

# TALES OF TINMOUTH

January 2021  
Vol. 35 Number 1

Tinmouth  
Vermont

## Editors' Notes:

*May the New Year be filled with Health and Happiness. Please Pray for Peace . . . Be Kind . . .*

The deadline for submissions is the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month, for publication on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the following month.

Please email your information to (tinmouthtales@vermontel.net).

*Pat Psholka, Helen Mango, & Gail Fallar*

## ~ Town Meeting 2021 ~

Will be a little different this year. Due to the corona virus pandemic, the Legislature granted authority to the Select Board to conduct town meeting business using the Australian balloting system. As Town Meeting from the floor will not meet state guidelines for public gatherings, the Select Board decided to use that authority for 2021.

We will elect officers as well as vote on budgets and public questions this way. There will be an informational meeting – held via Zoom or similar virtual format on Saturday, February 27<sup>th</sup>. Voting will be by Australian balloting at the Old Fire House on Tuesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**You are encouraged to vote early/absentee. You can call the town office to request the ballots.**

Town Meeting will find voters choosing the following officers:

- Moderator - Town - 1 year term
- Select Board Member - 3 year term
- Road Commissioner – 3 year term
- Lister - 3 year term
- Auditor - 3 year term
- Tax Collector (Delinquent) - 1 year term

Stan Wilbur has announced that he will not be running for re-election as Moderator. Anyone interested?

The Legislature also (for 2021) removed the requirement to get signatures for a petition to run for an office. If you wish to run, you only need to file a consent form, available at the town office, with the town clerk by 5:00 PM Monday, **January 25<sup>th</sup>**.

## ~ Early/Absentee Ballots ~

Due to the continuing presence of the corona virus pandemic, please vote early/absentee if you can. This provides a bit of safety for voters and poll workers. Nearly 75% of votes cast in November were early/absentee!! The polls will be open at the Old Fire House on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

To request an **Absentee Ballot**, you must do so before **5:00 pm on Monday, March 1<sup>st</sup>**. **Voted ballots must be returned by 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>**. You can also vote **early** at the town office starting mid-February.



## ~ Christmas Baskets ~

The **Roy & Anne Wilbur Fund**, under the umbrella of the Tinmouth Community Church, along with the Tinmouth Elves, provided food and gift baskets to 20 families this year. There were also 20 fruit baskets delivered to elders and those needing a small boost of holiday spirit. They were very much appreciated. Thank you to all who donated food, time, and financially to make this happen. It helps keep Tinmouth a special place.

Thank you also to the Tinmouth Community Church for use of its basement, to the Tinmouth Volunteer Fire Department for use of its freezer and refrigerators, to the Mill River Union High School Honor Society for its wonderful contributions, and to the Tinmouth Community Fund for a grant for the Elf work.

## ~ Anne & Roy Wilbur Community Service Fund ~

*By Stan Wilbur*

If you need financial assistance with fuel, heat, telephone, electricity, food, transportation, taxes, or something to add a little joy, or know of someone who does, the Anne & Roy Wilbur Community Service Fund may be able to help. Please contact Gail Fallar at the Town Office for information - 446-2498.

The **Anne Wilbur Fund** was established by the Tinmouth Community Church in 1993 in memory of Anne's many contributions to the Church and the Tinmouth Community.

Based on the family's request, the purpose of the fund is to make life a little better, bring a smile, and offer a helping hand to anyone in Tinmouth. They also wanted the money to be used to meet current needs until the money ran out. However, the money has never run out thanks to the many generous donations made by Tinmouth folks.

When Roy passed in 1996, contributions made in his memory were added to the fund and the name was changed to the **Anne & Roy Wilbur Community Service Fund**.

Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets and the Food Shelf at the Town Office are supported by the Fund as well.

~ January 2021 Calendar of Events ~  
 All meetings are virtual due to the corona virus pandemic.

Fire Department	Thursday	7 <sup>th</sup>	7:00	Virtual
Select Board	Thursday	14 <sup>th</sup>	7:00	Virtual
<i>Tales of Tinmouth</i> Deadline	Wednesday	20 <sup>th</sup>	Don't Miss It!	
Select Board -Special	Thursday	21 <sup>st</sup>	7:00	Virtual
Select Board	Tuesday	26 <sup>th</sup>	7:00	Virtual

~ February 2021 Calendar of Events ~

Fire Department	Thursday	3 <sup>rd</sup>	7:00	Virtual
Select Board	Thursday	10 <sup>th</sup>	7:00	Virtual
Planning Commission	Thursday	17 <sup>th</sup>	Maybe!	Virtual
<i>Tales of Tinmouth</i> Deadline	Sunday	20 <sup>th</sup>	Don't Miss It!	
Select Board	Tuesday	22 <sup>nd</sup>	7:00	Virtual

*Transfer Station hours are Wednesday 4:00 - 7:00 pm & Saturday 8:00 am - noon.*

~ Sunday Church Service ~ Is now virtual, please see details in the Church News ~

~ Library Hours ~ Volleyball ~ Pickleball ~ Knit, Craft or Chat ~ and Bone Builders ~  
 Are All Suspended Until Further Notice Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and  
 Governor Scott's Emergency Order.

~ Front Porch Forum ~  
 Connect with your Tinmouth Neighbors

Have you checked out Front Porch Forum yet? To sign up, go to <http://FrontPorchForum.com>. Or stop by the town office to sign up!! 200+ households have signed to date! Good way to discuss community issues, sell a canoe, give away a kitten, etc. If you are a second home owner you can use your Tinmouth 911 address.



~ January reminder from  
 your local  
 Fire Department (TVFD) ~

Please remember to keep your walkways shoveled and clear – even to the doors you only use occasionally – you never know when you might need the Rescue Squad or which door they may need to use. Goes for the inside too, don't block doorways with 'stuff'. You may need to make a hasty exit (in case of fire) or the Fire Department may need to get in.

**TVFD also reminds everyone to make sure that your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are working and that you have more than one way out of your house!**

\* \* \* \* \*

For road conditions call 511 or visit [511vt.com](http://511vt.com). For personal assistance, like heating help or other information, call 211.

211 is a service of the United Way.

~ Tales of Tinmouth ~

*Tales of Tinmouth* is mailed monthly to 540 households ~ residents, property owners, past residents, and friends. It is a bit dismaying that only 80 or so of those contribute to help pay for paper, printing, labels and postage – those expenses are over \$3,000 per year. The Town allows the use of their copier, but is reimbursed for all copies made. And we thank them for use of the town office for assembly space. There are dedicated volunteers who gather each month to fold, tape and label. No one is paid.

2020 expenses were \$3,025.24 and donations/grants totaled \$3,330.00. Thank you so much for keeping us in print! If you are one of the **other 460** households that enjoy receiving and reading *Tales* each month, please consider sending a donation. It will be much appreciated!

The *Tales of Tinmouth* is also on the Town's website ([tinmouthvt.org](http://tinmouthvt.org)). Look under "About", if you would like to read it online. Or if someone in your house recycles it before you get a chance to read it!

There is much more information about the town on this website, take a few minutes and check it out!!

\* \* \* \* \*

*Whenever you are to do a thing, though it can never be known but to yourself, ask yourself how you would act were all the world looking at you, and act accordingly.*  
 -- Thomas Jefferson

~ Covid 19 Update ~  
By Michael Fannin, EMD

The good news is that we have learned a lot about how to safely navigate the Covid world. We know how to judge the relative risks involved in our daily activities and what behaviors help to reduce those risks. In fact, thanks to the adherence of the majority of Vermonters to the suggested safety measures spelled out by our governor and related state agencies, Vermont enjoyed the reputation of being the safest state to live in during much of the past year. These results speak for themselves and negate the contrarian propaganda by those who would try to convince us to do otherwise for their own perceived benefit. This misinformation has led some of us astray. That is the reason why the US, with only four percent of the world's population, suffers twenty five percent of the worlds fatalities linked to this disease. That fact says it all. Constitutional rights do not necessarily trump our social and moral responsibility to protect others.

On the flip side, living with the virus has often changed our behaviors and altered our values for the better. Many have become more thrifty, self-reliant, organized, creative, and prepared. Also many have become more aware of the value of friendships, social responsibility, organization and altruism. It's brought out the best in many of us. Crisis situations provoke change and often that is for the better.

*On the practical side I have these suggestions.*

If the readers find themselves in crisis please make use of systems that are available. Vermont's 211 phone and online crisis hot line is a fountain of information with linkage to help of all sorts. When I've been involved in state emergency drills the 211 number was my main help line for most all contingencies. It covers community resources, health care options, public assistance, training and employment opportunities, food acquirement, mental health assistance and the list goes on.

Secondly feel free to link to the Vermont Health Department's web site. This centers on health safety and resource availability. Questions about testing, and vaccine availability are here. I've recently subscribed to the Vermont Alert system via a link on this page. Vermont Alert has been developed to warn the individual citizen of any emergency situation developing in real time in their immediate area. It's a little complicated to join but if I could do it, being the techno-dinosaur that I am, I think most people can.

Thirdly I'd suggest that you follow the Governor's noontime press conferences on VPR. This will keep your understanding of the situation sharp and up to date. We are so fortunate to have a governor who has followed science and factual information to form a practical response to the Covid monster. A strong majority of my fellow Vermonters agreed with this approach by re-

electing republican Governor Scott despite his spending none of his time campaigning for office.

Finally, I have to note that the overall situation is going to get worse before it gets better. We all have to double down on our protective behavior. I know what a pain it is. I miss the close contact of my extended family and friends but that is nothing compared to how I would feel if I found myself to be the vector of their infection. Hopefully the spreaders will return to the fold, wear a mask and care about the rest of us. If they do please don't make an issue out of their change of heart. Just silently accept them back into our compassionate fraternity.

Once again, if you have any problems using the resources above or have a specific need please contact me at 235-2412 or [fannin@vermontel.net](mailto:fannin@vermontel.net). I'll keep your identity in confidence.

*Michael Fannin*  
*Tinmouth Emergency Management Director*

**STATEMENT FROM GOVERNOR PHIL  
SCOTT ON THE FDA APPROVAL OF THE  
PFIZER-BIONTECH VACCINE FOR COVID-19**

Montpelier, Vt. – Governor Phil Scott issued the following statement:

“I join many across Vermont and the country in welcoming news of the first approved vaccine for COVID-19. This is an important milestone and a major – and essential - step toward defeating a virus that's having devastating impacts on families and businesses throughout Vermont and around the globe.

“I want all Vermonters to know we've had a team of talented experts working for months to prepare for what will be an unprecedented effort to deliver safe and effective coronavirus vaccines. The process will be difficult, and we are ready. My Administration will focus first on protecting the most vulnerable and those at greatest risk during this crisis, which is why we will begin our rollout by vaccinating nursing home staff and residents, and those treating and interacting with COVID patients throughout our healthcare system.

“There is no better, safer or faster way to defeat this virus and work to rebuild our economy than a successful effort to make vaccines available to every single Vermonter. We are committed to working with our partners to get this done, so we can get through this and be stronger and more resilient than ever before.

“This is a significant step forward, but we still have months of discipline and hard work ahead of us. Until enough people are vaccinated, it is critical we remain vigilant. So, I urge all Vermonters to continue wearing a mask in public, keeping six feet apart, avoiding crowds and gatherings and quarantining when required. Together, we can keep each other safe as we work our way towards the end of the tunnel.”

~ **Tinmouth Community Fund Grants** ~

By Jan Krantz, Chair, TCF

The Tinmouth Community Fund (TCF)'s annual grant cycle is beginning. We start the year off with Community Fund Project grants, and our **new Small Business grant**. This new \$500 grant is meant to support the start-up or expansion of a small local business that will benefit the citizens of Tinmouth in some way. Applications for the Community Fund Project and Small Business grants need to be completed and returned to the Town Office or emailed to: [tinmouthcommunityfund@gmail.com](mailto:tinmouthcommunityfund@gmail.com) by **midnight on February 1, 2021**.

The K-12 Camp Scholarship applications are due **April 1**, and accepted until funds are expended. The Continuing Education Scholarship applications are due **May 1**. You can pick up grant applications at the Town Office, or download each form from the town's website: <http://www.tinmouthvt.org/resources/>. We appreciate if you can please complete and send them in electronically. Thank you!

We are always looking for new ideas to fulfill TCF's purpose: "To provide funding of needed services and facilities for the well-being of the citizens of and for the sense of community in the town of Tinmouth."

To give you a sense of the type of projects that might be funded, think in terms of the following activity areas: historical, culture, arts, recreation, social services, education, health, conservation, environment, aesthetics, and community development. If you are considering a project that fits in any of these areas, download the application today. Might it be computer classes for elders, Thanksgiving dinners for shut-ins or singles either at home or at the community center, a movie series or special program at the Old Firehouse? Use your imagination, take some action, and create something fun and interesting for your town!

The Small Business grant and the Community Fund Project grant awards will both be announced at the Tinmouth Community Fund's Annual Meeting on **February 27th**, to take place via Zoom, beginning at **11:30 a.m.** Hope you can join us!

**If you need to alert the road crew about a tree across the road, or have some other road issue, please be advised the Town Garage has a telephone and answering machine.**

**Please leave a message, as the road crew most likely will be out working on the roads.**

**802-446-9163**



**Tinmouth**  
Mountain School

To the Tinmouth Community,

The final month of 2020 flew by without incident. The highlight of the month was the unanticipated snow day on December 17th.

School was open for a little less than 3 weeks in December. One-fourth of our student population quarantined during the first few weeks after the Thanksgiving break. We have been very fortunate that the number of cases of Covid virus within the school population is nil to date. Quarantining, the wearing of masks, screening, and social distancing has not only prevented an outbreak of Covid 19 but outbreaks of colds and flu have declined among students and staff as well.

The traditional holiday celebrations at school were adapted to meet the restrictions mandated by the current pandemic. The students rode a virtual bus and sang at the usual homes and offices around town *remotely* via zoom (a virtual computer program). We would like to extend our thanks to Nelson Jaquay for taking us caroling throughout Tinmouth (online). Nelson has also brought us virtual roundup since last spring whether we are working remotely or in person. More than ever, the students and staff appreciate this opportunity to sing together as a community.

Christmas break began on December 18<sup>th</sup>, two days earlier than initially scheduled this year. School will open remotely on January 4, 2021 for one week only. Children return in person on January 11<sup>th</sup>. Hopefully, we will remain "in-person" for the remainder of the year.

Wishing you a peaceful New Year!

*Maureen Fitzgerald-Riker*  
*Principal*  
*Tinmouth Mountain School*

~ **Community News** ~

*Get Well Wishes* are sent to **Marion Hambly, Carol Bohlin, Helen Young, and Jo Reynolds**.

*Heartfelt Sympathies* are sent to **Barb Herrick** and family for the loss of her brother.

*Congratulations* to **Allison Nemeth & Jaron Rochon** who were named to the Dean's List at Castleton University. Allison is the daughter of **Jeremy & Shelley Nemeth**. Jaron is the son of **Shannon Zandy (Tinmouth) & Wayne Rochon (Fair Haven)**.



TINMOUTH CHURCH

~ **Tinmouth Community Church** ~

Pastor John's Reflections . . .

For many of us, the beginning of a new year initiates reflection on the year past and the year upcoming. Each of us has had experiences unique to ourselves in 2020; we have also had experiences common to us all - the pandemic, political turmoil, social unrest. Reflecting on these can enlighten our way forward and give us hope.

2020 could be characterized any number of ways. One of them is by the divisiveness of our politics and the polarization of our people that will be with us into the new year. It is a truism that "a house divided cannot stand." That is why one's enemies have always sought to "divide and conquer." In our case the "enemy" has come from within our own ranks and from within ourselves, a spiritual virus sowing dishonesty, discord, animosity, even violence. America cannot be "great" in this condition nor our world thrive in a measure of cooperation and peace.

Perhaps the pandemic, by a higher Wisdom, is trying to heal us, as odd as that may sound. Painful and fearful in many ways, and with irrecoverable losses and grief, the global nature of this crisis shows us that we are all in this together - anyone can contract the virus and everyone is affected by its social and economic fallout. Getting the virus under control will require a universal and united effort that has the potential to bring us together. More importantly, and as we are seeing happening all around, the pandemic is opening our hearts and bringing forth the compassion that lies within us all: compassion that feels the pain and responds to the needs; compassion that transcends parochial divisions and affirms our common humanity; compassion that truly cares about others and seeks the good of all. To otherwise harden our hearts in selfish motives and bogus independence is to compound and prolong the suffering and belie our underlying unity.

May our awakening compassion be the antidote for the viruses that beset us and so make 2021 a really good year.

**Pastor John**

Sunday Services online at [www.tinmouthchurch.org](http://www.tinmouthchurch.org)  
Evening Prayer, Tuesdays and Thursdays, on Tinmouth Community Church Facebook page

Rev. John Hardman-Zimmerman  
(802) 282-7532 (cell, preferred)  
(802) 884-8249 (parsonage)  
[hzfam@hotmail.com](mailto:hzfam@hotmail.com)

*Greetings,*

*I want to pass along the most useful piece of advice I have heard about the pandemic. You like to put useful tips in the Tales and maybe you'll like this one. It was in our local paper (in Ohio), and while I remember the quote, I don't recall who said it. "Just because you like someone, doesn't mean they don't have COVID."*

*It has helped me keep my distance when I'd rather not.*

*Stay safe, stay healthy, and I hope you all have a merry Christmas*

**Katryn Renard**  
(Part time Tinmouth resident)

~ **Looking to Reduce Heating/Cooling in 2021?** ~

*By Todd Dennis, Energy Committee*

Interested but not sure where to start? Button Up Vermont has an archive of each Weatherization Wednesday from last Fall on their website if you want to know more about specific topics:  
<https://buttonupvermont.org/events>

With a new year, some of the incentives offered by Efficiency Vermont have changed so be sure to check out how upgrading your home can be supported:  
<https://www.encyvermont.com/rebates> For example, upgrading to a heat pump water heater has incentives of up to \$800 or installing a smart thermostat is eligible for a \$100 rebate per unit (limit of 2).

*Apologies for the January issue of Tales being so late, February will be coming right along, and will include statements from candidates who are running for office.*

*There were several consent forms requested, but not yet returned to the town office. Deadline is 5:00 PM Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup>*

~ **Nature Notes** ~

December was an interesting month weather-wise. Over three, **yes 3, feet** of snow fell on the 17<sup>th</sup> during *Winter Storm Gail*. The teeniest, tiniest, flakes, must have been a godzillion of them to pile so high. Light and fluffy too. What a wonderful White Christmas we'll all have thought everyone, until just a week later, along came warm weather (50 degrees!) and rain and Voila`, Christmas turned green and brown! And to think that 1-3 inches was forecast, not 1-3 feet.

A week or two later, more snow fell, a bit sticky as it held onto branches for a couple of days, slowly draping itself up and down and around like garlands on a Christmas tree!

Days are getting longer, can you tell? It's lighter earlier in the morning and later in the afternoon. Yeah!!

~ **Tinmouth Volunteer Fire Department** ~  
*By Marshall Squier, Chief*

Fire Departments all over the country are grappling with the effects of the Pandemic on how they operate. The Tinmouth Volunteer Fire Department is having to adapt with this new threat as well. Like many other Fire Departments large and small we are now meeting remotely and training virtually with training videos and discussions to remain as ready as possible. How we fundraise has also changed and we may not be able to host our famous Tinmouth Game Supper as we have.

Slow rollout of the vaccine and not all willing to take it poses new approaches to how we operate for an unknown period. Hopefully most people in the greater community who are considered high risk will be vaccinated but even some of those considered high risk are declining to be vaccinated. Some members of the Fire Department are also declining at this time. This is all personal choice for different reasons and will be respected within and without our department.

As a First Responder our first responsibility is to do no harm in our efforts to help others. Considering all of this we do not want to put at greater risk anyone that we may be trying to help. If you are a person that is considered high risk please contact Chief Marshall Squier: 235-2718 or Sherry Johnson: 446-3307. This information remains within the department to help us identify and make changes in our response so we do not further compromise anyone's safety. If your situation changes please let us know as well.

Adapting to these changes requires us to keep safety for all in mind within our department and our department has adopted mask wearing and social distancing to the best of our abilities as most other department have also done. As an ALL VOLUNTEER Fire Department we appreciate all community members doing their part in respecting these necessary changes.

Part of this as community members would be being as proactive as possible. Check and update fire detectors, have fire extinguishers on all floors of the home and in the kitchen, keep chimneys clean and debris and furniture away from wood stoves. Call Fire Warden Glenn Merrill 446-2782 or Assistant Fire Warden Wheaton Squier: 446-2082 for outdoor burn permits.

It is illegal to burn outdoors without a permit unless there is snow on the ground. However, spring and fall are the highest risk for brush fire so do not burn without permits please.

As Chief, I would like to thank every Fireman past and present who have given and continue to give a part of their

lives to help others. These members are all exemplary people and the personal satisfaction in helping others and heartfelt gratitude expressed by community members is our only pay.

If you are high risk for COVID-19, the Tinmouth Volunteer Fire Department needs to know so we can respond appropriately and minimize any additional risk.

Please let the Fire Department know by calling 446-3307 or email [vtsjohnson@icloud.cloud](mailto:vtsjohnson@icloud.cloud).

~ **Checking on Neighbors** ~

If you live by yourself, or don't have family or friends checking on you daily, it might be a good idea to think about finding someone to help with that. A recent incident in town occurred when concerned neighbors had to call the Vermont State Police for a welfare check as they noticed no tracks in or out of the house or garage, mail and newspapers were piling up, and no one responded to the telephone, or knocking on the door.

Neighbors had no one to contact. It turned out that the person had been picked up by a nephew from another state for a visit through the holidays. The VSP had to break a window in the door to enter, they found no one there, and the house was secured upon their departure. But several neighbors and others were quite concerned with this elder's wellbeing.

If you have a neighbor who fits this description, please think about reaching out to see if you can help. If they need a hand, or are going to be away, have them give you a call before they go.

Needing a friend to talk with during these COVID times? Pastor John (Tinmouth Community Church) is a phone call away.

**Any reason is a good reason to call: 802-417-1491.**

**Celebrating 21 Years!** Serving the Community with Excellence and Compassion Since 2000

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~ *Tales of Tinmouth* ~

We are starting our 35<sup>th</sup> year!! Ye olde editor had occasion to search past issues for information about the start of the Anne Wilbur Fund – in the mid 1990's - and found a number of really neat historic items. Some of these are worth repeating and will be shared in future *Tales*.

Here's the first –

~ **1994 in Review** ~

Ellen & Elizabeth Merrill, Christopher Lindberg, Maguire Peters and Jaqueline Holler arrived to join our midst.

Lusk Boswell and Joseph Devenow passed away. Melanie Walker and David Allen were married.

Marcus and Alba Fish celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

Cathy Reynolds was elected to the Select Board. Marian Ackerman was elected to the School Board,

Winter snowfall was reminiscent of the “old days”! The Select Board named all town roads and private drives as part of the “locatable addressing” for 911.

The Select Board adopted a Trash Ordinance that banned burn barrels.

The Town bought a one-ton dump truck. The Town began work on re-claiming old cemeteries in town. The Crampton Cemetery was the first.

The Town sold its remote parcel of land, work on property maps will begin soon with the proceeds.

We do a great job recycling – more items are added! The Tinmouth Volunteer Fire Department celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The 25<sup>th</sup> Game Supper was also held.

The Fire Department hosts its annual Halloween Party for town children of all ages!! The Spook Walk is GREAT!

The Fire Department purchased a radio to help the Wallingford Rescue Squad locate folks faster.

The Tinmouth Elementary School received Public School Approval from the Vermont Department of Education.

Allyn Kahle was hired as the new teacher for grades 3/4.

More folks decided to Home-School their children.

Jason Burden is a winner in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Earth Artist Program.

Laura Usher is chosen to be published in “The Mountain Review”.

Bessie and Clara Lewis, Andy and Josh Ruane and Katie Buffum win 4-H ribbons with their animals.

Sarah Jaquay and Ali Jenkins graduate from college. The Town Picnic is again held at the Pavilion at Tinmouth Pond.

The Church Suppers held by the Ladies Circle continue to be great!

Mike Peters retires as “Tales” typesetter after several years of fine work.

Fall was fair and mild – the colors were splendid!

The School Parents Club again produces a beautiful community quilt to raise money for extracurricular activities.

The Parents Club holds its annual Spring Plant Sale and spreads flowers all around town and beyond!!

Cecil Buffum, Nelson Jaquay, Jim Neilson, Jeanne Schmelzenbach and Marshall Squier were elected Justices of the Peace.

70% of Tinmouth voters turn out for state wide elections. Bob Weeks of Wallingford was elected our new Representative to Montpelier.

Roy Wilbur's house was destroyed by fire. Many baskets and boxes of goodies are distributed to needy folks at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The Christmas Eve Service of lessons and carols once again re-kindles the true meaning of Christmas.

*Anyone want to take a stab at what happened in Tinmouth in 2020?? Please contact ye olde editor.*

~ **Also from the 1994 Tales** ~  
(With thanks to the late Sue Lloyd)

*Never run for a bus*

*Celebrate the arrival of chives*

*Take yourself lightly*

*Neatness is comforting*

*It is possible that you do not realize how much you matter to someone else*

*Travel light*

*Making bread keeps you on earth*

*Dishes are patient*

*Aunt Rhoda*

~ **Vermont's Free Ice Fishing Day is January 30<sup>th</sup>** ~

NORTH HERO, Vt. – Vermont's seventh annual Free Ice Fishing Day is Saturday, January 30, 2021.

Free Ice Fishing Day is held annually on the last Saturday in January. The day is geared toward giving new ice anglers an opportunity to try ice fishing before purchasing equipment, but any angler may ice fish on any waterbody open to ice fishing statewide without a fishing license on Free Ice Fishing Day.

To learn more about ice fishing in Vermont or to purchase a fishing license, visit [www.vtfishandwildlife.com](http://www.vtfishandwildlife.com)

~ Meeting Highlights ~

(Complete minutes are available at the town office.)

Select Board ~ 12/10/20

Present were members Michael Fallar, Cathy Reynolds, and Frank Sears, as well as Eric Buffum – Road Commissioner, Stan Wilbur – Public Works Project Manager, Sherry Johnson, Kim Harbaugh, Craig Jewett – Engineer with Otter Creek Engineering (OCE), Grant Reynolds, Ronnie Crossman, (Doug Fontein and Rainbow Squier - Conservation Commission at 8:50) and Gail Fallar – Select Board Assistant (SBA).

Minutes of 11/24/20 were approved with correction to remove a comment attributed to Eric Buffum regarding the design/build proposal and a reference to Snow Mountain Lane, Board voted to accept as corrected.

Highway ~

Eric reported business as usual, working on snow fencing.

Winter Salt Bids were opened.

Requests were for 1) regular rock salt and 2) deicer salt product.

	(1)	(2)
American Rock Salt	\$70 per ton	No Bid
Apalachee Salt	\$70 per ton	\$85 per ton
Cargill Salt	\$68.50 per ton	\$78.50 per ton

Eric advised that the deicer product from Apalachee works better as it has a higher sugar content, is more efficient, is less corrosive, that they are the current vendor and service has been great. After brief discussion, Board voted to accept the Apalachee bid (more expensive but more efficient and less corrosive).

Better Roads Grant Application – After brief discussion, Board voted to approve application for culvert on Potter’s Brook on North End Road (used same info used for VTRANS grant that is on hold).

‘What If Plan’ – Eric advised that he had contacted Glenn Merrill and Marshall Squier for back-up for snow plowing, still working on the plan. Board asked for a mark-up for the next meeting.

Second December SB Meeting – Board decided move its December 22nd meeting to January 7th.

Public Works Facilities ~

Stan advised that he anticipated the design/build proposals would be returned in time for the Board to review on the 7th. He also advised the state had confirmed that no storm water permit is needed for the garage project.

Craig (OCE) advised that he had confirmed with the state that under certain conditions no storm water permit would be required. He will send a marked-up plan to Stan, still working on it as there is about 950 square feet over the one acre maximum – trying to eliminate that with other places on site or squeeze the size of the garage. He advised that the town still needs to make a formal determination on how to proceed – there is no time frame,

but the state has a 60 day window before considering it dead. The Town would have to re-start the permit process.

Craig advised he will get the design related changes and plan to Stan next week, Board asked that he share it with Eric and Ronnie to make sure it will work. Board asked whether work done for salt/sand shed will be lost, Craig advised barring any changes it will be alright to use, permit will only be needed for that facility. Permit fee may need to be paid again, but with less impervious surface the fee will be less. Board inquired about the time frame – it’s been a over a year now – Craig replied 30-45 days with a 45 day state review period – should use six months to be on the safe side.

Craig also advised that building on the existing impervious areas doesn’t require a permit, nor does re-developing an already impervious site. The sand and gravel stock piles are considered pervious as they can be moved. Craig also clarified that once the permit is issued, it does not have an expiration date.

Design/Build RFP – Board reviewed draft, asked Stan to clarify that the four bay proposal was a starting place that the Board had determined was not viable, and add that current energy standards have to be met. Added two more firms to list of contractors to solicit bids from – there are now nine. Board agreed to have Stan proceed with sending out the RFP. Stan noted he expected to receive the proposals on the 4th and to prepare packets for the Board to discuss at their meeting on the 7th with interviews of prospective contractors at the Board meeting on the 14th. Stan and Craig left the meeting at this point.

Personnel Policy Update - Board discussed: proposed changes, additions due to Covid19 restrictions, difficulties with those with a crew of two, is the road crew essential workers (yes), how to keep them safe, etc. Cathy volunteered to continue work on proposed changes.

One proposed change would the reduce accumulation of vacation days from 15 to 10 – Eric raised concerns with forfeiting that, asked if road crew could be paid for unused vacation days. Ronnie noted that when he is away fighting forest fires he is not on vacation (but is on vacation from the town) and is working as an emergency first responder.

Board members expressed concern for a crew of two taking vacations (in the summer as they are not allowed to do that during the winter), how to manage that, and the need to think about how to support employees.

Health Insurance benefits were discussed, the PP needs to be less specific regarding which plan, use more general language. Board voted to remove PPC comments and update the current Personnel Policy information to reflect the Silver Reflective Plan.

Health Insurance for 2021, after brief discussion, switching to MVP for the same plan (as BCBS) – Silver Reflective Standard, would save \$2,484. Road crew

approved. Board voted to approve switch from BCBS to MVP for the road crew.

**Draft #1 FY22 Highway Budget** – 3% raise for road crew, discussed increase to roadside mowing, winter sand, decided to keep equipment fund allotment the same to help keep tax rate from wild fluctuations, discussed how to allot the increase in FY21 to state highway aide (one time action) – inclination is to add it to the Capital Building Fund.

**Draft #1 FY22 General Budget** – Added stipend for Emergency Management Director and Coordinator. Discussed whether to continue with the transfer station or hire a company to pick-up the entire town – need some research done in that regards.

**Conservation Commission** – On behalf of the Conservation Commission, Doug and Rainbow reviewed possible uses for the town’s property behind the town garage – long term and short term, to encourage recreation and enjoy nature – trails, fruit trees, frisbee golf course, picnic tables, community garden, volleyball court, pickle ball court, horse shoe court, to name a few. Board took under advisement and asked CC to return in January.

**Financial** ~

**Financial Report** – Board voted to accept.

**Warrants Reviewed** ~ Payroll Warrants #21 dated 11/23/20 for \$1,409.92, #22 dated 11/30/20 for \$3050.72, and #23 dated 12/7/20 for \$2019.73; and Accounts Payable Warrant #9 dated 11/23/20 for \$11,859.72, and #10 dated 11/30/20 for \$6,803.05 were reviewed. Board voted to approve.

**2020 Property Tax Waiver of Penalty and Interest** –

Gail advised that the Legislature had given the Select Board authority until January 1<sup>st</sup> to waive interest and/penalty on property taxes. After brief discussion, Board voted to create a six month grace period beginning November 17<sup>th</sup> where no penalty or interest would be assessed for 2020 property taxes.

**Old Business** ~

**Trash and Dogs at 605 Mountain View** – Frank reported on his conversation with attorney Jim Carroll. If there is a health hazard the Board is required to act. There are two tracks that can run at the same time, violation of the Solid Waste Ordinance and the health and safety statutes. Both could end up in court. Frank as Health Officer and Solid Waste Enforcement Officer will have to recuse himself from the Select Board during a hearing or any action taken. Board reviewed complaint from neighbor and will respond, noting it has been an ongoing problem for a number of years. Will take action at its January 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**New Business** ~

**‘What If Plan’** – Still being worked on for town office functions. Board asked Gail commit to also preparing a written procedure for all functions of the clerk/treasurer.

**Holiday Bonus** – Board discussed \$100 bonus for road crew, transfer station attendants and town office staff. Board voted in favor (Michael recused himself re:Gail’s bonus).

**911 Re-numbering for Tinmouth Pond Road** – Gail, as 911 Coordinator, reported the 911 Board requested that Tinmouth Pond Road be re-numbered due to confusion with Danby’s numbering system on the south side of the road and Tinmouth’s on the north side. Tinmouth’s increment is 50 feet, Danby’s is 5.28 feet – the standard now used. 50 feet was the standard when original 911 numbering was done in the 1990’s. Board voted to re-number Tinmouth Pond Road.

**Highway Aide Allocation** - Board decided to add the allocation of the extra highway state aide to the January 7<sup>th</sup> agenda.

**Town Meeting 2021** – After brief discussion and due to the pandemic, Board voted to switch the floor portion of 2021 town meeting to Australian ballot. This includes voting for the budgets and any public questions. A virtual informational meeting will be held on Saturday, February 27<sup>th</sup>.

Gail advised that the Legislature eliminated the position of Town Agent and made Grand Juror an appointable position – no longer elected. Board voted to remove these offices from the town meeting warning.

**Next Regular Meeting** ~ January 7<sup>th</sup> – 1st Thursday

**Young Writer’s Corner** ~

Submitted by a reader who was touched by this young lad’s letter and his situation (a new baby was born a preemie and needs special care).

**Dear Dad,**

*Thank you for everything you do for me. I hope we can hunt together forever. I love to hunt with you. You make me smile every day. I can’t wait for you guys to come home. I hope we can hunt with muzzleloaders this year, get a big doe like we did during youth weekend together!*

*I love to hunt with you because my best moments are with you. I love you so much, and hopefully we can have more of those moments together. I hope we can have fun together every day when you get back. The fire department is praying for you guys!*

*Dad, you take care of me by giving me food and shelter. You also work very hard for food for our family. I like how you eat dinner with us as a family. I would never want a different dad than you.*

*It has been rough with you being gone for so long at the hospital. I can’t wait for you all to come home. I wish I could be there with you as a family. I love you a lot, and thank you for everything you do for me.*

**-Aiden Stewart, 10  
Middletown Springs**

## Doug Fontein

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Please stop by the town office to pick them up. They are washable. The town office is normally open Monday and Thursday 9-12 and 1-4:30 and most Saturday mornings.

If ye olde clerk's car is there in between times, please feel free to stop in. Or call 446-2498 and we can make other arrangements. **THEY ARE FREE!**

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\*\*\*Backup Power for Home Phone Services during  
Power Outages\*\*\*

December 30, 2020

Dear Valued Customer,

For many years, your home phone would allow you to stay connected to emergency voice services during a power outage. However, many of today's advanced home phone services, such as VTel's, require backup power to continue functioning during an electrical outage. Without a backup battery or alternate backup electrical source, such as a generator, customers will not be able to make any calls, including emergency calls to 911, during a power outage.

To avoid a disruption of home voice service during an outage-and to maintain the customer's ability to connect to 911 emergency services-VTel installs a battery backup power unit, including a battery, when we convert a home to VTel's fiber optic network. When first installed, this backup battery typically lasts approximately 8 hours during an outage (which is the length of time the battery is powering your Optical Network Terminal (ONT), not the time you spend using your phone).

Environmental factors such as temperature may shorten a battery's useful life. Batteries should be kept in dry conditions, operated within a temperature range of 32-104°F (recommended operating temperature range) and stored within a temperature range of 5-113° F (recommended storage temperature range). Aged batteries require replacement. Batteries typically last 3-5 years under normal conditions. Replacement is the sole responsibility of the customer. Specifications for replacement batteries purchased by customers may vary.

In order to preserve the life of the battery, VTel encourages all customers to review the additional battery backup information, including purchasing resources and step-by-step instructions for battery replacement and for connecting 20-hour EBPs, on our website at <https://www.vermontel.com/about/fiber/battery-information>.

If you have any questions, please call us at 802-885-9000, or by dialing 611 from any VTel phone, Monday-Saturday, 8am-5pm, we'd be happy to assist you.

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