

middle TOWN NEWS letter

June 2020

Strawberry Festival

Following the advice of Governor Phil Scott and the Vermont Department of Health, the Middletown Springs Historical Society Board has decided to cancel this year's Strawberry Festival, originally scheduled for Sunday, June 21, out of concern for the health of our volunteers and visitors.

We still hope to hold our Annual Meeting, as scheduled, on September 13, and our Museum Open House on October 4, pending further guidance from state officials.

Thanks for your support,
David Wright, President



"We hold out hope for a successful festival in 2021!"

Memorial Day Observance

The safely pared-down observance of Memorial Day on the Town Green, Sunday, May 25, went off without a hitch. Bob Bruttomesso of the ad hoc Parade Committee led with his enthusiasm and care to ensure that Middletown Springs could honor those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country, even without what would have been the 51st parade and attendant crowds. Participants practiced

social distancing and wore patriotic face masks sewn by Audrey Cameron; Nathan Carr emceed the ceremony with inspiring words; Justin Haynes, Emmett Francois, and Ed Lawson performed the raising and lowering of the flag; Girl Scouts Rose Tarbell and Natalia Tarbell laid flowers at the memorial while others sang the national anthem; Daniel Graves played taps. It is hoped that a video of the event will be available soon; watch Front Porch Forum for those details.

It was indeed a memorable Memorial Day.

A Note from the Town Treasurer

Property Tax payments for the 4th and FINAL Quarter of Fiscal Year 19/20 are due on or before **Monday, June 15, 2020.**

Due to continuing caution and regulations regarding COVID-19, tax payments will be accepted **ONLY** as follows:

1. MAIL to PO Box 1022, Middletown Springs, VT 05757 (with a 6/15/20 or earlier postmark).
2. **Place in DROP BOX on the OUTSIDE of the Town Office** by the end of the day, 6/15/20.

PLEASE DO NOT ENTER THE TOWN OFFICE TO REMIT TAXES.

Currently, there are NO exceptions for late taxes – **An 8% penalty will be imposed if taxes are received or postmarked after June 15**, and notice will be forwarded to the Delinquent Tax Collector, Debra House, for collection.

Additionally, 1% interest fee will be charged for the first 3 months of delinquency, and 1.5% interest per month will be charged thereafter.

If you have any questions, please contact mtstreasurer@vermontel.net.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. Stay safe and healthy.

Jenny Talke Munyak, Town Treasurer

Library News

Re-Opening

Governor Phil Scott announced on Friday, May 29, that libraries in Vermont may open on or after June 1. The trustees and staff at the Town Library are exploring the options and developing a staged approach to re-opening the building. We will announce the plan and its dates as soon as they are confirmed.

Curbside Service

Safe access to books, DVDs, and other physical materials is available with the Library's contactless, curbside pickup service. Hours for curbside pickup: Wednesday, 1-5 pm, and Friday, 11 am-3 pm (or by appointment). Call 235-2435 or [email](#) your requests. We will call you when your order is ready for pickup. Details are available on the Library's website (middletownspringslibrary.org).

New Digital Resource

Access over 9,800 downloadable audiobooks and 775 eBooks, as well as Pimsleur language eAUDIO and Great Courses (such as Practicing Mindfulness, Financial Literacy, and The American Civil War) with [RBDigital](#). Download the RBDigital app to your phone or tablet. Sign up using your MSPL library card, listing Vermont Department of Libraries as your library, for access to high-quality downloadable Recorded Books titles for adults, children, and young adults that include a variety of fiction and non-fiction titles, including best-sellers. Multi-access titles from "the Core List" are always available with no holds or waiting lists. All eBooks are single-access only.

If you had prior access to RBDigital through this library, you will be signing in again rather than registering. If you don't know your library card number or if you have trouble signing up or logging in, please call or [email](#) the Library so we can assist you.

Summer Program: *Imagine Your Story*

Our traditional summer program is being *reimagined* in light of current guidelines from the state, CDC, and Town Selectboard, with guidance from the Vermont Department of Libraries. We will keep you posted via the Library's eNews, Front Porch Forum, and the swing sign in front of our building.

Book Returns & Due Dates

All items will be due the week the library building re-opens, whenever that is. There are no

fees, fines, or penalties. Please enjoy the books/movies you check out for as long as you like. If you return things prior to the re-opening, please do so only if there is room in the outside Book Drop, or during our curbside hours.

Book Sale

The Book Sale has been postponed. We hope to be able to hold it in the fall. Please hold off on delivering all donations for the Book Sale until the building reopens.

Inter-Library Loans

Inter-Library Loan (ILL) restarted on Monday, June 1. With the closure of libraries around Vermont and the suspension of the courier service, the Inter-Library Loan system has been paused since mid-March. In its relaunch, patrons of MSPL will again have access to the collections in all Vermont Libraries. Most items arrive within 7 to 10 days. Curious about what's available? Take a look at the [CLOVER Catalog](#). Though you will not be able to log in to place requests directly, [email](#) or call the Library and we will do it for you.

Story Time

For at least as long as the Library is closed, we will be recording Story Times for you and uploading them to our [YouTube Channel](#). Join Melissa for songs and stories.

COVID-19 Updates

For the most current information and guidance on COVID-19 in Vermont, visit the website of the Vermont Department of Health at <https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19>, and the Middletown Springs website at <http://middletownsprings.vt.gov/emergency-safety/disasteremergency-planning/>.

Lest there be any confusion

IRS DEADLINES ARE ALL JULY 15 - Though our town taxes are due June 15 as usual, the deadlines for filing your 2019 1040 individual tax return as well as the estimated tax payments due April 15 AND June 15 have been extended to July 15. <https://www.irs.gov/coronavirus/coronavirus-tax-relief-filing-and-payment-deadlines>.

United States 2020 Census

- You count! Everyone counts!
- It's about fair representation & redistricting.
- It's about \$675 billion.
- Your privacy is protected.
- It takes 10 minutes of your time.

Making sure **every person in Vermont is counted during this 2020 Census matters a lot.** Vermont receives around \$2.5 billion dollars in Census-guided federal funds, which works out to about \$3,963 per person, IF WE PARTICIPATE! **A complete count** is vital to securing dollars for our state, our county, and our town. So far, Middletown Springs has just over a 55% response rate. Let's do better than that. It takes 10 minutes, no hard questions, completely confidential.

The past decades' censuses were conducted by people hired by the Federal government to go door to door. This year it's up to you to go online at my2020census.gov, do it by phone (844-330-2020), or return the questionnaire you got in the mail.

It is interesting to follow the census response rate across Vermont, by county and by town, at 2020.mapvt.com/.

Restarting the Engine: HEAT Squad Home Energy Audits

Have you been thinking about getting a home energy audit? HEAT Squad, a service of NeighborWorks of Western Vermont, is ready to help as they are restarting their home energy audit program. HEAT Squad has developed a COVID-19 precautions protocol to reduce risks and ensure the safety of both homeowner and auditor. During the visit, social distancing practices will be used. The auditor will also be wearing a face mask and disinfecting surfaces. After homeowners receive their written report, they will have the opportunity to review the recommendations, potential solutions, financing and rebate options, and next steps over the phone or virtually with the auditor.

Right NOW is the best time to consider home energy projects! Efficiency Vermont rebates are in place through December 31, 2020, and will cover 50% of the weatherization project cost, up to \$2000 or \$4000, depending on your income. Homeowners can also apply for a LOW-INTEREST, Home Energy Loan with HEAT Squad. As long as your loan closes by

October 31 and your income qualifies you for the Home Energy Loan, Efficiency Vermont will make the first 6 monthly payments for you up to \$900 (not to exceed 50% of the loan amount). Rebates and special offers such as this make it the best time to act, as these rebates and financing options have never been better and they will expire – so act now! To learn more and schedule your energy audit, visit HEAT Squad's website at www.heatsquad.org or call 802-438-2303.



Pie Safe Raffle

The **Friends of the Library** will be conducting a raffle for a beautiful pie cabinet hand-crafted and donated by Matt and Trish Peschl. The piece is made of pine and maple wood harvested from their land here in Middletown Springs, and the front of the chest is made of punch tin art. The raffle tickets are on sale now through the **drawing on June 21**. Tickets can be purchased from any member of the FOL board: Ashley Fioretti, Wendy Herrick, Shane Thornton, Judy Robinson, Claudia Gonda, Juanita Clay, Linda Olson, Jeanne Arsenault, and Karen Minasian. Tickets are 1 for \$5 or 3 for \$10. All proceeds from the raffle will go to benefit our beloved Library.

For more information, please contact Wendy Herrick at 235-3999.

Calendar of Events

In response to Governor Phil Scott's order to minimize gatherings, the Middletown Springs Selectboard has encouraged all Town boards and committees to meet only for urgent decisions. This may mean that some regularly scheduled meetings are cancelled or postponed, while others are held at their normal time and place but with electronic participation rather than in-person attendance. Please check with the following people to see whether a meeting will be held at its usual time and place, and the preferred method for remote participation.

Regular Meeting Schedule & Chair or Contact Person

Conservation Commission	2 nd Thurs	Elizabeth Cooper
Fire Dept. Training	Every Tues	Joe Castle
First Response	3 rd Sun	Carl Haynes
Friends for Education (FFE)	2 nd Wed	Ashley Fioretti
Friends of the Library (FOL)	2 nd Tues	Ashley Fioretti
Library Trustees	4 th Wed	Kristal Hier
Planning Commission	1 st Mon	Peter Blekis
Selectboard	2 nd & 4 th Thurs	Terry Redfield
Town Facilities Planning	1 st & 3 rd Thurs	Terry Redfield
Wells Springs School Board	1 st Wed	Clarence Haynes

When public meetings do occur, meeting organizers must set up the meeting space so that the recommended six feet of distance is maintained between participants.

The Vermont Secretary of State has updated, temporary guidelines for boards & committees to comply with **Vermont Open Meeting Laws**. You can find more information at <https://sos.vermont.gov/secretary-s-desk/commentary/updated-covid-19-impacts-and-considerations-for-open-meeting-law/>.

Town Newsletter

Lots of information in a snippet & list format, plus a Calendar of Events. No ads, articles, or minutes.

This supplements and enhances the Town website & Front Porch Forum and will serve the needs of those who don't regularly use computers.

Digital copies are available as a PDF. The PDF is posted to FPF or the Town website or is sent free via email to those who sign up. It is also available in hard copy, delivered by USPS, to those who subscribe for \$6 a year postage. Copies are posted at the Town Office, Grant's Village Store, and the Library.

Have questions? Call 235-2435, or email: middletownspringslibrary@gmail.com to reach Kimberly and Melissa at the Library.

Submit News & Events to:

Middletown Springs Public Library
middletownspringslibrary@gmail.com
PO Box 1206
Middletown Springs, VT 05757

Deadline: 25th of the month

Front Porch Forum

Join Front Porch Forum to know what is happening between issues of the middleTOWN NEWSletter. It's free. It's local. And, it's friendly. Check it out at FrontPorchForum.com/.