

# WINDHAM NEWS & NOTES

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2

WINDHAM, VERMONT

SEPT - OCT 2004

## Hearing on proposed town plan to be September 2

by Edith Serke

The Windham Planning Commission has updated the town plan which lapsed on January 12, 2003, and has forwarded the plan to the select board for its approval. The select board will hold a public hearing on the plan on Thursday, September 2, at 6:30 p.m. at the Town Office, as required by law, prior to taking action on it.

Although the plan does not have any major changes from the previous one, it does take into account the changing environment, e.g. increased turn-over of existing homes and open land, increased real estate prices, increased number of building permits resulting in less open areas, and awareness of wind energy proposals and the effect on the aesthetics of ridge lines.

The plan provides a historical perspective, the current perspective, and policies and purpose for the future.



It is the policy of the Town of Windham to identify, protect, and preserve natural and historic features of the community, namely our outstanding water resources and wetlands, significant scenic lands, vistas and view sheds, and important historic structures, sites and archeological sites.

The plan and its goals are implemented through the town's

zoning regulations, which are, by reference, a part of the town plan. The zoning regulations, which were adopted in 2001, are not currently being revised. They are the tools which the town uses to ensure an orderly development of the land and to protect property values.

As is true of any plan, it must be a living document, responsive to the changing environment and the desires of the community. It is important that it reflect the values of its residents. It is expected that further changes will be proposed in the near future, based on input from Windham's residents.

Residents are encouraged to attend the public hearing on September 2 and to voice their opinions about the plan, copies of which are available at the Town Office.

## Be Involved!

Please voice your opinions to our town leaders. If you are happy with Windham as it is or would like to see changes, they need to know.

Don't forget the upcoming elections. If you are not already on the voter checklist, you can register at the Town Office during regular hours until noon on the Tuesday, September 7. All registered voters will be able to vote in the primary elections to be held Tuesday, September 14, at the Town Office from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

The primaries will select the Democrat, Progressive and Republican candidates who will run in the November elections. You do not have to tell which party you favor, as each ballot will include the candidates for all three parties. In the privacy of the polling booth, you will select the party of our choice.

The primary will determine the candidates for U.S. senator and representative and Vermont governor, lieutenant governor, state treasurer, secretary of state, auditor of accounts, attorney general, state senators, state representatives, and high bailiff.

### Town of Windham Hours

(All meetings at Town Office except School Bd.)

**Town Clerk**  
at Town Office  
Tuesday, Thursday,  
Friday  
10:00 a.m.  
to 3:00 p.m.  
and by appointment  
802-874-4211

**Select Board**  
First and third  
Monday of month,  
6:30 p.m.  
Call to verify time

**Planning  
Commission**  
Second Tuesdays  
7:15 p.m.

**Conservation  
Commission**  
Schedule varies  
Call for meeting time

**School Board**  
First Monday of  
month, 4:00 p.m.  
at Elementary School



## Largest crowd attends Windham Community Organization's BBQ

by Lydia Pope France

After a few days of rain and a very iffy forecast, the skies were blue on Saturday July 24 for WCO's annual Chicken BBQ fundraiser. We had a record turnout, and once again sold out early, despite the fact that we cooked more chicken than ever before. Both the BBQ and the raffle were big successes – with the raffle, we raised more than double last year's amount.

The WCO is dedicated to helping neighbors in need. We donate regularly to the area food pantry and the Windham Summer Day Camp, and sponsor a variety of community events. We are very grateful to all who helped make the night a success – our tireless volunteers, local businesses



Chicken BBQers hope to hear their names called as raffle winners.

Photo by Lydia Pope France

and community members who donated items for the raffle, the local musicians who played for everyone's entertainment, and of course, all the supper attendees and raffle ticket buyers and sellers!

Below is a list of the lucky winners. We had a number of local winners,

and one as far away as Sweden. Thanks again to everyone who helped make this night such a success, and thank you for supporting the WCO. If you would like to join our group, please call Donna Koutrakos, club president, at 874-4131 or ask any club member about our next meeting.

### ! WCO Raffle Winners !

#### Arts and Crafts

"Perry's Barn" Original Watercolor

by Donna Koutrakos ..... Michael Simonds

Hand Knit Shawl by Bev Carmichael ..... Butch Jelly

Hand Knit Scarf by Margaret Woodruff .... Ann Garrett

Candle Sculpture from Edith Serke . Bonnie Chamberlain

Mary Meyer Teddybear ..... Kris Koutrakos

#### Dinners and Lunches

Grandma Frisby's ..... Noah Garrett

Landgrove Inn ..... John Pollack

Candeleros ..... Bonnie West

Mika's Japanese & Chinese Cuisine ... John Lingley, Jr.

The Old Newfane Inn ..... Ralph Beck

Outback at Winhall ..... Kris Koutrakos

#### More Dinners & Lunches

Jake's ..... Harry Opal

Mulberry Street Pasta & Pizza ..... The Bower Family

The American Grill ..... The Chamberlain Family

Windham Hill Inn ..... Carl Fagerberg

Perfect Wife Restaurant ..... Kathy Campbell

Swiss Inn ..... Chris Fisher

#### Overnight Stays

Asta's ..... Diane Fisher

Red Fox Inn ..... Chris Haupt

#### Sporting Activities

Tater Hill Golf Club ..... Helen Kawaki

Tater Hill Golf Club ..... Miriam Bellack

Chester Rod & Gun Club Skeet and Trap . Ernie Friedli

*Many thanks to those who provided these generous gifts. Readers, please patronize our business donors.*

"That frequent recurrence to fundamental principles and a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, industry and frugality are absolutely necessary to preserve the blessings of liberty and keep government free."

The Constitution of the State of Vermont

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# School starts September 1

by Roberta Stradling, principal

Windham Elementary School students will begin classes on Wednesday, September 1. The traditional potluck breakfast will begin at 8:00 a.m. in the All Purpose Room at the school. Parents and community members are invited to attend. Bring something to share.

As you may already know, Ms. Madeline Rice, Windham Elementary's principal for the last four years, retired this year. Ms. Roberta Stradling from Bellows Falls started on July 1 as the school's new teaching principal.

Also new to our staff is Mr. Mickey Parker-Jennings, who will replace Ms. Coleen Brophy who is on maternity leave this year. Ms. Jennifer Schreiter who was slated to assist "Mr. P.J. in the 4-6 classroom has recently resigned. We are currently advertising to fill her position.

Ms. Cynthia Kehoe will serve as teaching assistant in Ms. Sally Newton's K-3 classroom this year, as well as conduct the Pre-school Program. The Pre-school Program will be held Monday and Wednesday afternoons from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., same as last year.

Please call 874-4159 to register your child or if you have any questions.

## Windham welcomes new property owners

We extend greetings to the these new Windham property owners:

Nathan D. Chavis

– White Road

Richard & Debora Steckert

– Woodburn Road

Noel & Alexander Peslak

– Woodburn Road

Sarah & William Roberts

– Route 121

Cheryl Healy

– Windham Springs Road

Scott & Lenore Henderson

– Windham Springs Road



Patrick & Elizabeth Veillette

– Hitchcock Road

Michael Calabrese

– Abbott Road

Ronald & Kang-Hee Turner

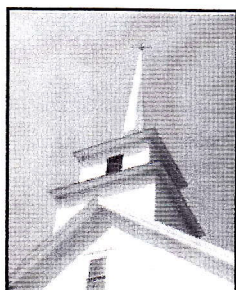
– Windham Hill Road

John G. Clark

– Windham Hill Road

Mark & Kathleen Emmons

– Windham Hill Road



## Windham Congregational Church

Sunday Service 9:00 a.m.

Everyone welcomed

Pastors: Reverend Fran Hakenson

and Reverend Margaret Woodruff

Communion – first Sunday of each month

## WINDHAM NEWS & NOTES

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### The WN&N Team

Jean Coburn

Dawn Bower

Bev Carmichael

Bill Koutrakos

Mary McCoy

Edith Serke

Margaret Woodruff

### Acknowledgments

Thanks to all who provided articles and photos – their names are noted with their work

Thanks also to our advertisers. Additional ads are welcomed.

Thanks to past editors, Lydia Pope France and Maggie Newton for their assistance with this issue.

### Submissions

Windham News & Notes welcomes submissions. Send articles and signed "letters to the editors" of 100 to 300 words to the address below. We prefer emailed submissions.

### Next deadline

October 8, 2004

**Windham News & Notes**

**P.O. Box 1068**

**Windham, VT 05359**

**802-874-4302**

**wnandn@vermontel.net**



## Community supports Fire Company at annual auction

by Marcia Clinton

The 17th annual Windham Fire Company Auction and BBQ held August 14 was a blazing success! The money raised goes to the electricity and fuel bills of the firehouse, maintenance of the fire trucks (a new truck battery cost \$400), and training sessions for the firemen.



Going once, twice, three times. Sold for \$1,300!

photos by Bill Koutrakos

Last year they also were able to purchase fire extinguishers for each of the firemen to keep in their cars and ID tags for each to assure their safety when fighting a fire. New members received "turnout" gear: jackets, helmets, boots and gloves for each.

A generous donation of vinyl siding was given, and the firemen spent many weekends putting it up on the firehouse. A definite improvement!

The members of the Fire Company thank all who put in a multitude of hours in preparation of the big day, those who worked at the auction and BBQ, and everyone who attended the auction and ate at the BBQ.



Phil Talbot and Clarence Merritt prepare chicken for Fire Auction.

## Citizens Advisory Committee helps with housing repairs

The Citizens Advisory Committee is comprised of seven townspeople of Windham who oversee the implementation of the Windham Community Development Program. The program began as a grant in 1998 with the goal of promoting community development and improving the economic and living conditions of the people of the town.

Funds are available for rehabilitation activities which can include: exterior and interior structural, electrical, plumbing and heating repairs and improvements: fire and other safety improvements: energy conservation, septic system and water supply repairs and improvements.

A priority of the housing rehabilitation program is to serve elderly, handicapped and low-income owner-occupied homes, although moderate-income owner-occupied homes will also be considered.

The loans are based on a sliding scale installment and the

interest rate can range from 0% to 8%. The difference between income and expenses or the amount of disposable income is the basis for determining the appropriate interest rate.

Applications are available in the Town Hall and all information received is held in the strictest confidentiality. Because the members of this committee absolutely never discuss anything outside of executive committee meetings, many residents may not be aware of the existence the low interest rate loans available to all residents of Windham.

If you have a big-time expensive household repair looming on the horizon, don't hesitate to file an application. Over the years the committee has a reputation of accepting all applications with low interest rates arrived at by mutual agreement between the committee members and the applicant.




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## Clunkers and beaters decorate Vermont

by Elizabeth Robinson

There are more varieties of cars in Vermont than just about anywhere else. Vermont law states that only two unlicensed cars may be visible on your property at any one time, but in many places the limit is exceeded.

Clunkers are large old cars which are still running around with large loose bumper bars whose interior upholstery sprouts white foam. A clunking noise is heard as you slow down. The engine makes a herumph herumph noise as you accelerate. If left unattended for too long, these cars attract rats and squirrels especially if left in barns over the winter. The glove compartment is favored but upholstery, trunk and engine areas become vast watertight stores for nuts and berries, bits of old newspaper, rags and more revolting things. If these become dead cars, they are difficult to get rid of as nobody seems to want to recycle them. There is a number you can call 1-800-DEAD-CAR which can result in a tax-free charitable gift.

Beaters are small cars which have had the life beaten out of them. Running with less noise than clunkers, they usually have only the basics going for them – four wheels, steering, engine and brakes. Many less vital necessities have long since gone by the wayside: heating, air-conditioning, radio/tape deck (forget CD player), power windows (if any windows at all), doors that close properly, bumper bars without dents or cracks if made of plastic. These cars have many deep dents, but none going right through into the passenger space.

Another category which is somewhat rare is antique dead cars. These rusted over items are anything up to 50 years old, and suddenly they become restoration classics or items of photographic beauty in their woodsy settings. Hallmark cards would love the following charming scene.

An old 1930s truck has ended its life way up in the woods in the rear of our house. Parked near a stream, its tires

now slightly sunk into the mud, the verdigris paint could now be on the paint list of Benjamin Moore. A maple tree has grown up through the flatbed. The leather seat is remarkably in tact, as is the steering wheel and speedometer. No frills, just turn it on the three speeds. The doors seem to have disappeared; kids can play here and not get trapped. At a recent auction a number of these cars in this condition were fetching thousands of dollars. An important item which fetched almost as much was the handbook, even if there was no car to go with it. Does the dealership exist after all these years?

The final category is old school buses. These used to make excellent septic systems. Close the windows, fill her up with rocks, bury your bus. Then hook it up to the old system; and you have plenty of capacity for a good long time. The environmentalists have long since put paid to this ingenious solution.

## Graduates Eva and Kyle offer reflections

Congratulations to Eva Pare and Kyle Farace, two Windham residents who graduated from Leland and Gray last spring and will soon begin new adventures. We asked them to share their thoughts about their years in high school and their future plans.

Eva told us: “The best experience I had at Leland and Gray was the opportunity to travel to Belize and Italy. It was amazing to go to such culturally different countries. In Belize, we studied Mayan ruins, and in Italy famous works of art.

“The thing I like least about L&G were the teachers who were not inspired to teach, who did not have the energy and spunk to get students interested.

“In the future, I hope to go to college. I haven’t decided what I want to major in, but I have high interests in psychology, massage therapy, and teaching. In the winter, I am going to begin taking courses at the Brattleboro Community College in English, math, and science, just to get those courses out of the way.

“All in all, high school was a good experience. Hey, maybe one day I’ll become a teacher and come back to Windham to

teach!”

Kyle had this to say: “Reflecting back on my six years at Leland and Grey, I had many experiences, some good and some bad. After graduating, I found that it’s true what people say –

high school years are some of the best of your life. Though I still have a long way to go in life, I know I will always look back and remember all the good times I had, and I know the bad experiences will prepare me for what is to come later in life.

“As for my future, I never really thought about it much or got stressed out about it like everyone else did. I just applied to a couple of schools and waited for replies. I wound up getting into both of them, but I’m still not sure what I am going to do. I might be moving to Massachusetts in a couple of months, so I guess I’ll just see where things go from there.

“But, yeah, overall my time spent at L&G was alright.”





# Walter Woodruff Preserves Vermont

by Mary McCoy

Selectman, taxidermist, carpenter, computer operator, husband, father, son, neighbor, BBQer, square dancer, hunter, and more, Walter Woodruff seems to know no limits.

Take taxidermy. He had mounted a baby goose when he was a young boy, so in 1976, when he shot a deer and didn't have the money to mount it, he decided to do it himself. He got some taxidermy supply catalogs, ordered what he needed, and proceeded to do the job. That deer is still on display in the home he shares with his wife, Mary Lou, on Windham Hill Road. They were married in 1962.

As a young man, Walter lived in New York for a short while, then in Randolph, Vermont where he worked for Ethan Allen Furniture. He was a machinist before entering the world of computers. As Walter explained, that was back when IT (information technology) was called EDP (electronic data processing) and a computer printer was as big as a room.

Back in Windham, Walter built a log cabin next to the house where he was born and where his mother, Margaret Woodruff, still resides. (She was born on that land, too.) For 23 years, Walter worked in computer operations for a machine tool company in Springfield. Then he spent a dozen years as a carpenter. He now works at Stratton, in charge of the stock room.

Walter also built the house where he and Mary Lou now live, complete with dozens of beams he hewed by hand. They raised their two sons, Bruce and Brian, there. With the sons' children, five generations of Woodruffs have called Windham "home."

Walter and Mary Lou's house is decorated with antiques, portraits of American Indians (the fearless 4'10" Geronimo is Walter's hero), and several mounted animal heads. After preserving the deer back in '76, Walter continued this as a hobby.

"I wouldn't do it for money," he explained, although he could probably make his living that way, considering all the requests he receives without advertising. "If I did it for the money, I'd be stuck in the cellar day in and out." His cellar is where he keeps his supplies and mounts about 40 animals per year for himself and friends.

Taxidermy involves carefully skinning the animal and taking its measurements to know what size styrofoam form

to later glue it to. The skin is preserved in a solution of salt and citric acid. Plastic forms are used for the ears. Eye sockets are filled with glass eyes so real they seem to watch you. Mop & Glow makes noses appear wet with breath.

Walter has mounted everything from moose, elks and buffalos to squirrels and ducks. The most challenging jobs

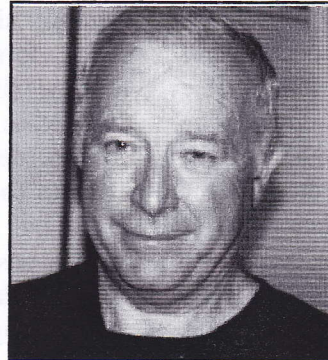
are when he mounts the whole body. Not only is it larger than a head, he must set a pose on a pedestal.

Somehow, Walter has also found the time to serve on Windham's select board for the past 22 years. He explained, "I do it because it's important, and I care about this town. If it were political, I wouldn't be interested. But it's not, and someone has to take care of the town's affairs."

Perhaps the biggest town issue Walter has dealt with was the damage from last summer's flood. "The town's never seen such bad damage. Fixing the road coast over a million dollars, with the residents paying \$200,000. That's the largest request in one year."

Walter can remember a time when roads looked nothing like the renewed section of Route 121. "We used to have Mud Season when cars couldn't be driven. Kids couldn't get to school. Cars were buried up to the windows."

The improved roads are changes Walter appreciates. However, when asked if there was anything else he'd change about Windham, his answer was definite. "I'm happy to see no change. I'm here because Windham is the way it is."



Photos by Mary McCoy





## Popple Dungeon – What's in a name?

by Margaret Woodruff

Since I have been writing tidbits of local history from years past, many have asked me about the name “popple dungeon” road. I found this wonderful book in a Chester book shop entitled, *The Source: Popple Dungeon Vermont*, by Virginia Blake Clark. It has a wealth of information regarding the local history and genealogy of that area.

Parts of three towns are located on the Popple Dungeon Road – Chester, Andover and Windham. Each of these areas seems to have had two schools each at one time. There appears to have been about sixty farms in this area; a few were built in the late seventies, but the majority were built between 1810 and 1840. Maybe more will be written at another time about the farms and schools, but right now the name is my main topic.

I will take the liberty of quoting this from the book, which the author specifically permits in her introduction.

“When this section was first settled, the area was called Poplar Grove, and

the name is found in early records. It was a pretty name for a community full of Poplar trees. A common contraction for Poplar is Popple, and so the first word makes sense.

“The story of how the grove became a dungeon is a little less sure. The story I heard was from Lauren Clark, my father-in-law, who grew up in Popple Dungeon. You can accept the story or debate it until you hear a better one. But I will stick to the story – he went to the District 15 school mentioned in the story and had a sharp memory.

“One day, when Lauren was around twelve, there was a substitute teacher at red schoolhouse #15. Like children of every age are prone to do, Lauren and his classmates gave her a particularly hard time. It seems that the older boys made the day so miserable for her it prompted her to exclaim, ‘This place isn’t Popple Grove, it’s Popple Dungeon.’ The teacher’s critical comment was undoubtedly reinforced by the fact that the locals referred to a stretch of road that

reached from #15 school to a bridge to the east as ‘the dungeon.’ The overhang of the tree branches and the heavy growth of bush along that stretch of road gave the area a dark and forbidding appearance.

“As you can imagine, the boys picked up this name and started to call their neighborhood Popple Dungeon or just ‘The Dungeon.’ This would have happened some time prior to World War 1, but the date is not clear. By the late teens, newspapers were using both names.”

And while we are on the topic, here’s something else that you might find interesting. Did you know that the Congregational Church located on Route 11 in Simonsville was once located at the intersection of Horsenail Hill and Popple Dungeon road? I am not sure just when this church was built, or when it was moved, but history states that members met there on November 11, 1799 and voted to build what is now the Meeting House, and that was built in 1802.



## Library reports increase in visitors

by Beverly Carmichael

The trustees of the Windham Town Library are happy to report a huge increase in the number of visits to our town library last month.

We started the summer season this year by opening the library during the summer children’s camp program. We issued 18 library cards the first day and children signed out books for their summer reading enjoyment. We also had videos available for the first time, and they were a big hit with our children.

Our Freeman Foundation Grant money has arrived, and because of this, many new books have been added to our shelves. Our hope is that with this renewed interest, we will be able to apply for more funds in the future.

But we need your help. Please be aware that our library is hoping to expand our hours so that all of our residents can enjoy this expanded book collection. Our library is free to all town residents. We have a sign posted in front of the library and will change it as necessary to keep you informed of the new hours as they occur.

As always, please feel free to call me anytime with your questions e – Beverly Carmichael at 875-4874.

### In Case You Wondered...

Why do we have the beautiful colors in our leaves every autumn?

Brilliant autumn colors, characteristic of the leaves of many plants, are due to the presence of accessory leaf pigments that normally assist the plant in photosynthesis by capturing specific wavelengths of sunlight. These pigments, called carotenoids, become visible when the leaf dies in the fall.

Leaves only appear green in the summer. Chlorophyll gives them their green color and absorbs the light necessary for photosynthesis. The great abundance of chlorophyll in leaves and its occasional presence in other plant tissues, such as stems, causes these plant parts to appear green. In fall, as sunlight fades, chlorophyll wanes in the leaves of trees, and the other pigments predominate.

**Windham News & Notes  
needs YOU**

Please send letters, articles, or ideas  
to [wnandn@vermontel.net](mailto:wnandn@vermontel.net)!



## Many enjoy summer day camp

Attendance reached well over 30 on some days of Windham's successful summer day camp, held June 28 through July 6. In this photo, girls make jewelry – (left to right) Sarah Clark of Windham, Tessa Stanley of West Townshend, and Julie Higgins of Cape Cod. In addition to crafts and other activities, students were treated to daily music lessons by Jane Newton. Congratulations to Kathy Campbell, camp director, and the other fine teachers and volunteers for giving the children this wonderful experience.

Photo by Bev Carmichael



## We live in the clouds, you know

by Beverly Carmichael

I was sitting at my computer gazing out the window wondering why there are no apples on the tree this summer when out of the corner of my eye I spotted a hawk circling the sky. I stood up, leaned for a closer look and sure enough, feathers in the grass under the apple tree.

I went downstairs to the kitchen to investigate further. Tom and I both heard blackbirds squawking in the trees along the hedgerow. "Tom, I think a hawk just got a bird." He looked out the window and also spotted the circle of gray feathers.

He opened the back door and slowly walked up the hill to see if he could determine what kind of a bird it was.

All of a sudden the hawk came down from above and landed directly behind Tom with the bird in its talons. I slowly opened the kitchen window and said, "The hawk is right behind you." He, being slightly hard of hearing, turned quickly and scared the hawk away, leaving a dove behind.

"Do you think it's okay," I asked as I crept up behind the bird. "Ah,, no," was his reply.

When he bent down to pick up the dove, it flew away. Well, it flew as far as the bottom of the rock wall and snuggled against the rocks. Tom's next words surprised me. "Bev, the kind thing to do would be to put the dove in the middle of the lawn and let the hawk have it. It is what nature requires."

"No, it'll be okay." I replied.

The next thing he said was, "Bev, let's go for a ride. I see a patch of blue over there and it's a nice night for a ride." We often go for rides after dinner looking for deer. So I grabbed my camera and my water bottle and off we went, glancing at the wounded bird on our way out.

It was a beautiful night after a long day of too much rain. We didn't see any deer along the way but checked on the beaver dams from last summer. Most of the beavers have moved on from where they were a year ago. The sun kept surprising me, as

I can't remember a summer with so much rain. I noticed the sun everywhere, on the trunk of a tree, peeking between the branches over by Coleman Farm, and shining on our mountain just below the clouds. "We live in those clouds, you know," was my only remark on this summer evening. Of course we delayed our coming home with an ice cream cone, still wondering about our dove.

The motion light came on as we got out of the car, and Tom, trying to distract me said, "I think I'll tie up the tomato plants; why don't you get me some strips of your rug fabric." I walked through the woodshed only half hearing him.

My dove was gone. He flew away.



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Michael Simonds and Mary McCoy, hosts



## Meadowsend Timberlands protects forests in Windham

by Jeremy G. Turner

As most all Windham residents know, this part of the world beholds great forests of beauty and richness. In fact, it is my belief that this region upholds the fine standard of defining Vermont's Green Mountains' motto.

Meadowsend Timberlands is a native New Hampshire family business that believes strongly in owning and managing forest land for sustainable supplies of wood products, clean air and water resources, wildlife habitat, and outdoor recreational opportunities. MTL owns a total of over 32,000 acres, 20,000 of which is located throughout Vermont. MTL quietly practices long-term sustainable forest management across this special resource land base, such that few folks know we are the third largest private landowner in the state of Vermont.

With our high standard land ethic of conservation, MTL helps contribute to and maintain Vermont's heavily forested sense of place.

Windham, of all Vermont towns, knows what a heavily forested sense of place means, and likely because of that, many people highly regard this area for the place they call home. MTL does too. We own and manage a place we call Stiles Brook Forest, a contiguous forest that spans the three towns of Windham, Grafton and Townsend. Of the nearly eight square miles, 3,128 acres are in Windham. Much of this land is entirely forested, primarily consisting of red spruce, red maple, sugar maple and white birch. The remaining 239 acres are non-forested and consist of mainly wetlands and open land.

All this land plays a critical role in wildlife habitat, and wildlife use on this property is extensive and varied. The largest mammals that are found in New England call this land "home." In fact, the largest black bear in the state are found here. In addition to bear, moose, deer, bobcat, coyote, red and grey fox and, some say, catamount are found here too. Countless upland birds, song birds, amphibians and fish all abound here as well.

After nearly eight years of ownership, MTL, looks forward to continuing to play a large yet quiet role in making Windham that much more special of a place.

*Jeremy G Turner, MTL forest manager, refers to MTL's large forest on Windham's east side.*

## Residents hike in Stiles Brook Forest

by Maggie Newton

On the morning of June 15, forester Jeremy Turner introduced a group of hikers to Stiles Brook Forest, 3000+ acres on Windham's east side. Jeremy was accompanied by Assistance County Forester Laura French. Hikers were Mary Western, Ginny Crittenden, Nancy and Jerry Dyke, Claudio and Lettie Denoya, and Maggie Newton.

Years ago, there were many small farms on this acreage, plus talc mines. Jeremy and Laura took us into the forest from the access road on the north-south power line which crosses Route 121 east of Lawrence Four Corners. We climbed uphill for a quarter mile and then off to the southwest through the woods, where we came to an abandoned apple orchard which had been overtaken by new growth of trees and shrubs.

The foresters explained how they were pruning the old trees, so they will again bear fruit, especially for deer feed during the winter. Invading trees

were being cut back. The Stiles Brook forest plan encourages sustainable habitat for large animals, especially bear, deer and moose. We saw many moose tracks and scat, a moose bed and a bear bed, and we learned how to identify them.

We continued on through an old road to a large cellar hole, the site of a former farmhouse. The barn cellar hole was nearby. The family had done sheep farming, among other things.

We continued to climb up in a semicircle, ending higher up on the power-line road, and finally returned down the hill to Rt. 121.

Jeremy explained the philosophy of sustainable forestry used in Stiles Brook Forest with selective cutting of trees to gradually improve the timber stands. No part of the cut timber is wasted, and felled trees are brought to



Photo by Claudio Denoya

an area where wood is sorted into pulp, timber, etc., and from there transported to the appropriate mill or plant for processing.

Laura and Jeremy also treated us to a lesson in wild flowers and other plant-life on the forest floor. We learned about different soil conditions which foster growth of certain species of trees and wild plants.

We hope for more treks to Stiles Brook Forest. Low-impact recreational use without motorized vehicles is welcome.





## WINDHAM NEWS & NOTES

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# Your help needed to buy skis for students

by Daniel Reilly

Being a small rural school with a limited budget, our Windham Elementary School doesn't have the facilities many larger schools have. We do, however, have fields and woods that can be used for cross-country skiing at recess time and after school.

If the school had the necessary equipment, our students could cross-country ski in their own backyard. It is an affordable, accessible sport. If we had the equipment, all of our students could ski, not just the children who pay to participate on JISP ski program days.

Parents and educators are becoming more aware of how important it is for children to acquire healthy lifestyles that involve regular exercise. Cross-country skiing exercises your whole body and gives your heart and lungs a great workout. Because it's so affordable (requiring only the equipment), it's a wonderful lifelong winter sport.

Both parents and teachers would support a program at the school. Sally Newton, the teacher, is very energetic and full of enthusiasm, and her goal is to turn as many children as possible on to cross-country skiing by getting them on skis during lunchtime recess in the winter months.

Stratton Mountain very generously offered to order skis for us at a discount. We need 18 sets of skis for children (with bindings, boots and poles) at \$80 a set, and 14 sets of adult equipment (for larger children and assisting adults) at \$150 a set, for a total of \$3,540.

Please join with me in supporting this worthwhile cause. Any donation would be greatly appreciated, and it is tax-deductible since it is for a public institution. Please make your check payable to Windham Elementary School and mail it to me, Daniel Reilly, at 1175 Burbee Pond Road, Windham, Vermont 05359. Given that cross-country skis last for 15 years, your donation will make a difference at the school for a long time!

