved learning environment and the most cost-effective way to achieve it over the next 20 years.

One challenging but very important element of your decision may be to figure out how your taxes will be affected by this renovation and expansion. You can find a chart as well as complete details of the plan, answers to frequently asked questions, and other elements of the planning process at <http://emesfacilities.blogspot.com>. You can also call me at 223-1113. An informational brochure will be sent to everyone in town, prior to the meeting and vote. We hope you take the time to read it and attend the May 14 meeting at EMES.

Thanks for your continuing support of your elementary school.

Cross Section Of Hot Air Solar Panel



The system catches the sun's heat and a solar-powered fan directs the hot air into the house.

An Inventor in Our Midst

by Dave Grundy, Chair EM Energy Committee

Ross Hazel is one of our town listers, but that only describes a small fraction of this man's skills. These include taking and printing photographs as a way to chronicle his life over the last 45 years, designing and constructing houses, sailboats, vertical takeoff and landing aircraft, and solar panels to capture the sun's energy to warm his home.

Conventional wisdom holds that solar energy devices in Vermont are most effectively used to produce electricity and hot water. But Ross has designed and constructed solar panels that heat air which is circulated into his home. As any good inventor would, Ross has incorporated devices into his system to monitor its performance. On a sunny day, in the first week of February, his two 4' x 8' panels collected 20,000 BTU even though the sun was partially obscured by trees to the south.

Most solar collectors installed in this part of the country are erected at a 45 degree angle so as to have the sun's rays hit the collector at an optimum angle during the winter months. Ross has erected his panels vertically so that they do not collect snow, but also so they do collect the sun's rays that reflect off the snow as well as those that hit the panel directly. Ross wanted to achieve maximum heat capture but still keep the cost as low as possible. On a good day, the temperature difference between out-going and in-coming air can be as high as 71 degrees F. All the materials he used are readily available, and he used techniques that any amateur craftsman could copy.

One of the goals of the EM Energy Committee is to decrease the use of fossil fuels in our town's homes, businesses and town buildings. Ross is leading the way by showing us that, with a little investment of time and materials, it is possible to create a system that can help reduce reliance on unsustainable sources of energy and keep our air cleaner at the same time.



TERRY J. ALLEN

White Pine Cohousing

by Carolyn Shapiro

Andy and I had talked for many years about living with a group of family and friends in a cohousing environment. It was difficult to think of moving to any other place in Vermont because we really liked our neighborhood. Then one day when we were walking, I mentioned to Andy that the piece of land off Dillon Road would be an ideal place. Almost the next day we found that the land was for sale. We joined with two other families and purchased the land with the idea that we would find others to join us. One of our first lessons was to remain flexible because one of the original owners decided it didn't make sense for them to be a part of the project at that point. By asking friends, we found people for the four other units. We met our goal to have a range of ages with people in their 60s to families with small children.

Our overall view of our cohousing is to be like a village—with informal connections and simple group expectations and requirements. Our legal structure is condominium in by-laws and declaration. Energy efficiency standards were set for each home emphasizing sustainability, moderate cost, use of local materials, low maintenance, and small physical and ecological footprint. Some members decided to have a contractor build their homes and others built their own homes. Everyone was able to individually do their own designs as long as they met energy standards. We own our own homes and hold in common the land as well as a "barn" with a work space, open meeting space, and a wood-pellet-fired boiler that provides heat and hot water to all the houses via underground piping. We all share septic systems.

We meet monthly and share a potluck dinner. Our meeting process uses a sociocratic method where we go around the circle giving each person a chance to speak in turn about the topic at hand. In this way, emotions are diminished and listening is enhanced. We often go around again until we come to agreement or agree to think further about the topic. We have committees for community projects like landscaping. We have a large garden and each of us has our own plot, but we share the tasks necessary to maintain it. Sometimes a group will get together for special projects—like the several who joined together to purchase a tractor. In this way, not everyone has to participate in every project.

We are continually evolving in our understanding of what it means to be living together, where the individual ways meet the community ways. We enjoy being together and have a commitment to our cohousing community.



Green up lunch

Strong plastic Green Up disposal bags are available at no cost at EMES, East Montpelier Town Office, as well as at Dudley's and Riverbend Country Stores. It is not necessary to use Green Up bags -- any bag or box will do to hold roadside debris.

As a special thank-you and a time to rest and catch up with neighbors and friends, a delicious free lunch is provided in the school cafeteria between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. courtesy of the Jean Cate Community Fund Committee. Call Deb at 229-1320 if you would like to donate cookies for the lunch.

We encourage your family to take part in this great Vermont tradition. Contact co-coordinators Paul Erlbaum and Chris Racanelli for more info and to notify them of the areas you plan to clean at 223-3177 or garlicmountain@gmail.com.

Please note, Green Up Day is not an event for disposal of household trash. Call Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District Hazardous Waste Collection program at 229-9383 to dispose of household paint, cleaning products, fluorescent bulbs, pesticides, or other hazardous waste.



Thank you *Signpost* supporters

Contributions are always welcome. Please mail them to:
PO Box 184, East Montpelier, VT 05651

**Robert/Carolyn Brown, Jean Boucher,
John Ordway/Molly Power,
Norma Raymond, Nancy Couch**

East Montpelier and the Civil War

by Elliott Morse, *East Montpelier Historical Society*

The year 2012 marks 150 years since the Civil War. Probably nothing has affected East Montpelier and the whole country more than this terrible war. As people realized that we might suffer the loss of our Union, patriotism ran high. All over town people stepped forward in anticipation that this war could be over and won in a matter of days or weeks. This did not prove to be the case; the war went on for five terrible years with more U.S. casualties than all the wars since then have produced.

Our town sent a total of 122 men – from a total population of 1,308. After volunteering, our men would board the train in Montpelier for the ride to Camp Lincoln at Brattleboro. They lived in a tent city during training and then were shipped out to various southern destinations. We participated in many battles including Bull Run, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, and The Wilderness. Our town lost seven men at The Wilderness.

1865 saw victory and the surrender of the Confederacy. Many families had lost members, which would affect the town for years to come. For more information, people should read *Across the Onion*, written by Ellen Hill and Marilyn N. Blackwell, in particular the chapter entitled "Saving the Union." You will be amazed. This book may be purchased from the Town Clerk or Anne Ormsbee.



Good Neighbors in EM

By Joyce Bean, *Barnes Road*



Early one morning last fall, I received a phone call from my neighbor, Phyllis Martin. On her way to work, she noticed a large dog, a bloodhound, taking a dump in front of my mailbox. Since the surrounding area was no longer summer-green, Phyllis thought I might not see the deposit – and be ever so sorry.

I appreciated her call so much and consider her to be the epitome of a good neighbor. Thank you, Phyllis Martin!

WHO REMEMBERS the coolness of an icehouse during a hot July day? Did you ever ride on the local Mud and Water Railroad? These memories of the past and much more were shared at recent Historical Society meetings. Read all about it at www.eastmontpelierhistoricalsociety.org.

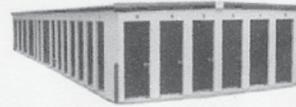
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Volume XXII—Number Five
 May-June 2012

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CALENDAR & NOTICES

EVENTS

- Thurs. May 3, 7:00 p.m.** Anthroposophy Today and Tomorrow, Torin Finser, PhD, Orchard Valley School, Rte 14N
- Sat. May 5, 9:00 a.m.–3 p.m.** Green Up Day roadside trash collection, bring trash to EMES
- Sat. May 5, 11:00 a.m.–1 p.m.** Free lunch for Green Up volunteers, EMES
- Sat. May 5, 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.** Annual Sweet'N Savory All-You-Can-Eat Pie Breakfast, Christ Church, Montpelier, to benefit the Orchard Valley School
- Mon. May 14, 6:30** Final information meeting on the proposed EMES renovation project, EMES
- Tues. May 22, 7 a.m. –7 p.m** Town-wide vote on the EMES renovation project, EM Town Hall, .



Deb Fillion and Rhoda Carroll

TERRY J. ALLEN

WWW.EMSIGNPOST.COM

Check it out: **www.emsignpost.com**.
 East Montpelier announcements welcome.
 To be notified of new announcements, join:
www.frontporchforum.com
 To receive the *Signpost* in electronic form only, notify Jennifer at
vtposts@gmail.com
A great way to know what is happening in town.

There Is Such A Thing As A Free Lunch

On Green Up Day, May 5, reward yourself and join other community volunteers with a free lunch at the elementary school. It including your choice of sandwiches, fruit, and cookies. Lunch will be served continuously from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. by the Jean Cate Community Fund Committee.

Deadline for Next Issue: June 1, 2012, to Barbara Ploof: 223-6934, signpostbcp@hotmail.com

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Selectboard	1st & 3rd Mon	6:30 p.m.	Town Office Building
Planning Commission (PC)	1st & 3rd Thurs	7:00 p.m.	Town Office Building
Development Review Board (DRB)	1st & 3rd Tues	7:00 p.m.	Town Office Building
U-32 School Board	1st & 3rd Wed	6:00 p.m.	U-32 School
Elementary School Board (EMES)	3rd Mon	6:30 p.m.	Elementary School
East Montpelier Fire Department (EMFD)	Every Tues	7:00 p.m.	EMFD Community Room
East Montpelier Fire District #1	2nd Wed	7:00 p.m.	EMFD Community Room
Recreation Board	2nd Mon	7:15 p.m.	Elementary School
Conservation Fund Advisory Committee	as needed	7:30 p.m.	Town Office Building
East Montpelier Historical Society	3rd Tues	7:00/6:00 p.m.	Four Corners Schoolhouse/E. Calais
Four Corners Schoolhouse Association	2nd Wed	7:00 p.m.	Four Corners School
EMES Parent Teacher Neighbor Org. (PTNO)	2nd Wed	6:30 p.m.	Elementary School, Art Room