

Westminster Gazette



po box 147 westminster vt 05158

Our Community Newspaper @ www.westminstervt.org

Vol. 12, No. 1 January 2016

STUDENTS END 2015 WITH HANDS-ON SCIENCE PROJECTS



To celebrate the last day of school in 2015, students, staff and community volunteers explored science! Multiage groups experimented with everything from fire and electricity to bird feeders and monkeys.

Applying the principles of friction, one group designed and tested hand-made vehicles, while another made marble runs. Density was explored by making snow globes, rainbow jars or lava lamps.

Student engineers used newspaper, tape, and a cardboard base to design and build a table that would hold a heavy book. Other groups built structures from sticks, cups and blocks or flying machines out of paper, sticks, straws and tape. We proved our hypothesis: lots of learning results from fun.

The "Be a Light to the World", Westminster Schools Winter Concert is on Thursday, Jan. 21 at 6:30 p.m. in the Center School gymnasium. Students are asked to arrive at 6:15 and meet in their classrooms.

Come to hear the 5th and 6th grade bands, the 5th and 6th grade chorus, and all grades lift up their voices in song as they bring light to a winter's night.

In photos, clockwise from top left, a paper, tape and cardboard 'chair' holds a heavy load of books; building the chairs with a little help; and creating a rainbow in a jar; all part of the science experiments that ended 2015 in Westminster.

LIST OF SCHEDULED ANNUAL MEETINGS

UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 27 (BELLOWS FALLS UNION HIGH SCHOOL) ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, February 24, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.
in the BFUHS Auditorium

ANNUAL TOWN, FIRE DISTRICT #3 & SCHOOL MEETING

Saturday, February 27, 2016 at 10:00 a.m.
in the BFUHS Auditorium

Town Meeting Day

Vote on Australian ballot articles on Tuesday, March 1, 2016
from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Westminster Institute

LAST DAY TO BE ADDED TO THE CHECKLIST TO VOTE

Union High School District No. 27 Meeting
5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 17, 2016

Annual Town Meeting
5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 24, 2016

ENTERGY EMPLOYEES FUNDRAISE FOR SEVCA'S EMERGENCY FUEL PROGRAM

For over a year, Entergy employees have been donating to SEVCA's Share the Warmth fund through their employer-matched donation program, Power to Care, raising over \$4,000 to help some of our area's most vulnerable residents resolve fuel and electricity shut-off crises and keep their homes warm.

The employees recently intensified their fundraising efforts, raising another \$1,250 for emergency fuel and utility assistance. This was again achieved in partnership with Entergy, which sold off surplus office equipment to the employees and donated the money to support Share the Warmth. On behalf of all Entergy employees involved in the effort, Amy Haselton presented the check to SEVCA's Executive Director Steve Geller on Dec. 15, in photo.



SEVCA's emergency fuel assistance program serves low-income households experiencing heating crises, including the working poor, the elderly, and people struggling with finances due to all manner of unexpected emergencies. SEVCA also assists households facing chronic housing instability, providing fuel assistance as one element of a multi-pronged strategy to help stabilize their housing. Households facing a fuel emergency can call SEVCA toll free at (800) 464-9951.

"The support we've received from Entergy and its employees is admirable, and very much needed," Geller said, "especially since the state imposed stricter eligibility rules for the federal-and-state-funded Crisis Fuel Program and fewer households are able to get assistance from that source. This donation will help to make up for some of that gap."

UPDATE ON WESTMINSTER CARES ANNUAL APPEAL

Good News – Great Community! Westminster Cares would like to thank everyone who has already contributed to our Annual Appeal. We have just passed the halfway mark to our goal! The appeal will continue throughout the winter so you still have time to make a contribution. If we reach our goal, the Thomas Thompson Trust will donate \$12,000 over the next three years to support our Community Nursing Program. Every gift counts and moves us one step closer to our goal.

MYSTERY PHOTO ID?

Below are two comments we received trying to identify what last month's Mystery Photo was. Can anyone else help verify these? Thanks!

"Could it possibly be a grape arbor? Years ago I recall seeing grapes hanging from the pillars." *Mike Lowe*

"It is my understanding that these painted concrete pillars were set up by Alfred Wright as part of a garden arbor for his wife Margaret. In hopes of covering the arbor. Margaret planted wisteria, unaware, it seems, that we are a too far north for that plant to blossom."

R Hancock

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COMPASS SCHOOL INDEPENDENT STUDY PROJECTS

Our inaugural mid-year "Comp"etency Exhibition provided an inspiring display of what Compass is about.

There was a palatable buzz of enthusiasm in the big room as 9th and 10th graders interviewed their older peers about their independent projects that are part of the curriculum for all 11-12th graders. The range of undertakings was huge — from writing short stories to taking a college microeconomics course to translating ancient myths to rebuilding a drag car to farming mushrooms.

This was exactly what we hoped for when we began comps last year. We aimed to provide a structure where each student could pursue personal interests and go beyond what we offer through classes and the rest of the Compass educational program. So to see the range of projects and how each student was completely engaged with whatever they chose to produce.

This is the kind of personalized learning that schools throughout the country are trying to achieve. While the high expectations were applied equally to all students, the pathway to achievement was able to vary greatly.

One student learned to screenprint shirts while another created art on her own and taught an art class at Compass and a third interned in school learning

accounting and quickbooks with our business manager.

The common thread was that each student was required to choose a topic, create a clearly articulated plan, work independently, change plans as needed, and share their learning with peers and teachers.

Throughout this process, each student worked closely with a "comp coach" with whom he or she met weekly. These one-to-one discussions involved intellectually rich dialogue that pushed each student to the next edge of their learning envelope.

We can't wait to see the comps these students undertake in the second semester, as well as those they inspired for the current 10th graders when they are upperclassmen next year.

At right, Compass School student James West learning glass blowing during his independent competency project.



WHAT'S UP AT THE TOWN HALL: TOWN MEETING APPROACHES

By the time you are reading this, it will be next year. Happy New Year to all of you and I hope that this upcoming year is gratifying and productive for you and your families.

If you haven't heard, Peter Barrett resigned his position to the Selectboard on December 22nd. Peter has been on the Selectboard for approximately 16 years. He resigned before he and his wife Wilma went to Florida for the winter. Peter will be missed, but as he stated in his letter, "IT'S TIME." He wants to pursue other interests and thought this was perfect timing.

Thank You Peter for your service to this Town. The Board appointed Nancy Dalzell to finish the term.

The Town Hall's employees are gearing up for Town Meeting which is on Saturday, Feb. 27, 2016 at 10 a.m. at the Bellows Falls Union High School. Voting will take place at the Westminster Institute on Tuesday Mar. 1, 2016 starting at 8 a.m. until 7 p.m.

The Town Report information is being compiled and formatted for publication. If you are supplying any information for this publication please forward as soon as possible to Karen Astley here at the Town Hall. We all want to mention that we need your help and participation at Town Meeting and voting.

Please take the time to go to these events and participant in your Town's future.

I am going to mention again this month that at present, we have approximately eight vacant positions on local commissions or boards and we have many positions that are expiring and will need to be reelected and are running unopposed. Please use this opportunity to get involved. The petition deadline for any elected position is Jan. 25, 2016 at 5 p.m. You will need to have 1% of registered voters sign your petition which works out to be, today, 23 signatures. If you want to petition an "Article" to be placed on the warning you must submit your written article by Jan. 14, 2016 and you will need 5% of the registered voters, which today works out to be at least 114 signatures. For both petitions, more signatures are better to be safe.

We have one or more vacancies on the following:

Town Grand Juror; Town Service Officer; Town Fence Viewer; Windham Regional Commission Representative; CRVC Wantastiquet Region River Subcommittee Representative; Community Improvement Program Committee; Planning Commission; Conservation Commission.

As always, please feel free to call the Town Manager's Office regarding concerns, issues or comments.

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER CARES - MEMORIAL AND HONORARY DONATIONS

Westminster Cares is in the middle of its Annual Appeal. The following is a list of the memorial and honorary donations given through Dec. 21.

In loving memory of Walter Jennison from:
The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association
Phyllis Anderson
Nancy Dalzell
Peter and Judy Harrison
Gregory and Joan Holton
Dick and Lori Miller
Charles (Artie) Aiken
William and Joan Smidutz
Don and Donna Dawson
Myra Ashcroft
The BFUHS Class of 1950
Betty R. Miller
Linda Jennison
Cheryl Jennison
David Schumann
The Men's Heart Club of the First Congregation Church of Walpole
In memory of Staci Jones-Maly; Joanne Duval; Caro Duval; and Genevieve Farnsworth from Tonia and Lester White
In memory of Rose Stoodley from John T. and Suzanne Stoodley
In memory of Doris Gagnon from Arnie & Lorraine Knowlton
In memory of Brad Ryea from Susan Roman
In memory of Gordon (Bub) Fontaine from Shirley Fontaine
In memory of Bertha Maxwell from Irene and Jeff Michaud
In memory of Dotti Ann Fontaine from Bill and Marlene O'Connor
In memory of Ralph and Shirley Harlow and Don Berg from Bettina Berg & Chris Harlow
In memory of Harold Angers from Barbara Angers
In memory of Mary Hadley from Ann Hadley
In memory of my father, Hocker Harlow, from Susan J. Harlow
In memory of Nora Eno from Bill and Sandra Burton
In memory of Alfred Pucci from Norma Pucci
In memory of Paul Chaffee from Lillian Chaffee

In memory of Theo Green from Doreen Branford
In memory of Lloyd E. Church from Carol Church
In memory of loved ones, so missed, from Frank & Mary Mitchell
In memory of Jim Grandy from Ruth Grandy
In memory of Robie and Katherine Palmer from George & Georgiana Cheney
In memory of Ellen (Nell) Sharkey from anonymous
In memory of Marguerite & Clifford Dawson and Helen Cordano from Don & Donna Dawson
In memory of Stella & Gerald Hill and Helen & Maynard Aiken from Frank & Shirley Aiken
In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Victor Harrison and Ralph Aubuchont from Pete & Judy Harrison
In memory of Terri Rounds from Arnie and Lorraine Knowlton
In memory of Jay and Larry Hammond from Marty Hammond
In memory of Marie Wright from Jon & Karen Wright
In memory of Doris Bowen from Dan & Mary Davis
In memory of Barbara Bishop Greenwood from Allison & David Deen
In memory of our parents, Pat and Walt Jennison from Linda & Cheryl Jennison
In memory of Donna, Virginia and John Manning from Elise Manning-Sterling & Bruce Manning; In memory of Fran Streeter from Phil & Jane Savoy
In memory of Clara Stuart from Lisa & Jim Calchera

In honor of Phyllis Anderson from Robert Rhodes
In honor of Shaun Martineau from Sally Martineau
In honor of Betty Holton from Ila Mitchell
In honor of Board Members and Volunteers from Miriam and Larry Lanata
In honor of Donna Dawson from Kevin and Beth Shrader
In honor of Phyllis Anderson from Don Anderson
In honor of "smiling" Artie Aiken from Kirk Hemelberg
In honor of my good neighbor, Robert Davis, from John Benzaia
In honor of Don Anderson from Janice Wojcik
In honor of all the volunteers from Priscilla Allbee
In honor of Phyllis Anderson from Heidi Anderson

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE

The Westminster Fire & Rescue Department holds their monthly meetings at 7 p.m. on the first Tuesday of every month and a combined drill on the third Tuesday of every month. Rescue training is the second Tuesday of the month.

Next association meeting is Dec. 1 at 7 p.m.

The Prudential Committee meets twice a month on the first and third Monday after the first Tuesday at 7 p.m. A warning will be posted 48 hours prior to each meeting.

Number of calls in Nov.: 39

Number of calls through Dec. 30th: 30

Number of calls calendar year to Date: 367

Number of calls fiscal year to date: 193

Association Meeting: The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association met for their regular meeting December 1st with President Greg Holton presiding. There were 23 members present and 7 members excused. Currently there are 41 members of the volunteer fire department.

Skating rink: As soon as there is a good stretch of cold weather, the skating rink at the Center School will be flooded by some of the fire department volunteers. With cooperation from the weather and some help in keeping it plowed off, there should be some good ice skating conditions once it stays cold.

Fire Extinguishers: Check dates and gauges on a regular basis to be sure they are ready to use. The gauge needs to be in the green. Once a year, tip the extinguisher upside down to be sure the contents haven't dried up and it still moves. Remember that the extinguisher can only do its job for the first 30 seconds of the fire and will operate for only 10 seconds. Be prepared to call 911.

Know how to operate the extinguisher. Learn the word PASS. P means pull

the pin, A means aim the nozzle, S means squeeze the trigger, and the second S means sweep as in moving over the fire. Fire department personnel are always available for advice.

CO detectors: Because houses are closed up more tightly in the winter, CO detectors need to be checked more frequently.

Smoke Alarms: It's always a good idea to put new batteries in the smoke alarms January 1st and double check to be sure they are operating properly.

Vents: Check vents for heating appliances regularly to be sure they are free from ice and snow. A plugged vent can cause a fire.

The Westminster Fire & Rescue Association welcomes donations throughout the year from anyone wishing to remember a loved one or a friend.

Donations received for December: 1. Christmas tree from Kelley Green in memory of Jeff Miller 2. Turkey from Lisai's market for the Christmas Toast 3. Jeffrey Shumlin and Evelyn Lovett 4. Kathleen Lockerby

We are always looking for new members: 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, an engine and a rescue vehicle located in Westminster West and more help is always welcome to utilize that equipment during calls.

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

Check us out on our web-site www.westminsterfireandrescue.org.

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

Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers

by Alma Beals, Vermont Master Gardener and Naturalist

The downy and hairy woodpeckers are two of my favorite birds. They are the woodpeckers that are familiar to most of us, with the downy being the smallest North American woodpecker and the most common. They are found over almost all of the United States.

We see them on dead trees and on suet feeders in our yards. The downy is friendly and tame with the hairy being a little shy. While song birds have three toes pointing forward and one pointing back for perching, woodpeckers have two sharply clawed toes pointing in each direction so that they can cling to vertical tree surfaces. Woodpeckers have stiffened tails for support in climbing and foraging.

To distinguish between them, observe them when they are side by side. Although they are similar in plumage, the hairy is larger with a proportionately larger bill. The hairy has a longer and more distinct black mark on the shoulder and has white outer tail feathers.

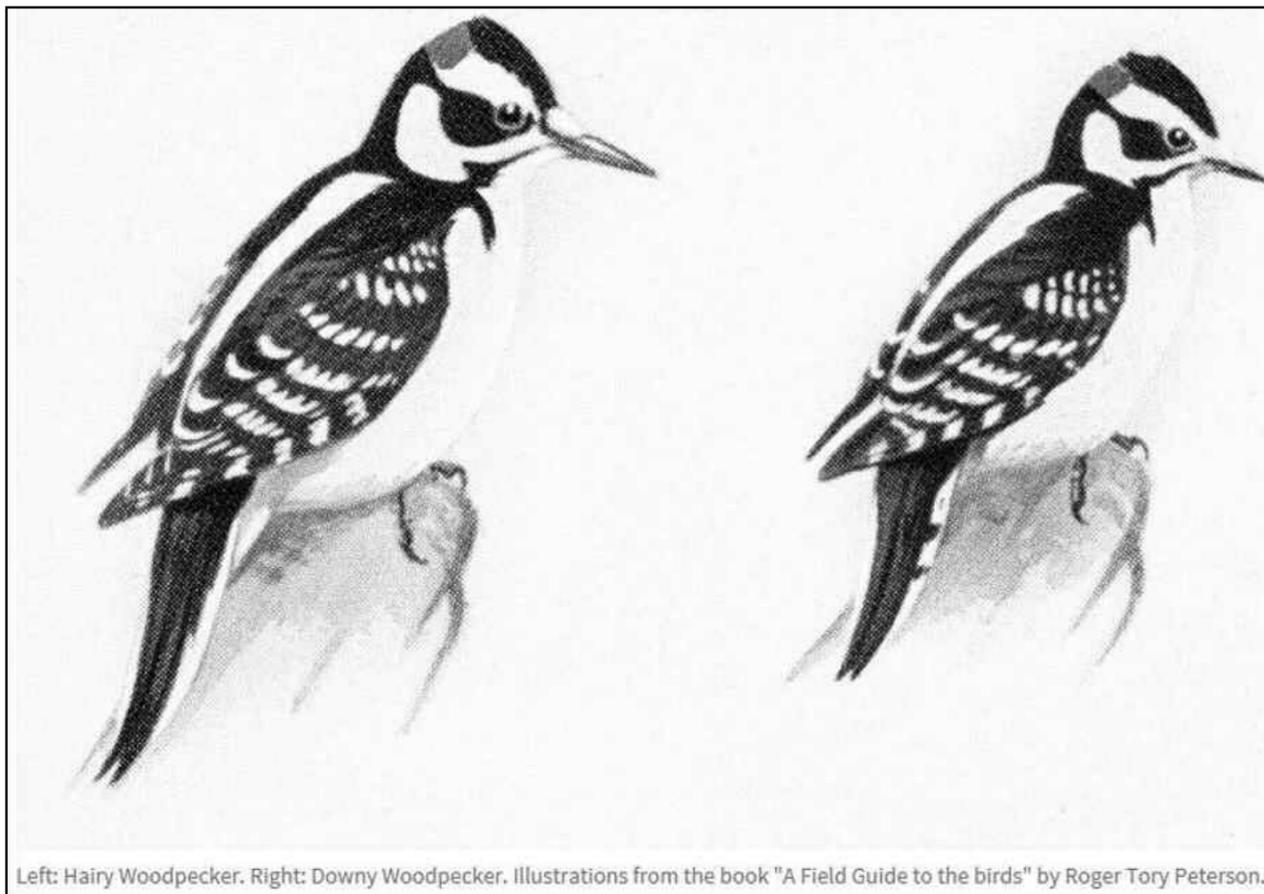
The downy's outer tail feathers are barred in black which gives them a spotted appearance. Males have a spot of red on the top of their heads and the females don't. Males forage more on smaller branches while the females forage on larger branches and tree trunks.

Dead trees and limbs are a great source of food and homes for woodpeckers. Many insects live under the loosened bark as the trees start to die. Woodpeckers eat at least 44 different kinds of insects including beetles, weevils, ants, scale, aphids, butterfly and moth larvae, crickets, spiders and 24 kinds of vegetable matter including black oil sunflower seeds.

Smaller birds like chickadees, titmice and nuthatches also search for the insects on the trees and branches. Although woodpeckers don't appear to cache food themselves, they have been seen stealing caches from white-breasted nuthatches.

On cold nights, chickadees and downies conserve energy by lowering their body temperature by 10 to 15 degrees. In non breeding season, downies will hang out with a mixed flock of chickadees, titmice, nuthatches and kinglets. This gives all the flock a better chance to find food and to watch for predators. Woodpeckers respond to alarm calls by chickadees and titmice.

The hairy and downy have similar drumming patterns. They drum against branches and tree trunks all year but starting in February, they drum harder and more often. They usually drum until July. Drumming appears to establish territories, bonding between pairs and courtship.



Left: Hairy Woodpecker. Right: Downy Woodpecker. Illustrations from the book "A Field Guide to the birds" by Roger Tory Peterson.

Watch for a calm sunny day in February to hear and see the action.

In early spring, nest building begins with both male and female excavating nesting holes in trees. The downy creates a perfectly round nest hole. The hairy creates a slightly larger and elongated hole. Both leave a bed of wood chips and no nest material in the bottom of the nest. The eggs are laid in May with both the female and male taking turns incubating. There are usually five eggs that hatch in 12 days.

Last summer, right after my four young downies left the cavity nest, they discovered my two suet feeders. After watching them scrambling about, I set up four separate feeders, side by side. They spent several days on the feeders before heading out to forage on their own. What a show that was!

In the last couple years, studies have been done to see if woodpeckers could control the Emerald Ash Borer. This bark burrowing beetle is an invasive insect that apparently hitched a ride in a cargo shipment from Asia and is starving the ash trees of eastern and Midwestern North America. It appears in the studies that downy, hairy and red-bellied woodpeckers and white-breasted nuthatches eat many of the beetles. It's probably wishful thinking that birds can control the infestations but it is a step in the right direction.

Aged in Vermont

Westminster Cares, Inc.

THE PLEASURES OF COOKING FOR ONE

By *Ronnie Friedman*

Cooking for yourself can open possibilities for both pleasure and experimentation. You can use ingredients that you like or ones you've never tried before. This is an excellent opportunity to try foods that can not only improve your health but also can be surprisingly tasty. And you can fail, because a meal for one does not have to be perfect. It is satisfying and economical, and cooking for one means we can occasionally indulge ourselves in a favorite treat.

Planning is important, however, for anyone on a fixed income. Before you shop, make a list and go to the store with a plan for the meals you are going to make. If you can plan your meals for a week, all the better.

The first step to dinner-for-one success is to make cooking healthy meals a priority. Planning ahead and arming yourself with a few tips and tricks will put you on the path to triumph in the kitchen.

Instead of scaling down, cook up full recipes: cook once, eat twice. Save time, money and clean-up by freezing soups, chili, pasta dishes and extra vegetables. Pull these 'frozen meals' out when you don't feel like cooking or just need a quick meal.

Cook a batch of whole grains such as brown rice or barley, and freeze in individual portions using a muffin pan. Once frozen, the discs can be stored in a zip-top bag.

Frozen produce can be just as nutritious as fresh and it's there when you need it. Just choose options without added sauces and sugar. And because they're frozen, there is no rush to use them before they spoil.

Eggs can make a meal happen in a flash, anytime! They are an excellent source of protein and contain a bounty of nutrients such as vitamin D. You can hard-boil a few eggs on the weekend to have as an easy breakfast, snack or quick salad addition.

Cook your main protein once a week. By roasting a chicken on the weekend or slow-cooking a turkey breast, for example, you can use the leftover meat to quickly create different dishes during the week. Add the meat to a soup or salad, slice it in sandwiches, or combine with veggies and add to pasta or rice.

Dining well can add so much value to the quality of your life. For those of us who live alone, that means taking the time and effort to prepare pleasurable meals that satisfy both the appetite and the spirit, even when it is just you.

Do you have favorite recipes for one that you would like share, or maybe additional tips for cooking for one? If you do, please send them in to Westminster Cares and we will pass them along.

"One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well." – Virginia Woolf

POTATO AND ONION HASH WITH A FRIED EGG

Time: About 30 minutes

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

1 medium onion, sliced into half-moons

Salt

2 cups (1 10-ounce) waxy potato, with skin, diced into 1/2-inch pieces

1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 large egg

1. Place a large nonstick skillet over medium heat, and add oil. When oil is hot, add onion and a sprinkling of salt. Stir until onion begins to soften, about 1 minute.

2. Add potato and cayenne to pan. Reduce heat to low, and cook, stirring frequently, until potatoes and onions are tender, caramelized and lightly browned, 30 minutes.

3. Push potato and onion hash to one side of pan, and increase heat. Crack egg into pan, and cook to taste. Spoon potatoes and onions on plate, and top with egg.

Yield: one generous serving

Ronnie Friedman is the former director of Westminster Cares.

SCHOOL DATES TO REMEMBER

Westminster Schools dates to remember for January include:

Mondays starting Jan. 11th: Winter Sports in the afternoons

Monday, Jan. 18th: Martin Luther King Jr birthday - no school

Thursday, Jan. 21st: Westminster Schools Winter Concert in the WCS gym, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 28th: Teacher inservice afternoon - early release for students

WESTMINSTER TOWN REPORTS AVAILABLE

Copies of the Town Report will be available on or before Feb. 12, at the Westminster Town Hall, Westminster West and/or Westminster Center Schools, Butterfield and/or Westminster West Libraries and the Health Center in Bellows Falls.

The Town will mail or distribute a copy of the report to any voter or resident upon request. To do so please contact the Town office at 722-4255 no later than Feb. 5.

WESTMINSTER MYSTERY PHOTO

**Can You Help Us out?
We need more Mystery Photos
of the Town of Westminster.**

**When Mystery Photos are available, E-mail your answer to
westminsternews@gmail.com
The answer and the winners are
announced in the next issue, page 3.**

INSTITUTE BOARD MEETING

The Westminster Institute Board meeting will be on Tuesday, Jan. 12 at 6:30 p.m. at the Institute.

GAZETTE SEEKS NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The Westminster Gazette Board is seeking a few new members, and in particular a board secretary would be greatly appreciated. Board membership requires attending a one hour meeting each month, and some time spent on Gazette issues at home.

Also, if anyone would like to donate toward Gazette expenses, all contributions are greatly appreciated. They can be sent in care of the Town Offices.

MITTEN TREE IS A SUCCESS

The Town of Westminster has felt the generosity of the season. In early October the Campbell Fund suggested that we collect mittens to distribute around town for those that would be in need.

Thanks to many people mittens, hats and scarfs were knitted and we found we had 62 hats, 50 pair of mittens, and 14 scarfs to distribute. They came in beautiful colors and sizes. Some people had donated yarn that was used by knitters to help make this outreach so successful.

Thank you to Linda Fawcett at the library and Ali Bigwood, Karen Astley, Patty Mark and Russ Hodgkins for collecting the knitted items. Because there was such a generous response, next year we will have more collection spots and begin earlier in the season.

The real joy was delivering mittens and hats to the Westminster Schools, to SEVCA Head Start Day Care and knitted hats as well as new ball caps to the Warming Shelter. All items were received with joy and thanks.

The Campbell Fund sends thanks and appreciation to the many knitters who made this project a success and will help to warm so many of our neighbors. Thank you, from the Campbell Fund Commissioners and Public Funds Trustees.

3SQUARESVT—A PROGRAM FOR ALL SEASONS

Winter is a time when many households living with lower incomes are particularly hard-pressed to meet their food expenses, given the added burden of heating costs. Some cut down on the food they consume, or buy cheaper, less nutritious food as a means to cope with these added expenses. But good nutrition is essential for good health in all seasons. Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) wants Windham and Windsor county residents to know that many struggling households can get help with their food costs through 3SquaresVT.

3SquaresVT is Vermont's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, designed to help households without sufficient resources meet their need for healthy, nutritious food. The program helps eligible households stretch their food budgets and put three square meals a day on the table, at the same time freeing up money for other basic living expenses.

Whether they are experiencing a short-term financial crisis or longer-term challenges, 3SquaresVT helps seniors, families, and individuals with lower incomes make ends meet. Monthly benefits come on a debit card accepted at many grocery stores and farmers' markets, making it easy for households to use them.

SEVCA's Family Services staff are available to assist households to apply for 3SquaresVT. Many Vermonters are eligible for the program and don't know it, so SEVCA encourages any family having trouble meeting their food expenses to contact them. Eligibility and the amount of assistance provided is based primarily on household income, expenses, and household size. The program is open to individuals, families with or without children, seniors, and people with disabilities. There are special rules that make it easier for households that include a senior or a person with a disability to receive benefits.

3SquaresVT also helps the local economy by bringing federal dollars to the state and encouraging local spending, helping to support businesses and farmers in our communities. Call SEVCA at (800) 464-9951 for an appointment to get help filling out an application.

Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) was established in 1965 as part of the national War on Poverty to address the needs of low-income residents of Windham and Windsor Counties. In addition to providing the "safety net" for households in financial crisis, its services help them stabilize their lives, make their homes safe and energy-efficient, take strides toward becoming self-reliant, and enable their children to escape the generational poverty cycle.

WESTMINSTER HAPPENINGS

Activities

Scottish Country Dance Classes

Every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. in the Westminster Center School Gym. 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 beginner's workshop is taught at 8 p.m., and the regular dance goes from 8:30 to 11. A donation at the door will benefit the Pierce's Hall Building Fund. For more information call 387-5985.

Senior Potluck Lunch

Every 2nd Thursday of the month at noon. All Westminster seniors are invited to attend a potluck lunch at the First Congregational Church on Route 5.

Bellows Falls Gallery Walk

Downtown at 5:30 p.m. every 3rd Friday of the month.

Secrets of Healthy Aging

A facilitated discussion group and pot-luck. The 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at the Westminster Fire Station from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Call Westminster Cares at 722-3607 for more information.

Contra Dance

Every 3rd Saturday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Hall in Walpole, N.H.

Gentle Yoga

Every Monday at 10 a.m. at the Westminster Institute. Call Westminster Cares at 722-3607 for more information.

Living Strong Classes

Mondays and Thursdays: at the First Congregational Church in Westminster from 9-10 a.m.; at the Westminster West Church from 6-7 p.m.; or at Greater Rock Fitness in Bellows Falls from 11-12. Call Westminster Cares for more information at 722-3607.

Knitting Together

Join us every Wednesday, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Village Square Booksellers, downtown Bellows Falls. Bring your knitting needles, we have the yarn and casual instruction if needed to knit hats, mittens and sweaters for area kids.

All our yarn is from community donation and we distribute our completed work to all area schools and Parks Place. More knitters at all skill levels are wanted and we can promise you an enjoyable experience. For details or to donate yarn contact Caroline at 463-4653.

Westminster West Public Library Trustees

The Westminster West Public Library Trustees meet on the second Monday of the month at 7 p.m. at the library. They welcome visits from the public, but it would be best to check times with Bev Major at 387-5737 before coming.

Bellows Falls Farmers' Market

Stop by the Train Station in Bellows Falls every Friday from 4 to 7 p.m., for our Farmers Market. For details visit www.bffarmersmarket.com or call 463-2018.

Faith Community

The First Congregational Church of Westminster

The Rev. Sami Jones McRae, Pastor. Main Street, Route 5, P.O. Box 122, Westminster, 722-4148. Sunday worship at 10 a.m. Communion is the first Sunday of each month.

Sunday School is held at 10 a.m. from September to May. The church has a ramp and lift for wheelchair access as well as a handicapped bathroom. Westminster First Congregational is an open and affirming church, all are welcome.

The Congregational Church of Westminster West

The Congregational Church of Westminster West worships every Sunday at 10 a.m. The pick-up choir meets most Sundays at 9 to rehearse for that morning's anthem; newcomers to choir are always welcome!

Holy Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday of every month, and on the Second Sunday the church collects a special offering that goes to Our Place in Bellows Falls to help fund their food shelf.

The church building is fully wheelchair accessible, and the congregation is Open and Affirming. Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno is the pastor, and musicians are Jennifer Hed and Margit Lilly.

Rev. Webster-Toleno currently holds office hours on Monday and Thursday afternoons, and people are welcome to drop by. However, since "office hours" sometimes means she's out visiting people in their homes, it's a good idea to make an appointment if you really want to catch her.

She can be reached at the church on those days at 387-2334, via cell phone at 579-8356 or e-mail susiewt@gmail.com.

Grace Bible Fellowship Services

The Grace Bible Fellowship holds its Sunday Worship Service at 9:15 a.m. at 38 Elm Street in Walpole, NH.

Find out more about the church at its Web site, www.gb4hisglory.com/.

Walpole Unitarian Church

Services are presented by Rev. Lisa Mobayed M.Div. Worship services are at 10 a.m. Children's Religious Education begins at 10 a.m. with the adults and moves to Hastings House at 10:15. Refreshments and conversation are held after the service with the children included. www.walpoleunitarian.org.

Meetings

Selectboard 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Planning Commission 2nd Monday at 7 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Westminster Activities Commission 2nd Monday of the Month at 6 p.m. at the Westminster Institute.

Westminster School Board

1st and 3rd Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the Westminster Center School Library.

Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association

3rd Thursday at 7 p.m. at the Westminster West Congregational Church.

Westminster West Public Library Board

2nd Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the Westminster West Public Library.

Development Review Board

1st Monday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Town Hall.

Community Improvement Program Committee

meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m.

Westminster Cares Board - No Summer Meetings

1st Wednesday of every month, at the Westminster Institute at 4:30 p.m.

911 Committee as needed.

The Westminster Fire & Rescue Dept.

holds their monthly meetings on the 1st Tuesday of every month, at 7 p.m. and a combined drill on the 3rd Tuesday of every month at the Westminster Fire Station.

Westminster Historical Society

2nd Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the Westminster Institute.

Westminster Gazette Meeting

Monday, January 25 at 4:30 p.m. at the Westminster Institute

Westminster Recycling Committee

Every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Westminster Fire Station.



**THE GAZETTE
GRATEFULLY
ACKNOWLEDGES
THE SUPPORT
OF ITS UNDERWRITERS:**
Kurn Hattin Homes
Westminster School District
Town of Westminster
Westminster Activities Commission
Sojourns Community Health Clinic
Westminster Cares
Westminster Fire & Rescue
Association
Burtco Inc.
The Dascomb Trust

SOUPER WEDNESDAY RETURNS

Souper Wednesday will be returning to the First Congregational Church, located at 3470 U.S. Route 5 in Westminster, for the seventh consecutive year, on Jan. 6 from noon to 2 p.m.

Please come and join us for a hot bowl of soup and conversation with your neighbors. There is no charge for the lunch other than free will donation.

Come and enjoy getting out of the house for a while on those cold, winter Wednesdays.

JOIN YOUR LOCAL ROTARY CLUB

Every December, the Bellows Falls Rotary Club sponsors a free movie for the kids at the Opera House. After the movie, Santa arrives via a fire truck and escorts the kids to the Lower Theater for cookies and punch which are supplied by the Bellows Falls Woman's Club and the Emblem Club.

The Club also sponsors a Penny Sale, the Paddle Battle and two Spaghetti Dinners, one as a fund raiser and the other as a thank you.

Our meetings are held at Kurn Hattin on Thursday mornings at 7:30 and we usually have a speaker. All are welcome.

WESTMINSTER GAZETTE

Editor: Robert Smith

Board of Directors:
Charmion Handy - Chairwoman
Donna Dawson
Alma Beals

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KURN HATTIN CHILDREN CELEBRATE HOLIDAYS

The 101 children of Kurn Hattin Homes celebrated the spirit of giving during the holiday season this year, with the help of several individuals and businesses in the community.

Tim Mollica of Christmas Trees of Vermont and his family donated 11 trees, hand-picked by the children. The children and staff put on their holiday sparkles and finery for the very special Annual Night of Giving dinner.

In the months leading up to this event, the children in each cottage selected a Christmas giving project to help those in need. On the evening of the dinner, a child from each cottage presented their chosen community service project, explaining why it was selected, and how it made a difference.

Among several projects chosen by the nine cottages were: raising money for the Dana-Farber Institute in memory of the school's late Principal, Tom Fahner; t visiting, singing, and socializing with nursing home residents; and food drives for the local food shelf. Later that week, all of the Kurn Hattin staff and children spread good cheer by caroling in area villages. The children also had their own cottage Christmas parties, with frosted cookies, eggnog, and singing before leaving for vacation.

The Rotary Club of Chester coordinated volunteers, gifts, donations, and pizza to make Christmas truly magical. Santa, Mrs. Claus, Mr. Grinch, and an entourage of elves went from cottage to cottage with a giant sack of presents. Squeals of glee accompanied the tearing of paper, and the children smiled and hugged Santa and Mrs. Claus as they expressed their gratitude. A Holiday Bazaar with items generously donated by friends, staff, and parents, was held on the last day of school, followed by a special holiday concert. Kurn Hattin thanks all who contributed by helping to bake some yummy sweets, and by participating in the Bazaar, and sends their best wishes for the holidays and the New Year.

In photo, Santa and Mrs. Claus receive a thank you hug from the Kurn Hattin girls.



HUBBARDS RECEIVE KH AWARD

On December 10th, John and Carol Hubbard of Walpole, NH, were the recipients of Kurn Hattin Homes for Children's Charles Albert Dickinson Award. The award, established in 2013, is given annually in recognition of an individual or organization whose philanthropic commitment embodies the mission of Kurn Hattin Homes for Children. Named for founder Charles Albert Dickinson, the award recognizes those who make a significant contribution to the field of child welfare, and help to transform the lives of children and families forever.



The award, designed and created by Vermont artist, Robert DuGrenier, features a beautiful cast crystal relief image of Dickinson.

The Award was presented to John and Carol Hubbard for their unwavering dedication to Kurn Hattin. Following in the footsteps of John's parents, Austin and Winona Hubbard, who were longtime supporters of Kurn Hattin.

John became actively involved with the organization at an early age. He went on to become an Incorporator in 1972, a Trustee in 1977, President from 2000 to 2005, Trustee Emeritus in 2012, and served as an enthusiastic Chair of the Golf Tournament Committee for over 15 years. John and his wife, Carol, enjoyed spending time with the Kurn Hattin children, and were often in attendance at events on campus.

In addition to their private support, John and Carol spearheaded donations to Kurn Hattin from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, a tradition of giving in memory of his parents that continues today. Recently, John and Carol supported the project to bring back a chicken flock to the farm at Kurn Hattin. John, as he accepted the honorary sculpture on behalf of the couple, explained, "Carol and I believe in Kurn Hattin's mission, and we are pleased to have been a part of it."

Above, the Hubbard Family, from left, Susan and Peter Johnson, John Hubbard, Rachel Johnson and Carol Hubbard.

BELLOWS FALLS ROTARY CLUB



For more information about Rotary, contact Alma Beals at almabeals@gmail.com or 722-3355

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We meet most Thursdays, 7:30 a.m. at Kurn Hattin School in the Mayo Center, Westminster, Vermont.
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January Business of the Month: Allen Brothers Oil Co.

Allen Brothers Oil Company, started out in 2001 primarily to supply the Allen Brother's greenhouses and a few area farms. As word spread, Allen Brothers store customers began asking if they could get oil, and so began the business.

In 2004, Tim Allen turned the business into a full service heating company offering pre-buy and budget plans, as well as 24 hour emergency calls.

We now have three delivery trucks, three service vehicles, and a client base of over 3500 customers, serving Cheshire, Windham and Windsor counties.

Just this past October, Tim and Stacey's oldest son Matthew Allen and wife moved back to this area, and he is now running the service department.

We are very excited about the future of the company, and have a wonderful staff in place to insure that all of our customers are kept warm, and receive the best possible service we can provide.

We continue to offer low pricing, as well as small minimum deliveries, and we strive to support those in need any way we can.

Thank you to all our customers for your business, trust and success of our company. We hope you have a blessed 2016 !

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KURN HATTIN RECEIVES EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE GRANT

Kurn Hattin Homes for Children is the recipient of a \$500 ExxonMobil Educational Alliance Grant to support mathematics and science programs at the non-profit, residential home and school for boys and girls in the first through eighth grades.

Now in its 16th year, ExxonMobil's grant program provides grants to schools across the country, which have been nominated by local retailers who best know the schools in their area.

Allen Brothers of Westminster, nominated Kurn Hattin Homes. Stacey Allen, from Allen Brothers, presented the check to Kurn Hattin's office of Development and Public Relations Director, Kim Fine.

In photo at right, Kim Fine of Kurn Hattin Homes for Children, left, accepts an ExxonMobil Educational Alliance Grant check from Stacey Allen of Allen Brothers Oil Co. in Westminster.



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Westminster Gazette

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