

WINDHAM NEWS & NOTES

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 3

WINDHAM, VERMONT

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2006

Windham will elect JPs on November 7

by Mary Boyer

On election day, Tuesday, November 7, voters of Windham will choose five neighbors to serve as justices of the peace. This office is one of the oldest public offices in Vermont.

The first justices of the peace acted as judges. A 1799 law provided that a justice could try any action in which the fine did not exceed ten pounds, or corporal punishment did not exceed ten lashes. It wasn't until 1997 that the General Assembly removed all judicial powers from the office.

Nevertheless, JPs continue to be an important part of local government. They are members of the board of civil authority and in that capacity serve as election officials, deliver absentee ballots, register voters and update the voter checklist. They are mandated to sit to hear appeals to the final decisions of the listers. Their more discretionary duties

include solemnizing marriages and certifying civil unions, and they also serve as public notaries.

Towns with less than 1,000 in population have five justices that serve for two-year terms. This year we have ten candidates from which to choose our five officials. We asked each of them to submit a short statement about why they want to be a justice of the peace. Their responses appear on page 3.

Voters decide November 7 on Leland & Gray improvements

by Howie Ires

When we moved to Windham eight years ago, our oldest daughter was five-years-old and began her education in kindergarten at Windham Elementary School. Middle and high school seemed far away in the future. I probably drove past Leland & Gray for two or three years before I realized that the tiny brick building on the green in Townshend was really a large, subterranean school with 450 students.

Fast forward to now, and she's in eighth grade at Leland & Gray, her sister is in seventh grade, and little brother is in first grade. I've been honored to represent Windham on the L&G School Board for the past three years, and I'd like to talk to you about the bond vote coming up on November 7.

This coming election day registered voters in the Town of Windham, along with those of Jamaica, Townshend,

(continued page 2)



Jim and Deb Vangilst hand their 2006 property tax payment to Town Clerk Carol Merritt. Jim and Deb's property is next to the Woodruffs' on Windham Hill Road. They plan to slowly build a home where they will eventually retire.

Property taxes due November 1

Property taxes are due in the Windham Town Office on or before November 1. Checks can arrive by mail, be hand-delivered, or be left in the lock-box outside the Town Office door. But they must be in the hands of Town Treasurer Carol Merritt prior to November 2.

The penalty for being delinquent as of November 2 is 8% of your total taxes. Interest is also due each month you are late with your payment. The Town Office address is 5976 Windham Hill Road, Windham, VT 05359. The phone number is 874-4211.

Harvest Supper

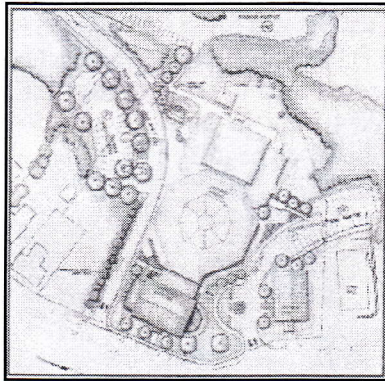
November 18, 2006 - Meeting House
Dinner 5:30 PM - Square Dance 7:00 PM
(see page 4 for details)

Voters decide November 7 on Leland & Gray improvements *(continued from page 1)*

Newfane, and Brookline will be voting on a bond to fund much needed improvements at Leland & Gray.

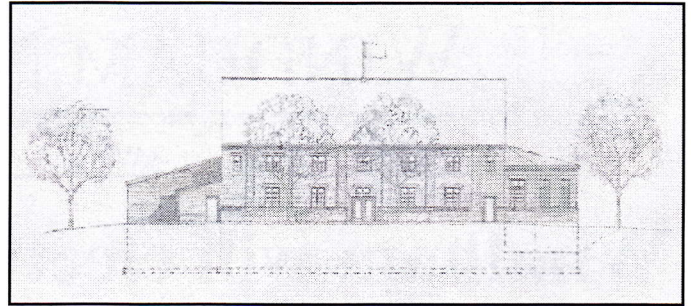
The bond vote is a major step in a process that began three years ago when voters rejected a previous plan to improve the school. After that vote, the Leland & Gray school board decided to rethink the project from scratch, rather than make minor changes and resubmit the same plan to the voters again. An ad hoc committee was formed and met regularly for a year, carefully studying all the needs of the school.

With the needs of the school cataloged, a building committee was formed to evaluate all possible ways to meet the needs identified by the ad hoc committee. The building committee came up with five possible solutions and presented them to the public for comment. When a consensus formed for one of the five solutions the school board authorized a public vote and budgeted \$85,000 for preliminary architectural and engineering work necessary to estimate the cost.



Another year brings us to this point, where we have a cost estimate for the project (\$7.5 million). We have a commitment from the State of Vermont for \$2.2 million, and we need the voters to authorize the \$5.3 million bond to make the project happen. The estimated school tax impact of this bond for a \$200,000 residence in Windham ranges from \$36 per year for a household income of \$30,000 to \$169 per year for a household income of \$100,000 or better.

The improvement plan will add 18,000 square feet of space to the school, allowing programs currently occupying



rental space across the road to return to the L&G building. The Dutton Gym which is currently used as space for Tech Ed will be returned to its original function as a gymnasium, and the programs offered there will be relocated into the main building.

The focal point of the project is the "cafetorium", which will include a full kitchen, allowing L&G to participate in federally-funded school lunch and breakfast programs. It will include classroom space for the music program and a flexible seating system that will enable the main space to be used for many purposes in addition to breakfast and lunch, such as school assemblies, drama club performances, music performances, art exhibits, and community events.

This is a handsome building that will be placed in front of the existing L&G entrance in the area that is now a paved loop. The drop-off area displaced by the new structure will be moved to the south, between the new addition and Dutton Gym. Bus drop off will be on the north side of the school by the C level entrance, and the driveway on that side will be re-graded and widened. Additional parking spaces will be added on both the north and south sides.

Leland & Gray will be holding an informational meeting with the architects on November 1 at 7:30 PM in the L&G gym for folks who want to know more about this project before the vote on election day, or you can contact me at hi@hillinteractive.net with your questions.

Windham works on emergency preparedness

by Edith Serke

At one of the Brown Bag Chat Group meetings, the topic of emergency planning came up. Are we prepared to deal with such things as a pandemic flu which, according to experts, is overdue, or a major natural disaster such as an ice or wind storm, or a blizzard or flood, or even a terrorist attack?

State and regional planners are seriously urging all communities to prepare for such eventualities. Do we all have enough emergency supplies of food, water, medications, and fuel? Will we be able to communicate with emergency workers? Where would we go in case of mandatory or volunteer evacuation? These are all questions that an ad hoc committee has been working on, with staff support from the Windham Regional Commission.

In order to prepare an emergency plan, we must assess

our community resources, identify gaps, prepare a list of vulnerable residents, and get an official plan approved by our town leaders. A first step is to survey our residents to see who might need assistance in case of a disaster, as well as to find out who has the ability to provide assistance.

There is a simple survey form included in this issue of the *Windham News and Notes*. All full-time Windham residents are strongly urged to fill it out, fold it over, put a stamp on it, and mail it to the Town Office without delay.

The committee, in cooperation with the Fire Company and town officials, will continue to work on the plan, under the leadership of Jim Scott and Heath Boyer. Periodic updates and useful information will be available at the Windham Town Office.

JP candidates seek your vote

Each of the 10 candidates for justice of the peace was asked to submit a statement of 50 words or less about why they are running and deserve your vote on November 7. Their responses appear below in alphabetical order, *exactly* as they were submitted to us. You can vote for no more than five, which is the number that will be elected.

Colin Blazej, Democrat -- No reply

Marcia Clinton, Democrat

While conversing with Carol Bellucci, Chair of the Democratic Comm., I told her that if she had a vacancy on the ballot for Justice of the Peace she could put my name down. Becoming a Justice of the Peace is another way to serve the community.

David Corriveau, Independent

I'm running as an Independent JP because I want to help people with their problems that the job covers, also I would like to give the town a third choice. My Grandfather James Perry was a JP and I wanted to be one, too, when I heard of him being a JP.

Ernest "Ernie" Friedli, Republican

Retirement is a time to stay active and engage in activities beyond the usual. It can also serve the needs of neighbors and friends. Having been a lister, Planning Commission member, etc, it seemed that filling one of the openings for Justice of the Peace would provide yet another chance to do just that.

Helen George, Republican

Being a Justice of the Peace is a privilege. 1. You marry people. 2. You are on the Board of Civil Authority. 3. You are on the Board of Tax Abatement. 4. You are an election official. 5. And you may administer oaths.

Donna Koutrakos, Democrat

The reason that I am running for another term as Justice of the Peace in Windham is that it is a way that I can

serve the community. The time required works with my employment schedule unlike some of the other town positions.

Carolyn Partridge, Democrat

I would like to serve as Justice of the Peace for another two years because I enjoy registering people to vote, performing marriages and civil unions, and participating in the other duties, such as checklist maintenance and tax appeals. I humbly ask for your vote and appreciate your support!

Daniel Reilly, Republican

I'm Daniel Reilly and I am running for the position of Justice of the Peace. For a living I provide executive search services to corporations, and I work part time selling tickets at Stratton. It is important to me in life to volunteer my time to worthwhile activities. My understanding is the Justice of the Peace position is important in working with how ballots are counted and providing moderation in property tax disputes. I am a careful, through person and would like the opportunity to make a difference in whatever is needed.

Edith M. Serke, Republican

I strongly believe that we all have an obligation to serve our communities to the best of our abilities. Having served as an auditor for three years, I am now offering my services as a Justice of the Peace. My education and many years of experience in local government give me the qualifications needed for this office.

Michael Simonds, Democrat

I deeply respect Vermont's democratic processes and our laws which provide equal treatment for every individual. As a justice of the peace, I have upheld these Vermont values while serving on the BCA, registering voters, and performing many marriages and civil unions. I hope to continue serving in these ways.



WINDHAM NEWS & NOTES

is a publication of the
Windham Community
Organization

Published six times a year,
the basic membership is \$10.
Send to address below.

The WN&N Team

Mary Boyer
Carolyn Chase
Jean Coburn
Dawn Bower
Bev Carmichael
Bill Koutrakos
Mary McCoy
Imme Maurath
Edith Serke
Margaret Woodruff

Acknowledgments

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

Submissions

Windham News & Notes
welcomes submissions.

Send articles of 100 to 500
words to the address below.
We prefer emailed submissions.

Next deadline
December 8, 2006

Windham News & Notes
5976 Windham Hill Road
Windham, VT 05359
802-875-4874
wnandn@vermontel.net



As Bill and Donna Koutrakos were enjoying breakfast one October morning, they were delighted to see this moose stroll through their yard on Burbee Pond Road.

All invited to Harvest Supper

by Imme Maurath

Members of the Windham Community Organization are counting forks at the Meeting House to make sure we have enough for our very popular Harvest Supper feast on November 18. As is the tradition (which I've come to learn is serious business in Windham), we'll serve ham, scalloped potatoes, squash, peas and sweet breads.

Our chef in charge of this event will be Carolyn Partridge, who makes it look so easy. For dessert we will be having strawberries left over from the chicken BBQ. Ah, Vermont strawberries in November! Following dinner will be a square dance with live music by the Turkey Mountain Window Smashers.

The event will start at 5:30 PM and only costs \$9.50 for adults and \$4.50 for children. See you then!



Residents rally for improved Verizon service

by Heath Boyer

The long-smoldering unhappiness of Windham residents with Verizon telephone service has boiled over in recent weeks. The issue of service outages and noisy lines is as old as local memory and had reached the point where many customers gave in to resignation and failed to report trouble on their telephone lines. However, three service outages lasting from 8 to 48 hours in September has led to more public expression of accumulated unhappiness. (See the September-October 2006 issue of the *WN&N* for an article by Dan Reilly on this subject).

An ad hoc group which included, among others, Brenda and Bob Bingham, Nancy and Jerry Dyke, Howard and Beth Ires, Dan and Jenny Reilly, and Bill and Donna Koutrakos had been communicating formally with Verizon and the Department of Public Service in recent weeks. They also contacted Rep. Carolyn Partridge, who in turn was talking with legislators, regulators and Verizon executives.

Then in early October, Jim Scott wrote a letter to the Windham Select Board asking that they speak out officially for the Town in an effort to get long-overdue attention to the unreliable telephone service in the part of Windham served by Verizon. A letter to the Public Service Board was prepared and signed by all three Select Board members and countersigned by eight of the residents who have been most vocal in their complaints. Copies went to appropriate officials at Verizon Vermont, the Department of Public Service, Representative Partridge, the Windham Regional Commission, and Governor Jim Douglas.

Generally speaking, consumer complaints regarding telephone service are taken only by the Consumer Affairs

Section of the Department of Public Service. In this case, however, it was learned while preparing the letter that if a complaint is submitted by five or more citizens, the Public Service Board may call for public hearings on the issue.

Although there has been no official statement by Verizon regarding its plans for the Windham service area (which begins at the Town Garage and extends on both sides of Windham Hill Road south to Jamaica), unofficial news has been gleaned from a number of Verizon employees. The outages are said by some to be a result of old call-handling equipment that is shut down by power surges.

A new equipment cabinet has been installed recently near the junction of Windham Hill Road and Burbee Pond Road's northern end. This cabinet is intended to contain new call-handling equipment. An open question at this time seems to be whether the cables serving the new box will be replaced with fiber optic lines. If the old cable is not replaced, then service outages may be reduced, but line noise is likely to continue. If new fiber optics lines are installed, there may be high-speed Internet access, as well as fewer outages and better connections.

In part, the recent letter to the Public Service Board said: "We believe that the long term 'repair-when-necessary' approach that Verizon takes to our service area is not consistent with its obligation to provide reliable voice service via land line; and we ask that the Public Service Board take whatever steps the law provides to address the situation."

Stay tuned for developments. If you wish to comment on this issue, you can direct emails on this to me, Heath Boyer at hmb@vermontel.net.

Broadband Project requests state funding

by Mary McCoy

State help may be possible for Windham residents who plod along with slow dial-up Internet access. The local Windham Broadband Project made it through the first round of applications to the state's Department of Information & Innovation for funding to assist our efforts. Our final proposal was submitted on October 20, with the outcome expected within the next month.

Fortunately, our efforts coincide with new developments from Optima Computer in Brattleboro. That company has established a new division, called Great Auk, which is eager to begin broadband delivery for rural towns. The prices they are offering now for their services are lower than those they previously offered and do not require that customers prepay.

Great Auk's interest in helping us is especially significant because no other vendor is interested in serving us. GlobalNet conducted a site visit here recently, only to conclude that their costs could not be recouped due to the expense of serving our sparse and dispersed population in such mountainous territory.

Verizon has not changed its tune about not providing DSL here. A Verizon manager recently said that even if fiber optic lines were strung to the new service box, it would be 2010 before DSL was provided to all those who live beyond the immediate area of the box's location on Windham Hill Road near the northern end of Burbee Pond Road.

If the grant funds are approved, high-speed Internet access will be available through Great Auk for many locations which are currently without it in Jamaica, Londonderry, and West Townshend, as well as Windham. The grant funds would cut the cost of installation for each customer and provide additional access points to relay transmission so more locations are reached.

Final details will be determined if and when the grant is approved.

Papercutting class offered Nov. 14

by Marcia Clinton

Call it scherenschnitte, wycinanki, knippen, or just plain papercutting; it's a folk art that has fascinated people in many countries for nearly two thousand years.

On Tuesday, November 14, Marcia Clinton will offer a beginner's class in papercutting for Christmas.

The class will be held twice, at 1:00 PM and 6:30 PM, at the Town

Office in the conference room. Participants are asked to bring pencil and paper for notes, scissors, ruler, and scotch tape. A small charge will be asked for other required materials.

Participants will be able to choose a selection of patterns and have access to the copier.

If you'd like to attend, contact Marcia at 875-3531 by November 6.



Fire Company provides safety tips

Recently, the students at the Windham Elementary School got a refresher course on fire safety, as they do each year. The program starts with a practice fire drill, and timed perfectly, the screaming fire truck pulls up. Dressed in full gear, firemen check the building, as if to make sure the fire is out. The kids need to see them in full gear, so they won't be afraid in a real emergency.

The kids are then taught some of the basics, like if your clothes are on fire, you should "stop, drop and roll". You should know two ways out, stay low in a smoking building, never open a door if the handle is hot and, most important of all, make sure you have a smoke alarm in working order. Change the batteries twice a year when you change the clocks for daylight savings time.

For the adults, the Fire Company adds: have your chimney cleaned, have a practice fire drill in your home, especially if you have children, and have a fire safe holiday season.

Vermont Magazine to feature Windham

During color season this year, Karl Decker, a professional photographer, was in Windham taking pictures. He is working with a writer, Nancy Levine, on a feature article that will be published in *Vermont Magazine* in the autumn of 2007.

Karl and his wife are friends of Windham resident Edith Serke. Many visits to our town convinced Karl that Windham would make an excellent focus for the magazine.

Library sponsors varied activities

by Beverly Carmichael

The Windham library offers diverse activities for town residents. Currently, you can help African children with AIDS, raise funds for the library with photos, and join others in the enjoyment of reading, writing, and knitting.

There are 12.3 million children in Sub-Saharan Africa orphaned by AIDS. While many are living with relatives, in orphanages, or with foster parents, millions are with their brothers and sisters in child-headed households.

In an effort to contribute more than monetary donations, the knitters who meet at the library on Wednesday afternoons have been making dolls to be donated to these children through an organization based in nearby Jamaica, called CHABHA. If you would like to learn more about the organization, go to www.chabha.org.

In other library news, we are sponsoring a photo contest in November with prizes to be awarded to the top three choices. Photos must be taken in Windham and will be made into a calendar. The calendars will be sold as a fund-raiser for the library. Deadline for this contest is December 1, 2006. Please bring 8 x 10 prints to the library or town office for judging.



We continue our book discussion on the first Wednesday of each month, followed by a quilting class taught by Mary Boyer on the second Wednesday. Our writing class is now on the third Wednesday of each month, followed by knitting classes on the fourth Wednesday.

All library classes are free to the public. Please join us.

Statewide Ballot - November 7, 2006

(In addition to the choices stated, you may write in a candidate for any office.)

U.S. Senator, choose ONE

Pete Diamodstone, LU
Cris Ericson, I
Craig Hill, VG
Peter Moss, ABC
Bernard Sanders, I
Rich Tarrant, R

Representative to Congress, choose ONE

Chris Karr, WtP
Bruce R. Marshall, VG
Dennis Morrisseau, IBN
Jane Newton, LU
Martha Rainville, R
Keith Stern, I
Jerry Trudell, I
Peter Welch, D.

Governor, choose ONE

Benjamin Clarke, VL
Jim Douglas, R
Cris Ericson, I
Jim Hogue, VG
Scudder Parker, D
Bob Skold, LU

Lieutenant Governor, choose ONE

Brian E. Dubie, R
Matt Dunne, D
Mary Alice "MAL" Herbert, LU
Marvin Malek, P

State Treasurer, choose ONE

V. Murray Ngoima, LU
Jeb Spaulding, D/R

Secretary of State, choose ONE

Deb Markowitz, D
Cheryl Moomey, R
Boots Wardinski, LU

Auditor of Accounts, choose ONE

Martha Abbott, P
Randy Block, R
Jerry Levy, LU
Thomas M. Salmon, D

Attorney General, choose ONE

Dennis Carver, R
Rosemarie Jackowski, LU
William H. Sorrell, D

State Senator, choose TWO

Aaron Diamondstone, LU
Benjamin Mitchell, LU
Peter Shumlin, D
Jeanette K. White, D

State Representative, choose TWO

Michael J. Obuchowski, D
Carolyn W. Partridge, D

Probate Judge, choose ONE

Edward M. Goutas, D/R

Assistant Judge, choose TWO

Mary Ann Clarkson, D/R
Patricia W. Duff, D
Trish Hain, R
Wendy Ireland, LU
Steven K-Brooks, LU
Lewis E. Young, I

States Auditor, choose ONE

Dan M. Davis, D/R
Gwendolyn W. Harris, I

Sheriff, choose ONE

Keith D. Clark, D
Terry Martin, R

High Bailiff, choose ONE

Robert W. Backus, I
Stephen L. Fine, R
Steven K-Brooks, LU

KEY to PARTY

ABC - Anti-Bushist Candidate

D - Democrat
IBN - Impeach Bush Now
I - Independent
LU - Liberty Union
P - Progressive
R - Republican
VG - Vermont Green
VL - Vermont Localist
WtP - We the People

Town holiday festivities begin November 24

by Beverly Carmichael

Once again it soon will be time to bring in the holiday season with singing and the lighting of the tree. The Christmas carol sing will be held at the Meeting House on the Friday after Thanksgiving at 4:30 PM.

Come join your neighbors for this always fun/silly rendition of your favorite carols. There will be hot chocolate,

homemade marshmallows, and Jean Coburn's famous snickerdoodles. The Dykes will lead us in song with their usual exuberance and good cheer.

The town Christmas tree will be lit from November 24 till January 1, 2007. Hope you all can take the time to come together for an evening of fun.

Windham's Christmas Tree approaches 30 years

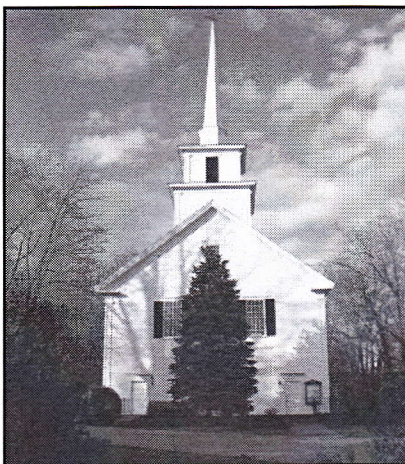
by Inga Lingley

My husband John and I are delighted that the residents of Windham kick off each holiday season by lighting the Christmas tree in front of the Congregational Church.

In October 1975, we Lingleys arrived in Windham to make it our town. On passing the church before turning onto Cornhill Road to our house (no heat, no electricity, and very inadequate plumbing), I told John that we should have a Christmas tree in front of the church. I was fond of the edifice and admired the labor that the Windham folks had performed almost 200 years earlier to build their church.

We needed permission from a deacon, Bob Stowell, who lived right behind the church. He liked our idea, and we offered to help. Before we knew it, Bob put up a cut tree by himself, and John placed the lights on it. Bob turned the lights on at 4:00 in the evening, and John turned them off at 11:00 at night.

The church had no Sunday services in the winter – God found it too cold in Windham. So for Christmas Eve, Bob Stowell heated the building for three days using the big wood stove downstairs. The heat rose upstairs through metal grates in the ceiling. Was it warm enough? We thought so and celebrated a beautiful Christmas Eve in 1975 with music and food. Mr.

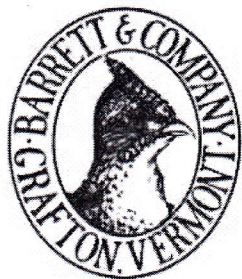


Phoenix from Townshend played the piano for us, and young John Merritt played the trumpet on the stairs of the church while a pleasant moon lit the night.

The following year, not to have to cut a different tree every year, we asked if we could plant a live tree. Bob Stowell allowed that we could plant a tree. He was all for that. Again without help, he had a tree planted in December. John added electric candles in the windows of the church, including the belfry. Unfortunately, the tree did not live. Another try the next year experienced the same fate.

Over at Bob's house one day, we were talking about yet another tree, and Angelette (Bob's wife) quipped that nothing grows on that ground anyway. We, of course, did not agree, and with luck, a member of the congregation, Frank Michelson, dug up a little tree on his property on Stonebridge Road and planted it where it stands today. What luck that we can still enjoy that beautiful tree today and, we hope, for many more years to come.

After the church congregation grew and money became available to improve the church, we ended up over a time with the inside and outside of the church as it is today. All this happened thanks to the interested and dedicated people of Windham.



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Christmas Eve Celebration moves to December 22

by Nancy Dyke

Preparations are underway for the traditional Christmas pageant at Windham Congregational Church!

In order to accommodate neighborhood children who join us each year for the pageant, we are scheduling it for Friday, December 22. Join us at 6:00 PM for this special celebration which will also include a bell choir and other music.





Local folks rediscover Cobb Rock

by David Crittenden

Late in September, eight hikers – six from Windham and two from Londonderry – traced the steps of 18th, 19th, and 20th century residents who had Sunday picnics on Cobb Rock, an outcropping of ledge on Glebe Mountain. The landmark is exactly on the Windham/Londonderry line, and reached easily from West Windham, especially when Walter Woodruff is leading the pack.

The rusted shell of a cook stove is evidence of mid-day Sunday feasts which took place there. More evidence exists in early 20th century pictures taken by photographer Harry Chapman, whose house in Windham Center is now owned by the Lingley family. In those photos, our predecessors are decked out in their Sunday finery, teams pulling wagons loaded up with food and kids too little to walk.

Walter Woodruff and David Crittenden, schoolmates in the early 1950s at Windham Elementary School, remember a Cobb Rock hike led 55 years ago by Ida Chase Dutton and her husband, Herbert Dutton, fifth-generation West Windham dairy farmers. The highlight of that trip for both those 10-year-olds was not Cobb Rock itself, as they both clearly remember, but a treed bobcat, hissing and snarling down at them from the crotch of a soft maple.

Besides Woodruff and Crittenden, hikers on the 2006 Cobb Rock trip were Nancy and Jerry Dyke, Claire and Bob Trask, Ginny Crittenden, and Ernie Friedli

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Mysterious ghost haunted West Windham home

by Margaret Woodruff

When we were living in South Windham, we would raise a piglet or two to supplement the season's food supply. This must have been in the late 50s or early 60s. We had discovered that an older man in Putney had some very good ones, so my husband, Stockton, went over one day to look at them with plans to purchase a couple.

When the pig owner found out Stockton lived in Windham, he was very pleased and wanted to talk as most Vermonters do. His family had lived in West Windham while he was growing up. This is the story he told us.

"We had to leave the house and land in West Windham. We were living in a haunted house. You have no idea how scared you can be. We would go to bed, and we would hear this creaking noise outside. We would creep to the windows, and there she would be, a tall woman in a long white gown working the well sweep. This was in the days before electricity, so there were no outside flood lights."

Stockton said that the man was quite agitated telling the story. Stockton repeated the story to Harry Hall, the town clerk, who lived in South Windham by the Baptist church. They proceeded to trace the house back in the recorded deeds and found an astonishing fact. The farm and buildings were sold for one dollar, and no one ever lived in the house again.

I asked an old-time West Windham resident, "Do you know where the haunted house was? The reply was: "Which one do you want, there were two of them?"

If anyone out there has any ideas about just which houses these were, WN&N would love to hear from you.

So long for now,
Margaret Woodruff

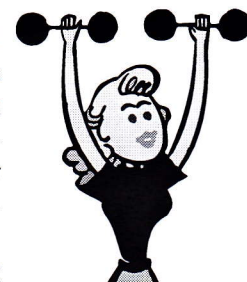
Strong Living Classes continue

by Nancy Dyke

See what a little effort can do for you! Each Wednesday at 1:30 PM at the Meeting House, a group of Windham residents meets to build stronger muscles and bones, so necessary for avoiding osteoporosis and for maintaining a positive lifestyle.

This is accomplished by using ankle weights, dumbbells, and the body's own weight. In the process, balance and flexibility are also improved.

Anyone over 40 is invited to join us for this program sponsored by Tufts University, the Vermont Department of Health, and the Council on Aging. Leaders are trained and certified. Call Nancy Dyke (874-4428) for more information.



Marcia Clinton finds perfect home in Vermont

by Mary McCoy

Marcia Clinton admits to being shy. Some might say she is a loner. But Marcia is no wallflower and no recluse. She is a fiercely independent woman who marches to her own drummer.

Originally from the Hartford, Connecticut area, Marcia began coming to Vermont to ski during her student days at Boston College. When she graduated in 1964 with a BS and an RN's license, property was cheap in Vermont, and Marcia purchased a place on Horsenail Hill Road, taking over a mortgage for a mere \$37.50 per month.

But Vermont was not yet the state that appealed to her most. She took a trip with friends, following Route 66 to California, camping in parks and the backyards of relatives. She liked California so much that after a couple of years as a visiting nurse in Hartford, she joined the Navy because it promised to send her to the Golden State. She stayed for two years, taking care of Marines before they went to Viet Nam, and left with the rank of lieutenant.

Back in Hartford, she worked as a visiting nurse. Unlike hospital work, she went into people's homes to teach them how to give their own medicines, change their own dressings, adjust their daily routines, and make their homes safer. Marcia says, "People don't always like questions or being told. The challenge is to do what people will allow."

Marcia became a nurse because at the time there were only two options of professions for women – nursing and teaching. She chose nursing, but she wanted to do it her own way, which meant working somewhere other than a hospital. "I've always had a tendency to go my own way," she explains, "and against the norm."

Skiing is a long-time love of Marcia, and in 1969 she joined the National Ski Patrol, helping skiers who had fallen and were injured. She continued this work for nearly 30 years. In exchange for volunteering, she skied for free. She added a second floor to her place in Windham, where she stayed on the weekends while renting out her first floor.

Although she wanted to make Windham her home, there were no nursing jobs in the area. So using the GI Bill, she returned to college, acquired a master's degree in guidance and counseling, and then her license as a nurse practitioner. She became a pediatric nurse practitioner for Hartford's Visiting Nurses, moved on to the Hartford Hospital Pediatric Clinic, and later worked for the Hartford School System. These positions were planned to achieve early retirement, and they allowed her to move permanently

to Windham in 1997.

Marcia now lives on Route 121, and to call her "retired" is a stretch. She still works two days a week as a visiting nurse, and she has a long list of other activities. She's the Windham health officer, commander of the American Legion Post in Londonderry, an alcolyte at St. Luke's Church, a member of our Citizen's Advisory Council, a member of the Windham Community Organization, and a fund-raiser for the Windham Volunteer Fire Company.

"She's a hard one to keep up with," says Imme Maurath. This is true in more ways than one, for Imme is talking about the fast pace Marcia sets on the hikes she leads every Thursday morning. Marcia knows all the best trails, based on her many years of exploring the region. Her long-haired dachshund Spike accompanies the hikers and also walks with Marcia early every morning on the Tater Hill Golf Course.

Then there are Marcia's hobbies, which are so many in number that it would be hard to believe one person could do so much if it weren't all on display in her home. She loves crafts – stain glass, crewel, needlepoint, wreath making, woodcutting, grave-stone rubbing, and papercutting. She collects old radio premiums, antique kitchen tools, long-forgotten health products, and prints by Wallace Nutting. She cooks fabulous desserts. She brews beer. She gardens and keeps indoor plants. She follows UConn women's sports. It is no surprise that she says, "I never sit down."

Since she has so many hobbies and is basically shy, Marcia says, "I have to push myself to connect with others." She admires Helen George for her many years of activism, and appreciates the way people in Windham get along. "People here say what they believe, and everyone still respects each other and is cordial."

There's nothing she would change about our town, although she's quick to add that she's not opposed to change. She has embraced computer technology, which allows her to do her nursing paperwork from the comfort of home and to keep up with friends back in Connecticut.

On her refrigerator is a quote: "We're lucky to live where everyone else wants to vacation." But her appreciation of Vermont is more than that. "I've realized over the years that what I like best is the live-and-let-live attitude. People here have respect for the individual. You can be as eccentric as you want."

Yet it is not Marcia's uniqueness that people who know her well think of when asked about her. Says Jan Wyman, "She's always a friend you can count on."



Memories of pond life warm winter bones

by Elisabeth Robinson

In the early winter, a thin film of ice forms on the pond, yet I recall all of the activity in the warmer weather. It was an unusual year for our pond because of the heavy rains. The level all summer was higher than normal, and the water was very clear.

Although fed by several underground springs, general evaporation takes place in the hotter months of July and August. When I arrived in Windham in July, peepers could still be heard at night, but as blue heron passed over the pond on a regular basis, helping themselves to the frogs, there were none left at summer's end.

Last year we had an invasion of black leeches, and although nobody was touched by them, it was a little scary swimming in the pond. We had some advice as to how to get rid of them, including putting a coffee can pierced with small holes and then filled with meat into the water. The leeches would enter the can, eat and expand and would not be able to get out. The best method seemed to be a small fishing net. Yet if you dispose of the leeches anywhere near the pond they can crawl back.

I have to admit there are snakes that swim in the pond, and I am fairly sure these are harmless grass snakes looking for insects, but when I'm swimming I tend to stay on the side of the pond where they don't go. The pond



is filled with many baby trout as well as red and green salamanders, apparently a sign of clean water. If you stand still in the shallow end the trout will nibble at your feet.

Every year we have to clear the banks of willow, as they tend to grow toward the water and then pull the banks in. Ice erosion is also a problem and my son-in law worked hard this summer rebuilding the banks with several tons of rock, in places where the erosion was worst. We had a large sandy beach for a number of years, but it gradually washed into the pond, and as there are presently no bucket and spaders, we will leave it as it is.

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Michael Simonds and Mary McCoy, hosts

Brighten your mood during darkness of winter

by Mary McCallum

Every year when November rolls around Lydia, 68, starts to lose her zest for daily living. Normally an early riser who meets friends for coffee at the local senior center, Lydia has a difficult time getting motivated during winter months.

"It seems I sleep more, whether I need to or not," she says. "I feel a little blue, and not interested in much besides snacking." She points to her midriff. "And goodness knows, the extra five pounds I put on so far is proof of that!"

Concerned about her depression and weight gain, Lydia decided to be proactive. She saw her doctor. Although she suffered from mild depression each winter, she was relieved to find out from her physician that she was not clinically depressed, but instead was experiencing Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), a type of depression tied to the seasons.

SAD, which affects more women than men, is most prevalent in northern areas where winter is dark and cold. It tends to come and go around the same time every year and can last from late fall until spring when the daylight hours grow longer. Lack of light is the culprit. Experts say that the less light we are exposed to, the more melatonin our bodies secrete. When this sleep hormone reaches high levels, it can cause depression. During this emotional slump appetite may increase with accompanying cravings for carbohydrates. Weight gain, irritability and sleepiness are typical of this winter disorder. Inability to concentrate and anxiety are also common.

Lydia followed her doctor's advice and made two immediate lifestyle changes related to light and exercise. Light can be a natural antidepressant in winter, so she began by consciously adding light to her day. She threw open the heavy drapes that she had hung to keep her furniture from fading and allowed sunlight to stream into her living room. She had a skylight installed in her bedroom that let sunlight pour into the room in late afternoon.



Secondly, Lydia made it a priority to take a 30-minute walk on every precious sunny day that came along. She talked her circle of friends into joining her as often as possible, and they all benefitted from the increased exercise and social contact. In fact, they began to call themselves The Happy SAD Walkers.

Fortunately, Lydia was able to elevate her mood and enjoy life again through greater awareness and some simple changes, and much of what she did cost little or nothing. But for some, light therapy or even taking antidepressants might be required.

Light therapy entails sitting in front of a special light box for about thirty minutes a day. Seasonal mood disorders respond to treatment using full color spectrum light sources that simulate sunlight without the harmful ultraviolet rays. As an alternative, there are battery powered sun visors available that are worn around the head. A sun visor allows more freedom of movement than a light box.

In addition to adding light and exercise to your life, in order to beat back the winter blues you need social contact in your life. Pursue whatever group activities you enjoy. Make a plan to eat dinner with friends at least once a week. Call someone who is sick or lives alone – extending care toward another will lighten your own heart.

Whether you call it cabin fever, the winter blahs, the winter blues, or Seasonal Affective Disorder, the accompanying depression is treatable. Turn up the lights, add daily exercise and a dose of companionship, and your own inner



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GET INVOLVED IN WINDHAM!

~ 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 at 11:00 and 6:00 on Sundays and a Bible study and prayer meeting at 7:00 on Thursdays.

Every Wednesday – **Windham Town Library** open at Meeting House from 3:00 to 5:00 PM. Also at that time: reading group on first Weds, quilting class on the second Weds, writing group on third Weds, and knitting group on fourth Weds. All invited to join.

Every Wednesday – **Strong Living Class** at 1:30 PM at the Meeting House. (*see page 8*)

Tuesday, November 7 – **Election Day** at Town Office

Tuesday, November 14 – **Papercutting Class** with Marcia Clinton at 1:00 and 6:30 PM at Town Office (*see page 5*).

Wednesday, November 15 – **Brown Bag Chat Group** at noon at the Meeting House.

Saturday, November 18 – **Harvest Supper** and Dance at Meeting House at 5:30 PM (*see page 4*).

Friday, November 24 – **Tree Lighting & Carol Singing** at Meeting House at 4:30 PM (*see page 7*)

Friday, December 1 – **Photo Contest Deadline** to benefit Town Library (*see page 6*)

Wednesday, December 13 – **Windham Community Organization** Meeting at 7:00 PM at Meeting House. Bring cookies to create holiday cookie plates for neighbors.

Wednesday, December 20 – **Brown Bag Chat Group** at noon at the Meeting House.

Friday, December 22 – **Christmas Celebration** at Windham Congregational Church at 6:00 PM (*see page 7*.)

