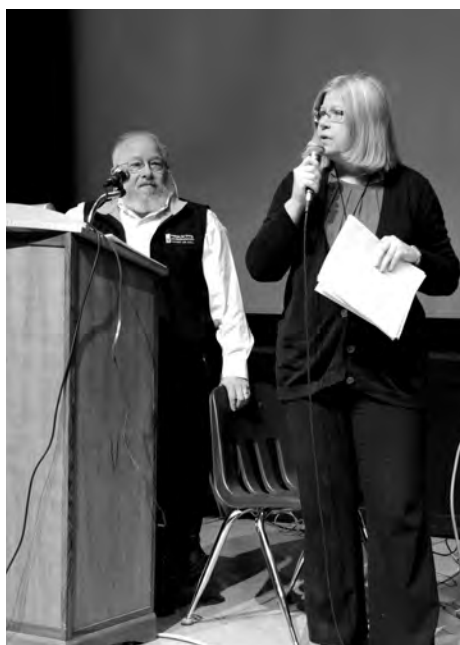


# EAST MONTPELIER Signpost

Volume XXV—Number Four

March/April 2015

## Town Meeting Day: Tuesday, March 3



Photos: Alex Brown

## Voting Dates & Locations

### Voter Registration

Register at the Town Office, Mon.–Thurs. 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Fri. 9 a.m.–noon. The deadline for the upcoming Town/School Meeting is Wed. Feb. 25 by 5 p.m.

### Town/School Forum

**Sat. Feb. 28, 9:30 a.m.–noon at EMES.** Come discuss all School and Town Warning articles, including the budget items that are to be voted by Australian ballot. The candidates for offices will be introduced. Remember to bring your copy of the Town Report.

### Town Meeting Day

**Tues. Mar. 3, 9:30 a.m. at EMES.** The Town and School Meetings are both warned for 9:30 a.m. The School District meeting will be first followed by the Town Meeting. Babysitting will be available.

**Australian Ballot Voting:** Tues. Mar. 3, 7 a.m.–7 p.m. at EMES

**Town Meeting Day Potluck:** Tues. Mar. 3 around noon at EMES

### Early or Absentee Voting

Available through Monday, Mar. 2. Call the Town Clerk's Office at 223-3313 or go to the office to obtain ballots and vote. All ballots must be returned by 7 p.m. on Tues. Mar. 3 to be counted.

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9 — East Montpelier Eats

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## Top of the Signpost A Tasty Tradition at Town Meeting

by Sue Racanelli



Photo: Alex Brown

Everyone agrees that the best part of Town Meeting is the potluck lunch. Where else can you find a delectable smorgasbord of the best home cooking in East Montpelier?

Join us Tuesday, March 3, at East Montpelier Elementary School. We encourage you to bring a dish to share—salad, main entree, bread, or dessert. Label your food vegetarian or non-vegetarian and please let us know if it is gluten-free or contains nuts.

Bring enough food for four times as many people as in your group. Potluck items should be dropped off in the kitchen in the morning, and you can pick up your lunch ticket then. Following the potluck, please remember to take your dish home with you. We cannot be responsible for dishes left at the school.

If you can't bring a dish to share, \$5.00 will buy you the best lunch you'll eat all year. We haven't run out of food yet, but please be mindful of the line behind you when filling your plate.

Volunteers are needed throughout the day. We need help with set up, serving, and clean up. You can also be part of the kitchen crew and help with cooking and coordinating food served at the potluck. This is a great way to meet your neighbors and catch up with old friends.

To volunteer or for more information, contact Sue Racanelli at 225-6032.

## Solutions Committee Report Available

by Carl Etnier, committee member

Democracy requires participation, and, fortunately, new methods exist to increase accessibility to town meetings. That was a main conclusion of a committee the EMES Board set up to address the issue.

A vote at the School District Meeting last year directed the School Board "to explore options, technological or otherwise, to increase accessibility to the East Montpelier Town School District Annual Meeting." The vote emerged from the warned article to move voting on the elementary school budget to Australian ballot. People on both sides of the school budget vote issue were invited to participate.

Drawing extensively from the experience of Middlesex and studies of town meetings throughout the state, the committee recommended ways to maximize accessibility: a technological solution to make it possible for people to participate in meetings from their homes, a survey to find out why people do and don't attend town and school meetings, a light-hearted informational campaign about town and school meetings, and more. The Solutions Committee, co-chaired by Philip Heinz and EMES board member Flor Diaz Smith, recommends that its work continue. The committee's report is available at [eastmontpeliervt.org](http://eastmontpeliervt.org); enter "solutions committee" in the search box.

## U-32 Update

by Kari Bradley, EM board member

This year's U-32 school budgeting process reflected the challenges we face as a community in balancing our educational and fiscal responsibilities. The proposed budget calls for a 0.55% expense increase over the current year which requires reductions in administrative, instructional and non-instructional support positions. The budget does include an additional \$98,000 for capital expenses, bringing us closer to a fully-funded capital fund consistent with our multi-year plan to sustain our facility and avoid deferred maintenance expenses in the future.

Unfortunately, as a school we face two significant decreases in revenues next year: no support from our fund balance and a projected decline of 19 tuition students from neighboring towns. As a result, the total increase in tax rates associated specifically with the proposed U-32 budget is 7.4 cents, or \$74 in additional tax per \$100,000 in assessed property value, a 4.3% increase.

To calculate the final tax rates, the U-32 budget is combined with the elementary school budget, the Common Level of Appraisal, and the Statewide Education Tax Rate. As of this writing, the estimated local tax impact for the five towns (Berlin, Calais, East Montpelier, Middlesex, and Worcester) ranges from an increase of \$198 per \$100,000 assessed property value in East Montpelier to a decrease of \$17 per \$100,000 in Worcester. Due to class size fluctuations, East Montpelier students will account for a larger proportion of the U-32 population, another factor in our town's projected tax rate. It is important to recognize that for our town, the majority of the increase is due to the CLA and State Tax Rate, which are beyond our control.

The board believes we have struck an appropriate balance between school quality and fiscal responsibility and we are asking for your support this March. We are grateful for the support of our community to maintain our quality schools for our students current and future. Please feel free to contact Emily Goyette or myself if you have any questions or need further explanation.

## EMES Update

by Flor Diaz Smith, EMES board member

After a year of construction, the addition and renovation of our beautiful school is now complete. The final project was \$79,000 under budget. This amount was applied towards the bond principal.

The energy in the building is wonderful for children and adults ready to learn and teach. The more accessible facility once again serves as the heart of our community, and we will hold Town Meeting there again this year.

Now a little window into other important work the board is doing. We set three long-term goals: educational outcomes, fiscal responsibility, and community engagement. Through public forums and open dialogue with the community we aimed to engage the community in our struggle to balance fiscal responsibility without sacrificing educational outcomes.

The school board goal was a level-funded budget, but after deliberations that included consideration of cutting classroom teaching staff or entire programs, we ended up with a budget that reflects a very modest 0.35% increase. Despite contracted increases of over \$98,000, we were able to make \$84,000 in cuts to reduce the increase to \$14,000. In effect, since the EMES budget is weighted by equalized pupil and our increase is less than the state base increase of 1.87% (EMES is 0.35%), the EMES budget results in a net decrease of 1.3 cents (\$0.013) on the tax rate.

Helpful figures for FY16:

- A 1% change in the budget would be \$45,500
- \$38,000 equates to \$0.01 on the tax rate.



Photo: Jim Westphalen

## Express Your Opinion on Education Funding

by Carl Etnier, selectboard member

Twice in 2014 the selectboard was asked to endorse resolutions on education funding, but we declined to do so in the absence of a town dialogue on the subject. With the issue still contentious, the selectboard has asked for an advisory vote on the topic in Article 14 on

the Town Meeting Warning. It is based on a bill that our State Representative, Tony Klein, has introduced to the legislature. The wording is:

"Shall the State of Vermont set a statewide per-pupil spending amount for each equalized student in each district, excluding capital expenditures, with adjustments possible for a district's extraordinary expenses?"

The selectboard hopes that a lively discussion at town meeting will help inform its actions, in the event that it is asked again to endorse a resolution on education funding.

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# Willing to Serve: Our Candidates

*Descriptions taken largely from the VLCT Resource Manual and Vermont Law*

## Town and School District Moderator

*(elected separately; may be one or two individuals):  
one 1-year term*

*The moderator is the presiding officer of municipal and school meetings and shall decide questions of votes taken, except if Australian ballot is used. The moderator shall preserve order in the conduct of business and meetings.*



**Michael Duane:** I am running for re-election for the positions of town and school district moderator. My wife, Ellen, and I have lived in Vermont since the mid-1970s, and have been residents of East Montpelier for over 30 years.

I served as president of the Washington Electric Co-op from 1991 to 1998, during which time I presided over the monthly and annual meetings. I have also served on the town ancient roads committee, a town committee to explore the effect of land conservation on the property tax rate, and more recently on the town charter committee. I am also a member of the East Montpelier Historical Society, and was a member of the board of the Hunger Mountain Co-op from 2008 to 2011; as Co-op president during my final year, I presided over the monthly and annual meetings.

I would be honored to serve again as the East Montpelier town and school district moderator, and I hope my experience can be of some service to our town.

## Town Clerk

*one 3-year term*

*The town clerk carries out many of the operational roles of the town office including recording, preserving and certifying public documents, administering oaths of office, complying with public information requests, posting notices on the town's bulletin board, running the local elections, maintaining the grand list, selling fish and game licenses, issuing marriage licenses, and licensing animals. The town clerk may assume unofficial duties as agreed to with the selectboard.*



**Teresa 'Terri' Conti:** I have had the privilege of serving as the elected town clerk of East Montpelier for three 3-year terms. Over those nine years, plus the prior four years as assistant town clerk, I have seen many changes in our town. While some interesting and some challenging, I would appreciate the opportunity to continue to serve as your town clerk.

## Selectboard Member

*one 3-year term, one 2-year term*

*Selectboard members are responsible for general supervision of the affairs of the town and are responsible for seeing that all duties, not assigned by law to any particular officer, are carried out. The selectboard convenes town meetings and may enact ordinances and rules that regulate areas such as roads, traffic, waste disposal, animals, and nuisances as examples.*



**Seth Gardner,** 3-year term: To those who don't know me, I've lived in East Montpelier for over 25 years, and I own and operate the McKnight Farm on Snow Hill Road. The McKnight Farm is a historical dairy farm now operated as an organic dairy operation with 250 milk cows and many other farm products.

Thank you, East Montpelier community, for giving me the opportunity to be on the selectboard for the last five years. As an active participant in town business, from serving as payroll administrator, chairman of the roads policy committee, and strong involvement in many other issues facing the town, it's rewarding to serve the community. I think my involvement in town affairs has been positive for the town, and I've learned a tremendous amount about grass roots democracy. I would like to continue to work on the many projects brought forth to the selectboard. I hope I have your vote in the upcoming election at Town Meeting, and please feel free to call me with your concerns and questions: 223-1370 (h), 272-3478 (c).



**Kimberly Swasey,** 2-year term: After being appointed to the East Montpelier Selectboard in 2012 and subsequently elected for a 2-year term in 2013, I am gaining experience in town government and am able to apply the leadership skills I learned as a Lieutenant Colonel in the US Army and Vermont National

Guard. More often than not, whenever a decision has to be made, some people will be disappointed, but my focus has been on what I perceive to be best for the future of our town in the long term without over-regulation. During my service to East Montpelier, I received a Master in Public Administration from Norwich University and learned ways to help the town develop a long-term vision. I care about our town and share our common concern about stabilizing taxes and keeping the budget within reason. I appreciate your support and ask for your vote on Town Meeting Day 2015. Thank you.

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## Lister

one 3-year term

Listers are responsible for determining the value of the real and personal property in town. This is the value the selectboard or the town will use to set a tax rate necessary to raise the money to operate the town in the next year. It is also the basis for the determination of the property wealth of the municipality for purposes of setting state education property taxes.



**Ross Hazel:** I have enjoyed working as a lister for the Town of East Montpelier for the last 12 years. It has been both a rewarding and challenging experience for me to maintain the Grand List and help the residents of our town with their questions and concerns. I look forward to being a lister into the future.

## First Constable

one 1-year term

East Montpelier has voted to prohibit constables from exercising any law enforcement authority. The constables serve as animal control officers and may be called on to serve civil or criminal process and to aid first responders when necessary.



**Sandy F. Conti:** I have served as the Town's First Constable (and Animal Control Officer) for eight years and still find it interesting and at times challenging. I enjoy the opportunity to give back to the town that I have called home for more than 20 years. I would appreciate the opportunity to serve as the first constable for a ninth term.

## Second Constable

one 1-year term

Same description as First Constable

No Candidate

## Auditor

one 3-year term

Town auditors are responsible for examining and adjusting the accounts of all town and school district officers and all other persons authorized by law to draw orders on the town treasurer. Secondly, they are to report their findings in writing to the legal voters of the town presenting an easy-to-understand picture of the town's finances.



**David Grundy:** I am asking for the town's vote of confidence in my efforts over the past three years as one of the three town auditors. I have worked closely with Town Treasurer Don Welch, Town Administrator Bruce Johnson, Town Clerk Terri Conti, and Assistant Town Clerk Denise Brown in making sure the bills that the town pays are justified and that the expenditures are posted to the correct town budget accounts. I believe the town has a good system for paying its bills, and I look forward to continuing to insure it remains that way.

## Cemetery Commissioner

one 5-year term

The cemetery commissioners are responsible for the care and management of the Town's cemeteries.



**Elliott Morse:** I have been a cemetery commissioner for many years while being active in other town activities including the volunteer fire department. My, how time does fly; it doesn't seem like five years have passed, but yes, my time as a cemetery commissioner is coming to an end.

I would like to continue this job for another five years if approved by the voters.

Historically a cemetery commissioner didn't have much work to do, but nowadays people want to see the cemetery looking nice and well managed. East Montpelier has four cemeteries: the Doty, Cutler, East Montpelier Village, and Cate. All must be mowed at least bi-weekly. There are also six primitive cemeteries which require periodic attention. As commissioners we must arrange to get this job done. I would be very pleased if elected again.

## 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/Zoning Administrator:**  
Bruce Johnson, eastmontadmin@comcast.net  
Hours: Mon–Fri 9 AM–5 PM

**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

Seth Gardner, Chair  
sethbgardner@hotmail.com

Carl Etnier	Steve Sparrow
Kimberly Swazey	Casey Northrup

### Planning Commission

Jean Vissering, Chair, 223-3262

### Development Review Board

Richard Curtis, Chair  
rcurtis841@comcast.net

### U-32 Jr./Sr. High School

Kari Bradley, kbradley@u32.org  
Emily Goyette, egoyette@u32.org

### Elementary School

Rubin Bennett, Chair  
rbennett@thatitguy.com

Kimberly Kendall	Priscilla Gilbert
Stephen Looke	Flor Diaz-Smith

### State Representative

Tony Klein, 793-6032  
twk@tonyklein.com

## School Director

*School directors are responsible for managing the general affairs of the school district by developing policies and hiring able administrators to assure the soundness of the physical assets as well as the educational content and methods presented in student classrooms. They are responsible for convening school district meetings.*

### East Montpelier Elementary School Director

*one 3-year term, one 2-year term*



**Flor Diaz Smith**, 3-year term: I am seeking re-election to the EMES Board. If re-elected, I would continue to combine my love for children and people and my professional architectural experience with my passion for education to best serve the school and our community. I believe education is the most important gift we give our children. A strong public education is the basis of our democracy and the key to successful communities.

I value and understand the importance of collaboration between the board, superintendent, teachers, staff, and parents for the one common goal: what is best for our students. It is not easy to represent all voices in the community, but I am a patient listener and a good communicator.

I have volunteered on the school's facilities committee since 2006 and was appointed to the board in 2011, then elected in 2012. I have played many roles in the past few years from helping with the bond vote in 2012 to overseeing the addition and renovation of our elementary school. It has been a wonderful experience to collaborate with many members of the community and to make this school renovation a reality. I look forward to the opportunity of serving our community for years to come.

I live with my husband, Dan, and our children, Mia (12) and Lincoln (9), on Horn of the Moon Road. We have a small family farm, raising beef cows, keeping chickens, and sugaring in the spring.

Thank you for your consideration. You can contact me at 802-223-1113 or [diazsmith.flor@gmail.com](mailto:diazsmith.flor@gmail.com)



**Kim Kendall**, 2-year term: I am running for a second 2-year term on the EMES Board. I live on Sparrow Farm Road with my husband, Jamie Shanley, and two children, Tom, 13 and Ava, 8. I am a teacher and tutor at the Community College of Vermont.

The past two years on the school board have been a huge learning experience. It has been a pleasure serving with my fellow board members to carry out our dual role of creating a

quality education for our children while at the same time delivering budgets and plans that are sustainable and a wise investment for our taxpayers.

I strongly believe in public education and the idea that our local school is a place where we all come together, no matter our differences, to listen to each other and compromise and create a system that works for our children. As a parent, I am motivated to work to make our school a place where children are challenged academically and are able to build social skills and develop a life-long love of learning. Our school is a place where children learn to appreciate diversity and learn to work as part of a team. There are opportunities for children to participate in sports, art, and music. In many ways our school is the center of our community.

As a board member I will continue to listen, learn, and make difficult compromises to make our school better in a way that is responsible to taxpayers.

## Planning Commissioner

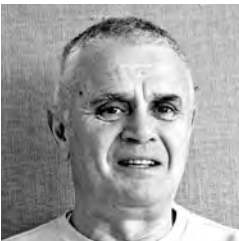
three 3-year terms; one 2 years of a 3-year term

The planning commission is responsible for preparing and maintaining a current town plan which addresses land-use, transportation, economic development, historic preservation, energy, natural resources, scenic preservation, and other topics relevant to future planning for the town. It also creates and modifies the town's land use regulations. The planning commission reviews and can participate in development proposed under Act 250 and Section 248, and takes part in regional planning efforts.



**Mark Lane**, 3-year term: I live near the top of Gould Hill with my wife, Connie, and our children, Hunter and Haylie. I am a life-long resident of East Montpelier. In fact, I still live on the Lane family homestead where I grew up. This corner of East Montpelier has been in my family for seven generations.

I am running for my fourth three-year term on the EM Planning Commission. We have completed the town plan and now have updated it to match the new state regulations. We are revamping some of the regulations on ground water withdrawal and the village plan. I look forward to continuing this work on the Planning Commission.



**John "Jack" Pauly**, 3-year term: I would like to work at keeping our lovely and beautiful town, lovely and beautiful. Who knows what the next three years will bring. However, I want to keep our town a desirable community to live in, and I will work to that end.



**Jean Vissering**, 3-year term: After completing revisions to our Town Plan in 2013, the Planning Commission has been working on revising our zoning regulations to reflect the goals and objectives of the Town Plan, as well as to create greater clarity. I look forward to continuing work on regulations

designed to encourage growth in East Montpelier village, compact settlement, perhaps a new growth center, and development that protects our valued agricultural resources, wetlands, and forest lands.

I have been fortunate to serve with an excellent group of people on the commission and hope to be able to continue to do so for another three years.

No candidate for the 2 years of 3-year term

## Inside EMES

### What's Changed and What's the Same

by Michelle A.L. Singer

From no running water and no electricity (see page 8) to our new facility is a huge jump. But consider what Cathy N. Davidson, author of *The Future of Thinking: Learning Institutions in a Digital Age*, reports: fully sixty-five percent of today's grade-school kids may end up doing work that hasn't been invented yet.

In 2011, Jamie Vollmer, author of *Schools Cannot Do It Alone* and champion of public education, developed a list of changes in education over the years. Starting in 1640 with Massachusetts Puritans who taught the rudiments of reading, writing, and arithmetic, he chronicled the accelerating expectations put on public education. Prior to 1900, the focus of education didn't expand much. However, from 1900 on when, as he says, schools became "a logical site for the social engineering of the citizens—and workers—of the new industrial age," the responsibilities shouldered by public schools have grown, and grown, and grown.

At first, each decade after 1900 shows a few additions to the curriculum: health and nutrition, home economics, vocational education. Physical education was added from 1910-1930, as well as art and music. Half-day kindergarten joins the list in the 1940s along with a big jump in services when school lunches began to be provided. By the 1950s subjects like safety education and sex education show up alongside expanded math and science requirements. From the 1960s on, the list grows exponentially. Breakfast joins lunch, skills like keyboarding are introduced as well as after school programs. Now some schools feed students two-thirds of their meals throughout the school year. The 1970s saw another large jump in services when the federal government mandated special education. Head Start, consumer education, drug and alcohol abuse, stranger danger, anti-smoking, child abuse monitoring, behavior adjustment classes, and environmental education were only a few of the new programs and topics demanded.

*continued on page 8*

## Thank you Signpost supporters

Alice & Richard Angney

Teresa Doyle & Chris Reed

Kathie Hickman

Brian & Tracy Phillips

Catherine Rader & Kenneth Hertz

Loring Starr

Since the 1990s, there have been new initiatives from each administration that moves through the White House (most recently No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top). Computers entered schools and with them computer education and media literacy. All together, it's a list that makes compliance impossible. In fact, according to the No Child Left Behind act (NCLB), which requires that every single student test "proficient" in both reading and math in order for a school to be considered "effective," every participating school in Vermont is considered "low-performing." This outcome was predicted by many.

Although both the Vermont Agency of Education and our own Washington Central Supervisory Union have issued memos and letters rejecting this assessment as a true measure of Vermont schools, it does serve to illustrate the moving targets that schools are unfailingly asked to hit. EMES has a Continuous Improvement Plan to address NCLB and other federal, state, and local requirements—a 17-page document

that outlines vision, mission and goals. It is notable that much of EMES's focus doesn't look all that different from the Puritan's. Literacy (reading and writing) and math still form the core. The third focus, school climate, speaks to the social and behavioral needs as well as special education.

A telling symbol for the enormous changes in education is the 639-page tome officially titled *The Vermont Education Law Book*. It outlines all the legal requirements for a public school in Vermont, from the protocol for bullying, to dress code, to food, to how many days kids have to be in school. It's enough to give anyone pause, thinking about how best to meet these requirements and mandates. Schools have to prepare children to enter a world that grows ever more complex. Not only must they meet that staggering goal, they must do so while being directly accountable to the family, the community, the state, and the latest national agenda. No wonder the lights stay on so late every day at EMES.

## The Way it Was

*by Dave Coburn, EM Historical Society*



*East Village School, 1935. Currently the town office. This photo is from the EM Historical Society Archives.*

were no principals, teachers' aides, special education teachers, coaches, art or music teachers, or custodians. Some did not have electricity until the end of the 1930s which meant there was no running water or indoor facilities. In a few of the schools there was no central heating system, only a big stove that had to be started every morning (often by one of the older boys who arrived early to build the fire).

The students walked to school or got there the best way they could, as there was no bus system. They either went home for lunch or brought a lunch box. For recess on good days they went into the yard and played some made-up game such as tag, my goal one-two-three, or blind man's bluff. If someone had a ball and a bat, they might play softball or, in the fall, tag football. They were strictly on their own most of the time. On inclement days they played inside.

The education was pretty basic: reading, arithmetic, spelling, history, and geography. Any music and art was taught by the classroom teacher. The students who could make it through the eighth grade in eight years did so, and a fair number went on to high school. Those who took longer often dropped out when they reached the mandatory schooling age of 16.

The schools met the needs of the society of the times, just as the modern school is designed to fill today's needs.

Since we have just completed a significant renovation of our elementary school, a bit of school history might be of interest. In the East Village School there were two rooms and two teachers. Each room had four grades and a count of the students shows both rooms were full. Unlike the other nine schools in town which each housed eight grades in one room, this school housed the first four grades only. There was no kindergarten or preschool provided.

By today's standards, these schools were notable for what they did not have. There was no library, gymnasium, kitchen and dining area, art or music room, nurse's room, central office, or much in the way of a play area. There

## Spring Sweetness at Adamant Sugarhouse

by Betsy and Rick Barstow

We are long-time makers of maple syrup at our Adamant farm. Sugaring is more than a business for us; it's a labor of love. Though it requires lots of work, time, and energy, we take pleasure in it. It is the perfect agricultural endeavor to get you outside and working off the winter rust.

I, Rick, learned about sugaring in the 60s in northwestern Connecticut at the 2,000-tap operation of the Yale Summer School of Forestry. When I moved to Vermont in 1971, I looked for land with sugar maples and found the place where we still reside. I began in the spring of 1972 with 55 buckets and an old 2x4 finishing-off rig that I found here sitting in the woods. The only thing I needed to purchase that first year was a filter tank, filters, and syrup cans, so it wasn't very expensive to get started.

I, Betsy, came to Vermont from Colombia, South America in 1988. Curious about local culture, I came up to the sugarhouse and quickly saw opportunities to help out. Sugaring is not only sweet but sticky, getting you more and more involved. With one thing leading to another, we were married before the next sugaring season began.

At one time we had 2,200 taps and produced over 500 gallons of syrup with the assistance of some Central American refugees that stayed with us on their way to Canada. We have since scaled back to between 300 to 400 taps and make approximately 100 gallons per year.

Sugaring is a seasonal activity, ideal for hobbyists who may want to put out a few buckets and boil the sap on the stove. For those who want to make it a business, it requires maple trees, buckets or tubing system, gathering tank, evaporator, filtering system, jugs, and a sugar house. Used equipment can be found.



Photo: Julia Barstow

As sap flow is weather-dependent, one has to be available at any time, typically from late February until mid-April. We feel that a flexible temperament is helpful. One has to be able to "go with the flow," so to speak. One can spend hours preparing for sugaring, but the amount of maple syrup produced is largely in Mother Nature's hands, at least for us, as we do not use a vacuum system to increase sap flow. The rewards are many as one experiences the seasonal change from late winter to early spring. There is nothing that tops it, except maybe a maple creemee from Morse's or Bragg's.

During the sugaring season, individuals and families who would like to set up, gather sap, or hang out in the sugar house are most welcome. Our syrup is available for direct purchase and can be shipped anywhere. It is also sold at the Adamant Co-op. Betsy and I can be reached at 223-3311.

### Biscuits in Vermont Maple Syrup *By Paulie Coburn*

Baking powder biscuits

2 cups sifted flour

½ teaspoon salt

4 teaspoons baking powder

½ teaspoon cream of tartar

2 teaspoons sugar

½ cup shortening

2/3 cup of milk

Preheat oven to 400°

Combine dry ingredients in a mixing bowl. With a pastry blender cut in shortening until mixture resembles fine crumbs. Add milk and stir gently with fork until dough holds together.

Gather dough into a ball and turn onto a lightly floured board. Knead gently several times with floured fingers. Roll dough to 1 inch thickness and cut with a floured biscuit cutter.

Arrange biscuits in a baking dish on top of 1-1½ inches of hot maple syrup. (A 9x12 dish works well.) Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until biscuits are done.

Note: the syrup gets quite thick so you can add a little water, say ¼ to ½ cup.

Dave's comment: A dollop of vanilla ice cream makes a nice topping.

## Town Weathervane

Due to lack of space in this issue, summaries of the minutes from town board meetings may be found on the Signpost website: [esignpost.com](http://esignpost.com). Complete minutes are always available in the Town Office or online at the town website, [eastmontpeliervt.org](http://eastmontpeliervt.org), under "documents."

### MILESTONES

#### Births

- Conner William Walczak, son, born Sept. 14, 2014, to Kathryn & Andrew Walczak
- Aiden Ulric Pecor Brummert, son, born Sept. 21, 2014, to Skye & Matthew Brummert
- Douglas Eric Wheeler, Jr., son, born Nov. 25, 2014, to Melissa & Douglas Wheeler

#### Deaths

- James Eniti died Nov. 7, 2014, son of Barbara Eniti
- David Lee Joly died Nov. 30, 2014, spouse of Judith Joly
- Lena Brazier died Dec. 27, 2014, mother of Tom & Nancy
- Florence Young died January 27, 2015

#### Land Transfers

- Michael & Marlene McCarty to McCarty Revocable Living Trust, single family dwelling & 98.55 acres, Jacob Rd
- Joshua Ashline to Joshua & Jaylann Ashline, single family dwelling & 2.1 acres, VT14N
- Peter Carriere to Emily & Jonathan Stacy, mobile home, Sandy Pines Rd
- Jerome Rappaport to Fairmont Dairy, farm buildings & 763 acres, VT14S
- Kenneth Smith to Janice & Glenn Bamforth, single family dwelling & 7 acres, Evergreen Lane
- Carol Johnson to Carol Johnson Revocable Trust, single family dwelling & 7.18 acres, Center Rd
- Mary Morrison to Christopher & Patti Morrison, single family dwelling & 3.4 acres, US2
- John & Joanna Reynolds to Laura Morse, single family dwelling & 9.2 acres, Cherry Tree Hill Rd

## Twin Valley Senior Center

*by Rita Copeland, Executive Director*

Your Senior Center, at Blueberry Commons on Route 2 in East Montpelier, continues its regular services including classes, activities, health checks, and transportation to and from your home—all without a charge. Lunch is served on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays with a suggested donation of \$4-\$5.

Until April 10, AARP Tax Preparation by Certified Tax Volunteers is available at no charge by appointment (call Rita at 223-3322) on Fridays.

A new Bone Building Exercise class, led by Cort Richardson, is offered every Monday and Wednesday from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. This class is open to all ages and requires only sturdy shoes and comfortable clothing.

TVSC is able to provide these services at no charge due to the generous support of individuals and participating towns. We ask you to support us both financially and as a volunteer and also encourage you to attend Town Meeting and urge your town to help underwrite our efforts.

See [www.twinvalleyseniors.org](http://www.twinvalleyseniors.org) for complete information.



Photo: Alex Brown

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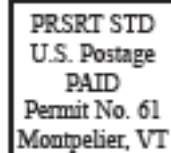
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## Green Up Vermont is 45!

**Saturday, May 2, 2015, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. @EMES**

*by Chris Racanelli, EM Coordinator*

Green Up in East Montpelier is like the first tailwind on a long sailing journey through the rest of the year. Grab a bag, spend a few hours picking up trash around your neighborhood, bring it to the shiny red trucks at the school, have a quick bite, and head on home!

A few pointers—bags are available at Dudley's Store, the Town Office, or bring your own. Street trash only, no household garbage. Separate recyclables such as cans and bottles. Drag heavy items to a visible spot by the side of the road or tell Chris the location and he'll arrange pick-up. Let him know areas that have significant trash.

Stop by the cafeteria between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. for a delicious lunch provided by the Jean Cate Community Fund and their helpful members who motivate us. Give Norma Raymond a call at 223-6464 if you would like to bake cookies or brownies for the day.

Green Up Day springs us into action—one person's trash is another person's contribution to the success of Green Up Day. Call Chris Racanelli at 225-6032 with questions, comments, or concerns.

### CALENDAR

**Sat. Feb. 28, Town/School District Forum:** EMES, 9:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

**Tues. Mar. 3, Town Meeting Day:** EMES, 9:30 a.m.  
Polls open 7:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m.

**Sat. May 2, Green Up Day:** roadside trash pick-up, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Call Chris Racanelli at 225-6032 for more information

**Sat. May 2, Green Up luncheon:** EMES, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

### Notices

**Wed. Feb. 25, Voter registration deadline** for Town Meeting: Town Office 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

**Wed. April 1, Dog registration deadline:** Town Office. \$8.00 spay/neutered \$12.00 unspayed/unneutered, current rabies vaccination required

**Mon. Mar. 2, Deadline to obtain absentee ballots:** Town Office or call 223-3313. Must be returned by 7 p.m. Mar. 3.

**Fri. May 15, Property Tax Installment Due:** Town Office by 5:00 p.m. to avoid 8 percent penalty

**Next Due Date for Signpost Submissions:**  
**March 30, 2015**