

Volume 14, No. 4



January-February 2017



Windham News & Notes



**HAPPY
NEW YEAR**

2017

“CAPTURING the BEAUTY of WINDHAM”

Library Photo Contest Winners



First Place Winner, “Follow Me”, Louise Johnson



Second Place, “Sunset In Windham”, Bill Dunkel

2017 Calendars are on sale in the Windham Library and Town Office.



Third Place, “Life Is Good”, Dawn Bower

Reminder: TOWN MEETING, MARCH 7 at 10 AM

Selectboard News *from Frank Seawright*

Michael Simonds filled several town offices, and he has decided it's time to devote more time to his farm. Filling the positions left vacant by Michael's resignation are:

Office Vacated	New appointee
Zoning Officer	Alison Cummings
911 Coordinator	Alison Cummings
Energy Coordinator	Bill Dunkel
Building Safety Officer	vacant
Lister	vacant

If you are interested in serving as a lister, you should contact John Hoover or Alison Cummings for more information.

We appreciate the example set by Michael of serving in town government over the last 20 years, and especially encourage younger Windham residents to become similarly involved.

The Selectboard is currently preparing a budget to be voted on during Town Meeting. We do not foresee any large changes for the coming year.

During the last legislative session, Act 174, an act relating to improving the siting of renewable energy projects, was passed. The overview of the act reads "...establishes a new set of municipal and regional energy planning standards, which if met, allow those plans to carry greater weight - substantial deference - in the Section 248 siting process for energy generation." However, a reading of the act reveals that to gain the possibility of "substantial deference", a town must commit to a set of narrow options. Towns may gain nothing when meeting those standards. In the case of Windham, adopting these standards, we think, would actually weaken what is a very strong and well written energy component in our Town Plan.

The Planning Commission has made a recommendation to the Selectboard that the Town of Windham should not devote time, money and/or energy toward seeking "substantial deference" as provided under Act 174. The majority of the Selectboard is in agreement with the Planning Commission's recommendation.

TOWN MEETING set for Tuesday, March 7, 2017 *by Mary Boyer*

Town Meeting Day, the first Tuesday in March, is everyone's opportunity to participate in town governance. It's our collective way to maintain control of our local issues. Those in attendance discuss and vote on articles that include the budget, town officers, and issues raised by voters.

If you would like to become more involved in serving Windham, please consider running for office. You must be nominated for any elected position from the floor. However, there are also appointed positions to be filled by the Selectboard at the first Selectboard meeting after Town Meeting, on March 20, 2017. Please contact the Selectboard if you would like to serve in an appointed position. Positions up for appointment this year will be listed in your Town Report, with the incumbent's term expiring in 2017. Duties and responsibilities of all town officers are easily accessible on the Vermont League of Cities and Towns website; www.vlct.org. Click on "Vermont Local Government".

Positions to be elected March 7 are listed below, along with the term of office and the incumbent:

Moderator, 1 year, Mike McLaine
 Selectman, 3 years, Kord Scott
 Lister, 3 years, Alison Cummings
 Auditor, 3 years, Imme Maurath
 Delinquent Tax Collector, 1 year, Ernie Friedli
 Grand Juror, 1 year, Jim Scott
 Town Agent, 1 year, position vacant
 Windham Center Cemetery Commission,
 5 years, Heath Boyer
 West Windham Cemetery Commission,
 5 years, Peter Newton
 North Windham Cemetery Commission,
 5 years, Carol Merritt
 Library Trustee, 5 years, Beverly Carmichael
 Windham School Director,
 3 years, Carolyn Partridge
 Leland and Gray Union Representative,
 3 years, Howie Ires

Submit Statement of Candidacy

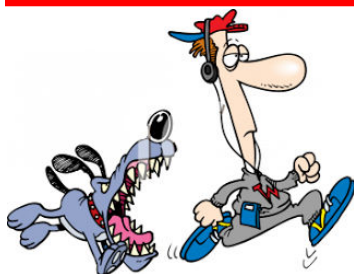
If you are interested in running for any elected position at Town Meeting, please submit a statement of your candidacy to *Windham News & Notes* that describes to the voters a little about yourself, what position(s) you are running for, your qualifications for the position, and why you think you are a good candidate. Please submit statements to windhamnews@hotmail.com by February 15 for publication in our next issue (prior to the election).

TOWN MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 7 at 10 AM
at the MEETING HOUSE
Also Vote on ACT 46 Proposal
Bring a Potluck Dish to Share
and \$1 for Drinks and Paper Goods

FILE FOR YOUR HOMESTEAD TAX EXEMPTION



Resident property owners wishing to file for the **HOMESTEAD TAX EXEMPTION (FORM HS-122) MUST FILE ON OR BEFORE APRIL 15 (income tax day)**. This is usually filed each year with your Vermont State Income Tax return. However, if you are filing for an extension on your taxes, you must still file for the Homestead Tax Exemption every year by the deadline of April 15. Failure to do so incurs rather substantial penalties and/or loss of homestead status on your property taxes.



Vicious Dog Ordinance

The Windham Selectboard has adopted a Vicious Dog Ordinance. The purpose of the ordinance is to regulate the keeping of dogs (and wolf-hybrids), and to provide regulation related to their leashing, muzzling, restraint, impoundment, destruction and running wild, so as to protect the public health and safety of

the town, and the quiet enjoyment of town residents' homes and properties. The ordinance defines a potentially "vicious dog", and the steps the town will take in the event of an incident involving potential (or actual) danger posed by a dog.

The ordinance includes the following sections: the Selectboard's authority to adopt ordinances, the purpose of the ordinance, definitions of relevant terms, a statement of collar and leash requirements, enforcement penalties and costs, impoundment, notice of impoundment and release from impoundment, investigation of vicious dogs, the relation of this ordinance to other laws and ordinances, severability, and the effective date.

The ordinance will take effect on March 3, 2017, unless a petition signed by at least 5% of the voters of Windham is filed with the Town Clerk by February 16, 2017, asking for a vote to disapprove the ordinance. If a petition is received, the Windham Selectboard will warn a special town meeting, and the voters may vote on the question (24 V.S.A. section 1973).

How Did Windham Vote?

by News and Notes Staff

Many of you would probably like to know how your community voted in the November election.

Windham had 317 registered voters on November 8, 2016. Of those, a whopping 290 (91.5%) cast ballots.

Three ballots were deemed defective.

President,	Hillary Clinton	156
	Donald Trump	78
	Bernie Sanders	16
	Gary Johnson	10
	Jill Stein	8
US Senator	Patrick Leahy	149
	Scott Milne	90
US Representative,	Peter Welch	232
	Erica Clauson	33
VT Governor	Phil Scott	195
	Sue Minter	75
Lt. Governor	Randy Brock	134
	David Zuckerman	122
State Senator	Becca Balint	116
	Jeanette White	114

State Representative	Carolyn Partridge	219
	Matthew Trieber	163
Justice of the Peace	Marcia Clinton	170
	Carolyn Partridge	169
	John Hoover	161
	Carol Bellucci	160
	Michael Simonds	117

For complete results see the posting in the Town Office.

The vote results on the Stiles Brook Wind Project were:

Opposed	181 (62.4%)
For	101 (34.8%)
Blank	5 (1.7%)
Defective	3 (1.0%)

Windham Second Home Owners also had a mail-in referendum on the Stiles Brook Wind Project. Out of 312 ballots sent out by mail, 190 (61% response rate) were returned. However, only 171 ballots were counted as "legitimate" ballots: 159 votes were "Against" the project and only 12 were "For" the project.



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.

N&N Team

Dawn Bower Mary Boyer

Bev Carmichael Mia Clark

Leila Erhardt

Kathy Jungermann Imme Maurath

Ellen McDuffie Nancy Tips

Many thanks to all who contribute. Send articles of around 300 words to the address on the last page or email to: windhamnews@hotmail.com.

Next deadline: February 15, 2016

Windham Fire Company News

by Marcia Clinton

Fire Calls:

- Oct. 27 - Route 11, car rollover, no injuries, assisted Londonderry Fire Co. with traffic control. 3 responded.
- Oct. 28 - Route 121, automatic smoke alarm, no smoke detected. 3 responded.
- Nov. 13 - Windham Hill Road, chimney fire. 8 responded
- Dec. 16 - Windham Elementary School, problem with furnace, no leakage or CO2 detected. 4 responded.
- Dec. 18 - Route 11 near Chester line, wires down.

On Friday eve, October 28th, pint-sized, costumed creatures arrived at the Windham Firehouse for our annual Halloween party. There was a Pirate, Rainbow Girl, Skeleton, Cowgirl, Harry Potter, Cotton Candy Kid, the Mario Brothers, Princesses and assorted sizes of Fire Chiefs - to name a few. The Halloween party began with the costume parade. The 20+ kids marched around while the judges selected winners for the Scariest, Ugliest, Most Original, Cutest, Funniest, Creepiest, Prettiest and Most 'Halloweeny' prizes. Due to wet snow cover, the hayride, a regular favorite, had to be cancelled. So everyone, kids and parents, feasted on chili and hot dogs, plus assorted goodies. The kids were entertained with games while the adults visited with each other. Lots of prizes were awarded, and each child went home with a bag of candy.

With winter upon us, more homes are being heated with wood stoves and fireplaces. The Fire Company has already responded to the first chimney fire of the season. Has your chimney had its annual cleaning by a certified chimney sweep? We do not want to have to make an emergency call to your home.

Earlier in December, letters went out appealing for donations for the Windham Volunteer Fire Co. In the past year, we have welcomed a few new members. It costs \$2000 to outfit each fire fighter, and three are also attending the six month Fire Fighter I course. We ask that you remember us when you make your annual donations.

Harvest Supper a Big Success!

by Imme Maurath

This year's Harvest Supper was attended by a record breaking 76 adults and about a dozen children. Thank you, Jo-Jo and Jim Chlebojannis, for donating the ham and butternut squash. And thank you to all the members of WCO, and our wonderful musicians, who made this such an enjoyable evening!.

After dinner, there was a concert performed by students from the Windham Elementary School, accompanied by their teacher Sally Newton. They had been practicing their ukuleles with diligence. After a few tunes, the square dancing began. There was barely room for the five squares; three were the most we ever had before, so like I said, the event was well attended. Thank you Windham!

Remembering Jean Coburn

by Carolyn Partridge

On Saturday, November 19, 2016, the family and friends of Jean Coburn gathered at the Windham Congregational Church to remember our loved one and friend. Nancy Dyke led the service identifying the theme of "Simple Things", and how much Jean enjoyed the simple pleasures of life.

Born in 1930 in the midst of the Great Depression, Jean enjoyed her family, storytelling, crossword puzzles, and her cats.

She participated in Windham town activities through the library, tax collection, the Windham Community Organization, and the Windham Congregational Church, just to name a few.

Many reminiscences were shared about Jean at the service. My favorite was offered by a granddaughter whose fretful baby, at the time, was causing her to lose sleep. Jean said she had the solution, and brought out the whiskey bottle. After rubbing a little on the baby's gums, he slept for five hours straight, giving his mother some uninterrupted, much needed sleep. The old fashioned remedy worked!

My favorite memory of Jean was her wonderful blueberry pie that she frequently brought to our Harvest Suppers, still warm!

We miss you, Jean, and we will keep your family in our thoughts and prayers.



Ukele Concert at Harvest Supper

Students (left to right): Rihanna Dryden, Gracie Packard, Nyah Ryan, Mary McDonald and Lillie Beshay; with teacher, Sally Newton on right.

Leland & Gray Budget Vote, Wednesday, February 8 at Town Office



Leland & Gray News

from Howie Ires

Every community member should be proud to know that in 2016 Leland & Gray (L&G) was one of eight schools in the USA to receive "Gold Recognition" from the National Education Policy Center at the University of Colorado, Boulder. The text of the award reads in part: "Over the past six years, Leland and Gray increased academic expectations by adding Advanced Placement courses and support classes beginning in seventh grade, thereby detracking the student body into one college preparatory curriculum." The entire text can be found at: <http://opportunitygap.org/leland-and-gray-union-middle-and-high-school.html>.

The last Leland & Gray board meeting, dedicated to approving a budget to present to voters, was moved from the school library to the Dutton Gym to accommodate the approximately 100 people who showed up to voice their disapproval of proposed program cuts in next year's budget.

Based on community input, \$93,500 was restored, of the \$349,000 we needed to cut to keep us beneath the anticipated state-per-pupil spending limits. We restored

funding for the snowboard team, music department, and technology education. The budget, as approved by the board, still cut \$200,000 from the original proposed budget, including the elimination of one of our five science teachers. But with reduced enrollment at L&G, and across the state, the hard reality is that we need to reduce teaching staff to reflect our reduced student population.

This is not the crises some would make it into. It's not the first time in the history of Vermont that we have seen statewide school enrollment drop. Even with fewer teachers, thanks to the internet, students can take courses we never dreamed of offering a few years ago.

The Community Budget Presentation meeting will be held at L&G on January 26 at 7:00 PM. All are urged to attend. The L&G Annual Meeting will be held February 7 at 7:00 PM. And the budget vote will be by Australian ballot on February 8. Voting for Windham residents will be at the Windham Town Office. Check postings for hours.

Regular L&G school board meetings are at 7:00 PM on the second Tuesday of the month at the L&G Library. Please come to any and all meetings to ask questions, and let the board know how you feel about our school. Our school board represents you!

Raw Milk Available in Windham

by John and Sally Hoover

For quite a few years we have been purchasing raw milk from a small dairy in Landgrove. However, recently the farmer has moved his stock to Manchester, so we've had to look for another source of milk. We had heard that raw milk was available from Meadows Bee Farm on Windham Hill Road, and set out to see what they were all about.

Leigh Merinoff owns Meadows Bee Farm, and Beth McDonald is the stock manager. Beth was able to provide us with the gallon of raw milk we consume each week. She also told us that they have a number of customers from Townshend and Jamaica, but very few hometown folks from Windham. Meadows Bee Farm produces plenty of milk, and they are looking for new customers.

Beth told us that their Jersey cows, Mercy, Celeste and Mable, as well as Celeste's calf Luna, are pasture fed, allowed to graze in new fields each day, and are fed hay in the off-season. They receive a small amount of grain, as well. As we came to find out, the way the animals are treated here, is an example of sustainable methods, that have far less of an environmental impact than large confinement feeding operations, which supply most of the pasteurized milk in supermarkets.

As we started to look more closely at raw milk, we came to understand that there are numerous health benefits to its consumption. Pasteurization destroys a substantial portion of the Vitamin C in milk. It can also destroy bacteria that are important to the digestive process. Some studies have shown that upwards to 80% of people diagnosed with lactose intolerance no longer suffer from symptoms after switching to raw milk.

There is also a substantial body of evidence that consumption of raw milk during childhood may protect against asthma, allergies and other immune-mediated diseases. In 1973, when our oldest child stopped nursing, we discovered he had an 'allergy' to cow's milk, and his doctor had us give him soy milk. We found a small farm that sold raw milk, so we tried that, and he had no problems. We don't know if that was because of the milk, or his maturing digestive system, but he has been fine ever since. We often hear that raw milk contains fats that can lead to issues with cholesterol or weight gain, but in the years we have been using raw milk, we have seen no increase in our cholesterol or weight.

In addition to the healthful benefits of consuming raw milk, the impact of purchasing locally sourced foods is immense. Meadows Bee milk is local, produced by people who live in Windham, and those who purchase it are reconnected directly to their food supply. Because Mercy, Celeste and Mable are on a small, local dairy farm, they are treated better than cows that live in overcrowded and inhumane "factory farm" conditions.

Last, but not least of the benefits of raw milk, is the flavor. Emily Weinstein in her New York Times blog stated this about raw milk, "The milk – oh man, the milk! – was creamy and full of flavors, not white like supermarket milk, but yellow tinged. It was milk with a taste that wasn't defined by its texture – it was distinct, satisfying, delicious. All food should be like this..."

Meadows Bee Farm also produces raw honey (made from locally gathered nectar), maple syrup, and natural tinctures that promote a holistic approach to health. If you are interested in raw milk, or any of their other products, please contact Beth McDonald.



WCSU Leland & Gray Towns Act 46 Study Committee

from wscu-lgtowns.blogspot.com and News & Notes Staff

On November 21, 2016, the Windham Central Supervisory Union (WCSU) Leland and Gray Towns Act 46 Study Committee for Brookline, Jamaica, Newfane, Townshend and Windham voted to approve the final draft of its *Report and Articles of Agreement*. Eight of the 15 committee members were present; the vote was seven in favor, and one opposed. Carolyn Partridge, our Windham representative to the committee, was not able to attend. She sent a statement that was read at the meeting. In part, she wrote, "At this point, appreciating all of the work that has been done, I don't think, in good conscience, I can vote for the *Articles of Agreement* as written." Her vote could not be counted in *abstentia*; however, Carolyn's letter elaborated on her perspective of how these articles could affect Windham.

The document that the Committee approved is a 34-page paper consisting of: a *Report from the Committee*, seventeen *Articles of Agreement* that are the proposed plan for the consolidation of school governance for these five towns, recommendations prepared by the Committee's consultant, John Everitt, and charts and tables in an appendix. The approved document outlines a plan for the consolidation of

VOTE MARCH 7 on ACT 46 ARTICLES of UNIFICATION

school governance that aligns with the goals of Vermont Act 46. Go to the web site below to read the articles or search "WCSU Leland & Gray Towns Act 46".

These articles will be voted upon by registered voters in all the member towns at Town Meeting on March 7. **It is very important that you educate yourself on these articles**, the advantages and disadvantages, before coming to a decision as to how you are going to vote on this important issue. Public information sessions will be scheduled in each town for residents to ask questions about the articles prior to the ballot vote on March 7.

To comment or ask a question, one can also: (1) send an email to: wscu.media@windhamcentral.org (no word limit); (2) contact Ante Ruppert or Carolyn Partridge; (3) attend Windham's public information meeting (watch for notices for meeting schedule). Minutes and videos of meetings can be found at: wscu-lgtowns.blogspot.com. Anyone who wishes to receive a copy by email should send their name and email address to wscu.media@windhamcentral.org. A printed copy is on file at the elementary schools in Brookline, Jamaica, Newfane, Townshend and Windham. A copy is also available in the Windham Town Office.



WHY ACT 46? (and Why I'm in Support) by Nancy Dyke

What are the reasons for Act 46? How could it impact our students and our schools? How will things change if we vote in favor of the Act 46

Articles? What will happen if we vote against the articles? Jerry and I attended all but one of the Act 46 Leland and Gray Towns Study Committee meetings, as well as the State Board of Education meeting, where the articles proposing a new unified district were approved. We, along with others, have been sorting out the answers to the above questions.

The major issues fueling Act 46 are equity, opportunities for students, quality of education, efficiency, transparency/accountability and cost containment. There is clear evidence that our present way of doing education in Vermont is not sustainable.

How about impact? The most important change provided by these articles will be the formation of one school board with representatives from the various towns, according to overall town population. Decisions for all the schools in the new unified district will be made by that board who will govern with a concern and care for all students. Town school boards will cease to exist. This is the system by which most schools in the country are governed.

Where will the unified board meetings take place? This has not been determined because the new unified board will make that decision. One possibility is that they could be held in the member towns on a rotating basis.

It is important to note that schools will NOT be closed. Under the Act 46 Articles, schools can only be closed with a unanimous vote of the unified board AND a vote by the registered voters of the town.

What if the Act 46 Articles are voted down? If nothing else is agreed upon by 2019, the State Board of Education has the authority to decide what our structure and governance will be.

A major improvement for students under the new governance could be curriculum alignment. Presently students enter seventh grade having covered different topics

at different levels during elementary school, especially in math. Teachers at Leland & Gray have pointed this out repeatedly. Because accountability to the current supervisory union is weak, getting everyone (all the districts) on one page (not lock-step education, but agreement as to what students should know and be able to do), can be challenging. The committee agreed that accountability to one school board could improve this dramatically. Curriculum alignment in all subject areas directly impacts both students and teachers, and the overall quality of education.

A high point of the early meetings was listening to each principal describe the great in-school and after-school activities happening in their school. Each school now offers at least one activity not offered by the others, but it was clear that the larger schools have developed a greater diversity of activities. The committee discussed ways that schools could participate in the activities of the others, made easier by a single governance system. Socialization could also be improved in this way. Despite the fact that there is now communication between schools, little cross-participation presently takes place.

Another opportunity for students in a unified school district is the possibility of in-district elementary school choice. For example, if a student living in West Townshend, attending Townshend Elementary School, had parents passing the Windham school on their way to work, it might be more convenient for parents to enroll them in the Windham School. It would be the duty of the new unified board to develop guidelines for these choices.

Greater efficiency would hopefully be possible. An obvious example is having one financial audit rather than the expense of individual audits for each school. Discussion also took place in the committee regarding greater sharing of personnel and resources.

Will taxes increase or decrease for Windham under the new governance system? The committee discussed this issue for each town, but determined that conclusions are tenuous, at best, at this point.

The Study Committee will conduct an informational meeting in Windham in February. Please bring your questions and comments. It is our hope that this will be an open, objective meeting that encourages a diversity of perspectives.



ACT 46 Articles to be Voted Upon (and why We're Opposed) *by Carolyn Partridge and the Windham School Board*

The Act 46 Leland and Gray Towns Study Committee finished its work on the *Articles of Agreement* for our district, which were sent to the State Board of Education for approval. The state board has approved the proposed articles, and now registered voters will vote on them at Town Meeting on March 7, 2017.

In preparation for that vote, the Windham School Board feels it is important that the voters of Windham understand the details of these articles, and also why we decided to oppose the *Articles of Agreement*. We would encourage everyone to look at the articles carefully. All of the information, including links to the minutes and video recordings of the meetings, are available at <http://wcsu-lgtowns.blogspot.com/p/announcements.html>. We also encourage Windham voters to read Act 46, which can be found at <http://legislature.vermont.gov/assets/Documents/2016/Docs/ACTS/ACT046/ACT046%20As%20Enacted.pdf>.

To be clear, my role as Windham's representative was to look out for Windham's best interests and the interests of our students, present and future. So while I sometimes seemed like the skunk at the garden party, it was important to ask the hard questions and think about every eventuality possible. What is proposed would be a *huge* change for the Town of Windham, and *irreversible* – it is important to get it right and not have unintended consequences. Antje Ruppert also attended most meetings but was not permitted to vote, because Windham was only allowed one representative and one vote, due to the small size of our town population.

It is important to understand the goals of Act 46. As quoted from the Act, they include "(1) provide substantial equity in the quality and variety of educational opportunities statewide; (2) lead students to achieve or exceed the State's Education Quality Standards, adopted as rules by the State Board of Education at the direction of the General Assembly; (3) maximize operational efficiencies through increased flexibility to manage, share, and transfer resources, with a goal of increasing the district-level ratio of students to full-time equivalent staff; (4) promote transparency and accountability; and (5) are delivered at a cost that parents, voters, and taxpayers value."

Again, I quote from Act 46: "Vermont recognizes the important role that a small school plays in the social and educational fabric of its community. It is not the State's intent to close its small schools, but rather to ensure that those schools have the opportunity to enjoy the expanded educational opportunities and economies of scale that are available to schools within larger, more flexible governance models." While this sounds good, power is given by Act 46 to close any school without input from the community. It is hard to understand how governance consolidation will really expand educational opportunities for students. In the "Findings" section of the legislation, national literature is relied upon to determine the optimal size of a school district. Only four Vermont school districts meet that national standard, and given Vermont's rural nature, one wonders if that standard is reasonably achievable in all areas of our state, while protecting the educational opportunity, health, and safety of our children.

While Antje and I appreciated the discussion, in the end, as the representative for the Town of Windham, I could not support the final proposal. The articles passed on a vote of 7-1, but I was not able to attend the meeting and cast my vote against the proposal.

I feel it is very important for the people of Windham to

understand what such an arrangement would look like in real terms, if this passes. First of all, our local Windham school board would be eliminated, and a larger board would be formed with at least nine members and possibly two additional at-large members. Windham would have only one representative on that board. This larger board would construct a budget that would cover all of the elementary schools (Jamaica, Newbrook, Townshend, and Windham) and the Leland and Gray Union High School. To be clear, one budget for all of the schools combined. It would no longer be possible to know what was being spent on the Windham Elementary School or any of the other schools, individually. The vote would be by Australian ballot, not necessarily on Town Meeting Day, but similar to the way the Leland and Gray budget is voted on now. School Board meetings, rather than being held at the Windham School, would presumably be held at the high school.

The Study Committee had extensive discussion about financial numbers, assuming projections for decreased enrollment in out-years. The bottom line though, based on today's spending, was actually not favorable for Windham – it would cost us more – due, in part, to the fact that Windham's Small Schools Grant would be combined in the larger budget and shared among all the schools.

Discussion about increased educational opportunity, which is a major goal of Act 46, was very limited and came down to the inclusion of elementary school choice, which, in fact, could cut both ways for Windham. We were thankful that language was included in the articles for our district, guaranteeing that the only entity that could vote to close our school, would be the voters of the Town of Windham. My understanding is that a special article will need to be included on our Town Meeting warning that ensures this condition. On transportation, they would not guarantee our children the same level of transportation that we have now, but acknowledged that transportation was needed.

We feel that the Windham Central Supervisory Union already meets the goal of maximizing operational efficiencies by sharing teachers, staff, and resources, as much as feasibly possible. Increased educational opportunity, such as a language teacher, could be accomplished under the current system, we would just have to pay for sharing a teacher. In fact, much of what is included in the document sent to the State Board of Education can already be done under our current system.

After having spent several months attending Act 46 Study Committee Meetings, I, along with Antje Ruppert, and in consultation with Beth McDonald, could find no clear benefit of the proposal to the Town of Windham or its students. Our student population is low, but the children continue to do extremely well, with opportunities not offered by other nearby schools. And we do it at a reasonable price.

Additional concerns include decreased transparency, when most people are asking for more, despite goal No. 4 in Act 46. We fear that because of this decreased transparency by school, there would be an opportunity to shortchange Windham, which might produce poorer results and, therefore, provide justification to close the school. School Board meetings would no longer be held at the Windham school and parental involvement, so important to a child's success, would possibly decrease. To reiterate, the proposed money situation is not advantageous, and as a school deemed "geographically necessary", Windham will continue to receive its Small Schools Grant even if Windham votes not to join.

There will be a presentation by the Act 46 Study Committee in Windham in the near future, and I encourage people to attend, learn about the proposal, and ask questions. If you have any questions for me or Antje, please feel free to email or call us; Carolyn, cpartridge@leg.state.vt.us or 874-4182; Antje, antje@sover.net or 874-4759.

Farewell to a Good Neighbor *by Phil Talbot*

Mr. Reginald Flee of North Windham passed away quietly at the Springfield Health and Rehabilitation facility, Saturday, the 26th of November, 2016. He was 99 years young, not quite making the 110 years he was shooting for, but gave it a heck of a go!

He pretty much lived at home the way he wanted since 1960, when he came to Windham with hunting friends from Amityville, New York. There he owned and operated Reggie Flee Service Station. In Windham, he found the place that he would call home, at 449 White Road, ever since then.

Many of the locals knew Reggie loved to fly, and did so with him right here at the landing strip at Tater Hill. Some say he flew better than he drove, I was one of them. He was generous with flying time, if you were willing. More than a few times, he would just pull up and ask if I wanted to go up! Dropping everything, I would go with him. One of my favorite flights was following the Connecticut River all the way north to the first, second and third Connecticut lakes, from which the river originates. He also really loved to fly ultralights. He would supply many neighbors and landowners with aerial photos of their properties.

Reggie was always on the go, usually in high gear. Many days, leaving early and coming home late, usually starting out the day at local diners for breakfast, and a daily dose of local gossip. He would then go all over creation dumpster-diving for treasures people would throw out, usually finding another use for them, or a second home for them with some of his neighbors, or maybe even selling them in The Message. He also got great exercise locating golf balls in and around the woods at Tater Hill Golf Course, coming home a bit bruised and scratched from the briers, finding balls that even the owners of the miscued ball would not venture to retrieve. He always returned with many, many golf balls. Usually the day ended at another local diner, for supper and some take-home for a snack later on.

Reggie was tough! Right up until a year ago, he would insist on cutting his own lawn and snow blowing his own driveway. One night, coming home to help him clear his driveway of snow, I found him out there with a foot of snow on the ground, and snow still falling, hanging onto his snow blower, outside in his favorite slippers! He never took them off!

As many of you know, Reggie was very independent, only relying on friends and neighbors and visiting nurses as a last resort. To the amazement of many of the nurses, Reggie was never on any medication, only in the hospital where they would they administer meds to "calm him down". One of the natural remedies he did believe in was raw honey, and he would use it as a topical ointment for most of his wounds.

Reggie was truly an inspiration for all of us, to always find a way to keep on fighting till you get what you are after, and never give up, ever! Reggie very generously gifted his estate to the Windham Volunteer Fire Company.

You will be missed, Reggie! Your neighbor for 29 years, and forever your friend, Phil

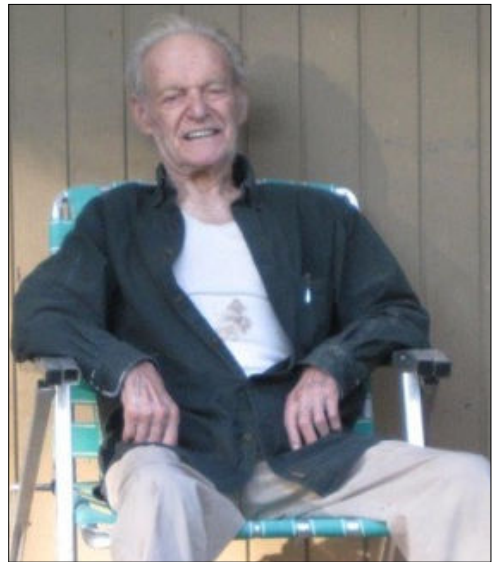


Photo on left: This is how the roads were made passable before snow plows; with large horse-drawn heavy rollers. It took awhile!

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Email crklaw89@gmail.com



Bringing In the Christmas Season

by Ginny Crittenden

On the day after Thanksgiving at 4:00 PM, about 40 people gathered at the Windham Meeting House to sing Christmas carols and songs of the season, and to light up the big tree. It was wonderful to see families there, singing together all the favorite songs and watching the energetic directing by Christine Dyke, with her mother Nancy on the piano. It made for a wonderful sound all around!

A favorite every year seems to

be "The Twelve Days of Christmas", with everyone showing superb acting skills. At about 5:00 PM, the singing stopped, people drank hot chocolate, ate cookies, and went outside to hear the countdown, and watch the tree light up. We sang one last song, "We Wish You a Merry Christmas", and we all went home full of the spirit of the season!



A Musical Night in Windham

by Ginny Crittenden

The annual Christmas program at the Windham Congregational Church on Sunday, December 18th, had some special music to add to the traditional carols, and readings of the Christmas Story. Six members of the Windham Elementary School chorus, directed by Kate Ullman, sang three songs, including one from South Africa. And Dan DeWalt, along with two friends, played blues renditions of several carols throughout the service. Members of the congregation read the Christmas Story, and lit the advent candles. Jerry Dyke provided wooden figures of the Nativity, and Nancy Dyke played piano for the carols. It was a wonderful, musical night, culminated by the singing of "Silent Night" by candlelight. The offering collection was sent to the Londonderry and Townshend Food Shelves.



Congratulations to Bob Bingham!

by News and Notes Staff

WOW! Eleven points! What a beautiful buck, Bob's first in many, many years! During this past hunting season, Bob was in the woods to the west of Weston when he came across this big-boy, handsome buck.

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Windham School News by Gail Wyman

Sally's class has been studying trees and forests. Each child has adopted a tree for the year. They visit their tree to observe changes throughout the seasons. In their Nature Notebooks, they write about and draw pictures of their tree. The students have also learned about the different parts of a tree and how each part helps the tree to thrive. They have created some great posters that are displayed in the multi-purpose room. Check them out, if you have a chance to stop by.

Before Christmas holiday, Beth McDonald brought fresh milk from Meadows Bee Farm, and the whole school made yogurt. First, the milk was heated to 170 degrees to pasteurize it. Then it was cooled to 110 degrees, some plain yogurt was added for the culture, and it was poured into jars. The yogurt jars were kept warm in a cooler by placing other jars filled with hot water next to them. The next morning they had fresh yogurt!!!! And there was enough left to have yogurt sundaes for dessert on Wednesday, just before the holiday vacation.

Music is a large part of a Windham education. In the month of December, the children first sang here at our school Holiday Concert. Then on December 14th, the chorus sang at Leland and Gray, dressed in their white shirts and black skirts/pants. Friday, December 16th, they sang at Valley Cares, and many also played their ukuleles. On Sunday, December 18th, they sang at the Windham Congregational Church Christmas Program. In addition to this, students play

and sing as a group, as often as possible, at Friday Pizza Night at the West Townshend Country Store.

For the third time, we have children participating in the Organization of American Kodály Educators (OAKE). Inspired by the vision of Hungarian composer Zoltán Kodály, the mission of the OAKE is to support music education of the highest quality, promote universal music literacy and lifelong music making, and preserve musical heritage through education, artistic performance, advocacy and research. For more information, go to www.oake.org. Lillie Beshay and Mary McDonald were accepted into the OAKE National Youth Honor Choir, following rigorous auditions, and will perform with the choir in Philadelphia in March.

Art class has had a mathematical theme! Betty Young, math coach-in-residence, led an exploration of how to transform two dimensional figures into helpful three dimensional figures. Students worked with equilateral triangles and pentagons to create useful tetrahedrons and dodecahedrons. Through art, they mastered the language of geometry and design. This was an opportunity to engage in mathematics through art, color, and shape, and to enjoy comradery.

A curious request from our school: if you have just the blade of a shovel hanging around, the children love them for digging in the snow banks at school. We only have two, and every recess that is not enough. They could be put to good use during the winter months. Right now they are building an igloo!

SUPPORT GROUPS AT GRACE COTTAGE

Men's Coffee Hour: Wednesdays, 8:30-10:00 AM. January 4 – February 22. Free. An 8-week series of casual lectures on topics such as the History of Agriculture in Vermont, the West River Railroad, and Windham County Forestry. Come to one or all. For more info: 365-3762.

Cancer Support Group: Mondays, 1:00-2:30 PM. January 2 – February 20. Free. A safe environment for sharing experiences and learning from others who are dealing with cancer diagnosis, treatment or recovery. Prior to first session, call 365-3715, ext. 6.

Weight Loss Support Group: 2nd Tuesday of every month. 10:30 AM-Noon. Free. A bit of education about a chosen topic of the day, followed by discussion, friendly advice and encouragement. Prior to first session, call 365-3715, ext. 5.

Living Alone Support Group: 3rd Wednesday of every month. 10:15-11:45 AM. Free. Informal, facilitated group focused on the challenges of living alone. Prior to first session, call 365-3753.

All groups meet in the Grace Cottage Community Wellness Center at 133 Grafton Road, Townshend.

More information is available at www.gracecottage.org.



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Textile Collection at Transfer Station

from Esther Fishman

The Londonderry Transfer Station is in a trial period with Goodwill Industries to recycle our textiles. It is difficult to find an entity who will collect this material, which can and should be kept out of our landfills. It is very important that Good Will's guidelines be followed. For questions, contact Esther Fishman at 824-3306, or londonrecycle@vermontel.net.

WE ACCEPT ONLY:

CLEAN & DRY, NO SMELL, NO MOLD

All donations must be in plastic bags.

TEXTILES – Coats, Jackets, Sweaters, T-shirts, Pants, Dresses, Shorts, etc. Any Condition, Washed, Dry, Clean

SHOES – Any Condition, Any Size, Clean

SHIRTS & TOWELS – Any Condition, Washed, Dry, Clean (will be cut and used for rag business)

ACCESSORIES – Jewelry, Belts, Scarves, Pocketbooks, Sunglasses, Paired Mittens/Gloves, Handbags, Hats

HOME GOODS – Curtains, Drapes, Linens, Towels, Sheets, Wash, Dry, Clean

BUSINESS ATTIRE – Suits, Ties, Shoes, Dresses, Skirts, Pants, Washed, Dry, Clean

**STRONG LIVING, Monday & Thursday,
10 AM at the Meeting House**

**ALL DOGS MUST BE REGISTERED
IN THE TOWN OFFICE BY APRIL 1**

Emergency Information Survey Postponed until May-June Issue

Community Hope & Action Supper

On Saturday, January 21st from 6-9 PM, Community Hope & Action of Townshend will host a **FREE** community supper and concert, featuring Ten Gallon Swing. The dinner, cooked by the Harmonyville Store, will begin at 6:00 PM at the Townshend Town Hall. Music and dancing will follow, upstairs, from 7-9 PM. Please contact Community Hope & Action at communityhopeandaction@gmail.com, or 802-365-4700 with any questions. If you can, please bring a side dish or dessert to share. This event is substance free and open to people of all ages, from all towns. Thanks to the Ben & Jerry's Foundation for providing the funding for both food and music this month!

Town Contacts

Town Clerk: Jo-Jo Chlebogiannis, phone: 874-4211; email: windham.town@gmail.com

Town Treasurer: Peter Chamberlain, phone: 874-4211; email: windham.towntreasurer@gmail.com

Town Road Crew: Josh Dryden and Jon Gordon, phone: 874-7025 at the Town Garage

Town Lister: Alison Cummings, 874-7223; cobbbrookfarm@gmail.com; John Hoover, 875-6224, johnjhoover@vermontel.net

Select Board: Frank Seawright, chair, phone: 875-1555; email: fseawright@vermontel.net

School Board: Antje Ruppert, phone: 874-4759; email: antje@sover.net

Windham Community Organization: Ellen McDuffie, phone: 874-8183; email: eflockwood@aol.com

Windham Volunteer Fire and Rescue: Rick Weitzel, phone: 874-4104; Ralph Wyman, phone: 875-3373

Health Officer: Marcia Clinton; phone: 875-3531; email: mclinton@vermontel.net



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REGULAR MEETINGS



Town Clerk:

Monday: Noon - 4:00 PM
Tuesday: Noon - 4:00 PM
Wednesday: Noon - 4:00 PM
Closed - Jan 2 & 16, Feb 20
Thursdays, Fridays, and
Holidays Call 874-4211.

Select Board:

1st & 3rd Mondays,
Jan 9 & 16, Feb 6 & 20 at
6:30 PM at the Town
Office; Open meetings.
Agenda posted.

School Board:

1st Mondays,
Jan 2 & Feb 6 at 4 PM at
the Elementary School.
Call Antje Rupert at
874-4759 to confirm.

Planning and Zoning:

Second Wednesday of the
month at 6 PM at the Town
Office; Jan 11 & Feb 8
Call Bob Bingham at
874-4049 to confirm.

Library:

Every Wednesday, 3-5 PM
at the Meeting House.
Book Group: 1st Wednesday
Jan 4, Feb 1 & Mar 1 at
3 PM at the Meeting House.

Volunteer Fire Company:

First Wednesday of the
month (through March) at
6 PM at the Firehouse;
Jan 4, Feb 1, & Mar 1.
Heavy refreshments
served.

Windham Community Organization:

No January Meeting.
February 22 at 7 PM at the
Meeting House. Call Ellen
McDuffie at 874-8183 for
information.

Windham Congregational Church (UCC):

Sundays: Worship Services
at 9:30 AM at the Meeting
House. Call Dave Crittenden
at 874-4049 for more info.

Valley Bible Church:

Sundays: Sunday School,
9:55 AM; Morning Worship,
11 AM; Potluck, 12:10 PM;
Sun. Afternoon Service,
1:10 PM; Tuesdays: Bible
Study/ Prayer, 7 PM.

Listers:

Every Wednesday
9 AM- Noon at the Town
Office.

SAVE THESE DATES!

January 26 - Leland & Gray Budget Presentation, 7 PM
February 7 - Leland & Gray Annual Meeting, 7 PM
February 8 - Leland & Gray Budget Vote, Windham Town Office
February 15 - Deadline to submit Candidacy Statement to News & Notes
March 7 - Town Meeting Day, 10 AM at the Meeting House
March 7 - Ballot Vote on ACT 46 Articles at Town Meeting



Leland & Gray's "Above the Influence" Club Working Hard to Spread their Message

from Katelynn Venne, WRVT

Every year, new middle school students opt to join Leland & Gray's Above the Influence (ATI) club. The mission of the group, led by West River Valley Thrives, is to rise above the influence of negative social pressures such as drugs, peer pressure and/or violence. Throughout the school year, this team of inspiring students attends workshops and organizes events for their fellow students. This year, new 7th graders attended a weekend-long training in Brattleboro at the High 5 Adventure Learning Center, along with teens from around Windham County.

High 5 staff led students through a series of team building challenges over the course of the weekend, many of which required them to push their own limits and have faith in one another. Students spent the

majority of the weekend in the tree tops – climbing, swinging and working together to accomplish each challenge. The goal of this training is for students to discover the leadership qualities within themselves, and become empowered to go back to their own school and community, and make a difference.

Meanwhile, 8th grade ATI students were in Montpelier, reviewing the most recent Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) results. This survey, completed by Vermont students every two years, provides information on all aspects of student wellness, with an emphasis on drugs and alcohol. This student-led training, called "Getting to Y", is held annually in the capitol, and helps students bring meaning to their own school's YRBS results. This month, the Leland & Gray ATI group will use what they learned about the survey results to host a dialogue with students and teachers at their school, during which time strengths and concerns will be identified.



Leland & Gray's Above the Influence club members





Fire Company Halloween Party October 28, 2017



Left to right: Dave Crittenden, Ginny Crittenden, and observers Sarah and John Peck from Jamaica

Counting Second-Homeowners Referendum Vote Tally on the Stiles Brook Wind Project November 9, 2016 at the Meeting House





Meadows Bee Farm's Dairy Cows

On left: Celeste, mom to Luna

Below: Mercy, oldest cow, with sheep



Ukulele Concert at the Harvest Supper



*Students (left to right): Rihanna Dryden, Gracie Packard, Nyah Ryan, Mary McDonald and Lillie Beshay;
with teacher, Sally Newton, on right*

Harvest Supper Square Dance
November 12, 2016



**Our Harvest Supper
Musicians
Square Dance Called by
Sally Newton**



From left to right: Dominique Vuvan (from Saratoga Springs), Amos Newton, Diane Newton, Colin Blazej, Pete Newton, Sally Newton (in top picture only), and Alan Partridge (back of head).

**Christmas Caroling
At the Meeting House
November 25, 2016
Led by Christine and Nancy Dyke**

Led by Christine and Nancy Dyke



Windham Community Organization Cookie Plates & Yankee Swap
December 14, 2016

