

Westminster Gazette



po box 147 westminster vt 05158

Our Community Newspaper @ www.westminstervt.org

Vol. 11, No. 11 November 2015

WESTMINSTER SCHOOLS ENJOY HALLOWEEN PARADE

Students from Kurn Hattin, Westminster Center and Westminster West Schools, and even a group from Bellows Falls Union High School joined forces and costumes to celebrate Halloween. They were joined by parents, grandparents...



WORLD WAR II VETERANS PLAQUE TO BE RE-DEDICATED ON VETERANS DAY

On Veterans Day Wed. Nov. 11, a new monument will be dedicated on the grounds of the Westminster Institute honoring the Westminster veterans who served in World War II.

The memorial plaque, which has hung inside the Institute for many years, will be moved outdoors and mounted on a granite stone. A new flag pole will also be installed as part of the memorial.

This project was initiated many months ago by Artie Aiken of School Street, Westminster. Artie is a veteran of WW II and his name appears on the plaque along with many other Westminster citizens who served.

Artie came to an Institute board meeting several months ago with Greg Holton to present the idea. The board liked the idea and gave the go ahead for the concept to be researched further.

Artie, along with Greg and Jim Grout began to research the costs and to find donors who would help with the project funding. At the September meeting of the Institute board everything was approved and plans were made for the Veterans Day dedication. A brief ceremony will be held on the lawn of the Westminster Institute.

Artie Aiken, our 102 year old veteran, will be there to raise the flag and say a few words in memory of those who served.

Please join us for this very special event.

KURN HATTIN VOLUNTEER TURNS 104

Retired teacher Vivian Prindl has been a volunteer at Kurn Hattin Homes for Children in Westminster for 20 years. Each year, she comes from her home in Hudson Falls, NY to read, spend time, and enjoy her birthday with the children.

At her celebration, she said that the children and staff at Kurn Hattin were the kindest people she had met in a century's worth of travels.

The children sang her songs, gave her handmade birthday cards, and wrapped her in hug after hug before sharing some delicious cake with her.

Afterwards, Mrs. Prindl smiled and reflected, "I never thought that I would see the year 2000, because it had seemed so far away at one time."



CHICKEN PIE SUPPER & CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

The First Congregational Church of Westminster will hold their annual Chicken Pie Supper on Nov. 14, with seatings at 5 and 6:15 p.m. The Church is located at 3470 U.S. Route 5

The menu will be chicken and biscuits, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, winter squash, cranberry sauce and apple spice cobbler for dessert. Coffee, tea, water and milk are the beverages.

The cost will be \$10 for adults, \$5 for students, and no charge for children under 5yrs old.

The Women's Fellowship will hold their annual Christmas bazaar on Nov. 28, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. which will feature many hand crafted items as well as many baked items.

Coffee, donuts and muffins will be available for purchase early and lunch will consist of ham or chicken salad, corn chowder, chili, or vegan vegetarian minestrone, coffee, tea or hot chocolate.

COMPASS CORRECTION AND CLARIFICATION

An announcement of Compass Day in the October edition of the Westminster Gazette mistakenly stated that The Compass School is a "fully accredited independent school." This should have said that The Compass School is "approved by the Vermont State Board of Education as an independent school."

In fact, the school has been granted the highest level of state approval at every stage of its 17 year history. "Accreditation" is different from "approval." The New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) is the regional accrediting agency for Vermont. It is voluntary for schools to seek accreditation through a process that entails completing a year-long self-study, hosting a four day visit by peers from other schools, and passing a comprehensive set of Standards for Accreditation. NEASC currently accredits 68 independent and public schools in Vermont.

Information about The Compass School and NEASC may be found on their respective websites: www.compass-school.org and www.neasc.org.

Rick Gordon, Director, The Compass School

Bill Bennett, Director, Commission on Independent Schools, NEASC



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brian.whitehouse@compass-school.org

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WESTMINSTER WALKERS

We are still meeting at the Westminster Park and Ride on Westminster Heights Road at 9 a.m. each Wednesday.

Most of our walks are one to one and a half hours including the time to carpool to the trail.

We walk on moderate and quiet trails and roads. Come join us before the cold weather sets in.

Call Westminster Cares for more information at 722-3607.

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Compass School Events in November

The introduction of our 1-1 computer initiative has been a wonderful success so far! A few of the benefits we see are: 1) assuring every student has equal access to technology, 2) improving work flow management in handing out and collecting assignments, and, most significantly, helping students archive their work as evidence related to graduation proficiencies, and 3) increasing personalization of learning by expanding opportunities for diverse learning experiences or accessing a wider range of resources that match individual student needs.

9-10 Flash Filmmaking

While the middle school was on an overnight camping trip and the juniors and seniors were at Camp Takodah working on leadership development, the 9-10th graders were challenged to produce a film in 24 hours connected to curriculum from their classes. Perhaps unsurprisingly, all chose to follow their humanities class theme of fear. Using skills of writing, creative thinking, problem solving, technology use, and collaboration, each group succeeded in making a film that, if not exactly scary in each case, did much to entertain the audience.

Mycology Lab Independent Study

As part of "Comps" for grades 11-12 students, Kestral Osman has built a mycology lab in the basement to grow mushrooms for commercial sale. "Comp time" occurs for two blocks on Wednesday for students to work on individual projects that meet graduation "comp"encies. Other projects include: blacksmithing, monitoring personal nutrition and health, studying particle physics, creating art, and writing and recording hip-hop music. It is inspiring to see students pursuing their personal learning interests!

Coding Class: Python the Hard Way

Patrick Chu, a nationally recognized computer programming expert is teaching coding to a dozen students this term. Teaching Python, a state-of-the-art language, Patrick's goal is to develop a cadre of programmers with employable



skills to create a mini Silicon Valley here in Southern Vermont.

Compass Day Opens School to Community

We welcomed 40+ adult and student visitors to Compass to join us for lunch, classes, and exploratories on our 4th Annual Compass Day. It is so easy to have visitors join us and we invite anyone to come by and experience Compass in action at any time. Bringing in outside community members in to classes adds to the learning environment and is well appreciated. We welcome visitors anytime to see Compass at work!

WHAT'S UP AT TOWN HALL - TOWN PLAN ADOPTED

The new "Town Plan" has been finished and adopted by the Selectboard. The Planning Commission should be applauded for their dedication to this task. The process was lengthy because of the thoroughness of this Commission's commitment to the Town.

The plan takes into account everything from environmental changes to State mandates. The "Plan" outlines our preparedness for our Town's future as our world climate changes. Thank you to John Medeiros, Chris Vincent, Matt Conklin, Kathy Kingston, John Barnett, and Randy Major who make up our Planning Commission.

A special gift has been given to our Town. The Dunklee family has given the Town 15 acres of land adjoining the Town Forest. This land is totally engulfed by our existing forest and will enhance the capabilities of trail making and forest management. A special thank you for this everlasting gift to Martha, Laura, and Jeff who made this possible.

The Selectboard is interviewing two architects to start the process of the Town Hall's first floor possible renovation project. The main purpose of the Architect is to get us real numbers for the renovation costs and to see if this is what we want to do as a Town. It will also help us get financing and will include handicap accessibility to the first and second floors to make our Town Hall to code.

The Town of Westminster received some good news this past week. The State of Vermont sent the Town a check for \$289,911.69 for the Covered Bridge Road's bridge repair that needed to be done because of Tropical Storm Irene.

The bridge was damaged by flood waters in 2011 and was deemed an "improved repair" which made it a non-refundable bridge repair by FEMA. The repair was done with the guidance from the State and with a little perseverance, the State of Vermont saw the Town's predicament and helped fund the repair.

The Town Manager had the opportunity to go to an Emergency Management seminar this past week and he came out of it with a lot of good information for the safety of our Town. One very interesting fact that was brought up was when the electricity and phone systems are out Ham Radio Operators are very valuable in getting communications out to neighboring sources requesting any and all types of resources.

I am requesting names of such operators that might be of assistance in the case of an emergency from Westminster. Please e-mail me at Manager@westminstervt.org or call 722-4255. I thank you in advance for any help that you may provide.

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

News From Westminster Cares

The Westminster Cares, Inc. Board of Directors met October 21st at the Westminster Institute with President Connie Sanderson presiding. The following board members attended: Reggie Borden, Pete Harrison, Barbara Sherrod, Sally Ryea, Heidi Anderson, Don Dawson, Susan Harlow, Kathy Elliott, Miriam Lanata and Director Donna Dawson.

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 friends.

Anyone interested in learning more about Westminster Cares, volunteering to deliver meals on wheels or driving neighbors to doctor appointments, working on a committee, making a contribution or attending a workshop may contact Donna Dawson at 722-3607 or by e-mail at wecares@sover.net. Check us out on the web@ www.westminstercares.org and like us on Facebook.

Services Provided:

Meals On Wheels – In September: WC volunteers delivered meals five days a week to 15-16 different people who are now on meals. In addition, two frozen entrees were delivered to 11 people on Fridays for weekend meals (22 total per week).

Transportation – During the month of September, nine rides were provided by four different volunteers who drove five different Westminster residents to medical appointments, shopping or wellness programs.

Nursing Program – During September, our community nurse made six home visits and phone check-in calls on behalf of five seniors for medication manage-

ment, blood pressure checks, foot care and hospitalization follow-ups.

Meetings Attended by Staff in September Included – Attended Monthly Senior Lunch; meetings held with nurse, treasurer, bookkeeper and board president. Met with Gazette Board, grant writer, Programs Committee, PR Committee, Funding Committee and Executive Committee.

Programs in September – two Secrets of Healthy Aging sessions, four Gentle Yoga classes, 21 Strength Training classes, five Artist in Each of Us classes and four Chair Yoga classes.

Assistance and Referrals – Assistance provided to several Westminster residents and their families, collaborating with Our Place, BF Senior Center, Senior Solutions, the V.A., HCRS, SEVCA, Hospice, Bradley House and Thompson House.

Friendly Visiting – Three friendly visits this month.

Medical Equipment – In September we loaned out 11 pieces of equipment and 12 bags of supplies; one piece of equipment was returned to us and seven pieces (plus supplies) were donated to us.

Westminster Cares welcomes donations throughout the year from anyone wishing to remember or honor a loved one or friend.

September and October 2015

In memory of Almon Flagg from Ken Flagg

In memory of Alice and Harold Shattuck from Barb Greenoug

In memory of my Aunt, Aleda Baraby from Lyanne Woodward

NEWS FROM WESTMINSTER VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE

The Westminster Fire & Rescue Department holds their monthly meetings at 7 p.m. on the 1st Tuesday of every month and a combined drill on the 3rd Tuesday of every month. Rescue training is the 2nd Tuesday of the month.

Next association meeting November 3 at 7 p.m.

The Prudential Committee normally meets twice a month. A warning will be posted 48 hours prior to each meeting.

Number of calls in September: 31

Number of calls through October 28: 28

Number of calls calendar year to date: 295

Number of calls fiscal year to date: 121

Association Meeting: The Westminster Fire and Rescue Association met for their regular meeting September 1st with Vice President Paul Millman presiding. There were 24 members present and 5 members excused. Currently there are 41 members of the volunteer fire department.

Fire Prevention Open House: Friday October 9th was a fun filled day and a huge success. Around 150 kids were present, including all of Westminster West, K through 4 from the Center School, 20 from Squeaky Sneakers pre K pre-school and 10 home schooled. Several events took place. There were rides on the Tower, off road vehicles and an Engine. Representatives from Golden Cross Ambulance and the State Police were there. Thank you from Chief Cole Streeter to the many volunteers who gave so much of their time and energy to make the Fire Prevention Open House such a huge success.

Walking outside in the dark: Now that we have reverted back to standard time and it is getting dark much earlier, we want everyone to be more alert, walkers and drivers alike. There have been several fatal pedestrian accidents

SWAMP HIKE IN ATHENS DOME AREA

The Pinnacle Association will host an interesting excursion to large, dark, and quiet spruce swamp in the Athens Dome area in Grafton on Saturday, Nov. 7 from 1 to 3 p.m. Camilla Roberts, former Chair of the Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association, will lead the hike and discuss the area's special characteristics.

Participants should dress warmly, wear sturdy shoes, and bring water. Meet at the parking lot opposite The Nature Museum on Townshend Road in Grafton. From there participants will carpool to the start – traversing a number of connecting roads and trails in the expanded 20-mile Pinnacle Trail System that runs from Putney Mountain to Grafton. Then they will be shuttled back to the parking lot across from the Museum. Interested hikers should contact Roberts at 869-1388 for more information and registration.

For a map and information about the Athens Dome area trails, visit the Athens Dome map under Trails & Maps at www.windmillhillpinnacle.org.

in the area lately and we want to remind those who walk to be extra cautious. We are not trying to say that the walker is at fault, but there are precautionary measures that can be taken. And just because you have the right away in a cross walk, don't just assume the vehicle will respect that. Keep your eye on those vehicles when crossing. They may not see you or, guess what, someone could be texting. Also, 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. This is very dangerous and has often resulted in fatal injuries to the pedestrian. And don't have a headset on. You need to be able to hear the traffic to be safe.

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

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.

RECIEVES CLERGY RENEWAL GRANT

The Congregational Church of Westminster West has received a grant of \$48,800. to enable its Minister, Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno, to participate in the 2015 National Clergy Renewal Program.

The Church is one of 144 congregations across the country selected to participate in this competitive grant program, which is funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. and administered by Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. Established by the Endowment in 2000,

the program's grants allow Christian congregations to support their pastors with the gift of extended time away from their ministerial duties and responsibilities.

Ministers whose congregation are awarded the grants use their time away from the demands of daily ministry to engage in reflection and renewal. The approach respects the "Sabbath time" concept, offering ministers a carefully considered respite that may include travel, study, rest, immersive arts and cultural experiences, and prayer.

The Human-Bear Conflict

by Alma Beals, Vermont Master Gardener and Naturalist

Over the past several decades, farm land has reverted to forest which has created ideal habitat for the bear population. They do not like to cross large open areas and are apt to stick to the woods. Unfortunately more houses are being built in the woods.

It is time to start thinking about feeding the birds for the winter. Some of us feed all year but many who have had black bears visit only feed while the bears are denned up from November to April. Bears don't just knock the feeders down. They destroy them.

Forrest Hammond, a wildlife biologist from the Springfield State Office advises that the first time a bear visits make all kinds of noise and scare it off. What most of us do is grab a camera and watch the bear. This gives the bear the chance to smell that food is around and almost guarantees a return visit.

Bears have an acute sense of smell and can smell food miles away. They spend most of their lives looking for the calories they need to survive. They need to gain 30% to 40% of their spring-time body weight by fall to survive their winter hibernation and are programmed to pack in as many calories as possible.

One pound of black oil sunflower seeds has 1740 calories. It takes many hours of foraging natural foods to get the 12,000 plus calories it can down in five minutes at a bird feeder.

They are also very intelligent, adaptable and resourceful with excellent memories. They will return at the right season, year after year, to places they have found food previously. Although their hearing is excellent, their eyesight is about the same as ours. They might be a little near-sighted. That is why they often stand up and sniff the air when they are trying to identify something.

Remember I am talking about our bears, the black bears, which do not snarl or roar as stories have led us to believe. They use a wide variety of sounds. The most common is grunting which is used in amicable situations with mates, cubs, other bears and occasionally humans. Huffing means they



are nervous or afraid. Jaw-popping or tooth-clicking usually means bluffing rather than aggression.

Cubs frightened or separated from their mother bawl. Bears trapped in trees for long times often moan in fear. However, if you encounter a bear with its ears back and making a deep moaning sound, the bear is very distressed and could charge.

Pay attention to the bear's body language. A bear standing on its hind legs is trying to get a better smell but if the head is down with the ears laid back, the bear is nervous, afraid or feels threatened. If the bear is woofing and has its mouth open displaying teeth, keep your distance.

Many of you have bear stories I would like to hear. If I hear from enough of you, I will write a follow-up column.

Aged in Vermont

Westminster Cares, Inc.

CHAIR YOGA - IS IT FOR YOU?

By Bonnie Anderson

Nearly everyone can benefit from yoga practice. However, for some people, the idea of getting down on the floor to move and stretch is either not appealing or simply not an option. Standing and balancing postures can be very challenging as well.

Chair yoga brings the postures up off the floor and onto a chair, which provides support and safety, allowing people with a wide range of physical conditions to participate and have fun. It combines seated, standing, and balancing postures and movements, any of which may be further modified according to individual needs.

The benefits of yoga go way beyond improved flexibility—it also stimulates blood circulation, tones and strengthens muscles, relieves stress, and generally promotes a sense of calm and well-being. Regular yoga practice can help to improve various functions of the body, such as digestive, lymphatic, and nervous systems. Yoga provides us the opportunity to slow down, let go of our busy lives, and be more aware of what's going on in our bodies. A sense of humor is helpful too, as we are reminded of our human limitations. Laughter is always welcomed!

Westminster Cares offers weekly chair yoga classes for seniors, led by Bonnie Anderson, who has been teaching yoga for 14 years.

Where: First Congregational Church, Rt. 5 in Westminster

When: Fridays, 9:30 - 10:30 am Cost - \$3 per class

How: Medical release form required - please contact Donna Dawson to register. Call 722-3607 or e-mail wecares@sover.net.

Westminster Cares also offers a traditional yoga class held every Monday at the Institute from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Call or e-mail the office for fee information and release forms.

News From the BF Rotary Club

All members take turns inviting speakers. Our speakers last week were members Ed Dinnany and Keith Clark who told us about their recent hike on the Pacific Trail.

Everyone is welcome to attend our meetings which are on Thursday mornings at 7:30 at Kurn Hattin.

To learn more about our club, please contact Secretary Alma Beals at almaeals@gmail.com.

Westminster West Book Club

The Westminster West Public Library would like to get the word out that the annual Book Club is starting up again. The club selects six books, one for each month, December through May, to read and discuss.

The books are selected by club members in late October and a weekday night is selected for meetings. The first book will be discussed in early December.

If you are interested, please contact Beverly Major at 387-5737

EDUCATION SECRETARY ON ACT 46 AT BFUHS

The Windham Northeast Supervisory Union and its member Boards will be hosting a presentation by Secretary of Education Rebecca Holcombe at the Bellows Falls Union High School on Wednesday, Nov. 4, at 5:30 p.m.

Secretary Holcombe was invited to address Act 46 as well as the reasons for Act 46. This is also an opportunity to ask questions related to other legislative and State Board of Education initiatives.

The public is encouraged to attend in order to learn more about the potential significant changes in school governance that are encouraged through the Act 46 school consolidation law.

Child care will be available for parents with younger children who wish to attend the presentation. Please call the WNESU office at 463-9958 in order to RSVP for child care.

SEVCA ANNOUNCES FREE FINANCIAL FITNESS CLASSES

Southeastern Vermont Community Action announced that it has space available in the upcoming, free, financial fitness workshop. This 10 part workshop series will help participants discover how to use the money they have and take steps towards prosperity.

Participants will learn to improve their relationship with money, increase cash flow and experience financial security. Other topics covered include; saving, spending, credit, paying for college, purchasing a home, purchasing a car, insurance and meal planning. Credit reports can be reviewed and recommendations will be provided to take steps to build healthy credit or resolve credit issues. This financial coaching will help participants and their families develop strong financial habits.

The 10-part workshop will begin on Tuesday, Nov. 3 from 10 a.m. to noon, and continue each Tuesday and Wednesday through Dec. 9.

The workshops will be held at Claremont Savings Bank Community Room, 85 Main Street in Springfield. Pre-registration is required. Please call to register at 722-4575, ext. 151, or e-mail kwoodcock@sevca.org

WESTMINSTER MYSTERY PHOTO

Last month's mystery photo was originally the Bensenhaver Farm 1933, then owned by Bitner 1974, and then Bump 1988, and in 1998 the farm became Livewater Farm owned by Bill and Miriam Acquaviva. It is located at 1289 Westminster West Road.

The photo was courtesy of Livewater Farm. Wanda West and Mary (Bensenhaver) Piluski correctly identified the photo.

Do YOU have a mystery photo we could use?

WHERE IS THIS FARM, AND

WHAT IS THERE TODAY?

If you have pictures you think would make a great mystery photo, send them to westminsternews@gmail.com

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.

LOOKING FOR YOUNG WRESTLERS!

The Rockingham Area Wrestling (RAW) club provides young athletes with an opportunity to build confidence, discipline, and athletic ability. The sport of wrestling has a strong impact on a kids physical growth by promoting balance, coordination, and core strength. Along with physical gains, young wrestlers also build emotional strength through learning about resiliency, pride, and courage.

Coach Todd Swisher has been coaching wrestling for 8 years and is also the Bellows Falls HS varsity wrestling coach. Winning is obviously important, but we focus on attitude, effort, and preparation. When these three key ideals are practiced, success (and fun) find their way into the equation. Kids will play several different wrestling games at the end of most practices to keep it fun.

Practices are Tuesday and Thursday from 5:30-7pm at Lawrence & Lober Electric. There are two sessions. Session 1 runs 11/17/15 - 1/28/16 and Session 2 will run 2/15/16- 4/9/16. Kids can wrestle both sessions, but this gives kids that play basketball a chance to participate. Tournament participation is not required and will be left to the parent's discretion.

The fee to join the RAW youth club is \$25 which will include a dry-fit practice t-shirt. The club is also looking for Middle Schoolers interested in wrestling. Middle schoolers practice with the HS Varsity team. Contact Coach Swisher at swishvt@yahoo.com

OPEN MIC COFFEE HOUSE ON NOV. 14TH

There will be an open mic on Saturday Nov. 14 at the Westminster Institute from 7 to 9 p.m.

Come sit with neighbors and enjoy the music. Coffee, tea and desserts available. Donations appreciated.

Sponsored by the Westminster Activities Commission.

NOMINATE CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Dear Residents of Westminster:

It is that time again to start thinking about town meeting. Many Westminster citizens contribute their time, skills, and effort to make this a great community. The Selectboard would like to recognize one of these outstanding citizens as "Westminster's Citizen of the Year" at our next Town Meeting.

Is there someone you would like to nominate for this award? If you know someone who has worked to make Westminster a better community, please let us know.

Simply send us a letter letting us know who you would like to nominate along with a brief statement as to why you feel they should be Westminster's Citizen of the Year.

Please send your nomination in a sealed envelope to:

Citizen of the Year Nomination

Westminster Town Hall

P.O. Box 147

Westminster, VT 05158

Nominations must be received by Dec. 4, no later than 4 p.m. All nominations will be held in the strictest confidence. The honoree will be announced during Town Meeting at BFUHS on February 27, 2016.

Thank you.

Westminster Selectboard:

Sheldon Beebe, Chair; Paul Banik, Vice Chair; Craig Allen, Clerk; Peter Barrett; and Toby Young

Westminster Happenings

Activities

Scottish Country Dance Classes

Every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. 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 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

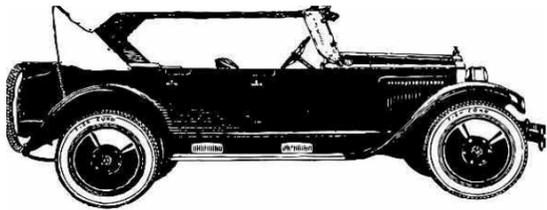
A facilitated discussion group and pot-luck. The 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at the Westminster Fire Station from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Call Westminster Cares at 722-3607 for more information.

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.



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**WESTMINSTER GAZETTE
Editor: Robert Smith**

Board of Directors:
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Donna Dawson
Alma Beals

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westminsternews@gmail.com**

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 Fred Gray and Mary Westbrook-Geha.

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.gbff4hisglory.com/.

THANKSGIVING POTLUCK SENIOR LUNCHEON

As always, the monthly Senior Lunch will be held on the 2nd Thursday of the month at the First Congregational Church of Westminster. On November 12th, we have a special holiday luncheon hosted by Marlene and Bill O'Connor who generously donate and prepare the turkey, stuffing, potatoes and gravy.

The luncheon is a potluck and all attendees are asked to bring a side dish or dessert.

All Westminster seniors are invited to attend – but we need to know how many to expect. Please contact Marlene O'Connor or Donna Dawson at Westminster Cares (722-3607) to r.s.v.p. and let us know what you'd like to bring.

The lunch starts at 12 p.m.

WESTMINSTER INSTITUTE BOARD MEETING

The November board meeting of the Westminster Institute will be held Nov. 10 at 6:30 p.m. at the Institute.

Walpole Unitarian Church

Services are presented by Rev. Lisa Mobayed M.Div.

Worship services are at 10am. 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 Board November 23 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 Deadline for
the December Issue of the
Westminster Gazette is
Wednesday,
November 25
Publish Date is
Tuesday, December 1**

**To Contact the
Westminster Gazette
E-mail:
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LIBRARY PRESCHOOL PLAYGROUP

Join us on Thursday mornings, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Westminster West Library, for our free Preschool Playgroup.

You do not need to live in Westminster West to participate. All Parents and children are welcomed! Most appropriate for very young children.

Together we begin our mornings outside for free play, book reading, and circle. Teresa Savel, shares a new book each week with the playgroup and highlights an assortment of books from the library for loan. Circle (weather permitted) also takes place out doors.

There are lots of fun songs, finger plays, and games to learn in circle, both in English and Spanish. Our group transitions inside with song to wash hands and prepare for a shared snack (byo).

After snack parents and children participate in a craft activity. Some activities have been felting, making finger puppets, and decorating candles with colored beeswax. All materials are provided and it's a great way for parents to create special playthings for their children and to connect with other parents.

Our morning ends with a simple puppet play and we all love to leave with an arm load of books. Come and join us. Questions can be directed to Lise Cavanaugh at the Westminster West Library: 387-4682.



OCTOBER SCHOOL BOARD REPORT

We began building next year's budget. This starts with looking at expected student enrollment numbers for next year and staffing needs. Expecting an increase numbered of students, we may need to hire one additional teacher. Spending increases are limited by act 46, with our cap at 1.42% above last years. For this year, we have a favorable surplus from the 2015 budget that can be applied to keep within this cap.

Our biggest action was to unanimously pass a resolution asking the legislature to rescind act 46 on district consolidation because of the potential negative effect on town meeting and our civic culture of participatory democracy that is a defining character of Vermont.

Less controversially, we heard a presentation on the potential for Westminster to join a number of other school districts in a solar energy consortium that is expected to save 20% or more on electricity costs.

In the planning ahead arena, we are working on determining how to be part of a study committee in WNESU related to act 46 and district consolidation and we continue to work on the strategic plan for Westminster Schools and hope to clarify goal areas in our next meeting.



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We meet most Thursdays, 7:30 a.m. at Kurn Hattin School in the Mayo Center, Westminster, Vermont. New members welcome.



Compass School Giant Indoor Tag Sale



Date: Saturday, November 7th

Time: 9am to 6pm

Free Pancakes!

The school will be packed with tons of vintage and gently used clothing, quality furniture, books, winter gear, sports equipment and fascinating knickknacks and curios.



The tag sale is a charity fundraiser for the Global Connections Expedition, a Compass graduation requirement undertaken each year by the junior class.

There will be hot lunch available for purchase at 11am.

The Compass School is located at 7892 US-5, Westminster Station, between downtown Bellows Falls and BFUHS off exit 5 on 91. **See you there!**

SEVCA Weatherization 1-800-464-9951

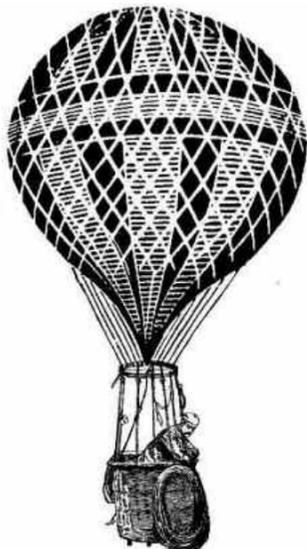


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November Business of the Month: Ruggiero Trash Removal

Ruggiero Trash Removal would like to wish everyone Happy Holidays. Once again we have had a great year here at Ruggiero Trash Removal thanks to our fantastic customers. We are excited about our new expansion which includes our new contract with the Town of Westminster.

Ruggiero Trash Removal is a local family owned and operated company with over 20+ years of experience in the trash hauling and recycling business. With our processing facility we are able to take care of all recycling and trash needs in the Southern Vermont and New Hampshire area for residential and commercial needs.

We provide containers ranging from 2 to 40 yards, which are available for recycling of paper, plastic, cardboard, masonry, wood, and metal. We also have the same size containers for one time clean up and monthly trash services that we can service daily, weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. We offer curbside service as well.

In the past we have seen savings from 10% - 40% over national haulers pricing. Our rates are reasonable and very straight forward with no diesel surcharge, rental fees, or hidden costs. The community has always been loyal and straight forward with us, so we like to return the courtesy.

There is no job to big and no job to small for Ruggiero Trash Removal. So remember if you need to chuck it, we truck it.

Think local.

Call (802)-869-2235 to talk to one of our friendly and courteous staff members.



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PANEL ON BALANCING RECREATION AND CONSERVATION

The Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association [WHPA] on Wednesday, Nov. 18 at 7 p.m. at the Westminster West Church will host a panel discussion on The Challenge of Balancing Recreation and Conservation.

Panelists will discuss how to balance conservation goals with the recreational goals of people who enjoy conserved land.

Moderated by Camilla Roberts, former Chair of WHPA, the panel will include Judy Anderson, a consultant on land conservation working closely with the Land Trust Alliance; Jeff Nugent, an avid hiker familiar with trail systems all over the state of Vermont and a professional mapper for the Windham Regional Commission, as well as Windham County towns; and Scott Davidson, who splits his time between working as a ranger at the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park in Woodstock during the warmer months and working as a natural history and environmental educator during the winter.

Panel discussions will revolve around successful strategies for balancing recreation with habitat protection, problems arising from overuse or inappropriate use of the land, defining sustainable use from the perspectives of conservation and community relations, and ways to involve young people in the process.

This free program is directed toward board members of area conservation organizations and others involved in conservation, but the public is also invited to attend.

For further information, please contact Bev Major at 387-5737 or beverly-major65@gmail.com.

Please visit www.windmillhillpinnacle.org for information on the Pinnacle Association, its 20-mile trail system, and directions to the Westminster West Church, 44 Church Street, Westminster West, Vermont.

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Westminster Gazette

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