

# middle TOWN NEWS letter

## January 2021

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### Maple Raffle Coming Soon

Planning for the 2021 Historical Society Maple Festival is already underway, and we invite you to participate. The pandemic has put the traditional Maple Festival activities on hold for 2021, and the only Maple Festival event will be a targeted version of the Maple Festival Raffle.

**How can you help?** We welcome your donation of an item or service to the Maple Raffle. Some suggestions are: artwork & crafts, food & beverage baskets, gift certificates, household & personal items, professional services, opportunities for recreation, travel & vacation, antiques & vintage items.

**How will the raffle work?** A numbered list of raffle items will be mailed to the MSHS membership and to others by request, along with booklets of raffle tickets. The list will also be posted on our website [www.middletownspringshistoricalsociety.org](http://www.middletownspringshistoricalsociety.org) for the general public. Bidders will write in a specific item number on each ticket they wish to enter into a targeted raffle for a specific item and return the tickets with payment. Tickets returned with no numbers written in will be entered into a separate, general raffle. The list of items, with photos will be available for viewing (but not for online bidding) on the MSHS website from early February.

**What is the timeline?** By January 31, please submit a description, screen shot or a photo of your donation by email to Pat Hemenway at [ladyh@vermontel.net](mailto:ladyh@vermontel.net), or call 235-2421. Contact Pat with questions and requests for printed item lists and raffle tickets. The Maple Raffle bidding will close on March 21 and the drawing will be held on or about March 24.

Thank you for your participation!

*MSHS Trustees*

### Short-Term Highway Maintenance Help

In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and in an effort to be prepared in the event of potential sickness or infections, the Middletown Springs Highway Department and the Selectboard are requesting (possible) assistance from the community.

We would like to assemble a list of qualified, interested persons to be available to operate winter plow/sander trucks, backhoe/loader equipment, and other related tasks to keep our town roads plowed and maintained in the event that one or both of our primary highway employees became ill and/or is forced to remain home under quarantine for a period of time this winter.

Minimum requirements to operate Town equipment will be a CDL 'B' (commercial driver's license) and a valid DOT medical ID card. We are also interested in prospective contractors who may have the ability and equipment to plow highways with their own equipment rather than operate town-owned vehicles. Interested private contractors must offer proof of insurance, a proposed rate schedule, and a listing of available equipment to be considered.

Please contact Road Commissioner Bill Reed at the Town Garage (235-2024) or via email at [middletown.roads@gmail.com](mailto:middletown.roads@gmail.com) for any additional information. Pay rates will be determined commensurate with appropriate related experience. You may also contact Selectboard members Patty Kenyon at [pmhkenyon@vermontel.net](mailto:pmhkenyon@vermontel.net) or Terry Redfield at [redbonevt@gmail.com](mailto:redbonevt@gmail.com) for additional information.

Your fellow townspeople thank you for your interest in serving the community during these turbulent, uncertain times.

## MSVFD Report – 2020

The summary of a year's worth of service to our town from the Volunteer Fire Department is [available here](#) to read online or as printable PDF. (For a few highlights from a busy year, see page 3.)

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## Community Birthday Calendars

Thank you for supporting the Library with your calendar subscription or paid ad in the **2021 Town Calendar**. If you have not yet picked up your calendar, please stop by the Library to do so. See our hours in right-hand column.

A reminder for those who did not pay in advance: calendars are now \$10. If you wanted one and did not get an order in on time, there are a few extra calendars (also \$10).

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## Health and Wellness

Information from Vermont Department of Health

### Take Care of Your Emotional and Mental Health

If you or someone you know is in crisis or needs emotional support, help is available 24/7:

- Call your [local mental health crisis line](#).
- Text VT to 741741 to talk with someone at the [Crisis Text Line](#).
- Call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at 1-800-273-8255.
- For more info visit [healthvermont.gov/suicide](http://healthvermont.gov/suicide).
- Get connected to Alcohol and Drug Support Services at [VT Helplink](#).
- Get self-help tips and connect to mental health services at [COVID Support VT](#).

### Food resources

If your financial situation has recently changed, you may now qualify for Vermont nutrition and food programs, including the WIC program (Women, Infants and Children) and 3SquaresVT/SNAP. Contact the [Health Department](#), [Hunger Free Vermont](#), or call 2-1-1 for more information.

## LIBRARY NEWS

### NEW Books! - Adult Fiction & Non-Fiction

*Homeland Elegies* by Ayad Akhtar  
*Leopard* by Herb Childress  
*Pie Academy* by Ken Haedrich  
*Eleanor* by David Michaelis  
*The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue* by V.E. Schwab  
*How to Raise an Elephant* by Alexander McCall Smith  
*Memorial Drive* by Natasha Trethewey  
*This Time Next Year We'll Be Laughing*  
by Jacqueline Winspear  
*Before the Ever After* by Jacqueline Woodson

**Library HOURS:** 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

Saturday 10 am – Noon

**No/Low Contact Pick-Up:** We encourage patrons to call ahead with their requests to 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.

**Going Forward:** We are exploring various options for service which balance keeping our building open to the public with staff/patron health and safety, guided by the Governor's Executive Order, Dept. of Health, and Dept. of Libraries. We will keep you posted. If in doubt, call before you come.

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

Be well and stay safe, Kimberly & Melissa

## MSVFD 2020 Summary HIGHLIGHTS

The MSVFD held a “graduation” for our Middletown Springs high school seniors, with their very own fire truck parade and procession in their caps and gowns to “Pomp and Circumstance”.

MSVFD responded to three structure fires in Middletown Springs. Other calls in town included several EMS assists, motor vehicle accidents, smoke alarm activations, carbon monoxide alarm activations, trees and wires down, hazardous road conditions, and an ATV assist and manpower with Vermont State Police.

Mutual aid trainings have become even more important since the Coronavirus invaded our lives. New precautions and procedures have been implemented due to Coronavirus.

MSVFD also responded as a mutual aid company for several calls including nine structure fires in seven surrounding towns, for motor vehicle accidents, a chimney fire, smoke conditions in the residence, and a forest fire.

All the local volunteer fire departments work very closely together to execute a fast response, set up a quick water supply, keep homeowners and firefighters safe, and keep open lines of communication. Without mutual aid departments, many calls could be much more dangerous and/or traumatic.

As we’ve been expecting, Tanker 532 finally split in March, and the MSVFD was able to replace the tank on the original truck with volunteer, in-house labor, saving the Town hundreds of thousands of dollars. Unfortunately, due to the Coronavirus, this project which was supposed to take approximately 2 weeks from start to finish took approximately 8 weeks to complete.

Regarding the firehouse project, the Select Board is looking into alternatives. Modifications and remodeling could potentially cost as much or more than a new firehouse. The MSVFD membership and Board of Trustees are also looking into alternative plans. Although this project is important to us, the Board of Trustees and the membership also consider the financial stress of our community members relating to the Coronavirus.

The Coronavirus did not stop Santa from visiting Middletown Springs. Although we could not host our annual Breakfast with Santa this year, Santa was able to ride on a fire truck around town. For a short time, it gave us all a little sense of “normal”.

The fire department budget for FY22 will remain the same as FY21. There will not be an increase in the budget. The budget has remained the same for the past four years. Again, thank you for your support.

Social distancing has certainly changed our community in so many ways, but we would like everyone to know that we are still here, for whatever you may need. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us. Take care and stay healthy.

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## Design Study on Fire House

Centerline Architects & Planners, a structural engineering firm with offices in Bennington and Burlington, and Rutland area-based construction firm Russel Construction have been selected to co-lead the evaluation of the Middletown Springs Volunteer Fire Department’s facility in order to provide the citizens of Middletown Springs the most cost-effective way to have a safe, efficient, and effective facility for Fire and Safety Services for the town.

Building quality in the areas of electrical, insulation, cancer-causing materials, roofing materials, and internal egress are no longer up to modern code. These violations directly impact the safety of our volunteer firemen, and could possibly shut down the facility, leaving the town without adequate fire and emergency protection.

All the MSVFD equipment, serving the variety of properties and activities of our town, needs to be adequately stored and provided with a safe and efficient place for its maintenance. The facility must be up to modern safety standards for the Fire Department and other Municipal personnel who use the facility.

The design investigation process began this fall and has been done with communication and input from the Middletown Springs Select Board. The study is funded by the Middletown Springs Fire Association Building Fund and is expected to wrap up at the end of January 2021.



## 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 <sup>nd</sup> Thurs	Elizabeth Cooper
Fire Dept. Training	Every Tues	Joe Castle
First Response	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sun	Carl Haynes
Friends of the Library (FOL)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Wed	Ashley Fioretti
Historical Society	1 <sup>st</sup> Thurs	David Wright
Library Trustees	4 <sup>th</sup> Wed	Kristal Hier
Planning Commission	1 <sup>st</sup> Mon	Peter Blekis
Selectboard	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Thurs	Terry Redfield
Town Facilities Planning	1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thurs	Terry Redfield
Wells Springs School Board	1 <sup>st</sup> 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? Contact Kimberly and Melissa at the Library, [middletownspringslibrary@gmail.com](mailto:middletownspringslibrary@gmail.com) or 235-2435.

## Submit News & Events to:

Middletown Springs Public Library  
[middletownspringslibrary@gmail.com](mailto:middletownspringslibrary@gmail.com)  
PO Box 1206  
Middletown Springs, VT 05757

Deadline: 25<sup>th</sup> 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/>.