

The TUNBRIDGE Quarterly



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

Issue #7
February 15, 2007

The TUNBRIDGE Quarterly
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Tunbridge Recreation Department

Thornton Hayslett- 889-9479

SKATING RINK: The skating rink is open at last, thanks to cold weather! Thanks to the volunteers who helped set up the rink earlier this year, and to the “ice angels” who have helped with shoveling and maintenance. Special thanks to the Fair Association for the use of lights again this year and to Jim Tracy for leading the effort to set them up. There is a box of donated skates at the school for kids to use on recess and during the after-school program. If you have any outgrown skates in good condition, or if you’re in a thrift shop and see a bargain pair that you’d like to buy and contribute, you can bring them to the school.

K-4 BASKETBALL: Pete Howe has been leading a lively K-2 group on Saturday mornings, and Rosemary Distel and Charlotte Mullen have been coaching boys and girls teams for the 3rd and 4th grades. The older group is playing Saturday games against Bethel, South Royalton, Chelsea, and Rochester. Thanks to Pete, Rosemary, and Charlotte for working with these groups, and to everyone who has helped by refereeing or running the clock. Thanks also to Tracy Vesper for her help with scheduling and logistics.

SKI-RUNNERS: This learn-to-ski program at Suicide Six ski area in Pomfret is a great way to introduce kids (1st grade and up) to downhill and cross-country skiing without spending a lot of money. It’s also a good way to improve skills as an adult skier, by volunteering to be an instructor or assistant. The Rec. program helps to facilitate Tunbridge participation in this program by coordinating a shared bus with South Royalton School.

WINTER CARNIVAL: I’m going to propose a date of Saturday, March 10 for an afternoon of skating, snow-sculpture, and other outdoor activities (like cross-country skiing or snow-shoeing) at the school, followed by a community potluck and game night (or perhaps a family dance)--- save the date; more info later.

SUMMER: Please take a moment to fill out a summer activity questionnaire when they come out. Completed surveys can be returned to Carrie McDonnell at the Tunbridge One Planet program office (at TCS) or to Wendy at the Town Clerk’s office. Thanks again to all who have helped in many ways over the last several months.

Tunbridge Treasurer

Anne Mallary- 889-5521

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

Due to the closing of the Town office building because of mold, I have been working from the school. I am looking forward to the day when we can all be back in the building.

The estimate from the company who did the work on the town hall and office building was \$41,842 for the offices and \$5804 for the town hall. This money and some more for cleaning the buildings will be spent, and the town will be over budget on the repairs and maintenance line item in the budget. No money has been budgeted in the next fiscal year to pay for this, so you will probably see a line with a tax rate on your tax bill to cover the deficit in the selectmen’s budget due to this cost. Depending on the Grand list and if there is any surplus in the selectmen’s budget, that amount could be at most \$.044.

The selectmen’s budget has increased by \$13,344, approximately 4.5%. The tax rate will stay about the same because there is an increase in non-tax revenue. Of course that will change as stated above,

The Highway budget increased by \$5150, a 1% increase. The tax rate will also increase by 1%, from \$.368 to approximately \$.372. The final figures will depend on the Grand list which is recorded on April 1, and any surplus or deficit.

Appropriations are voted on at Town Meeting. The amounts presented in the town report reflect a \$5330 increase. A quick way to think about the tax consequences is that an increase in the budget of \$11000 will raise the tax rate by \$.01.

See you at Town Meeting.

The TUNBRIDGE Quarterly

Janet Zug 889-9602

Due to the closing of the town office (where the copier is) this issue of the TQ is being printed by a local company.

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions about the TUNBRIDGE Quarterly please call, write or email me at janet@zugglass.com.

Tunbridge Broadband Project

Janet Zug- 889-9602

Currently the TBC is waiting for proposals from two wireless Internet providers that are interested in servicing our area. These companies are WaveComm of West Lebanon, NH and Globalnet of Essex Junction, VT. Finding a “perfect company” to provide Tunbridge with a wireless network today is impossible. The wireless Internet providers that are available are extremely busy. This is a growing industry and it will take time for the companies to catch up with the demand. Our committee would love to find a group of enthusiastic techies that are interested in starting a new company with our region as their first customer! (anyone?)

Tunbridge was not chosen to receive a grant from the most recent round of grant funding. Four \$50,000 grants were awarded from a pool of 13 applicants. Projects that were chosen had either applied before or have no high-speed service available in their town at all. It is likely there will be more grant funding available in the future. Tunbridge has some DSL and cable service available, as well as around 100 addresses that Wavecomm is able to service now with broadband. Write gina@wavecomm.com with your E-911 address to see if you can receive their service.

In Governor Douglas’ Inaugural Address he proposed a goal that Vermont be the first true “e-state.” He is creating the VT Telecommunications Authority to work on making this happen through organization, legislation and funding. Our committee hopes to work with this group in the future to create the best network possible. Things are shifting due to possible new legislation and also new technology in the equipment that is needed to create a wireless network.

While we do not have answers on when high-speed Internet will reach the hills of Tunbridge, we are continuing to work on it. In the meantime, if you really need to feel the speed, you can go to the Tunbridge Public Library and use the computers there or your laptop. Please contact us if you would like more information or if you would like to help with the project.

Committee Members: Henry Swayze, Kathi Terami, Janet Zug.

Listers con’t

It is false that the listers can be required to purchase a property for its assessed value. No kidding, on more than one occasion a property owner has announced that the board needs to draw up the papers for such a purchase. These days, if Helen, Ben and I were able, we would be happy to purchase property for the listed value and, then, resell it at a nice profit.

Meanwhile, if your property has been changed in a way that would affect its probable selling price, you should expect a visit from the Listers. All town property is assessed as it exists on April 1st. We inspect properties into May, but we may only consider what was actually there on April 1. For example if you are thinking of moving a double-wide into town, you might want to wait until April 2nd.

Board Members: Judie Lewis, Ben Wolfe, Helen O’Donnell

Central VT Community Land Trust

Shawn Hansen (802-476-4493 ext. 211)

Last year the NeighborWorks® Homeownership Center at the Central Vermont Community Land Trust in Barre (<http://www.CVCLT.org>) proudly announced the creation of the Green Mountain Loan Fund, with funding provided by the Vermont Community Development Program. This loan fund provides affordable loans and technical assistance for low and moderate-income homeowners throughout Orange, Washington, and Lamoille Counties to perform critical health and safety upgrades to their homes.

The application process with the Green Mountain Loan Fund is unique and extremely customer friendly. Our staff will work together with the applicant to fill out the paperwork, get estimates and see the job to completion.

If you or someone you know are interested in or have questions about the Green Mountain Loan Fund, please contact Garrath Gorton at 476-4493 extension 215.

Tunbridge Grange #384

Robin Russell- 889-3246

Grange #384 in No. Tunbridge has a mission to serve the local community. A small group of hard-working folks are making great strides towards fulfilling this mission. Currently, progress is being made towards making the building handicap accessible. Funds are being raised through events which serve the community, such as dinners, dances and raffles. Please support these events and join us in the fun of making them happen. You do not need to be a member. This organization is here to serve the interests of the residents of Tunbridge.

Collaborations to get this project underway are being made with Cover Home Repair, an organization based in White River Junction. Cover's primary mission is to organize volunteers to do urgent residential home repairs for low-income owners in the Upper Valley Region. In an effort to reach out to the wider regions, they have agreed to provide assistance to the Grange in the design and building of this project. The project will require crews of volunteers, whom we hope will be local folks from our own community as well as others from around the area. By collaborating on this project, Cover hopes to establish a "hub" in this area of local volunteers who might help on residential projects for people who also live in our local community. We are very appreciative of their willingness to help launch this effort which will benefit several people.

Monthly Grange meetings are held on **first Wednesdays** at **7 pm**. All are welcome. Watch for announcements regarding the Lecturer's schedule of speakers coming this spring. For information go to www.vermontstategranges.org. The hall is available for rent by private parties. Please call Mary Roberts at: 685-2143.

The Mountain House Dance Company will hold it's 2nd annual clogging show at the Tunbridge School on Saturday, **March 17th at 6:30 pm**. Adults-\$4 Children-\$2. An evening of dance and traditional music played by local musicians should help chase away some winter blues! A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the Grange Hall Project.

We are also looking for ways to better serve the youth of our community. Ideas can be submitted to Robin Russell at 889-3246, robin@newacadiafarm.com.

Tunbridge Volunteer Fire Department

Jena Young- 889-2804

For this edition of the Tunbridge Quarterly we wanted to take an opportunity to introduce you to our trucks. The TVFD currently has 4 fire trucks, each with unique features that serve our town in a variety of ways. Here's a bit about each truck to help you to get to know them better:

Tunbridge 1, made by Pierce Arrow, is our primary attack truck. It is a pumper engine that was built in 1991. We purchased it used in 1999. It carries the bulk of our special equipment for our firefighters such as SCBA's (self contained breathing apparatus), tools, a thermal imager and a great deal of hand-held hose. This truck is in good condition and is by far the most expensive truck in our fleet. This truck is also incredibly valuable in the case of a structure fire, as it can apply large amounts of water quickly to help knock down & contain a large fire.

Tunbridge 2, built by International, is 28 years old and is our truck that is in most need of replacing. This truck has a front mounted pump with a large hose reel that holds approximately 1800 feet of large diameter fire hose. This truck can sit at a water source such as a pond or river and can supply Tunbridge 1 with the water it needs. Because this truck is old, it can be difficult to find replacement parts. In past years, it has been out of commission from time to time while we searched for replacement parts. The cost of replacing this truck is expected to run about \$270,000.

Tunbridge 3, also an International, is our newest truck, purchased in 2004 from funds we received from a grant from the Department of Homeland Security. This truck is a tanker and holds about 2000 gallons of water. This truck can fill up with water at a water source, and bring that water to the location of the fire. It can quickly dump the water into a portable pool, and then leave the fire scene to go & get more water.

Tunbridge 4 is our fastest response vehicle and is the only truck in our fleet that can fit in our covered bridges. It is smaller than the rest of our trucks, it carries a small amount of water and some foam. It can be especially effective in combating & containing an early fire and a small fire. This truck is 23 years old and in fair condition. It will probably need to be replaced in 5 - 10 years.

Hopefully that gives you all some basic information about the fire trucks that serve our town. Stay tuned for more information and discussion about our trucks and replacement plans at Town Meeting.

Tunbridge Town Clerk Administrative Assisitant

Wendy McCullough- 889-5521

As most of you know the Town Office and Town Hall Buildings have been closed since December 19, 2006. Due to mold growth in the basement of both buildings. It has been a process getting this cleaned up and to date we are in hopes of being back in our offices by the time you receive this issue of the TQ.

The Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for **March 6, 2007 at 10 am**; you will be receiving your Annual Town Report soon, scheduled mailing date is February 20. The warning that is printed in the Town Report will include an extra article at Town Meeting. Art 10 was added to read: Will the Town vote: monies left over in the Capital Improvement Reserve Fund for the water system; to pay down the expense for the mold removal from the Town Office and the Town Hall Buildings. With that money included, the clean-up job will cost the town and additional \$8,000 to \$10,000 dollars.

We hope to see all of you on March 6 for good discussions and a fabulous lunch.

Town Meeting

Janet Zug 889-9602,

If you've never attended Town Meeting do consider coming for the first time this year. Tunbridge has a fairly high voter turnout rate compared to neighboring towns, but we want to be first! The meetings are held in the school gym . The town meeting will be on **March 6th at 10 am**. The School Budget meeting will be on **March 5th at 7:30 pm**. There is also a pre-town meeting scheduled for **February. 27 at 7:30 pm**. Come to listen and be heard if you so choose.

Serving in local office is a great way to give to your community, meet your neighbors and help make things happen. For a list of town offices and job descriptions go to the VT Secretary of State webpage <http://www.sec.state.vt.us/municipal/pubs/who'swho.html> Our town report has a list of the current town officers and those coming up for election. If you are interested in a certain job, and want more information about the duties and actual work load, you can talk with our town clerk and/or contact a current or former officer. The State website is also a great place to read about what happens at town meeting.

Ultimately the more townspeople that get involved, the more our town will reflect the values of it's people.

We can make a difference in the world, right here in our own town.

Office hours:

**Mon 8-11:30 1-4,
Tues & Thurs- 8-12 1-4,
Wed. 9-6, Fri 8-12**

Transfer Station & Recycling

Mary-Alice Leonard-Heath- 685-3035

Saturdays from 9:00 - 3:00.

You will notice some big changes when you make your next visit to the Transfer Station. First of all, I hope everyone had a chance to stop by and wish Evelyn well in her retirement. It is hard to imagine that Evelyn is retiring, and will take some getting used to.

You will notice that we now have only two boxes. Instead of sorting items into a bin for fibers and a bin for containers, recyclables are collected together and sorted at the Materials Recovery Facility in Chittenden County. This eliminates the problems that occur when items are improperly sorted. And, this makes it a whole lot easier for everyone to recycle!

We are looking for subs for the Transfer Station. Please give Wendy a call at 889-5521 to request a job description and an application. If you enjoy being around people, seeing your neighbors more often and making a decent hourly wage, please consider this opportunity.

If you have ANY questions that the attendants can not answer about solid waste disposal, please contact the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District at 800-730-9475.

Tunbridge Bone Builders

Shelia Mitchinson 889-5547

If over the winter you're exercise flew out the window, springs a comin' with lot's to do. You'll need Tunbridge Bone Builder's to build you up fast, so get it together and come to a class

Mon-Thurs at 8:30 am

Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5:30 pm

Monday & Wednesday at 3:30 pm

You may attend two classes per week with at least a day in between. These classes are free and open to all ages.

Tunbridge Board of Listers

Judie Lewis- 889-3571

This summer the State will send the Selectboard a letter ordering a town-wide reappraisal. Gotta tell you, I am not looking forward to it as a lister and certainly not as a property owner. As a lister it will be long hours, gut-wrenching decisions trying to determine how much a property will sell for, and grumbling from an already overtaxed citizenry. As a property owner myself, I fall into the group of grumbling, overtaxed citizens.

The State orders a town to reappraise when the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) drops below 80%, which means the listed values are only 80% of the selling prices. Our CLA this year is 78.55 %. The state bases the CLA on a three-year sales study. This study is based on sales from April 1, 2003 to April 1, 2006. Our listed values would be in the neighborhood of 60% of the selling prices if the study used only sales in 2005 and 2006. At today's selling prices a property assessed at \$100,000 for the 2002 town-wide reappraisal could be expected to sell in the neighborhood of \$160,000.

You won't have to contend with new town-wide values for a couple of years, but while you are thinking about it I would like to correct a few misconceptions:.

It is false that the listers cannot consider "the view" in determining value. People get all twisted up with this one because of what has been called a "view tax." A view tax would be a tax separate from and in addition to the property tax. My understanding is that the courts disallow a town from charging this separate "view tax." That said, the view can and must be considered in determining the probable selling price of a property, the mandated basis for all property assessment values.

It is false that listers cannot assess an unfinished dwelling. The late Buck Rogers liked to tell the story of the man who did not finish his front stoop because he was convinced that the listers couldn't put a value on the property. Then one day the man fell through his makeshift stoop and broke his leg. An unfinished property is valued based on a percentage of completion. An unfinished stoop or a two-foot section of unfinished siding has little or no impact on the "probable selling price."

Tunbridge Church

Judie Lewis- 889-3571

The church will sponsor its annual Sugar-on-Snow party in March. The date is to be announced.

There are special events scheduled for Passion Week. The week begins **Sunday, April 1**, with a festive Palm Sunday **10 am** worship service. A Good Friday service will be held at **7:30 p.m. April 6**. Communion will be served. The Easter celebration, **April 8th**, begins with a **sunrise service**; the time and place are to be announced. All are welcome to the breakfast served at the Parish House after the service. The **10 am** worship service will include music by all choirs.

The church now has three choirs which meet **Wednesday evenings**. A choir for early elementary and pre-school children meets at **6 pm** and a choir for the more experienced young singers meets at **6:30 pm**. The adult choir meets at **7:30 pm**.

The regular worship service is at 10 a.m. Sundays. The pastor conducts a Bible Study group at 8:45 a.m. Sundays. More information about the church and its programs may be obtained from church pastor: David Wolfe (889-5577); music director, Judie Lewis (889-9490). Council president, Townsend Swayze (889-3234).

If you would like to receive the church bulletin by e-mail, please make your request to tunbridgechurch@innevi.com.

Keep The Steeple Standing!

After more than 165 robust years, the church in Tunbridge Village has an ailing steeple. This very steeple has been featured in National Geographic publications and such books as Jan Albers' "Hands on the Land." The Parish Council has resolved to rebuild the steeple and preserve its historic appearance in the local landscape.

While many generous donations have been made by the congregation, the Council invites the whole Tunbridge community to help restore the integrity to this historic structure. Contributions for this effort can be made to "The Tunbridge Church," with "Steeple Fund" in the subject line, and sent to: The Tunbridge Church; c/o Euclid Farnham; 24 The Crossroad; Tunbridge, VT 05077. Thanks for your support!

Orange County Domestic & Sexual Violence Taskforce

Laura Davidson- 685-7900

Help make it safe to live in Orange County...

If you want to do something to end bullying in your local school, help prevent violence in your neighbor's home, or learn more about the causes of relationship and family violence then please join the Tunbridge Cluster of the Orange County Domestic and Sexual Violence Task Force. We are people like you: men, women and teens, educators, lawyers, advocates, students, parents, artists; we are individuals who recognize that domestic and sexual violence affects all of us, whether directly or indirectly, and we are dedicated to raising our voices to create cultural, institutional and policy changes around these issues.

Meetings are held on the **third Tuesday of the month** at the Parish House from **7 - 8:30 pm**. Our next meetings will be held on **February 20, March 20, April 17 and May 15**.

We also would like to invite any concerned citizens to join us at a county-wide LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST on **Monday, March 26, 8 - 10 am**, at the United Church of Chelsea. We are very excited about this event. There will be an opportunity to meet with Orange County's legislative representatives and hear directly about issues, concerns and priorities for the legislative session, and to share your views on current legislative proposals affecting victims and survivors of child abuse and domestic violence. Coffee, tea, pastry and fruit provided.

To RSVP and for more information please contact:
Laura Davidson, Coordinator (802) 272-2320 or ljd@sover.net
or Connie Button, Cluster Member (802) 728-3336

Tunbridge Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Jim Wick 889-3524

If you could use a hand with something, think of the Neighbors Helping Neighbors hot line... **889-3437**
It's best to give a couple of days notice but not always necessary.

TNHN is for everyone. We have a network of neighbors ready to help out with a variety of needs. So if you need a hand, or would like to lend a hand, call the number.

First Branch Sustainability Project

Henry Swayze 889-5556

Learning to live better with out fossil fuel
We are working to combat climate change, save money, help the local economy and feel more self-sufficient.

We have two upcoming meetings.

Please come and bring your friends and neighbors.
Everyone needs to be thinking about how to move forward.

Monday February 19 at 7-9 pm- downstairs in the Tunbridge Town Hall.

Get an overview of why we should move off of Fossil Fuel and how to do it. We will plan future actions for First Branch.

Saturday March 10th at 10 pm at the Chelsea Town Hall
SOLAR HOT WATER information meeting.

Learn how solar hot water works, the costs and benefits.
Learn to fill in a site survey to see if your house is a good candidate for financing possibilities. Meet installers, see equipment and get your questions answered.

Help us meet the challenge: 50 commitments to hot water installations by May 1st. Over 90 have expressed interest.
Contacts: Henry Swayze 889-5556 swayze@pngusa.net

Philip Mulligan 685-7784 phillip@sover.net

Interactive website:

<http://www.vtpeakoil.net/community/folder.php?id=10>

Tunbridge Planning Commission

Michael Sacca- 889-3210

The Planning Commission is in the final stages of writing the Town Plan. We will be having a meeting for public input before the next TQ is out. It will then go to the Select board for approval. Watch for the notices around town and in the newspaper.

We would like to welcome new planning commission member, Lorinda Oliver.

The Planning Commission meets on the **second Tuesday of the month at 7 pm** in the town offices. The meetings are open to the public.

Tunbridge Public Library

Marsha Higgins 889-9404

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

Children's Story Hour activities are usually held in the Library on the **1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month at 6:15**. Changes in scheduling are announced in advance. Upcoming Story Hour themes are "Friends" (2/15), "Birds" (3/1), "Green" (3/15), "Ducks, Chickens, and Bunnies" (4/5), "Rain and Mud" (4/19), "Trucks, Trains, Cranes, and Such" (5/3), "Music" (5/17), and "Flowers" (6/6).

The popular and free Winter Evenings series has three programs left to brighten the winter:

Linda Faillace, author/shepherdess (**2/22**); Jeff Danziger, editorial cartoonist (**3/8**); and Kristina Stykos, musician (**3/22**).

All programs begin a **7 pm** and are followed by refreshments.

Art Exhibits are sponsored by the Friends of the Tunbridge Library. Currently showing through March 9 are photographs of Tunbridge area landscapes by Stephen Baumbach. Framed prints can be purchased or prints can be ordered; proceeds from these sales benefit the library. In April and May, ArtSpace will feature the works of area students. If you wish to be added to the mailing list for upcoming art receptions/exhibits, please call the library.

The library is in need of volunteers to help at the Town Meeting day dinner, March 6. Memorial Day weekend is also a major fund raising time for the library. Volunteers are needed in advance to help prepare for the plant, book, and bake sales; donations are welcomed. The library book sale area could use some donated bookcases. Help will also be needed with the actual sales on Memorial Day. If you can volunteer in any way, call the library.

The library now has high speed, wireless internet access.

First Branch Ambulance & Rescue Co.

Pam Howe Caron- 763-8756

•CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS•

Your local volunteer rescue squad is in dire need of day-time volunteers. EMTs and First Responders are needed as well as drivers. Training is free. This is a golden opportunity to help our community in a way that truly makes a difference.

For more information please call Ambulance Captain Linda Kuban at 685-2206.

Tunbridge School Board

Fred Welch- 889-3574

Board Members: Fred Welch, Jonni Spaulding, Skip Distel

Presently the School Board is happy with how things are going at the school. We adopted a proposed budget to present to voters at town meeting. Look for a summery of that budget in the next issue of Tiger Tails. The administration and staff are doing very good work at maintaining and improving all aspects of school related issues, from learning to cleaning.

With this issue of TQ I want to draw Tunbridge residents attention to education related issues being discussed in Montpelier. Here is a partial list:

- A proposal to change the present 283 local school districts (Tunbridge School Board is one) into 63 districts.
- Modify current education tax policy (act 68)
- School consolidation
- The state administration and legislature will try and understand the major cost drivers in public education. (This is very important do do before steps are taken to make adjustments to school finance issues.)
- Statewide school calendar
- Public run pre-school

These are just a few of the school-related issues our legislatures will be looking at this legislative session. The school board has not made any formal opinions on any of these issues but it is my hope to get them on our meeting agendas. I also hope that our town citizen's will become more educated on these issues and and let the board and our legislators know your thoughts.

I will leave copies of legislative reports, which we periodically receive, on the School Boards bulletin board located in the entry way at the school. Also, Look there for other school board related info. And listen to the news. I find that VPR does a good job at reporting school related issues and the Times Argus and Burlington Free Press do a good job also. Please call me any-time with questions or concerns related to these issues. I like to talk about them and get others opinions

The Tunbridge School Board meets in the school library on the **third monday of each month at 5:30p.m.** All citizens of Tunbridge are invited to attend the meetings.