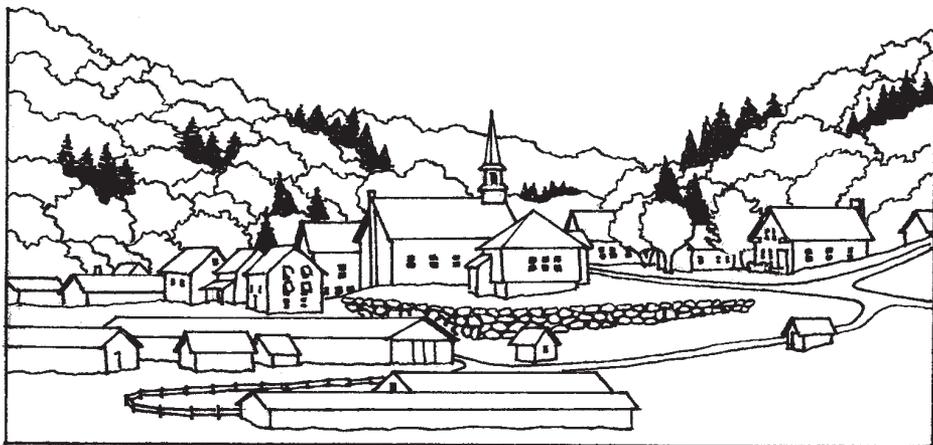


The **TUNBRIDGE** Quarterly

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



April 1, 2024
issue #76

Tunbridge Select Board

John O'Brien, Clerk

889-3474; bellwetherfilms@yahoo.com

Gary Mullen, Chair

889-3323, barn or 889-3242, house; theflyingfarmer29@gmail.com

Mike McPhetres, Vice Chair

802-272-6108, cell or 802-728-3390, shop; farmallfix@yahoo.com

Mariah Cilley, Administrative Assistant, 802-889-5521 or

tunbridge.adm.assist@gmail.com

Spring Forward! In the lag between writing our pieces for the TQ--due on the Ides of March--and the arrival of the TQ in our mailboxes--expected on April Fools' Day--a lot can happen with the weather and our roads. We know, statistically, that meteorological winter (the coldest three months of the year, approximately early December to early March) is over; our days are getting incrementally longer and warmer; and our road-fixing materials--sand, salt, gravel, crushed stone--have dwindled to their lowest levels for the year. We can hope that the last of the mud seasons has passed, the roads have dried out and are now stable enough to grade and ditch and beef up. But would any of us be surprised by an April blizzard that's a carbon copy of the storm we just had--10 inches of cement-like snow on top of soft, muddy roads? (Anybody born after 1990 is wondering, "What's a carbon copy?") Would any of us be shocked by another 7 inches of rain in a 24 hour period? Would any of us "bet the farm" that we won't have another 100 year freeze like we did last May 18th, when temperatures plummeted into the teens? The battle between climate change and municipal road crews is only going to intensify in the coming years. We're confident that our road crew can fight the fight, but whether our tax base can afford the war is another question.

The Selectboard considered this year's Town Meeting to be a "success." As Moderator Izzy Provoncha pointed out in his introductory remarks, traditional town meetings are becoming an endangered species, and we're committed, in Tunbridge, to stick with tradition. The meeting was well-attended, there was respectful debate, there were amendments proposed from the floor, during lunch there was much catching up heard over delicious pasta and pie. There were also some "takeaways" by the Selectboard:

Noise Ordinance. The article to approve the further investigation of a noise ordinance narrowly passed. We felt there was some confusion here. The vote wasn't to create a noise ordinance for Tunbridge, it was only a vote to say "look into this more." Already, in Pre-Town Meeting and at Town Meeting, a lot of good points were made. If we do adopt a noise ordinance, there need to be exemptions for farmers and loggers, for the Tunbridge Fair and other events with music or reasonable short-lived noise (a dog show would

have barking dogs, a tractor pull would have engines straining). We realized that we should talk to other towns and various law enforcement bodies about noise ordinances and their experiences with them. At the end of the day, we're trying to keep Tunbridge peaceful and respectful. If somebody insists on making nuisance or hostile noise, it would nice to have the legal tool to make them cease. But, if that legal ordinance inhibits Tunbridgians in their daily work or their weekend festivities, perhaps it will be better to stay with the status quo, and trust that complaints can be addressed with common sense.

Policing. The Emergency Services Committee is back at full strength and has been tasked with recommending a law enforcement team for Tunbridge, with the two top candidates being Windsor County Sheriff Department or Royalton Police Department. The town approved \$50,000 for a policing budget for FY 25. Going forward, this gives Tunbridge some flexibility. At next year's Town Meeting, voters can level fund or adjust that budget number, and, contractually, we are planning a one year agreement, so if the Town is disappointed in the service, we can look elsewhere.

Legal Trails. As a defendant, the Town of Tunbridge's case is now at the Vermont Supreme Court. While the town has "won" the original case and the appeal, there's no cause for celebration, only ongoing frustration at the mounting legal bills. We've come to the conclusion that the plaintiffs are going to sue the town of Tunbridge, for some reason or other, until they get a result they are satisfied with--in a nutshell, that bicycles will be prohibited from using the legal trail/public right of way that crosses their property. Proposed workarounds have now been discussed for years with solutions unforthcoming. The one thing that everybody agrees on is that each of our four legal trails is a unique challenge and this will require four separate policies of usage that will accommodate access and respect property owner's rights.

To end on a positive note, we now have a new Transfer Station attendant, Adam Kenyon, who has taken over for Mike Barnaby. Adam, a people person, is enjoying the job and has good ideas for improving the whole dump experience. Mike will now slot into the super sub role previous held by Rod Fisk. Rod was last seen at his home in North Tunbridge, moving slowly but steadily, with a bag of leaves, while wife Mary, sitting in a chair, raked the detritus of winter away on the front lawn. Robins surrounded the couple, giving them, what looked to be, a standing ovation.

The TUNBRIDGE Quarterly

Janet Zug 889-9602 zugglasstudio@gmail.com

TQ Entries are printed as received and only edited for typos. Please accept my apologies for any mistakes I miss or make! Feel free to contact me with any questions, comments or suggestions. The deadline dates for TQ entries are the 15th of December, March, June and September.

Tunbridge Town Clerk

Mariah Cilley, Clerk 889-5521

Bonnie McCrillis, Asst Clerk town.clerk@tunbridgevt.org

Hours: Monday-Thursday 8-2 , Friday closed

Call or Email to set up time outside of these hours

Happy Spring Tunbridge! The sun is shining and the last of the sugar snow is melting from the ground.

Town Meeting was well attended, with 174 voters present, lots of pie, and great debate and discussion about important topics and articles. Keep an eye on the upcoming Selectboard agenda for further discussion of policing, noise ordinance updates and other vital topics.

Dog Licenses are due April 1st. You can either stop in during office hours to register in person, mail in a payment and updated rabies certificate to PO Box 6, or place the items in the drop box outside of the office doors and we can process your license. The cost is \$9.00 for spayed/neutered and \$13.00 for non-spayed/neutered.

If you would like to request a slot on a Selectboard meeting agenda, please email tunbridge.adm.assist@gmail.com or call the number above.

If you would like to reserve the Town Hall for an event, please call Judy Howe at 889-3487. She maintains the reservation book, reservation contracts, and can answer any other questions you may have.

As always, please feel free to reach out to myself or Bonnie with any questions, concerns, or to set up a time outside of office hours. Stay well and enjoy the sunshine!

Better Bones

Kay Jorgensen – 889-5528, kjayvt@gmail.com

Better Bones balance and weight-bearing exercise program is offered at the Town Hall on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 5 p.m. It is aimed at increasing bone density at an age when bone mass is lost and osteoporosis is a concern. Anyone can drop in for a session. A doctor's permission is requested for those who continue with the program.

Tunbridge Historical Society

Fern Strong - 860-986-0507

The Tunbridge Historical Society had a full year of programs in 2023. The Memorial Day Parade and a program about the military service of Tunbridge Women. Tunbridge Speaks in July “Growing Up in Tunbridge - the Women of Tunbridge” was great fun to hear about the memories of residents of all ages. The Ghost Walk at Mt Pleasant Cemetery in October on a cold and blustery day was well received. The raffle we host every year was very successful thanks to the organization of Nancy Howe. The quilt made by the Ladies Quilting group was gorgeous.

2024 plans to be another eventful year. We will be participating in the Memorial Day events with a program about veterans, in the town hall. July’s Tunbridge Speaks on July 9th will be about our Revolutionary War participation. We are also planning a bus tour to the sites of the Royalton Raid this summer. The Ghost Walk will be in Monarch Hill Cemetery.

Please look to our Facebook Page www.facebook.com/tunbridgehistoricalsociety/ and local listserv for dates and times.

We received the State of Vermont Historic Preservation grant this year to replace the windows in the North Baptist Church. It’s a matching grant, so we will be using the donations from our various events to help pay for this work.

THS now has a web page on the town site under organizations. Thanks to Izzy Provoncha for getting that done. Meeting minutes will be posted on the web page. There is also a QR code link to our Venmo account for donations to the society.

Our raffle quilt this year is a lovely “Trip around the World”. Thanks to Nancy Howe and the Saturday Sewing Circle. Look for raffle tickets at all events this year.

We are looking for volunteers to help carry on work in the archives. Please contact any of the officers or Lydia Flanagan if you would like to help in any way.

THS is still looking for a new president. If you are interested, please contact any of the executive board members stating why you believe you would be a good fit and what your objectives would be.

We invite all town residents to join THS. We look forward to input and participation by all. Please share information, questions, and photographs with us on our Facebook page and feel free to contact any of the officers.

Fern Strong, vicepresident@tunbridgehistorical.org

Elaine Howe, secretary@tunbridgehistorical.org

Israel (Izzy) Provoncha, treasurer@tunbridgehistorical.org

Lydia Flanagan Archivist, flanagant@gmail.com

Tunbridge Board of Listers

Dan ‘rudi’ Ruddell, Darlene Miller, Deb Mullen 802-889-3571

(lister@tunbridgevt.org) Office hrs: Tu, Fr 9am-3pm

Deb Mullen came on board to fill a vacancy left by Helen O’Donnell’s retirement in 2023, and was elected to fulfill the remaining two years of her position as a Lister at the March 2024 Town Meeting. Sales continue to be highly variable in Tunbridge as well as throughout the state, and numerous sales have come in well above our current town assessments. In 2022, 65% of Vermont towns were mandated by statute to conduct a town-wide reappraisal due to thresholds set for Common Level of Appraisal (CLA). Under the statutes at that time, a town was mandated to do a town-wide reappraisal if the CLA dropped below 85% or exceeded 115%, or the COD (Coefficient of Dispersion) exceeded 20%.

The Vermont Legislature got rid of the CLA as a triggering factor for a mandated reappraisal in 2023, but 62% of towns were still mandated by the now-applicable 20% COD threshold. This included Tunbridge, as our COD is now at 21.14% (and the CLA has dropped to 79.50%). This means that we are now mandated to do a town-wide reappraisal, and we have started the planning processes. Due to the high volume of other towns mandated, and insufficient capacity to provide direct assessing services or more limited project supervision, it is likely we will be one or two years out for our first town-wide reappraisal since 2010.

The CLA helps equalize sales values across towns for purposes of leveling education taxes (<https://tax.vermont.gov/property-owners/understanding-property-taxes/education-tax-rates>). The COD is a measure of equity within the town. A COD of less than 10% is considered indicative of a high degree of equity within town. April 1 is the “assess as is” date in our annual cycle, and we are focusing on quarterly rotational reviews in the southeast quadrant of town for 2024. We are primarily updating outdoor pictures and making phone calls rather than visiting interiors, and greatly appreciate notice if there are significant changes to your property (whether in the SE quadrant or elsewhere). If there are changes to a property in any part of town, we may make Changes of Appraisal up until early June but need to estimate the state of completion as of April 1.

HOMESTEAD DECLARATIONS AND HOMESTEAD PROPERTY TAX ADJUSTMENT CLAIMS ARE DUE APRIL 15, 2024, even if you anticipate filing an extension for income taxes (adjustments can be made later and still be considered timely if you file by April 15). Late fees and penalties apply after April 15, and no HS declarations are accepted after October 15, 2024. If you are eligible, the Homestead Property Tax Adjustment is a credit against taxes, filed at the same time as the Homestead Declaration. Further information can be found at: <https://tax.vermont.gov/property/tax-credit>

Memorial Picnic Invitation

The daughters of Bill Chester will host a memorial picnic for Bill on Strawberry Hill, on Saturday, June 8th, at noon (with a rain date of June 9th). All are invited.

They write: "We were sad that word did not get out to many in Tunbridge for his memorial on December 28. Please RSVP to daughter Caroline at cchyde95@gmail.com or 889-3778 by Memorial Day weekend."

First Branch Ambulance

Barbara LaFrancis 889-3378. Judy Tucker - 889-3305

Congratulations to Clara Hutchins Inman. Clara was the winner of the Heat Raffle. Thank you to those who bought tickets in support of FBA.

FBA has red 911 house signs that assist locating our new and old neighbors when a call is received for a \$20.00 charitable donation. You may obtain your house sign by calling Judy Tucker at 889-3305 or email at tucker-judy40@yahoo.com

Recruiting efforts continue for individuals interested in serving their community. Please contact the station at 685-3112 to inquire.

Thank you all, members&volunteers for serving, and the community for your generous support. We could not do it without you.

Friends of the Tunbridge World's Fair

Deb Mullen - 889-9406 damullen49@gmail.com

The Friends of the Tunbridge World's Fair will begin meeting again soon! Meetings are the 2nd Wednesday of the month, from May through October. We are already making plans for our annual duck race fundraiser, and tickets will go on sale starting on Memorial Day. If you are interested in donating items or services, or would like more information about the mission of the Friends, please contact Deb Mullen at 889-9406.

Tunbridge Library

Mariah Lawrence - Library Director

802-889-9404/tunbridgelifrary@gmail.com/tunbridgelifrary.org

Tues 10-5, Wed 3-6, Thurs 10-5, Fri 3-6, Sat 9-1

Staff ~ Maureen Moriarty, Theresa FitzGerald, Russell Lewczuk-Jensen

Thank you so much for your support this year on town meeting day and for your continued support through the year. We truly are all so grateful to live in a town that values literacy and community events. Thank you to Anna Dechert for signing on as Trustee Secretary for another term. We realize time is limited for everyone and we appreciate you dedicating yourself to the library!

Special events coming up to note:

April 20th 10am ~ Author visit and reading by Zoe Tilley Poster. Crafts, treats and story time! Zoe currently has an art show up in the children's area of the library. Also up on display is a special art exhibit by John Duffy. All proceeds from John's art show go directly to helping Kyle Spaulding recover from his car accident last September.

April 20th 2-4pm ~ Cake Fest ~ A Birthday celebration for Elaine Howe. Bring a cake if you would like and celebrate our town's most treasured storyteller. Should be noted Elaine says it better be homemade;))

April 28th 4-6pm ~ Community Conversation ~ We are so proud to announce we have received a \$20,000 Libraries Transforming Communities Grant from The American Library Association specifically designed for creating more accessible small and rural libraries! We proposed a grant to create better space, programs and collection development for people who are neurodivergent. We invite people from the community who are neurodivergent, their caregivers, family, teachers and anyone who is curious or interested in helping us allocate how to spend our funds to best serve the neurodivergent population. This event will include light refreshments, ample time and space to share thoughts and door prizes.

Current Program Offerings at TPL:

***Writing Groups:**

- ~Ripe to Write~ A writing workshop series for seniors
- ~Write Away~ Monthly writing group

***Imagination Fridays:**

- ~No Thank You Evil~3:15pm Tabletop board game for 5-9 year olds
- ~Magic the Gathering ~4:15pm Tabletop card game

***Early Childhood**

- ~Bumblebee Playgroup~10-11:30am (Birth-7) Thursdays
- ~Story Hour (some Saturdays)

***Book Clubs**

- ~Shelf Love~ Monthly book club
- ~Middle Grade Book Club~ Monthly book club for 5-9th graders

***Afterschool Programs**

- ~Middle School and Elementary Sessions~ this spring we are offering cooking, zine making, legos, D & D and No Thank You Evil
- Check the website for more details! tunbridgelibrary.org

Ed Larkin Contra Dancers

Clyde Jenne - clydo46@gmail.com

The Ed Larkin Contra Dancers will host Contra Dancing at the Tunbridge Town Hall on April 12th & May 10th. Dances start at 7pm, weather permitting.

All dances taught. Refreshments at intermission. \$8 donation at the door. Bring the family. Children under the age of 12 admitted free.

Chelsea Area Senior Center

Susan Pirie, 685-2290, chelseaseniorcenter@gmail.com

In addition to offering Meals on Wheels and Curbside pick-up, the Chelsea Area Senior Center is open for indoor dining on Mondays at 12:00 pm. Please call to make a reservation to eat indoors, for curbside pick up and also Meals on Wheels.

Friends of the Tunbridge Public Library

Kay Jorgensen, 889-5528

Everyone who supports the library is a “friend,” whether it be as a patron, program attendee, shopper, or donor of time, talent, books, food or funds. All of you are appreciated for your support of this important town institution.

The Friends contribute annually towards the library’s budget – \$5,000 last year. Ten years ago the Friends added \$14,000 to the library investment fund administered by the Trustees of Public Funds.

Most recently the Friends and Recreation Commission co-hosted the Town Meeting mid-day dinner. Rec members cooked and Friends volunteers set up tables, coffee pots, and tableware, sold meal tickets and merchandise, donated pies and served beverages and pies.

Memorial Day is important for Friends’ fundraising. Donated baked and food goods will be sold at the Town Hall from 9-12. The Underground shop in the basement off the driveway will be open the same hours. Books for all ages and interests (from free to \$1), half-price gift items, \$1 greeting cards, CDs/DVDs, library totes and caps will be for sale. These purchases can also be made whenever the library is open.

The Friends reprinted and sell the Tunbridge Walks, A Guide to Hiking in Tunbridge VT book with maps for long and short walks in town. Proceeds from the Turkey Trot and most art shows benefit the library. The Friends handle donations from Sunday Series and Winter Evenings programs which recently funded audio/visual equipment.

In the past the Friends raised \$40,000 for the connector between the Sporn Community Room and library, received donations for the Bumblebee Garden in memory of Susan Barnaby, provided computers, equipment and memorial plaques and benches for the library.

The Friends’ officers are Elaine Howe, president; Donna Nelson, treasurer; Maureen Moriarty, secretary.

ECFiber and the Town of Tunbridge

Town Representative: Dick Dybvig

tunbridge@ecfiber.net | www.ecfiber.net | 802-ECFiber

Tunbridge is a member of the East Central Vermont Telecommunications District, the state's first communications union district (CUD), whose mission is to provide world-class fiber-optic based internet service to all on-grid homes and businesses in its member towns. The District consists of 31 member towns, and owns the business which operates under the trade name ECFiber. The business added over 800 new customers despite critical labor shortages, and now serves over 8,500 customer locations via 1,700 miles of network, which, when fully built out, will bring fiber-to-the-premises (FTTP) to about 32,000 premises over more than 2,000 miles network.

In June, ECFiber celebrated the completion of its original 23 town network when it activated its operation center in White River Junction. In August, the District was awarded a \$13 million construction grant that will support the first three or four stages of its \$30 million, nine stage, network completion plan. In November, its Series 2023A municipal revenue bond received a "BB" rating from Standard & Poor's Global Credit arm, a historic moment in US financial history: the first time a municipal revenue bond not backed by taxes, and not for a regulated utility or exclusive service territory, received a rating. This was extended to the six earlier bonds as well.

The District contracts with Great Works Internet (GWI) of Vermont to operate the business. The biggest challenges we face now are not funding, but rather finding enough folks to construct the networks – people who know how to operate bucket trucks, splice fiber while 40 feet above the ground, and be willing to work outside in difficult weather. ECFiber is actively participating in state and regional workforce development efforts. If you are or know of someone who may be interested in these well-paid jobs, please let us know!

If you are not a member, we invite you to visit our website to learn more about ECFiber. Basic service starts at 75 Mbps (\$72/mo.) and runs up to "Wicked" service at 1Gbps (\$134/mo.). Same upload and download speeds; unlimited data. Phone service can be added for \$25. No contracts required.

The Tunbridge Church

802-693-0098, thetunbridgechurch@gmail.com

The Tunbridge Church will celebrate the April 8 solar eclipse at its 10 a.m. worship service the day before. Cellist Suzanne Long will be the guest musician. Nan Frost will play the piano and whistle. Pastor John McClintock will sing Total Eclipse, the aria from Handel's 1743 oratorio Samson.

On Easter Sunday, March 31, the church will hold a short sunrise service at the top of Strafford Road at 6:20. Tailgate refreshments will follow. The traditional Easter service will be at 10 in the church. All are welcome at both services.

The year's first Super Senior meal will be held April 24. It continues a tradition that began with the Outreach Committee celebrating the town's most senior residents at a Parish House lunch. Younger seniors were soon included and now four senior meals are hosted at the Town Hall and Dodge-Gilman Building.

Those meals are also delivered to homebound as were snack packs taken to 42 people in January. The church also provided snacks and coffee at the Town Nurse's HVC Cares clinic at the Town Hall and snacks for the Civic Club's Comedy & Music Showcase Variety Show.

Road Crew members and guest were treated to the February Rec Breakfast as thanks for their work during last year's weather events and this time of multiple mud seasons.

Pastor John began a second study series, leading six classes during the Lenten season. He is at the Parish House Monday-Friday from 1 to 5 p.m. and can be reached at pastorjohn@tunbridgechurch.org.

Women who are alone are invited to the Women Moving Forward potluck fellowship noon meals at the Parish House on the third Thursday of the month.

The Parish House (across from the church) also hosts the Tunbridge Community Food Shelf on Fridays from 4-5 p.m.; Al-Anon Sundays at 5 p.m.; and AA Sundays at 7 p.m.

To join the church email list, write thetunbridgechurch@gmail.com or call 802-693-0098. News is emailed midweek and announcements are posted on Facebook.

Sunday services are streamed and recorded. Go to tunbridgechurch.org for Zoom. Previous services are at the "Index to Services" link. To listen by phone, dial (646) 876-9923 –

meeting ID: 858 4950 1899, passcode: 526048.

The church welcomes donations in support of its programs at PO Box 270, Tunbridge VT 05077 or by credit card at tunbridgechurch.org.

The Shindigs

Janet Zug - 802-738-9602 shindigsvt@hotmail.com

There will be one more Shindig in this 16th season (and if we're counting it's #90!). On April 6th, from 7-10pm, Tunbridge's own Marty Young and his band mate, percussionist Todd Westfall, will be playing their upbeat blend of country hits of the 70's, 80's and 90's with a few rock n' roll oldies sprinkled in. The cover charge is \$15. at the door. No advance reservations needed.

The Shindigs dance series is held from Nov. - April, always on the first Saturdays of the month except the January gig is on New Years' Eve. All the funds collected, above the cost to rent the hall and insurance, are paid to the band. The Tunbridge Town Hall offers a large dance floor upstairs and a quieter space for visiting downstairs. All are welcome to bring their own food and beverages. It's a pack-it-in, pack-it-out event, everyone is encouraged to bring what you need for the evening and then leave no trace. Please do not attend if you're feeling ill or potentially contagious

If you like to dance, you'll love the Shindigs!

Tunbridge Grange # 384

Rosemary Distel 802-272-2235

Tunbridge Grange No 384 Spring 2024 News:

We hope everyone has been enjoying Friday Night Bingo at the Tunbridge Town Hall which continues through April.

On March 30th, the Tunbridge Grange held its annual Easter event. Fun for everyone young at heart!

The Grange will be hosting our Craft Nights on April 4th, 11th, and 18th Come to one or all and join Marie and Chancity to experience some great crafting ideas.

It will be Memorial Day before we know it and the Tunbridge Grange is the host/organizer of the wonderful Memorial Day Parade. This year's theme will be based upon the Korean War.

On June 1st we are planning on having a "bag auction" which always guarantees a "bagful of fun.

Wedding Season is coming up and Rada Cutlery makes great wedding gifts. Purchasing Rada Cutlery helps support the Tunbridge Grange. Go to your internet browser and type in RadaFundRaising.com then enter Tunbridge Grange as the organization you wish to support. Then start shopping!

The Grange meets the first Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm. We really could use some new members to help us continue supporting our community.

Tunbridge Volunteer Fire Department

Jamie Bradford - 802-889-3478

The Fire Departments Annual Meeting was held on March 14, 2024 at 6:00p.m. At this event a potluck dinner was held and began at 6:00 p.m. followed by the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Any and all community members are welcome and encouraged to attend. This event is warned in the Herald as the event date approaches to notify any interested parties. At the meeting Simon Bradford was reelected as our Fire Chief. Jamie Bradford was reelected as the Clerk and Amy Young was reelected as Auditor. Lois Gross, and Amy Young were elected to the board of trustees. The trustees serve as members for a two year period. Robert Dunkle was elected to serve as the trustee president.

The Fire Department has purchased a new Pumper/Rescue Truck for the department. Our current engine and rescue trucks are an 1990s model. The new truck will be a combination of both trucks reducing the fleet by 1 vehicle. We have signed an agreement with Lakes Region Fire Apparatus. This truck is due to be delivered in mid year 2025.

Please remember when we leap forward or fall back, changing the clocks is a great reminder to change the batteries in the smoke detectors.

Tunbridge Neighbors Helping Neighbors has donated a trash pump and two 2,000 watt generators to the fire department. The trash pump will be used for basement flooding and the generators will be loaned out upon request to towns people during power outages. Please contact Neighbors Helping Neighbors if/when you are in need. 802-889-3437.

The Tunbridge Volunteer Fire Department is always welcoming new members. If you are interested please stop by the Department Thursday nights after 7:00pm or reach out to us at tunbridge.fire@gmail.com.

Tunbridge World's Fair

Ingrid Van Steamburg - 889-5555

Removal of winter storage items is from 9am - 12noon on the last Saturday of April and the first Saturday of May. If you dropped off on the first weekend you pick up on the second weekend and if you dropped off on the second weekend you must pick up on the first weekend. Please think about the fair for storage next fall.

Check out our website soon for updates for the coming season, which starts in May and ends in October. Don't forget the World's fair is September 12 - 15 this year. Call the office if you have any questions about the grounds or the fair. Have a great summer!

Tunbridge Community Food Shelf

Open Fridays 4:00 to 6:00 802-693-0098 (please leave a message)

Several months ago our food shelf received a notification from the Vermont Food Bank concerning “Free Little Pantries” (the equivalent of our outdoor structure). We were informed that our food shelf is prohibited from putting out foods in the outdoor structure that are purchased from the Food Bank. The VT Food Bank is a member of Feeding America which has strict guidelines, especially post Covid. We are bound by contract to follow them, to insure the foods we provide are safe, have been inspected, handled correctly and follow the guidelines. These deal with risk of contamination, through pest activity, temperature variations and intentional or unintentional contamination. Therefore, we are unable to put foods from our food shelf in the outdoor structure. We will still set up the outdoor area for donations. Any donations left inside the Food Shelf area can be inspected and used, but if left outside that would be impossible. If you choose to use the foods from the outside structure, please check the expiration dates and condition of the foods. However it will be your own responsibility.

Additionally we made a decision when we received this notification, to not purchase the CSA this year, because of the difficulty with refrigeration and the safety involved with that. Special thanks go to Jean and Wendy Palthy who supplied a wonderful selection of vegetables and were very generous to us the past two years. We totally recommend them to anyone considering a CSA this summer. We still encourage you to share your excess garden vegetables with your neighbors, by leaving them in the outdoor structure. There are many community members who do not have gardens and would certainly appreciate them. We assume that vegetables and herbs from the community garden will still be available later in the season.

Our hours of operation have changed and are now every Friday 4:00-5:00, which seems to be working well with our volunteers and for the recipient needs. Our Food Shelf continues to supply back packs for 10-12 families each week, supplementing the foods needs of 40-50 people.

We wish to acknowledge the many generous donations to our organization in memory of Christine Hoyt. We really appreciate the thoughtfulness of the family who made these donations possible.

The Tunbridge Recreation also provided a huge donation of foods following one of their softball tournaments at the end of the summer/early fall. Also of note are the multiple families who consistently supply our food shelf with eggs. Thank you to all. If you would like to make a financial donation please send it to Mary Fisk, treasurer, PO Box 12 Tunbridge, VT 05077. As always we are happy to take food donations, but they need to be left in the Parish House.

Tunbridge Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Pat Howe, Treasurer – 889-5512

For TNH services call 889-3437

Thanks to a generous grant from the Vermont Community Foundation intended to help towns strengthen their emergency preparedness, Neighbors Helping Neighbors has purchased a new trash pump and two small generators to be borrowed by Tunbridge residents in the event of an emergency such as a power outage or flooding.

The portable pump can remove 90 gallons of water per minute and is ideal for situations where the water is muddy and contains a high solid content. The generators provide 2200 watts of super quiet power. A loan of this equipment can be arranged by calling TNH at 889-3437.

Tunbridge Neighbors Helping Neighbors coordinates and provides basic services at no charge to town residents through the efforts of volunteers. We are a non-profit organization whose operating costs (primarily phone service) are supported by the generosity of Tunbridgians who allocate funds at Town Meeting, and by donations, which may be sent to TNH, P.O. Box 22, Tunbridge, VT 05077.

A few of the services offered by TNH are:

Rides

Pick up of prescriptions or other goods from stores

Cooking meals for people who are ill or

otherwise unable to cook for a short time

Minor repairs or painting, minor home improvements, changing a lock*

Changing a flat tire or jump-starting a car

Simple repairs to household appliances*

Help lifting or moving large objects

Delivery of library books or Food Shelf items

Help with gardening, lawn care or stacking firewood

Shoveling snow off walkways and steps

Other reasonable requests

Anyone needing a service offered by TNH should call 802-889-3437. To join our list of volunteers, please contact any of the board members listed below or call 802-889-3437. We respect and value your willingness to help your neighbors.

Current Board Members: Michael O'Donnell, President – 802-763-8985; Jory Innes, Vice President – 802-299-9249; Pat Howe, Treasurer – 802-889-5512; Sarah Priestap Porter, Secretary; Helen O'Donnell; Claire Brock

Friends of First Branch Schools

Tiffany Bates, Eliza Minnucci, Jen Loftus

friendsoffirstbranch@wrvsu.org

The Friends of First Branch Schools fundraises and volunteers to support and celebrate the students and staff of our First Branch Unified District. We welcome new members. You can join our email list by sending us a message at friendsoffirstbranch@wrvsu.org. And you can follow our new facebook page “Friends of First Branch School Club.”

Big thanks to our Winter Carnival super volunteers, Peggy Grote, Meg Hopkins, Holly Hall and Kayla Thibault - we had a great afternoon with lots of activities for all the kids at the elementary school back in February. Ruth Hall supplied us with homemade snowflake cookies for every single kid and adult to provide halftime nourishment too! We also have so much gratitude for Seth Johnson, the Tunbridge Fire Department and accomplices (even the ones who nonchalantly wear crocs in the middle of January) for assembling and maintaining the ice rink for the elementary school this year. Every day there was ice our students were out there, often as many as thirty at a time.

We were excited to be able to support the purchase of an evaporator for the middle school sugar house this winter. By the printing date it will have had its first boil. Thanks to the generosity of neighbors the middle schoolers are collecting their own sap up in Chelsea.

We continue to make progress on the Rachel Brown Memorial shed project. We have gathered a few community partners to collaborate and hope to break ground this spring or summer in preparation for a middle school led building project in the fall.

School Staff Appreciation week is May 6-10. We provide food and gifts throughout the week and can always use community support - getting on our email list is a great way to know all the details about all the things we are up to.

Our biggest annual fundraiser is The Ranger at the Tunbridge Fairgrounds on June 8th and 9th. Not only do we sell a lot of lemonade and bicycle cookies, but The Ranger also makes a generous donation to our group annually. We hope to see you there!

Tunbridge Town Nurse

Jodi Hoyt 802-249-8956 healthofficertunbridgevt@gmail.com

Hello Tunbridge residents! So glad to see you all at town meeting! Reiterating this year she has been able to help people with so many things but here are a few; hospice care, getting ramps for disabled residents, connecting with neighbors helping neighbors, getting COVID tests for the town, well water contamination and flood disaster, getting flood resource donations, getting handicap placards, helping with infections, post surgical procedures, post hospital admissions, FEMA, long term care referrals, getting vaccinations, grieving resources, picking up prescriptions, green burial information, disposing of expired medications, education, setting up a social media presence, speaking at senior luncheons, writing 3 newsletters so far, writing and receiving multiple grants, connecting people with food and heating assistance. So much more. The newest addition is creating and organizing the Tunbridge medical equipment library. In which residents can borrow medical equipment to help in time of need. She also helped support getting dental care to the area via health hub for adult dental care which adults can call 802-VTTEETH to schedule. Advertising at memorial parade, trick or trunk and many different community events.

So excited for another year with Tunbridge! My hardest hurdle is only having a few hours a week but I'm doing the best I can. I thank you for all your support of your community Nurse. So thankful for budget increase for the 2024. Call nurse Jodi if you need any assistance and or resources.

Tunbridge Town Website

Geoff Hansen, 802-889-3373, or info@geoffhansen.com

Tunbridge's town website is a timely resource for information from the Town Clerk, board meetings (including videos of meetings via Zoom), an Events Calendar listing upcoming meetings and community events, and past issues of the Tunbridge Quarterly. Please let us know if there's something you would like to see listed or have any questions.

Tunbridge Conservation Commission

Eliza Minnucci eliza.minnucci@gmail.com

Betsy Gaiser, Evan Reiss - Co-Chairs, Cheryl Metcalf - Secretary, Jory Innes - Treasurer, Eliza Minnucci, Scott Beavers, Bryan Kalleberg

The bluebirds are arriving up on the western ridge and, we hope, where you are too. Their cheerful song brings hope for a season between mud and flood. Spring!

Perhaps we could take some advice from our winter evening presenters as to what to do with our spring:

Plant native trees and shrubs for our pollinators.

We brought Desiree Narango to speak in January, and learned that native plants host vastly more helpful insects than non-natives - which in turn help pollinate our crops, and support diversity up the food chain. You can find a planting guide at the Vermont Center for Ecostudies website.

Use local wood and welcome the Red Oak.

In February we heard from Dave Paganelli, our county forester on the connection between climate change and forests. Using local wood as much as possible - from heating to construction to furniture - reduces manufacturing and transportation of other materials, and in some cases may even keep the tree carbon sequestered longer than its natural cycle in the forest. Due to climate change and diseases threatening our Beech and Ash trees, encouraging Red Oaks to establish here will fill an anticipated gap in food for some of our favorite local birds and mammals.

Feed the bees. Healthy stuff.

Bill Mares and James Key rounded out our winter evening series with a presentation on the history and future of beekeeping. Having native plants, especially early and late season blooms, and limiting pesticides will support pollinator health, with benefits to our crops to follow.

And we could all use a good spring cleaning. Green Up Day is Saturday, May 4th. By pledging to help pick up roadside trash you can be part of Vermont's Guinness World Record attempt at "Most Pledges Received to Pick Up Trash." A pledge sheet can be found at the town library, and you'll see Conservation Commission members and our allies handing out green bags at the transfer station the week before the big day.

We welcome interested community members to attend our meetings, and to consider membership on our commission. The Tunbridge Conservation Commission meets the first Thursday of the month at 6pm at the Tunbridge Public Library. For further information contact us at tunbridgeconservation@gmail.com. Information about our commission can also be found at <http://tunbridgevt.org/conservation-commission/>

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