

EAST MONTPELIER SIGNPOST

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May/June 2002

A DREAM COMES TRUE FOR JOYCE COPPING

by Rachel Senechal

One night, Joyce Copping dreamed in living color. She dreamed that she was in the most beautiful flower garden that she'd ever seen. The colors were so bright - red, yellow, orange, pink, purple, green - that she thought, "This must be what heaven looks like." Surely nothing on earth could be this beautiful. A couple of days later Joyce received a call from her son Jay, a landscaper living in Utah at the time. "Mom, I'm coming home and building a rock garden for you on the hill in front of the house." That was the genesis of Joyce's striking flower gardens at her home on VT 14 about a mile and a half north of the Village. Joyce and Jay collected rocks, purchased perennials and planted flowers with tender loving care to create that first garden.

Over the years, the garden has grown by leaps and bounds. One day Jay came to visit while his father was away on a trip. Jay found his mother digging up sod for a new garden. Joyce had seen a picture of a circular garden divided in quarters and wanted to replicate it in her yard. Realizing that it could take days for his mother to turn the sod by hand, Jay used the roto-tiller and accomplished the task in no time.

Last summer, Joyce told her husband Clayton that she wanted to fill in the swimming pool and make a pond with a fountain. The first two liners leaked, but so far the third liner works. It takes a lot of hard work to build a pond three times! Joyce gazes at her lovely fountain from an old-fashioned swing

in her side yard.

Joyce and Clayton moved into their home in 1962.

They have four children: Jay, Robin, Heather and Lori. Many people know Robin and Jay as members of the East Montpelier Fast Squad. Heather lives in Montpelier and Lori in Duxbury. Joyce and Clayton have one grandchild - a good looking boy with a smiling face.

As motorists drive by the Copping home, their eyes feast on an array of colors, shapes and textures. The garden's beauty is irresistible. A New York couple spied the garden as they drove by and promptly did a U-turn on busy VT 14 to drive up to the house and photograph Joyce's "heaven on earth." Since Joyce and Clayton are friendly people, they didn't mind the unannounced visit by this couple. Joyce is proud of her gardens and wants passersby to enjoy them.

Joyce has another passion that keeps her hands busy and reveals another facet of her creativity. She has been a quilter for about 20 years and quilts every day. "Quilting is a nice pastime. It's relaxing and peaceful. I go into my own little world." Currently, Joyce is making a baby quilt that features angels in the center blocks. Joyce loves angels as evidenced throughout her house. Recently, Joyce worked with Lincoln House residents (of Barre) on a queen size quilt. Several red work blocks were embroidered by women of Lincoln House, and Joyce put them together to make a beautiful quilt. Joyce also made a prototype prayer lap quilt for the Old Brick Church. Church members are considering making lap quilts to give to people who are sick or injured. Joyce is generous in sharing her quilting talents.

Joyce and Clayton enjoy traveling in their RV. A few years ago they took a memorable trip to Alaska. At night they snuggled under quilts Joyce made specially for the RV. They're planning several trips this year both in Vermont and out of state. It's hard to believe that Joyce has time to work part-time as a registered nurse at Gifford Hospital or as a teacher of CPR classes.



(Continued on page 2)

Top of the Signpost

"All in good season." "The season's the reason." "Seasons come, seasons go." We have so many expressions about the seasons, but my favorite is the idea that Vermont has a fifth season, Mud Season. And in some years it is truly a season apart from the other four. But on this last day of March, Mud Season hardly exists thanks to the light winter and gradual spring. Another of Nature's tricks!

How would it be if we rearranged the seasons? I think that April 1 should be celebrated as New Year's Day, not January 1. April brings new beginnings in so many ways. Do you know any month that sees more changes in the landscape? Our back field today is a solid sheet of snow, but by the end of April there will be onions, potatoes and peas sprouting in the garden. It is the start of a new year for growing things — wildflowers, bulbs and perennials. The sap rises in the trees, and the maples yield some of it in the annual spring ritual of sugaring. Animals on the farm and in the wild are having babies. The tax listers have even chosen April 1 as the time to start visiting us. It's surely New Year's Day for them. (Historians and genealogists may observe that in 1752, the Gregorian Calendar replaced the Julian in the

British colonies. The earlier calendar was patterned by the natural flow of the seasons and started the new year at the spring solstice.)

It's funny to consider how we define seasons. We call the months of June, July and August summer, and we know that it will be hot (well, hot for Vermont anyway). Australians and others living in the Southern Hemisphere find these same months to be cold. Our summer is their winter. Then there is Costa Rica, with an entirely different definition of the seasons. I was there in January and February and found the school children enjoying their "summer vacation." They name those "winter months" summer because they enjoy the best weather of the year, the dry season. When the rains come, it is winter. It's all in your definition.

Wherever we live on this planet, I expect that humans and wild creatures alike feel a great sense of expectation when the earth wakes up from its sleep to start a new cycle of birth and growth. That time is now - enjoy it!

Jean Cate

As Spring approaches, Joyce is itching to put her fingers in the dirt. She and Clayton are awaiting the return of their bluebirds, hummingbirds and a bunting that visited for the first time last year. Joyce loves all of her perennials, but some of her favorites are irises, clematis and the ever-cheerful evening primrose. She's eager to see their blossoms again.

As I left Joyce and Clayton's house, I was invited back to visit when the flowers are in bloom. I also noticed Jay's signature blue spruce in the yard. His business is called Blue Spruce Landscaping. Joyce, I'm happy that your dream came true!

Rachel Senechal lives on McKnight Road with her family, Wayne, Hannah and Tom Hamilton. She is the Director of Lincoln House in Barre.

The front bed ready to plant in 1993.



The spectacular results by 2000.

LOSE YOUR SHADES? SAAB(ING) OVER YOUR KEYS?

A pair of sunglasses in a case was left on the stage after Town Meeting. Also, keys to a Saab were found at the Town Office. They can be claimed at the Town Clerk's office. Call 223-3313.

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.

Marion Codling
Nancy Couch
Marguerite Ferris
Albert and Betty Jerome
Philip and Donna Leno
Conrad and Anne Ormsby
Florence Young

Clayton and Joyce Copping
Frances Donaghy
Bernard and Marcia Guilmette
Stephen and Lois Jerome
Thomas and Charlotte MacLeay
George and Minnie Lane and
Cynthia Sealey

Also, the overage from the town meeting lunch has been donated.



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NEW ACTIVITIES

REVOLVING LOAN FUND COMMITTEE

David A. Coburn, Chair

Our town has received two grants from the Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP); one for a loan of \$218,000 to Fairmont Farms for improvements to their dairy facilities, one for a loan of \$318,900 to the owners of Sandy Pines Mobile Home Park for improvements to the park. Repayments from the loans come back to the Town and will be used to capitalize the East Montpelier Revolving Loan Fund (EMRLF).

Under the policies of the VCDP, the Town is allowed to use up to 20% of the loan repayment for eligible program management and general administration costs. After being reduced by these costs, the income is subject to an annual assessment of 25% to be paid to the State for reuse in the VCDP. The remaining funds will total about \$712,566 over the life of the two loans.

The Town may use these funds to make loans or grants available for eligible activities, including public facilities, public services, housing rehabilitation, or economic development. They must be used to benefit low and moderate income persons in the Town.

The Selectboard created a management committee in April, 2001, to be responsible for the operation of the loan fund, appointing Bruce Bjornlund, David Coburn, Ed Deegan, David Grundy, and Paul Manghi. Coburn is the Chair and Bjornlund the Clerk. The committee will have authority to set priorities, determine loan terms and conditions and approve loans and grants. It is to establish internal policies and guidelines for the EMRLF. The committee is now working on a series of policies which, when adopted, will provide a framework within which the funds can be used to best serve the interests of the Town.

A survey was distributed at Town Meeting to see what uses town residents thought should have the highest priority. The results of the survey showed economic development and housing rehabilitation as the preferred use of the funds. In addition, several very thoughtful comments were received. Our thanks to all who contributed.

The committee meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 in the Town Office. All are welcome. For further information, call Marlene Betit, Town Administrator (223-3313).

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WEC PURSUES RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES

Avram Patt, WEC General Manager

In November, Congressman Bernie Sanders announced that he had secured a \$1 million grant to allow Washington Electric Co-op to develop a wind generation site in the Central Vermont area. This will enable WEC to meet three objectives for new energy supply established by our board of directors a year ago. As we look for power supply to replace existing contracts or to meet demand caused by growth in our membership, we want those sources to be renewable, affordable, and when possible, close to home.

WEC serves over 9,000 member homes and businesses in 41 towns in Washington, Orange and Caledonia counties. Although we own and operate the hydroelectric station at the Wrightsville dam, that supplies only a small fraction of our members' needs. Most of the electricity we supply is purchased wholesale through long and short-term contracts. Vermont Yankee, our largest source and about a third of our supply, ends in 2002. Looking into replacement sources, we realized that some renewable sources could be available to us at lower than expected cost if we were willing to make long-term commitments and play a role in actually developing them. This would also give us something else we were looking for: price stability and predictability.

Renewable sources are fast becoming a significant source of electricity. In other parts of the country and the world, wind, solar and methane gas from landfills and farms are no longer seen as experimental and pie-in-the sky. Washington Electric Co-op has in fact already secured a three-year contract for landfill methane gas generation at market prices, and is working on a longer-term project from landfill gas as well.

New England has not seen much wind generation development yet. But in the upper Midwest and Texas, it is one of the fastest growing and most economical new energy sources. The technology has improved significantly. Wind energy in Vermont is still a bit more costly than other sources, but that cost is coming down. Preliminary research shows that there are a number of locations throughout Vermont with high wind potential. The Searsburg facility in southern Vermont, owned by Green Mountain Power, is showing that the technology works, and that this type of facility can be welcomed as a part of the landscape.

Over the next several months, WEC will still be in the planning stages of our project. When Congressman Sanders announced the grant, we began receiving calls and emails from Co-op members and others suggesting potential sites. We are not quite there yet, but later in 2002, we expect to start working with wind measurement experts to screen sites, including some already being considered by private wind energy developers. Hopefully, within a year we will have selected a site and some development partners. We will begin the process of getting regulatory approval, and then building a wind energy "farm" in our area. We know that WEC members and Vermonters in general want to support renewable energy. At the same time, wind energy facilities are visible additions to our landscape. The Co-op is enthusiastic about the project and will work with property owners and communities to find a site that is acceptable, welcome and affordable to our members.



MILESTONES

Births

- >Maija Jean Pearson; October 31, 2001, daughter to Rochelle L. & Elroy Pearson.
>Olivia McKenna Thiemann; November 15, 2001, daughter to Carol Ann McKenna and Michael John Thiemann.
>Amanda Lynn Brown; December 25, 2001, daughter to Jodi-Lyn and Travis S. Brown.
>Simon Erik Moon; January 14, 2002, son to Emily Kristina Nelson.
>Thomas Kendall Shanley; January 22, 2002, son to Kimberly Ann and James Bryan Shanley.
>Zai Indigo Gluck; February 16, 2002, daughter to Elyse Andrea Coleman Huback Gluck and Rita Rene Gluck.

Marriages

- >Richard Earle Rowell to Nancy Kaye Hallock, March 3, 2002.
>Jeffrey Irving Paronto Jr. to Jennifer Leann Fassett, January 22, 2002.

Deaths

- >Lawrence C. Smith; January 21, 2002.
>Jake Brian Paton; January 22, 2002, spouse of Christine Johnson.
>Edith Maude Parker; February 10, 2002, mother of Joyce Parker.

Land Transfers

- >Patricia Renzello to Luellen McDonagh, 1.88 a. & dwelling, VT 14.
>David H. & Virginia E. Keefe to Virginia E. Keefe, 11 a. & dwelling, Taylor Rd.
>John R. & Joanne M. Reynolds, 0.59 a. & dwelling, easement to Crystal Springs Water Company, Cherry Tree Hill Rd.
>Robert S. & Jean L. Bevan to Jean L. & Robert S. Bevan, Co-Trustees, Jean L. Bevan Trust, 10 a. & dwelling, Guyette Rd.
>John E. Fothergill, Candace Beardsley & Mark T. Perry to Shane Brothers, 1.2 a. & commercial apartments, VT 14.
>Warren A., Mary L., Steven W. & Janet P. Noyes to Steven W. & Janet P. Noyes, 0.6131 a. & 2 condo units, US 2.
>Paul H. Libercent and Barbara A. Stalling to Barbara A. Stalling, mobile home, Sandy Pines Mobile Home Park.
>Alan E. Phin II to Kimberly Swasey, 10 a. & dwelling, Wheeler Rd.
>Anne C. & Ralph N. Flanders to Ralph N. Flanders, 1.3 a. & dwelling, Brazier Rd.
>Gale Shepard & Denise Gregory to Shayne M. & Debbie L. Atkinson, 7 a. & dwelling, Bliss Rd.

- >Matthew L. Joy & Matthew L. Joy, Trustee of Sandra I. Joy Trust to Laureen J. Gauthier, 2.9 a. & dwelling, Jacobs Rd.
>Milone Properties, LLC to Jeffrey O. & Linda J. Willey, mobile home, Sandy Pines Mobile Home Park.
>Robert W. McDonald to Robert W. McDonald & Karen K. Ryan, mobile home, Sandy Pines Mobile Home Park.
>Richard Wiswall, III & Sally Colman to Colin & Laura Williams McCaffrey, 30 a., VT 214.
>Richard G. & Carole Casavant to John P. Southgate, 2.67 a., VT 14.
>Ralph N. Flanders to Ralph N., James, Jonathan, Mark, Naomi, Deborah, Eunice, Lois Flanders & Elizabeth Bissell, 1.3 a. & dwelling, Brazier Rd.
>Christiana Roberts to Michael & Charlene Hopkins, water rights, Coburn Rd.
>Julie Ellen Cueto to Rosendo Jr. & Armonia Cueto, 3 a. & dwelling, Murray Rd., corrective deed.
>Rosendo Jr. & Armonia Cueto to Julie Ellen Cueto, 3 a. & dwelling, Murray Rd., corrective deed.

SELECTBOARD

Tom Brazier, Chair
Tim Meehan, Edie Miller

January 21, 2002

- >Approved request of Conservation Committee to include Article of Warning at Town Meeting.
>Since East Montpelier's census is now over 2500 the Town Plan and Zoning Regulations do not require voter approval. Agreed to leave decisions on above with Selectboard.
>Signed Fothergill, Segale & Valley Engagement Letter for 2002 auditing and accounting services.
>Discussed poor condition of Muddy Brook Road due to overweight truck traffic from Casella Waste and LePage Gravel.

January 24, 2002

- >Accepted Articles of Warning 2002 and the 2002 Budget for Town Meeting.

February 4, 2002

- >No quorum.

February 25, 2002

- >Accepted revised access permit for Porter subdivision on Cherry Tree Hill Rd.
>Approved access permit for Douglass and

- Corinne Nichols off Factory Street.
>Will begin statutory process for Town acceptance of Jourdan Road.
>Selectboard Member Meehan and Road Foreman Garand met with Todd Deuso of Casella and determined they not use Muddy Brook Road between March 1st and June 1st each year.
>At Public Hearing discussion of Telecommunications Interim By-Law Amendment and Setback Amendment. Both approved as presented.

PLANNING COMMISSION

Carol Welch, Chair

March 7, 2002

- > ZA reported on Cote site visit. An amended commercial building application will be required to avoid zoning violation.
> ZA issued permit for Porter subdivision upon Selectboard approval of new road.
> Amendments to Zoning Bylaws adopted at Selectboard's Feb. 25 public hearing.
> Results of 80 reponses to Town Plan Survey were reviewed.

April 4, 2002

- > Approved final plat for 2-lot subdivision on Rt. 214 by Richard Wiswall and Sally Colman.
> Approved Nancy Audette's application to use her home on Rt. 2 as a registered daycare.
> Heard commercial change of use proposal by Greg Blake of property owned by David Gauthier. Sent case to Zoning Board of Adjustment because second apartment can be allowed only as Conditional Use.

Public hearing for 150-ft. cell tower was warned for April 22. Other hearings will be held in the near future.

Town Plan Survey

Many thanks to those of you who took the time to respond to the Planning Commission's Town Plan Survey last month. We've received more than 100 completed forms! It's not too late to send in your survey if you haven't yet. We'll be compiling the information and using it to guide us in updating the Plan. Check the Signpost for progress reports.

Town Plan Committee



THE TOWN WEATHERVANE



BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT *Claudia Bristow, Chair*

February 11, 2002

>Hearing for Steven and Janet Noyes Conditional Use Permit. Asks for permit to build a 22 x 58 foot storage shed on Noyes property on US 2 in East Montpelier Village. Would replace 22 x 30 foot well house dismantled in fall of 2001. Granted.

February 25, 2002

>Hearing on the request of Roy and Joanne Bair for a dimensional variance to build a 20 x 40 foot three-bay garage on Center Road. Would have a 36 foot setback. Board members will make a site visit on April 8.

>Pre-application review of Montpelier Waldorf school. Would like to build on a 10.7 acre parcel on Towne Hill Road. Discussed plans and permits necessary.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

*Jan Aldrich, Chair
Lucy Ferrada, Bob Riggen
Anna Saxman, Nancy Thomas*

December 29, 2001

>Judy Warriner Walke met with the Board to plan the community dialog segment of the regular meeting January 3.

January 2, 2002

>Planning session for community dialog segment of Jan. 3 meeting.

January 3, 2002

>Discussed work of Capital Improvement Committee.

>Robbe Brook said Washington Central Supervisory Union Foreign Language Committee's recommendation is for Spanish in kindergarten through grade six.
>Judy Warriner Walke facilitated the Community Forum concerning support staff.

January 30, 2002

>Approved Agreement between the Educational Support Personnel and Washington Central Supervisory Union.

February 7, 2002

>Discussed five year strategic plan with Tim Flynn, curriculum coordinator for WCSU.

>Carol Randall reported that Community Connections currently has 92 students participating in their afterschool programs.

>Summer school will be available for students who are not meeting standards in reading and math.

U-32 JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL

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

January 2, 2002

>Jon Winston reported kitchen renovation almost complete. Part of the new hydraulic heating system failed during cold weather. Insurance claims have been filed.

>Approved warning.

>Approved proposed U-32-Montpelier School Choice Agreement.

January 16, 2002

>Welcomed new student representatives, Crystal Riportella-Crose and John Menger.

>Approved purchase of car for driver education, additional funding for Branching Out Program and funding for Technology Services-temps.

February 6, 2002

>Established tuition rates for FY03: \$9254 for grades 7 and 8, \$9413 for grades 9 - 12.

February 26, 2002

>U-32 Annual Budget Informational Meeting.

>Approved Middle School spring coaches.

>Dennis Beloin reported that due to security issues, a hardware based fire wall has been purchased and installed. New web page is up and running.

March 13, 2002

>Voted Tony Klein as Board Chairperson, Ginny Burley, Vice-Chairperson and Eric Zency, Clerk.

>Jon Winston reported plans for occupancy of administrative offices, library and nurse's office by April 1.

>Approved spring coaches.



FOUR CORNERS SCHOOLHOUSE *Rachel Senechal, President*

>Meetings were held in February and March. The request for \$4,830 at town meeting was approved.

>Resurfacing of the classroom floor and stage floor is planned after preschool closes in June. Ramp relocation will be done as weather conditions permit.

>For use of building, please call Elaine Manghi between 6 and 8 pm at 229-5811.

E. MONTPELIER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

At the March meeting of the East Montpelier Historical Society, Anne Ormsbee presented an interesting talk on the history of 4-H in our town. She has written the following to give us a taste of the clubs:

4-H clubs have long had a place in East Montpelier life. One of the earliest clubs in town, organized in 1921, was the "Hustlers Community Crop and Canning Club," a County Road group with about 15 members. Members won prizes for several years with their canning achievements, with Marion Fitch fulfilling her 100 quart goal at age 11 by putting up 121 quarts of food.

Other early clubs were the "Happy Cacklers" of the County Road, the "Four Corner Daily Cacklers," (whose motto was "an egg a day makes a hen pay"), the "Good Luck Sewing Club" of North Montpelier, "The North Montpelier Handicrafters" and, a bit later, the "Center Girls 4-H Club" and "The 100% 4-H Club."

Sound like fun? The Historical Society meets the third Monday of each month at the Four Corners School.

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ALL ABOUT TOWN

COLLECTION OF HAZARDOUS HOUSEHOLD WASTE STARTING

Start gathering up all your spent fluorescent bulbs, old oil-based paint and lawn and garden pesticides! The Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District's seasonal hazardous waste collections are scheduled for May through October, and this year we're holding two mid-week collections in addition to Saturday collections. Please note the schedule is a bit different this year. Mark your calendar!

2002 Collections

- Saturdays: May 11, June 8, September 14, October 12
- Wednesdays: June 19, August 21
- Hours: 9 - 10 am for CEG's (that's "Conditionally Exempted Generator" —small business, in English) appointment required; 10 am to 1 pm for households
- Location: CV Transfer Station on US 2 in East Montpelier
Call the district office at 229-9383 for CEG appointments, disposal costs and more information.

GREEN UP DAY IS COMING ON MAY 4TH

A single ski, a sofa, an old TV, 40 automobile tires, these were among the items collected from the roadsides of our town on Green Up Day last year. The total inventory included an additional ton of bagged trash and several hundred pounds of recyclable containers. It was an impressive sight to see it all gathered together at the Elementary School last May for hauling. Even more impressive was the sense of mission and satisfaction among the 70 plus volunteers of all ages who made it happen.

Just as it's safe to expect that our snow will be gone by Green Up Day again this year, it's also assured that there will be the need to get out and clean up the roadsides of our town. Here's how you can take part:

- Plan in advance to clean up an area or roadside near your home.
- Contact the Green Up coordinator to check on needs and to state your commitment.
- Obtain Green Up disposal bags at the Town Clerk's office or the Elementary School.
- Speak to your neighbors about joining you on Green Up.
- Come out and participate on May 4th, rain or shine. Bring your collected trash to the Elementary School.

We have 63 miles of non-state roads in East Montpelier. Last year, over one half of those roads were cleaned up by friends and neighbors on Green Up Day. This year our goals are to green up more of our roadsides and involve more volunteers.

Maybe we'll even find that other ski!

Contact Green Up Coordinator Bill Merrylees at 223-4951 or e-mail bmerry@together.net.

BOIL WATER NOTICE

The boil water notice is in effect whenever Crystal Spring Water Company uses wells as back up sources. Water is being drawn from wells because of the drought. People on the system should boil their water until advised otherwise by the Crystal Springs Water Company.

RESULTS OF AUSTRALIAN BALLOT

Moderator-1 yr	Marty Miller
Selectperson-3 yrs	Tom Brazier
Lister-3 yrs	Rosendo Cueto
Auditor-3 yrs	Tracy M. Phillips
Auditor-2 yrs	Deborah Fillion
Trustee of Public Funds-3 yrs	Virginia Hopkins
Town Law Agent-1 yr	Dennis Carver
Town Grand Juror-1 yr	Tim Carver
First Constable-1 yr	Dennis Carver
Second Constable-1 yr	Timothy Meehan
Cemetery Commissioner-5 yrs	Pauline Coburn
Planning Commissioners-3 yrs	Marilyn Blackwell
	Richmond Hopkins
	Kenneth Santor
School Director-3 yrs	Janice Aldrich
School Director-2 yrs	Nancy Thomas
U-32 School Director-3 yrs	Tony Klein
Art. 5, Town Budget: vote	YES 482 NO 84
Art. 6, Capital Reserve fund: vote	YES 403 NO 151
Art. 7, Salt Shed: vote	YES 431 NO 126
Art. 12, Wood Chip Facility: vote	YES 458 NO 107

Articles taken up on the floor were all passed as written except Art. 17 which was amended and adopted.

A resolution urging support of instant runoff voting was passed.

Total of Voters on Checklist 1973

Total ballots cast 587 (Absentee Ballots 50)

Total Voter Cards given out 217

The Riverbend Country Store

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Maurice and Sue Cerutti - Owners

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OLD MEETING HOUSE

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Worship, Sunday School and Child Care 9:30 a.m.

CROSSROADS CHRISTIAN CHURCH

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

NORTH MONTPELIER'S RIVERBEND STORE REVISITED

by Alban Richey

Tucked away in East Montpelier's northeast corner, at the junction of VT 14 and 214, the Riverbend Store has, since September 23 of 1999, taken on a new life under the ownership of Maurice and Sue Cerutti. In its present transformation, this local landmark is much more than a convenient place to pick up that loaf of bread or gallon of milk you just ran out of. If it's a cup of coffee you need to take on the road, you have a choice of six kinds including an organic fair-traded brand, all freshly brewed to go along with the muffins, fresh-baked daily. Are you looking for a greeting card that reflects the Vermont milieu or one that expresses your sentiments in good taste? Seven different brands of cards are attractively displayed. Need a made-in-Vermont gift? In the post-Revolutionary gift shop, with its wide-board floor, you'll find a pleasing mix of wind-chimes, painted glass, dipped candles, baskets, puzzles, goat's milk lotions and much more. The Riverbend still houses a U.S. Post Office (zip 05666)—112 boxes are rented—and serves as a Vermont wild game reporting station and sells hunting and fishing licenses (as well as lottery tickets). But it's the expanded groceries inventory and the variety of new items carried that are bringing back old customers and making lots of new ones.

Just as the store has undergone a transformation, so have the lives of the new owners. When the previous owners, Bob and Karen VanZandt, announced they were putting the business up for sale, Maurice and Sue Cerutti saw it as their chance to make a move. Maurice (Mo) had dreamed of someday owning a business and being self-employed. Having reached 36 years of service as a technician with the State Agency of Transportation, he was ready for a change. Sue continued working at her job as office manager and bookkeeper for a Montpelier firm, leaving that job behind in May of 2000 to join the staff of the store. Both knew they were in for long hours and a steep learning curve, but their wide experience in dealing with people gave them confidence in their ability to serve their customers. Mo has an active interest in family and local history and is a member of the Green Mountain Barbershop Chorus. Sue has served as general manager and treasurer of the Vermont Philharmonic, and currently serves as treasurer for the Barre Players and is producer of many shows. Both are Board members of the Barre Players.

Before buying the store, the Ceruttis and their two children still with them occupied Mo's grandmother Wheeler's house near the "singing bridge." Out of the nest are three others plus five grandchildren. Now they have vacated their family homestead to take up residence in the apartment over the store, the better to

keep an eye on things and to generate supplemental income from the rental of their home—a measure of financial safety, given the vagaries of business. Sue cites a case in point: anticipating a brisk tourist business last fall, she had ordered a generous supply of sweatshirts, T-shirts and hats with Vermont logos. The attacks of September 11 seriously hurt tourist business everywhere; that inventory will have to be sold at a significant discount. But there are other lines, especially groceries, that provide a solid base of revenue.

Before filling my cup of Superior coffee to take on the road (decaffeinated with a shot of "high test"), I poked my nose into as many corners and displays as possible thinking I might find an item I needed and that would translate into Riverbend revenue. Sure enough, there was a display of Swiss Army knives (I'm always losing mine). On the bottom shelf in the groceries was a gallon of wine vinegar (goes into a recipe for salad dressing). Over a display of stuffed animals and toys was a case of hand-crafted earrings (my granddaughters' birthdays are coming up). Remember the Zippo cigarette lighter? You can still get one here. Nothing on TV tonight? You'll find choices galore in the video and DVD rentals section. If, like the writer, you have a craving for Manghi's breads or you need beer or wine for a special occasion, you'll find a wide selection at the Riverbend.

But, what are the satisfactions (and the headaches) that have come with ownership of the business? Mo is quick to answer. "Daily interaction with customers brings the greatest satisfaction." The biggest challenge? "Balancing the concern for serving the customers' needs with developing a trusted staff and honest suppliers. Managing a store that's

responsive to the customers' needs means you need to trust your employees and your suppliers to have the store's best interests at heart," Mo asserts. Sue adds, "We're very fortunate to have competent employees we can trust and who are liked by the customers."

Future goals? By September of 2002 (their third anniversary) the Ceruttis expect to have doubled the sales from what they were when they took over. Their positive attitude and bountiful energy bodes well for the future success of the business. Undeniably these new owners have made a significant contribution to the quality of life and the economy of North Montpelier.

Alban Richey and his wife live in North Montpelier. He is retired and enjoys skiing, tennis and golf, sings with a local group and is an active volunteer.



COMMITTEE MEETING CALENDAR

Selectboard	1st & 3rd Monday	7:00	Town Office
Planning Commission (PC)	1st & 3rd Thursday	7:30	Town Office
Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA)	1st & 3rd 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 (EMES)	1st Thursday	6:30	Elementary School
Recreation Board	3rd Monday	7:00	Town Office
Revolving Loan Committee	2nd Wednesday	6:30	Town Office
Four Corners Schoolhouse Assoc.	2nd Wednesday	7:00	Four Corners Schoolhouse

Meeting and event times are subject to change

EAST MONTPELIER TOWN OFFICE

PO Box 157, E. Montpelier, VT 05651
Office Hours: M-Th 9:00-5:00, F 9:00-Noon
Phone: 223-3313
Email: eastmont@adelphia.net
Clerk-Treasurer - Sylvia Tosi
Asst. Clerk-Treasurer - Pauline Coburn
Asst. Clerk - Ginger Hopkins
Town Administrator - Marlene Betit
(W & Th 9:00-5:00, Tu 1:00-5:00)
Lister—Rosie Cueto
(M-F 9:00-11:30)
Zoning Administrator—Gene Troia
Tu & Th 3:30-5:00

EVENTS CALENDAR

May 4	Green Up Day	All day	All over town
May 11	Hazardous waste collection	10:00 am—1:00 pm	CV Transfer Station on US 2
May 20	Historical Society Meeting	7:00 pm	Four Corners Schoolhouse
June 8 & 19	Hazardous waste collection	10:00 am—1:00 pm	CV Transfer Station on US 2
June 12	EMES 6th grade graduation (tentative)	time to be announced	EMES
June 14	EMES and U-32 last day of school	barring a snow storm!	EMES & U-32
June 14	U-32 graduation	time to be announced	U-32 (tentatively)
June 17	Historical Society Meeting	7:00 pm	Four Corners Schoolhouse

EAST MONTPELIER SIGNPOST

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