

Benson Bulletin

Benson, Vermont's Community Newsletter December 2008

BRIGHT LIGHTS IN BENSON

Benson's annual Open House will take place Friday, December 5th through Sunday, December 7th, culminating in the lighting of our Memory Tree on Sunday, December 7th at 4:30 pm in front of the Town Office. Come and enjoy the individual attention offered to each customer by all our local merchants – many have planned some extra special goodies for this event!

Book Shed: Fri. 4 – 8, Sat. 10 – 6, Sun. 10 – 6 (537-4002)

Ellie May's: Fri. 4 – 8, Sat. 10 – 6 (779-8627)

Lowell Country Gifts: Fri. 4 – 8, Sat. 10 – 5, Sun. 10 – 3 (537-3185)

Silverwear: Fri. 10 – 8, Sat. 10 – 5 (537-2724)

Westbrooke Gardens: Fri. 4 – 8, Sat. 10 – 8, Sun. 10 – 3 (537-4002)

And, as always, there's no need to travel out of town: both our local general stores, the Benson Village Store and G & L, as well as the Wheel Inn will be open and ready to serve you. So, bring your family, meet your friends and enjoy the sparkle!

MEETINGS/EVENTS THIS MONTH

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DAY</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>PLACE</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION/EVENT</u>
December 1	Monday	7 pm	Town Office	Selectboard
December 3	Wednesday	6:30 pm	Benson School	Bingo
Dec. 5-7	Fri. – Sun.	see above	Benson	Open House
December 7	Sunday	4:30 pm	Town Office	Memory Tree Lighting
December 8	Monday	11:30 am	Community Hall	Senior Luncheon
December 9	Tuesday	6:30 pm	Community Hall	Busy Buddies 4H
December 9	Tuesday	6:30 pm	Town Office	History Project
December 9	Tuesday	6 pm	BVS Library	School Budget Meeting
December 9	Tuesday	6 pm	BVS Library	School Board
December 10	Wednesday	7 pm	Town Office	Planning Commission
December 11	Tuesday	6:30 pm	Community Hall	History Project
December 11	Thursday	Noon	Benson School	Community Dinner
December 11	Thursday	7:00 pm	Town Office	Policy Committee
December 11	Thursday	6:30 pm	Community Hall	Verd-Mont FCE
December 15	Monday	7:00 pm	Town Office	Selectboard
December 17	Wednesday	6:30 pm	Benson School	Bingo
December 23	Tuesday	6:30 pm	Community Hall	Busy Buddies 4H
December 29	Monday	7:00 pm	Town Office	Selectboard

Monthly Senior Luncheon at the Benson Community Hall on December 8th

Warm up over a delicious hot meal and share stories of how cold it was when we were younger...you know, uphill to school, both ways in boodles of snow, barefoot! And bring your best voices because we will be singing some of our favorite carols! Proposed menu: Tossed Salad, Roast Pork, Boiled Potatoes with Parsley, Applesauce, Peas and Carrots, Cherry Cobbler, Milk, Coffee, Tea. Suggested donation: \$3.50.

For reservations, please call Deanna Britton by Friday, December 5th: 537-2971.

BUDGET TIME

The Selectboard will begin work on the 2009-2010 Budget at the December 1st meeting. Don't wait for Town Meeting or Tax Day: Please give us your suggestions, ideas, complaints/compliments **NOW!** We welcome any and all budget suggestions and ideas. You are encouraged to come to a meeting, call a Selectboard member, drop a note off at the Town Office or e-mail the Selectboard (selectboard@benson-vt.com). If the Selectboard is not aware of a problem or concern, they cannot reasonably be expected to address it.

MANY THANKS FROM THE BFVD

The officers and members of your volunteer fire department would like to thank the wonderful folks of Benson for supporting us this past year with our fundraising efforts. You so graciously donated your time and talents (and money!) to help make sure the needs of the fire department were met so that we could better serve you. The Bar-B-Q and the Haunted Hayride were huge successes and with the funds donated, we were able to put the finishing touches on our Crash Truck which is now complete with a 3 phase generator and is outfitted with all kinds of tools necessary to fight fires. We were also able to purchase a 2800 gallon Tanker that will provide so much more water at the scene of a fire. Both of these vehicles should be in service within a month.

The BVFD wishes you and yours the merriest of holidays and a very Happy New Year.

COMMUNITY DINNER

There will be a community dinner at the Benson Village School on Thursday, December 11th at 12:00 noon. The cost is \$5.00 per person, \$1.50 per toddler. Seniors 65 years or older are free. You **MUST** have a reservation to attend the dinner. Please call the school at 537-2491 to reserve your seat no later than Friday, December 5th.

HEADS UP FROM THE CONSTABLE

There have been several incidents of gas being siphoned in the village. If you can, park your car with the gas cap facing your house and park near a light. Also, please remember not to let strangers into your home for any reason. And, if you see a gun metal gray Jeep wagon with a loud exhaust system, call Daryl right away (537-2722, 770-0237, 537-2708).

CHURCH NEWS

"The Surprising Christmas Pageant" will be presented at 4 p.m. on Sunday, December 14th, followed by a Pot Luck Supper. If anyone (you do NOT need to be a Church member...or to have acting experience...or to memorize anything) would like to be in the play, please call the Church Office 537-2455 or Holly Noble at 446-3575. An audience is also sought!

After Church on Sunday, December 21st, we will go caroling at Benson Heights. All are welcome to join us – no previous experience required!

Our Candlelight Christmas Eve service will be held at 7 p.m. on December 24th. This is always a very special service and we hope everyone will be able to attend - and bring family and friends!

The United Church of Benson's new Sunday School for pre-schoolers through sixth grade started on Sunday, September 14! After the Children's Message, the children go downstairs with teachers Meghan and Cassie. The last Sunday of each month is Family Sunday, where the children and parents can worship together.

Questions? Call Holly Noble at 446-3575.

BENSON PUBLIC LIBRARY



Open Wednesday, December 3, 10 and 17, 3 pm – 7 pm
Tuesday, December 23 and 30, 3 pm – 7 pm and Saturdays 11 am – 2 pm

The Reading Group is in hibernation for December and January but our decorating team is working at full force. Be sure to plan a visit to our newly refurbished library in the New Year!

BENSON BUSY BUDDIES 4-H CLUB

In November, Club members learned how to measure and follow directions as they baked cookies for the Thanksgiving plates that they distributed on November 25th. They also collected fruit and candy to add to the plates.

Members plan on completing several holiday crafts at the December 9th meeting. Later in the month they will visit Benson Heights to sing Christmas carols and share refreshments with the residents.

The Benson Busy Buddies 4-H Club meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month from 6:30 to 8:00 PM at the Community Hall. Cloverbud 4-H is for youth 5-7 years of age and standard members are between 8 and 18 years old. You are welcome to come and check us out!

Benson Village School News

There are many interesting events coming to the Benson Village School in December! To begin the month there will be Bingo on Wednesday, December 3rd at 6:30. Bingo will again be offered on the 17th at 6:30. Refreshments will be available. The Benson 8th Grade would like to thank all community members for the kind donations that have been sent in to keep this event going.

There will be an informational meeting for Parents and interested members of the community on December 8th at 6:30 with guest speaker Jerry Krietzer. Mr. Krietzer is a trainer for the Anti-Defamation League's World of Difference Program as well as running his own consulting business helping schools deal with issues of harassment and bullying. He has taught leadership, communications, and current issues at Rutland High School. He also developed Rutland High's Leadership Program, GMTI over the past 25 years. We look forward to having Mr. Krietzer visit our school.

Circus Smirkus will be entertaining the students the week of December 15th. Circus training requires the same dedication, discipline and hard work of any sport, but it stresses collaboration instead of competition. The Circus performer will introduce the kids to juggling, tumbling, clowning, circus history and other aspects of the exciting art of the Circus.

And please join us in thanking Jackie Ambrozaitis who obtained funding from the Vermont Dairy Association for our new scoreboard. All our wins are now much easier to see. Thanks, Jackie!

Winter Vacation is coming soon. The last student day will be December 19th and they will return to school on January 5th.

VERD MONT FCE CLUB

Verd Mont members took part in the Craft Fair, sponsored by the Benson First Response, with a variety of handcrafted items. The topic of local food sources was discussed at the monthly club meeting.

Members will have a potluck supper (starting at 6:30) followed by a gift exchange, at their next meeting on December 11th.

The Verd Mont FCE Club meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month at the Community Hall at 7:30 PM. The meetings are open to anyone who has an interest in issues that effect Family, Community or Education.

Verd Mont FCE is part of the National Family Community Education Association with the following mission: "Strengthening individuals, families and communities through continuing education, developing leadership and community action."

PARKING BAN

Please remember that from November 15th through April 15th the Parking Ordinance directs that there is to be no parking on the streets within the Town of Benson. The purpose of this ordinance is to facilitate the removal of snow. Thank you for your cooperation.

ARE YOU READY TO RAISE THE ROOF?!?

Please come and help our local Bone Builders Group test the new roof at the Community Hall. It's been guaranteed to withstand all the warmth generated by this active group...we'll see! Join us from 9 – 10 am every Monday and Thursday morning downstairs in the Community Hall. The program is FREE and is a great LOCAL way to improve your balance, strengthen your bones and enjoy great company.

WALK RUTLAND

- Bored with your regular walking routine? It's great walking weather and Walk Rutland is offering an event that will perk up your interest. On Sunday, December 14 at 1:00 pm in Pine Hill Park in Rutland there will be a guided walk. For beginners, there will be a 15 minute guided walk; more experienced walkers may choose a 2 hour walk. Remember, Walk Rutland is a FREE team based walking program for residents of Rutland County.
- Contact Sandra Owens (775-0555 or Sandra@walkrutland.com) for more information or visit the website: www.walkrutland.com.

KICKBOXING RIGHT HERE IN BENSON

Need some locally generated heat? Come join the Cardio Kickboxing/Aerobics sessions held right here in downtown Benson. This one hour workout incorporates aerobic conditioning, strength and abdominal work. It's sure to help you begin to lose some of that extra weight you accumulated from Thanksgiving dinner, while increasing your energy level. New and different routines are planned to keep the program fresh. Based on the level of interest, classes are scheduled to run through May!

When: Wednesday's from 6 – 7 pm , December 3rd, 10th and 17th

Where: Community Hall

Fee: \$6/class

Instructor: Joni Imperato

Please be sure to bring a mat or towel to lie on and wear comfortable clothes.

Questions? Call Joni 775-0980

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED ABOUT...

...the "No Corn in Our Gas" sign at the Benson Village Store? Well, ethanol is derived from plants (corn) and used as a supplement to gasoline to power cars. This may sound like a good idea, but... First, ethanol cannot travel in pipelines and must be transported by trucks, trains or barges. Second, ethanol contains less energy than gas so you're back at the pump more often. Third, ethanol is more expensive than gas. You may be using ethanol without knowing it – it's mixed into gas in many regions, including Vermont, so buyer beware!

This information came from an article in Business Week magazine, 5-19-06.

THROWING OUT...

...ink cartridges or cell phones? Stop at the Town Office and pick up a free mail-in bag which will allow you to safely dispose of these items.

The First Hundred Years Decay of a Town – Part Two

In March 1884, a letter to the editor of a local paper was written by E. L. Barbour which was entitled “Decay of a Town”. Parts of the letter were printed in the November newsletter; more of the letter is printed below.

Decay of a Town (continued)

..... Benson at one time had lawyers that took the highest rank in the county and state. Some of the older inhabitants can still remember its Kellogs, its Smiths, its Harmons and its Meachams. Now when its inhabitants get into an altercation over an old stone boat they have to leave town for lawyers to pettifog their petty suits, make game of their clients and so put money in their pockets.

The population of the town has decreased more than one-half in the last seventy years and the wealth has decreased in still greater proportion, in fact the people are very poor and troubled to get money to pay the tax gatherer. The best of the real estate is now owned by people living out of town, and much that is still nominally owned in town is covered by mortgages held by those outside.

E. L. BARBOUR

(We fear our friend Barbour takes a too pessimistic view of Benson. There could be added to the above that the old time enterprise is yet seen in many of its thrifty farmers. Two very good general stores are conducted; mails reach Benson every day; as for lawyers our friend Barbour has sufficient legal knowledge to defend or prosecute in any case which may come up in his pleasant home town. We like to visit Benson and meet its people. – Editor*) **Please note, this was the 1884, not the 2008, Editor!*

Town of Benson Auditors’ Notice December 1, 2008

All Reports for the Budget Year 2008-2009 and all budgets for the year 2009-2010 are due in the Town Office by January 5, 2009. Anyone who received money for 2008-2009 must submit an accounting for that money.

The Town Office is open 8 to 12 and 1 – 4:30, Monday to Thursday.

Benson Auditors

Robert Butman and John Kubin

Benson History Project

The next meeting of the Benson History Project is on Tuesday, December 9 from 6:30 to 8 PM at the Town Clerk's office. We will be learning how to use the recording equipment, and discussing interview topics and techniques, so that we can begin interviewing Benson old-timers. If you are interested in conducting interviews or in writing a chapter on some aspect of Benson's history, please join us. Please contact Karen Barber 537-3155 or Deanna Britton 537-2971 if you have questions, have input to share, or if you would like a ride to the meeting.

SIMPLIFY THE HOLIDAYS

December brings the hustle and bustle of the holiday season. With the economy the way it is, the holidays may also bring a lot of stress. Why not simplify your holidays this year?

Here are some ideas:

- Emphasize fun rather than gifts. Put together a jigsaw puzzle as a family, play some board games, have a skating or sliding party.
- Give the gift of time, rather than something purchased. Make a gift certificate to teach someone how to bake bread or make soaps, offer to babysit or prepare a home-cooked meal. Collect some favorite family recipes, and make a recipe book.
- If you buy gifts, purchase something locally made. There are lots of crafts fairs, as well as a great variety of Vermont foods. Or, you could even make a gift yourself.
- Give a gift to charity in the name of your family member or friend.

Do you decorate like Chevy Chase in the “Christmas Vacation” movie, with the electric meter spinning wildly? To save money and energy, think about cutting down on the amount of your lighting decorations. Turn off the lights earlier in the evening, or use a timer to turn off the lights, to save energy usage.

If you’re planning to buy some new holiday lighting this year, either indoors or out, consider buying new energy-efficient LED lights. They use only around 0.08 watts per bulb, are sturdier than older bulbs, can last for 20 years, and remain cool to the touch, reducing fire risk. To give you an idea, if you have 300 bulbs and keep them on for 5 hours a day for 45 days, you will spend about \$60 to light large bulbs, \$4 to light mini-non LED lights, and about 40 cents for LED lights (from EfficiencyVermont.org.).

Happy Holidays from the Energy Committee!

CFL DISPOSAL

Remember that, because they contain trace amounts of mercury, CFL bulbs need to be disposed of separately. Keep them apart from your regular trash and recyclables and Wesley will help you dispose of them safely.

FOR SALE

- The Selectboard sold the ditching bucket and the \$500 was returned to the Equipment Fund.
- The truck is still available.

➤ A 1994 Ford F250 with plow (minimum bid = \$1500)

- If you are interested, submit your sealed bid to the Selectboard by Monday, December 15th.

The Selectboard reserves the right to reject any and all bids.

HOLIDAY DECORATING SAFETY TIPS

- The Benson Volunteer Fire Department wishes everyone a happy Holiday Season. The National Fire Protection Association offers the following tips to help make sure your holidays stay safe too.
- ✓ When decorating your tree, always use lights listed by a testing laboratory. Some lights are designed only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both. Larger tree lights should also have some type of reflector rather than a bare bulb.
- ✓ Follow the manufacturer's instructions on how to use tree lights. Any string of lights with worn, frayed or broken cords or loose bulb connections should not be used. Connect no more than three strands of push-in bulbs and a maximum of 50 bulbs for screw-in bulbs.
- ✓ Always unplug Christmas tree lights before leaving home or going to bed.
- ✓ Bring outdoor electrical lights inside after the holidays to prevent hazards and extend their life.
- ✓ Never use lit candles to decorate a tree, and make sure any lit candles in the room are placed well away from tree branches.
- ✓ Try to keep live trees as moist as possible by giving them plenty of water daily. Do not purchase a tree that is dry or dropping needles. Check for fresh, green needles. And place your tree in a sturdy tree stand designed not to tip over.
- ✓ If you purchase an artificial tree, be sure it is labeled as fire-retardant.
- ✓ Children are fascinated with Christmas trees. Keep a watchful eye on them when around the tree and do not let them play with the wiring or lights. Store matches and lighters up high, out of reach, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- ✓ Make sure the tree is at least three feet away from any heat source, such as fireplaces and radiators. Try to position the tree near an outlet so that cords are not running long distances. Do not place the tree where it may block exits.
- ✓ Safely dispose of the tree when it begins dropping needles. Dried-out trees are highly flammable and should not be left in a house or garage, or placed against the house.

LIGHTS FOR THE MEMORY TREE

Lights are available for \$1/bulb at the Town Office, G & L and the Benson Village Store.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

For the **January 1st** newsletter, please submit your news and ads no later than December 26th. To submit your news, please either e-mail the information to bensonnews@shoreham.net or call Sue Jansen at 537-3111. Submit your ads to Shirley Vladyka: ShirleyV@shoreham.net

Need more information? Visit our Town's website: <http://www.benson-vt.com>