

The TUNBRIDGE Quarterly



News and information
from your town offices and
local volunteer efforts.

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February 15, 2006

The TUNBRIDGE Quarterly
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Janet Zug 889-9602

This issue of the Quarterly is being mailed one month later than originally planned. I will be sticking with this schedule and the next issues will be mailed on the 15th of May, August and November.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to write entries for this issue. And thank you for all the encouragement I have received from our community!

If you have questions or comments about The TQ- call, write or email me at janet@zugglass.com

Town Logo Contest

Wendy McCullough 889-5521

There has been talk at the Town Office about coming up with a Town Logo that we can use on all Tunbridge media materials. It has been decided that we will hold a contest. We are asking Tunbridge artists (any age!) to submit artwork to Wendy at the Town Office. The deadline is **April 15th**. The finalists will be printed in the next TQ and a vote will be held. Finally the most favored will be printed in the August issue of the Quarterly.

Tunbridge Ice Skating Rink

Thanks to a generous outpouring from the community, Tunbridge now has a skating rink. The Recreation Commission made a plea for contributions, hoping to raise about \$2,600 to get the rink up and running. The community responded with donations adding up to \$4,774. That does not include the valuable time and effort that was donated by volunteers to help construct and, now, to maintain the rink. The “extra” money will be used to help maintain the rink over time and purchase lights, as the ones being used now are on loan from The Fair Association.

The school now includes skating as one of its electives. The rink is available for community use, weather permitting, after school and on weekends. And it is certainly getting a lot of use. Even if you don't want to get on the ice, it is worth stopping by for a look see: Skaters of all ages, styles and experience having a great time on winter's day.

Tunbridge Treasurer

Anne Mallary- 889-5521

Office hours: Tues & Wed 9-12 1-4, Fri 9-11:30

The Selectmen's budget for the fiscal year 06/07 has no significant changes. To make the process clearer we have eliminated Delinquent taxes as an income item. The same amount was always added to the tax amount to be raised. A new income item is Hold Harmless. This is the amount sent from the state to cover taxes reduced by current use.

Appropriations, an amount to be raised by taxes, has increased. The Fire Dept. is asking for \$30,000.00 to add to their equipment fund in addition to \$25,000 for operating expenses. The Ambulance is asking for \$11,000, the new cemetery wants \$6,000.00 and the town is asking for \$25,000 to finish the water system for the town hall and town office.

There are three big changes in the Highway budget. It includes the addition of a full-time person, and the purchase of a new truck. The additional person adds about \$25,000 to the budget and the truck adds about \$30,000. Also planned is an addition to the garage to store flammable materials. This is estimated to cost about \$11,000.

What does this mean as far as your taxes? They will go up.

	FY06/07	FY 05/06	FY 04/05	FY 03/04
Tax rate	Est. .65	.51	.39	.43

This tax rate is based on last year's Grand List. The grand list usually increases each year, which will make the tax rate go down. Also, depending on any surplus funds, the tax rate could go down.

The amount of Delinquent taxes was down this year. Approximately 5.4% went delinquent this year, compared to about 6.7% the two previous years.

Tunbridge Fair Association

Rob Howe- 889-5555

The Tunbridge Fair dates are **Sept. 14,15,16, and 17th** 2006. The date of the fair always falls on the second weekend following Labor Day. The theme for this years fair honors Antique Hill. There will be special events relating to this unique part of our fair; the new machinery barn will have new additions, and our promotional material will emphasize Antique Hill. The new poster is available with artwork done by Tunbridge resident Michelle Landry. It features a wagon wheel with images of workers, crafters and employees of the fair. Anyone in Tunbridge, or other Tunbridge Quarterly readers are invited to participate in a contest to identify the characters on the poster. The prize is a seasons pass for the fair. Bring your guesses to Rebecca Beguin at the fair office. Rebecca works Mon., Wed., and Fri. mornings during winter and early spring. She can also sell you a copy of the poster, or you can get one at the South Royalton Market for \$5.

At the VT Farm Show in Barre, the Fair received a Best of Show award for the most attractive booth. This is the second time in three years that our booth was recognized with this award. Our compliments go to Roger Morgan who oversees the efforts in creating the booth and finding volunteers to man it for three full days. The Farm Show booth helps to promote the fair and it's agricultural heritage, and to look for new venues for events to use the grounds during the summer months. Any inquiries about available dates for weddings, parties, or other events may be made at the main office 889-5555.

Tunbridge Fact

Taken from "Tunbridge Past" by Euclid Farnham

The Tunbridge Fair was started in 1867 by The Union Agricultural Society at the Elisha Lougee farm in North Tunbridge. It moved to its present location in 1875. It was christened "a little world's fair" by the former Lt. Gov. Martin of Chelsea.

Tunbridge School Board

Anissa Morrison- 889-3535

The Tunbridge School Board would like to share with the community that we recently completed negotiations with the Tunbridge Teacher's Association. The result is a master contract effective from July 1, 2005 until June 30, 2008. The process of negotiations lasted from October 2004 until January of 2006. After the board established its goals and proposed ground rules for the process we worked with the chief association negotiator, Walt Garner, on extensive language changes to the negotiated agreement. These modifications to existing language clarified and updated many terms of the contract.

In April of 2005 first proposals dealing with money related issues, salary and insurance, were exchanged. As the school year closed and the district transitioned to a new superintendent our negotiations reached a point where neither side had additional monetary offers to share.

Impasse was formally declared in early September. The process of agreeing on a mediator and setting a date for mediation began. Once impasse was declared the board hired Dennis Wells to represent the districts interests throughout the remaining process. In early December the mediation session occurred. Mediator Ira Lobel spent over 5 hours going between both groups. At the end of the session we did not have a formal agreement but had moved closer. After a couple of additional exchanges and clarifications both groups in mid-January approved a new master contract.

The results of this process are a 4% yearly increase in salary with minimal base salary increases. The TCS staff will also increase their percentage of health insurance co-pay by 1% a year.

Please do not hesitate to contact a board member or the superintendent if you have questions.

We look forward to seeing you at the annual meeting at **7:30pm Monday, March 6th** at the school.

Tunbridge Grange #53

Robin Russell- 889-3246

Tunbridge Grange is a volunteer local organization that has been part of community life here since the early 1930's. As its newest member, I am submitting this article to invite the people of Tunbridge to take note of what is happening both locally and nationally. Founded in 1867 the Grange is responding to the changing social and economic climates that our town governments and families are facing. However, most of us don't know or understand much about it. I'm grateful to be discovering how fortunate we are to still have one in our midst.

On Feb. 3rd, Grange #53 partnered up with the White River Grange #384 to sponsor a community contra dance in Royalton. Vermont Law School chipped in too. They hired some of Vermont's finest musicians and came to the dance to greet people. It brought people from all over together for a night of wholesome fun. More events will be hosted throughout the year along the First Branch River to help raise awareness of the Grange and its potential to serve the interests and needs of its neighbors.

Friends, partners and new members are all needed for its survival. If you have a project, idea, need or special interest in which you would like to involve the community in, think of the Grange as a place where you might realize that idea. Membership is only \$20.00. Meetings are held monthly on first Wednesdays. The Hall is available for rent to private parties as well as groups. If you would like to know more about the Grange or membership information, you can contact Robin at the number above.

Tunbridge Facts

Taken from "Tunbridge Past" by Euclid Farnham

North Tunbridge had a Post Office from 1854 until 1911.

At one time there were seven major dams in Tunbridge built across the First Branch of White River.

Our Town Office building was the Market School. It was built in 1904 as the first Tunbridge two-room school house. It cost \$2,568.27 to construct.

Winter Evenings

At the Tunbridge Public Library

7 p.m. at the Tunbridge Public Library

All programs are free; donations are welcomed.

For information, snow dates call 889-9404

February 23 - Artist Woody Jackson

Holy Cow!

March 9 - Rural Vermont Policy Director Amy Shollenberger
The Farmers' Dilemma: GMOs and Small Farms

March 23 - Musician & media producer Mark Greenberg
Kitchen Tunks & Parlor Songs

First Branch Ambulance & Rescue Co.

Pam Howe Caron- 763-8756

After a few months of relatively quiet time, the crews have had a very busy last couple of months. Thanks to all the volunteers who have given up their time to serve us. The Board is currently working on a plan for a new (or newer) Rescue truck. There is a committee researching our options for the replacement vehicle. You will certainly hear more about this and anyone interested in working on this project please give us a call.

We are looking for a few good men/women to aid in some fund raising endeavors. Also, as this is Town Meeting time I am pleased to let everyone know that we are again not increasing our request for funding from the two towns we serve. Our goal has been and will continue to be; to give high quality service while maintaining our costs at an affordable level.

Tunbridge Broadband Project

Janet Zug 889-9602

A committee was formed last November to work on bringing high-speed internet access to Tunbridge. If you are interested, please fill out the survey inserted in the TQ and mail it back. Or you can sign on to www.tunbridgebroadband.org and fill out the survey there.

Committee members: Henry and Cornelia Swayze, Kathi Terami, Janet Zug, Michael Sacca.

Tunbridge Town Clerk

Wendy McCullough- 889-5521

Office hours: Mon 8-11:30 1-4,

Tues & Thurs- 8-12 1-4, Wed. 9-6, Fri 8-12

This past fall Vermont Town Clerks began training to participate in the new state-wide checklist program run by the Secretary of State and the Elections Division. We are all in hopes that the system will be up and running smoothly for the 2006 Primary elections.

Any resident that is not on the voter checklist may register at the clerk's office. You must provide a Vermont Drivers License or other Vermont DMV identification. The deadline to register to vote at the March town & school meetings is noon, **Monday, Feb. 27**. Applications are available at the clerk's office.

On Jan. 11 the Town Moderator and I attended a Town Meeting Tune-up Seminar sponsored by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT). Moderators, Clerks, and Select board members from 32 towns attended. Many ideas were shared. The VLCT legal team answered questions.

Please call me at the Town office if you have any questions about town records, elections or the upcoming town meeting.

Administrative Assistant

Wendy McCullough 889-5521

The Select board spent the end of 2005 working on its budget for the 2006-2007 fiscal year. We are now preparing for Town Meeting Day, which is set to begin at **10 a.m. March 7** at the Tunbridge Central School

The Road Crew has been dealing this winter with frequent weather changes that have resulted in a multitude of variable road conditions. Your road crew works hard to keep the town roads in good condition for winter travel. We, as drivers, must remember to take the weather into consideration while traveling our roads and the roads in surrounding towns. If you hear school has been cancelled, that is a good indication that there may be some delays and that extra time is needed to travel safely.

Please do not hesitate to call if you have any questions or concerns about our town's business.

Transfer Station & Recycling

Mary-Alice Leonard-Heath- 685-3035

Saturdays 9-3

Several years ago, the CVSWMD board voted to move toward a more regional approach of providing disposal services to communities. The concern is that all communities, regardless of population, receive equitable and expansive services from the CVSWMD. The idea was to build (or add to existing facilities) full-service transfer stations that would accept a wider variety of materials. The facilities would be shared by several towns. Many areas of concern have been explored such as traffic patterns, community disposal habits, etc. Geographically it made sense to group Tunbridge with Chelsea and Strafford.

The CVSWMD has been meeting with the Tunbridge and Chelsea Selectboards over the past year about the future of the CVSWMD support of local transfer stations. Currently the Tunbridge Transfer Station receives financial assistance from CVSWMD for recycling. Additionally, they hold the Tire, Household Hazardous Waste and Electronics collections. They provide technical assistance to us and support in working with the state regarding certification. The Town of Tunbridge has been open to discuss and explore all possibilities and are approaching the prospect with caution. An engineer was hired to look at Tunbridge and Chelsea to determine availability and appropriateness of sites. No decisions have been made and the CVSWMD board has decided to resume the discussions next year.

We were forced to raise disposal fees at the Transfer Station and loose truckloads truckloads are no longer accepted as they strain our compactor and do not necessarily promote recycling:

13 gal - \$2.00

30 gal - \$3.00

containers not bagged - \$5.00

contractor bags - \$7.50

Please mark your calendars:

Bulky item collection(furniture, etc.):**First two Saturdays in May**

Household Hazardous Waste and Electronics Collection:**May 27**

Tunbridge Board of Listers

Judie Lewis- 889-3571

The Board of Listers is heading into its busy season. All properties must be listed, as they exist on April 1 of a given year. We may visit a property at any time, but we can only assess for what was there as of April 1. For example: You are in process of construction, and, as of April 1, you do not have any plumbing or electrical work. We visit May 1 and by that time the work is complete. We must assess the property for that tax year as though the plumbing and electrical work is incomplete.

The Lister annual work must be completed by June 4, the last day we may lodge the abstract of the Grand List. The Grand List must set forth the values of all taxable properties listed in alphabetical order by owner's name. On the day we lodge the abstract we are required to send out notices to all property owners whose assessments has changed. The notice must show the amount of change, give a brief explanation, and state the time and date of grievance hearings.

At the first of the year we had approximately 60 more places we expect to visit between January and mid May. This includes new building starts (dwellings or outbuildings), updates of construction that were incomplete as of April 1st last year, and dwellings that have been renovated.

Visiting properties is the easiest part of the job. Assigning a value is the most difficult. We use a computer program that provides the cost of construction. We use that cost and our knowledge of recent sales to make our best guess at what the property would sell for and then compare that value with other similar properties. It is often an exhausting process that finds us debating, researching, and second-guessing ourselves on even a minimal change of assessment.

In addition, each year the State changes slightly the value of property enrolled in the current use program. There are presently 152 properties enrolled in the program. We must review every property for this change and send notices to all enrollees. Under the new laws, the State sends us a list of all properties owners that have filed a homestead. We must review the properties and make sure that all homestead and housesite values are correct.

Tunbridge Church

Judie Lewis- 889-3571

The Tunbridge Church will be looking forward to its activities to celebrate spring and Easter in the next few months.

Sometime around the beginning of spring, the church holds its annual Sugar-On-Snow gathering. Watch the church board and The Herald for notices of the exact date.

Easter falls on April 16th this year. The church holds a sunrise service after which there is a yummy breakfast at the Town Hall. The time and place of the service will be determined closer to the date. The regular 10 a.m. service on Easter is a joyous festival including music by both choirs.

Lent begins March 1st and the First Choir (youth choir) will offer music for the first Sunday in Lent, March 5th. Palm Sunday is April 9th and the service usually borders on rowdy both choirs singing lots of "Hosannas". The Good Friday service is at 7:30 p.m. April 14th. This service is a candlelight communion service.

The First Choir has expanded its activities. It meets on Tuesdays after school, first at the Parish House for snacks and chat, and then at 4:30 moves to the church for rehearse until 5:45. The choir often takes special trips for concerts or other activities.

The church Parish Council recently held a reorganization meeting. Townsend Swayze was elected a council president.

Our church pastor is David Wolfe; music director, Judie Lewis; and First Choir Director, Janet Zug.

The Tunbridge Church is a nondenominational fellowship. Worship services are at 10 a.m. throughout the year.

Tunbridge Community Food Shelf

Sue Barnaby- 889-3736 David Wolfe- 889-5577

The Tunbridge Community Food Shelf is open **Tuesdays and Fridays from 4-6 pm.** The winter is long and hard for families, especially with the high fuel prices for houses and cars; so please remember community members that use the food shelf. Donations of money may be sent to: Euclid Farnham, treasurer, 24 The Crossroad, Tunbridge, Vt. 05077 or donations of food may be donated by calling Sue Barnaby or David Wolfe at the phone numbers above. Thank you to all who have already helped us by donating this winter season!

Collector of Delinquent Taxes

Jackie Higgins- 889-3566

The total outstanding Delinquent Taxes at this time are \$59,000.00.

If you are delinquent and have not set up a payment schedule please contact me as soon as possible to do so. I am currently working on the next round of tax sales, which tentatively are scheduled for mid-March

Tunbridge Volunteer Fire Department

Jena Trombly- 889-2804

Over the past several months Fire Department volunteers have been working with area contractors and local citizens on purchasing and installing a generator to provide electricity to the firehouse in case of a power failure. Additionally, we have received approval from Ron Caron to install a new repeater in his silo on the top of the Strafford Road. The new more powerful repeater will ensure that our volunteers will receive crucial call signals when they are needed to respond to an emergency call. Both the generator and the repeater were made available to our town through grants received from the Department of Homeland Security. We would like to express our thanks to JD Gas, Gordie Benson, Ron Caron and Chapman Foundations for their assistance in working with us on these projects.

Coming up on **March 9th** we have our Annual Meeting and potluck dinner. Please join us at **6:00 PM** on the 9th for a potluck dinner followed by our Annual Meeting when we will have elections for the coming year and hear reports from our officers and committees.

The TVFD raffle winners for the 2005 prizes are as follows: Lover's Knot Quilt sewn by Annie Laver was won by Dana Spencer Gould, who is a Red Cross Blood Drive Nurse. Second prize, the Genies Vase handblown by Janet Zug was won by Julie Lancaster of Randolph. Third prize, a covered basket crafted by Bev Howe went to Stacy Flanders in N. Tunbridge. Items from other talented Tunbridge artisans will be featured in the 2006 raffle, which will kick off at Town Meeting.

Tunbridge Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Jim Wick 889-3524

Tunbridge Neighbors Helping Neighbors has been started to help provide services to local residents through volunteer action. We started providing services after a kick-off potluck in October and have received quite a few calls. We have about 40 volunteers who have agreed to help. Some of the things we have taken care of so far include:

Provided transportation to a medical appointment,

Changed a tire,

Installed a lock,

Arranged for a loan of an emergency generator,

Picked something up in W. Lebanon,

Helped someone change a surgical dressing,

Provided food for a shut-in and her caregiver,

Put someone in touch with a state agency that

could provide assistance,

Provided medical equipment to an ill person,

Help stack wood,

Helped clean up after a house fire,

(as did many other people)

Helped someone drop their car at the auto mechanic

Helped someone use their computer.

If you would like help with something, the number to call is:

889-3437

One of us will take your request and try to line up a volunteer. There is no charge for the service and you don't have to join anything. There are no dues or fees. We are being supported by generous donations from local residents and businesses. This service is for anyone. Our emphasis will be to provide services for seniors, but anyone is eligible. If the request is reasonable and we can find a volunteer, we will do it. Everyone needs help with something sometime, so please call.

Board Members: Bunchie Angell, Bill Chester, Felicity Swayze, Frank LePore, Jim Wick, David Wolfe. Call us if you need more information about this. We also have brochures at the Town Clerk, School, North Tunbridge General Store, Post Office, and Library.

Tunbridge Public Library

Jean Wolfe, Librarian 889-940

Hours: Sun 11:30-1:30, Mon 3-8, Wed 6-8, Fri 2-6, Sat 10-4

Handicapped accessible

Story Hour: Stories and refreshments for children of all ages are offered the **first and third Thursdays** of each month at **6:30 p.m.** Topics will be Quilts (Feb. 16), Wolves, Foxes and Coyotes (March 2), The Color Green (March 16), Rabbits (April 6), Monkeys (April 20), Horses (May 4). Bring the kids and enjoy the fun!

Art Exhibits: The next opening will be a memorial celebration of the many talents of the late David Binzen. On display will be a variety of his works. The opening will be from **11:30 to 1:30** on **March 12** and will run through April 3. In April the library will host a display of art by Andy Wasserman with an opening reception on **April 9** from **11:30 to 1:30**.

Income Tax Time: The IRS is no longer supplying paper forms and instructions to public outlets. The library can access forms off the internet for you. Please come in or call if you need assistance.

Town Meeting: Join Tunbridge's great pie bakers in supplying the famous pie table at town meeting dinner! Call the library and let us know that you are willing to help. Don't bake? Help is always welcome at the time or donating something in advance. Call and let us know.

Plant Sale Planning: The Tunbridge Library Plant Team has exciting news! Tripp Edwards, a professional gardener, has agreed to open his Tunbridge facilities to potters and to oversee the production operation. A new location, a new season, and the perfect time for YOU to join the team! For more reasons to join the Plant team read the library column in The Herald.

Tunbridge Planning Commission

Michael Sacca- 889-3210

The Planning Commission held a total of seven public meetings this year to gather public input for a town plan rewrite. Themes developed over the course of the sessions which were guided by the Planning Commission's suggestions. Topping the long list were: Maintaining our agricultural heritage, creating affordable housing, discussion of land use issues including zoning, promoting a local economic base including broadband, creating places for community news: bulletin board, town web page, newsletter, providing local daycare, elderly care and services, providing recreation opportunities, supporting emergency services, and creating youth opportunities.

The Planning Commission will now write the town plan with technical assistance from Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission. There will be opportunities for the public to comment on it. It will then go to the Selectboard for approval. The deadline for the work to be completed is late May.

An Agricultural Survey was conducted by the planning commission and was coordinated by member Dan Rudell. Much valuable baseline information was gathered giving a "state of agriculture" picture across the town. The maps and tabulated information that have been generated from the survey will help inform the town plan in the agriculture and land use sections. There will be a display at Town Meeting of the Ag survey.

We would like to welcome new planning commission members, Ginny Burham, Liz York and Gary Mullen. The Planning Commission meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the town offices. The meetings are open to the public.

Tunbridge Playground Committee

Jerilyn Mulvey- 889-9414

Although the ground is frozen and covered with snow, the playground committee has purchased several playground structures that will be put in place as soon as Mother Nature allows! We are still in the planning stages of the basketball court and would love to hear some thoughts regarding the court. If anyone is interested in being a part of the spring time work bees or in helping with the basketball court, please call the number above.