

middle TOWN NEWS letter

September 2020

History Talk at Annual Meeting

The 51st Annual Meeting of the Middletown Springs Historical Society will convene at 2 pm on Sunday, September 13, at the Historical Society Building.

The meeting will be held outdoors under canopies, observing social distancing. Please bring a face mask or shield for times when social distancing is impossible.

Following a dessert buffet with vanilla ice cream, originally donated by Stewart's for the Strawberry Festival, there will be a brief business meeting, including a review of the year's accomplishments and plans for the future. On the business meeting agenda is the election of new Trustees for the 2020-2022 term.

Later, Historical Society member Bill Powers will give a slide presentation on the crash of a military aircraft on a remote mountain in Chittenden and subsequent recovery efforts.

In 1957 a U.S. Army airplane crashed about three miles south of Brandon Gap and claimed the lives of four Army officers. Historian Bill Powers gives a first-hand account from 1957 and the remarkable "unconventional" rediscovery of the crash site over 50 years later. Learn about a crash victim's family and the father they never knew.

Bill Powers was raised in Rutland and Lake Dunmore, Vermont. He received a B.A. from St. Michael's College in 1967 and an M.A. from Ball State University in 1976. Bill spent 40 years associated with the Air Force, 21 years on active duty and 19 years as a contractor at Hanscom Air Force Base, Massachusetts. He retired to Rutland in 2007 and currently does volunteer work, historical research, and historical presentations.

His publications include: *Leicester, Vermont's Silver Lake: Beyond the Myths* (Academy Books, 2000); *Vanderburgh Ancestry of President George Bush: A Colonial New York Excursion* (NEHGS Nexus, vol. vii, no. 6, Dec 1990); and *100 Summers at Lake Dunmore* (Rutland Magazine, Summer 2012).

Happy Labor Day!

Outdoor Classroom Help Needed

The Friends for Education (FFE) is looking to build an outdoor pavilion at the Middletown Springs Elementary School in hopes that it can be utilized as an outdoor classroom space. Anyone interested in donating time, money, or materials (for example, locust trees and pine boards) to this effort please contact Ashley Fioretti at vtlittleflower13@gmail.com.

Thanks!

Cultural Relief Grant

On June 1, the Historical Society received word that it has been awarded a Cultural Relief Grant in the amount of \$5,000. The grant program is a partnership between the Vermont Arts Council and Vermont Humanities Council to provide rapid-response funding to arts and humanities organizations that face financial hardship due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Grants are made possible with federal funds distributed through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act.

Among the intended uses of the funding are operating expenses, including utilities, security, insurance and building maintenance, that normally would be paid by revenue from fundraising activities like our Maple Festival and Strawberry Festival, which were curtailed or cancelled this year.

In accordance with the terms of the grant, we are asked to state that this grant award is "supported in part by the Vermont Humanities Council" and that "Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed do not necessarily represent those of Vermont Humanities Council."

Time to Replace Your Face Mask?

Even the best cloth masks don't last forever. Middletown Springs has received 190 cloth face masks from VT Emergency Management. They're available for free at the Town Office, Library, and Grant's Village Store. They're plain white cotton, machine washable (up to 15 times). If you'd like more information, contact Herb Childress at 235-2093 or herb.childress@gmail.com.

Milestones

Freya Ruby Kniffin was born on July 8 at home on Spruce Knob Road to Hillary Doran and Richard Kniffin. She joins her proud big sister Rose.

If you have a Milestone, such as news of a birth, marriage, or death that you would like recognized here, please send it to mid-dletownspringslibrary@gmail.com.

Property Taxes

Property Tax Installment for the first quarter of the 2020/2021 fiscal year is due before or on Tuesday, September 15.

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 postmark of 9/15/20 or earlier).
2. PLACE in **DROP BOX on the OUTSIDE of the Town Office** by the end of the day of 9/15/20.

IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO ENTER THE TOWN OFFICE TO REMIT TAXES.

Please note: For those of you who have still not received credit or notification of your homestead rebate, please pay the 1st installment of your taxes as listed on your Property Tax Bill. Once we have been notified of your rebate by the State of Vermont, your taxes will be adjusted accordingly, and you will be sent an updated Property Tax Bill that will show a reduction for the second quarter payment.

It is important to note that if your tax is being paid by your mortgage company or your bank, it is YOUR responsibility to give them a copy of your tax bill.

Finally, if for some reason you have not received your Property Tax Bill, please contact me at mtstreasurer@vermontel.net and indicate for which property you need the bill as well as the name under which the property is listed.

Jenny Talke Munyak, Town Treasurer

September Days are here, with Summer's best of weather and Autumn's best of cheer.

- Helen Hunt Jackson, American Poet 1830-1885

Library News

The Library is currently open for walk-in service and no-contact porch pick-up.

Monday 2 pm - 5 pm

Tuesday 2 pm - 7 pm

Wednesday 2 pm - 5 pm

Friday 10 am - 2 pm

... or by appointment

For walk-in service, protocols include masks required, and one household at a time. Call 235-2435 or [email](#) your questions or book requests. For porch pick-up, we will contact you when your order is ready.

Book Returns & Due Dates: All items that have been in circulation while the Library building was closed are now due. There are no fees, fines, or penalties. When items are returned, they are quarantined for no fewer than 72 hours before being checked back in and shelved.

NEW Books:

Simon the Fiddler by Paulette Jiles

The Girl from Widow Hills by Megan Miranda

She Stands at the Curb and Waits for the Bus

(short stories), edited by Herb Childress

The ABCs of Diversity: Helping Kids (and Ourselves!)

Embrace Our Differences

by Carolyn B. Helsel and Y. Joy Harris-Smith

Slush: Courageous Writing in the Face of All Reason

by Herb Childress

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents

by Isabel Wilkerson

When Sadness Is at Your Door by Eva Eland

Dog Man: Fetch-22 by Dav Pilkey

Whoosh! Lonnie Johnson's Super-Soaking Stream of

Inventions by Chris Barton

Something Happened in Our Town by Marianne

Celano, Marietta Collings, and Ann Hazzard

Inter-Library Loans: Inter-Library Loan (ILL) allows patrons of MSPL to 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](#). You will not be able to place requests directly; [email](#) or call the Library and we will do it for you.

No Annual Lawn Sale:

The Friends of the Library has decided to cancel its Fall lawn sale. We appreciate everyone who collected items and are sorry we won't be able to use them this year.

Elementary School News

The new school year is almost here. Because of Covid-19, there will be many changes. This year, school begins after Labor Day. We will back at MSES on Tuesday, August 8. Unfortunately, we will be unable to hold our traditional First Day Community Breakfast, but we look forward to doing it again next year.

We will return to in-person schooling for students in grades Pre-K–grade 6 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. On Wednesdays, students will be remote-learning from home. This gives us the opportunity to give the school building an extra deep cleaning mid-week. Students and staff will be required to wear face masks while in school and any parents or visitors will need to do so as well. We will, however, be limiting (to the extent possible) visits to the school by parents and others by holding most of our meetings by phone or online. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to keep everyone healthy and safe.

We've received word that the new equipment for the separate, dedicated Pre-K playground is on its way to us and we've already laid down a bed of wood chips in the designated area. The new playground will feature a picnic table with an umbrella, a small balance climbing center, basketball hoops at different heights, and a playhouse. The new playground will help us to adhere more closely to the new Early Childhood Learning standards. Congratulations and many thanks to our Pre-K teacher, Kristina Severance, for successfully obtaining full funding through the "Donors Choose" program. We would like to extend our gratitude to all who contributed so generously to the project.

Speaking of generosity, I would like to give my sincere thanks to this past year's sixth graders: Quincy, Kiara, Avery, Tyler, Allison, Allyssa, Elliott, Keaton, and Keighen! Although they were very disappointed to miss out on the annual sixth-grade trip to Washington, DC, they decided to do something meaningful with the money they had raised for their trip. They donated their money to a number of worthy causes: the Middletown Springs Town Library, our local food bank, the Pre-K playground project, and the MSES Student Council. They also left a starting balance for this year's sixth graders, giving them a jump start on their trip in the spring.

It is at times like these that I reflect on what a special school and community we have here in Middletown Springs. We look forward to being reunited

with the students this fall as we sail into uncharted waters together.

Rick Beal, Principal

United States 2020 Census

Middletown Springs has just over a 59% response rate. We can do better than that! Making sure **every person in Vermont is counted** during this 2020 Census matters a lot. A complete count is vital to securing dollars for our state, our county, and our town.

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

Choose one of these options: go online at my2020census.gov; do it by phone (844-330-2020); or return the questionnaire you got in the mail. Easy, painless, and really important.

Community Calendars

It's time to send in your orders and updates for the Community Birthday Calendar. Between the calendar pages for June & July there was a [re-order form](#). Send it in by September 15 and help the Library Trustees complete the task of the calendar updating and reprinting for 2021. All proceeds benefit the Town Library.

Don't know what we're talking about? Stop in at the Library and we will show you this year's calendar. It is a long-standing tradition as well as a fund-raiser for the Library.

For more information or to advertise, contact the Library at 235-2435 or middletownspringslibrary@gmail.com.

Be the FIRST to Know!

The Library's fall programming and virtual events will be announced after Labor Day. Be the first to know! Keep up to date on the news, events, and newest titles at the Library. Check out the curated collection of links to resources and curiosities. Sign up for the Library's periodic E-News at <https://mailchi.mp/2cab7316f313/librarynewssignup>.

We need your permission to add your email to the list of *Library News* subscribers which you can provide by following the link above or by calling or [emailing](#) the Library.

Primary Election Thanks

Local election officials would like to take a moment to recognize and thank the dedicated group of volunteers who provided help and assistance during the recent August 11 primary election. It would be very difficult, if not impossible, for the Town to conduct an election if not for the help of many individuals working together for the common goal of serving the community.

Please offer a word of thanks to Herb Childress, Pat Hemenway, Larry Gorman, Kimberly Bushnell, Terry Redfield, Meredith Morgan, Elizabeth Cooper, Juanita Burch-Clay, Kelley Beckwith, Patty Kenyon, Leslie Silver, Chris Fenton, Kathleen Feeley, Nora Rubinstein, Laura Castle, and Heather Grier. We have undoubtedly missed someone, but please give these folks a "Thank You" when you see them around town. Each of these folks provided support in one or more capacities, whether it was setting up the Town Clerk's Office "annex" for in-person voting, working the polls (check-in, check-out, regulating entry to the building, sanitizing the voting booths, etc.), and more.

Also, several members of the Board of Civil Authority really stepped in to offer help and support to Town Clerk Laura Castle in dealing with the unusually heavy volume of absentee ballots due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Nora Rubinstein, Elizabeth Cooper, Patty Kenyon, Leslie Silver, Pat Hemenway, and others worked in the days leading up to the election to help ensure that ballots were documented and distributed to the individuals requesting them. The Selectboard and Town Clerk are most appreciative of the help and support provided.

Thank you!

Homebound Library Service

The Library provides delivery service of books and movies to those who are unable to visit the Library, whether on a temporary or a permanent basis. Large print and audiobooks are also available. Call the Library at 235-2435 or e-mail middletownspringslibrary@gmail.com to place a request. The Library collection can be viewed online at the Library's website (<https://middletownspringslibrary.org/>).

Not sure what you want? Talk with Kimberly or Melissa and they will help connect you with something new to read or watch.

Update on First Response

As many of you may already know, the Middletown Springs First Response (MSFR) and Poultney Rescue Squad have severed organizational ties. Some members of MSFR will remain members of Poultney Rescue Squad, but the organization no longer has a state license to operate as the Middletown Springs First Response. Because MSFR was operating as a "d/b/a" of the Poultney Rescue Squad, they did not have their own federal distinction as a non-profit organization. (d/b/a stands for "doing business as" - a company is said to be "doing business as" when the name under which they operate their business differs from its legal, registered name.) At this time, the MSFR does not want to pursue establishing their own federal non-profit status as an independent organization and has asked that the Town create a new town agency under which they may continue to operate.

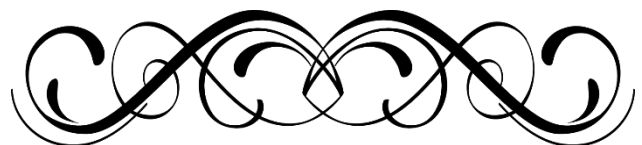
The Selectboard as a whole would like to see the MSFR to continue to serve the community; the MSFR volunteers would like to continue to serve the community. To accomplish this, the Selectboard has had many conversations, done a good amount of research, and has found conflicting and confusing information. Consequently, we have engaged the town lawyer to help us determine the full implications of this potential move.

For those of you interested in the details, minutes from recent Selectboard meetings are posted on the Town's website and capture a fair amount of the general concerns and discussions.

We hope this update helps to provide some clarity about this complicated process. For more information, please feel free to reach out to a member of the Board.

The Selectboard is committed to working through this process with the best intentions and will work to keep you informed when any new information is forthcoming.

On behalf of the Selectboard,
Patty Kenyon, Selectboard Clerk



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 |
| Historical Society | 1 st Thurs | David Wright |
| 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, those present must wear masks or facial covers and 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 (FPF) 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 <https://frontporchforum.com/>.