

# EAST MONTPELIER SIGNPOST

Volume X, No. 4

March/April 2000

## Maggie Rebmann — Grounded in East Montpelier by Carol Dickson

Maggie Rebmann's house stands at the intersection of County and Center Roads, watching over everyone who comes up the hill into East Montpelier. My conversation with Maggie began with a discussion of her house, an important symbol of stability and rootedness for a woman who, as a child, moved practically every year of her life. Like Maggie, the house arrived at its present location from out of town. Legend has it that the timbers were moved by horse from a cabin on Berlin Pond about 135 years ago. Interestingly enough, they were moved to land that, since the early 1700's and until quite recently, had been considered "glebe" land, (land set aside to support local schools and parishes). Maggie, a bit more recently, bought the house a year after being called to the ministry at the Unitarian church in Montpelier in 1981. She has since become an important fixture in our community.

Many people know Maggie primarily as the Unitarian minister, a position she has held for nineteen years. Maggie feels blessed to be part of such a gracious and socially committed congregation, comprised of about 200 members who come from as far away as Lyndonville, Morrisville and Ryegate. She is especially pleased by the church's recent growth, as well as by the music program and the recently completed restoration of the sanctuary.

Maggie met her husband Rick while on a sabbatical fellowship at Harvard (where she lived in the same building where Ralph Waldo Emerson once lived and where he delivered his famous and controversial Divinity School address in 1838). A former Marine and Vietnam veteran, Rick Rebmann was studying both ministry and business at Harvard when he and Maggie met at a dance. Maggie convinced him to move to Vermont, and a year later they were married.

Rick taught business for six years at Vermont College and is now the Chief Financial Officer at Norwich University. Maggie has three grown children by a previous marriage and three grandchildren.

The most recent addition to the Rebmann family, however, is the one who commands the bulk of their attention these days - Maggie and Rick's newly adopted daughter, Araceli Grace, who

will turn one in March.

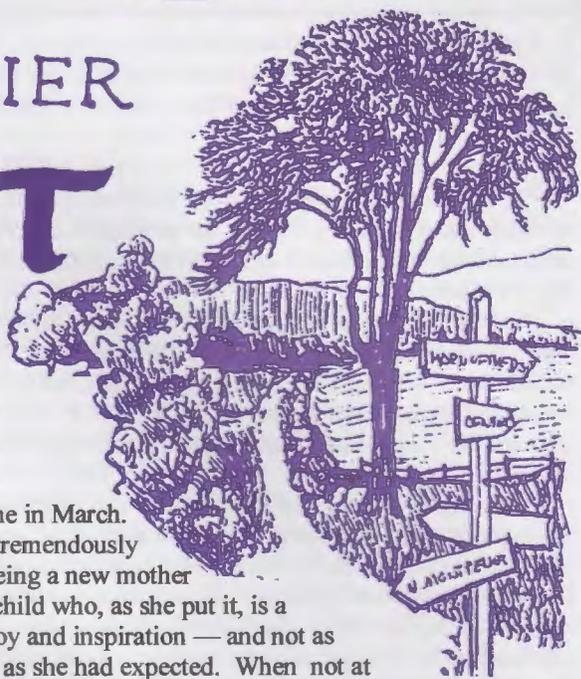
Maggie is tremendously enjoying being a new mother again to a child who, as she put it, is a continual joy and inspiration — and not as exhausting as she had expected. When not at home, Araceli attends Turtle Island, whose program for infants both mother and daughter love.

Maggie and Rick adopted Araceli through an open adoption process; they met the birth mother and keep in regular communication with her about Araceli's growth and development. Maggie is grateful for this arrangement, particularly since she was "petrified" by the prospect of an interracial adoption. She feels that keeping in contact with Araceli's birth mother will

help her daughter to learn about her African-American cultural heritage. Maggie readily acknowledges the difficulties of teaching Araceli about African-American culture within a white family and in a largely white state, but this is a priority for her. Araceli already has black dolls among her mountains of toys, and the Rebmans belong to an organization called Families of Color, through which families with children from many different racial backgrounds have an opportunity to meet and celebrate cultural events like Kwaanza. In the future, Maggie plans to encourage Araceli to investigate her African-American heritage through reading and traveling, and she hopes that together they can research her family genealogy, including a trip to Africa.

Many people, according to Maggie, wonder why she would, at the age of fifty-five, want to adopt a child. Her simple reply is that she wanted to. Her more complex answer in part grows out her awareness that there are over 100,000 children awaiting adoption in this country alone, as well as her feeling that she has much to share with a child. Maggie and Rick adopted Araceli through the Lund Family Center in Burlington and an organization called Kaleidoscope in Philadelphia. Maggie would be happy to speak with anyone

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## Top of the Signpost

Town Meeting is just around the corner. No one I have heard tells the story of Town Meeting better than Paul Gillies. He writes in the newsletter *Opinions* from the Secretary of State's Office. Slightly condensed, here it is.

"Town Meeting Day is the whole point of being a Vermonter. No other event so purely defines our independence or connects us to our history and tradition as the first Tuesday in March, the day the people rule.

"Only at town meeting does the Town come fully to, facing the stage, and engaged in discussions of articles, the Town speaks. Sure, individual voters get up and talk, but as the meeting progresses you begin to hear one voice — the voice of the majority — and understand what makes the community work.

"How could anyone stay away from Town Meeting? Is there any experience that can compete with it during the year? It's the best theatre you'll see anywhere, and it's entirely unrehearsed. It's the best opportunity you have to participate in making law, without having to run for a public office. For one day, you are a legislator, fully vested with the authority to speak and vote on the subjects that come before you.

"We have our private lives, family lives, work lives, but this is town life, and it too has its obligations. One meeting a year is just enough. There the Town sits down and reasons together, not as a representative assembly, like the Legislature or the Congress, but as people ruling themselves, deciding who will serve in public office, how much to spend on highways and how much to pay in property taxes.

"Some people you never see except at Town Meeting. 'How's the family?' you ask. 'Sorry to hear about your father.

Has the baby started walking yet?' To a Selectboard member, you ask, 'How's the Town? Sorry to hear about the grader. Has the new Zoning Administrator started yet?'

"Town Meeting is not all grace and light, of course. It has its sharp edges. Feelings are easily hurt. Tensions surface, between old and young, natives and newcomers, rural and urban sensibilities, left and right. Someone at every meeting is expected to criticize town officers. Someone else will want to cut the budget drastically. There will be pleas to be more civil. Some will leave Town Meeting shaking their heads.

"By the time Town Meeting ends, most people will have had enough of it for another year. It's always that way. It always seems to go on longer than it should. Still and all, it's the heart of the Town. It's the shareholders' meeting. It's the community, present and voting, in one room, article by article.

"At Town Meeting, you can measure a Town's heart. You can gauge this in the way it respects its orneriest citizen, its tolerance for the oddball idea, its appreciation of a good joke, and the way it responds to a good argument. A whole Town Meeting can be inspired, just as it can be antagonized. Like a swarm of bees, it's an organism, reflecting the best and worst of its inhabitants.

"Then there is a motion to adjourn, a second, and a sea of yeas, and it's over. Coats are put on, final goodbys said. How quickly the room empties after Town Meeting. Other lives are calling. It's all over but the minutes and the talk about how it went this year.

"Treasure Town Meeting. Go and participate. This is the reason you live in Vermont."

*Paul Gillies and Jean Cate*

*(Continued from page 1)*

interested in adopting a child or wondering about being an older parent.

Between her work and her family — which also includes two cats, two goats, and a dog Willy, who has come to appreciate Araceli's talent for dropping food — Maggie has little time to pursue outside interests like pottery, and her wheel has lain dormant these past few months. But Maggie doesn't mind. In fact, she says, "If I were ten years younger, I would adopt many more." Although she doesn't plan to adopt any more children she hasn't ruled out the possibility of becoming a foster parent in the future.

When Maggie first lived in town, she would frequently pass by her present house and look at it longingly; this little white farmhouse seemed to represent everything Vermont meant to her. Now, living in this house and in our community, she feels lucky to be able to share the values that first drew her here — the sense of rugged independence combined with a genuine willingness to help each other out and to come together as a community — and to be able to raise her daughter in such an environment. Unlike her beloved Norway Maple that blew down in Hurricane Floyd last fall, Maggie's roots here are firm.

*Carol Dickson lives on County Road and teaches Literature and Writing at Goddard.*

### GREEN-UP DAY

Mark SATURDAY, MAY 6, on your calendar to help clean up our town for spring. Let's hope that many townspeople will come out that day to tackle a half mile section of the town trail (formerly the old railroad bed) where it intersects with VT 14 about a half-mile from East Village toward Barre. Chairman Paul Erlbaum reports that many years of dumping in that area present a fine challenge for the day. Meet at 9 a.m. Call Paul at 223-3177.



### THANK YOU TO THESE LOYAL SUPPORTERS!

The *Signpost* welcomes contributions. Any amount would be gratefully received \$5, \$10, \$25, even \$50. Send your donation to Anne Sherman, The *Signpost*, 315 Putnam Road, East Montpelier, VT 05651-4119. All new contributors will be recognized in the next issue.

Alice Angney  
Maurice & Barbara Brown  
K. Putnam & Susan Clayton  
Donna & Philip Leno  
Mabel Wright  
Ginny Callan & Cort Richardson

Charles & Claudia Bristow  
Arthur & Joanne Chickering  
Stuart & Annette Lawson  
Samuel & Barbara Starr  
Florence Young



MILESTONES

Births

- >Calvin William Myka-Smith, born December 5, 1999, son of Jennifer L. Myka and Richard Scott Smith.
- >Willem Baldwin Carlson Hillier, born January 3, 2000, son of Sharon Ellen Carlson and James Baldwin Hillier.
- >Caleb Robert Martin, born January 3, 2000, son to Heidi Marie & Robert John Martin.

Marriages

Stephen Yialiades to Heidi Marie Greene, married November 27, 1999.

Deaths

- >Melinda W. Saia, died November 28, 1999, daughter of Thelma Welch.
- >Ivan Ira Clark, died November 29, 1999, spouse of Celia Clark.
- >Muriel Lincoln Handford, died December 15, 1999.
- >Orilla Pauline Bailey, died December 15, 1999, mother of Gary Bailey, Glenn Bailey, Ruth Farnham & Rena Pearson.
- >Kimball C. DeForge, died December 30, 1999, spouse of Sandra E. DeForge.

Land Transfers

- >Seth B. Gardner & Michelle E. Gardner to David Swenson & Elizabeth Swenson, 1.5 acres, Lot 2, VT 14 S.
- >Seth B. Gardner & Michelle E. Gardner to David Swenson & Elizabeth Swenson, 1.86 acres, Lot 3, VT 14 S.
- >Robert R. VanZandt & Karen M. VanZandt to Maurice C. & Sue C. Cerutti, .55 acres, residence & store, VT 14 N.
- >Walter F. Carter & Elizabeth Holden Carter to Frank E. & Edna R. Campbell, quit claim, 1 acre, Templeton Rd.
- >Frank E. Campbell & Edna R. Campbell to Walter F. Carter & Elizabeth Holden Carter, quit claim, 4.6 acres, Templeton Rd.
- >Albert A. Plant Jr. & Catherine A. Plant to Albert A. Plant Jr. & Catherine A. Plant, easement, VT 14 S.
- >Marian Bainbridge Lord to Walter Steven Litkovitz and Ann Marie Giroux, 20.75 acres, Sodom Pond Rd.

EAST MONTPELIER VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

by Bill George

In 1999, the East Montpelier Volunteer Fire Department responded to 222 emergency calls. Of these, 136 were in East Montpelier, 68 in Calais and 18 were calls for assistance from neighboring fire departments. The breakdown of the 222 emergency calls is as follows: 104 medical calls, 44 for motor vehicle accidents, 20 structure fires, and the remainder were calls for outside fires, vehicle fires, alarm activations, good intent calls and welfare checks.

Recently, two long time members resigned from the Department, Robert VanZandt and Larry Brown. Both men served as firefighters, emergency medical technicians and officers of the Department. They will be missed.

At the January business meeting Scott Doner, Richard Barstow and Joseph Ciccarelli became members of the EMFD. If you, or any other resident of East Montpelier or Calais, are interested in becoming a member of the EMFD, please stop by the Templeton Road Fire Station any Tuesday night or contact any member of the Fire Department.

East Montpelier Historical Society:

The following meetings are planned for the coming months. They are at the Four Corners Schoolhouse and start at 7 p.m.

- Monday, March 20 - "Old Time Seeds & Early Gardens"
- Monday, April 17 - "Wells River Railroad"



CHURCH BELLS



OLD BRICK CHURCH

Rev. Marcheta Townsend, Pastor  
Worship, Sunday School and Child Care  
11:00 a.m.

OLD MEETING HOUSE

Rev. David W. Connor and Rev. Susan Cooke Kittredge,  
Co-Pastors  
Worship, Sunday School and Child Care  
9:30 a.m.

CROSSROADS CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Rev. Bob Walton  
Worship and Sunday School - 9:30 a.m.

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1 MILE NORTH OF E. MONTPELIER VILLAGE ON RT. 14 (FOLLOW SIGNS)



# THE TOWN WEATHERVANE



## SELECTBOARD

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

### December 1, 1999

>Road Foreman Mike Garand submitted monthly report. Submitted road budget for 2000. Fifteen road projects were completed this summer.

>Agreed to 30 day free trial for DTN a weather reporting radar service. Is accurate to within 15 minutes.

>Discussed compost/sludge project. Will ask for 60 day delay in Act 250 permit approval.

>Approved Gully Jumpers request for use of same town roads previously utilized to gain access to snowmobile trails.

### December 20, 1999

>Agreed to name Town Highway #6 (spur off of Fitch Road) Doner Road.

>Set salaries for employees in executive session.

### January 19, 2000

>Reappointed Sue Chickering and Brian Lusignan to Conservation Fund Committee effective June 30, 1999, to June 30, 2002.

>Fairmont Farms begins repayment of their community development loan on 2/1/00.

## PLANNING COMMISSION

*Carol Welch, Chair*

### January 6, 2000

>Zoning Administrator reported approval of 68 more parking spaces at U-32.

>Reviewed and accepted sketch plan of 3-lot subdivision on Elisha Smith Road by Donald H. and Marjorie R. Donnelly. Discussed plan to transfer 1.03 acre lot to neighbor Kirkpatrick for use as septic leach field.

>Town sign ordinance changes have been forwarded to Selectboard for action.

>Tracy Phillips briefed Commission on minutes of Regional Planning Commission.

## BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT

*Claudia Bristow, Chair*

### December 27, 1999

>Public hearing on application of U-32 Junior-Senior High School to amend permit #30-99 for purpose of extending parking area to create additional 68 parking sites on gravel surface. Would be located

between the newly constructed parking area and Gallison Hill Road. Alternative "green space" has been designated agreeable to students.

>Approved application on condition that existing mature tree line along Gallison Hill Road be retained and maintained.

### January 10, 2000

>Approved permit for Beverly Lavin to construct a carport on her property on Coburn Road.

## EAST MONTPELIER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*Jan Aldrich, Chair, Richard Curtis, Lisa Rice, Cheryl Rus, Nancy Thomas*

### November 28, 1999

>Discussed budget for FY2000-01.

>Discussed other topics related to FY2000-01: part-time technology position. keeping library open in summer. possible creation of a 5 6 class next year, preschool. special education staffing. updating computers in primary unit.

### December 2, 1999

>Continued work on budget.

>Approved purchase of six computers, four to be used in primary unit.

>Discussed bus issues. Principals are satisfied with bus company.

### December 16, 1999

>Discussed cuts in budget.

>ELF program funding not in budget. If there is money available from sources other than the budget, the board will consider funding this program.

### January 6, 2000

>Approved \$1,799,813 for 2000-01 school year. This includes a new teacher and an increase in health insurance.

>Article 7 on the East Montpelier Town School District Warning will ask whether the School District shall adopt budget by Australian ballot.

## U-32 JR. SR. HIGH SCHOOL

*Tony Klein, Chair, and Ginny Burley, East Montpelier members*

### November 17, 1999

>Heard reports and discussed budget.

>Approved \$7000 from fund balance for Search Committee funding. Adopted proposed charge to Search Committee.

>Cross-country team received accolades for good behavior during their travel to state championships.

### December 1, 1999

>Jon Winston provided update on building project. Discussed building being open on Sundays for Middle School basketball.

>Approved Better Worlds Energy LLC's bid to provide wood chip services.

>Approved David Pickel as Varsity Boys Ice Hockey assistant coach.

### December 15, 1999

>Discussed FY2001 draft budget.

>Approved recommendation to match Booster Club funds for gymnastics uniforms in amount of \$215 from fund balance.

>Approved graduation date of June 16, 2000. *(Editorial note: the date has since been changed to Thursday, June 15.)*

### January 5, 2000

>Jon Winston gave update on building project. Architects will provide a model of the building prior to Town Meeting.

>Approved presenting budget for FY 2001 of \$8,267,598, an increase of 6.9% over last year. Informational meeting will be February 23, 2000.

>Appointed Otto Kinzel as Varsity Boys Ice Hockey Volunteer.

>Approved hiring Jon Terhune as Middle School Art Teacher.



## EAST MONTPELIER TOWN OFFICE

Phone: 223-3313

Email: EastMont@together.net

Clerk-Treasurer - Sylvia Tosi  
Asst. Clerk-Treasurer - Pauline Coburn  
Asst. Clerk - Ginger Hopkins  
Administrative Assistant - Marlene Betit  
(W & Th 9-5)

PO Box 157, E. Montpelier, VT 05651  
(Office Hours: M-Th 9-5, F 9-12 noon)



**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EMES 2000 BUDGET**

*by Carol Randall, Principal*

The East Montpelier Board of School Directors is committed to a budget which is both student-focused and fiscally responsible. The FY01 budget increase is 4.1% over last year. It supports smaller class sizes with an additional 5/6 classroom teacher, funds an alternative location for the pre-school, includes an approximate 25% increase in cost for health benefits, provides one day a week of technical support for technology and continues facilities improvements.

Sources of additional information include the Town Report, Town Forum, Town Meeting and board members. Watch for the School Report (data from the 1998-99 school year) in the *World!*



**RALLY DAY COMMITTEE SEEKS NEW LEADERSHIP**

*by Rachel Senechal*

After many years of service on the Rally Day Committee, Dave Burley is "retiring". Dave was responsible for many things including roping off the driveway in front of the school, setting-up tents, controlling traffic, opening and closing the school, setting up the gym, cleaning up and numerous other tasks. Thank you, Dave, for your outstanding contributions to Rally Day. We appreciate your hard work. We need people to complete these tasks on Rally Day. ARE YOU INTERESTED IN THIS? If not, we have another opportunity for you.

Jane Burroughs has successfully organized the Signpost Silent Auction for the last two years. Jane has two very young sons that are keeping her busy, as well as a fulltime job. She is stepping down as chief organizer of the Silent Auction, but will continue to help, in a much smaller role. Thank you, Jane, for your outstanding contributions to Rally Day. We truly appreciate your hard work, especially with a new infant last September! Two people co-ordinating this event would be easier than one. ARE YOU INTERESTED IN THIS? If not, we have another suggestion for you.

I have coordinated Rally Day for a few years now, following in Jean Cate's able footsteps. Due to personal circumstances, I am no longer able to perform this job. Like Jane, I am willing to continue working in a much smaller role, and I certainly will show newcomers what the various tasks are of coordinating Rally Day. I truly believe that it would be easier for several people to take on the various tasks of organizing Rally Day. Rally Day has grown into one big wonderful day filled with delights from morning until night. We need more people to make it better and better each year. ARE YOU INTERESTED IN THIS?

If any of these jobs appeals to you, please call me at 223-0539. If one of the kids answers, assume I didn't get the message. Or you can e-mail me at [Deerhill@together.net](mailto:Deerhill@together.net). Rally Day committee meetings start in April and go through August with a follow-up meeting a couple of weeks after Rally Day. We need to share the work load so that we all enjoy Rally Day! Thank you.

**Public Hearing: VT14 & US2 Intersection**  
There will be an informational meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 29, at the East Montpelier Elementary School, at 6 p. m. A presentation by the Agency of Transportation for modification to the northern intersection will be made in response to requests by the Selectboard and the traveling public. Input from town residents and those using these roads will be solicited and incorporated into development of a final design plan for construction.  
Hope to see you there.  
*Frank Pratt (Transportation Advisory Committee of the Regional Planning Commission)*



**FOUR CORNERS SCHOOLHOUSE**  
*Rachel Senechal, President*  
>Time of meetings is changed from 7:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
>The East Montpelier Gully Jumpers are holding monthly meetings at the schoolhouse.  
>Cub Scout Troop led by Wendi Coburn will hold its meetings at the schoolhouse on alternate Saturday mornings.  
>Scheduler is Marion Codling - 223-2058.



# EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TOWN MEETING

## CANDIDATES FOR TOWN OFFICERS

Moderator Marty ..... Miller  
 Selectman, 3 yrs..... Timothy F. Meehan  
 Town Clerk, 3 yrs..... Sylvia M. Tosi  
 Town/School Treasurer, 3 yrs..... Sylvia M. Tosi  
 Lister, 3 yrs..... James V. Goodall  
 Auditor, 3 yrs..... Holly Edwards  
 Auditor, 2 yrs..... No candidate  
 Trustee of Public Funds, 3 yrs..... Pauline E. Coburn  
 Town Law Agent..... Dennis Carver  
 Town Grand Juror..... Tim Carver  
 First Constable..... Dennis Carver  
 Second Constable..... Timothy F. Meehan  
 Cemetery Commissioner, 5 yrs..... Elliott A. Morse  
 Planning Commissioner, 3 years ..... Deborah Fillion  
 Vote for three ..... Peter Hill  
 ..... Dave Hudson  
 ..... John "Jack" Pauly  
 School Director, 3 yrs..... Richard W. Curtis Jr.  
 Vote for one ..... Anna Saxman  
 School Director, 2 yrs..... Nancy Thomas

## AUSTRALIAN BALLOT ITEMS

Art. 5. Shall The Town raise the sum of \$618,080.85 as proposed by the Selectboard, for laying out and repairing highways and for other necessary Town expenses?

Art. 6. Shall the Town appropriate \$64,500 for the Capital Reserve Fund?

Art. 7. Shall the Town authorize the Selectboard to use \$50,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund to purchase a 1 ton Truck for the Road Department?

Art. 8. Shall the Town of East Montpelier sign a Promissory Note to the Kellogg-Hubbard Library committing the Town to contribute the total amount of \$65,160 in four (4) annual installments, without interest, of \$16,290 each, with first payment to be made 1 July 2000, the proceeds of which will be applied by the Kellogg-Hubbard Library to its Millennium Capital Campaign to help finance the construction of a new addition and carry out renovations to the existing century-old building?

## TOWN MEETING POTLUCK

This will be our sixth year of sharing Town Meeting pot luck. Many of you know how it works, but here is a reminder. Each family should bring something - a hot dish, a salad, bread, OR a dessert - enough to serve four people times the number of family members. Thus a couple would bring enough to serve eight, a family of four a dish for 16, and so on. Then there will be plenty of food.

Please bring your food to the cafeteria window when you arrive. You will be given a ticket showing how many people you brought food for. If you absolutely can't bring food, call Rachel Grossman (223-3177) or Jean Cate (223-2951) by Monday, March 6, and eat with us anyway. Your ticket will cost you \$3.00 if you don't bring food, and will help pay for coffee, milk, etc.

## IMPORTANT DATES

The Town Forum will be held at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 4, 2000, at the Elementary School. This change is to see if more people can attend. All Town and School warning articles will be discussed. Candidates are invited to attend to introduce themselves to the voters.

Town Meeting Day is March 7, 2000. Voting booths will be open for Australian Ballot voting beginning at 7 a.m. and ending at 7 p.m.

**Town Meeting begins at 9:30 a.m.**

**School Meeting begins at 9:30 a.m.** Both will convene, and then the school portion will be recessed until the conclusion of the Town Meeting. This will allow a quicker transition between meetings. The School Meeting will be started immediately after a short break.

U-32 High School budget will be voted on by Australian Ballot on Town Meeting Day.

This is the first time the Town Ballot will be counted by our new voting machine. The Presidential Primary ballot will also be counted by the voting machine. The voting machine will not be used for the U-32 vote as the ballots must be co-mingled with those of other towns.

The machine will be on display at the Town Forum on March 4 at 9:00 a.m. through 12 noon.

Requests for Absentee Ballots can be mailed or phoned in to the Town Clerk to be mailed anytime after February 16, 2000. Voters will need to designate their party for the Presidential Primary ballot. Absentee Ballots can be mailed back or brought back to the Town Clerk's office by Town Meeting Day. (Town Office phone - 802-223-3313)



## Who's Who?

Did you notice Janet MacLeod's drawing of the 1983 Town Meeting in the last Signpost? Many people have commented about it, so we thought you might like to have the folks in it identified. This was Town Clerk Minnie Lane's last Town Meeting before retirement. She sits at the head of the table, with Selectboard members John Butler, John Hall and Austin Cleaves to her left. Weston Cate Jr. is Moderator.

Bet you had guessed some of them!

## HOLDING IT ALL TOGETHER

by Charlie and Janice Waterman

We headed off to find Gauthier Welding and Fabrication on a very cold January afternoon and were greeted at the shop door by Dave Gauthier and his "watch dog" Sally. The sign says watch dog, but Sally is really an adorable beagle whose tail doesn't seem to stop wagging.

Gauthier Welding and Fabrication is located on Route 14 in the old Nissen Bakery Building next to Til Con Masonry. Dave purchased the building from Nissen in 1984 and converted it into a large shop and two apartment units.

Dave Gauthier is the sole proprietor and has operated this business for 20 years. The next day he will be working on fabricating metal rails used to fasten down the load on a large flat bed truck. Also in the shop is an old metal lathe made by the Lane Manufacturing Company, vintage 1920's, which Dave is restoring for display at the Barre Granite Museum. In addition to traditional electric welding, Dave has become proficient at welding stainless steel and has been modifying stainless steel counter tops for McDonald's restaurants in northern Vermont and as far west as Massena, NY. He can also weld aluminum and is set up with portable equipment so his work can be done on site as well as in the shop. Dave works on all kinds of things: the week before he had repaired a road grader for the State of Vermont, and there is an almost new snow machine trailer outside in need of repair; he even repaired a Lionel toy train engine at one time. He commented that many things made today (like the snow machine trailer) are made on high speed production lines resulting in lower quality products, unlike the precision and quality of the old lathe he is restoring.

Dave grew up in Barre on Route 14 near the Canadian Club with his parents, four brothers and a sister. His father, Alfred, ran Gauthier's Welding and Machine Shop in Barre City. The bread and butter of that business was welding and fabricating for the granite industry. Dave learned the metal fabrication business by hanging out and working in his father's shop. To keep the large family fed and the kids out of mischief, Dad also tapped up to 5000 maple trees on family and rented land including the old Bill Andrus Farm. One year they made 1000 gallons of syrup! The family also had a 3 to 4 acre vegetable garden where they raised food for the family and sold the surplus vegetables at a road stand in Barre. Dave and the family worked hard but found time to devote to hunting each year. Dave proudly told us he got his first deer at age 11, and it was the expectation that the freezer be filled with venison to feed family and friends. It seems this notion of keeping the freezer full still prevails. This year Dave got five deer! Dave quickly brings forth a photo album to show us a picture of a six point 250 pound buck which he got in Jackman, Maine. This deer gained him admission into the prestigious "Biggest Bucks in Maine Club". He also shot a five point 148 pound deer in Berlin, a seven point 145 pound deer in New Hampshire, and during black powder season got a spike horn and a button buck on a doe permit. The freezer is full!

Dave graduated from Spaulding High School in 1972 and later from Vermont Technical College (VTC) with an associate degree in mechanical engineering. He even taught manufacturing technology for two semesters at VTC. Dave met his wife Cindy some twenty years ago when skiing. Cindy hails from West Topsham and is a first grade teacher at Berlin Elementary. They

have been married 12 years, have two daughters, Sarah and Alison, and their home is in Berlin.

While Dave is an experienced downhill skier, he now limits his skiing to taking his daughters to Sugarbush for the Sunday afternoon ski program. He is excited about his entry into a biathlon event in Jeffersonville, VT at the end of January. In this timed event, Dave will travel one mile on snowshoes while shooting at targets with a muzzle loading rifle along the way.

At one time Dave toyed with the idea of expanding his business and ultimately decided to stay a one man operation. He employs occasional part time help but likes the flexibility of self employment. For example, the month of November is pretty much set aside for hunting when he heads off in his "hunting condo" (a pickup truck with a camper on the back). He often works six or seven days a week the rest of the year, representative of the spirit and energy of a small business owner.

Dave shared photos of hunting, of past projects, of his family and of the 13 foot, 11/2 inch sunflower that the family grew this past summer! He also tested the strength of our dental work by offering us some of his own venison jerky which was quite tasty. We got the sense that this place may be a gathering spot for friends and neighbors. Though we didn't see the cracker barrel, we suspect there is one in the large shop as several cronies stopped by while we were there.

Dave is very proud of his work, his family and his passion for hunting. Asked if the future looked bright, he replied, "Sure does - there is always the need for someone to fix things". He feels he does a good job at a competitive price and welcomes all business large and small. Judging by the fact that he has all the work he wants without advertising, we guess that he's right.

We needed to wrap up our interview so Dave could get to Montpelier to thaw out frozen pipes at a local church. We took another piece of jerky for the road and grinned all the way home after being treated to an animated hour with Dave Gauthier at his welding and fabrication business.

*Charlie and Janice Waterman live in East Montpelier Center with their daughters Sarah and Suzanne.*



## COMMITTEE MEETING CALENDER

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

**Meeting times are subject to change.**

## EVENTS CALENDAR

Public Hearing — Intersection of VT-14 & US-2	February 29	6:00 p.m.	EMES
TOWN FORUM	March 4	9:30 a.m.	EMES
TOWN MEETING	March 7	9:30 a.m.	EMES
Historical Society	March 20	7:00 p.m.	Four Corners Schoolhouse
	April 17	7:00 p.m.	Four Corners Schoolhouse
Green-Up Day	May 6	9:00 a.m.	Off VT-14 on old railroad bed
U-32 Graduation	June 15	6:30 p.m.	U-32
EMES Graduation [This has not been set. Watch for it in the next <i>Signpost</i> .]			

## EAST MONTPELIER SIGNPOST

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**INSIDE:**  
**The Welder and the  
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Town Meeting**