

Westminster Gazette



po box 147 westminster vt 05158

Our Community Newspaper

Vol. 5, No. 12 December 2009

Volunteers Are Needed to HELP with the Town Tradition of Displaying the Christmas Luminaries.

Wednesday, December 23rd - 6:00pm Meet at the Fire Station to Assemble the bags.

Thursday, December 24th - Christmas Eve Morning at 9:00am Meet at the Fire Station to set-up the bags. 2-3 tall persons are required to pace off the bags.

Thursday, December 24th - Christmas Eve at 3:00pm - No meeting place required just come out and help light the candles.

Friday, December 25th - Christmas Morning at 7:00am meet at the Fire Station to help pick-up the bags.

A special thank you to Sam Streeter who has once again agreed to dispose of the bags. And Lavalley Building Supply who has agreed to supply the sand for the bags at their cost.

Please send monetary donations to: Diane Bazin, Box 12, Westminster, Vt 05158 or TDbank c/o Chris Hackett, PO Box 689, Bellows Falls, Vt 05101

KURN HATTIN CHILDREN HONOR VETERANS

by Kim Fine



The Kurn Hattin Brownies presenting flags for official retirement

Westminster, VT - The Kurn Hattin children under the direction of their social studies teacher, Richard Long, honored Veterans' Day with a special program held annually. The Kurn Hattin Cub Scouts #401 led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and Student Council President, Dylan Bussino, read a letter from President Obama. Before the Veterans' Day event, the Brownies went to the Westminster cemeteries and collected the old flags from the gravesites. The Brownies presented the flags for the official retirement of the flags ceremony. Special this year, each Veteran was presented will a star with his or her name on it to wear in honor of his and her service to the country.

The Lighting of Candles was a very special presentation remembering the fallen Vermont soldiers who died in Iraq and Afghanistan; thirty-three candles were lit by Bellows Falls

VFW Veteran Douglas McPhee during the reading of each soldier's name.

After this presentation, there was a moment of silence, Taps was played and five students read their VFW essays about, When is the Right Time to Honor our Military Heroes? The Kurn Hattin Select Band, with directors, Lisa Bianconi and Matt Hunter and music program volunteers, Chris Goding, Janet Lewis and Father Lance Harlow, played the Green Mountain Song. Following the Benediction by Father Lance Harlow of St. Charles Church in Bellows Falls, the singing of God Bless America led by student, Aaliyah Olmo-Gilmore and the Retirement of the Colors, guests were treated to a wonderful luncheon in Watson Hall.

Kurn Hattin is a year-round, non-profit, residential home and school for in-need and at-risk children, ages 6-15, from throughout the Northeast.

Volunteers Wanted for Reception Center

Volunteers are being sought to staff the Reception Center at Bellows Falls Union High School in Westminster which has been operated by area emergency management personnel and local citizens for many years. This Reception Center would be used to provide assistance to individuals during an emergency including registration, reuniting parents with children who have been evacuated from area schools and child care facilities, as well as placement in congregate care facilities if necessary. Jobs range from Section Chief to Greeter, so all skill sets are welcome. Depending on position, training takes anywhere from a few hours to one day. Volunteers must be available for occasional drills and are paid for their time.

To volunteer, contact Doreen Woodward at (802) 722-4091 or by e-mail at westmntc@comcast.net.

Saturday Dec. 5th

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7-10 pm

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"The Town of Westminster is seeking volunteers for an Energy Committee that is now being formed. Interested persons may contact Sonia Alexander at 722-4255 or by email at westmin@sover.net."

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Why change the look?
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When you leave your car behind and ride **The Current**, you decrease your energy consumption, improve environmental quality, and save commuting costs. If you are unable to drive or don't have transportation, you can benefit by riding on our Dial-a-Ride and volunteer network. We Provide the Ride... so please tell us how we can improve to make that happen for you. Thank you for riding Connecticut River Transit last year and **The Current** this year.

Bellows Falls - Brattleboro Commuter Schedule

Bellows Falls to Brattleboro										Brattleboro to Bellows Falls									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
5:45	6:00	6:02	6:07	6:09	6:12	6:25	6:27	6:37	6:44	7:00	7:02	7:12	7:17	7:26	7:28	7:40	7:44	7:47	7:50
8:00	8:02	8:07	8:09	8:12	8:25	8:27	8:37	8:44	9:00	9:00	9:02	9:12	9:17	9:26	9:28	9:40	9:44	9:47	9:50
1:55	2:30	2:32	2:35	2:37	2:39	2:42	2:45	2:47	2:51	3:10	3:12	3:22	3:27	3:36	3:38	3:50	3:54	3:57	4:00
4:30	4:42	4:45	4:47	4:49	4:52	4:55	4:57	4:59	5:03	5:10	5:12	5:22	5:27	5:36	5:38	5:50	5:54	5:57	6:00

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SPRINGFIELD HOSPITAL ASKS FOR DONOR SUPPORT THROUGH ANNUAL GIVING CAMPAIGN

by Anna Smith

Springfield Hospital launched its Annual Giving Campaign at 10 a.m. on November 10 with a small gathering of supporters under the portico at the hospital. Rick Bibens, Springfield native, CEO of Bibens Ace Hardware Stores, and chair of the Springfield Medical Care Systems Board of Directors, is hosting this year's annual giving effort and spoke about its importance.

Bibens has long been a strong supporter of the hospital and said this year's effort is absolutely essential to the health and wellness of the region. "Vermonters are losing their health insurance in record numbers and the hospital's free care has climbed to more than \$2.4 million in the last year alone. Our community must come together to support our friends and neighbors in Vermont during these difficult times," offered Bibens.

Glenn Cordner, hospital CEO, spoke reminding local residents that "Springfield Hospital is ranked at the very top of Vermont hospitals in key measures of quality." "If we are to provide that high level of excellent care to everyone across the region who needs it," Cordner said, "we need the help of our loyal donors this year more than ever."

Cordner added, "Rick's team of local volunteers will be calling folks in the coming weeks to ask for their support. These gifts will help ensure that the high-tech medical practice with old-fashioned care residents have come to expect will continue long into the future no matter where the national healthcare debate winds up. Springfield Hospital must always be here for everyone."



Artist in Each of us...

The Artist In Each of Us has a new artist facilitator. Local artist Deborah Lazar will take over from Nora Zellmer who has been the facilitator for the last several years and is relocating. The Artist In Each of Us is an artist workshop program for adults meeting Wednesdays from 10:00 to noon at the Putney Cares Activity Barn, Kimball Hill, Putney, Vermont. The program is by a suggested donation of \$2. - \$5. per session. Art materials are available and all artist abilities are welcome. The artist facilitator provides guidance and suggestions. The Artist in Each of Us was started by Peggy Leo, Westminster Cares and Putney Cares in 2003 to provide an opportunity for adults to create, inspire, share artwork and art making together with other people in the community. The program was based on Don Sunseri's GRACE program, Grass Roots Art and Community Effort. All interested adults are invited to join us and work with a variety of materials provided or bring your own.

The program has been overseen by a collaboration of Sue Mansfield from Putney Cares and Ronnie Friedman from Westminster Cares. We are currently writing grants and accepting donations to support the program. In addition to general program support, we wish to create an honorarium to invite local artists to share their knowledge.

For information contact Westminster Cares Director Ronnie Friedman at 802-722-3607 or email wecares@sover.net.

The Vermont Country Store, Gibney Family Foundation of South Burlington, and 12 Year-Old Girl among Those Honored for Outstanding Fundraising Efforts at National Philanthropy Day Celebration

The Vermont Country Store, based in Manchester Center with stores in Rockingham and Weston; the Gibney Family Foundation of South Burlington; and a 12-year old girl from Portland, Maine were among those honored at the annual National Philanthropy Day on November 5th. Hosted by the Association of Fundraising Professionals Northern New England Chapter, National Philanthropy Day recognizes the extraordinary contributions of philanthropists—and those people active in the philanthropic community—to the region, country, and world. This year's celebration was held at the Hilton Waterfront Hotel in Burlington on November 5th.

Sarah Gnerre, President of the AFP Northern New England Chapter, said, "We are so thrilled to honor The Vermont Country Store (Manchester Center, VT) as Outstanding Corporation; The Gibney Family Foundation of South Burlington as Outstanding Foundation; Jude Blake of Portsmouth, NH as Outstanding Philanthropist; and W. John Funk of Gilmanton, NH as Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser. It gives me extra special pleasure to honor 12 year old Rachel Blair Friedman, of Portland, Maine, as the recipient of the AFP Northern New England-Demont Scholarship for Outstanding Youth in Philanthropy."

Ms. Gnerre added, "Each of these recipients has excelled in their own special ways. There are few Vermonters who are not familiar with the charm and long history of the Vermont Country Store and its quintessentially New England catalogue and stores. Now, may as many people become familiar with the Vermont Country Store's contributions to the philanthropic landscape of Vermont as well."

The Vermont Country Store was nominated this year by the Long Trail School of Dorset, VT. Eliot Orton, Owner of Vermont Country Store, accepted the award.

The Gibney Family Foundation was honored in part for its history of support for the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Frank Gibney of Shelburne, Vermont accepted the award.

Twelve-year-old Rachel Blair Friedman, of Portland, Maine, received the AFP Northern New England-Demont Scholarship for Outstanding Youth in Philanthropy for her work raising funds to benefit the American Cancer Society, among other cancer-related causes. Rachel will receive a \$10,000 college scholarship for her award. Rachel was motivated to raise funds for cancer care when her mom was diagnosed with lymphoma. She started an event called Perform for a Cure which has been held annually for more than three years and has raised more than \$30,000 to date.

The celebration is one of more than 100 celebrations held in November by AFP chapters throughout the United States. Founded in 1960, the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), formerly known as the National Society of Fundraising Executives, has advanced philanthropy through its 32,000 members around the globe. In 2008, despite the recession, Americans donated \$307 billion to non profits.

AFP provides ethical expertise and guidance to practitioners of philanthropy through education, training, mentoring, networking and advocacy. The local chapter is comprised of 250+ members from the states of Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. Kim Fine, Senior Development Officer at Kurn Hattin Homes in Westminster, VT presided as Chair of the event.

For more information, contact Kim @ kimfine@sover.net or (802) 721-6914 or go to www.afp-nne.org



There's no thrill like winning a medal. Third Grader, Daishawn Patterson with his Cross-Country Medal.

FALL SPORTS AWARD BANQUET HELD AT KURN HATTIN

by Kim Fine

Westminster - Kurn Hattin Homes held its annual Fall Sports Award Banquet on November 3rd. Awards were given to the students who participated in soccer, cross-country and equestrian programs. The soccer coaches are: Robert Anderson, Grades 3rd & 4th, Dave Brodeur, Grades 5th & 6th, Sara Frantz & Asst. Coach: Patricia Davenport, Grades 7th & 8th, and Dean Kinville, Boy's the Family Readiness programming and support a military instillation provides. In previous deployments local families have had to travel to their unit family readiness group to connect with other military families facing similar stressors caused by deployment. Campbell and Cleveland are hoping that the Dragon's Den Lending Library will help provide community based support for local families and children to connect with one another. Recreational activities are a very important part of Kurn Hattin's year-round program.

Kurn Hattin is a charitable, year-round, residential, home and school for in-need and at-risk children, ages 6 through 15, from throughout the Northeast.

Parent Involvement Committee at Westminster Schools

A parent involvement committee at Westminster Schools is asking parents and community members to please fill out a Community Survey and return it to the school by December 22nd, in order to help the committee better serve the community. Look for the one page survey in area businesses, coming home with students, and in the school office. Thank you for your participation!

This same committee is sponsoring regular open house hours in the new Parent Resource Room at the Westminster Center School on Tuesday mornings, 8:00-8:45am. All are welcome to stop in for coffee and a donut, a visit with other parents, and to utilize the resources of the room (computer, books, information boards, etc).

Launching a resource for local military children and families

The Vermont National Guard deployment slated for December 2009 /January 2010 will be the largest since World War II. It will impact 100 children in Windham county, and over 3,000 children state wide. Approximately 81 children have a family member who is part of the Delta Dragons 3/172 Westminster Vermont Army National Guard unit deploying.

The Dragon's Den Lending Library has been developed to provide community based support for local families and children to connect with each other. Several local military spouses formed the nonprofit organization to provide books and other resources and make them available to military children to help them cope with separation issues, and to learn about other cultures and geographic regions.

Dragon's Den Lending Library codirectors Karen Campbell and Becky Cleveland have been through previous deployments with their husbands and have experienced the emotional stress children and families go through. Campbell and Cleveland note that military kids in southern Vermont are more isolated than others being hundreds of miles away from Camp Johnson and the Family Readiness programming and support a military instillation provides. In previous deployments local families have had to travel to their unit family readiness group to connect with other military families facing similar stressors caused by deployment. Campbell and Cleveland are hoping that the Dragon's Den Lending Library will help provide community based support for local families and children to connect with one another.

A very successful kickoff event was held on Sunday, November 15, 2009 at the VFW Post 1034 on Black Mountain Road in Brattleboro to introduce the Dragon's Den to the community. Over thirty five children participated in multiple activity stations spotlighting books that will be a part of this military children's lending library : exploring in a Humvee, making flags, making paper hugs, and writing messages to local military children, and designing their own yellow ribbons. The community adopted over 80 books to help get the library started. Basket raffles, costume characters, and a local magician rounded out this fun family event.

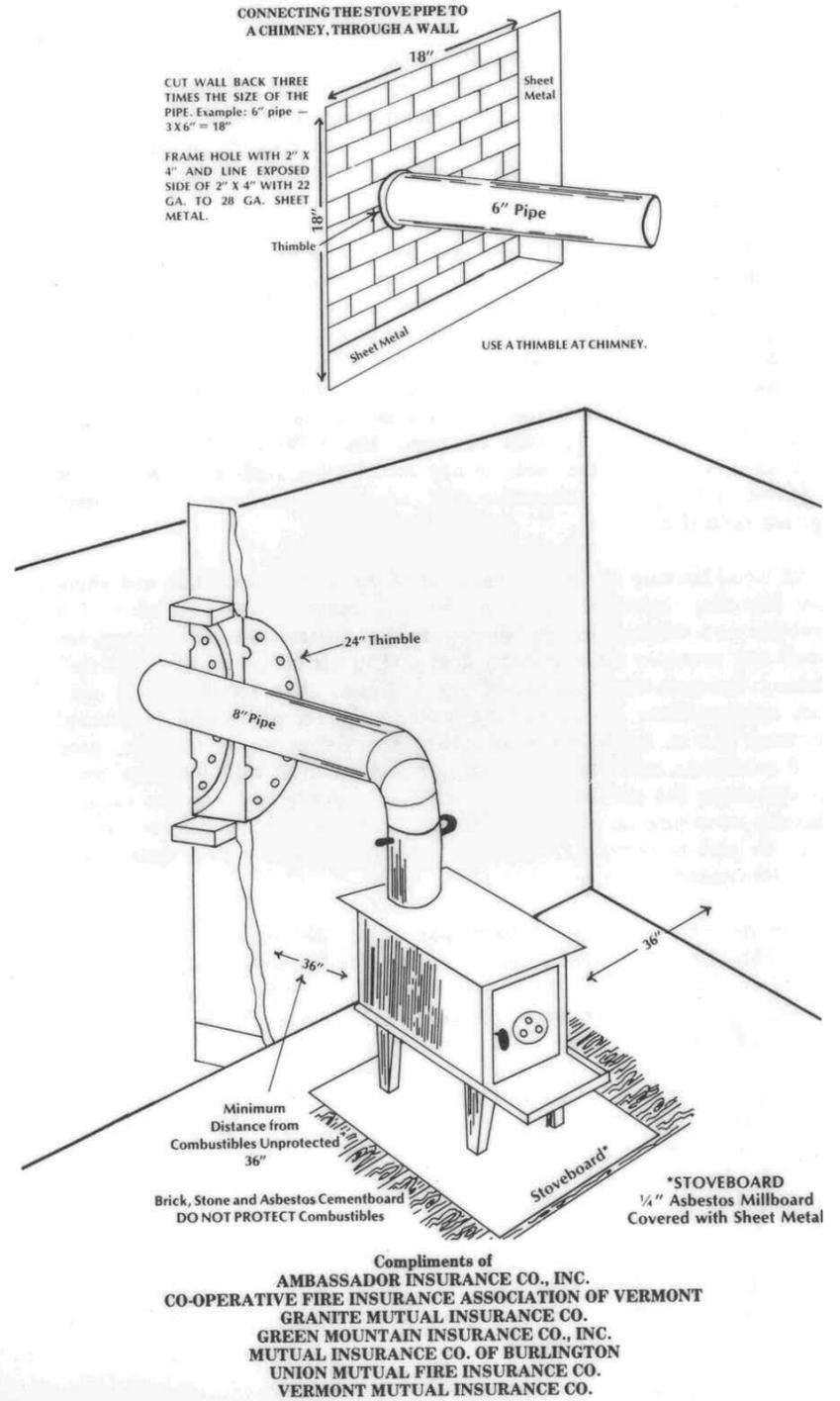
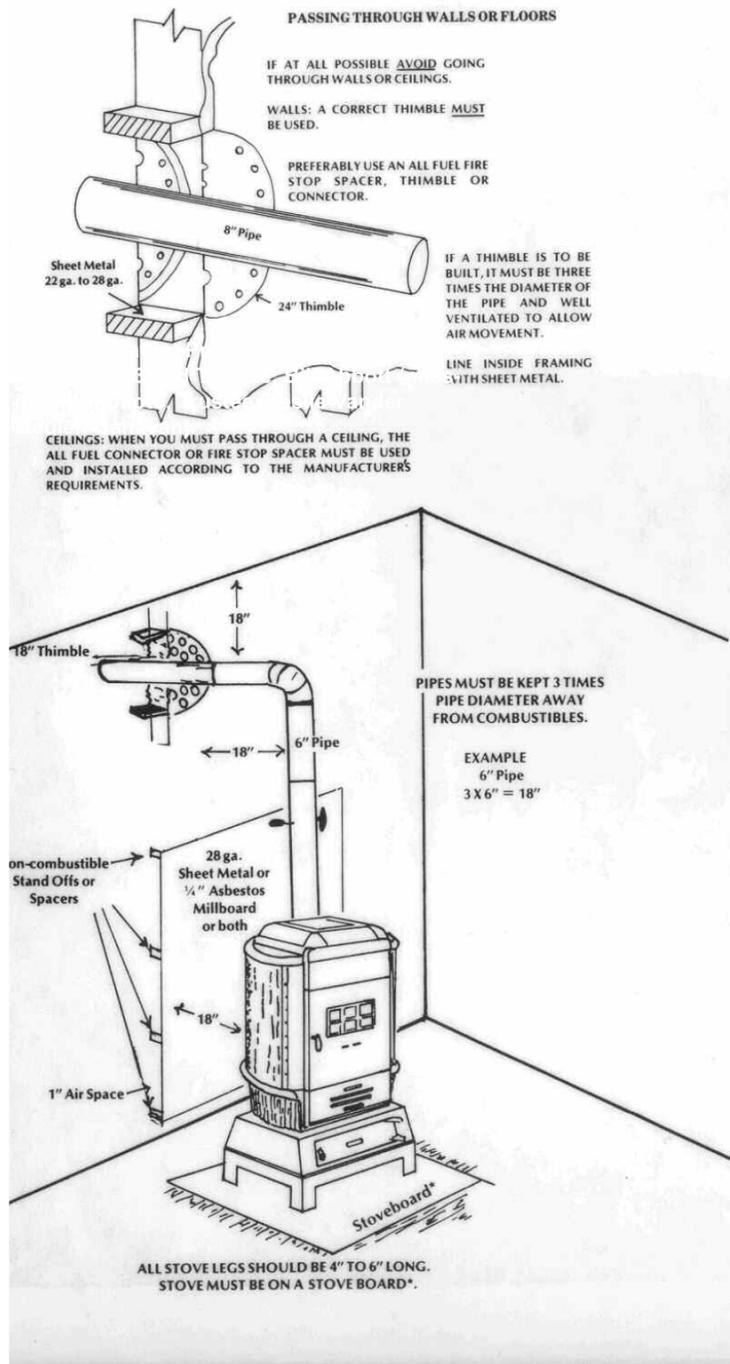
The Dragon's Den Lending Library will be housed at the Westminster Armory, but it is not a part of the Vermont Army National Guard, the Westminster Armory or the Family Readiness programs. It is a separate entity being housed in the armory so military children will have "easy access" to the book collection.

How you can help: Donations can be made out to Dragon's Den Lending Library and mailed c/o Karen Campbell, 140 Sherwood Circle, Brattleboro, VT 05301.

For more information, including library hours contact Karen Campbell 257-1379 or Becky Cleveland 258-2264.



SUGGESTED PROCEDURE FOR INSTALLATION OF WOOD BURNING STOVES



A CHRISTMAS TRADITION by Babs Lynde, a Vermont Master Gardener

*O Christmas Tree, O Christmas tree,
Thou tree most fair and lovely!
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
Thou tree most fair and lovely!
The sight of thee at Christmas-tide
Spreads hope and gladness far and wide!
O Christmas tree, O Christmas Tree,
Thou Tree most fair and lovely!*

Regardless of what you believe or how you celebrate the holidays, there are few things more picturesque during this season than the decorated Christmas tree. Whether outside or in, at night when all is peaceful and serene, the sight of the lighted tree can be enchanting and magical for both young and old. There are many stories of how the Christmas tree came to be, and I don't want to dispel any gentle thoughts that our children may have of its origins, but here are some facts that you may not know.

Tinsel was invented in Germany in the early 1600s and originally was made from real silver that was stretched extremely thin. However the silver would tarnish and turn color after a few months so lead was mixed with the silver. This product was later banned by our government for health and environmental reasons, and now tinsel is made from plastic.

In 1856, our 14th president, Franklin Pierce, placed the first Christmas tree inside the White House, but president number 26, Teddy Roosevelt, later banned the tree because he believed it was depleting our national forests, an issue that was very dear to him. Of course, this was long before the commercial tree farms came around that have since sprung up by the thousands. Our 30th president, Calvin



Coolidge, began the lighting of the Christmas tree on the White House lawn in 1923. Franklin Roosevelt, our 32nd president, helped to popularized the concept of "growing your own" Christmas tree by raising them on his own estate in Hyde Park, NY during the 1930s.

Tree farms began to multiply in the 1940s, and they now grow about 98 percent of those trees selected for Christmas time. These farms plant nearly 77 million trees each year. Usually only half of that survive, and the trees are harvested between 6 and 10 years of age. Nearly 30 to 35 million of them are sold each year within the United States, and the best selling varieties are Balsam fir, Douglas fir, Fraser fir, Scotch pine and white pine.

In 2002, it is estimated that 48% of people in the US had changed from the real thing to the artificial Christmas trees. Artificial trees are sometimes more colorful and easier to care for because they do not require water, thus making them less of a fire hazard. It is believed the primary reason for the purchase of an artificial tree is to avoid the yearly cost of a real tree, but they will take hundreds, if not thousands, of years to break-down in a landfill. Real trees are generally recycled and used for many organic reasons including compost, fill, mulch, and soil erosion barriers.

This year don't forget to take a drive through the center of the Westminster Village on Christmas Eve. Our fire department sets up small paper bags along the main street (U S Route 5) as well as Grout Avenue and School Street with candles that are lit at dusk. It is said that airplanes passing over Westminster at night have said the display looks like a giant cross.

Would you like more information about evergreens, tree farms and reasons for purchasing a real tree for the Christmas season? The Master Gardeners of Vermont are trained to help you with all your needs. Call their Helpline toll-free at 1-800-639-2230, send questions by email to master.gardener@uvm.edu or visit their website at <http://www.uvm.edu/mastergardener/> for extensive information.



November News from Compass School

Presentations of Learning for Middle School

During the middle weeks of November, every middle schooler completed their first Presentation of Learning (POL) for the year. Somewhat like our portfolio process, POLs ask students to reflect on their significant learnings during the trimester, as well as their trajectory of learning and new experiences. Each student writes reflective letters about their growth and then shares these in a public presentation to their classmates, teachers, and parents.

The value of POLs for each student are numerous, from writing and presenting to developing self awareness, identifying strengths and areas for growth, and setting future goals. Equally important is the sense of shared community as students learn from and express their support for each other in valuing learning. One message of POLs is that everyone is a learner, each person learns differently, and we all support each other in this shared effort to help every student find success at Compass. It is remarkable to see 7th and 8th graders sensitively articulate valuing their peers and the challenges of personal growth.

You are invited to join for POLs in subsequent terms. Please contact the school or the middle school teachers if you want to experience this meaningful process in action.

Compass Soccer Finishes Strong Season

Compass fielded one of its strongest Middle School soccer teams in recent years. Coming from many different schools, the players had varied prior experiences with soccer and we worked hard to develop the more advanced sense of the game played at higher levels. Moving from a kick and run style to team play that used more sophisticated passing and defending was the biggest goal of the season.

A lot of our early season was spent on basic skills and tactics, with uneven results as we won some games and lost others because of basic mistakes. Late in the season, there were major breakthroughs team-wide as the players began to see how to move the ball as a team and how to run to space and support on offense and defense.

This growth was reflected in games in the last couple weeks, with a dominating performance against Greenwood, who had beat Compass easily earlier in the year. Compass controlled the ball for probably 75% of the game, and had some great scoring opportunities, only to lose 1-0 on the one breakaway of the game by a Greenwood forward.

In the annual Halloween costume game, Compass once again was in complete control, beating the Grammar School 4-1, with the chicken scoring a couple goals and the leprechaun dangerous from the wing position. In the end of season Greenwood Tournament, Compass continued its fine play, playing with flair in a 1-1 tie with Hilltop, coming back to tie Greenwood 1-1, and beating the Grammar School again before losing to tournament champ Linden Hill in the first day's final game.

Compass returned on Sunday for a heart

breaking 1-0 loss to Greenwood despite far outshooting their opponent. In the consolation game, Compass bested Hilltop with an overtime goal by Wrath Kissell that ended the season on a high note.

Looking back on the season, there are so many players who could be named Most Improved Player. Will McCarthy, Wrath Kissell, Dylan Elliott and Cedar Williams may have been most noteworthy in their growth. Koby Gordon consistently led the team on and off the field, with Liam and Galen Kingston-Shaw logging long playing time and contributing in many ways. Every player made great improvements this season and watching the team coalesce bodes well for next year.

The Power of Health Week

It is easy to have Health Education in schools that is "safe" and blandly presents materials and simple messages of "just say no" or explains the biological effects of drugs on the brain. Everyone can dutifully sit through these required lectures, act interested and leave with little impact on their thinking or behavior. At Compass we aim for something more valuable in Health Week. In addition to the standard topics about Nutrition, Safety, Sex Education, Substance Abuse, Compass also engages students in wellness experiences such as mindful breathing, relaxation techniques, and acupuncture. Even more importantly, we try to give students experiences that will make them think deeply about health related issues.

This year, a visit by four recovering drug addicts from Phoenix House truly changed lives, as much for our students as our guests from Phoenix. These 4 men, in their mid 20's and 30's, had all entered rehab in the last few months after profound struggles with drugs and alcohol. One described to the students how he died four months ago, going into a drug induced coma that he miraculously recovered from.

Understandably, these 4 guests were more than a bit nervous in coming to a school—unsure about how to share their experiences, fear of presenting, concerned about too much self-disclosure. With the support of the Compass community and the welcoming nature of our students and teachers, these men went on to powerfully tell how they fell into addiction and the impact on their lives and their families and friends. There was nothing pretty or contrived about their message that drugs and alcohol led to nothing good, and the honesty of their stories stayed with the students long after their visit ended.

At the same time, these men were changed by being at Compass. To feel valued and honored as individuals, to be heard but not judged, and to experience a school where kids care about each other and their community made these men more hopeful not only for our students but for their own opportunities to make a difference in their own lives. The changes for these men were evident as they hung out at school later in the day, feeling a part of this community where each had contributed in their own way to the betterment of society.

WESTMINSTER MYSTERY PHOTO



What is the name of this string of buildings and where was it located.

You may email your answer to the westminsternews@gmail.com or wminster@comcast.net Phone: Babs Lynde at 802-722-9516
The answer and the winner/s will be announced in the Next Issue.

November Answer: The old Wilson Basket factory on Gage St.

November Winners: Audrey Gochey remembers: They made baskets and later went to plastic picnic plates, etc. to go into their 'picnic' baskets. **Don remembers:** The fire that hit the factory many years ago. He was one of the fire fighters that responded at the time. Due to the fire and subsequent structural damage, a good share of the buildings are now gone, although the main building still stands. The present owner is using the building for storage, although he told me several years ago that he would love to be able to partially restore it at some point. Marty Collins, Bob Gay, and Howie Rice.

If you have picture's you think would make a great mystery photo please stop by the town office and see Bab Lyndes. **We are in search of Pictures..**

News from Westminster Volunteer Fire and Rescue

The Westminster Fire & Rescue Department holds their monthly meetings at 7:00 PM on the 1st Tuesday of every month and a combined drill on the 3rd Tuesday of every month.
Association meeting December 1st

The Prudential Committee meets twice a month on the first and third Monday after the first Tuesday at 7:00 PM
December meetings: 7th & 21st

Number of calls in October: 23
Number of man hours spent: 4,221

Number of calls through November 24th: 15
Number of man hours spent: 2,340
Number of calls calendar year to Date: 250

Woodstove hook-up: refer to the diagram (page 4) for proper installation and be careful not to pile your wood too close to the stove. The Fire Department is always available for advice and inspection of woodstove and wood furnace installation.

Christmas Trees: Be careful to not overload circuits and extension cords with tree lights and do not set up your tree near any heating appliances or wood stoves. Keep trees watered so they won't dry out so quickly and become a fire hazard. When using extension cords, be careful not to overload the circuits. Keep from putting anything on an extension cord with any weight. The weight of the object could cause a short circuit and start a fire. This actually occurred at a residence last month.

Vehicle winter preparation: In addition to having plenty of antifreeze in the radiator, it is always a good idea to keep your gas tank as full as possible. Low levels of fuel can make room for frost to form on the inside of the tank. The frost turns to water and then freezes and causes you engine to quit or not start at all. Carry a blanket, a flashlight, chains, jumper cables and any other emergency items that might come in handy if you or someone else is stranded.

Walking outside in the dark: Reflective vests work very well when walking at night. Always walk facing traffic, which means on the left side of the road. We still see many people walking on the right side of the street or road with the flow of traffic. That is very dangerous and has often resulted in fatal injuries to the pedestrian.

Tips For Winter: Close or install storm windows and install storm doors. Close cellar windows, check weather stripping, and latch windows. Every little bit helps to keep your house warm during the winter months. Also remove and drain outside hoses and faucets. Don't forget the

cobwebs. They can be a fire hazard. When emptying the ashes from the wood stove be sure to put them in a metal container and never put the container on a deck or porch or any wood floor.

Renter's Insurance: A recent fire where some renters were displaced raised the awareness of the need for renters insurance. In most cases of a fire in a rented building there is no insurance on the contents belonging to the tenant. Check with your insurance company for rates. Usually a fairly small annual premium could help replace lost items.

Association Meeting: The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association met for their regular meeting November 3rd with 26 members present and 6 members excused. It was noted that Firefighter Jason Smith has been deployed to Afghanistan with the Vermont National Guard. Some of the items discussed were as follows:
Chief Cole Streeter thanked all the members who helped during the mutual aid call to Putney for the General Store fire last month. It was a late night and a job well done.

The idea of the Association helping out some needy families in town for Christmas was discussed. Members were encouraged to bring ideas to the next meeting. Suggestions are welcome from anyone in the community.

The Halloween event at the firehouse Halloween night was very well attended in spite of the rain. Many children and adults showed up in costumes to share the candy, cocoa, cider, donuts, coffee and popcorn that was made available by some of the members of the Fire Department.

Shelter:
The Fire Station will be open for shelter in case an event occurs where shelter is needed. Contact the Chief or any member of the department in case of any emergency needs.

The Westminster Fire & Rescue Association welcomes donations throughout the year from anyone wishing to remember a loved one or a friend. We are looking for help. Anyone interested in volunteering their time to help the community in a time of need, please contact Chief Cole Streeter at 722-3178 or stop by the Firehouse any Sunday morning and pick up an application. We would like to have additional volunteers from the Westminster West area. There is a Fire House and an engine and a rescue vehicle located there and more help is needed to utilize the equipment during calls.

As always, we would like to thank the community for its continued support of the fire department.

The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association operates independently from Westminster Fire District #3

WESTMINSTER HAPPENINGS

Activities

ScottishCountryDance

Classes

Every Wednesday @ 7:30 in the Westminster Center School Gym. Bernard McGrath, instructor. All skill levels welcome. Contact Michael Daley for more information at 387-2601. No charge.

Putney Contra Dance

Last Saturday of every month at Pierce Hall on East Putney Falls Road, off Rt. 5 in East Putney. A beginners' workshop is taught at 8 pm, and the regular dance goes from 8:30 to 11:00 pm. A donation at the door will benefit the Pierce's Hall Building Fund. For more information, call (802) 387-5985.

Senior Lunch

Every 2nd Thursday of the month. All Westminster seniors are invited to attend. Join us at the First Congregational Church on Route 5

Bellows Falls Gallery

Downtown @ 5:30 every 3rd Friday of the Month.

Secrets of Health Aging – a facilitated discussion group and pot-

luck. The 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at the Westminster Fire Station. Call Westminster Cares at 722-3607 for more information

Contra Dance

Every 3rd Saturday of month at 7:30 @ The Town Hall in Walpole, NH

Gentle Yoga

Every Monday at 10:00am @ The Westminster Institute: Call Westminster Cares @722-3607 for more information.

Living StrongClasses

Mondays & Thursdays @The First Congregational Church in Westminster 9:00am to 10:00am

@The Westminster West Church 6:00pm to 7:00pm

Call Westminster Cares

for more Information:

722-3607

Yoga Class with Lisa Nigro-15

weejs

begins September 9 and ends

December 23.

Wednesdays 7 - 8:30 p.m. at the

Westminster Institute. All levels

welcomed. Drop ins welcomed.

vides home delivery to those

who are sick and shut in.

Along with the Community

Kitchen, Immanuel Episcopal

Church also provides the follow-

ing to local people in need: 1)

basic imperishable food items

are available on a daily basis at

the Church from the Food Pantry

and 2) produce is delivered

Monday, Wednesdays and

Fridays thanks to the generosity

of local farms and stores and the

faithful ministry of one of our

Deacons, The Rev. Charles

Mansfield. The Rev. Mansfield

also helps provide food for the

kitchen.

The Community Supper takes

place in the Undercroft of the

church building on Monday

evenings at 5:00 pm. All are wel-

come to be served without

charge. For more information or

to volunteer to help, contact

Mary Haas through the church

office, immanuel@sover.net or

802-463-3100. The Community

Kitchen is an agency of the

Vermont Foodbank.

And please join us to celebrate

twenty years of service on

Monday, December 7th at 5:00

pm. RSVP by calling or emailing

the church office.

Faith Community

The First Congregational Church of Westminster United Church of Christ

The Rev. Sami Jones McRae, Pastor Main Street, Route 5, Westminster, Vermont 05158, 802-722-4148

Sunday worship at 10:00 AM

Communion is the first Sunday of each month. Sunday School is held at 10:00 am from Sept to May. The church has a ramp and lift for wheelchair access. Westminster First Congregational is an Open and Affirming church, all are welcome.

Important Dates

Dec. 1 - Women's Fellowship 12:00 noon

Dec. 6 - Worship and Communion 10:00 am

Dec. 6 - Westmoreland Band Christmas Concert 4:00 pm

Dec. 13 - Worship and Children's Sunday Service 10:00 am

Dec. 14 - Standing committee - 7:00 pm

Dec. 20 - Worship and Sunday School 10:00 am

Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Worship 5:30 pm

Dec. 27 - Worship and Sunday School 10:00 am

Advent starts Sunday, Nov. 29. Each of the 4 Sundays will feature a different theme as we prepare for Christmas, come check it out.

All children are invited to attend Sunday School. In Dec. Sunday School will be held on Dec. 20 and 27. On Dec 13th the children will participate in a special Children's Worship. Students start at 10:00 upstairs in church with the rest of the congregation. After the children's story children are invited to join the teachers down in the fellowship hall for the remainder of the lesson. Students will hear stories, play games, and work together on projects. If you are interested in Sunday school call church for more info or to register your children.

Christmas Concert for the Community

The Westmoreland Town Band will present a Christmas Musial Extravaganza on Sunday, Dec. 6th, at 4 PM, at the First Congregational Church, Route 5, Westminster, Vermont. Under the direction of Carlson Barrett, the band is known throughout New England for its excellence. A selection of Christmas music will be performed upstairs in the church. If you love band music stop at the Westminster First Congregational Church on Dec 6th and get in the holiday mood. There will be a free-will offering and a portion of the proceeds will be donated to Our Place. After the concert refreshments will be served and there will be a chance to meet the band. We hope to see you all there!!

Christmas Eve Service

On Thursday, Dec. 24 there will be a Christmas Eve service at 5:30 all are invited!

The Congregational Church of Westminster West (UCC Church)

Sunday Worship is at 10:00am. Holy Communion service is held on the first Sunday of every month. Prayer service is held on Thursdays, 12:30 to 12:50pm.

Child care and Sunday School are available during worship hour. Choir meets most Sundays at 9:00am. Fully Wheelchair accessible.

Open and Affirming Susie Webster-Toleno, Minister

New Church Office Hours:

Susie Webster-Toleno will be at the church Monday 1-4pm and Thursday and

Friday mornings until 12:30. Feel free to drop by, but it's a good idea to call if

you really want to catch her, as she sometimes steps out to visit people in their

homes or the hospital. She can be reached at the Church during her office hours

at 387-2334, or a message may be left for her at home 254-4142 or by email

ccwww@sover.net

Meetings

Selectboard meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at 7PM in the Town Hall.

Planning and Development

Commission meets the 2nd Monday at 7:00 in the Town Hall.

Westminster Activitie

Commission

Second Monday of the Month at 6:00pm at the Westminster Institute.

Westminster School Board

1st and 3rd Tuesday at 7:00 at the Westminster Center School Library.

Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association

3rd Thursday at 7:00 at the Westminster West Congregational Church

Westminster West Public Library Board

2nd Mondays at 7:00 at the Westminster West Public Library

Development Review Board

meets the 1st Monday of each month at 7:00PM. at the Town Hall

Community Improvement Program Committee

meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:00PM.

Westminster Cares Board

meets the 1st Wednesday of every month at the Westminster Fire Station.

Westminster Institute Board

meets on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Institute.

911 Committee

meets as needed.

The Westminster Fire & Rescue Dept

holds their monthly meetings on the first Tuesday of every month and a combined drill on the 3rd Tuesday of every month.

Westminster Historical Society

meets the third Tuesday, monthly, at 7:30 pm at the Westminster Institute.

Westminster Gazette Meeting,

Thursday, December 17th at 7:30am at Westminster Cares Office.

Watch for up coming events from the Westminster Activities Commission!

Dec - Kids Christmas workshop
Feb. - Dance

Volunteer/s Needed to Distribute the Westminster Gazette to Local Establishments.

Usually, the 1st Tuesday of the Month

The Deadline for The January 2010 Issue of the Westminster Gazette is. Wednesday, December 30th by

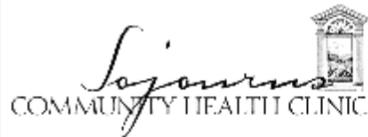
20th Anniversary Celebration of The Great Falls Community Kitchen 5:00 pm, Monday, December 7th



The Rev. Mary Haas has run the Community Kitchen for 20 years

We are celebrating a milestone of service to the community. The Rev. Mary Haas and her volunteers at the Great Falls Community Kitchen have been working hard serving a free meal and welcoming all every Monday night for twenty years. Please join us on Monday, December 7th at 5:00 pm to help us mark the occasion.

Began December 4th, 1989, the date of the first community supper, the Community Kitchen serves a hot dinner to about 80 people each Monday evening entirely through the efforts of volunteers. The clientele are a multi-generational crowd. Upon request, the Kitchen also pro-



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- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Sound Therapy
- Immune Support
- Sauna
- Yoga Therapy
- Apothecary

Walking Toward Vermont's Energy Future

The Safe & Green Campaign is sponsoring a walk from Brattleboro to Montpelier to help bring attention to concerns about Vermont having clean, safe, reliable and locally controlled energy sources.

The walk will take place January 2nd – 13th with stopover events in Putney, Bellows Falls, and other towns along the route.

For more information about the walk and how you can participate, contact Betsy Williams at (802) 387-2765, or visit the Safe & Green website at www.safeandgreen.org.

WESTMINSTER CARES, INC.

The annual meeting for Westminster Cares will be held Saturday December 5th from 2 Pm to 4 PM. We will be honoring the 90 year olds who live in Westminster. Anyone who is 90 or knows someone who is 90 is urged to contact us at 802-722 3607 for more information.

The Westminster Cares, Inc. Board of Directors met on November 4, 2009. Westminster Cares creates opportunities for seniors and disabled adults to live with independence and dignity in the community. Your support to this care-giving organization is a way for all of us to take care of our elderly.

Westminster Cares and the United Church of Bellows Falls continue to move forward with their elder housing project in Westminster. The Steering Committee meets at least once a month. Several committee members have been attending Westminster Planning Board meetings for preliminary consultations with the anticipation that the required permits will be approved.

Services provided include: 14 people on Meals on Wheels, 22 rides for 8 different people by 6 volunteers for a total of 275 miles; 3 pieces of medical equipment loaned. Volunteers visited three people plus one-on-one assistance for an elderly couple. Meetings attended in October: Bookkeeper, Gazette, Quilt Show, meetings with the Development Director. Programs in September: 2 Secrets of Healthy Aging sessions, 4 Yoga classes, 4 Artist in Each of Us classes, 27 Living Strong classes were held, one localvore lunch. Anyone interested in learning more about Westminster Cares, working on a committee, making a contribution or attending a workshop may contact Ronnie Friedman at 722-3607 or by email at wecares@sover.net.

Memorial donations received in November:
From Janice Wojcik in memory of Nick Grout

Westminster Cares welcomes donations throughout the year from anyone wishing to memorialize a loved one or a friend. Send to: Westminster Cares, PO Box 312, Westminster, VT 05158.

VFW RECOGNIZES KURN HATTIN TEACHER

by Connie Sanderson

Westminster, VT: On Saturday, November 21, 2009 the Brattleboro Post VFW honored Richard Long as the VFW Teacher of the Year. This award is given annually to a teacher who exemplifies the spirit of patriotism, who teaches a citizenship based course, and who promotes American traditions. In addition, Mr. Long was cited for his extra efforts in teaching the We The People curriculum, and for hosting an annual Veterans Day observance at Kurn Hattin. Richard will become a finalist at the state level for national recognition as a result of this award. He was nominated by Tom Fahner, Director of Educational and Residential Services at Kurn Hattin.

Part of the Saturday ceremony also recognized the top three student finalists from Kurn Hattin who submitted essays in the Patriots Pen essay contest: Aaliyah Olmo-Gilmore, Erica Tirado-Cuebas and Codi Merlin, pictured with Richard Long.

Long always knew he wanted to be a history teacher, and credits his parents with instilling his deep sense of commitment to community and to fostering patriotism. "Every family outing included a side trip to a museum or historic site," said Richard. "Even a Red Sox outing might include a stop in Concord or the Old South Church! We were always learning."

Richard Long has taught at Kurn Hattin since 1981. In addition, he serves as an umpire and is Vice President of the Vermont High School Umpires Association, is Past President of the Bellows Falls Alumni Association, and has served on many civic Boards and committees.

On his way to the ceremony, Long shared, "It is an honor to accept this recognition, to be selected, and I appreciate representing Kurn Hattin." Long resides in Manchester Center, VT with his wife, Melissa.

Kurn Hattin is a charitable home and school in Westminster, VT serving in need and at risk children ages 6-15.

Friday, December 18 is the next **Family Movie Night at the Westminster West Public Library**. At 6:30 PM, from the makers of Wallace & Gromit, come the hilarious adventures of SHAUN THE SHEEP, and a couple of stunning PIXAR animations. At 7:00 PM, a special treat: MICROCOSMOS. Incredible photography and a down-on-the-ground perspective in this award-winning nature documentary show you the worlds of insects in ways you never imagined. The drama, humor, strength, and sheer intelligence on display will leave you wondering just where humans really are on the evolutionary tree! As always, free admission, everyone is welcome, and the popcorn will be fresh and especially tasty the week before Christmas. For info, email westwestflicks at gmail dot com, or call David at 802-869-2697. **See you there!**

Harvest Moon Presents:

An Andes Dinner With food from Mexico,
Latin and South America
Saturday Dec 5th -5-9pm9-10pm Light Fare
All Tips help Compass School Juniors
raise money for Ecuador Trip
Harvest Moon is located on
Main street in Saxtons River
Reservations Strongly Recommended
802 869 7000

Stone Church Arts presents...

Early Music from the British Isles
Peter Blanchette, archguitars, and Alexandra Ludwig, Alto
7:30 pm, Saturday, December 5, 2009
Stone Church Arts brings the Early Music from the British Isles to Bellows Falls, Vermont, on Saturday, December 5 at 7:30 pm. Peter Blanchette, archguitars, and Alexandra Ludwig, Alto will perform Strathspeys, Rants, Jigs, Airs, and more from four sources of early music of the British Isles: The Gow Collection of Scottish Dance Music, O'Neill's Music of Ireland, The Playford Dance Master, and The Collected Lute Songs of John Dowland. The first three collections make up the Bible for British Isles fiddlers, the Dowland is a jewel in the crown of Elizabethan music and one of the highpoints of Renaissance repertoire.
Anthony Peck wrote: "Peter Blanchette gives an evening of such musical and mathematical precision and originality that we are transported to a state of wonder and delight. His scoring and performance thrill in the same way watching a great magician thrills. This is something completely unique and brilliant."



Parks Place Receives \$1000 from Chittenden Bank, Bellows Falls!

by Robyn Weisel

Recently, Parks Place Community Resource Center was the proud recipient of \$1000 from Chittenden Bank. Joanne Sprague and Katie Dearborn of the Bellows Falls branch stopped by to personally give their donation to the Carriage House Building Project fund.

Parks Place has been fundraising to renovate their on-site carriage house which will expand offices and meeting areas to accommodate the ever-increasing need for local health and human service space. Their goal is \$100,000 and they are 2/3 of the way there!

Parks Place helps thousands of community members access education, employment training, health programs that enabled them to make positive, lasting changes in their lives.

If you would like more information about Parks Place, or would like to contribute, call Robyn Weisel at 802-463-9927, ext.109.

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December Business of the Month
Father's Restaurant

Father's Restaurant has been in business for 20 1/2 years on route 5 in Westminster. Opened on April 12, 1988, by Brian McAllister of Westminster and Mike Crum of Saxtons River, Father's soon became a local favorite for everyone. Brian became sole proprietor in 1993, tore down and built a new restaurant in 1995, added catering in 1998 and has continued to prosper to this day. Serving homemade foods, baked goods and having the only salad bar in the area keeps us on top.

Locals are the backbone of our restaurant and have been the reason we have survived throughout the years.

Breakfast, lunch or dinner we are the areas best casual restaurant. Need an event catered ?? Give us a call.

Gift certificates are available \$25.00 for \$20.00 or \$50.00 for \$40.00 through December.

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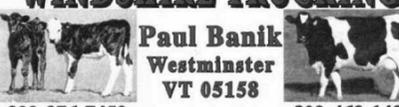
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WESTMINSTER CARES ANNUAL MEETING AND CELEBRATION

COME JOIN US ON SATURDAY,
 DECEMBER 5, 2009
 FROM 2 PM TO 4 PM AT
 THE FIRE STATION
 ON GROUT AVE
 IN WESTMINSTER.

Honored guest will be all Westminster residents who are 90 years of age and older. There will be refreshments, memory sharing and appreciation for all our volunteers and for our honored guests.

ALL ARE INVITED.

PROJECT GRADUATION 2010

Project Graduation is a substance-free celebration for the Bellows Falls Union High School graduating class of 2010. Project Graduation will be held the night of graduation June 17, 2010.

Project Graduation is part of a nationwide effort to provide a safe and memorable celebration for high school graduates. Statistics show that during the 24 hour period following graduations, hundreds of young people are killed or maimed for life while under the influence of drugs and alcohol.

Project Graduation has been a success every year since it was started. Last year nearly every senior participated. Through the support of family, friends and community, Project Graduation has been a tradition.

We have been fundraising since the start of the school year to provide another successful celebration for the class of 2010. We work hard to make sure the graduates have a safe and fun filled evening, full of activities and entertainment. It would be greatly appreciated if you would make either a financial contribution or a donation of your services / products for a raffle to help us.

We thank you as you consider supporting our efforts. Donations are tax deductible and a receipt will be provided upon request. All checks can be made payable to:

Project Graduation 2010

Please mail to:

Project Graduation
 C/O Archie Gleason
 261 Williams Rd
 Chester, VT 05143

School Board Blog

In an effort to increase transparency and communication with the public about the school board, Westminster Board member Rick Gordon has been keeping a blog at <http://www.rickwestboard.blogspot.com/>. Please keep track of this site for information and reflections on the workings of the school board.

Westminster Gazette

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