

# WINDHAM NEWS & NOTES

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 6

WINDHAM, VERMONT

MAY - JUNE 2006

## 2006 Town Meeting provides a few surprises

by Edith Serke

This year's Town Meeting was much like previous years, yet it produced a few changes. Once again, Donna Koutrakos was elected moderator, and she kept the business of the meeting rolling along. Selectman Walter Woodruff was re-elected to another three-year term, having already served for 26 years in that position. (By the way, he is now the First Selectman, replacing Helen George.)

Jerry Dyke was re-elected as lister for another three-year term. Ernie Friedli's position as lister, from which he resigned after 23 years, was filled by Michael Simonds, after a challenge by Dan Reilly. Dawn Bower was re-elected as auditor for another three-year term, and Imme Maurath was elected to fill a vacancy until 2008. There was a contest for the position of delinquent tax collector between incumbent Michael Simonds and challenger Ernie Friedli, with Friedli the winner. The rest of the incumbents were re-elected without a challenge.

There were 38 articles voted on. The budgets, both for the school and the town, were approved without a problem. The town library will get an increase to \$1,968 this year. Voters also approved using \$22,679 of Hold Harmless monies for legal fees, should such be needed to deal with the proposed wind farm on Glebe Mountain. Hold Harmless monies are funds from the state to reimburse the town for



loss of tax revenue from property owners who are enrolled in the current use program. A new item, \$300 for Meals on Wheels, was approved.

Finally, there was considerable discussion about appropriating funds to support the Windham Broadband Project's efforts to bring broadband to town residents who

*(continued on next page)*

## Wind development decision moves to state level

by Mary Boyer

Glebe Mountain Wind Energy, LLC is the new name for Catamount Energy. They have partnered with a Japanese company, Marubeni Power International in the hopes of building a commercial wind generating plant on Glebe Mountain. The following is a brief update of recent events related to the development.

In early February, Windham's Select Board and Planning Commission hired attorney David Grayck to help design a legal strategy and represent the town before the

Environmental Court and Public Service Board should the wind plant developers proceed to file a Petition for a Certificate of Public Good. His practice focuses on representing municipalities, individuals and businesses before the Vermont utility and land use regulatory agencies and courts.

In a non-binding referendum in Londonderry on February 24, townspeople voted against the nineteen 420-foot towers proposed for Glebe Mountain by a margin of 2 to 1. The following week Manchester residents

voted their opposition to five 390-foot towers proposed for Little Equinox Mountain by Endless Energy Corp.

Windham's Select Board opted not to have a referendum but to instead support our present town plan and zoning laws which state that our ridge lines are for farming or forestry use and that commercial development is prohibited. An informal survey conducted in the fall by a Windham citizens group indicated widespread opposition to any significant change to

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## Town Meeting provides surprises

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don't have it. A convincing case was made by Mary McCoy, who led the effort which would benefit the town office, the school, and residents. After much discussion, it was pointed out that if broadband was available at the town library, residents could log on from there. In a surprise move, an amendment was offered to increase the requested appropriation from \$1200 to \$2400 with 27 votes for it and 5 opposed.

As usual, there was a delicious potluck luncheon enjoyed by all. Our State Representatives Carolyn Partridge and Michael Obuchowski addressed the meeting after lunch with updates on issues before the State Legislature. There is a budget shortfall to deal with, as well as the problem of health care and how to finance it. Many residents spoke in opposition to using the State Education Fund for purposes other than education, and our representatives assured us that they agreed with this. They urged residents to keep in touch with them.

Approximately 70 Windham residents exercised their civic duties and responsibilities in this truly democratic form of government, known as the annual Town Meeting.

## News & Notes turns 3

This issue of the Windham News & Notes completes three years of bi-monthly publications. As stated in our first issue: "Our goal is simple – to inform and involve every corner of the Windham community."

The founding editors – Lydia Pope France, Maggie Newton, and Margaret Woodruff – noted: "Without a post office or general store to serve as meeting place, we thought it would be a good idea to reach out." We thank these three for "birthing" our newsletter.

The News & Notes has changed somewhat with more pages now, more photographs, more news about local happenings and resources, and a larger team involved in its production.

In the next issue, we'll ask you to send a contribution to support our efforts. We do this once a year in order to keep our accounting simple. We hope you enjoy our publication and will help us pay for its production, printing, and mailing.

## Wind development decision moves to state level *(continued from previous page)*

the use of our ridge lines.

There continues to be debate about which state body has decision-making power in this matter. Last fall, the District Environmental Commission rendered an opinion that since Glebe Mountain has a long history of permits issued under Act 250, any substantial change to the land use of Glebe Mountain would continue to fall under that commission's jurisdiction even if it is a utility development.

This opinion was challenged by the Public Service Board (PSB), which regulates all utility development under Title 30, Section 248. Developers and utilities joined that challenge, claiming that joint jurisdiction is burdensome. The Environmental Court has heard oral arguments from both sides and is expected to render a timely decision. The court instead may request that the legislature take up the matter.

On March 11, a PSB hearing officer recommended that the East Haven project be rejected because the adjacent lands have been "protected from development through years of effort and the expenditure of millions

of dollars of public funds."

This conclusion was immediately challenged by the Department of Public Service (which is the advisory arm of the PSB), developers, utility companies and some environmental and citizens groups. The PSB usually accepts its hearing officers' findings, but it can accept part of the opinion or reject it completely. The board will rule at a later date.

On April 4, the PSB reprimanded Endless Energy, which proposed the Little Equinox project, for failing to comply with the strictly regulated schedule for filing documents regarding bird and bat impacts, and issued a small fine to further make its point. The developer has withdrawn its petition and is making plans for several single-tower installations.

The first week in April, an attempt was made in the Senate to draft an amendment to the state budget bill that would bar Act 250 jurisdiction in any Section 248 public utility applications. The effort was abandoned after the Natural Resources Committee decided that this is an important matter worthy

of public debate and should be handled as a stand alone issue rather than as an amendment. This issue is expected to come up in the next legislative session.

Small towns like Windham find it difficult and expensive to deal with the issues raised by the Glebe Mountain proposal. There seems to be growing sentiment in the state that we need a clear statewide policy to define standards for commercial wind energy projects on our ridge lines. Standards should include siting, wind characteristics, aesthetics, ecological impacts, and the developer's financial strength.

Following the public announcement of the East Haven opinion, the representative of Glebe Mountain Wind Energy stated that the development is "on hold," until the issue is resolved. The company's lawyers, however, remain active in the Act 250 jurisdictional case and are lobbying to reduce some of the restrictions the environmental laws place upon them.

Your thoughts and opinions are needed and all property owners are urged to write our legislators, the PSB and the media.



## Broadband likely for all in Windham

by Mary McCoy

After nearly a year's work, the Windham Broadband Project has secured one workable proposal from a broadband vendor to deliver faster Internet access in our area. The offer comes from Optima, located in Brattleboro. What they require to begin are 20 (or more) subscribers who will sign up for their one-time offer to be a Windham Broadband Starter.

These Starters receive 16 months of broadband service by prepaying for one year of high-speed Internet service. The cost is \$798 paid up front, which includes installation of the hardware to receive the wireless signal. All Starters are covered by a money-back guarantee for receipt of service.

There are good reasons to be a Starter. You will help bring broadband to everyone in town without it, and you will save about \$200. Those who sign up later after this initial stage will pay \$198 for the installation of the hardware and \$49.95 per month for service, for a total of \$997.20. However, if we get more than 20 Starters, the monthly service charge might be reduced for all subscribers.

Details still need to be resolved before Optima's proposal is accepted and they are ready to begin. Optima needs to know the names and addresses of everyone who wants their service so they can determine if the houses can be reached by the wireless signal.

The Broadband committee is aware that price is a concern for many people,

and we wish this offer were as inexpensive as broadband offered in other areas. But Optima is the only wireless vendor that has presented us with a workable proposal, and our research has convinced us that wireless is the best way to go.

When considering Optima's charges, remember you will no longer need to pay your current Internet Service Provider or the phone company for charges related to your dial-up service. Also, depending on how the houses of interested people are clustered, the prices might be lower. These details will be worked out with Optima once we are able to give them a working list of 20 Starters and other truly interested households.

Fortunately, the Windham Broadband Project recently conducted a survey of interest, and we have many of these names. If you are one, we will be contacting you about signing up. If you don't hear from us or have not previously registered your interest, please sign up on our website, [www.windhambroadband.org](http://www.windhambroadband.org). If you can help with the work to sign up others, let us know by emailing [info@windhambroadband.org](mailto:info@windhambroadband.org).

In the meanwhile, anyone can use the DSL on the computer at the library in the Meeting House on Wednesday afternoons. We hope to have a newer computer with a CD burner and printer there by June. This option will remain available for all who wish to use it.



### WINDHAM NEWS & NOTES

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Send to address below.

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#### Acknowledgments

Thanks to all who provided articles – their names are noted with their submissions.

Thanks also to our advertisers.  
Additional ads are welcomed.

#### 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**  
**June 9, 2006**

**Windham News & Notes**  
**P.O. Box 1068**  
**Windham, VT 05359**  
**802-875-4874**

## Senior Housing moves closer to reality

by Edith Serke

After many year of planning, affordable housing and supportive services for the elderly in the West River Valley is nearing reality. Conceived and nurtured by Otis Health Care in Townshend, the new non-profit organization, Valley Cares, is now independent from the hospital.

Valley Cares purchased the historic

Kronmeyer House at 457 Grafton Road in Townshend, just north of Grace Cottage on Route 35. The building currently houses offices of Valley Cares and the Valley Health Council homemaker program.

Valley Cares plans to provide a continuum of elderly special needs

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## Senior Housing moves closer to reality *(continued from previous page)*

housing on site by constructing 24 units of independent housing with supportive services and 28 units of assisted living. Residents will have access to an array of prevention and wellness services, including homemaker services, senior activities, meals, and transportation. It is hoped that the housing campus will be a focal point for area seniors.

About 95 % of this \$9.3 million project has been raised from a wide variety of funding sources – federal, state, and local, as well as tax credits and loans. Valley Cares also received a gift of real estate valued at over \$800,000 for an endowment. With preliminary plans completed, the

project now waits for Act 250 approval. Groundbreaking is expected to be in the summer of 2006, and unit rent-up by September 2007.

Twelve of the independent units will be earmarked as affordable, with monthly rents between \$500 and \$550, including utilities. About 35% of the assisted living units will be targeted to Medicaid-eligible residents, similar to current rates at Heins Home. All residents of Heins Home will be accommodated in the new assisted living complex.

No reservations for any of the housing units are currently being taken. About six months prior to completion, Valley Cares will notify

all those who have indicated an interest, in addition to advertising to the general public.

Valley Cares is governed by a nine-member board of directors with John Nopper of Putney as president, Effie Chamberlin of Townshend as vice president, Edith Serke of Windham as secretary, and Stacey Rheume of Newfane as treasurer.

For more information about the project or Valley Cares, contact: Bob Crego, executive director, at 365-4115 or [bcrego@svcable.net](mailto:bcrego@svcable.net); Elaine Scott, director of Valley Health Council, at 365-4910 or [escott@svcable.net](mailto:escott@svcable.net); or Edith Serke at 874-4812 or [emserke@aol.com](mailto:emserke@aol.com).

## Valley Health Council helps people live safely at home

by Beverly D. Scott

The Valley Health Council offers an array of services, many of which are free, to residents of the West River Valley and beyond. Founded in 1971, the Council's focus is on helping elderly or disabled persons remain safely at home for as long as possible, thus delaying or eliminating the need for institutionalization.

The Council offers the following services:

**Homemaker Services** – These services enable patients to return home more quickly from a stay in a hospital or nursing home. They also give temporary relief from care of an elderly relative or handicapped child, and they provide respite care to relieve the care giver of a dependent person. The services also allow elderly or disabled persons to remain in their own homes by providing assistance with light housekeeping tasks.

Persons of any age who need help at home due to physical illness, recent hospitalization, or physical or emotional disability due to the normal aging process are eligible and urged to apply. A doctor's order isn't necessary, and fees are based on a sliding scale.

**Clinic** – A toe-nail trimming clinic is held the second Thursday of each month. At the same time, blood pressure can be checked. This is a free service!

**Durable Medical Equipment** – Orthopedic aids, such as wheelchairs, walkers, commodes, toilet seat extenders, and shower benches are available on loan. This is a free service!

**Transportation** – Volunteers take residents to and from medical appointments. Please call in advance, if

possible. This is a free service!

**Telephone Reassurance** – If you live alone and would like someone to check up on you, a volunteer can call each day at a designated time. This is a free service!

**Thrift Shop** – Volunteers run a Thrift Shop located one mile north of Townshend Village on Route 30. The shop is open Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Good, clean clothing and some household items are offered at low prices

**Information** – Call the Council with questions, and the staff will give you answers or refer you to someone who can.

**Scholarship** – Through the generosity of the Robert Crowell family, a \$1,000 Scholarship is awarded annually to a student in the West River Valley who is pursuing a career in health care.

### YOU CAN HELP!

**Become a Volunteer** – Drivers are needed to transport people to medical appointments. Help at the Thrift Shop is always needed. Even three hours a month will be appreciated.

**Contribute** – Good, clean clothing and small household items are accepted at the Thrift Shop. Wanted also are donations of good, durable medical equipment that is no longer of use to you. Your ideas are requested for other services needed in the Valley.

**Person to Contact** – Elaine Scott, director of services, Valley Health Council, 457 Grafton Road, P.O. Box 314, Townshend, VT 05353, Telephone: 802-365-4910.



## Windham summer camp set for July; supper for May

by *Billie Jean Van Alstyne*

It's almost that time of year again. Summer Camp! This year camp will be July 10-28 and will be held at the Windham Meeting House from 9:00-1:00 on Mondays through Thursdays and 9:00-12:30 on Fridays.

We have a lot of new ideas planned for this year; but are looking for more. If you have suggestions, please call me, Billie Jean Van Alstyne, camp director, at 875-4371.

### Spaghetti supper raises funds

There will be a spaghetti supper at the Windham Meeting

House on Saturday May 6 at 5:00 PM. This supper will raise money for the Windham Day Camp. The camp is open to all, and we would like to keep the cost of tuition as low as possible.

Dinner will be spaghetti (naturally), bread and butter, and salad. The cost is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children 12 and under. There will also be a raffle with prizes from area businesses. If you would like to help, please call me, Billie Jean Van Alstyne, at 875-4371. Thanks!

## Students meet with writers

by *Beverly Carmichael*

Jessie Haas, author of more than thirty children's books, visited the Windham town library on April 6.

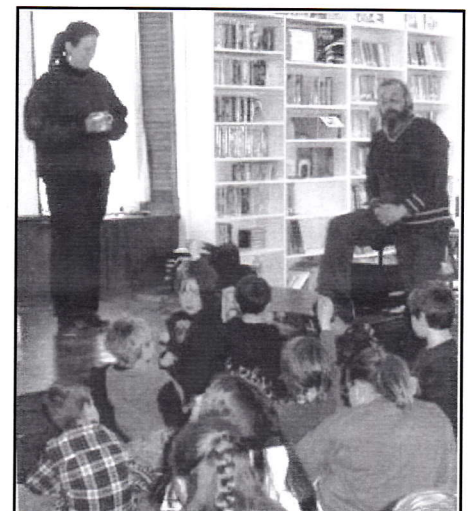
Elementary school children were bused from the school to the library for this visit and listened to an inspiring and informative talk on writing books, getting published, and following your heart to the life you desire.

Jessie and her husband Michael are both published authors. His newest book, "At Home with the Sun," features activities and experiments for children including plans for a pizza

box solar oven. This book is available at our library for children to sign out.

They both read from their current works. Jessie also brought with her a slide presentation of her log cabin along with pictures of her horses. The predominant theme in all of her books is her childhood experience raising, riding, and loving horses. She writes books for all grade levels.

They both spoke of alternative forms of energy as a way of life. There is so much to learn, and their presentations were excellent!



### Windham welcomes these new property owners:

Ronald & Rebecca Phillips  
Daniel Keirns & Holly Janney  
Elizabeth Burke-Tabor  
Jack Buchanan Tabor  
Damon Michael Tabor  
Joshua Nichols & Jessica Lauren  
Bruce & Laurie Griswold  
Michael Viola & Kenneth Abriola

## Are you prepared for a disaster?

by *Marcia Clinton*

Disasters can happen at anytime with or without warning. A disaster can be the result of a man-made incident or a natural event like a flood or ice storm. Vermont's history demonstrates that no community is immune to the affects of a disaster, and so it is important to take steps now to prepare.

The Vermont Emergency Management has created a free workbook which highlights steps everyone and every family can take now to prepare for an emergency.

During an emergency, safety and well-being are the top priorities. This

workbook has an excellent disaster preparedness checklist including a disaster supply kit, important phone numbers, and other essential advice. The workbook is available for all at the Town Office and the Elementary School.

The Department of Health and Human services has created a "Family Emergency Health Information Sheet". This is also available at the Town Office and school and is an excellent way to create a family emergency health plan.



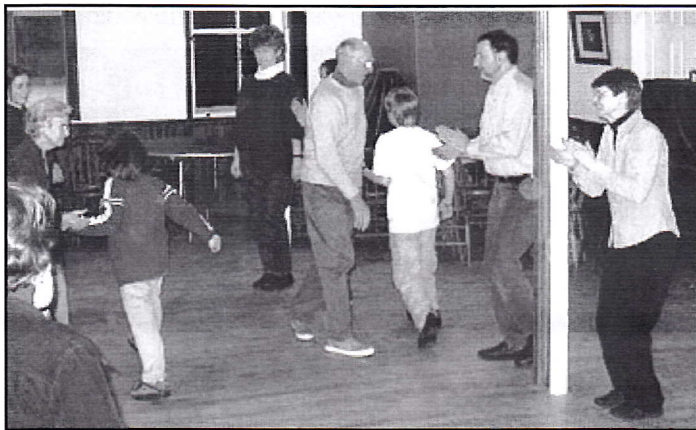
## Neighbors enjoy food and fun

by Imme Maurath

The soup and salad/cabin fever events have ended for the season. They were well received with requests for them to be repeated next year. We'll try to schedule them when we don't have a snow storm, but then we never know – and neither do the weathermen.

Those who braved the storm on March 25 included the band, the Turkey Mountain Window Smashers, who played a short set for the dancers, some of whom are shown below.

Before the music, everyone enjoyed excellent food. Let me tell you, Windham has some fine chefs, men included. The next dining event sponsored by the Windham Community Organization will be the chicken BBQ, scheduled for July 15, so mark your calendars.



# WANTED

**WOODWORKERS**

**FIBER ARTISTS**

**POTTERS**

**IRONWORKERS**

**CRAFTERS OF ALL KINDS**

**TO DISPLAY AND/OR SELL THEIR**

**ITEMS ON JULY 15**

**AT THE CHICKEN BARBECUE**

**CELEBRATION**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

## WCO looks in new directions

by Nancy Dyke

We, the members of the Windham Community Organization, are pleased to announce that we are making good progress toward becoming incorporated and are including Windham News & Notes under our banner. Two important advantages for both groups are reduced rates for mailings and tax deductions for contributors. Both WCO and News & Notes will continue to function much as they have in the past.

At our February meeting, a number of creative ideas were shared and discussed as possible goals for the new year. One initiative grew out of a lively Senior Brown Bag discussion regarding the development of a comprehensive plan for the community in the event of a major emergency. Members who volunteered for this committee are Imme Maurath, Edith Serke, Helen George, and Dawn Bower. They will work in cooperation with the Windham Volunteer Fire Company.

Donna Koutrakos, Beverly Scott, Mary Boyer, and Brenda Bingham are members of a newly formed committee called the Helping Hands. This committee will formalize the WCO's process of linking families and individuals who have temporary needs with the grants and services the WCO can provide. This month we were able to help two families, one with a utility bill and another with food and clothing. If you are aware of anyone in the community who needs help, the committee asks that you contact one of its members. All inquiries are held in strictest confidence.

We welcomed Marcia Clinton at our March meeting. She shared information with us about the "bird flu" as a result of attending a workshop organized by health officials. A booklet describing recommended precautions was distributed at the meeting and is also available at the Town Office. If the bird flu becomes a pandemic, as predicted, a town emergency plan could become critical. We thank Marcia for her timely presentation.

Also at our March meeting we voted to use the Meeting House for our monthly gatherings on a four-month trial basis. We will all miss the warm and cozy atmosphere of Helen George's living room, but we are pleased about the reason for the change. We have outgrown Helen's house because of the addition of new members. Helen was presented with a plant as an expression of our appreciation for her hospitality in the past years.

The final action of the March meeting was the election of new officers. They are as follows: president - Nancy Dyke; vice-president - Mary Boyer; secretary - Dawn Bower; treasurer - Edith Serke. Thanks to Donna Koutrakos for serving as treasurer for the past year. Please join us in making this year the best ever as the Windham Community Organization broadens our efforts to serve this community.



# Maxx chosen in playwright contest

by Mary McCoy

Maxx Scott, a sixth grader at Windham Elementary, was chosen as one of 10 semi-finalists in Northern Stage's Project Playwright. His play and those of the other semi-finalists were performed by professional actors of Northern Stage on April 21-23 at the Briggs Opera House in White River Junction.



The final results of the competition were not known before the News and Notes was printed. We congratulate Maxx on having his play selected as the best of the 16 submitted by Windham students. Runner-ups from Windham were Owen Ruppert-Bousquet and Eric Starr.

Maxx's classmate Caitlin Persa said, "All of us worked very hard on our plays, and we are happy for Maxx and proud of him." Windham was one of 10 Vermont elementary schools with a semi-finalist. Some 300 plays were involved in the initial competition.

As a semi-finalist, Maxx is assured of receiving a commemorative pin and a trophy. The winner of Best Play receives a laptop and \$1,000 cash award for the student's school library. There is also an Audience Choice Award of a laptop and \$500 cash award for the student's library.

Maxx's play, "Car Trouble," tells the story of students going on a field trip with their teacher and getting caught in a snow storm and power outage. They manage to find a hotel, but no one knows where they are and everyone thinks they are missing. They wake up the next day to find police at their door.

According to Maxx's mother, Holly Scott, Maxx now wants to be a writer, a profession that would work well for him since Maxx only has use of one of his hands. She reports that Maxx is very excited about being selected.

## Unique Lenten and Easter Services held at Windham Congregational Church (UCC)

by Nancy Dyke

At the Maundy Thursday service we participated in the Seder Dinner, a Passover meal similar to the Last Supper, celebrated by the Israelites since the days of the exodus from Egypt. Pastor Fran Hakenson explained the symbols on the tables as the meal progressed.

An example is small bowls of salt water placed at each table to represent the tears of the Israelites because of their enslavement. Also served were matzo or unleavened bread and bowls of karoses a salad-like dish made from sour apples that resembles the mortar used by the Israelites to make bricks in Egypt. The Seder helped us to be "present" at the Last Supper.

We were travelers together at the Good Friday service as we visited the Stations of the Cross. On a trip to Ireland some years ago, Pastor Fran Hakenson was part of a pilgrimage that visited natural rock formations representing the Stations of the Cross. She presented slides and an explanation of each Station while individuals read about the events that took place at that particular Station.

Easter Sunday morning was a joyful celebration of new life led by Pastor Christine Dyke. Bible stories and traditional and contemporary music were the highlights of the morning. We visited the empty tomb, leaving behind sadness and weeping for the joy of resurrection life. The



church choir participated by singing an Easter hymn from the year 1890.

Following worship a delicious brunch of eggs Benedict and crepes was served. Billy Koutrakos was the main chef and others contributed breads, fruit, and beverages. Thank you to everyone who assisted by bringing or serving food or by cleaning-up.

As a preparation for the services of Holy Week a number of people participated in a lively three-week Bible study. We studied and discussed some figures surrounding the crucifixion such as Caiphas, the high priest, Pilate, the Roman governor, and the controversial Mary Magdalene. As part of the study we viewed short clips from the film, "Jesus of Nazareth".



# Alison shares her talents from the center

by Mary McCoy

Not many girls grow up with the dream of becoming a farmer. Yet for Alison Trowbridge, the dream was so strong she choose to work on a dairy farm after she graduated from her Long Island high school. The experience confirmed her love for rural life, and she enrolled at UVM to study agriculture.

That's where she met her husband Colin Blazej. Now a carpenter, justice of the peace, and stand-up bass player, Colin grew up in southern Vermont, knowing the Newton family from Windham. After college Alison and Colin lived in Brookline, Newfane, and Dummerston, before buying land and building their home here on Ingalls Road. They moved in March 1993, just one month before their first daughter Amy was born.

Farming turned out to be a money-losing proposition, and Alison now considers herself a "hobby farmer." They have four horses, six Icelandic sheep, three rabbits, four chickens, two dogs, and two cats. The sheep are very hardy, and they're thorough grazers who "do the mowing" and give her about 10 fleeces a year, which she sells. The family eats the chicken eggs. The other animals are pets.

Alison's agricultural, botanical and environmental knowledge has been put to use in other ways. Since 1994 when Windham's Conservation Commission was formed, she has served as the chair. These days that means she is in the middle of the wind turbine issue, making sure that all sides are explored and heard. Earlier this year, she organized two public meetings, one to present the case for the wind farm, and the other to present the opposition. She also wrote an article for a previous issue of News & Notes that presented both sides.

She sees the Conservation Commission's role as that of education, explaining, "Windham has natural resources that need to be considered and protected." The Conservation Commission worked with the Planning Commission on forest district zoning. They sponsored a radon detector giveaway. They are working now to eradicate Japanese knotweed. Each year they sponsor Green-Up Day to remove trash from the roadsides – this year it is Saturday, May 6, beginning at 9:00 at the Town Office.

Alison sees these efforts as "not enormous, but making a difference." Others would say she understates her

contributions. According to Carolyn Partridge, "Alison is very hard working and puts her heart into whatever she does. She thinks before she speaks, and is an extremely thoughtful and talented person."

Carolyn serves with Alison on the Windham School Board, which Alison joined in 2000. "We don't run the school," Alison says, "we create the framework in which the school can run." She has enjoyed hiring personnel and discussing with parents the best ways to educate our children. She says, "Everyone has their own philosophy, often opposed, but we try to make it all work."

"Alison is a diplomat," says fellow school board member Diane Newton. "She's great at looking at all sides. She wants to understand everyone's point of view. She takes a centralist role and gives others a chance to speak their piece."

While she has dedicated much of her energy to serving our elementary school, Alison sees other educational possibilities. She home-schooled her daughter Amy during her sixth grade year and again this year on the seventh grade level. Home-schooling gives Amy more flexibility to pursue her interests, Alison explains. Being self-directed, Amy is able to

complete her main subject work in about three hours each day. This allows time for more physical activity and for some tutored lessons.

Meanwhile, Alison and Colin's other daughter, six-year-old Kit, is in kindergarten at Windham Elementary and enjoys her many friends there. "It's quite satisfying," Alison says. "We have a good school and a hardworking staff."

While maintaining her "hobby farming," conservation work, and school board duties, Alison also works as a massage therapist. She says, "I'm fascinated by muscles and the human body, and it is a very positive profession I meet nice people, and I make them feel better." While her training was based in Swedish massage, she incorporates Thai, cranial-sacral, and bio-dynamic massage techniques as well. "I base what I do on the person and what they need," she explains. Alison still takes new clients and can be reached at 874-7050.

And yet, there's more. Alison rides her horses as much  
(continued on next page)





## Alison shares talents from center

*(continued from previous page)*

as possible. She enjoys jumping and trail riding, and is now developing her skills in dressage. In addition, Alison gardens, spins, knits, hikes, cross-country skis, swims, and enjoys "all the fun things you can do in Vermont."

"We live in an incredible place," she says, "and I'm happy to see others appreciate it. But dividing and developing property is an issue. I did it, so others should have a chance too. But it's tricky. How do we maintain harmony with the Earth? I'd hoped to live a sustainable life style, but I can't live off the land. I use an enormous amount of gasoline just to cart the kids around."

Alison is not one who takes herself too seriously. As Diane says, "She's great at laughing at herself and finding humor when things don't turn out the way she expected."

**Green-up Day**  
**Saturday, May 6**  
*starting at 9:00 AM*  
*at Town Office*  
*with doughnuts & juice*

*Come help clean up trash*  
*from the roadsides.*  
*Bags provided for free disposal.*  
*(Found treasures may be kept!)*



## Citrus brightens the dark days of February

*by Lydia Pope France*

The arrival of a big box of oranges or grapefruit has become part of our winter ritual. Dave and Ginny Crittenden appear, their truck filled with boxes of perfect citrus fruit. This fund-raiser for the Brattleboro Community Chorus gives us the opportunity to support a local group while enjoying some delicious fruit just when winter seems quite endless.

Part of the Brattleboro Music Center, the group is self-supporting and has several fundraisers like this citrus

one every year. Dave (bass) and his wife Ginny (alto) have been singing with them for three years. They give two performances a year. The next concert will be on the campus of Marlboro College the evening of Saturday, May 20, and the afternoon of Sunday, May 21. They will be performing Haydn's "The Creation".

If you are interested in finding out more about the chorus or about purchasing oranges next February, contact Dave or Ginny at 874-4049.

## Bats found in quarry tunnel

*by Imme Maurath*

Scott Darling and Ryan Smith from the Fish and Wildlife Agency have been in Windham investigating bat inhabitants in our area. This information is vital with regards to the wind turbines on Glebe Mountain. This past fall, netting was erected on both sides of the talc quarry on Hitchcock Hill Road property owned by Jimmy Keith, a long-time resident. About 40-50 bats were caught.

This March, Scott and Ryan repelled down into the quarry where there is an old tunnel about a mile long. Scott kayaked in and discovered northern long-eared and little browns. Both bats are similar in size and color, but the northern long-eared has duller pelage and larger ears. They prefer caves and mines that are relatively cool and moist, and where the air is still.

Both of these species are sensitive to disturbance during hibernation, so Scott and Ryan had to be very quiet.



Frequently aroused bats may deplete their energy reserves, potentially leading to mortality from starvation before spring arrives.



# Incident at Hamilton Falls

by Elisabeth Robinson

Anyone who has lived in Windham for any length of time knows of Hamilton Falls as a place of great beauty, but also a place of danger.

A case in point was the summer my daughter and her husband were there for a romantic picnic when distant rumble of thunder was heard.

Large drops of rain started to fall, and the young couple decided to wait it out under an outcropping of rock. Further down the falls, another couple with a three-year-old girl were wading in the shallows.



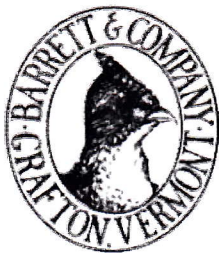
Within minutes, the rain started to fall in heavy sheets and the wind picked up, dropping the temperature about 20

degrees. From a pleasant splash over the rocks, the cascade picked up gallons of water which roared down the canyon. The water below rose alarmingly. Great gusts of wind sent spray flying in all directions. Thunder, amplified by the narrow gorge, boomed loudly. Lightning skidded off the wet rocks perilously close to them.

Suddenly, the current became so swift that the young couple with the child were barely able to scramble to safety on the far side of the gorge. Cold rain hammered down on them, and as they were dressed in lightweight clothes, they were soon soaked. My son-in-law, who had a jacket, tried to reach them to cover up the little girl, but by now the rocks were wet and very slippery, and the climbing downwards tortuous. Cut off from their car, the couple with the child were panicking.

My son-in-law was finally able to reach them and cover the little girl who was soaked and crying. The swift water was now at a high level and impossible to cross. After what seemed an eternity, the storm passed, and the water level dropped enough for the father to carry his daughter to safety.

When my daughter and son-in-law returned to South Windham a while later, looking a little white, I innocently asked, "Did you get caught in that thunderstorm?"



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# More people enjoy exploring their roots

by Mary McCallum, Council on Aging for Southeastern Vermont

There is a growing national fascination with family history. Estelle, who retired early, is a prime example. "I always wondered about my ancestors, who they were and where they came from, but I didn't have the time to do any research," she says. "Now that I'm retired, genealogy has become more than a hobby. It's a real passion."

Genealogy, the study of the origins and descent of families, has always been with us, but with the advent of the Internet, the number of people digging up their family roots has exploded. There are heritage societies, oral history projects, online forums, genealogical databases and special computer software that support the study of our ancestry.

How do people get started? Estelle began by collecting oral histories from her extended family, stories passed by word of mouth from one generation to another. Estelle sat with her parents and had them answer questions that she taped on a small recorder. Her past came alive.

Estelle went on to record the memories of her aging aunts and uncles. Not only did she gather important information, she also strengthened ties with her elders. "It was rewarding for all of us," she recalls. "I feel like I'm part of a web that stretches far beyond my own life. I only wish I had done this before my grandparents died."

Estelle kept her records in a simple three-ring binder. She created forms to record births, marriages, divorces, graduations, obituaries, ancestral charts, religious and military affiliations, and family activity. There are special journals available in bookstores and online that serve the same purpose, but Estelle created her own format.

There are certain basics you should know:

- \* Interview your oldest relatives first, and be prepared to sit down with them several times to fill in memory gaps and respond to follow-up questions.

- \* Births, deaths and marriages are most important. Include dates, locations and as much detail as you can find.

- \* Burial information is also helpful; visiting an ancestor's grave can provide a powerful connection.

- \* Organization memberships lead to more biographical information. This includes church, temple, military and academic organizations, which can yield data on baptisms, confirmations, school attendance and employment records.

Traditional resources for genealogical information have been libraries, courthouses, historical museums, town clerk offices, and genealogical and historical societies. But today, genealogical searching can begin with a few mouse clicks to "google" your family name or search the growing number of genealogy websites and databases. The Family History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake City maintains immense genealogical records on

microfilm and online at [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org). It is the granddaddy of all genealogical databases and can be searched for free.

In researching your family tree, you are doing a service for your whole family. It is a long and interesting process, and most people do it because it's fun, like solving a mystery. It's also a way to hold hands with your ancestors.

## A plea for calmness

The inner voice cries out to God through nature  
Calmness and quietude are all that I seek  
As from the chaos of daily living I flee.

Why has he created this depth of need?  
To what ends and means must this searching persist?  
To bring the inner piece for which we plead.

My utopia lies still in the work of God and nature  
His handiwork is here for all to see today.  
How many tomorrows will it continue to exist?

So long for now,  
Margaret Woodruff



Gabrielle Hanson and Maureen Fitch learn to weave at a library class taught by Ginny Crittenden in March.

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## WINDHAM NEWS & NOTES

**P. O. Box 1068  
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The WN&N Team welcomes your signed letters and articles (approx 300 words). Send them to the address above or preferably by email to [wnandn@vermontel.net](mailto:wnandn@vermontel.net)

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**GET INVOLVED  
IN WINDHAM!**

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Wm & Donna L. Koutrakos  
1455 Burbee Pond Rd.  
Windham VT 05359

## — *Windham Community Calendar* —

Every Sunday – **Windham Congregational Church (UCC)** has worship services at 9:30 AM; everyone is invited.

Every Sunday and Thursday – **Valley Bible Church** has services; call the pastor at 874-7287 for times.

Every Wednesday – **Windham Town Library** open at Meeting House from 3 to 5 PM. Also at that time: reading group on first Weds, knitting group on second and third Weds, and writing group on fourth Weds. All invited to join.

Saturday, May 6 – **Green-up Day** at 9:00 AM at Town Office, sponsored by Conservation Commission.

Saturday, May 6 – **Spaghetti Supper** at 5:00 PM at Meeting House to raise money for Summer Camp (*see page 5*)

Wednesday, May 17 – **Senior Brown Bag Chat Group** at 12 noon at the Meeting House.

Saturday & Sunday, May 20 & 21 – **Brattleboro**

**Community Chorus** performs (*see article page 9.*)

Wednesday, May 31 – **Windham Community Organization** meets at 7:00 PM at the Meeting House. All welcomed.

Friday, June 9 – **Deadline for WN&N submissions**

Wednesday, June 21 – **Senior Brown Bag Chat Group** at 12 noon at the Meeting House

Wednesday, June 28 – **Windham Community Organization** meets at 7:00 PM at the Meeting House. All welcomed.

Saturday, July 15 – **WCO's Annual Chicken BBQ** with crafts fair (*more details next issue*)

Monday - Friday, July 10 - 28 – **Summer Day Camp** at Meeting House (*see article page 5*)

Saturday, August 12 – **Fire House Auction & Chicken BBQ**. Donations accepted in July (*more details next issue*)