

middle TOWN NEWS letter

December 2020

Community Church News

“Christmas in the Park” has been a tradition in Middletown Springs for over 30 years. Sadly, we have had to cancel the event this year, as well as our “Free Indeed” event due to COVID.

But don’t let that dampen your Christmas spirit! Our manger scene will be up and the lights will be on the tree (thank you MSVFD!)

Celebrate the joy of this Christmas season with us on Sunday mornings at 10 am and for our **Christmas Eve service at 7 pm**. You can either join us in church (masks and social distancing required) or you can join us on Zoom. Just email mscchurch@gmail.com and we’ll send you the link.

Also, for any family in Middletown Springs, we are offering a free one-month subscription to the online program “Minno”, which is produced by the makers of the popular children’s show “VeggieTales.” It’s loaded with fun programs for the kids and you can feel good about what they’re watching! Email hansenjr@vermontel.net and we’ll get you subscribed.

We wish you a safe and Merry Christmas!

Your Friends at the Middletown Springs
Community Church

COVID and Holiday Gatherings

As we see the recent spike in COVID cases, it’s important to recognize that gatherings of people have demonstrably led to further spread of the disease. We saw it in Canada, with most provinces reporting a doubling or tripling of new cases two weeks after their Thanksgiving on October 12th. We’ve seen it with big weddings and parties, and the caseloads that have resulted from those. Here are two things to know:

IN VERMONT, over 40% of all COVID cases since the beginning of the outbreak have occurred in November alone.

NATIONALLY, the number of days it’s taken to add each million new cases has dropped -- from 99 days in February through May down to only six days in November.

We are in the thick of it, right now.

We can look forward to a vaccine perhaps in spring 2021, though widespread distribution will trail behind its early availability. In the meantime, we need to avoid enclosed gatherings of any size, continue to wear masks for all of our beyond-family interactions, and maintain our physical distancing. We’re all sick of it; I know I’m sick of it. But to have a truly merry Christmas and happy Hannukah and blessed new year in 2021, we need to sacrifice some of the things we might do in 2020. Please be cautious and be safe, not merely for yourselves but for your neighbors and for everyone you love.

Herb Childress, Town Emergency Coordinator

Property Tax Reminder

Payment for second quarter property tax is due on or before Tuesday, December 15, 2020. Payments should be mailed or dropped in the black drop box on the OUTSIDE of the town office building.

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 (postmarked 12/15/20 or earlier).
2. DROP OFF in locked dropbox on the OUTSIDE of the Town Office by the end of the day on 12/15/20.

**PLEASE DO NOT ENTER THE TOWN OFFICE
TO REMIT TAXES.**

Tax payments received or postmarked after December 15, 2020 will incur a late fee of 1% for 3 months and 1.5% thereafter until paid.

Stay safe and healthy.

Jenny Talke Munyak, Town Treasurer

Bids to Produce 2021 Town Report

The Selectboard of Middletown Springs is soliciting bids for the layout and production of the 2020 Town Report. This includes coordinating with numerous Town officers and non-profit bodies to collect annual reports and financial statements; graphic design to create an attractive and readable document, including collection and formatting of appropriate photographs; and coordinating with a printing contractor to deliver finished files and prepare completed copies for mailing no later than February 15, 2021. Any questions over the details of the work requested should be directed to Board member Patty Kenyon, who has done it herself many times before joining the Board.

Bids may be sent to Board Clerk Patty Kenyon at pmhkenyon@vermontel.net. Bids will be reviewed and a decision made at our regular meeting on December 10, 2020.

LIBRARY NEWS

NEW HOURS: The Library has increased and changed its hours. We are now open for walk-in service, as well as no/low-contact pick-up.

Monday 2 pm - 6 pm

Tuesday 2 pm - 6 pm

Wednesday 2 pm - 6 pm

Friday 10 am – 2 pm or by appointment

Going Forward: We are exploring various options for service which balance keeping our building open to the public and staff/patron health and safety. We will keep you posted. If in doubt, call before you come.

No/Low Contact Pick-Up: We encourage patrons to call ahead with their requests and pick up with little or no contact. Library Catalog may be accessed at <https://middletownspringslibrary.org/>

Sometimes you just need to browse! We are still open for **walk-in patrons**, with these COVID-preventing protocols which must be followed.

- Masks, hand hygiene, physical distancing
- Maintain physical distance from the staff at all possible times.
- Maximum of 4 patrons at a time in the building.

- Visits are limited to 15 minutes.
- All returned items are quarantined for at least 4 days.

Inter-Library Loan service is available, increasing access to nearly all Vermont libraries' collections.

Word of the Week: coming soon! Watch for details for how to play.

There is no in-person programming at this time.

The Library staff and trustees will make adjustments to library access in compliance with and guided by the Governor's Executive Order, Vermont Dept. of Health, and the Vermont Dept. of Libraries. We will widely announce any changes.

Thank you for helping us keep the library building open to you & others.

Be well and stay safe, Kimberly & Melissa

NEW Books!

New to the shelves and looking for readers, just in time for winter. Stoke the woodstove and settle in with a good read.

Adult Collection

The Searcher by Tana French

Troubled Blood by Robert Galbraith

A Time for Mercy by John Grisham

Miss Benson's Beetle by Rachel Joyce

The Girl of His Dreams by Donna Leon

Vesper Flights by Helen Macdonald

The Orphan's Guilt by Archer Mayor

A Promised Land by Barack Obama

The Discomfort of Evening

by Marieke Lucas Rijneveld

Home by Marilynne Robinson

Jack by Marilynne Robinson

The Best of Me by David Sedaris

Ruth Bader Ginsburg: A Life by Jane Sherron De Hart

The Return by Nicholas Sparks

The Cold Millions by Jess Walter

Children's Picture Books & Graphic Novels

Class Act by Jerry Craft

Trials of Apollo: The Tower of Nero by Rick Riordan

Dork Diaries Tales (series) by Rachel Renee Russell

Freedom Summer by Deborah Wiles

The Case of R.B.G. vs. Inequality by Jonah Winter

Sweetie by Andrea Zuyll

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 of the Library (FOL) | 2 nd Wed | 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/secretarys-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 on FPF and 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/>.