

# EAST MONTPELIER SIGNPOST

Volume VII, No. 6

July/August 1997

## FROM FLOWERS TO FOUR CORNERS: RUTH FROST

On Mother's Day I walked past Ruth Frost's house on Kelton Road and admired the flowers: bloodroot, trout lilies, and lots of daffodils. When the warmer weather arrives, Ruth's many perennials will bloom to provide color into the fall. Ruth and her husband, Dr. Kendal Frost, are the fourth owners of the antique brick cape which overlooks fields with a mountain range in the distance. Behind the Frosts' house are more fields and a magical red pine plantation. The Frosts generously allow their neighbors to ski and snowshoe through their property where an abundance of wildlife resides.

This story begins in 1961 when Ruth and Dr. Frost left Connecticut (where Ruth was born and raised) to live in England for three years while Dr. Frost was employed by the National Health Service. This was a great experience, but the weather was atrocious. The weather reports would predict "bright intervals" which meant the sun would shine for about ten minutes then the gloomy, dark clouds would return. During vacations the Frosts toured Europe and developed friendships that still flourish today. Their daughter Hilary was born in England.



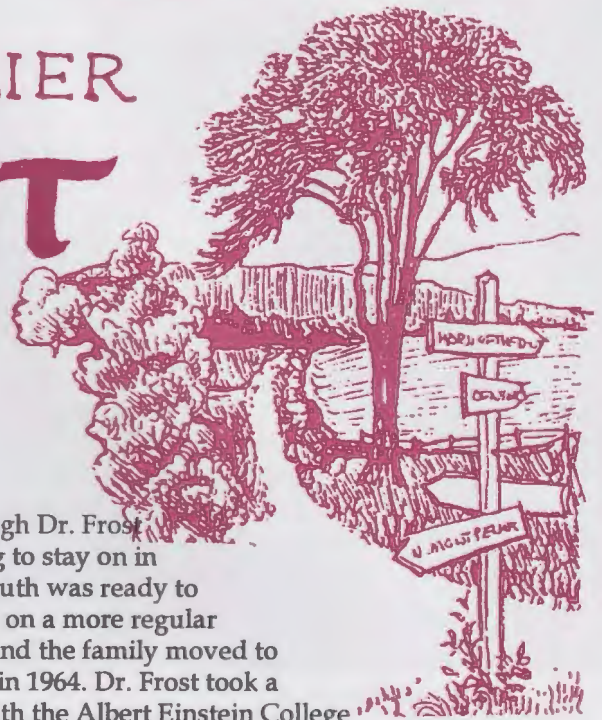
Although Dr. Frost was willing to stay on in England, Ruth was ready to see the sun on a more regular schedule, and the family moved to New York in 1964. Dr. Frost took a position with the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Timothy and Christopher were born in New York and completed the Frost family.

After visiting friends in Vermont, the Frosts knew where they wanted to raise their family. In 1966 the Frosts moved to East Montpelier, and Dr. Frost became central Vermont's first orthopedist. Ruth's home reflects her love of 18th century antiques and needle arts. She takes quilting and needlepoint classes to meet other people who share her interest. Ruth is passionate about perennials and believes that gardening provides wonderful therapy.

For years Ruth's main responsibility was her family life. She participated in 4-H, Cub Scouts, and started the ELF Program at the Elementary School. Ruth feels strongly that we all have a responsibility to serve our community, and she has served on boards both locally and statewide. Ruth's strong interest in human services led to her appointment as the first volunteer Executive Director of the Vermont Association for Learning Disabilities. Ruth has also worked with the Hospice program.

In 1979 Ruth gained another son. Mohsen Javadabadi Falahi, a teenager from Iran, came to the Frosts' home for Thanksgiving and stayed for five years. There was a revolution in Iran at that time that prevented Mohsen's return to his home country and he never went back. Mohsen attended U-32, then Vermont Technical College. A few years ago Mohsen had a reunion with his father in Toronto, and in March both of his parents came to his home in Plainfield and are here for an extended visit. Mohsen hadn't seen his mother in 20 years!

Getting to know Ruth Frost for this *Signpost* interview has been fun and informative. As an incoming Four Corners School Association Board Member, I learned the



## Top of the Signpost

A neighbor and faithful reader of the *Signpost* told me the other day that she had saved every issue since the beginning - September/October 1990. I was amazed! That is *my* job, and indeed I have squirreled away boxes of old issues in our attic. Only a history freak would use attic space in this way, but we've come to recognize that pack rats like us are the ones who will ultimately tell the history of a person or family, a town or a nation.

Thus it is in East Montpelier. The *Signpost's* goal from the beginning was to help us all know our town and its people better. That it has worked is demonstrated each time a reader exclaims, "I didn't know that!" about a friend or neighbor in our people/business profiles. Likewise when townspeople quote from the *Signpost* the arrival of a new baby, the transfer of property from one party to another, or the business done by one or another of the town's boards, commissions and committees, we think, "That is what the *Signpost* is all about."

You may have noticed that each fall as we start a new volume, we design a special issue, featuring some important aspect of East Montpelier: history, government, schools, businesses, organizations, and the trails network. Now for Volume VIII, Number 1 (September/October), we chose a more personal focus. We are asking the question "HOW DID YOU GET HERE FROM THERE?" The stories we turn up of why people moved to East Montpelier are likely to run the gamut from "BORN HERE" to some really fun tales of discovery and adventure.

Who will we ask? This is not a scientific poll and will be hit-or-miss, but each of us on the staff will be asking neighbors, friends and acquaintances. There may be more stories than we have space for, but we expect to hear some interesting reasons for settling here. Do you have an unusual story to tell? Call us. Anyone listed in the box on page 8 can take your call. Please be a part of this adventure.

*Jean Cate*

history of the Four Corners School and the reasons for Ruth's enthusiastic involvement over the last five years.

It was the June 1989 Art Show that grabbed Ruth's interest in the Association, and in 1992 Ruth was ready to join the board. Restoration of the building started in 1989 and continues today.

Ruth sees that the School creates its own energy and means so much to so many different people. For instance, a local resident who had attended the School recently saw his daughter celebrate her 11th birthday with a sleep-over there. As President of the Board, Ruth worked with a dedicated group of people who gave so much of their time and talents to making the Four Corners School a great place. Ruth sees the School's greatest value in being a neutral place for community members to come together, feeling that it can bridge the gap that exists in the town's social life.

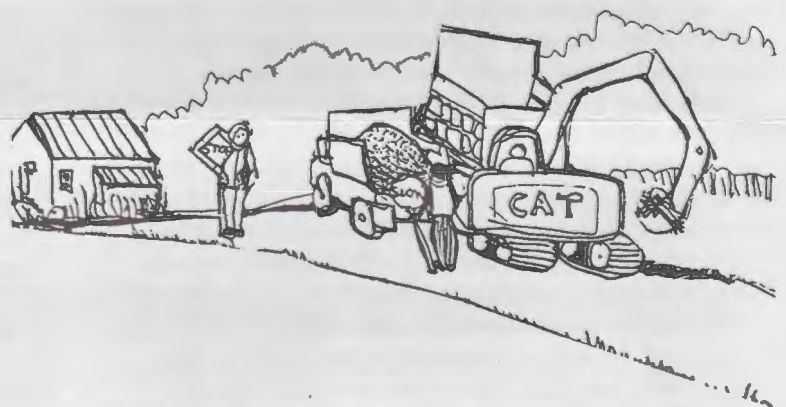
At the Association's Annual Meeting in April, Ruth handed the Presidency to Wes Cate but continues to serve on the Board. At that meeting several suggestions for use of the School included a book discussion group, an "expert" lecture series, a newcomers club, yoga/exercise classes, and art classes.

Ruth is organizing a tour of perennial gardens in July. Please call her if you'd like your garden to be part of the tour.

East Montpelier is fortunate to have Ruth Frost as a neighbor and as an active member of the Four Corners School Association.

*Rachel Senechal*

*Rachel Senechal lives on McKnight Road and is strongly interested in the care of the elderly, her family, and just a few Christmas trees.*



### MORE PATIENCE! BETTER ROADS!

The Selectboard signed a contract with Pike Industries, Inc. for the 1997 paving project. Roads included are County Road, Center Road, the older mile of Towne Hill Road, Vincent Flats and Quaker Roads. The project is being funded with monies approved at the 1997 town meeting.

The Road Department and Willey Excavation have been clearing ditches. The reclamation of the existing pavement will begin in late June and continue into July. New pavement will be laid shortly following the reclamation. The Selectboard intends that the time between grinding the old pavement and laying the new to be long enough to help compact the base but short enough to minimize inconvenience. It is hoped that all work will be completed by the end of August.



## SELECTBOARD

*Edie Miller, (Chair), Tom Brazier,  
Tim Meehan*

**March 26, 1997**

- > Memo will be sent to various boards and committees regarding term limits for members.
- > Two veterinary clinics are willing to accept rabies quarantined animals from the town.
- > Reviewed draft specifications for the 1997 paving project.
- > Received petition with 97 signatures requesting informational meeting on proposed City of Montpelier sludge composting facility. Will send letter to Agency of Natural Resources to encourage open format for the Solid Waste Division hearings.
- > Discussed letter from Housing Foundation, Inc. requesting help in obtaining grant funds for replacement of septic systems at Sandy Pines Mobile Home Park.

**April 9, 1997**

- > Mike Garand submitted monthly road report.
- > Met with State Representatives Elaine Alfano and Donny Osman to discuss pending legislation for changing education funding.
- > Public Hearing re: application to Vermont Community Development Program for \$280,000 to replace sewage disposal system in Sandy Pines MHP.
- > Approved excess vehicle weight permits for Agri-Mark and Walmar Transportation.
- > Appointed Anne Carter to serve on the Wrightsville Beach Recreation District Board.
- > Reappointed Ed Blackwell as representative to the CVRPC and Frank Pratt as alternate and as representative to the Transportation Advisory Committee.

**April 17, 1997**

- > Received proposed revisions to Town Sewage Ordinance.

**April 30, 1997**

- > Town Sewage Officer discussed proposed Sewage Ordinance Revisions.

- > Approved tobacco license for Digna Cornier DeSosa at East Montpelier U-Save store.
- > Approved excess weight vehicle permit for A.G. Anderson, Inc.
- > Received grant of \$250 for Green Up Day activities.

**May 7, 1997**

- > Awarded paving project to Pike Industries. Agreed to changes in specifications to keep within budget.
- > Discussed proposed new loan terms for Sandy Pines MHP septic system.
- > Approved purchase of used backhoe for \$19,000.

**May 14, 1997**

- > Mike Garand submitted monthly road report.
- > Continued discussion of Sandy Pines septic system proposal. Concern over how little time Selectboard has had to review proposed revised loan terms.
- > Voted to contract with Walmar Transportation for winter sand at \$5.68 per cubic yard.
- > Awarded contract to Grout Farms for roadside mowing.
- > Designated Edie Miller as liaison with the Sheriff's Department to renew traffic control contract. Will review current speed limits with a traffic engineer.
- > Signed petition of NYNEX for utility pole easement at EMES.
- > Approved contract with Central Vermont Humane Society.
- > Set terms of Board of Adjustment members at three years. Incumbents Sherry Carver, Earl Ellingwood and Jeff Cueto through 1998; Anne Sherman, Gene Troia and Stuart Friedman through 1999. Appointed new members Claudia Bristow, Florence Morse and Sue Mahoney for three-year terms to 2000.
- > Adopted two-year terms for the Town Forest Committee members.
- > Conservation easements for Friihauf and Sibley properties have been funded by the Vermont Housing and Conservation Trust Fund. Closings planned for this

- summer. Town will co-hold conservation easements on both properties but not the Friihauf property trail easement.
- > Approved Agricultural Tax Stabilization contracts for Harry and Elizabeth Morse and Ila Smith.
- > Declined invitation from Rural Vermont to co-sponsor informational meeting re sewage sludge compacting regulations. Selectperson Miller will attend.



## PLANNING COMMISSION

*Doug Johnson, Chair*

**March 20, 1997**

- > Elected Doug Johnson as chair, and Gary Bryant as clerk.
- > Approved site plan proposal of Mike Rus to divide existing lot off Towne Hill Road into two lots.

**April 3, 1997**

- > Approved request of Steve McKenny for a musical equipment and supply store in North Montpelier.

**May 1, 1997**

- > Discussed zoning regulations and proposed changes to current regulations.

## BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

*Jeff Cueto, Chair*

**April 14, 1997**

- > Approved request of Paul and Erica Dayton to convert an existing structure (formerly a sugarhouse) to a dwelling.
- > Heard update on use of CV Landfill Transfer station. Station is fulfilling all conditions stated in permit.
- > Tim Meehan resigned from Board because he is now a member of the Selectboard.

## EAST MONTPELIER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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

**April 3, 1997**

- Lee Sease presented Special Education information.
- Accepted recommendation of Grade 2/3 Configuration Ad Hoc Committee. There will be two straight second grades and two straight third grades for 1997-98.
- Mary Ann Robb and Ann Parker will teach second grade classes; Kathy Christy and Carolyn Pastore will teach third grade classes.
- Approved the use of the school by Sara O'Hare to direct a summer camp under the Success by Six Program supervision.

**May 1, 1997**

- Peg Meyer spoke about the new math curriculum.
- New sound system will cost \$1,450 and be ready by June 4th.
- Approved tuition rate of \$6,109 for the 1997-98 school year.
- Heard report of Vision Committee meeting. Accepted the Mission and Vision Statements and the Core Values and Beliefs for EMES.

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### U-32 BOARD

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

**March 25, 1997**

- Appointed Dan Violette Truant Officer.
- Set tuition rate at \$6,308.
- Agreed to accept one or two Project Harmony students during 1997-98 school year.

**April 1, 1997**

- Ralph Leonard discussed 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade core configuration.
- Accepted resignation of Milo Moore.
- Contracted with Jon Winston for 4/1/97-6/30/97.
- Accepted staffing of departments and curricula as recommended by the administration.
- Approved following reduction in force: Dottie Ricks, .3FTE dance; Barbara Marcoullier, .2FTE business.

**April 15, 1997**

- June 24 is last student day as April 7 (a day with no water) was recognized as a teacher work day.
- Lee Sease outlined selected data reports from Vt. Dept. of Ed., Special Education report. Also discussed inclusion - efficacy, cost and defunding of regional programs.
- Voted to offer contract to Jackie Gahagen for associate principal of senior high for one year.
- Voted that position of associate principal for junior high be publicly recruited.

**May 6, 1997**

- Peter Meyer and Dick Butsch updated Board on ice arena.
- WCSU report: Superintendency offered to Robbie Brook. She will start July 1, 1997.
- Approved Junior High Spring Coach List.
- Approved one year leave of absence to Karen Lieberman to work at environmental center.
- Will draft resolution to express gratitude of Board to the faculty.

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### FOUR CORNERS SCHOOLHOUSE

*Weston Cate, President*

- ❖ At April annual meeting elected Weston Cate, Jr., President; Hobie Guion, Vice President; and Marion Codling, Clerk/Treasurer.
- ❖ May activities included two family parties, EMES fourth grade class, practice by local 4-H group, Board meeting, Vermont String School on Mondays, and a bird and wildflower walk led by Paul Cate.
- ❖ A resident of East Montpelier can rent the Four Corners School for a birthday party, rehearsal dinner, or some other function. Town groups can use the School for free.

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### RECREATION BOARD

*Pat Fitzsimmons, Rachel Senechal,  
Co-Chairs*

- ❖ **Coaching Clinic:** Gene Troia and Peter Wells shared current coaching practices that they learned at a clinic in Connecticut with this year's baseball and softball coaches.
- ❖ **Field of Dreams:** Steve Connor

met with a representative from Washington Electric (WEC) re: installing electric service on the recreation fields. WEC will do this inexpensively if we cover materials.

- ❖ **Recreation Field Clean Up Day:** On May 3<sup>rd</sup> several adults and students worked for hours on a very cold, wet day preparing the fields for softball and baseball games, installing a scoreboard and chin-up bars, dismantling the skating rink boards, and erecting the volleyball net. The Recreation Board sincerely thanks the workers who participated! We weren't able to paint the dugouts but will provide paint to do it when the weather warms up. If your son or daughter plays ball, please consider spending a few hours painting.
- ❖ **Summer Swimming Lessons:** There are 22 kids registered for lessons. Robyn Hall will hold a second swim registration to increase the number of registrants to 40.
- ❖ **Recreation Board Term Limits:** We were asked to suggest term limits, but members felt them inappropriate. Anyone who would like to serve is welcome, and we seek new membership regularly, with no restrictions on the number of members. Our long-term projects benefit from long-term membership. Pat Fitzsimmons will speak to Bill Bryant regarding our position.

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### EAST MONTPELIER FIRE DEPARTMENT

*Chief Jon Winston, President Bill George*

- ❖ Members held their annual meeting May 6 at the Templeton Road Station, where they were treated to a picnic supper put on by the fireground officers.
- ❖ Jon Winston was re-elected Chief, Robert VanZandt was elected Vice President, Michael Garand and Earl Smith to the Board of Directors, and Robin Copping, Chaplain.
- ❖ The Fire Department is seeking individuals to serve as firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and to assist in maintaining the two stations, apparatus, and equipment. If interested, please contact any member or Bill George at 223-7741.

## EAST MONTPELIER CEMETERY COMMISSION

*George Fitch, Chair*

**April 28, 1997**

- ❖ Welcomed Pauli Coburn, new member.
- ❖ Hired Kevin Wilkinson as Sexton for the 1997-98 year, who will fix and paint fence at Cutler Cemetery and paint the Cate Cemetery fence.
- ❖ Will solicit proposals to survey Phase I of the Doty Cemetery in East Montpelier Center.

**May 19, 1997**

- ❖ Fire Dept. burned over White Cemetery on County Road. Commission will meet June 2 to locate hidden gravestones and establish perimeter.
- ❖ Voted to notify Selectboard that Commission opposes sale of land where old Town Hall stood next to East Montpelier Cemetery. It may be needed for further expansion or easier access.
- ❖ Authorized Kevin Wilkinson to approach William Chase of Chase and Chase to conduct engineering survey of Phase I of the Doty Cemetery.

## CHURCH BELLS OLD MEETING HOUSE

*David Connor, Interim Pastor*

- † The Search Committee for the Old Meeting House recommended, and the congregation unanimously endorsed, the joint ministry of David W. Connor and Susan Cooke Kittredge. Celebration Sunday will be held September 7 at 9:30 a.m. to inaugurate this ministry. Members are excited about the collaboration and look forward to reaching out more broadly to the community.
- † This summer, David Connor will continue to serve as Interim Pastor and Susan Kittredge as Pastoral Counselor (220-0840). Janice Waterman is Church Administrator (229-9593 or 223-5826).
- † Worship services will be held at 9:30 a.m. during the month of July. The Old Meeting House will be closed for painting during August.

## OLD BRICK CHURCH

*Rev. Marcheta Townsend, Pastor*

† Services in July and August will be held from 9:30 to 10:15 a.m., returning to the regular 11:00 a.m. time on September 7.

† On April 30 Sunday School children filled and delivered decorated containers to eleven men and women to celebrate May Day.

† On May 20 a party was held at the Lobster Pot Restaurant to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Brick Church Club, an auxiliary organization formed on April 30, 1947. Three charter members, Phyllis Duso, Irma Hodgeman, and Jennie Clark, were recognized.

† A surprise birthday party was held on May 18th for Kris Christiansen to celebrate his 50th birthday and his 40 years as a member of the choir.

## SPECIAL INVITATION FROM THE OBC CHOIR:

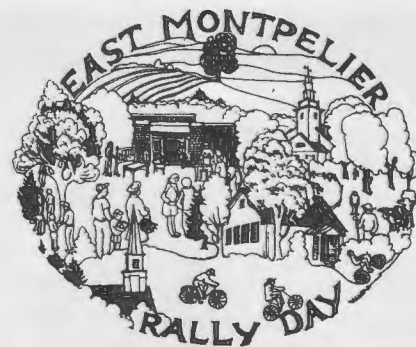
We invite anyone in the community who enjoys singing and isn't attending any particular church to join in our choir, which isn't hung up on formality and likes to sing a variety of music. We'd welcome your "voice," ideas, and enthusiasm. You need have no intention of becoming otherwise involved with the church. Rehearsals are generally Thursdays from 7:30 to 9 p.m., and a half hour before the service on Sundays.

## TWIN VALLEY SENIORS

Everyone is welcome to enjoy musical entertainment and readings by local authors at the Community Teas co-sponsored by Twin Valley Seniors and the Cutler Memorial Library, held the second and fourth Thursdays at the Cutler Memorial Library on Route 2 in Plainfield.

Twin Valley Seniors are meeting at the Old Brick Church this summer on days that Goddard College is closed. See the Calendar, or call the Council on Aging at 479-0531 for the summer schedule

News on E-9-1-1 in our next issue. It's going more slowly than planned and has target date of May 1998.



## DUST OFF YOUR DANCING SHOES!

Rally Day, East Montpelier's special nine year tradition, brings together new friends and old. It celebrates the special talents and places which are unique to our town. Most events are free or reasonably priced. We get to know our neighbors and the town better, whether it's on foot, on bike, or seated comfortably at the Variety Show. And best of all, we smile a lot!

Here's a sneak preview: We'll have the hikes, the Town Fair in the EMES Gym, the Rural Running Race, Memory Hour, Bike Tours, delicious food, and the Variety Show. The Four Corners Schoolhouse always presents something special, and the *Signpost* Auction will offer lots of bargains.

We'll feature two dance demonstrations, clogging and Morris, followed by a contra dance for people of all ages. New activities include a photo contest for adults and kids, origami box making, a scarecrow contest, and perhaps a perennial plant swap and sale.

*Can you help?* We need enthusiastic people to help put it all together and talented people to perform in the Variety Show. Talent of either variety should be reported to Rachel Senechal at 223-0539. We need items, services and time donated to the *Signpost* Auction. Please call Loring Starr at 229-0007 with those donations.

**Rally Day is September 6  
Put It on Your Calendar!!!**

# MOOSE LIPS

## ❖ Adamant Music School:

**History Project:** The Adamant Music School has begun to preserve its history and the life stories of its founders - Edwine Behre, Alice Mary Kimball, and Harry Godfrey - with the goal of publishing it on the Internet. If you remember its early days, please call or write Andy or Jennifer Christiansen at Northeast Research Associates, RR 1 Box 8, East Montpelier, 05651; 229-2638.

❖ A tree has been planted at the Municipal Office in memory of Allan Couch, a former Selectman. The tree was donated by Carver Tree Farm on the County Road.

❖ Check in the attic — the Town's collection of **Town Reports** is complete except for the years 1849, 1850, 1851, 1852, 1853 and 1860. If anyone has the reports from these long-ago days, Sylvia would like to round out the collection. Would be happy just to borrow them to make copies if you can not bear to part with them.

❖ Is anyone out there handy with a camera and willing to spend a couple of hours every two months taking pictures for the *Signpost* articles? We are desperate for this help. Call any of us. Thanks!

❖ Contact Anne Ormsbee at 223-5372 or Judy Fowler at 454-7823 (evenings) if you have a quilt to enter in the Washington County Field Days Quilt Contest.

## MILESTONES

### Marriages

♥ Christopher George Manuel to Keri Leigh Boswell; May 10, 1997.

♥ James G. Grundy to Sharon Gouveia; May 24, 1997.

♥ James Nobel Olmsted to Sally D. Grigg; May 24, 1997.

### Births

♥ Ty Alexander Bell; born April 21, 1997. Son of Leslie Ann & Douglas A. Bell, Jr.

♥ Abigail Eve DiMario, born April 3, 1997. Daughter of Amber Lea Merrill & Andrew DiMario.

## Deaths

☉ Lincoln Lewis Sibley, Jr.; died September 16, 1996. Husband of Hilde E. Sibley.

☉ George F. Sibley, Sr.; died May 9, 1997. Father of George (Jeff) F. Sibley, Jr.

## Land Transfers

☞ Arthur & Joanne Chickering to Arthur & Joanne Chickering, trustees; dwelling and 125.5 acres on Chickering Road.

☞ Wendell H. Maxham to Norman Ferland; ½ interest in dwelling and 2.3 acres, in East Village.

☞ Paul & Joanne Breching to P.G. Salles, Inc. dba Ray's Mobile Homes; mobile home in Sandy Pines Mobile Home Park.

☞ George Landry, Jr. to Carolyn Landry; dwelling and 2.1 acres on Horn of Moon Road.

☞ Michele (Welch) Guyette to Michele & Wesley Guyette, Jr.; dwelling and 0.88 acres in North Montpelier.

☞ Elliott Morse to George Landry, Jr. & Carolyn Landry; 0.44 acres on Horn of Moon Road.

☞ Hilde Sibley to Richard & Debra Anderson; dwelling and 1.13 acres in North Montpelier.

☞ Earl & Pauline Montague to Earl & Pauline Montague; dwelling and 28 acres on Putnam Road.

☞ Clifford Bowman to Don & Donne Orr; dwelling and 5.4 acres off Wheeler Road.

☞ Ronald Morris & Sharon Boguzewski to Ronald Morris & Sharon Boguzewski; title correction for dwelling and 14.3 acres on Jacobs Road.

☞ Stephen Aldenton & Margaret Duganski to Francis Ying-Wai Wu & Amy Chia-Mei Wu, trustees; 43.5 acres on Rte. 14 in North Montpelier.

☞ Washington Superior Court to Northfield Savings Bank; dwelling and 2.9 acres on Rte. 14.

☞ John & Sally Dames to Russell & Alison Schuck; dwelling and 3.35 acres on Haggett Road.

☞ Frederick W. Markham Estate to Frederick W. Markham, Jr.; dwelling and 55 acres on Guyette Road.

☞ Jerry Nelson to Robert & Charlene LaClair; ½ interest in 8.1 acres on Rte. 14.

☞ Stuart Ross & Carolyn Balentine to Carolyn & Roberta Borland; 1 acre on Towne Hill Road.

☞ Peter & Barbara Sykas to F. Niles & Adrienne Taylor; ½ interest in 1.1 acres (two parcels) to establish boundary correction on Northview Road.

☞ Peter Wells to Oaks Bros., Inc.; 43.1 acres on Rte. 14.

☞ Kenneth Charles Emerson to Trishia Mary Thompson; dwelling and 7.6 acres off Horn of Moon Road.

☞ Earth Construction, Inc. by Norma Raymond, East Montpelier Tax Collector to John Thetford, Alan Lendway & Stephen Ribolini; 83 acres with gravel pit on Coburn Rd.

☞ North Country Credit Union to John Paul Perrotte; mobile home in Sandy Pines MHP.

☞ Steven & Karlene Keysar to William Merrylees & Lucy Patti; dwelling and 10.0 acres on Gallison Hill Road.

## THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

We asked for help,  
and you came through splendidly!

Elizabeth & Donald Atkins

Joanne & Roy Bair

Jane & Royal Bartrum

Eula Brown

Irene & Dwight Clark

Edwin Clark

Marion Codling

Nancy Couch

Frances Donaghy

Ann Dwyer & Thomas McKenna

Sandra & John Flannery

Charlotte & Jeff Green

Judith Hinds

Elizabeth L. Hudson

Carolyn H. Kreis

Alice & William Menard

Edith & Martin Miller

Henry Murray

Harriet Papineau

Susan & Steven Sinclair

Leonard Wilson

Geneva & Ron Woodward

Florence Young

Jennifer Zollner & Andrew

Christiansen

## ELLIOTT MORSE: OF "ELEPHANT TUBES" & BUGS

Back in the early sixties Warner Shedd didn't have the slightest idea he was partially responsible for the creation of a thriving business when he asked his neighbor's son, Elliott Morse, if the young lad could somehow fix his ailing Volkswagen Bug. The nearest Volkswagen dealer was in St. Johnsbury, a long ways to go for minor repairs. Elliott fixed it, the first of hundreds of Volkswagens which sooner or later rolled up to the Morse Garage on County Road, where Elliott, his wife Florence, and of late years, their son Brian have operated a highly respected garage.

Elliott decided early on that he preferred mechanical work to farming. After finishing school, he went to work for Twin Town Motors in the days when it was possible to purchase a new Bug for \$1300. After three years there, he and Florence decided to launch out on their own, setting up shop in a building next to his grandfather's former Allis Chalmers dealership across from the home place on County Road.

A year later on October 6, 1966, in an early snowstorm, the young couple's tiny garage burned to the ground. They lost everything, including several cars which were being repaired. A week later, the town's neighborly spirit prevailed, and a dozen or more friends arrived to clean up the remnants of the building and transform the old Allis Chalmers building into a usable garage. They were back in business. Thirty years later they built a new structure on the site of the original garage.

In the early sixties the Volkswagen Bug was a new kind of vehicle. Small, inexpensive to run, and sporting an air-cooled engine, it was the vehicle of choice for many young folks and area commuters. But after the first year or so there was a tendency for the heater boxes to rust out, leaving the vehicle deadly cold in wintertime. The windshield would frost over; the pedals would stick. Elliott the inventor purchased lengths of 2½" heater tube which he attached to a heat source in the rear of the car, ran it up between the two front seats, and directed it at the windshield. Many a local Bug driver remembers with great fondness the device Elliott dubbed his "elephant tube."

For many years the garage was a one-man operation, but with a strong assist from Florence. She kept the books for the firm, scheduled appointments, and if necessity required (say, when brake jobs were undertaken), she would bundle up the kids and cross over to the garage to help out. After son Brian graduated from Vermont Tech in 1987 and joined the firm, Florence went to work for the Vermont National Bank. The team approach continues. Elliott

brings years of practical experience to his work, and Brian handles the electronic side of the repair business.

For several years during the mid-sixties, Elliott would work with young folks from the Sheltered Workshop in Montpelier in an attempt to evaluate just what the residents there could do. Several who worked with him went on to mechanical careers of their own as did some of the half-dozen high school youngsters who used to work at the garage after school during the seventies and early eighties.

Busy as they have been with their business and raising their three children, Andy, Beth, and Brian, the Morses have yet devoted a great deal of time to civic work. Elliott is one of the founding members of the East Montpelier Fire Department, serving for 33 years. For a number of years he was also Fire Warden, and the Morses maintained in their home one of the three Fire Phones in the town. Before there was centralized fire dispatching, there had to be at least one person constantly within hearing of a Fire Phone to field emergency calls.

Elliott has also been a member of the Cemetery Commission for 15 years and was a Justice of the Peace for five years. Florence was active in the Fire Department Auxiliary, the PTO, and was chair of the Town Meeting dinner for several years.

The garage continues to be a busy place. Work is normally scheduled two weeks ahead except for emergencies. In a world of growing anonymity and questionable work ethics, Morse's Garage continues to offer personal attention and dependable results.

*Weston Cate*

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*The purveyor of an exquisite sense of humor, Weston Cate lives on County Road, gardens, and enjoys fulfilling his commitment to civic life.*



## COMMITTEE MEETING CALENDAR

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

Meeting times are subject to change during the summer.

## EVENTS CALENDAR

July 14, Monday	Twin Valley Seniors	Old Brick Church
Aug. 1, Friday	Twin Valley Seniors	Old Brick Church
Aug. 2-3, Saturday & Sunday	Washington County Field Days	Parker Field, Rte. 2
Aug. 4, Monday	Twin Valley Seniors	Old Brick Church
Aug. 11, Monday	Twin Valley Seniors	Old Brick Church
Aug. 25, Monday	Twin Valley Seniors	Old Brick Church
Aug. 29, Friday	Twin Valley Seniors	Old Brick Church
Sept. 6, Saturday	RALLY DAY	EMES & Others
Sept. 7, Sunday	Celebration of New Ministry	Old Meeting House

## EAST MONTPELIER SIGNPOST

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July/August 1997

**INSIDE:**  
**ELEPHANT**  
**TUBES**  
**RUTH FROST**  
**ROAD SHOW**  
**THINKING OF**  
**RALLY DAY**

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