



Windham News & Notes

My Friend Margaret *by Lydia Pope France*

Margaret Woodruff has passed away, iconic link to Windham's past now gone ... I knew her name when we bought this house, as she had once owned this land. But I didn't meet her until a steamy afternoon in 2002 when she came to invite us to the Meeting House Bicentennial. I heard something in my driveway and saw a woman beside a car, looking for something. She didn't notice me, but eventually came up the stairs, introduced herself, and we sat and had iced tea. We really clicked later when she asked if I would be interested in starting a local newsletter, which happily is still going.

Margaret and I would drive the back roads where we would scramble under fences and around trees finding views she remembered for her whole life, looking down on her sister Ida's farm, around brooks, and down overgrown dirt tracks. All the while she was pointing things out, who once lived where, this wildflower, that grape vine. My knowledge of Windham was growing!

I also learned a lot about Margaret. She had grown up a farm girl, living within a small radius for all but three years. She married young, sixteen I think, to Stockton Woodruff who had family connections here but was from New York. According to Herb Dutton, she was quite a beauty. She was



a Quaker and devout pacifist. She raised five children, instilling a love of nature in them.

She never owned pants till she was 14, when she saved up a dollar and sent away for a pair to wear doing chores. She hated snakes, but had to endure them around her legs when she hayed.

She loved to read, but had a hard time finding books. She once walked to the library in Wind-

ham only to be told she couldn't take books as she was from over the town line -- shame on that rule freak! She loved learning, but her formal education came to an end when her father died and she was needed at home. After her

husband died, she studied and became an ordained Congregational Minister. She took the Master Gardener's Course and excelled, lifelong gardener that she was.

She was a spinner and a weaver, and she once raised angora rabbits to spin their yarn. Rabbits did what rabbits do, and they were overrun pretty quickly. We had a lovely day out in Harrisville, NH a few years ago, looking at all the looms and yarns at the Design Center.

She was involved in the start of Valley Health Care, which grew into Grace Cottage Hospital. She loved peaches and green beans, and was dedicated to eating well. She also loved lobster rolls, angel food cake with whipped cream for birthday parties, and scalloped oysters at Thanksgiving. And she loved "the big rock" on their property across the road. That is where she has now rejoined her husband.



When I began quilting, Margaret dug out some log cabin quilt blocks she had made when keeping busy after her husband died, from scraps that went back years. We arranged them and I sewed them together and finished my first quilt. I tried to give it to her, but she insisted I have it.

I see many reminders of Margaret. The lupines she gave me, the evening primrose, the bittersweet that is taking over the end of the fence, the angel wing begonia, which I have also shared.

On August 14th, which would have been Margaret's 89th birthday, family and friends gathered at the Windham Congregational Church, for a celebration of her life. Pastor

(Continued on page 7)

TOWN OF WINDHAM BUSINESS

SELECTBOARD NEWS

Mary Boyer, Margaret Dwyer, and Frank Seawright

The Selectboard reviewed 2014 school tax rates, set by the state; the rates are: non-residential, 1.7283 and homestead, 1.7739. The Town of Windham set the roads and bridges rate at .4470 and the general fund rate at .2390, for a total municipal tax rate of .6860. Tax bills went out in early August, and taxes are due by October 31, 2013.

Windham has recently received another \$309,333.40 from FEMA, with the total received about \$17,000 short of town expenditure on Irene-related repairs. We can now repay the \$100,000 loan from People's Bank. The VT Department of Housing and Community Affairs is offering funds to cover shortfalls, and we have submitted a letter of interest.

As mentioned in the last issue, we approved the creation of the Windham Woodland Defense Fund to defray the costs of wind-related attorney and consulting fees. Contributions are tax deductible, and there will be a committee to oversee the management of funds collected. Anyone interested in serving on the committee should notify the Selectboard.

The Planning Commission held a hearing in July to readopt the existing Town Plan, expiring in September, allowing them more time to work with the Windham Regional Commission (WRC) to update the Plan. In addition to updates, our Planners are adding a category to the Plan, Economic Development, which is newly required by the State. Hearings on the Town Plan are posted; inquiries may be directed to the Town Clerk, Alison Trowbridge, at the Town Office at 874-4211.

The Planning Commission has recorded its meetings rather than taking written minutes due to the focused attention they have needed at their meetings. The VT League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) recommends written notes, so the Planning Commission has hired Amy Blazej to transcribe their minutes.

The Selectboard renewed the contract for services with the Windham County Sheriff for \$166.67/month.

We have received a request for several traffic signs for South Windham and have decided to update our 1994 Town Traffic Ordinance. Our Town Clerk contacted Matt Mann of WRC to get more information about road signs and updating our traffic ordinance; we are also considering reducing speed limits for South Windham and possibly the hamlet by the Congregational Church.

We received the contract for Green Mountain Appraisals (GMA) to appraise the approximately 625 resi-

dential properties in our Town. Our attorney reviewed the agreement and recommended that a cancellation clause be added. Brian DeCesare of GMA responded that, while a cancellation clause is impossible due to the complicated nature of the work, GMA would agree to mediation should a dispute arise. Our attorney approved the change and we signed the contract.

The Town Garage will switch from Dorr Oil to Cota and Cota for its diesel fuel and heating oil, provided that the latter can make timely deliveries. Cota and Cota is the fuel company currently serving the Town Office, and its prices have been consistently lower than other companies.

The Windham library is the beneficiary of a state wide grant to bring fiber optics to municipalities in rural areas of the state. The set-up costs will be covered by a grant from Sovernet and the town will pay a minimal usage fee.

Enjoy the late summer days and get that wood stacked; winter will be here before we know it.

BOARD OF LISTERS NEWS

Michael Simonds, Jerry Dyke, John Lingley

At two public informational meetings in July, attendees heard details of the upcoming town-wide reappraisal, which we expect to result in fair and accurate assessed values for all Windham properties.

Under contract with our town, Green Mountain Appraisals will begin in October the year-long process of inspecting each Windham property. New assessments will be reflected in 2015 property-tax bills.

At the meetings, Green Mountain Appraisals' owner, Brian DeCesare, said his company would use a "market-based" approach rather than the "cost-based" approach used previously. The new method compares your property with three comparable properties that have sold recently in Windham. If no comparable sales are available in Windham, properties in nearby towns will be used. Because no property is exactly like yours, adjustments will be made to reflect differences in location, acreage, square footage, and other factors. With your assessment in 2015, you will receive details about the three properties comparable to yours, including their locations.

The market-based approach is widely deemed the best way to arrive at fairly assessed values. We thank you for your support.

FROM THE WCO*by Dona Robinson, President, Windham Community Organization*

WCO is actively working on fall programs. The Windham community can look forward to a special presentation on September 25 at 7:00 p.m. by Nancy Dyke and Susan Grannis about their trip to Rwanda with CHABHA (Children Affected by HIV/AIDS). WCO's regular business meeting will be held at 6:30 that night prior to the presentation. Plans are in the making for the annual Harvest Supper/Square Dance scheduled for November 9. We look forward to seeing many of you at these special events and at our regular meetings on September 25 at 6:30 and October 30 at 7:00 p.m. All adult Windham residents are members of WCO and welcome to attend.

FROM THE TOWN OFFICE *by Alison Trowbridge, Town Clerk*

Here is a summary of selected statistics so far this year. There have been:

Births: 2

Marriages: 2

Deaths: 5

Property Transfers: 27 (includes both sales and other types of transfers).

**WINDHAM
NEWS & NOTES**

A publication of the Windham Community Organization, published six times a year. Please send donations to the address on the last page.

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Thanks to all who contribute.
Send articles of around 300 words to the address on the last page or email to:

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Next deadline: October 15, 2013



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Agency of Education

August 1, 2013

Mickey Parker Jennings, Principal
Windham Elementary School
5940 Windham Road
West Townshend, VT 05359

Dear Mickey Parker Jennings:

The Windham Elementary School is commended for its commitment to continuous improvement. That commitment has been demonstrated by the fact that the percentage of **all students** in the proficient or above category for NECAP scores in both **reading and mathematics** is 20% or more above the state average. This is a significant and important accomplishment that it is believed reflects a concerted and intentional effort to improve educational opportunities and learning outcomes for the students of Windham Elementary School.

Vermont has an excellent system of public education, dedicated professionals at work in that system, and a student population eager to participate in the construction of their personal learning experiences. The passage of Act 77 in the 2013 Legislative Session, along with earlier legislative action and the policy initiatives of the State Board of Education and the Agency of Education, have provided the framework, authority and incentive for dramatic progress in the coming years. While our leaders can set the stage, it is in our communities, schools and classrooms, engaging with our students, where the real innovation and progress will be realized.

Keep up your commitment to improvement and the good work in which you are engaged, and help Vermont take the next steps toward excellence.

Sincerely,

Armando Vilasaca
Secretary of Education

cc: Steven John, Superintendent
Windham Central SU

**WINDHAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COM-
MENDED BY THE STATE**

In early August, Windham Elementary School received commendation for its excellence from the VT Agency of Education. The agency released its school accountability determinations, and while some 50 schools were recognized, only nine were commended. Commended schools had 20% or more of all students in the proficient or above category for NECAP scores in both reading and mathematics.

BOUNDARIES IN WINDHAM EBB AND FLOW *by Mary McCoy*

Stored in the vault of our town office is the first map of Windham, drawn on parchment. Genealogists Elizabeth and Jonathan Stevens enthusiastically showed it to me one day while they were in our office researching. Due to their ancestral links to our town, this mother and son from Chester are terrific resources of knowledge about Windham's early days.

Jonathan says, "Every title of any parcel of land in Windham can be traced back to this map," a copy of which appears on this page. Created in 1805, the map was based on the original lots from before Windham's founding when our town was still a part of Londonderry.

The original Londonderry had grown in size in 1782 (a year before the Revolutionary War ended) when a strip of land along the entire eastern boundary was added. First called Anderson's Gore, it became known as Mack's Leg for the surveyor, James Mack, who drew the map.

It was 1795 when the Vermont general assembly divided Londonderry with an arbitrary line down the middle, and the eastern half became the Town of Windham. Those in the northwestern corner of this first version of Windham (around where Routes 11 and 121 now connect) didn't like the boundary, as geographically they are more connected to the new Londonderry. They successfully petitioned to have the line redrawn. In 1804, the boundary was changed to follow Glebe Mountain's ridge line and brooks, and the map was created the following year. Jonathan shares a bit of irony. The area that was returned to Londonderry had its own post office until 1914 and was officially named "North Windham".

Mack's survey used the lot and range system, creating four-sided blocks of land. Most plots were 200 acres or more, although those in Mack's Leg were around 100 acres. The plots in what we now call North Windham had "pitched" lots, as they were staked out before the survey. Most of the Glebe Mountain area was undivided and retained as a whole. As Elizabeth explains, "It was too steep to be populated by anyone except maybe sheep."

Determining the exact boundary between Londonderry and Windham is no certain matter, as was discovered several years ago when the possibility of wind towers was considered there. Elizabeth says, "Boundaries were typically marked by stakes, trees, large rocks, and stone walls. But these fall or move or get buried over time." So although the location was well documented in our records, the written words were hard to translate on the ground.

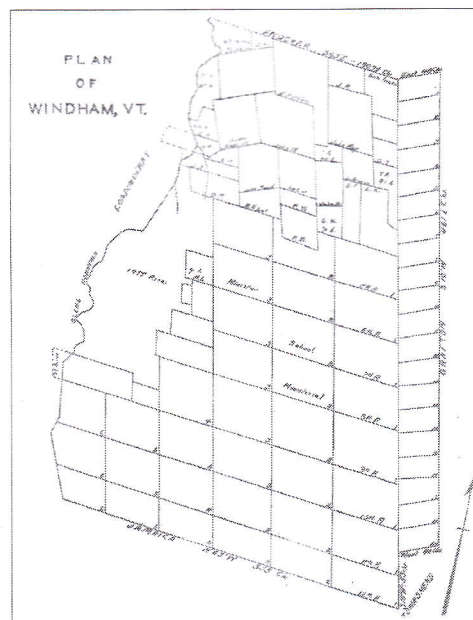
Windham's property owners today also can find it hard to determine their exact property lines based on old markers. Even remaining stone walls are unreliable, as these were also used for fields and pastures or to line roads. Some stone walls along roads that actually served as property lines were used later to fill the roads. So even today's professional surveyors can't always determine exact boundaries.

Elizabeth says, "Some don't thoroughly research the information in deeds, and even if they do, deeds aren't always accurate." Thus, the precise amount of acreage one owns can't be determined, and property is often said to be a number of acres followed by plus or minus.

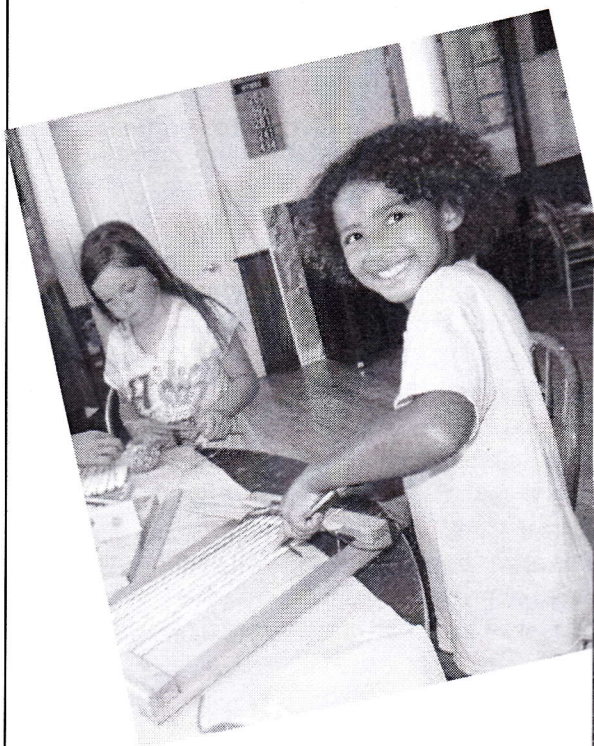
There's also the fact that boundaries change repeatedly as property changes hands. A map of Windham showing today's property lines looks nothing like the one on this page. The four-sided plots were initially replaced by smaller, irregular plots. Jonathan and Elizabeth explain that the early farmers needed tillable land for their subsistence farming, so their property lines were impacted by Windham's mountainous terrain. There were also small plots in the several hamlets located in early Windham.

All that changed when properties were swallowed up by mining companies who quarried for marble and talc and by timber companies with paper mills. Most early property lines were eliminated altogether. Still later when these businesses ran their course and Vermont became a valued retreat due to its beauty, individually owned smaller properties returned.

Today we see a mix of property sizes with two families owning a large tract each, one on the east side and one on the northwest, combined with a wide range of smaller property sizes and shapes. Who knows what lies ahead over the next 200 years? We can only be certain that tomorrow's boundary lines are as unpredictable as the future.



WINDHAM SUMMER DAY CAMP: GREAT FUN HAD BY ALL



Making Friends



Learning to Weave

JULY, 2013

SOLAR IN WINDHAM? *by News and Notes Staff*

At least one Windham family has taken advantage of a new program to help Vermonters buy solar systems for their homes. The program, sponsored by the non-profit Energize Vermont, is called Power Up. It combines group buying and low-interest loans to lower the cost and make solar-system ownership easier for more people.

Under the program, a solar system can be installed and paid for in monthly installments that may be the same as or lower than average monthly electric bills, depending on system cost, how much is financed, and the homeowner's average electric bill. Once installed, the system sends power to the grid, lowering the homeowner's electric bill.

During sunny months, credits are earned that offset electric bills in the darker months, with the net result that, for many homeowners, the system can be up and operating at no additional annual cost. At the end of the finance period the homeowner owns the solar system which continues to produce power to offset future electric bills.

The solar system is made even more affordable by a 30% Federal tax credit and a direct incentive from the State of Vermont. Power Up also provides an examination to determine a home's electricity efficiency before installation of the solar system. For more information and details on how to sign up, you can get the fact sheet at the Town Office, or visit www.powerupvt.com, or call 802-778-0660.

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Q & A ABOUT VERMONT'S NEW HEALTH INSURANCE RULES *by Windham's "Navigator," Carol Bellucci****What is the Affordable Care Act?***

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is a Federal law which took effect in 2010. Its purpose is to increase access to health care and improve quality and affordability. Under the law, states create a health insurance marketplace; in VT this marketplace is called Vermont Health Connect (VHC).

What is the purpose of Vermont Health Connect (VHC) and who is it for?

VHC is there to help us compare health insurance options and enroll in a health plan. It also helps people in need to secure financial assistance to help pay for insurance. Target audiences are individuals, families, and small businesses (defined as those with 50 or fewer full-time employees).

Who can use VHC?

- Small businesses in VT that provide coverage for their employees; and
- Qualified individuals who do not have employer coverage.

Who are qualified individuals?

People who:

- Do not have health insurance;
- Currently purchase insurance for themselves;

- Have Medicaid or Dr. Dynasaur ;
- Have Catamount/VT Health Access Program (VHAP);
- Have been offered "unaffordable" coverage by their employers.

When do I enroll?

Open enrollment for the 2014 calendar year will be from Oct. 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014.

What is a "Navigator?"

VT has 150 Navigators to assist clients. Their role is to:

- Assist us in understanding our health care options;
- Provide us with fair and impartial information about health care plans;
- Help us apply for the most suitable plan from among the range of private plans that will be offered on VHC, as well as public programs such as Medicaid and Dr. Dynasaur.

How can I find out more?

At the website VermontHealthConnect.gov you'll find information about available health insurance plans, additional questions and answers, and much more. Hotline for small businesses is 855-499-9800. If you would like more information, please call Windham's Navigator, Carol Bellucci, at 874-4413.

PREVENT EXPOSURE TO CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) *by Marcia Clinton*

CO poisoning, the leading cause of poison-related death in the U.S., is preventable. CO is an odorless, colorless, tasteless gas found in combustion fumes from generators, wood stoves, gas ranges and heating systems. CO can build up in places that don't have a good flow of fresh air; especially dangerous are heating systems that are not maintained or vented properly.

Symptoms of CO poisoning can be mild (fatigue, headache, dizziness, nausea) or severe (loss of consciousness and death). The level of exposure (how long and how much was inhaled) influences damage done and recovery. Most people who survive CO poisoning recover fully, but some may have delayed symptoms, and mental abilities can be impaired and permanent brain damage can occur. Here are important prevention tips:

Install: Properly install a CO detector near all sleeping areas in the home. If the detector alarm sounds, leave immediately and call 9-1-1.

Maintain: heating equipment, gas, oil, or coal burning appliances and chimneys by having them cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified professional. Make sure stove pipes and other types of vents are tightly joined and not cracked or rusty.

Never use a generator, charcoal grill, camp stove, or other gasoline or charcoal burning device inside the home, basement, or garage, near a window, or under a tent.

Never use a gas cooking range or oven to heat the home.

Never run a car or truck inside a garage attached to a dwelling, even if the door is left open.



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STAYING FIT IN WINDHAM: LIFT WEIGHTS, PRACTICE YOGA, AND DANCE

With three fitness classes offered here in town, more and more people in the Windham area are getting in shape. Whether you could benefit from weight lifting, the gentle centering and stretching of yoga, or the aerobic stimulation of dance movement, Windham has something to offer. The ten-year old Living Strong program added yoga about five years ago, and now there's a new program in town, Zumba. Some folks do more than one program-- you can tell by their youthful expressions and enthusiasm for life!

Living Strong meets Mondays and Thursday at the Windham Meetinghouse at 10:15 a.m. for an hour or so. Led by Windham's own Mary Boyer and Ginny Crittenden, the program incorporates ankle- and hand-weights and mild aerobic exercise. The group owns all of the equipment and everyone is welcome to use it. Anyone is welcome to join at any time. Enjoyed by folks of a wide range of ages, the program is geared for people who are 40 and over and is free of charge.

Yoga class meets on Mondays at 8:30 a.m. at the Meetinghouse. Taught by Peru resident, Bonnie Bokenkamp, the one and a half hour class offers yoga stretches and strengthening, guaranteed to improve mental and physical health! This program has a fee of \$15.00 per

session.

Zumba Gold meets at the Windham Elementary School gym on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5 p.m. Taught by Westminster resident, Pauline O'Brien, the class takes the original Zumba formula and modifies the moves and pacing to suit the active person age 55 and over, as well as those starting out on the road to fitness. All the elements of the Zumba Fitness Party are here: the zesty Latin music, the easy-to-follow moves, and the invigorating party-like atmosphere. You may join at any time. Each class is \$8.00 for Windham Residents and \$10.00 for non-residents. You can pre-buy a six-session card and get one session free. To register or for more information, contact Pauline: paulinebob@hotmail.com or 802/376-5397.



Living Strong!

(My Friend Margaret, *continued from page 1*)

Nancy Dyke reflected on the biblical theme "She Has Done What She Could" to characterize Margaret, who had overcome many obstacles, setting and meeting ambitious goals.

Neighbor Bob Phelps spoke of her letting him fish in her pond, as long as he threw back the bass. Co-pastor Fran Hakerson was lured from retirement after being completely charmed by her. Jim Scott remembered 50 years ago having a memorable meal with his wife Beverly, Margaret, and Stockton; and then this past year, just the two of them ...

Margaret was deeply involved with and proud of her family, and many generations were present, from oldest son Walter down to newest great grandchild. Walter spoke

of her knack for befriending strangers, love of driving the back roads, and the wonderful meals she made, often from simple ingredients -- the smells from her kitchen would make his mouth water. A granddaughter described her on Facebook as "full of life and one liners." A grandson made us laugh with an April Fools joke she played, involving a pretty girl and a sporty car.

We ended by holding hands and singing "Will the Circle be Unbroken" while Dave Crittenden played the guitar. All were invited to refreshments with the family downstairs.

Margaret was a wonderful combination of grandmotherly support with a sort of "best friends forever" penchant for sharing news and ideas. She will be missed, by me and many others. Thanks Margaret, for being such a dear friend...



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LIBRARY NEWS

On October 23, 2013 at 7 p.m., don't miss the film, *At the Edge of the Earth - A Journey Through the Galapagos Islands*, hosted by Chris Fischer. This multimedia program will combine still images and movies for a unique look at the beauty, wildlife, geology and biology of these remote islands. We will consider what it is about them that helped Darwin reach his extraordinary conclusions about natural selection as the driving force behind evolution. Don't miss this opportunity to share close encounters with Blue-footed Boobies, Lava Lizards, Giant Land Iguanas, Galapagos Sea Lions and many more interesting creatures. At the Town of Windham Library. Come at 5:30 for a soup supper.

In other news, we have been having difficulty keeping

track of library books and cards. If you sign out a book when we are not present, please write your name on the card and put it in the box on the library table. We want our books in circulation but it is difficult to keep track of them if we find cards on the windowsill and books back on the shelves with no card. We appreciate your cooperation.

The 2014 "Capturing the Beauty of Windham" photo contest will be judged at the WCO Harvest Supper on November 9. Please drop off photos at the library by November 2 and help us create a beautiful calendar for next year.

Vermont Fiber Connect, the public/private partnership bringing a fiber-optic network to southern, central and northeastern VT, is continuing to make progress, simultaneously licensing poles and stringing over 550 miles of fiber to improve internet access for the general public and community anchor institutions, such as our library. We do not have a definite connection date at this point but will keep you informed.

SCHOOL BOARD REPORT *by Carolyn Partridge*

The school year at Windham School always begins on a positive note with our community "Welcome Back" potluck breakfast. It is always wonderful to see the children back at school eager to learn. This year, the first day was Aug. 27.

Windham Elementary School was honored to receive a letter from Secretary of Education, Armando Vilaseca (see page 3), congratulating us on the fact that the percentage of all students in the "proficient" or "above proficient" category for New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) scores in both reading and mathematics is 20% or more above the state average. We were also congratulated for having met Average Yearly Progress targets for all student groups. This affirmation is a feather in our cap and we thank our dedicated staff for their hard work.

The School Board continues to meet the first Monday of the month at 4 p.m. unless otherwise warned due to holidays or other conflicts. The public is welcome to attend. We would also welcome community members with special skills or talent to consider volunteering at the school. If you are interested, please talk with Mickey Parker-Jennings, our head teacher, about what you have in mind.

WINDHAM READS: BOOKS THAT MATTER

Lydia Pope France: In the late 60s, *The Whole Earth Catalogue* was my bible, leading me down many fascinating paths ... card weaving, cutting bottles for vases, ordering a tjanting for batik and a subscription to the fledgling Foxfire Magazine. That led to a pilgrimage to the source, Rabun Gap, GA. Looking through a copy of it today (yes, I still have one!), it struck me that in pre-google era, it was a treasure trove of exploration and enlightenment ...

Bev Carmichael: *Breakfast With Buddha* by Roland Merello is absolutely wonderful! This book forced me to look at life in a different, more peaceful way. I needed it. I used to have to be busy every minute. Now I can ride in a car without knitting, actually just doing nothing but looking at the scenery. The road ahead is much more compelling when you look around and just enjoy.

Frank Seawright: *I Married Adventure* was the best-selling non-fiction book of 1940. Filled with amazing pictures, it is the autobiography of Osa Johnson, chronicling her adventures with her photographer husband Martin.

Both were consumed by wanderlust; in 1917 they took their first trip, to the New Hebrides and Solomon Islands. Many trips and adventures followed. I had this book before I could read, but the pictures were enough; I wanted to be Osa Johnson, who could shoot a rifle, fly an airplane, and organize safaris.

Fran Plumer: *In the Fall* by Vermont author Jeffrey Lent, is the story of a Vermonter who left his farm to fight for the Union during the Civil War. He was wounded, became lost, and was saved by an escaped slave girl. They marry, return to VT, and endure hardships as a mixed-race couple. This is a "can't put down" book, even on my second reading. Lent is sensitive to racism in New England, feelings of the heart, and life in Vermont during the 1800s. His writing is both heart breaking and heart mending.

Meredith Tips-McLaine: *The Way of All Flesh* by Samuel Butler. A very modern book that happens to have been written in a less modern age. It has many of things that I love about Forster's work, but somehow, I don't know, it's just a near-perfect book, and Merchant/Ivory never put their ideas of how it should look into my head.

SUMMER IN WINDHAM MEANS GREAT BBQ AND COMMUNITY SPIRIT

ANNUAL WCO BBQ *from the WCO*

Great food and a great time sum up WCO's annual Chicken BBQ, held at the Meeting House in July. The event was a BIG success despite the absence of the Koutrakos family and Bill's beloved chicken livers. More than 100 community members turned out and were treated to an entertaining evening featuring local music (Diane, Pete and Alan), + Walter's secret BBQ chicken recipe + fresh hand-picked strawberry shortcake (with real whipped cream), and a raffle featuring local homemade arts & crafts. Special thanks go to all WCO contributors who donated time and talent, to Imme & Steve for all their help in organizing the event, to "Chef Walter" and his hand-picked team of line cooks, and to Sparky Electric for donating the (much needed with a threat of rain) event tent. This year's BBQ was dedicated to Margaret Woodruff, in tribute to all she did for the Windham community and the WCO. One of Margaret's many contributions is her handmade tablecloths, used for all occasions at the Meeting House.

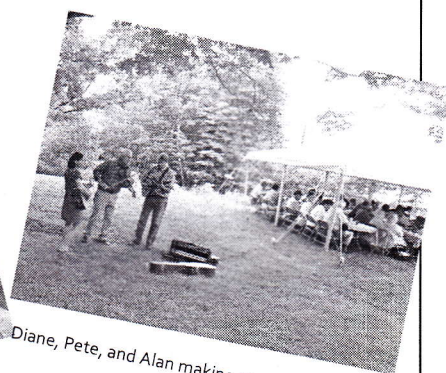


Strawberry pickers, (l. to r.) Dona Robinson, Dawn Bower, Imme Maurath, Ellen McDuffie, and Carol Frey

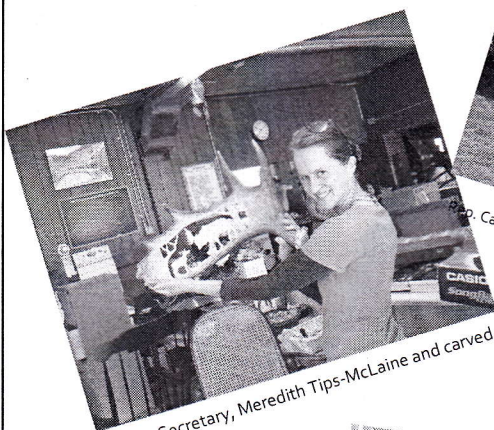
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Heath Boyer and Walt Woodruff tend the grills



Diane, Pete, and Alan making music



Fireco Secretary, Meredith Tips-McLaine and carved moose antler.



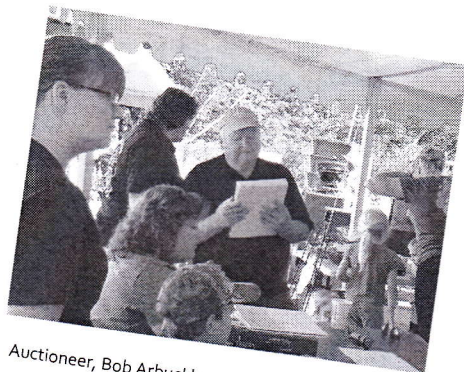
Carolyn Partridge with a wooly treasure

FIRECO AUCTION AND BBQ *by Marcia Clinton*

Ideal weather, good-size crowd, faithful volunteers, plentiful tasty food, a cajoling auctioneer, and a whopping array of items all led to another triumphant auction and BBQ for the Windham Fire Co.

The tables under the tent of the flea market groaned with treasures for those willing to dig deeply to find them. Bidders at the auction happily carried home numerous bargains.

Over 130 dinners were served at the evening BBQ as the diners enjoyed the buffet and renewed acquaintances with old friends and neighbors. Many stayed for the infamous pie auction with its usual intense bidding along with lots of laughter. A huge "thank you" to all the volunteers who come out every year to assist the Fire Co. members in the many tasks that are necessary to create a fun-filled day. The money raised will go towards upkeep of the fire trucks and equipment and training for the volunteers.



Auctioneer, Bob Arbuckle

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WINDHAM HAS TALENT *by Imme Maurath*

Phil and Ellen McDuffie moved to Windham in 2011. We interviewed Phil, who is already making a name for himself selling candles under the name Windham Hill Candles.

When did you start making candles?

About 15 years ago. Since then, I've probably poured two thousand candles, including pillars and votives.

What got you interested?

Around 1998, I realized that I hadn't burned any candles since I was in college (which was almost 30 years earlier), so I bought a couple of pillars from a local store and tried to burn them. Neither of them burned very well. One smoked and formed a deep hole in the middle, and the other quickly spilled paraffin down the sides and onto my table. Other candles I purchased did the same, so I thought I could figure out how to make a better candle than what I could buy.

As it turns out, mass-produced pillar candles are made differently and of different materials from handmade candles. The approach is designed for high volume and low cost, so finishes and burning characteristics are usually inferior to quality handmade candles.

Are you self taught or did you take some classes?

Pretty much self taught. I got a kit from the local Hobby Lobby, but the results weren't completely satisfactory so I bought a couple of basic candle-making books that gave me background and guidelines. But like most candle makers, I spent a long time experimenting with formulations and techniques to arrive at a candle I would want to buy and burn. I continue to experiment with new materials, as the industry continues to evolve.

What did you do before you got into this endeavor?

I was a mechanical design engineer in advanced development of new products. My job involved a lot of research, experimentation, and record keeping, so candle making fit right in as a weekend "hobby." Once I could make enough candles to sell, I began selling to coworkers and neighbors.

Where do you sell your beautiful candles? They are really pretty when they burn.

Thanks for the compliment. I'm glad you're burning your candle. I spent about 18 months developing a pillar with an exceptionally polished surface that also burned well. Unfortunately a lot of people that buy my candles say they're "too pretty to burn". They're missing half the equation: the beauty of a well-made candle is evident only when it burns. After all, it is a candle.

At this point, I mostly sell them by word of mouth. I don't make enough candles for wholesale to stores, though a number of places have expressed an interest. You can also find them on my web site (windhamhillcandles.com). I've sold candles at the Windham Hill Inn German Christmas Market for a couple of years and I also keep a number of candles in stock. Folks are welcome to set up a time to come by and see what I have. I also take "custom" orders (shape, size, color and scent), though my turnaround time is determined by my available time and current backlog.

Where do you make your candles?

I outfitted a workroom next to my garage. I still make candles in small batches over a stove top, but I hope to purchase a medium-sized "melter" in the near future, so that my production rate can be substantially increased.

What's your specialty candle?

I specialize in pillars because of their size and presence, and if they're burned properly they produce a relatively bright flame that doesn't make soot like many container candles do. My pillars are also self-consuming and burn nearly all of their fuel. (I recycle what's left over into fire starters.) I prefer to make pillars out of highly refined paraffin because its purity makes exceptional burning candles for the lowest cost. I also make some pillars out of palm wax which produces interesting crystalline patterns on the candle surface, but it's more expensive and produces a candle that doesn't "behave" as well as a paraffin pillar when it burns.

Due to their relative low-cost and popularity, I also make scented paraffin votives, as well as pure beeswax votives. Beeswax is ideal "natural" candle material, but its high cost is prohibitive when it comes to making pillars. As for soy wax (one of the "in" candle materials these days), it's too soft for pillars, and when I realized how much fuel, pesticides, and fertilizer are used to grow soy beans, as well as how many organic solvents are used to extract the soy wax from the beans, I decided that soy wax wasn't as "earth friendly" as the soy manufacturing associations would like you to believe, so I haven't pursued that branch of the business.

See an additional photo on our pdf.

WHAT IS JOE-PYE WEED? by Ginny Crittenden**Joe-Pye Weed**

As you wander the roads of Windham during the late summer, you realize what a great number of flowering plants there are, even along the roadsides. One such plant that loves wet places is our "Joe-Pye Weed," also known as "Gravel Root," "Kidney Root," "Queen of the Meadow," and "Purple Boneset." Joe Pye was a native American who is said to have healed colonists in Massachusetts during a typhus epidemic.

The botanical name of this native plant is *Eupatorium*, after a biblical herb doctor, Eupator. As you might guess, the plant has been used medicinally for centuries. The root has diuretic properties and has been used to treat gout, dropsy, and kidney stones. Its dome-shaped lavender flower heads stand high above other "weeds" and are to be admired from late July into September. The plants I have seen in Windham are the "Hollow Joe Pye Weed," but there may be some here that are called "Sweet Joe-Pye." This type does not have hollow stems and it smells like vanilla when bruised or crushed. So look for Joe-Pye Weed as you dodge the raindrops on your late-summer walks.

BULLETIN BOARD**WINDHAM DEMS TO CAUCUS**

On Thursday, September 19th the Democrats in the Town of Windham will hold their annual Biennial Reorganization meeting at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Office. This reorganization is held every two years to elect officers and form a Committee. Anyone who is a registered voter in the Town of Windham and who does not participate in the caucus of another political party is welcome. For more info: call Carol at 874-4413.

FIRE CO HALLOWEEN PARTY—OCTOBER 25 AT 6 P.M.

There will be the usual judging of costumes, hayride, musical chairs, and eating donuts on a string. Prizes for all! Hot dogs, juice and desserts will be served. All kids in town and parents are invited to attend.

**HOW CAN WE HELP?**

Do you need a ride to the doctor's or dentist's office or a trip to the grocery store? Are you a caregiver who could use a short break? Do you need someone to stay with your loved one while you run errands? If your answer is "yes" to any of these questions, people from Windham Congregational Church are willing to help. Please call 874-4428.

The Valley Bible Church invites you to check out our updated website at www.valleybibleVT.com for more information and a calendar of upcoming events.

WINDHAM WOODLANDS DEFENSE FUND

If you support Windham's Town Plan and oppose industrial development in Windham's woodlands, make a tax-deductible contribution to help pay for attorneys and experts in land-use issues, noise and light pollution, surface and ground water management, and wildlife protection.

Send tax-deductible contributions to the Windham Woodlands Defense Fund, 5976 Windham Hill Road, Windham VT 05359.

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Windham News & Notes

My Friend Margaret *by Lydia Pope France*

Margaret Woodruff has passed away, iconic link to Windham's past now gone ... I knew her name when we bought this house, as she had once owned this land. But I didn't meet her until a steamy afternoon in 2002 when she came to invite us to the Meeting House Bicentennial. I heard something in my driveway and saw a woman beside a car, looking for something. She didn't notice me, but eventually came up the stairs, introduced herself, and we sat and had iced tea. We really clicked later when she asked if I would be interested in starting a local newsletter, which happily is still going.

Margaret and I would drive the back roads where we would scramble under fences and around trees finding views she remembered for her whole life, looking down on her sister Ida's farm, around brooks, and down overgrown dirt tracks. All the while she was pointing things out, who once lived where, this wildflower, that grape vine. My knowledge of Windham was growing!

I also learned a lot about Margaret. She had grown up a farm girl, living within a small radius for all but three years. She married young, sixteen I think, to Stockton Woodruff who had family connections here but was from New York. According to Herb Dutton, she was quite a beauty. She was



a Quaker and devout pacifist. She raised five children, instilling a love of nature in them.

She never owned pants till she was 14, when she saved up a dollar and sent away for a pair to wear doing chores. She hated snakes, but had to endure them around her legs when she hayed.

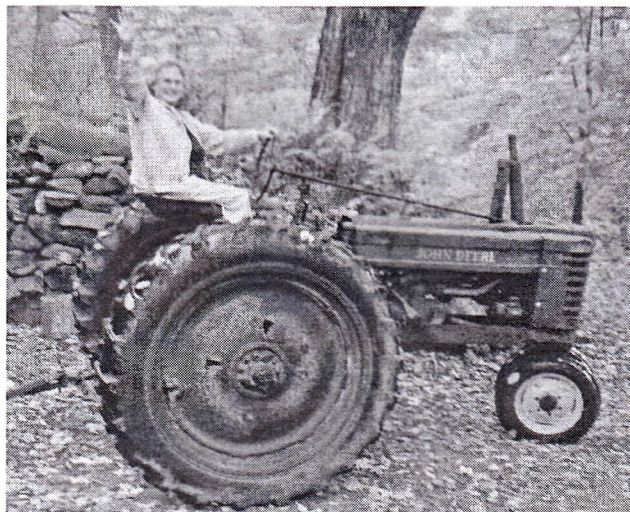
She loved to read, but had a hard time finding books. She once walked to the library in Wind-

ham only to be told she couldn't take books as she was from over the town line -- shame on that rule freak! She loved learning, but her formal education came to an end when her father died and she was needed at home. After her

husband died, she studied and became an ordained Congregational Minister. She took the Master Gardener's Course and excelled, lifelong gardener that she was.

She was a spinner and a weaver, and she once raised angora rabbits to spin their yarn. Rabbits did what rabbits do, and they were overrun pretty quickly. We had a lovely day out in Harrisville, NH a few years ago, looking at all the looms and yarns at the Design Center.

She was involved in the start of Valley Health Care, which grew into Grace Cottage Hospital. She loved peaches and green beans, and was dedicated to eating well. She also loved lobster rolls, angel food cake with whipped cream for birthday parties, and scalloped oysters at Thanksgiving. And she loved "the big rock" on their property across the road. That is where she has now rejoined her husband.



When I began quilting, Margaret dug out some log cabin quilt blocks she had made when keeping busy after her husband died, from scraps that went back years. We arranged them and I sewed them together and finished my first quilt. I tried to give it to her, but she insisted I have it.

I see many reminders of Margaret. The lupines she gave me, the evening primrose, the bittersweet that is taking over the end of the fence, the angel wing begonia, which I have also shared.

On August 14th, which would have been Margaret's 89th birthday, family and friends gathered at the Windham Congregational Church, for a celebration of her life. Pastor

(Continued on page 7)