

# EAST MONTPELIER SIGNPOST

Volume 1, No. 4

March/April 1991

## FROM SNOW ROLLERS TO SNOWMOBILES, DWIGHT CLARK ROLLS ON

I learned a lesson talking to Dwight Clark... a history lesson. The gristmill, the sawmill, the early wooden creamery and the covered bridge are all gone from the bustling village of East Montpelier, but their memory remains.

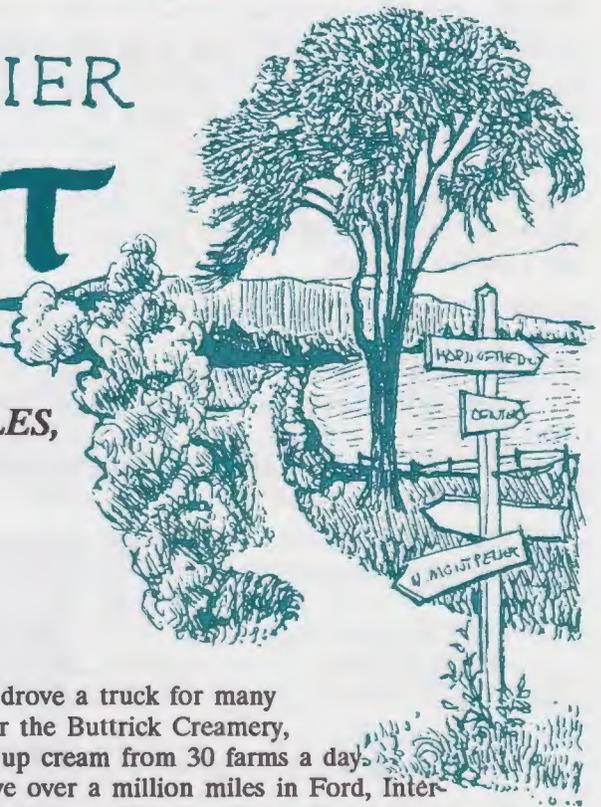
Dwight was born in East Montpelier in the house now occupied by Charles and Merlene Codling. His family moved to Marshfield after his father bought a sawmill there. His father had two teams of horses which in winter were leased to the town to pull the snow roller. A gleam comes to his eye as he recalls riding on the cross-beam of the snow roller. "Nobody drove their cars anywhere in the winter," he says. "They'd put 'em up on blocks for the winter." To carry on the tradition, he keeps a gleaming '72 Dodge Polara in his garage, out of reach of winter's salt and weather. He's got a cozy corner in his garage with a stove and a desk, his tools and his projects.

He returned to the village for the eighth grade -- the highest grade taught at the school. The school is now the Town Clerk's office, which is remarkably unchanged from the photos Dwight has of his class there.

He went on to Montpelier Seminary -- now Vermont College -- but his father convinced him he didn't need any more schooling since he already had the best job in town and pulled down \$3.50 a day.



Dwight Clark



Dwight drove a truck for many years for the Buttrick Creamery, picking up cream from 30 farms a day. He drove over a million miles in Ford, International, Federal, Rio Speedway, Chevrolet, White, and Indiana trucks in the backcountry of Vermont.

Two tiers with 60 cans each fitted on the truck, all filled with cream. After filtering and pasteurizing, the 40% butterfat cream was packed in river ice and sent to Arlington, Massachusetts, on the train to be turned into Howard Johnson's ice cream.

Sometimes he picked up more than cans of cream. A pretty young schoolteacher named Irene Caustic had to walk a mile and a half from the farm where she boarded to the school in Worcester, and Dwight managed to arrange his route so he would be going that way at just the right time every day. They were married June 25, 1933, at her family's farm on the Northfield Road, then the biggest farm in Berlin. When asked if he was related to other Clarks in town, Dwight explained that two unrelated Clarks married sisters, one of whom was his grandmother.

Dwight also worked for the sawmill just upstream from the existing bridge. The dam, now gone, supplied a 60 horsepower Ogdensburg water wheel for the gristmill and a 25 hp shaft for the cracker and elevator. A third shaft drove the No. 2 Lane saw comprised of a top and bottom blade sawing together to cut through the larger logs.

The creamery dumped 100 to 150 cans of skim milk per day in the Winooski River. When Borden began to buy skim milk in 1935, Dwight delivered up to 5 truckloads a day to Richmond. He ran Greenwood's store in East Montpelier village for a few years, then moved the family to Connecticut to help build the Vought-Sikorsky helicopters being used in the war. Charles Lindberg

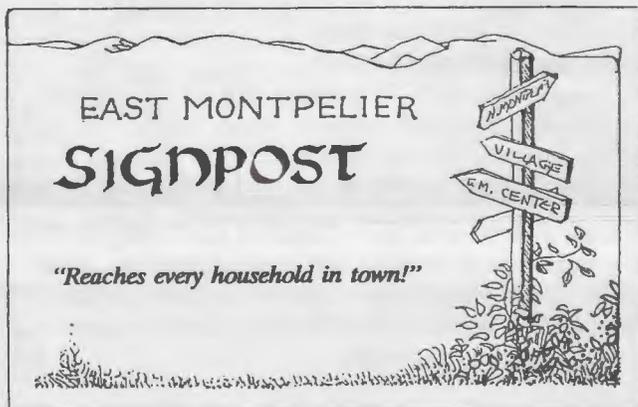
joined his flight assembly team for a time to examine ways to build a better machine. "A nice fellow," Dwight says.

Though he loves to tell tales from years past, Dwight is not the rocking chair type. He was out with Cliff Wright at 3 a.m. on a recent Sunday, grooming the VAST trail with the "Tucker Cat" trail groomer. And when the driveshaft pulled out, they managed to get it back together enough to get to a safe spot. As he rode the snow roller years ago, so he rides the snow trails now with a swifter machine.

He refers to Town Hill Road as "Farnham Turn" and to North Montpelier as "The Hollow". He tells of climbing up inside Bailey's Gristmill, the tallest building in Montpelier, to look down on the State House. (The Grand Union is now on the site). He recalls Joe Person, a noted bootlegger. Memories of 75 years ago are as clear as memories of yesterday.

March 3 is his 81st birthday and he's still going strong. Happy Birthday, Dwight!

*Fred Tubbs*



### TOWN MEETING JANUARY 1ST

The first official Town Meeting was held Jan. 1, 1849 at the Methodist Meetinghouse (now the Old Meeting House in the Center).

Royal Wheeler was the first Moderator, then was elected as the First Town Clerk. Addison Peck was appointed to replace him as Moderator. Selectmen elected were Stephen F. Stevens, Isaac Cate, and Joel C. Nichols; Town Treasurer was Addison Peck.

The Inspector of Leather and Sealer of Weights and Measures are two offices which are no longer filled. The office of Overseer of the Poor was done away with about 25 years ago.

Cost of printing the one-page Town Report: \$3.00. (The 1989 report cost \$3,349 to print 800 116-page reports).

*Excerpted from the Town Report by Sylvia Tosi.*

## FROM THE TOP OF THE SIGNPOST

From the Boy Scouts to the firemen, from Home Dem members to snowmobilers, the news has come in to us. It's clear that some folks really enjoy writing! Janice Waterman, whose job it is to round up the news, is sure that the paper would be twice as large and cost lots more if we printed every word, but we must condense it. Here is how you can help us:

- \* Try to be concise. Include the highlights, skip the details.
- \* Be prompt. See page 5 for the next deadline.
- \* Ads the size of the one in this issue can be arranged with Janice. Janet MacLeod will design your ad or you may provide your own text. Ads cost \$15 per issue or \$75 for the year's six issues. "See it in the Signpost".
- \* For each issue we need people who will interview and write the business and personal profiles. So far we've been very lucky to find willing and talented writers. There's lots of ability in East Montpelier! If you would like to write for the Signpost, contact any staff member.
- \* We are sorry to lose Becky Reed from our newspaper group. She helped us get started but is now too busy to continue.

As I write this, the snow is still on the ground. We're still a long way from digging parsnips, but I find that looking at future deadlines is a sure way to THINK SPRING. Have you ordered your seeds yet?

*Jean Cate, Publisher*



### 4-H GARDENING PROGRAM

The UVM Extension Service and Central Vermont Rotary Club will sponsor a gardening program for local young people age seven and older. Youths do not need to be enrolled in a 4-H club to participate.

At a kick-off meeting in May, participants will receive a variety of vegetable seeds and seedlings. They will plant their own garden plots, or be responsible for a designated portion of the family garden. An Extension Service volunteer will visit each and offer suggestions. They will keep records, care for their garden, and exhibit produce at the Washington County Field Days on August 3 and 4. In the fall, participants will be recognized at a banquet hosted by the Rotary Club.

Registration forms for the 1991 4-H Gardening Program will be available in April. For more information, call 223-2389. Michael J. Martin is the local Extension 4-H/ Youth Agent.



**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

*Peter Hill, Allan Couch, Austin Cleaves*

**December 26, 1990**

- \* East Montpelier Fire Department budget presented by Bill George and Jon Winston.
- \* Greg McNaughton presented two articles for review and consideration regarding criteria of the Conservation Fund and its use. Selectmen will ask town attorney Bruce Bjornlund to review before deciding how to present these articles.
- \* Dennis Carver submitted an article regarding listers' appraisal of property according to current use vs. highest possible value. Selectmen will discuss with listers before making final decision.
- \* Received resignation of Douglas Kievit-Kylar as Assistant Zoning Administrator. Asked Planning Commission to select a person to be appointed as his replacement and present to Selectmen for approval.

- \* Began work on budget.

**January 9, 1991**

- \* Met with a representative from Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) regarding their insurance programs for liability and unemployment compensation. Will consider VLCT insurance when present policies come up for renewal this year.

- \* Worked on 1991 budget.

**January 16, 1991**

- \* Earle Ellingwood advised Selectmen that the present Zoning Map is not viable due to inaccuracies in lines depicting zoned areas. Recommended a zoning hearing to reconsider these lines and prepare a new map. Selectmen agreed to set hearing.
- \* Approved purchase of Accounts Payable computer package for \$1595.
- \* Appointed Road Foreman Butch Davis as chairperson for Green Up Day, May 4, 1991.
- \* Reviewed and approved bills for payment. Authorized payroll payments of up to \$10,000 per month without prior approval of Selectman.

**January 22, 1991**

- \* Bruce Chapell presented an article requesting \$10,000 for Conservation Fund. Approved putting this article on Town Warning.
- \* Approved an article regarding exemption of taxes on handicap ramps or lifts.
- \* Did not approve article submitted by Timothy Philbin regarding limiting terms of Congressional delegation.
- \* Approved wording of article on criteria used by Conservation Advisory Board. This will be on Town Warning as Article 7.
- \* Dennis Carver requested articles for Australian Ballot for Planning Commission members and for adoption of municipal plans. Advised Mr. Carver that articles would be considered for Town Warning if petitions with 5% of town voters signing were received by 1/24/91 at 5:00 p.m.
- \* Will meet 1/28 at 4:30 to consider adding any petitions received and finalize warning for approval.
- \* Approved the 1991 budget.



**PLANNING COMMISSION**

*Chair: Johanna DeMartino*

**November 1, 1990**

- \* GIS Mapping project: One bid came in lower than expected, therefore decided to ask for \$975 of Act 200 planning money instead of applying for a grant. Commission approved and Selectmen will be asked to proceed.
- \* Washington County Field Days sign: Claudia Bristow checked into whether a waiver could be granted so sign permit didn't need to be filed each year. No basis in law found for such a waiver.
- \* Stuart Friedman met with Fish and Game Biologist concerning reconfiguration of the Casavant project to address the concern that the deer yard in that area not supersede need for open space for recreation activities. Fish and Game will speak to other state officials on this.

- \* Town Finance section of Plan worked on.

**November 29, 1990**

- \* Doug Kievit-Kylar resigned as Asst. Zoning Administrator.
- \* Copies of the Solid Waste Management Plan are available from the District's office.
- \* Remainder of meeting devoted to review of Education and Agriculture sections of Town Plan.

**December 6, 1990**

- \* Met with Norman and Carla Messier to discuss locating a mobile home park on a 9-acre parcel of land in Zone A. A review of regulations revealed that this is not possible; no further action taken.
- \* Cote subdivision: Chairman received request for assistance from lawyer in response to Act 250's request that some of the buildings be clustered. Consensus of Commission was that clustering was a good idea and that the PC should not challenge Act 250 on this issue.

- \* Sign permit issued to Kenneth and Nancy Mason discussed. Wording of sign slightly different than was approved but group felt it conformed to regulations and was therefore permissible under original permit. Zoning Administrator will discuss traffic issue stemming from open house with Masons.

- \* Noyes Store: Concern over number of signs displayed; Zoning Administrator will discuss with the Noyes and request they remove all but the two allowed in permit.

- \* Discussed the Agricultural Section of Plan.

**December 20, 1990**

- \* Heard report from permit officer for the Central Vermont Region of the Dept. of Environmental Conservation of the Agency of Natural Resources.
- \* Met with members of BOA to discuss their concerns about home occupations which currently do not require a permit to operate.

\* Denied request for sign permit for Potter-Otto Bed and Breakfast as the business does not have a permit to operate.

\* Voted to approve sign for the Golf Shop, David Christy, on Route 14.

**December 27, 1990**

\* Discussed how to keep townspeople informed of the progress being made on town plan. Information will be included in town report. Once plan is completed, copies should be mailed to all citizens.

\* Selectmen requested that group select a person to serve as Assistant Zoning Administrator.

\* Discussion on whether town plan should be voted on by Australian ballot. Voted not to initiate any move to change the current process of accepting the plan.

**January 3, 1991**

\* Voted to give Claudia Bristow a leave of absence until 6/15/91 so that she can go to Czechoslovakia.

\* Zoning Administrator reported that there had been 80 applications filed in 1990 compared to 122 in 1989 and 118 in 1988.

\* Remainder of meeting left to work on report for Town Report.



### **ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT**

*Chair: Earle Ellingwood*

**November 26, 1990**

\* Continued discussion of the Potter-Otto application with town attorney Bruce Bjornlund present to offer opinion. Voted to recess further discussion until 12/10 when additional information will be available to help make the decision.

\* Discussed Montague trailer situation. Voted to have a Selectman come to next meeting to update BOA on this issue.

\* Discussed concerns about new antique shop on Snow Hill Road. Sign permit was granted but conditional use permit is also needed.

**December 10, 1990**

\* The Limited Partnership agreement of Potter-Otto case was reviewed by

town attorney, Bruce Bjornlund, who said it was clear that Cheryl Potter-Otto was not in ownership of the property and therefore application is inappropriate. The BOA voted to reject the application as presented.

\* Selectman Cleaves informed the BOA that the Montague trailer was being used as storage and not as residence and that Mr. Montague was aware that if it became a residence that appropriate septic system needs to be in place. Discussed definition of occupancy. Cleaves will bring the BOA's concerns to the next Selectmen's meeting.

\* Continued discussion of Irene Cook situation. Septic system is in non-compliance of her permit.

\* Continued discussion on Mason Antique shop. Planning Commission granted a home occupational use permit to the Masons on 10/18/89. BOA feels that this is their jurisdiction. Both boards need to clarify this situation.

\* Request from Tofani Carriage House for possible school for ecology. When application is received, BOA will need to determine if this is a permitted use.

\* Informational meeting on state permit requirements will be held on 12/20 by the Environmental Board and Agency of Natural Resources.



### **CONSERVATION FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

*Chair: Richard Angney*

The CFAC has received three applications:

(1) Jeff Sibley proposed sale of 30 acres of wetland. Recommended that the town fund not be used to buy the wetland since, despite its value for wildlife, it is not threatened with loss or change in use, and it is protected under the State's Wetland Rules.

(2) Austin Cleaves proposed sale of development rights on 285 acres of farmland, requesting \$35,000 from town fund to match \$322,000 grant from the Vermont Housing and Conservation Fund. CFAC held two open meetings where more than 60 people attended and commented on the application. It is awaiting

additional information from the revised appraisal and other questions posed to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund Board and the Vermont Land Trust. When received, CFAC will make a recommendation to the Selectmen at its February 19th meeting.

(3) Dexter and Susan Merritt requested a \$15,000 no-interest loan from the fund, to be repaid to the Town in the event land changes use, to allow expansion of orchard (40-50 acres). CFAC will consider this at the Feb. 19 meeting.



### **EAST MONTPELIER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BOARD**

*Phil Cookson, Rich Davidian, Tony Klein  
Kathy McGinley, Beth Thorpe*

**December 6, 1990**

\* Lyman Amsden reported budget is in excellent financial shape. There will be no tax increase this year.

\* Approved the Drug-free, Alcohol-free Workplace Policy.

\* Hot lunch program still not self supporting. Cooks working on serving children the most popular items. A parent survey will be done.

**January 3, 1991**

\* Information/reports for Town Meeting reviewed and approved.

\* Approved the Sexual Harrassment Policy.

\* Discussed budget for 1991-1992. The full-day kindergarten program and tables/benches for cafeteria were cut and an extra day added for music. Budget was approved.

\* Amsden reported the EMES tuition rate for 1991-1992 will be \$4575.



## NEXT ISSUE

News for the May/June issue should be submitted by April 1 to Janice Waterman, RR 1, Box 4330, Montpelier, 05602; 223-5826.

## RIDDLE

The stuff does not disappear, It does not dissolve. It may vanish from your sight and may not burden your mind, but it still exists. Neither amoeba nor bacteria are its complete demise. It may move when it feels crowded, but it doesn't go far and can become quite troublesome. Odors, sickness and disease, it may eventually cause. In very serious cases, it may even strike back and cause havoc in your home.

What is it?

### SEPTIC TANK SLUDGE.

What to do about it?

Your septic tank should be pumped every three or four years (more often if it's heavily used) to prevent the sludge and solids from overflowing from the septic tank and into the leach field. The solids, if not settled out in the septic tank, can plug and ruin the treatment rendered by the leach field in a very short time. Wastewater may continue to disappear down the toilet, but it may not be treated in the field and will cause pollution of the ground and surface water by viruses and bacteria. In the worst cases, not pumping your septic tank can cause a blockage so bad that your toilet can't be flushed.

For more information on the Do's and Don'ts of septic tank/leach field maintenance and how you can save money in the process, call the town office for an information sheet.

*Richard Czaplinski, Sewage Officer.*



## BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

Church bells rang on January 10 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the vote ratifying the U.S. Constitution and consequently its entry into the Union. Dwight Clark tolled the bell at the Old Brick Church, and Jim Wright did the honors at the Old Meeting House in the Center. Bells would also ring on February 13 at noon to commemorate Congress' vote to allow Vermont to join the Union, and on March 4 at noon for Statehood Day.

Other events scheduled include:

- \* March 4: Activities by students at the Elementary School to honor the day, including a re-enactment of the first town meeting scene from an original play by Ellen Hill and Lyn Blackwell.
- \* March 5: Adults will perform the same scene at 11:00 during Town Meeting at the Elementary School.
- \* July 13: Parade in Montpelier, with a float from East Montpelier.
- \* Sept. 7: Rally Day, with exhibits, tours, a supper and a talent show.
- \* Sept. 8: Special church service at the Old Meeting House, with luncheon at noon and a musical in the afternoon.
- \* Nov. 11: Dedication of the new Town Honor Roll at the East Montpelier Municipal Building.

Members of the Committee are Ellen Hill, Gladys Dunkling, Phyllis Duso, Flo Young, Charlotte Karr, Helen Allen, David and Pauline Coburn, Weston and Jean Cate, Austin Cleaves, Norma Raymond, and Brenda Chapell.



## DUNROVEN ASSOCIATES

RR 1 Box 110 East Montpelier, Vermont 05651

SURVEYING AND MAPPING  
SITE ENGINEERING

SOIL AND PERCOLATION TESTS  
SEPTIC SYSTEM DESIGN  
ENVIRONMENTAL PERMIT PROCESSING

Norman C. Rice  
President  
(802) 229-1506

## CHURCH CHIMES

### OLD MEETING HOUSE OLD BRICK CHURCH

Both churches held their annual meetings in January to review last year's activities and vote budgets for 1991.

The Spiritual Life Committee held a forum on January 23 with Stu Gibson from the Extension Service highlighting ways to manage and reduce stress. The next forum will be held March 15 at the Old Meeting House at 7:00 and will be talking about better interpersonal communications.

Services are held at 9:30 a.m. at the Old Meeting House and at 11:00 a.m. at the Old Brick Church. Sunday School is held during the services. All are welcome.



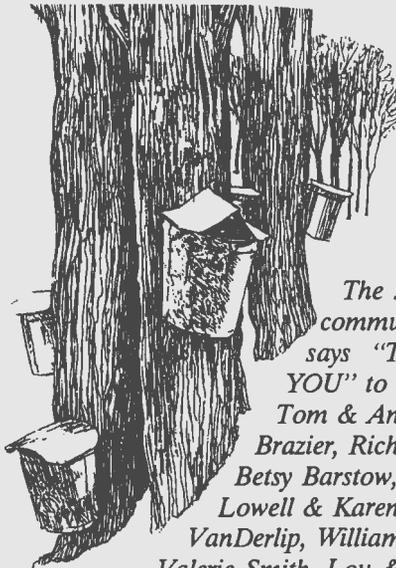
## NOTICE

There are vacancies on the Board of the 4-Corners Schoolhouse Association. If you'd like to serve with people who are bringing activity to the 4-Corners Schoolhouse, call Kathy McGinley at 229-4740.

## NEW CONTRIBUTORS

*We thank the following people for their generous donations made since our last issue.*

*Harold & Joyce Bean  
Bruce & Janet Chapell  
Austin Cleaves  
Dorothy Conlon  
Peter Noel Duhamel  
John & Sandra Flannery  
Ross & Luella Gardner  
Dr. Philip & Maureen Gates  
John & Donna Hall  
Frederick & Joyce Jacek  
Thomas & Charlotte MacLeay  
Harold & Carolyn Pastore  
Frederic & Granthia Preston  
Samuel & Barbara Starr  
Ann Talbott Stone  
Guy & Patricia Welch  
Merideth Wright &  
Frederic Emigh*



The school community says "THANK YOU" to Tom & Ann Brazier, Richard & Betsy Barstow, Lowell & Karen VanDerlip, William & Valerie Smith, Lou & Olivia Bravakis, Morse Farm, Larry & Patty Crossman-Babic, Paul & Sandal Cate, Bragg Farm and Bruce & Janet Chapell for graciously donating maple syrup to the hot lunch program. One of the best selling lunches is pancakes with pure maple syrup!

- ♥ East Montpelier Spelling Bee Team placed second in the Washington Central District. Congratulations to Coach Sabens and her team of Erin Beardsworth, Matt Pelkey, Stephanie Nist, Drew McNaughton, Samantha Hawkins and Shelagh McGinley for a job well done.
- ♥ To date the school has collected over \$293,000 worth of Grand Union tapes. Thanks to all who saved their tapes, the school will be receiving an Apple GS computer with an additional disk drive and printer.
- ♥ The Russian version of "The Gingerbread Man" was performed by the Russian Puppeteers in January. The performance was enjoyed by all and was funded by PTO and LEAP.
- ♥ The PTO cookbook, compiled of recipes from students, teachers, and East Montpelier residents, will be on sale during the Town Meeting day dinner.
- ♥ Claudia Bristow left for Czechoslovakia on January 14 to teach English for 5½ months.
- ♥ "Former Clubs of East Montpelier" is the theme of the current display at Town Hall. The East Montpelier

Historical Society arrangement shows many pictures of prize-winning calves from former 4-H'ers like Roger Chapell. Old Valentine cards are also on display.

- ♥ Jean and Wes Cate attempted to outdo the neighbors' Christmas lights with their own chimney fire, but then withdrew the motion.
- ♥ If you can't attend all of Town Meeting, drop in to eat the wonderful noontime feast! Word has it that the morning business is intentionally carried over so that everyone can eat together.
- ♥ Six East Montpelier families joined 24 others to share in a community agriculture project last summer. They formed a cooperative with producers Les Snow and Lori Baker at the Snow Baker Farm in Marshfield, and received a regular supply of fresh organic vegetables for seven months at a price comparable to non-organic produce from the supermarket.

♥ MOOSE PIE SUPPER, April 1, at the Town Hall. Call 229-4858 for your place for a slice of the pie.

- ♥ Anyone interested in reading to students in Grades K, 1 and 2 on a one to one basis? If so, please call Laura Johnson at 223-7936.
- ♥ Sgt. Ross from the Vermont State Police spoke to parents on January 7 concerning "Facts Parents Should Know About Drugs and Alcohol".
- ♥ The students in grades 4, 5 and 6 have been working on a bicentennial mural project. Be sure to look for it on Town Meeting Day.

PASSINGS

Bradley Arthur Bassett passed away on 12/8/90. He lived on Route 14 and was a Vietnam Veteran.

Douglas H. Newcombe passed away 12/24/90. He lived in Sandy Pines Trailer Park and was a letter carrier for the U.S. Post Office.

Joey Laquerre, whose family has operated businesses on Route 14 in

town for a number of years, died Feb. 1 in a snowmobiling accident.

BIRTHS

(Received by the Town Clerk by Jan. 31)

- ♥ Justin Michael Gay born 10/16/90 to Kimberly Sue and Michael Gay.
- ♥ Julie Elizabeth Bigelow born 11/1/90 to Kimberlee Ann and Timothy A. Bigelow.
- ♥ Shawna Lee Plante born 12/2/90 to Kathy Marie and Paul E. Plante.
- ♥ William Calvin Alexander Barstow born 12/3/90 to Linda Elizabeth and Richard I. Barstow.
- ♥ Evan Coburn Wells born 12/6/90 to Wendi Lee Coburn and Peter John Wells.
- ♥ Ari Jordan Erlbaum born 1/6/91 to Rachel Sarah Grossman and Paul H. Erlbaum.

LAND TRANSFERS  
(As recorded 12/1/90-1/31/91)

25.58 acre parcel known as Sandy Pines Trailer Park from Richard Casavant to Housing Foundation, Inc.

Building and 2 acre lot on Codling Road from B & B Artesian Well Co. Inc. to A & W Artesian Well Co. of Vermont, Inc.

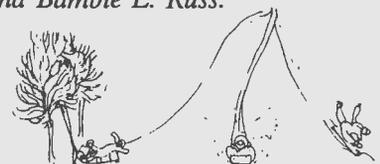
House and 10.74 acres on Lyle Young Road from Real & Angele Ouimet to Kenneth W. & Marilyn A. Wood.

House and 3.2 acres on County Road from David & Linda Willey to Michael & Joanne Kulaga.

House and 10.4 acres on Lyle Young Road from Real & Angele Ouimet to Ricky & Joanne Thomas.

House and .27 acres on Carleton Boulevard from Tina Pariseau to Audrey Lafirira et al.

3 acres off Route 14 from Albert & Linda Phillips to Margaret B. Pashely and Bambie L. Russ.



## RICK BARSTOW, SUGARMAKER

For me as a child growing up in "the big city", maple syrup was always a rare and longed-for feast. It was synonymous with "Vermont" and conjured up images of brilliant red autumns and white winters. How it was made was a mystery, and so was its preciousness. Last week I went to visit Rick and Betsy Barstow (and William, now 8 weeks old) to find out.

Rick grew up in rural Connecticut, near a large sugaring operation. As a youngster, he helped out there often and so was no stranger to maple sugaring when he arrived in Vermont twenty years later. One fall night he and his friend Lowell Vanderlip were taking a stroll near an old abandoned house in Adamant just this side of the East Montpelier/Calais line. They decided to take a look around and found themselves knee-deep in trash. The house was in pretty bad shape, full of tiny rooms, doors everywhere you looked, and unlivable. When they came back during daylight, Rick found the property boasted a good-sized sugarbush with enough large (a foot in diameter) healthy trees for good sugaring. When the place went on the market a while later, he bought it.

In front of the house are two huge and venerable maple trees about 4 feet in diameter, bearing the scars of years of sugaring. The trees, Rick estimates, are about as old as the house, which was built in the mid 1800's.

The first year's operation was patched together with old equipment -- a 2x4 rig for boiling the sap which was found in the woods, and buckets and 50 taps found in the backroom in the house -- and hard work. There was no sugarhouse, just the rig standing outside with no shelter. There was no tractor, so buckets were emptied into gathering pails which were hand-carried. The evaporating pan for boiling the sap had no dividers or flues. The sap was poured in a bit at a time and boiled until it became syrup. The only "mechanization" was a bucket with holes punched in it to control the flow of the sap into the pan. Sap has approximately 2.5-3% sugar content depending upon the weather and the size and condition of the tree. One tap can produce a quart of syrup. With the fifty taps that year they made 8-10 gallons of syrup. Enough for Rick and Lowell and friends, but that's about all.

Through the years the operation has grown. They went from 50 taps to 2100. At first, sap was collected on foot, then by toboggan, then with a 1971 Toyota Land Cruiser, affectionately named Whitey, and finally a tractor. (Whitey retired in '86 but lives in the barn and still runs.)

What began as a simple rig gained divided pans, drop flues to heat the sap more efficiently, and an arch for burning wood. Different parts were borrowed, built, or bought along the way with labor and advice from helpful neighbors. The operation has survived the vagaries of fire, weather, and pear thrips, and is thriving. In 1986 after the old chicken coop housing the rig burned to the ground, a "real" sugarhouse was built, and pipeline was run in from the sugarbush.

Rick produces enough syrup to be sold to the Hunger Mountain Food Coop, the State Street Market, the Adamant Food Coop, and the Maple Corner Store. He hopes to expand the mail order business through the Adamant Food Coop as well. He has become expert in the business and has been a regional director of the Vermont Sugar Makers Association for the past five years.



*Rick, Betsy and William Barstow*

Sugaring is not Rick's only trade. He also does logging, carpentry, tilling, brushhogging and masonry. But he does seem to have a soft spot in his heart for sugaring. Maybe that's because it brought him and his wife Betsy together.

Betsy moved to Vermont after spending several years living in South America. While there she had gotten to know the people, learned about their culture and traditions. In Vermont, she wished to do the same, and Vermont's tradition of maple sugaring piqued her interest. A friend suggested she look up Rick, which she did in the midst of mud season, and she learned about sugaring. They were married eight months later, in November 1988. When Betsy became pregnant last spring, ironically the one smell she could not stand was maple syrup! "I felt like a traitor," she said. "I was afraid I would never be able to help out with sugaring again." Luckily, it was temporary; after six months it disappeared.

This year, Rick will set the taps at the end of February. He prefers to do that himself, as the placing of the taps is an important factor in the amount and quality of sap a tree continues to produce. Then they'll hope for the alternating 40° days and below freezing nights that make for the best sugaring. Betsy will help collect the sap and boil it and William will get his first lessons in sugaring, getting an early start on following his daddy's footsteps. If all goes well they'll make up to 50% Vermont Fancy, the top grade, and keep collecting till the "frog runs" -- the last run of the season, when you can already hear the spring peepers chirping in the sugarbush.

*Ruth Coppersmith*



## COMMITTEE MEETING CALENDAR

Selectmen	2nd & 4th Wednesday	7:00 Municipal Building
Planning Commission	1st, 3rd, 4th Thursday	7:30 " "
Zoning Board of Adjustment	2nd & 4th Monday	7:30 " "
Conservation Fund Advisory Comm.	3rd Tuesday	7:00 " "
Agland and Open Space	1st Tuesday	7:30 " "
Commercial/Industrial Development	No regularly scheduled meetings	Call Peter Wells, 229-1545
Volunteer Fire Department	Every Tuesday	7:00 Fire Station, Templeton Rd.
Affordable Housing	No regularly scheduled meetings	Call Stuart Friedman, 223-3255
Community Activities	No regularly scheduled meetings	Call Jean Cate, 223-2951
U-32 School Board	2nd & 4th Tuesday	7:30 U-32
Elementary School Board	1st Thursday	7:30 Elementary School
Town Clerk's Office Hours	Monday-Thursday: 9-5, Friday: 9-12	Municipal Building
Zoning Administrator	Tuesday & Thursday	1:00-2:30, Municipal Building

Meeting times are subject to change

## EVENTS CALENDAR

March 4, Monday	Statehood Day	Elementary School
March 5, Tuesday, 10 a.m.	Town Meeting Day	Voting, Elementary School, 9:30 -7
March 5, Tuesday, 11 a.m.	Re-enactment of First Town Meeting	Elementary School
March 8, Friday, 6 p.m.	Lasagna Supper	OMH Community Building
	Reservations: 223-5826	Adults: \$4, Children: \$2
March 31, Sunday	Easter Sunrise Service	4-Corners Schoolhouse
April 1, Monday	Legislature Adjourns!	State House
April 1, Monday	Moose Pie Supper	Town Hall
May 4, Saturday	Green Up Day	Along the roadsides

## SIGNPOST STAFF

<i>Jean Cate, Publisher, 223-2951</i>	<i>Cherie Langer, Managing Editor, 229-4858</i>	<i>Janet MacLeod, Artist, 229-4349</i>
<i>Fred Tubbs, Copy Editor, 454-8462</i>		<i>Sylvia Tosi, Town Records, 223-3240</i>
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**INSIDE:**

**SUGARING WITH  
THE BARSTOWS  
4-H GARDENS  
BICENTENNIAL  
EVENTS  
DWIGHT CLARK  
MOOOO SLIPS**

