

# THE BOLTON GAZETTE

THE TOWN OF BOLTON, VERMONT

“THE LAND OF BOULDERS AND BEARS”

3045 THEODORE ROOSEVELT HIGHWAY, BOLTON VT 05676

FEBRUARY 2014

EMAIL: [BOLTONGAZETTE@GMAVT.NET](mailto:BOLTONGAZETTE@GMAVT.NET)

VOLUME #2 ISSUE #2

## TOWN MEETING 2014 EDITION “YOUR VOTE IS YOUR VOICE!”

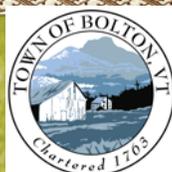
The legal voters of the Town of Bolton are hereby notified to meet at Smilie Memorial School on Monday, March 03, 2014 at 7 p.m. to transact school and town business.

Voting for town officers and any other business to be voted by Australian Ballot will take place at Smilie Memorial School on Tuesday, March 04, 2014 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.



**TOWN MEETING AT THE BOLTON FIRE STATION ~ CIRCA 1980'S**

Bolton's first Town Meeting was held at the home of JAMES MOORE ( did you ever wonder where the James Moore Tavern at Bolton Valley got its name?) on March 17, 1795, at 10 a.m. Records list the fourteen people elected to manage the town affairs which included Moderator, Town Clerk, Constable, Grand Juror, Pound Keeper, Surveyors of Highways, and Listers.



**REMINDER: the third installment of property taxes is due on Monday, February 17, 2014. Postmarks of 2/17/14 are accepted as on time.**

## **CLERK'S CORNER**

**AMY GROVER \* TOWN CLERK & TREASURER**  
**CLERKBOLTON@GMAV.T.NET**

### **WIN A FREE 2015 DOG LICENSE!**

How? License your dog by April 1, 2014 and be entered into the drawing to win a free 2015 dog license. Winner will be announced on April 2, 2014! A current rabies certificate is required for a license, and the fee is \$11. There is no late fee, and we are happy to issue licenses by mail. Please contact the town office if you need more information.

### **HOMESTEAD DECLARATION**

Please note that when you complete your income taxes for the state of Vermont, you need to declare your primary residence EACH year, and apply at the same time for the Property Tax Adjustment, if you fall within the regulatory guidelines. Both forms **MUST** be filed every year to take benefit of these programs, and must be filed by the April 15 deadline, even if you receive an extension on your taxes. Questions? Contact the VT Tax Department at (802) 828-2515.

Information from the  state of VT:

Vermont resident homeowners **must annually file** a Declaration of Homestead on their principal dwelling as of April 1, 2014. (2014 Vermont Homestead Declaration Form HS-122 Section A)

Eligible Homestead owners **must annually file** a claim to receive an adjustment to property tax (2014 Property Tax Adjustment Claim Form HS-122 Section B). Generally an adjustment is not available to households whose income is \$105,000 or more.

### **REAPPRAISAL IN WEST BOLTON**

We will start calling in late February and early March to begin scheduling appointments again.



### **PHOEBE VISITS A MYSTERY BUILDING**

#### **IN BOLTON!**

### **PHOEBE'S KIDS' QUESTION**

#### **OF THE MONTH!**

Hmmm...what is this building? Do you know where it is in Bolton? When do you think it was built? Why do you think it was built? It looks like it might need some repairs, doesn't it? Find out all about it in next month's issue!

**WOOF! WOOF!!**

Last month's answer: As of February 1, 2014, there were 921 registered voters in the town of Bolton! Are the adults (18 years old and over) in your house registered to vote???

**FEBRUARY 2014**

**PAGE 2 CLERK'S CORNER CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

## SMILIE SCHOOL NEWS

THE LEGAL VOTERS OF THE BOLTON TOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT ARE NOTIFIED THAT A BUDGET INFORMATIONAL MEETING WILL BE HELD AT SMILIE SCHOOL ON MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2014 at 7 PM FOR THE PURPOSE OF EXPLAINING THE 2014 - 2015 PROPOSED SCHOOL BUDGET.



### **ETCH-A- SKETCH ARTIST AT WORK!**

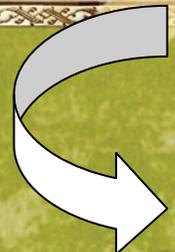
Even with a delayed opening, minds were active and creative at Smilie School on January 23rd! Our friend Will created this amazing design on an Etch-A-Sketch of a deer, mouse and skunk, while waiting for school to officially open!!

Students and chaperones enjoyed a snowshoeing adventure and a swim in the indoor pool at Bolton Valley on Monday, January 27th. Bolton Valley has continued to generously offer students, staff, parents, and chaperones three free days of fun recreational activities each winter. Thank you Bolton Valley!

From all your friends at Smile School.



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**TOWN MEETING 2014 INFORMATION**

**TOWN MEETING – MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2014, 7 P.M.**



Evacuation Plan: Per building use requirements, in the event of an emergency during town meeting, attendees will evacuate the building via the three doors in the gym. Babysitters and children will evacuate the kindergarten room via two exits as needed and meet parents in the school parking lot. Attendees will wait in the parking lot until notified it is safe to re-enter the building. In the event the building is not cleared for reentry, attendees will go home.

**TOWN MEETING POTLUCK DINNER**

Our Town Meeting Potluck Dinner tradition continues...bring your favorite dish to share and come join your friends and neighbors at 5:45 p.m. on Monday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> for dinner prior to the meeting. As in the past, our representatives as well as board members will be on hand to chat and answer questions. The town will provide all utensils, rolls, coffee, tea, cider and milk.

**BABYSITTING AVAILABLE AT TOWN MEETING**

Local teens will be providing babysitting services at Town Meeting (Monday March 3<sup>rd</sup>) in the Kindergarten classroom from 6:30 p.m. until all business is completed. Please provide a drink and snack for your child/ren, as well as anything special that will make them feel happier while away from their family.

**REGISTER TO VOTE!**

The last day to register to vote prior to Town Meeting is Wednesday, February 26, 2014 by 5 p.m. Note: the town office will remain open until 5 p.m. on this date to meet this statutory requirement.



**TOWN REPORT**

The Town Report was delivered to the printer on January 30<sup>th</sup>, and the printer expects them to be mailed on February 14, 2014. Town Reports will be mailed only to registered voters, and is posted on the town website. Please bring your Town Report with you to Town Meeting – we will only have a limited supply of extra copies on hand. Thank you.

**OFFICIAL WARNINGS AND BALLOTS**

Copies of official warnings and ballots are included in this Gazette.

**QUESTIONS ABOUT TOWN MEETING? PLEASE CALL THE TOWN OFFICE!**

**SENIOR DINNER NEWS – IT'S ITALIAN!**

What could be better than warm Italian food on a cold winter's night?

Date: Thursday, February 27, 2014

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: Bolton Fire Station

Menu: Lasagna, salad, garlic bread and a special dessert provided by Don and June Kenney

Questions? Call Doris at 434-3769

**THANK YOU FROM THE MMU ACADEMIC BOOSTERS**

Thanks come from the MMU Academic Boosters to the Bolton Store and Bolton Valley for their support of the Honor Roll Rewards Program. This program recognizes the academic achievement of students who make the MMU honor roll by enlisting local businesses to offer free products or special pricing to those students. Many thanks to both the Bolton Store and Bolton Valley for their continued support of this program.

**WHEELER TRUST SCHOLARSHIP**

Reminder that the Wheeler Trust Scholarship application deadline is April 30<sup>th</sup>. Overseen by the Board of Civil Authority, the Wheeler Trust Scholarship annually awards funds to 1 - 4 full time college students from Bolton. See the town website for the full guidelines on applying for a scholarship and application form, or call the town office for more information.

**YES...STILL LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS**

To serve as Alternates on the Development Review Board. Interested? Contact the town office!

**BOLTON GAZETTE INFORMATION**

Reminder: The deadline for submissions in the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month for the following month's edition. To OPT IN to receive the Bolton Gazette electronically and in color (help the town save \$ on paper and postage costs!) email [boltingazette@gmavt.net](mailto:boltingazette@gmavt.net).

We welcome all submissions, in any format: stories, news, events, art, poetry, photographs. Drop submissions at the town office or, you've got it, email them to [boltingazette@gmavt.net](mailto:boltingazette@gmavt.net)!

Smilie School Board News

These are challenging times for the town of Bolton. Last spring, for the first time in recent memory, our town was divided on the issue of our school budget. Even though the Smilie school board and administration had made sincere efforts to reduce spending, voters were asked to accept a sizeable increase in our school tax rate. At that time, we believed that the situation would be a one-time event, and we were optimistic that future tax increases would be more manageable. This has not proven to be the case.

This year, even though our board and administration have tried to be responsive to the needs and wishes of our residents and crafted a budget where the actual dollars spent would go down for 2014-15, we are again faced with the potential of a tax rate increase. How is it possible for us to spend less at Smilie yet still be asked to pay higher taxes?

There are essentially three factors that contribute to this situation.

- First, the statewide tax rate is expected to rise by \$0.07.
- Second, the proposed Mount Mansfield Union School District (MMUSD) budget has an increase of 2.32%. This budget, which is completely independent and separate from the Smilie budget, has a significant effect on our school tax rate because roughly 2/3 of the students who live in Bolton are enrolled at either Camels Hump Middle School or Mt. Mansfield UHS. The MMUSD budget is considered by Australian ballot on Town Meeting Day, and this vote is separate from the Smilie budget vote.
- Third, according to state calculations, Smilie's enrollment has reduced by 4.84 equalized pupils compared to last year. In reality, we have only one less student this year than last year, but the state uses a two-year average in their complex calculation of equalized pupils. This reduction of 4.84 means that even though our total spending has gone down slightly, our spending per pupil is 6.8% higher. We fully expect that our enrollment will increase next year when our current class of nine fourth graders advances to middle school and we welcome a class of fifteen students for Kindergarten.

Many other Vermont towns, both large and small, are struggling with these same budget factors and will be facing double digit tax rate increases on Town Meeting Day. No one can deny that Vermont is approaching the tipping point in terms of how much property tax residents can be expected to pay in support of education. As taxpayers ourselves, board members are also frustrated by the increases.

But we are also optimistic about the future of our school. The process of forming a Modified Unified Union School District in the Chittenden East Supervisory Union (CESU) has begun.

Under new legislation, towns are able to authorize school district consolidations even if all the voting towns are not in favor of the consolidation. Instead of requiring a unanimous decision, this process requires only four (or more) of the six CESU towns to be in favor of the consolidation for it to be approved. The formation of a Modified Unified Union School District would help our town by giving us greater flexibility in staffing and enrollment, and most importantly, it would reduce our spending-per-pupil and thus our property taxes.

We hope the community shares the pride we have in Smilie School and will continue to support high quality education for our students.

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Alain Cohen 434-2280 [griffonier@gmail.com](mailto:griffonier@gmail.com)

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Mary-Ellen Seaver-Reid 434-4813 [mseaverr@uvm.edu](mailto:mseaverr@uvm.edu)

Amy Turner 434-3514 [mrs1thiker@hotmail.com](mailto:mrs1thiker@hotmail.com)



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## **Concern for Gillett Pond**

By Nancy Stoddard

Gillett Pond is a treasure for its natural beauty, natural resources and the recreational opportunities it provides. With the news in August that a state dam inspector's report says "*the dam needs to be completely replaced or removed,*" many residents in Richmond, Huntington and surrounding areas have expressed great concern.

A "Friends of Gillett Pond" network has formed, made up of 23 people including the Richmond Conservation Commission, Richmond Land Trust, Huntington Historical and Community Trust, land owners, and interested citizens. Acting as a collective voice for saving the pond, the "Friends" group has initiated a conversation with the principle owner of the dam, the Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains. In addition, the town of Richmond has written the State and the Girls Scouts proposing a joint effort to save the pond (see Richmond Select Board minutes). The group is also planning meetings with state representatives and appropriate state agency representatives.

A recent survey posted on Front Porch Forum has provided some interesting data about how people value the pond. In just 4 days, over 150 people in Richmond and Huntington have taken the survey with 99% of people claiming it would impact their quality of their life (both individually and community). In addition, many families and children have asked what they can do to save the pond.

### **Things You Can Do to Help**

1. Write a letter to your state representatives stating your desire for a joint effort to save the pond.
2. Visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/GillettPond>
3. Take the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/K688TR5>

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, Nancy Stoddard (coordinator for Friends of Gillett Pond) at 434-2048 or [tennisvt@gmail.com](mailto:tennisvt@gmail.com)



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**TOWN MEETING – ELECTION OF OFFICERS** The candidates in the contested races for two seats on the Bolton Select Board (a two year term, and two years remaining on a three year term) were all invited to submit a photo and a “candidate statement” to help provide more information about themselves to Bolton voters.

**RUNNING FOR A TWO YEAR TERM: JEN DUDLEY-GAILLARD AND TOM MAY**



“My name is Jen Dudley-Gaillard and I am running for the two-year term for Select Board. After graduating from college in 1999, I moved to Vermont to work on my aunt and uncle’s farm in Walden. I have had a diverse set of work experiences from working on farms to driving a forklift in Antarctica as a Solid Waste Technician. More recently, I have had my own business providing bookkeeping services to small businesses for the past nine years. This has given me a solid understanding of finances and budgets. I recognize that the Select Board is similar to running a small business in that one must work within a small group to build consensus to achieve a common goal of fiscal health while saving for the future and maintaining quality services. I also strongly believe in fostering community so I invest time as a volunteer. I helped organize the construction of Bolton’s Own Little Libraries, volunteer with Neighbor Rides, and help maintain the gardens at Smilie School where my daughter is a first grader. I also enjoy skiing at Bolton Valley, hiking around Preston Pond, and veggie gardening in the summer.

Ultimately, I am running for the Select Board because I believe that it is important to give back to your community, and I would like to be involved in nurturing and governing the town in which I am raising my child and growing old with my husband. I want our town to remain fiscally healthy as well as affordable as it faces the challenges ahead, and my financial experience can help that happen. I would appreciate your vote to represent you: Bolton’s women, the Smilie School community, and the larger Bolton community on the Select Board. Thanks!”



*Jen Dudley-Gaillard*  
*Smilie School Community*  
*Neighbor Rides*  
 *Bolton Valley*

**RUNNING FOR TWO YEARS REMAINING ON A THREE YEAR TERM:**

**SHARON MURRAY AND DAVID J. PAROT**

Sharon Murray

“I live on the south bank of the Winooski, on the River (Duxbury) Road, with my husband Bob Fett and our black lab. We moved to Bolton from Fletcher in 1997, after looking for several years for a home in Chittenden County. We opted for Bolton because, unlike much of the rest of the county, it’s still rural, relatively affordable, and a really nice place to live.

I’m a strong advocate of community service, in part because of what I do for a living. As a professional planner I’ve worked for nearly 30 years with small towns around Vermont and northern New England on community plans, ordinances, budgets, grants, conservation, housing and development projects. When we first moved to town I was happy to be appointed to the Conservation Commission – it gave me the chance to learn about Bolton from long-time residents, and to explore and help protect some of the town’s really amazing natural resources. I also worked with the Planning Commission and Select Board on the town’s current land use regulations. Since 2005 I’ve had the privilege of serving on the Development Review Board, currently as its chair.

Bolton has a good school, hardworking town staff and many dedicated volunteers who run local government, serve on boards and provide critical services at little cost to the town. That said, we’re facing some real challenges – including a small and aging population, shrinking school enrollments, a limited tax base and capacity for new development, new administrative requirements, and the rising cost of just about everything. We’ll need to find ways to more efficiently manage our affairs, provide needed staff support for volunteer boards, and benefit from programs and assistance available to small communities. I don’t have answers, just some thoughts – and still have a lot to learn – but over the years I’ve picked up some skills and knowledge that I hope can be of use to the community.”

David J. Parot

**Vote David J. Parot for Select Board**