



WINDHAM NEWS & NOTES

Volume VI - Issue 4

January / February 2009

Happy New Year, Windham!

Tuesday, March 3 2009, is Town Meeting Day *By Edith Serke*

It's not too early to think of Town Meeting Day, which is always the first Tuesday in March, this year on March 3. There are certain deadlines which should be kept in mind:

At least 40 days before Town Meeting, i.e. **no later than January 22, 2009**, all petitions for an Article to be voted on, must be filed at the Town Office. Wednesday, **February 25, 2009**, is the last day to sign up for the voter check list if you are a new voter in Windham. The **Leland and Gray High School Budget** will be voted on at the **Town Office 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on February 4, 2009**.

You should receive the **2008 Town Report** about a week before the Town Meeting. You are urged to read it carefully as it will contain all financial reports for 2008 and proposed budgets for 2009. **Bring it with you to the Town Meeting.** We will also attempt to get the March/April issue of Windham News and Notes to you with all the latest details by the last week in February. The following town offices will be voted on March 3:

Town Meeting Moderator for one year. Incumbent is Donna Koutrakos.

Select Board, 3 year term, incumbent is Walter Woodruff.

Lister, 3 year term, incumbent is Jerry Dyke.

Auditor, 3 year term, incumbent is Virginia Crittenden.

Constable, one year term, incumbent is Billy VanAlstyne.

Tax Collector, one year term, incumbent is Ernest Friedli.

Grand Juror, one year term, incumbent is James A. Scott.

Town Agent, one year term, incumbent is James A. Scott.

Windham Center Cemetery Commission, 5 year term, Walter Woodruff.

West Windham Cemetery Comm., 5-year term, Diane Newton.

No. Windham Cemetery Comm., 5 year term, Ralph Wyman.

Library Trustee, 5 year term, incumbent is Jean Coburn.

Windham School Board, 3 year term, incumbent is Elizabeth McDonald.



The incumbents may or may not seek re-election. Anyone interested in any of these elected positions is strongly encouraged to find out from the incumbent and from the VT State Statutes what the responsibilities of these positions entail. In addition to these elected positions, there are several appointed positions, which the Select Board will fill on the Monday following the Town Meeting.



POT LUCK LUNCH DURING TOWN MEETING

Donation: \$1 toward paper goods and beverages

Select Board News

In November we were approached by the Vermont American Legion and asked if Windham, along with other VT towns, would consider increasing the amount of property tax exemption given to Veterans who are more than fifty percent disabled. For several years this exemption has been \$20,000 and the newly established amount is \$40,000. We feel this should be considered and it will appear as an Article for your discussion and vote at the Town Meeting in March. We have one resident disabled vet who has the required disabilities to qualify for the exemption.

You may have noticed the stain on Rte. 121 about half way up the hill from Rte. 11. It was the site of an oil slick that occurred the last week in October. Our road crew acted quickly with the help of the State Police to remediate it. The truck that made the spill has not been identified.

We have updated our documentation for non-employee work agreements. As we use more contractors for a variety of jobs we are asking that they provide proof of insurance and agree to certain terms that will hold Windham harmless in the event of a work related accident.

In December we met with Josh O'Neil and Rebecca Pfeiffer, two staff members of the Windham Regional Commission, to help us design Flood Hazard Regulations to prepare us for enrollment in the National Flood Insurance Project. Our recently written Emergency Plan named the ability to respond to flooding as our top priority. These new Regulations will be the first step in preparing Windham for any major emergency due to flash flooding and its aftermath and qualify Windham residents for flood insurance under the National Flood Insurance Program.

At this time of year our attention falls to the '09 budget. We will be looking at ways to maintain or reduce the operating costs of the Town of Windham. Everyone is feeling the pressure of an economy on the down-turn and your Select Board is committed to doing everything we can to make decisions consistent with this economic reality. Windham has a history of fiscal conservatism so tightening our belts is a natural reflex. Our new Annual Report and Proposed Budget will be in the mail by the end of February. We encourage all of you to become familiar with it and to participate by voicing your opinion at Town Meeting on March 3, '09.

Windham's installation of a generator and development of an Emergency Plan in 2008 was a big accomplishment. The recent ice storm and subsequent questions from a number of chilly residents revealed to us the difference between a plan on paper and reality. Our next step is to develop criteria and a decision making structure to differentiate between an emergency and an inconvenience. We also need a way to notify all of you if the school is open as a "warming center" for relief from the cold. We are meeting with Rick Weitzel, our Emergency Management Director, at our regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, January 5th at 6:30. If you have thoughts, concerns or suggestions regarding this important issue please come to the meeting or send your comments to Carol.

The Select Board meets every Monday throughout January and February in order to prepare the budget for Town Meeting. Our meetings are open for your participation and if you have an agenda item please let Carol Merritt know early in the day of the meeting.

A very Happy New Year to you and yours.

Your Select Board

Margaret Dwyer, Walt Woodruff and Mary Boyer

Firehouse Hosts Halloween Party *by Imme Maurath*

The annual Halloween Party at the fire house was well attended once more. Thanks to everyone who helped decorate, made desserts, gathered donations, filled candy bags, and got the hay ride together. There was something there for all ages and the children really came up with some creative stuff. See you next year!

The Windham Volunteer Fire Company would like to thank the community for their very generous donations. We find it an honor that in these tough times you were able to support us and what we do. Many Thanks!!!



Responding to Listers' letters helps you and others

by *Windham Listers*

In a few months, you might receive a letter from the town's Listers asking if we can come to your property to review its value. Not everyone receives these letters, so we'd like to explain why you might get one when other property owners don't.

It is the lister's job to determine an accurate and fair market value of every house in Windham as of April 1 of each year. Everything we do goes to that end, including our letters, visits, and any subsequent meetings. Each property value is calculated using the exact same standards and formula, which are set by the state.

When the Listers have reason to believe that there has been a change to your property since our previous assessment, we are required to update our determination of your property's value. Some of the reasons we would think there has been a change are if you have taken out a permit to change your house's footprint, or if barns, sheds or garages appear on your property, or if your house was under construction last year and probably is improved now, or if you bought your house within the last year.

By responding to the Listers' letter and setting up a time for us to visit your property, you help us to accurately determine the value of your house and grounds so that you can pay your fair share of the town's property taxes. If you were to hide any increased value, the rest of the town's tax payers have to pay more than their fair share.

How much everyone pays for taxes is ultimately decided by the town's residents at Town Meeting when the budget is approved. All property owners pay the same town tax rate which is determined by dividing the budget amount by the Grand List. The Grand List is the sum total of all property values in town.

If you don't respond to our letter requesting a site visit, we can only guess at your property's value, and to be fair to everyone else in town, we have to assume that since you won't let us see your property there is more value to it than before. In fact what often happens is that once we visit and get the accurate information we need, the determined value decreases.

So please, if you receive a letter asking if we can examine your property, call us at your earliest convenience to set an appointment. It will make your property value and everyone else's accurate and fair.

A Spook in Windham by *Abagale Van Alstyne*

On Thursday, October 30th there was a Halloween Party held at the Windham Community Firehouse. There were so many costumes! Some of the costumes were: "Strawberry Shortcake", a dill pickle, "Pigglet", an old man, a dead bride, a witch, "Batman", "Superman", a ladybug and two guys dressed as girls. Everyone looked great. There was a hay ride, one for the older kids and one for the younger kids. Some of the kids toilet-papered a house near the firehouse. A community member supplied the toilet paper. While all of that was happening outside there was fun, games and contests going on inside. There was bobbing for apples, musical chairs and eating donuts on a string. In the end, everyone was handed a gift bag of candy made by Billie Van Alstyne and her girls, Erika and Abagale.



WINDHAM NEWS & NOTES

Is a publication of the Windham
Community Organization

Published six times a year

Send donations to address
below

THE WN&N TEAM

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Gina Noel

Edith Serke

Margaret Woodruff

Acknowledgements

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

Send articles of around 300 words to the address below. We prefer emailed submissions to windhamnews@hotmail.com

Next deadline

February 13, 2009

Windham News & Notes

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Windham, VT 05359

802-874-7198



Gina Noel serves community in more ways than four *by Mary McCoy*

With her gentle humor and laid-back manner, Regina Noel doesn't come across as a powerhouse. Yet since moving to Windham four years ago, her skills and hard work have made her an indispensable contributor to our community.

She had expected to retire when she and her husband Greg settled into their home on Burbee Pond Road. Having taken a package from Harvard University where she was Director of Benefits, she wanted to serve her new community, but thought things would slow down. Little did she know how much her talents would be recognized and recruited here. She's now Vice President of the Windham Community Organization, auditor for the Town of Windham, managing editor of the *Windham News & Notes*, and advisory board member of the Council on Aging for Southeastern Vermont.

She says, "All of these organizations do a lot of worthwhile work, and I'm pleased to be a part of them. I'm amazed at how effective these grassroots organizations can be. I was used to big top-down organizations and thought that was the model. But it's not so."

As VP for the WCO, Gina fills in for the president when she is absent, serves on the executive committee, and helps with fund-raising events. She joined WCO's *News & Notes* team in 2007, immediately taking the empty leadership position, demonstrating her can-do attitude. She says, "I knew a little about desktop publishing and valued the newsletter, so it was sink or swim." She adds, "It's really fun."

Serving as a town auditor is a role that is much more familiar. With a management degree and many years of experience working for corporations and universities, she had been through audits many times. "Audits provide an interesting perspective," she says, "showing clearly what an organization values and who its stakeholders are, that is what it spends its money on and where that money comes from. It's amazing how complex even a little town like Windham is. We have to deal with state regulators, school systems, taxing authorities, and the like. All that is sophisticated, yet we are parochial too, dealing with sums like 82 cents."

By working with the Council on Aging, Gina helps to address issues of concern for local seniors. Among those is maintaining physical strength. Recently, she prepared a grant application to the Council which was awarded, netting Windham's Living Strong exercise group \$500 for weights and heat for the Meeting House, where the group exercises. Gina is a participant of Living Strong, telling entertaining tales when not hefting her barbells.

Gina attributes her outgoing nature to her childhood. Being the third of seven children, she used joking as a way to get noticed and to calm sibling disputes. She also copied her mother's good sense of humor. Gina says, "Laughter stops negativity, and negative is a waste of time." Her positive attitude has also helped her through tough times. "When terrible things happen to me, death or lost relationships, I think nothing worse can happen. Even if it does, I know that's just the cycle of life. Each tough challenge is good because it strengthens me for the next thing."

In addition to sharing her time and good nature with her neighbors, there's another way Gina serves the community – by serving delicious food she prepares. Immediately after retiring from Harvard, she attended the Cambridge School of Culinary Arts. "That was a blast," she says about pursuing one of her favorite pleasures. Once she moved to Windham, she started Green Mountain Chef, advertising her skills on the Internet. Now she is a personal chef who provides meals for on-going clients or individuals wanting help with a dinner party. She says, "I love cooking. It's creative and I get immediate feedback." She laughs, "So far, no one has hated my food!" She adds, "It's a physical job that keeps me on my feet and moving. It's just fun. I get to wear the chef's hat!"

It's hard to imagine that Gina has any spare time, but she makes room for a hobby she and husband Greg share – bird watching. She has always enjoyed nature and hiking and now combines that pleasure with birding. "As I age," she says, "I am 'youth challenged.' Birding is a good sport because I can stop a lot and look." It also fits in with her and Greg's love for traveling, as they go places to see birds they haven't seen before.

After Gina divorced from her first husband in 1985, she spent many years as a single woman and traveled with friends. She's been to most of Europe, much of the Caribbean and South America, and throughout the U.S. Among those trips were some to visit Greg in California. They had been neighbors in Boston and shared a good friend, so they kept in touch over the years. When Greg moved back to Boston, their romance blossomed and they married. Greg works in accounting and finance, and when he retires, they plan to spend a few months exploring Australia and, of course, its unique feathered population.

Gina Noel (Continued)

For the time being, however, they are perfectly happy here in Vermont. "Being here is like being on permanent vacation," Gina says. "I have friends who wonder what I do with myself here. Same as everyone, but I do it in the most beautiful place in the world. Greg says his daily commute is something people pay to see, flying here, renting a car, paying for a place to stay. We get it for free!"

But it's not just the beauty that Gina loves. She says, "Windham is a wonderful community. I never thought there could be a community with such open arms. People are accepting and giving to others." She pauses to reflect, "I don't know if it was luck or providence that brought us here, but I'm glad it did."

Gina, you can be sure that this community is glad as well.

UNIQUE DONATION MADE TO THE WCO

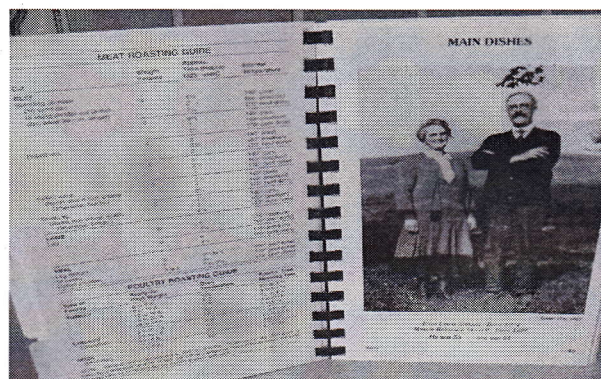
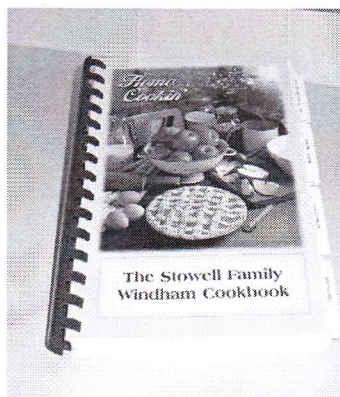
by Mary Boyer

We are excited to announce that the Stowell family recently donated 50 copies of the *Stowell Family Windham Cookbook*.

Minnie Effie Robinson was born in Windham and married Elias Lewis Stowell in South Windham on October 17, 1895. They were blessed with 16 children. To supplement the family income Minnie cooked for the Friday night dances held at the dance hall in South Windham. Minnie's good cooking inspired her grandson Chef John Malone to become a professional. Not wanting to have the families best recipes lost, several years ago John created a book of recipes, stories, letters and pictures of the family and Old Windham. More than a "cookbook" its 240 pages is a treasury of Windham history as seen through the eyes of one of its loyal families.

Anyone who either loves to cook or loves Windham should have this wonderful collection on their shelf.

The WCO is selling it at a reduced price of \$20.00 and we anticipate a favorable response. Please fill out the insert and send with your check to the Windham Community Organization right away to reserve your copy.



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A Sampling of Recipes from the Stowell Cookbook:

- Queen's Pudding...pg. 102
- The Great Depression Cake...pg. 110
- Better Than Sex Cake...pg. 113
- Wacky Cake...pg. 115
- Mission Sunday Fudge Cake...pg. 114
- Pompadour Pudding...pg. 103
- Frosty Trash...pg. 3

WINDHAM CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH NEWS by Nancy Dyke**ANNUAL TREE LIGHTING AND CAROL SING**

Were you there? If you weren't, you missed one of the highlights of the year. Rudolph, Santa and Frosty were part of the evening as well as the traditional carols. An addition this year was "Grandma Got Run Over By a Reindeer", but "The Twelve Days of Christmas" remains the favorite. Turtle doves smooching, geese a-laying and squatting, ladies pirouetting, and lords a-leaping were but a few happenings on the Friday after Thanksgiving at the Meeting House directed by Christine Dyke. Approximately 60 people (young and old) were in attendance, including community members along with their friends and relatives. After the singing and drama, hot chocolate and cookies were served followed by the final event of the evening - the count-down and lighting of the tree. This was a truly memorable kick-off for the Christmas season!

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Another Christmas event, the annual Celebration at the Meeting House, was hosted by the Windham Congregational Church on Sunday evening, December 21. The guest musician was Fred Beleck, trumpeter and Windham children also participated. "The Greening of the Church", the nativity scene and Advent Candle lighting service were all part of the program. An offering was collected and was shared equally with the Londonderry Food Pantry and CHABHA (Children Affected By HIV Aids).

MINISTRY AT DISMAS HOUSE CONTINUES

In November, Bob and Claire Trask, Sheila Friedli and Carolyn Chase served a delicious meal at Dismas House, a residence for recently released prisoners. Residents use this time to locate employment and to generally put their lives back together. If you would like to join the other great cooks from Windham in this effort which takes place on the second Monday of each month, please contact Dave Crittenden.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Windham Congregational Church is scheduled for Friday, January 23. At this time elections and all other business will take place.

REMINDER ABOUT THE FOOD PANTRY

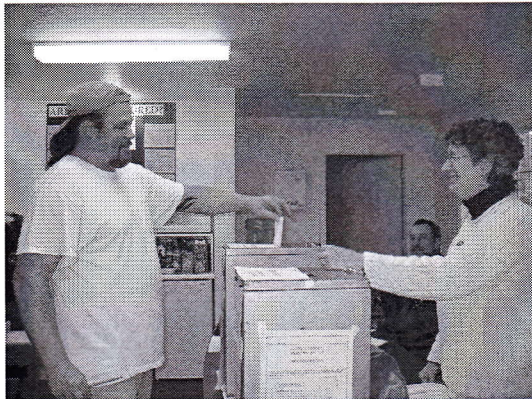
Please help to keep the shelves stocked at the Londonderry Food Pantry by bringing non-perishable foods, paper products and cleaning products to the Meeting House. A box in the lower level has been provided for this purpose. The Windham Congregational Church has designated the second Sunday of the month as Brown Bag Sunday, and items are taken to the Food Pantry soon after; however, items can be dropped off anytime the building is open. For more information contact Ian Bailes at 874-4510.

**CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING REFLECTION** by Imme Maurath

The dynamic duo once again led us in a round of caroling the day after Thanksgiving at the annual tree lighting ceremony. Christine Dyke orchestrated the audience with her antics and her mom, Nancy Dyke backed her up wonderfully on the piano. Theatrical performances by the audience to the words of the *Twelve Days of Christmas* were a panic. Although next year, I think Christine should give the younger folk the 1, 2, 3 days of Christmas and the older folk the 10, 11, and 12 days. Now let me explain if you weren't there. When your number came up, the small group would have to stand up and do their spiel. Well, if you were # 1, 2 or 3 you'd be getting up say 10 times or so. Well, one older couple was chosen to be 2 Turtle Doves, and I'll tell you, by the 12th round I think they were glad the song was over. Plus, they had to kiss each time. My husband's lucky if he gets 2 out of me a day after 25 years of marriage. A new favorite which we got the words to this time because it was such a big hit last year was *Grandma Got Run Over By A Reindeer*. I'm sure it will become a new annual tradition. Afterwards we had hot chocolate and then outside for the countdown. Hope you enjoy the tree and peace on earth, goodwill toward man.

How Windham Voted November 4

by Edith Serke



John Targonski submits his ballot

The elections (and the endless campaign) are finally over, and we all know the results. But how did Windham vote? In our local elections for Justices of the Peace, five of the six Democrats: Colin Blazej, Marcia Clinton, Donna Koutrakos, Carolyn Partridge, and Michael Simonds were re-elected. There were no Republican candidates on the ballot. A total of 238 people voted.

Of the 329 registered voters in Windham, 243, or 74% cast a ballot, including 63 absentee ballots. For President, Barack Obama received 171 votes, John McCain 64, and Ralph Nader 2. (In case you're counting, there were 3 write-ins, and 3 spoiled votes.) For Representative to the U.S. Congress: Peter Welch received 144 votes, Jane Newton 45, Cris Ericson 30, Jerry Trudell 5, Mike Bethel 3, Thomas James Hermann 3, Mark Shepard, a write-in, one vote, and there were 12 spoiled or blank votes.

For Governor, Jim Douglas received 103 votes, Gaye Symington 89, Anthony Polina 31, Cris Ericson and Tony O'Connor received 6 each, and Peter Diamondstone 2. There were 6 blank votes. For Lieutenant Governor: Thomas W. Costello 130, Brian Dubie 83, Richard Kemp 9, and Ben Mitchell 6. There were 15 blank votes. For State Treasurer: Jeb Spaulding received 187 votes, Don Schramm 25, and Murray Ngoima 8, with 23 spoiled or blank votes. For Secretary of State: Deb Markowitz received 153 votes, Eugene J. Bifano 50, Marjorie Power 10, and Leslie Marmorale 7, with 23 spoiled or blank votes. For State Auditor: Thomas M. Salmon 173, Martha Abbott 23, and Jerry Levy 17, with 30 blank votes. For Attorney General: William H. Sorrell 143 votes, Karen Kerin 48, Charlotte Dennett 20, and Rosemarie Jackowski 6. Twenty-six ballots were blank. For State Senator, Peter E. Shumlin received 163 votes, and Jeanette White 153 (both were elected), while Aaron Diamondstone received 35 votes, with 135 blank votes. Our two State Representatives who ran unopposed: Carolyn Partridge got 200 votes and Michael J. Obuchowski got 174, there were 109 blank votes and 3 write-ins. For High Bailiff, Robert Wolcott Backus got 202 votes, there was one write-in: Fred Flintstone (!) and 40 blank votes. Oh, yes, someone wrote in Mary Popins for State Rep.

All in all, Windham citizens took their civic responsibilities seriously, knowing that in this country you can express your political views without fear of repercussions.

Winter Top Tips for Bird Lovers

- Find a way to keep your birdbath open in winter, even during freezing temperatures
- Brush snow and ice off feeders during and after storms to keep the food accessible.
- Offer suet to birds all winter. This is a way for birds to get quick energy and to build fat reserves.
- To see the most birds place feeders at varying heights and locations.
- With the beginning of a new year, start a bird journal to keep track of all the different species you see.



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November News at the Library *by Beverly Carmichael*



Our third annual "Capturing the Beauty of Windham," photo contest has ended with the best of the best chosen for our 2009 calendar. Our winners are:

First Place: Lydia Pope France for her entry, "Enchanted Forest."

Second Place: Ann Garrett for her entry, "Early Fall."

Third Place: Dawn Bower for her entry, "Butterfly – So Delicate."

Every year the images of Windham captured for our contest are spectacular and this year is no exception. The calendars are on sale now at the library every Wednesday during regular library hours, also available at our town offices or by calling Cindy Kehoe, Maureen Fitch, or Jean Coburn. The desk calendars are \$10 again this year and this is the library's only fundraiser. Please support your local library.

HOW DO YOU KNOW YOU ARE RICH? - A Contest

Yes, each of us is rich in some way, possibly many ways. At a recent meeting the Windham Writing Group wrote responses to this question and shared them with one another. The topic prompted some great replies so the group decided to invite community members to write their responses also. In fact, it will take the form of a contest. We realize that the economy is not at its high point and there is no shortage of problems to focus on, but we also believe that there are riches in all of our lives. Please send your response in the form of a short essay to ndyke@verizon.net or mail it to Nancy Dyke at 5622 Windham Hill Road by January 30, 2008. The Writing Group will read the responses and print the winners in the next issue of the News & Notes. Happy writing!

The Coming Winter ... *by Lydia Pope France*

Well, using the *tried* but not exactly *true* method of forecasting the number of "snow events" that we've talked about in previous years, looks like we are in for around 56 this year. The first "cat print" snow at our house came a little later than it sometimes does – Oct. 29th. But of course, the method says nothing about the intensity of any of our "snow events"! This summer we all noticed the unbelievable abundance of fruit and berries. It was a banner year and we all picked and canned and preserved till we couldn't look at another berry! If I heard it once, I heard it a dozen times when talking to any of the old timers and life-long Vermonters. The common wisdom says that in years of a bountiful harvest we get a very harsh winter. I guess you could say it's the universe's way of providing for tough times ... Time will tell, but I do hope you are all enjoying the beauty of these early, wintry days ...



For sound local advice...
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Alison Cummings

Londonderry
802 824 3113
ali@mainstreetre.com



REMINDER

The WCO has funds available for Windham area residents in need of fuel and/or food assistance during these difficult economic times. Please contact Peter Chamlain at 874-4342.

WINDHAM SONGBIRDS *by Ginny Crittenden*

Chances are that you have heard of the Brattleboro Community Chorus, or have even been to a concert or two performed by the group. As of this year, the BCC has a new name, the Brattleboro Concert Choir, reflecting the classic choral masterpieces that the group performs twice each year. The chorus has existed since the early 1950's, and was started by

Blanche Moyse, even before she founded the Brattleboro Music Center. Since 1989, the group has been directed by Susan Dedell. It is open to all singers by audition. Two Windham residents, Ginny and Dave Crittenden have enjoyed singing in the chorus since 1993, (with a slight hiatus of about 9 years while they were away from Vermont). Dave is currently President of the Concert Choir and Ginny is the Alto section leader.

This winter the Brattleboro Concert Choir will be singing their second Russian Orthodox Vespers by Sergei Rachmaninov and a current work by his contemporary, Alexander Gretchaninov. The two concerts in Brattleboro will be January 17 and 18 in the beautiful St. Michael's Catholic Church. The music is performed without any instruments except the voices of the 92 member concert choir. The public is cordially invited and Ginny and Dave will have tickets to sell. Call us at 874-4049 if you would like to attend.

Legislative News From Our Representative Michael Obuchowski

The 2009 session of the Vermont General Assembly convenes at 10 AM on Wednesday, January 7, 2009 at the State House. The budget, revenues, health care, property taxes, energy and the economy will be on the agenda. Decisions made under the golden dome impact our pocketbooks and our lives. Communication is essential to making good policy decisions.

Please contact me anytime with your concerns, questions, ideas or problems regarding our Vermont state government, its policies or politics.

During the session you can contact me Tuesday through Friday at the State House by phone at 1-800-322-5616 and leave a message, by mail at House of Representatives, 115 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05633-5301. My email address is obie@leg.state.vt.us. Otherwise you can reach me at 802-463-3094 or 72 Atkinson Street, Bellows Falls, VT 05101-1321. Please do not hesitate to contact me. Together we govern.

In addition, the State House has a web site providing information on legislative schedules, a members' directory and contact information, bill tracking, text of bills and resolutions, calendars, journals and much more. The address is www.leg.state.vt.us. You can use the web site to access and communicate with your legislator, too. Stay informed and hold your public servants accountable.

Thank you for your participation in our state government. And don't forget to stay in touch. Keep those cards, letters, emails and calls coming.

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Playing softly nature's icicle, glissade.

Some unseen fairy princess

Waves her graceful wand,

Sending brown leaves dancing,

Like elves across the pond.

Spun sugar-like confections

As far as one can see.

Tiny crystal droplets,

All a-glisten on each tree

And as the cover closes,

One last admiring look

Another page is turning on

Winter's picture book.

Carolyn Heidel Chase



FairPoint Customers – Here's Help for Future Phone Outages

by Lydia Pope France

We are all delighted that FairPoint has designated Windham as one of the towns that they will serve 100% with high speed internet access by 2010. Some are even more delighted that they already have their new, faster service up and running.

But quite a few of us have had ongoing problems with *basic phone service* going out quite regularly, and it recently came to a head when we had a month or more on and off outages.

During this time, I obtained three critical phone numbers, which have helped enormously. One of the problems is that when our phones go out and we go through repair to have them fixed, no one is looking at the big picture. But by registering your problem, and any related complaints, with the following numbers, you will document the trouble along with the fact that these are not once-in-a-while, occasional, weather or accident-related outages.

Often we know that entire sections of town are out and that someone else has called in the problem. But if each of us calls each time, it makes it harder for FairPoint to just do a quick, band-aid type of fix. And I promise, it doesn't take much time!

Monique McLean -- Fair Point Repair 603.743.6410

... a direct line, and she does seem to really care!

Sunni Ericksen -- VT Dept. of Public Service 802.828.2342

... NEED TO FILE A VERBAL REPORT

Erica Sands -- FairPoint Consumer Advocate 800.483.7988/press 2

... FILE SECOND REPORT HERE

The first number will help get your phone repaired (I would suggest calling this in addition to the automated repair line). The second one lets the State of Vermont Dept. of Public Service know that we are continuing to have problems. The third registers the problem within FairPoint so that they can see an ongoing/variety of phone outages within our exchange. I would remind each of them when you call that this is about Windham VT, where the problems have been continuous ...

In the last go round, repair kept doing a minor fix and closing out the job, only to have our phones go out again hours or days later. By keeping the pressure on, they sent a crew that then found other, deeper problems which they addressed.

Both Carolyn Partridge and Michael Obuchowski have been involved and are working the system from their end, but that will only be effective if FairPoint has ongoing documentation of these issues. As someone said, the squeaky wheel gets the grease, but it is the squeaky, *documented* wheel that gets truly fixed! Should you have the misfortune of an outage, please take the time and effort to call all three numbers ... You will help yourself, and in the long run it will help us all ...

A Harvest Celebration in Windham *by Ian K. Bailes*



The Windham Meeting House was bursting at the seams as over 125 hungry people sat down for the Windham Community Organization's annual Harvest Supper on November 8th. Not only were Windham's faithful residents gathered together, but there were also participants from out of town/state.

As we entered the Meeting House, we were welcomed with the smells of delicious food...there was ham, (the best ever tasted), mashed squash, beans and other delicious foods, all made by members of the WCO. The proceeds of the evening went to the Windham Community Organization, which helps the people of Windham who are in need of assistance with fuel, utilities, food and other emergencies that come up. The hearty meal was followed by a lot of great conversation over dessert. The group was treated to square dancing called by Sally Newton and her supporting musicians. Young and old gathered on the dance floor and really "whooped it up until the cows came home".

A Letter of Appreciation

On the morning of October 18th, after just coming back from a morning walk, we were pleasantly surprised to meet a group of Windham residents gathering in front of our house. After warm introductions and a neighborly chat, we learned that our new friends had come to replace the trees that had been removed from the area surrounding the Golding Road bridge. To our surprise, just a few weeks before, we pulled down the road and saw that the landscape had been transformed to make way for a repair. The road which we had been traveling down for over thirty six years (before the birth of our first child) suddenly had changed dramatically.

We would like to thank each and every volunteer who took their precious time and energy to replace what had been lost. Thanks to their generosity, the beauty of the land will be restored to our now adult children and four young grandchildren. We have so many wonderful memories of our son and daughter with each visit we took to "the cabin" from Connecticut. We are so fortunate that our grandchildren will be able to grow up making their own precious memories in such a beautiful place.

With much gratitude, Bruce and Jo-Ann Rogers, Norwalk, CT

Editor's Note: Thanks to the Windham Conservation Committee for their reclamation work at the bridge.



Astonishing distant views, complete quiet, unparalleled privacy; Mtn. tops, valley streams & a pond, minutes from 4-season activities, this VT vernacular farmhouse offers contemporary updates & amenities plus room to grow. Newly hand-crafted P&B barn/garage with heated work-shop & loft is superb! Inspire your creative self, live where panoramic is real & nature thrives. \$668,000 Call Barrett & Valley Assoc., Inc at 843-2390.

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to the Editor at the
above address or preferably by email to
windhamnews@hotmail.com

GET INVOLVED
IN WINDHAM!

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

Every Sunday and Thursday - **Valley Bible Church** has services: *Sunday* - 9:45 AM Sunday School, 11:00 AM Worship, followed by lunch and 1:00 PM Bible Study; *Thursday* - 7:00 PM Prayer Meeting and Bible Study.

Every Wednesday - **Windham Town Library** open at Meeting House from 3:00 to 5:00 PM. Also at that time: reading group on first Wednesday of the month.

Wednesdays, 9:00 to 12:00 - **Town Listers'** office hours

Monday, Jan 5, 12, 19 and 26 - Feb 2, 9, 16 and 23. **Select Board** meets at 6:30 PM at the Town Office:
Public Invited.

Wednesday, Jan 21 and Feb 18 - **Brown Bag Chat Group** at noon at the Meeting House.

Thursday, Jan 15 and Feb 12 - **Windham Planning Commission** at 7:15 PM at the Town Office

Friday, Jan 30 - **Deadline for Submissions to Writing Contest!** (See Article pg. 8)

Wednesday, Jan 28 and Feb 25 - **Windham Community Organization** meets at 7:00 PM at the Meeting House

Tuesday, Thursday and Friday - **Town Office Hours** - 10:00 to 3:00

Save the date - Town Meeting and Pot Luck Lunch - March 3, 2009 at 10:00 AM